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**10th Reunion
42d Anniversary
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"Mighty Eighth Reunion Group"

385th BOMBARDMENT GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

GREAT ASHFIELD - SUFFOLK, ENGLAND
STATION 155

ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

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Forrest V. Poore
23253 Westwood St.
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Gen. Curtis E. LeMay
Gen. E.P. Partridge
L/Gen. Ira C. Eaker
B/Gen. Elliott Vandevanter, Jr.
Col. George Y. Jumper
Ronald C. Nolan
MSgt. John McKay, Jr. USAF

PAST PRESIDENTS

Ruel G. Weikert
Frank B. Walls
Vincent W. Masters
John C. Ford
James H. Emmons
Paul Schulz

NEWSLETTER

VOL. X NO. 3 JULY 1983 EDITOR, VERNE PHILIPS

PREZ SEZ

Forty years of association ... We are not getting older, we are getting better. At the banquet, looking around, I felt what a beautiful group of people! It was great to have so many at our reunion. I will be looking forward to seeing you all in Los Angeles in 1985. If you know of any 385th people who have not joined us, do try to contact them and ask them to join us. If you would rather give me their name and address, I'll be happy to welcome them. To all the people who congratulated me and offered to help, if needed, thank you. I'll give a holler! Take care of yourselves, 'til then



AGED AVIATORS RELISH REUNION REVELS THE SPREE AT THE SPRINGS

The ninth reunion of the 385th Bombardment Group Memorial Association and the Fortieth Anniversary of the organization of the Group was the biggest ever and we found that June was a great time to be in Colorado Springs.

Paul Schulz, now our "used to be" president, tried to keep score. He reported "450 for the Friday night barbecue, 444 for the Saturday night dinner, and 400 for the Sunday breakfast. The Coors tour had 120 and the side trips of Wednesday and Friday were filled to capacity (90 and 150). The hospitality room was a popular place, as was the PX, swimming pool and tours in to Colorado Springs. The Saturday band consisted of 19 pieces." Paul did not explain if that meant they had 19 instruments or could only play 19 different pieces of music.

However, the most entertaining part of it all was the constant relating of stories of just what really happened in those days back there when some of us were much younger. Unfortunately, there were some questions about the total accuracy of those stories, but fortunately, most understood that the standards for truthful narration are considerably relaxed for such occasions.

In between stories the group paused for a business meeting to hear that the Association was fiscally sound and that an annual memorial donation is made to All Saints Church in Great Ashfield; to approve the establishment of a permanent fund for the sole benefit of All Saints Church, the planning of 385th BCMA memorials at the Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio and at Arlington Cemetery, and the establishment of the office of historian; and to elect as a new group of officers the following: President, Forrest V. Poore; Vice-Presidents, William A. Nicholls and Mary A. Weikert; Secretary, Robert E. Douglas and Treasurer, John F. Pettenger.

The group remembered those we lost by dedicating a memorial at the Air Force Academy Cemetery and heard with sorrow of the illness and death of Mabel Douglas, of nearby Pueblo, Colorado, who, with Bob, had lovingly planned for many of the arrangements for the Ninth Reunion.

The group heard of the start of the plans for the Tenth Reunion in Los Angeles in 1985 and of Allan Chealander's willingness to be our host and undertake the leadership in this effort.



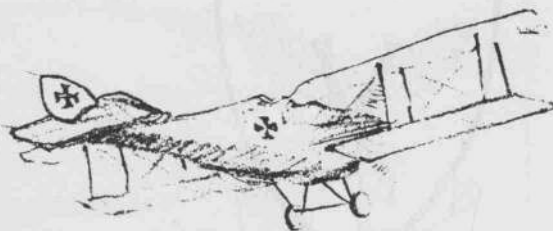
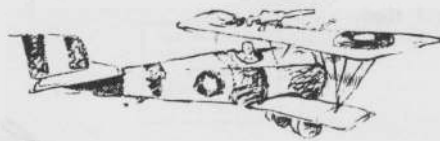
Services Held At Great Ashfield

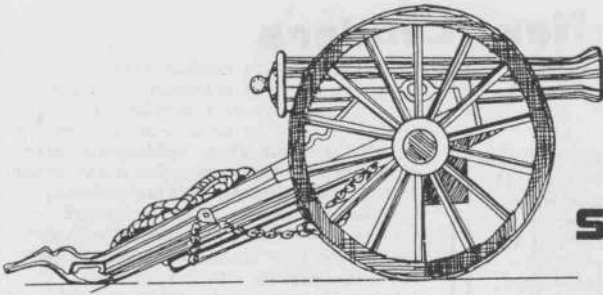
1943 - 1983

At morning service on June 5th the people of All Saints Church, Great Ashfield, joined with you at Colorado Springs in commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the arrival at Great Ashfield of the 385th Bombardment Group. In our prayers and in the minister's sermon we recalled the bond of friendship which exists between our village and the 385th BGMA; we also remembered your fallen comrades who served at Great Ashfield, and also all those who have died since. Through arrangements with Tom Harrison, of Nashville, Tennessee, we had special floral arrangements on your Memorial Altar, also on the main altar. The Memorial Altar decoration bore a card remembering those who died.

We have had visits in Great Ashfield from Earl and Ruth Cole, together with their neighbors. Dr. Harold and Eulane Bushey, also from Ed and Jane Stern. We also had a visit from a second generation Air Force man stationed at Bentwaters whose father, Manuel Udemi, was at Great Ashfield from 1943 -1945.

John Ellis
Fox Farm
Wetherden,
Stowmarket,
Suffolk, IP14 3NE





Short Bursts

THANK YOU PAUL SCHULZ - and all of you that made the Reunion possible - and all of you who were there. And those of you who didn't - couldn't - wouldn't make it - it was your loss.

It was my first Reunion, and except for Paul, I didn't know a soul - when I arrived. My guest was Colonel T. L. Rider of the 34th Bomb Group, who lives in Colorado, and volunteered to chauffeur me while there. He didn't know anyone either, but like me, had a grand time and now looks forward to his Group's reunion.

I had thought I didn't belong, because there was no one there from my Crew. But crew-integrity proved to be an exception, as there was only one entire crew present - less one. Time had taken its toll on what the war had not done in busting up crews. However, EVERYONE did belong to the Group and to a place and a time in history; a precious and irreplaceable - most unique relationship.

Thanks Paul-n-All.

Truman Smith

Dear Paul:

Those of us who were fortunate enough to attend the 385th BGMA Reunion in Colorado Springs will be forever in your debt. You, and the competent people that you selected to head up the various activities are to be congratulated. The Flight Surgeon should give you each a "double shot" after this mission, the Operations Officer should let you "stand down" for awhile and certainly the Awards Officer must be racking his brain for a medal suitable for the mission that was accomplished. It was pure pleasure from beginning to end and if there was anyone there who failed to have the time of his or her life the fault was theirs.

Having chaired a convention or two in my time I know that you were aware of many things that were apparently not going as predicted and were at times questioned by many who thought that this or that was wrongBe at Ease!!! Things could not have been better...from the selection of the site to the final "Good-Bye's" everything was completely enjoyable, and this doesn't happen by luck but by good planning and execution.

Thanks again for all the work that you

put into not only the reunion but the operation of the Association during the past years I'm sure you will enjoy the next reunion more but for the rest of us this one will always stand out as the best.

Tommy
(Tom C. Harrison, Jr.
2020 West End Avenue
Nashville, Tn 37203)

Dear Elaine 5 Paul:

We are writing to thank you both for the fine job you did as President and First Lady. It was a lot of work, we know, and we certainly appreciate all your efforts.

The reunion in Colorado Springs was fantastic! And we have really enjoyed the newsletter these past two years.

We are trying to get permission to do a mini-reunion for the 385th in Houston at the 8th AFHS reunion in October.

Again, thanks for a fine job you have done. We did not want you to think it had gone unnoticed.

Sincerely yours,

Mai.las and Don Hale
P.O. Box 126
East Alton, Illinois 62024

A WORD OF APPRECIATION FROM BOB DOUGLAS

My Dear Fellow Members of the 385th BGMA:

Words can't express in the fullest, my feelings for your compassion, thoughtfulness, and gifts in the passing of my wife, Mabel, just prior to the Convention. Thank you. To be honored by my peers touched me deeply. My wife would have been proud. Thank you again.

I want to give a special thanks to Wes Braesher for his tremendous job, that I had to put on his shoulders. Thanks, Wes.

A special thanks to Paul and Elaine Schulz and Bill Nicholls for attending her funeral.

I did want to speak to the group, but I was afraid I would have broken down. Please forgive my weakness.

I personally want to thank all the wonderful people that worked so hard with me, to make this the biggest and best convention.

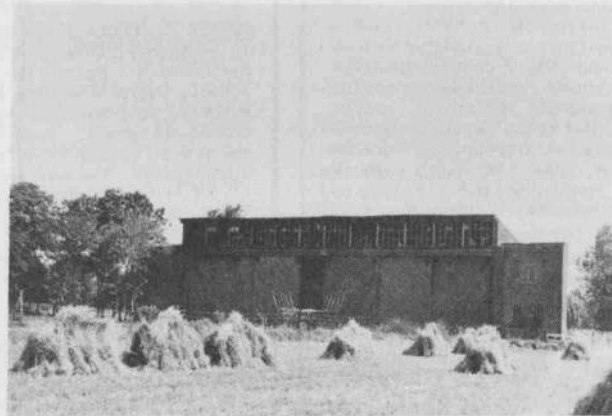
A very personal thanks to Paul Schulz for his leadership and enthusiasm. He once again has shown his skill as a navigator, leading us to the goals he has set for us to strive for. A job well done, Paul.

The Good Lord willing, I hope to meet with you all at the mini convention in Cody, Wyoming in '84.

With the utmost respect,

R. E. (Bob) Douglas

*(Mto. Mabel Douglas passed away on
Jane 3, 1983. Sen.v-i.ces wene in
Pueblo, Colorado June 5, 1983.)*



A 385TH TARGET TWENTY YEARS AFTER

On August 15, 1947 the 385th Bomb Group took part in an attack on a German air field located at Vitry-EnArtois in France. This photograph was taken exactly twenty years later on August 15, 1963 and shows a hangar that survived or was rebuilt. The piles of hay show that the pruning hooks have prevailed once again.

Sketches

About Our New

Leaders

president...

FORREST V. POORE. I and my crew were the first replacement crew assigned to the 551st Squadron in early August, 1943. We lost our ship "Pat Pending" on the Taxi-way on December 11, 1943. We were hit from the rear as we lined up for a mission to Emden, Germany. This was to have been my 21st mission, so we asked to take a replacement B-17. We were attacked by fighters and bailed out over Holland. I spent the next 18 months in POW camp at Stalug Luft #1, Barth, Germany. After returning to the States and a 60 day POW leave, I returned to the Air Force as a pilot and additional duty as a Commercial Transportation Specialist. As we geared down after WWII, I was with a team that closed down Air Bases. Then a tour in the Korean War, another tour in England, and my last tour in England and France. On June 1, 1962 I retired from the Air Force. In March, 1965 my wife and I opened a North American Van Line Agency in San Bernardino, Ca. In June, 1978 we turned the business over to our oldest son, Eugene. We have another son and a daughter, all married, and to date, have 8 grandchildren. They keep us involved and busy. I am still an active pilot, and we have a 1972 Cessna Skylane, which is my hobby. We do enjoy flying around the country now that we are free to take off.

vice-presidents...

WILLIAM A. NICHOLLS. I was accepted as a Flying Cadet in November, 1941, and was enlisted 2 February, 1942. I spent pre-flight at Kelly Field in San Antonio, Texas, and began primary flying at Vernon, Texas. I "washed out" with 52 hours and a few minutes. Quite a shock to my ego, since I had hoped to be a pilot from age ten.

After the "wash out" and between cadet assignments I had a 7 day leave. I took advantage of this leave to talk Doris, my first wife, into marrying me.

After a series of job offers, including navigation training, glider-pilot training, ground OCS, I decided to take bombardier training, sure the war would be over before I saw any action.

Doris joined me in Houston and was with me when I graduated from bombardier school in early March, 1943. We went to Las Vegas, where I took student officer gunnery, and from there to Ephrata, Washington. Fate or chance gave us the opportunity to meet Forrest and Florence Poore - as it turned out, two very dear friends. I became Forrest's bombardier in May, 1943, and we went overseas as a replacement crew assigned to the 385th in late August, 1943.

The greeting when we were welcomed into the 551st was spectacular; Squadron C.O. Daniel Riva in a green battle jacket, pink trousers and a nylon parachute scarf made us realize that the 551st was by far the greatest unit in the entire Eighth Air Corps Shades of WWI!

I flew my first four missions with Tom Morgan and from then on, we flew as a full crew, with Forrest as airplane commander.

On my twentieth mission we went down, losing two crewmen, Charles Morris and Alva Woodall. It was December, 1943, and we spent the rest of the war in prison camps.

I returned to the U.S. of A. in June, 1945, to a house which became a home - Doris had saved my allotment and had purchased a house in the western suburbs of Philadelphia. Words were not enough to express my admiration for her daring.

The Philco Corp. asked me to rejoin them in the merchandising department, and I did, only to join my father and brother in a snack food business some two years later.

So from 1948 to May, 1982 I stayed in this business, and then we had some one eager to work hard and experience long hours, so we sold the business.

Our family consists of five children and seven grandchildren. Our oldest daughter was born November, 1943, and was 19 months old when we first met.

Last, but not least - retirement is TERRIFIC!

MARY A. WEIKERT. I was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, but when I was six weeks old we moved to New Orleans. When my mother died in New Orleans I went north to live with my Aunt in Dayton, Ohio. I met Ruel in Dayton and then he went to Santa Ana in April, 1942 to begin his training as an aviation cadet.

We were married in Merced, California in September, 1942, and I traveled with him as long as possible before he was sent overseas from Kearney, Nebraska in June, 1943.

We have one son, married, and he has two children.

secretary...

ROBERT E. DOUGLAS. I enlisted into the Army in September, 1942, and was assigned to the Air Corps. I passed the tests for gunnery school, but at the time they needed paper pushers, so I was sent to ESO school in Edmund, Oklahoma. From Salt Lake City I was shipped to Geiger Field to the 385th. I was with them all the way from the beginning.

I worked several jobs while with the 385th. Squadron Engineering, orderly room squadron operations under Archie Benner and Ed Faroe, and the base motor pool, under Smith. I was in the 549th Squadron.

I was discharged in November, 1945 at Dayton, Ohio, Patterson Field.

I was very active in the Ohio Speedway Racing Association. I was an officer in the organization, plus an owner driver in what they used to call "Hot Rods." My biggest thrill was when I drove and raced at Indianapolis in my Hot Rod. I had driven just about anything that had wheels.

My best man at my wedding was also an officer in the club, plus a car owner. We took our wives to William's Grove, P.A. and she didn't know that I was driving race cars. She just about had a fit when they announced my name on the loud speaker. I retired from driving in races right after that day. I won all the races at home with my wife.

We moved to Colorado in 1951. I had stopped on a troop train when it went through Denver, and liked it, so when things went to pot in Ohio, we sold out and moved west.

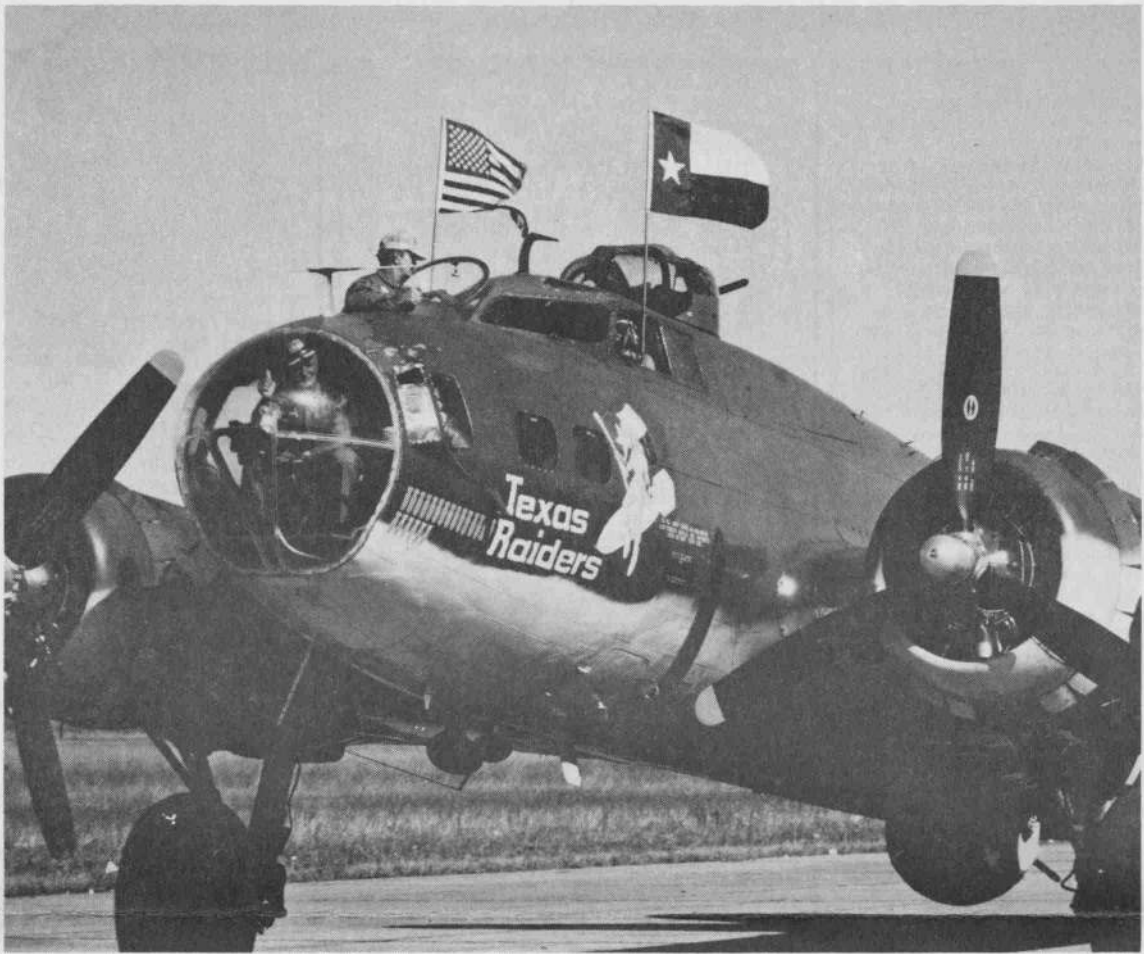
My wife and I shared the same hobbies, fishing and hunting. Bought a mountain cabin in the mountains in a little town on the west side of Monarch Pass on Hwy. 50. We spent much time there. Those were some of the happiest days of my life.

Soon we got tired of going to the same places all the time, so we sold the cabin and bought a 5th wheel trailer, a 36', just like a home. My wife never had the chance to use it. Prior to her death, we had plans made to make a vacation trip. This was supposed to start with the mini-convention in Estes Park last year. She didn't make it. I am going to hit the road and travel, like we planned, the Lord willing. I plan to visit members of the 385th.

treasurer...

JOHN F. PETTINGER. I came to the 385th while it was forming at Great Falls, Mt. and was assigned to the 551st Squadron. I flew 19 missions aboard the Vibrant Virgin and was shot down over Munster on October 10, 1943. I flew with United Airlines for twenty years, retiring in 1971. I flew DC3's, Gonvair 340's, DC6 § 7's, and ended up flying B727's. I have three children. My oldest son, a Major in the Air Force, has flown DC's, C141's, C5's and is presently flying T39's.





ONE B-17 STILL FLYING IS "TEXAS RAIDERS" OF THE CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE.

IT IS SCHEDULED TO BE IN HOUSTON FOR THE 8TH AIR FORCE REUNION.

385TM B G M A
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8th AIR FORCE REUNION HOUSTON, OCTOBER 12-16

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The Eighth Air Force Reunion is planned for Houston, Texas for October 12-16, 1983. Anyone who has not received information about this gathering should write immediately for details and a registration form. Address your request to:

8th Air Force Reunion
 P.O. Box 1304
 Hallandale, Florida 33009

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society is the sponsoring organization for the reunion. The 385th unit contact with the Eighth Air Force Historical Society is Gerry Donnelly, 10770 S. W. 46th, Miami, Florida 33165.

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