

CHAPLAIN JIM'S THOUGHTS

Hi - this is late - but Happy 1996 Year to YOU all.

We don't have a "Confessionel" in the United Methodist denomination but from time to time confession is good for the soul. And this will be my confession time. Now hear this!!

Have you ever felt you were being "preached at"? I have, but this time I was preaching to myself or at myself.

In making phone calls it has really bugged me when the person or rather the voice on the other end says something like this - "If you want information touch one, if you need to speak to the treasurer touch two or if you need assistance to understand the letter you received please stay on the line and one of our officers will assist you." AND all this went by so fast touching one, two, etc. I did not do any good and the line was cut off.

Inpersonal voices on the telephone, giving me too much information too fast is for the birds, I said to myself. Then I began preaching to myself.

Remember, I said (to myself so no one else could hear) these voices belong to real live human beings just doing their thing. They were doing what they were told and it was to help me and cut their time on the phone.

Then I said (to myself) I must remember times are changing and I must be patient. I must learn different ways of doing things. I must learn, no matter how I hate change, to accept these new-fangled inventions.

Time marches on. Change is inevitable and I am showing my age with my inability to accept these "new-fangled" inventions.

We stay young longer when we are willing to accept change. We will be "sweet old people" when we "act young". And we can act young by remembering to do unto others as we would have them do unto us or "whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them".

"Finally, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

So I preached to myself and now to you. Peace and Love!

Sincerely,
Jim

EDITORSNOTE: Here's Art Boyer's recollections of the flight described by Bud Hutton in the story about Brownie in the October '95 Hardlife Herald.

I wish they would get their facts right when they tell a story. On the article about Brownie on page 7. Snyder had nothing to do with these events, it was I who had the altercation with Brownie. I will relate the true facts as they occurred. The Raunchy Wolf was flying in the low squadron left wing on the second flight. It happened after we had almost lost Bart our ball gunner. The aircraft flying right wing suddenly started trailing fuel from his right wing. To keep from endangering the other aircraft, he started a shallow right bank away from us, the tail gunner bailed out and instantly popped his chute, at the same instant the aircraft exploded in a ball of flames. The flames enveloped the tail gunners chute. I saw him grab his ankles and bury his face in his knees as he tumbled towards the ground. I had not seen any enemy aircraft around him. Then a ship from the 94th group moved up from behind and filled in the empty slot. I was looking all around for enemy aircraft, and when I looked over the ship from the 94th was gone. We were flying below some clouds and as I was staring up I saw a dark shadow moving through the clouds. All of a sudden here comes this J11-88 diving out of the clouds. When he went behind and below us, I thought he was going to get us, because we had no ball turret in operation.; Instead he started to climb up alongside to probably get the flight leader. That's when I took aim at the left engine then Brownie put his camera on my shoulder and against the side of my head. Just as I fired he banged the camera into the side of my head and knocked my point of aim off, that's when I turned and shoved him away, I then fired two five round bursts and a cloud of smoke trailed from his left engine. The JU-88 immediately leveled off along side us. I imagine to keep from stalling out. I immediately fired two five round bursts and knocked out the upper gun position and put two more bursts into the lower gun position, to prevent any return fire. I then concentrated on the cockpit area, the plexiglass went flying, the pilot slumped over the controls, the aircraft went into a right bank and down. At this point my gun jammed, a round had hung up in the feed chute, when I got it cleared he was gone. A usual the stories of Brownie riding bareback on a B 17 were all hype, he just stood in the radio room to take his pictures.

Sincerely,
Arthur M. Boyer
521 N. Elderberry Ave.
Ontario, CA 91762
(909) 986-2459



Chaplain Jim and his wife

□ □ □ □ LIFE MEMBERS □ □ □ □

Ray B. Pennington	307
Daryl Bentley	308
M.J. Leuphold	309
Donald S. Graham	310
Verna M. Wells	311
Walt Gasiorski	312



Eugene Curtis	November 1995
Merle M. Ramsey	December 1995
Wm. D. Meeks	November 1994
Jerome B. Harmon, Jr.	December 1995
Alphonse J. Corriveau	January 1996
William D. Fazenbaker	December 1995

Dear Ed,

It is with sadness that I must tell you of another loss of one of our comrades and members.

JEROME B. HARMON JR. of Winter Park, Florida, 1924-1995.

On December 27, 1995 Jerry died after a long battle with lymphoma. Jerry was our tail gunner flying 35 missions over Europe. Jerry was fearless. Flak and enemy fighters never deterred him. He had volunteered for the tail gunner's position - a lonely spot.

Jerry reenlisted at the end of WWII and retired as a Lt Colonel after a career which included tours of Germany, Japan and Korea. He also served in the Dominican military operation as an intelligence officer.

After retirement he went on to a successful career in a major Winter Park department store retiring as manager of the store.

I have the memory of being a friend of Jerry' s for over 50 years. We have maintained close ties over the years in spite of the distance which separated us. I will miss him - he was a great friend as well as a fellow crew member.

Sincerely,
 Elmer Snow
 139 Runnymede Rd
 West Caldwell, NJ 07006-8114

FAZENBAKER, William Davis - Of Grand Blanc, age 76, died Friday, December 22, 1995. Funer-



al services will be held 10 a.m. Wednesday, December 27, 1995 at the HUI Funeral Home, Grand Blanc, Rev. R. Edward McCracken officiating. Interment at Roseland Park Ceme-

tery, Berkley, ME Family will be at the funeral home Sunday 1-3 p.m. only and on Tuesday from 1-3 and 6-9 p.m. Contributions may be made to the Grand Blanc United Methodist Church or the Leader Dogs for the Blind or the American Cancer Society. Bill was born in Luke, Maryland on October 3, 1919. He was a Navigator on B17's in World War II, shot down over Holland, captured and was POW for 19 months. He received the Purple Heart as well as other medals. He graduated from the University of Maryland Law School and after passing the Maryland Bar he moved to Flint, working for an insurance company. Upon passing the Michigan Bar he practiced in association with Attorney Marvin Ransom. His last association was with Ed Jakeway, Jon Lawniczak and Craig Henry in Grand Blanc. Eye problems forced him to retire in 1984. He was a member of the State Bar of Michigan, Genesee County Bar Association, life member of the Flint Elks Lodge #222, the Grand Blanc Heritage Association, the American Legion Post #413, the Genesee Masonic Lodge #174 F.&A.M., the Bay City Scottish Rite bodies, and the Elf Khurafeh Shrine Temple A.A.O.N.M.S. He was a member Grand Blanc United Methodist Church with many good friends there. Mr. Fazenbaker married Doris J. Hallman Fidler on December 16, 1955 in Detroit Most beloved husband and father. He leaves his wife, Doris; son, Tom and wife Lou Ann Fidler of Pensacola, FL; daughter, Nancy Rae and husband Dick Sherrill of Holly; 4 grandchildren, Stephanie and Jason Rader, Rebecca and Ruth Fidler; great-grandson, Steven Rader; 1 brother, Thomas L. and wife Wilmay Fazenbaker of Kill Devil Hills, NC; niece, Margaret Fazenbaker of Flint; 2 nephews, Tom and David Fazenbaker of NC.

HILL FUNERAL HOME
 11723 S. Saginaw
 Grand Blanc 694-4141

Dear Ed,

I enclosed an obituary for Alphonse Corriveau a member of one of the original crews of the 385th BG.

I was able to get the names of the other crew members with the help of Joe DeGiacomo tbl member of Jerry Mudge's crew.

The original crew listed below,
 1st Lt. Harold Jordan, pilot
 2nd Lt Alphonse Corr iveaii, co/pi lot
 2nd Lt Morton Robbins, nav.
 2nd Lt George Brown, bomb.
 T/Sgt Harry Poplowski, eng.
 T/Sgt Michael Khoury, radio
 S/Sgt Frank tJavak
 S/Sgt Clyde Brown Jr.
 Sgt Rober.t McGuire
 Sgt Steven Suspenski

I was on a 385th reunidn to England in 1988 became acquainted and missed visiting with him.

As the new President of the Mass. Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society I find myself more involved in the activities of the Mighty Eighth.

I¹ am-sending a copy of Alphonse's obituary to George Brown.

Albert E. Audette
 279 Wasihington St.
 Woburn, Mass. 01801
 617-933-5316

Alphonse J. Corriveau, Co-Founder Of Corriveau-Routhier Inc., C&R Tile

Alphonse J. Corriveau, 78, of Manchester, died Jan. 13, 1996, at Whis home after a lengthy

illness.

Born in Manchester, he was the son of Theodore and Lumina (Turmel) Corriveau and had been a resident of Manchester all his life.

He attended local schools and was a graduate of Central High School and Hesser College.

He was president and co-founder of Corriveau-Routhier Inc. and C & R Tile Stores.

He was a veteran of World War II and completed 25 missions in the European theatre of operations as a B-17 pilot with the 385th Division of the 8th Army Air Corps in England, holding the rank of captain. He was awarded two Distinguished Flying Cross Medals. He was a member of the American Legion, Jutras Post.

Mr. Corriveau was a member of the board of directors of the Amoskeag National Bank and an incorporator of the Amoskeag Savings Bank.

He had been a vice president of Associated General Contractors, the National Association of Home Builders, the National Association of Dealers and Distributors and a member of the Good Roads Association.

He was a former chairman of the New Hampshire Sweepstakes Commission, the Manchester Planning Board, Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission, chairman of the Building Trades Division for the United Fund, and a member of the Civic Progress Committee of Manchester.

Mr. Corriveau was a trustee of Notre Dame Hospital in Manchester, a trustee of the Manchester Boys and Girls Club and United Way.

He was long affiliated with the Republican Party on a local, state and national level.

Mr. Corriveau was one of the founders of the Manchester Youth Hockey League and was instru-



ALPHONSE J. CORRIVEAU

mental in the building of local ice arenas. He served as president of the Junior Hockey League and Queen City Hockey Inc. He was co-owner of the Manchester Monarchs and Manchester Blackhawks; and a sponsor of the Men's Senior A Hockey League teams.

He was a charter member of the International Belleek Collector's Society, a past member of the Rotary Club and was nationally ranked in NASTAR (amateur ski racing).

He was a benefactor of the NH Millennium Committee and the Kosciuszko Foundation.

Family members include his wife of 51 years, Josephine (Kleczynska); three daughters, Janet Corriveau, Mrs. Walter (Lynda) Lubelczyk and Nancy Gorczyca; two sons, David Corriveau and John Corriveau, all of Manchester; eight grandchildren; two sisters, Mrs. Lucienne Walker of Walnut Creek, Calif. and Mrs. Rita Taylor of Geneseo, N.Y.; nephews and nieces.

SERVICES: Calling hours are Tuesday from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. in the Lambert Funeral Home, 1799 Elm St., corner of North St., Manchester.

A Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated Wednesday at 11 a.m. in Blessed Sacrament Church.

Private burial will be in Holy Trinity Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may U. made to Blessed Sacrament Church, 1 Elm St., Manchester 03103; or to the charity of one's choice.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Another interesting story from Minnesota 8AF Newsletter.

Switzerland - An Escape to Neutrality

It is a little known fact that during WWII one hundred sixty-six (166) U.S. aircraft sought refuge in Switzerland with 41 destroyed in crashes, 39 badly damaged and 86 repairable. Rumor spread that most of these airmen had defected to Switzerland because they had enough of war and wanted to spend the rest of the war in safety. In fact the contrary is the truth.

Only about 5-10 percent of the crews deliberately went to Switzerland. Additionally, a large number of U.S. airmen escaped from Swiss internment camps making their way back to England or Italy. Of the 1740 internees and evadees, 947 tried to escape; of these 184 attempts failed and the airmen were put into the tough Wauwilermoos prison camp.

The first U.S. airmen to arrive in Switzerland did not land, they walked in. They had been shot down over Europe, were kept safe by the French Underground and subsequently were guided to Switzerland. These men who had escaped from the enemy, sought safety in Switzerland and walked unarmed into the country were considered "Evadees" rather than "internees." According to Swiss law, going back to medieval times, "Evadees" are entitled to sanctuary and are free to leave like tourists. These "Evadees" were kept in different camps from the internees who arrived in Switzerland by air. All airmen who landed or parachuted into Switzerland were called "internees," POWs kept under guard at one place. A popular saying goes, "The Swiss were working for the Germans six days a week and praying for the Allies on the seventh." Probably some 95% of the Swiss were openly pro-allied.

The first U.S. aircraft to land in Switzerland was a B-24D SN 42-40611, Death Dealer, of the 93rd BG on 13 Aug 1943. It was set afire and destroyed by its crew at Thurau near the city of Wil. It had taken part in a raid on the Messerschmitt factory at Wiener-Neustadt. At this time the 44th, 93rd, and 389th BG's were sent to North Africa to participate in operations Tidal Wave and Juggler-Juggler. (Incidentally on 9 Oct 1943 the first B-24 to land in Sweden was also from the 93rd BG and it too was named "Death Dealer," with SN 42-40610.) The first B-17 to land in Switzerland was named "HighLife," SN 42-30080, from the 100th BG and on its 13th combat mission. It was on the

Schweinfurt mission of 17 Aug 1943. They crash landed with #3 feathered, #2 shot-up, and prop wind milling and landing gear up. The second B-17, SN 42-30315, named "Battle Queen-Peg of My Heart," of the 390th BG and also on the Schweinfurt mission, belly landed on 17 Aug 1943. It had two engines shot out, dropped out of formation and bellied in near Berne, Switzerland.

Of the 166 U.S. aircraft which landed in Switzerland 74 were B-17s, 82 were B-24s and the remaining were miscellaneous types. The last arrival came in on 20 April 1945. It was a B-17G, SN 44-6347, "Princess O'Rourke", from the 30st BG, 15th AF. A record of 16 U.S. aircraft went down in Switzerland in one day alone on 18 March 1944. The most during WWII. Twelve were B-24s (6 from the 44th BG alone) and four were B-17s. Some landings were highly questionable, such as the case on 16 March 1944 when a 93rd BG B-24D SN 42-40969, "Big Noise", (a veteran of the famous Ploesti Raid) was flown into Dubendorf where it landed. The Swiss noted "aircraft was undamaged with enough fuel (1058 gals.) for a return to England."

Between 27 Aug and 22 Oct 1945, 30 B-17s, 41 B-24s and one P-51 were flown to Burtonwood, UK. The rest were scrapped in Switzerland. Ironically, the B-17s and B-24s, which were flown to England, arrived too late to be flown back to the U.S. and so were scrapped at Burtonwood. Other miscellaneous items such as aircraft equipment, bombs, flight clothing, etc. were hauled out of Switzerland by six large trucks, each carrying 20 tons, to Munich-Erding, Germany where most was destroyed or burned.

At wars end the Swiss government presented the USAAF with an invoice for \$104,000.00 for the lodging of interned U.S. airmen and maintenance on U.S. aircraft during their stay in Switzerland.

Note: At wars end investigations ordered by Gen. Spaatz concluded that few if any crews deliberately diverted to Switzerland. Such are the fortunes of war.

Adolf Scolavino, Historian
NM Chapter, 8thAFHS

BULLETIN BOARD

HELP

Whoever sent pictures to someone of 3 crews—Inglis, Mellors, and someone else—if you want the pictures back from whoever you sent them to, let him know. He called us, left a message on the answering machine. My wife called and said "This is for you" after the message started and we didn't hear who called. And then out of habit, she erased the message. As you can see, we're flying blind on this one.

REMEMBER Charles (Bud) Mellinger?

Bud was a pilot in the 550th or 551 st. He made it back home but was killed in a car accident. His son is trying to contact any member of the crew. If you can help, please write to Mrs. Karma Mellinger, 8604 E Onyn Dr SW, Tacoma Wa 98498.

APOLOGIES

Sorry for the late mailing of the December Hardlife. Our publisher was swamped with work that had to be out "right now", and we had to be held up for a few weeks. The February issue should be on time.

GROUP HISTORY UPDATE

Southern Heritage Press expects to ship our Group History books the first week in February. They apologize for the delay and thank all of us for our patience. Instead of a Christmas gift, they can be used as a Valentine!!

TOUR TO ENGLAND SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 4, 1996

Itinerary is being worked out—approximate cost \$ 1336 from New York—much more time scheduled around Great Ashfield than before—details will be in the April Hardlife Herald. Ten Nights, English Breakfast and 5 lunches & 9 dinners included in the cost.

NOTICE

The December issue had a "thank you" letter from Bob Swindell on page 6. His name was left off—SORRY!! Bob won a door prize at the Reunion with a mail-in purchase of 3 tickets.

CORRECTION

In Secretary George Hruska's report on the Omaha Reunion, we were a little rough on our speaker— demoted him from a Lt General to a Lt Colonel. We apologize to Lt. General Smith (hope he didn't get a copy of our newsletter).



WE SOLD OUT OF REUNION
WATCHES IN A HURRY.
IF YOU WOULD LIKE ONE
OR MORE SEND ME \$20.00
FOR EACH PLUS \$3.00 FOR
POSTAGE. IF I GET ENOUGH
ORDERS I WILL THEN GET
THEM ORDERED. SEND TO
GEORGE S. HRUSKA
7442 ONTARIO STREET
OMAHA, NE 68124-3563

EDITOR'S NOTE: As we said in the August issue, Charles McCauley has written a wonderful account of his life, his 385th experiences, and how things developed for him from a depression-dust bowl era farm to the present. Here's one of his stories of a tragic accident that many of you will remember.

EXCERPT FROM THE THREE TREES

By Charles McCauley

Not all problems come when you are on a mission. I had been asked to take up a plane for slow-timing the engines. This plane was a "war weary" plane, not suitable for combat, as it had been stripped of all guns, etc. We gathered a make-up crew for a six hour mission as it had two new engines to be broken in. We were going to fly at about 5,000 feet to just see the country side. Many times ground personnel ask to take a ride on this type flight, to get in flight time to maintain flying pay.

This March 12th our Link trainer instructor, Sgt. Jim Ezell asked to go along. His Link trainer was "Ezell Deezil" and was a famous sport for group pilots to hang out and get in some "Link" time between operational missions. He wanted to fly the tail position so that he could see "where he has been". We had not been in the air very long, and about 50 miles from base, when along our side came a B-24.

The March 12th accident between my plane and a B-24 was a close call for all the crew, and unfortunately, caused the death of Sgt. Jim Ezell. The pilot of the B-24 called to me on the radio saying he was always hearing about how good we flew formation in the B-17, and he was going to show us "real" formation flying with his B-24. All of a sudden he brought his plane close so his wing was within mine. We often do this over the bomb run in the B-17; however, his wing is build differently, and he got caught in my propwash. Almost instantly the B-24 was sucked into, and through, the tail of our plane.

I am not certain of the fate of the B-24. I know our controls were frozen one would not move. We could not see the destruction of the tail (vertical stabilizer was almost knocked off, the rudder was jammed into the stabilizer, the left elevator was almost cut in-half, and the right elevator was frozen in place. We could not get back into the tail to help Sgt. Ezell.) and we were losing altitude.

Click wasn't with me today. I did recall an instructor in the States telling me to try the autopilot when control cables are cut or frozen. Seconds later I had this on to assist holding the plane level, but we were losing more altitude. Instinct told me to go against the norm and I put on full power! We leveled off at 900 feet, flew level, and started to slowly gain altitude. The elevator was frozen in just the right spot!!



After fifteen minutes I had coached the plane back up to 2,500 feet and radioed the base for clearance to land. We didn't know our condition, and neither did the base. Neither did I know how I was going to turn the plane without the use of the tail section, and with the wing ailerons frozen. Still with full power on, I thought of cutting two engines back on one side. This caused that side of the wing to drop and gave us a gradual flat turn. The least change in power caused a great change in the plane's attitude. I really had to be careful.

The crew spotted the base and I started a huge flat turn heading for the runway. We would be coming in fast so I had only one chance to hit the very end of the runway. There would be no second chance. We used all the runway, and our brakes did their job to stop us in time. I taxied back to the first hardstand to allow the medics to help the man in the tail. It was too late. Sgt Ezell had lost too much blood from his legs being severed.

There was already a crowd around the tail section by the time I was able to get out to see the "problem". When I did observe the severity of the accident, my knees almost went out from under me! I could not believe it! One of the men in the publicity department said to me, "I tried to get you on the radio to ask if you would go around the field one more time. I didn't get a picture of the plane in the air." He didn't know how lucky I felt to be on the ground!!



Capt. Huff of the Medical Section, assisted by medical orerlies and a number of our crew, work to free the injured Sgt. Ezell.



It all began in 1862, during the Civil War, when a Union Army Captain, Robert Ellicombe, was with his men near Harrison's landing, in Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of this narrow strip of land. During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moan of a soldier who lay mortally wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention. Crawling on his stomach through the gun fire, the captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment. When the captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead.

The captain lit a lantern. Suddenly, he caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier. It was his own son! The boy had been studying music in the south when the war broke out. Without telling his father, he had enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, the heart-broken father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial despite his enemy status. His request was partially granted.

The captain had asked if he could have a group of army band members play a funeral dirge for the son at the funeral. That request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate. Out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician. The captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform.

This wish was granted. That music was the haunting bugle melody we now know as "Taps" used at all military funerals.

The above article is extracted from Doug Storer's Encyclopedia of Amazing But True Facts, published by Signet, and recommended to the Scottish Rite Journal, via Bro.-. Jack O'Faust, by D. A. Morrison, Commander (Honorary) Four Corners Navy Seabee Veterans of America, Inc, Island X-1, Farmington, New Mexico, as a story "worth sharing with my Veteran friends."

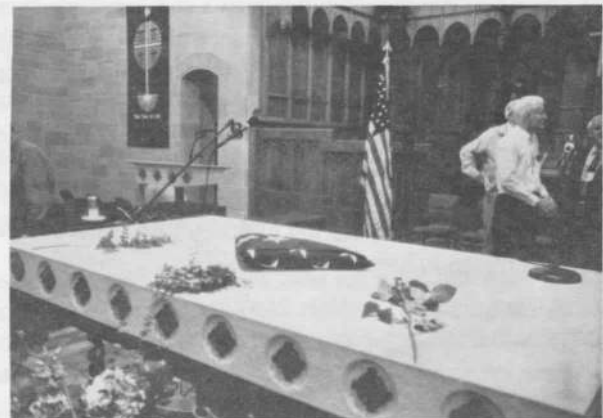
Another incident was eapt. Masters account of his ditching off the coast of France. Ask him who stayed with them as they ditched. The plane sank in seconds, and the good old Raunchy Wolf crew flew low over them and dropped their life rafts to captain Masters and his crew. They circled and stayed with them, radioing their position to air sea rescue, until the Raunchy Wolfs fuel was almost out, and just managed to make it to an RAF base with on engine out. It seemed as though Capt. Masters forgot about this.

Arthur M. Boyer

EDITOR'S NOTE: This refers to the return after landing in Africa from the Regensburg raid. John Dewey group navigator was lost while swimming toward one of the life rafts.



Dan Riva addressing the 551st Squadron Meeting.



Funeral at Riva Town Chapel

Schweinfurt Painting Report

The sale of 100 lithographs has made it possible to pay for this project.

1. 100 members and families are enjoying this combat scene of WWII over Germany. One copy to artist Tom Wells of Seattle for professional advice.

- 2. We own the copyrights on the remaining 889 prints.
- 3. We own the painting which has been appraised at \$10,000.00.

The Schweinfurt Painting and lithograph committee is as follows: Chairman, Bobo Smith; Bob Valliere; Arch Benner; Michail Gallagher; Chuck Smith; Jim McDonald; Danny Riva; and Sid Colthorpe.

Our initial task is to do the following:

- 1. Arrange a suitable and official unveiling of this important painting.
- 2. Find a suitable and reputable agency to market the remaining lithographs.
- 3. Place the painting. Places such as Boeing, savanah, Smithsonian, Duxford and Offutt have been suggested.

Print and Financial Accounting:

Prints Sold:	100
gift to artist	1
replace due to damage	10

Shipped	total: 111
On hand for sale	889

Profit and Loss statement for picture:

Total Income and Interest:	\$ 13375.95
(includes \$4500 held money from the 385th)	
Expenses:	
copyright, lithographs	
Expense, ins, etc	\$7010.80
Bob Smith Xp	\$1639.76
Return for deposit to 385th	\$4500.00
Refunds	\$150.00
Service Charge	\$3.00
	<hr/>
	\$13303.56
Balance in account	\$72.39

EDITORS NOTE:

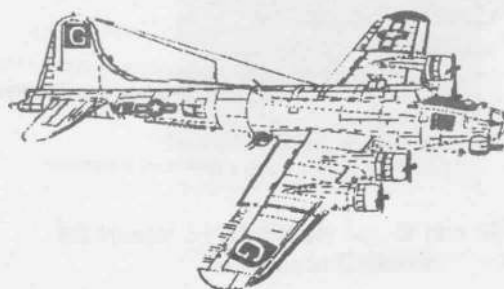
Past President Bob Smith did a huge job of originating and bird-dogging this project to a succesful conclusion. Handling the promotion, orders, mailing, apologizing for the delay-ending up with a surplus an inventory of very valuable prints—quite an accomplishment that is recognized and appreciated by all.



Don Hunter fir Leo LaCasse



Hospitality Room/Bar



"The U.S. Air Force - 50 Years Strong"

A CELEBRATION OF INDIVIDUAL DEDICATION AND NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT....

The Air Force Association will bring together veterans, Air Force members, aerospace industry representatives, reunions groups, the

Thunderbirds, foreign and civilian aerial demonstration teams, foreign air forces, and, most importantly, members of the American public for five days in 1997 to celebrate America's Air Force.

The five days...April 22-26, 1997...will be filled with activities and events that will impress the most discriminating of air show attendees. Two days of air shows, a huge aerospace exhibition at the convention center, reunion group activities, symposia, and gala evening events are just a few of the things planned for this celebration.

Join the Air Force Association as we mark the 50th Anniversary of the United States Air Force.

LAS VEGAS-APRIL 22-26, 1997- *BE THERE,*
FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL
1 (800) 727-3337 EXT. 1997



Air Force Association

1501 tec Highway, Arlington, Virgin'ia* >2209-' 19S
An Independent Mon Profit Aerospace Organization

James A. McDonnell, Jr.

CNef/Progrmms, Fvents & Military Relations

MAJOR EVENT SCHEDULE

(Preliminary)

Tuesday, April 22, 1997

Registration
Reunion Group Reception
Come and meet your Air Force friends from the past.

Wednesday, April 23, 1997

Aerospace Exhibits and Displays
Morning Open for Reunion Groups
International Air Power Symposium
Interantional Air Power Reception

Thursday, April 24, 1997

Aerospace Exhibits and Displays
U.S. Air Force Symposium
Afternoon Open for Reunion Groups
USAF Golden Anniversary Reception
& Dinner or Buffet

Friday, April 25, 1997

Aerospace Exhibits and Displays
Nellis AFB Open House Air Show
and Displays
Evening Open For Reunion Groups

Saturday, April 26, 1997

Nellis AFB Open House Air Show
and Displays
Evening Open for Reunion Groups



The Entertainers

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Bob Silver received this letter from Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands that made him feel real good, as it should have. Probably others of you did, too.

Bob wrote the story of his return to the Netherlands for the 50th anniversary of the Chowhound missions, and, after thinking about it, he sent a copy to Prince Bernhard. To his surprise and pleasure, he received a hand-written Christmas card acknowledging receipt of the story, even making a correction of one of Bob's statements, which proves that it was read.

So-how many of YOU have been receiving Christmas cards from Royalty lately?

Bob also sent a wonderful 4 page letter from Major General Frans L. Cayaux of the RNLA (ret) telling of the emotional feelings he had as he met the men who had dropped food to him at the Hague when he was 9 years old.

Incidentally, our President Bob Valliere is a Director of the International Manna/Chowhound Brotherhood.



H.R.H. PRINCE BERNHARD
OF THE NETHERLANDS
HONORARY PRESIDENT



B

INTERNATIONAL
MANNA/CHOWHOUND
BROTHERHOOD



&

BOB COOPERMAN, CHAIRMAN U.S.A.
17 ALDEN AVE., SYOSSET, NY 11791

REESE MARTIN, DIRECTOR
BOB VALLIERE, DIRECTOR

Soestdijk Palace, December 1995

Dear Fellow-Airmen,

Nobody will deny it - 1995 has been a memorable and also quite emotional year for us.

When you men of Manna and Chowhound were marching past on that 3rd of May - remarkably vital by the way - and the historic aircraft flew low over Soestdijk Palace, our hearts were touched.

It was wonderful to witness how our people, who were saved by the food you dropped in April and May 1945, and also their children and grandchildren, remembered you. They showed their renewed gratitude by thousands and thousands. Your food drops seemed to have created a never ending bond between the airmen of the Royal Air Force and the United States Air Force and the people of the Netherlands on a receiving end.

Let us be realistic. We certainly belong to the lucky survivors. We received the honours and thanksgivings, fifty years after again. Also in the name of all those good fellow airmen, who did not live to see and feel this national gratitude.

This gives us good reason for happy feelings now that we, half a century older in the meantime, were selected to live on, to celebrate and be celebrated. In spite of pitfalls, such as the pretty deep physical valley I had to go through during the passed winter.

It are these feelings which may give us a true happy Christmas. And let us pray for another healthy new year among our beloved ones.

God bless you,

Prince of the Netherlands

34th B.G. 95th B.G. 96th B.G. 100th B.G. 385th B.G. 388th B.G. 390th B.G.

452nd B.G. 490th B.G. 493rd B.G. 3rd SCOUT

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BEKANNTMACHUNG

Der Oberbefehlshaber (der deutschen Armeegruppe Süd) weat, Generaloberst Heinrich von Vietinghoff, hat sich mit einwichtigen unter seinem Kommando stehenden—deutschen und faschistischen—Truppen Oberbefehl ertheilt. Er hat dementsprechende Befehle erteilt, denen unverzüglich Folge geleistet werden muss.

Ihr habt den Kampf sofort einzustellen und auf Eurem gegenwärtigen Standort verbleibend. weitere Anordnungen abzuzwarten.

H. R. ALEXANDER

Feldmarschall

Alliiertes Höchstkommandierendes
Mittelschwer-Kreigsbauplatz.

Dear Ed,

Since 1 turn 76 young years tomorrow and only use the cane to swat away coyotes, gila monsters and the like I thought I'd treat myself to a birthday gift and tell all 385th'rs how it was after the 385th. Oct 3, 1944 was a bummer for me what with the five flake areas...moderate to heavy and accurate, it was the luftwaffe jet base west of Nurnburg with a bombing altitude of 25,000 feet, damned flak. Hit my oxygen lines. Thought every tooth in my mouth was pulverized. All sorts of garbage sucked into my lungs each time I breathed. Lt. Kaplan got us home safe. I logged it as an 8:00 hour mission.

1 did not fly the October 6, 1944 Berlin mission and I was released from the hospital after the takeoff. As I understand it the 385th/549th put up 13 planes and 2 aborted and all of the 11 B-17's were shot down over Berlin or in close proximity.

Anyway to make a long story short I was the only one left in my quonset hut and Sgt. Roy White in the next hut the only one left in his. I think Roy had completed his 25 missions. Me, only 7 up to October 6th.

Anyway, the late Sgt. Arthur 'Whitey' Wallace, who had been 'flaked' in the base of his spine over Coblenz, and whom I gave first aid to and dragged him back to the radio room area, and assumed his tail position... well, Whitey was the only other one from Lt. Kaplans crew that I know of who also missed the October 6th mission. I guess Whitey was 'walking wounded' at the time. I heard I was put in for a citation, but, nothing ever came of it.

Well, Colonel Jumper and I had a nice talk and I wound up on Corsica; flying tail gunner on B-25's. I wanted the change as I didn't know anyone anymore and the replacements were younger than I was. On Corsica, Major Canale my C.O. had me report to him. He told me he knew I was Staff Sgt. Conrow and I was alive, but a flyer was fished out of the English Channel wearing my leather flight jacket with my name on it and the flyers dog tags didn't jibe. I remembered the young boy. His first mission I believe and I had two jackets and loaned him one. So, that's the sad story.

Anyway, I'm cutting this close now...I was in the chow line at Fano, Italy on the Adriatic, after evacuating Corsica a bit previous. My name came over the loud speaker. Report to the C.O. in a Class A uniform. On the double! So, I missed a meal but was in for a surprise. As were two other x-8th AF'guys. Sgt Brown and Sgt. Allen. I believe Allen was from Philadelphia. As I entered the C.O.'s office Sgt. Brown exited. I asked Brownie what was up. He told me I would find out. Find out I did. For sure!

I was called into Major Canale's inner sanctum and saluted. This fine West Pointer put me at ease and then told me he would like me to fly one more mission on May 3, 1945. And, I would receive another citation. Rough, Tough New York City kid that I was (now approaching 26 years of age) I told him I didn't want another citation. I just wanted to go home. The fact that friendly medics on Corsica and in Italy kept patching me up with sulfa drugs and me dodging medical exams from a spinal problem had something to do with going home. That was for sure. Anyway, back in the States a doctor wanted to hold up my discharge for a surgery but I wouldn't agree and it took 7 years for the spinal fluid drainage to heal completely.

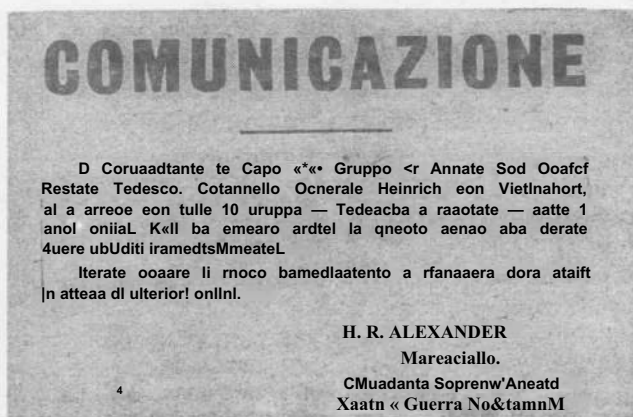
Anyway, I had the most number of combat hours and combat missions in my 12th Air Force group at that time and I was selected as an X-8TH AIR FORCE FLYER (along with Brown and Allen) to fly the unarmed surrender mission for sir Harold Alexander, Commander in Chief, Allied Forces, Mediterranean Theatre of Operations...Unarmed... three B-25's. Flying from treetop level to a max of 4,000 feet. Into a hornets nest of fanatical German troops in the Turin, Italy area. Three twenty mile treetop level passes. Throwing out surrender leaflets. (One souvenir enclosed-in German and Italian) Glad to get back in one piece. On landing I took my parachute and threw it at an officer and told him, "1 QUIT!" Why not? It was my 68th combat mission.

Anyway, I never got back into professional baseball. Too old. Too beat up...and, I remember the conversation Casey Stengel and I had in the old Hotel Commodore in New York City. I would be taken to Spring training in Florida in 1942. So, I enlisted in January, 1941 and was on my way home and at Warrington, W. Virginia with an Atlantic City, New Jersey artillery outfit when Pearl Harbor was bombed... and, never got out of the service until July 26, 1945. So, in some way I did get to the "Big Leagues" what with the 8th and 12th Air Force gigs!

Two things I cherish are on a bedroom wall, along with my late wife Statias aerial shot of a Lockheed Lightning P-38. One is the Air Force Award for Valor for bravery in the face of the enemy during 68 combat missions of intense severity which earned me the gratitude of my fellow country men...and, the other the Award for the Conspicuous Service Cross by enactment of a Legislative body and signed by the late "crime buster" Governor Thomas E. Dewey. Two days after my military discharge I took a Federal exam and in time became a member of a Fraud and Racket Unit and assigned to Intelligence. Two years on the waterfront working cases which were the outgrowth of the late Senator Estes Kefauver's hearing. Worked Brooklyn, NY, 5 Posts of duty in New Jersey, worked Arizona, California, Reno, Tought Federal Officers over a period including the first class of female officers Sept-Oct. 1966. Retired in 1974 after supervising for a number of years several groups of Treasury Officers, including stints as Acting Chief, Field Branch, and supervising Narcotics officers. So, all in all... reflecting on things...and facing my 76th birthday tomorrow, September 9th...it has been a good life and I have been pretty damned lucky.... and, needless to say it has been my honor to have been associated with the Great Ashfield heros.

Keep 'em flying!

Sincerely,
Ed Conrow
13541 Whitewood Drive
Sun City West, Az. 85375



Dear Ed,
At our last dinner meeting the torch of leadership was passed on to me. As a life member of the National 8th Air Force and a member of the 385th Historical Societies let it be known that any member of the 385th may contact me for any help. Next year will be a very busy year for me and hope that it will be successful. Some members of the 385th in Mass, have asked if we will be going back to England in 1996. Thanks again for adding Thorobred to the Hardlife Herald cover.

Sincerely,
Albert E. Audette, Pres
Mass. Chapter 8th Air Force
Historical Society

Dear Jane & Ed,

You had a picture of a P47 buzzing our field in the October Newsletter. I think I know who did it. Preston Piper, our former air exec, left our group and joined a P47 group. One day he flew over to our base to have me check a tooth that was bothering him. When I was finished doing whatever it was that needed doing, I got my camera and drove out to the tower with him and asked him to fly down the runway so that I could get a "head-on" shot of the P47. Well, he really did a great job. I got the picture, but fell flat on my face as I thought he was so low he'd chop my head off!! Don't know why anyone else would have done it.

An interesting sidelight to the 200 mission party you spoke about, was that the guitar player with the Glen Miller was a patient of mine. We got together at that time. He introduced me to most of the other members of the band. Little did I know but that the lead singer was to marry my niece right after the war. Actually, this fellow subsequently did all the production numbers of the Carol Burnett shows.

Ed, did I ever tell you of my first airplane ride? Well, it took place when the group moved from Spokane to Great Falls. Col. Van was an avid bridge player. The bridge foursome consisted of Van, "Joe" the catholic chaplain, McWilliams the intelligence officer and myself. Not to be deprived of a bridge game in Great Falls, he told the foursome that instead of taking the troop train we should fly with him to our next base.

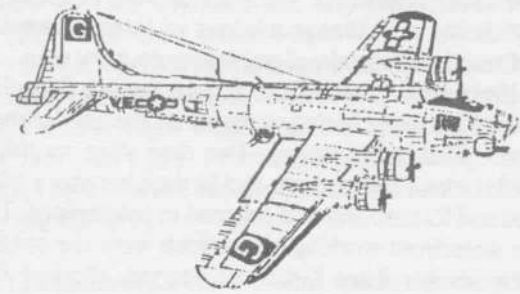
That sounded pretty good to me since I had never been in a plane before and wanted to see what it was like. Col. Van flew the plane and his "cohorts" were in the radio room. Soon after take-off we flew over the mountains. It was the end of March. The mountains were covered with snow ■ it was a grand sight. Someone suggested that if I went to the tail gunners spot, I could get a panoramic view. That was all I had to hear. Back into the tail I went. I was enjoying the view for not more than five minutes when the bottom of the plane seemed to fall out. Then suddenly up I went like a seesaw. No sooner had that happened when I was sort of thrown from side to side. Fortunately, the plane did not seem to be falling. I crawled back into the radio room - and no one seemed to be disturbed at what went on. Then Col. Van asked me to come up to where he was flying the plane. He asked me how I was enjoying the "ride." At that point I realized what was going on. Knowing that I had never flown before, he told someone to suggest I go back into the tail. Then he whipped the tail around in just about every direction. I never let on how scared I was, but told him what a pleasant experience it was!!

Milton L. Taubkin, DDS
3166 Cavendish Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90064-4743
(310) 838-1747

EDITOR'S NOTE: See Leo LaCasse's letter on page 15. Only 50 years ago-maybe we were buzzed twice.

Dear Ed,

In the April '95 H.L.H., page 6 you printed five Strike type photos. These photos triggered a question that I have been meaning to address. During the time I was Gen. Fred Castles driver at 4th Bomb Wing I was able to save several Strike and Recon photos. My problem is that although some of the photo markings are clearly understandable, like date, Target and altitude. some however, such as, "SAV" and code numbers following it and the code members before the altitude I cannot figure out. It seems like the numbers following "SAV" might be unit I.D. but they don't make sense as Squadron I.D., or do they??



A sample of photo marking as they appear in the original photo.

*(SAV-385^a/523 - /3) (21-6-44) (07054-12-25000) (BERLIN)
The 385 didn't have a 523 Sqn. The date I understand. the. 07054-12 ?
and of course, the 25000 is, altitude in feet. Could 385^a mean. "A" Flight?*

*(SAV-4470/1138-1) (22-3-45) (900-7-24500) (VCLBCR7 AREA) CON?) (6°71L7)
Understand the date, altitude and target, Confidential and angle.
Could 4470 mean "0" Flight?*

*(SAV-38573/322-7) (97559-7-25000) (PRELORICHSHAPCN)
Understand 25000 Feet and target only. What one other number,?
Could 38573 mean "73" Flight?*

*(SAV96ALE/1112-2) (14-4-45) (841-12-23430) (1WJAN) (15° 71L7) (CON?)
Understand date and altitude., Target, Angle, & Confidential.*

(SAV-7966-5)(22-3-45) 521-12-24500) (VCL73ER7 AREA) (6°) CON?.

*One photo is, marked up in ink and Diack ink. as follows, "385 730mL Qp (H)
(3io>o>ion 6 July 1944 PCI." "Ao>o>igned & actual atoning point. Heading 80° 13"
"730(373 7RAIL" Annoivo, point to above, marked "V-1, V-2, W" and "2-1,2,3, 4,5, 6,7
and y, X, LL" Obviously marked by photo intensifier, but no target identified
en.ce.pt for the mission date. Pnom some pant HLH. I too, all to pin point the
6 July 13io>o>iono> ao> #145 Cneppy and on the same day #146 ao> Seuteno, count,
that item did not mention the Localcon of the the, e Tangelo,.*

I have about 50 Photos, in various, sizes, some marked, some not.

*If you can help me out on often me to someone knowledgeable I would be
grateful.*

73eo,t Regaodo,

*Nonman Valentine
721 Lawnence Lane
AmJUn, Pa, 19002*

Dear Ed,

Please add Horice R. Hosback to our 385th Newsletter. He lives at 737 Amosland Rd. Morton, PA 19070. He was a gunner in the 551st Squadron. His crew was shot down and he became a prisoner.

I enjoy every issue. I was a member of Bill Whitehead's Crew of the 548th Squadron.

My wife and I hosted our 50th Reunion on 10-1 -94. All seven of our living members attended. It was a wonderful time together.

Sincerely,
 John H. Povey
 869 Goshen Rd.
 Newton Square, PA 19073

Dear Ed,

In the last copy of Hard Life someone wanted to know who the pilots of the P-47 buzzing Great Ashfield. They were Ben Johnston and Less Kress. Both were classmates of mine until we separated after going through Primary and Basic Flying School. They had someone go to G.A. to check on me and find out how to identify our group to Maximize high cover whenever we flew missions. Ben was the Squadron Comander and wanted to be sure he kept an eye on my safety. That concern may have made some difference in our losses. Have a great Holiday and good health to you both.

All the best,
 Leo LaCasse

EDITOR'S NOTE:

See Milt Taubkins letter on page 13.

Dear Ed,

Appreciate the picture of the B-1 7 Mississippi Miss in the October 1995 Herald. Have been looking for the aircraft serial number all of these years. As you recall this aircraft was named by our crew after we were assigned to fly it in May or June 1944. Since I was the pilot and was from Mississippi then the crew named it for my home state. I have written to Ian McLachlan and thanked him for the picture with the serial number.

Sincerely,
 Howard Richardson
 4624 Kelton Drive
 Jackson, Ms. 39211
 (601)362-7151



Dear Ed,

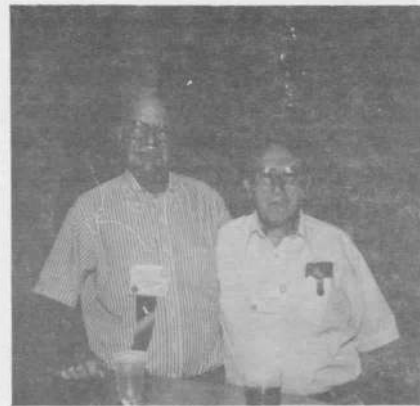
I was the bombardier on one of the original crews of the 385th. Jordan's great crew 13 of the 549th.

I later went with Gen. Le May and flew 28 combat missions in the B-29's, plus several often weird intelligence missions. Was recalled during the Korean War.

I am writing to answer Ian McSachlars Letter concerning the picture lower left on pg. 13 of the Oct. 95 issue. The short figure on the left looking intently at the chart is Louis Dentoni, lead bombardier of the 551 st. Louie and I were both from San Francisco. He was lost over Berlin after I had finished up.

Does anyone know of James T. McShane, bombardier in Ink's L. Crew. I've lost touch with him.

George B. Brown
 514-A Cliff St.
 Santa Cruz, Ca 95060



John Pettinger & Jack Gesser



Bill Hunter 549th Supply Sgt. & him wife Ruthie at home in California

Dear Ed,

What a great reunion we had in Omaha, thanks to people like you and the Hruskas who make it all possible.

I served on the Famed "Wally" Mellors Crew as a bombardier. The '95 reunion was the first any of us had ever attended, and I'm proud and happy, to say, seven of us made it.

I am enclosing a couple of pictures I thought you might be interested in, "before & after".

Might also mention our plane was "Sky Goddess" which we left in a beet field about half way between Lille, France, and Brussels, Belgian on November 25, 1944.

Also, if anyone knows the whereabouts of William P. Wood. (Last known address: Ogdon, Michigan) Please contact me.

The best to you and yours,
 Jim Shoemaker
 45358 10th St West
 Lancaster, Cal 93534
 (805) 945-7084



1995

Back Row: (LtoR) Co-Pilot-James "ED" Hefner; Bombardier-James "Jim" Shoemaker; Pilot-James "Wally" Mellors
 Front Row: (LtoR) Ball Gunner-Quentin Swartz; Radio Operator-William "Bill" Henderson; Engineer-John "Campy" Campenelli; Waist Gunner-Herbert Baudier.



1944

Back Row: (LtoR) - Pilot-James W. Millors; Navigator-Micheal J. Pohorillo; Bombardier-James G. Shoemaker; Co-Pilot-James E. Hefner.

Front Row: (LtoR) - Tail Gunner-Wilbur P. Word; Radio Operator-William E. Henderson; Waist Gunner-Herbert Baudier; Waist Gunner-Robert Bain(K.I.F) Engineer-John Campanall, Ball Gunner-Quentin Swartz.



Omaha, September 1995
 Bob Valliere & Beverly McElroy

Dear Ed,

You know of my 385th tour with Col. Van. Perhaps you didn't know that I was also his Group Ops Officer in Tampa (about 1951 I think). We and another group at the base were the first units to fly jet heavy bombers, the B-47's had 6 jets but a limited endurance (7 hours without refueling).

So-oo-o I probably knew Van better than others.
 Note: Some of those London Girls were on Great Ashfield 3 weeks after the train left (to take them back).

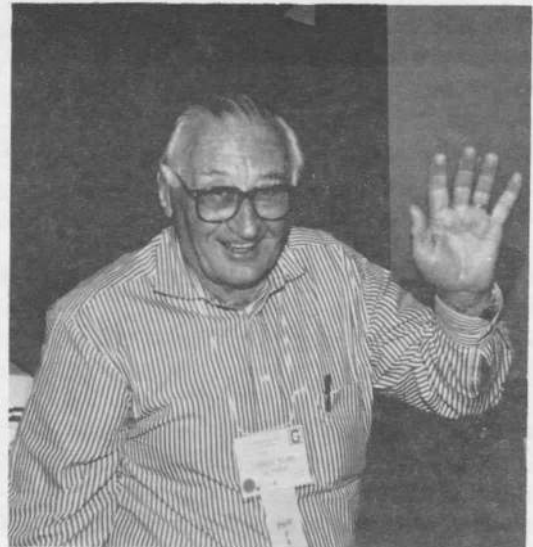
Another Note: RE: dazzle your grand children with the following statistics on Page 6. I didn't know I had led "the greatest single force of airplanes ever dispatched in history".

You may remember my story about Gen. Castle pushing me out of the lead. I became the deputy leader and when (over Belgium), Castle was shot down I took over for the last 5 hours. I didn't realize we had 2034 bombers up that day.

As Ever,
 Col. James G. McDonald
 950 Mandalay Beach Road
 Oxnard, California 93035
 805-985-2980



Bob Smith & Gordon Cook



Forrest Poore



Obviously happy to see each other!!



Jerry Howard and Pals

EDITOR'S NOTE: Tom Helman and this B-29 had quite a trip about the time the Enola Gay was heading toward the Smithsonian. Read his story!

ME AND THE MAYBE ORIGINAL ENOLA GAY

Dear Ed,

Your nice piece on the B-29 in the December 94 Hardlife, brought to my memory an episode I had in one of those superforts of an early vintage, and of questioned virtue, but yet of intriguing history.

And today, even after fifty years, I've yet to figure if my role be either dandy, dunce, or dupe, as I dangled as victim to one puffy combo of federal hothead fuzz, guarding a secret so secret even they had no idea what it was that was secret; (the Manhattan Project).

Of course the names Offutt and Omaha are both ribbon that binds, at least in part, this whole tale together.

How I came to be a part of this is only the happenstance of duty at Wendover AAB Utah, to Chanute Field at Champaign, Illinois.

It was with these orders that, with my four-man crew and after a short airline flight from home-base Great Falls to Salt Lake City, I paddled the chugging old stage coach (forerunner to Greyhound) plumb to the Wendover front gate. And there I began one red tape trail only some oldtime exec like you-know-hoo could handle.

Even before our luggage was downloaded off the stage rooftop, my (on paper) orders were rebuffed with instructions to cool it until an armed guard could escort me only to the Provost office, my favorited place of all places of course.

In short time the guard appeared, and after telling the three of my crew to stay with the stuff, he paraded me a three minute walk to a barren back room of what appeared as the police head quarter. Just for one mad moment I had the wild impulse to make a fast one-eighty, as I think, I am outta here! It looked like a gob-mob gestapo to me.

Shades of Al Capone, there were three of them, three piece suits and white shirt and tie, all three with telltale humps ahiding their issue hoglegs, each one I thought a smelling like an unaliened 4F.

Of the three, the guy in the middle was the mouth. He flashed an ID so fast I only heard the words "special agent" and "FBI", awaving me to a straight-backed chair that sat near the middle of the room.

Hey I'm thinking (to myself), three on one; they'll get no blood from me, not from this mild mannered one-bar captain; its only name, rank, and serial number to these guys, so what's the deal?

Maybe the dude in the middle read my mind but he was wrong about my slow western grin. He should of known I was scared enough to cry.

This's no laughing matter Lieutenant, he sneered (the right word for a growl I'd say). You are to tell NO ONE that you have been here or what you have SEEN here and you will be taken to your plane ONLY! And if you approach any other airplane on the line, you will be SHOT FIRST and questions will be MAYBE later, DO YOU UNDERSTAND? Wow.

I guess I nodded, but he repeated his last three words so loud I was obliged to wipe his spit off my face. Oh happy day, did this guy ever have a mother, ever? And if so, did his mother ever, too?

The trip to the flight line was a trick-or-treat fantasy. We all chucked our gear (plus us too) into the back of one GI 6x6, and were instructed to stay there on the ride through two tall gates, both of which were portal to two large separate areas that were secured by 8 foot chainlink. At each gate we got another driver, the first driver evidently not allowed into the second or middle area, and the second (hohum) not cleared into the third (area), this one the flight line.

These guys must have dreamed they were hauling us off to maybe a shangri-la someplace, or perhaps a salt mine. At each gate there was a heated discussion between the current driver and the next I'm, sure involving we four. Omigosh, I'm in a thunk again. Could it be? Maybe to a Stalag-Amerika? Is this the place? Weird.

After a five minute trip taking a good half hour, we were dumped at Operations, which was ground floor at one end of a huge hanger.

It was not astonishing to find we were expected, for even before I presented my Orders to the desk sarge, which was s.o.p., I (alone) was waved to a long stairway that was the way, I found to the man.

It was a pleasant surprise to find this friendly such gentleman, a full Kernel no less, who greeted me warmly with a shake and smile. He was an older man, in his fifties I'd guess, more than twice mine; just the ticket to cool my overboiled adrenaline, akindled in all of the just past wild hour.

I could welcome a hug right now for sure, but what gives? if it was gay-nineties time of THIS century, I'd be on my guard for an old hand-on-the-knee routine me think, but it didn't happen, it was 1945.

We (meaning he) got right down to a breezy dad-to-kid chat, that quickly goosed me to feel I had an itch I couldn't scratch. I didn't but no means add one whit to my part of this one-way conversation, I meant to keep it that way, him and NO me. In all this, all the marks of one deep mystery, were as rampant as bees swarming a honey bear.

Strangely he seemed obsessed at inviting me to SEE the very nono whatever the feddy fuzzes promised purgatory for me to forget. More than casually he invited me to the window that overlooked the flight line to view the bird we were doomed to fly. It was a lone B-29 that was among a flock of all kinds of airplanes I didn't even look at.

I only pretended real interest as he mentioned that the poor old thing was only on HIS flight line long enough for some ferry jock to truck her off to the graveyard. Her time was put in with "that bunch across the way", and he pointed to a passel of what looked like tar paper shacks far off across the airfield.

(Of course it was sometime later that it was learned the atomics trained "across the field" here at Wendover, secretly sequestered in the best kept secret ever, under the code name Manhattan Project.)

My mindset was etched soul deep on my arrival here abouts, so the less I SAW, the less I dared SEE. And the less I KNEW, the more that I would have not to FORGET. So tar paper shanties or dancin at Ritz, who cares? I was ready for a.w.o.l.; so outta here!

One last thing from the colonel: One of his men, a medic officer he said, needed a hitch to Chicago (Champaign was not far south from that famous windy place) so could or would..... I give him a ride?

Oh sure kernel, ure the boss, what can I say? But I'm a thunking (to myself fo course), might this guy be pet shill to the front-gate skunk works? OR the company shrink on a mercy mission? UGGH.

For most of the while I was experiencing the kernel's cordials, my crew was allowed to both load our gear and go through procedures that looked like preflight; ever warily, where was the shooter?

A class 26 airplane this one. It was a travel weary that neared the end-of-the-line, a sad sack on her way to the last roundup. And we carefully looked the other way at any flaw that might keep us on the ground. But how many a defect can be until an ill effect we be?

Nevertheless it was off we go, and it was on takeoff that first off the old girl showed her age. Tired maybe, but she could buck.

As was a dirty habit of early B-29s, all head temps were worse than red-line. And as dirty as this airplane was, we were lucky not to have an engine fire or several; and lucky we weren't hauling the huge load as did the unlucky bastards that flew these maryanns into combat. (I was a lucky bastard with 25 in a sweet-dolly B-17)

The only cure for this engine hotpants dilemma was for gear and flaps to up, then throttle back to climb, and flit as close to mama earth without hitting a thing or a body. We do this good.

And our poor medico passenger. He claimed this his first plane ride, oh my, and I gave him the best seat in the house; up front in the bombardier seat where the only blessing between him and a sandy salt experience was plexiglass and maybe ten feet of purely air.

On the point, he didn't last long, he was ten minutes in flight and then back with the flight engineer at the panel, looking rear.

I got so taken up with dodging salt dykes that I full forgot to scope our kernel's covert bivouac of "that bunch across the field". And neglected too, was a buzz job of the Bonneville salt flats that lay just east of Wendover, and north of the highway. Oh well.

We were nearly to the Great Salt Lake when we deemed it time to head upstairs and cool off the rest of us, beside engines. But dear mizz whiffletree, poor thing, pled to differ.

First she complained by puffing dungy smoke from her air inlets when we tried to pressurize the cabin at ten thousand, so forget it we did, and set up a cruise at that alt. So then enter Plan B.

But there she was unhappy still. Now it was her props. All four lost their sync and argued among themselves, so that we yawed along at a pitiful gait, a clean fifty em-pee-aitch less than her normal.

It was in the course of these major minor difficulties and as I change course northward toward Ogden, that my flight engineer, who worked the panel, done blued the air with a string of bleeps only a copilot could understand. Even I caught a few.

I give up, he whooped, not a bleepin gage in this whole bleepin ark that works, bleep bleep. I'm donning my parachute!! and be did.

Only for a moment did the guy's song and dance ring my bell, he after all was our cockpit comedian. His big thing was to bestartle our passenger (he thought him a spy), and this he did well, gruffly egging the poor guy into his chute, assuring him the WHY his crotch strap was cinched to tight (I thought maybe WHY he turned to pale).

In the meanwhile, I contined the B plan, proceeding from Ogden east on U.S. Highway 30. amd recalling from pilot school days, that when flying down highways or railroads, stay rightside, because for sure, a Navy jock will be coming down the middle (old joke).

Forget the parachutes men, I yelled back at the two of them, you guys should lighten up and enjoy all the scenery flying by.

If our baby blows, you got but three thousand feet to open; that is if you blow free; and in one piece. If she conks, then we'll put down with the freight trucks atrucking down below.

This was almost too easy. Highway 30 (now 1-80), was the Lincoln Highway (still is). And if we make it before dark, who needs a map? Just follow the stripe to Cheyenne (we could land there) and Lincoln (We could land there too) and Omaha (there too) then a right turn at Moline to pass-by Peoria, and then to Champaign, A snap.

It was near Cheyenne that I finally managed a position report to Cheyenne Radio. It was from them I learned the big black cloud cover that hung over Champaign this morning was still there, Hohum not me.

A near dark approach under a big black cloud down a strange road with no lights to read by, chickened me.

It wasn't a big decision to decide where our RON. It was Omaha. Our now unpetrified medico guest passenger, by now getting his color back, offered the humble request for Omaha, why? He didn't say.

But I'm thinking, why not Lincoln? yeah why not? Last year I was in Pilot Pool there. Yes! Stite beer and T-bone steak. So why Omaha?

Then came the light bulb...aha...so that's it, this guy wants out to go by train, he's cured of planes, and Omaha's got rail to ever.

Oh so? We ain't on the ground yet. He doesn't know this el train has the brakes like my old 35 Ford, the more you push em the faster.

And I didn't know, when comes time to cork it, is it a stopper? Only time will tell, for mush was for brakes at runup this morning.



On the bright side, it came to mind that Martin Bell built B-29s in Omaha. So? (another light bulb)...maybe we tradein for a new one? My druthers though, if druther 1 could have, was to deliver this bus to Chanute, be done with it, give her up as nightmare in a daydream.

It was ugly to think there'd be another flight tomorrow, proviso we walk it through the pancake coming up. As the guy said, how do we get out of this chicken outfit?

But it came out true, that all is well that ends well. However I gotta say said heartbeat went from pulse to throb at the very end of this ride of a life time. But I was just a young guy.

It came at when we had parked and the engines shut down, each of us yet jitters from the longest landing roll of all time, a mile and a half plus some weeds at the end. A look at poor medico showed he'd drained color all over again.

Suddenly wheeling from nowhere was this Ford sedan that screamed to a stop in front of our nose and out piled four civilianos, decked in suit and tie and even fedora. Oh no, I', saying, not them again!

But these guys were different a bit, they were smiling. Who are you guys, I'm smiling too, are you FBI?

Oh my no, chuckled one of them, we're Bell engineers. Didn't you know this is a famous airplane? One of the first made here in Omaha!

Famous indeed, famous last words as they say. But who is to tell me how did they know we were coming? We only came here by chance.

And medico? The last we saw of him, he was in a fast trot to the boy's room I guess. He never said goodbye. See you in Omaha.

Tom Helman



Boeing B-17F 303rd Bombardment Group, 8th Airforce based in UK 1943

EDITOR'S NOTE: From Henry Clow in their Pittsboro NC newspaper.

Memory's custodian

BY MIRINDA JEAN KOSOFF

DURHAM

World War II is again in the news. In recent months I've watched my teenage sons flip the TV channel past programs commemorating such milestones as D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge. Their disinterest saddens me, and I think about how the war is becoming a speck on the historical horizon as we sail toward the 21st century.

For me, World War II is personal and vivid, because my parents lived it. I'm the link between their generation and the generation for whom

POINT OF VIEW the war is only text in a history book. I want to be as alive for my children as they are for me.

World War II defined my parents' generation, just as Vietnam defined mine. It eclipsed any other event in my father's life, before or since. If he were alive today, my father would be almost 70, and he'd still be talking about the war, when he flew B-17s over Germany.

Like many fathers of his generation, he was unable to express feelings or share much of himself with his daughters. But the war had such a profound impact on him that he couldn't contain those memories: they spilled out like gems for me, his first-born, to pick through.

When I was a child, my father would often tuck me into bed at night. Instead of a lullaby, he'd sing a rousing rendition of "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon": "Around her neck, she wore a yellow ribbon, she wore it in December and in the merry month of May, and if you asked her why the heck she wore it, she wore it for that airman who was far, far away..."

That song thrilled me, because my father had been that airman, far, far away. A whiff of death-defying adventure still clung to him, and I could smell it.

Instead of a bedtime story, my father would tell me about the mission over Berlin that made him a believer.

I could picture him in the turret of his B-17, slicing/he sky as tracers lit up the night, bullets cracking through the plane's fuselage, my father's terror.

"By the grace of God," he said, they made it back. Others he knew weren't so lucky. The hardest part was returning from a mission to those empty bunks in the quonset hut he called home.

I wondered what it would be like to be in the turret of a B-17, taking enemy fire — heart pounding, ears ringing, muscles knotted, depending on crewmates to get back alive. I knew I would rather be the

Mirinda Jean Kossoff is a writer who lives in Durham and works as public affairs director for the state Department of Revenue in Raleigh.

one in the plane that the one at home waiting.

My father's stories, the movies and the music from that era shaped my romantic notions of the '40s. I loved "Bridge On the River Kwai" with William Holden and Alec Guinness, and John Wayne in "The Longest Day" and "The Sands of Iwo Jima." I swooned over incomparable love songs like "I'll Be Seeing You" or Vera Lynn singing "We'll meet again, don't know where, don't know when. ..."

I pull out my father's tattered brown scrapbook with its neatly labeled photographs, and there he is in his leather bomber jacket, hat with earflaps and flight goggles perched on his forehead. He's a smooth-face 19-year-old airman lined up with his crew, other young men barely out of boyhood with names like Augie, Bev, Fletcher and Stoop.

In their faces I see the cocky optimism of youth. They're proud members of the 385th bomb group, Eighth Air Force, stationed in England. My father is flight engineer and top turret gunner. His best friend Bev is ball turret gunner, the most vulnerable position in a B-17.

One picture is labeled "me and the guys before our 13th mission." They wear tight smiles intended to camouflage their fear and assert that they'll beat the odds again. Under the next picture my father wrote, "13th mission completed. All is well." The smiles are broader.

"Flying is Good Living," my father wrote as an introduction to his collection

A veteran's daughter forms a link between generations.

of wartime photos. Even then, he knew that nothing would ever compare with that experience. He knew that the prospect of death makes life crackle with intensity, and he wanted to capture it, if only through photographs.

But he did more than that. He distilled the courage and soul of those war years and passed their essence on to me.

I salute you, Dad,... and "I'll be seeing you."



ORANIENBURG - MARCH 15, 1945

EDITOR'S NOTE:

While reading Richard Rhodes "Dark Sun, the making of the Hydrogen Bomb", your editor came across a piece of history that our 385th Bomb Group is tied to,

The atom bomb was, of course, developed before the hydrogen bomb, and the book starts out with that history. It tells of the Russian success in infiltrating the Manhattan Project (with Klaus Fuchs, David Greenglass, the Rosenbergs, David Gold, etc..etc..). Russian scientists were kept pretty well abreast of what our scientists were doing and were able to use the 10,000 pages of information they got from their spies to adapt what they knew to what we had proven with our development. They didn't have the facilities, but they had the know-how.

Anyway, General Groves, C.E. of the Manhattan project knew of a German facility at Oranienburg that he desperately didn't want to fall into Soviet hands. When their armies were getting close, he flew to England, told the story to General Spaatz, arranged for a bombing mission to destroy the facility. It was March 15, 1945—and we were on the mission—some of you must remember. We didn't lose any planes. Frank Walls led the mission, and we furnished 38 planes. That raid could have been the first confrontation that started the cold war—We did the bombing to deny our ally the facility.

So—here's an excerpt from the book that tells the story. As for the book, it's damn tough reading—I'm now on page 472 out of 590. And don't ask me to take an exam on it when I finish!!

"Groves had sent a scientific intelligence mission to Europe to follow immediately behind the advancing western front and determine once and for all if the Germans had been working on the bomb. In Strasbourg, Groves's Alsos Mission had found documents identifying a metal-refining plant in Oranienburg, about fifteen miles north of Berlin in what would be the Soviet Zone of postwar Germany, as the source of cubes and plates of uranium metal intended for a German nuclear reactor. The Red Army was then advancing from the east dismantling factories "en passant" and shipping them back to the USSR. "Since there was not even the remotest possibility that Alsos could seize the (Oranienburg) works," Groves writes in his memories, "I recommended to (Army Chief of Staff) General Marshall that the plant be destroyed by air attack." The ostensible purpose of the attack was to prevent Nazi Germany from completing an atomic bomb, but Groves knew with some certainty by then that the Germans had not even begun work on nuclear weapons; evidently his purpose was to deny the facility to the Soviets. Groves sent an officer to London to confer with Carl "Tooey" Spaatz, the USAAF General, who commanded the Strategic Air Forces in Europe at that time. "We did not have any target maps," one of Spaatz's intelligence officers, Lewis F. Powell, Jr. later an associate justice of the US Supreme Court, recalls. I did obtain a city

map of Oranienburg by a hectic flight to London at night and going to the British War Office there." The mission was laid on for the afternoon of March 15, 1945. "In a period of about thirty minutes," Groves concludes, "612 Flying Fortresses of the Eighth Air Force dropped 1,506 tons of high explosives and 178 tons of incendiary bombs on the target. Post-strike indicated that all parts of the plant that were above ground had been completely destroyed." Groves was nothing if not thorough; if the Soviets desired uranium, he wanted them to start from scratch.

Ironically Stalin at that time still anticipated that the USSR and its allies might come to accommodation postwar. In February 1945, while he was meeting with Winston Churchill and a mortally ill Franklin Roosevelt at Yalta, in the Crimea, to further that purpose, his generals had offered him the opportunity of crashing through to Berlin in a matter of days, shortening the war by months. To their fury, Stalin had overruled them, telling them that such an uncoordinated advance would be rash and dangerous. He knew that the Western leaders, Churchill in particular, feared the Red Army might overrun Europe, and held his armies back so as not to alarm them. "It was ... a hard decision for Stalin to take," writes Alexander Werth. "...In the end, it cost the Russians hundreds of thousands of lives. Between February and April, the Germans had time to build powerful fortifications between the Oder and Berlin, and the final Russian victory was incomparably more costly to them than it would have been three months earlier."



Bob Douglas
Taking an order



385m BOMB GROUP UNIT HISTORY

This book will be approximately 200 pages and will consist of -the history, personal remembrances and photos of the members of the 385th.-

This will be a limited edition, hard cover volume that will increase in value the minute the last copy is bound. Reserve your copy now. Anticipated publishing date, 8/95.

385th Bomb Group History *please print*

Book	Qty	Price	Total
385th Bomb Group Unit History		39.95	
Gold Foil Name stamped on cover (Florida Residents add 7% sales tax)		5.00	
Postage and handling (\$3.95 for 1st book \$2.50 for each additional)		Shipping	
		Total	



send to:

**385th Bomb Group History
Southern Heritage Press**

**PO Box 10937 St. Petersburg, FL 33733
(800) 282-2823**

Name(s) to be embossed on cover (up to 24 spaces)

Payment: Check VISA Mastercard

Name on Credit Card

Credit Card Number

Expiration date

Name

Street

City, State, Zip

Phone

This unit history, put together over several years by Bill Barnedoe, will include 146 crew pictures, most with individuals identified, 98 plane pictures including nose art, plus a history of the 385th (pre-combat and combat), many

air stories, really a complete volume that everyone will treasure. Orders should be sent in promptly - there'll be just one printing.

385th BGMA APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Please Print

LAST NAME, First, MI.

Spouse's Name

Street or P.O. Box #

Telephone Number

City, State, & Zip Code

Squadron or Support Unit

The annual dues are Ten Dollars (\$10.00)
Life-time memberships are one payment of \$100.00
Make Check out to "385th BGMA" and mail to:
John F. Pettenger, Treas.
Box 117
Laurel, FL 34272-0117

POW Capture Data
Date
Place
Stalag Unit

Life-time memberships are used to perpetuate the memorial at All Saints Church in Great Ashfield, Suffolk County, England.

**385th Bomb Group Memorial Association
OMAHA REUNION
SEPT. 27 TO OCT. 1, 1995
FINANCIAL REPORT**

Seed Money		500.00
Receipts:		
Registrations	45,171.50	
Raffle	817.00	
Hospitality Room	673.00	
Huber Raffle	90.00	
BX	664.00	
Interest	626.84	
		<hr/> 48,042.34 48,042.34
		<hr/> 48,542.34
Disbursements:		
Registration Refunds	2,787.00	
Food, Entertainment, Tours, etc	35,722.32	
Operating Expense	497.37	
BX	565.00	
Reunion Book	240.00	
		<hr/> ----- 39,811.69
Balance in Bank		<hr/> 8,730.65

385th^B G M A

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

FORWARD & ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Fargo, North Dakota
Permit No. 1761

R 96
Joseph B. Kosciński
Rt 2 Box 21A
Stone Lake WI 54876-9533