

Hardlife



Herald



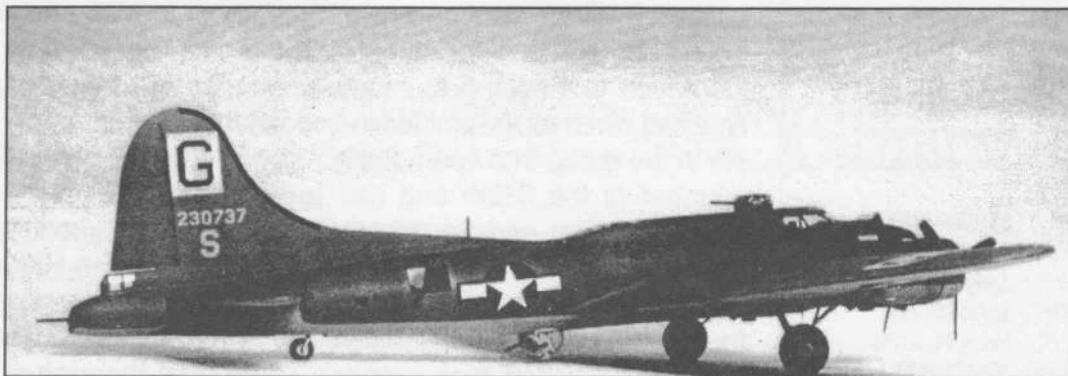
Newsletter of the
385th Bombardment Group Memorial Association

1942 - 1945 • Great Ashfield - (Suffolk, England • (Station 15

The Mighty Eighth

Vol. 18 Number 2

May, 2001



JOHN RICHEY'S CHAMPION B-17F FLYING FORTRESS THE OHIO AIR FORCE

RECORD KILL

By The Associated Press

A U.S. BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND Oct 12-

A new record of 12 German fighters shot down by one bomber on a single raid was set Sunday on the mission to Munster, Germany by the B-17 Flying Fortress the Ohio Air Force, piloted by Lt John Richey, Steubenville, Ohio, it was announced today.

Out of a total of 24 claimed shot down in the hectic 90-minute air battle from which they escaped without a scratch, only twelve were officially corroborated.

Pilot Richey and copilot Thomas Helman, Medford, Ore., were the only crewmen who didn't make kills—and they have no guns.

**All 12 Fort's Nazi Kills Confirmed
for Record**

AN EIGHTH AF BOMBER STATION Oct 22—

Several weeks ago two B-17s put in record claims for enemy aircraft destroyed in one raid. The Fort Murder Inc., claimed 11 German planes on the Frankfurt raid, and the Fort called Ohio Air Force claimed 12 on the Munster raid.

The reviewing board cut Murder Inc. claims from 11 to three, but all 12 claims of the Ohio Air Force have been approved so that B-17, piloted by 2/Lt John Richey of Steubenville, Ohio, holds the ETO record for Germans shot down on a single raid.

Hardlife Herald

385th Bombardment Group (H)

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Eldon Nysether
Mayor Ferdinand Unsen

PRESIDENTS REPORT

By Leo A. LaCasse, Col., USAF, Fiet.

To all who have shown confidence in me to be your President for the next two years, my deepest appreciation. Like Tom Newton and so many before it will be a tough act to follow. I will do my utmost to keep the traditions of the past.

At ABQ, a far more important change took place than the two year change of the guard. Our editor, Ed Stem finally got his wish to pass on the responsibility of keeping the association active. There are many who feel as I do that without the HLH to provide a source of information for members to keep in touch with one another, the 385th might have gone the way other groups have gone on a final mission and dissolved. For 17 years Ed has kept the HLH going with stories of the past that have touched many of us. In all these years Ed has not once declined to print our stories and items of history pertaining to our group. Ed, you have served the 385th with great honor and the service you have provided will be remembered by all. You have earned the distinction of being the most important member of the 385th and you will be missed as our Editor. We wish you God speed and know that you will keep in touch.

In the short time I have been in office I have received a few e-mails from old timers expressing a feeling of not belonging and a sense of not recognizing enough members to make it worth while to attend our reunions. In June of last year seventy-one of us brave souls journeyed to England to renew memories of Great Ashfield. I was shocked when all assembled in London that there were only three people in the group that I personally recognized. After all I was an original member of the 385th and had held positions as pilot, Asst. Group Training Officer and Squadron Operations Officer until I finished my missions and went to 3rd Air Division Hq. at Alvedon Hall in Jan 1945. As I got acquainted with my fellow travelers I soon learned that most of them had arrived at the 385th in Jan 45 or later. Yet, in that short time many had finished their missions considered themselves elite members of the group. The Old Timers went to Regensburg and earned a Presidential Unit Citation. The Elite went to Zwickau and earned a Presidential Unit Citation. It's no wonder they feel the pride that the Old Timers share in accomplishments. Even those who spent a minimum of time at the Group and were unfortunate to spend the rest of the War in a POW camp are just as much a part of the 385th as those who were there from the beginning to the end. There are no outsiders. Join us on a mini reunion next year or plan to be with us at our biennial gathering in Hampton, Va. in 2003 and get to know one another.

A bit of humor on the definition of an "Old Timer." Tom Newton and I were having a discussion one day and the subject of our first mission came up. I proudly remarked that I had been on the 1st mission of the 385th in June 43. Tom remarked, "Gee, I was still in High School on that date." It almost makes you feel Old and not much of a Timer.

CHAPLAIN SEZ

By Rev. James H. Vance

Greetings from the state of Washington where we are short of water!!

I am doing real good and the Doctor says I can do what I feel my body tells me. The only trouble is I am loosing a good excuse for being lazy. Thanks to you all for keeping me in your prayers. Now for what I should be writing.

One of my favorite books in the Bible, probably my most favorite one, is James. Not because of the name but because it is full of advice for everyday living. James talks about "faith" which is very clear he means action.

In Emerald Heights, which is where we live, the folks here are retired (mostly) from all

walks of life. We have not met them all but those we have met are real interesting. One man invented the 'Touch Tone Telephone'. Another borrowed several million dollars, himself, to get this retirement home started. There are a number of retired clergy but so far I am the only United Methodist. Another was a medical doctor that also helped spearhead the health center but did not live long enough to see his work to maturity. The center is named after him. There are school teachers, salesmen, bankers, Boeing workers, cooks, house wives, etc. Yet we are all old retired people and treated the same. James, in the second chapter, talks about treating everyone

the same. He says it is the law that commands us to love others as much as we love ourselves.

In verses 12 and 13 it reads - "Speak and act like people who will be judged by the law that sets us free. Do this, because on the day of judgement there will be no pity for those who have not had pity on others. But even in judgement, God is merciful."

Now in our old age we must still live according to the law of love. So keep the faith and your life will be blessed regardless of your aches and pains or loss of this or that.

Shalom - Jim Vance

P.S. I sure missed you all at Albuquerque

THE SOFT LIFE SIDE

By Darla Newton

Martha Stewart and Katie Couric wish to thank the wonderful participants who were at the women's breakfast in Albuquerque. What fun we all had.

In keeping with our helpful hints we were asked what to do when a husband feels old. We came up with an idea. Start by referring to the great job the B-17's did during the Vietnam War. Keep this up and he will mentally drop 20 years. We realize that going for the Gulf War would be to big of a stretch.

When we were asked

about having tee shirts for the women we talked to our attorney and he did not think we should at this time. He also said he couldn't for the life of him figure out what possible message we would want to carry on our chests. Personally we think it is a real waste of a chest not to carry some sort of message.

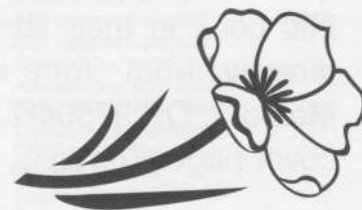
Well the latest from the medical world says that one out of three Americans are suffering from mental illness. So to clear this worry up we want you to think of your two best friends and if they are OK then it must

be you.

We are all blessed to have had such brave men who went to fight the war and must always be grateful.

Darla Newton

In the next issue Marian Gallagher will be putting in her thoughts too.



THE OUTGOING PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Albuquerque NM Reunion Report

A dinner for the year 2000 European tour group that included our British friends, Di & Roy Barker, Pam Metcalfe and our Luxembourg friends, Mayor Ferdinand Unsen, Maisy Unsen, Roger Feller and Jeanny Feller was held a day prior to the reunion at the Doubletree Hotel. We had 55 people attending the tour group reunion. 71 people had been on the European trip.

Hal Goetsch and his wife, Suzanne, had the registration all perfectly organized. Hal had made many diversified choices for the attendees. The first evening of the main reunion was held at the Wool Warehouse and had the Watermelon Jug Band as entertainment. This was followed by the awarding of honorary membership in the 385th BGMA to Eldon Nysether. (Eldon is the brother of our 2nd vice-president Maurie Nysether.) The award was given in recognition of the many contributions of items given by Eldon on behalf of the 385th BGMA. to the 385th BGMA Museum in Perle

Luxembourg. Eldon & Maurie then presented to Mayor Unsen and Roger Feller a Norden Bomb Sight for the 385th Museum. You should have seen Roger when the bomb sight was presented, he was so excited. Mayor Unsen & Roger Feller then presented certificates and plaques to Eldon and Maurie Nysether making them honorary citizens of the Municipality of Rambrouch, Luxembourg. Mayor Unsen & Roger Feller gave to the 385th BGMA a beautiful picture symbolizing the liberation of Luxembourg by the US Armed Forces. One evening we went to Los Amigos roundup for a western barbecue and entertained with Indian & Mexican dancers, (*editors note, A chicken dance by Englishman Floy Barker was the highlight of the evening.*)

We were honored at the main banquet with Major General J. Harlin, former Chief of Chaplains, USAF. He gave a very inspirational speech that was followed by a standing ova-

tion. During the main banquet the 385th presented plaques to Mayor Unsen and Roger Feller, naming them as Honorary Members of the 385th BGMA for their exceptional contributions to the USAAF and international recognition in the field of aviation through their establishment of the 385th BGMA Museum in Perle Luxembourg. A beautiful trophy was presented to Ed Stern for his many years as editor of the Hardlife Herald., thanks Ed.

I want to express my appreciation to the Officers & Executive Committee members I have worked with the last two years. They were a great group of dedicated 385th members and I am proud to have served with them. The election of new officers has given the 385th a fine group of men to lead the group the next two years

Tom Newton
Immediate Past President

LETTERSTO HARDLIFE

A fantastic 385th book by Tom Helman Copilot of the OHIO AIR FORCE. Every 385th member should have this book in their library. You may order your copy directly from Tom Helman) 718 Sherman St., Medford, OR 97504-7126. \$20.00 postpaid USA (see cover page. Editor)



Vet Reunions Draw Thousands to City

Visitors Bring Memories, Money

BY JOHN J. LUMPKIN
Journal Staff Writer

Old warriors swapping tales of valor and glory is a, tourism niche that means some bucks for the local economy.

Albuquerque hosts dozens of veterans' reunions annually, to the tune of several thousand visitors and several million dollars according to the Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau. PT boaters, Green Berets, submariners, warship crews and Army unit associations all have spent a weekend in town during recent years.

It's a market the city actively

seeks through direct mail and advertising in veterans' magazines, said Martha Mondragon-Guerin, Albuquerque's "military reunion queen" and sales director at the convention bureau.

"It's a great market for, our hotels," she said. "We have so much corporate business during the week, then they're dead on the weekends" - when the reunions come to town.

Albuquerque's relatively inexpensive rooms, mild climate and, large veteran population are part of Mondragon-Guerin's pitch. So are the National Atomic and Ernie Pyle museums.

"I love these guys," Mondragon-Guerin said. "I used to be a history teacher. They want to, tell you their stories."

That's the case at the reunion

of members of the 385th Bomb Group, a World War II B-17 unit, who are staying at the Doubletree this week-end. The 385th bombed German targets from English bases and was part of the 8th Air Force, association president Tom Newton said.

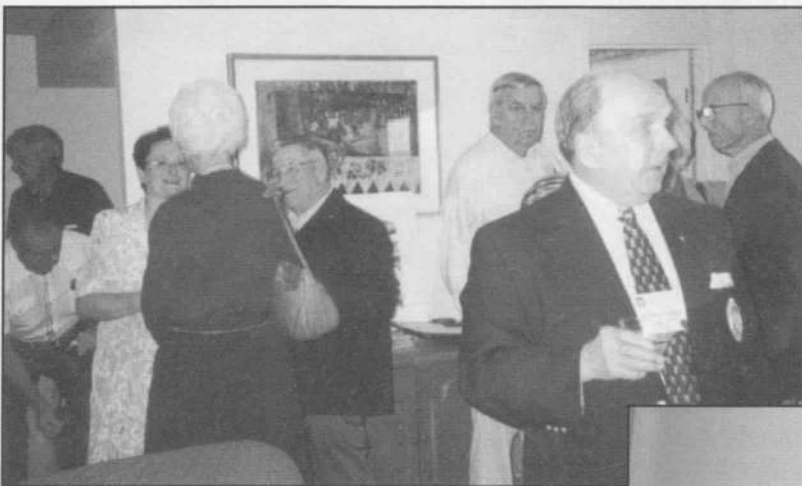
Air crews who fought together decades ago, get reacquainted and, swap stories, he said. For some, it's a first encounter with a buddy since the war.

"By golly, the flak gets worse every two years," Newton joked.

Guests of the 385th in Albuquerque include a delegation of officials from Luxembourg, where two bombers crashed during the war.

Newton, who saw combat as a flight engineer on a B-17 in 1945, noted that attendance, from his 1,200-member organization has been dropping at its biennial national meeting & Veterans are dying or becoming too ill to travel, he said.

"We have such a big loss in personnel now" he said.



**Reunion
Hospitality
Room**



BOMB SIGHT

At the Albuquerque Reunion Eldon and Maurice Nysether presented a Norden Bombsight for the 385th Museum in Perle, Luxembourg to Mayor Unsen and Roger Feller. How many of you were familiar with the Sperry Bombsight that were used on B 24's ? The following is a story of the Sperry Bombsight. (*Editor's note: If you ever have witnessed a small boy at Christmas you would know how Roger reacted to this gift.*)

THE SPERRY SIGHT

In 1937 a new gyroscope was designed by a Sperry engineer. It had twice the former mass and an RPM of 30,000, about four times the speed of the Norden gyro. This new gyro provided for a self-erecting vertical system for holding a line of sight. This same design led to a new azimuth control system thus providing for aiming accuracy during aircraft deviations in flight. This was the new Sperry S-1 bombsight. The Army Air Corps was so inspired by the new Sperry that aircraft electrical systems were altered from de to 400-hertz ac systems required by the new Sperry bombsight.

In 1940 and 1941 the Norden XV bombsight was installed in B-17 bombers and the Sperry S-1 was installed in the B-24s used by the 151th AF in the Mediterranean area. Also, since the Navy would not release the Norden to foreign governments, the B-24 Sperry bombers could be leased to the

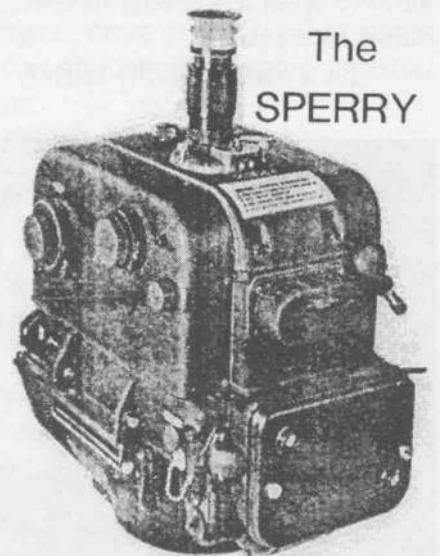
RAF. A British report, six months before the USA entered the war, told of an RAF Lockheed Hudson Mk V, with a Sperry bombsight, bombed a small Nazi supply ship near Tyboron, Denmark from 8,000 feet and hit it on the first pass.

The precision bombing now possible by the two new bombsights created a need for a much improved autopilot. Neither the Sperry A-3 or the Norden SBAE auto-pilots provided the stable platform to realize the high precision possible from both bombsights. To provide such a stable bombing platform Sperry developed an all new A-5 autopilot.

With the A-5, once the bomb run began, the pilot turned over flight control to the bombardier who engaged the bombsight to the A-5 autopilot until the bombs were released.

The Army Air Corps was so impressed with the increased bombing performance that on 17 June 1941 a government

contract was awarded to Sperry to use its Great Neck, NY manufacturing facility to produce S-1 bombsights and A-5 autopilots. At the same time the Army Air Corps issued a teletype that in the future all production models of bombardment airplanes be equipped with the A-5 autopilots with provisions to permit the use of Sperry or Norden bombsights.



Send Your E-Mail

It has been suggested that we start a page with member's e-mail address. If you are interested in sharing your e-mail address with other members please e-mail it to tjnewton25@aol.com In subject box identify as 385th e-mail.

GREAT ASHFIELD AIRFIELD IN WORLD WAR II

***Station 155, 385th Heavy Bombardment Group United States
Eighth Army Air Force***

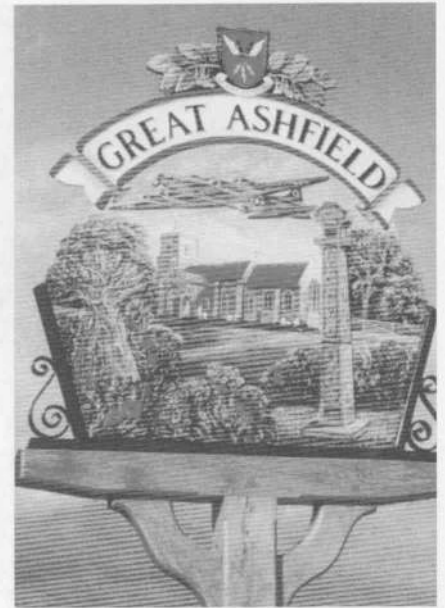
John Laing and Son Ltd built the present airfield in 1942. It had three runways and the technical site was situated on the south side of the airfield. During its construction 3000 trees and eight miles of hedgerow were uprooted, while the volume of excavation ran to some 250,000 cubic metres. Altogether, some 108,000 cubic metres of concrete and 250,000 tonnes of locally obtained ballast were used in the airfield's construction.

The airfield was opened in March 1943 and was used for a short time by the RAF. Stirling four-engine bombers used the runways to practice circuits and landings but none of them were permanently based there. The airfield was then handed over to the United States Eighth Army Air Force and the 385th Heavy Bombardment Group.

The 385th Bomb Group was formed at Davis-Monthan air base, Arizona, on 1 December 1942 and arrived at Great Ashfield on 19 June 1943. Known as 'Van's Valiants' after their Commanding Officer Colonel Elliott Vandevanter, they first went into action on 17 July 1943. Their B17's distinguishing mark was a black G in a white square on the tail fin. Between 1943 and 1945 the Group attacked many targets across Europe, including Berlin, oil refineries, railways, airfields, factories, and coastal targets associated with D Day. On 6 March 1944, during a raid on Berlin, Brigadier General Russell Wilson took off from Great Ashfield in a radar equipped B17. All the 385th's aircraft returned from the raid apart from the General's, which was seen to take several hits. Four of the crew managed to parachute to safety but eight others, including the General, perished when the aircraft exploded.

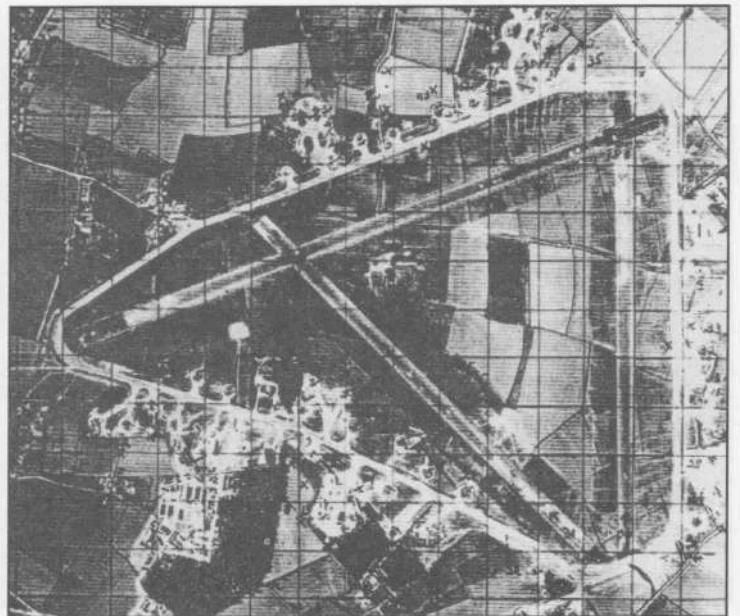
One of the hangars on the airfield was badly damaged on two occasions. The first was on 3 September 1943, when a bombed up B17 nearby caught fire and exploded. The second was a unique event, when the Group earned the dubious distinction of being the only Eighth AAF unit to lose an aircraft to German bombing; on the night of 23 May 1944, a German intruder scored a direct hit on the hangar, destroying it and a B17 inside. Another intruder towards the end of the War also strafed the airfield, but evidently without causing much damage.

One of the Group's B17s, 'Satan's Mate', flown by Lieutenant James Fleisher, managed to loop the loop on 19 February 1945 when it flew



The Village Sign

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The Airfield in 1943



Mission briefing



Mission completed



Staff Sgt Warren Roberts in front of B17 'Rum Dum' at Great Ashfield in 1944 (note the large number of mission completed symbols)

into another aircraft's slipstream, causing it to fall over backwards. The aircraft and crew survived the ensuing 380 mile/h (600 km/h) power dive; it was the only B17 ever to do this and the incident is commemorated in

the stained glass window in the American memorial chapel.

Overall the Group flew 296 missions from Great Ashfield, losing 129 B17s. 231 men were killed in action, 442 were missing in action, 458 became prisoners of war, 13 were interned in neutral countries and 252 escaped to return to England after bailing out or crashing on the Continent. A memorial to those Americans who lost their lives was erected at the airfield in 1944; it is now located in the churchyard.

The Airfield Today



The main runway in 2000

The airfield reverted to RAF control in October 1945, when it became a Maintenance Unit used for bomb storage. The RAF finally abandoned the site in 1959/60 and the land was returned to its original owners, the Miles family.

The airfield is predominantly used for agricultural purposes; however, a considerable section of the main runway still remains, as do various small buildings - some still showing signs of their use in World War II. Much of the taxiway also remains.

Light aircraft still take off and land from what is left of the runway and every year the airfield is used for the Great Ashfield Truck Rally, which raises large sums of money for church maintenance. A small number of American veterans from the 1940s still revisit the airfield and village.



The American memorial

TO THE 385TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

My wife, son, and I had just finished our supper at the Patton Hotel in Garmisch, Germany on the night of 9 Feb 2001. On tap the next morning was a ski trip atop the Alps. That night in our hotel room, however, a phone call from home broke the sad and painful news that the greatest hero I had ever known was gone. My father, Robert Samuel Vandiver, Colonel, USAF(retired) had passed away after a long, long fight. It wasn't the Parkinson's Disease that he battled for 20 years that claimed him. No single enemy could finish off Dad. A mighty combination of Parkinson's, a series of small strokes that became increasingly destructive, and the silent killer pneumonia managed to achieve what years of combat could not—the death of a devout warrior and gifted aviator.

We had to drive back 6 hours early the next morning to our home at Ramstein Air Base where I had to get my emergency leave orders cut back to the States. It was impossible on that trip not to reflect on the life of my father and his fellow friends of the 385th Bomb Group, many of which I've been fortunate to meet at the reunions I attended with Dad and Mom (Jennie to those of you that know her).

As we left Bavaria driving to the northwest, on a beautiful and absolutely clear day (day-light bombing weather), I could clearly imagine seeing and hearing the massive formations

of B-17 fortresses approaching on the horizon. Dad and many of you flew similar ingress routes into the Rhineland almost six decades ago in these exact flying conditions, seeing the same countryside from the air that I was now seeing from the ground. I could see the flak soaring to find you and the Luftwaffe attacking from every angle. I could see Lieutenant Robert Vandiver at the fight controls of the Latest Rumor, with the great men of the 385th BG providing firepower and protection all around. I could see each of you courageously fighting, never once turning back in the face of the enemy and hammering heavily defended targets with everything you had.

Not just the history books have told me how this story ends. Thanks to all of you alive or fallen who served then, many of the young men that returned home were able to start families. Dad lived to raise 6 children, and this USAF aviator was among them, I'm here today thanks to this great legacy. And on that drive home after learning that Dad died, heading to my American airbase on German soil, driving my American Jeep down the German autobahn, and seeing the friendship and trust that the Germans still give to their victors, I realized that there is an even larger legacy at work here thanks to you and Dad. Germany has not seen war since you left it. You ended an era of death and destruction and gave birth to an era of peace,

serenity, and life.

Such thoughts filled my head for the 48 hours it took to get signed out on emergency leave and cross the Atlantic for Ormond Beach, Florida. At a memorial service for Dad, over 200 family and friends came and paid tribute to this great patriot. We heard Dad's favorite hymns and scripture, and everyone at the service witnessed how God's love had created such a devoted servant. Preceding Taps and Dad's 21 Gun salute from the Air Force Honor Guard, I stood at ease in full service dress and eulogized my fallen hero. At one point in the eulogy, I talked about Dad's memories of the 14 October 1943 raid on Schweinfurt (Black Thursday). The 385th had only one casualty on that bloody day—Dad's navigator onboard the Latest Rumor, Phil Vockerath:

"Although Dad in his infinite modesty was never one to dwell at length about his combat sorties, when pressed, he would say that Mission 115 on 14 October 1943 had a profound impact upon him. According to one historian, of all the dogfights in the air, Schweinfurt "stands out among all the others for unprecedented fury, for losses suffered, for courage." Dad piloted 24 other missions over Germany and Nazi-occupied France, but Schweinfurt made the biggest impression on him. At one point during the constant attacks by Luftwaffe and anti-aircraft fire, a large piece of flak entered the fuselage below

Dad's seat. Severed hydraulic lines dripped red fluid from the cockpit, and the crew was afraid that it might be Dad's blood. Another foot higher and it would've been, and we would have lost Lieutenant Robert Vandiver on that day. Instead, his navigator, Phil Vockerath of Mount Vernon, New York, took the hit in the chest and died before Dad could land the crippled plane back on British soil.

Medal of Honor winner General Leon W. Johnson, gave a powerful tribute to the men who fought over Schweinfurt in a post-war interview:

"I don't doubt that was one of the most hazardous missions in the whole war. Those Schweinfurt missions were unbelievable. I know that I was fortunate enough to receive the Medal of Honor for fifteen minutes of fighting, over Ploesti, and they fought for about five hours over Schweinfurt. I don't remember anyone getting a Medal of Honor out of that. I think I would rather do five Ploesti raids than one Schweinfurt."

Dad did so many heroic things in the Second World War, but that wasn't his only defining moment in history. Before making Colonel, Major Vandiver fought in Korea. And Lieutenant Colonel Vandiver helped lay the framework for the Cold War victory against communism. His heroism will never be forgotten by a grateful nation and grateful world.

I said a lot of things in the eulogy, but I would be remiss to not give the Hard Life Herald

readers the names of Dad's crew. He was so proud to serve with such distinctive flying organizations as the 8th AF, the 385th BG, and the 549th SQ. But it was the Latest Rumor crew whom he trained with and led into the battle that carried the greatest significance in his heart. In every war from the dawn of Antiquity to the present, there is one fundamental truth that is repeated over and over: the bond created between warriors who fight together closely in combat can never be broken.

The Latest Rumor, 1943-1944: Robert Samuel Vandiver, Aircraft Commander; Louis des Cognets, Co-Pilot; Phillip James Vockerath, Navigator; Winston Cecil Holmes, Bombardier; Joseph Edward Balcerzak, Engineer; Allen Robert Millican, Radio Operator; James Richard Leary, Asst. Engineer Earl Jackson Summers, Asst. Radio Operator; Robert Otto Hach, Waist Gunner; James Wesley Davis, Tail Gunner. Ground crew much beloved by the flight crew: William H. Koon, Lester

Crawford, Sergeant Towne, and Stretch. Sid Colthorpe replaced Phil Vockerath on one mission aboard the Latest Rumor before finding a permanent crew.

Dad savored the many reunions, visits, phone calls, and letters from his crew in the years following the war. Since he joined the 385th Bomb Group Memorial Association in the 1970s, he found even more friends from the days at Great Ashfield, among them his Executive Officer Ed Stem and countless others. His service with all of you made Bob Vandiver's life more momentous and memorable than he ever could have imagined when he was growing up as a young boy in Florence, Alabama. High above the skies where he soared, he now joins his special compatriots who preceded him. To all of you here and gone, I salute you. And to Dad, now gone as well, I render my salute and my love as well. I miss you.

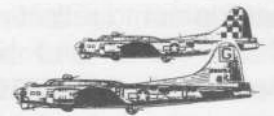
SAMUEL B. VANDIVER,
Major, USAF

B-17 STATS

I just ran a statistical study on ALL the B-17s of the 385th Bomb Group.

I took their assignment date and subtracted the end date, whether shot down, salvaged, or near the end, returned to the U.S. I then averaged this figure for all 300 B-17s of the 385th Bomb Group. The average life of a combat B-17 was 4.3977 months!! That's 4 Months and 12 days!! Not quite the length of an average tour of missions! That's an average, of course. Some unlucky ones made only one mission, others made it over a year. None of the originals made it all the way through.

Bill Varnedoe



TRUMAN SMITH COLUMN

(Author, *The Wrong Stuff*)

-----**YOUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME!!!**-----

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NIGHTLY ENTERTAINMENT

(When You Can't Get To Sleep)

AT YOUR SERVICE

(IM-PROPRIETOR)

Sir Edward Stem

This announcement is a tribute to Captain Ed Stern, Executive Officer, 550 B.S. and Editor of the 385th Bomb Group Memorial Association HARDLIFE HERALD Newsletter for lo these many years. There is probably no editor in the world who has faithfully collected more War Stories than Editor Ed Stern, which has to amount to a whole library of history.

Tom Newton agreed to finally unburden Ed Stern by assuming responsibility as the Editor of the HARDLIFE HERALD, so vitally important to our history. In turn, Tom asked if I would assist by writing a column. So this is my (delayed) attempt to do SOMETHING(?).

Since I'm already so far behind, I now mail this and will follow up, because I do have more to say about Ed Stern, a man I have always respected and (I'll Say It) whom I have come to love, as I'm sure others of you have also... So I extend an invitation to any of you who would like to say "Thank You" to Ed Stern. And I quickly remind you: IF YOU CAN'T SAY SOMETHING NICE ABOUT ED, JUST KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT. Mail your Thank You's to Ed, and Tom (for taking over the task).

Truman J. Smith

Honored Members of The 385th BG

Thank you so much for sending the Hardlife Herald to me. They are very interesting for me. I could find much information about crews and planes of the 385th BG.

Near Bastogne is a site called "Peace Woods" with around 500 trees every one is dedicated to an American soldier. Most of them are dedicated to members of the 101st Air Born Division. I was asking to get a tree for a member of the 385th BG and I got it for Maurice O. Nysether, Bombardier on Sleepytime Gal airplane of the 385th BG. He is the man getting a tree to represent the 385th BG and the 8th Air Force, all the other trees are for infantry and Pattons tank men.

For us and Mayor Unsen it was a great honor to stay with all our heroes in Albuquerque. Thank you for making us honorary members of the 385th BG. For me it is the greatest moment in my life. Thank you for all you did for us. Mrs. Unsen was very proud to tell about the reunion to the members of her group. We all wait for you and your friends next year in Perle. Best regards and thank you again.

Roger and Jeanny Feller
Luxembourg

Change in Hardlife Herald

Due to a new editor you will notice changes in the Hardlife Herald. We have a new printer, changes in the format, will have columns by Truman Smith, (author of "Wrong Stuff") War Stories by Frank Mays, (author of "And No Purple Heart"). The Soft Life Side, by Darla Newton & Marian Gallagher, (Martha Stewart and Katie Couric of ABQ.), President's Column and Chaplain Sez. Due to current financial status the executive committee requested that the Hardlife Herald be limited to 16 pages and published quarterly. Your 385th BGMA is solvent but not wealthy. See balance sheet & statement of earnings on page 14.

After many years of dedicated service as editor of Hardlife Herald Ed Stern has retired. He did a great job of keeping the group in touch making it an active cohesive unit. Ed has much personal knowledge of the group at Great Ashfield making it very difficult for anyone following him as editor. We owe Ed a big thanks.

Our 385th members have a lot of knowledge and interesting stories that would be of great interest to other members. Please send me articles, letters and any other pertinent information.

Tom Newton,
PO Box 34
Dallas, OR 97338-0034
e-mail tjnewton25@aol.com

A MUSEUM THAT TEACHES CHARACTER

Parade, Sunday 4 Feb. 01

Character education is a priority in many schools nationwide. Congress even appropriated millions in grants for states to provide such programs, designed to promote community values in students.

A museum in Pooler, Ga., outside Savannah, also took that message to heart. The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum - which commemorates the sacrifices of U.S. airmen from World War II to today has become a living classroom for character education. Its exhibits are real-life examples of compassion, generosity and the 25 other traits in Georgia's character curriculum.

Compassion, for instance, is taught through the story of an injured B-17 pilot and a German flier. Instead of shooting down the damaged plane, the German flew alongside and guided it out of enemy airspace. Generosity is taught through the story of a supply drop to starving Dutch citizens. And all this happened while one in four airmen in the Mighty Eighth was being lost in raids over Germany.

"We can teach by example," notes Vivian Rogers-Price, the museum's director of education. And her museum's accomplishments also serve as an example of character. When budget cuts forced many regional schools to cancel field trips, the Mighty Eighth found sponsors like Wal-Mart to help cover the cost of a museum visit. Now this is the only field trip some schools will have. Last year, more than 10,000 students participated in the museum's character-education program, assisted by volunteers, mostly combat veterans.

To learn more, visit www.mightyeighth.org on the Web.

Children learn that humanity can shine even in wartime

A LETTER FROM A GREAT ASHFIELD FARMER

I am Robert Dyball (40) married to Julia with twin daughters Arianne and Dominique age 5.1 farm the land to the south of the runway including what is left of the sites for the 550th, 549th, hospital, guard room and others. Subject to farming commitments would be happy to point people in the right direction if they visit Great Ashfield. I live in an old farmhouse called Botany Bay Farm in between the old main entrance fire station and the hospital. The house was originally thatched but the roof was burnt off by a flare from a returning B17. Maurice Nysether said it was one shooting flare off after successfully completing their tour of duty. If anyone has any more information about it such as crew, name of plane, repercussions etc I would be interested to know. Keep up the good work

Robert

Editors note. If you plan on visiting Great Ashfield in addition to Robert Dyball, to view the old airbase or All Saints Church you may contact Roy Barker and Stephen Miles. Their address is in the 385th roster.

ATTENDEES AT THE ALBUQUERQUE REUNION

First,	Last	City, State	SQDN #	First,	Last	City, State	SQDN#
Albert	Audett	Woburn, Massachusetts	558	Beverly	Hunter	Irvine, California	
Priscilla	Audett	Woburn, Massachusetts		Don	Hunter	Irvine, California	548
Bob	Bailey	Kittery Point, Maine	549	John	Hyatt	Flagstaff, Arizona	550
Marge	Bailey	Kittery Point, Maine		Daryl	Hyde	Watertown, New York	
Don	Baker	Tequesta, Florida	548	Robert	Hyde	Watertown, New York	550
Nance	Baker	Tequesta, Florida		Stephen	Inglis	Houston, Texas	548
Garry	Bean	Naples, Florida	550	Liz	Jaquith	Edmonds, WA	
Nancy	Bean	Naples, Florida		Marion	Jindra	Kingfisher, Oklahoma	550
Dick	Dehr	Dearborn, Michigan	385	Rozetta	Jindra	Kingfisher, Oklahoma	
Arch	Benner	El Paso, Texas	549	Betty	Johnson	Snellville, Georgia	
Bonnie	Benner	El Paso, Texas		Stacy	Johnson	Snellville, Georgia	551
Jerry	Binks	Marbleton, Wyoming	550	Michael	Kindya	Spokane, Washington	548
Jim	Binks	Marbleton, Wyoming		Sharon	Kindya	Spokane, Washington	
James	Bond	Edenton, North Carolina	551	Janet	Koons	El Cajon, California	550
Millard	Bond	Edenton, North Carolina		Carol	Kriese	Albuquerque, New Mexico	
Charlie	Bright	Bothell, Washington	549	Ray	Kriese	Albuquerque, New Mexico	549
June	Bright	Bothell, Washington		Joe	Kubr	Fremont, Nebraska	551
Elvah	Brown	Huntington Park, California		Marjorie	Kubr	Fremont, Nebraska	
Jesse	Brown	Navarre, Florida	550	Leo	LaCasse	Roanoke, Virginia	548
Marion	Brown	Navarre, Florida		Myron	Loyet	Whittier, California	550
Julie	Cerrone	Falmouth, Maine		Charles	Lubicic	Manchester, Massachusetts	551
Warren	Cerrone	Falmouth, Maine	550/551	Nita	Luckie	Stuttgart, Arkansas	
Matt	Clawson	BeaverCreek, Ohio		Sam	Luckie	Stuttgart, Arkansas	551
Grant	Coggon	Anacortes, WA		Mary	Lyke	Bartlesville, Oklahoma	
Nancy	Coggon	Anacortes, WA		Sam	Lyke	Bartlesville, Oklahoma	551
Lee	Colthorpe	Hampton, Virginia		Louis	Massari	Lancaster, California	550
Margaret	Conway	Columbus, Ohio		Mary	Massari	Lancaster, California	
Thomas	Conway	Columbus, Ohio	550	Judy	Masters	Athens, Georgia	
Charlie	Coughlin	West Boylston, Massachusetts	551	Vince	Masters	Athens, Georgia	551
Connie	Coughlin	West Boylston, Massachusetts		Betty	Mathews	Freeport, Illinois	
Margaret	Courtney	Lompoc, California		John	Mathews	Freeport, Illinois	549
Roy	Courtney	Lompoc, California	549	Jim	Me Cool	Madison, Wisconsin	
Dan	Dandrea	Albuquerque, New Mexico	548-549	Mary	Me Cool	Madison, Wisconsin	
Barbara	Dangleman	Hawley, Pennsylvania		Ray	Me Cool	Madison, Wisconsin	548
Jane	Dehner	Albuquerque, New Mexico		Dixie	McAllister	Sedona, Arizona	
Ray	Dehner	Albuquerque, New Mexico		Floyd	McAllister	Sedona, Arizona	
Doris	Derer	Spring Hill, Florida		Frank	McCawley	Cheverly, Maryland	549
Joseph	Derer	Spring Hill, Florida	548	Peggy	McCawley	Cheverly, Maryland	
Ginny	Donnelly	Miami, Florida		O. Bryan	McKinney	Arlington, Texas	550
Jerry	Donnelly	Miami, Florida	549	Wilma	McKinney	Arlington, Texas	
RoyAnne	Donnelly	Alpharetta, Georgia		Frank	McNamara	Beavercreek, Ohio	551
Art	Driscoll	Nashville, Tennessee	549	Helen	McNamara	Beavercreek, Ohio	
Mary	Driscoll	Nashville, Tennessee		Jean	McNamara	Beavercreek, Ohio	
Dru	Dworshak	Bethesda, Maryland		Grace	Messbauer	Plainview, New York	
Henry	Dworshak	Bethesda, Maryland	548	John	Messbauer	Plainview, New York	550
Dorothy	Elbert	Orlando, Florida		Amy	Miller	Lacey, Washington	
Edward	Elbert	Orlando, Florida	551	Jeanette	Moebius	Racine, Wisconsin	
Foster	Falkenstine	Littleton, Colorado	551	William	Moebius	Racine, Wisconsin	551
Eric	Felt	West Palm Beach, Florida	549	Francis	Moll	Ft. Myers Beach, Florida	549
Peggy	Felt	West Palm Beach, Florida		Mary Jane	Molzhan	Hawley, Pennsylvania	
Marian	Gallagher	Naples, Florida		Richard	Molzhan	Hawley, Pennsylvania	550
Michael	Gallagher	Naples, Florida	548	Ann	Montano	Punta Gorda, Florida	
Arch	Garvin	Abinatonu, Pennsylvania	551	Arthur	Montano	Punta Gorda, Florida	548
Jean	Garvin	Abinatonu, Pennsylvania		Jerry	Mudge	Edmonds, Washington	549
Walter	Gazda	Dearborn Hts., Michigan	550	Vera	Mudge	Edmonds, Washington	
Burton	Gelbman	Sun City Center, Florida	551	Gib	Munro	Albuquerque, New Mexico	548
Joyce	Gelbman	Sun City Center, Florida		Liz	Munro	Albuquerque, New Mexico	
G.K.	Gentis	Jenks, Oklahoma	548	Laurie	Nelson	Troy, Idaho	
Sue	Gentis	Jenks, Oklahoma		Royce	Nelson	Troy, Idaho	
David	George	Colchester, England		Fred	Nestler	Sonoma, California	
Janet	Gilligan	Hawley, Pennsylvania		Marion	Nestler	Sonoma California	
Hal	Goetsch	Albuquerque, New Mexico	551	Darla	Newton	Dallas, Oregon	
Suzanne	Goetsch	Albuquerque, New Mexico		Tom	Newton	Dallas, Oregon	549
Graham	Donald	Eugene, Oregon	550	Bill	Nicholls	Marlton, New Jersey	551
Carlyle	Hanson	Mesa, Arizona	550	Doris	Nicholls	Marlton, New Jersey	
Mildred	Hanson	Mesa, Arizona		Maurie	Nysether	San Marcos, California	650
Tommy	Harrison	Nashville, Tennessee	550	Linda	Nysether	San Marcos, California	
Kandy	Heiman	Horace, North Dakota		Tom	Nysether	San Marcos, California	
Judy	Hill	Leavenworth, Kansas		Betty	Palmer	Albuquerque, New Mexico	
Russ	Hill	Leavenworth, Kansas	551	Jack	Palmer	Albuquerque, New Mexico	549
Eileen	Howard	Georgetown, Texas		Frances	Payne	Chattanooga, Tennessee	
Pat	Howard	Georgetown, Texas	549	James	Payne	Chattanooga Tennessee	551
George	Hruska	Omaha, Nebraska	548	Betty	Peck	Flagstaff, Arizona	
Cloyce	Huff	Oxnard, California	550	Harry	Peltzer	Eugene, Oregon	549
Michael	Huff	Oxnard, California		Phyllis	Peltzer	Eugene, Oregon	

First,	Last	City, State	SQDN #
Ed	Perry	San Antonio, Texas	548
Lois	Perry	San Antonio, Texas	
Lavon	Phillips	Austin, Texas	
Verne	Phillips	Austin, Texas	
Joanne	Pickett	Many, Louisiana	
John	Pickett, Jr.	Many, Louisiana	550
Joel	Punches	Santa Maria, California	551
Margaret	Punches	Santa Maria, California	
Byron	Plye	Cortez, Colorado	550
Georgia	Pyle	Cortez, Colorado	
Bob	Reeve	T hief River Falls, Minnesota	548
Betty	Rei hardt	Liverpool, New York	
Les	Reichardt	Liverpool, New York	549
John	Richardson	Prescott Valley, Arizona	548
Danny	Riva	Daytona Beach Shores, Florida	551
Kimiko	Riva	Daytona Beach Shores, Florida	
Buck	Rogers	Radnor, Pennsylvania	551
Ginny	Rogers	Radnor, Pennsylvania	
Francis	Roquette	Whitefish, Montana	549
Walter	Saffron	Las Vegas, New York	551
Eleanor	Sanchez	Albuquerque, New Mexico	
Myron	Sanchez	Albuquerque, New Mexico	549
Al	Saunier	Rio Rancho, New Mexico	
Mary	Saunier	Rio Rancho, New Mexico	
Bill	Schubert	Lincoln, Nebraska	
Norma	Schulte	Westminster, California	
Walter	Schulte	Westminster, California	549
David	Schwartz	Fort Lee, New Jersey	548
Shirley	Schwartz	Fort Lee, New Jersey	
Steve	Shanahan	Lincoln, Nebraska	
Denny	Shields	Huntington Beach, California	
Mary Ann	Shields	Huntington Beach, California	
Chuck	Smith	Alpharetta, Georgia	549
Dee	Smith	Wichita, Kansas	
Gladys	Smith	Horace, North Dakota	
Lew	Smith	Wichita, Kansas	550
Marion	Sparks	Colorado	
John	Spiegle	Haddonfield, New Jersey	
John	Stansfield	Paradise, California	548
Sally	Stansfield	Paradise, California	
Ed	Stern	Fargo, North Dakota	550
Jane	Stern	Fargo, North Dakota	
Susy	Stern-Fineman	Sherman Oaks, California	
Bill	Swindell	Rancho Murieta, California	HQ
Helen	Taubkin	Los Angeles, California	
Milton	Taubkin	Los Angeles, California	HQ
Dot	Thompson	Woodbury Heights, New Jersey	
Jim	Thompson	Woodbury Heights, New Jersey	
Edith	Trumbull	Coconut Creek, Florida	549
Bill	Varnedoe	Huntsville, Alabama	550
Arlene	Vencill	Littleton, Colorado	
Rollie	Vencill	Littleton, Colorado	551
Eddie	Vize	Ft, Myers Beach, Florida	
Chuck	Williams	Kalispeill, Montana	
Bob	Wilson	Van Wert, Ohio	550
Coralie	Wilson	Van Wert, Ohio	
Warren	Zachary	Blue Ridge, Georgia	550
Steve	Zaputil	Citrus Heights, California	551
Eunice	Zeigler	Iowa Falls, Iowa	
Wayne	Ziegler	Iowa Falls, Iowa	548
Joe	Zwick	Bonita Springs, Florida	551
Phyllis	Zwick	Bonita Springs, Florida	
Eldon	Nysether	Everette, Washington	
Roy	Barker	England	
Di	Barker	England	
Roger	Feller	Luxembourg	
Jeanny	Feller	Luxembourg	
Ferdinand	Unsen	Luxembourg	
Maisy	Unsen	Luxembourg	
Pamala	Metcalfe	England	

385th Bomb Group Memorial Assoc. BALANCE SHEET

December 31, 2000

Condensed
(Unaudited)

Current Assets:

Cash

United Heritage - mmkt ckg	\$5,147.63
United Heritage - svg	<u>4,527.56</u>

TOTAL ASSETS **9,675.19**

LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL

CAPITAL

Retained Earnings	8,857.60
Profit (loss) for period	<u>817.59</u>

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL **9,675.19**

STATEMENT OF EARNINGS

12 Months Ending Dec. 31, 2000

Condensed- Unaudited

INCOME:

Income - dues	11,496.00
Income - Schweinfurt Prints	527.50
Interest mmkt checking	45.69
Interest - savings	<u>133.69</u>

TOTAL INCOME **12,202.88**

EXPENSES:

Expenses - Newsletters	10,985.29
Expenses - Postage	100.00
Reunion 2001 (start up fund)	<u>300.00</u>

TOTAL EXPENSES: **11,385.29**

Net Earnings (loss) for period **817.59**

TOTAL EXPENSES AND EARNINGS **12,202.88**



Taps



MILTON V. LANE

Milton V. Lane, 79, of Ocean City, N.J. died Jan. 29, 2001. Milton was the beloved radioman of John Richey's B-17 OHIO AIR FORCE aircrew. He will be remembered by his crew for his very funny play-by-play calling of oldtime baseball that featured his favorite team the Brooklyn Dodgers, playing the New York Giants, all taking place during the slow climb to landfall on mission days.

Most noteworthy though, even more than his one fighter kill, was his marriage to Ivy, his pretty English war bride, his forever soulmate that has lasted for 56 fruitful years, producing one daughter, one son & four grandchildren.

HAROLD J. KESLER

Retired office manager, 90

Harold J. Kesler, 90, formerly of Springfield, Delaware County, a retired office manager, died Wednesday at the Veterans Affairs Hospital in Washington. He had lived in the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home there for seven years.

Mr. Kesler was a radio operator with the Army Air Corps during World War II.

He was 33 when he was drafted and believed he would be given a desk job, said his son Robert.

"Instead, they assigned him to the 385th Bomb Group, and he was the old man when most of the guys he flew with were 22," Kesler said.

Mr. Kesler, a technical sergeant, flew 29 missions out of England, often in the lead bomber.

"All of the guys in his unit survived, and just two years ago my-dad went to a reunion," Kesler said.



ANITA S. JUMPER

Anita S. Jumper, died in Sacramento, CA. Feb. 20, 2001 after a long illness. Her husband, George Y Jumper, Col. USAF Ret. died in 1990. Col. Jumper was the second commanding officer of the 385th Bomb Group serving from April 1944 to May 1945 Anita is survived by 3 sons, George Jr., Eric, Geoffrey and one daughter Mary Ellen.

HOMER L. JONES

Homer Lester Jones 88, died Dec. 12, 2000. Survived by wife, Helen L. Jones, Madison TN He served in WW II with the 8th Air Force, 385th Bomb Group as Tech. Sergeant in charge of the photographic laboratory in Great Ashfield England from April 11 1942 to Sept. 21, 1945,

Obituaries

Eugene R Dana	June 2000
James W. Engle	Nov. 2000
Homer L. Jones	Dec. 2000
Milton V. Lane	Jan.2001
Frank M. Sutter	Feb. 2001
Harold J. Kesler	Feb. 2001
Hank Koenig	Apr. 2001

Please forward all obituary notices to:
Tom Newton PO. Box 34, Dallas, OR 97338-0034