

HARDLIFE HERALD

Newsletter of the 385th Bombardment Group
Association



548th



549th

550th



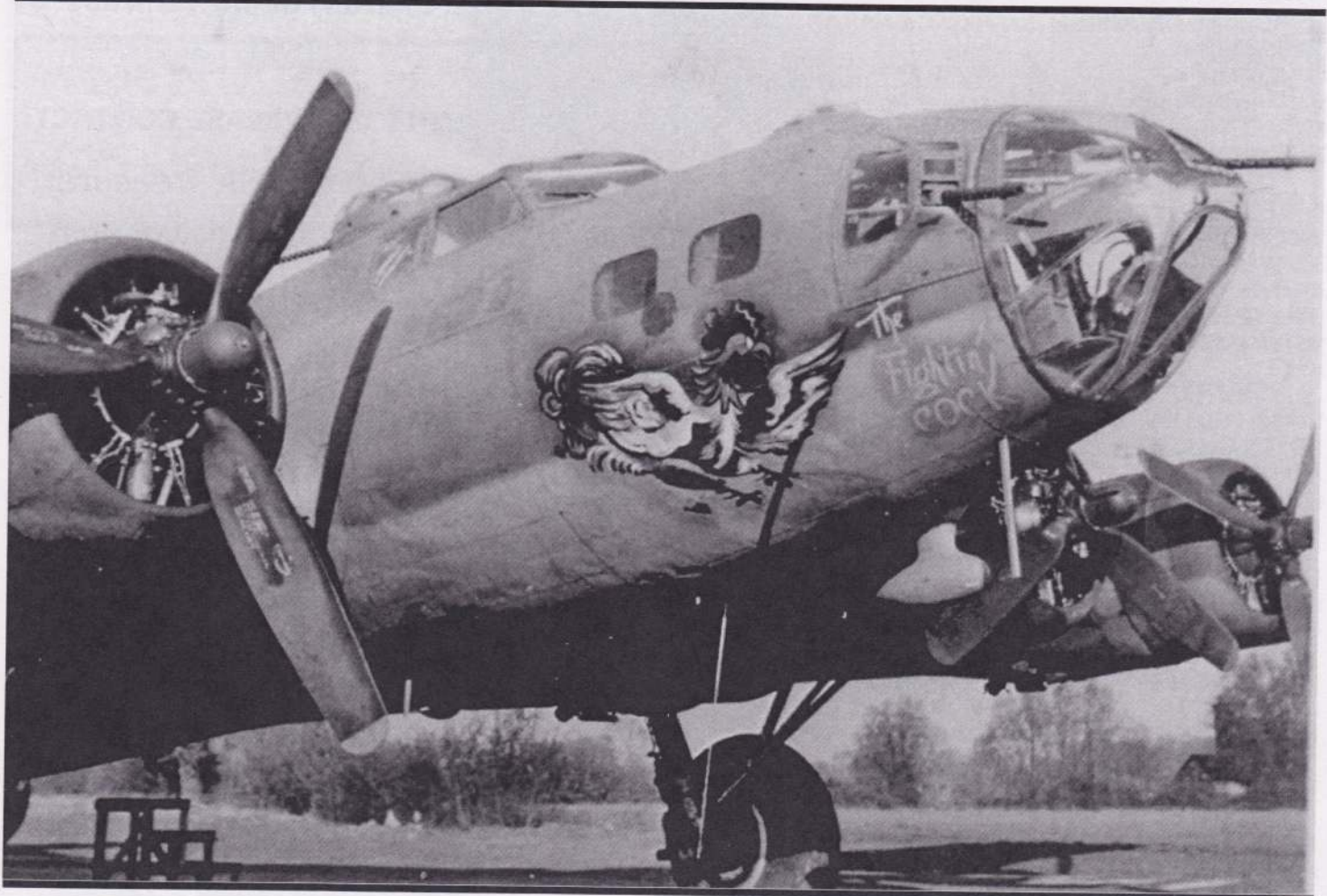
551st



1942 - 1945 Great Ashfield - Suffolk, England Station 155 - The Mighty Eighth

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HARDLIFE HERALD

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Front Cover: 42-3397 "The Fightin' Cock"

Back Cover: Courtesy of Bill Varnedoe

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HARDLIFE HERALD

Newsletter of the 385th Bombardment Group
Association



42-97643 - "Katie's Revenge" Landing Accident

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I continue to be amazed at the members of our 385th Bomb Group family who are just now discovering our Association. The availability of the Internet and sites like our 385th Bomb Group FaceBook page (Many thanks to Charles Lundsberg for his FaceBook efforts!) are making the 385th BG Association easier to find and, it seems, a growing number of folks are just now starting to search for information on what their fathers, grandfathers, uncles, etc. really did during the war that they rarely, if ever, talked about. As we receive inquiries from these folks, we are encouraging them to join our Association and to participate in our activities. Of course, whether they do join up or not, we do our very best to reply to their inquiries with as much information as we can provide. Many thanks to Bill Varnedoe, Ian McLachlan and Charles Lundsberg, to name those most active in these "research and information missions." I know that their efforts are very much appreciated by the recipients of their information. I am hoping to see a couple of these new folks at our October reunion in the Minnesota Twin Cities. Elsewhere in this issue you will find detailed information concerning the dates, activities and location as well as hotel information for making hotel reservations. Also included is a registration form for you to complete and submit as soon as possible, but no later than September 20. You will recall that the 385th decided not to join the 8AFHS in Atlanta this year in the high heat and humidity of the summertime. While we will miss seeing some of our 8AFHS comrades this year, we are looking forward to another great get-together of our Group. I do hope you will make every effort to attend this year's reunion and to please encourage family and friends to join us as well. While I don't expect this to be our last reunion, it is clear that the passage of time is taking its inexorable toll on our members and we will not have many more opportunities to share each other's company. Let me sign off with my best wishes to you and yours for a wonderful summer season and sincere hopes of seeing you in the Fall.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings and welcome to another issue of Hardlife Herald. As always, it is my pleasure and honour to edit this fine newsletter which I could not do without your assistance. I look forward to hearing from you and I always enjoy the phone calls and letters that provide the content for these issues. Keep 'em coming! If you have made a submission and have yet to see it in print, please feel free to drop me a reminder.

Please note on pages 14 & 15 we have information and registration for this years' 385th reunion.

For those of you who are into modeling or a general fascination with the markings of the 385th, on pages 16-18 we have a couple of exerpts explaining the many paint schemes from 1943-45. (Thanks to Bill Varnedoe and Randy Colthorpe for the emails)

I'd also suggest checking out this website: <https://archive.org/details/CS-1096> On this page there is a link to some 385th film footage from March 22, 1944. I'm still blown away from seeing the 385th in motion. (Thanks to Mark Swedlund for bringing this to our attention)

We have lost a few 385th veterans in the past months, however I am still in the process of finding and collecting their obituaries. I would much rather celebrate their lives in this manner than to simply list their names so I appreciate your patience while I do this research.



*"I've topped the wind-sweep heights with easy grace
 *Where never look, nor ever eagle flew,
 And, while with silent lifting mind I've trod
 The high untrodden sanctity of space,
 Put out my hand and touched the face of God."
 John Gillespie Magee, Jr.*



COMBAT UNITS

ACTIVATED
 FEB 1943
 297 MISSIONS
 2 UNIT CITATIONS
 REGENSBURG
 &
 ZWICKAU

AIRCRAFT LOST: 129
 LIVES LOST: 409
 DEACTIVATED
 AUG 1945

HQ SQUADRON
 548TH BOMB SQDN (H)
 549TH BOMB SQDN
 550TH BOMB SQDN
 551ST BOMB SQDN

ACTIVATED
 FEB 1943
 297 MISSIONS
 2 UNIT CITATIONS
 REGENSBURG
 &
 ZWICKAU

AIRCRAFT LOST: 129
 LIVES LOST: 409
 DEACTIVATED
 AUG 1945

THOSE OF US WHO HAVE SURVIVED DEDICATE THIS MONUMENT
 TO OUR FALLEN COMRADES WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LAST FULL
 MEASURE OF DEVOTION IN A SACRED CAUSE.

COMBAT UNITS
 HQ SQUADRON
 548TH BOMB SQDN
 549TH BOMB SQDN
 550TH BOMB SQDN
 551ST BOMB SQDN

SUPPORT UNITS
 424TH AIR SERV GRP
 877TH CHEM CO
 DET 155. 18TH AWS

*"I've topped the wind-sweep heights with easy grace
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UNRAVELLING A 70-YEAR OLD MYSTERY⁷

JAY HODSHON TRACKS DOWN FATE OF AIRMAN WHO WAS BROTHER-IN-LAW

(REPRINTED IN PART FROM NORTH JERSEY SUBURBAN TRENDS - DONNA ROLANDO)

Jay Hodshon grew up with stories about his brother-in-law, a Purple Heart recipient from World War II. Hodshon's family members suspected that the brother-in-law had been shot down over the English Channel.

Hodshon was only about 3 years old when his relatives got the news of Leo DeGraw's death on Dec. 5, 1943. But the sketchy details of the tragedy created a puzzle that was to remain unsolved well into adulthood.

"All I knew of him is from pictures before he went away," said Hodshon.

Adding to the mystery, Hodshon's sister Jeanne didn't much talk about the events that led to the death of her high school sweetheart after a short spell of marriage. So Hodshon always wondered until at the age of 65, he used technology to piece together this slice of the past. Hodshon had moved to Hampstead, N.C. But he still thought about his hometown and what had happened to his brother-in-law, DeGraw, who was from the Midvale section of Wanaque. He used the Internet to solve what he felt had been a decades' long mystery surrounding DeGraw's death.

Hodshon's first break came when the government released military documentation that showed that the doomed flight of the B-17

had three survivors.

Though DeGraw's body was never found, Hodshon said, "They knew the date because they had three survivors. They had records." The first two survivors Hodshon contacted, Thomas Betow and Walter Olowniuk, did not shed much light.

"But when I got to Stewart Day Jr., he was very nice about it," Hodshon said.

In a three-page letter, Day detailed the tragic events that befell the 385th Bomb Group, of which DeGraw was a member, on Dec. 5, 1943. The letter explained that DeGraw did not descend in the English Channel after all.

Day was a 19-year-old tail-gunner when German fighter planes "came out of the sun" after engine trouble forced his bomber plane to dump its load into the sea and head back toward England.

"We left our base at Great Ashfield, England, in the early morning for Bordeaux, France, to bomb the sub pens. The target was clouded over so no bombs were dropped," the letter said. "About 20 miles over the Bay of Biscay, on our way back to England, we had engine trouble and dropped back from our group about three or four miles."

This was clearly no time for the ailing B-17 to encounter German fighter planes. But who can control timing in

war?

Day recalled that both German planes fired at the same time.

"[One] fired low and one fired high over and under my position in the tail," Day wrote.

The radio room, engines and other portions of the American plane took a hard hit, so the order to bail out was no surprise. Then a fire intensified the threat.

"While we were taking care of the fire, the ball turret gunner (Stanley Wysokinski) was out of his position and shot up bad. The two waist gunners Sgt. (James) O'Keefe and Leo DeGraw were down on the floor badly wounded," Day could still recall.

The survival of the crew and its wounded members meant dropping from "25,000 feet in the thin air without oxygen masks," Day said.

Though a formidable task, Day said, "We hit the water without anyone getting hurt worse."

DeGraw and the other injured men then were loaded into life rafts, and a German fighter overhead seemed to respect their situation, leaving the ailing crew without fire.

Trouble then came not from the sky but from the shore.

"My raft started to receive sniper fire from the shore," Day said. "We jumped over-

board. Our pilot (Theodore) Klauser stood up and was shot in the head. (Fred) Albert (the navigator) was also shot."

In waves two to three feet high, Day lost his grip on Wysokinski and Albert.

Hours later when the crew of Day's life raft fell into the reach of a German air-sea rescue plane, co-pilot John Slater was dead from gunshot or drowning, and Albert died in the first-aid room.

But what about DeGraw, the subject of mystery for so many years?

Day recalls a second raft heading toward shore amidst gunfire, and he "lost track of them."

Meanwhile, the Germans wanted to know the whereabouts of the missing crewmembers.

"I had a bad feeling they would kill everyone who would make it to shore," Day said.

Though Day was taken to a POW camp in Austria, he later learned that the soldiers who fired at the life rafts were from India. Captured themselves in North Africa, these soldiers resorted to fighting for Germany, though they once were in the British Army, he said.

"I know this from a French historian who got in contact with me about 10 years ago," he explained. With the mystery finally cleared up, Hodshon concludes that DeGraw not only lost his life, but that he also lost it to what Hodshon considers

JULY 2013 —=



Back Row: O'Keefe - DeGraw - Day - Mushrush - Wysokinaki - Olowniuk

Front Row: Albert - Betow - Kleuser - Weikert

On Dec 5, 1943, the crew of The Mary Pat was split up and most were placed on 42-3397 "The Fightin' Cock" (see front cover)

a war crime" because it was action taken against wounded soldiers.

"All the men who got killed were heroes. They all served their country," Hodshon said. Now that he knows what happened to his brother-in-law all those years ago, Hodshon says he has the truth to share with his own children.

"People get killed and their stories die," said Hodshon, who aims to preserve this bit of family history.

Today, tablets honoring DeGraw and Others missing in Jeanne Hodshon DeGraw action or buried at sea can 1944/45-WAC

be found at the Rhone American Cemetery in France.

The B-17 the crew was flying for the first time that day never made it out of the water, Hodshon said. But he believes it could probably be found close to shore, showing just how close the crew almost came to survival.



Jeanne Hodshon DeGraw



Leo DeGraw

HARDLIFE HERALD 05

AILING OUT OVER FRANCE: JANUARY 2, 1045

BY JOHN II. STANSFIELD, .IK.

STORYTELLER AND WRITER

The B-17's engines 3 and 4 are failing. At an altitude of 22,000 feet, number 3 begins disintegrating internally, its "windmilling" propeller vibrating the plane intensely and refusing to feather. The bomber falls out of formation, losing air speed and altitude. The navigator sends the cockpit a bearing to guide them toward home base. The plane turns back. Wrestling with the controls, the pilot and co-pilot, cannot long hold the bomb-and-fuel-laden plane on a level course. The pilot sounds an alarm and radios each duty station from nose to tail individually, delivering the same message, "Bail out!" Each crew member replies in confirmation.

In the plane's nose, the navigator, my father, secures his parachute to the harness over his flight suit and forces open the "cheek" escape hatch. Sitting, he scoots forward into the opening, legs dangling out. Then he freezes, not from the sub-zero air rushing in, but from an instant stomach knot, the instinctive fear of falling thousands of feet through open air. "Better give me a push," he yells to the bombardier behind him. With a swift shove, the bombardier launches my father out into a realm he has never experienced before. Seconds later,

the bombardier follows him out.

On December 24, 1944, crews of the U. S. Army Air Force, stationed in Suffolk, England, received an early Christmas present--of sorts. A string of rainy, foggy days ended. Better flying weather returned just in time. Ground forces of Nazi Germany were making a last-ditch push back into their previously-held territory near the French border in Luxembourg and Belgium. Allied ground troops desperately needed air support to stop the surging Germans during what Americans called the "Battle of the Bulge".

Nine days later, January 2, 1945, 37 B-17G bombers from the Eighth Army Air Force 385th Bombardment Group, along with hundreds from other groups, undertook a rare tactical mission to help halt and reverse the German advance. The aircraft, all heavily loaded with explosives, lumbered one after another down the runway of Great Ashfield airbase early that morning, rising slowly skyward like enormous silver pelicans. Most B-17s carried a crew of nine or ten. My father, Second Lieutenant John Stansfield, was a navigator with the 548th Bombardment Squadron of the 385th on

one of the bombers (B-17 number 42-102486) that day. He was 23-years-old and flying his ninth bombing mission.

The aircraft gained altitude and gathered in tight flying formations over Sussex before crossing the English Channel. As his plane headed toward the winter sun and its prescribed target behind the German lines, John worked at his station, a tiny desk behind the bombardier's station in the plane's cramped, Plexiglas-fronted nose. Nearby, two machine guns dangled, one on each side protruding out like thick whiskers from the fuselage, awaiting use should enemy fighter planes attack. The navigator, using maps, aerial photos, radio, a Gee box guidance device, and visual reference to the other B-17s, guided the bomber toward its target. Nearing the destination, the bombardier, with direction from the Group lead plane, would take control of the plane briefly. Using a Norden bombsight to locate the target area, he would drop the bomb load, fulfilling the mission. But that day, the mission of John's crew went unfulfilled.

The plane slips past above him. Lt. Stansfield accelerates rapidly in his fall toward earth from above 10,000 feet

feet in altitude. G-force pressure on his arms makes it difficult to grasp the rip cord ring. He pulls the handle. Nothing happens. He yanks the ring harder and the parachute unfurls above him. Instantly, the chute brakes his earthward speed. His upper body seems to be separating from his lower half. As if from a stomach punch, his breath escapes him in a burst. As breath returns, he drifts down through a thick cloud layer into better visibility. There is little lateral wind.

After the vibration, roar, and stress within the plane, John's parachute journey is intensely quiet. Then the drone of two massive B-17 engines, still running, reaches him. He watches as his plane drops in an erratic death spiral and explodes on ground impact in a plume of fire. In a second, the impact concussion reaches his ears and passes on, leaving only the whisper of his body and parachute cutting through air. He wonders about his fellow crew members. Did they all make it out?

A crazy quilt landscape of pastures, farms, lanes, and villages takes shape below. During the final seconds of descent, a furrowed field rushes up to meet him. He lands on his feet, falling backward on the frozen ground, unhurt. His light weight, only 125 pounds, proves beneficial in his first



**Front L-R: Benson-P, Zeigler-CP, Stansfield-N, Gulbranson-B
Back L-R: Charlesworth-TTG, Schaller-RO, Demasc-WG Loachino-BTG, Miller-WG, Job-TG**

and only parachute drop of World War II.

After a few moments spent gathering his senses, his parachute, and his bearings, John walks to a nearby road. Two French Army officers in a jeep pick him up and deliver him to a U.S. Military Police post in the nearby city of St. Quentin. There he unites with most—but not all—of his flight crew.

Pilot Lieutenant Virgil Benson and co-pilot Lieutenant Wayne Zeigler fight the controls as long as they can, hoping all of the crew will escape the plane safely. With the the plane set on auto-pilot, they pull their parachutes from under their seats and snap them into their chest harnesses.

Crawling down the narrow chute to the nose, they vacate the plane through the cheek hatch.

After plummeting earthward upside down, Zeigler gets his chute open. As he drifts beneath it, the unmanned B-17 comes roaring toward him. When only about 100 yards away from swatting him out of the air, the plane pivots onto its right wing and drops away to a fiery end.

Wayne moves uncontrollably backward as he nears the ground. He lands awkwardly on his left hip, biting through his tongue. Impact knocks him out cold and face down. Coming to and spitting blood, he feels pain in his left hip and leg. Rolling to his right hip, he finds

a man and a boy standing above, the man holding a pitch fork about a foot from his chest.

Wayne lies still, trying unsuccessfully to clear his head. More than a dozen men, women, and children come hurrying up and encircle him, but what they say to him he does not understand. Has he landed in Germany? He knows that a number of Allied parachutists have been pitchforked to death by German farmers. The people help unhook and gather up his parachute.

Two men help Zeigler stand on his good leg. Someone offers him a glass of amber liquid, but he refuses what he thinks might be poison. Some in the crowd propose killing the intruder, but the pitchfork-wielding man, understanding a bit of English, argues that he might be an American. Just then, a black car with a white star rolls up near a farm house at the bottom of the hill. Out climb Men in the uniform of the French Home Forces, while helpers assist the aviator hobbling toward the house.

English-speakers at the farm, inform the American that he is in France, about 40 kilometers from the Belgian border, where the ground battle rages. When the soldiers confirm for the crowd that the crashed plane is American and that Wayne is not a Nazi paratrooper in dis-

guise, they cheer and offer him the glass of liquid again. Wayne discovers the amber potion to be 100-proof home-brewed liquor--and very powerful medicine.

The French soldiers drive the airman two miles to a temporary military hospital housed in a school building in St. Quentin. An X-ray and exam disclose no broken bones, just deep, massive bruising. The crew's tail gunner, Staff Sergeant William J. Barnes, is brought in later with a broken ankle.



Lt. Wayne G. Zeigler, 1945
The rest of the crew—pilot Benson, bombardier Lieutenant P. Fundyga, engineer/top turret gunner Sergeant William Charlesworth, ball turret gunner Sergeant Billy N. Barham, and waist gunner Staff Sergeant S. C. Alencewicz—parachute down without serious incident. Radio operator, Staff Sergeant David Schaller, has a close call, but a soft landing. Nearing the ground, he barely avoids colliding with a hard,

steep roof, landing instead in an icy pigsty. Residents of the farm extricate him from the mud and feed him cognac. By the time Schaller arrives at the U.S. Military Police post, my father recalls that his crew mate is feeling no pain.

Benson's crew was lucky to turn back soon enough to bail into friendly territory. Behind German lines, they might have become prisoners of war or worse. While published estimates vary, 21,000 or more Eighth Army Air Force airmen became POWs, while at least 26,000 were killed. Serving in an air crew was per capita the most dangerous task for U.S. armed forces in World War II.

M.P.s transported the reunited crew members to the plane crash site. It was immediately obvious that the B-17 flew itself into a hillside, exploded, and burned. Debris lay scattered out over a half-mile around the impact crater. Sergeant Charlesworth found an unexploded bomb and picked it up. He carried it around awhile, until Lieutenant Benson told him, "Put that damn thing down!"

From the moment he hit the ground, my father intended to return his life-saving parachute back to Great Ashfield and the skillful parachute packers on base. Riding back to the M.P. Station, he

noticed a wine shop nearby. John purchased a bottle of champagne as a gift for the packers. But, glass bottles were scarce at that time and place. The woman who owned the shop demanded that he consume the champagne soon nearby and return the empty bottle. John promised that he would. But that was not to be. Eventually, both parachute and bottle of champagne received a warm welcome from the packers at Great Ashfield.

A military truck transported the seven able-bodied crew members for temporary housing to a nearby USAAF base, most likely the B-26 operation at Saint-Simon-Clastres. In the officer's mess hall that night, the commanding colonel, seeing men out of proper uniform in their flight suits and fleece caps, started to chew them out. A subordinate explained about the B-17 bail out survivors on base. The colonel rapidly apologized and welcomed them.

Benson's crew resided on the B-26 base for five days awaiting transportation back to England, sleeping in tents at night like the rest of the personnel in the heavily-bombed and recently-German base. The next leg of the journey brought them to Brussels, with crew members bouncing along in a canvas-covered trailer pulled by a troop transport truck. The crew's encounter with a ma-

major in charge of temporary housing proved unpleasant. (They met the "mean major" again after an emergency landing in Brussels on a later mission.) But, they did receive indoor billets, where they spent two nights double-bunked in feather beds, a distinct upgrade from winter nights in tents.

Ferrying a B-17 back to England, the airmen returned to Great Ashfield. The next few days included a rest and recuperation stint away from the base. Benson testified before a board of inquiry concerning the loss of the plane, which was officially removed from the list of aircraft in service at the base on January 18, 1945.

That same day, Benson's crew, minus Zeigler and Barnes and with regular ball turret gunner Paul Loachino, returned to action, flying a successful bombing mission to Kaiserslautern. After about two and one-half weeks in the St. Quentin hospital recovering from head, hip, and leg injuries, Zeigler returned to fly with the crew on their February 3 mission to Berlin. On their next mission, Lieutenant Mike Gallagher took over as pilot for my father's crew. Virgil Benson became a lead pilot, flying with Gallagher's former crew.

Virgil Benson became a lead pilot, flying with Gallagher's former crew.

From November 25, 1944 until April 9, 1945, my father flew 29 combat missions with the 385th Bombardment Group. In addition, he served as navigator on a humanitarian mission in the first week of May and a celebratory flight after German surrender. The mercy flight (some call it the "chow haul") featured an aerial drop of tons of food from hundreds of B-17s to feed thousands starving in Holland, one of seven such missions flown during cease fires negotiated with the Germans. After VE Day, my father's crew flew their hard-working ground personnel over Europe to experience the combat crew perspective on the war. In between those two flights, on May 7, 1945, Germany surrendered and the war ended in Europe.

Almost 70 years have passed since John Stansfield and his crewmates bailed out over France. Still, his memory remains quite fresh regarding details of the incident, as are Wayne Ziegler's recollections, from which I have gathered a number of details for this story. After retelling his January, 1945 experiences to me one evening, my father stated with his usual humility, "I hope I'm not gilding the lily. I don't think I am." And, from what I have learned about the crew's exploits, he is not. Any errors in retelling this story are mine alone.

THU DAY I EARNED MY D.F.C

BY F.B. MOLL

The Day I Earned the D.F.C. Woke us up at 4:35 am. Breakfast at 5:15 consisting of coffee, powdered eggs and toast, and a half of a canned peach. 5:45 Briefing for a mission to Munster, Germany. Down town in the industrial section of Germany. Flight Line getting ready to go 6:15 with take-off about 7:00 to 7:25. Circling to gain altitude and form up in squadrons and head out at 9:00 reaching the bomb run at about 1:00 pm.

We are in the #4 position of the lower formation. I call out to the crew on intercom to tell them we had lost the two planes on our wing #5 and #6 positions and that I had counted the parachutes; ten out of both planes. Captain Ink notified us that we had lost the three planes in front of us too. We continued on and dropped out bombs on target (Munster). As we pulled off from target, Captain Ink asked if we should head for Switzerland or try to make it back to England. I was the only one to speak and I said "Oh! We can make it back!" so we headed for Great Ashfield.

Almost immediately German fighters jumped us and their leader must have been teaching new pilots how to go about shooting down crippled bombers. There were eighteen of them formed up and behind us. They would come three at a time diving at us and just when they got into range, I would cry out to Ink to kick the rudder. Since there were three of them they could not follow us for fear of running into each other;



Back L-R: Moll - Lorenz - Kast - Taylor - Shelton - Holmes

Front L-R: Ink - Stokes - McShane - Cowing

they would have to circle under and around us and go back to get in line and try again. They were also making passes at the sides - plenty of action for everyone! This continued for what seemed like a long time and Ink spotted a large cloud and we sought cover in it for a while. When we came out of the cloud, there were some Jerries there but nothing like before.

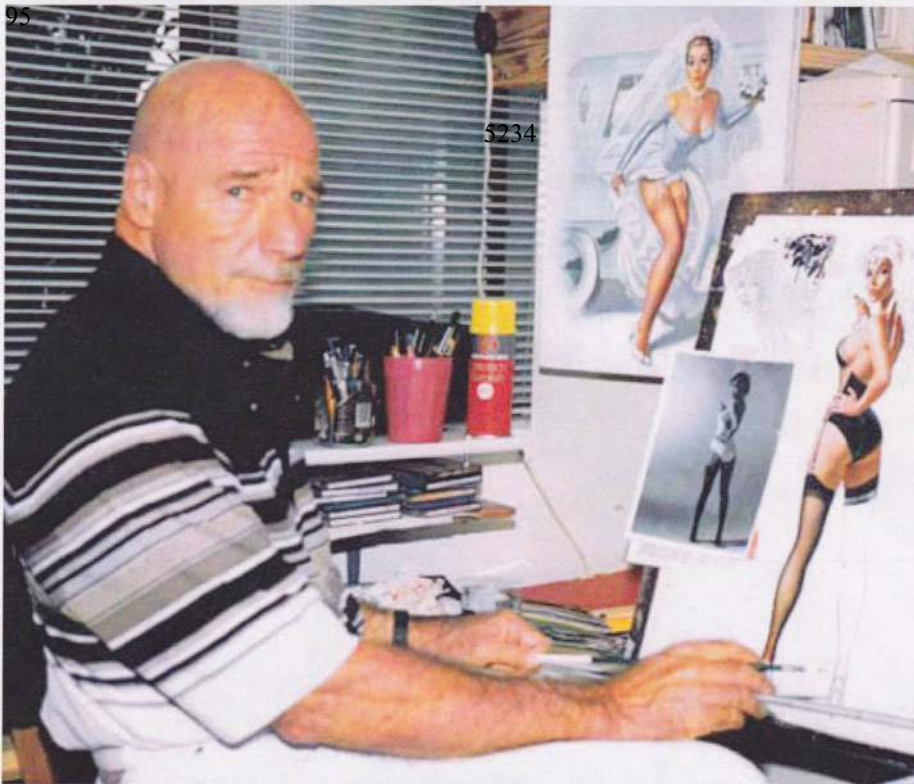
We literally fought our way to the English Channel before they quit. In the meantime we had lost three engines and we were dropping altitude badly. We prepared to ditch in the Channel but Captain Ink nursed it to land and we made it to a B-24 base. Ink called in and told them the situation and they told him to circle the field one time and they would work him in to land. He told them again "I'm on one engine, I'm coming in now over and out!" As it happened, just prior to

setting down, that last engine quit and Ink and Stokes landed that B-17 dead stick, Woah! What a landing. We coasted to the far end of the runway and they kicked the left rudder and we went into the infield as a truck came out and took us in. Captain Ink must have given me credit for making it because shortly after I was awarded the D.F.C. What I did not know for at least 25 years after the war, we were hit in one engine and could not stay up with the formation. If we had salvoed our bombs, we could have stayed up, but Captain Ink decided to complete what we came for: bomb Munster.

I always thought the other planes in our squadron had been shot down. I learned the facts at a 385th Bombardment Group Association reunion many years later.

(Note this was Mission #27 on Oct. 10, 1943 - B-17 42-3388 "Sleepytyme Gal")

FEATURED PIN-UP ARTIST



Jay Scott Pike (born 1924, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), is an American comic book artist and commercial illustrator known for his 1950s and 1960s work for Marvel Comics and DC Comics, advertising art, and as a good girl artist. He created the DC character Dolphin and co-created the Marvel character Jann of the Jungle.

Born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Jay Scott Pike enrolled at the Art Students League in Manhattan, New York City at the age of 16. After military service in the United States Marines, he went on to study at the Parsons School of Design,

Syracuse University, and the Ringling School of Art in Sarasota, Florida.

Besides the pinups we showcase in this gallery, he has painted award-winning illustrations for magazines and comic books (he created the DC character Dolphin and co-created the Marvel character Jann of the Jungle), as well as advertisements for major corporate clients like Proctor and Gamble, Pepsi, General Mills, Ford, Borden's, and Trans World Airlines. Near the close of his commercial career, Pike turned to painting canvases of sensuous fine-art nudes. His exquisite pencil drawings of nudes first appeared in the Playboy clubs before being published as limited-edition graphics.

In recent years, he has accepted many portrait commissions.

“There I was...” The cartoons of Bob Stevens



» JAY SCOTT PIKE



2013 385th BGA Reunion Registration Form

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and total the amount. Send your completed registration form and the total amount due to Barbara Dangleman, 741 Faith St., Maitland, FL 32751. Send your payment in the form of a check or money order payable to 385th Bomb Group Association. Your cancelled check will serve as your receipt.

All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before September 20, 2013. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of this form before mailing. Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form.

	Price per	# of People	Total
REGISTRATION FEE			
Includes meeting expenses, Banquet Entertainment and other reunion expenses.	\$35		\$
THURSDAY GROUP LUNCHEON	\$22		\$
FRIDAY BUS TOUR/RIVERBOAT RIDE	\$40		\$
BANQUET DINNER			
Please select your entree' choice(s) for the Banquet:			
London Broil Supreme	\$38		\$
Mediterranean Chicken	\$35		\$

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE \$
Payable to: 385th Bomb Group Association

Please Print:

MEMBER NAME (for nametag)

SPOUSE NAME (if attending)

GUEST NAMES

PHONE # () - EMAIL ADDRESS @

ADDRESS CITY ST ZIP

DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

EMERGENCY CONTACT PHONE # () -

385th Bomb Group Association Reunion October 16-20, 2013

This year's 385th BGA reunion will be held in Bloomington, Minnesota at the Hilton Minneapolis/St. Paul-Airport/Mall of America. Our room rate is \$119 plus tax. You may contact the hotel directly to make your reservations at 952-854-2100 or Hilton Reservations at 1-800-HILTONS (445-8667). Individuals must identify themselves as being with the group, 385th Bomb Group Reunion, at the time the reservation is made in order to receive the special group rate. Reservations may also be made by booking online at:

[http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/M/MSPAHHF-385-20131016/index.jhtml? WT.mc_id=POG](http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/M/MSPAHHF-385-20131016/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG)

The Hilton Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport Mall of America hotel is just three miles from the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport (MSP) and one mile from Mall of America. Enjoy complimentary shuttle service from/to the airport, Mall of America and Light Rail Transit station (LRT). The LRT provides easy access to downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul. The Minneapolis/St. Paul airport is easily accessible by air from most major U.S. cities.

Wednesday, October 16

Arrive at the airport and take the free hotel shuttle to check in at the Hilton. The shuttle runs continuously between the hotel and the airport roughly every 30 minutes. Dinner is on your own at the hotel or at one of the many local area restaurants. We expect to have our Hospitality Suite open for business Wednesday evening to meet and greet those who arrive during the afternoon and early evening on Wednesday.

Thursday, October 17

We will hold a Group luncheon at noon. Thursday afternoon and evening is your time for visiting the Mall of America, one of the most visited tourist destinations in the world. Mall of America features 520 stores, 50 restaurants and attractions galore, including Nickelodeon Universe®, the nation's largest indoor theme park, and the new American Girl store. Put on your shopping shoes, and hop the free hotel shuttle at your convenience. The Mall shuttle runs hourly from 10:20 am to 10:20 pm. The Mall offers something for everyone and is quite an experience. The Hospitality Suite will be open during the afternoon and evening for conversation, refreshments and some interesting videos for your viewing pleasure.

Friday, October 18

Friday, we have scheduled a guided motorcoach tour of the Twin Cities on Thursday morning followed by a one and a half hour stop for lunch (on your own). After lunch, we will re-board our bus for a short ride to the dock for a scenic Riverboat Cruise. The Fall foliage should be particularly beautiful at this time of year. Twin Cities weather is somewhat unpredictable in October, so plan on bringing a sweatshirt or jacket just in case. At least one deck on our boat will be completely enclosed and climate controlled. Our motorcoach will depart the hotel at 9:00 am and return at approximately 5:15 pm. Dinner will be on your own or you may join us in the Hospitality Suite for an informal pizza buffet! Of course, the Hospitality Suite will be open for the evening.

Saturday, October 19

Saturday morning, we will have our annual business meeting at 10:00 followed by some presentations. The afternoon will be at your leisure. In the evening we will have our Reunion Banquet where we will be serenaded with the sounds of the Big Band Era. And, of course, the Hospitality Suite will be open in the afternoon and early evening, and after the banquet 'til the wee hours!

Sunday, October 20

Time to say "So Long" for another year and to wish everyone a safe trip Home.

"A WARTIME ROMANCE"

MAJOR CHARLES IV. HALPER IJSAFR

I didn't have to go. As a construction worker for the DuPont Corporation I had a deferment, but I also had a yen to be an Airplane Pilot, so I took the Aviation Cadet Examination and was accepted. I planned to fly the P-38 Lockheed Lightning Fighter but instead, they sent me to Bomber School.

My first look at the B-17 Flying Fortress I was assigned to fly made me feel like throwing up right there on the Tarmac. There it sat, tail dragging on the ground, nose pointed in the air like a hound dog on the scent, Olive Drab paint. Studded tires, and no guns, or turrets. After dreaming about the P-38, now this thing. I thought I'd be sick.

After two months learning to fly this wreck, they gave me a New Silver B-17 and nine men to train with. When we finished up we flew over to England, put some Girlie Art on the nose of the plane and named her "Maiden America"

She and I began to go steady and we started to fly Bombing Raids into Germany. We dreamed up a safe way to get home in Bad Weather and avoid those all too often, Mid-Air Collisions. We learned the Railroad Routes to our field and flew the tracks back to the Base. The Maiden and I thought this was Great Sport.

She let me do Partial Stalls

16 HARDLIFE HERALD

to dump altitude on the Final Approach, and Wingovers for Priority Landings. Whatever the antics, she was always patient with me and never complained.

When on one occasion, the Germans again proved they didn't know how to treat a Lady, they slapped her around and wounded two of her family with Anti-Aircraft Fire, but she simply turned away and brought us all home safely to an English Emergency Field.

By the time the Maiden had carried us in and out of Germany the required 35 times, all thoughts of the P-38 had vanished. I parked her on her Hardstand for the last time, patted her Chin Turret and said, "Good-bye".

Back in the States, I flew everything from the B-29 Super Fortress to Sailplanes, but there never was a Competitor. I had long before lost my heart to the B-17.

Years later, I saw her once again at the Airport in Long

Beach, California. She was surrounded by her admirers and looked as young and beautiful as I had always remembered her. Of course she would never recognize me. How could she imagine that the Old Man, standing apart from the crowd, and gazing at her so wistfully, was that Young Pilot who once courted her so passionately.

I'll take one more look and then I'll be ready to go. Hey, wait a minute! Did you see that? She remembered! She just winked at me with her Landing Light!



JULY 2013

385TH BOMB GROUP MARKINGS - B-17F/G JUNE 43-JULY 45

FROM "MIGHTY EIGHTH, WAR PAINT AND HERALDRY" BY ROGER A. FREEMAN, PAGE 83

Original B-17F's were in Dark Olive Drab and neutral Gray (bottom fuselage) factory finish. Group markings were on the fin and upper right wing. An identification Yellow letter G, 40 inches high, was painted on a duller white square, varying in dimensions but generally 50 inches by 48 inches, positioned above the tail number. On some 549 Squadron a/c the square was 60 inches on the horizontal sides and overlapped the rudder.

On the wing this marking was 72 inches with the span and 57 inches with the chord, again light gray with a 45 inch yellow G. The yellow individual a/c call letter, painted below the tail number, was 24 inches high on some a/c and 48 inches on others. The large letters only appeared on the Group's early B-17F's; in general, replacements had 24 inch high tail call-letters. On some a/c the call letter was also painted on the rear fuselage in bluish gray, 36 inches high.

Early in July 45, the instruction for the Group device was amended, the square changed to white and the G altered to Insignia Blue. The size of the G and square remained as already established. Exactly how many of the Group's a/c had received the yellow G before the change is not known, but many 385th Bomb Group B-17's were to be seen with this original device throughout the summer of '43. From early '44 the dimensions of the Group markings were generally consistent with the 48 inch square. When a/c without camouflage (OD and Gray) were received the Group marking was a white G on a black square, although forming the G by masking the bare metal became common. Tail call-letters were black on bare metal but they too remained the same size.

Although SD110 squadron code letters were available for the 385th BG they were not displayed on Fuselages during the combat operations period (until May '45.)

Propeller spinners (hubs) were painted in squadron colors: 548-Blue, 549-yellow, 550-Red, 551-Green. In December '44 the a/c received a yellow chevron marking on the upper surface of the right wing. Each arm was 48 inches wide with the apex approximately in the center of the outer wing section leading edge.

On transfer to the 93rd Combat Bomb Wing in the first week of February '45, the square G marking was deleted from both tail and wing. In its place 93rd CBW red wing and tail markings were applied. A single 48 inch wide stripe was painted around each wing outboard of engines Nos 1 and 4, with the outer edge of the band running just inside the joint to the outer wing section. The 36 inch wide band around the horizontal tail plane was situated midway between the two central elevator hinges. The vertical tail markings consisted of 28 inch squared forming a checkerboard. At the base there were three red squares and at the highest point in the center of the fin there were also three red squares, giving nine full and five part red squares of each fin surface. The squares separating the red were either olive drab or bare metal. On OD fuselages, the call-letter was repositioned in white in the top full square and the tail number in white or yellow in its original position over the checkerboard. On bare metal the call-letter was black in the top full bare metal square and the tail number in black in its original position. It was April '45 before all a/c were repainted. After combat in mid May '45 the 1945 SD110 squadron codes were used as anti-buzz ID markings under the left wing. Each letter was about 72 inches by 60 inches, black (or yellow.) The 548-GX, the 549-XA, 550-SG and 551-HR.

•385TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HEAVY)*

‘WINGED VICTORY’

•STATION NO.155«

GREAT ASHFIELD A/F-SUFFOLK

•CAMPAIGNS*

AIR OFFENSIVE-EUROPE • NORMANDY
NORTHERN FRANCE • RHINELAND
ARDENNES-ALSACE • CENTRAL EUROPE

•ASSIGNED EIGHTH AF*

JUNE, 1943-AUGUST, 1944



Part of the 385th Bomb Groups history that tends to be a bit confusing centers around this units transfer to the 93rd Combat Bombardment Group during the final months of the European conflict. This transfer, effected in February 1945, necessitated a complete cosmetic make-over, the result of which presents an entirely different visual appearance than that previously associated with the group. Gone altogether was the familiar Square ‘G’ configuration so often associated with the 385th.

The photo to the immediate right and the graphics below illustrate the ‘face lift’ that aircraft of the 385th underwent subsequent to that units transfer to the 93rd CBW.



Aside from the obvious drama inherent with this photo, the image provides an exceptional close-up view of the application of tactical markings to the tail of a 385th Bomb Group aircraft.

The overhead photo below clearly shows the application of a first pattern 385th tactical marker to the right wing. Note the national insignia on the left wing and what appears to possibly be a yellow contour outline.



The photo at left depicts a second generation, first pattern tactical marking configuration, as applied to 385th BG natural metal finished replacement aircraft

4m
COMBAT
BOMBARDMENT
WING (H)

3RD
BOMBARDMENT
(AIR) DIVISION

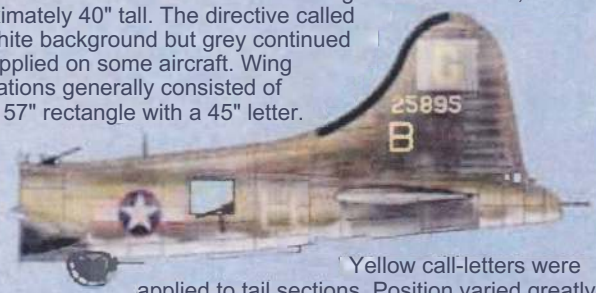


385TH BOMBARDMENT
GROUP (HEAVY)

By the end of 1943, all 585th aircraft displayed propeller bosses painted in assigned sqdn. colors.



The first group markers were applied to tail and upper right wing as a yellow letter 'G' on a light grey background. By mid summer '43, specifications modified this image from Identification Yellow to an Insignia Blue letter, approximately 40" tall. The directive called for a white background but grey continued to be applied on some aircraft. Wing applications generally consisted of a 72"X 57" rectangle with a 45" letter.



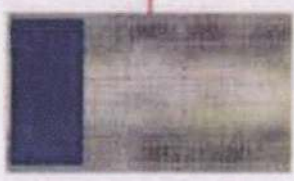
Yellow call-letters were applied to tail sections. Position varied greatly and letter sizes ranged from between 24" and 48" in height. On some aircraft a 36" tall blue-grey call-letter was painted on the fuselage. Just aft the waist gunners window.



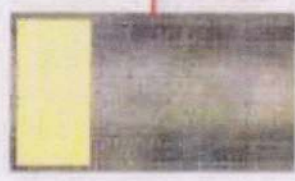
In late 1944 the group adopted an Identification Yellow chevron which replaced the 'Square 'G' on the upper right wing. Blue-on-white tail markings were replaced by a white-on-black configuration. In some cases the 'G' was masked out to allow the metal under-surface to show through against the surrounding black rectangular image.



The 385th BG gradually discontinued the application of the additional fuselage call-letter prior to its' transfer from the 4th CBW to the 93rd CBW.



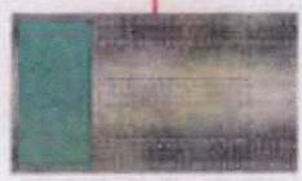
548TH BMB SQDN



549TH BMB SQDN



550TH BMB SQDN



551ST BMB SQDN

TM & © Warner Bros.(s03)

Refurbishing the Monmument

Finally got an OK and weather cooperated for me to go and repaint the lettering on our monument at the Mighty Eighth Museum.

Its a labor of love and respect for all our 385th veterans. It sure made a BIG improvement and we look pretty good. Job took 2 days but well worth it. June 1 & 2, 2013

-Barbara Dangleman





*"I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, nor even eagle flew—
And, while with silent lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand and touched the face of God."*
John Gillespie Magee, Jr.

COMBAT UNITS

HQ SQUADRON

548TH BOMB SQDN

549TH BOMB SQDN

550TH BOMB SQDN

551ST BOMB SQDN

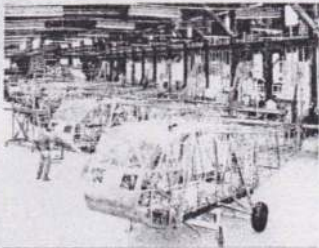


Honey Bee

We were very fortunate to recently have a very large donation of photographs from Mr. Raymond Fordyce whose father was the Group Photo Officer for the 385th. Within this collection were two negatives of a B-17. However, we have no record of a 17 with this name. Might anyone be able to shed some light on this (or who the gentleman in the pictures is?)



FIGHTING FALCON MILITARY MUSEUM



This legend begins in 1942. The Gibson Refrigerator Company, Greenville, Michigan, had just received a contract from the U.S. Army Air Forces for production of CG-4A troop carrying gliders. There were 15 companies in the U.S. given these cost-plus a 5% fixed fee contracts to manufacture the gliders. Most of the companies were small civilian aircraft manufacturers; the exceptions were Gibson Refrigerator Company and the Ford Motor Company. Gibson's produced a total of 1,078 CG-4A gliders.

The glider had over 70,000 individual parts, a height of 12'7", wing span of 83'8" and overall length of 48'4". The crew consisted of a pilot, co-pilot and 13 infantrymen. The glider was towed by a C-46 or C-47 and released behind enemy lines.

In March, 1943, the students of Greenville Public Schools decided to try to raise enough money to purchase one of the Gibson made gliders. In two months the students raised \$72,000, enough to purchase four of the Gibson-made gliders. On May 19, 1943, the school students christened one of these gliders "The Fighting Falcon" at a prestigious dedication ceremony on Black Field. The students received the coveted Distinguished Service Award from the United States Treasury Department, the first one in history to be awarded to school students. The Fighting Falcon was then disassembled, re-crated at the Gibson factory, and shipped overseas to Crookham Commons, England with hundreds of other gliders.

In recognition of the students' patriotic efforts, the Ninth Air Force Headquarters ordered that the Fighting Falcon be the first glider in the echelon of 52 gliders heading into Normandy on D-Day. At 1:19 a.m. on June 6, 1944, the lead aircraft roared down the runway towing its glider, "Flu* Fighting Falcon", with a big "1" chalked on its nose.



In May, 1993, a small yet dedicated group of individuals began work to complete a replica of "The Fighting Falcon", the most famous combat glider of WWII. The Cass Street school building has now become the Fighting Falcon Military Museum and is the permanent home of the CG-4A restoration. By creating a museum in this building we are also preserving the oldest existing school building in Greenville today.

The Fighting Falcon Military Museum became officially incorporated on March 7, 2000. The museum has several purposes:

- A. Establishment and maintenance for museum display of a collection of military artifacts and specific historic Army Air Force aircraft in honor of the sacrificial giving of men, women, and children during times of war.
- B. Education of the general public on wartime events through museum displays, aircraft displays, and presentations, publications, and educational programs.
- C. Promotion and knowledge of and appreciation for the American historical experience and the efforts of our forebearers to create and preserve our U.S. Constitutional freedoms and liberties.

thefightingfalcon.org

516 W. Cass Street Greenville, MI 48838 (35 minutes NE of Grand Rapids) 616-225-1940

Open Sunday 2:00-4:00 p.m. Lifetime Membership \$1,500.00



BEFORE YOU RECYCLE THIS NEWSLETTER...

Please consider donating it to your local School, VFW, or American Legion.

HARDLIFE HERALD

Newsletter of the 385th Bombardment Group Association



1942-1945 Great Ashfield - Suffolk - England Station 155 - The Mighty Eighth

February 2013



42-97643 - "Katie's Revenge" Landing Accident

FOR SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT:

Chuck Smith - 385th BGA Treasurer

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Alpharetta, GA 30009-0329

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385th BGA

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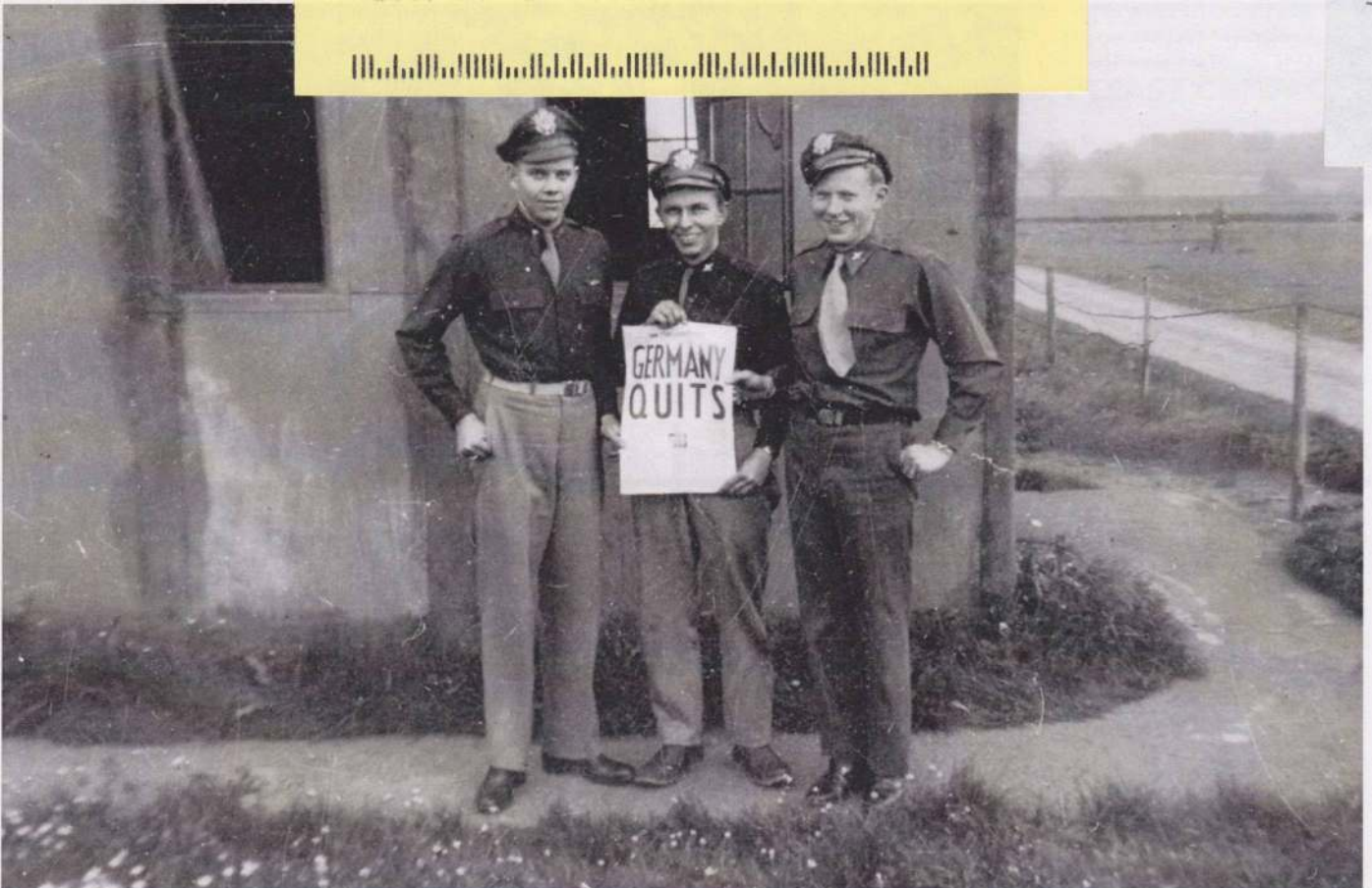
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07/26/13F

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"May 7th, 1945!!! George Crow-P, Bill Varnedoe-N, and Don Black-CP, three happy campers!
The bldg behind us is the 550th Sq BOQ." -Bill Varnedoe