

385th BOMBARDMENT GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

COMBAT UNITS

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



SUPPORT UNITS

424th AIR SVS. GP.
877th CHEM. CO. (AO)
DET. 155, 18th AWS

VOL. XV NO. 3

Editor: Ed Stern

Printed by Interstate Printing
Fargo, North Dakota

JANUARY 1988

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Prez Sez

Here's a run-down on Reunion plans. Let's make each one "The Best Ever".

1988 -- England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, with plenty of time in London. See the enclosed brochure, plus letter from Al Chealander.

1989 -- Fargo, ND with perfect weather guaranteed in August. Plan for side-trips to see this great part of the country during the celebration of North Dakota's Centennial.

1991 -- as yet open to suggestions. How about Northeastern USA? A host volunteer is needed to work up a proposal.

1993 -- suggested in Washington State for the 50th anniversary of our Group. Col. Bob Smith of Spokane ahs offered to Host if we choose Spokane.

Start making plans with your old crew, old or new friends. Each Reunion seems to be better than the last -- not because of anything except new and old friendships.

We have a great suggestion from one of our members who read in an earlier Newsletter about the plight of fellow-member, George Czerwinski, who is in trouble. He sent \$20 to start a Fund to help him -- I'm proud to send the second \$20. Anyone who can join in helping George, please send your contribution to Treasurer John Pettinger, Box 117, Laurel, FL 34272-0117. Let's give George a hand in recovering from his difficulties.

Verne Philips, Box 5970, Austin, TX 78763 is gathering information for a book about Military Institutions in the United States, one of his hobbies.

I'm sending him information about the Kentucky Military Institute, better known as KMI, which thrived for many years.

If any of you have any info on other Military Institutions of the United States, please send it to Verne.

Earl

1988 Reunion Notes

More from Al Chealander on the 1988 Reunion in England.
Read the enclosed brochure and get your reservation in!

Dear Ed:

By now, you should have received the 850 reunion trip brochures from David Wade. Please let me know right away if you have not received them or if the count was short.

There are two changes in the new brochures. First, that fifth logo showing a 552nd Bomb Sqdn. has been deleted. Second, the cancellation provisions have been amended (softened) slightly. I had asked David Wade to do this. The new provisions are stated in paragraph 7 under Reservation Conditions. Perhaps the change should be pointed out in the next newsletter because those who received the old brochure would not know about it. And, in the same breath, perhaps mention should be made of the printing error in the first brochure showing a 552nd Bomb Sqdn.

I have apprised the Superintendent of the Cambridge American Military Cemetery that our Croup will visit the Cemetery in the afternoon of August 22, 1988. He has agreed to place small flags on the graves of all of our 385th comrades buried there. It will make it easier for us to find them. The Superintendent also sent me lists of the 385th members buried in the Cemetery and those whose names appear on the Wall of Missing. I am enclosing copies of the lists. I might point out that these lists were published in the October 1986 Newsletter, but a number of the names were misspelled. I have also enclosed a descriptive history of the Cemetery and Memorial.

So far, I have received inquiries about the 1988 reunion tour from 22 of our members and have mailed each of them a brochure. I believe there will be a large number interested after all the brochures are distributed.

I have checked with the Airlines flying to London but none will offer discounts unless we all leave from the same place. Of course, that will be impossible. However, the Airlines do offer certain discount fares from "gateway" cities. For instance, round trip discount fares to London can be had for prices ranging from \$405 to \$580. I'm sure comparable discounts can be obtained from the "gateway" cities. I will send you a list of the "gateway" cities later on. I am also putting together the cost information on travel and trip cancellation insurance and will furnish that to you at a later date. Oh, I forgot to state above that those round trip fares are from Los Angeles to London.

With best regards,

Al Chealander

From our British "War Brides"

Dear Eu.

As promised, a "War Bride" article which you may, or may not want to use, also a photograph. Our wedding reception was held at the Gt. White Horse Cafe, which I understand has since been demolished. It was even mentioned in the Pickwick Papers!

Kathleen Marano

Frank and I had the pleasure of entertaining Ed Stern for dinner at our house last week so I couldn't turn down the Editor's personal request to contribute a "War Bride" article.

Frank and I met at the Officer's Red Cross Club in Ipswich in April, 1944 when he missed a train connection and had to stay over. We were married a year later, April 21, 1945. I arrived in New York on our first wedding anniversary, 1946, (Easter Sunday) with our five week old baby girl, Susan. No wonder "I Remember April" is our favorite song.



Kathleen & Frank at Gt. White Horse Hotel,
Ipswich, April 21st, 1945

Two years ago, while at the reunion in Los Angeles, we visited the "Queen Mary" - the ship I had traveled on - and it certainly brought back many memories.

After we were married, Frank stayed on to close the base and was then moved to the staff of 3rd Air Division in Thetford. He remained there as judge advocate until April, 1946 when left for home. The ship on which he eventually left for the U.S. sailed on the very day our daughter was born. Because of rough seas and strong winds, it was two weeks before he reached the U.S. and learned he was a father.

I was fortunate to be able to join him a month later but I can now appreciate my mother's apprehensions at the time. My parents accompanied Susan and me on the train to London, where my sister met us. She had traveled by train from Northumberland to say goodbye and to give my parents some moral support. We crossed London to Victoria to take a special train to Southampton where they had to leave us, tearfully surveying a packed train of war brides and children.

CORRECTION.

These 2 pictures were mixed up in the Nov. issue.



Vice President A.L. (Benny)
Benefield and wife Betty



Vice Presidents Sam & Mary Lyke

"War Brides" cont.

I am reminded of our feelings when, in June of 1968, we said goodbye to our newly married 20 year old second daughter as she and her husband left for a 2-year Peace Corps stint on a South Pacific Island. One has to be young!

Near Southampton we spent several days in Army barracks being processed - 10 mothers and 11 babies (twins) in one barrack - attended by a couple of Army personnel and prisoners-of-war. Pretty grim. It was a relief to board the Queen Mary, but she was still equipped as a troop ship so we were eight mothers and four babies in a cabin. Very fortunately I was nursing Susan, because apparently several babies got dysentery. After our trip, no child under 6 months was allowed to travel. Once I acquired my sea legs the trip wasn't too bad and I will never forget being called early Easter Sunday morning to go on deck and see the Statue of Liberty and the Wall Street skyline in that early morning haze while tugboats greeted us, with loudspeakers playing — what I later learned were college songs. "Knuckle Down Winsockey"!! was one.

Later when we docked, our names were called and Frank came to greet us with his father and brother. I knew I had arrived home, and it's been a wonderful home for 41 years, 4 children and 8 grandchildren later!

The following letters were sent to George Donnelly, who received them in his 8th Air Force Position.

Dear Sir;

I saw your address in a Dutch magazine for people who are interested in the airwar of the 1939-45 period. The magazine gave addresses of Bomb Group associations in the USA. I noted that you are the representative of the 385 Bomb Group. I was glad to find the address of the association because for some time now am trying to trace a member of the crew of a B17F of this group who came down near our town on December 11, 1943. I am investigating aircraft crashes in our province of Friesland which is in the northern part of Holland. Although I am born after the war it is with great interest and respect for those men who fought for our freedom that I am doing this research. But first let me tell you what I know about this crash.

On December 11, 1943, a B17F, serial 42-3488 of 385 Bomb Group, 548 Bomb Squadron came down a few miles north east of our town of Sneek. The aircraft was hit by Flak over the target (Emden) and on its way back attacked by German fighters. The crew was: 2/Lt Edwin F. Pollock, 1st pilot; 2/Lt Milo A. Raim, 2nd pilot; 2/Lt Maurice G. Alexander, navigator; 2/Lt Max Weinstein, bomb-aimer; Sgt. Max Schwartz, radio operator; T/Sgt Herbert Baber, top-turret gunner; S/Sgt Howard G. Hall, left waistgunner; Sgt. Francis M. Harwell, right waistgunner; Sgt. Wilford M. Husband, ball turretgunner; Sgt. Joseph LaVia, tail-gunner.

Two men were killed in the air, Sgt. Husband and S/Sgt. Hall, the others were able to bail out over the northern part of our country. Some of the other crew members were helped by the Dutch resistance and a few were captured by the Germans and spent the rest of the war in a POW camp in Germany. It is also known that 3 crew members spent some time in the Sneek hospital, perhaps because they had bailed out too low. They were Joseph LaVia, Max Schwartz and Francis Harwell.

Although I would like to get in touch very much with all surviving crew members I am especially interested in Sgt. Francis M. Harwell. When he had bailed out near Sneek, he was helped by a then 18 year old girl Mrs. Hallema. She and her family were trying to help him to escape from the Germans. This was of course very dangerous for them, if the Germans had found out they were sent to a concentration camp. The problem was that Harwell was wounded and needed medical attention, also the language formed a problem. The Hallema family were hiding him for one night but the Germans had found out that an airman had come down in this area and they were looking for him. The next day the family decided it was best to hand him over because of the great danger and of the fact that he needed medical care. Later after the war they got a letter from Sgt. Harwell of which I have enclosed a copy as a matter of interest. Mrs. Hallema is now 62 and is wondering how Sgt. Francis M. Harwell is doing nowadays, he should now be about 65. I am in the possession of Sgt's Harwell parachute and emergency ration box that were kept by Mrs. Hallema for more than 40 years. I think the letter that Sgt. Harwell wrote to the Hallema family was the only one. The language was a big problem then, nowadays almost everybody speaks a bit English.

I tried to find Sgt. Harwell on his old address in Texarkana, Arkansas. I wrote to the town hall but never heard anything from it. If you could be of any help in tracing him or perhaps the other crew members I would be very pleased. Also Mrs. Hallema would like to hear from Sgt. Harwell that she met under such difficult circumstances during World War II.

Yours sincerely,

Wim J. Stienstra

Furmerusstraat 306, 8602 BZ Sneek, Netherlands
05150-21814

My Dear Dutch Friends,

You can only guess how happy we were to receive your nice letter. It was written to my mother but never-the-less I am very proud of it. My mother said she wouldn't take anything for that letter and part of the parachute. It was very thoughtful on your part to send it to her, I am forever in your debt for everything you did for my friends and myself during our stay in Holland. To speak frankly, Holland is the only part of that country that I want to see again, maybe it's because I was treated so well.

After I left the hospital in Sneek, the Germans took us through Amsterdam, Cologne and to a prison camp in Frankfort, after staying there one week we were transferred to Stalag 17B in Krems Austria where I stayed for 17 months. The Germans marched us from there to Broneau, Austria. In ten days after we arrived there we were liberated by our own comrades. I reached the States on June 3 and have, been in my home ever since. I have told everyone how wonderful I was treated in your home and in the hospital, so all my friends thank you from the bottom of their hearts hoping some day we can all repay you for such friendship.

I haven't a good picture of myself at the present but will send you one in my next letter. If you happen to see Dr. Roberts or Dr. Dunkerslot (I don't know if that's spelled right or not) give them my very best regards, also the Catholic Father who was so nice, I can't think of much to say so will close for now, again, thanks so very much for your interest in my safe return home and the letter to my mother.

Letters to George Donnelly con't.

She will put a letter in this same envelope. I almost forgot to tell you that I also heard from Bep Rolff, the girl who was in the hospital the same time I was with burns on her legs. If you see her tell her I am writing her a letter also.

Write again soon.

Your American Friend
S/sgt Francis M. Harwell

Dear Gerry,

As 8th Air Force unit contact for the 385th, I'm wondering if you can help me with information about a Sgt. Joseph E. Drucker, 551st Squadron who died on 21st May, 1945, after the war had ended. According to the story given by his brother, he was a Togglier and had completed his tour but the stress may have told for he collapsed of a heart attack and died in the hospital. I've been through my records and could add little to the above although, given time, I might find him in orders on the microfilm. If you can add to what I've got, I'd appreciate it because his brother wants to know more about his Air Force career.

I do have a fair bit of information on the 385th so, if you feel I can help you out at anytime, please don't hesitate to ask. In the meantime. I'll look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Ian McLachlan

Dear Gerald,

Writing you to ask about associate membership with the 385th B.G. Association. You're the last person listed for the Group (1984 8th AF News), as nobody was listed for current year.

Just recently received a "Mint" copy of the 385th's history from a bookshop in England, and haven't been able to put it down.

Was wondering if you could give me data on the following:

A/C flown by Lt. Louis Des Cognet on his first tour with the 385th in 1943, his second tour (549th BS).

Crew (or) crews who flew B-17F-75DL 42-3547, "Latest Rumor", its squadron assignment.

Crew (or) crews of B-17G "Sky Chief", its squadron assignment.

Crew (or) crews of B-17G "Old Rum Dum", its squadron assignment.

Crew (or) crews of B-17G "Mr. Lucky" 42-38035, its squadron assignment.

Looking forward to coming aboard with the 385th.

Sincerely,

Doug Hubert
19412 - 40 Ave. W. #108, Lynnwood, WA 98036

Dear Mr. Donnelly,

I am an amateur-historian, interested in World War II history concerning my hometown Holten, in the eastern part of Holland. Together with a hobby-colleague (Mr. Martin Hols) we did some six years research on this subject and finally we published a book "Holten during WW II", which consisted of 472 pages and was published in May 1984.

One of the chapters deals with the airwar and aircraft-crashes in Holten. Quite some attention is paid on October 10, 1943 (the day of the known Musterraid) on which date a German Me 410 and a USAAF B-17G crashed in Holten. The B-17 belonged to the 385th Bomb Group/549th Squadron and was flown by 2nd Lt. William B. Whitlow. Two men were killed: S/Sgt T.M. Ennis and S/Sgt. H. E. Walker; the rest managed to bail out. The crew consisted of: 2nd Lt. W. B. Whitlow, pilot; 2nd Lt. J. F. Burch, co-pilot; 2nd Lt. W. D. Fazenbaker, navigator; 2nd Lt. L. A. Stanford, bombardier; S/Sgt C. W. Schaumburg, left waist gunner; S/Sgt T. M. Ennis, ball turret gunner; S/Sgt R. L. Richards, tail gunner; T/Sgt J. T. Ashcraft, radio operator; S/Sgt H. E. Walker, right waist gunner; T/Sgt W. G. Shaneyfelt, midup gunner.

We succeeded in contacting Mr. Whitlow and Mr. Shaneyfelt, who gave us an account of their experiences. We also managed to get a picture of the crew from this B-17. However, we never managed to trace a picture from this specific B-17. Serial Number 42-3539, A/C Code: XA-P. Have you got a suggestion how to obtain such a picture (if there has ever been one made of). Perhaps there is something like an annual meeting from ex. 385 members where you could ask it for us?

Or perhaps the association has a magazine which is spread among former members, wherein an announcement can be placed. I would be very grateful if you could manage that.

Also I am still looking for the whereabouts of Mr. Schaumburg. He was not a regular crewmember. He replaced S/Sgt Gilbert who was ill on this particular day. Do you know how to trace Mr. Schaumburg?

If there is anyone who has some more information about these former 385BG men, it would be very welcome.

Looking forward to your reply.

Yours Sincerely,

Herman J. Steunenbergh
Dijkerhoekseweg 3
7451 LV Holten (ov), Netherlands

PS: I got your address through "Bulletin 40-45", a Dutch monthly magazine who's members are all interested in the airwar over Holland.

Dear Mr. Donnelly,

I read in the 8th AFHS that the 385th is having their reunion July 24 - 26 in Dayton, OH — so decided to contact you to see if you have the following on your roster.

1st Sgt _____ Joyce - only 1 Joyce listed, address at end of letter; Glen Burdick - Not listed; _____ Tully - Not listed; "Swede" Ney - Not listed.

Letters to George Donnelly con't.

I am the widow of Sgt. Joseph E. Drucker - a duty sgt. with the 551st sq.

When Joe left the states in Nov. 1942, he had a half brother - 10 months old, Jimmy. Well baby Jimmy is now 45 - a priest and a captain (chaplain) in USAF reserve. His Bishop has given him a 3 year leave to go on active duty in Aug. Jim is most anxious to find out all he can about a brother he never knew. He contacted me (through an English family) in Dec. 1985. He has info that isn't correct.

Drucker, now pastor of St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church in St. Clair, said he not only saw his brother's grave, but also visited Great Ashfield Air Base where his brother was stationed. "I saw the actual airstrip that my brother flew on, and saw '385' painted inside one of the old huts," Drucker says. His brother served with "Van's Valiants," the 385th Bombardment Group under the Eighth Air Force, and flew with the 551st Bombardment Squadron whose motto was "Strength Maintains Security".

True, Jim is sure that Joe was a bombardier.

I have a feeling he is trying to make a hero out of Joe. Anyway, I thought I would try to track down some of the G.I.'s that knew Joe.

Am inclosing some Xerox pictures from my scrapbooks and would like to get the names of the G.I.'s. (Pass them around at reunion.)

Thanks for any help you can give me.

Sincerely,

Eleanor (Marple Drucker) Callihan
2412 Siskupsee Blvd., Ashland, OR 97520



Joe and Eleanor (Marple) Drucker

Letters to the Editor

Dear Ed,

Thanks for the prompt reply and extra copies of the Groups Newsletter.

On "Star Dusts" crash, I remember we were lead of the high element, we were supposed to peel left, low, lead, and then high to bomb a Nobull site south of Avveville. Things got all screwed up and we ended up down around 12,000. An 88 battery hit three rounds right under us. Three and four engines quit immediately. Swede broke left and headed for the coast. By that time we were down

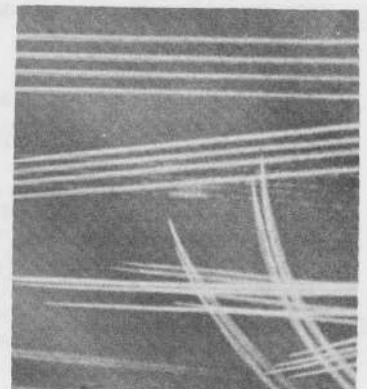
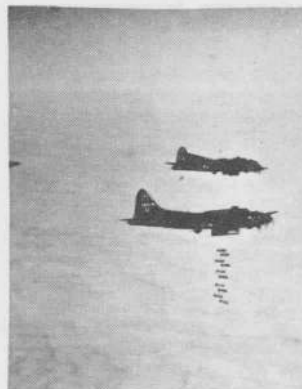
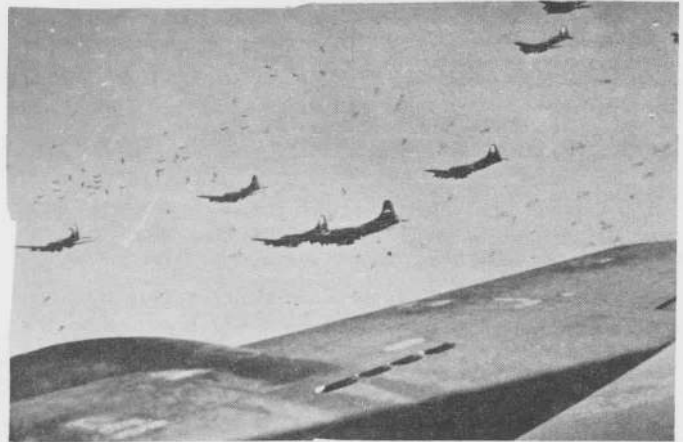
to IOA's and throwing everything overboard. Whether to ditch or bail was vetoed because two were running real strong at that time. What we didn't know was that the left mains had been hit and they were leaking like a sieve. Luckily we only had the short portion of the channel to cross, cause just as we passed over the English coast, number 2 quit, but there was this "Typhoon" base pointed right at us. Flaps 8 gear came down ok, ditching procedure. Swede hit fast, he later said something about over a hundred, we relaxed in the radio room because it felt like a normal landing. Then we became airborne again cause the dammed field had a hump in it. Boy what a scramble to get back into ditching positions. She hit again and ran about a hundred yards right into a concrete pill box. God! , did we stop. No fires, gas all gone. We scrambled out of the radio room and away from the ship. She was a mess. I could hear someone yelling from the cockpit, so climbed back in the waist, up thru the bomb bay and into the cockpit. Olson, the engineer was caught between the two pieces of armour plate of the co-pilot and pilot. We helped get him loose and the four got the hell out. All of us were ok except for Fred Berlinger,, bombardier, for some reason had gone back into the nose. When we hit he went out thru the nose, lost a leg, but lived. We spent a few days eating the English out of house and home. Col. Vanderaner came down and picked us up later. I do remember he gave that Typhoon base a B-17 buzz job they will never forget. Me either cause I was hanging on for dear life.

It was hard keeping the crew together after that. Replacements or flying with some other crew but we more or less all finished by June 44.

Well have run down so will close. Hope these are of interest.

Sincerely,

Green Hawes



Letters to the Editor con't.

Research on Air Attacks on Munich gets a response from our Truman Smith.

Dear Irmtraud;

The July '87 8th AF NEWS indicated you wanted to contact 8th AF crewmen who participated in missions against Munich, for your doctorate degree; in which the Eighth Air Force Historical Society should be interested. In any case, I am interested enough to help you in only a small way.

My records show that I flew copilot on 12 July 1944, Mission Number 150 for the 385th Bomb Group. It was this day that I lost two roommates: Lt. R. L. McDonald, pilot, and Lt. _____ Ryan, copilot, as well as the navigator and bombardier, who's names I can't recall. The entire crew went down in a midair collision with another plane and crew of the 550th Bomb Squadron. The other crew was Lt. White's.

My memory of it is that we (the Group) were making a Time Turn north of Munich (perhaps 15 miles from target) when Lt. White's ship turned to the left, upward and into the bottom of Lt. McDonald. Both ships seemed to stall and, locked together, spun together earthward. I did not see if they separated from each other, or if any parachutes were reported. The 385th Bomb Group History lists both crews lost. At the time, we were flying with nine crewmen, so I presume there were eighteen airmen killed in this accident.

I was responsible for helping to pack up my roommates personal effects to return to their families. As military clothing was not returned, I kept - and still have - McDonald's lighter weight leather A-2 flight jacket that he was not wearing that day.

A Time Turn is a "dog-leg" alteration to slow the arrival time over the target. In this case, we were flying eastward, north of Munich, and ahead of schedule (possibly from favorable winds). We made the jog of the Time Turn by turning northward (when the accident happened) and then back to an easterly heading. At a point northeast of Munich we then turned south until we were east of the target. We then turned to the west onto our I.P. (Initial Point) from where we made the Bomb Run.

This was the second of three consecutive days that our Group was assigned Munich as a target: 11, 12, 13 July, 1944. On the 11th, Major Hamilton was the Group Leader; 36 ships were put up and one, Lt. Henderson was lost. On the 12th, Major Tesla was the Group Commander; 42 ships were put up and two, as I've described, were lost. On the 13th Col. Vandevanter was the Group Commander; 32 ships were put up and one, Lt. Turner - another roommate - was lost. That is, he didn't return that day. In fact, I didn't learn of the crew's survival until I ran into his bombardier in Oklahoma City the following year. A story worth telling.

But first, I should mention that my crew was scheduled also for the 13th but we had to abort due to problems. A fuel cap was unsecure and fuel syphoned out from the top of the wing in a long spray, which meant we wouldn't have enough on board to make the entire trip. In addition, we lost oil pressure on the Number Two engine and were unable to feather it. And if that wasn't enough, we called for clearance to return to the base, but were told that the field had been closed due to bad weather. Not only that, but they reported that the bad weather had closed all airfields to below minimum landing conditions.

Even with the loss of fuel, we had enough on board for several hours and flew out of the North Sea and jettisoned our bombs in the water. However, the windmilling dead engine, turning without oil, started to vibrate to such an extent that it shook the airplane fiercely and the instrument panel was shaking so much it was impossible to read the instrument. It would do one of two things: the propeller would fly off - possible through the cockpit - or the engine would seize (lock up). Fortunately, it finally jerked to a halt. All that remained was for us to attempt a landing in the below minimum conditions.

We let down over the water, where there were no obstructions, until we were in contact with the surface at less than a hundred feet altitude, then proceeded back to England, zig-zagging to miss building and one windmill that almost got us. We passed over an airfield and turned back to land, but lost it. Eventually, after much trial and error and near collisions, we finally made it back and down onto our base.

-----I was surprised to run into Turner's bombardier in Oklahoma City a year later, since the crew was presumed lost. He explained how they had lost a couple of engines over the target, could not keep up with the Group and had been escorted into a Swiss airfield by Messerschmidts, marked and piloted by Swiss. That they had escaped from their hosts and made it overland to Spain, and eventually made it back to England. After a month's leave to the United States, they returned to the Bomb Group and concluded their 35 missions.

On one of these missions the bombardier had been struck in the chest with flak. He pulled it out of his pocket and handed it to me for my inspection. It was an arming ring from the nose of a shell about two inches in diameter and perhaps about a half an inch thick, which looked like a little disc with a hole in the center. While I looked at it the bombardier explained how it had hit him in the right side of the chest and how it had spun itself under his skin and slid around his ribs to the left side of his chest where it had been removed surgically. He then asked me to read the serial numbers imprinted on the ring of the shell. I did. He pulled his dog tags from under his shirt and asked me to compare his serial number with the numbers on the shell. The odds of them matching were unbelievable, but his serial number was the same as the number of the shell! I still can't believe it even though I saw it. He assured me that he was going to keep track of the shell fragment, because that was the one with his number on it.

I wish you well with your doctorate and would be interesting in hearing the results of your thesis.

Sincerely,

Truman Smith
5000 E. Prospect, Ponca City, OK 74601

Dear Truman:

Thank you very much for your letter. I have read with great interest your comments about your missions on Munich.

I am at present working on my doctorate thesis, on air attacks on Munich from 1939 - 1945. I must say that the American response to my request has been very big. I hope to include some of your informations in my thesis, but would be grateful if you could send further individual comments on the attacks flown by 8th AF. I have attached a list of these air raids. Perhaps this is useful to your memory.

Letters to the Editor con't.

I have already received through various record offices, maps and official mission reports, and you have been able to help with personal information giving the other side of the story.

In all there were 73 attacks on Munich, shared by the American 8th and 15th and British RAF, in the late phase of the war also by the American 9th and 12th tactical forces. Munich totalled 6,500 dead from 42-45, which is relatively small compared with Hamburg or Berlin. 45% of the city's buildings were destroyed through attacks, however, at the end of the war, a fast rebuilding program was instigated and put into action. Many of the destroyed buildings were rebuilt in their original style, which means that the city has kept its original charm. I have enclosed two maps of the city, showing its present layout, and if you can remember your target maps, you'll see very little difference.

I have enclosed as well a list of all the 8th AF attacks on Munich. This can be useful for your memory. The series of July 44, consisting of 7 attack flown by the Mighty Eighth, was the most destructive phase for Munich during the 2nd World War. More than two thousand people died through these air raids, that is one third of the whole sum during the other years! The flying conditions were difficult due to cloud. H2X had to be used and mostly PFF attack has to be carried out.

The importance of the July attacks was the true reason for my request in 8th AF News. You can imagine my excitement, when I received your letter some days ago. I am really amazed at the unbelievable coincidence which happened to Turner's bombardier. It's fateful to be struck by a shell fragment with the same number as one's own serial number.

I'm interested in the accidents you have described in your letter. I will ask an air war expert because of the destiny of Lt. Whites and Lt. McDonald. I presume as well as you that they were all killed.

You are perhaps wondering that there is a woman working on such a subject. I have studied German literature and history and I was not at all a specialist in military subjects and air war. I came upon it because I wanted to issue an oral history project in Munich. Thereby people told me a lot about their life during the last war and above all about the allied air raids on this town. At this stage my professor suggested examining this point in more detail. I was naive enough to agree. After a while I recognized that it was useless to make interviews without an exact base of knowledge. Then I studied the material in the Munich archives. I was surprised at the mass of sources that have accumulated. After that I worked in the great German central archives in Koblenz and in the military archives in Freiburg. Nevertheless, I had still a great need for more homogenous information, because here in Germany many important sources were lost during air raids (!) or were destroyed on purpose. This was one of Hitler's orders in the latephase of the war.

Then it became obvious that I had to contact the British and American archives. I did this with much success. I've got now accurate information about planning and carrying-out of Munich attacks.

During my research I've already met a lot of air war experts in Germany. They have helped me enormously. In the course of time I've learnt to work professionally on this subject.

Now let me close for today and thank you again for your kindness!

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Irma Permoser
Friedenstr. 37, 8038 Grobenzell, Germany

A letter from Marty Girson to Ian to us:

Dear Ian,

We attended the 385th reunion in Dayton and we had a great time. It is nice getting together with old friends.

In my letter to you concerning the crew of Alexander's Ragtime Band, the name of the engineer and top turret was Murray Levine and not Leo Belleveau. I talked with Arkey Huber. I believe that I mentioned that Arkey was the tail gunner on Alexander's crew. Anyway, Arkey has a crew picture and he reminded me that Murray Levine was the engineer. Arkey can name everyone on that crew.

I believe and again I am not 100% certain that Leo Belleveau was the engineer and top turret gunner on Ed Hughes crew of the Micky II.

And in regard to your query of the identification or serial number of Micky II. I am sorry but I do not remember. I do remember that the identification letter was "R". A call to the control tower would go "Hello, Hard life this is Summer "R" Roger.

As you know, Hardlife was Great Ashfield control tower; Summer was 548th Squadron "R" was the I.D. letter of the aircraft and the Roger was to clarify or emphasize the "R".

It is funny how certain things seem to come back after you think about them for awhile. I am sorry that I don't remember any aircraft numbers for you.

Another thing that sticks in my memory is a picture that was in our (548th) latrine. It was a large picture that someone with art talent drew or painted. It was a picture of an ME-109 coming in with its guns blazing and spitting fire and the picture had the caption "If you can't shit — look at this". Gosh, I wish I had the foresite to bring that picture home. I would love to have it today.

Since I am being uncouth, and I don't mean to be — I remember the nose art on one of the 385th planes. It was one of the original aircraft that its crew flew over in July 1943. One of the group of the first planes at Great Ashfield. I believe it was one of the 551st Sqdn. Anyway, the crew named the plane "Big Stinky" and they had a professional artist paint a large penis on the nose. Unfortunately this plane was shot down on its first combat mission. You might get more information about this aircraft from one of the 551st guys.

Well Ian, I guess that is about all for now.

I wish I could remember more for you. Take good care of yourself.

Sincerely,

Marty Girson

LIFE MEMBERS

Henry I. Jones - 168
Charles W. McCauley - 169
John Vovolka Jr. - 170
Harry E. Woltman - 171
Bernard S. Kananowicz - 172

Letters to the Editor con't.

A nice letter from an English admirer received by Leo LaCasse.

Dear Mr. LaCasse;

I hope you don't mind me writing to you like this and I hope you can understand what I am trying to say although it is hard to put one's feelings on paper. But first a little about myself.

I am 59 years old, ex service army 1945 - 48. I just managed to earn myself one Defense Medal and one Victory Medal. Compared to a lot of men, my two are hardly worth mentioning but I am trying to give you a picture of myself. I managed only 3 months war service when we were at last in Peace time. The only action I saw was during the Blitz, I was messenger boy in the A.R.P. that is (Air Raid Precaution).

Now I must explain to you my reason of writing to you.

I do a lot of reading about our own RAF Bomber Command and I am also interested in the Eight Air Force (The Mighty Eighth) and I have quite a number of books about both. Now I am a great believer in the fact that we as a nation could not have won the war without the massive help of you and your country men. In other words, I can assure you that there is at least 1 English man who appreciates what American really did in terms of life and men.

As I have all ready said, I have quite a lot of books on the Eighth's but most of my thoughts are with all those that did not return from their missions and please let me assure you I am most genuine with my feelings. I am no longer working thru ill health but I have a daughter who goes round the country in her car and when I go with her I have the opportunity to go to some old airfields and in my own way I like to stop by them and silently pay my respect to all Airmen who flew from there. You see that is the only way I can say thank you for what you all achieved.

Now how did I get your address and how come I am writing to you well now here goes. I have one book called "The Schweinfurt Regensburg Mission", by Martin Middlebrook and of all books I have this one really got to my feelings and at the end of the book in the chapter called Aftermath there are some personal feelings written and one of them is yours. Lieutenant Leo LaCasse 385th BG and in it you say that you have visited your old airfield which was Great Ashfield and that the silence is deafening and that you cry. That statement Sir, really made me realize just what we owe you and I feel that there is no way we can repay you. This is my one reason for writing to you. I just want to say even after all these years THANK YOU SO MUCH.

Because some how that's what happens to me when I go to these old airfields. I walk along the old runways and the silence is also with me and then I try to capture the sadness the happiness, the worry and the fear of all those airmen and I feel that they must know that at least someone down here still thinks about them and admires and also thanks them as well.

Sir, I wrote to the USA for some information about the 8th and out of the blue, last week a Mrs. Win Pennow phoned me up from Suffolk and her husband was a Col. Louis Pennow who served in the 8th and now lives over here and they are in the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and my letter had been sent on to them back from USA and from there she got on to me and gave me your address.

I sincerely hope you don't mind me writing to you and I also hope you can make sense out of my letter but to put it simply, all I want to say to you is this — it has taken me years to find someone from the USA who served in the Eighth and I have at last found one, that is you.

Now I can say a very grateful THANK YOU SIR, GOD BLESS YOU.

I remain Sir
Yours most sincerely,

Norman Carless
47 Aylesbury
47 Aylesbury Crescent
Kingstanding, Birmingham B44 ODY, West Midland,
England

A CLARIFICATION FROM PRESIDENT EARL

In my statement in the September newsletter I said "I am proud to have been a member of the original 385th Bomb Group". By this I was distinguishing from the 385th Bomb Group and the 385th Bomb Group Memorial Association. I was not one of the original members who organized the group.

I flew to England as a bombardier on Wesley Breshear's crew. We landed at Prestwick, Scotland, 5 May 1944. A. L. Benefield's crew landed there the same day. Later in the month of May, we were assigned to the 551st Squadron of the 385th Bomb Group at Great Ashfield. I certainly am proud to have been a member of that organization.

It will be good seeing all of you in August 1989 at Fargo, ND.

Sincerely,

Earl L. Cole

Dear Ed;

I have been trying to locate someone for a few years. It has been just recently I have been able to find the full name and serial number. I was in the 549th squadron and when replacement gunners were needed in the 9th Air Force I, along with several others, were transferred to the 397th Bomb Group and most to the 597th Bomb Squadron. One fellow in particular I recalled but the name slipped my mind. I ran across some old letters I had written to my mother and the name Fletcher was mentioned. I contacted the 397th Bomb Group and was given the name Robert L. Fletcher serial number 18075234. I have tried through the 8th AF search service and no luck, I tried the VA, St. Louis personnel records, San Antonio AF records, no luck. I have no idea what squadron he was from, but on about August 7 1944 we were transferred to the 9th AF outfit. Does anyone remember him, he was a S/Sgt, Engineer gunner. Please contact me if you have any information. There was a member at the last reunion from the 549th squadron, I believe he was from the Denver area that mentioned ways to locate persons. If he reads this, please contact me. Thank you. Write to Clarence Abrahamson, 6431 Menlo St., Santa Susana, CA 93063

Sincerely,

Clarence Abrahamson

Letters to the Editor con't.

Dear Mr. S. Lyke

Hello There;

It seems that you're the one to contact about a 385th Bomb Group Reunion which I have obviously missed if it was held as scheduled in Dayton, Ohio on July 24 - 26. But I thought I would drop you a line anyway and maybe get on your mailing list in case there are any plans for similar events in the future.

I joined the 385th at Great Ashfield, Elmswell, England in Nov. 1943 and departed shortly after May 19th, 1944. I was the Bombardier on a plane called Shack Bunny which I understand managed to survive to finally be stripped down and be used by Wing Wienies to monitor group formations during practice missions. As far as I know it was never shot down.

My Pilot was Capt. Charles M. Davis (called Black Dog), Co-pilot was Larry Fostmeier, Navigator was Rex M. Cantrell, Engineer was Robert L. Smith, Ball Turrent Gunner was Otha G. Lawson, Waist Gunners were Peter V. Marion and Theodor Bruns, Tail Gunner was Frederic Kopie.

Most of the rest of the crew finished their tour with 25 missions but I spent a month in the hospital getting my appendix removed so had to do five extra for Jimmy Doolittle. This meant checking out as a navigator on the "G" Box and flying five missions in that position.

Our crew was assigned to the 551st Raunchy Wolf Squadron and in 1956 I was back in England for three months TDY at Lakenheath and rode my bicycle about 30 miles on the backroads to see what was left of our old base. The runway seemed to be used for bomb storage and most of the buildings had been torn down. Our barracks were still standing and a farmer was keeping hay in it.

Shortly after we left England both Davis and Fostmeier were released by the Air Corps to fly for the airlines. Black Dog flew for TWA until he retired, I think. I lost track of him in California. Fostmeier lived in Petaluma and Santa Rosa, California and I saw him last about 10 years ago. Cantrell and Marino both lived in the San Francisco area but I don't have current addresses on them.

I was a 1st Lt. when I got out of the Air Corps in 1945 but stayed in the reserve so got recalled in 1951 to fly B-29's in Korea. Actually we were based at Kadena, Okinawa and just flew over Korea. After that I became a Navigator on B-47's and was stationed in Lincoln, Nebraska, McConnell AFB, Kansas and Whiteman AFB, Missouri until I retired in 1967.

We moved here in December of that year and I worked for Boeing on the 747 and the 767 until I retired in about 1983.

The first I heard about the 385th reunion was a notice I belatedly read in the June issue of Crosshairs which I received only last week. Since the event has already taken place I guess I'm too late for this one but would appreciate it if you hear of a later event you would let me know about it.

Some years ago I bought a copy of the 385th Bombardment Group History (Feb. 1943 - Aug. 1945) put out by some outfit in Texas. Recently I got a paperback copy of Castles in the Air which is also quite good in that the author, Martin W. Bowman had access to all the official records of the missions flown by all the 8th Air Force groups including all the debriefing records. He must have either been in the Air Force or at least had access to their records.

If you know how many attended the reunion in Dayton or have a current roster of the people who contacted you about it I'd appreciate having a copy. There may be some people I've lost contact with on your list, and I can use it to get in touch with them again.

I'm sure you've had your share of mailings and postage charges in getting this thing organized so I'm sending a stamped self addressed env. to make it a little easier to reply. Thanks for your help and your time, hope to be hearing from you soon.

Most sincerely,

Carter Hart Jr.
Maj. USAF (ret.)
Formerly of: P.O. Box 524, Kountze, TX (prior to 1945)

Dear Mr. Stern,

We feel we must thank everybody for the 385th Memorial Trust for which we are very grateful. Your generosity will be so much appreciated over the years as we are permanently raising money for the general up keep of the church. Our latest repairs have just been completed; the tower has been repointed and one of the windows reglazed.

The weather this year has been terrible with very little sun and very wet. Harvest was late and the autumn cultivations are very behind. The climax of the bad weather was on October 16th when a hurricane passed over southern Britain. Something very rare here. There was a tremendous amount of damage with hundreds of marvellous old trees being uprooted.

We are looking forward to the visit of the group to Great Ashfield next year and meeting old friends again. We have been very pleased to welcome visitors to the airfield again this year and inform them of the Reunion Group. Some visitors contact us before coming to the base so we can meet them. We know that some people have had difficulty in contacting us so for any future visitors our telephone number is: WALSHAM-LE-WILLOWS 283.

Thank you once again for the trust. See you in 1988.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen and Petrica Miles
The Limes, Great Ashfield, Bury St. Edmunds, England

Dear Ed;

In the June Newsletter you added a note to Bill Powell's letter concerning the key to the "Hustlin' Hussy" that was our airplane originally, and I have passed the word to Jerry Mudge, our pilot, who did have that key before he finished his tour. Jerry plans to be in Dayton, so please hold on to it until he gets there.

Jerry, Jim, Wayzke, Joe DeGiacomo and I all plan to have a serious talk with Bill Powell and find out just why they let the "Hustlin' Hussy" fall prey to the Luftwaffe after we had nursed it along through our time with her.

Sincerely,

Verne
7313 Mesa Dr., Austin, TX 78731

Editors Note: What was their excuse, Verne?

Letters to the Editor con't.

Dear Ed Stern,

I just got through reading the Newsletter you so kindly sent. I enjoyed it very much. I'm sorry my dear husband is not alive to read it, he died this year April 27. He had lung cancer. I had known him 45 years as he was stationed at Gt. Ashfield where I met him when he was with the 385th bomb group in communications. I just wish I could get in touch with his roommate who's name was Mac. I think he was a flyer, he came from Chicago. Of course I don't know if he is still alive as I know many of the people Hymie knew died. My husband was 67.

Also looking at the pictures from Stowmarket brought back memories as Stowmarket is my home. I go back so many years it has changed a little, the pub Whitehart is no longer there also the Kings head is not there and the railroad tavern is not there the fox is. In fact I'm going to Stowmarket this Dec. 3 and staying for a month to be with my sister who still lives in Stowmarket. I have one sister who lives at Framlingham near Woodbridge in fact she used to live at Gt. Ashfield just outside the base the back road at some little cottage. This is where I met my husband while staying with her one weekend we dated for many years then broke up, then many years later he came back to England and was stationed at South Ruslip. We got married 1952. He came back Jan. of that year and we got married April 5.

Those were the good old days. I can remember Glen Miller came to Ashfield and saw him the next day he left and was never seen again. We used to have such fun at the dances, also were invited on a Sunday for lunch at the officers club and everyone just enjoyed themselves even though they were going off to bomb and many times some did not come back. A Capt. Dentony I always remember as he was a friend of mine and he was killed, then there was a guy who always used to get drunk and one time his friends found him asleep and just hung him up on a coat hanger on the wall until he woke up which many times was the next day. I could go on but I don't want to bore you.



Schulz, Masters and Denton

In those days the guys looked so handsome in the pinks and dark green, better than they look today and smarter. I also lived in Emswell at one time but just not the same anymore. I love America and love living in Cal.

If you still care to send the Newsletter from now on I will enjoy reading just for the memories. Our two children are grown up. They used to love to listen to Hymie telling them about the war days and used to get a big kick out of the stories which Hymie was good at telling.

Again thank you for the newspaper, it made my day even though I had a good cry, it still helped.

Hoping I've not bored you with this letter.

As always,

Connie Gomborg

PS. By the way, I remember Chaplain Jim, and I've wondered about him.

Editors note: Chaplain Jim Kincannon died in the early fifties (cancer). We all remember him.

Dear Ed:

My name is Bob Skophammer and although I served in the old Air Corps (1945-46) I was never sent overseas, therefore, I am not a member of the 385th Association. However, I have a brother, Jim, who is, which brings me to the point of this letter.

I am into plastic scale modeling, (have been since I was a kid) only these days most of us just don't slap a plastic kit together out of the box. Now I do "Fine Scale" modeling, which some of your members may be familiar with. This means cramming as much detail as you can into a model to make it look as much like the real thing as you can. Details like accurate cockpits, engines, wheel wells, also accurate painting and weathering.

One of the projects I want to take on is an accurate model of the B-17 my brother Jim flew waist on back in 1944. However, pinning down a particular airplane is somewhat difficult. After some conversations with Jim (who lives in San Fransico) and reading over 3 of the 385th newsletters, we seem to have come down to two possibilities, one is "Big Gas Bird" and the other is "Old War Horse". I am in a little luck here because these are both "G" models and that is the only model I can find in 1/48" scale. So I guess where I need some help is in running down the following information. (1) I need the tail numbers and fuselage letter identification (2) Were these planes painted or natural metal?

From the photos of nose art I have seen, they would appear to be painted olive drab. I particularly need the numbers, tho, if anyone out there has an old photo or remembers any thing additional about either of these planes, it would be greatly appreciated.

So there you have it - I'll be watching my mail box. Thanks for listening.

Bob Skophammer
427 0. St., Fort Dodge, IA 50501

Mr. Ed Stern,

On page 11, you show a damaged tail of "Honky Tonk Sal". Not true. It is "My Gal Sal". I was there then and a base photographer went up for a joy ride, a B-24 got cute and collided with Sal and chopped up the photographer. He died in the base hospital same day.

Am enclosing copy of newsletter issue, by John Ford, showing picture from other side. I wrote to John and he agreed that it was "My Gal Sal".

Also on page 9 of 11/87 issue is a picture sent in by Ian Hawkins that say something America. I believe it was airplane (Halper's crew, 548th) "MAIDEN AMERICA". Enjoy the newsletter!

Don Hale
P.O. Box 126, East Alton, IL 62024

Letters to the Editor con't.

READ ABOUT AN ABORTED FLUTE RECITAL AT OUR GREAT ASHFIELD CHURCH

Dear Ed,

This is an update on my daughter's planned flute recital at the church at Ct. Ashfield.

My daughter, Linda, had contacted Rev. Pattison, the vicar at the church. He also has other parishes around Bury St. Edmunds. She had other recitals planned for Bath and Brighton, in museums.

She was all set, landed in Heathrow in London and whammo! The immigration people wouldn't pass her as she didn't have a work permit. The British Embassy people hadn't even mentioned such a thing when she called them before the trip. The permit had to be applied for before the trip and, later she found out, it was to be applied for by the vicar and Lady Beatly of the Art Museum in Bath.

So here was Linda with 72 lbs. of luggage, no clearance to play the planned recital, and no authorization to stay in 'dear' England.

She called the vicar, who in turn got an M.P. on it. She called Lady Beatly and an American friend who was British born. This friend contacted relatives who got another M.P. on it.

The immigration people would not budge, make any allowances. She was shipped back the next day to our beloved US.

The vicar and many of the other people contacted, worked hard to correct it. He even asked her to come back and he would arrange several recitals. Also, the other heads in Bath and Brighton said they would reschedule for another time.

I can't at this time tell you what she will do, but if she does reschedule. I'll let you know.

Sincerely,

Norm Madsen

Dear Ed:

While thumbing through past issues of the Newsletter, I came across a letter (April '87) from an ex-B-17 pilot who seems to be having a hard time of it, and unjustifiably so. His name is George Czerwinski. I remember glancing through his letter last April, but this time it really hit me in the gut, and I would like to see if we can do something to help the poor guy out. After all, he's still one of us, and a wheel chair is no place for a bomber pilot.

Ed, I think it should be incumbent upon the rest of us to pitch in and try to help. Accordingly, I'm suggesting we start a relief fund for immediate assistance for our buddy. I'd like to be the first to donate twenty dollars to start the ball rolling.

Please let me know of your decision, and I hope my suggestion is in good taste and well-taken.

A Member

Editors note: Pres. Earl Cole has sent the second \$20 to Treas. John Pettinger. Anyone wishing to help, please write John.

To Whom it May Concern??

Received a letter from above address last week. Enclosed was a photo of our B17 the "Big Gas Bird" wrapped in two pages from a shoe catalog. (To protect the photo from bending I assume.)

Since last week I've been racking my brain as to who from Fargo??? No note was enclosed, just the photo and shoe pictures. Sooooo, my question is who the hell are you? You had my name and proper address, but no letter or note enclosed.

Please write me and get me off the hook.

Pat Quinn
Arrowhead Shore, Naples, ME 04055

Editors Note: Who sent that picture of Big Gas Bird and asked for it back? If you still want it, write to Pat.

Dear Ed,

Having just read your interesting September 1987 Newsletter I wanted to furnish some additional information concerning the B-17 "Alexander's Ragtime Band" referred to in your October, 1986 article on Ian McLachlan and Marty Girson's letter in the current issue.

"Alexander's Ragtime Band" was so named in November, 1943 when the crew arrived in England. Lawrence E. Alexander was pilot; Mario J. Colantino, Co-pilot; Garnett T. Tunstall, Navigator; Donald P. Peterson, Bombardier; Murray Levine, Engineer; James Greer, Ball Turret Gunner; Joe Caruso, Radio Operator; Eddie Waters and Woodrow Bacchetti, Waist Gunners and Arkey Dzuba (now Huber), tail gunner.

Colantino left the crew for a command of his own, Tunstall went to a Pathfinder unit ending up by crash landing in Switzerland and Peterson was reported MIA while flying with another crew.

I enjoy reading your newsletters and find them very interesting. My wife and I went to the 1980 reunion in England and plan on going to the 1988 one.

Sincerely,

Garnett T. Tunstall
15311 Pine Orchard Dr., Silver Spring, MD 20906



Rick Stern, son of Editor, Ed Stern, shown with our Memorial at Arlington. With an Air National Guard group touring the Cemetery, he spotted our Memorial almost immediately and proudly told his friends about the 385th and how his father had flown (the 550th Exec's desk) through the whole war, and he has the Battle Stars to prove it!

Letters to the Editor con't.

Dear Marty,

Thanks for yours of October 9th.

Your letter was delightful, even in the midst of war, some humour emerged and I enjoy snippets of information like those mentioned. I echo your sentiments re the latrine picture - very little, if any, 385th artwork has survived. Numerous buildings were adorned with pictures, serious and otherwise, but the destruction of Great Ashfield has been so complete that it's all gone.

I'd heard of "Big Stinky" - what a thought, a large penis pounding through the heavens. Now there's a nose art picture I'd like to get. I'm sending this and a copy of your letter to Ed - he can censor the items he considers too rude but someone out there may have worked on or flown in, "Big Stinky".

All the best for now.

Ian

Editors note: What needs censoring for a bunch of old war heroes like us?

Dear Mr. Stern,

Because our correspondence with Bob Valliere after the 1985 celebration of the 40th anniversary of the food drop missions in 1945 (Operation Chow-Hound) we visited the U.S.A, for the first time in May 1987 and we were the house guests of Bob and Nancy Valliere. In your newsletter Vol XV, No. 1 of September 1987, we read an Editors letter of Bob.

On behalf of my wife and myself, we like to wish all the members of the 385th Bomb-group, and especially the participants of "Chow-Hound", the best wishes for the happiest of New Years 1988. We have planned to visit the U.S.A, and his friendly people again in May/June.

Our warmest regards to all your members.

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Assenberg
Tillenburgsingel 372
3136 EH Vlaandingen, Holland.



- George Breckenridge, April 1987
- Howard L. Drennan, Oct., 1986
- William W. Eaken, April, 1987
- Emmett M. Hegerhorst, April, 1987
- David Tabor, Jan. 1986
- Robert W. Bash
- Raymond Koenig, Aug., 1987
- Albert Lages, Oct., 1987
- Van Durrant, Feb., 1987
- Fred Heiser, Dec., 1987

Adam Koziol sent an interesting batch of News stories and pictures telling about life after being shot down on a raid to Brunswick on April 13, 1944. Along with Adam, there were Pilot Downs, CoPilot Bigham, Navigator Haynes, Bombardier Mascari, Engineer McCafferty, Radio Gunner Wasmer, Tail Gunner Morrison, Lw Travis and RW Koenig.

Adam was part of Crew 13, and Kratz, Clark, and Sylvester were the only 3 to complete their missions. The others found the #13 unlucky and ended up in Switzerland.

Hordes of Fighters Fail to Stop Blow at Nazi Aircraft Plants Terrific Dogfights Develop; New Luftwaffe Tactics Force Some U.S. Escorts . Back; Libs Raid HoUhd , J

Flying Fortresses, striking a new blow in the concerted We-invasion campaign to wipe out the Luftwaffe's aircraft plants, crashed through some of the heaviest fighter opposition yet encountered to carry out the Eighth Air Force's third heavy blow in 30 days on Brunswick, where a large portion of Germany's warplanes are produced.

The Luftwaffe, judging from early reports of returning American crew hurled everything it had into a desperate—but vain—effort to keep the bombers away from the target.

For 2½ hours—from the time the Forts roared across the enemy coast for the 450-mile penetration to Brunswick, until they reached the CiiEmn again on the way back—the bombers and their escorts blazed away continuously against swarms of German fighters. Many said it was the roughest mission yet for the U&I heavies, and others ventured the observation that the Luftwaffe must have had orders to halt the attack at any cost.

Direct Hits on Targets

No official announcement of bombing results or its losses had been made Eighth Air Force headquarters late last night, but preliminary reports of crew members indicated that the great central Germany aircraft manufacturing center had received a severe pounding. Direct hits upon the targets were reported.

Fortress bombing "raised hell in the center of the target" despite the heavy opposition, crew members said.

"We really got the target good today," 2/Lt. Orris Traub, of Mason City, Ia., bombardier, said. "I bet I saw a thousand fires."

Brunswick has at least four major aircraft component factories, manufacturing parts for Me110s and Me210s, plus large repair facilities and aerial-engine manufacturing plants. Gun and bomb sights, artillery tractors and tanks also are built at Brunswick.

As the Fortresses carried on the already-effective drive to cut into Nazi fighter production, Liberators pounded the German fighter base at Gilze-Rijen in Holland, and Marauders again lashed at the unidentified but much-battered secret military targets in France, though snow and sleet in the Straits restricted operations. Marauder crews again reported a minimum of fighter resistance, but heavy flak.

"Looks as if the raids on Nazi fighter factories are paying off," said one Marauder pilot.

Desperately striving to avert another crippling blow at its waning strength, the Luftwaffe appeared to have marshaled every fighter and used every tactic to stop the Fortresses. Ferocious dogfights raged between Allied and enemy fighter planes as the bombers plodded steadfastly toward Brunswick.

Many as 200 at One Time

Attacking the Forts themselves were never less than 75 fighters and sometimes many more. At one time as many as 200 German fighters 15 abreast plunged in at the bombers, while others dived through the formations in line from astern.

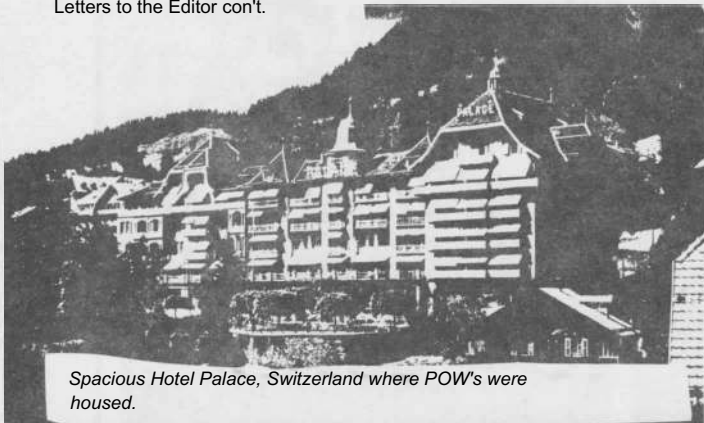
Hundreds of Me109s, FW190s and Ju88s mixed it up with the escorting Thunderbolts, Lightnings and Mustangs. One new trick reported in use by the

(Continued on page 4)



Wen gen RR Station, Switzerland

Letters to the Editor con't.



Spacious Hotel Palace, Switzerland where POW's were housed.

"tForts Battle Through Hordes Of Fighters to Hit Brunswick

(Continued from page 1)

Nazis was that of concentrating on a portion of the escort long before they reached the target, engaging them in such fierce combat that the P47s were in danger of exhausting their fuel supply.

Unable to go the full distance to Brunswick, some P47s were forced to turn back, leaving a number of Fortresses unescorted to fight it out alone.

The air battle was described by some crewmen as even fiercer than the Jan. 11 attack on Brunswick, Oschersleben and Halberstadt, when the USAAF lost a record 60 bombers but shot down 152 Nazi fighters.

On the subsequent raid on Brunswick and Hanover Jan. 30 the American losses were held to 20 bombers, while the enemy lost 91 aircraft.

At one point in the battle 25 Thunderbolts roared down on 35 Messerschmitt 110s and in the mad scramble that followed the bombers flew on, leaving the fighters behind.

Crews told of Fortresses exploding and going down with the German fighters which had attacked them.

"It was like something out of the movies," said one pilot. "Only it was worse. More than 100 German fighters attacked a wing of bombers about a mile to our right. I watched through field-glasses as they smashed through it and .57s then dived under and queued up for rag another attack.

"When a Fortress started straggling they would all hop on it until they battered it down. Then they went back for the rest of the formation. Any straggler was a dead duck. I saw plenty of fighters EM falling, too. Twice I saw three going down in a row."

"Parachutes, some black and some white, seemed to fill the sky, mixed up with black puffs of flak and orange streaks that had been bombers or fighters.

"At one time 12 Focke-Wulfs came in head-on at us but our fire broke them up before they could do any damage."

Another pilot said: "We had the whole Luftwaffe there trying to get a lick at us. Look anywhere any time and all you could see was dogfights. The Germans threw everything into the battle except the bathtub.

"There was lots of destruction upstairs, including one Fortress that exploded and took another one with it, but most of the destruction was on the ground. The formation ahead of us put their bombs right on the target and I don't believe it left us anything to hit. We dumped our bombs right in the middle of the flames and the smoke which cover the whole target."

During their eighth mission of the month, the Marauders crossed the Channel shortly after dawn to continue their offensive on targets in the Pas de Calais area.

The Marauders, virtually unhampered by enemy fighters in all of their February missions, again were protected by RAF, RCAF and Allied Spitfires. "They encountered heavy anti-aircraft fire. One pilot, said: "It looks as if the raids on Nazi fighter factories are paying off."

"Toughest flak I've seen in 36 missions," said S/Sgt. J. O. Lampkins, I of Tell City, Ind., engineer-gunner on the Marauder piloted by 1/Lt. Lyle G. McGlocklin, of Bonners Ferry, Idaho.

"The days of the milk run are over," said Sgt. ILT. White, of Syracuse, waist-gunner of the B26 piloted by 1/Lt. A. W. Bouquet, of San Antonio.



Aldelboden, Switzerland

Dear Earl:

Now that the reunion is behind us, I wonder if any one is working at getting a painting of the 385th. I know I had gotten a letter from you and you were all for the painting idea. I am sending you a copy of the leaflet I got from the artist and I am sure if you contact him he can tell you if he is continuing to work on the information for the 385th. I have a print of the painting shown and it is really very beautiful. I would certainly like to have one of the 385th, whether it be Berlin (as you suggested) or whatever one that showed the 385th in action. I am sure you can find someone to follow through on this and be ready for the next reunion in 1989 or sooner.

I know I will buy one as long as it shows the big old square C and maybe some of the names of the ships.

One of the crewmembers, Frank Sutter told us about a very good book called "Target Berlin, Mission 250:6 March 1949". He had read it and passed it on to one of the other crewmembers and I just got it last week and read it immediately. After I started, I couldn't put it down and he was right, it was really a good book on just the one mission from our side and theirs. I have finished with it and I am sending it on to one of the other crewmembers.

I would like to see something done about the painting but I am not able to help with it now. I do have some information I had collected about the 2 Berlin raids you might pass on to who ever would be able to follow through on it. I would like your comments on it.

Sincerely,

Clarence Abrahamson
6431 Menlo St., Santa Susana, CA 93063

Editors Notes: How many of you are interested in a painting of a 385th plane over Berlin? Let Earl Cole know.

Dear Ed,

B-17 bomber crews keep popping up in the strangest places.

The latest: the Sept. 1987 copy of Guideposts magazine, "Till We Meet Again" about a 493rd BC crew who signed a dollar bill in 1944 and what transpired until they reunited again in 1983. If you don't get the magazine, or can't locate a copy, let me know. I'll copy mine and send it to you. I'm certain you'll find it a very worthwhile account.

In the meantime, as I mentioned in Dayton, my daughter Linda will play a flute concert at Great Ashfield Church on Sept. 12, 1987. She leaves next week and will also play a concert in Bath and Brighton, England.

Norm Madsen
4490 Tomberdale Dr., Stow, Ohio 44224

Dear Ed,

Jim Lavin of Chicago did the paint job on "Rum Dum". Sorry about writing, i shake so.

John Hote

Some Nose Art on display at CAF in Harlingep.



Fragments of "nose art" displayed in the CAF museum and (opposite page) the real thing in 1945, on a B24 Liberator named "Sweet Racket"

Here's a page from "Yank" Magazine, sent in by John DeBerg, crew chief of "Lil Audrey".

There's, part of a story about the 385th in the 1st column that is only half there. Can anyone add to it?

i, now a corporal in the 385th
cade the writer of that old Army
pries. For in his off-time hours
ch painting flattering life-sized
soldiers' wives and sweethearts.
>m the snapshots the men carry
lets.



0 difficulty getting customers,
in the Army," he says, "who
v you his wife's picture. When
I just give them a good sales

loss relies on flattery—LLA- guy—
fe being glamorized a bit," he
is too long, I can shorten it.
h, I can push them back."

1 painting at Chanute Field, Ill.,
cents for a portrait. But his
re then. In England a Ploss
jud. Ploss reasons that they
■ here.

is wife more than he did back
: photographs he carries around
r-beaten and torn that they're
g at."

extra money he has made in
home for an air-brush, which
oduction considerably. He uses
and can now turn out three
he feels in the mood. Before
: soldier to tell him what color
air and complexion.

go a crew in the 385th Bomb
■ss to paint a portrait of Cpl.
Flying Fortress. Ruby, you
tly judged by *Slurs and Stripes*
liul Wad in the UK.

.....*"
^iilblLairob^but^me^M^2 <
is called upon to do«a fancy ■
same.

s, a Fort of the 385th Bomb
Returning from Germany after
ad, the plane did a complete
hout damaging herself or the

1 way back from Rheine. The
ituments, and had just started
climb to get out of the soup,
e became caught in the slip-

LOT of people can shaile the credit for the fact
that, as of last week, *Li'l Audrey*: a Flying
Fortress of the 385th Boms Group, had chalked up
in missions, but no one is any prouder of that
accomplishment than M/Sgt. John R. De. Berg of
Henry, S.D. As the plane's crew chief, he has had
her under his care since her first mission and has
kept her up in the air for 1020 hours.

There are probably only three or four Forts in the
8th Air Force that can rival *Li'l Audrey's* record.
Those that reach the ioo-rark do so as a result of
luck, expert maintenance and good pilots who have
the inn^ ef-bringir.g nr back- on two engines
if they have to.

Li'l Audrey's first mission was way back on
March 6, 1944. the date on; which the 8th Air Force
flew its first daylight raid over Berlin. She had been
placed in De Berg's care the day before.

Since then sije has missed only two Berlin raids
and, not counting practice missions, has averaged
a mission every third day -for the past u months.
She has had two turn-backs, for mechanical reasons,
both after she had completed 73 missions. She has
had x8 engines, her plexiglass nose and wings are
studded with flak holes, she has come back three
times - with only two engines, yet not one of her
crew has ever been killed or wounded.



De Berg and his ground crew are naturally pretty
pleased by all this. In two years De Berg has never
lost a ship. *Mary Pat*. his »hip before *Li'l Audrey*,
was declared war-weary.

Two pilots ha'e completed their missions on
Li'l Audrey. The third and present pilot is 1st Lt.
John H. Peterson of Cheste , Pa. lie has 19 more
missions to go. De Berg thinks that the way *Li'l*
Audrey can take it, she'll probably-just aixiut last
him out.

-By 'pl EDMUND ANTROBUS Q
VAHK Sl. ff C-r«pond.nt g



The COUNT

HERE is an occasional hint of spring in the air
these days and the Count, that mouldy old
ex-T/5 who flourishes like skunk cabbage in
warm weather, has hauled his carcass out of his
sack and found himself a new dream-girl—a Wac
corporal named Abigail. At least she's making
his dreams rosy, although it's anybody's guess how
he's affecting hers.

We discovered this latest development in the
Count's emotional life when we paid him a visit
last week and found him vigorously polishing his
paratroop boots, a task which he never felt up
to in the days before love entered the withered
organ that passes for his heart. "Henceforth,"
he told us, "it will be necessary for me to keep
me boots polished at all times since me Corporal
Abigail is a stickler for correct military bearing.
How's about a little help? Me arm is all worn
out, and 'when me arm aches I cannot talk of
love." - ■ ■ ■

Eager to keep the Count in a talkative mood,
we took over the brush. "I have also decided
that it would enhance me dignity to buy a swagger
stick," the Count continued, bumming a cigarette
and settling back on his cot. "It is very likely
that me top-kick, who does not see eye to eye
with me on many matters, will not let me carry
such a stick in his presence, although me frank
opinion is that what this lousy camp needs is
more swagger sticks and less fatigues. But that
is not to say that I cannot display a swagger stick,
along with me wings and combat stars, when I
take me Corporal Abigail into town."

The Count sighed and blew a smoke-ring
ceilingwards. "Me Corporal Abigail," he said,
"is beyond doubt the most beautiful girl in the
world, even if she don't make much money. I
have discovered that she is very impressed with a
correct British accent, and this I have hastened to
acquire. Me greeting to her when we are on
duty is, of course, always militarily correct—
"Good morning, Corporal," I says. But off duty
I give her the good old Anthony Eden lingo, hoc
out of Buckingham's Palace. "Coo, ducks," I coos
at her, and I follows that up with "Blimey!"

An article in the East Any Han Daily
Times, Oct. 8, 1987. Linda is a
daughter of member Norman Madsen.

Cancelled recital

Sir, — I would like to
sincerely apologise to every-
one who was planning to at-
tend my flute recital on
September 12 at Great Ash-
field Church.

I did indeed fly to
Heathrow Airport but I was
denied-entry into England.

The authorities said I am
required to have a work per-
mit in order to play for you.
before this most distressing
experience, I have never had
to cancel a recital for any
reason, and I feel very sorry
that this had to happen.

I feel especially sorry
because, as some of you
know, my father flew mis-
sions over Germany, from the

base at Great Ashfield, as a
member of the 385th Bomb
Group during World War II.

I would like to thank
everyone who interceded in
my behalf, some of whom I
know by name and others
whom I do not. In particular,
I would like to thank the
Rev. George Pattison, of
Grat Ashfield Church, who
made every possible effort to
ameliorate thi\$ unfortunate
situation.

When I becomes possible,
I hope very much to return to
Great Ashfield to perform.
Looking forward to that day I
close.

LINDA MADSEN
4490 Timberdale Drive,
Stow, Ohio. USA.

