



HARD LIFE

HERALD



NEWSLETTER OF THE 385th BOMBARDMENT GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION



COMBAT UNITS

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

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JUNE 1998

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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1. The Reunion

While a contract with the Marriott Riverfront Hotel has not yet been finalized, it appears almost certain that our 1999 reunion will be held at that hotel. We have been afforded an opportunity to inspect the hotel and feel it should prove to be quite satisfactory for our purposes. It has already been the reunion headquarters of a number of bomb groups, so it has experience with groups of our nature and size and it worked cooperatively with the Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in coordinating activities. George Hruska should be thanked for his efforts in negotiating the agreement.

2. Monument Fund

Contributions have been coming in far better than we had expected and we have reached our goal as of May 31. We will be able to add greatly to what will already be an impressive monument.

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HONORARY MEMBERS
M/Sgt John McKay, Jr. USAF
LTC Raymond B. Tucker

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*Frank B. Walls
Vincent W. Masters
*John C. Ford
*James E. Emmons
*Paul Schulz
Forrest V. Poore
William A. Nicholls
*Earl L. Cole
Sam Lyke
Sid Colthorpe
Robert C. Smith

Mini Reunion
20 June 1998
North Canton, Ohio 44720
Call 1-888-879-7510 for info and
last minute reservations

continued on page 2

Chaplain Sez

Greetings to all of you!!

I spoke at a Scottish Rite gathering on Easter and I started with this thought. Father Joseph T McGloin in his book 'Living to Beat Hell' told about his dog going through obedience training. A friend's daughter asked him, 'doesn't obedience training cut down on the dog's freedom?' His answer was, "No, because freedom does not mean free from laws and responsibilities."

What I feel scriptures tell us about obedience is that we have the responsibility and freedom to love other. There is a thread that goes all through the Old and New Testament of the Bible, and that is love and moderation.

Also there is a significant phenomena of the Biblical faith and that is we can search all through the pages of the scripture and we'll find nothing about our rights. Instead the Bible talks only of our responsibilities as sons and daughters of God. All that we have and all that we are, is given to us as a gift from God. And because He has given and given and given, we are responsible for His gifts. His gifts of minds, bodies, hearts and strength.

All this is hard to understand as it is to understand God. But the Rev. Dr. Dale Turner wrote on March 3, 1998 in the Seattle Times these words. "We do not think we have to understand the whole of God in order to believe in God. A God small enough to be fully understood would not be big enough to meet our needs."

I believe in God but I believe I will not fully understand Him until I see Him face to face. How about you?

May God's presence help to fill all your needs. And may your desires help fill God's plans for you.

Sincere love
Jim

3. The Monument Design

Progress of a general nature has been made with respect to the design of the monument, but nothing of a clear cut nature has been proposed or decided on. Jim Fogarty of the DePue Monument Company has been very cooperative. The burden rests with the Executive Committee to submit to DePue some ideas that it can work with to generate a suggested design for our consideration. So far, there seems to be concurrence among the Executive Committee members that the Memorial should display two B-17's, one with a square G tail and the other with a checkerboardtail. It is felt also by the Executive Committee that the emblematic three trees used to identify the field in returning from missions, should also be integrated into the design. How to combine these will be a test of

ingenuity.

4. Site of the Monument

The Executive Committee has decided that the preferred site for the monument in the museum gardens would be one of the two sites flanking the entry gate (still unbuilt) to the Chapel (still unbuilt). General Buck Shuler advises that the Heritage Museum has only \$195,000 of the needed \$300,000 for the erection of the Chapel and that until the full amount is in hand, the construction of the Chapel will not be started. This complicates our situation, for a monument cannot be erected by the flanking gate which does not exist. It may be that General Shuler will allow us to locate our monument at another site and permit us to move it to a gate flanking site when such a site becomes available at a later date.

5. Perle

Reference has been made to the municipality of Rambrach and to the town of Perle, among others. It appears that a municipality in Rambruch is somewhat similar to a county in the United States. The municipality of Rambruch contains 11 towns including Perle, just as counties in the United States contain a number of cities, villages and townships.

The number of 385th Bomb Group members planning to attend the Perle dedication is as yet uncertain, but it appears there will approximately 8, a number of whom will be accompanied by their wives. The officers attending are doing so at their own travel and hotel expense. The last issue of the Hardlife Herald contained the potentially misleading statement "Everything is free once you get over there." The banquets and civic celebrations are free, but hotel and ordinary travel expenses while there are borne by the attending member.

6. All Saints Church Memorial Fund

A statement account as of June 30, 1997 and an expository excerpt from the transmitting letter of Mr. Stephen Miles, Chairman of the Trust Committee, appears in the next Hardlife Herald. The account is expressed in British pounds. It values at the current exchange rate (1.632) in American dollars is \$59,842.97.

HARDLIFE HERALD

This issue is the largest Hardlife Herald we've had so far-wonderful to keep getting your correspondence, which is what keeps these issues possible. Keep it coming.

The next issue will have a lot of info on the trip to Luxembourg, plus a special insert telling about the Savannah Reunion in 1999.

BULLETIN BOARD

DID YOUR KNOW

Headstones or grave markers are provided by the VA without charge for the grave sites of veterans interned in any private, state veterans or national cemetery. In VA-operated national cemeteries and state veterans cemeteries, they also mark the graves of veterans' eligible dependents. The VA operates 112 national cemeteries in 38 states and Puerto Rico and last year furnished approximately 254,000 headstones and grave markers.

Your editor has been asked to list internet number. Sorry-its just too time consuming-please write to each other.

But here's Sally B-www.deltaweb.uk/sallyb

Nominating Committee for 1999 election of Officers appointed.

Robert C. Smith, past president of the 385th BGMA, has been appointed Chairman of the Nominating Committee for the 1999 election of officers. Other Committee members appointed are Sam Lyke, William A. Nicholls, Forrest V. Poore and Vincent W. Masters, all past presidents, and Ed Stern, Editor of the Hard Life Herald.

Chairman Smith requests that recommendation by the general membership for committee consideration be sent to the committee in care of:

Mr. Robert C. Smith
12019 N Ann J Dr
Spokane, WA 99218-2783

All recommendation will be carefully considered by the committee in arriving at its slate of proposed candidates.

According to Michael R. Gallagher, nominations will be accepted from the floor at the Biennial meeting and the election will be by written ballot.

548th mini reunion in Savannah, Georgia

You don't have to have been in the 548th to attend. Friends and relatives are more than welcome. The reunion is planned for September 8th thru the 11th, (Tuesday thru Friday). We will be staying at:

Savannah Airport Inn & Conference Center
301 Governor Treutlen Drive
PO Box F
Pooler, Georgia 31322
Phone: 912-748-6464

The cost of a room is \$55.00 per night. The motel is holding a block of rooms for us until July 31, 1998.

Each person planning to attend must make his own reservations. We have no registration fee, everything is Dutch Treat. There will be a Hospitality Room, no charge for beverages or snacks, if you wish to contribute a beverage or snack it would be appreciated.

The motel is near the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum (about 2 city blocks). When making reservation mention 548th reunion for this special room rate. If anyone would like any additional information please contact

Marty Girson
151 Gilmore Dr.
Pittsburgh, PA 15235
Phone: 412-824-2417

Confederate Air Force Airshow '98 October 3-4, 1998 Midland, Texas

for more info, call 915-563-1000

Walter Boyne's book Clash of the Wings is printed by Simon and Schuster. He's written a number of others-the latest being "Beyond the Wild Blue a history of the USAF, 1947-1997". They're available in book stores.

LAST CALL Perle Memorial June 20-21

Call Roger Feller 352-649465 for last minute info & reservations. Add Milt Shalinsky to those you'll see there.

Sorry

For all the typos in the April issue. We didn't get a chance to proof read the last few pages. Probably would have missed them anyway.

WANTED

An A-20 (Douglas medium bomber "Boston/Havoc") by the RAF Imperial Air Museum at Hendon, London, England.

On 29 June 1942 the 8th AF 15th Bomb Squadron flew RAF Boston (A-20s) in British formation on bombing missions to Hazebruck, France. The first 8th AF combat mission was flown by the 15th Bomb Squadron Commander Charles Kegelman in borrowed Bostons hitting airfields in Holland.

Page A48 - Pacific Rytr October 1995

Ex-WW II B-17 Bombardier Finally Solos At Age 76

If they had a Guinness book of almost-world records, Maurice Nysether of San Marcos, Calif. would probably qualify for it.

He may not be the oldest soloed student pilot at age 76 — rumors are circulating of a youngster of 78 over at French Valley — but he's got to be one of the most cautious. He began his weekly lessons in December of 1992 and racked up lots of hours before going it alone.

His instructor, Robert Smith, 53, owner, operator and sole employee of Bob's Flight Training at Palomar

Airport in Carlsbad, said he could have sent Nysether off on a solo flight in the C-150 months ago.

"But he is an individual who just wanted to take his good old time and make absolutely certain that he could handle the aircraft without any difficulties," Smith said. "I finally forced him to solo."

Actually, Nysether said, he consulted with the pilot of a B-17 crew he flew with 50 years ago (when he was a bombardier) before deciding to take it up by himself.

"I told him I was nervous about flying and he said you have to do things automatically; if you have to think about things then you need more training," Nysether recalled.

Why start flying at an, ah, advanced age?

"I suppose," said Nysether, it was "a sense of vanity. I went into the aviation



MAURICE NYSETHET with favorite Ford.

cadets in World War II and was selected for pilot training but washed out of pilot school for 'lack of progress.'"

He ended up flying 35 combat missions in the nose of a B-17 with the Eighth Air Force, 385th Bomb Group, flying missions from England in 1944. Wounded by flak over Munich, he spent six weeks in a hospital before sent back to flying status, accumulating 800 hours in the 'Fortress.

After the war and a college degree, he went to work for Union Oil and stayed with the company until retirement in 1976. Then, it was golf and other retirement pursuits.

But he never forgot that wash-out.

"I'm at an age where I don't buy any green bananas," he laughed, "but I'll continue and probably get a recreational pilots license ... I just passed my medical for another two years."

And he'll keep the same instructor, he said.

something. She showed me a form on the desk and told me to sign it. I asked what am I signing for, she said you are going to fly the B-17 today.

This came as a surprise to me. The FAA had just flown in a B-17 and they allowed some of the old guys to take a venture in the old B-17. It was great, I sat in the cockpit and had the controls going and found out that I could still make the turns and hold my altitude. The controls were a little more difficult to move than I had recalled, but we made it around flying and enjoying it. On top of that my 14 year old grandson, Clark IV flew with me and he got the opportunity to sit in the cockpit and move the controls. When we came back down, his Dad asked him, how did things go and he said boy Dad it was cool. I am glad that he got the opportunity to see a little of what his grandfather had gone through a number of years ago.

Another thing just occurred to me, I was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross when I finished my last mission with Colonel Jumper in November '44. I left the base a few days after that to go to the states and in 8-10 months I was transferred to 6-7 different bases and finally I got out of the corps. I went back to college and met a lovely brunette who graciously agreed to marry me and we graduated from college, then I came home and worked in the family business. I had four wonderful children and stayed busy for quite a period of time. One day I was up in the attic going through some of the papers, and stumbled across Colonel Jumper's letter. I thought maybe I would contact someone about the DFC, when I did, it took quite a bit of time writing letters, etc., I finally got the DFC, which is now nicely framed and brings back great memories after 50 years.

Dear Ed,

In reply to page 14, in the February issue of the Hardlife Herald, a note that Paul Van Boven wrote, where he saw a book at the reunion titled "Nose Art of the 385th Bomb Group". I will drop him a letter, which I do have an Esthell's book "History of aircraft Nose Art", and another book by Esthell is "World War II Nose Art". I believe that it is what he is referring to. I also have a picture of our ship Madame Shoo Shoo in Esthell's book.

In thinking about the good old BI 7,1 had a surprise invitation in June of '97 where my four children took me to the Lebanon, TN airport. They had a few old airplanes in the hanger during WWII And thought maybe I would like to see them. I reluctantly agreed to go, as Peggy (my wife) was out of town visiting a sister. I thought, I would get sleep that Saturday morning, but I said O.K. come and pick me up, I will go. My son showed up and asked me to get out my old leather jacket and hat, just to put some pizzazz in the combination in the old airplanes in the hangar and my time in WWII. So, I did and when we arrived at the airport, my kids had my grandchildren with them. I said this is a great get together, what is this for? Of course, there was no response, then my daughter asked me to come inside the office to show me

Well. I guess this is all. I am enclosing a few pictures of the B-17 with me in the cockpit and pictures of the children. It might be of interest just to pass around the information. Keep things going and I really appreciate what you have done and the time spent for the 385th.

Yours truly

Clark B. Rollins, Jr.





Mark Bloomfield
Chimney's
The Green
Beyton
Bury St. Edmunds
Suffolk IP30 9AF

Dear Ed,

In the December issue of HH Ian McLachlan was wondering about the location of the base photography supplied by James Bond.

The picture was taken from the roof of the officers quarters, at the entrance to site No. 5, on the sharp 90 degree bend in the road to the south of the base, (200 yds from sick quarters) looking southeast towards Wetherden, and judging by the shadows about 10 a.m. July/August.

The hut to the right is one of the sergeants quarters. The nissan hut directly ahead is the picket post with the airmens quarters in a line along the left. In the background is communal site "B" (near Darshams farm) with the dining halls clearly visible. Some of these buildings still stand and I have enclosed some photo's recently taken.



Taken from the same spot (although slightly to the right and at ground level) show the remains of the sergeants quarters to the right, and in the trees the first in the line of the nissan huts. The picket post has long gone.

The air raid shelter is still there but is obscured by trees and scrub.



Fuller picture of the sergeants quarters.



Closer look at the first nissan hut.



Unrelated to the above although taken on the same site looking south. The first Hut I think is the drying room, the second is the first of four airmens nissan huts in a line.

EDITOR'S NOTES: Thanks Edythe!

I'm sure Ed would have me contribute to the monument in Savannah, I enclose a check for \$50.00

Hopefully I'll be able to get to the next reunion. Ed passed on Nov. 1988. I have not attended since then. I would like to see old friends and the museum.

Thanks for all your good work.

Edythe Faroe

LETTER TO IAN:

Hello Ian,

I was going through my old "Hard Life Heralds" and found a request from you inquiring about the fate of Satan's Mate.

I was the ball turret gunner on that ship, when we turned the loop. There are two other living members of my crew that were in it also at that time. Their names are Bob Corey (Waist Gunner) and Trevor Kevin (Radio Operator). Deceased members were: Jim Fleisher (Pilot), Paul Cowling (Co-pilot), Charles Bomboy (Top turret & Engineer) and George McCain (Tail Gunner). I do not know about the rest of the crew: Morton Silvergilt (Navigator) or Fred Conner (Nose Gunner).

I do not have a crew picture of our crew in England. The enclosed picture was taken during our crew training in Ardmore Oklahoma. First Row left to right: Charles Bomboy (Top turret), Trevor Kevin (radio Operator), Bob Corey (Waist Gunner), Joe Zwick (Ball Turret Gunner), Fred Conner (Nose Turret), George McCain (Tail Turret).

Top Row: Jim Fleisher (Pilot), Paul Cowling (Co-pilot), Morton Silvergilt (Navigator), and Warrant Officer Lesson (Bombardier). Lesson did not go to the FTO with us.

We were assigned to Satan's Mate two times. First time was my third mission on Dec 3, '44. On our run out for take off, the right main tire blew out and we stopped just in time without any danger. We flew a spare plane on that mission. I'll never forget that mission, because the swivel on the oxygen tojny ball turret broke and I was almost a goner. They pulled me out of my turret and plugged me into a spare oxygen bottle.

The second time we flew on Satan's Mate was my fifteenth mission assignment on Feb 17, '45 to Frankfurt Germany. The morning was very clear, but we made very heavy contrails going in and we were coming back over the Ruhr Valley in the clouds we made going in. We were in the lead squadron. Bob Corey (waist gunner) spotted a B-17 coming in at 9 o'clock level and called it out to pilot Jim Fleischer. Fleisher pulled the nose abruptly and we caught the prop wash of the high squadron blowing us over backward. I was in the Ball Turret and knew we were in trouble, so proceeded to get out. I had just opened the turret and stood up, when it pushed me

back down into the turret. The turret had crept in it, and was closing on me when I shut off the master switch. I tried to get up, but my knees were shaking so badly that I just couldn't stand up for a little while. I looked around and saw my parachute hanging out the ball turret inspection door.

Bob Corey and Trevor Kevin (radio) were all beat up from being tossed about from everything flying around. We were reported missing by other crews because we were at 21000 feet when the plane looped and the last they saw of us we were going straight down through the clouds. They said no B-17 could ever pull out of that situation. Jim Fleisher and Paul Cowling said they didn't have their seat belts fastened, and were shoved up in the top of the cockpit. They could reach the controls with only their fingertips. They both pulled back together fairly gently and pulled the plane out of the dive at 7000 feet. However the plane was upside down, and needed to be rolled back over. We proceeded back to Great Ashfield. Everyone was surprised to see us when we landed there. Our navigator, Morton Silvergilt, figured our true airspeed to be over 500 miles per hour. We had 154 or 184 rivets torn out of our lift stabilizer. That was the final flight for Satan's Mate. It was scrapped for salvage parts.

Our picture and story of our fifteenth mission of Feb 17, 1945, was on the next issue of "Stars and Stripes". I had a copy, but can no longer find it. Ian, can you get a copy of this issue for me from the company that printed Stars and Stripes?

The Air Force considered sending the whole crew back to the United States so that we could tell of our experiences and sell war bonds, but that never happened. Fleisher flew 35 mission and we gunners flew 32. I flew my first mission on Nov 27 at Binger on the Rhein, and we flew our last mission on April 9, '45 on Neuberg. Munich was the primary target that day, and yet for some reason we didn't drop on the primary target. We lost three B-17's that day. One of them was from our 385th BG, which was actually to be their last mission.

Ian. I'm sorry that I do not have the serial number of Satan's Mate or any other B-17's we flew. I was just a nineteen year old kid, and didn't think to do that. I wasn't twenty years old until four months after I flew my last mission. I do have my little black book with notes of all my missions and newspaper clippings for almost all of my missions. Hope this information will be of some help to you.

We are really happy that you and your family will be with at the Tucson. Corey and Kevin are both planning to be at the Tucson Reunion too.

Yours truly
Joe Zwick



Dear Mr. Stern

I received your name and address from Mr. H.F. Burby. I contacted Mr. Burby to try and find information about my father, Jerry Twomey. To make a long story short, I am trying to contact members of my father's crew to gather information for a family history. My father died in 1974 and his military records were destroyed in a fire in St. Louis in 1972. My mother is still alive, but she has no recollection of any of my father's friends from the war and she does not like to talk about it. My father and I were not close so I have no memories. The only info I have to go on is his discharge records and a "yearbook" type publication called "Bombs Away". That is how I got in touch with Mr. Burby. I wrote to all the members in his class, obtaining current addresses with the help of the internet. So far, only 2 have replied. One other gentleman did send me my father's transfer orders from Victorville. That is about all I have to go on. I would love to be able to contact people he actually served with and interview them. It is my hope to create a living history for future generations of my family. I think it is important that future generations understand the sacrifice that was given by you all to save freedom throughout the world. I also think it would help bring my family closer together and better understand what my father had to go through. I would appreciate any help you could provide. You can contact me via e-mail at: rjm@goplay.com or write me at:

Robert M. Twomey
1340 Mount Pisgah Road, #1
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

Thank you very much
Robert M Twomey

Dear Ed,

Mike Gallagher's review of Wars End written by Mr. Charles Sweeney prompts me to tell all 385th people that we had a small part in the bomb dropped by Sweeney-on Nagasaki.

Here is how: Charles and I went thru pilot training together and upon graduation Charles became my best man as Bette and I wed at Barksdale LA.

Sometime in 1943 Charlie wrote me and asked advice of how to lead bomber groups. I had lead about 15 missions so I sat down and wrote him a 3 page letter telling him what we in the 385th had learned.

Later, after somehow leading 25 missions, I went home & Charlie and I met in the Jamores Parker House bar. One thing I told him was to never make a second run on a target. (Pete Van) was almost fired by Gen. LeMay when he (Pete) made a second run on his 1st or 2nd mission lead. Pete came back from the debriefing at LeMay's place and told me he was going to be fired.

From his book you can see he took our advice-then he violated it!!

I agree with Mike Gallagher that the first 6 chapters don't inspire folks. However since Charlie's descriptions were good reading for me and for Danny Riva-we three spent 9 months in pilot training together,- it is nostalgic for us!!

As Ever

Jim McDonald

SSgt Frank RAEMAN MSM
George Reidstraat 4
B-9990 MALDEGEM
Belgium
Phone & Fax: +32(0)50/71.88.76
E-Mail: jan.sierens@sping.be

Dear Mr. Hruska,

Since sometime, I'm working on my second book regarding the Second World War over Belgium. Especially the area of Eeklo-Maldegem-Bruges. This book describes the history of the formal military airfield in Maldegem (Province of East Flanders, Belgium) from 1939 to 1950, when the runway was destroyed. The book is nearly finished but for one specific day, I would like to ask for your help.

On April 10th, 1944, fourteen B-17's of the 390th Bomb Group and Nineteen of the 385th Bomb Group attacked Maldegem airfield between 1012 hours and 1019 Hours. I have been able to find some names and aircraft numbers who took part at the attack:

WHEATON, R.A.	1st Lt.(Lead Bombardier)
A-Group	
LANCASTER, O.V.	1st Lt.(Lead Pilot) A-Group
HEARD, L.B.	2nd Lt(Lead Navigator) A-Group

Please see diagram A and B groups with participating B-17's numbers and pilots names.

That day, Maldegem was a target of opportunity because the initial target (not known what and where) was covered in clouds. The aircraft's took off at 0620 Hours and returned at 1131 Hours.

Sir, I would like to ask you if you were able to help me find formal members who took part in the attack and who would like to help me with this chapter in my book. Stories, photographs, etc. are welcome. All original material will be returned within 2 weeks after I received it by registered mail. I hope that I have given you a little help with names and aircraft numbers, because it is all that I have regarding the attack in which 385th Bomb Group was involved. Any information, how small I may be, would help me a lot.

Dear Mike,

In response to your Hardlife inquiry about currently active pilots who are 385th members.

Yes, I am still currently involved in aviation. (1) I own a Piper Pa-28-160 Cherokee. (2) I was a flight engineer on Harold A Kays crew, (3) I have had an interest in flying most of my life. That interest prompted me to join the Air Corps, cadet program. My first flying lessons were at CTD in Piper Cubs. At preflight my class was informed of the "bad news", they had more cadets than they need and our class was being phased out. However the "good news" they could send some to school to be flight engineers or radio operator if we could qualify, otherwise we would be reassigned. Later I found out that reassignment meant-Infantry, here we come.

After the war while attending college I took flying courses and received my private licenses. I have been flying off and on ever since, I flew for business and pleasure purposes. I am single and multi-engine rated, with over 2000 hours as PIC.

I have owned nine different airplanes, mainly Pipers and Ercoups. The bank that I was associated with had two different Cessna 31 Os. which I flew. A 310L that a prop blade broke off at the hub while solid IFR in Seattle WA area. That got my attention as much or more than any of my missions over Germany. After that incident the bank bought a new 31011R. Beautiful ship, well equipped, practically push button flying.

I have been active in the Oregon Pilots Assn. Served as local chapter president a number of times and also as State President. Was honored by Oregon Pilots Assn by being presented their Outstanding Oregon Pilot award.

Most recently I have been involved with some of my local pilots friends putting together historical trail flight. We have had two flights flying the Oregon Trail from Independence MO to Independence OR. We had 28 aircraft on the first flight and 32 on the second. We had one flight following the Applegate Trail from Fort Hall ID to Independence OR. Now we are working on a Lewis and Clark Trail flight. My part in this has been to secure transportation at each of the historic sites we land at.

As you know when pilots get together & talk about flying, it can go on for hours, I probably have gone on too long now

Happy Landings,
Tom Newton

Hi Ed,

Would you publish the enclosed letter in the next Hardlife Herald? I have been trying to get to the bottom of the incident that happened in about May 1944 at Great Ashfield at the skeet/trap range.

I was a member of Milligans crew and arrived at Great Ashfield in the last of April of 1944. I know our first mission was the day the German plane bombed the hangars and the field. That was a rude awakening to all of us. It must have been sometime in that month of May that we were on the skeet/trap range. I believe we were all required to shoot on a regular basis. Maybe someone else can fill me in on that? Anyway as I recall there were several of us enlisted men on the right side of the range facing out to the field. On the other side were several officers shooting and we were waiting our turn. As we would do in those days, gamble on anything. We were betting on who would hit the most clay pigeons. One of the persons on the left side had the shot gun facing our way and it went off. Some of us felt the sting of the pellets and could see where the cloth of the uniform was torn. I did not realize for some time it had penetrated the skin. I brushed it away and did my turn. I never reported it because I did not want to get anyone in trouble and still do not!!! I would like to know if anyone remembers the incident and would you please write me? I still have 5 pellets on the outside of my left leg and I have been having trouble with it for many years and I am going to need something done about it soon. The x-rays taken at the VA clearly show the pellets but they are reluctant to do anything until I can't walk on my leg!! The reason I'm writing now? I want to file a claim with the VA for service connection so I can get treated at the VA hospital. I would appreciate anyone coming forward to back up my claim!

Sincerely,

Clarence Abrahamson
Squadron 549
3291 Lemon Dr.
Simi Valley, CA 963063

Dear Mike,

In the recent Hard Life Herald you asked for info on current pilots.

My fellow pilots at the Petaldema Muni. Airport don't really consider my tupa as a pilot. Have been flying my ERCOUPE since 1966. ?Have 2,600 hours in it.

I was a navigator in the 548th Squadron was in a train wreck on Jan 16,1944 and in hospital until November 1945. Flew 9 missions.

Have a fused left knee and when I saw an ENCULOPE in 1966 with no rudders pedals that was the one for me.

I go to the airport 7 days a week, and we tell big lies like

golfers. My wife does not like to fly but she does her thing with her 3 Arab horses. Great arrangement-Married 50 1/2 years, 3 children, 5 grandchildren.

Best ever
Tom Carson

Dear Ed
Regret the delay in getting these pictures and report to you. We had a great time at the Tucson Reunion. Thanks to you and others for the time and energy you invested in planning and managing a very successful reunion for the 385th BGMA. We look forward to the next meeting is Savannah area. Best wishes for your continued good health and the excellent job you do with the HLH.

Sincerely,
Art Driscoll



Clarence Abrahamson, Roger Feller, ana Bob Milligan



Roger Orford below picture on wall.



Frank Sutter and Steve Yarema



Ian McLahlan tells one of his Bomber Stories



Richie's crew Ohio Air Force



Children of Sue McLachlan are Maddie and Jake



Sat B.B.Q

SUNDAY BRUNCH FOR ENGLISH GUESTS

More from the Tuscon Reunion

A small group of the 385th BGMA were host to seven guests from England for Sunday Brunch at the Doubletree Hotel in Tucson. Eighteen veterans plus family members, who returned to Great Ashfield for the '96 Reunion, welcomed the opportunity to reciprocate the gracious hospitality provided at Great Ashfield just a little more than a year ago. Guests from England at Tucson included the following:

Stephen and Petrina Miles were in the United States for the first time. They own about a third of the land which was occupied by the 385th Airbase during 1943-45. This 1700 acre sugar beet farm has been in the Miles family for most of the 20th Century. Stephen's grandfather farmed the property prior to the time it was used during World War II. Stephen was host to the '96 Reunion for a barbeque lunch held in his barn, which is located on the concrete remains of the NW runway just beyond where it intersects with the NE runway. Many of you remember his father, Rowley Miles, who also helped to host the '96 reunion group as well as earlier gatherings of the 385th at Great Ashfield.

Roger Orford represented the Orford family at Tucson. We regret that it was necessary for two other members of his family to cancel because of illness. They helped to host the '96 Reunion when 13 families of the local area hosted 34 visitors from the USA for Sunday Dinner in their homes following the special memorial service at All Saints Church. The Orfords live on Kiln Farm which is close to Rookery Farm where Roy Barker and family live. Both of these families own land which was occupied by the 385th Airbase. Roger has visited the USA several times.

Ian and Sue McLachlan brought her two children, Jake and Maddie, to America for the first time. Ian is known to all of us as author of BOMBER STORIES and other books about combat of military aircraft. He is a professional aviation historian, who represents the 385th annually during the memorial services at Mattingly Cemetery near Cambridge, England. Each year, Ian or Sue lay a wreath honoring the 39 members of the 385th who are buried at this American Cemetery which is called Mattingly. The Book of Honor at All Saints Church contains the names of 413 members of the 385th who were KIA or died while at Great Ashfield. Ian had a great time duplicating pictures of B-17s and crews brought to Tucson by participants. He interviewed several people to gather material for future books he will write.

Those of us who were in England for the '96 Reunion got a preview of the excellent slide presentation and commentary by Ian and Sue at the Monday night banquet in Tucson. The Sunday Brunch was a good opportunity to renew friendships and acknowledge that the 385th BGMA has true and faithful advocates among our guests from England--ONE AND ALL.

Reported by Art Driscoll, Nashville, TN.

Dear Mr. Hruska:

Thanks to Reggie Fuller in New Hampshire, he sent me your name and address along with the information relative to the formation of a Memorial Association by former members of the 385th Bomb Group.

I served as a pilot of a B-17 crew assigned to the 385th Bomb Group, 551st Squadron from May in 1944 until November 1944. Since leaving the military service. I have made no contact with any members of the crew. In fact, I was not aware of any organization or association formed to keep alive the memory of the 385th Bomb Group.

Please send me information necessary to become a member of the 385th Bomb Group Memorial Association.

Naturally, I have often thought about the members of the 385th Bomb Group and would enjoy making contact with any of my crew members or others.

Thanks

Ernest Kelly
 Former Pilot
 385th Bomb Group
 1310 Cottonwood Drive
 Richardson, TX 75080-3759

Dear Ed,

To answer to your call for stories may I submit this piece of information.

I persuaded my ball turret gunner Peter Rizkovsky who lives in Calif, to come to the reunion in Tucson.

We met each other for the first time in May 1944. Peter's son Ray was able to get some time off and flew in to Tucson Airport for a few days to visit our group.

The highlight of the visit was when Ray asked if we would like to take a ride in his five passenger Bonanza around Tucson.

I was able to get three more volunteers, the son of my pilot Stephen Inglis, Charles Coughlin one of our Chapter members and Doc Hunter.

We were flown over the Doubletree Hotel and circled once with permission from traffic control then returned to the airport.

Ray asked Doc if he wanted to take over in the co-pilot seat and before we knew it Ray flipped the wheel over to Doc much to our surprise.

Doc gave us a little rock and roll before he got us back on line and we leveled off.

Ray took over for the landing, we all thanked Ray and Peter Rizkovsky for giving us the opportunity to see the views from above.

I am enclosing a picture of Roger Feller of Perle Luxembourg being introduced at our banquet. Bob Valliere and Mike Gallagher seated behind him. The other photo is of my squadron. I am second from the left in the second row. Continue the good work and hopefully looking forward to Savannah.

Sincerely,
 Albert E Audette



Harold A. Kay Crew



Harold A. Kay Crew

(Left to Right)

Standing, Willis EW. Johnson, CoPilot; Harold A. Kay, Pilot; Sherwin L. Glazer, Nav, kneeling, Thomas J. Newton, TTEng; Elmer Rasmussen, WG; William Todd, TO; Louis C. Eby, RO; sitting, George Eric Felt BTG; Francis L. Roquette, A/CG.

Help Help

Kay Crew looking for our Pilot, Harold A. Kay and Co-Pilot, Willis E. W. Johnson. Is there anyone out there that is acquainted with or knows the whereabouts of either of these two. Kay's crew assigned to the 385th BG and 549 Sqdn. Feb. 15, 1945. The crew returned to the States on or about June 19, 1945 aboard airship no. 43-38204 with 20 people aboard. Lt. Col. John Thrill and Major Robert E. Holmberg, a flight surgeon I believe, were aboard.

ALSO; Looking for Norman M. Neilson, a former 385th BG member. I do not remember which squadron he was in. Norman and his crew also arrive at Great Ashfield in about Feb. of 1945. Our crews trained together in Avon Park Fl. Norman & I had attended AM school and gunnery school together. He was a flight engineer and from Salt Lake City UT. I would like to hear from any of his former crew members.

Tom Newton
P.O. Box 34
Dallas, Or. 97338-0034
Tel. 503-623-3935

Dear Ed,

In our recent newsletter a question was raised as to who was the first C.O. of the 305th BG. I know!! I was a terribly embarrassed Capt. when I delivered the first B-17 to Wendover AFB and to the C.O. who was Col. LeMay!

In 1942 I joined the 34th BG at Pendleton, Oregon. (I believe it was Jan '42) (Col) Gen. LeMay was the Deputy C.O.. Each month the 24th would provide the nucleus of a new BG and he left us to organize the 305th at Wendover.

My embarrassment?? I had about 180 hours as a pilot. About 40 on B-17's was I a proud, stupid new pilot!

When I landed at Wendover I lost my brakes as we slowed down into the wind. No problem-I'll just use the throttles to taxi to parking! Soon I was downwind on a taxiway!! Picking up speed! I get to parking area but I can't stop! I see a berm to my left. I run the plane into it! We stop. Apparently no damage! 3 Generals and Col. LeMay surround us. Each has an idea on how to free the plane. (They were the welcoming committee for the 1st B-17 into the 305th).

I say to the Lt. co-pilot. Let us climb that hill and leave the problem to them. We did. Hours later we were picked up and returned to Pendleton.

I have to confess that this old pilot is glad to have survived!

Jim McDonald

P.S. I guess the troop thought I was a "hard ass". Perhaps I was. But I cry a little each time I read the stories in Hard Life. I guess I have matured.

Jim

Dear Ed,

I have come across your name on a newsletter for the 385th Bombardment Group Assoc. I am taking a chance that you may be able to lead me to someone or somewhere that may be able to give me information on the 384th Bombardment Group. This newsletter is exciting and I would be so happy to get info on the 384th.

My dad, Peter Yaskow, was a tail gunner in B-17's during the war, European Theatre. He was stationed at Grafton Underwood. He did 25 missions. He is now 77, doing very well. But I want to do something special for him before he is no longer here. He lost all his pictures of his plane and crew in a fire years ago. I want specifically to find a picture of his plane called "Little America", and the crew. And I also want to find out if any of that crew are still alive and hopefully can connect with one of them!

I have written to the Archives in Washington and got no where. I cannot go there and I guess I couldn't leave with any information anyway. It would be so great to find out there was a newsletter on the 384th.

I am very happy that a lot of you men have reunions and newsletters. It is a great thing. My dad would be so happy to obtain anything on the 384th.

Thank you
Debbie Zink
Box 789
Williamson, NY 14589

Dear Ed,

In reference to articles in Aug. and Dec. '97 Hardlife Herald concerning LuLu Belle and its ditching Aug. 24, 1943 and letter from Vince Masters. I can refresh his memory on at least one crew member that was lost. It was my Bombardier, Lt. Lee Jones who was removed from my crew in Africa to act as lead Bombardier. This was Lee's second ditching as he was with my crew on our ditching in the North Sea on July 29, 1943.

There was one other loss on that fateful mission on Aug. 24th on the return "milk run". My crew of "The Old Shillaleigh" a few hours prior to reaching the target. We lost an engine as a result of previous damage and flak on the way down, had a runaway prop and was unable to keep up with the formation. We eventually were shot down by 3 ME 109's. The entire crew bailed out including the wounded and five were captured and five walked out of France, with the aid of the French Underground. We returned to duty 4 months later.

As far as I know there are five of us still around, Jack Hughes, co-pilot, Dan Kneale, Navi., Denver Canaday, W. Gunner, John Astyk, R.O.

I met with Jack Hughes over the holidays in Florida and X-mas cards were exchanged with the others.

Sincerely,
Wilmont C. Grodi (Bill)
12089 Fairhope Rd.
San Diego, CA 92128

Dear Ed,

This is long overdue note to thank you for the superb job you have done over the years as editor of the "Hardlife Herald." Your dedication to a most difficult task, has been a tremendous service to the association, and certainly has played no small part in maintaining its vitality and continuous growth.

I was truly saddened to read of the passing of Jim Emmons late last year. Jim was one of the solid members of the group and I have some happy memories of him during those days. He was a great golfer, even then, and I remember one brisk fall day Jim and I, and some others whose names I don't recall, went to a golf course near Gt. Ashfield and spent a pleasant afternoon away from wartime activities. It was the first time I had ever had a golf club in my hands!! I don't seem to remember much about the golf course, but I have vivid memories of the surrounding woods and shrubs!

Warren Cerrone
6 Baysite Lane
Fairwouth ME 04105-1507

Dear Ed,

Interesting pictures of the V-E night. The picture of brilliant lights exploding may have been the burning of a haystack just outside of our barracks. Somebody (name unknown?) From our building decided to set the haystack on fire but put it out immediately by using a fire extinguisher he took with him. That stack was so dry even a fire truck standing by would not have succeeded. It burned for at least 5 days.

I'm not sure if you or others remember the first use of "Jelly Gas" now called napalm from my diary:

April 15, 1945 Target-Royan France This was mission No. 20 for the pilot (Lt. Al Sherry). We sure were surprised to learn that we would drop the fire bombs on this target. I guess they wanted to find out how they would work. They really started the fires and the target was completely covered with smoke.

We got up a little earlier that morning and assembled over France and then took off for the target. We saw the French Navy shelling the shore installations and they were really pouring the shells into it. We encountered no flak although the other bomb groups lost a few planes due to accidents with the fire bombs.

Ship "Lil Audrey"

Ed: my notes also show that we hit the Royan target the next day, April 16 with 6-1000 lb-G.P. Bombs from our plane. The French troops started their drive to recapture the city after the bombing.

Enclosed is the picture of our barracks right behind the haystack that became part of the VE celebration will you please print my current address in the next HardLife.

Your sincerely
Ronald J. Webster
1283 Revere Ridge
Rockford, IL 61108

EDITOR'S NOTE: We had to pay for that haystack out of our Squadron slush funds, Ron!



Dear Ed,

My wife and I along with our ten year old grand-daughter, Anna Anglim, attended the Tucson, Arizona Reunion. While there we visited the Pima Air Museum, the 390th Groups exhibit and especially their fully restored B-17G. although they had a no entry policy for this aircraft this policy was waived for members of the 385th.

I took the enclosed pictures for Anna's scrapbook. As I looked at the developed pictures I was reminded of the pictures taken shortly after our joining the 385th as a replacement crew in the fall of 1943. I enclose that picture as well.

My wife and I enjoy the Newsletter very much, keep up your good work. The letter of commendation read at the reunion honoring your work was well deserved.

Sincerely,
Mario Colantino
44 Doral Drive
Warson Woods, MO 63122



Mario Colantino in 1945



Mario's Granddaughter at Tucson



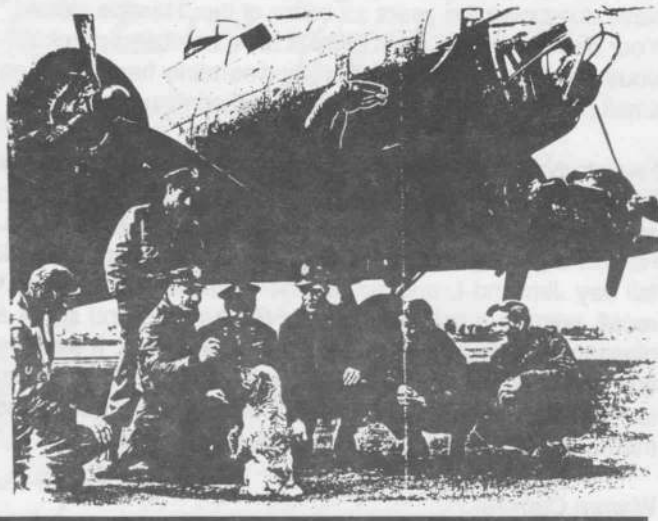
Another shot of Mario's granddaughter Anna

Dear Ed,

I recently found this photograph below of what appears to be my Dad's (Harlan Inglis) plane, the Thoroughbred in the background. I have a few questions about it, and I hope that your readers might be able to help me. First, I thought it odd that in The History of the 385th Bomb Group' book, the Thoroughbred was listed with the Ser# 42-31677. This production serial number would have belonged to a B-17G. However as one can see in the photo, the plane in question lacks the distinctive chin turret of a B-17G, and in fact is a B-17F. Were there more than two Thoroughbred's? If there were in

fact two, does anyone know or have any idea what the serial number of F model was? Also, does anyone know who the men grouped around the dog were? Dad wrote the names of Birelle, Anderson & Dr. Bard, on the back of the photo. If anyone has any information, I would appreciate hearing from them.

Yours Sincerely
Stephen Inglis
21717 Inverness Forest Blvd. #2504
Houston TX 77073-1300



Dear Mr. Stern,

I have been a veterans advocate for many years. On my wall in my den at home are the photos, pins, patches, medals and other documents of 17 members of my family that served their country. Five paid the highest price to be called American. It starts with the Philippine Insurrection and goes to Vietnam. Three cousins were killed in Normandy-two with the 29th Div. 115th Inft. and 116th Respectively-first on the beach at Omaha.

Another went down in the Adriatic MIA from 759 Bomb Group, 459 Bomb Sq. on a B-24 waist gunner 15th Air Force. Besides being a member of the Normandy Battlefield Committee, honorary member of 29th Div Blue and Grey and a veteran's advocate as I previously mentioned. I have tried to help widows, sons and daughters retrieve their loved ones awards and frame them.

A gal who I've known for many years and who is a friend of my wife and I asked me recently if I could help her trace her father who she said was killed in Europe in World War II when his parachute failed to open. She was a small child and was never told anything else about him or her mother was to distraught to talk about it. Even after all these years, she still knew nothing. She told me her fathers name. I was able to trace in a matter of weeks that he was the co-pilot of the B-17, Mr. Smith of the 551st Bomb Sq. (H) 385th Bomb GP (GP). It was hit by Ground fire over Fallersleben and crashed neat Cuxhaven, Germany. All bailed out and became POW's

except Co-pilot Lt. Samuel K. Levy whose chute did not open.

The Germans buried him in a private cemetery in Cuxhaven. After the war, he was transferred to the American Cemetery in Neuville in Conchroz, Belgium.

Fortunately, I was able to put Joanne Hansen (Levy) in touch with the Navigator of the B-17 Milt Shalinsky and I received a nice letter from the Top Turret Gunner James Martin. Also detailed exceptional fine nice letter from the widow of the ball turret gunner John Hadzega who helped recover Sam's body.

Lt. Samuel K. Levy was again transferred from Belgium in 1948 and lies to rest next to his parents in Montefiore Cemetery St. Albans, New York.

I would like to repeat a quotation from Franklin D. Roosevelt. "He stands in the unbroken line of patriots who have dared to die that freedom might live and grow, and increase its blessings. Freedom lives and through it, he lives-In a way that humbles the undertakings of most men."

Respectfully
Matt Guskin



Elmswell When we were there.



JACQUES LEROUX
LASADEILLANE
32300 SAINT MARTIN
FRANCE

TELEPHONE: 05 62 66 52 25
TELECOPE : 05 62 66 51 54
PORTABLE : 06 08 17 46 36
E-MAL : JAC.LEROUX@WANADOO.FR

Saint Martin 21 February 1998

Dear John, *(Pellenger)*

There is a long time to hear from me ! I wish you are well and I don't disturb you.

I heard you are the official Contact for the 385th BG, so, once more I request your help.

After I have reconstituted the Old Shillelagh II's story (Grodi Ship) I am trying to do the same thing for all US planes crashed when they flew a mission concerning the South-West of France;

For that I need information on several crews of the 385th BG and may be could you help me.

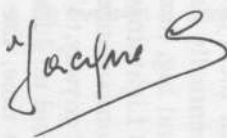
- * 24 August 1943 : Bordeaux Merignac A/F
BI 7F 42 30187 Lulu Belle 1 st Lt Vincent W. Masters
Ditched near Cornwall coast
4 MIA 7 RSCD
Could you give me the list of the crew with position.
(Vincent don't recall that).
- * 16 September 1943 : La Pallice P/A La Rochelle Laleu A/F Cognac-
Chateaubernard A/F
BI 7 42-30601 Mary Eilen II John D. SCHLEY Jr 550th BS
Crashed Rickinhall Superior(G.B)
10 KIA
Could you give me the list of the crew with position.
- * 5 December 1943 : Bordeaux-Merignac A/F
BI 7F 42-3397 1 st Lt Theodore J. KLEUSER 551 st BS
7 KIA - 3 POW
Could you tell me if anybody of the POW is alive and if would accept to explain me the circumstances of the crash and tell me the precise site where the ship fell down.
- * 5 december 1943 : Bordeaux-M6rignac A/F
BI 7G 42 3294 1 st Lt Novo J.MARYONOVICH 550th BS 10 INTD
Could you give me the list of the crew with position, if anybody is alive and if would accept to explain me the circumstances of the crash and tell me the precise site where the ship fell down.

- * 31 december 1943 : Cognac Chateaubernard A/F
 BI 7 ? Crashed in Kent (UK) when he returned from Cognac Chateaubernard.
 Could you give me the list of the crew and the condition of each after the crash with position and the circumstances of the crash with the site where the ship fell down.

- * 5 January 1944 : Bordeaux-Merignac A/F
 BI 7 42 3544
 I don't have not information about this plane .
 Could you give me the list of the crew and the condition of each with position and the circumstances of the crash with the site where the ship fell down.

Enclosed a card for each of plane (in French, sorry I).
 I know that won't be a easy job but your help will be much appreciated.

Regards,



Jacques

EDITOR'S NOTE: Anyone who can help Jacque, please write him direct.



Top L-R Soucek, Taylor, Laplyinsri, Punches
 Bottom: Faber, Riggs, Mahoney, Foster, All, Unknown
 Soucek, Punches still alive



B-17 Crazy Horse 1970 after the Zuiderzee was drained of water, crashed Feb 21,1944

EDITOR'S NOTE: Here's an excerpt from Andy Rooney and Bud Hutton's book, written in 1946.

We remember two Stars and Stripes reporters (suppose it was them) coming to our 550th site for housing. Unfortunately, we had empty beds-had lost some crews a few days before.

One of our planes was christened Stars and Stripes as the story says. We found pictures of two "Star and Stripes", thanks to Richard Lyden. Remarkable what turns up after 55 years!



M THE STORY OF THE STARS AND STRIPES

There was a catch: how to figure out a story which the Desk—which Hutton had left for the fun of covering the air war—would approve as worth sending three men into combat.

The three reporters finally worked out a deal, and enlisted the aid of Earl Mazo, then a public relations lieutenant for the 385th Bomb Group of the Eighth Air Force, who later transferred to *The Stars and Stripes* on the recommendations of Hutton, Kiley and Rooney.

“Why don’t you get some new crew with a new Fortress to name their plane ‘The Stars and Stripes’!” demanded the reporters. “We’d give it a good story, with pictures, and it probably would get a good play in the papers at home as well.”

Mazo liked the idea, sold it to his colonel and a new crew headed by Lieutenant John McElwain. Dick Wingert, who was just in the process of developing his character, Hubert, went out to the 385th and painted a screaming eagle holding the Stars and Stripes on the fuselage of McElwain’s plane. Kiley won—the others said he lost, because it was a green crew—a toss and was to fly in The Stars and Stripes. Rooney was to go in a plane on one wing, Hutton on the other. Thus, they assured the office, even if one of them got shot down, the chances were good the others would be back with the story of the baptismal flight of The Stars and Stripes, which certainly should be well covered.

Reluctantly the Desk agreed, having been outmaneuvered by The Stars and Stripes promotion scheme, and the three reporters had a week of loafing around the bomber base, eating four meals a day and relishing the Indian summer sunshine.

Unfortunately, when the day of the christening came, Hutton’s plane had engine trouble and turned back. Rooney and Kiley flew on to report the baptism under fire of The Stars and Stripes, and then stayed on the base almost another week until the next mission, when Hutton flew to Bremen with what was until then the greatest force of bombers ever sent out in daylight to Germany.

Hutton and Rooney continued flying with the bombers, and eventually Andy totaled some ten missions and Bud twenty-odd, which was more than the average gunner lived to amass. Charlie flew the thirteenth—the air crews call it the 12B—mission with The Stars and Stripes, and when the ship and crew were ready for their twenty-fifth mission he went back to make it with them.

COMBAT

B5

The weather was bad. Day after day there was no flying, and this at a time when the office was shorthanded and Charlie was needed there. Finally, he decided to slip back to London over the weekend, help in putting out Sunday night’s big paper and come back to the base early Monday morning.

On Sunday morning, while Charlie was in London, the weather cleared and McElwain and The Stars and Stripes flew off to Germany for what was to be their last mission. They lost an engine to flak over the target, deep in northeastern Germany, and on the way out, over the Baltic Sea, Luftwaffe fighters caught the crippled plane.

Two of the crew baled out to drown or freeze in the sea, the others apparently were caught in the plane as it hurtled off into the mist out of sight of the rest of the formation.

Charlie heard about it Sunday night, at the office.

It was more difficult to do a first hand coverage of the fighter planes; they were built for one man, and the *Stars and Stripes* staff didn’t believe in going to war as passengers or spectators; it wasn’t fair to the others, who had to play the game for keeps. Staffers went as gunners with the bombers, but there was no room for them to do a useful job in a fighter.

Eventually Earl Mazo, who had transferred to the paper by then, and big, lumbering lovable Pat Mitchell flew fighter sorties in P-38 Lightnings which had been converted to carry an observer for reconnaissance. The staff felt that, since the planes had been altered anyway to hold an observer, there was some point in going along and no added risk to the pilot who was doing it as a job.

In time, the *Stars and Stripes* reporters became aware of a distinct difference between the attitude of the airmen about having reporters along and the views of the ground forces, particularly the infantry.

Both groups were glad to have someone from their paper with them. The airmen were glad to have you along but thought you were crazy for sticking your neck out when, as they viewed it, you didn’t have to do it.

The infantrymen were glad to have you along and wanted you to stay around and get shot at and endure the misery of their lives. It was a natural feeling on the doughboys’ part, because only those who have been with them not only under fire but

8th Air Force Heritage Museum Memorial

With the contributions listed below added to those previously reported, we've now raised \$15,067 against our goal of \$15,000. Great!

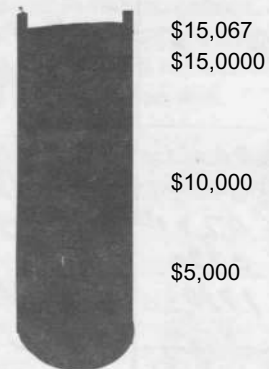
If we can keep adding to the fund, we'll be able to come up with a REALLY OUTSTANDING memorial. Here's one suggestion from Rom Newton - a statue of an Airman-plus a B-17. This would make our monument stand-out. Let's keep working. Send your donation to Treasurer Verne Philips.

A few corrections on names previously listed-sorry for the mistakes! Correct spellings-Bob Silver, Paul Marnice, Tom Kavanagh, Herman Siederer, Loren Jackson. If there were any others, let us know.



Gesser, Jack	100.00
Rollins, Clark	100.00
Faroe, Edythe	50.00
Klasinski, Anthony	27.00
Lyke, Sam	50.00
Pickett, John Jr.	100.00
Crow, Kimber	50.00
Roti, Bruno	50.00
Menkoff, George	50.00
Massari, Louis	100.00
Gaul, Norman	50.00
Gaul, Norman	50.00
Bachman, Frank	50.00
Deutschman, C.S.	50.00
Irons, Clement	50.00
Peltzer, Harry	50.00
Connolly, William	50.00
Ramaker, Gerald	50.00
Benton, WM	50.00
Shaak, Lester	50.00

Heidbreder, Harold	50.00
Schuman, Jerome	100.00
Rummans, Albert	50.00
Smith, Lewis	50.00
Raper, Marion	50.00
Boyer, Arthur	50.00
Taubkin, Milton	50.00
Salvador, George	50.00
Kay, HL	50.00
Todd, William E	50.00
Canaday, Denver	50.00
Benner, Archie	100.00
Stenrose, Arnold	100.00
Dennis, Lee & Rally	75.00
Flagler, Col. William F.	100.00
Soucek, Clarence	50.00
Palmer, John	50.00
Smith, Chuck	500.00
Volrath, Lawrence	100.00
Vanboven, Paul	50.00
Hyde, Robert	50.00
Masters, Vincent O	50.00
Moebius, William	50.00
Gelman, Paul	50.00
Purkiss, GI	100.00
Mathews, John	100.00
Myers, Roland	50.00
Hake, Robert	50.00
Graham, Donald	50.00
Gilbert, Donald E	50.00
Huber, Charles	50.00
Styler, William	50.00
Gallen, Plato	220.00
Hair, Thomas	100.00
DeBerg, Thomas	20.00
Ryan, Richard	100.00
Total as of May 22, 1998	15,067.00



MONDAY 18 JUNE 1945

1800
2021

Off Watch Gf Bongberg 1/1st Lt. A.C.
Changed R/W to 07

Tuesday 19 June 1945

0001
0130
0730
0730
0900
1115

Watches continued
85-1 F/B down all A/C down
Off Watch Gf Bongberg 1/1st Lt. A.C.
On Watch, R.J. McGinn, 1st Lt. A.C.
Briefing 1300 - T/O 1500 FOR VALLEY
560 3/4 - Capt. Bloimberg - First a/c off for V.S.

1230
1230
1300
1540

Off Watch, R.J. McGinn, 1st Lt. A.C.
Off Watch Gf Bongberg 1/1st Lt. A.C.
attended briefing - T.O. 1700 - R/W 07
Col. Witherspoon - 710 T/O until

1651
1745
1800
1800
2050

1800 A/C first off at 1640
088 A/K first off for U.S.A.
798 A/M first off " " "
Off Watch Gf Bongberg 1/1st Lt. A.C.
On Watch, R.J. McGinn, 1st Lt. A.C.
Valley reports all four a/c arrived - 280
A/O, Lt. Gunn, overshot R/W and smashed up a/c

2310

2 persons slightly injured - Will call details later
Ops. Col. Hansen, 3rd Div. notified.
Called Valley & received following information. Three
persons very slightly injured, Capt. Derry, cut head -
one has bruised ribs, one has sore shoulder - X-rays
being taken but believed only very minor injuries - A/c
will be salvaged either by Valley or 1st BAD -
Pine tree notified by them, but they will take care of
disposition of personnel - Preliminary report on
nature of jets now - Col. Hansen, Col. Thift, &
Corp. Ops. Notified. - Also 3rd Div.

2315

Rest of a/c - 14 - T/O 0730 - Briefing 0600 - Lt
Thift asks to have decesses down the lot 0500

Wednesday 20 June 1945

0001
0150
0730
0730
1230
1329
1800
1917
2000

Continual Watch
Corp. Ops. advise a/c are scrubbed for morning
Off Watch, R.J. McGinn, 1st Lt. A.C.
On Watch Gf Bongberg 1/1st Lt. A.C.
Off Watch Gf Bongberg 1/1st Lt. A.C.
On Watch Mr. J. Coniff 1st Lt. A.C.
1st Div. know where all ops are of
On Watch Gf Bongberg 1/1st Lt. A.C.
briefing 0630 in the morning
clearance.
Changed R/W to 25
Thursday 21 June 45

Thursday 21 June 1945 (cont)

0730 for tJ/cz&Z Jesse Ashlock Capt. A.C.
 1230 Off Watch Jesse Ashlock Capt. A.C.
 1230 On Watch R.J. M. Given 1st Lt. A.C.
 1800 Off Watch R.J. M. Given 1st Lt. A.C.
 On Watch Jesse Ashlock Capt. A.C.
 Gp. Ops advise briefing 0600 hrs.
 S'SD requests to be notified as soon as the 14
 aining ops get off. There are no replacement ops
 coming in. All radio Equip + HF 1DF can be
 dismantled J-yy immediately. Just one clerk will
 remain on duty at all times.
 Briefing 0730 Gp. Ops.
 Briefing now 0630 T.O. 0800 Gp. Ops.
 FRIDAY 22 June
 Watch continued
 0610 Take-off scrubbed Gp. Ops.
 0730 Off watch Jesse Ashlock Capt. A.C.
 0130 On Watch R.J. M. Given 1st Lt. A.C.
 O?Sf P-5/e><ti 'landed, engine failure - From Keiston - Lt. Fry - Home
 station sending C-64 with mechanics.
 Briefing 1300 - T/O 1345 - Call all a/c in and let no more
 take off Gp. Ops.
 204 F/Y last a/c down.
 a/c not to T/O until relayed by 3rd Div. - Attended Briefing
 T/O 25 - 1345 - Start Engines 1330
 1230 Off Watch R.J. M. Given 1st Lt. A.C.
 i>3# On Watch G. Thompson 1/2 Lt. A.C.
 13^e> Cal. Thrift - Port engine stand by.
 1330 Div. g.p. ops. arrive Valley 1616 -
 Cal. Thrift. all a/c start engines at
 1415 T.O. 1430
 1444 204 F/Y first off for H. s.
 14-44' F/2 last off rS
 1436 ■^V--- 2
 17irfield is officially closed

1437 Off duty G. Thompson 1/2 Lt. A.C.
 Closed this is the
 end the
 Jesse Ashlock
 Capt. A.C.
 P.

WA DEPARTMENT
AAF FORM NO. 23
(REISED AUG. IS. 1543)

ARMY AIR FORCES

AIRCRAFT CLEARANCE

OPERATIONS OFFICE A	Great Ashfield Station - 155	DATE 8/7/45
-------------------------------	-------------------------------------	-----------------------

PILOTS NAME B G a vrf, R. G.	HOME STATION 17J. LT 155	ORGANIZATION 385th B.H.	AIRCRAFT NUMBER Sit, 3 63
NAME, INITIALS, RANK, HOME STATION OF OTHER OCCUPANTS 7Z~		C/S Henpeck Csv)	
+		0432 Jj.r, ?<□ s//uj	
to new		J	

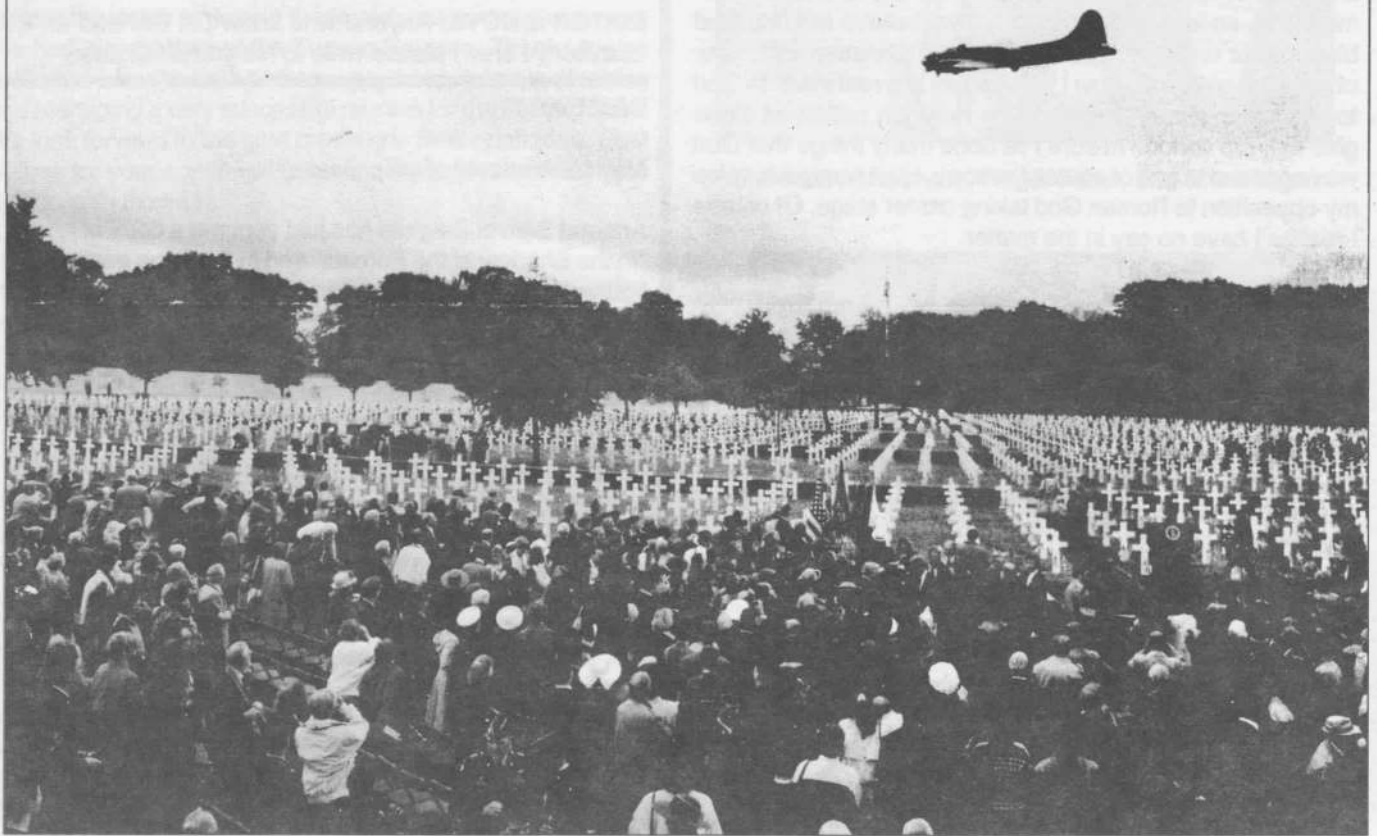
LIST ADDITIONAL PASSENGERS ON SEPARATE SHEET

C WEATHER DATA		EXISTING LOCAL	ALTIMETER SETTINGS
EXISTING ROUTE		LOCAL	
DESTINATION (LATEST)	TIME	DESTINATION	PFE-30.11
ALTERNATE (LATEST)	TIME	ALTERNATE	
FORECASTS (ESTIMATED FLIGHT TIME PLUS 2 HOURS)		RESET ALTIMETER BEFORE APPROACH	
ROUTE 6-9/10 over entire route decreasing to 6/10 in Valley area. Bases 2500-3000ft. Vis. 10-15 miles over entire route. Surface wind at destination SSW.			
WINDS - 2000 290°-5K in local area backing to 190°-10K in Valley area.			
WINDS ALOFT GIVE ALT, DIR, VEL, AS PILOT REQUESTS 5000 - same as 2000ft.			
AAF FORM 23A REQUIRED	<input type="checkbox"/> NOT REQUIRED	FORECASTER Dwight St. Edmunds	TIME 1700

FLIGHT PLAN (PILOT COMPLETES) RADIO CALLS ARMY 663		TYPE OF AIRCRAFT B-17	PILOT (LAST NAME ONLY) GUNN	POINT OF DEPARTURE Sta. 155
1 ALT contact	2 ALT contact	3 ALT	4 ALT	
CFR ROUTE BASE 2	CFR ROUTE PROSTATYN	CFR ROUTE	CFR ROUTE	
IFR TO PROSTATYN	IFR TO VALLEY	IFR TO	IFR TO	
AIRPORT OF FIRST INTENDED LANDING VALLEY	TRUE AIR SPEED 160	TRANSMITTING FREQUENCIES KC 6440 KC 4220		RECEIVER ONLY NO RADIO
PROPOSED TAKE OFF TIME 1800	EST. TIME ENROUTE 1 hr. 45 min	ALTERNATE AIRPORT	HOURS OF FUEL (CRUISING) 8+	INSTRUMENT RATING TYPE
REMARKS: SHOW FIXES WHICH WILL BE REPORTED WHILE ON INSTRUMENT FLIGHT. BASE 5320N / 0394W - VALLEY				
TOWER FREQUENCIES DESTINATION 6440 KC VHF 17" ALTERNATE 7" KC		WEATHER CODE RECEIVED <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	TO MILEAGE DEST. TO ALTERNATE 241	PILOT'S SIGNATURE R.G. Gunn
				<input type="checkbox"/> COMMAND PILOT <input type="checkbox"/> SENIOR PILOT <input type="checkbox"/> CONTRACT PILOT OF CARGO AIRCRAFT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PILOT

E FLIGHT CLEARANCE AUTHORIZATION			
ISSUED BY S.B.D.	TIME	BY TC	OPERATIONS IDENTIFICATION NO.
TIME APPROVAL RECEIVED	CONTROL INSTRUCTIONS RECEIVED		CLEARING AUTHORITY Station Commander

Sally B over Madingley 1996



Dear John Pettenger,

Thank you so very much for your extremely generous donation to our B-17 of \$500.

Your donation will certainly go to a very worthwhile cause and only serves to remind me just how much we rely on donations such as this to keep Sally B flying-many, many thanks.

We have just replaced on engine one Sally B, with a refurbished one which was extremely costly. Now we need a spare and the aircraft must be painted this spring, as the paint is getting worn, to say it mildly. So, there are always so many jobs needing doing to keep her airworthy-your kind donations really helps, believe me.

Kind Regards
Elly Sallingboe
B-17 Operator & Managing Director

BI 7 Preservation Ltd.
PO Box 92 Bury St. Edmunds
Suffolk IP28 8RR

385thBGMA

I have wanted to write a letter for some time as I feel honored to have served in the 385th and flew 29 missions with 550th on the William B. Clark crew as eng.-top turret gunner. It was the best outfit I was ever in and that's over 20 years of service. Chaplain Jim Vance always writes a good letter in the Groups Newsletter. I looked at the Perle Memorial drawing and can't believe my eyes. At the center of the arch is a Roman God, an idol god no doubt. Now I believe the real God blessed our unit greatly. Col. Van was a Christian and many of our men were too. Now I believe this is a real insult to God to even mention a false God of a Heathen nation let alone give him top honor. I'm sure I've done many things that God was opposed to and of course I'm sorry. I just wanted to voice my opposition to Roman God taking center stage. Of course I realize I have no say in the matter.

Thanks to our president, Editors and all who have contributed so much to the BGMA for these many years. I celebrated my 76th birthday yesterday. My wife Roberta and I have been married 52 years this July. We have 3 children living. A boy died at age 4 days. We also have 5 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren.

Our original combat Crew
 Pilot William B. Clark
 Co-pilot Paul d Starr
 Nav. Dexter E Schleusener
 Bomb Richard a Wheaton
 Eng. Oral F Lindsey
 Ball G Edward (N.M.I.) Leach
 L. Waist G Leroy W Bevins
 R. Waist G Albert V Baumann
 Tail G Johnny W Colston

Thanks and best wishes
 Oral F. Lindsey
 921-23rd St
 Anson, TX 79501-7127
 Ph: 1-915-823-2039

Dear Mr. Stern,

I recently read the article in the April 1997 issue of your newsletter concerning William Shannon, my Grandfather. The pride I felt upon reading the story of his heroic act filled me immeasurably. I have rarely heard stories concerning my late grandfather's service to our nation and found it very interesting. Reading it also sparked an idea.

So. Mr. Stern, I respectfully request that you ask those subscribers who knew my granddad to write down any story or even just an impression of him, and send them to me at the address listed. No matter how insignificant it may seem to them, I guarantee that it will mean a great deal to me. I would like to compile a book, with the help of all that knew him in and out of the service, so my family can know more about this man that we all love.

Thank you and everyone for anything that you can do to help me in my project. Your assistance will not go unnoticed or uncredited.

Sincerely,
 Jennifer Leonard
 11 Doris Court
 Concord, NC 28025

EDITOR'S NOTE: Anyone who knew Bill (he was on Paul Stahlberg's crew) please write to his granddaughter.

Dear Ed,

May I ask a favor of you, please?

Armond Blau of Belgium has just sent me a copy of his book "In the Shadow of the Forests" and in the large section of the Netherlands American Military Cemetery I found the listing of one of my best buddies. After being assigned to crews we were sent to different bases for our 3 month RTU and then I went to the 97th in Italy and he went to England. I never knew to which group but it's shown in the book as to be your 548th BS of your 385th BG, later I learned his crew went down, were MIA, then later KIA.

Les Lynch was with myself and 2 other who were 4 Irishmen and close friends. Lannigan's crew bailed out near Switzerland in a blizzard, one was killed, several were POW's, but Lannigan got to Switzerland. McGonigal was wounded by flak and mistakenly reported killed. I was luckier. I tried to locate Leo's family in Provo, Utah to no avail. As he and all of his crew had WOM (wall of missing) next to their names I must assume their plane got a hit and blew up. I searched all the 26,694 names and found 10 others who were on the same B-17 and died on 4th April 1945, just a few weeks before their last mission of the war. Would you ask in your newsletter if anybody knew these men to contact me. I'd like to know where to mission was to bomb - (maybe Berlin?) What the target was, did their plane blow up or "auger in" or ditch in the North Sea?

Leo T. Lunch S/Sgt From Provo, Utah-girlfriend's nickname was "Rummy"
 Crimmins, Timothy EJ-Captain (probaly pilot) 0-823536
 Ritchie, Robert G-1st Lt 0-777241
 Bernacchi, Adolph-2nd Lt. 0-782130
 Abernathy, Mercer G-2nd Lt. 0-2009170
 Koblitz, Alvin L-2nd Lt 0-723-802
 Miller, William H-S/Sgt
 Rapps, Oliver J-S/Sgt.
 Frederickson, Harold-S/Sgt
 Dawidowicz, Milton-S/Sgt.
 Chamber, Charles T-S/Sgt.

As there's one extra man on the plane he could have been a photographer.

Thanks very much for any assistance you can give.

Best Regards,
Don Hayes
1640 Cambridge Dr,
Walla Walla, WA 99362

P.S. I want to let Lannigan, McGonigal and some of my crew know.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Remember this charming young lady and her American Only "American Melody Bar" in London?



Telephone MAYfair 0668

AMERICANS ONLY
American Melody Club

AMERICAN MELODY BAR

22, Brook Street,
off Bond Street, W. 1



Dear Editor:

Reference the last paragraph on page 21 of the April 1998 issue of Hardlife Herald from the book "Clash of Wings" by Col. Walter J Boyne.

The first raid on Berlin was recalled due to weather. Several aircraft never received the message and continued on the mission. Results are unknown.

However on the March 6, 1944 first raid on Berlin, an exception is noted to the statement of bombs being dropped through an overcast.

If the records are checked they should reflect that the 548th BS of the 385th BG was leading the 8th AF on the first big raid. Our lead aircraft was shot down on the Bomb run and we lost our lead crew Commanded by Col. Wilson (BG Designee)

How do I know? I was navigator in the #4 aircraft over the target, The weather was CAVU. The only sky coverage may have resulted from black smoke from exploding shells as 488 heavy guns were brought to bear in the Berlin Area.

Respectfully
Donald E. Gilbert
Lt. Col USAF Retired.

**MANY THINGS IN THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 1944
AT THE 385TH BOMB GROUP.**

Many things happened on the 21 st. of February at the 385th bomb group: It had the most losses any month for the 385th Bomb Group. Those lost were Morse, Heuser, Horstman, MacAdams, Papilch, Ruby, Pease, Hutchinson, McIlveen, Terrace, Davis Gray and Kennan. Morse and Heuser were mid air collision as was Pease and Hutchinson. Hutchinson was on his 25th and last mission.

I was the navigator on Tex Taylor's crew. Taylor had finished up and I was on my 24 mission. Soucek our Bombardier was going with Hutchinson crew to take the place of their Bombardier, who was sick at the time, but at the last minute changed his mind and wanted to go as it was his last mission also. So Soucek went with another crew.

Early on we were going to: Norway and got caught in a violent storm over England and plane got out of control and Taylor rang the bell. Everyone bailed out except the pilot, Co-pilot, top gunner and myself. I tried to get out the nose hatch. I had my arms and head out but could not get the rest out because of the back pack chute. I had on. So I quit and went back to nose. Taylor got the plane under control at 1500 feet and we went over the channel and dropped our bombs. Soucek landed in a farmers field and the farrt women invited him in for a cup of tea. Later my mother sent me an article in the Lincoln Star newspaper which said local boy refuses to

leave pilot in crippled plane.

On the 21 st of Feb. Capt. Binks got me out of bed at the last minute to go with him on a pathfinder plane as an extra pilot and navigator. The target was Diepholz Germany and would probable be a: "MILK RUN". We went to Diepholz with extra radar and navigation equipment and everything that could went wrong, Over the target we lost our Electricity and oxygen and could not feather one engine. On the way back we were going down 1000 ft. per minute and nothing we threw seemed to help. Over Holland we were at 5000 Ft. which meant we had five minutes to fly and we were at least 20 minutes from England and off the left two little airplanes coming fast and they were not ours. We all bailed out of the Bombay except Holcombe, the pilot, who for some reason stayed with the plane and crashed in the Zuiderzee.

Of the crew five were captures by the Germans and the rest evaded. I got in the Dutch underground and saw many sights and did many unusual things.

Nine months later I was freed at Leigh Belgium by the American 1st Army. After the 1st Army arrived many interesting things happened. Piano and furniture were thrown our of the 3rd and 4th floor windows. Peoples heads were shaved and taken off to jail. Over the years the people had kept track of the Quislings. Many German soldiers changed uniforms to a suit of clothes.

Then 2 days later on the 24th Feb. Our copilot John Lapsynske and our two waist gunners Riggs and Mahoney went to Rostock Germany with Mclveen crew and were shot sown over Rostock and bailed out over a large lake and all were drowned.

On my last trip to Holland to visit my Dutch helpers and friends I went to Margraten, which is the Large American cemetery in southern Holland and looked up Lapsynski who is buried there. Margraten is certainly a beautiful and well kept up American cemetery in Holland.

I have often wondered what happened to the BI 7 after we bailed out and I finally found out. About 1 year ago I got a letter from a man in Holland by the name of Cee Steijger. He was a small boy during the war and lived only 500 meters from the Auiderzee. During that time he watched many American, English, and German planes crash, in the Zuiderzee. He was most impressed with a B-17 crash on Feb. 21 st. Ralph Holcomb, the pilot of the pathfinder planes, that Binks and I were on was killed in the crash. According to Cee Steijger the pilot was trying to hold the plane steady but apparently he did not manage. Once the plane was over the water of the Zuiderzee it went almost straight up and once it reached the top of that uncontrolled move it rolled over and ditched. The water was quite shallow and the tail was seen many weeks before it broke off. The pilot, Holcombe was brought ashore on 26 April 1944 and was buried in Amersfood and in Feb 1946 was reburied at Margarten, both in the Netherlands.

Cee Steijger said he is publishing a book about Air War over the Zuiderzee in the spring of 1998.

Joel Punches
Navigator on Taylor's crew 1943.

Dear Ed,

In our home town newspaper here in Hendersonville NC-
The Times-News this article caught my eye.

Stephen Black is a columnist well known in this part of the country.

He visited the Mighty Eighth Museum and published this article.

It seems the museum impresses everyone who visits it-I thought you would like to publish it in the Hardlife Herald.

Keep up the good work-1 look forward to each issue.

Martin (Moe) Bridges

P.S. Would appreciate more articles about us grease monkeys.

EDITOR'S NOTE: You "grease monkeys" send in stories - we need them!!



12A SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1998

Times-News

ON BORROWED TIME

An experience you shouldn't miss



STEVE BLACK
You will leave with profound appreciation

In my last column (if you missed it send me a self-addressed, stamped envelope and I'll send you a copy), I promised to bring you details of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, Ga.

Here we go. When you first walk in you can tell this is a class act. And no act, either. From the entire layout to the mellow polished wood, it is design quality throughout.

And the whole layout is wise and wonderful. It isn't just a museum, it is an organization built to accept everything the Eighth Air Force fought for.

Meetings of various political groups. Luncheons, suppers and if you are in the mood, dances. The design is such that the acoustics are perfect.

High above the rotunda on the ceiling is a massive cargo parachute. A tank is heavy but with one of these chutes a tank can be dropped safely.

Unless you're under it.



The entire museum is an experience. If a person truly wants to study the museum I would recommend at least two 2-hour sessions. After two hours a person gets tired of eating ice cream. Or drinking bourbon.

Or both.

I guarantee any visit is worth the seven buck ticket. And if you get hungry there is an excellent museum canteen that serves up, what else, but fish and chips,

among other items.

What I want to recommend is a careful study of several areas. The art gallery is a must. Many of the top U.S. aviation artists are displayed here.

Talk about telling a story! Brilliant!

Take your time.

Then study the many display cases. Row after row of well-beloved personal items. A cracked leather flying jacket. Faded photographs. A watch that still has life to it. Boots, scarves, medals awarded for incredible bravery.

Most importantly the display cases do not hold generic items. All of the above items belonged to real people, real faces.

Each display case has many photographs and a small story of the men and women who owned the items featured.

One of the most poignant cases holds the dress uniforms of a flyer, and not far from it is a small child's coat. The latter was made from the lining of the father's uniform coat. Times were hard during the war and people "made do" with what they had.

Sometimes a squadron's history is displayed, sometimes a group.

One entire section is on escape and evasion. These are wonderful photographs of the many men and women who risked their lives shielding allied airmen from capture.

Recently a reunion of the European Rescuers and the men they saved was held in Savannah. Those who attended were jolted by the emotional bond between rescued and rescuer.



Other areas of the museum I wish to recommend include the fantastic diorama created by the International Plastic Modelers Society.

The diorama depicts a typical Eighth Air Force base in England. Note the masterful details such as the above-ground concrete slit trenches, the oil stains coming from the four big engines of the B-17's that line the runway, the paint crew busy at work on a B-17.

I'm telling you, as a modeler myself, I found myself drooling...

And speaking of models, the mother of all models is displayed close by the diorama. It is a late model B-17 in flight. The wing span is over ten feet wide and the craft is perfect in all detail.

Further on be sure to stand in the cutaway mid-fuselage and man the .50-caliber guns. Think what it was like to stare into the snout of a Focke-Wulf 190 as his guns started to blink at you. Then big blobs of glowing lights came at you. Whoa!

Look into the cockpit of a B-24 Liberator or an upper turret that holds "twin fifties."

Study the hundreds of photographs that line the museum walls. And don't miss the photo of a crew member who didn't make it back home to the parades and loved ones.



I've saved the best for the last.

The "Mission Experience" is indeed an experience. Let us take it one step at a time.

"Bud" Porter was our mission experience guide. The first thing I noticed about Bud was his height. He was short. I'm even shorter than Bud so I can say that. I told my wife it was a good bet that Bud was a former ball turret gunner.

He was, and he led our group into an actual old Nissan hut brought back from England. In this metal building air crews met for preflight briefing. There was the familiar map of Europe with ribbons marking the bombing route to target.

We were then led into mission experience. There, a number of movie screens wrap around the theater. These screens show various images during "flight." Image of what you as a crew member would see if you were on High deep into Germany.

Your fellow bombers sit close off your wing, below you and above. How can any enemy fighter get through the hail of lead you and your gunners put up.

But they do! And over the raucous of your engines, you are suddenly jolted practically out of your seat at twin .50-caliber machine guns over beside you and above your head.

There! There is the enemy! ME 109 coming out of the sun! His nose and wings start blinking. He's opened his firing and he's cutting and slashing into your side...

Well, take it from me, you will be thoroughly washed out. Most of all you will be left with a profound appreciation and gratitude to all those young men who went up into the blue. And who did it simply and humbly to stop tyrants and bring freedom from taking over the world.

Be sure to visit the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. It is a simple five-hour trip to Savannah.

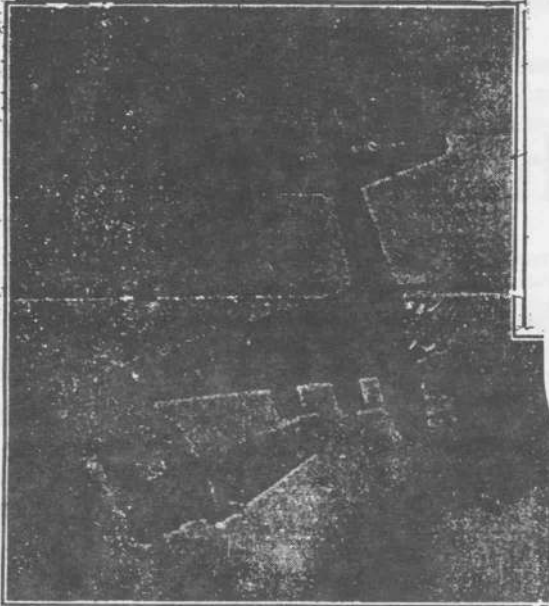
Take I-26 to I-95 and head south. Pull off onto Exit 18 (U.S. Highway 80) and head east a few hundred yards and turn left onto Boulevard; follow the signs. You can't miss it. Group rates are available.

For more information, contact Wayne Corbett, director of public relations at 912-748-8888. Ext. 1122

It is a must see. Take the family. P.S. And "Bud," keep that hat spinning round and round!

77»ICS-V«M's column is: >: ■ ' Hlack /ires ill Holder-- i: U.:'<<

No 35® jRjui. Here



US Army Air Force Photo
The# massive btows <rf Arim air aradas have brakes (be back <rf (be Luftwaffe, bat
the rides aver Gerpaagy are not all lined with rivet. wSr ah' (T. ijndTikriSa
-Qmfe&arrvCT -Maid, along, seen, ...
-swt at a Tores UNOJXxaben 'ri. 850 fighters.

**1,300.8th Heavies Again
Blast Reich as Nazis Hide**

The long final plunge

By spring of 1945 the German nation was whipped. Almost paralyzed industrially, its communications badly snarled, and its economy- bled white, defeat — in the air as well as on the ground — was only a matter of time. The AAF statisticians had all manner of charts and graphs to prove this was so. Unfortunately, they could never represent with a squiggle on a graph the incredibly desperate last-ditch flying of the German fighter pilots. A B-17 shot down in flames three days before all was *kaput* carried down to the earth, miles below, eleven men who were just as dead as if they had "bought it" over Schweinfurt back in 1943. The sight of large groups of Me-262 jet fighters, and lesser numbers of the speedy Me-163 rocket

interceptor, still conjured up the nightmare that Hitle<r might yet produce a miracle in the struggle for air SAI-premacy. On March 3, 1945, more than fifty of these new fighters playfully circled escorting P-51 Mustangs at tremendous speed, then closed in and shot down six heavy bombers and three fighters without loss. On March 18th — with our victory already assured — twenty-four bombers and five fighters out of 1,250 bombers and 850 fighters that attacked Berlin were shot down, sixteen other bombers were so badly damaged they crash-landed in Russian territory. And flak put some holes in nearly 700 bombers. The 550-mph speed of the Me-262 and the punch of its four 30-mm cannon proved devastating; one burst tore the wing clear off the hapless B-17 >^n the above picture. Despite the jets' superiority, they had come too late and were too few. We were right. Germany had her jets, but she lost the war.

**Spaatz Says
It's Tactical
From Now On**

The strategic air war of the 8th and 15th Air Forces is at an end and from now on they must "operate with our tactical air forces in close cooperation with our armies," Gen. Carl Spaatz, USSTAF commander, announced last night.

The announcement climaxed a day during which 8th Air Fyce fighter pilots smashed all previous records for the number of enemy planes destroyed with a record bag of 537—all on the ground—in sweeps over southern Germany and as far east as Prague, Czechoslovakia. The old record was 377, established only six days ago.

In an Order of the Day commending all units under his command, Spaatz declared that the strategic air war has been won with a decisiveness becoming increasingly evident as our armies overrun Germany." He called on the air forces to "continue with undiminished effort and precision the final tactical phase of air action to secure the ultimate objective, the complete defeat of Germany."

All of 'Em Get SS7

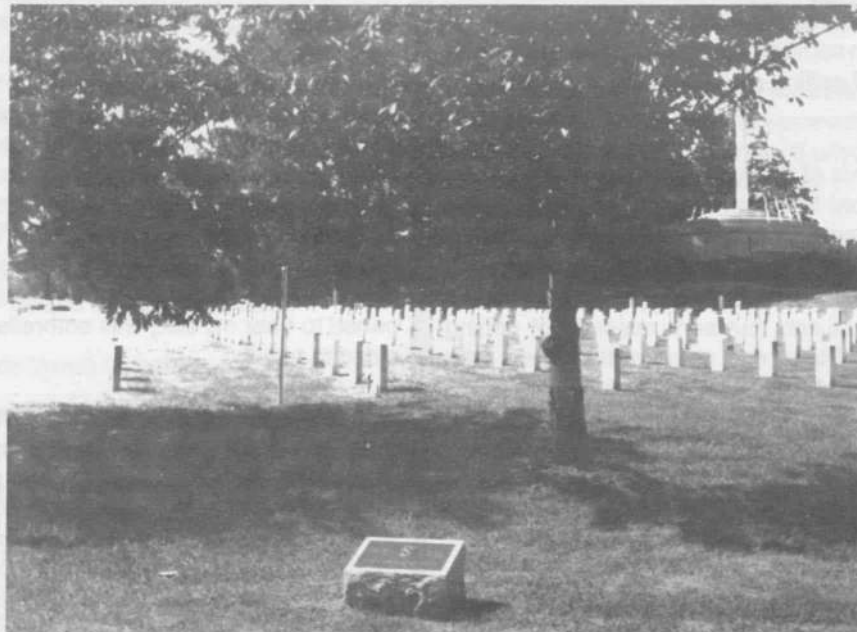
Together with 50 enemy planes destroyed on the ground and in the air by Continental based fighters of the 9th and 1st Tactical Air Forces, U.S. pilots knocked out a fpan total of 587 German aircraft. Since Apr. 7, over 1,300 Nazi planes have been demolished by U.S. fliers.

The fact that all of the enemy planes wiped out were on the ground emphasizes the growing ineffectiveness of Nazi air resistance. Approximately 850 England-based fighters escorted 750 Liberators and Fortresses which blasted rail targets at Regensburg, Landshut, Plattling and Straubing in southern Germany,

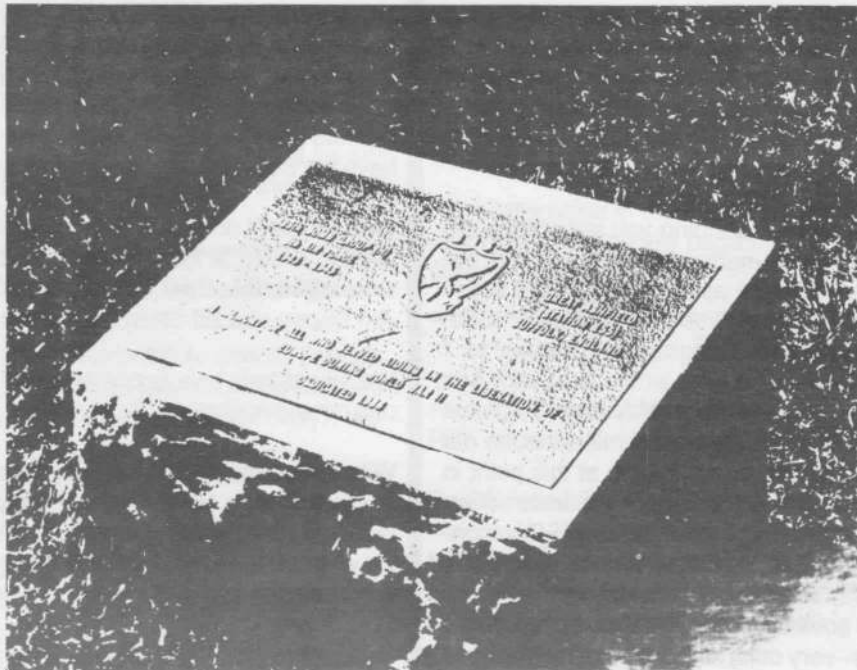
Meanwhile, 450 unescorted Fortresses dumped high explosives near Point de Grave on the west side of the Gironde estuary in co-operation with elements of the French Army moving against the cornered Germans at Bordeaux.

RAF Mosquitoes raided Berlin three times Sunday night, reporting very littlqg flak and no fighter opposition, although the Germans turned on the capital's searchlights for the first time in may weeks.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Showing our Memorial at Arlington Cemetery 385th Plaque and tree. In back behind limb is the Memorial to those who died on Battleship Main. Houses (tempory) the body of Polish pianist Padarewski



Jim Dacey sent these 2 great pictures of our Memorial at the Tomb of the Unknown Solider (See his letter). Every member who visits Washington should go there.



Dear Ed,

When Hardlife Herald comes in the mail, I drop everything else, sit down and give it a quick once over. Then, a couple of days later, I will pick it up again to read it in more detail. After a few days, I'll go over it to make sure I didn't miss anything. Yep, sure enough in your April edition, a request for pix of the 385th memorial at Arlington Cemetery. The enclosed shots were taken some time ago but I never got around to printing them. (Awful getting old). I hope they are of some use to you.

I, too will join the chorus of those who praise what a great show we had at Tucson! My first reunion and I shall never forget it. It was most meaningful to get together with Gallagher, Silver and Kindya, members of our original crew. And much enjoyed the companionship of others I had known or flown with some 50 odd years ago, but sure missed not getting together with guys like Stern, and some of the others with who I flew out of Great Ashfield. And I was much impressed with our visitors who had travelled so far to join us.

Regards,

Jim Dacey

2305 N Monroe

Arlington, VA 22207

P.S. See you in Savannah.

EDITOR'S NOTE: A slightly shortened version of Bob Silver's letter to Roger Feller in Luxembourg.

Jim Dacey was at the meeting in Tucson...I hope that you got to meet him. It was the first time he and I had seen one another in 52 years! Here is an interesting thing about Jim: He spent some of his childhood and teenage years living with his family in Austria where his father was a physician. Result: He spoke fluent German. He was asked by the War Department to go to London to make a broadcast recording for radio to the Germans; in this, his message was-in effect- "Why don't you stop the war now (surrender) instead of letting it drag on any longer." That's as close as anyone on our crew ever came to being a "Secret Agent"...but I do think it is interesting.

Enclosed in some material I am sending you separately are two copies of a photo which he made of the entry sign at the gate at our air base. I specifically asked Jim to make these for you. They should fit in very nicely to your display of 385th material. He has always been a photography enthusiast as I am sure you can tell from the photos which Ed Stern has used in the newsletter. While it was probably "totally against regulations" for him to take photos while on missions, he did it anyway! I trust that by letting this be known at this point in time he will not be court martialed. 3) Under separate cover, I am going to send in the next few days two boxes. One contains a copy of "One Last Look", a truly beautiful book about the airbases of the Eighth Air Force. Also in that box will be a copy of the first history book of the 385th. Also, a book about "nose art" of the B-17's-very colorful. These are for your use

in the museum. The second box will have in it the helmet which I wore along with an oxygen mask (also mine). These have been sitting in a drawer for 52 years waiting for someone named Roger Feller to let me know that he might be able to use them. That I wore them has absolutely no relevance whatsoever; they are simply examples of what all crew members wore. Better that they be in Perle than in my drawer!

In that box shall also be the insignia which we wore on our "dress" uniforms-along with a photo-diagram of where they were worn. Also in the box will be a copy of a new newspaper which was published in our community last month (Volume #1, Number #1) and the lead story just happens to be about our mutual friend Bob Silver. It came about as the result of a talk which I was asked to make to the Dutch/American Club of Miami. The editor/publisher of the paper happened to hear my talk, was enthralled with the story and decided to use it.

Also in the box will be a really nice photo of B-17s on a mission with flak-bursts around them. It gives an excellent view of how the flak came in bursts of 3 or 4 (usually 4). It is my recollection at this time that the Germans had radar with which to determine our altitude. In any event, they were extremely accurate. On the first mission which our crew flew together (each of us having had one or two "indoctrination" missions with other crews) we counted 160 flak holes in our aircraft when we got back. This was a mission to a synthetic oil refinery at Meresberg which, we later learned, was the most heavily defended target of the air war. The date was (I Believe) 4 November '44. Am I lucky to be here to write this letter? YES!

Michael Gallagher, now President of the 385th BGA, was on a bomb-survey team after the war ended and it is my recollection that he said that Merseberg target was defended by around 2,000 88 millimeter guns! He was, as you know, on our crew at that time. By the way, Mike, wrote up, from his daily journal notes made during the war, a marvelous history of his experiences. Perhaps he could be persuaded to make a photo copy of this history for your display. Of course, you have his address from the newsletter.

Well, Roger, I do believe that this covers most of the things I wanted to say..at least for now. If I come up with more I shall write more. Because they are both mentioned in the letter, Jim Dacey and Ed Stern shall receive copies.

We would truly love to come to Perle in June...giving it serious consideration!

With every Best Wish to you and Geanny..and as my friends in Luxembourg so often say: "J'espere que tout va bien et qu'on se reverra au mois de juin." (We shall not tell Jim and Ed what that means..their feelings might be hurt!)

Sincerely,
Bob Silver

James L Percival
Auto parts sales cleric, 78

James L. Percival of Denver, an auto parts counter person, died Thursday in Denver. He was 78.

Services were Monday at Christ the King Catholic Church. Interment will be in Fort Logan National Cemetery.

He was bom Sept. 29,1919, in McCook, Neb. He graduated from East High School in Denver in 1937. He served as a lieutenant in the Army Air Corps during World War II as a B-17 pilot, having flown 30 missions over Germany. During his military service, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters. On Aug. 27, 1944, he married Virginia Hose in Denver.

STEPHEN VARGO

Stephen A. Vargo, 83, of McKeesport died yesterday in the Briarcliff Pavilion for Specialized Care in North Huntingdon Twp. A retired millwright from the National plant, U.S. Steel Corp., he was a member of St. Martin de Porres Parish and served with the 385th Bomb Group of the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II.

Dear Sir,

I wish to report the death of Robert G. Klostermeier
 Tech. Sgt. 549th Bombardment Group on 21/3/98.

American Legion Post #553 arranged the proper and final salute to a fallen warrior.

There is nothing sadder than to hear "Taps" and receive the shells from the last round of rifle shots. Married 51 years.

Mrs. Eira L Klostemeier
 810 Colburn St.
 Toledo, OH 43609-3246

Dear Ed,

In behalf of Steihl crew Misfortune it is with great sadness that I report his death. Even though we were all very young Jerry was always very cool in every situation. Twice with engines out we landed safely in Belgium. Lost Co-pilot due to flak Jerry remained very steady. In one instance over England another 17 was coming down on us, he remain information luckliy the 17 finally went up avoiding a mid air collision. As his flight engineer I will miss him greatly and I'm sure the rest of the crew will also.

Sincerely
 Rocky Tanguay
 101 Rainbow Dr #1455
 Livingston, TX 77351

Norman C. Powell, 75, World War II veteran

BRANFORD - Norman C. Powell, 75, of Rice Terrace died Wednesday, March 18, 1998, at St. Raphael's Hospital.

Mr. Powell, son of the late George and Flossie Powell, was bom Aug. 29, 1922, in White Plains, N.Y. He lived in Branford smce 1969. He graduated from Columbia University with a bachelor's degree in education. He was the owner of Shoreline Chrysler Plymouth

before retiring in 1973. He was a bombardier in the 8th Air Force, 385th Bombardment Group and completed 35 missions during World War II. x



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GERALD O. STEIL (JERRY) October 2, 1923 - March 30, 1998



Jerry Steil died peacefully surrounded by family on March 30, 1998. His wife wants you to know how much he looked forward to reading the Hard Life Herald.

Gerald O. Steil was born to George & Ruth Steil at their farm outside of Scribner, NE. He was a devoted brother to his 4 younger sisters Ardene, Beth, Phyllis, and Mickey. The family moved to West Point, NE and later to Omaha, NE where Jerry graduated from Cross Lutheran School after 8th grade and from South High School in 1941. He attended the University of Omaha for 1 year. He joined United Air Lines as a baggage handler in Cleveland, OH.

Jerry married Ruth (Sally) Homig in 1944, just after he joined the Army Air Corp. While in the Army Air Corp, he flew out of England with the 385th Bombardment Group. Due to his flying experience in the war, he came back to United as a pilot without loss of seniority. While working for United, the Steil family moved many times, spending most years in Chicago, IL or Denver, CO and a few years in the Washington, DC area. During their first stay in Colorado, Jerry built the family house. Each time they moved back, it was to "the house that Jerry built." Jerry and Sally had 5 children, George, Bob, Kathy, Janet and Rusty. They had 6 grandchildren. Heather, David, Andrew, Geoff, DJ, and John. Sally died of cancer. Jerry married Dianne in 1991, adding 2 more (almost grown) children, Mike and Vai. Jerry and Dianne had the best of both worlds with homes in both Denver, CO and Syracuse, NE. Jerry fought cancer 3 times, losing the final battle due to complications because of his weakened immune system due to the cancer treatment. Jerry died with his wife and 4 of his 5 children at his bedside in Lincoln, Nebraska. His other child was on the phone with him before he died. 3 of his grandchildren were with him that same morning. He may have lost the last earthly battle, but he won the war of Eternity because he "kept the faith"!

Jerry was truly one of the lucky ones! He had an unshakable faith, many people who loved him, a pastime that kept him interested (working with lumber, especially additions to houses!), and a career that was not a job or work, but a purely pleasurable experience.



James L. Percival		William Holdsworth	March 1998	Otto Mimms	January 1998
Norman C. Powell	April 1998	Earl Flaherty	April 1997	Charles Byers	January 1997
Jerry Steil	March 1998	Harold Vessel	August 1997	Jack Hughes	April 1998
Robert G. Klostermeier	April 1998	Peter Sarpolus	May 1997	John T. Hill	October 1997
Dr. Rick Timmins	April 1998	Stephen Vargo	April 1998	Walter Stephens	February 1996
Ed Korbel	April 1998	Matthew F. Peters	March 1996		