

BACK TO THE SACK
 OHIO AIR FORCE
 SKY GODDESS
 HONKY TONK SAL
 HESITATIN' HUSSY
 GROUND HOG
 BIG GAS BIRD
 STAR DUST
 LIBERTY BELLE
 ANGELS SISTER
 GREMLIN BUGGY II
 HIT PARADE JR
 ROUNDTRIP TICKET
 RAUNCHY WOLF
 "HAYBAG" ANNIE
 HUSTLIN' HUSSY
 LIL AUDREY
 THE BLACKJACKER
 THUNDERBIRD
 GOLDEN GOOSE
 WAR HORSE
 HEAVENLY BODY
 CROWBOUND
 MISS AMERICA
 PREGNANT PORTIA
 LEADING LADY
 ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND
 LONESOME POLECAT
 OFF SPRING
 WANDERING DUCHESS
 BLUE CHAMPAGNE
 GELDING
 STARS AND STRIPES
 DORSAL QUEEN
 HARES BREATH
 SLY FOX
 CURLY'S KIDS
 MARY ELLEN
 DRAGON LADY
 WINNIE THE POOH
 WAR WEARY
 MARY PAT

THOROBRED

HARD LIFE



HERALD

MR. SMITH
 SUGAR JO

SKY CHIEF
 PERRY'S PIRATES
 GZMO
 MR. LUCKY
 MADAME SHOO SHOO
 BARBARA B
 PAT PENDING
 ROUNDTRIP JACK
 SPIRIT OF CHICAGO
 SOUTHERN BELLE
 MARY ELLEN III
 HELLS BELLS
 PRINCESS VAL
 SLO JO
 ROGER THE DODGER
 MICKY
 HALF AND HALF
 MICKY II
 SLEEPYTIME GAL
 LATEST RUMOR
 MAIDEN AMERICA
 MISSION BELLE
 OL' RUM DUM
 CRASH WAGON III
 RELUCTANT LADY
 PISTOL PACKIN MAMA
 TARGET FOR TONIGHT
 JUNIOR
 OL' DOODLE BUG
 SWEET CHARIOT
 SWINGING DOOR
 MISSISSIPPI MISS
 SATAN'S MATE
 SLICK CHICK
 KITTY'S REVENGE
 BELL OF THE BLUE
 MARY ELLEN II



NEWSLETTER OF THE 385th BOMBARDMENT GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION



COMBAT UNITS

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

VOL. XXI, NO. 3

Editor: Ed Stern
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JUNE 1994

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 STATION COMPLEMENT SQ.

ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

PREZ SEZ:

George Hruska, our host, has selected the dates 27 September 1995 thru 1 October 1995. **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!** because the agenda and weather are going to be GREAT IN OMAHA.

Captain Ted Wilbur is a Naval Aviator, Combat Artist, Editor and Writer with 35 years of active service. He is a highly experienced pilot in all types of aircraft. His illustrations and articles have appeared in many newspapers. His paintings are displayed in the National Air and Space Museum in Washington D.C. "Chuck" Yeager and President Bush airplanes are among them. Let's have our 385th B-17 there too. Remember the "Rough Proof" is only a sketch. the final Lithograph will be wonderful.

Please return the cards showing your interest as soon as possible.

Thank you my friends,

Bob Smith

ASSOCIATION OFFICER

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

EDITOR, HARDLIFE HERALD

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

8TH AF HISTORICAL UNIT CONTACT

Gerry Donnelly
 10770 SW 46th
 Miami, FL 33165

HONORARY MEMBERS

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SECRETARY

George Hruska
 7442 Ontario St.
 Omaha, NE 68124
 402-397-1934

TREASURER

John Pettenger
 Box 117
 Laurel, FL 34272-0117

OMAHA REUNION

September 27, 28, 29, 30, Oct. 1, 1995

CHAPLAIN JIM SEZ:

GREETINGS FROM THE "NORTH WEST WASHINGTON"!!

In a news letter from our "Minister To The Retired Clergy" was this statement: "Only Robinson Crusoe got his work done by Friday." So relax when things keep you from accomplishing all you would like. Get it done - but just relax!

Another quote: This from the Rev. Dale Turner. "When every one thinks alike, no one thinks." I hope my notes in the "Hard Life" have helped you think for yourself. Sure, I would like you to think and do as I say but I really, truly want each to think for themselves. So relax and think but don't expect to get things done by 'Friday'.

A verse in Proverbs 12:15 reads: "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice." Sometimes that is hard to do - listen - but it pays.

All of us are getting to the place where we realize we don't know it all. O.K.? SOOO we surely know it pays to listen - relax - get it done ourselves - and think but enjoy ourselves with what we have.

Have a good life!!

Sincerely with Love

Jim



They say he died in glory.
 What ever that may be.
 If dieing in a burst of flames is glory,
 Than it's not for me
 In the briefing room that morning.
 He sat with clear eyes and strong heart.
 Just one of the many gunners.
 Determined to do his part.
 My buddy had the guts all right.
 He sought not glory or fate.
 He knew he had a job to do.
 And his crew all felt the same.
 But death had the final word.
 For in it's cog it wrote his name,
 And my buddy died that morning.
 In glory and a burst of flame.



Horace L. Twyman	Jan. 1994
Darwin L. Mushrush Jr.	April 1994
James McAnnally	May 1994
Wilfrid "Doc" Karls	March 1994
James A. Hess	March 1994
Frank Cortese	July 1993

EDITOR'S NOTE: Irene Huber reminds us that Olive Blake, whose father was at the Fox Pub in Elmswell was Darwin's wife of 49 years.

DARWIN LINDSAY MUSHRUSH JR., 72, who retired to Clayton Street, Dagsboro, in 1986 froir Lansdowne, Pa., died Friday of complications from lung cancer in Peninsula Regional Medical Center, Salisbury, Md.

During summers, Mr. 24ushrush worked at the take-out counter at Phillips Seafood House at Ocean Highway and 141st Street in Ocean City, Md. He was a member of American Legion Post 24, Dagsboro, and enjoyed woodwork-ing and sports.

In 1986, he retired as a consulting civil engineer for A.V. Smith Co., Narberth, Pa. Earlier, he was

a civil engineer at Atlantic Pipe-line, Philadelphia.

An Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, he earned the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal as a top turret gunner and flight engineer on the "Mary Pat" bomber. Based at Ashfield, Suffolk, England with the 551st Squadron of the 385th Bomber Group, he completed 25 missions over German territory and became a member of his squadron's "Lucky Bastard Club."

During the Korean War, he served in the Air Force with an airplane maintenance crew in Georgia.

Winfrid John "Doc" Karls

ALAMOGORDO, N.M. - Winfrid John "Doc" Karls, 71, Alamogordo, died Friday, March 25, 1994, at the Gerald Champion Memorial Hospital, Alamogordo.

Mr. Karls was bom Sept. 25, 1922, at Leoville, Kan., and was a resident of Alamogordo since 1974. He was a B-17 pilot in Wdrld War II and also served in Korea anOVietnam, retiring as chief master sergeant. He was a member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Precision Shooters Club and a volunteer with VITA and Retiree Affairs at Holloman Air Force Base.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This wonderful tribute from Jim McDonald about President Bob Smith's bravery under fire would make it worth-while for you to look back in your old Hardlife Herald's for Bob's letter about this mission.

Dear Ed.

I refer to page 22 of the recent Hardlife - letter from Ian to Miss Wilson - in which he refers to Bob Smith as the pilot of the "Liberty Belle."

Miss Wilson and Ian might also know that Bob Smith was a hero on that flight. The ammunition for the top turret, (right back of the pilot), caught fire and started exploding thus causing the fire. Evidence was that 2 members of the crew hesitated to bail out. Bob stayed with it to help and gave them time to jump, finally, he too, jumped.

For that, and other reasons I've previously enumerated in letters to you, I consider Bob the toughest man, pound for pound, I've ever met, (then he weighed about 130 lbs).

Best wishes,

Col. James G. McDonald
 950 Mandalay Beach Road
 Oxnard, California 93035

EDITOR'S NOTE: Here's a wonderful tribute, written by his sister and grandson, on the life of Dick Cowan. It was read as a eulogy at his funeral. Dick died on November 23, 1993. Wonderful to leave such memories.

WHAT CAN I SAY ABOUT MY GRANDFATHER

How can I capture in a few sentences the richness of a man so multifaceted? You knew him; that's why you are here - to celebrate a life that has touched so many. Each of you who knew my grandfather could describe one facet perhaps, maybe more. But we, his family have sampled all the facets and knew him as the complete person he was. Poppa was a family man. He was a second son; loving and caring. He was a devoted brother; a tease and an inspiration. He was a wonderful husband, a terrific father, a role model and best friend to his grandchildren. But my grandfather did not spend all his time with his family. He was a patriot; proud to be an American. Lovingly called "The Colonel" by those of you whose friendship was forged during his years in the United States Air Force. Poppa had other titles, too. "Gray Eagle" always conjures images of him staking a claim on the Silver mines of Nevada, or while talking on his CB radio on the way to the Yuba River to pan for gold. "Rotarian" was a title he cherished. It was an indication of the successful businessman he was, and the humanitarian who had a heart for people in need. Being a Scotsman was a thing of pride for Poppa. The Highland heritage of the Colquhoun Clan he so cherished and displayed each year at the Kirken of the Tartan and the Scottish Games. Poppa was a scientist, as many of you know. He was a physicist, a meteorologist, an inventor. He could solve problems that would stump many another and would find a way to do what other's deemed impossible. Did you know my grandfather was an artist? We called him Michael - "Dick" - also, the sculpter. there are many pieces of marble in the garage as I speak, awaiting his mallet and chisel. He mastered the art of storytelling, especially to children, but we all know he could spell-bind any group with tales of his own adventures. Some of his stories he put in written form; like his children's book, *Beeblebum, the Bumble Bee*. Language was important to him; for he was an impressive speaker. Poppa was a natural entertainer. His magic tricks could tease a laugh out of the most sullen child. He made people laugh, turning the most stupid mistakes into something simply funny. Poppa was a realist and an idealist at the same time. He was a religious man, a prayer, a man who has known God all his life. He involved himself in the church and enjoyed friendships that blossomed through the parish. These are some of the facets of my grandfather, but the one title that describes him best is the title "friend". It gives us entry into his personality into his passion for life, for honesty, for sincerity. Into his intolerance of the slipshod and the inane. Into his quick temper that could paralyze the timid and into his equally quick tenderness that struck a happy balance. His friends have known his intelligence, his humor, his depth. Yes, my grandfather was quite a man; multifaceted - sometimes complex. But, all in all, I'm proud to say: he was a balanced man.

EDITOR'S NOTE: A.F. Chief of Staff Gen. Merrill A. McPeak had this to say in helping welcome the B-2 to Whiteman AFB.

"At the Earth's surface, or in air and space, nothing good ever comes from being noticed by the enemy. But since WWII, when radar began augmenting human eyesight, finding airplanes has been easier than hiding them. Our response has been essentially to give up on achieving surprise and try instead to overpower air defenses. We build huge air armadas - flak suppressors, radar jammers, armed escorts - in order to push a fraction of the force through air defenses to the target. **But air forces do not exist for the purpose of protecting themselves.** Thus, the B-2 offers a much more satisfying and elegant solution: avoid detection, and tip the scales back in favor of flexibility and offensive punch.

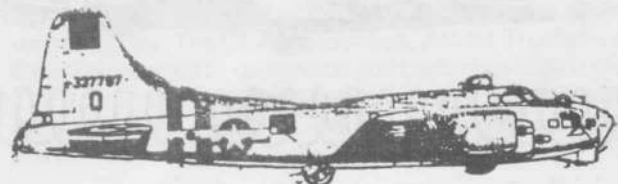
"The B-2 also meets our need to carry large payloads over vast distances. This has been a long-standing American requirement. For most of our history, we have assumed that the starting line for military operations was located inside our national borders. In WWII, when it appeared Britain might fall, Jack Northrop developed a flying wing concept, a bomber that could carry 10,000 pounds of bombs 10,000 miles - about the round-trip distance from the U.S. to Germany. Today, we make this visionary concept a reality - just in time, since we are in the process of bringing our forces home from forward bases overseas.

"In every sense of the word, the B-2 is a survivor. Already, it is a seasoned veteran of political wars, technical skirmishes, fiscal battles. It has landed on this flight line, today, not just because of its stealthiness and load-carrying capacity, but because of its toughness, its tenacity. **It promises to be a terrible enemy of anyone who seeks mortal combat with America.**

"The B-2 continues the finest traditions of our bomber fleet. We're very proud to welcome her into the Air Force."

EDITOR'S NOTE: And A.F. Secretary Sheila E. Widnall pointed this out.

"The B-2 has also ushered in a new era in the way we buy, field, and support aircraft. Unlike the practice of past weapon systems, the aircraft is actually the last of the system hardware to arrive at Whiteman. Everything else is already in place — the aircrew simulators, the maintenance and weapons loading trainers, the initial spare parts, the support equipment, the tech orders.



BULLETIN BOARD

REUNION - FREEMAN FIELD, SEYMOUR, IN - OCTOBER 7, 8, 9, 1994. Members of cadet classes 43 -D to 44 - K. Contact Mayor's Office, 220 N. Chestnut St., Seymour, IN 47274 ATTN: Louis Osterman or call 317-888-8661.

DFC HOLDERS

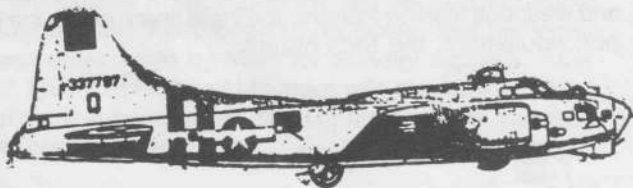
Want to be part of the distinguished Flying Cross society? Alexander D. Ciurczak, 34552 Camino Capistrano, Capistrano Beach, CA 92624-1232 is starting this Society. Drop him a line if you're interested. He's in pre-flight mode now, and expects to get off the ground soon.

KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

Knoxville, Tennessee is hosting a celebration of the ending of World War 2 on July 4, 1995 at Knoxville's World's Fair Park. They'll be honoring veterans and their families. If you plan that far ahead, put the date on your list!

WANTED

Seeking an original flight jacket and also Sq insignia of the 548th, 549th 550th and 551st. Also any other AAF and German items for display. Contact John Grindahl, 1837 16th St. So, Fargo, ND 58103



THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE HERITAGE CENTER

Write them for a beautiful brochure telling of the plans that are now being put into place. Address: box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402-1992.

Our December issue had a great story by Andy Rooney about General LeMay -- if you don't remember it, better look it up and read it again. anyway, we wrote to Andy to ask permission to reprint it, assumed that he wouldn't object, and ran it after waiting a suitable time. Surprisingly, we received a post card from dated March 31 saying "Dear Ed, Hope you used my piece on Lemay if you wanted it. I'm getting more mail than I can handle--especially for old warriors like us who seem to want to get it down before they go. Andy Rooney"

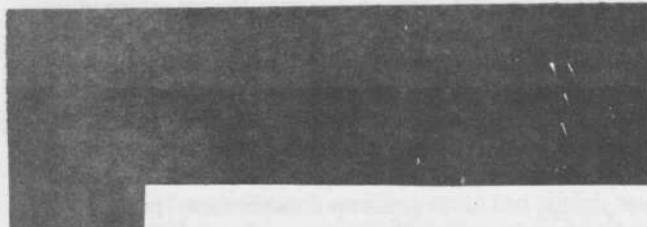
Thanks Andy, for the card. Good to hear from you--and it's always fun to watch you every Sunday night on CBS.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Here's an excerpt from a letter to my wife telling of the time we rode one of our planes that delivered food to the Dutch. Made quite an impression on us!

The rest of the letter is none of your business. We had been over there a long and time and were getting lonesome.

Darling,

It looks a little like our outfit might be getting a break on the redeployment plans. At least we can be a little optimistic. Maybe I'll be home for Decky's 2nd birthday. Our your 30th. But not my 31 st. Anyway, we can be hopeful, honey. Nice to think of--that there's a possibility of seeing you sometime this year.



Censorship regulations have been relaxed a little and I can tell you about a very interesting trip I made yesterday. We've been flying food to the Dutch and I went along on one of the missions. Went the day that the Germans in Holland surrendered to the British 2nd. Was a wonderful experience. We flew very low and could see everything. Went in at the Hague and flew up to Amsterdam and then came out. The country was just swarming with flags. Every house had one - all the people in the streets carried them - even saw one tied to the topmost vane of a windmill. And the people stood all along the streets, on roofs, in the roads, waving and cheering. Was a thrilling sight. Just after we dropped, we flew over a big tulip field that they'd clipped to spell "Thank you". Made all the boys feel mighty fine - to be helping people instead of bombing them - and to see that their help was appreciated. I saw one old duffer riding a bike along the road. He looked up and started waving to beat the dickens and proceeded to run into another fellow. Both of them fell down, but they kept on waving. Also saw a cow give us quite a welcome. Over here, the cows don't pay any attention to the planes - they're used to us flying low. But over there, they start running every way. One cow kept running and ran right into a canal and disappeared. Hope he could swim. I rode in the nose of the ship and could see everything that went on. We went over some of the coastal defenses - sure wouldn't like to try to land there. And we also saw some bombed docks and airfields that were really bombed - completely flattened. Anyway, it was a most interesting experience. If everyone were glad to see us the way the Dutch were, we'd have a happy world.



Love ya,

Eddie

EDITOR'S NOTE: Lots of "History of Flying Fortress" stories have been written. Here's one we hadn't seen before. It failed to mention the vital role played by fighters in protecting the formation, but it's pretty complete in other respects.

BOEING B-17 FLYING FORTRESS

The Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress was probably the most famous of World War II's combat aircraft. Described by Gen. H.H. "Hap" Arnold as the "Backbone of our world wide aerial offensive", the development of this airplane was unique in aviation history.

Boeing assumed the expense of the design and production of the B-299, the bomber prototype that led to the B-17, it staked its entire future on this new airplane which made all existing bombers and fighters virtually obsolete.

In July 1941 Fortresses of England's Royal Air Force first performed precision bombing of German installations from heights at which the airplane could not be touched.

In December 1941, following Pearl Harbor, Flying Forts of the 19th Bombardment Group based at Clark Field in the Philippine Islands struck back at the Japanese. In 12 months more than 600 Japanese aircraft had been shot down and a number of ships sunk, during this time, on May 10, 1942, the Japanese Navy learned of the B-17's power in the battle of the Coral Sea.

This battle, the world's first great engagement between ships and land-based planes, convinced the last of the die hards that heavy bombers were major tactical weapons. Earlier, when the 299 had been first introduced, Air Corps officials connected with it were enthusiastic, but the War Department was not prepared to accept such an advanced airplane. Up to that time, military men had looked upon any *new* airplane as merely an adjunct to ground operations - a small airplane was about as good as a large one. For a given appropriation more small airplanes could be purchased that large ones and big numbers looked good on annual reports. The B-17's performance proved otherwise.

On the western front, many persons, including the Nazis, did not believe that any bombing program could do major damage to Germany. They pointed to the fact that the Luftwaffe had tried to bomb Britain into submission and had failed, and that strategic bombing over land was a matter of night raids. Damage was done, but not enough to be decisive in the long run.

The summer of 1942 the first B-17E's, manned by American crews, landed in England. These bombers of a new breed, bristling with gun turrets and very different from earlier Flying Fortresses.

They struck first on August 17, 1942, at Rouen, a Nazi rail center 87 miles northw. of Paris. Twelve Forts poured destruction on freight yards, trains and roundhouses, while others carried out diversionary raids on Cherbourg and Dunkerque.

It was broad daylight, a time when heavy bombers supposedly should be kept at home, but the B-17E's came in at 25,000 feet and effectively hit their targets. All of them returned safely to England.

The tremendous toughness of the Boeing planes became a legend. Many came back from raids riddled with hundreds of bullet and flak holes, with one or two engines shot out, with wings and tail surfaces torn and shattered. All of them, however, didn't make it. A total of 4,750 was lost on combat missions, more than any other type of aircraft. This was because the forts did so much of the fighting over the Pacific, Europe and Africa. Newspaper headlines screamed of thousand plane raids.

Fighter planes were unable to stop the huge armadas of Flying Forts with their tremendous, deadly criss-cross patterns of fire power, the Forts shot down an average of 23 enemy fighters on a thousand-plane raid, compared with 11 shot down by U.S. fighters.

During the war B-17's dropped a total of 640,036 tons of bombs on European targets. This compares with 452,508 tons dropped by B-24 Liberators and 463,544 tons dropped by all other aircraft. One of the most famous Flying Fortresses was "Alexander the Swoose", a B-17D which averaged 150 combat hours a month for a wartime record. It was one of 21 Fortresses which broke speed records from the U.S. to the Philippines two months before Pearl Harbor. Eight months later it was the only known survivor of its squadron. It remained in service to the end of the war and is now in the Smithsonian Institution as the only example of an early B-17 model.

A total of 12,731 Fortresses was built in all series. This included 6,981 by Boeing, 3,000 by Douglas and 2,750 by Lockheed. Designed for a competition organized by the Army Air corps, the 299 first appeared on Boeing drawing boards in 1933. The prototype was built during 1934-1935, first flew on July 28, 1935, and was destroyed in an accident in October of the same year when an Army pilot attempted to take off with the controls locked.

The Army Air corps, however, impressed with the airplane's performance, ordered 13 of the 299's for testing under the designation YB-17. This model, virtually identical to the prototype, differed by having new 1,000 horsepower Wright Cyclone engines as compared to the 750 horsepower Pratt & Whitney used on the prototype, and single leg landing gear in place of the double strut type. Also, much framework of the gun blisters was replaced with clear plastic domes. By the time production actually began in a brand-new factory called Plant II, the designation became YIB-17.

The 14th YIB-17, ordered for static test purposes, was completed as a flight article called the YIB-17A and used for experimental purposes, chief of which was the installation of General Electric turbo superchargers.

Following this, 39 B-17B's were built featuring 1,200 horsepower Cyclone engines, a redesigned nose with a flat panel for the bombardier, a navigator's blister above the cockpit and constant-speed full feathering propellers.

The imminence of war brought numerous Fortress modifica-

tions with the B-17C the result. Major changes was the armament equipment which involved the replacement of the wings. Of 38 built, 20 were sent to Great Britain in the spring of 1941.

As a result of operational service of the B-17C, most of which were modified in 1941 to B-17D's, the Fortress was extensively altered to include self-sealing fuel tanks, more armor protection for the crew, increased armament and cowl flaps for controlling engine cooling. Forty-two B-17D's were built in addition to the modified "Cs".

The B-17E, of which Boeing built 512, was the first "offensive" model of the Fortress family. It first flew on September 5, 1941. Among the major changes in the "E" were longer fuselage, increased fin area, dorsal and ventral power turrets and a tail gun position. Nine machine guns were .50 caliber type, while one, in the nose, was a .30 caliber type. In the spring of 1942, Douglas and Lockheed production lines began turning out the B-17F model along with Boeing. Later in the year it became the mainstay of the Eighth Air Force. Of more than 400 changes, the most obvious alterations were the new one-piece clear plastic nose, newer ventral ball turret and new "paddle-type" propellers. Wing bomb racks, which had been proposed on the earliest models, were added to the B-17F as were the "Tokyo tanks," extra fuel cells in the wing fuel tanks which gave an added 1,100 gallons. Boeing built 2,300 of the "Fs". Last of the Fortress series was the B-17G, of which Boeing built 4,035. These were essentially B-17F's with remotely-controlled two-gun chin turrets to improve defense against head-on attacks by enemy fighters. Later models included redesigned side nose gun mountings, enclosed waist gun and tail positions. In addition, some B-17G's had two "cheek" guns added in the nose, with the chin turret this model giving it 13.50 caliber guns, the most of any Fortress. The last Boeing built was the B-17G delivered April 13, 1945.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Whose grandson wrote this one?

OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF CHILDREN....

Retarded RV'ers

After Christmas, the teacher asked her small pupils how they spent their holidays. Johnny's reply:

"We always spend Christmas with Grandma and Grandpa. They used to live in a big brick house, but Grandpa got retarded and they moved to Texas. They live with a lot of other retarded people in tin huts, they all meet in a big building they call a wrecked hall. They play games there and do exercises, but they don't do them very well.

There is a swimming pool and they go there and stand in the water with their hats on — I guess they don't know how to swim. Nobody cooks because they all go to fast-food restaurants. If you visit the park, there is a doll house at the entrance with a man sitting in it. all the retarded people wear name tags so they know who they are.

Grandma said Grandpa worked all his life to earn his retardment. I wish they would move back here, but the man in the doll house won't let them out."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Marty Girson sent this. Note what a couple could get for \$30.00!

REUNION AT PARK SHERATON IN NEW YORK

385 BOMB GROUP REUNION

AUGUST 5, 1960
(Friday)

5:00 P.M. - 11 :00 P.M.	FRENCH ROOM	Informal Get-together and Registration
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AUGUST 6, 1960
(Saturday)

10:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.	FRENCH ROOM	Registration
6:30 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.	COLONIAL ROOM	Cocktai1s
8:00 P.M. - 1:00 A.M.	COLONIAL ROOM	Dinner and Dancing

AUGUST 7, 1960
(Sunday)

10:00 A.M.	FRENCH ROOM	Business Meeting and Financial Report
11:00 A.M.	FRENCH ROOM	Coffee and Danish Rolls

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Registration Fee (\$18.00 per man, \$12.00 per wife) covers Saturday night Dinner, Cocktail Snacks, Music for Dancing, Coffee and Danish Rolls oh Sunday, Mailing expenses and other incidental expenses involved. A full financial report will be given Sunday - any money In excess will be returned or added to the "kitty".

Drinks at the Cocktail Hour and Dance will have to be purchased at the bar provided. It was felt be\$t to have a cash bar so that each may participate as his desires dictate.

Some thought should be given to plans for another Reunion in the near future. This will be discussed on Sunday morning.

Please wear your identification tag at the Cocktail Hour and Dinner - they will take the place of tickets.

EDITOR'S NOTE: We in the Air Force and overseas during WW2 didn't become aware of the Nazi extermination program, although many of us knew about the persecution of Jews long before Pearl Harbor got us into the war.

Personally, while my father had been very active in helping refugees come to the United States (130 of them, in fact), I was too involved in other things -- chasing my girl, trying

Buchenwald Was a Living* Death

By Edward R. Murrow

Columbia Broadcasting System Correspondent

Edward R. Murrow, chief European correspondent for the Columbia Broadcasting System, broadcast this account of an infamous German concentration camp Sunday night.

This last week I have driven more than a few hundred miles through Germany, most of it in the 3rd Army sector, Wiesbaden, Frankfurt, Weimar, Jena and beyond.

The Germans are well clothed, appear well fed and healthy, in better condition than any other people I have seen in Europe. In the large cities there are many young men of military age in civilian clothes. In the fields there are few horses. Most of the ploughs are pulled by cows. Old men and women work in the fields.

There are cities in Germany that make Coventry and Plymouth appear to be merely damage done by a petulant child, but bombed houses have a way of looking alike, wherever you see them.

But, this is no time to talk of the surface of Germany. I propose to tell you of Buchenwald. It is on a small hill about four miles outside Weimar. It was one of the largest concentration camps in Germany—and it was built to last.

When I entered one of the barracks men crowded around, tried to lift me to their shoulders. They were too weak, many of them could not get out of bed. I was told that this building had once stabled 80 horses; there were 1,200 men in it, five to a bunk. The stink was beyond description.

As we walked out into the courtyard, a man fell dead. Two others, they must have seen over 60, were crawling on the ground.

In another part of the camp they showed me the children, hundreds of them. Some were only 6. One rolled up his sleeve and showed me his pumber. It was tattooed on his arm. Others showed me their numbers; they will carry them till they die.



MIUJOW

to start a business, then getting into the service -- to keep track of things.

Remembering back, we first really became aware of the horrors of the Holocaust in April and May 1945. Going through some of my old momentos, I found the following story by Edward R. Murrow which I had saved -- probably the first time we learned about it from a well-known newsman's account.

We went to the hospital. It was full. The doctor told me that 200 had died the day before. I asked the cause of death. He shrugged and said: "Tuberculosis, starvation, fatigue, and there are many who have no desire to live. It is very difficult."

I asked to see the kitchen. It was clean. The German in charge had been a Communist; had been at Buchenwald for nine years. He showed me the daily ration—one piece of brown bread about as thick as your thumb, on top of it a piece of margarine as big as three sticks of chewing gum. That, and a little stew, was what they received every 24 hours.

Five different men asserted that Buchenwald was the best concentration camp in Germany; they had had some experience in the others.

Dr. Heller, a Czech doctor, asked if I would care to see the crematorium. He said it wouldn't be very interesting, because the Germans had run out of coke some days ago and had taken to dumping the bodies into a great hole near by.

We proceeded to the small courtyard. The wall was about eight feet high; it adjoined what had been a stable or garage. It was floored with concrete. There were two rows of bodies stacked up like cordwood. They were thin and very white. Some of the bodies were terribly bruised, though there seemed to be little flesh to bruise.

There was a German trailer, which must have contained another 50, but it was not possible to count them. The clothing was piled in a heap against the wall. It appeared that most of the men and boys had died of starvation—they had not been executed.

But the manner of death seemed unimportant. Murder had been done at Buchenwald. God alone knows how many men and boys have died there during the last 12 years. There had been as many as 60,000. Where are they now?

Dead men are plentiful in war—but the living dead, more than 20,000 of them in one camp! And the country round about was pleasing to the eye, and the Germans were well-fed and well-dressed.

American trucks were rolling toward the rear filled with prisoners. Soon they would be eating American rations, as much for a meal as the men at Buchenwald received in four days.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Another gem from Marty Giron.

GROUND CREW BABY

There's something akin to a human bond,
As men watch a ship take off in the dawn.
It's a love you'd never understand;
What a Flying Fort can mean to a man.

To them, you see, she's a rhapsody,
A powerful, thunderous symphony
Of craft and speed and sweat and skill,
A aery creation of human will;
A thousand years of kings and courts
And the minds of men in a Flying Fort.

Her voice is her bombs and spattering guns
Her heritage, victories up by the sun,
Her spirit, American, pioneering anew,
Her mission, destruction, her soul is the crew.

That's why, to the ground crew, she's something more
Than "just a Fort" as they watch her roar
Away toward a fighter-and-flak-filled hell,
That pilots and gunners know so well.

It's personal pride when they hear what she did
Like a father's, whose son licks the neighbor's kid.
She's a Dempsey, A Gehrig, a champ of champs,
She's pennies the kids puts in war saving stamps.

She fights her load through and comes back for more.
Take a look at her side, at her bombing score.
To the ground crew guys they mean battle scars,
Campaign ribbons pinned there by Mars.
When she battles home from a long tough ride,
With a shell-torn wing, or a hold in her side.

You can understand the reason why
There's pride in the heart of a ground crew guy.
They're proud of the way she out-rote the flak,

Out-gunned and out-distanced a fighter pack.
Like the mother whose ever-loving son
Played in the ball game and knocked a home run
And her voice, the bombs and cannons too
The pilot, the gunners, the whole damn crew
Know that ground crews are guys that cook,
and there's more to a "Fort" than you read in a book.

Cpl. Ellworth B. Lawrence

8th Air Force Nomads

As the men of the Eighth Air Force start to pack for the long trek home or to the Pacific, many of the ground force men are probably reflecting that, being based in England, they really didn't see a lot of country.

But there was one group that followed close behind the advancing armies and whose trails crisscrossed every part of four Continental countries, and then led into Germany. Their shop trucks rattled over the transport-cluttered roads of France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg and Germany; and, often following their map coordinates, the men left the main highways to come upon secluded regions where the sight of American GIs brought curious natives into the village street to see their "liberators."

These men made up the mobile crews of the Eighth Air Force Service Command on the Continent. In groups of ten, headed by a sergeant, they left their home bases for weeks at a time, to either repair or salvage Eighth Air Force planes that had been forced down on the Continent and were unable to reach any one of the three emergency landing fields.

The mobile crews were part of the Continental operations of the 8th AFSC that sent back almost 1300 bombers and fighters before V-E Day. Summing up the accomplishments, Col. J. M. McCulloch, the CO, said, "Prior to D-Day all planes that could not get back to England were either lost to the enemy or the English Channel. But since the first beachhead was secured, of 1,288 planes, valued at about \$300,000,000, which were forced down in repairable condition, all but 67 were returned to England and made airworthy." Critical parts were also recovered from 422 unrepairable planes which crashed on the Continent.

First man to reach France after D-Day was John R. Campbell. He was then a master sergeant, but later earned a field commission. Campbell flew into the beachhead on D-plus-n to count the planes that were down and run a quick inspection on them to see if they could be repaired. The first group of men—13 of them—landed seven days later with only hand tools, and, of course, field equipment and arms. They tackled the planes with what they had, and with what they could "beg, borrow, steal or invent." One month after D-Day, two B-17S and one P-47 took off from the landing strips in France and headed for the depots in England. Then began the race to satisfy the insatiable demands of the United Kingdom for planes to keep abreast of the air war. The strength and for parts that would be used to repair the damaged planes that had made their way home.

The "13 men and a jeep" grew into a full-blown Strategic Air Depot, and three landing fields were



YANKS IN BRITAIN

(ABOVE) TSGT N. E. LUEDEMAN, INDIANAPOLIS, STUDIES MAP TO LOCATE PLANE NEAR WURZBURG, GERMANY. (BELOW) CHANGING P-51 ENGINES NEAR METZ ARE PFC MACK AIKEN, HENDERSONVILLE, N. C.; SGT WILLIAM VANDER WEGE, HOLLAND, MICH.; AND SGT ALFRED HARJUE, WAREFIELD, MICH.

8th Air Force Nomads

established on the Continent, where pilots were briefed to land in an emergency. The mobile crews went after those ships which had to land quickly on any old spot.

The crews were stocked with 10-in-1 rations. Sometimes they lived on those. Sometimes they scrounged. Sometimes they put up with other outfits' near the plane they were repairing. Inspectors went ahead of them; finding the planes, putting guards on them, and marking them for "salvage" or for "repair." The crew would pile into their 6x6 shop truck as soon as one job was done and head for the next one, maybe 200 miles away. They became the nomads of the Eighth Air Force.

When the pressure was on, as it was for months following D-Day, they started work at the crack of dawn, and finished at night using flashlights. They had to know every plane in the Eighth Air Force. No man could specialize. They took on Lightnings, Thunderbolts, Mustangs, Libs and others as they came. Hangars to protect them from



the winter blasts were an unknown luxury. "During those months it seemed like there wasn't anything between us and the North Pole but a bush," one of them said. "We'd keep a five or ten gallon can of oil burning near the plane to numb our hands."

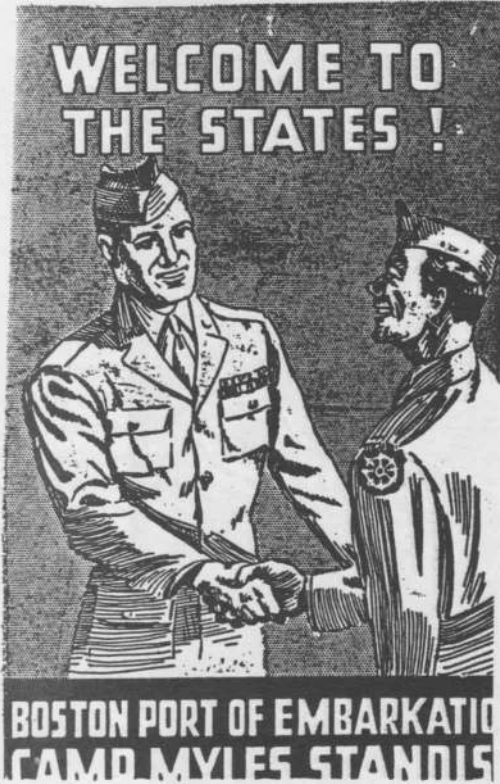
As our armies pushed the Germans back, the Service Command men followed in their wake, and their shop trucks were familiar sights to the men in the ground forces.

They tell a story about one crew working on a plane in the Ardennes in the latter part of December. "Where's the front?" they called to a couple of Infantry Joes. The men came over and watched the mechanics for a moment and then replied, "The front? If you wait a couple of hours it ought to be right here. Our outfit is regrouping a couple of miles further back."

By Sgt. EARL ANDERSON
YANK Staff Correspondant



EDITOR'S NOTE: This was a brochure given to Marty Giron and each returnee coming bak in August, 1945. Fun to remember!! Miles Standish was ORGANIZED! They didn't even know we were back in Sioux Falls, where your Editor arrived on the day we dropped the bomb -- August 6, 1945.



FURLOUGHS: Granted at Reception Station.

CHANGE-IN-DESTINATION: Not possible at this point.

HOLD-BAGS: Will accompany you on train to Reception Station if possible, will be available to you on train, otherwise you will receive them at Reception Station.

LIQUOR: Any liquor found in Camp or aboard troop trains will be confiscated.

CHAPLAINS' MESSAGE

In the Army you leaned upon your*Chaplain. At home your priest, pastor or rabbi is ready to help you.

In your community life you will continue your patriotic service to the country by seeking means to give to the community rather than to get from it. The Church and Temple offer splendid facilities to organize our efforts and carry them into community betterment.

Many have discovered or rediscovered God in the stress of war. Continue that dependence upon Deity and work in the religious groupings of the country to make this nation an example to the whole world.

REGULATIONS

YOUR UNIFORM: You are back in the States with plenty of reason to be proud of your uniform.

WEAR IT ACCORDINGLY



LAUNDRY FURLOUGHS



MENDING PRESSING & DRY CLEANING

Irons & Free Mending service available to EM at Service Clubs. At Tailor Shop, Bldg. 141, corner Crane Ave. & Cranberry Rd. Repairs & pressing usually while you wait—Dry cleaning usually 24 hour service.

LAUNDRY

Sorry—Time too short.



REGULATIONS

PERSONAL AFFAIRS: Questions on Allotment & Insurance Tracers, Federal Maternity & Infant Care, Naturalization. Legal Advice, Army Emergency Relief. Bldg. T-19, near main PX.

PX: One in each area. Also beer tavern. Photo Studio (across street Main PX) open 1230-2030 daily, except Sunday. Photos mailed direct to your home.

OFFICERS' CLUB: You are welcome—Free Membership. Limited capacity necessitates reservations for meals. Snack Bar open 1930-2230.

SOUVENIRS: "Duds", hand-grenades, shells, etc., are to be checked with Ordnance Officer (Bldg. T-172, Combined Shops) Too many citizens are lost thru "harmless" souvenirs.

AT CAMP

MYLES STANDISH

LENGTH OF TIME HERE:

24 to 48 hours



PASSES: No—time too short
BEDDING: Already on your bunk
DETAILS: None pulled here

CO-OPERATION: Get permission from your Group Commander before leaving Area
If sick—report to Area Hq
Don't get hurt—walk on left side of road



BE PROMPT: Don't miss your train. Furlough (leave) time is lost in such cases

CLOTHING - ISSUE & TURN-IN: E M see your Group Commander
Group Commander see Area Supply Officer

VISITORS - NONE PERMITTED: Time too short.

MONEY

PAY: Sorry—not here.



Time too short. Will be paid at RECEPTION STATION.

MONEY ORDERS: Cashed at Post Office Oper 0900 till 1700.

PERSONAL CHECKS: Bank will cash \$25 check only if on regularly printed form of the paying bank and endorsed by an officer.

Bank open: Daily 1100-1600. Sat: 1000-1500.

FOREIGN CURRENCY: Sorry—cannot exchange here.

OFFICERS' TRAVEL PAY: Neither mileage nor per diem paid if troop train with facilities to mess from kitchen car is available.

MONEY - PASSES - HOW LONG

Handwritten notes and typed text including 'ARMY SERVICE FORCES BOSTON PORT OF EMBARKATION HEADQUARTERS CAMP MYLES STANDISH OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING OFFICER' and 'GREETINGS 1. As Camp Commander of Camp Myles Standish, I am happy to welcome you to your home - the United States of America. You have risked your life to save your home. You deserve everything your grateful Government and its citizens can do for you. 2. Your stay here will be brief and I hope pleasant. There will be a welcome "free time" and a lot of good American food and some entertainment. 3. You can help by close contact with your group leaders who will have "the word", what time they are, etc. 4. You have shown yourself to be a real soldier; be a soldier, proud of the uniform you wear, while on furlough. May your stay at home be filled with joy and good fortune for you always.' Signed: J.C. [Signature]



TELEPHONES: See map for convenient telephone locations.

TELEGRAMS: Send from Western Union Office. Open 0815-2100.



MAIL & PACKAGES: Use your home as return address.

AIR MAIL to points within U. S. 8¢ per ounce; to A.P.O.'S overseas - per J.A. uncert letters. *¹ civilians overseas (V¹ Mail not permitted). Must have postage affixed. Consult the post office for rates. Don't mail "gift parcels" to civilians in foreign countries until you get full information concerning mailing. Such parcels are subject to duty and tax amounting, in some cases, to 100% of the wholesale value.

SECURITY: Discuss classified military information only with duly authorized intelligence agents. In newspaper interviews talk only concerning your own personal experiences.



WEAPONS: Weapons including knives will not be carried while in camp (except in formation).

ENTERTAINMENT - SECURITY - TELEGRAPH



Athletics - Recreation

Athletic Equipment Available at Area Supply.

For use of Rec. Hall & Athletic Field see Area C.O.

SERVICE CLUB LIBRARIES: Latest books, magazines, home town newspapers. Recorded music on request.

MUSIC: For loan of Instruments: Call 440

SERVICE CLUB SOCIAL ACTIVITIES: All Clubs have Cafeterias, Libraries, Writing Materials, Radio, Juke Box, Games & Record Players. Dances on Mon-Wed-Fri Nights (Admission by ticket only. See Area Commander) On other nights: Movies, Stage Shows, Song Fests, Games (No ticket needed)



THEATERS:—ADMISSION 15¢

Theater 1: Shows at 1800 & 2000. Sun. Mat. 1400
Theater 2: Shows at 1800 & 2000. Sun. Mat. 1400
Theater 3: Shows at 1900 & 2100. Sun. Mat. 1500

WAR INFORMATION CENTER

Drop in, browse around! Plenty of U maps, good books, etc. in Reading Room. Newcasts, News Bulletins. U.S. A.F.I. Course. Open daily until 2130.



EDITOR'S NOTE: More of the detailed history of Varnedoe's missions which we started to run in December. We'll keep them coming in future editions.

2 MARCH 1945 / C 3 / F 261

If my second mission sounded impressive, number three was also!

On the 2nd March 1945, the 385th Bomb Group went on its 261st mission. The 548th was A or Lead Squadron called "Clambake George Leader." The 551st was B or High Squadron. Clambake George High, while the 550th was Low Flight of the C or Low Squadron, "Clambake George Lo." The primary target, was to be a Ruhland oil refinery. But 10/10 clouds diverted the Group to the secondary target, a railroad marshalling yard on the outskirts of Dresden. The bomb load was 20, 250 lb General Purpose bombs in each Fort. Intervalometer setting was minimum. Bombing altitude was 23,000 ft.

In briefing, the crews were told that they would be flying over fighter fields of the German Air force, but unless weather was bad, keeping the Germans away from the ground fighting, they were not expected to attack the bombers. The weather was bad.

Col. G.Y. Jumper, the 385th CO was leading the Group in A/C No. -472, which was leading the 93rd Wing, and the entire 3rd Division. He flew with Byers crew. Lasher was deputy lead with Mee's crew. Other crews in the Lead Squadron were Heintz, Wise, Toman, Williams, Crimmins, Bensing, Ritchie, Willits, Lantz and McCool.

Capt. Weikert, flying with Allen's crew, led the B or High Squadron. Other crews were Kitz, Hall, Fleisher, Wutschinek, Keskes, Bloom, Bash, Sherry, Krahn, Recter, Connell and Dunlap.

Lead Flight of the Low Squadron was led by Capt. Elbert in 44-8361 with Baldwin's crew. High right wing was Lowry in 42-3-8199, "Hairs Breath." Left wing was Stenrose in 43-38464. "Hare's Breath." (Different A/C, different names!) Steel in 44-8762 lead the High Element. His right wing was Weiss in 43-38700 with Closz in 43-37842 on the left. Lead of the Low Flight of the Low Squadron was McCauley in 43-38566. His right wing was Platt in a Fortress named "Haybag Annie", serial no. 42-97280. In Platt's crew, the normal navigator, Francis L. Aires, had been promoted to a lead navigator and was not with his crew. He was in the Element Lead with McCauley. Platt's Bombardier was also absent and was in A/C 44-8361 with Capt. Elbert, the Lead of the Low Squadron. Staats was assigned to Platt's Crew as Navigator. Vaadi was on McCauley's left wing in no. 42-97979. It was Vaadi's 18th mission. His full crew was:

- Pilot - Eugene J. Vaadi
- Copilot - Jesse R. Brown
- Navigator - Thomas J. Conway, Jr.
- Chin G. - Neil G. Duell
- Engineer - Henry R. Anthony
- Radio Op. - Clarent a Glitz
- Ball G. - Jino O. DiFonzo
- Waist G. - Burke L. Marshall
- Tail G. - Phillip P. Penchi

The Low Flight had two elements, stacked down. The Low Element was lead by Audrain. He was in no. 42-102461, later to be named "Kentucky Winner." His crew was:

Pilot - Thornton Audrain
 Copilot - John Kokos
 Navigator - W.W. Varnedoe, Jr. (Assigned today only)
 Bombardier - Vic Iverson
 Engineer - Gordon Stead
 Radio Op. - Joe Muzz
 Waist Gun - Ed Ashley
 Ball Gun - Ralph Smith
 Tail Gun - Grimet (Today only)

Crow's crew did not fly as a crew on this mission. However, there was a shortage of Navigators and Radio Operators so Bill Kozosky, the Radio Operator, and Bill Varnedoe, the Navigator, both from Crow's crew were awakened and sent to the briefing, although neither knew the other was flying (in different aircraft) until after the mission was over. This was mission No. 3 for both of them. Varnedoe was flying because Audrain's regular navigator was filling in on Rusecki's crew on the mission the day before and was lost in that mid-air collision. Bill K. was in McCauley's crew. On Audrain's right wing was Tipton in A/C No. 44-8417. Tipton was on his 3rd mission, his first with his crew. Tipton's crew and Crow's crew had trained together at Avon Park, FL; both flew over the Atlantic at the same time and were both assigned to the 385th and 550th on the same orders. Tipton's crew was:

Pilot - Kenneth G. Tipton
 Copilot - Edward M. Craig
 Navigator - Jack M. Waller
 Bombardier - Glen W. King (assign't today, not a reg.)
 Engineer - Roger C. Maul
 Radio Op. - Frank E. Mang
 Ball Gun - Glenn R. Childress
 Waist Gun - Charles C. Eckert
 Tail Gun - John Nostin

Left wing off Audrain was filled by Dunlap in No. 42- 102636, "Sleepytime Gal." Tripp, on his 14th mission, filled in the diamond in the tail end Charlie spot with 43- 38148. Tripp's crew was:

Pilot - Leon E. Tripp
 Copilot - Edward L.C. Batz
 Navigator - Edward J. Gildea
 Engineer - Daniel J. Mackiewicz
 Chin G. - Richard J. Walters
 Radio Op. - Leon G. Deziel
 Ball Gun - Francis w. Wiemerslage
 Waist Gun - Robert J. Maccauley
 Tail Gun - Henry G. Koshenina

This made a total of 13 original planes for the Low Squadron. (12 over the IP.) The Group had 38 A/C assigned, (37 over the IP.) 4 of which were PFF equipped.

Dunlap aborted and dropped out of formation before getting to the IP. However, he bombed a target of opportunity, an airfield at Diepholz, and made it back to Great Ashfield OK. As soon as Dunlap left the formation, Tripp pulled out of his Tail-End-Charlie spot and came in on the now vacant left wing of Audrain in the Low Flight.

The lead Navigator, R.E. Pittis, reported a wind shift near Hanover and the loss of his flux gate compass. However, he and the rest of the Group made the IP OK.

Although not leading the 8th Air Force, and not at the head of the bomber stream, our IP differed from the Group ahead, since we had a different target. The Lead Squadron and the High Squadron turned slightly short of the IP, but the Low Squadron went on to the briefed IP over Oschatz. This left a gap in front of the Low Squadron. The official report says that the Low Squadron was "straggling" 2 to 3 miles back of the group. Whatever the reason, Jerry was quick to take advantage in the break in the Fortress covering firepower and attacked the Low Squadron 30 seconds before the IP.

The Group Bombardier, E.J. Maloney, reported that the Mickey Operator picked up the target and the rate checks were made from 14 to 5 miles. Bombs away at 1027 hours with results believed good.

The Low Squadron Radar Navigator, R.W. Law, also picked up the target 40 miles away, but he then had difficulty with the Mickey set and no returns were obtainable. The C Squadron bombed on the B squadron's smoke bombs. In any case, the Squadron Leader had ordered Group bombing when the fighters attacked.

On the bomb run, Bill Varnedoe, in Audrain's crew, noticed what he thought was unusual flack bursts close by. Normal flack was a black smoke, elongated vertically. These were light gray, rather small, and elongated horizontally. He had just started to describe them in the log when someone started firing his guns and he realized that there was an attack by fighters. By then, numerous gunners were firing, but no one had ever called out, "bandits" on the intercom. (Neil Duell in Vaadi's crew also reported no one in his crew had called out bandits either.) Those "odd flack" bursts were 20 mm cannon shells fired by the fighters and fuse timed to go off in the formation.

The first attack was by 12 FW's and 3 ME 109s coming abreast and level from our rear (6 o'clock). They fired fused 20mm shells. Ground crews later reported flack damage to some of the Forts, but this was, no doubt, shrapnel from these cannon shells. The Germans called this tactic their "Strumm" formation, we called it a "company front" attack. They then made another similar pass from the front (12 o'clock). Several then made pursuit curve passes, while most concentrated on the forts dropping out of formation. Several crewmen sighted one of the new German jets, but it didn't join in the fight.

During the fight, an ME 109 seemed to pull up and stall at about 2 o'clock high. Bill lined up the right cheek gun, remembering the correct angle to aim, and pushed the firing lever. Nothing. He recharged (cocked) the gun and tried again. Again, nothing happened. He opened up the 50 cal. machine gun and found a crooked link in the ammo chain, took it out and once more charged gun - but, by now they were gone and the fight over. The chin turret had jammed also, and Iverson was manning the left cheek gun.

Sometime during all of this, probably after most had drop-

ped their bombs on the lead, Audrain had ordered the bombs salvoed, and Bill did because Iverson was quite occupied at the time. We have no idea where they landed. The official report states that most bombs fell in the middle of town, and that everyone, including Audrain, released at 1027 hours, but surely those from '-481' were late.

The escorting P-51 's had also engaged the enemy and accounted for several shot down.

On the bomb run, Tipton's B-17 was knocked out during the first attack. The CoPilot, Ed Craig, recalls that they were hit in the radio room and the tail section, then sustained a burst in the main fuel tank. No.s 1 and 4 were on fire, the turbos out and the controls were half shot away. They began to split-S, but the auto pilot held them level enough for all to jump. The Tail gunner, John, was killed on impact with the ground, but all the others were captured and sent to a prisoner camp. On the way to interrogation, Jack, the navigator was hit in the mouth by a brick thrown by a civilian and had a tooth knocked out. Craig and Glenn, the bombardier, were captured near Oschatz, then sent to Frankfort for interrogation before being sent to a POW camp. At the time, no one saw any parachutes, and many reported that the plane had exploded.

Vaadi's A/C was hit in the left wing tank at No. 2, caught fire and glided to cloud tops at 18,000 ft, when it exploded, Jesse Brown, Vaadi's CoPilot, remembered it this way. "We were on fire and control was almost impossible due to control surface damage, the bail out order was given and no response was heard on the intercom. We saw the navigator, Tom Conway, engineer, Ray Anthony and chin gunner, Neil Duell, bail out. I went back thru the bomb bay to see if everyone had left the rear of the aircraft and no one was seen. I came back up to the flight deck and told Gene that everyone was out. I then started toward the front escape hatch when Gene turned loose the controls, the aircraft started a descending slow roll. I had to pull myself thru the escape hatch as the aircraft was now upside down. The slipstream forced me against the wing and I was caught between the fuselage and engine and held tightly against the wing by the air stream. I then saw and heard an explosion - the next thing I knew I was floating down in my parachute with pieces of the plane falling all around me...."

Neil, the chin Gunner of Vaadi's crew, remembers the incident this way.

"After we were on fire, I remember checking the waist and ball turret. Tony, the Engineer, and I both checked out the fire. The Navigator had already left and we could see we were burning too bad to do anything about it. Tony motioned me to go, but I shook my head and motioned for him to go first. About then we were racked by more bullets. Tony climbed back into the upper turret and took on a FW that was riding on our wing. After this, Tony jumped and I followed. I free fell for what I guessed would take me to 10,000 feet, by then the plane had already blown up. I landed right on the fighter field while the fighters were landing. The terrific wind caused me to be hurt when I hit the ground. I was completely paralyzed for about a month. And today, I walk with a limp, the Gestapo questioned me for about two days

before sending me to Oschatz. Our gunners were especially nervous that day, after the Armbruster/Rusecki collision the day before, and so when they heard bail out they didn't tarry....."

"(At Oschatz) We had quite a few fellows that had some bad infections and we could get nothing done, so a fellow from Kansas and an Englishman and I got some wire cutters and cut a hole thru all the barb wire and fences and took off one night.....(After contacting Americans) the fellow prisoner from Kansas put on a German uniform and with a driver drove right into the POW camp, loaded up those in a really bad way, and brought them back to the hospital!"

All of Vaadi's crew did jump OK before their Fort blew up, although at the time only 5 parachutes were seen by the rest of us. Jino broke an ankle on landing. Oddly enough, this same Oschatz was the IP for the mission.

After the turn off the target and the Germans had left, Bill in Audrain's Fort looked about to see who was left. In addition to Vaadi and Tipton, Tripp was also missing. In Tripp's crew both of the Leon's and Ed, Dan, Francis Henry and Robert were killed. Only Ed Batz and Richard were listed as missing.

Since both of Audrain's wing men were gone and left wing up ahead, Audrain was now Tail-End-Charlie. But he pulled up into Vaadi's vacant left wing spot to finish the mission.

The CoPilot of Tripp's crew has said:

"There were several fires on the ship and the controls were evidently shot out because the ship would not respond. The bail out order was given both by bell and interphone. After the crew had ample time to get out, I went down to the nose escape hatch, finding the engineer sitting beside it because it was jammed. I reached over to pull the emergency release handle when the ship rolled over and blew up. The explosion knocked me unconscious. When I recovered I was falling free. I waited and pulled my chute. I was taken prisoner two hours later."

In the Lead Squadron, Krahn, on his 30th mission, was shot down on the second attack. He was right wing of the Low Element of the Low Flight Lead in A/C No. 43-37871, "Slick Chick". His crew was:

Pilot - Robert a. Krahn
 Copilot - Oris E. Lundy
 Navigator - Glynn D. Hull
 Bombardier - Russel W. Fritzingler
 Engineer - Flem E. Williams
 Radio Op. - Paul G. Klimko
 Ball Gun - Doyle Green
 Tail Gun - Roy O. Werner
 Waist G. - Lester R. Brown

Lt. Fritzingler was shortly liberated from a German POW camp and reported that Williams, also a POW, had shot down a German fighter during the attack, all crew members survived.

Francis Aires, Navigator from Platt's crew, but in the Low

Flight Lead on this raid, was shot four times, and badly wounded, yet continued to navigate back to Great Ashfield. He was awarded the Silver Star.

Sherry in A/C no. 48415, left wing of Lead Element of the High Flight of the High Squadron had his controls damaged in the second attack and had to drop out of formation. The Tail Gunner, James Bond wrote in his diary at the time: "...My oxygen system and interphone were shot out. I blazed away at the fighters and got a hit on a Focke Wolf 190. I tried to get something on my interphone but couldn't. I switched out my oxygen and got on another system. I blazed away again at the second attack and could hear their bullets whistle by..... We were hit and out of formation. I didn't know where to expect fighters from next. I didn't know where we were headed or if we were supposed to bail out. After a while my waist gunner...called me. Everyone was OK except he and Hatfield my RO were wounded when a 20mm shell exploded in the waist. ...The controls were shot out. Radio receiver out. Oxygen and interphone from waist back. Nos. 1 and 2 props badly damaged. Hydraulic system was out." Sherry nursed his B-17 to B-53, an emergency airfield in Meville, in France and landed OK.

After the target, the low squadron was even further behind and therefore it headed for a different Rendezvous Point (RP), cutting a corner, and joined the 34th Group. But all then made it back to Great Ashfield without further losses. The only incident being that Bensing of the Lead (548th) Squadron in A/C -4415, also had to land at B-53 in France to refuel.

The British had bombed Dresden the night before and this was the raid that started the well-known firestorm in Dresden.

It is well to conclude this mission by quoting the Narrative paragraph from the official "Special Intelligence Report of Air Opposition" by Capt. John R. Murray, Assistant Group S-2, written immediately after the mission, summarizing the enemy attack:

"The 93A group was composed of the 385A, 385B, 385C squadrons and was leading the entire 3rd division.

"At about 1015 hours as the group was in the vicinity of its IP (approximately 51 18 - 13 07) the first attack was made. As no information had been received that e/a were in the area, the group was about to make their bomb run in squadron formation. They had spread out, however. The 385A and 385B were quite close together but the 385C was about 2 to 3 miles to the rear.

"The first attack came as a surprise and was made on the 385C by 12 FW 190s and 3 ME 109s attacking "Company front" formation in 3 waves of 6 FW 190s, 6 FW 190s, and 3 ME 109s in that order. Each came in from about 6 o'clock level, the first 6 peeling off to 9 o'clock low, the second 6 to 9 o'clock level and the third to 9 o'clock high. This attack resulted in the loss of 3 B-17s from the rear of this squadron, in numbers 3, 5, and 6 positions.

The e/a rallied together again, appeared to start an attack on the 385A and 385B squadrons, who were by this time

together and flying quite a tight formation, from 12 o'clock in groups of 3 or 4 but at about 600 to 700 yards away, turned to their left, and all but 2 went around and above the 385A and 385B, 2 going below this formation, without pressing an attack however, the e/a then attacked the 385C from 11 to 1 o'clock in groups of 3 to 4 but each e/a peeling off to make individual attacks in a pursuit curve. This attack resulted in some damage, but no losses, other than one B-17 (Kahn or the straggler? Ed).

"After the second attack apparently the e/a attempted to rally again, but were engaged by P51s escorting the formation and a few other single attacks were made but in most cases at a straggling unidentified B-17 to the left side of the 385B and in some cases they came into or near the formation. This straggler did not come from our group and no one can explain why it was there. It was destroyed by the e/a.

"These single sporadic attacks were over at about 1040 in the vicinity of the RP (approximately 50 10 - 14 00) and by this time the remainder of the 385C had dropped back and joined the bomber group to the rear, the 34th.

"A few crews reported seeing a t/e jet e/a and one crew reported seeing 2 toward the end of the attack however they apparently did not attack. One of our gunners claimed to have fired at and damaged 1 jet e/a while it was making a tail attack on a straggling B-17, 700 to 800 yards to the rear of 385A squadron.

"There was also a report of 1 Ju 88 being seen several thousand feet below the formation and made no attempt to attack or approach the formation.

"On one of the individual attacks 1 rocket was fired from e/a. Also fused 20mm ammunition was apparently used by the e/a and the shells were seen to burst in front of the formation on the nose attack. Some crew members said that when they first saw it they thought it was very light flack.

"The e/a were reported to be gray-green or light blue in color.

"Second tour crew members claimed that these enemy pilots displayed all the ability and fearlessness of the pilots who engaged our formations several months back when attacks were common.

"We have heard rumors to the effect that 1 P51 was shot down by B-17 gunners. None of our gunners or other crew members report any such incident."

NOTE BY AUTHOR:

e/a - enemy aircraft and t/e - twin engine.

50 10 - 14 00 - 50.10 degrees North Latitude, 1400 degrees East Longitude.



IN A WOODED GROVE near Basel, Switzerland, a modest wreath hangs from a tree branch. *In Memoriam*, it says. Nothing more.

Those who see it doubtless wonder what it signifies. In the nearby towns of Aesch, Ettingen and Reinach, though, old-timers know full well. When they see that circle of blue plastic flowers with its gold ribbon underneath, their minds fly back to an amazing experience 50 years ago.

I always remember the noise first.

On that sunny Thursday afternoon, October 14, 1943, we were playing soccer when, with a terrifying roar, a huge plane appeared, throwing a black shadow over us. It was flying so low that it clipped the tip of a steeple, lifted tiles from rooftops and cleared tram wires by only a few feet. I made frantic pushing gestures with my arms, as if by willpower I could raise it.

"*Fliegende Festung!*" cried one of the kids—"Flying Fortress!"

It was an American bomber, mortally wounded. Awe-struck, we gaped as the dark-green aircraft circled, looking for a place to put down. The plane's nose was blown away, its fuselage riddled with holes. Shuddering and wobbling, she disappeared over a hill. When she landed, it was going to be quite a crash. We grabbed our bikes and raced off in pursuit, about to make the acquaintance of a B-17 named *Lazy Baby*.

I was 13, a Swiss schoolboy living in a little corner of Europe that was still free. World War II had been raging for more than four years. The Nazis were only a few kilometers away, on the other side of the Rhine. Everyone feared that one day they would march in and conquer us, as they had conquered most of the Continent. Our only hope was that America could stop the Nazis first.

America. We kids had spun legends about that mysterious land across the Atlantic. More than anything else, the single image that represented America for us was the mighty B-17, the four-engined Flying Fortress, whose streaming white contrails we watched from our playgrounds and whose high-altitude formations rattled our windows. They were as big as houses, we told one another; only Americans could ever get

EDITOR'S NOTE: An interesting Reader's Digest (October 1993) article. Not about the 385th, but we can relate to it

Legacy of Lazy Baby

BY JEAN-PIERRE WILHELM

For a small boy, these men helped define freedom and everything else America stands for

something like that into the air.

Our parents told us these people were heroes, and we needed heroes badly in those days. From heroes we kids built Americans into supermen.

THE DAY of that stunning visit from the sky, I later learned, was a grim one in the annals of war. "Black Thursday," the U.S. Army Air Forces named it—the day of an epic air battle that resulted in heavy American losses.

Lazy Baby was a small part of that loss, a shard from the fearful aerial maelstrom over Germany. There seemed nothing distinctive about *Lazy Baby's* crew. The ten men inside that B-17, Protestant, Catholic and Jew, might have been a cross-section of Middle America. They had names like Cinibulk, Baus, Johnson, Bolin and Zullo. Staff Sgt Bernie Segal, tail gunner, was anxious about the idea of bailing out over Germany because he was Jewish. The two top gun positions were manned by George Blalock and radioman Hurley "Smitty" Smith. The average age was 22.

Handsomest of the lot was 2nd Lt. Donald Rowley, *Lazy Baby's* navigator. A sunny, optimistic golden boy from California, Rowley was an athletic Los Angeles native with arms like oak branches who could do no pushups at a clip. Some of the crew used to tease Rowley for being such a Boy Scout—he never smoked, drank or swore—but they all secretly admired him for it just the same. Rowley was the only crew member who ever admitted concern about being killed; his young wife, Jerrie, was back in Los Angeles with her folks.

That morning they had taken off from England shortly after 10 a.m. The weather was miserable, with rain and pea-soup fog blanketing the Chelveston air base. The bomb-heavy planes heaved up into the murk, navigating by instruments alone. It was not until 8000 feet that the skipper, 2nd Lt. Ed Dienhart, lifted *Lazy Baby* into sunlight. His ship was slotted under the lead plane of the squadron's low group—the position sometimes known as the coffin corner.

She never made it to her target: the ball-bearing works at Schweinfurt. The 291 slow-moving bombers were under heavy fire the moment they crossed into German territory. With German fighters boring in from every direction and anti-aircraft fire filling the sky, the six aircraft of Dienhart's squadron were in an aerial meat grinder 23,000 feet in the air. One after another the B-17s went down, until *Lazy Baby* was one of only two planes left in the squadron. But she was a flying wreck: the throttle controls for engine Nos. 1 and 2 were shot away, No. 3 engine was dead, and a huge hole in the right-wing fuel tank was trailing a stream of gas that could ignite at any second.

Nothing to Lose. Injuries made the situation even more critical. A shell burst into the ship's plexiglass nose, horribly wounding bombardier Carl Johnson and Rowley. The navigator's arms were nearly blown off. Aft of the cockpit, another explosion broke Smitty's left arm and riddled him with shrapnel. With the front end of his aircraft a gaping hole and a violent blast of frigid air surging into the fuselage, Dienhart laid *Lazy Baby* in a near-vertical dive.

His luck held. The ruptured tank had emptied without exploding, and the German fighters dismissed *Lazy Baby* as a goner. Dienhart pulled out of the dive, ditched the bombs and made a run for it at ground level, hedge-hopping the big bomber the way he used to do with light planes back home in Michigan. The able-bodied crew tended to the widowed and strapped Rowley into the co-pilot's seat. His useless arms wrapped in bandages and towels, he tried to read die maps others held for him.

"Give me a heading," Dienhart said.

"Hundred and eighty," Rowley answered calmly—straight toward Switzerland. Following the compass, Rowley kept them aligned for the sanctuary of the neutral country, even as he slowly bled to death. At one point a lone Focke-Wulf fighter appeared, preparing to attack, but Dienhart turned head-on toward the German. He had nothing more to lose. The fighter broke off and disappeared.

After more than an hour of tree-top flying, they crossed the Rhine into Switzerland. By now *Lazy Baby* was so low that it was barely clearing high-tension wires in Dienhart's desperate search for a spot to put down.

At last he found a sloping potato field, a postage stamp compared to a normal runway. He cut the engines and dead-sticked her in on her belly. The bottom ball turret snapped off, but the landing was smooth. *Lazy Baby* came to rest with her nose pointing toward a pretty little wooded grove. Rowley ribbed Dienhart that it was the best landing the pilot had ever made.

Brilliant Glow. My friends and I arrived only minutes after the crash, tingling with excitement at the prospect of seeing our heroes up close. But when I dropped my bike and ran to where a small crowd of locals had gathered, what I saw was horrifying.

My heroes were there, all right, but the "invulnerable" Flying Fortress was nothing more than a smoking, shrapnel-riddled wreck, splattered with gore and reeking of aviation fuel. The crew's uniforms were stained with blood, their faces lined with tension. They looked suspiciously like ordinary human beings.

I stayed until nightfall, watching. A doctor arrived, then soldiers and ambulances for the wounded. When I finally headed home, I turned and looked back at the plane. The last thing I saw was the big U.S. star insignia glowing brilliantly white in the dusk.

They buried Don Rowley four days later in Basel's Hörnli cemetery. The rest of the crew were interned. Jerrie would later receive Don's Silver Star—final, irrevocable notice of his death.

The war ended. *Lazy Baby's* crew returned to the States and more or less lost touch with one another. Life went on. Americans went off to other wars. As *Lazy Baby's* crew aged, the memory of that October afternoon was stashed away like a forgotten pair of shoes. The crew's children grew up, probably never suspecting that anyone could ever have thought of their fathers as supermen. I, too, grew older, got married, started a family.

THEN, IN 1988, *Lazy Baby* came alive for me again. One afternoon, idly leafing through an old scrapbook, I came upon a clipping from a Basel newspaper, with a fuzzy photograph of a B-17 in a field. Suddenly it all came flooding back. I felt once again the odd mix of emotions that had stirred me when I got close to the wreck more than 40 years earlier: admiration, chagrin, compassion. But now questions came into my head, too—questions that had not occurred to me as a boy. *Who vuere they? Why did they do it?* I had to find out.

Over the years, I gathered material on the air battle over Germany. I learned that on Black Thursday the U.S. Army Air Forces had taken such terrible losses that the Germans were convinced the Americans would never come back. But they did. These

ordinary guys came back and back and back until they won the war.

I was lucky enough to locate most of *Lazy Baby's* surviving crew members. Bit by bit, the story came together.

Through it all, Rowley stayed on my mind. I just couldn't forget the horrible irony of the handsome young Californian with the rippling biceps having both arms nearly blown off.

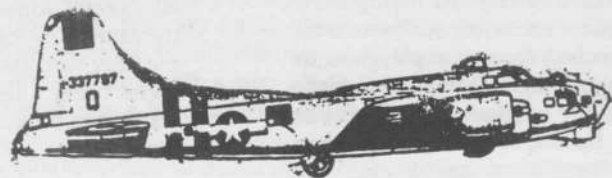
Precious Prize. Today I know Ed Dienhart is haunted too. "Rowley was a real gentleman, just about the nicest fellow you'd ever hope to meet," he told me. "What happened just doesn't seem fair. I don't understand why the good ones get it and the rest of us are still here."

I don't understand either—but I do know that, from one end of Europe to the other, thousands of Don Rowleys lie under little white crosses. No one will ever convince me that they came across the Atlantic and fought only out of raw self-interest, as the cynics of the world would have us believe.

It was something far more precious they fought for: freedom. That's why I do what I can to make *Lazy Baby's* story known to my fellow Europeans. I've given lectures, written articles and helped set up a *Lazy Baby* corner in the Ettingen museum. Every year we place a new wreath in that wooded grove.

It's not much, but that little *In Memoriam* ribbon celebrates Don Rowley, his fellow crewmen and the country that sent them.

No, they weren't supermen. I had come to understand that no one is invincible. But these ordinary guys who sacrificed for freedom were definitely heroes. For me, they will always represent America's special kind of idealism, its desire to help others and defend liberty. For them, a wreath of flowers will always hang on a tree in Switzerland.



Letters to the Editor:

Dear Ed,

We have arrived home in the beautiful Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. Home to piles of snow and collapsed roofs and iced over lakes. We were unable to put up with those days of sunny clear blue skies and 80 degree temperatures that they have in Florida.

On our way home we stopped in Savannah to see what was going on with the eighth Air Force Heritage Center, we spoke with Phillip Wayne Corbett who is a nice young boy (53 years old retired after 30 years Air Force as Colonel.) During our 1 1/2 hour conversation he was quite impressed with the Herald. He said he would like to get in touch with you. I signed the guest book for the 385th. We are on page one.

We had our annual Lunch with Dan Riva in February.

I hope this finds you well and happy. I believe in keeping active. Right now I am sitting in my chair watching the ice melt on our lake.

Regards to all,

Richard E. Molzahn

Mind over matter - If you don't mind it doesn't matter.

Dear Ed,

While spending the winter in Venice, FL., I met with Ruel Weikert and John Pettenger a few times. We went out to the local airport to see the B-17 and B-24 which flew in for 2 day's visit.

Regards,

Bob Valliere



L-R: Weikert, Valliere, Pettenger

Dear Ed,

Recently, while rummaging around in old papers saved by my parents from WWII, I came across three "write-ups" of missions in which I was involved. Reading them now makes me believe that they were written with my parents in mind as the prospective readers.

In any event, they are factual even if (in my present assessment) a bit shallow. If you should decide that they would have any value to use in the Herald, please feel free to use them. They are enclosed.

Thank you for all the efforts you have put in for so long for so many of us.

With every Best Wish.

Sincerely,

Bob Silver
4510 Southwest 62nd Avenue
Miami, FL 33155

Mission of April 15, '45 - Target: Royan (North bank of Gironde Estuary leading to Bordeaux)

Everyone on the base had been "sweating out" the fire-bomb raid. It was known that the barrels of gasoline-rubber compound we had were to be carried in the bomb-bays in fighter plane "belly tanks" but no one knew when. Since the B-29s have been using the stuff in Japan at very low altitude, that was one of the big question marks in our proposed raid; because, of course, the stuff is very highly inflammable and ((flying at) 5,000 ft. over Central Germany would have been "asking for it." As it worked out, though, it was a mild run of the first order.

It was a continental assembly with take off at 5:30 a.m.-in the dark. I was flying the low squadron lead with Lt. Holmes-one of the new lead crews from the 549th. We crossed the French coast on course about four miles North of Dunkirk, German held. It was just starting to get light then and we could distinguish the coast. The Germans at Dunkirk really threw up the flak. There were two planes flying somewhere off to our right (I could see their lights) and it looked much worse than usual because it was dark and the shells could be followed in flight.

The assembly went very well with the only drawback being the dolts in the other groups of the wing and their ceaseless chattering on VHF. Our wing was to be split up and the groups tacked onto other wings in the Division. The bunch we were to follow was seven minutes early so in our effort to cut the course short we went right over the heart of Paris. We were at 8,000 feet at the time and everything showed up beautifully. The Champs Elysees, Arc de Triomphe and Eiffel Tower were all on my side and I got a fine look at them. The Tower and Arc stood out excellently. On the whole, the town looked pretty dead but I was glad for such a marvellous look at it.

We also passed right over Orleans. A lot of "essing" took place in the groups ahead and almost suddenly we all began to pile up. After a lot of twisting and turning to lose time, we finally made our IP and bomb run. Things had kept me too bush for the period just prior to the IP and, for the first time, I failed to put on my flak suit.

The run went OK with the planes flying in line abreast in order to be sure that the tumbling tanks would not hit any ship flying in normal bombing formation. There wasn't a burst of flak and the whole area on the ground was covered with black smoke. Three minutes after bombs-away we were off oxygen (bombing altitude was 15,000 feet). On the way back, everything was smooth as glass and we didn't even bother to fly close formation.

The entire mission was visual except for the last few miles over England. Undoubtedly one of the easiest missions ever run by this Group.

Mission of April 4, '45 -- Target: Kiel

Yesterday, I flew with Lt. Salkeld who has recently taken over Mee's crew (Mee went through lead crew training with me..funny!) We flew the low squadron lead in our own group; the other two squadrons were led by Mjr. Cerrone and Capt. Lasker. (Ran short of time on this writing and over a week has gone by since this mission.) Everything went smoothly on the assembly and, I thought, on the climb from coast-out point. Col. Jumper was flying as observer, however, and stayed with us until we were half-way across the North Sea. He told me later that the low squadron was "damn poor" and "it was my fault". We had a beautiful, tight group formation but perhaps in holding it we were a little rough. I think if I'd been flying it would have been OK . . .but that's the pilot's job; yet, I got blamed. Oh, well !

About % of the way across the North Sea we were flying quite close to the lead squadron when Ritchie, flying number 4 in the low section of the lead squadron suddenly came up in front of Crimmins, flying number one and the best low-section lead the Group ever had. Ritchie's ship broke in two immediately and the tail section was jammed up against Crimmin's nose. The latter fell out...went into a flat spin and broke up. After the target, we came back across the spot and Air Sea Rescue was there with fighters and two Catalinas and a launch on the way. They never got any of them. (Lt. Bill) Simmons, of Highpoint (NC), was flying navigator with Ritchie.

(Personal note, added 4/94: The reason for the person reference to Lt. Bill Simmons is that he and I had been stationed in his home town, Highpoint, NC, for two months of pre-cadet training. I had been to his home, met his family and been entertained by them for Sunday suppers. After the war, I went to Highpoint to meet with the family and tell them of my first-hand observation of the accident that took the two crews' lives.)

MARCH 24, 1945 -

Yester, the 23rd, I flew my first mission as Command Pilot.

I flew with Lt. Sommers crew of the 549th; I had ridden with him on his first lead crew practice mission when he led a squadron and this was his fourth combat mission as a leader. So things were just reversed from our first ride together.

The briefed target was a marshalling yard at Giesecke which is East and a little North of Dortmund in the Ruhr. Everything went rather smoothly-briefing at 0645-fresh eggs for breakfast and take-off at 0915. Our assembly went very well and the group left the buncher one minute early with all ships in position, a lot of "essing" was necessary to get into the wing position and that, in addition to the fact that our low squadron kept over-shooting the lead with a low Air Speed on our indicator...which we later earned to be reading about 10 MPH slow...kept us moving around under the lead a lot to keep from getting too far ahead. The high squadron didn't stay in such hot position; on the way in the lead had to level off and make an "S" to let them catch up.

The weather was perfect all day-the only obstruction being a slight haze. Our route in took us just North of Antwerp of which I got an excellent view from the CP window. It has sort of a jayyer-arrangement running out from the docks to the ocean about 3 miles away. The channel is well dotted with barrage balloons. Antwerp is the 3rd largest port in the work in tonnage handled.

We crossed the Maas River shortly thereafter and I thought it was the Rhine for a while. The Maas leads up to Aachen which we got a good look at on the way out. We changed to a North-East heading slightly before the Rhine and crossed just below Remagen-our first point of crossing the Rhine. Our squadron filled in in good position behind the lead and High at the I.P. About %ths of the way down the run, the first two squadrons turned sharp right but Sabatino (our bombardier) said he had the target "OK" and we went ahead and knocked it out...with but one drawback: wrong target! He was SURE, as was the navigator, until we saw pictures that we'd hit the primary. The lead squadron had dropped their bombs and turned left off the target and came in at right-angles on us from our right and just did clear us as they went behind us.

The high squadron hit the secondary and went out across the lines ahead of us...we were with the lead by then, the flak over the target was meager and I only saw one burst but I felt the ship "buck" from several close bursts underneath; we got a good many holes on the underside...one, through the tail compartment, just missed the tail gunner and was big enough to put your arm through.

On the way out, the group ahead got about 10 bursts of flack and two ships went down...the most phenomenally accurate stuff I've ever heard of. I took our squadron on some good evasive action around the stuff. Remagen and the Rhine to the North was on my side going out and I got an excellent grand-stand view of the entire Western Front. Visibility was 60 miles and in every direction. Several pontoon bridges were right around the collapsed Remagen bridge, there were fighters giving constant cover over the

river. Up to the North, we could see Cologne which was well covered with smoke--probably a smoke screen--as was the entire region to the North under the command of Montgomery.

Julich and Duren were absolutely devoid of habitation; the towns were actually changed to a rubbish pile as if no town had ever existed there. I bombed Julich on my first mission of November 16, 1944.

Rest of mission went smoothly. Logged 6:40.

Dear Ed:

1. Enclosed letter regarding death of Jim Hess.
2. Reference page 18 in the april 1994 Hardlife, the article about the mission to Bergen, Norway in 1943. I was on the mission. We were looking for the German battleship "Torpitz," in a Fjord near the "Heavy Water" plant. This was the only mission I was on where the anti-aircraft bursts were red rather than black smoke.
3. Reference page 21 in the april 1994 Hardlife Herald letter of Penni Wilson and of lans answer on page 22. I was in contact for many years with the family of my bombardier, Chuck Stevens. In fact, at our reunion in Colorado Springs, I spent many happy hours with the brother and his wife. I would be most happy to hear from Miss. Wilson.
4. Reference Verne Philips letter on Page 22 of the April 1994 issue of Hardlife. I flew the mission in the #2 position on Stan's wing. He was leading the low squadron. We had bombed the Renault factory in Paris and were on the return to England. A ME-109 made a head on pass at the group-guns blazine on its wings-turned on its belly and split s'd below the low squadron. Stone and Mudge were hit. Looking out my left window and over the left wing I saw Stones aircraft hit the water in the Channel not to far from the French coast. I didn't see Mudge but I know he did a great job getting back to England.

In December 1942, Stone and myself were assigned to an instructor at Hobbs, New Mexico to be checked out in the B-17. We completed the course together. I knew him quite well. Col. Vandeventer asked me after the mission "What do you think about Stone going down?" He was testing me. I responded "Well, for Stone it was the toughest mission he ever had but for the exception of Mudge it was a milk-run for the rest of us." He promoted me to Captain.

Bob Smith

Dear Ed,

Please make it a REQUIREMENT that the band picked for the reunions know and can play the "Into The Air Army Air Corp" song. At least the Band in Fargo played it after we hummed them the tune. The band in Spokane did not seem

to have ever heard of it even after we hummed them the tune. And speaking of bands, we don't need 20 pieces with a vocalist. It would have been much better with a 10 piece band and no vocalist and with the money saved given everyone attending a souvenir of the 50th anniversary.

The next thing that I would like to write about is Steve Yarema's letter in the February Hardlife Herald. Or rather the way he ended his letter "Hardlife tower, summer L. Love" on final and last approach. Summer was the 548th code name to the tower. What were the code names for the 549th, 550th and 551st?

Another thing is to tell you how much we enjoyed our trip to Fargo in 1989. We drove out.

When we left Fargo, we drove down to Mt. Rushmore and we stayed in Keystone at the base of the mountain. The next day we took an 8 hour tour bus trip with the guide. The Tour was great. It took us over to "Crazy Horse" monument or rather where they are working on it. We toured the Badlands, the Black Forest, where the forest fires were. We saw herds of wild Buffalo, Deer, Mountain Goats, Wild Burrows left by the prospectors. Anyway, it was a great trip. On the way back to Pittsburgh we stopped in Wall and visited the Wall Drug Store and we stopped in Mitchell and saw the Corn Palace. It was a great trip and we really enjoyed it. Mount Rushmore is really worth seeing. It really is impressive.

Last August we drove out to the reunion in Spokane. On the way out we visited "Custer's Battlefield" in Montana, Devils Tower in Wyoming, Yellowstone Park, Glacier National Park, Old Faithful in Yellowstone. We could not see Yellowstone when we were at Mt. Rushmore because we were not yet retired and had to get back to work.

Anyway it was a great trip out to Spokane. When we left Spokane we followed Jim and Geri Vance back to their home in Seattle and spent 4 most enjoyable days with them. When we left Seattle we drove back to Pittsburgh through Salt Lake city. We visited the Morman Tabernacle ana naa a great trip home. The whole trip was very enjoyable.

Best of everything to you and Jane.

Sincnerely,

Marty Girson

P.S. Summer R-Roger over and out.

P.P.S. In reading over my letter, I see I omitted a few things. Summer was the 548 code name to tower, the "L" was the I.D. of the aircraft.

The I.D. letter was at the bottom of the vertical stabilizer. The I.D. letter for Micky II was "R".



Dear Ed,

the article by Verne Philips in regard to the 20mm in the nose of "Round Trip Jack" - Verne was correct; it did not fly on August 15, 1943. In fact it was just installed and test fired a few days before that, as the two pictures I have, show 14-8-43.

I am sure that on the mission that it did fly, no fighter action occurred. Tommie Thompson flew the mission and told me on our return that no enemy fighters showed up. He was very disappointed.

I can't remember the consequences if it was flown again or not; I don't think so. I do remember it had a terrific recoil, and the few times it was fired it broke the sight window in the nose where it was mounted.

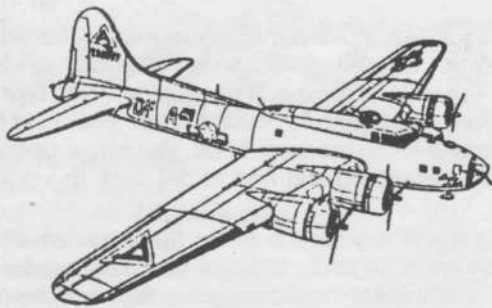
I submitted the two pictures of the cannon to HH. I think it was when John Ford was president, so you probably have them in your picture files, Ed.

Sincerely,

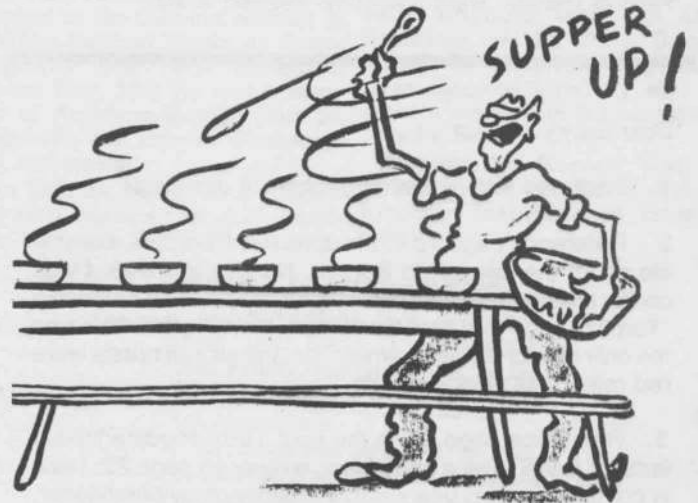
Charlie Hughes

P.S. I really enjoy the H.H., Ed.

You do a great job.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Bernie of Interstate Printing Co. (our publishers) found a great hardcover book of Kriegie Cartoons published by the men who were guests of Stalag Luft 1, Barth, Germany. We'll be printing some of them in this and future issues.



SUHI» UN

"Borley up," "Soup up"—it seemed to be all those Britishers could say. Before long we took their expression and made it ours—when it came to serving our meals, and when it came to other things.

During the daytime we always posted a guard of our own outside the barracks to keep inquisitive Germans from turning up too suddenly. The warning the guard gave of their approach was "Goon up." The word puzzled the Germans, not used to American slang.

"Vos means this 'goon'?" they would ask, and we explained potently that in America goon meant . . .

385 BGM A

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

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