

Hardlife



Herald



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The Mighty Eighth

November, 2003



Anita Hartman
("Anne" Lemonnier)

Aug. 28, 1909 - Aug. 25, 2003

A Farewell Salute

By Diane O'Day Cantor

On September 25, 1944, the Germans marched out of France as the country celebrated its liberation. Exactly 59 years to the day Anita ("Anne" Lemonnier) Hartman, one of France's most decorated heroines for her work with the French Resistance during World War II, died at the age of 94.

On August 2, 1944, the nine members aboard the B-17 crew flying "Moonglow" were shot down over France. Three, including the pilot, were picked up by the Germans and sat out the rest of the war in a POW camp. The other five were MIA. Four of those men, including the bombardier (my father Edward F. O'Day), connected with the French Underground. They had seen the plane come down and so had the Germans, who were driving along the roads and searching the woods looking for crewmembers.

At this time Mrs. Hartman was escorting downed airmen to safety. She collected my dad from the LeFerve home in Rambouillet and successfully delivered him to freedom on August 18th. He had flown his last mission. He was to be hers - France would be liberated a week later. He spoke about many of the dangerous circumstances they encountered along the route, including several close calls involving the Gestapo or the SS at several points along the way. Despite the odds she managed to deliver him safely to freedom, as she had done for so many other aviators who were fortunate enough to connect with the Underground.

Her background made her perfect for the job. She was a French woman raised in an English boarding school. She was disciplined and fluent in the languages most necessary for the work she would be doing.

After the war she married P. K. Hartman, a Naval Captain, moved to New York and lived a quiet, modest life, despite being the only member of the Resistance to receive the highest recognition possible by four countries. She was awarded the Medal of Freedom (United States), the Croix de Guerre (France), the King's Medal for Courage in the Cause of Freedom (England) and the Medal of Freedom with Bronze Palm (Canada). These awards recognized her disregard for personal safety while she hid, fed, sheltered and clothed the airmen; as well as procuring medical attention and identification cards as necessary. She also aided the airmen by escorting them from France by way of the Pyrenees Mountains to Spain. The honors bestowed recognized her work with several resistance groups including: Shelburn's Operation Bonaparte

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2003 Reunion Photo Memory Books

The great photo album memory books are ready. They will help us remember our 385th friends and also the various activities that we participated in at Hampton. Even if you did not attend the reunion you will enjoy the book. We are 14 shy of our guaranty to the photographer and we need your help. Please consider purchasing a book. Send your check for \$20.00 to Leo LaCasse, 4911 Hunting Hills Ct., Roanoke, VA 24014.

On the ABC evening news, it was reported that, because of the dangers of Hurricane Isabelle approaching Washington DC, the military members assigned the duty of guarding the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier were given permission to suspend the assignment.

They refused. "No way, Sir!"

Soaked to the skin, marching in the pelting rain of a tropical storm, they said that guarding the tomb was not just an assignment, it was the highest honor that can be afforded to a serviceperson.

The tomb has been patrolled continuously, 24hours, 7 days a week, since 1930.

PREZ SEZ

by Bill Varnedoe

The 2003 reunion has come and gone. You who missed it missed a grand time! I want to thank the membership for trusting me with the awesome task of heading this organization. I will do my very best, but you must realize that those who have gone before did such magnificent jobs, that duplicating them will be impossible. However, on a positive side, the newly elected officers are just what any President

could wish for and will continue to make the 385th BGMA one of the best.

Another development at this reunion was the enthusiasm of the 2nd and 3rd generation members. There were several meetings of these Associate Members during the reunion. We, all of us, are getting a bit long in the tooth, and simply cannot carry on too much longer. The memory of the 385th is in their

hands. The membership voted to have our next reunion next year, 2004. The decision was to make it a joint reunion with the 8th Air Force Historical Society. This reunion will take place in Kansas City; details will be in this, and/or subsequent, *Hardlife Herald*s.

I and your board of officers invite your comments on this reunion, future reunion planning and, not only of reunions but the future of the organization, itself.

FINAL REPORT

by Immediate Past President Leo A. LaCasse, Col., USAF, Ret.

The 19th Biennial Reunion for the 385th BGMA is History. The following is my final report on the activities that took place before the planning stages and during the Reunion itself. It was my intention to get as much outside support for the reunion as possible. Many visits to Hampton, Va. was planned to coordinate the activities to be scheduled. Primary contacts were with the hotels and Tour Agencies in the area. All decisions made were coordinated with the Board Members and approved by them. This included the cost of hotel rooms as well as cost of various tours proposed. I estimated a cost of over \$2000 out of pocket to finalize all the events.

Those outside agencies whom I contacted required numerous letters to coordinate. The results were encouraging. Elizabeth Arden provided all the

gifts given to attending members at the Squadron meeting and to the Ladies attending the Brunch. Kroger Foods Inc. gave a \$100 debit card good enough for me to buy \$127.53 worth of snacks for the hospitality room. SAMs Club gave me a certificate for \$25 to purchase items in the Club. Items purchased were along the line of Peanuts, Nuts, cups plastic glasses, Candy dishes, etc.etc. costing \$35.96. Guess who footed the amount over the twenty five bucks? Advance Auto donated enough tools to prepare 47 grab bags which were purchased for \$2. The Wineries of Virginia provided over nine cases of wine which ended up on the tables on Banquet night and the hospitality room throughout the five days of the reunion. Some of these cases given were valued at over \$200. My grandson, Luke Fannin gave me all the remain-

ing Tshirts and caps from his Movie, "Fernando". They too ended up in the grab bags. Let's not forget the Hampton Convention and Visitor's Center who provided help at the desk, registration day. They also provided the badges, book marks and pencils stuffed in your envelopes. The Florida Golf Foundation provided me with over \$1500 worth of prizes which were raffled off in the Hospitality Room along with Chuck Smith Schweinfurt Litho. It was estimated that \$800 + was collected at the raffle and the hospitality room donations.

On one tour Phillips Tour Agencies made all the arrangements for our lunch at the Norfolk Navy Base and provided the attendees with an outstanding speaker, Capt Scott Saunders, USN. Scott provided a very clear picture of the roll the

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and the Comete Line.

She began her work with the Bourgogne line in November '43. For this line she (and her mother) hid airmen in their Paris apartment. The men who they harbored were:

First Lt. Elton Pete Hoyt III of
Mentor, 014, B -17 pilot
First Lt. William Cook Jr., El
Paso, TX, B-17 navigator
S/Sgt Herbert Gebers, Holstein,
Iowa, radio operator
George Whitehead, Cambs,
England, RAF bomber pilot
Harold Williams, Liverpool,
England, RAF Mosquito
navigator
Joseph Oliver, Brixton, London,
England RAF Mosquito
pilot

Through the Shelburn line they harbored:

S/Sgt. Robert K. Fruth,
Smyrna, TN
Harold Vines, West Fork, AR,
gunner
Stuart Barr, Philadelphia, PA,
co-pilot
Robert Sidders, Hastings,
Nebraska, assistant radio
operator

During the course of her time with the Underground she personally escorted 32 men to safety knowing that capture meant almost certain torture and death. She was very aware of this as she had replaced Virginia d'Albert Lake who had been captured.

The Germans picked her up and released her three times. During one interrogation she could tell that the Austrian interpreter knew and did not betray

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Left: J. Lindquist, Jack Davis, Ed O'Day, Russell Katz (Cotts) and John (Jack) Larkin. (L to R)

Below: The home of Mme. LeFebvres and her son Claude in Rambouillet, France. At the time Ed O'day, Russell Katz (Cotts) and John (Jack) larkin were among the many whom were sheltered by the LeFebvres. Mrs. hartman interviewed these men and escorted them to Paris.



her. It was just one of many moments of grace that allowed her to continue her work.

Other such moments reported include an occasion when a hastily assembled German road block appeared at the end of a narrow street where she was leading three American flyers who did not even have the customary forged identification papers. She was able to lead the men away without raising suspicion.

My father, who received the Distinguished Flying Cross for his efforts that day, never thought of and always dismissed any talk about his "heroism". A word of such extraordinary weight, he would say, belongs to Anita Hartman. He told me it didn't take any courage to get shot down, but that it took "a hell of a lot of courage" for Anita Hartman to step into the fray knowing the consequences she and her family could face if she were apprehended.

"Honey, they didn't want me. I was just a bombardier." The Germans had watched the plane go down, apprehended three members of the crew and were frantically combing the countryside looking for the rest of them. "They were tracking me

because they wanted her. She was the one with the information they needed to break the back of the Resistance."

My father held her in the highest regard, never failing to be awed by the risks Mrs. Hartman took on behalf of the men she helped as well as her dedication to her country.

When I was a child I asked my father what he thought about when he jumped out of that plane. He grinned as he tilted his head toward Heaven, eyes sparkling and said, "Honey, I thought 'I'm going home.'"

Later he would say that he wasn't worried about being captured because he just would have been sent to a POW camp. He was worried about his Irish mug being spotted by the Germans which would put Anita in greater jeopardy.

He asked her why she was risking her life to save his. She

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told him, "I had to do something or go mad." She was recruited by the local grocer after expressing her distress for the Allies. At the end of the conversation she was told if she really wanted to do something to come back in two days. The grocer would have two flyers for her to shelter.

Her mother would continue to take in the airmen as Mrs. Hartman would undertake the extremely dangerous task of interrogating the aviators before assigning housing to make certain they were not spies. In their desperation to crack the resistance the Germans were dropping their English-speaking soldiers from planes in an effort to infiltrate the operation.

Mrs. Hartman never had any children of her own, but many people did because her commitment and bravery allowed them to return home to their families. If she hadn't helped my dad my brother would have been an only child.

In June of '44 she reported that several men with the Comete line asked Mrs. Hartman if she would hide them from the Gestapo "and our flat became the temporary headquarters of the line." She asked the man heading up the Comete line what she could do to help. That's when she began "checking up on the aviators, fetching and conveying them to the first relay." This is when she adopted the name "Anne."

She interviewed and checked on more than 60 aviators. By then she had conveyed to her flat and, with her mother,

were harboring:

Jim Kennedy, Canadian,

"fetched from Villejuif

John Larkin, Thunderbolt pilot

"fetched from Mme. LeFevre"

Russell J. Katz, B-17 co-pilot

"fetched from Mme. LeFevre"

(Now Russell J. Cotts)

Edward F. O'Day, B-17

bombardier "fetched from

Mme. LeFevre"

She also convoyed many men, including Larkin, Cotts, and O'Day; as well as John P. T. Finn, North Dublin, County Kildare, Eire; Walter Pryer, Rugby, Warwickshire; and Gaston Lapieffe, a French Canadian.

She leaves behind a remarkable legacy that touches many people in many countries. She will be missed, but never forgotten. She will live on in the hearts and minds of those who are indebted to her. She would certainly dismiss such a notion, claiming that she only did what she needed to do at the time.

Note: I would appreciate hearing from anyone who was helped by Mrs. Hartman or is related to someone who was. I can be contacted at 34585 Quaker Valley Rd., Farmington Hills, MI 48331. Phone: (248) 477-1152. Email: ldoc@ljc.cnc.net



A very happy Russ Katz (Cotts) and Ed O'Day after they gain their freedom from Occupied France.

World War II Heroine of French Resistance Dies

New York - Anita ("Anne" Lemonnier) Hartman, who began working through the French Resistance Movement to rescue downed flyers in early 1943 died August 25, 2003, at the age of 94. Born in France and educated in England, she made New York her home in 1954.

Mrs. Hartman is the only member of the Resistance whose efforts on behalf of France and the Allied countries resulted in her being decorated and honored by all four countries. She, as well as her mother (Mme. LeMonnier), were awarded the Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor presented by the United States. She also received the Croix de Guerre from France, the King's Medal for Courage in the Cause of Freedom from England and the Medal of Freedom with Bronze Palm from Canada, among other medals and citations; including those from President Eisenhower and President Johnson for her work in rescuing, conveying and assisting Allied airmen who were shot down over occupied France.

Her niece Martine Goddet and nephew Michel Goddet, both living in France, survive her. Marianna Dryl, her friend, companion and caretaker for many years also survives her.

Mrs. Hartman was buried in Arlington, a private cemetery in Pennsylvania where she rests in peace together with her husband and next to her mother.

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Navy would play in future conflicts.

Who could forget the Honor Guard provided by Langley AFB entering our meeting room that first morning to Post the Colors. The Pledge of Allegiance must have been heard throughout the hotel. Then one of the guards returned with a Banner rolled up and given to me as it was unfurled. I presented this Banner, which I designed and made to Col Mac (James McDonald) to offer the Banner in the form of a Motion to the assembled members to accept the Banner as the Official Flag of the 385th. The vote was unanimous and the Flag was placed at the head table each day a meeting was held. There were objections for making a flag because of the cost to the 385th Assn. The Flag

with two streamers identifying two Presidential Unit Citation (Regensburg 8-17-43 and Zwauch 5-4-44) was attached to the Mast and donated to the 385th. Langley also furnished a Bugler to play Taps at the Memorial Ceremonies on the last day of the reunion. Art Driscoll can be commended for his effort and time spent preparing for this moving ceremony.

The final Banquet was well attended music by the Royal Liberty Band and their entertainers was well received. Most of the music played was of the 40s nostalgic version. Col. Mac was our main speaker and provided an insight into the decisions made on various missions while he was Operations Officer of the Group.

At our last meeting the 385th Flag was passed on to

our new officers i.e. Bill Varnedoe, President, Art Driscoll, 1st VP, Chuck Smith 2nd VP, Frank McCawley 3rd VP Les Reichardt 4th VP. Frank McCawley was also named assistant Editor of the HLH. It was a sad moment for me to see the Flag change hands but I am sure the new Board will represent the membership well.

All funds collected for the Reunion has been inked into a ledger by name and amount paid. All expenses are also recorded and accounted for which I will mail to our Treasurer for audit. Since there are possibilities that additional expenses or refunds may be forthcoming my records will be detained for a few weeks before I close the books. Thank you one and all who have supported me and made my term easy to accept.

EDITOR'S REPORT

To the members of the 385th it has been my privilege to serve you as the editor of the Hardlife Herald for the last two and a half years. All your helpful input has given me a much greater understanding of all my comrades who served at the Great Ashfield area. When I have contacted people for per-

sonal articles you have been so willing to comply. The fact that so many of you are authors of books and great stories has made my job very interesting. I thank you all and am impressed and proud of the men who served in the 385th. As we grew older many of the young men have continued to serve their

communities and country. Now Frank McCawley will be the lucky editor of the fine Hardlife Herald that we all have enjoyed for so many years. Good luck to Frank who I know will do an excellent job. Again my best to you all and of course Keep Them Flying!

Tom Newton

Notice

The next 385th reunion will be October 5- 10, 2004 at the Weston Crown Center in Kansas MO, in connection with The Eighth Air Force Historical Society. Mark your calander to attended this reunion.

In the next issue of the Hardlife Herald your new Hardlife Herald Editor, Frank McCawley, will have more on the reunion at Hampton. All letters and articles for the Hardlife Herald please mail to Frank McCawley, 2309 Cheverly Ave. Hyattsville MD, 20785 or e-mail FXMCCAWAWLEYOaol.com

SOFTLIFE SIDE

By Darla Newton

This may be my last column as next year Frank and Peggy McCawley will take over the HLH. So I guess I should be straight about my guilty secret. Here goes ... in high school I was feature editor of my school paper and wrote a column called by the terrible name of Darla's Drools. That's it and so Softlife Side sounds really uptown to me.

As we know, the east coast area of the U.S.A, and the west coast are different. In Hampton another important difference became clear to me. The east coast blow their trees down and the west coast burn them down. Now trees are a good oxygen source and so go figure

This column will end with an Irish saying found by Sharon Kindya in a pub. She and Michael, Tom and I got a cab and went to see Fort Monroe. It was closed and had real guards on duty due to Hurricane Isabel's damage. So what else to do but go to an Irish pub for a beer instead and come away with something to hold dear and live by.

The personal contacts at the reunion mean so much to all of us. I'll share a few thoughts about my time with those friends in the 385th. How well Walt and Norma Shulte's daughter is doing, Joanne Pickett's great and funny family stories, 007 Bond's grandson (who was with us on the 2000 tour) and how he is now an English major in college and where did he get all that curly black hair, Mary Molzhan's positive attitude concerning her treatments for cancer, the many questions concerning Mike and Marian Gallagher and wanting them to

know that we are missing them, the worrying about Ed Stern's daughter Suzy's home in the fire part of California, Bill Swindell and Frances Payne and I sharing our thoughts and worries about our national church, RoyAnne Donnelly's spectacular red chapeau, how can someone be jolly considering he flew 50 missions (he lived) and he is Gilbert D'Alonzo, Gene Vaadi story about spending some months in a German prisoner of war camp and then another three years in a war camp in China during the Korean war (2 years in solitary), John Mathews unlucky last and 35th mission where he was shot down and he is the only one Tom remembers who was in his barracks, Alice Salvador's good taste in earrings as we have the same ones, but hers are gold, and hi to all the swell girls Eunice, Sharon, Evy, Mary, Bonnie, Peggy, Margaret, Elizabeth, Jane, Lee, Babs, Shirley, Phillis, Judy, Joyce, Betty, Connie and Anne and many more who I think of with affection.

Smiles and hugs were a standard greeting and great glee was expressed when a familiar face was spotted. One was Pamela Metcalf who was our English tour guide. She attended with her dear husband Anthony. They add a special spice to the carryings on. Now on the Discovery Channel I will be watching for Nicky Fannins and Leo and Anne's grandsons name Luke Fannin as he produces there and we got his Fernando cap.

My thanks go out to Lee Colthorpe for the wonderful ladies brunch (we didn't go away hungry) and her pretend cousin made

us all feel very young in her funny monologue. And dear Leo you did a great job putting on the whole shindig. There is no way we could have a successful reunion without the hospitality room. The drinks and snacks are nice, but all the talk and stories just keep coming year after year. It is amazing what fear and stress can do to imprint certain times permanently in your brain cells. The current 8th Airforce people who were at the hotel seemed to enjoy hearing the stories that were shared with them. One we all know is the tale of Joe Jone's riding down the tail of his plane and having his last cigarette and living to tell his story. The current 8th Airforce men will now be hopefully passing that WW2 tale down. Several of the Colonels who heard this tale looked as if they just could not fathom this story.

Now to express my thrill at all the second and third generation of 385th people who were at the reunion. It shows that our bomb group is going to live on in good hands. However, when the music played at the cruise and banquet the old folks did not take a back seat to them. Two names that surely did come to mind are the dancing pair of Joe and Doris Derer. They know how to cut a rug and those English war brides do wear very well.

Now here is what I promised at the beginning. It is graffiti right off the rest room wall. "The past is history. The future is a mystery. Today is a gift and that is why it is called the Present."

THE GIRLS I NEVER KNEW

by Sterling Rogers

Author of *Hunkered Down*

It seemed to be my fate as a prisoner of war to encounter nice looking young women. Under very unlikely circumstances. And never to be able to pursue the contact.

After I bailed out deep in Germany and broke my leg in landing, a young French girl helped me out of my chute. She was working in the field where I landed. No doubt a slave laborer, she definitely seemed sympathetic to my situation. She swore furiously at the German sergeant who arrived immediately to take me prisoner. But she was powerless to do anything more. When the sergeant took me away she still stood in the field hurling insults at him.

Next day, as a guard transferred me by streetcar from the jail in Burg to the Luftwaffe base in Magdeburg, another young woman attempted to help me. This one was surely a German, for she obviously was coming home from a shopping trip to the grocer's. She carried the ubiquitous string bag common to all European housewives and it contained several

items from the store.

As the streetcar bumped its way along the track she tried to transfer a scrap of paper from her hand to my seat. She did it when my guard was not looking, and she tried to make it look like she just grasped for support when the car swayed on the track. The guard stood suddenly and she withdrew her hand in panic. He, however, simply pulled the bell cord indicating we would leave the car at the next stop.

Once again my contact with the fair sex was thwarted.

I had no further opportunities to meet girls for several months. In January of 1945 the Germans moved us out of Stalag Luft III, marching us in the winter's worst blizzard to Spremberg. Along the way we rested in a pottery factory in Muskau. It was in the street in front of that factory I encountered my third phantom woman.

I don't remember getting to Muskau. I don't remember anything of the last few kilometers we traveled that night. I was told I carried another man

rather than leave him beside the road with the other disabled prisoners and guards. My first memory is of someone holding a cup of hot sweet tea to my lips.

The bearer of tea was a young woman. How she came to be there, or why the guards allowed her to be there, I have no idea. She ignored the shouting and gesturing guards and pressed the cup against my lips until I had drained it. Then she led me to the curb and gently lowered me to a sitting position.

Having done all she could for me, she picked up her cup and pot of tea and disappeared in the crowd of POWs, looking, no doubt, for the next one who had reached the end of his endurance.

These three I call my phantom ladies. I will never know their names. I will never know what happened to them when the war ended.

But I will always be grateful to them.

*Sterling Rogers,
550th Sqdn, was a POW
in 1944 and 1945*

It is the VETERAN, not the preacher,
who has given us freedom of religion.

It is the VETERAN, not the reporter,
who has given us freedom of the press.

It is the VETERAN, not the poet,
who has given us freedom of speech.

It is the VETERAN, not the campus organizer,
who has given us freedom to assemble.

It is the VETERAN, not the lawyer,
who has given us the right to a fair trial.

It is the VETERAN, not the politician,
who has given us the right to vote.

It is the VETERAN,
who salutes the Flag,
who serves under the Flag.









THE LITTLE KNOWN "OREGON CONNECTION" TO THE FAMED WRIGHT BROTHERS

It was at the turn of the last Century, more than 100 years ago, that a Bishop of the United Brethren Church commented on the possibility of human beings being able to fly. "Blasphemy! Utter blasphemy!" he shouted. "God intends only his angels to fly." It may be a surprise to learn that the bishop in question was the Reverend Milton Wright - father of Wilbur and Orville Wright.

Milton Wright was the son of a pioneer. He became a minister in the United Brethren Church, a professor of theology, and ultimately a Bishop in that denomination. Susan Wright was the daughter of a carriage maker who converted to United Brethren faith at age 14. The year was 1853 when she and Milton met at Hartville College in Indiana, where he was working and she was a student of literature. Both shared a love of learning for the sake of learning. Milton augmented his theology training with algebra and Greek, while Susan not only excelled in literature, but also math and the sciences.

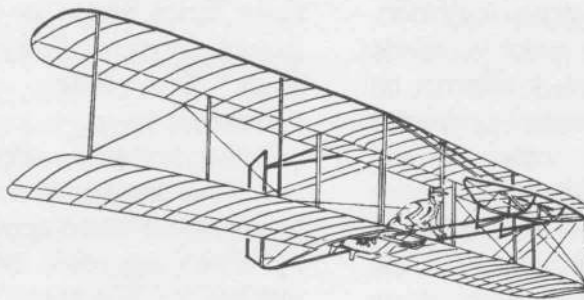
After a long courtship, Milton asked Susan to marry him and accompany him to the Oregon Territory, where the United Brethren church had assigned him as a teacher and missionary among the mining camps. While Susan declined to accompany him to the Oregon wilderness, she agreed to marry him upon his return. They married in 1859 - fairly late in life for "those days." He was almost 31; she was 28. Nonetheless, they had seven children together. Reuchlin was their first, born in 1860. Katharine was youngest, born in 1874 and the only surviving daughter.

Bishop Wright's three years in the Oregon territory were hard ones indeed. After a year of circuit riding missionary work in the mining camps, he was assigned a new responsibility. The Pacific Congress for United Brethren Church divided the Oregon Territory into two districts. In 1857, the Northern District established a preparatory school at Sublimity, Oregon, and appointed Reverend Wright as its first

president. Despite his efforts, Sublimity College closed its doors two years later due to lack of student enrollment. Wright wearily returned to Illinois and married Susan, discouraged at what he felt had been "his failure out West."

It is interesting to note that at the time Sublimity College was established, the Southern District of Oregon concurrently established Philomath College near Corvallis. One of Wright's colleagues, Reverend Conner, took the position of president of that institution. Philomath College became very prominent in the life of the newly formed State of Oregon. In fact, it remained open until 1929, when it was forced to close due to the growth of Oregon's public college network. It is important to consider that had Sublimity College not failed, causing Reverend Wright to return to Illinois more quickly than he had originally planned and marry, the Wright Brothers may never have been born.

*Celebrating
100 Years
of Flight*



“Flying Fortress”

By Frank R. Mays, Author of "And No Purple Heart"

How about a history lesson. Something most people hear and never stop to consider what or why.

That B-17 was really a good airplane. Almost didn't make it because the first one crashed on the first take-off test flight. Back then - in 1940 - the airplane was known as the YB-17. The underside - belly gun - was housed in a bubble and the motion of the gun was limited - not to mention the position a gunner had to lay in - not a really good defense for the airplane.

When Boeing made some modifications - adding several guns for a total of 13 machine guns - some newspaper reporter saw the guns poking out and called the

airplane, a “Flying Fortress.” This man was thinking of an old stone walled Fort with all the canons setting around. We have all seen pictures of old forts - visited some - ever since we were children. But - forts were built before guns were invented - some of the oldest defenses were walled cities with Archers positioned around the parapets and in towers.

It became known an Archer was limited to the direction he could shoot an arrow because the walls were straight - so - somebody decided to build a protrusion on the wall to place the Archer where he could shoot arrows along the wall without having to lean over placing himself in grave danger.

The idea was so good all forts and other fortifications built these protrusions for Archers - and later were adapted for the use of firearms. Somebody - began to call these protrusions, “Turrets.”

Along came the “Flying Fortress” with gun protrusions for the Chin Turret - the Top Turret - and the Ball Turret - the moveable gun mounts being called “Turrets” on a Flying Fortress (and other aircraft) - just like in the days of yore so the gunners could correctly defend the “Fort.”

Now - when you hear someone speak of a Ball “Turret”, you know why the name - something most people never gave a second thought to. Fact!

GROUND STORIES

By George Menkoff

Sure - we traded items - sometimes swiped from the government when stuff was available and not allowed - I believe we called it, “Mid-night Requisitioning”.

This brings to mind a little Dental History at our Great Ashfield. As you might suspect there was very little except the bare necessities in the Dental Equipment and Supplies - no proper chair, no spittoon (cuspidor), and of course no motor to provide power for the drill. It was run on cords and the assistant turning the treadle-like an older sewing machine.

So the 385th BG Dentist, Dr Milton Taubkin, a member of the 385th BG Memorial Assn, struck

out to get materials to make his dental office more workable. He did a lot of midnight requisitioning and asking, got plenty of tubing to construct a raised rigid chair., used an oxygen bottle to construct a cuspidor, made some cheek retractors, equipment to 'box' up impressions that produced models of the teeth, and a motor to turn the Drill! Quite innovative of Dr. Taubkin. He got these things and a lot of others through 'Hook or Crook'. Maybe Frank, Fain, Smitty, or Duke remembers having a tooth pulled or a filling in the new office?

The 3rd Air Division sent a photographer down and a 35min roll of film was made. Dr. Taubkin had the film and sent it to me in

Tulsa, whereby I had it put in a VCR Casette. So I have this cassette and was planning on taking it to the Reunion this year to show, but with Marie not well, and a host of other problems I was not able to go. If I go to one next year, I will be sure to take it along. I'm holding it in my hand right now. (There are other things made besides those stated in the tape.) I keep saying I will make a tape for the 385th Museum but haven't yet. I think Bill Varnedoe suggested this, so I had better get at it-also one for our 385th BG.

Have a good one,
George,
550th BG Ordnance, and
Dentist USN.

385TH BGMA, 19TH BIENNIAL REUNION ATTENDEES

548th Squadron

Baker, Don & Nancy
Caruso, Joseph & Adele
Connolly, Bill & Grace
Derer, Joseph & Doris
Englis, Sterve
Fannin, Luke & Becky
Fannin, Nicky
Girson, Marty & Edie
Hughes, James (Ed)
Hunter, Dr. Don & Beverly
Kindya, Michael & Sharon
LaCasse, Leo & Anne
McCool, Ray, Mary & Jim
Nestler, Fred
Palin, Lindy & Evy
Richardson, Howard
Schartz, David & Shirley
Zeigler, Wayne & Eunice
Metcalf, Pamela & Anthony

549th Squadron

Benner, Arch & Bonnie
Coggin, Grant & Nancy
Colthorpe, Lee, Amy, Eric, Randy, Russ,
Sheila
D'Alonzo, Gilbert
Donnelly, RoyAnne
Driscoll, Art & Mary
George, Gordon & Teresa
Lundberg, John
Mathews, John & Betty
McCawley, Frank & Peggy
Mudge, Jerry & Vera & Laurie Nelson
Newton, Tom & Darla
Phillips, Verne, Lavon & Susan
Reichardt, Les & Betty
Schulte, Walt & Norma
Smith, Charles & Peggy
Stern, Ed & Jane & Susy Fineman
Swindell, Bill

550th Squadron

Bean, Garry
Brown, Jesse & Marion
Conway, Tom & Margaret
Davis, Buster
Duell, Neil
Gazda, Walter
Graham, Donald
Harris, Sydney
Heckel, Herman & Elizabeth
Hycatt, John & Betty Peck
Kosginski, Joseph & Josephine
McCauley, Charles & Jr.
Messbauer, John & Sally
Pickett, John & Joanne
Ryan, Andrew & Elizabeth
Salvador, George & Alice
Schimmel, Jacob
Vaadi, Gene
Varnedoe, Bill & Louise
Wilson, Bob

551st Squadron

Bond, James
Bond, Millard & Teresa
Coughlin, Charles & Connie
Garvin, Aron & Jean
Gelbman, Burt & Joyce
Johnson, Stacy & Betty
Lubicic, Charles
Luckie, Sam & Nita
Masters, Dr. Vince & Judy
Moebius, Bill & Jeanette
Payne, James & Frances
Ryan, Richard
Webster, Ron & AnneMarle
Zwick, Joe & Phillis

Unknown Squadron

Burns, John & Kaye - Taylor, John & Peggy
Molzhan, Richard & Mary Jane
McCurdy, David - Smith, Gladys

Headquarters Squadron

"Col Mac" James McDonald

Air Stories [385BG] "Remembering"

By Frank Fl. Mays, Author of "And No Purple Heart"

Up early again this morning - looked outside at the cool dark surroundings - my mind wandered back in time. Odd how we humans think of events in periods of years - anniversaries and such - but we always do. Yes - October 17th - 59 years ago I was making like a big bird - flying in that ball turret - my combat mission NO. 35 - the last one for my tour of duty out of Great Ashfield.

I was no longer that young boy that entered the military at 18 - no - now a seasoned war veteran at 20 years of age - an old man in terms of a life span for an Airman - especially for a Ball Turret Gunner.

I do not remember because it was 59 years ago - I remember the day often - not on a yearly basis - but for the experience I was exposed to. My final combat mission - assigned to a "Green" crew without a single combat mission - not even the pilot. I was required to help all the gunners install their guns in the bomber - an airplane I do not remember if it had been assigned a name - but it was an "old" B-17 - showing it also was battle weary.

While waiting to be assigned to a crew - I was now in the "Spare" category since my pilot had completed all his missions - over a period of two weeks I had been assigned to three other crews to fly the ball turret - the gunners I was replacing showed up at the last minute - and the bombers had been

shot down without me aboard but my name still on the loading list. I was listed as "Missing In Action" - requiring work on my part to clear the list and keep telegrams from being sent to my mother! Yea, I was apprehensive about this mission.

When this formation of bombers reached the target area - flak began to bounce the B-17 around - the pilot fainted dead away? The co-pilot took over - descended in the flak area - bombs still aboard - down to 10,000 feet - dropped bombs somewhere - and lost from the formation flew on a heading given by the navigator.

Things quieted down as the bombardier and navigator attempted to revive the pilot - without any luck - and we flew on at an elevation of around 8,000 feet. After a while - without the Channel in sight - which it should have been - I crawled from the turret and sat in the waist fuselage. For no good reason other than something did not seem right - I asked over the intercom of the co-pilot - "if we are heading to England - why is the morning sun shining through the right waist window?"

There was an explosive remark made over the intercom to the co-pilot, "My God - I gave you a heading a 180 degrees off. Turn around 180 degrees."

We turned - the sun now shown in the left window - at 8,000 feet - somewhere over Germany - lost - flying as if we owned the skies - me with my

parachute on my chest ready to jump on command - we supposedly headed home - the pilot still unconscious.

The heading was a good - straight over a number of flak batteries but no killing hits on the bomber - we finally crossed the Channel - really heading home without having seen a single German fighter - or anybody for that matter?

On the hardstand - I jumped out and kissed the concrete! Yea - it was over - done - no more. My Guardian Angel had pulled one off again. They carried the pilot off in an ambulance - never heard of him again - I had/have mixed feeling toward the man. I became the member of The Lucky Bastard Club.

Yea - I remember October 17th! How could I forget? Not just as it appears once a year on a calendar - more often than that.

Frank

The students of Cranford High School in Cranford, NJ were asked to write a paper on a World War II Veteran. Jessica, our granddaughter, thought who could be better to write about that her very own Grandpop, William L. Styler, Jr. We thought you might enjoy reading her report.

She was very proud of her grandpop and vice versa.

William L. Styler passed away on June 27, 2003.

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WORLD WAR II VETERAN

by Jessica Styler

My grandfather William Styler, had planned on becoming a court stenographer. When word came out that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor, he was only a senior in high school. When President Roosevelt came on the radio with the news, my grandfather copied the entire report in short hand. He had immediately become furious, as did most of the other men in school. Instantly, he was determined and it became his destiny to fight in the war.

Only 18 years old, my grandfather, William Styler was inducted into the service in 1943. He went to Fort Dix in South Jersey to test his IQ, which he passed, making him eligible to join the Air Corps. After a brief stay in Fort Dix, he was shipped off to Shepherd's Field, Texas as a Cadet Trainee. "A Cadet Trainee is one who is eventually going to become either a pilot, a navigator or a bombardier." For approximately 8 or 9 weeks, the cadets began basic training to toughen up. "Unfortunately, at the end of our basic training, the word came down that we don't need a lot of pilots, navigators or bombardiers, at this point, but we do

need aerial gunners. Of course that was disappointing to those of us that wanted to be 'heroes of the skies.'" They were then sent to gunnery school in Las Vegas, Nevada. "If you're thinking of Las Vegas as a wild, wild, gambling casino and everything, in 1943, you're absolutely right, except it was worse." "Before I had gotten to the gunnery training, I had never, other than a B-B gun, fired any kind of firearm. By the time I had left, I had fired twin 50 caliber machine guns, passed tests where I had, blindfolded, taken those machine guns apart and put them back together again. I had become an aerial gunner, which, in those days, were known as number 6-11."

Next, he was assigned to a bomber crew, so he went to Tampa, Florida, where the crew was being assembled. The men trained for several months in Drew Field, Tampa, Florida. There, the first crew was assembled. The pilot, copilot, top turret gunner, radio operator, tail gunner, and my grandfather, all went overseas together. In training, my grandfather had to learn how to operate a turret and started out in the top turret. The top turret is the one just behind



the pilot and copilot, looking out the top of the ship. "The ball turret operator, being about 6'3", 220 lbs., said to me, "they have me in this ball turret, down here under the ship. I can hardly fit, would you like to switch?" Now, he got out of the small thing and I'm in it. So, I had to learn all over again because I took all of my training in a different turret. I had to learn all of the hydraulics and everything about the ball turret. Then I found out that almost everybody that talked about it said, 'That is the worst place you could possibly be.'

Training now consisted of learning how to man their stations, how to fire the guns, sea rescue missions, and how to ditch, or to be forced down into the water and evacuate the ship and get into the life rafts. When

that had finished, they were sent to Langley Field, Virginia because that is where they were developing new radar. Training continued here and they were eventually told they were going to be sent overseas. "They gave us a brand new B-17 G. The first B-17 that was built was just a B-17, then it goes through A, B, C and finally G, which had a lot of new equipment added to it. Now, we're going to fly overseas to deliver this airplane and ourselves to the war in Europe. First, they flew to Gander Bay, Newfoundland. "The next stop was Iceland. We had assumed we had just stopped there for the day and would continue on. Now Iceland was called 'The Rock,' there is no greenery there. There was ice, snow and winds. We had to tie down the planes so they wouldn't blow away. The guys that were stationed there sometimes couldn't get out of their igloos for days, so we had to stay there for a while because we couldn't just take off. Finally we flew from Iceland, across the Atlantic, at no more than 500 feet above water to save fuel, and we landed in Valley, Wales. We never saw that plane again."

The crew was taken up to what was called a wash. A wash was an area in the northeast part of England, which was on the North Sea, with nothing there. Once again, they were taught how to fire their weapons. Their airbase, in Great Ashfield, was where they spent the rest of the career in the service. Here, he completed 34 missions, including, one recall, which means they start out and before

you get to the target, they decide that you won't be able to see the target, so they "scrub" the mission and come back.

"From Great Ashfield to London, which was about 72 miles southwest of us, so that when we got leave, we went to London. I had the opportunity to see almost everything of interest in that big city. At sundown, it was blacked out. Dark. They were being bombed all the time, but they treated us marvelously. The Americans took over a hotel so troops on leave could stay over night, which was probably the equivalent of 25 cents for us to stay. Of course there were cots all over, it wasn't luxury, but it was better than being outside."

In June of 1944, the Normandy Invasion took place, and the Air Corps had to fly over and darken the sky with ships and gliders. Later, the pilot in my grandfather's crew, was brought up to 'lead ship', which meant that his skills were above average and needed to fly the lead ship in the attacks. Unfortunately, my grandfather was not needed in the lead ship because the turret was replaced by radar, which was more accurate than a turret gunner was. At this point, he was not flying with his original crew, so he was flying as a "spare gunner," until one of the other gunners was injured and they needed a replacement. So, at 3 o'clock in the morning, he was taken from the barracks and taken to the mess hall. "They say the worst thing you could do, before you take off, is eat something that will give you gas. So they give you powdered eggs, sausage and everything

that gave you gas. Of course, at 3 o'clock in the morning, you have very little appetite, plus you're a little bit frightened. So they take you to get your guns and you load the 'guts' of the guns into the plane because all that is in there is the outsides of the guns. Now, I am introducing myself to this crew that I have never seen before. At this point, I have completed 33 missions and this crew is on it's first. It's scary. Next, we go to briefing, which is when they tell the crew where your mission is going. They'd have a black tape going from the base to the target. Our mission was going to 'Big B,' or Berlin. The noise that came out of that crew was outrageous because this area, being where Hitler was, was the most protected area."

Each of the completed 33 missions was flown over Germany and "I never got nicked, never got harmed. My nose gunner got some toes shot off and my tail gunner was shot out of the tail and parachuted, safely, out of the plane, but into enemy territory. That was it."

"It's important to know that when you are 18 or 19 years old, you can really find out something about yourself that will last your entire life. You're tested, so a lot of things from then on don't faze you as much as they might have. Everything about yourself is tested and what you discover about yourself stays with you for the rest of your life. I found out that we used to take up, from my crew alone, 30 planes, and we lost 19 of them. We are lucky."



Taps



Harold J. Gardipee

NORWAY - Harold J. Gardipee, 81, of Norway died Saturday, Oct. 18, 2003, at Dickinson County Memorial Hospital in Iron Mountain.

He was born May 4, 1922, in Green Bay, Wis., the son of late George and Catherine (Gallagher) Gardipee.

Harold served in the U.S. Army Air Corp with the 385th Bomb Group, 8th Air Force during World War II. He was a member of the Norvulet Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4581 in Norway.

Edward F. O'day Jr.

B-17 Bom bradier rescued by Anita hartman dies in California

Edward F. O'Day Jr., age 84, of San Francisco, CA, Died March 30, 2002. First Lt. AC, Bombradier with the 385th Bomb Group. Received the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism on a heavy bombardment mission over enemy-occupied France on August 2, 1944. He would not salvo the bombs while over Paris despite the imminent danger of explosion. He was rescued by the French Resistance and escorted to safety by Anita Hartman (nee: Lemonnier, paris). The mission is reported in the December 2000 issue of the 385th BGMA Newsletter.

DECEASED

William L. Styler

June 27, 2003

(See Oral history Interview,
World War II Veteran by
Jessica Styler)

Edward F. O'Day Jr.

March 30, 2002

Forest "Bucky" D. Leatherman Dec. 18, 2002

LETTERS

Dear Darla and Tom

Thank you so much for writing. We hope that you all are going well. We are sorry because we had to cancel the trip to the reunion at Hampton. You know that it is always a great honor to stay with our heroes. As I informed Leo that Jeanny's mother died and that we not could attend and had to cancel. The museum is running fine and it becomes better and better. We had a lot of visitors and ceremonies this year, John Pettenger arrived on 10th of October for the 60th anniversary of his shot down and we also arranged a ceremony and dinner with him at this day. We also were showing him the tree dedicated to the 385th BG at the Peace Wood in Bastogne. You know it is the only tree dedicated to the air force. The US Air Force Band was in Perle for a concert. The commander of Spangdahlem Air Force Base Colonel Mueller visited your museum and the memorial. On 2nd of December the members of the North Atlantic Security Conference will be at Perle for a ceremony.

For next year the 60th anniversary we will arrange a ceremony around the 12th of July and we hope to see you again in Luxembourg.

We are working on a trip for next year to the states. We are going to Everett and from there we go down the coast to California there would be a possibility to meet somewhere that would be nice.

Again thank you for writing and all the best from your friends in Luxembourg.

Roger and Jeanny

Tom,

At the 385th reunion in Cleveland in 1973 Col. Vandevanter said, "Everyone in the service says their outfit is the best. Today I am going to tell you how good you really were."

Of all the bomb groups in the 8th Air Force the 385th was third for bombs on the target. And of all the bomb groups in the 8th Air Force the 385th next to last in losses. was

If you put these two things together, third for bombs on target and only one outfit had less losses that makes you pretty darn good. "

These were the words of General Elliot Vandevanter.

Submitted by
Marty Girson

385th BGMA

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