

# HARD LIFE

# HERALD



## 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. XXI, NO 1

Editor Ed Stern

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### SUPPORT UNITS

- 424th AIRSVS. GP.
- 877th CH EM. CO. (AO)
- DET. 155, 18th AWS
- STATION COMPLEMENT SO.

### ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

#### PRESIDENT

Robert C. Smith  
 N 12019 Anna J. Drive  
 Spokane, WA 99218  
 509-466-7824

#### 1ST VICE PRESIDENT

Robert A. Valliere  
 18 Whiting Farm Road  
 Branford, CT 06405-3223  
 203-488-1622

#### 2ND VICE PRESIDENTS

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 Spokane, WA 99218  
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 7442 Ontario St.  
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#### TREASURER

John Pettenger  
 Box 117  
 Laurel, FL 34272-0117

### PREZ SEZ:

I am working on something that I believe you will find exciting. The Chairman, Robert Kline, of the United States Historical Society and an outstanding artist of aviation paintings, Ted Wilbur, have agreed to provide a "color rough" miniature of a B-17 combat situation of the October 14, 1943 Schweinfurt Bombing Mission. I will send each of you a copy when they are completed. I will provide complete details for the completion of the painting, distribution of the prints and the expense/profit situation. The decision for placement of the painting such as Duxford Museum, Atlanta, Florida or wherever, we can probably decide in Omaha. You will be surprised what a fantastic proposition this can be for the 385th and anyone who was associated with or loves the B-17.

Sincerely,

Bob Smith

### ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

#### CHAPLAIN

Rev. James H. Vance  
 15929 SE 46 Way  
 Bellevue, WA 98006-3240

#### EDITOR, HARDLINE HERALD

Ed Stern  
 P.O. Box 2187  
 Fargo, ND 58108  
 701-237-9999

#### 8TH AF HISTORICAL UNIT CONTACT

Gerry Donnelly  
 10770 SW 46th  
 Miami, FL 33165

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**CHAPLAIN JIM SEZ:**

Greetings from Bellevue, Washington

In the December issue of Hardlife Herald, I wrote about the "calming" presence of God. I want to mention that again in a different way. I also mentioned the Wednesday Wonder Workers at our church sooooo, I'm mentioning them also.

The W.W.W. meet for pancakes (breakfast) at McDonalds and then at 8:30 we meet at the church. This one Wednesday, when I was leaving McDonald's, a widower who retired early from Boeing, called out my name. Being an old preacher and still, in my mind, have not let loose of the routine of counseling or helping some one. I immediately thought of ways I might be able to help him. But to my surprise and I must say relief, all he wanted was to hand me my coat which I had forgotten.

Old habits die hard, don't they. In this year of 1994 I am going to work on getting on with my retirement and leave all those old habits behind (those I don't need any more). How about you??

I don't mean "New Years Resolutions". They are too easy to ignore or to reason why you can't keep them. What I am trying to say is each day is a new beginning and by resigning oneself to be aware of the "calming" presence of God you truly can make each day a new beginning.

1994 is a new year, and man we have seen a lot of them, but taking it a day at a time will make it a memorable year.

May God bless you and yours as you figure out what to do in 1994.

Sincerely,

Jim



Ben James	1991
Robert W. Kramer	Nov. 1992
Arthur Wallace	May 1992
Altons V. Baltrukonis	Dec 1992
Cleon Holderbaugh	July 1993
Donald E. Hale	Dec. 1993
Rudy J. Cunat	Dec 1993
Stephen G. Bowen	1985
Charles H. Cavan	Dec 1993
Thomas B. Potter	• June 1992

**NEW ALBANY — Charles H. Cavan, 77,** Rolling Hills Health Care Center, died there Tuesday,

He was a native of Hammond, a retired supervisor for Illinois Bell Telephone Co., an Army Air Forces veteran of World War II and, an Air Force veteran of the Korean War. He was a member of St. John United Presbyterian Church and New Albany Kiwanis Club, and a former member of Kiwanis Club of Bloomington and Jjons Club of Dyer.

Survivors: his wife, the former Marilyn M. Watt; a son, Garry E. Cavan; two daughters, Patricia A. Arnold of Indiana and Wendy E. Cavan of Idaho Falls, Idaho; a brother, Jack M. Cavan of Waveland, Miss.; a sister, Eileen T. Krug of Bolivar, Mo.; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

**Donald Hale**

**ST. CHARLES, Mo. —** Former East Alton resident Donald P. Hale, 69, died at 4:55 p.m. Friday, Dec. 10, 1993, at St. John's Mercy Hospital in St. Louis.

A U.S. Army Air Corps veteran, he was a Realtor and appraiser. He owned and operated Don Hale Realtors for 37 years.

He was a member and past president of Alton-Wood River Board of Realtors and South-west Illinois Chapter of Independent Fee Appraisers; charter member of the Multiple Listing Service; member of Fee Appraisers since 1957, Wood River Masonic Lodge 1062 and Ainad Temple of Shriners; and a life member of VFW Post 1308 and Disabled American Veterans Post 4, both of Alton.

Born in Alton Nov. 27, 1924, he was a son of the late Lawrence and Edna (Cooper) Hale.

He married the former Dallas Fuller in Jerseyville March 21, 1944. She survives.

# BULLETIN BOARD

## REUNION NOTICE For Santa Ana Army Air Base 19th Annual Reunion

April 23, 1994, Santa Ana Army Air Base 19th Annual Reunion and Luncheon, Orange Coast college, Costa Mesa, CA. Former S.A.A.A.B. personnel, civilian, military, aviation cadets and guests. Contact S.A.A.A.B. Wing, PO Box 1764, Costa Mesa, CA 92628. Tel. (714) 631-5918, Thurs. 10 A.M.-3 P.M. or 24 hr Ans Machine, Leave name and address.

Had a nice Christmas card from our friends the Herdman's at Woolpit in England. They have a WW2 friend who drove a tank in the Royal Tank Regiment who is putting together a display of US military Badges for next year's 50th Anniversary of D Day. He has some but needs more. If you have any you can send him, please do--R. Hodges, 41 Newman Rd., Sudbury, Suffolk, England C0106UA. And Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Herdmans.

## NOTICE

One of the Countries leading publishers of military veteran's association histories is asking for a short history of our Group's involvement in the Battle of the Bulge. Your Editor isn't qualified to write it--who is? Our suggestion--any of you who can, please write them of your recollections, send us a copy for the Hardlife Herald, and we hope they'll get enough interesting stories to warrant publishing in their book, which will be "A 50th Anniversary Commemorative Edition on the Battle of the Bulge". Write them--Turner Publishing Co., PO Box 3101, Paducah, KY 42002-3101

Freeman Field, Seymour, IN is having a Reunion for members of cadet classes 43-D to 44-K. Contact Mayor's Office, 220 N. Chestnut St., Seymour, IN 47274. Attn: Louis Osterman, or call 317-888-8661. Reunion dates---October 7,8,9, 1994.

Jane and your Editor thank the great number of you who sent us Christmas cards. We enjoyed them all, reminisced about the Reunions, and appreciated being remembered by so many. We ran out of our cards--just couldn't keep up.

## 385TH MEMBERS IN CONNECTICUT

Recently we have formed a Connecticut Chapter of the 8th Air Force society. So far there are only two members who were in the 385th. They are Nello Malavasi, and myself. We have at the present about 90 members and we would like to increase that considerably. Our meetings are monthly and interesting so come join us, no dues, only comradeship.

For more information contact:  
Bob Valliere - Treasurer  
18 Whiting Farm Road  
Branford, CT 06405  
(203) 488-1622

Member Don Kabitzkke informs us that there's a money-raising scam being carried out, claiming to be building a Memorial to the 9th Air Force in France. Don says he's told that around \$8 million has been raised with no progress being reported. Don Transferred into the 9th Air Force after a year with the 385th. Anyone else been approached?

One of our Fargo friends was watching TV's A & E Channel in December, saw a story about German POW camps, and noted that one of our members, Milton Shalinsky, was interviewed about his experiences. Write and tell us about it, Milt!

## NOTICE

If anyone knows the address of Ivan Klohe, who attended the Spokane reunion, please sent it to your editor. We've had several inquiries and he's not on our list.

## ATTENTION YOU WHO WERE STATIONED AT EPHRATA

Pat Dunston of Soap Lake has put together a very interesting book telling of the beginnings and early difficulties of the Ephrata Air Base from its inception in June 1942. We who were stationed there will be especially interested in that part of the book telling of the dust, turmoil, poor housing, cold, heat, and all the other discomforts we endured. Truthfully, your Editor had forgotten most of it--and this brings the memories flooding back.

Write for a copy -- \$11.00-- to Patricia Dunston, 97 Road 18.5NE, Soap Lake, WA 98851

EDITOR'S NOTE: Any of you remember him from Maxwell Field?

Von Ryan's Express—

## At Maxwell Preflight He Was the Ironass Captain

by David Westheimer (S)

Had it not been for James Rhea Luper, I most likely would not have had the one best seller among the 15 novels I wrote over a period of 35 years.

The first time I saw him was in 1941, and the mere sight of him made me nervous. He was lean and mean, dark, granite-jawed, with piercing, intimidating eyes. He was commandant of cadets at Maxwell Field, Alabama's preflight school.

The rumors were his dog could not lift a leg without his permission, his wife (though we weren't sure he had one) was required to stand at attention when he spoke to her directly, and his children (though we weren't sure he had any) had to eat "square meals." A square meal was eaten while sitting at attention, with the fork or spoon lifted straight up from the plate and brought to the mouth in a straight line.

Luper was a West Pointer, class of 1938. The rumors were that at the military academy he had been captain of the boxing team, had accumulated more gigs (demerits) than any cadet since Ulysses S. Grant, and had courted the superintendent's daughter, marrying her after graduation. And that some of his gigs were picked up for minor social indiscretions while calling on her at her father's quarters.

During the weeks I was one of his cadets at Maxwell Field, I had only one major, direct encounter with him. I may have told that tale before and, if so here it is again. Three of us were going into Montgomery to a roller skating rink one Saturday after the daily parade. (Luper insisted on a parade seven days a week.) I was in uniform, my two friends in sweatshirts. All three of us had suckers in our mouths. As we came around the corner of the barracks, whom did we encounter but spit and polish CapL Luper.

Startled as I was, I snatched the sucker out of my mouth before saluting. The other two also saluted, but with their suckers firmly in place. Luper wanted to know where we were going. When told to town, he demanded coldly if my two companions considered sweatshirts proper uniform. And told them to report themselves for being improperly dressed for town, although they hadn't even gotten out the gate. And then, before dismissing us, he asked, still coldly, "And don't you know better than to salute an officer with a lollypop in your mouth?" Despite the temperature of his frosty eyes, I thought I saw a twinkle in them.

By the spring of 1943, when I had graduated to the rank of POW in Italy, I still had not forgotten him. When a West Point lieutenant colonel arrived in camp, I asked him if he had known Luper. Indeed he had. He was in Luper's upper class. Luper hadn't been captain of the boxing team, but he had been a very capable member of it. He didn't know how many gigs Luper had accumulated, or how many Ulysses Grant had before him, but he did know that Luper's count was way up there. And he thought that maybe Luper had courted the superintendent's daughter and later married her.

In 1944, by then in a German POW camp, I was standing with a throng of other POWs watching a contingent of recently shot-down flyers arriving. Among them was a familiar face. Luper's. I wasn't the only one there who knew him. "It's Luper!" filled the air. That granite jaw and those piercing eyes turned toward us. And he grinned.

He was by then a full colonel. The rumor was — there were always rumors about Luper — that he had been sent into combat when he was caught moving his piano (he was an accomplished musician) in his plane during a change of station in the States (I learned later he had volunteered for combat.)

A junior officer who had been on the train with Luper on the journey to the POW camp said that some of the men had gathered the courage to ask Luper about his fearsome reputation.

And Luper had replied, "I used to be tough but I'm not anymore."

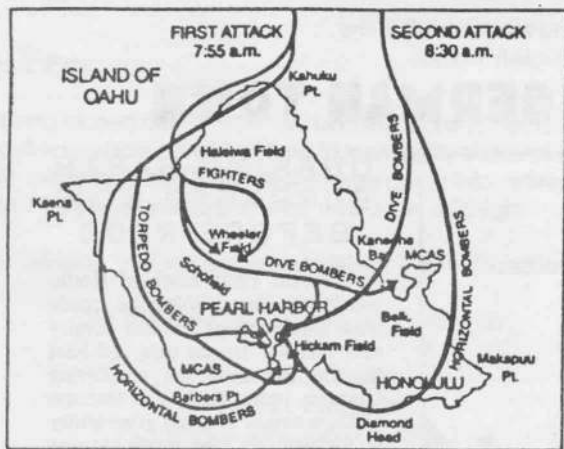
Which was a lie.

That winter, the Germans moved us out of our camp ahead of the Russians. After about 36 hours on the road, we stopped to bivouac in a glass factory. The first men inside its warmth dropped near the door, completely spent, leaving those behind them stranded out in the bitter cold. A voice cracked like a whip. "You men move back!" That's all it took. The dazed men got up and moved to the rear. It was Luper's voice, of course.

Luper earned the Silver Star, two Distinguished Flying Crosses and three Air Medals. He was the model for Col. Joseph Ryan in *Von Ryan's Express*.

On Feb. 28, 1953, on a snowy night at Offut Air Force Base, Neb., Col. James Rhea Luper died in a crash of his aircraft.

(The above profile appeared in the *Houston Post* November 5, 1986)



**AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION**  
(All Types)

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
U.S.	2,141	6,086	19,433	47,836	85,898	96,318	46,001
Britain	7,940	15,049	20,094	23,672	26,263	26,461	12,070
Soviet Union	10,382	10,565	15,737	25,436	34,900	40,300	20,900
Germany	8,295	10,826	12,401	15,409	24,807	40,593	7,540
Japan	4,467	4,768	5,088	8,861	16,693	28,180	8,263

**MILITARY AIRCRAFT LOSSES (1939 - 1945)**

U.S.	59,296	France	2,100
Germany	95,000	Canada	2,389
Japan	49,485	<b>New Zealand</b>	684
Britain	33,090	India	527
Australia	7,160	Sweden	272
Italy	4,000	Denmark	154

(U.S.S.R. losses were extremely high, but they were undisclosed by the Soviet government.)

**NAVAL LOSSES (1939 - 1945)**  
(Submarines, frigates, & all larger ships)  
Number of ships

U.S.	157	Germany	672
Britain	296	Japan	433
France	129	Greece	22
Netherlands	40	Yugoslavia	13
Norway	40	•U.S.S.R.	102
Italy	300	Others	36

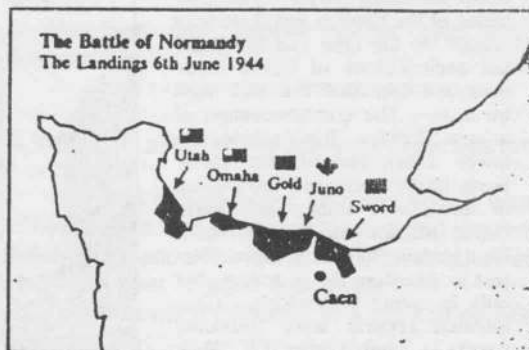
'Unconfirmed Statistic

**MERCHANT SHIP LOSSES**  
(Ships over 200 tons)

	Numbers
Britain	3,194
Japan	2,346
U.S.	866
Other Allied	1,467
Neutral	902

**TANK PRODUCTION**  
(All Types)

U.S.	60,973
Britain	23,202
Germany	19,926
Italy	4,000
Japan	2,464
U.S.S.R.	54,500



**PRISONERS OF WAR**

Prisoners held by the Allies  
(excluding those in the Soviet Union):

German	630,000
Italian	430,000
Japanese	11,600

Prisoners held by Germany:

French	765,000
Italian	550,000
British	200,000
Yugoslav	125,000
American	90,000

Prisoners held by Japan:

British	108,000
Dutch	22,000
American	15,000

**SOURCES**

Robert Goralski. World War II Almanac: 1931 - 1945. G.P. Putnam & Sons. New York. 1981.

Arthur Enock. This War Business. The Bodley Head. London. 1951.

Trade Division. Naval Staff Admiralty (London). October 1945.

Operations Navy. Division of Naval Intelligence. September. 1945.

50th Anniversary of World War II Commemoration Committee  
HQDA, SACC; Pentagon. Room 3E524  
Washington, D.C. 20310-0107 (703) 697-4664

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Another interesting story recalling the last days of WWII—from one of our English friends.

## LIFE AND DEATH OF A GERMAN TOWN

### TENSE MOMENTS WHILE ALLIES TAKE CONTROL

An air of tension hung over the camp for many days. The presence of the English and American armies on the Elbe and the Russian encirclement of Berlin made everyone feel that the end must be near. The commencement of a new Russian drive across the lower Oder toward the Baltic ports finally increased the tension to an almost unbearable pildt. Panic reigned ill the Voilager. No German had any more interest in guarding the prisoners, but only in saving his own life. Confidential reports were hurriedly burnt — and copies of "Mein Kauipl" went to swell the flames.

#### Conference with the Kominandaitt

Finally, late in the afternoon, the Senior British and American officers were called to a conference with the Ceiman camp Kommandant Colonel Warnstedt. They were told that orders had been received to move the whole camp westward. Colonel Zemke stated he was not willing to move at all, and asked in that case what the German attitude would be. The Kommandant replied that he would, not tolerate bloodshed in the camp; if we did not intend to move, he and his men would evacuate themselves and leave us in sole possession of the camp. When the Germans left it would be up to us to take over the camp peacefully and assume full control.

At approximately 1 AM. on April 30 Major Steinliauer informed Group Captain Weir and Colonel Zemke that the Germans had evacuated the camp, leaving it in our charge. When the camp woke up in the morning it was to find itself no longer under armed guard and comparatively free.

#### Where are the Russians?

Our next problem was to establish contact with the Russian forces. It was decided to send out something in the nature of a recon patrol. An American Major, a British Officer speaking German, and an American Officer speaking Russian, set out with the German in the auto which was equipped with an American flag on one fender and a white flag on the other, to investigate the real situation in Barth and then proceed to the main Stralsund—Rostock road, some 15 kilometers south of the camp, to wait there for any signs of Russian spearheads or of the proximity of the front line. The first patrol returned in the early evening. Still no sign or news of the Russian Army, but they were coming!



**Russian Contact (continued from Page 1)**  
Every house draped with red flags (who said the Germans weren't chameleons?). Suddenly, there was Uncle Joe-----or one of his ambassadors: a chunky little Dead End guy who loomed up and flashed a variety of lethal weapons and a cacophony of Slavic language.

"Engliski", shouted the scouts.

"Never mind the words", said Joe's man, "this isn't Dulag" or something like that in Russian. And, without ceremony they went to the nearest Russian officer. It was 1st Lt. Alec Nick Karmyzoff, infantryman from Tula (you oughta see that written in Russian!) He'd fought his way from Stalingrad — three years across Russia, Poland and Germany — to the relief of Stalag Luft I.

#### Toasts are Drunk.

Karmyzoff came in the main gate. Commanding Officers Zemke and Weir received him. Schnapps seared kriegie throats — glasses smashed Hitler's picture, the barracks jiggled with cheering and back-pounding. Toasts were drunk: "To the destruction of Germany — she will never rise again! And to our solid and enduring friendship."<sup>11</sup> Karmyzoff went to the Russian barracks (our co-kriegies) — told them about himself, their army and the new life that was beginning. Thus the first contact. Karmyzoff bedded down on the floor — "Rather the floor than a German bed," said he. BBC announced Hitler dead; kriegies heard the "Hit Parade" from home; the excitement was exhausting — Rnt what an pvnrience!

### QUAKING BARTH BURGHERS BOW BEFORE REDS

As Russian tanks rumbled Northwards on the cobblestone roads from Stralsund, as Russian cavalry and guerilla troops tore hell bent for the Baltic, as the spluttering German radio flashed a staccato of place names that had gone under in the Red rip tide, Barth became an open city and an open grave. The few Americans who had been in town on camp chores from Stalag I knew that the life of Barth was a living death. We had seen the streets peopled by children and octogenarians, we had noticed that all males were either lame, halt, or blind; we had stared into empty shop windows, and we had seen the soldiers of the master race straggle back from the fronts dazed, whipped, harbingers of the ruin that stalked the streets of German towns. By April 30, this year of grace, the good burghers of Barth turned their faces to the wall and stopped hoping.

#### LET 'EM EAT CAKE

Life had not been good. In the bakery shop where the camp brot was made hung a sign; cake is no! sold to Jews or Poles. It failed to explain that cake was not sold to the supermen either. There was no cake. But there were good things to eat in the larders of Barth, baking powder requisitioned from Holland, Nestles milk commandeered from Denmark, wines looted from the cellars of France, spaghetti and noodles hijacked from Italy, Worcestershire sauce which had trickled through mysteriously from England, olive oil drained from Greece, in short, all types of blood from the turnip of Europe. If Mussolini considered the Mediterranean his sea, Hitler considered the world his oyster and was trying to serve it up to the Reich on the half shell.

#### A House of Cards

As the first explosions from the flak school reverberated under the sullen Baltic sky, the new order toppled on Barth like a house of cards. Red flags and white sheets began to appear in the windows of the ginger bread houses. Flight was futile and the old stood querously on their door steps, wringing gnarled hands and weeping. Pictures of Hitler were torn down and scattered like confetti. Two German children came wailing into the bakery shop. They had heard American airmen ate little boys and mother said the day of reckoning was at hand.

Barth, like the whole of Deutschland-über-alles Germany, was on its knees in terror. But mayhem did not materialize. Wine, not blood, flowed through the streets. **Wp ernt drunk**

Rally Dennis our PR officer when we were in England got his picture in the home-town paper in the Veterans Day issue. Still looks pretty good, wouldn't you agree?



BRUCE TAYLOR/Monadnock Ledger Staff

## Veteran reminiscence

Wilbur "Rally" Dennis, of Peterborough, points to the area of England where he was stationed during World War II. Dennis served as Public Relations Officer for the 385th Bombardment Group Heavy consisting of 30-60 operational B-17 bombers. For a complete list of Veterans Day activities, see Page 2.

## WHAT DO YOU DO UP THERE WHEN IT GETS COLD

Your Editor hears that question often. The answer—"The same thing as when it's warm." Take the week of January 11. First, we took the copy for the February Hardlife Herald to the printer. Went home for a little lunch, drove 60 miles to see someone, another 40 miles to attend a retirement party for an employee. Stayed overnight, drove 100 miles north to be there for the final day of an 87 year old store that had fallen on very hard times. Plugged in the car so it would start the next morning, helped pack a u-Haul with what was left, drove the 200 miles back to Fargo. It warmed up to 13 below by the time we got home. We had "winter gear" in the car but didn't need it.

Ate an early dinner with Jane, dashed off to a jazz concert along with 800 other people. Around 5,000 other nuts attended hockey and basketball games that night.

Too busy unloading and checking stuff the next day to notice, but we were lucky we got the trip out of the way before the weather really turned cold. 33° below this morning—and that's not "wind chill"—that's real.

So, what did you do those days?

The month of January brought some astonishing natural disasters - the earthquake in Los Angeles, and the bitter weather through much of the Eastern half of the country. As President Clinton said "We are not in control of a lot of things."

We extend our sympathy to any of our members who suffered - write and share your experiences through the Hardlife Herald.

In Omaha, our youngest member will be approaching 70. Let's all be there.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The way it was--50 years ago this month--written at the time by John Kavaliunas, 550th Intelligence Officer.

550th BOMB SQUADRON DIAR

BY

p(j)>1/Lt. John Kavallunas,

AC

Station 155, England,  
February, 1944.

DATE

EVENTS

1. The target finally came In and after the crews were briefed around 0400 hours, the mission was scrubbed at 0730 hours. It hasn't been scrubbed yet In time to give everyone a break but always at take-off time.  
The weather closed In on the field so maybe that Is the reason. The group officers were given a party by the Officers' Club to celebrate the first birthday of our Group. A nice time was had by all especially since there was no alert for tomorrow.  
Ffc. J. %. Boykin returned from sick In quarters. S/Sgt. D. L. Robbins, Sgt. D. E. Kania erd Cpl. S. A. Mardusewlcz were confined to sick to quarters. Sgt. h. Tenzer, Ffc. A. J. McGee and Fvt. L. H. Last were confined to the hospital.  
Capt. W. C. Huff returned to duty from T. D. Learn anything?  
Fvt. L. H. Last went from his furlough straight to the hospital. You shouldn't have gone Into things so. seriously.
2. It rained In early morning but at daybreak it stopped. The crews flew a practise mission and those that didn't fly, had ground school. Luckily the boys didn't have to go on the real thing for there were many hangers going around.  
We were placed on a "Stand-by" till 2300 hours and later extended. Maybe we will go out tomorrow.  
-T/Sgt. H. 6. Bradford, having completed 25 missions has been transferred to the 12th RCD. The next step Is —HOME.  
Capt. C, F. Shaw and 2/Lt. Meyer were sent to the rest heme for 8 days.  
1/Lt. W. Warren was put on TD In London to attend a conference.  
S/Sgt. G. £. Akley was promoted to T/Sgt. end Fvt. R. C. Workman was promoted to Sgt.  
Ffc. J. V. Daniells wee confined to the hospital. M/Sgt. W. D. Duffey was confined to sick In quarters. 1/Lt. W. B. Clark and S/Sgt. W. F. Morrison returned from sick in quarters.  
1/Lt. R. A. Robinson received his promotion to a Capt. Mice going Robby and thanks for that Double Scotch.  
1/Lt. D. Endler received an 8 day leave. Destination unknown.
3. The target came around 0100 hours, briefed at 0400 hours and the crews took' off for Wllnelmshavn. The weather proved favorable over England but the boys that flew over the continent have a different Idea about the weather. The mission proved successful. Everyone believes the target was hit, no fights nor flak were reported. Good work men!  
The crews receiving this day's honors, are:  
1/Lt. Cerrone (Hutchlneon's crew)  
1/Lt. Coulter  
•g^/Lt. Corcoran



DATEEVENTS

22. The planes took off for our well known target, Schweinfurt, but the Division recalled the planes around noon. Reason being the groups unable to assemble. The boys returned, a little weary, some happy but all tired and sleepy.' The last time this target was hit, the 3th AF lost 60 bombers which is nothing to be sneezed at.
- We are alerted for tomorrow.
- S/Sgt. R. D. Miners returned to duty from the hospital. T/Sgt. J. Kosaluk was confined to sick in quarters.
- S/Sgt. J. R. Wallace was put on TD at station 101.
- Fvt. F. S. Dlemer was released from confinement.
- 1/Lt. A. E. Hasson, T/Sgt. J. Goosens and Sgt. E. T. McCormick were transferred to the 493rd Bomb Group.
23. While the men were working in the dark, preparing the planes for the morning, Jerry decided to give us a present. Somewhere along the line, he became a little excited. Not being able to hold the present any longer, he dropped it. This is about the closest that he has been to us since we've been here. As long as he remains at that distance, it will be all right with us.
- The target, at briefing, was still Schweinfurt but the ground haze prevented a take-off. Eventually causing the mission to be scrubbed. Back to bed went the crews and to bed went the "peddlefeet" that worked on the preparation of the mission.
- A. Wing critique was held this afternoon for the last two missions. A lot of little things were ironed out and will probably help the future mission.
- We are alerted for tomorrow.
- T/Sgt. G. T. Gant returned from an 8 day furlough.
- Cpl. E. C. Jakway returned from sick in quarters.
24. The mission run was for Tutow once again. When the target area was reached, IC/10 cloud cover obscured it. Since searchfinder was attached to us, the crews flew to Rastock and bombed on the Pathfinder. The navigators believe they hit the town. They should know.
- Another crew, flying its 25th mission, was shot down. A ship was seen going down under control with chutes coming out of it. At least we have hopes of everyone getting out of the ship. It's better to be caught than to be killed. Maybe we will be able to run across his brother Cliff, Fryer and the other men. It's tough on your mother to have the two of you prisoners of war and both being missing in action for several weeks as until word is received.
- The crews flying this mission are:
- 1/Lt. Terrace - 1/Lt. Coulter - Capt. McIlveen - 1/Lt. Steber - 1/Lt. Schneider (Lt. Fulton) - 1/Lt. Clark - 1/Lt. Kratz - 1/Lt. Corcoran - Major Tesla (lead).
- The men who are missing in action, are:
- Capt. C. S. McIlveen - 2/Lt. C. W. Dickman - T/Sgt. C. E. Rotunda  
 S/Sgt. R. C. Rigg - S/Sgt. J. A. Mahoney - 1/Lt. J. A. Terrace  
 2/Lt. T. E. Harrington - 2/Lt. C. C. Edwards - T/5gt. C. I. Worley  
 2/Lt. J. Lapezynsky - 1/Lt. W. D. Williams - T/Sgt. J. D. Scarbrough  
 S/Sgt. E. A. Barrett - S/Sgt. R. F. Malmbelt - 2/Lt. E. E. St. John  
 S/Sgt. R. L. Goldsmith - S/Sgt. J. V. Lovely - T/Sgt. I. Morrison,  
 S/Sgt. C. C. Coleman - S/Sgt. C. W. Wilkinson
- We are alerted for tomorrow.

*TkRQStl* Tutow (Rostock)  
**DATS I** 24 February 1944  
 GROUP: 385th "A"

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

ENOrfl

A. **KNEW AIR OPPOSITION:** 85th "A" Group was flying low group in the 4B CW.

All three squadrons were attacked, with the low squadron sustaining most of the attacks, 25-30 fighters were first encountered at 1258, nt point of landfall into Germany. These were entirely T/E aircraft, both Ju 888 ami Me 110. Most of the attacks were from the rear quadrant, e/a firing both rockets and 20 mm. cannon with self-exploding shells, which-bur.st ^like flak in the formation. These Jdghters coast-this" group 2 B-17's) and broke off their attack at 17+10. At 14157 the attack a was resumed again, by Mo 110's, Ju 88'r, Me 109'B and RW 190's. This attack started over the islands oast of Denmark, and continued over Denmark, terminating at 1500 hours. A four engine, twin-tailed bomber, believed to be a Ho 274, was seen firing rockets at our group druring this time. During the entire running battle, this group chalked up tentative claims of 13 -3-5.

Tactics were as follows: Ju 88's camo in in pairs, firing rocke's, and attacking from the tail. S/E aircraft came out of the sun, several queued up at a time. 5 Ju 88's wero gray and black with red swastikas,

B: **OBSERVATIONS BY CREWS:** 7 small boats, possible minesrjeepers, ( left double wakes) were seen "t 545ON - O73OE.

3 rains ■■.ere seen on the bridge from the Isle of Sylt to the mainland. An Me 110 was shot down vy flak over Rostock.

A large naval vessel, Believed to ve a cruiser or a battleship, was seen between Aabeuras and Faaborg, heading south, at 1140 hours.

C. **FRIENDLY AIRCR'JT IN DISTRESS:** ftZ At 1535, a B-17 heard over V.H.F. "SRanklin pink calling Franklin green", and the information, "going down - SOS." Locastion was 545ON-O635E.

D. **Crew Comments and Suggestions:** Crews want tracers back in belts.

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

**385th "B"**

A. **Enemy Air Opposition:** The 385th B group Hew lead group in the 4 B CI.

About 20 E/A, mostly twin engine, attacked every squadron in the group. About 12 Me 110, 5 Ju 88, 1 Me 410, and 2 FT? I\$0 were the E/A seen. The E/A were shooting 20 mm, and rocket guns. The FW's were seen to have belly tanks. The attacks started in the vicinity of Rostock and lasted for 10 min. beyond the North Frisian Island. Crews reported attacks from almost all directions, howeverthe majority came for low and lv21 and from the left or the ipen side of the formation. The attacks were not vicious but were continuous. One or two enemy aircraft continually keeping the formation occupied. No new tactics were observed. Claims ware 2 destroyed, 1 probably destroyed, 2 damaged. Similar attacks were seen on groups ahead of this one.

HEADQUARTERS 56 WH KXBAaattIT GftJUP (H)  
Office of the Operations officer  
APO 654

2S February 1944.

SUBJECTi Report of Operations, 24 February 1944.

TO I Commanding Officer, 585th Bombardment Group (H), APO 654.

■A\* Group

The group aoucibly was normal and asanbly with the 585th B Group was as briefed. All control points were net at very good tines.

The C.mbat Ring asueahly was as planned. The trip across.the N-rth Sea was uneventful, AH formations cere fairly,go-cLThe 565 B was in lead, 96th high and right, the 585 A low and slightly rdght?^ The weather was excellent, although the(^b-unglare-waK Very BadT?-----

The Danish Coast was reached at the briefed position and very near the briefed tine. Moderate flat was observed fro® the Island \_f Silt.

Shortly before the briefed turn south the ;vings took intervale fur poBcibla visual boobing. However, the obmplete area,from Denmark to the target, was 10/10\* a clouds. C'-mmuni cations wore go.a and, t&en the 4 A Yiing was approximately at the IP, they announced that the secondary target would be attacked. This necessitated gaining six thousand feet and the closing nf the interval between the combat wings to enable pathfinder bonding. This was accomplished and, at th\* bomb release point, the A and B Yiings were approxi- mately three miles apart, in trail.

Flak was mederato over the target. The range was go d but the flection poor. Approximately, aix^twin engine ships attacked the A Grjup to bombing altitude. T<sup>no</sup> aircraft of the A Group were knocked downy—, ae- on the climb

Total enemy opposition after leaving the target area was about 15 twin engino, rocket firing, fighters (MeZIO\*, Mello, JU 68). The attacks were generally aimed at the tail.

The descent and route back were as briefed.

Summary of Aircraft Lost

	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>Total</u>
To Fighters .....	2	0	2
Flak.....	0	0	0
Unknow.....	0	0	0
Total.....	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>

Report of A/C Not Attacking

Ships scheduled to take off.....a.  
 Ships taking off..... tl  
 Ships dispatched.....21  
 Ships attacking.....20  
 Ships not attacking..... i

TARGET: Tutow (Rostock)  
 DATE: 24 February 1944.  
 Group: 385th \*B"

INTELLIGENCE REPORT (Cont)

».

- B.** Observation by Crews: A balloon barrage of about 20 to 25 balloons was seen over Rostock, the balloon barrage tore over the undercast. The undercast was estimated at 5000 ft. A railroad is under construction from the town of Skaarluck, Denmark to the coast and across the channel to the Island of Rømø, which is just north of Sylt.
- C.** Friendly Aircraft in Distress I B-17 #663 of the 385th "A" Group was straggling at 1312 hours over the Island of Rügen under control with two enemy fighters on his tail. Three to four chutes were seen. (B-17 #349 of the 385th "A" Group was last seen by the group just north of Rostock. The main engine on fire and under enemy attacks. He was UNDER control at 7000 feet and in a glide towards the clouds. Four chutes were seen.
- McQueen?*
- D.** Crew Suggestions and Comments Request Tracers.

OPERATION REPORT-NARRATIVE REPORT  
385th "A" Group

1. Leaflets - None.
  2. Bombing Results - PFF on Rostock results unobserved - Bombs dropped in flak and barrage balloons over Rostock.
  3. Enemy Air Activity - Third group encountered approximately 25-30 E/A Types were Ju 88, Me 110, Me 109, and FW 190's. Also one 4 engine twin-tailed bomber, which fired rockets at our formation. Claims 13-3-5.
  4. Fleck - Sylt - Moderate, F.B. — Rostock: Intense. Zingst: F.B. moderate, left. Gustrow: Moderate. Skeldei Jeager. Griefswald: moderate, inaccurate, F.B.
  5. Weather - 10/10 undercast prevented visual bombing of primary.
  6. Observations - T/K E/A carried belly tanks; 3 submarines at 1124 hrs. Balloon barrage over Rostock.
- T.** Other observations: None.

■ 42-51848

MIA, Libby Aircraft presumed to have bombed,

42-50662.

This ship last sighted at 55° 54' N. 12° 40' E at 1810 Hrs. The ship was under attack by two fighters and the number 5 engine was on fire. Seven Chutes sighted. Not counted in Attaching aircraft.

*Terrace?*

*Daniel F. Riva*  
 DANIEL F. RIVA, JR.  
 Major, Air Corps,  
 Operations Officer,

A few late arrivals from the Spokane Reunion.



Rum Dum

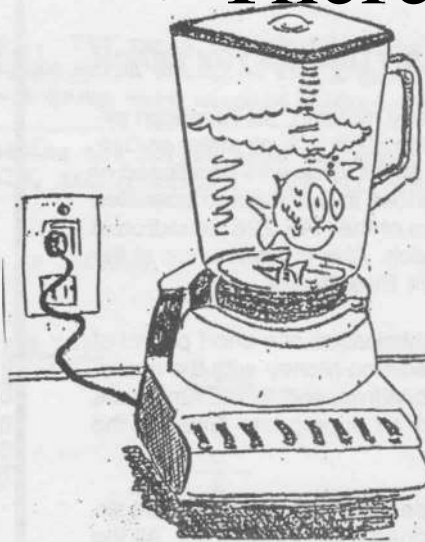


Front Row: Lou Massari, Bryon Pyle, Herman Heckel & Homer Howe  
2nd Row: Stanley Halstead & Joe Brocker



Sam Lyke - Who is he shooting at?

AND YOU THINK  
There's stress  
IN YOUR  
LIFE!



- So Do I -  
GPK

## Letters to the Editor:

Dear Ed:

Please find a story enclosed that perhaps you might find of interest to our members. Marshall Draper, an American Air Force veteran, revealed to me his experience during the second world war. I requested that he put the first part of his story in writing so that I could forward it to you. . .

Draper's A20 did not return from the very first mission by the American Air Force against the Germans. As far as he knows, he was the first American Air Force officer taken prisoner by the Germans in the European theater. He spent the entire war in hospitals and P.O.W. camps and weighed eighty-four pounds when he was liberated.

It is always a delight to receive the Hard Life Herald. The first thing I do is search the caption to see if "Blind Date" is listed. So far I have been disappointed. I completed a combat tour as a member of the crew of "Blind Date" in the 548th squadron. After all these years, we crew members still communicate with each other.

Yours truly,

W.N. (Bill Whitehead.)

P.S. Marshal Draper is now retired in Woodland Hills, California and lives at 22927 Dolorosa Street.

EDITOR'S NOTE: July 4, 1942 to May 1945 equals over 1000 days as a P.O.W.! Maybe some of our POW's knew him as a real "veteran".

### **THERE I WAS.....SITTING ON THE BEACH**

On July 4th, 1942, in the early morning, six American air-crews attended a briefing for the first U.S. air strike on German occupied Europe. The strike force was composed of six RAF crews and six American in a combined operation using Douglas A-20 bombers of the RAF 226 Squadron at Swanton Morney near Norwich. Also in attendance at the briefing was Lt. Gen. Dwight Eisenhower.

The operation marked the culmination of a short period of training and orientation at Swanton Morley with the operationally experienced 226 Squadron, and to the American, Independence Day seemed an appropriate time for the attack.

The twelve A-20's were divided into four flights of three aircraft, each flight being assigned a different target. All the designated targets were Luftwaffe air-fields in Holland.

Our assigned target was De Kooy, a Luftwaffe base near the town of Den Helder, on the northern tip of Holland. The flight was led by an RAF pilot with Capt. Charles Kegelmann and 2nd Lt. F.A. Loehrle, both USAAF pilots, flying the wings. I was the bombardier-navigator in Loehrle's plane.

Just before take-off, the RAF officer who normally flew in this plane, handed me a 1' by 1' piece of armor plate and a steel infantryman's hat and said "Be sure you put the plate

under your feet and wear the hat." I have been told since that this practice was vigorously discouraged later because of the weight added, especially in heavy bombers with a larger crew. Nevertheless, it probably saved my life, since I was the point man, so to speak, in our plane.

The flight took off, formed up, and we headed east at a height of about fifty feet above the water toward Holland. About ten miles from the target we passed a couple of small boats which appeared to be fishing boats but were picket boats, called "squealers" by the RAF, whose function was to alert the shore based anti-aircraft defenses, as we soon discovered.

A few moments later, we were approaching a sea-wall on the shore when heavy flak opened up from the sea-wall. Tracer was going by above and below the plane and on both sides of my head like flaming grapefruit. This kind of situation, like hanging, concentrated the mind wonderfully, and everything went into slow motion. I could not see why we weren't getting hit but we cleared the sea-wall and I felt the plane lift as we let the bombs go. We immediately turned left to get out, - and came face to face with a flak battery. The four wing guns were firing but we were so close the fire was converging beyond the battery. I glanced at the air-speed indicator which registered 285 MPH and suddenly realized that the battery gunner was shooting directly at me. We were getting ripped right up the middle as we passed over about two feet above the gunner's head. We were about fifteen feet off the ground at this point.

This was my last memory of the attack. I woke up lying on my back on the bottom of the North Sea in about twenty feet of water, very confused about where I was or what I was doing there. I thought I was dead and I kept waiting in the grey gloom for something to happen. Then I thought "maybe I better look for someone". So I sat up and saw my breath bubbling up through the water and finally realized that I was submerged.

When I surfaced, I was opposite a small beach under the sea-wall and on about a sixty degree tangent with the tail of the A-20 protruding from the water which was all that was visible of the plane. Various subsequent reports had us crashing in flames, or disintegrating, but I saw no smoke or signs of fire associated with the plane and no debris in the water. However, for me to be vectored nearly sideways to the plane, which appeared to be pointed west, it would seem that some kind of explosion had occurred.

I swam ashore, walked a few feet from the waters' edge, and sat down, overcome suddenly with an enormous fatigue. Somehow I had been blown right out of my parachute harness and flotation vest and my uniform was ripped to shreds. Also, I was bleeding from an assortment of different places.

A path led up from the beach to the sea-wall and I could see several soldiers at the top of the path but they made no effort to come down. So I sat and rested for a time. After a while my mental tiles had clattered back into place somewhat and it occurred to me that I might be better off starting up the path than sitting on the beach bleeding like a stabbed hog. I got to my feet with some difficulty, trudged across the little beach, and started up the rather steep path when much to my astonishment the soldiers came rus-

ing down the path and grabbed me by the arms. They were mumbling "minen, minen" as if to excuse some perceived lack of hospitality in not coming to my assistance. The beach had been mined presumably by the Dutch before the Germans got there. I suppose that the soldiers were lurking at the top of the path because they expected something repugnant to happen and didn't want to get hit by flying body parts or other debris.

The next thing I remember was lying on a table in what appeared to be a first-aid room. The cast had changed from Wehrmacht to three Luftwaffe types, one of whom was holding my eyelid up and looking at my eye with a little flashlight. He straightened up, turned off the flashlight, and announced to the room at large "shock". Then he turned to me and asked "Have you lost many blood?" I said "That's much blood. You mean much blood. I don't know." I was still operating in an offset mode. I did notice, however, that my clothes had been removed and I could see my shoes lying nearby on another table. The rubber heels had been torn off. I thought "That must have been a big disappointment." I was already acquiring a Kriegsgefangener mind set.

The Luftwaffe people set about plastering me up with paper bandages because I was getting their table pretty messy and eventually I was loaded into a car and taken to a hospital in Amsterdam where I was sewed up and some metal fragments taken out of my leg. I eventually ended up at a hospital in Oberursel, after ten days in Amsterdam, where I spent another three weeks and nearly lost the leg. The trip to Oberursel was a real nightmare. I was accompanied by two RAF officers, a Canadian pilot and a Polish Tail-gunner, both severely injured. The Polish officer had two .30 calibre machine gun bullet holes through both thighs and hemorrhaged and hallucinated throughout the trip. Among the three of us we had two good legs and at times it seemed as though we were doomed to spend our remaining lives in the German railroad system.

After Oberursel I was processed through Dulag Luft and then to Stalag Luft III as usual.

Of the twelve planes taking part in this operation, three were shot down and of the twelve crew members involved I was the only survivor.

Two obvious lessons emerged from this experience: Going mano a' mano with flak batteries is a good way to keep from growing old and anybody with my kind of luck should avoid any gambling enterprises. He's already used up his good fortune.



Stalag Luft III, Germany, March 1943, EAST CAMP.

Back Row, Left to Right:

Lt. Frank M. Newton - Cameron, Texas  
 F/O B.W. Meyer - Watertown, Wis.  
 Lt. R. Ingram - Burlington, Iowa.  
 F/O W.D. Geiger - Pasadena, Calif.  
 Lt. M.D. Draper - Beverly Hills, Calif.

Front Row, Left to Right:

F/O I.G. McDaniel - Little rock, Ark.  
 Lt. R.G. Ries - Milwaukee, Wis.  
 Lt. Col. A.P. Clark - San Antonio, Texas  
 Lt. E.A. Tovrea - Phoenix, Arizona  
 Newton (B-24, shot down North Africa)  
 Meyer (Hurricane, shot down France)  
 Ingram (Spitfire, shot down Dieppe Invasion)  
 Geiger (Spitfire, shot down France)  
 Draper (A-20, shot down Holland)  
 McDaniel (Lancaster, shot down Ruhr Valley)  
 Ries (B-25, shot down North Africa)  
 Clark (Spitfire, shot down Dieppe Invasion)  
 Tovrea (Spitfire, shot down Dieppe Invasion)

A few notes: Meyer and Geiger were RAF Eagle Squadron types, and we later had a large influx of the Eagle Squadron when they were escorting some B-17s, encountered head winds coming back, ran out of fuel, and crash landed all over France. McDaniel, also an RAF pilot, was 19 years old and flying a Lane without a co-pilot, because the RAF was so short of pilots. He had done about eight night missions when he got hit by flack. Lt. Col. Clark later became Commandant of the Air Force Academy with the rank of Lt. General. This photo is dated March, 1943 by the guy who sent it to me but I think it was taken earlier. This is the original American contingent except for about four others, all in the RAF. We lived with a couple of Englishmen: Wing Commander Robert Tuck, and Squadron Leader Roger Bushell who was the guiding light behind the Great Escape. Tuck survived the war, but Bushell was shot by the Gestapo. The group was broken up later when I became a code-writer and had a different set of associates.

Dear Ed,

Here is a photo taken at Chicago's O'Hare Airport. Going to the recent 8th Air Force Historical Society reunion, I finally met up with my tail gunner, Charles DuShane (of Chicago). It was the first meeting of the two of us since 1945.

Bob Valliere



Charles DuShane & Bob Valliere

Dear Ed:

Although I have not attended any of the reunions, for many reasons, few very valid, the history of the 385th Bomb Group, is of vital importance to me. My friends have heard of the many adventures of the group, in general, and our crew in particular.

Consequently, one of the key roles of these adventures was played by "our lady—the RELUCTANT LADY." Her existence mentioned at least twice in the last few years in the Hardlife Herald. Hardlife tower heard her call sign "Summer L Love," on a number of missions, before she went down in flames, searching for her crew who had preceded her as a battle casualty.

Those of us remaining from John Masterson's crew, will remember her taking over 150 flak hits over Paris, and still she brought us back, with the right landing gear damaged to the extent that we veered off the runway on landing. A few days later we were shot down after having attacked Hamburg and its mighty flak batteries, in another aircraft.

The RELUCTANT LADY went down in flames about a month later—and to this day—we believe she came looking for her crew.

I would be remiss, Ed, if I didn't take one last stand to have the name of the RELUCTANT LADY superimposed with the names of the other great ladies that graced our birds in our missions over Europe. Before we "roll down the great runway in the sky," on our last mission, we would be pleased if in the banner of the Hardlife Herald, the name of the RELUCTANT LADY would appear. She was a great Lady!

The crew that graced her various positions were:  
Pilot - John Masterson  
Co-pilot - Ed Calderaro

Navigator - Joe Silverman  
Bombardier - Steve Yareama  
Engineer - Pete McCabe  
Radioman - Bob McNeely  
Waist Gunner - Ed Ferris  
Waist Gunner - Mike Knox  
Tail Gunner - George Mannarine

Hardlife Tower, Summer L Love—on final for last approach.

Ed, in the words of a great American, Bob Hope, to you, for your years of labor of love to keep the memory of the 385th alive—thanks for the memories.

Steve Yareama  
Lt. Col, USAF  
Retired

Dear Ed:

Recently I purchased a book entitled "Winged Victory" by Geoffrey Perret, published by Random House. This book supposedly is the story of the Eighth Air Force during World War II and its tremendous contribution to our victory. The book is relatively expensive and attributes certain actions to individual bombardment groups in the Eighth Air Force, except one - the 385th. There is no mention of the 385th at all.

I also purchased the book "One Last Look," by Philip Kaplan and Rex Alan Smith. This book is labeled "A Sentimental Journey to the Eighth Air Force Heavy Bomber Bases of World War II in England." There is not a word about the 385th Bomb Group in this book.

I recently purchased another book entitled "Round The Clock" by Philip Kaplan and Jack Currie. There are a few mundane references in this book to the 385th Bomb Group.

It is my opinion that Geoffrey Perret, Philip Kaplan and Rex Alan Smith owe to every member of the 385th Bomb Group a sincere apology. Overlooking the accomplishments of those who served in the 385th detracts from the validity of the history that is written by these authors and certainly is an insult to those who sacrificed their lives and bodies to achieve victory.

I trust that this letter will serve as a reminder to those who desire to purchase any of these books that at least two of them are totally incomplete for they overlook the bravery, devotion and dedication to duty by those who served in the 385th Bomb Group.

Very truly yours,

Robert E. Andrews  
Ihlenberg's Crew  
548th Bomb Sqdn  
March - October, 1944



Dear Ed:

I have been meaning to write to you for months regarding my trip to England; however being human I have kept putting it off until another day. That day has finally arrived; so here goes the story.

I had planned on attending the reunion back to England a year ago last May. However my wife became seriously ill, and I was unable to join you on the trip. Unfortunately she passed away in June of 1 992.

I was able to convince a friend of mine, a retired dentist who served in Korea, to join me for the trip. We flew to London, and then took a train to Cambridge where we rented a car for two weeks to tour the East Anglia area.

Our first stop was to Mattingly to see the American Military Cemetery. A beautiful, but yet depressing experience. While we were there we were able to meet with the two curators who surprisingly were American. They were very informative, and I am enclosing a list they gave me listing the names of men from the 385th who are enshrined on the Wall of Missing.

From Cambridge we drove to Duxford and spent a day touring the Air Museum. I was able to convince the manager to allow me to board the B-1 7 they have on display. He told us that it was used in the filming of the Memphis Belle. I hope it has better flying qualities than the movie.

From Duxford we became tourists, and even visited a beautiful little town named Warmington; where we had a delightful time and were received with great hospitality by the local gentry.

After several days of touring and repeated getting lost with roundabouts and other confusion, we were able to find Great Ashfield late at night. This was a real challenge, but with the help of the bartender at The Red Fox, we were able to get accommodations with a delightful couple who ran a bed and breakfast called, Spinnakers.

Of course the first thing we did the next day was to search out the old base. To my surprise one of the runways was still intact and being used by small planes. They told us the other runways and taxi strips had been removed and used for patching material for the local roads.

I was also very surprised to see that the control tower was still standing and being used as offices for a cold storage plant. The manager took me up to his office and was kind enough to make me copies of the location plans of the entire complex. I am enclosing them; as I am sure you will find them interesting.

My dentist friend is a frustrated race car driver; so as a result we proceeded to make several hurried trips up and down the remaining runway in our Fiat station wagon. During one of our speeding passes we were confronted by a very irate gentleman in a pick-up truck who suggested that we curtail any further activity. Being friendly people we were able to calm him down, and explain to him the reason for our being there.

We learned that he was the gamekeeper who worked for the gentleman that now owned the field and several thousand additional acres, and had turned it into a pheasant hunting preserve. Both my friend and I being bird hunters and dog owners proceeded to question him about the operation. The next thing we know we were in his cottage having tea and fresh baked bread. He then worked his Springer Spaniels for us and showed us 5000 pheasants that they were raising for the coming season.

He said that the owner opens the preserve for several days to Arabs and Iranians, who pay \$4500 each per day to shoot driven pheasants. A very interesting fellow.

We were able to locate the church custodian who gave us the key to the church where we were able to see the memorial window and take many photos.

The next day being Sunday, we attended the services, and they presented me with one of the crystal paperweights that you received at the reunion.

The couple that owned the bed and breakfast took us to Bury St. Edmunds one evening to dinner and a rollicking stop at THE FLYING FORTRESS pub which is completely decorated in 8th Air Force motif. I believe it was located on the old base of the 94th BG.

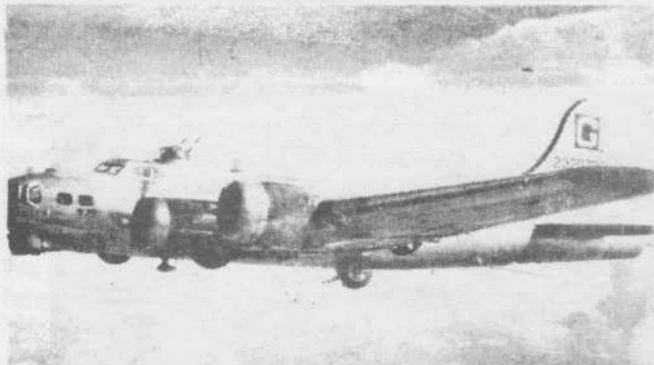
A really great trip and one that brought back a lot of memories good and bad. I am enclosing pictures of the runway, church and window which I am sure you will find of interest. I would appreciate your returning them to me.

Sincerely,

John E. Warmington  
550th Squadron

P.S. I was thru Fargo last September for bird hunting around Harvey, ND. Both times it was about 2 AM, and I didn't think you would appreciate hearing from me at that hour. Hope we will have the opportunity to meet in the future.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Thanks, John, for NOT calling at 2 AM on your way through! We ran a number of pictures similar to John's last year after the trip to England, so we're not reprinting them. Also the MIA list from the Cambridge cemetery was run a few years ago. Anyone wanting a copy can write to John.





Back Row: L-R: Ralph Britten, Eng, Wm Manos, Bomb., J.E. Warmington, Nav, George Jacotsen, Pilot, Earl Gregory Co-pilot.  
 Front Row: L-R: Henry Dimmick, W.F., Ralph Brofenshire, Ball Gun, Ralph Broughton, Tail Gun, Ralph Kinney, Radio.



Runway at Great Ashfield.  
 Note the three trees.

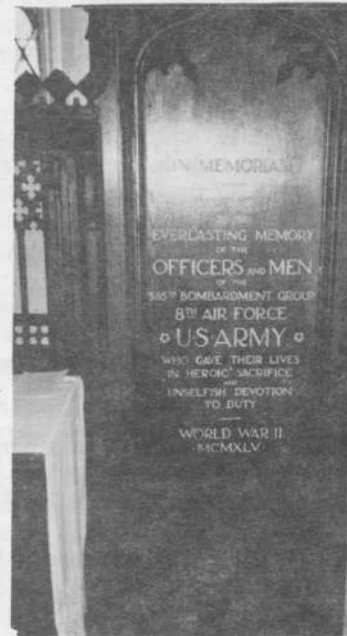
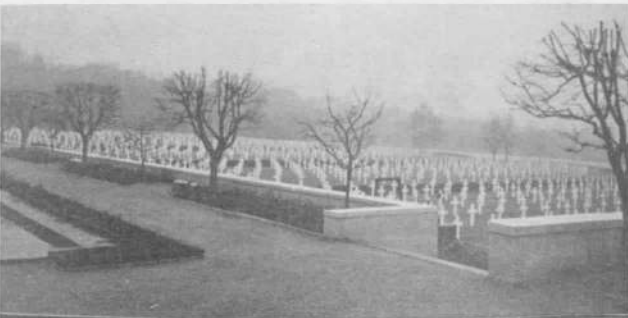
I understand these are replacements by the locals for the originals that were destroyed by disease.



John Warmington - 50 years later.



Gamekeeper and a couple of his Spaniels



Dear Ed:

Having closed our 57 year old clothing store in 1986, I now don't know how I ever had time to manage it, because I can't get everything done. I thought I was going into retirement, but I can't get around to that until after midnight.

I'm sending you my answers to Major Wells' Questionnaire.

All the best to you and yours forever,

Truman J. Smith  
5000 E. Prospect  
Ponca City, OK 74604

Dear Major Wells,

Reference to the article and information on your Aerial Combatant project in the December Hardlife Herald.

The definitive information on this subject I know of is the book *MEN UNDER STRESS* by two, former military, psychiatrists.

There was another study mentioned to me, which I cannot recall, that concluded (as strange as it sounds) that much of the selection process for pilots could have been eliminated by simply selecting those who had built model airplanes to become a pilot, but those who had pursued their interest in aviation in such a manner were motivated and even knowledgeable to a higher degree than those who had not.

Your questionnaire is inviting and hopefully productive, although I don't envy your task of trying to make order out of the chaotic and eclectic responses you will surely receive. I've come to my own conclusions from my experiences and am in the process of writing a book (as is everyone it seems). So far I'm into the fourth chapter.

Even so, I will take time out to have a go at your questionnaire.

Turman J. Smith  
Lt. Colonel, USAF, Ret.

## 385TH BOMB GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Why did you join the AAF?

A: Having made my solo flight on my 16th birthday and had my Private Pilot license by 18, I joined to continue my career, receiving my commission and wings at 19 and flying combat at 20.

2. What's your opinion of the psychological and medical tests you took prior to flying training?

A: Adequate (for me).

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

A: NO, in a word. (Even now, 50 years later, the search for such an answer proves the inadequacy of understanding the training to prepare one for combat, because any individual can or can not be prepared for the rigors of combat on any given moment of any given day. It remains a Catch-22 question.

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

A. I don't understand the question.

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

A. I was satisfied-not knowing how it was formed. I rather believe that it was not formed, but just happened by serendipity, and, like the aircraft, food, quarters, et al, we made the best of what was given.

B: We made it cohesive in a spirit of us AGAINST the system.

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

A: I can't recall ever seeing that, but it must have been.

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

A: What upgrade training? As a (43-1 Class, Oct., 19 year old) 2nd Lt. pilot I was sent to Columbia, SC where they didn't know what to do with me. So I sat in the right seat for some of the pilots back from 30 seconds over Tokyo who had fun showing me how good they could fly the B-25 with me training as a wheel/flap man. Due to heavy losses of the 8th Air Force I was sent to Drew Field, Tampa, Florida at the end of Dec., '43; assigned to a crew as a pickup co-pilot; picked up a new B-17 at Savannah, Georgia and flew to England for combat. By July the pilot got drunk, had a nightmare, bailed out of bed and cut his head open. I was given a check ride that consisted of three takeoffs: Cut one engine; Cut two engines; Cut three engines with one landing each time. That was my upgrade training to pilot in operational type aircraft. Having survived, I assume it was effective.

8. What were your views of Non-flyers? or Flight-surgeons?

A: Worth less than we, but ESSENTIAL for operations and for opposition for us to be against in our cohesiveness. Ground Crews and cooks were highly regarded; moreso than MPs and especially the Provost Marshall.

B: Flight Surgeons were not one of US. even though rated.

9. How many combat sorties did you fly?

A: 35 (Over 300 hours)

10. What was the worst thing about being action? The best?

A: Suspense and TERROR!

B: The "best" thing was the feeling of accomplishment or fulfillment, which is in direct proportion of the effort made and the risk taken:  $F = E \times R$ . A bonus in later life was having established a Benchmark, because everything afterwards (in perspective) is a piece of cake.

11 Did you ever have a bailout? Crash?

A: B. No

12. How did effect you?

AL N/A

13. Did you ever know a combatant who refused to fly or perform.

A. No.

B: 1) Our bombardier failed to perform, because he was out of it--while in the midst of it. He was there physically, but not mentally. Having been wounded on two previous missions, he did not avoid his duties, but simply did not toggle the bombs on cue

B: 2) Our radioman, oldest on the crew, requested reassignment, which was approved and he was reassigned to B-26's

14. Why would you say something like this occurred?

A: Improper psychological screening. The Shrinks were no better qualified than anyone else, because there was no empirical data.

15. Were these men dealt with fairly? Severely?

A: Yes. The Bombardier was removed from flying status.

B: The severity of being removed from flying for having failed the ultimate test and comrades could not be greater.

16. Did you ever reach the point where you felt you couldn't go on?

A: Of course. That's the Ultimate Test.

17. When was this (approximate mission?)

A: My 6th mission, 29 April 1944, flying copilot with Captain Vance, the 100th mission of the Group. The designated target was Berlin, but a navigational error took us out of the bomber stream. There were 29 of us and we were attacked by a composite group of approximately 200 ME-109s and FW-190s. which destroyed six of our ships. There were many who straggled and at one point there were only six of us hanging together in the Lead Squadron. . .At debriefing I noticed our C.O. Colonel Vandevanter, standing alone and staring at the formation boards along the wall. His eyes were moist...it is my understanding that Captain Vance became a minister after the war. It's believable, because I think we all got religion that day.

18. What helped you the most? Chaplain? Flight-surgeon? Crewmembers?

A: Not the Chaplain nor Flight-surgeon. In a way the other crewmembers helped in the agony of a shared experience. I did not seek the Chaplain's help, perhaps because he was not one of US and, therefore, could not possibly understand our circumstances. I did not need him to communicate with the SOURCE.

19. Was there one thing above all others you feared?

A: 1) Mid-air collisions, 2) Fighters, 3) Flak (in order)

20. How would you define "combat effectiveness" for B-1 7's and their crews?

A: The B-1 7 won World War Two!

B: The crews were more brave than qualified. Perhaps this had to do with the fact they had already survived the hardship and struggle of the Great Depression. As one pilot, Bill Usher, from a different Bomb Group told me, "Don't complain. You never had it so good." He had left home at 16 to ride the rails as a bum, a tramp and a hobo (being distinctive classes); joined the Merchant Marines; blown up and cast adrift in the China sea; picked up and fought with the Chinese guerrillas.

COMMENT: Salvation was in the design, testing, production and performance of the B-1 7. To verify, a replay of WAR TWO today could not find in inventory an aircraft equal to the B-1 7, which did not fly the fastest, the highest or carry the greatest bomb load and could be operated by relatively inexperienced air and ground crews. Such was the effectiveness of the B--17 and the crews.

21. Can you cite personal characteristics of some of the crews you would have identified as superior?

A: No.

22. Could you spot crews beforehand who were headed for certain disaster, or did casualties appear to strike at random?

A: There was no' guarantee of failure nor success. Casualties were unpredictable.

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Mr. Stern:

I am trying to locate any one who . may have served with my uncle in England.

My uncle was (TSGT) Charles Ray Bond of Ranger, Texas; a turret gunner on B-17 "Curly's Kids" in the 385th BG. He was in England from spring '44 - spring '45; I do not have exact dates. Any information about my uncle, or "Curly's Kids" would be gratefully appreciated.

Regards,

Paul Dobbs  
3205 Buckhorn Court  
Plano, TX 75074  
(214) 423-5765

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Dear Ed:

Good News! The Office- Secretary of the Air Force has given their approval to the 8th Air Force Memorial Control Tower at the A.F. Museum - Dayton, OH. This has taken almost a year and a half to get the go ahead. I never thought it would be so difficult to give an institution \$250,000. As soon as the weather breaks, we can start construction. We are still looking for more WWII control tower equipment - radios, aldis lamps, tables, charts/maps and weather instruments. Maybe you can give the message thru the HARDLIFE HERALD.

Best wishes,

John E. Greenwood  
President - 8AFMMF

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Bill Varnedoe's stories generate some interesting responses. Here's one.

Dear Bill:

Really enjoyed your latest in the December HLH. Brought back a lot of memories and filled in some voids - for instance, the serial # of a certain plane, "Gypsy Princess", Your article also reminded me of that "Goof off pilot" who darn near killed us in a mid-air collision. I remember the incident well. I was his co-pilot.

Interesting that you flew in our plane, must have been before we took it over upon our arrival.

Speaking of dropping smoke bombs, we were deputy lead and flew through one of the smoke trails which completely covered our windshield and blocked any forward vision. We pulled out of formation, the windshield stayed "frosted" until almost home, not a fun experience.

Missed talking with you at the 50th reunion at the All Saints Church in Great Ashfield. Spotted you there briefly and "poof" you were gone. Next time stay longer, hadn't seen you since '45.

I looked up, by telephone, "The Goof Off of a Pilot" a few years after the war and found that he had become an Attorney and much later a Municipal Judge in Sacramento, I believe. Never got an invite to see him when I was there, guess his fist is or was still sore.

Went to the Spokane convention and saw Jim Crowl and wife. They came home with us and spent about a week. I saw Ed Stern after the stove pipe incident and got on Kim's crew. He was one heck of a pilot. We flew home together. Had a lot to talk about as you can well imagine.

Just to fill you in on what the stovepipe incident was all about—

We had been on the mission in which Burch was rammed by the MEI 09. Tom Walner was on the wheel and interphone when the three fighters came in. I was on comm and listening to what was going on up ahead of us, looking around, up, down and sideways. Consequently I was bent over twisting and looking for fighters in the area. Later, the day of the stovepipe incident, Tom made a remark to me about being a coward, trying to cower in my seat when the fighters came in. That did it! (Gave him a few uncomplimentary words back that weren't appreciated) And that's when flesh and cast iron pipe met. Wish I could remember what I said. That tickles me that you wrote the story.

Keep writing, Bill, your stories fill in a lot of gaps.

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Roy Batey  
298 Nisqually Pl  
La Conner, WA 98257

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Another '17 took a loop!

Dear Ed:

The story from Bill Varnedoe in the December, 1993 HLH issue describing the B-17 that made a loop in 1945 reminded me of a situation that happened to a B-17 that I was in while in the 549th Squadron at Great Ashfield.

I was a navigator on our plane... "Remember Us", piloted by one of the best - Vincent Faix. Our crew was one of the lucky ones, with the normal harrowing combat experiences that completed 35 missions without a fatality. I flew all my missions except the last one on "Remember Us."

Sometime in early May, 1944, on a day between combat missions, we had the responsibility of flight testing a B-17 that had a new replacement engine installed. With a limited crew consisting of the Pilot, Co-pilot, engineer and myself, we completed the flight test at an altitude of approximately 12,000 feet. Shortly thereafter, Vincent announced that we should secure all equipment and brace ourselves because he wanted to see what the B-17 could do. He was going to perform a complete loop.

Being alone in the nose section, I decided to stand on the platform under the "astro-dome" with my head smack in the middle of it and no other physical support. Vincent nosed the plane down into a dive pickup up speed and then pulled the nose up into a vertical arc. When we were completely "upside down", I was looking up at mother earth with my feet firmly planted on the platform now above me and my arms outstretched horizontally. I was in this "Zero G" upside down attitude several seconds excitedly thing-ing... "Look ma no hands". It was a tremendously exhilarating experience. Then suddenly I was pulled down with a tremendous force. I tried to hold myself up with my fingers grasping the metallic support around the astro dome but could not and found myself hitting the floor with a forceful thud. Other than that, there appeared to have been no adverse effects on either the plane or its passengers.

A week or so later, I met a Boeing Aircraft representative and told him of our experience. He said that it was a good thing that we had a reinforced tail version of the aircraft because the earlier versions would probably have lost its tail.

I thought that I'd tell about this incident because I did not think that any other pilot would have been wacky enough to have performed a stunt such as this in a B-17.

I am therefore wondering if any of your readers had ever experienced a similar one during the war in a bomber type aircraft.

Sincerely,

Morton Weitz  
109 Hedgerow Dr.  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002-1050

Aloha Ed,

I am trying to help a lady from Kentucky establish a claim with the V.A. She needs to have someone who knew her departed husband when he was in the 385th BG(H) write to her. I brought his picture to the Spokane reunion, but with no luck, so would you please print his picture in our newsletter at your leisure? Maybe as follows:

If anyone recognizes this picture of Sgt. William Rowe, Jr. please contact his wife Mrs. Anna M. Rose, 2088 Marrowbone Creek Road, Elkhorn City, KY 41522.

I'm sure she would be most grateful if she could hear from anyone who knew her husband.

Thanking you and Aloha nui loa,

Jerry H. Ramaker  
310 Simone  
Carson City, NV  
89701



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Here's an answer to the questions Rodger Walsh raised in our December Hardlife Herald.

Dear Mr. Walsh,

In going through the December issue of the Hardlife Herald I noted your request as to various pieces of equipment and/or information can be found. The following might be of some help to you.

I am attaching a copy of a tabulation that I sent to our crew sometime ago that shows the material that I have covering the missions that we flew. In addition to the material shown I have the original "Flack Map" for each mission that we flew as well as those missions that we were scheduled to fly and were scrubbed for one reason or another. If any of this material is of any interest to you, I will be glad to make copies of it and send it to you.

Additional material can be found at the Air Force's Historical Research Center located in the AF Command and Staff College at Maxwell AFB in Montgomery, AL, and the Suitland Reference Branch (NNRR)-Textual Reference Division, National Archives and Records Division, Washington, DC 20408. There are a few strike photos in the files at Montgomery but no way to copy them in a manner that makes a decent copy. When I inquired about strike photos at Montgomery they referred me to the National Air and Space Museum in Washington. The address is shown on the attached paper.

Having dealt with the people at both Maxwell and Suitland I can tell you that they will not understand what you are looking for, however, they will try and will bring you files as long as you care to sit there and read. The people at Maxwell will not research the files looking for specific documents, you must do it yourself and if you want copies they can be made on their machine at 15 cents a pop. None of the files at Maxwell can be taken from the building. Suitland will not make copies of individual documents for you, they will copy a whole file that might cover a whole month or more and send it to you at 15 cents a pop. This can get expensive as each file will contain over 100 pages.

I have never tried to work with the National Air and Space Museum.

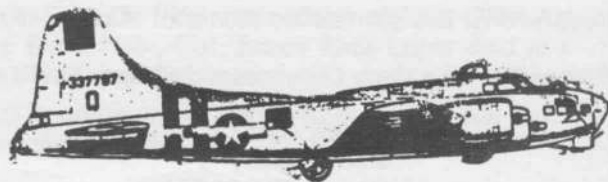
As to the other material you are looking for I have no idea where it could be purchased. I am sure that there are old bubble sextants around as well as 24 hour watches, maybe at a large Army-Navy store. Maps will be very hard if not impossible to come by.

As a matter of interest our Radio Operator, Robert T. Marshall lives in Kansas City at 3530 NE 46th street, Kansas City, MO 641 17-1276 and can be reached at 816-453-2290. Bob has written a very interesting book covering his time with the 385th and you might be interested in getting with him.

Hopefully the above will be of some use to you and if you want copies of any of my material I will be glad to send you copies.

Sincerely,

C.E. Brackett  
1 744 Carovel Circle,  
Birmingham, AL 35216



Dear Rodger:

You asked for a list of "words and phrases" etc in your letter published in the December Hardlife Herald.

I think I can help. A list of words and phrases used during our time with the 8th AF. You will find some of this on pages 82 and 83 or the book titled "One Last Look". This is a fine book of 216 pages, some illustrations in color. I just completed a project of getting a copy for the other four crewmembers who are in touch with me. ((I was 'lost' from 1968 until about March of '93. Anyway a reunion at Las Vegas planned for March 1994. The first for me. The others have had some.

Anyway, the book is about 10" X 10" and about 1" thick. Can order from Edward R. Hamilton, Bookseller, Falls Village, \$22.95 plus \$3.00 postage (total \$25.95). Don't have any idea of how many they have in stock.

Another good bit of luck tonight. Have been having a 'fit' because Micky II was not on cover of the Hardlife Herald. IT IS. Right in the center. Our crew flew the last mission for Micky III think. (About January 19, 1945 - just found some clippings (encl) and guessing the date from these.) Mission was to Mannheim - IFR (in the soup). #2 feathering line shot out so couldn't feather plus lots of other damage - about only thing left was the VHF radio. Anyway made it to Strasburg (spotted through break in clouds). Made a descent in a northerly direction in the clouds and broke out at about 500 ft. Managed to get a VHF DF steer (probably first and last time we ever used this). This took us right to the people that gave us the steer - a new P-47 base near Verdun. Just setting up operations and promptly got all the radios etc. from Mickey II - I guess for the control tower or spare parts etc. Needless to say B-17s don't go too good with a windmilling prop and other problems. Anyway about May '45 I was in Merville, France with a small crew (B-53 I think was the station number — Anyway, was said to be the home of the yellow nose ME-109's). We worked out of there and took repaired B-17's from all over back to England. On one of these trips we spotted Micky II parked with a lot of other B-17's at an airfield in northern France or Belgium. So, anyway it had been fixed up enough to get back that far.

Another name on the cover that we remember very well is "Honky Tonk Sal". Our crew flew our first 6 or 7 missions in this. Heavily armor plated. Was said to be the first B-17 to encounter a jet. One of the crew chiefs made up a little booklet on the history of Honky Tonk Sal. I used to have one but no more. Would like to get a copy if there is one to be had. (photocopy of course). I guess we flew the last mission for Honky Tonk Sal. Was declared war weary. Last thing I remember was that one day when someone was flying it local a B-24 hit it and damaged the vertical stabilizer badly. She got back to base. I have a photo.

Have just received a few issues of the 385th newsletter, (finally, after all these years). Anyway, I spotted some information about crews forming at Ephrata (Washington), then to Geiger (Spokane). Then I guess if the squadron flew over (like we did later) it went through Goose Bay. In 1949

(after college) I ended up in Ephrata with the Bureau of Reclamation. Then recalled in 1951 at Moses Lake but within a few months sent to Geiger Field to design, write specs, etc. to reopen the base (radar school). Took base over from national guard. From there to Goose Bay for about 18 months as airport engineer/engineering officer or whatever. That was the period of time when Goose had lots of big construction for SAC, ADC, plus radar sites all over the north. Anyway, was following along behind the history of the 385th and didn't know it.

Good luck on locating the other material you are looking for.

Robert G. Bensing  
548th Squadron  
(also 86th Sqn  
C-130 E and C-141'a)

Dear Ed,

I was in the 385th was 1943 early part of 1941.

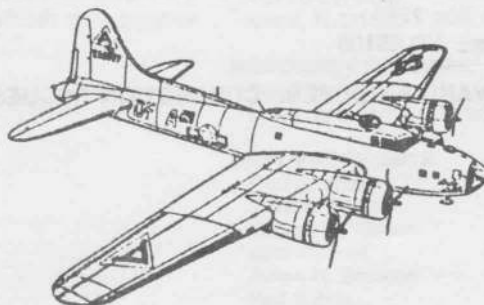
Below is a list of my crew members:

Pilot - Capt Ben James - Ohio  
Co-Pilot - Lt. Foss  
Navigator - Lee Levora  
Bombardier - Lt. Garrett  
Engineer - Rex Larkin  
Radio - Sam Borders  
Gunner - Richard Long  
Gunner - Arthur Pazzalie  
Tail Gunner - Patrick Calabrese  
Ball Turret - Clarence LeDoux

If anyone knows about these men, please drop me a line.  
I'm a new member of the Association.

Thanks,

Sam Borders  
PO Box 98  
Cedar Bluff, AL 35949



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Bob Mensing sent us this copy of his pass to Paris for a little R&R after he returned from MIA status. Have any fun, Bob?

HEADQUARTERS  
UNITED STATES STRATEGIC AIR FORCES IN EUROPE (MAIN)  
APO 633

JAN. 25, 1945  
(Date)

SUBJECT: Pass for Paris Area.

TO : Whom it May Concern

<i>R. E. Mensing</i>	<i>1st Lt.</i>	<i>0-772260</i>	<i>385 Bomb Group 548 Squadron</i>
(Name)	(Rank)	(ASN)	(Organization)

The above named person has just returned from a "Missing in Action" status, and is authorized to be in the Paris area. He is billeted at the Hotel Francia, 100 Rue Lafayette, Paris, (PW & X Det, Office of the Director of Intelligence, Hq US Strategic Air Forces in Europe). He will not be able to comply with existing uniform regulations due to his recent return to duty.

For the Commanding General:

*R. E. Fecteau*  
R. E. FECTEAU,  
Captain, AGD  
Asst. Adj. General

**385<sup>TH</sup> BGMA**

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

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