



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. XV NO. 1

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FEBRUARY 1997

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THOUGHTS OF THE PRESIDENT

The Dues are coming in and I am happy to report that there seems to be a surge of enthusiasm by the members to "pay their way". I plead to those who are not current, to send in their dues. I would like to hear John Pettinger say "all members are paid up".

Did you send info to Ed Johnson so that we can have a good section of the 385th on the Wall Of Valor? Do it now, please.

Finally, look at the Tucson schedule and send in your registration as soon as you know you will attend. It helps those who are working on the reunion to know. Those of us in the cold climate now should think of Tucson and it will warm you as you fill out the registration form. Widows, who would like to share a room with another widow, should indicate this on the form. I would hope that all widows who attend the reunions will feel comfortable and enjoy themselves socially. We should make the widows feel at home and that they indeed are part of the 385th.

TUCSON REUNION
November 14 - 18, 1997

CHAPLAIN

Rev. James H. Vance
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HONORARY MEMBERS

M/Sgt John McKay, Jr. USAF
LTC Raymond B. Tucker

PAST PRESIDENTS *DECEASED

Ruel G. Weikert
*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

CHAPLAIN JIM'S THOUGHTS

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

That's late but since this year is not over yet I pray your year will be a good healthy one.

In receiving the last Hardlife Herald I was made aware how the obits are getting longer. Those of us that are still reading them should be grateful for long life and for the memories of those that do appear on the list. May their loved ones realize our friends are missed and our prayers are with them. Also may God's Grace give them strength and peace.

Our son and his family from Hawaii were with us over Christmas. Their children and 7 and 2 years old. The 2 year old wasn't making up to Geti and I. Our son, Sid, said, "You two will have to talk to her because she won't come to you until she feels you accept her." We did and she did. But isn't that thru everyday contact with others. A smile, friendly and warm conversation makes us, as well as those we greet, feel accepted. I don't make resolutions but in this year of 1997 wouldn't it be O.K. if we all greeted everyone with a smile and warm friendly conversation?!!!

Keep the peace and I know God will bless us all some-way.

With a warm greeting & LOVE!

Jim



John H. Lemke	April 1996
Anthony A. Ryaldi	1994
William Rowe	1989
William R. Shannon	April 1995
Howard E. Cohea	Dec. 1995
John W. Grace	May 1996
George H. Platt	Oct. 1995
Wesley Brashear	

NOVO J. MARTIN

Age 76, of Gary passed away at St. Mary Medical Center, Hobart Monday[^] August 19, 1996. He was a Hh tired assistant fire chief with the Gary Fire Department with[®] years of service and also retired from Gary Steel Products, Inc. A member of Blessed Sacrament Church and he was a WWII Army Air Corp, veteran, attached to the 385th Bombardment Group. Preceded in death by sister, Helen Maryonovich and brother, Dale Maryonovich. Survived by wife, Marie; 5 children, Robert (Susan) Martin of Allentown, PA, Suzanne (Ronald) Boric of Crown Point; David (Kathy) Martin of Walkerton, IN, Paulette (Atse) Krstevski of Valparaiso & Annette Martin of Gary*, 8 grandchildren

Dear Winnie,

It is sad to learn of Frank's passing on.

Frank Walls was an important figure in the operation of the 385th Group in England during wartime. He was also important to the 385th Bomb Group Memorial Association in it's early years, as it's second President.

In 1985 and 1990 Frank and I were invited to Holland for the celebration of the food missions. Not able to make the 1995 invite, many Dutch and Englishmen asked me "where is the big guy"? He was missed, and will be missed.

The officers and Executive Board, together with the membership extend deepest sympathies to you during this trying time.

Sincerely,
Bob Valliere, President

OBITUARY

Howard Cohea, 75, helped develop West Mesa and Four Hills

By Carlos Salazar
TRIBUNE REPORTER

Howard Cohea was one of the city's top scratch amateur golfers during the post-World War II era.

And as a land developer, he helped build up commercial properties in tire Four Hills, West Mesa, Hofimantown and Bosque Farms areas.

"He loved his work," said his daughter, Kenny Cohea.

"Years ago he helped put together the original Angel Fire development (near Eagle Nest Lake) and also the one at die Four Hills Country Club. He also did some exploration development in Canada."

Cohea, 75, died Saturday of heart failure at St. Joseph Hospital. A memorial service was conducted Monday at St. Mark's Episcopal Church. Burial was at the National Cemetery in Santa Fe

Cohea, who was bom in Ketchum, Okla., came to Albuquerque with his parents when he was 4.

He attended North Fourth Street Elementary School and Washington Junior High

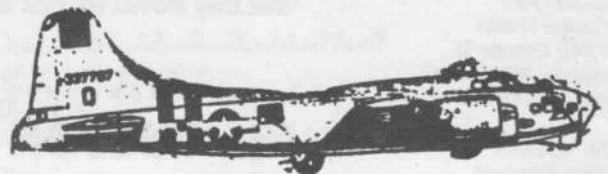
Cohea was a star football player at Albuquerque High School where he graduated in 1937. He also played for

the University of New Mexico.

He was a bombardier with the Air Force in Europe during World War II and served during the Korean War.

After World War II he sold insurance in Albuquerque. In 1952 he founded Automotive Acceptance Corp., a finance company, and eight years later started his realty career.

"Golf was his game," his daughter said. "He was very competitive. He played in practically all the amateur tournaments.



A Taste of North Dakota Humor

- Nov. 16 4:30p.m..... It just started to snow. First real snow of the season. Everything turning white as the lovely flakes fall all over the area.
- Nov. 17 We awoke to a 4-inch beautiful blanket of crystal white lush covering of the whole landscape. What a fantastic sight! We all laughed as we shoveled both the driveway and the sidewalk. Later, the snowplow came by and covered most of the driveway with compacted snow we all laughed again, and shoveled it out.
- Nov. 29 It snowed 6 inches last night and the temperature went down to 9 degrees. Maybe this snow will last until Christmas, we all hoped. The snowplow came by and did as usual, so we shoveled out again.
- Dec. 3 Decided to put on the snow tires after getting stuck at the edge of the driveway. Fell on my ass in the slick snow, but all that was hurt was my pride. Better break out the snow boots and the winter clothing.
- Dec. 8 The temperature is still in the 10-degree range, and the wind makes it about minus 25 degrees. It's getting to be a real chore driving on the compacted snow and icy roads. Only slid off the road twice today!
- Dec. 17 Had another 8 inches of the white stuff again last night. Just shoveled out and the damn snowplow came by twice, leaving a 2-foot oerm. Shoveled out two groves in it for the tires and left the rest for the kids to do after school.
- Dec. 19 It's definitely going to be a white Christmas because five more inches fell last night, and with this freezing weather the shit won't melt until July! Just as I got dressed to go shovel, (boots, jump suit, heavy coat, ear muffs, gloves, etc.) 1 got a strong urge to pee. Flipped off the snowplow driver as he filled the driveway again.
- Dec. 21 If I ever catch that S.O.B. snowplow driver, I'll drag him through the snow. 1 think he hides around the corner waiting for us to shovel, then comes by at 100 miles an hour filling my driveway and leaving a 4-foot berm.
- Dec. 25 Merry Christmas my ass! They predict 8 more inches of this goddam shit tonight. There's no place left to put it! Do you know how many shovels full of snow 8 inches is?...377,1 counted them! To hell with Santa...he doesn't have to shovel. The snowplow driver came asking for a donation. 1 hit him with my snow shovel.
- Dec. 26 Another 13 inches of the of the goddam crap came down when they only predicted 8! Now the driveway is glare ice 3 inches deep; the cat shit on the rug because we used his kitty litter to get traction on the ice.
- Dec. 27 Burnt the Christmas tree and the coffee table because the guy 1 ordered wood from in August called to say he couldn't deliver today because his truck froze up.
- Dec. 28 Woke up to 8 more inches and a frozen toilet. Set fire to the goddam house...now I won't have to shovel the roof or the driveway. Guy with the wood came by...1 threw it on the burning house after beating the hell out of him! Heat from the fire melted the snow around the neighbor's house, so they brought steak and marshmallows. By the way...don't eat yellow snow around here!
- Jan. 2 12 more inches, -10 below, 30 mile wind equals blinding blizzard and -80 wind chill. What 1 am doing here?

Editor's Note:

The problem is that February and March are usually the big snow months.

Editor's Note: This story, from Flying Fortress Newsletter about "our" Joe Jones has a couple things that don't jibe with what Joe told us at our Reunions- - wrong Group listed, we don't think he had a gash in his tongue - - may have had a hospital stay, may have been unconscious for 5 days. Anyway, it's a good story.

FLYING FORTRESS NEWS LETTER Page 5

FALL 1996

**BELGIAN ARTIST RELATES JOE JONES
AERIAL MIRACLE OF WORLD WAR II**

(I had heard of the Joe Jonea having fallen 13,000 feet trapped in the sheared off tail of his B-17 and unable to bail out, rode it down to a farmer's field, and survived with no broken bones. However, I had only the "Believe It Or Not" Robert Riply short account with a sketch to go on, and was unable to develop a story about it. Then at the bottom of a letter from Belgian artist Janssens Marcel I found a rare piece of luck. He mentioned that he lived only a few kilometers from where Joe Jones's "miracle" occurred, and that prompted me to write back to Janssens to ask him to relate what that miracle was.)

Joe Jones, a tail gunner, must have had an angel on his shoulder, at least he did on that day. In my 97th Bomb Group story of John Yandura's plane being cut in two in a collision you'll recall he said that as he was being sucked out of the open waist that he could see the tail section flying away as if his tail gunner was piloting it in a glide for a long ways before he bailed out

In one story of "Lucky Joe" writer Bob Sheeran has high praise for the bomber crews and the B-17 Flying Fortresses. Some of this article contains quotes from Sheeran's article, however, the source of this article is Janssens Marcel of Belare, Belgium who lives only 60 kilometers from where Joe's unconscious body was taken from the tail section by a passing bicyclist The rescuer, Gilbert Des Chopper, age 37, saw the miracle happen. Dropping his bicycle he climbed over a fence and rushed to the flier trapped in his twin .50 caliber gun station and found him alive. He then rushed to the farm house and got farmer Ryjkeboer, his wife, and their five daughters to help get Joe into the farmhouse, then to a British Field Hospital in Ostende. Joe had no broken bones, had a severe gash in his tongue, had some internal injuries, and didn't regain consciousness for 5 days. Nineteen days later he was flown back to England and two weeks later returned to his group's base at Great Ashley. The nurses told him he'd be going home, no more flying for him, but he footed them. He flew again a few days after getting back to base, and got the pilot to buzz the hospital and with a Aldis Lamp kept on the bomb



era, he signaled the nurses and doctors from his tail gun position.

After 43 years of combined military and Civil Service as a Special agent of the C.I.C. Joe Jones retired and made a return trip to the farmer's field in Belgium to visit his rescuers of that fateful mission and day of the miracle.

When Joe Jones was stationed at Langley Field in 1946 he met Ruth Smith and they were engaged to be married. If Joe had told Ruth that he had been the only member of his BI 7 crew to survive a mid-air collision in which 16 men died (only one man bailed out of the other plane) over Belgium on March 1, 1945 she probably would feel he was kidding her. and if he had told her he had fallen 13,000 feet trapped in the cut off tail of his bomber and survived without even one broken bone, she probably would have said, "Joe Jones, you're the biggest liar I ever met and I'm not sure I want to marry a liar." So, it's my guess that Joe never told her, "It's the truth, I swear it", and never went on to give her the true details or tried to convince her. Would you? I wouldn't!

At 4:00 A.M. on that fateful day, Joe and the crew of Lt. Chuck Armbruster were awakened by the CQ (Charge of Quarters), dressed quietly, went to the Mess Hall, then to briefing for that day's mission. There he teamed that their regular copilot, LL Howard Muchow, was ill and a replacement was to be in his seat. Their crew had flown 21 missions and the 22nd was their last, due to a tragedy that killed all eight, but miraculously spared the life of one, the guy in the tail gun position. , the one destined to make history and be named "Lucky Joe." And, if it hadn't been for a single modification at Boeing's Plant to add a tail gun position (by the lengthening of the fuselage) and the addition of a dorsal fin to strengthen the rear of the bomber and also increase its stability, Joe would surely have died that day with the rest

Continued

FLYING FORTRESS NEWS LETTER



of the crew. The plane was named "Mr. Lucky" and over Ostende, Belgium the bomber stream ran into grey intermittent clouds and turbulence. The pilot sharply told the co-pilot, who was flying formation since they were in number 3 position off the left wing of the lead plane, to "pull over, we don't want that guy's wing in our tap." Joe tells the story from there on: "I felt a terrific jolt and I looked up



right into the bomb-bay section of the B-17 flying in No.2 position so I tried the intercom. "Tail to pilot" but there was no answer, so I clawed my way to the escape hatch but it was jammed. I then thought of the confidence we all had in our pilot, who we thought to be the best of all. I remember thinking that if anybody can straighten this plane out, he can. Then I noted that we were in a spin and re

called that no B-17 had ever pulled out of a spin. I had no idea at all that the collision had sheared off the plane's tail section and that I was in a free-fall away from the rest of "Mr. Lucky." I then sat back in the gunner's seat and waited. At that point I thought with sadness of my mother in Fairfax, South Carolina receiving the customary Western union telegram that all men in combat hoped their families would never have to get. After that I took out a cigarette and lit it and did wonder why it took three flicks to get my lighter to fire up. I used to win bets from guys when betting that it would never fail on the first try. "

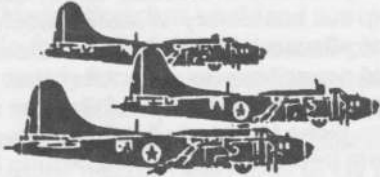
Editor's Note: I wonder what a young man thinks of when he's sure he's going to die any second. I should know, as my three recent episodes attest to in recent issues of this newsletter told of knowing that we'd all be dead in 10 seconds. I wonder if his life flashed before his eyes like some say—not in my case. I think I thought "I'm too young to die" then changed it to "we're all too young to die". I remained very composed back then. I might have had a quick vanishing thought, "we'll never know what hit us." I might have had the thought (very common in those days) "why do the good die young?" That seemed to happen a lot, while others some thought of as jerks were so luck over and over again.



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?



Your Editor -

Taken November 16, 1996

So after 7 more weeks of the same, we headed for Tucson.

OVER HERE

Another interesting book has been called to our attention—"Over Here: The Americans in Norfolk during World War 2". Although we had little contact in Norfolk, it's another look at "The Yanks influence on the cultural and social life" that sounds interesting. Available thru Images of Britain, 5761 E LaPalma Ave., 142, Anaheim CA 92807. \$31.95 plus \$6.95 Shipping.

HELP HELP HELP

Roger Feller in Luxembourg needs ANYTHING that any of you can give him with regard to the crash of McDonald's and White on July 12, 1944. As we've reported previously, they are planning a memorial ceremony at the site of the crash on June, 21, 1988. They have recovered many parts of the plane, silk from the parachutes, and they have asked us to try to locate two survivors, Robert McPherson and Larry Atiyah. Both crews were in the 550th, and your editor remembers them well but we have no pictures or anything to contribute. Truman Smith's book tells about the two crews, the crash, and helping pick up belongings for return home. If anyone has ANYTHING, please send to your Editor, Box 2187, Fargo ND 58108. We'll send it to Roger, who is working hard on the project.

He hopes to attend our Tucson Reunion- - just heard from him asking "where is Tucson?" We're replying "Only 4000 Kilometers Southwest of New York City. We imagine that if he'd go 4,000 Kilometers the other way, he'd end up in the middle of Siberia!

ATTENTION!!!!!! ATTENTION!!!!!!

VA DISCOVERS RECORDS

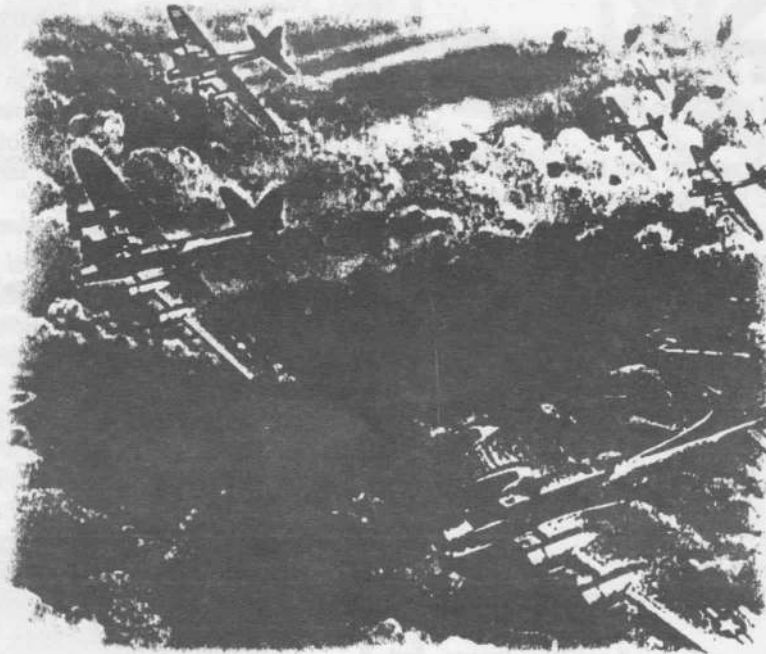
The Veterans Administration has discovered 10 million duplicates of 20th century military records thought to have been destroyed in the 1973 fire. If you were told that records you need were burned, you may want to write again.

NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS, HGSA,
9700 PAGE BLVD.,
ST. LOUIS, MO 63132

Reported in the N.J. News and the Georgia News.

THE WRONG STUFF

*The Adventures
and Mis-Adventures
of an
8th Air Force Aviator*



TRUMAN SMITH

Here's a gripping, wonderfully-written account of Truman Smith's 35 missions with the 385th from April to July of 1944. We're not going to give it the rave-review it deserves- - we're going to print a portion of his forward, which will give you an idea of his writing skills, his unconventional perspective on the War, life and death, the good guys and the bad. Read this and then write for your copy. You'll relive every day of your WW 2 career.

Order your copy from Southern Heritage Press. P.O. Box 10937, St. Petersburg FL. 33733
15.95 + 2.95 shipping and handling. (1-800-282-2823)

Con't on next page.

The Wrong Stuff Fore-Words

At least MY WAR OF '44 itself should be worthy of remembrance. Yet, I kept going back to the thought of my children and - WHO CARES?

Then one afternoon my wife, Margot, and I were taking care of our granddaughters, Heather and Kayla, who were five and four years old, when Heather was attracted to the television on which was featured the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

Contrary to the notion of TV executives, the violence attracts an audience, such oversaturation of brutality has actually immunized our society.

Therefore, Heather and Kayla generally ignored the ugly stuff on TV. On the other hand, television has educated them beyond their years. They can discern the real from the make-believe rather well and are quite aware of the suffering produced by warfare around the world.

Heather, being older at five, is also mindful of the past and present, gaining assurance that President Uncoin's and President Washington's wars were long ago and not for her to worry about.

So when television brought the Japanese attacking Pearl Harbor to her, she somehow sensed it was different than the current wars of her time and asked me, "Grandpa, is that your war?"

I answered her that it was my war and reached for the world globe we often refer to in helping them learn where they are and I explained that it had been a World War and that I had actually fought my war on the other side of the world in Europe; hoping to give her a sense of security by a separation of time and place.

She put her finger next to mine on the globe and asked, "Then we don't have that war anymore, do we?"

I assured her that we didn't have "that war" anymore.

Heather then looked at me with a smile and blew me a way by saying, "Thank you, grandpa."

Wow!

Somebody did care.

Then others expressed an interest; mainly young men who had been boys, too young to have participated in Vietnam.

Vietnam was fought nobly by American troops, but disgraced by Presidents and Congressmen with their Wrong Stuff.

Vietnam....Hard to believe that it had happened so long ago. Korea? Even longer. And World War Two?

"Now, that was a glamorous and romantic war."

Well, that's what I've been told-by those who weren't there.

"Back then we did it RIGHT."

"We did it RIGHT?"

"Well, we didn't have the disgrace of the MIAs, because all of those missing in action back then were accounted for."

Well, let's try and set the record straight.

Over 20,000 American servicemen, captured by the Germans, and recaptured by the Soviets during World War

Two, were and are still missing. Not 2,000, but over 20,000 Americans were captured in Europe have never been accounted for. There was also a like number in the Pacific, where the Japanese preferred killing them rather than taking prisoners.

President, former General, Eisenhower was forced to abandon them and their plight when it became necessary to stop the Communists in Korea. Such a decision had to have broken his heart.

So what was WRONG and what was RIGHT?

Any sane concept of right and wrong in warfare is flawed, because war is insane and the rules are quite different.

Good guys don't win wars. Victory goes to the Bad guys. Even domestic war against crime will never succeed unless criminals are made to suffer more than their victims.

The "Japs," as they were called, who attacked Pearl Harbor and committed gross war crimes, and the Nazis, who killed their own citizens, as well as the Soviets, who killed millions more of their own citizens, were the Bad Guys in our own Good Guy viewpoint. But as bad as they were, they finally were defeated by the "Good Guys," because we were better at being bad than they were.

No?

We're the only sonsabitches in the history of the world to have dropped atomic bombs on civilians. And as bad as that was, we created more destruction and killed even more women, children and elderly with the conventional bombing of Dresden, Hamburg, Berlin and countless other targets.

"When in doubt, aim for the church in the middle of town where most of them live."

Was it wrong or right?

Since we had convinced our enemies that we had the means and the will to be-not only the Bad Guys, but the worst in history of the world-we avoided World War Three. So most would have to agree that doing the wrong stuff actually turned out to be right.

"Glamorous?" "Romantic?"

"Well, at least it had the support of the people and as a result it didn't last as long as Vietnam."

However, the length of a war is not the only criteria. The Vietnam War lasted five times longer than the war of the Eighth Air Force in Europe. Yet, the Eighth Air Force lost 8,314 bombers and 60,376 air crewmen with 79,265 casualties in less than 36 months. Just try to imagine it.

The Eighth Air Force suffered higher losses than any other U.S. Force in War Two. And what a force it was!

How many airplanes have you ever seen in the sky at one time? Maybe ten? Have you ever seen a hundred planes in the air at the same time? Two hundred? Five Hundred? Can you imagine the sight of thousand airplanes?

How then can you possibly comprehend an air armada of TWO THOUSAND AIRPLANES? - as far as the eye can see in any direction...AIRPLANES!!! It was truly - AWESOME!!!

Editor's Note:

So— if that doesn't get you interested, just take our word for it. Your Editor wasn't getting shot at (not back then) but we couldn't quit reading once we started. You'll be the same.

Editor's Note: Information on the trip to England in the Fall arrived too late for the October and December Hardlife Her-alds, but we've now received pictures and stories from Grace & Dick Herdman of Woolpit, Bob Lopiano, Mandy Cockerton, Richard Molzahn, Stephen Miles of Bury St. Edmunds and Bill & Dorothy Nicholls.

Looks like a great time had by all, with many memories re-freshed and many nostalgic sites revisited.



At All Saints Memorial in Great Ashfield



Honor Guard from RAF Station



Bill Nicholls and friend at Madingley Cemetery



Signpost erected by our English friends



Wreath-laying at Madingly

U.S. war veterans return to county



HONOURED GUESTS: U.S. veterans from the 385th bomber group were given a guard of honour by airmen stationed at RAF Lakenheath when they visited Great Ashfield church at the weekend

A GROUP of U.S. veterans stationed in Suffolk during the Second World War returned to their old airfield at the weekend.

About 30 former servicemen and their wives flew hundreds of miles from their homes to visit Great Ashfield Airfield, near Bury St Edmunds, from where they flew bombing missions in the 1940s.

For many of the men, now in their 70s and 80s, it was an emotional return to Suffolk where they served as part of the 385th USAF bomber group.

The airfield was one of several in Suffolk to provide a base for the B17 Flying Fortress bombers spearheading the U.S. assault on Germany.

Bill Nicholls, 77, from New Jersey, flew 20 missions four months from the

Reunion at old airfield

village airfield before his bomber was shot down in 1943.

"It revives old memories of some wonderful people when you come back and visit. It's our fifth time here," he said. "Combat for anyone is not really pleasant, but it had to be done and we made the most of things in Suffolk."

Mr Nicholls, who was just 21 when he came to England, said the toughest mission flown from Great Ashfield was to Munster, in Germany, when about 60 air-

craft were shot down. Just two months later his own plane went down and he spent 15 months as a German prisoner before being allowed to return to the United States at the end of the war.

Before travelling to the airfield, the veterans visited the Woolpit Institute to see a display featuring the history of the 8th USAF brigade. Curator John Wiley said the exhibition had originally been put together to celebrate the U.S. air force 50th anniversary, but has been restaged for the former airmen's visit.

Yesterday the visitors attended a memorial service in Great Ashfield church where they were greeted by a guard of honour from airmen stationed at RAF Lakenheath when they were stationed at RAF Lakenheath.

Letters to the Editor:

Dear Ed,

On Sept 28th we had the pleasure of a visit from about 30 U.S. 385th Vets and wives, they came to visit our Woolpit Museum, when we found out that they were coming out Curator John Wiley put on a display of the history of the 385th, I'm sure you have already heard all about it, I thought you might like this newspaper cutting - We really did enjoy the visit from the vets, it meant a lot to all of us. That they took the time to stop and visit us, we hoped that they enjoyed the display and visit as much as we did when we met the vets, we do hope that they will visit us again, if they do plan on coming back next year please let John Wiley know and he will plan a tour around our lovely village, we would welcome all. Here is Johns Address:

John Wiley
Walnut Tree Cottage
Woolpit
Bury-St-Edmunds
Suffolk Ip309RF

Best Wishes and hello again to the vets and their wives who I really enjoyed talking to.

Grace and Dick Herdman

P.S. If any more articles or photos appear in the paper I will send them on to you.

Dear Ed,

How pleased we were to welcome members of the 385th to Great Ashfield on September 28th and 29th. We all thoroughly enjoyed their visit and made many friends. It was certainly a weekend to remember. On Saturday the group toured the Airfield followed by a Barbecue lunch with people from the village, in the bam on the Airfield, where we had also put on display of old photographs of the village in the 1940's and ones of the base with the help of Ian McLachlan. After lunch we visited the Village Sign which was unveiled to commemorate VJ Day last year, then sometime was spent at the Church which was decorated for the Harvest Festival. On Sunday we were so pleased the Group were able to join us for our Harvest Festival Service at 10:30 which was taken by the Rev. Chins Rogers, a friend of Di Barhers who also officiated at the service. Chins is very interested in the 385th and also spent the Saturday with the group. We were more than grateful to him for helping us, as our rector retired in August. There was also a Guard of Honour at the service from nearby Airbase at Lakenheath. After the service 385th members were entertained to lunch in our homes, leaving the village late afternoon. Some of us met up with them for lunch on Wednesday when it was suggested some should come to your Reunion in the States next year. We would obviously like to discuss this with the organizers of the event.

While preparing the photograph exhibition for the visit we discovered that we have no photographs or newspaper clippings of the dedication of the Memorial Altar in 1945. If anyone has any we would be more than grateful for copies, the only thing we have of the dedication is the Order of Service

Sheet. Also if anyone has any particular photographs that would be of interest to our village records we would also be grateful for copies. Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,
Stephen Miles
The Limes
Great Ashfield
Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 3HA

In late September of 1996, we landed in London to stay on busy Russell Square for a reunion with a small but lively group of thirty-one friends and members of the 385th. At a reception dinner we met old friends David Wade and Ian McLachlan and new ones, Sue McLachlan and our indispensable tour guide, Lynn Reddings. A bus tour and trip to the RAF Museum at Hendon the next day preceded a move to quaint Long Melford, Suffolk, and a stay at the Bull. On Saturday, Woolpit Museum, a barbecue, and dinner at the hotel with some charming (female) U.S. Airforce people were the highlights of the day.

Sunday brought the colorful Harvest Festival at All Saints, Great Ashfield, when the beautiful 385th stained glass window was dedicated. As always, we were welcomed with open arms and taken home to our hosts' homes for a visit and an English Sunday dinner. Bill and I renewed acquaintance with Miles- -Angela, Rowley, and Kate, while our friends, Dot and Jim Thompson, had a great visit and dinner with.

One never-to-be-forgotten moment was when we drove down the old runway toward the gathered group of townspeople waving farewell.

Using the medieval Bull Inn as headquarters, we "did" Lavenham of the crooked Tudor houses, and the next day toured the "Bloody IOOth's" restored operations centre at Thorpe Abbots Airfield. The exhibits spoke to the military aspects of WWII, but also to the personal deprivation and suffering. After lunch at Maid's Head Tavern, some of us visited Norwich Castle, the huge underground mall (it rhymes with "Sal" in England), or glorious cathedral.

The next leg of the trip took us to Bury St. Edmunds of the lively Angel Square and the haunting ruins of the monastery, now partly planted in still-blooming roses. A "ploughman's platter" at the Hying Fortress Pub fortified us for our journey to the University Arms in Cambridge.

Bill represented the Group as he placed a wreath at the foot of the Madingley Cementery Memorial in the rain. And the wind. And the cold. We went shopping and sightseeing in Cambridge, visiting the famous Round Church and gorgeous Kings College Chapel, where some young men were auditioning for voice scholarships.

A free day Friday ended with our FOTE friends, trading memories of our other years meeting. Oh, and during the day we had a conkers contest- - I'll explain when we have an hour or so! Anyway, James Bond's son, Millard won.

Dot, Jim, Bill and I returned to London for a few days to marvel at the efficiency and intricacies of the Underground. What would the traffic be like without it? We saw some of the usual London attractions: St. Paul's, Westminster Abbey, and

Con't on next page.

Covent Gardens, and went to the British Museum to see Magna Carta, the Rosetta Stone, and beautiful Elgin Marbles.

Having walked and ridden ourselves to exhaustion, we finally said "Goodby" to a great U.K. visit

Doris Nicholls
Dorothy Thompson

Dear Ed,

Here are two pictures of Sally B. which we support at \$250 per year, will buy 30-40 minutes of fuel for Sally B. to fly. When you see and hear Sally B. over Madingley makes one proud to help her keep flying.

John Pettinger



385th BOMBARDMENT GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION GROUP VISIT TO ENGLAND 1996

Oliver and Jeff Anderson-Burnsville, Minnesota
James and Millard Bond-Edenton, North Carolina
Denver and Noriko Canaday-Everett, Washington
Arthur and Mary Driscoll-Nashville, Tennessee
Clarence Fauber-Terre Haute, Indiana
Eldred Harrington-Sangerville, Maine
Michael and Sharon Kindya-Spokane, Washington
Richard and Mary Jane Malzhan-Hawley, Pennsylvania
John and Betty Mathews-Freeport, Illinois
William and Doris Nicholls-Woodbury Heights, New Jersey
Lyndol and Evelyn Pallin-Newport, Vermont
Howard and Vivian Richardson-Jackson, Mississippi
Maurice and Charlotte Sumney-Kalamazoo, Michigan
Frank Sutter-Sun City, Arizona
Jim and Dorothy Thompson-Woodbury Heights, New Jersey
Leslie, Mavis and Patricia Thompson-Stony Brook, New York
John and Ruth Pettinger-Laurel, Florida

Sally B over Madingley 1996



**A Service of Remembrance
THE 385th BOMB GROUP
"Van's Valiants"**

**Madingley American War Cemetery
3 October 1996**

Conducting the service...

Chaplain, Captain William F. "Trip" Ziegler, III, USAF
The 48th Fighter Wing, "The Liberty Wing," RAF Lakenheath

OPENING SENTENCES

From Psalm 27

INVOCATION

Chaplain Ziegler

WORD OF WELCOME TO MEMBERS OF THE 385TH!!!

RESPONSIVE READING:

LEADER: It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountains of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains,

PEOPLE: **...and shall be raised above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it,**

LEADER: ...and many peoples shall come, and say:

PEOPLE: **"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths."**

LEADER: For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

PEOPLE: **God shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples;**

LEADER: ...and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks;

PEOPLE: **...nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.** (Isaiah 2:2-4)

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8

ADDRESS

Chaplain William F. "Trip" Ziegler, III

MOMENT OF SILENCE

LAYING OF THE WREATH

PRAYER (in unison):

ALMIGHTY GOD, BEFORE WHOM STAND THE LIVING AND THE DEAD, WE YOUR CHILDREN, WHOSE MORTAL LIFE IS BUT A HAND'S BREADTH, GIVE THANKS TO YOU FOR THOSE WHO SACRIFICED THEMSELVES, OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS AND FOR THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM. MAY WE HOLD THEM IN CONTINUAL REMEMBRANCE, AND EVER THINK OF THEM AS WITH YOU, IN THAT CITY WHOSE GATES ARE NOT SHUT BY DAY AND WHERE THERE IS NO NIGHT. FOR THOSE OF US WHO LIVE TODAY, WE PRAY THAT THIS SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE WILL INSPIRE US TO A GREATER COMMITMENT TO YOU AND PEOPLE EVERYWHERE. MAY WE BE BRAVE SO THAT ENEMIES WHO WOULD DEPRIVE US OF OUR FREEDOM WILL NOT SUCCEED. GRANT US WISDOM TO SOLVE PROBLEMS AND ENRICH LIFE. FILL US WITH COMPASSION FOR THOSE IN NEED AND INSPIRE US TO LIVE BY YOUR WORD THAT OPPRESSION MIGHT CEASE, FREEDOM MIGHT PREVAIL, AND DIGNITY AND HONOR MIGHT REIGN. THEN WE SHALL KNOW THAT THE HEROES WE HONOR TODAY WILL NOT HAVE DIED IN VAIN. WE OFFER OUR PRAYER IN YOUR HOLY NAME. AMEN!

BENEDICTION

Chaplain Ziegler

LORD GUARD AND GUIDE THE MEN WHO FLY

(# 192/ Book of Worship for U.S. Forces)

"Lord, guard and guide the men who fly... Through the great spaces of the sky; Be with them traversing the air... In darkening storms or sunshine fair."

THE 385th BOMB GROUP
 Commanding Officer, Colonel Elliot Vandervanter
 (Commanding Officer until August 1944)

JUNE 1943- BI7s arrive at Great Ashfield (385th, Van's Valiants, Square G)...

21 JULY- Group sends 21 aircraft on first operation (aircraft factory, Amsterdam)... Next 9 days, three operations...

28 JULY- Group suffers loss of BI7 from Luftwaffe launched rocket...

27/28 SEPTEMBER- Night raids...

9 OCTOBER- Successful operation to Marienburg (daylight bombing)...

10 OCTOBER- 385th gunners distinguish themselves on mission to Munster...

4 MARCH 1944- Berlin missions begin... Two days later, Group leads the Division's formation to Berlin...

APRIL- The Group mounted 17 missions, including a Berlin bomb run 29 April...

12 MAY- The Eighth Air Force launches a massive offensive against German oil industry... Bombing accuracy of high standards... 385th receives second Distinguished Unit Citation. Ten days later, Great Ashfield Airfield attacked by German plane. One hangar and one BI 7 (on ground) destroyed...

WINTER 1944/45- Group involved in all major operations mounted by division...

MARCH 1945- Bomb runs on enemy synthetic oil plants...

MAY 1945- 'Operation Chowhound' ...Group makes food drops over Holland.

MISSIONS MOUNTED- 296 (8200 Sorties)
 129 BI 78 LOST TO ENEMY ACTION, 40 DESTROYED IN ACCIDENTS
 ACCOUNTED FOR OVER 280 ENEMY RGHTERS
 400 AIRMEN LOST LIVES



HOTEL
 RUSSELL

Menu

385th BOMBARDMENT GROUP
25th September 1996

Medallion of Smoked Salmon and Trout
 Mousse with Prawns & Egg Mayonnaise



Breast of Chicken with Peppers &
 Courgettes in a Tarragon & White Wine
 Sauce, Seasonal Vegetables & Potato



Dairy Cream Profiteroles with
 Hot Chocolate Sauce



Coffee & Chocolates



Editor's Note: Here's some more of the questions and Tom's answers.

#7 How effective was your upgrade training to operational type aircraft?

#7. From the gunner standpoint the upgrade was smooth and effective.

Before continuing to the next question I would like to insert a few words about my attitude at that time. In 1942 I was a wide-eyed innocent, having traveled no further west than Atlanta, east to Myrtle Beach, and south to Daytona. We didn't go north. I had the romantic, gung ho, movie view of the war. I trusted everyone and all things that they would come out right. I was amenable to training, discipline, and authority. I viewed the entire episode during training, and to some extent during combat, as a great adventure. I was very pleased that I had no real problems with airsickness (other than the hotdogs, cherry pie, and milkshake before a flight at Boise) , and I had no real fear of flying. When my old Dad found out what I had gotten myself into and where I was going, he said in effect, "Not to worry Son, God protects the fool and innocent, so you have no problems." Good words, but they do not necessarily make it so. In the face of the awesome statistics which became obvious even to a high school graduate, I went through the combat phase with an innocent, and probably dumb, trust that it would be the other guy, not me. In retrospect it probably had nothing to do with my survival. There is nothing bad about controlled fear. I do believe that it did contribute to mental stability and aircrew effectiveness at my level.

#8 What were your views of nonflyers? of Flight-surgeons?

#8. I had no hang ups about flyers/non-flyers. We were all in an unforgiving business so our immediate ground, crew were VIP. All of the maintenance people worked long hard hours seven days per week in one of the inhabited worlds worst climates. They were people upon whom you depended. It was a team effort. The words "ground pounder" were evident but I do not recall hearing it among the working class. As for the flight surgeon, I do recall his name, but I do not recall seeing him on business other than for scheduled checkups.

#9 How many combat sorties did you complete?

#9. I completed 25 combat missions, a number of training flights, and a number of aircraft recalls during the period of September 1943 through February 1944.



10 What was the worst thing about being in action? Best?

#10. Probably the worse part was waiting for combat to commence. On most missions there was a brief period of time after crossing the channel and entering enemy airspace before the flak became accurate and before enemy fighter planes appeared in force. On the earlier missions we had some Spitfire cover to the coast and P-47/P-38 cover a little further inland. Later in January 1944 the long-range P-51 covered us much further inland. But during that period on the early missions we knew what would happen. There was a brief period of time to think, reflect, and consider the possible outcomes. As we approached the turn-around point of our fighter cover the enemy had assembled in force. For that brief moment as the cover broke off and disappeared behind us a sense of loneliness, despondency, and foreboding sometimes entered my mind. We knew that we had hours of combat ahead. Even with the best of training, excellent formation, tactics, route planning, upwards of 200 guns per group, good aircraft, and the best pilots in the world, we knew there would be losses, possibly severe. Very disconcerting. Then the fighters rolled in, flak became accurate, tension mounted, and it was business as usual. Time seemed to have been contracted for me. No time to think of anything but the in-coming fighters and attempting to ignore the flak.

The second part of this question has an obvious "best" answer. The best thing about combat was surviving, definitely surviving. The second best thing was knowing that the assigned target had been "scrunched" with a superb demonstration of daylight precision bombing.

#11 Did you ever have a bailout? Crash?**#12 How did this affect you?**

#11&12. We had no bailouts and no crashes. We did suffer extensive aircraft damage on more than one occasion. The B-17 was a very durable aircraft. The co-pilot and top turret gunner suffered injuries from enemy fighter attacks. They were out of action for a few missions, but eventually went on to completion. Others missed missions because of colds, congestion, and personal encounters of the worst kind. I believe four of us (pilot, radio, tail, and myself) completed our sorties without missing an assigned mission.

#13 Did you ever com across a man in your squadron or in combat who refused to fly or failed to measure up?**#14 Why would you say something like this occured?****#15 Were these mean dealt with fairly? Severly?**

#13,14,£15. There were some in both training and combat who refused to fly, i.e., asked to be relieved from flying duty. I knew of two specific cases during combat. I would say that these cases were caused by an overwhelming fear of combat and death. A fear so strong that any penalties could be suffered. I do not recall what happened to those individuals, but I am sure that there was no severe punishment. It was best to get the severe emotional problems off the crew. In some cases the pilot asked that the individual be removed from flying status. It should be pointed out that these cases were not restricted to the enlisted personnel. There were an equal share of officers involved.

Editor S Note: Here's a letter from Roger Feller in Luxembourg that is astonishing - a 385th pilot who lives in Luxembourg!

Dear Ed,

On 17 of December I got a letter from Mister Charles Lubicic a member of your Group. In his letter he was speaking about a Luxembourger who was a pilot in the 385th B.G. The name of this Luxembourger is Charles Bech. Other members of the crew were: J.J. Conway, R. Swanda, H.F. Wilkinson, C Lubicic, R.H. Wallace, I'm not sure but I think it was the 551 th B.SQR. As you know Luxembourg is very small I was showing the telephone book and tried the first number with the name Bech and a man was on the phone. I was telling him the reason for my phone call and if he perhaps could help me to find this man. The big surprise was when he said that's me. On the beginning of the war his father Joseph Bech was Foreigne Minister in the Government of Luxembourg, and they went with the Grand Duchesse in exile to Great Britain. After the war his father was Prime Mister of our country. From Great Britain Charles went to the United States and became a pilot of a B-17, later he flew on a Lightning P38 as he told me we fixed a meeting in January. He didn't know your Group. I will tell him about your work. I hope it is interesting news for you as it is for me. I got pictures from Mister Lubicic from that crew but is not a very good quality I was asking for better ones.

Merry Christmas and a Happy new year from your friend Roger Feller.

Dear Bill,

Thanks for your letter and picture of the carving of Madam Shoo Shoo's nose art. You've crafted it beautifully and I've sent the picture of it that you enclosed to the 385th Newsletter so others can see your work.

As UK representative for the 385th, please accept my thanks for your interest in the Group.

Best Wishes,
Ian McLachlan



Mr. John Pettenger,

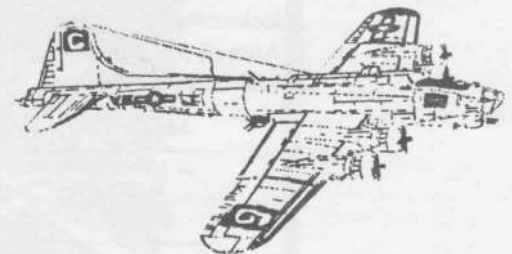
Enclosed find a check for \$30.00, dues for William Gaylord Watson.

Gaylord passed away October 21, 1994, but he would want me to continue support for your organization.

He flew a tour of 26 missions in the ETO-two or three on D-Day. He was flight engineer and top-turret gunner with Paul J. Stahlberg as pilot. Their plane "Virgie Queen of Hearts" was destroyed early in the encounter, but they continued to fly, mostly with their original crew for the duration.

May God Bless You and continue your work and support for our country.

Mrs. Wm Gaylord Watson





DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
AIR FORCE HISTORICAL RESEARCH AGENCY
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

24 October, 1996

HQ AFHRA/RSA
600 Chennault Circle
Maxwell AFB AL 36112-6424

Mr. Allen P. Holtman
705 Mendocina Ct #12
Florissant, MO 63031-6093

Dear Mr. Holtman

With reference to your 23 October telex requesting the identity of the commander of B-17-F 42-30264, our accident report cards identify the commander of that aircraft as being 1st Lt. Paul M. Yannello. As you can see from the copy of the 3X5 card that I have attached, the microfilm roll number for the microfilm that contains the accident report is #46260. I have attached a microfilm worksheet if you wish to order the microfilm.

I hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely

Mickey Russell
Mickey Russell
Archivist

Attachments:

1. Aircraft accident report card
2. Microfilm Worksheet

Yannello, Paul M 1st Lt 44-9-26-502

B-17-F

42-30264

-On -Tillinghamham Hall -Farm—
Bulphan 400 Yds 8W
"East Horndon Rwy"

USAAF NO 155UK

705 Mendocina Ct. #12
 Florissant, MO 63031-6093
 Monday, October 28, 1996

Major Ed Stem, USAAF
 PO Box 2187
 Fargo, ND 58108-2187

Dear Ed,

Finally, after wondering for a ten year period since making contact with LT. Donald E. Jones, the pilot of the Dorsal Queen, I know who borrowed the first Dorsal Queen, 42-30264, as you can see from the letter from the Air Force Historical Research Agency at Maxwell AFB, Alabama it was LT. Paul M. Yannello. Now who hit who I guess we'll never know but here is one strange thing, Lt. Jones then was assigned 42-30822 and I remember him saying to me that it did not fly as well as his original bird, anyhow the name of the Yannello B-17 was Foolish Virgin and that is what for no particular reason I painted on the back of my B3 flight jacket, go figure!

I suppose I should refresh your memory that I am talking about the midair collision of two 17s one was Lt. Donald Jones' plane borrowed by Lt. Yannello on 25 September 1943.

All the best,

Sincerely,
 Allen P. Holtman
 MSGT. USAF Ret.

Editor's Note: Dr. Tom Greider made an exhaustive search trying to get names of some of the British men who saved his dad in a ditching. Here's some of the correspondence. If a British Treasury Secretary couldn't dig it out it's probably not going to surface!

My initial interest in my father's war time exploits began in the Spring of 1994. At that time, he expressed an interest in celebrating the 50th anniversary of his "second birthday". That date, of course, would be September 26, 1944.

I thought that this celebration would be more interesting if a specific name or names could be found to thank for this wonderful occasion. This, in turn, would require investigation of British military records.

My initial inquiry was directed at a member of Parliament, Mr. Jonathan Aitken. Mr. Aitken is a good friend of one of my former patient's who lives in London. Mr. Aitken subsequently enlisted his friend, Nicholas Soames, then Minister of State for Armed Forces. I also obtained a microfilm of the 385th Bomb Group from the United States Airforce Historical Section at Maxwell Airforce Base in Alabama. I have enclosed relevant communications and copies from the microfilm, showing MIA list for the mission of September 26, 1944. I was subsequently referred to Roy Forbes-Morgan indirectly from a retired RAF officer who I met at a reception in Houston for Lady Margaret Thatcher. Mr. Roy Forbes-Morgan subsequently referred my inquiries to Mr. John Mills.

These inquiries have netted one possible connection. I was contacted by a gentleman in Canada who states that he was

on the craft that rescued my father. However, his recollection and my father's don't correlate well. I have referred this information to Mr. Forbes-Morgan who informs me that the alleged rescue boat was sunk in June of 1944. I am in the process of making additional inquiries to this man.

None the less, my father successfully celebrated his 50th "second birthday" on the front porch of the house that he was born in July of 1919. In addition to celebrating family, my cousin's wife and parents from England were there also.

Although this search has proved frustrating, it has allowed me to correspond with many people like yourself.

Tom Greider

25th July 1994

Dear Mr. Greider,

Thank you for your letter of 18th July. I recall our brief meeting in London on the eve of D-Day commemoration events. I am sure that you found the ceremonies as deeply moving as I did.

A friend of Said Ayas is always a friend of mine. I would be delighted to try and help you with your researches into the rescue of your father on 26th September 1944. From the brief description in your letter I think it is likely that your father was saved by the celebrated Air Sea Rescue Unit which operated up and down the East Anglia Coast. I cannot, at the time of dictating this letter, recall its exact designation but its famous motto was, "The sea shall not have them". It so happens that my own father was rescued from the North Sea by this same unit after he had to bail out of his Spitfire in 1941 so there is an interesting and profound paternal bond between us.

Until a few days ago, I would have been able to give my personal supervision to your request within our Ministry of Defense. However, I have just been promoted to the post of Treasury Secretary in recent reshuffle of Cabinet Ministers by Prime Minister John Major. I will therefore ask my good friend and colleague, Hon. Nicholas Soames M.P., Minister of State for the Armed Forces (and Winston Churchill's grandson) if he will handle your request and make sure that our Ministry of Defense Wartime Records Department come up with the answers you need.

Jonathan Aitken, M.P.

16 August 1994

Thank you for your letter of 25 July enclosing a letter from Dr. Thomas Greider of Houston, Texas, USA about the air/sea rescue of his father from the North Sea in September 1944.

I am afraid the MOD does not hold any of the surviving records from that period. They must, by law, be lodged with the Public Record Office at Kew where they are freely available to private researchers. I accept that Dr. Greider could not call at Kew himself, but you say that he would probably be happy to pay someone to undertake the necessary research on his behalf. If he were to write to the PRO at Ruskin Ave, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DD, I believe they would send him a

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a list of freelance research agents who could do this.

It may help Dr. Greider to know that there were two air/sea rescue units which operated off East Anglia: No 26 Marine Craft Unit (MCU) based at Felixstowe, and No 24 MCU based at Gorleston. The best reference sources covering the activities of these units would be their own monthly diaries, the "Operations Record Books", for which the PRO class numbers are A1R29/444 and AIR29/443 respectively. Other units operated to the north and south of these, but all the MCU Record Books come under the same PRO class: AIR 29. (I believe the motto: "The Sea Shall Not Have Them" applied to the RAF Marine Branch as whole and not to a particular unit.)

So far so good, but the second part of Dr. Greider's enquiry, namely locating any survivors from the rescue unit, would be more difficult, if not impossible, since so much time has elapsed. Even if Dr. Greider can positively identify names for the wartime records (and I have to say that this could not be assured), I am afraid that neither MOD or the Services have any channels for retaining contact with those who served during the war nor with their descendants, and simply would not know their whereabouts nor whether any survive.

The Hon. Nicholas Soames MP

Dear Dr. Greider,

Further to our recent correspondence I have now received a reply to the letter I wrote on your behalf to the Minister of State for the Armed Forces, The Hon. Nicholas Soames MP.

I enclosed a copy of this letter for your information. As you will see from the Minister's reply, the Ministry of Defence does not hold any of the surviving records from the war years. I understand that these are kept at the Public Record (PRO) in Kew. The information is freely available to private researchers and I understand that a list of freelance research agents could be sent to you if you write direct to the PRO at the address given in the Minister's Letter.

However, I am afraid that locating any survivors from the rescue unit would be more difficult. The Minister points out that even if you positively identify from the wartime records, neither the MOD nor the Services have any channels for retaining contact with those who served during the war.

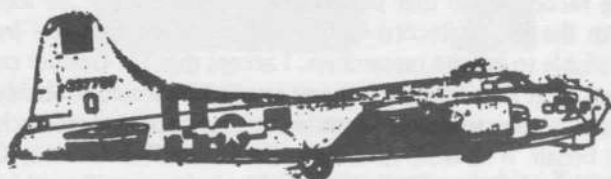
I am sorry not to be able to send you more encouraging reply.

With all good wishes,

Yours Sincerely,

Jonathan Aitken

P.S. I was pleased to meet you in Houston earlier.



Dear Mr. McLachlan,

I am particularly interested in obtaining information on a B-17G-40 Bo, No: 42-97079, named "Dozy Doats." This aircraft was assigned to the 548th BS and carried their squadron letter "B." "Dozy Doats" was an unpainted natural metal finished aircraft and was heavily damaged by enemy action on 6 Oct 44 and may not have flown again under that name. It is my understanding that portions of "Dozy Doats" were combined with another damaged B-17, 42-97940 and became known as "Half and Half."

I would very much like to locate and obtain photographs of this aircraft. Of particular interest, is a photograph of the "Dozy Doats" name and logo as painted in the nose of the aircraft.

A former neighbor of mine flew this aircraft and I would like to surprise him with a accurate model of this particular aircraft. Any help with this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Thank You in advance for your quick response to this request and good luck with your upcoming book.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Campbell

Dear Mr Campbell,

Many thanks for your letter of July 15th and my apologies for delay answering but I'm somewhat inundated at the moment.

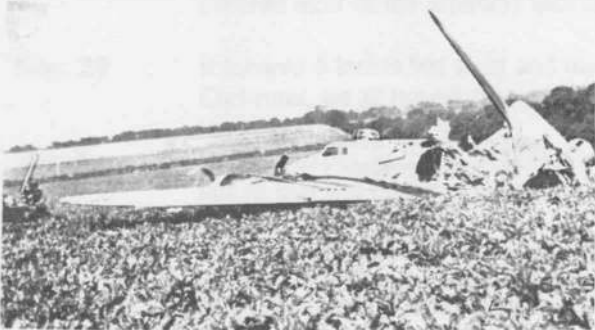
Enclosed is a xerox of a picture sent to me some years ago by John Bovee who put in 29 missions on "Dozy Doats". While not a brilliant copy, the picture at least gives you the nose-art I've enclosed a copy of John's War Record. Sadly, John died in 1989 but I've kept his correspondence and am still in occasional contact with his widow, Mary, who has since remarried. Her address is: Herb & Mary Macy, 5397 N. Mesquite Drive; Prescott Valley; AZ 86314-4210 and she may be able to send you a better copy of this picture and of the crew.

Receiving your letter has opened up another 385th puzzle for me because you mention that 42-97079 was, "heavily damaged" on 6th October, 1944. According to my records, she was actually shot down that day when being flown by the Isaacson crew and I've enclosed a copy of the MACR for you. I, too, had always thought that "Dozy Doats" was used to make "Half n' Half" but, "Half n' Half" was 42-97940 then something's wrong because 42-97940 was totally destroyed on 13th September, 1944. My friend, Russ Zorn, took several pictures of 42-97940 but none show a nose-art. One does illustrate the port-side, forward fuselage but I can't discern anything with my magnifying glass and any artwork could have been on the starboard side which isn't pictured. So, I now ask the question as to whether, "Half n' Half" and 42-97940 were one and the same. I'll send this letter to Hardlife Herald with a picture of the wrecked 42-97970 and ask if anyone can confirm its name. If she was "Half n' Half" then I doubt if "Dozy Doats" made any contribution to it because "Half n' Half" was destroyed first. A puzzle indeed, one way you might get some answers is to visit your National Archives in Washington DC. If you do, please let me know what you discover because I'm keen to find out as well.

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I hope the enclosed xerox of "Dozy Doats" will help and look forward to hearing from you. Incidentally, I describe the loss of 42-97940 in "Eighth Air force Bomber Stories" written with Russ. Sadly, he died before it came out but it is a tribute to his work.

Best Wishes
Ian



Was This Half n' Half?

Dear Ed,

I have once again read your wonderful newsletter. But in the process of reading the obituaries, it reminded me that I should have talked to you about the death of a man who greatly impacted the 385th Bombardment Group, even though I doubt that anybody in the group ever met him or knew him: Dr. Irving P. Krick.

I often wrote about Irving in my newsletter when I talked about long-range weather forecasting. By "long-range," I mean weather forecasting one year in advance, with a 70% accuracy. Irving was the man who developed the system, Strategic Weather Service, which is now used by more than 100 medium and large-sized retail companies.

Irving believed that if we could predict the tides, the sunrise, the sunset, and the other movements of nature there must be some way of predicting the weather with the same degree of certainty.

In the early and mid 1930s, he was a meteorologist for Western Airlines. While there, he introduced the bars on the maps which show the location of weather fronts and the direction in which they are moving. He also made it possible for Western Airline planes to leave Los Angeles for Salt Lake City without waiting until Salt Lake City was clear. He merely had them fly to Elko, Nevada, where they landed and waited until Salt Lake City cleared. With this method, it meant people would arrive in Salt Lake City several hours earlier than under the old system.

Hap Arnold happened to visit CIT before the war and found out that Irving was doing this work. Arnold immediately said, "We have to have access to that information." That was the beginning of a close relationship.

Irving had a commission in the Naval Reserve, but when the war broke out, he was given a commission in the Army Air Corps. As the war developed in Europe, he became the chief weather officer for Tooey Spatz and the 8th Air Force, which you were a part of. The secret of successful

daylight bombing- -I don't have to repeat- - is clear weather over the target. Irving's job was to select among the desirable targets which ones would be clear for bombing on certain dates. He used to tell the stories of Brigadier or Major Generals reporting they were going to abort a mission because the weather was not good at the take-off end and that he would explain patiently to the general that the mission was to go and that the weather would be suitable for high-level bombing when they arrived at the target.

I am sure that there were times in the 385th when the feeling was that it was a wasted mission; however, I am sure that a good number of times the weather over the target proved to be very good for daylight bombing.

Irving was loaned to General Eisenhower who was having trouble with the weather in concealing from the Germans the degree of mass troops which had been gathered in England with only one purpose: to invade the continent.

Ike had two weather advisers, one from the Royal Navy and one from the RAF. A question remained in late May regarding the tides and the landing troops. Irving did a long-range forecast for June 6 and outlined the weather that he and his team anticipated on that day. Both the RAF and Royal Navy were very much against it; however, Ike had been advised by Tooey Spatz, "When Irving says, 'Go,' you go!"

Ike finally made a decision to go on June 6, a date which will forever be included in our encyclopedias and history books.

For all of Irving's career in meteorology, he was always opposed by the American Meteorological Society, a society which is still trying to reasonably accurate seven-day weather forecasts! Its goal is to make a 15-day forecast, but it refuses to even consider the one-year forecasting still being projected by Strategic Weather Service.

I have seen some of Irving's work where he has forecast the water flow in the Columbia River five years in advance. His work was the basis for putting an aluminum plant on the river, the plant surplus electricity only if there was more than enough water flow to take care of basic requirements.

When California was having a series of drought years, Irving forecast the flow of seven or eight major rivers in the state a year in advance — and did it with great accuracy than the state meteorologist did one month before the start of the rainy season.

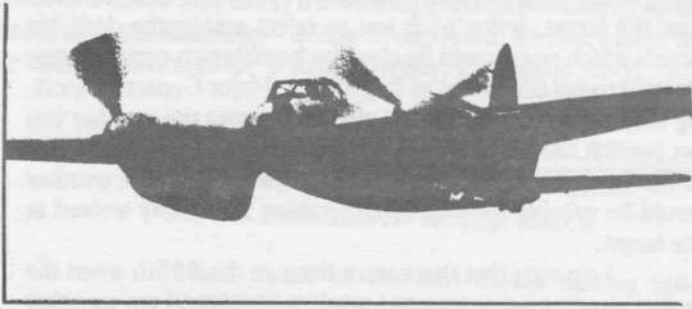
I know that Irving believed that the 385th and other bombardment groups in the European theater were the most important customers he ever had.

It has been 50 years since the 385th used his forecasting. However, I am certain that many have wondered why so many of them were accurate.

Sincerely,
Robert Kahn

PS As a supply officer in 1941-46 and then again in 1950-52, the one thing I could not provide was weather on demand.

Editor's Note: All of you will remember weather plagued missions that will relate to this letter. We wonder if Hitler had someone who forecast that bad weather that grounded us during the Battle of the Bulge.



The Mosquito

Aloha Ed,

December 1996
Carson City, NV

A friend of mine and 385th BG member wrote me a letter some time ago that is very interesting, and I would like to pass it on to the group.

Dear Jerry,

Thank you for your letter of July 18 th this year. Chuck Wells (my pilot from the 51*8th BS) and I transferred from the 385th BG on the same orders to the 25th BG. We were assigned to the same squadron, the 653rd, flying MOSQUITOS. Because most of the work we did was done single airplane, he and I flew perhaps two missions where two airplanes were used to drop chaff in front of the bomb groups. Other than that we flew primarily single airplane missions at night.

On April 1*, 191*5, I had the misfortune to be shot down. The C. O. of the 1*1*6 th BG was my navigator/ observer. We were flying with his group in order for him to see what happened when the group came under fighter attack.

Because the MOSQUITO was so much faster than the B-21*'s, I had to lower the landing gear and flaps in order to slow enough to stay with the group. After about 1*5 minutes of this, my engines began to overheat, so I picked up speed got the gear and flaps up and moved ahead of the group. As we made a turn about two miles in front of the group, an ME-262 (Jet) went through the formation knocking down two B-21*'s. The rest of the group scattered, and the Colonel asked me to get into position for him to take a picture of the group in disarray. He had a small camera. Despite telling the group leader where we were, and that we were going to turn towards the group, one of the planes fired on us, hitting at least the right engine. We moved away, shut down the one engine, and turned on a heading for England. Approximately two minutes later, the left engine began to run rough, so I asked the Colonel for a heading for Sweden about 100 miles from us. The Colonel gave me the heading, and we had just rolled to that heading when the left engine quit. We both bailed out and were picked up by the German home guard. We then were turned over to the Luftwaffe at Magdeberg. Because we were listed as M.I.A., all my property was picked up from my barracks. When my effects were returned to my Mother about two years after the war ended, all documents relating to the formation of my crew at Salt Lake City thru phase training, picking up an airplane at Grand Island, Nebraska and movement to England, and subsequent transfer from the 385th BG to the 25th BG were gone. This is why I have practically no information to give to you.

I keep in contact with Dave Tipton and the only other person I have met since leaving the service is Wells Supplee (Herman Wells Supplee) We met at our High School class reunion. Wells stayed with the Squadron and returned to the States with it.

Please excuse me for rambling like this as you are the first person I have told about being shot down who could possibly understand what happened, and it brought back a lot of memories. Thank you for writing me.

Sincerely, Theodore (TED) B. Smith
2011 Keswick Way
Norristown, PA 191*03

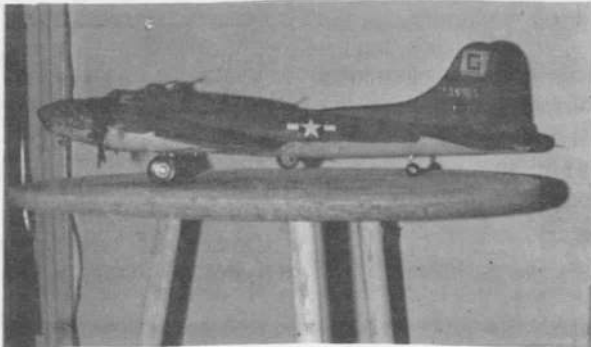
Editor's Note: Ted died in November of 1996

Dear Ed,

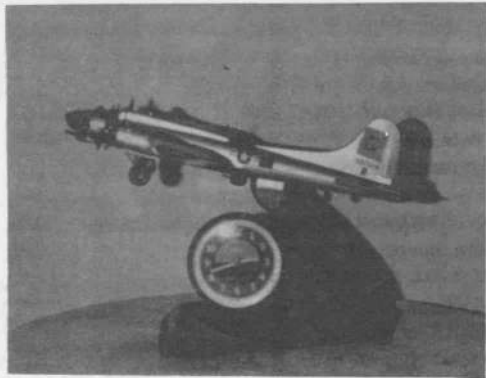
Enclosed I have put a couple of photos of B-17. The B-17 with the clock was advertised in the August 96 copy of the Hardlife. The other photo is a model of Mr. Smith with all the Gp. Markings I just finished.

Yours,

Merritt F. Andrews
1123 Hilbom Ave
Erie PA 16505
814-838-0881



Model made like Mr. Smith



B-17 Clock

What's Next?

From the New Jersey 8 AF Historical Society Newsletter

A "WARTIME DIARIES" QUOTE

In his "WARTIME DIARIES", the Reich Minister for Armements and War Production, Albert Speer, second only to Adolph Hitler, Chancellor of the Third Raich writes:

The real importance of the air war consisted in the fact that it opened a second front long before the invasion of Europe. That front was the skies over Germany. The fleets of bombers might appear at any time over any large German city or important factory. The unpredictability of the attacks made this front gigantic; every square meter of the territory we controlled was a kind of front line. Defense against air attacks required production of thousands of antiaircraft guns, the stockpiling of tremendous quantities of ammunition all over the country, and holding in readiness hundreds of thousands of soldiers, who in addition had to stay in position by their guns, often totally inactive, for months at a time.

As far as I can judge frctn the accounts I have read, no one has yet seen that this was the greatest lost battle on the German side. The losses from the retreats in Russia or from the surrender of Stalingrad were considerably less.. Moreover, the nearly 20,000 antiaircraft guns stationed in the haneland could almost have doubled the antitank defenses on the Eastern Front. In the territory of the Reich those guns were virtually useless. Over the attacked cities they did little more than provide a kind of reassuring fireworks display for the population. By that tine bcmbers were operating frcm such altitudes that the shells of the 8.8 centimeter flak guns reached the planes at too slow a speed.

***** * *****

Firm fined for selling bootleg Medals of Honor

Newark, N.J. (AP)

The company that holds the government contract to make the nation's highest combat decoration was fined \$80,000 Tuesday for selling 300 bootleg Medals of Honor.

H.L.I. Lordship Industries Inc. also will give the government \$22,500 it received for illegally selling the bogus medals for \$75 apiece at

memorabilia shows from 1991 to 1994.

"True Medal of Honor recipients and their families have a right to be outraged by (Lordship's) conduct," U.S. District Judge William G. Bassler said in imposing the maximum fine allowed under federal guidelines.

The family-owned company also could lose its status as a government contractor. Its only business is

making medals and insignia.

The Hauppauge, N.Y., company pleaded guilty before sentencing to a single misdemeanor count of making unauthorized medals. Company lawyer Frederick P. Hafetz said two brothers who operated the company were responsible for the fake medals.

Ward and Wes McAllister have been fired and no longer hold stock

in Lordship, Hafetz said. Under a plea bargain, neither they nor Lordship will face any further prosecution.

The company lawyer pleaded for leniency, saying Lordship would like to continue as a government contractor to save 120 jobs.

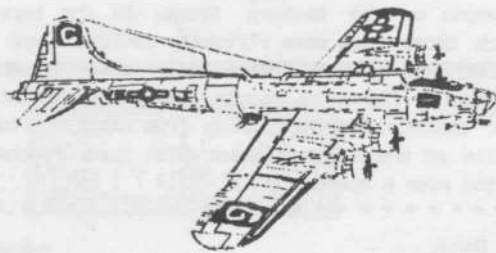
"I think the company has done as much as a company can do to internally rehabilitate itself," Hafetz said.

Taken from the 401 st Bomb Group Association Newsletter.

The FAA has a device for testing the strength of windshields on airplanes. They point out this thing at the windshield of the aircraft and shoot a dead chicken at about the speed the aircraft normally flies at. If the windshield doesn't break, it's likely to survive a real collision with the bird during flight.

The British had recently built a new locomotive that could pull a train faster than any before it. They were not sure that its windshield was strong enough so they borrowed the testing device from the FAA, reset it to approximate the maximum speed of the locomotive, loaded in the dead chicken, and fired. The bird went through the windshield, broke the engineer's chair, and made a major dent in the back wall of the engine cab.

They were quite surprised with this result, so they asked the FAA to check the test to see if everything was done correctly. The FAA checked everything and suggested that they might want to repeat the test using a thawed chicken.



385th^{BGM A}

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