

Hardlife



Herald



Newsletter of the
385th Bombardment Group Memorial Association

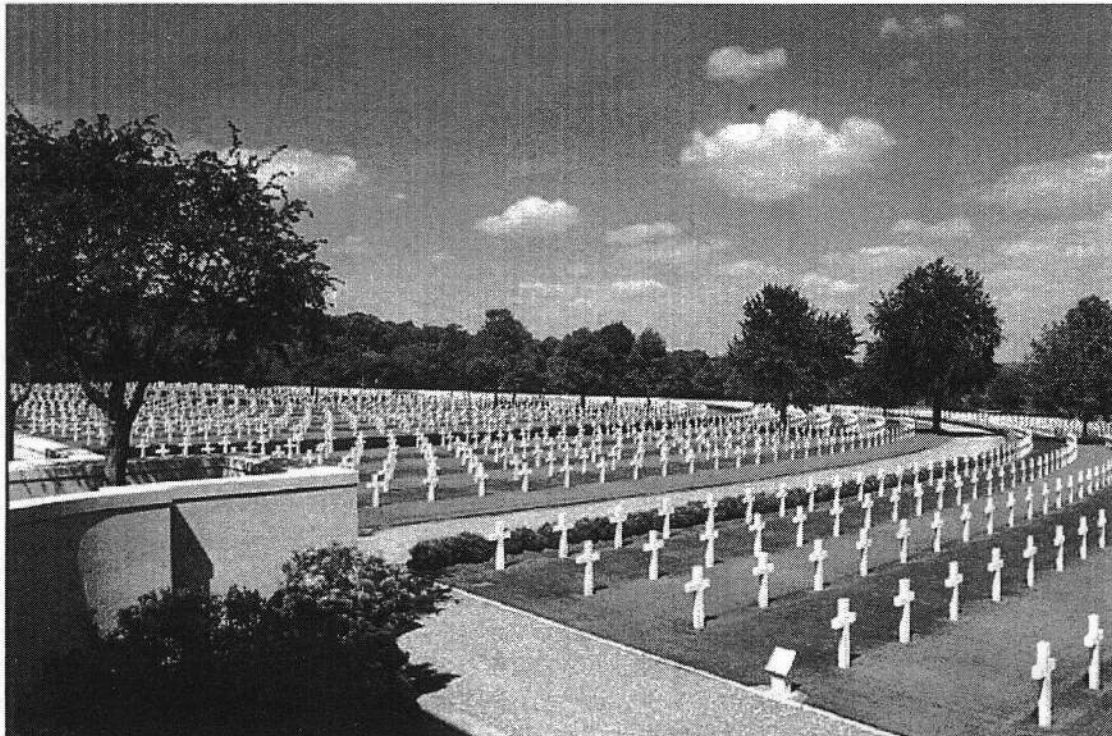
1942 - 1945 • Great Ashfield - Suffolk, England • Station 155

The Mighty Eighth

Vol. 22 Number 2

May, 2005

*The American Battle Monuments Commission cemetery
at Madingley, Cambridge, England.*



385 BGA REUNION • ARLINGTON, VA • SEPT. 25-OCT. 2, 2005

Hardlife Herald

385th Bombardment Group (H)

Federal IRS Tax Exempt Code #501 (C) (19)
52-1068468

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| Vincent Masters | '75-'77 | *Sid Colthorpe | '91-'93 |
| *John C. Ford | '77-'79 | *Robert C. Smith | '93-'95 |
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*deceased

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Mayor Ferdinand Unsen

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COVER

The cover depicts a view of the American Cemetery at Madingley, Cambridge, England. The Crosses and Stars of David indicate the burial sites of the thousands of American military personnel killed in the European Theater of Operations during World War Two. Many members of the 385th Bomb Group who were killed during air operations against the Nazi regime are buried at Madingley. Also at the cemetery, there is a Wall of Names listing all American military whose remains have not been found, and are MIA (Missing in Action). The 385th BGA June 2005 tour group will conduct a Memorial Service at Madingley to recognize the 385th BG members resting in honored peace.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

The 385th BGA Executive Board will meet in President Bill Varnedoe, Jr.'s room on Wednesday, September 28, 2005 at 7:30 PM prior to the 385th BGA membership meeting, Friday, September 30, 2005 at 8:30 AM.

EDITORIAL

I had a difficult time editing the Hardlife Herald for this issue. I am not sure whether it was 'old age' creeping up on me, or the lousy wet, cool weather that we have had in the Washington, DC area these past months. It was probably both. However, part of the difficult time was also due to the lack of stories from you, the members of the 385th Bomb Group Association. Remember, our experiences during the 1941-45 era was one of the great chapters of world history. Don't let your part be lost. Please put your WW II experiences down and send them to me via e-mail, or snail mail.

PREZ SEZ

The 2005 BGA Reunion – It is Board and Officer Election Time.

I hope each member of the 385th Bomb Group Association is urging your children, grand-children, nephews, and nieces to join our Association. With our current increasing attrition rate, as a result of our age-related illnesses that all of us are beginning to accumulate, we, the Veteran members, will no longer be able to function much longer. We are having trouble getting able and willing 385th BGA veterans to serve on the Board and become Officers.

Per our Constitution, the Executive Board consists of: The President, The 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Vice Presidents, The Past President, The Treasurer, The Secretary, and The Editor of the *Hardlife Herald*. Currently, the offices of the 3rd, and 4th Vice Presidents are unfulfilled. In addition, Jerry Mudge, who has been our long-time Sec-

retary, and Les Reichardt, our 2nd Vice President, has declined to be nominated for additional terms.

Currently, nominees for the Executive Board to be elected at the 2005 BGA Reunion are:

President: Art Driscoll
Treasurer: Chuck Smith
HH Editor: Frank McCawley

As you can see, nominees for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Vice Presidents, and the Secretary are open and badly need filling.

Art Driscoll, our current 1st Vice President, is automatically nominated for President. Both the current Treasurer and current Editor have agreed to run again. However, this does not close the nominations. Any member, Full, Life, or Associate who is *willing* is eligible for nomination to any office by any member, or by himself. Because of our age and health problems, obtaining eligible veteran members has become a

large problem. We need and could use some young blood on the Board. How about a son or daughter or nephew or niece as the Secretary or Vice President? *Speak up! Please! We need you.*

For our reunion this year we will again meet jointly with the 8th Air Force Historical Society. The reunion will be 25 September through 2 October at the National Sheraton Hotel in Arlington, VA. The same rules apply for our joint reunion as last year. We, the 385th BGA, will have our own Hospitality Room, and a room for our Annual Meeting. These rooms will be free, if enough of us promptly sign up, otherwise we will pay for their use. Tours of Washington will include the new World War II Memorial on the Mall, the Air and Space Museums on the Mall and at Dulles airport, as well as other sites in the Nation's Capital.

Bill

NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE

Owing to illness, Les Reichart has resigned as the 2nd Vice President and from the Board of Directors of the 385th Bomb Group Association. We certainly wish him a speedy recovery and our very, very best wishes. However, his resignation and the current vacancies of a 3rd and a 4th Vice President leave the Board of Directors with less than a full Board membership. At our Annual Meeting in Arlington, our 1st VP, Art Driscoll, will move up to the Presidency of the 385th BGA, leaving all Vice President's positions unfilled. We badly need additional persons to "step up" and fill these vacancies so that the 385th Bomb Group Association can continue to be one of the best in the 8th Air Force Historical Association. Please help us and volunteer for election to the Board at our next Annual Meeting.

2005 MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

We are planning on publishing a new roster of the members of the 385th Bomb Group Association. We ask all members to check the correct spelling of their names, and their current address. Also check their membership coding to reflect their correct membership status. The new roster will only include Veteran Life Members (L), Veteran 385th BGA members with 2005 paid-up annual dues (M05), Associate Life Members (LA), Associate paid-up members (A05), Overseas Mailings (F+code), and Complimentary Members (C). If you believe your membership status may be incorrectly listed or, contact our Treasurer, Chuck Smith, and provide him with the correct information. If you wish to list your e-mail address in the 2005 Roster, send your current e-mail address to us as well.

385th BGA 2005 MEMORIAL TOUR

Art Driscoll, 1st Vice President of the 385th BGA, has planned and will lead a group of 385th BGA members, Associate members, and guests on a Memorial Tour of Europe June 15-30, 2005. The tour is composed of two Sections. Section One will be visits to sites in the United Kingdom, including the weekend of June 17-19 at the Great Ashfield aerodrome, and a Memorial Service at The American Battle Monuments Commission Cemetery at Madingley, Cambridge.

Section Two will be to visits to sites of significance to the 385th Bomb Group in France, Luxembourg, Belgium and The Netherlands. A focal point of the Section Two part of the tour will be the June 24-26 weekend visit to Luxembourg and a Memorial Service at the Monument ** dedicated to the 385th BG in the Village of Perle. The Monument in the village square was dedicated in 1998 to honor two 385th BG

crews, McDonald and White, who were involved in a mid-air collision near the village. A year later, Roger Feller secured space and began development of a Museum that was named in honor of the 385th Bomb Group.

Participants scheduled to travel on the tour are:

Herbert Anderson
James and Richard Bond
Charles and June Bright
Joseph and Adele Caruso
Sarah Margaret and
Elizabeth Courtney
Barbara Dangleman
Art and Mary Driscoll
Theda Driscoll
John and Brian Graham
Eldred Harrington
Allen and Jessica Harrington
Charles and Mary Holloway
Lauren Holloway
John Hyatt and Betty Pack
Christine King
Joe and Marge Kubr
Earl and Evelyn Martin

Gail Martin
John and Betty Mathews
Richard and Mary Molzham
Larry and Jenny Pangle
Tom Rocco
Maurice "Suds" Sumney
John Tymkowych
Susan Warnstrom
Oscar and Billie Winniford

The roster compose 40 persons who will visit England and Great Ashfield. Thirty of those will continue to visit the countries on the continent. The roster includes many second and third generation family members who will accompany their veteran family members to the many 385th BG sites of significance. The tour will observe "Moments of Remembrance" at each of the sites visited to honor those who made the supreme sacrifice during WWII.

** The Monument was pictured on the cover of Vol. 22, No. 1 (Feb. 2005) of the Hardlife Herald.

MISSION WAS BERLIN

*by Ellis H. Murrey, Sgt.
Engineer/Top Turret Gunner*

On a Sunday morning in March 1944, we were awakened for a five o'clock briefing. At briefing when the map was uncovered, the route showed the mission of the day was Berlin. Take-off was scheduled for 0800 hours and our bomb load was eighteen 100 pound and eight 500 pound bombs. We were due over the target at 1200 hours. At eight o'clock we were rolling down the runway and into the air.

After forming into the group formation, we headed across the English Channel and at eleven

thirty we began our approach to the target. Suddenly No.1 engine started throwing oil from the cowl flaps. We continued on the bomb run and at twelve o'clock our bombs went hurling down on the target. After bombs away the pilot, 1st Lt. Wm. H. Cocke, Jr., attempted, but was unable, to feather the engine, and it began windmilling and vibrating the plane pretty bad. Suddenly No. 2 engine started to lose power and the pilot ordered us to stand by to bail out if necessary.

By this time the squadron

had left us; the weather had turned bad and visibility was poor. Since it would be impossible to make it to France, we descended to 21,000 feet, and headed due east for the Russian lines dodging all the towns we could. Plenty of flak continued to plague us during our trip east.

At the Eastern front, we were attacked by two fighters with Russian insignia. No. 3 engine caught fire, and was feathered as we dived to put the fire out. At 7,000 feet we entered some clouds and prepared to bail out as

we only had one engine, and was losing altitude fast. In the waist preparing to bail out, I saw Sgt Wm. T. Martsch, the waist gunner, bleeding badly, and Sgt. Joseph J. Ryan, the ball turret gunner, sitting with his right arm just hanging. Sgt Vincent O. Figini, the radio operator, advised the pilot, who then told all to prepare for a crash landing.

Because of the crash, the plane broke in half at the waist. Since the plane was burning, we removed the wounded out as soon as possible. Russian and Polish military were approaching the plane from all sides, and we showed them little American flags which convinced them we were Americans. Polish farmers loaded the wounded on wagons and transported them to a hospital about two miles away. The rest of the crew walked or were driven to the hospital.

At the hospital we were provided food and examined by a doctor. After examining the two wounded men, the doctor informed us, via sign language, that the waist gunner was dead and the ball turret gunner would have to have his arm amputated. Still by sign language, a nurse informed us that we were in Grodzisk, Poland about twenty miles southeast of Posa. We were advised that we would not be able to leave the hospital area for at least ten days while the ball turret gunner's arm healed.

The following day we conducted a funeral for Sgt. Martsch. The Russian Commander must have ordered everyone in town to

attend the funeral as there was a crowd of about two thousand people whom attended his burial service. He was buried in the town square, and a Polish priest conducted the burial service. He was buried with high honors by the Russian and the Poles.

After a stay of about two weeks in Grodzisk, and the ball turret gunner's arm was healed enough to travel, we rode a Model A Ford truck to Lodz, Poland, stopping overnight in Konin. In Lodz, we spent the night with some Americans from Poltovia, Russia who were repairing a B-17 that had previously landed there. We spent the night with them, talking about our experiences. We prepared letters to our families for them to take back and mail for us.

Since the Russians did not know if we were true Americans, we were taken to a barracks outside of town and placed under guard. In addition the men fixing the B-17, having a misunderstanding with the Russians, were also placed under guard in the barracks. We were kept under guard for about two weeks before we were finally taken to an airfield, loaded on a C-47 and flown to Kiev, Russia where we were joined by about seventy five other airmen who had been shot down. We were still kept under guard, and every day we were told that we would be leaving today. After several weeks at Kiev, we were loaded on trucks to take us to the Kiev train station for a train trip to Odessa. Weather in Odessa was much warmer than in Kiev. After a

short one-night stay in Odessa, where we were allowed to shower and given clean underwear, but not deloused, we were transported to an English ship in the harbor. Learning we were in Odessa, the American Council in Odessa came to the ship and provided each person with a clean uniform and an advanced pay of \$10.00.

After leaving Odessa and traveling about three days, we docked in Naples, Italy, and went to an American base about twenty miles outside of Naples. During our week's stay at the base, we visited Naples, saw Mt. Vesuvius and visited the ruins of Pompei. We were also issued more new uniform clothing.

We left Naples on a little Italian boat for a week's trip to Marseille, France, and from there to Paris by train, which took about twenty four hours. We were in Paris for about three days before departing for England and London, and our base from where we took off on March 18, 1945. We arrived back at the base on May 26th. It had taken us five and one half hours to get to Berlin from Great Ashfield, but seventy days to get back to Great Ashfield from Berlin.

Editor's Note: Story was abstracted from a December 27, 1945 news story in the Caldwell Route newspaper. Sgt. Murrey was reported MIA (MACR No. 13141) for several months during the time he spent in Russia. Other members of the crew on A/C 42-102481, "Kentucky Winner", were CP-1st Lt. Wm. S. Chaney, N-F/O Howard T. Morthorest, CTG-Sgt. Robt. W. Criner and TG-SSG Harry J. Grimet.

CHEMNITZ—A POW STORY

by Sterling Rogers, 550th BS

Ever wonder about the “40 and 8” expression from World War I? In English, French or German it meant the same: 40 men or 8 horses. It was still painted on the sides of European boxcars in WW II. However, when it came to moving prisoners, the Germans expanded the limits. They packed 50 of us in each slat-sided car, and then locked the doors.

That’s how we moved from Spremberg to Nuremberg. From our original Stalag Luft III in Zagan we had walked to Spremberg. On the train we had no access to food or water except what we ourselves carried. Our latrine was a honey bucket — an uncovered barrel — in the middle of the car.

I don’t remember how long the trip to Nuremberg took. However, I do remember the first night and I shall remember it clearly. It was the night the RAF attempted to destroy the marshaling yards at Chemnitz.

As POWs we were a low priority in the scheme of things, so our train had to pull on to a sidings frequently, and wait for more important cargo to move ahead. That’s why we were sitting in a

switch yard in Chemnitz when the air raid sirens began their wailing. The night was pitch black and the few lights visible were immediately snuffed out. Our engine uncoupled from the train and high-tailed it for the open countryside. The Nazis didn’t mind losing some prisoners, but they wanted to save their precious locomotive.

In the crush of humanity I was jammed into a corner of the car where I could look through the slats into the rail yard. I had a good view of the entire raid. Unfortunately those in the center of the car couldn’t see what was happening — they could only guess.

The first plane across the target dropped chandelier flares. They lit up the whole area with a brilliant white light that left no shadows. It made you want to dig a hole and crawl into it.

Then the real assault began. The British did not do pattern bombing like we did. They sent individual planes over in what appeared to be a totally random pattern. There was a method to it, but it was not apparent to us on the ground.

The first bomb exploded on

the edge of the yard, demolishing a building and sending a string of freight cars lurching several feet along the track. Explosion followed explosion as the bombers swarmed in from all directions. The constant concussion kept our cars moving, rocking violently on their trucks, but still upright, until they reached the end of the siding and could go no further. Strings of cars along the way piled into one another and scattered debris across the tracks, but somehow, ours stayed upright and moving.

When the bombers had emptied their loads and had gone, our cars sat beside a line of trees at the end of the switch. We stayed there the rest of the night and into the morning. We didn’t know if anyone would ever come to open the cars and let us out. We could do nothing except wait.

Eventually civilian workers cleared a path to us through the rubble. The rail yard had been destroyed but, even so, the rails were being replaced and the switches repaired. Eventually our engine found us, and once again we were on our way to Stalag XIII-D in Nurnberg.



RETRIEVAL OF MISSION DATA

as experienced by Frank McCawley and Bill Varnedoe

Data for every mission flown by the 385th Bomb Group can be obtained from the National Archives in College Park, Maryland. There are several hundred folders of 385th BG mission data. Each folder is listed by the mission number, the date, and the target name. Information in each folder lists such items as, the original TWX order for the mission from higher headquarters, the crew loading list for each aircraft, the scheduled aircraft's tail number, the aircraft's position in the formation, the crew member's debriefing reports, and the official mission report from the group to higher headquarters.

Normally there are several mission folders in boxes, which are also numbered and located within the bowels of the Archives. However, the mission folders may or may not be in numerical order within a box. For example, a box may contain the folders for missions 66 and 67, and 93 and 94, or it may contain several mission folders in consecutive order. Location of a mission folder can be obtained from an index booklet in an index room. The index room contains a listing of every Army, Navy, Marine, etc. units missions, battles or engagements for WW II, as well as WW I, the Vietnam War, the Korean War, and several other wars. All of this information has been declassified and is available to the public.

Data about any mission can be obtained by a mail request to The National Archives, or by personally researching the data at the College Park National Archives building. Obtaining mission data from the National

Archives by mail is time consuming and expensive. You must request the data from: The National Archives, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6001. Your request should provide as much information about a mission or missions as possible. Provide data such as, the 8th Air Force, the 385th Bomb Group, the mission date, the 385th mission number and the target. With full information, one can expect delays of several months. If some of this information is not furnished, you may expect additional months of delay with several rounds of correspondence. You will receive a form with the cost of copying the information, and to whom and how to pay the cost. The cost per page of copy is quite high. The entire folder for a mission is copied, since they do not copy specific pages in the folder. This can amount to many pages and be quite costly, since many mission folders contain numerous pages of information.

After sending your money for copying the data in a folder, it may take several months before the copies are delivered. MACR's (Missing Air Crew Reports) are on microfiche and may be obtained a bit quicker than mission data.

Mission data may also be retrieved by visiting the Archives and researching and reviewing the mission folders personally. Security is quite extensive at the Archives and one must obtain a Archives photo ID card before being allowed to check out data. Once an ID card is obtained, the secured research area may be entered. No outdoor clothing, brief cases or packages may be

taken into the research area. Keyed lockers are available for storing such items.

Laptop computers are allowed, but are inspected by the security guards when entering the research area. All papers and booklets are also inspected prior to entry to the research area. Pens are not allowed. Special paper and pencils are available for writing down information. Any information in the mission folders may be copied into a laptop, hand copied with a pencil, or may be Xeroxed at a cost per page.

Once you have determined the location of the mission folder from the index, that is, box number, stack area and shelf number, you may request up to 20 boxes of mission data. It takes about two to three hours for the requested boxes to arrive from the storage vaults to the research area. Individual desks are available for opening and reviewing the data in each box. Boxes are placed on movable carts which can be taken to an available desk. Boxes must be returned to the pick-up counter each night, but can be retrieved the next day for further review.

Any Xerox copied material and paper items are inspected upon leaving the research area to insure that no original papers are hidden among the copied items.

Copies of all the crew lists have been made for all the combat missions, and are kept by our Historian, Bill Varnedoe. However, if you wish additional information about a mission, you will have to request the data from the Archives, or research the data, personally.

MEN OF THE 385TH BOMB GROUP

by Frank R. Mays

Who were these men of the 385th Bomb Group? Only a small part of the 16 million persons that wore the uniform of their country during WWII. A generation of people unlike any ever before. From all walks of life they came, a cross section of the masses, winding up at Great Ashfield, England.

They came from crowded city streets, from towns across the land, and from farms and ranches. They came with varied backgrounds, from the wealthy and from families of little means, all having just survived years of "The Great Depression." They came with college degrees, with high school diplomas, and many with less than a complete public-school education.

Some were "Regular Army", but most had received a letter from the President,

"Greetings—You have been selected, etc.". Wanting to serve

their country in time of dire need, they accepted the challenge, and left behind their families—parents—wives, some with small children,—girl friends—and others. These men were the "Cream of American Youth", with an average age of about twenty-one. In the prime of life, they were willing to risk all, not only for the good of their country, but for preserving a way of democratic life, and saving a world from the bonds of dictatorship.

Individual egos were non-existent—military protocol governed all phases of duty, including rank. Together, they massed to fulfill assigned tasks with expertise and without complaint.

Off-duty friendly men shared tales of back home. Receiving packages from home—cookies that through the mail had taken on the appearance of ground corn-meal, smashed cakes with molded frosting, candy bars with

chocolate melted to the wrappings—these things were shared and eaten as if gourmet.

Also, the unattached persons bragged of exaggerated conquests of trips to London, or other towns. Poker games sometimes lasted for days. Anything to cover the home-sickness, anything to pass time. Yes—time was the enemy when not on duty. However, the men of the 385th Bomb Group supported each other regardless of status—background—or education. Buddies—yes, we were Buddies.

These were the men of the 385th Bomb Group of Great Ashfield. Proud! Patriotic to a man! Functioning as a Unit! Living day to day! Many would never make it back home to America—alive. They would (and will) never be forgotten.

CAPT. GLENN ROJOHN, 100TH BOMB GROUP

by Ralph Kinney Bennet

On December 31, 1944, Capt. Glenn Rojohn of the 8th Air Force's 100th Bomb Group was flying his B-17G bomber on a raid over Hamburg, Germany. After enduring heavy flak over the target while dropping their bombs, the formation headed northwest toward the North Sea and England, when they were jumped by a swarm of Messerschmitt Me-109 German fighters at 22,000 feet.

The bombers attempted to stay in formation to defend the group, when Capt. Rojohn saw a B-17 ahead of him burst into flames and slide sickeningly toward the ground. Capt. Rojohn

gunned his plane forward to fill in the empty gap.

Suddenly he felt a huge impact. The bomber shuddered, felt very heavy and began to losing altitude. He knew immediately that he had collided with another plane. A B-17, piloted by Lt. Wm. G. McNab, had slammed the top of it's fuselage into the bottom of Rojohn's plane. The top turret of McNab's plane was now locked into the belly of Rojohn's plane; and the ball turret in the belly of Rojohn's plane had smashed through the top of McNab's. The two plane were almost perfectly aligned—the tail of the lower plane was slightly to the left of

Rojohn's tailpiece. They were stuck together, as a crewman later exclaimed, "like mating dragon flies."

No one will ever know exactly how it happened. Perhaps both pilots instinctively moved to fill the same gap in the formation left by the burning aircraft, or perhaps McNab's plane hit an air pocket!

Three of the engines on the bottom plane and all of the engines on the top plane were still running. However, the fourth engine on the lower bomber was on fire, and the flames were spreading to the rest of the aircraft. Both planes were losing

altitude fast. Rojohn tried, unsuccessfully, to break free of the other plane by gunning his engines. The planes were inextricably locked together. Fearing a fire, Rojohn rang the bailout bell, and knowing that if his crew had any chance of parachuting, he had to keep the aircraft under control.

SSG Edward L. Woodall, Jr., in the ball turret of McNab's bomber had felt the impact of the collision and saw shards of metal drop past him. With both electrical and hydraulic power gone, he hand cranked the turret and guns down, and climbed out into the fuselage. What he saw was a chilling sight. The ball turret of the other bomber, Rojohn's plane, was protruding through the top of McNab's plane. Hopelessly trapped in the turret was SSG Joseph Russo. Crew members were trying to crank the turret around so Russo could escape, but it would not budge. Aware of his plight, Russo began reciting his Hail Mary's, unaware that his voice was going out over the intercom.

To prevent the plane from going into a spinning dive that would prevent the crew from jumping out, Capt. Rojohn and co-pilot 2nd Lt. Wm. G. Leek, Jr., propped their feet against the front panel and pulled back on the controls. The two managed to turn the collision-born hybrid plane left and back to the German coast. Since the crew could not exit from the bottom of the plane,

Rojohn ordered T/Sgts Orville Elkin (TTG), and Edward G. Neuhaus (RO), to bail out of the waist door. Rohjohn and Leek managed to keep the plane steady and 2nd Lt. Robert Washington (N), Sgt. James Shirley (B), Sgt. Roy Little (WG) and SSG Francis Chase (TG) also bailed out.

The plane locked below them was aflame, and fire poured over Rojohn's plane's left wing. He could feel the heat from the plane below and hear the sound of the .50 caliber ammunition exploding in the flames. He ordered Leek to bail out, but Leek knew that the plane would drop into a flaming spiral with out him helping at the controls, and he refused the order.

German soldiers and civilians on the ground looked up in wonder as they thought the Allies had a new weapon, i.e., a strange looking eight engine double bomber. However, German anti-aircraft gunners had seen the collision, and a German battery captain entered in his logbook at 12:47:

"Two fortress collided in formation in the NE. The planes flew hooked together and flew 20 miles south. The two planes were unable to fight anymore. The crash could be awaited so I stopped the firing at these two planes."

Rojohn and Leek held tightly to the controls as the

plane(s) fell, and slammed into the ground. Upon impact, the McNab plane on the bottom exploded, vaulting the Rojohn plane upward and forward. It hit the ground and slid along until it hit a building and came to a stop. Rojohn and Leek were still seated in the cockpit. The nose of the plane was relatively intact, but from the wings back, the B-17 was destroyed. Neither Rojohn or Leek were badly injured.

Two of the six men who parachuted out of Rojohn's plane did not survive the jump. The surviving four, and amazingly four men from McNab's plane including ball turret gunner Woodall survived the crash. All were taken prisoner. Several of them were interrogated at length by the Germans until they were satisfied that the American Air Corp did not have a new secret weapon.

Capt. Rojohn credited Lt. Leek with saving his life. After 40 years of searching for Lt. Leek by going through government records, in 1986 he contacted him by phone. Two old airmen on a phone line! One can imagine the first conversation of two men who shared that wild ride in the cockpit of a B-17. A year later they were re-united at a reunion of the 100th Bomb Group.

Editor's Note: This story was abstracted from http://www.b26.com/page/glenn_rojohn.htm. Capt Glenn Rojohn was awarded the DFC and Purple Heart from that mission. He died at the age of 81 and is buried in Greenock, PA, in the Pease Lutheran Cemetery.

**8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION
SHERATON NATIONAL HOTEL – ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA
SEPTEMBER 27 – OCTOBER 2**

Summer will come and go quickly, so fall is closer than you think. Make plans now to attend the 31st annual reunion, to be held just a few miles from our Nation's Capital. We have expectations for a large reunion this year. After all – Everyone should want to see the new World War II Memorial, as well as the Stephen F. Udvar – Hazy Center. Make your reservations early, as rooms may be limited, as well as some of the tours. The weather is almost perfect this time of year with daytime temperatures in the seventies.

REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

See choices below and complete the Registration Form noting your event choices and personal information. By "WWII GROUP," we're asking for the group or unit in which you served (specific Bomb Group, Fighter Group, PRG, HQ, etc.). We use this information for tallying totals for each group, nametags, and seating arrangements. If you prefer to sit with a different group, please give us that information too. Remit by check or money order payable to Armed Forces Reunions by August 25, 2005 (no credit cards or phone reservations accepted). Forms received after this date will be accepted on a space available basis only. Hotel reservation forms should be filled out completely and mailed to the hotel by August 25, 2005.

ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. CANCELLATION POLICY

For attendees canceling reunion activities prior to the cut-off date, Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. (AFR) shall process a full refund less a \$5 processing fee. Attendees canceling reunion activities after the cut-off date will be refunded to the fullest extent that AFR's vendor commitments and guarantees will allow, less a \$5 processing fee. Cancellations will only be taken Monday through Friday from 9:00am until 5:00pm Eastern Time, excluding holidays. Please call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Canceling your hotel reservation doesn't cancel your reunion activities.

MEALS / EVENTS CHOICES

CHOICE #1 TOTAL PACKAGE \$182

Package includes 7 hotel food functions starting with breakfast on Thursday. Tours are separate.

CHOICE # 2 PARTIAL PACKAGE \$130

Package includes 5 hotel food functions starting with breakfast on Friday. Tours are separate.

Breakfast menus: The continental breakfasts on Thursday, Friday, and Sunday include juice, breakfast breads, yogurt, cold cereals & milk, fruit, coffee, and tea. The breakfast buffet on Saturday includes juice, assorted breakfast breads, eggs, pancakes, sausage, potatoes, fruit, coffee, and tea.

CHOICE #3 INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Friday Rendezvous Dinner \$35 and Saturday Banquet \$42 can be purchased separately, but are included in both packages above.

TOUR OPTIONS

Tours and trips are described on the Reunion Highlights Pages. Prices are listed on the registration form. Driver and Guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.

8th AFHS ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and total the amount. Send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of check or money order (no credit cards or phone reservations accepted). Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before August 25, 2005. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of this form before mailing.

Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.
322 Madison Mews
Norfolk, VA 23510
ATTN: 8th AFHS

| OFFICE USE ONLY | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Check # _____ | Date Received _____ |
| Inputted _____ | Nametag Completed _____ |

CUT-OFF DATE IS 8/25/05

| | Price Per | # of People | Total |
|---|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| REGISTRATION FEE | | | |
| Includes Unit rebates, Saturday's Symposium expenses, and other reunion expenses. | \$40 | | \$ |
| MEAL PACKAGES | | | |
| <i>Choice #1 includes 7 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Thursday.</i> | | | |
| <i>Choice #2 includes 5 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Friday.</i> | | | |
| Choice #1 | \$182 | | \$ |
| Choice #2 | \$130 | | \$ |
| Please select your entrée choice(s) for the Banquet: | | | |
| Roast Prime Rib of Beef | | # | |
| Salmon w/ lemon butter sauce | | # | |
| SEPARATELY PRICED MEALS (if not purchasing a package) | | | |
| Friday: Rendezvous Dinner (chicken) | \$35 | | \$ |
| Saturday: Banquet (please select your entrée) | | | |
| Roast Prime Rib of Beef | \$42 | | \$ |
| Salmon w/ lemon butter sauce | \$42 | | \$ |
| TOURS | | | |
| <i>Please choose one of the following two tours:</i> | | | |
| Wednesday: Arlington National Cemetery | \$32 | | \$ |
| Wednesday: City Tour | \$33 | | \$ |
| Wednesday: Shear Madness Show | \$53 | | \$ |
| <i>Please choose one of the following two tours:</i> | | | |
| Thursday: Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center | \$31 | | \$ |
| Thursday: Spirit of Washington Lunch Cruise | \$68 | | \$ |
| <i>Please choose one of the following two tours:</i> | | | |
| Friday: WWII Memorial | \$25 | | \$ |
| Friday: WWII Memorial / National Mall | \$33 | | \$ |
| Saturday: City Tour | \$33 | | \$ |
| Total Amount Payable to Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. | | | \$ |

PLEASE PRINT MEMBER NAME _____ Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form.
1st 8AFHS REUNION?

LIFE MEMBER? ___ 8AFHS MEMBERSHIP # _____ WWII GROUP _____

SPOUSE NAME _____ LIFE MEMBER? ___ MEMBER # _____

GUEST NAMES _____

MEMBER'S STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, ST, ZIP _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____ - _____

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

MUST YOU BE LIFTED HYDRAULICALLY ONTO THE BUS WHILE SEATED IN YOUR WHEELCHAIR IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN BUS TRIPS? YES NO (PLEASE NOTE THAT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE AVAILABILITY).

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____ - _____

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION
SEPTEMBER 27 – OCTOBER 2, 2005
SHERATON NATIONAL HOTEL – ARLINGTON, VA (DC AREA)

Tuesday, September 27

2:00pm - 7:00pm **Early Bird Registration open**

Wednesday, September 28

8:00am - 9:30am **Reunion Registration open**

9:00am - Tbd Hospitality/Gathering Room & Memorabilia Room opens

9:00am - 12:00pm **ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY**

10:00am - 3:00pm **CITY TOUR**

1:00pm - Tbd **8AFHS 'PX' open through Sunday**

1:00pm - 5:00pm **Reunion Registration open**

2:00pm - **8AFHS Board Meeting**

7:00pm - 10:30pm **SHEAR MADNESS SHOW**

Thursday, September 29

7:00am - 8:30am **Continental Breakfast**

8:00am - 9:30am **Reunion Registration open**

8:00am - 9:30am **Unit Advisory and Chapter & Unit Development Meeting**

10:00am - 3:00pm **STEVEN F. UDVAR-HAZY CENTER**

11:00am - 2:45pm **SPIRIT OF WASHINGTON LUNCH CRUISE**

2:00pm - 5:00pm **Reunion Registration open**

3:30pm - 4:30pm **Medical Advisory Seminar: *Pearls*, by Dr. Brown**

4:45pm - 5:30pm **Seminar: "The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum - The Future and You."**

6:00pm - 7:00pm **Cash Bar Reception**

7:00pm - 9:00pm **Group Dinner & Entertainment**

Friday, September 30

7:00am - 8:30am **Continental Breakfast**

8:00am - 9:30am **Reunion Registration open**

8:30am - 10:00am **Individual Group Meetings**

10:15am - 2:15pm **WWII MEMORIAL**

10:30am - 4:00pm **WWII MEMORIAL / THE MALL**

2:30pm - 3:30pm **Session for Unit Historians & Archivists**

4:15pm - 5:15pm **Next Generation, Looking Ahead -- First Annual Meeting**

2:00pm - 5:00pm **Reunion Registration open**

6:00pm - 7:00pm **8AFHS Cash Bar Reception**

7:00pm - **Rendezvous Dinners and 'Hangar Flying'**

Saturday, October 1

7:00am - 8:30am **Full Breakfast Buffet**

9:00am - 11:00am **General Membership Meeting**

11:15am - 4:15pm **CITY TOUR**

1:00pm - 3:30pm **Norman C. Grant Symposium: *LITTLE FRIENDS***

5:30pm - 6:00pm **Reunion Registration open**

6:00pm - 7:00pm **8AFHS Cash Bar Reception**

7:00pm - **8AFHS Gala Banquet**

Sunday, October 2

7:00am - 8:30am **Continental Breakfast**

8:30am - 9:15am **Separate Protestant and Catholic Services at the hotel**

9:30am - **8AFHS Annual Board Meeting**

REUNION HIGHLIGHTS
ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY / CITY TOUR

Wednesday, September 28

Almost four million people visit the Arlington National Cemetery annually. For some, it is an opportunity to walk among the headstones that chronicle American history; for many, it is an opportunity to remember and honor the nation's war heroes. Tour the Arlington National Cemetery aboard Park Service Trams. See Arlington House, home of General and Mrs. Robert E. Lee. The 1,000 acres of the cemetery were once part of the Lee Estate. Visit the Tomb of the Unknowns where you will see the changing of the guard, and then visit the gravesites of President and Mrs. John F. Kennedy and his brother Robert, lit by the eternal flame.

9:00am board bus, 12:00pm back at hotel
\$32/Person includes bus, escort, and tram ride.

CITY TOUR

Wednesday, September 28 and Saturday, October 1

See the sites of our nation's capital during a driving tour of Washington, D.C. Ride by the Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, WWII Memorial, the Mall, Capitol Building, Washington Monument, White House, and other notable monuments and federal buildings. A brief stop will be made at the National World War II Memorial, the first national memorial dedicated to all who served during World War II. Lunch on your own and shopping will be at Union Station. Built in 1907, this Beaux-Arts train station houses 125 stores that include unique shops, restaurants, galleries, and more.

Wednesday: 10:00am board bus, 3:00pm back at hotel

Saturday: 11:15am board bus, 4:15pm back at hotel

\$33/Person includes bus and guide. Lunch on your own.

SHEAR MADNESS AT THE KENNEDY CENTER

Wednesday, September 28

The Kennedy Center is home to the entertaining show, *Shear Madness*, Washington's hilarious whodunit murder mystery. Someone's been killed in the apartment above a Georgetown hairstyling salon, and the police haven't got a clue... take a stab at catching the killer. It's a riotous, improvisational plot with topical humor where *you* spot the clues, *you* question the suspects, and *you* solve the crime! The ending is different every night so you'll never see the same show twice. If DC critic Arch Campbell says *Shear Madness* is "the most fun he ever had at the Kennedy Center," you are guaranteed to have a great time!

Note: The dress code is casual. Amphitheatre-style seating in the Theatre Lab and a cash bar will be available.

7:00pm board bus, 10:30pm back at the hotel

\$53/Person includes bus, escort, and show.

STEVEN F. UDVAR-HAZY CENTER

Thursday, September 29

This new museum, part of the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum, is dedicated to the preservation and display of its collection of historic aviation and space artifacts. Located at Washington International Dulles Airport, the facility has large aviation and space exhibit hangars. The museum currently has over eighty aircraft and dozens of space artifacts on display including the Space Shuttle "Enterprise," an SR-71 Blackbird, the Dash 80 prototype of the Boeing 707, and the B-29 Superfortress "Enola Gay." Currently showing in the IMAX Theater is Fighter Pilot: Operation Red Flag (admission on your own). You may tour the exhibits at your own pace, but there is a lot of walking, so please wear comfortable shoes.

10:00am board bus, 3:00pm back at the hotel

\$31/Person includes bus and escort. Lunch on your own.

* OR *

SPIRIT OF WASHINGTON LUNCH CRUISE

Thursday, September 29

Enjoy a two-hour lunch cruise with live entertainment, narration, and a bountiful lunch buffet, onboard the Spirit of Washington. While you relax on one of the three fully enclosed, climate-controlled decks, you will cruise the historic water of the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. Your captain will point out landmarks – the Washington Monument, Ft. McNair, Washington National Airport, General's Row, and Old Towne Alexandria. After lunch enjoy a stroll and the fresh air on the outdoor decks.

11:00am board bus, 2:45pm back at the hotel

\$68/Person includes bus, escort, and lunch cruise.

DINNER BUFFET & ENTERTAINMENT

Thursday, September 29

Spend the evening with your comrades and friends at the hotel. The dinner buffet will feature two entrees (pasta and chicken) along with plenty of side dishes. After dinner, take a trip down memory lane as you watch and listen to *USA Canteen*. This trio of ladies will remind you of the Andrew Sisters; complete with military attire, tight harmony, and the songs of yesteryear.

6:00pm Cash Bar Reception, 7:00pm Dinner.

Cost is included in Package #1.

WWII MEMORIAL

Friday, September 30

The highlight of the reunion is probably the visit to the National World War II Memorial, the first national memorial dedicated to all who served during World War II. The Memorial, which was established by the American Battle Monuments Commission, honors all military veterans of the war, the citizens on the home front, the nation at large, and high moral purpose and idealism that motivated the nation's call to arms. Pending Park Service Permission, the Society will have a wreath laying ceremony. On the way back to the hotel, buses will stop at Pentagon City Mall for lunch and shopping on your own.

10:15am board bus, 2:15pm back at hotel

\$25/Person includes bus and escort. Lunch on your own.

****OR****

WWII MEMORIAL / THE NATIONAL MALL

Friday, September 30

We'll start the day with a visit to the National World War II Memorial, as shown above. We'll proceed to lunch at Union Station that houses many specialty shops, eateries, and restaurants. Then, buses will shuttle between two stops on the National Mall for about two hours. Some can visit the National Air & Space Museum, while others may want to spend time at the Lincoln, Korean, and Vietnam Memorials. A more detailed schedule will be given to you at the reunion, depending on the number of buses needed.

10:30am board bus, 4:00pm back at hotel

\$33/Person includes bus and escort. Lunch on your own.

RENDEZVOUS DINNERS

Friday, September 30

Gather in your respective banquet rooms with your individual groups for dinner featuring Chicken Marsala. Units (BGs, FGs, PRGs, etc.) with approximately fifty or more people in attendance will have a private room. Smaller groups will be combined with others. Think of this as your "reunion within the reunion."

6:00pm Cash Bar Reception, 7:00pm Dinner.

Cost is included in both meal packages or \$35 separately.

2005 NORMAN C. GRANT COMMEMORATIVE 60th ANNIVERSARY SYMPOSIUM

Saturday, October 1

This year's Symposium will focus on our "Little Friends": The Groups, commanders, pilots, and ground personnel of Eighth Air Force Fighter Command. We will feature several legendary fighter pilots and groundcrew for what promises to be a most memorable and emotional afternoon.

1-3:30pm at the hotel

Cost is included in your Registration Fee.

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL BANQUET

Saturday, October 1

Assemble in the ballroom for the Posting of the Colors and Memorial Service. Dinner will be a choice of Prime Rib or Salmon and the usual accompaniments. After dinner, we'll proceed with the awards ceremony and guest speaker.

6:00pm Cash Bar Reception, 7:00pm Banquet.

Cost is included in both meal packages or \$42 separately.

Driver and guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.

Please plan to be at the bus boarding area at least five minutes prior to the scheduled time.

All tours must have a minimum of thirty people, unless otherwise stated.

SHERATON NATIONAL HOTEL
(703) 521-1900 OR (800) 325-3535

The Sheraton National Hotel is located at 900 S Orme Street, Arlington, VA 22204. Call the hotel directly for accurate driving directions. The hotel is on high elevation overlooking many Washington, D.C. famous landmarks and is just blocks from the Metro and the Pentagon. Downtown Washington, Crystal City, and the National Airport are just five minutes away. Complimentary shuttle van service departs every 30 minutes to and from Washington National Airport, Metro at The Pentagon, and Pentagon City Fashion Center. A pharmacy is conveniently located five blocks from the hotel. The hotel has eleven handicapped accessible rooms along with many non-smoking rooms, which are based on availability. Please request these special accommodations when making your reservation. We recommend that you *reconfirm* these special requests before arriving at the hotel. The Sheraton National has deluxe guest rooms with individual climate controls; color TV with in-room movies, and video check-out. Rooms offer in-room coffee makers, hair dryers, and irons/ironing boards. Guests can enjoy a rooftop indoor swimming pool (please check with the front desk for the hours of operation), sundeck (during the summer season), and an exercise room. Currently, garage parking is available for \$8 per night for registered hotel guests. There are 390 parking spaces available with a six-foot ceiling height. Oversize vehicles or RVs can park in the hotel's satellite parking lot across the street from the hotel. Check-in time is 3:00pm; check-out is 12:00 noon. *Potomac Restaurant* is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner for snacks and full course dinners. *Potomac Lounge*, in the Atrium lobby, serves regular cafe menu. Room service is available.

A limited number of suites with a special rate are available at the hotel for groups who want to entertain. The parlor of the suite is about the size of a standard sleeping room. Some parlors have conference tables; others are arranged in a typical living room format. Both types of parlors have a bar and refrigerator. The special rate for a two-room suite (parlor and sleeping room) is \$179 (plus tax) per night. As suites are limited, we request that group spokesmen make reservations early.

Complimentary shuttle van service departs every 30 minutes from 6:00am - 11:30pm to and from Washington-Reagan National Airport. Go to the Ground Transportation area of the airport to catch the shuttle. SuperShuttle offers transportation from Dulles International Airport and Baltimore/Washington International Airport.

The hotel does have the space to park RVs, but if you require RV hook-ups please contact Harmony Place located on Rt. 1, Richmond Road, which is about 8 miles from the hotel. Call (703) 360-4460 for information, reservations, and directions.

Should you require a wheelchair Apria Health Care rents standard wheelchairs. Please call (703) 642-3141 for information. Also ScootAround rents wheelchairs, please call (888) 441-7575 for more information and to make reservations.

Vendors, Schedules, and Prices are subject to change.

_____ CUT HERE AND MAIL TO HOTEL _____
8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY – HOTEL RESERVATION FORM
REUNION DATES: SEPTEMBER 27-OCTOBER 2, 2005

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL ADDRESS (if available) _____ TELEPHONE # () _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ TIME _____ AM/PM DEP. DATE _____

NUMBER OF ROOMS NEEDED _____ NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN EACH ROOM _____

SPECIAL REQUESTS: Wheelchair accessible room _____ Nonsmoking room _____ Smoking room _____
King Bed _____ Two Double Beds _____ Bed types are not guaranteed.
Conference-style suite _____ Living Room suite _____

RATE: \$89 (1-2 people) + tax (currently 10.25%). Suite rates are \$179/night and includes the parlor & sleeping room (plus tax)
CUT OFF DATE: 8/25/05. Reservations received after this date will be processed on a space available basis, at the prevailing public rate.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled 24 hrs. in advance of arrival date. Record your cancellation number. Call (703) 521-1900.

GUARANTEE: Reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit, enclosed.

MC ___ VISA ___ AM. EXPRESS ___ CARTE BLANCHE/DINERS ___ DISCOVER ___

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

Mail to: Sheraton National Hotel, 900 South Orme Street, Arlington, VA 22204 Attn: Reservations

Hotel will send you a confirmation letter once the reservation has been made.

STARS AND STRIPES

In the past months, there has been several stories in the 8th Air Force News about the 385th Bomb Group B-17 aircraft named "Stars and Stripes". The stories raised the interest of your editor and I am including these stories in this edition of the *Hardlife Herald*. Many members of the 385th Bomb Group may remember the crews that flew in the original "*Stars and Stripes*" and the second aircraft "*Stars and Stripes, Second Edition*." If anyone may have flown on or has additional information about these two aircraft, we would be pleased to hear from you.

In the June 2004 issue of the 8th AF News, the following story was reprinted from the article which was originally printed in the European edition of the Stars and Stripes newspaper:

Fort *Star and Stripes*
Finds 12B (Awright, 13)
Lucky Trip

by Charles F. Kiley
Stars and Stripes Staff Editor

AN EIGHTH BOMBER STATION, Nov. 16 — The B-17 *Stars and Stripes* thumbed its plexi-glass nose at superstition and winged its way over Axis territory for the 13th time today, joining in the second bombing of important targets in Norway by Eighth Air Force heavy bombers.

If there was any hard luck riding on the Fortress it was in the form of heavy bombs which cascaded down on the unlucky objectives. Otherwise mission No. 13 or 12B, as the flying trade calls it — was just a long frigid trip for the B-17 which 1/Lt. Clarence McIlveen, of Portland, Ore., and his crew named after the serviceman's newspaper in the ETO.

Aerial photos and reports from crews at this station, commanded by Lt. Col. Elliot Vandervanter Jr., of Washington, indicated that the target bombed by this group was destroyed.

In a position to note the damage, 1/Lt. Earl Mazo, of Charlestown, S.C., who flew in the *Raunchy Wolf*, said the bombs loads from *The Stars and Stripes* and other Forts dropped straight across the target. As on the Marienburg mission Oct. 9, this group led a bomb division on today's trip with Col. Vandervanter in command.

The group reported no flak over the target. A few enemy fighters were reported over Norway on the outward flight and over the North Sea on the way back, but none was seen.

"It was one hell of a cold trip," observed S/Sgt. Dan Sullivan, 20-year old *Stars and Stripes* waist gunner from New York, the only crew member doing his 13th mission with the ship. "But the scenery was nice. I would have hated to bail out over those snow-covered mountains in Norway."

Because another crew flew the ship on last week's raid on Bremen, most of the S and S fliers still have 12B ahead.

The *Stars and Stripes*, which started ops in the Lorient raid Sept. 23, has never turned back from a mission because of mechanical difficulties, thanks to the ground crew.

In the September 2004 issue of the 8th AF News, Bill Varnedoe, 385th BGA President and Historian, wrote the following reply:

Doc, (Dr. Walter E. Brown, MD, Editor 8th Air Force News)

Great Edition!! And thanks for the review of my book! ("The Story of Van's Valiants in the 8th Air Force")

Two comments regarding the June 2004 issue:

1. On the B-17 named *Stars and Stripes*, p-44. S&S was an original in the 385th BG, serial No. 42-3544. It was lost July 7, 44. Then another of our B-17s, serial No. 42-31349, was named *Stars and Stripes, 2nd Edition*.

2. The 385th BG also had a B-17 named *Half & Half*, for the same reason as that of the 457th BG on page 35. Ours was 42-97940, picture attached.

Bill Varnedoe, 385th BG
Huntsville, AL

In the March 2005 issue of the 8th AF News, the following letter from Clint Cansdale, Suffolk, was included:

Dear Sirs:

On page 17 of the September 8th AF NEWS there is a photo of *Stars and Stripes* B-17. We lived in a small village where the B-17 crashed, 400 yards from our house. My brother went to school that morning but could not get there because the aircraft had crashed across the road. He also remembered seeing the remains of the poor crew lying in the fields.

Is it possible to have a photo of *Stars and Stripes*, also the crew.

Thank you,

Clint Cansdale
No. 2 Shetland, The Case
Stanton NR Bury St. Edmunds
Suffolk England IP 31 2XH

Your editor received a copy of the following e-mail from Rich Stuebgen to Carl Hannon:

From: Paladin Computers
Date: 04/07/5

I am looking for information and especially photos of my half-brother Walter Stuebgen and the crew he was part of:

He was in the 550th Bomber Squadron of the 385th Bomber Group, 8th Air Force stationed at Great Ashland (Ashfield), England.

The B-17 was 42-3544, named "*Stars and Stripes*". He was the Ball Turret Gunner.

He died on Jan. 5, 1944 in an aircraft explosion over England on the return from a mission to Kiel?

He is buried side by side, in Cambridge, with his crew. He died just a few weeks after his 20th birthday.

I believe this is the crew information:

F/O Morris, William
2nd Lt. Ziebarth, Dennis
2nd Lt. Totaro, Robert M.
2nd Lt. Proctor, Richard S.

Sgt. Rober, Chester A.
Sgt Lowitz, Stanley
T/Sgt Stevens, Russell A.
S/Sgt Stuebgen, Walter (ball
turret gunner)

..any help would be much ap-
preciated.

Rick S.

Bill Varnedoe, our Historian
provided the following information

about the B-17s "*Stars and
Stripes*" and "*Stars and Stripes,
2nd Edition*".

***S & S was 42-3544. It came
to the 385th in Aug. 43. It crashed in
England on mission 50, 5 Jan 44 with
the Morris crew. (It belonged to the
McIlveen crew that did not fly that day.
This was the Morris' crew 2nd mission.)
S & S, 2nd Edition, 42-31349,
came to the 385th on 28 Nov 43 and
was shot down with the McIlveen crew

on mission 67, 24 Feb 44. (McIlveen
apparently named -349 after 5 Jan 44,
when S & S (-544) was lost.)

Your editor finds it amazing
and interesting that within several
months, many stories, and ques-
tions, have been raised about
one of the 385th Bomb Group's
aircraft.

WE HAVE ALWAYS DONE IT LIKE THAT!

Does the statement, "We've
always done it like that..." ring
any bells? It should since most of
us have said that once or twice
during our life. Read to the end of
the following story; it provides us
with knowledge that most of us
believe is absolutely neces-
sary.... at least I think so.—Your
Editor.

The United States railroad
gauge (distance between the
rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That is
an exceedingly odd number. Why
wasn't it 4.5 feet, or 5 feet? Why
was that gauge used?

Because that is the way
they built them in England, and
English expatriates built the first
US Railroads.

Why did the English build
them like that?

Because the first railroads
were built by the same people
who built the pre-railroad tram-
ways and that is the gauge they
used.

Why did "they" use that
gauge then?

Because the people who
built the tramways used the same
jigs and tools that they used for
building wagons, which used that
spacing.

Okay! Why did the wagons
have that particular odd wheel
spacing?

Because if they used any
other spacing, the wagon wheels
would break on some old, long
distance roads in England, as that
was the spacing of the wheel ruts.

So who built those old long
distance roads?

Imperial Rome built the first
long distance roads in Europe
(and England) for their Legions.
These roads have been used
ever since.

And the ruts in the roads?

Roman war chariots formed
the initial ruts, which everyone
else had to match for fear of de-
stroying their wagon wheels.
Since the chariots were made
for Imperial Rome, they were
all alike in the matter of wheel
spacing.

The United States standard
railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5
inches is derived from the original
specifications for an Imperial War
Chariot. So the next time you are
handed a specification, and ques-
tion 'what horse's a—' came up
with it, you may be exactly correct
in your wonderment. Because the
Imperial Roman Army chariots
were made just wide enough to

accommodate the *back ends* of
two war horses.

Now here is a new twist to
the story.

When you see a Space
Shuttle sitting on its launch pad,
there are two big booster rockets
attached to the sides of the main
fuel tank. These are solid rocket
boosters, or SRBs. The SRBs are
made by Thiokol at their factory in
Utah. The engineers who de-
signed the SRBs would have pre-
ferred to make them a bit fatter,
but the SRBs had to be shipped
by train from the factory to the
launch site.

The railroad line from the
factory happens to run through a
tunnel in the mountains. The
SRBs had to fit through that tun-
nel, and the tunnel is just slightly
wider than the railroad track, and
as you know the railroad track is
about as wide as two horse's
behinds.

So, a major Space Shuttle
design feature of what is no doubt
the world's most advanced trans-
portation system was determined
over two thousand years ago by
the width of a horse's a—.
*****And I bet you thought that a
horse's a— wasn't important.*****

THE NEW DVD — THE 385th BGMA 1976 UK VISIT

Produced and Edited by William Daysh

Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, England

The video runs for about 28 minutes and was extracted from an archival film published by the UK Imperial War Museum (IWM) and covers the nostalgic visit by members of the 385th BGMA to Great Ashfield, Suffolk, in September 1976. There are scenes of the 385th BG members mingling with locals, including the late Annie Haywood who created much of the nose art for the 385th BG B-17s, and visiting All Saint's Church, Great Ashfield, where there are memorials to the 385ths fallen comrades. Also shown are the veterans visiting the remnants of the Great Ashfield airbase and Bury St. Edmunds, and watching the '76 Farnborough air show.

Included in the DVD are some views of parks and general scenes of London, Stratford-upon-Avon, and memorial at Runnymede. Other scenes visited were one to the Magna Carta, and the site where it was sealed by King John in 1215, and to the John F. Kennedy memorial, and to the memorial to the 20,000 RAF airmen who were killed during WWII. The veterans are also shown visiting Windsor Castle.

Throughout the film, there are scenes of WWII footage of B-17 Squadrons on bombing missions, and under attack by German fighters and flak.

The video will be available in V-CD-ROM form for viewing on a PC with Windows Media Player (or Real Player) or, alternatively,

as a higher quality DVD for home DVD-players. The DVD version has on it the additional title, "Battle Stations: B-17", which runs for 48 minutes and tells the development history of the B-17 including wartime footage of B-17s in action plus return of the Memphis Belle from her final mission.

THE GREAT ASHFIELD 2002 FLIP ALBUM CD-ROM

The CD contains five albums:

1. A visual tour of what remains of the 385ths Great Ashfield airbase in 2002 through more than 80 photos of the quarters and communal buildings that were still standing; the remains of the runways and perimeter tracks, plus 1944 and 2002 aerial views of the site, and the Air Ministry Record Site Plan to which it was built. As a preface, Chapter Eleven of Graham Smith's book *Suffolk Airfields in the Second World War* covers the Group's history at Great Ashfield.

2. An album containing pages of the 385ths Memorial Book that is held in trust at Great Ashfield Church, in which the names of the Group's fallen are hand-scribed, plus images of All Saints Church and its 385th BG Memorial plaque. Included are images of the American Monuments Commission Military Cemetery at Madingley, Cambridge, UK, and a list of names of

all the Group's fallen buried or honored there.

3. Two albums (3&4) of photos of some of the ships and men of the 385th during their time at Great Ashfield, kindly supplied by the men themselves, plus a short video clip of the Chowhound Dutch food drops and some short shots of speeches given by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill during WWII.

4. A collection of photos taken at the 2002 Duxford *Flying Legends* air show, which was dedicated to American warbirds of WWII, and includes the last two B-17s in Europe, *Sally B* and *Pink Lady*.

Leo LaCasse, Past President of the 385th BGA, has been authorized by Bill Daysh as his agent in the United States for purchase of the new DVD and the three CDs of the 385th England and Luxembourg Tours. Leo will reproduce the DVD and the three CDs and send them to anyone who wishes to have copies for their files or library. The costs for the CDs are \$10.00 each, and the cost of the DVD is \$15.00. The items are well worth the costs, and all proceeds from sales will be sent to Bill Daysh. Postage will be paid by Leo; however, if you wish to reimburse Leo for postage, he will gladly accept your generosity. Mail your requests to Leo LaCasse, 4911 Hunting Hills Court, Roanoke, VA 24014.

PILOT JEROME MUDGE FLIES “HESITATIN’ HUSSY” TO HELL AND BACK

by Lt. Sam Sheffield & Sgt. Joe DiGiacomo

We claim our pilot as the best flyer in the world, barring none. We know, because we saw him in the roughest action possible, and he brought us through, everyone of us. Of course, our B-17, “Hesitatin’ Hussy” can be credited with part of it.

On a 385th Bomb Group mission to bomb the German Fighter base in France, we headed on the bomb run when one of our engines went out. With the propeller feathered we stayed with the formation and bombed the hell out of the target. The real hell came as we headed for home. One lone Nazi fighter whipped through our formation, turned and went through again. This time he shot out a 2nd engine on our B-17 and wounded our top turret gunner Burnell Cook. Though Burnell stayed with his guns our bomber could not keep up so we fell out of formation, a “straggler.” Over the coast we were down to 8,000 feet and over Dunkirk

we encountered very heavy antiaircraft fire—flak, coastal defense guns, ground machine guns, even fighters, a regular inferno. Lt. Mudge weaved and tossed our Fortress around like a fighter plane, and that cool skill kept us from being shot down in flames. It was a fight we’ll never forget. The Germans kept up their fire. We thought we’d never see the end of it. Over the Channel, with Nazi fighters still after us, they thought we were dead meat. We made them change their minds.

S/Sgt John Moniz, who was at his guns all the way, shot down a ME 109 on our tail, and our guns held the fighters at bay. Taking stock of our damage, we found the B-17 so badly battered that we can’t see how Lt. Mudge kept it under such wonderful control. We had wounded aboard, so Lt. Sheffield and Lt. Verne Philips went to give first aid to Sgt. Cook who was hit in the face. A 20 mm

shell exploded right in front of his turret, tearing it apart. A waist gunner, Sgt Hartan Villers, also was wounded. Thinking we would have to ditch in the Channel waters, McGarvey and Lt. Philips started throwing stuff out. Moniz and I (DiGiacomo) kept at our guns. Sighting England, we found a RAF fighter field and landed there. The commander told us “that was the prettiest landing he had ever seen” despite the fact that we had no flaps, no stabilizer, no trim tabs, and no brakes and our ship was so full of holes that we couldn’t see how it hung together. After we landed we learned that the copilot’s headset had been shot right off his head during the scuffle over Dunkirk.

Note: Copied from “Vapor Trails”, Newsletter of 8th AFHS, Massachusetts Chapter, April 30, 2005 Issue.

MILITARY WORDS OF WISDOM

“AIM TOWARD THE ENEMY.”—Instructions printed on US Army Rocket Launcher

“WHEN THE PIN IS PULLED, MR. GRENADE IS NO LONGER OUR FRIEND.”—US Marine Corp Journal

“CLUSTER BOMBING FROM B-52s IS VERY, VERY ACCURATE. THE BOMBS ARE GUARANTEED TO ALWAYS HIT THE GROUND.”—USAF Ammo Troop Manual

“IF THE ENEMY IS IN RANGE, SO ARE YOU.”—US Army Infantry Journal

“A SLIPPING GEAR COULD LET YOUR M203 GRENADE LAUNCHER FIRE WHEN YOU

LEAST EXPECT IT, THAT WOULD MAKE YOU QUITE UNPOPULAR IN WHAT’S LEFT OF YOUR UNIT.”—US Army’s Magazine of Preventive Maintenance

“IT IS GENERALLY INADVISABLE TO EJECT DIRECTLY OVER THE AREA YOU’VE JUST BOMBED.”—US Air Force Manual

“TRY TO LOOK UNIMPORTANT; THE ENEMY MAY BE LOW ON AMMO.”—US Army Infantry Journal

“TRACERS WORK BOTH WAYS.”—US Army Ordnance Manual

“FIVE-SECOND FUSES ONLY LAST THREE SECONDS.”—US Army Infantry Journal

“IF YOUR ATTACK IS GOING TOO WELL, YOU’RE WALKING INTO AN AMBUSH.”—US Army Infantry Journal

“ANY SHIP CAN BE A MINE-SWEEPER . . . ONCE.”—Anon

“NEVER TELL THE PLATOON SERGEANT YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DO.”—Unknown Marine Recruit

“DON’T DRAW FIRE; IT IRRITATES THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU.”—US Army Infantry Journal

“IF YOU SEE A BOMB TECHNICIAN RUNNING, TRY TO KEEP UP WITH HIM.”—USAF Ammo Troop Manual

LETTERS

April 12, 2005

Hardlife Herald Newsletter
Attn: Frank McCawley, Editor
% W.W. Varnedoe Jr.

I wanted to notify your newsletter of my father's death. He was 85 years old and will be greatly missed. He passed away April 2nd in Florida.
He served with the 8th Air Force, 385th Bombardment Group as a B-17 pilot during World War II.

Howard W. Hiatt - 01286486
Born - May 26, 1919
Died - April 2, 2005

Susan Moore

20 April 05

Hi Frank,

Just received my latest copy of the Hardlife Herald and as usual enjoyed it very much as I always read it from cover to cover.

I still have in my possession and extra Wartime Original 551st Sq. Bomb patch that I have had for many years. If any of your readers may be intersted in this they may contact me at my home address.

I do have a complete set of all five of the wartime 385th Group and four Sq. patches, and somehow wound up with an extra 551st...

Jim Young
221 Ramsey Ave.
Bridgeville, PA
15017-1968

PS - Keep up the good work with the Newsletter

LETTERS

THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY THE UNIT AND CHAPTER COMMITTEE

Jim Erskine, Chairman
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April 25, 2005

To all Unit and Chapter Newsletter Editors,
From the Committee
A sincere invitation to all.

The Unit and Chapter Committee meeting at the Eighth Air Force Historical Society reunion from September 27 through October 2, 2005 in Arlington, VA will focus on newsletter editors. The main theme will be discussions of how to improve the newsletters and how each editor can help all others. This will be an open and free session that should be of interest to all. No one will be criticized for their efforts or their work and questions will be answered in a forthright manner. If there is time, other subjects might be discussed, but the main topic will not be cut short.

If any of you have suggestions for the agenda of the meeting please send them to the Committee Chairman so they may be incorporated and arranged to suit the order of business.

While compiling the list of editors it was noted that some editors are not members of the Historical Society. At this time I would like to invite you to become members. It is not necessary that you be a member of the Historical Society to attend the reunion or the Unit and Chapter meeting. If you do attend as a non-member the only thing that you may not do is vote at the general membership meeting. You will be welcome to everything else. If you join while at the reunion you may then vote since there is no waiting period.

Guests are always welcome to all Eighth Air Force Historical Society functions. This is especially true for the reunions. The families of those attending really enjoy the reunions because they find out from others what we have, as individuals, did over there. Wives talk about the Agood old days@ of raising children (and husbands) and find that they have much in common. The kids and grandkids like to sit and listen to the stories of missions and the terrible weather for the ground crews. These stories do not get exaggerated; just a little more detail comes out with each telling. So be sure to attend and bring the family and friends for the time of your life.

For the Committee,

Jim Erskine, Chairman

LETTERS

E-mail:

Subj: 385th Imperial War Museum movie
Date: 3/22/2005 8:51 AM Eastern Standard Time
From: WDaysh@aol.com
To: (many persons including your Editor)

All

I have been lent an old IWM movie commemorating an early 385th reunion visit to Great Ashfield and beyond that I am going to "knock off" (copy). Judging by the snazzy clothing being worn in the video and the state of the cars I would say that this was made in the late 1960s. I have never seen the video before and I am sure most of you will already have a copy of it.

It shows many wartime scenes of B-17s in formation and in action against fighter attacks, bombing runs, the return of the Memphis Belle from her final mission, etc., interfaced with shots of the reunion group touring GA church, the airfield, Bury St Edmunds, Madingley US cemetery, Cambridge University and other parts of Britain. If I only knew you by sight I could probably recognize some of you in this video but I can only see who I believe to be Leo LaCasse (but I could be wrong). The narrator is American.

Anyway, if anyone does not have a copy of this and would like one please let me know. There will be no charge.

I can turn it into a DVD with either PAL formatting (European coding) or NTCS (US coding), or into video (PAL only). I think it will produce a file too large for CD-ROM but I won't know until I actually copy it.

Please let me know if you already have a copy of it so that I can cross you off the list. If you would like a copy please let me know if you can view DVDs on a domestic DVD player or on your PC.

(Please don't 'shop' me to the Federation Against Copyright Theft — there is no copyright notice on the video anyway.)

Thanks.

Regards to all,
Bill (Daysh)

Editor's Note: Bill has completed editing and producing the video. See "The New DVD — The 385th BGMA 1976 UK Visit" in this issue.

Taps

Harvey W. Hiatt — Florida - Pilot with the 385th BG. Harvey was born on May 26, 1919 and died on, April 2, 2005 at the age of 85. He will be greatly missed by his family.

from his daughter, Susan Moore

Ivan Klohe — Loveland, CO died March 11, 2005

from Chuck Hill

Robert Edsell — Melville, MO — Bombardier on "Satan's Mate"; 35 missions from Kenneth Laffoon; 8th AF News.

Warren Anderson — Boise, ID

from 8th AF News

Frank Reese Mays — Madison Heights, VA, died January 31, 2005 after a long illness. Frank was born in Lynchburg, VA, August 13, 1924, the son of Charles J. Mays, Sr. and Goldie Stewart Mays. He was preceded in death by one brother, Charles J. Mays, Jr. Frank was a retired Electrical Engineer and a member of the Randolph Baptist Church. Frank was a 549th Bomb Squadron ball turret gunner on the B-17, "War Horse." He completed his tour of duty and received the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters, the Presidential Citation and the European Theater of Operations ribbon with four Battle Stars. Frank was the author of a book entitled "And No Purple Heart", a book about his missions with the 385th Bomb Group during WWII. In addition to his wife of 58 years, Mary Pickral Mays, Frank is survived by one son, Terry Wayne, and one daughter, Sarah Ann, both of Madison Heights. His funeral was February 3rd with internment at Fort Hill Memorial Park. Military honors was presented by the American Legion Post 16

from Whitten Monelison Funeral Home.

Walter J. Gasiorowski — Pittsburg, PA, died March 20, 2005 of pancreatic cancer. Walter was a member of the 551st Bomb Squadron. His son has become an associate member of BGA.

Peter G. Knox — Allentown, PA, died January 17, 2005

John K. Palmer — Albuquerque, NM, died March 27, 2005

**THE 385th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION
WILL CONDUCT ITS 2005 ANNUAL REUNION**

IN CONJUNCTION WITH
THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION REUNION

at the

**SHERATON PARK NATIONAL HOTEL
Arlington, Virginia**

September 25th thru October 2nd, 2005

* *****

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February 2005

385th BGA

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