

NEWSLETTER OF THE

385th BOMBARDMENT GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION



COMBAT UNITS

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

VOL. XX, NO. 5

Editor: Ed Stern

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PREZ SEZ:

I want to congratulate Sid and Lee Colthorpe on the wonderful job they did these past two years. Our Spokane Reunion came close to 500 including guests. Our past 3 reunions have held at about 450--so I hope we do the same at Omaha in 1995. George Hruska is a great one to host the next affair and I am sure we will all support him.

Thank you to the many folks who have expressed their appreciation for the wonderful gathering in celebration of the Golden Reunion.

God Bless you all,

Bob Smith

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HONORARY MEMBERS

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CHAPLAIN JIM SEZ:

Greetings from the state of Washington -

Another Reunion has passed. This was special because it was the 50th year after our Group formed at Gieger Field in Spokane. It was a wonderful meeting and I remember -

If there was any slogan or special title that could be applied to our reunion in Spokane it was "I Remember". Every where you went; the third floor PX or Hospitality Room, the 14th floor or on the bus, Saturday's Barbecue or Sunday's Memorial Service and Breakfast, some, one would say "I remember. . .".

I remember jogging to breakfast at Great Ashfield from the line or from our Nissen hut with Ben Wingfield. Ben was one of our Electricians, about ten years older than me and always saying quaint things. (I thought they were) As we jogged along the road Ben would say, almost every time, "A brisk canter before breakfast will whet one's appetite." Ben died several years ago and I think this is the first time I have told anyone about this.

There are things we remember that are personal and some that can be shared. There are some things we should share, some we should keep to ourselves and some we must forget. Remembering our buddies and sharing our experiences is what our 385th Bomb Group Memorial Association is all about.

God has watched over each one of us and we must do no less for each other. Between this year and 1995, when we will meet again, there may be some of us that will not be able to meet. But we can continue "Remembering."

Thank you all for honoring me by giving me the plaque of remembering.

Sincerely with love,

Jim Vance



JOHN R. CUNIN

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

John R. Cunin was an order clerk when he started working at Bearings Inc. in 1948. When he retired 41 years later, he was chairman and chief executive.

He remained a director of the company and served on the board of Society National Bank

He was deeply religious and served in many civic and humanitarian causes.

Mr. Cunin, 68, died Sunday at his home in Cleveland Heights. He had been ill with cancer.

He was born in Akron and graduated from St. Vincent High School. He was a teen-age turret gunner on a B-17 in the Army Air Corps during

World War II. He survived Germt anti-aircraft fire and crash landing while flying 30 bombing missions;

"My attitude was that if God 1 me survive, maybe he had a reast and I would try to do some good wr my life," he said.

Mr. Cunin attended the Universi of Akron and John Carroll Universi where he majored in business a marketing. He was forced to lea school for economic reasons ju short of graduation, but alwa; vowed to return and get his degree.

He began working in the shippi and receiving department at Be; ings' Akron branch. He was pr footed and became an outstandii salesman for the company, th world's largest independent suppli of replacement bearings and pow transmission equipment.

Mr. Cunin became general sail manager in 1973 and was nami president in 1980. He succeeded J seph M. Bruening, who had head* the company since he founded it 1923. Revenues doubled under N Cunin's leadership. The John R. C nin Distribution Center in Carlis! Pa., was named for him in 1990..

He was a former president of th Bearing Specialists Association ar had memberships in the Americ; Marketing Association and th Power Transmission Distributors A sociation.

After he retired, he not only i turned to John Carroll to get his c gree, he taught a business class the university. He was a trustee John Carroll and of Notre Dame Q lege.

He received two Distinguished Eying Crosses and continued in the Air Force Reserves to earn the rank of Lt. Colonel. He was a 35-year employee of Pierce Estates Oil and Gas and was a registered professional engineer and was a member of the Societ-y of Petroleum Engineers.

He was a 40-year resident of Wharton County. Mr. Taylor served as Wharton Independent School District Board past secretary, Wharton County School Board past president, Wharton Chamber of Commerce past president, St. Thomas' Episcopal Church past Senior Warden and Junior Warden, Wharton County Museum Association past presi- dent, Wharton County Historical Museum charter member. Lions Gub past president. Babe Ruth League past president Eagle Scout and past Scoutmaster of Pierce Boy Scout Troop 272.

He recruited high school gra- duates for the Air Force while Liaison Officer for the Air Force Academy and taught engi- neering classes at Wharton County Junior College.

Robert Taylor

Funeral services for Robert McElwain Taylor, 73, of Whar- ton, were held Monday from St. Thomas' Episcopal Church with Rev. Dick Grant officiating. Interment followed in the Whar- ton City Cemetery.

Mr. Taylor died Aug. 13, 1993, at Gulf Coast Medical Center. He was bom Feb. 27, 1920, in El Paso to Jack and Lillian Lenore Taylor.

He graduated from Austin High School in Houston and attended the University of Texas prior to World War II, and gradu- ated from the University of Houston in 1949 as a petroleum engineer.

Mr. Taylor was a veteran of World War II having served as a B-17 pilot with the Air Force.



Arthur (Whitey) Wallace	'93
Dale Smeltzer	'93
Art Knapp	May'93
John R. Cunin	July'93
Robert J. McNeilly	April'93
Louis J. Sorrell	Nov.'92
Robert M. Taylor	August;93

□ □ □ ***LIFE MEMBERS*** □ □ □

BULLETIN BOARD

NOTICE

We have a request from the nephew of Leslie Baumert to see if he could contact anyone who possible knew his uncle who flew as a top turret gunner with the 385th BG during the term of Col. George Y. Jumper. Leslie entered the service from Mora, Minnesota and was awarded the Air Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters. Leslie died in 1947 in Minnesota. Contact Mr. Derral Lee, 7605 Skyview Road, Riverside, CA 92503.

EPHRATA

If you were ever stationed at the EPHRATA Army Air Base in Washington, write to Pat Dunston, 97-Road 18. 5NE, Soap Lake, WA 98851 (509-246-0562.)

He's writing a history of the Ephrata Airport and Air Base and needs your recollections, memories, copies of photographs, and any facts you may have. There'll be a Museum if you have anything to contribute.

He'll send you a questionnaire to fill out. Jerry Ramaker also has questionnaires available - his address is 310 Simone, Carson City, NV 89701.

SOLDIERS', SAILORS', & AIRMAN'S CLUB

The Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Club, Inc., 283 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016-3540 is a club which provides safe, clean convenient and attractive lodging accommodations to all present and former officers and enlisted members of the military. Weekday rates start at \$20.00 each for two or more guests, singles and weekends more. Located in midtown Manhattan between 36th and 37th streets. For information call (212) 683-4353. For reservations call 1-800-678-8443. Your ID card or proof of honorable service is all you need.

GROUP HISTORY

Anyone wanting a copy of the original Group History put together by Marston Leonard back about 1948 can get one from Jim Young, Box 89, Bridgeville, PA 15017-0089. He has a few left. It's worth the price (\$37.50) just to see how young and good-looking we all were in those days!

SQUADRON PICTURES

Order your 8x10 color picture -- send check for \$9.00 to:

Dorian Studio
S. 161 Post Street
Spokane, WA 99204

Specify Squadron number. Order within 10 days.

HERITAGE DAY

Evergreen Air Center, Marana, Arizona (about 20 miles North of Tucson) has set aside October 8 as World War II Heritage Day. If you get this word in time, get up there for an interesting day of sharing your memories with Tucson children as well as your old buddies.



NOTES FROM THE CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE AT MIDLAND, TX

The Confederate Air Force (CAF) along with the American Airpower Heritage Museum (AAHM), located at the Midland International Airport, between Midland and Odessa, are excited to unveil the most recent addition to the museum facilities - the SRV entertainment simulator.

Located in the museum foyer, visitors will now be able to not only see and read about aviation, but will also get the chance to experience flight. The SRV entertainment simulator, produced by Doron Precision Systems, Inc., combines a laser video disc, audio technology, motion and wind to create what can best be described as a theater that moves. Using the science of simulation technology, the SRV makes the senses work together to create the ultimate feeling of "really being there." It is the same technology that is used to train pilots to fly.

"The actual experience can be described as a training flight experience in a World War II biplane," Tami O'Bannion, AAHM director, said. After boarding the SRV, a capsule style simulator, up to 15 people will be able to experience the flight of a young Army Air Force cadet learning to fly.

The SRV is the newest type flight simulator built by Doron and an attraction that will add a new dimension to the type of learning that museums typically offer. "Our society today is accustomed to automated interactive video experiences and museums must shift their focus to meet our present day society's learning context," O'Bannion said. "We are in the shift from traditional exhibits to interactive experiences."

Future plans for the SRV include producing a simulated flight experience using a CAF aircraft in a World War II scenario and customizing the simulator for the AAHM. "Eventually it (the SRV) will be decorated as a World War II period aircraft," O'Bannion said.

The SRV will be open during regular museum hours, Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Sundays and holidays, noon to 5 p.m. Cost for an SRV ticket will be \$3 per person.

October 9-10, 1993 --The Confederate Air Force (CAF) will host AIRSHOW 93 at Midland International Airport, between Midland and Odessa, Texas. The CAF will celebrate their 30th annual homecoming airshow featuring the ever popular CAF World War II Airpower Demonstration, the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum's WWII Avro Lancaster, the TABASCO S2A Pitts, Les Shockley's Super Shockwave Chevy, Bobby Younkin's Twin Beech C-18, modern military demonstrations and static displays, and much much more! The American Airpower Heritage Museum will unveil Phase III titled "Troops, Tanks, Food and Supplies" which emphasizes the role of military transport during World War II. For ticket information call (915) 563-1000.

November 11-13, 1993 - The American Airpower Heritage Museum and Midland College announce an international symposium, "A Sleeping Giant Awakens," at the Confederate Air Force Headquarters, Midland International Airport, between Midland and Odessa, Texas. Format will be panels, papers and workshops. Featured speakers include Senator Barry Goldwater, WWII and Korean War ace Francis Gabreski and test pilot and aeronautical engineer Scott Crossfield. For registration information call (915) 685-4518.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to give us a call. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Barbi J. Woods
Public Relations Coordinator

THE NIGHT HELL CAME TO COVENTRY

By Geoff Mason Apps

So much has been written about the monstrous air raids conducted by the 8th AF and the British night bombers during WWII, that we might have lost sight of the great raids flown by the German Luftwaffe against England's cities in the early 1940's. The following account of the Luftwaffe raid on Coventry, one of the largest and most deadly raids of early WWII, was authored by Geoff Mason Apps and appeared in the November 11, 1990 issue of the INDEPENDENT in the UK.

"While we were still over the Channel, we caught sight of a small pinpoint of white light in front of us, looking rather like a hand torch seen from two hundred yards. My crew and I speculated on what it might be - some form of beacon to guide British night-fighters, perhaps? As we drew closer to our target, the light became larger, until it suddenly dawned on us; we were looking at the burning city of Coventry." - Feldwebel Gunther Unger.

The 13 Heinkels of Kampfgruppe 100, the Luftwaffe's elite pathfinders, had done their job well. Arriving over Coventry shortly after 7 PM on the brilliant moonlit night of Thursday 14 November 1940, within an hour they had dropped 10,224 incendiary bombs on a wide area of the city. The Rover car factory, the giant Courtaulds plant, the Naval Ordnance store, Lloyds and the Midland banks, the Central Hotel and the newly built Owen Owen department store in the city centre were all ablaze.

Along with the incendiaries, 48 high-explosive bombs of 50 kg each were dropped, with the aim of disrupting the already hazardous work of the fire and rescue teams. Reports came in of many people trapped. The fire brigade's resources were soon stretched to the limit, and by 8 PM, when the central fire station itself was hit, thus ending the keeping of detailed records, 240 fires had been plotted on the station map.

Operation Moonlight Sonata - the German code name for a raid of concentrated and sustained ferocity never before or afterwards experienced in Britain - had begun. By the time the main force of bombers (of which Guner Unger was a member) took over, it seemed Coventry was alight from end to end.

That night 449 bombers - Heinkel 111s, Junkers 88s and Dornier 17s - entered Britain in three streams: one over the Isle of Wight, one over Dover, one over the Wash. Between them they dropped an estimated 500 tons of high explosive in 1,200 to 1,600 bombs, including 50 parachute mines; Around 30,000 incendiaries were also released. The official casualty list reported 568 killed, 863 seriously injured and 393 lightly injured. A third of the city centre was destroyed; a third of the many factories were ruined or seriously damaged; three-quarters of the housing stock was damaged to some extent. When the sound of the last bomber's engines faded into the distance at 6:30 AM on the Friday morning, the city was barely alive.

"We have received orders to destroy the industries of Coventry tonight." Oberfeldwebel Werner Landorff, the pilot of a Junkers 88, wrote in his log that Thursday. It was an obvious target. Perhaps no other British city possessed such a combination of compact size and industrial capacity. The rise of modern factories had raised the population from 106,000 in 1911 to 308,000 in 1940, but the corporation's policy of forbidding building on common land around the city meant that factories and workshops jostled cheek by jowl with medieval and Tudor buildings in the ancient centre. Among these historic buildings was the Cathedral of St. Michael, one of the "three spires" of the city's emblem.

A German reproduction of an Ordnance Survy map identified 141 sites of interest, among them 13 motor-industry plants, including such evocative names as Alvis, Armstrong-Siddeley, Daimler, Hillman, Humber, Lanchester, Lea-Francis, Morris, Riley, Standard and Singer. Most of them had switched to the manufacture of war-planes and fighting vehicles.

In the Sir Alfred Herbert Co, Coventry had long had the country's largest machine-tools producer. In the 1930s came the building of vast plants such as Coventry Gauge and Tool, and Courtauld's synthetic fibres factory. From 1936, with the acceleration of re-armament, came the establishment of the so-called "shadow factories", semi-secret plants created for war production.

The German bombers took a terrible toll of this industrial might on the night of 14 November. Roughly a third of all factories were either destroyed or so badly damaged as to be out of action for months; another third suffered sufficiently to interfere with production for a matter of weeks. Few came through unscathed.

Whatever the intentions of the Luftwaffe, though, the damage and destruction could not be limited to these industrial targets. Both the city's main hospitals were badly damaged; wards were evacuated and operations disrupted. Four smaller hospitals and nursing homes were destroyed, as were five schools. Hardly a building remained undamaged. Hardly a street had not lost at least one house.

It was, however, in Broadgate, the city centre, that the bombardment was largely concentrated. Whole blocks had been turned into smouldering rubble. Only a third of the area, measuring three-quarters of a mile by half a mile, escaped either complete destruction or the need for considerable rebuilding.

When the loss of the new Owen Owen store - representative of the prosperous new Coventry - was a blow to the city's pride, the destruction of the medieval cathedral struck at its heart and soul.

All over the Midlands, the glow was visible in the sky. Clearly this was something out of the ordinary. But the condition of the streets made it very difficult for fire and rescue teams from outside to enter the city at all. They found themselves being flagged down and turned back: "You won't get in tonight, mate!" It is not clear how many of the 180 crews of various types did get through, but meanwhile Coventry, with its main water reserve running to waste, breached by a bomb, continued to burn.

From the many accounts of that night, a picture emerges of numberless acts of personal bravery by firefighters and rescue workers fighting hour after hour in the continuing bombardment. Time and again, teams working at the site of an incident would themselves be buried in debris. Time and again, those who survived would return to the task. The works that recur in their accounts are chaos, noise and fear.

It has been claimed, and is generally accepted, that not only were the German bombers limited to military/industrial targets, but that each bomber group had a specific target. Doubt is cast, however, by reports handed in the following day by members of those groups and now held in German military archives. While, for instance, the 14 Heinkels of Section II of Kampfgruppe 27 attacked the Alvis plant, of the 22 groups, or part-groups, included in these records, only six name a specific target, while another six do not even specify a target area.

What the records also seem to make clear is that the destroyers of St. Michael's were not members of the main bomber force, but the pathfinders of Kampfgruppe 100. The pathfinders had no specific targets; their brief was simply to spread fire across the city.

Two days later, a Mrs. Aylward described the scene in a letter to her daughter, "Coventry is a city of the dead, utterly devastated," she wrote. "We have no gas, electric light, and in most cases no water, we have no milk or bread. . . Beryl, it is indescribable. Whole streets have vanished, there is nothing left of Broadgate..." She repeated a neighbour's description of people crowding around the council House, queuing for death certificates.

Arthur Ramsay, a Home Guard despatch rider, wrote in his report that next morning of how he and five others had been called to what appears to have been a temporary mortuary at the Hill Street gasworks: "Hundreds of corpses lay around, piled haphazardly. . . Crowds of distraught people were moving among the bodies, . . . searching for loved ones."

Rumours began. When Mrs. Aylward wrote on 23 November that "Owen Owen is to be sealed up, many peo-

pie were trapped in shelters" and "we heard that many people were alive under the market as late as Thursday (21 st) tapping to be released", she was voicing a general belief held in the city.

Some Coventrians, who had assumed a death toll of thousands, if not tens of thousands, refused to accept the official casualty figures, some official material concerning the raid is still deemed too sensitive to be made public, but logic suggests the impossibility of concealing large numbers of dead.

Three factors perhaps help explain the comparatively low loss of life; first, the concentration of the attack on Broadgate, where few people actually lived; second, the widespread use of shelters by those who remained in the city; and third, the phenomenon of "trekking" whereby, following raids in August, people had been migrating every evening to stay with relatives or friends in outlying towns and villages (a council estimate a few days before the raid suggested that between a third and a half of the population undertook this nightly evacuation).

Another allegation is that Coventry was "let down". At its most extreme, the suggestion is made that Churchill, given 48 hours' notice of the attack, decided not to alert the air defences, for fear of revealing Britain's code-breaking capacity. Other accounts say that the notice was a mere three hours, and that he believed the attack was to be on London, which is why he returned there from Chartwell; further, that he believed that the jamming of the Luftwaffe's guidance beam would result in the bombs falling harmlessly on open fields.

Unfortunately, and this is not disputed, the diversionary beams were sent out on the frequency of a superseded guidance system, and were ignored.

It is certainly true that the 449 bombers taking part, the Germans lost only one, over Loughborough, and there seems to be some doubt over whether even that was actually the responsibility of the defence forces. This seems an appalling record, particularly when compared with the losses suffered by British bomber squadrons in night raids over German targets.

There were plenty of Anti-aircraft batteries around Coventry, but their effect seemed to tie neatly in with a remark passed two months earlier by General Pike, commander-in-chief of the Anti-Aircraft Command, that he doubted if his guns accounted for one aircraft per 15,000 rounds fired. That night, 6,700 rounds were pumped into the sky over Coventry.

The success rate of the defences in the Coventry raid is hard to reconcile with the figures quoted for the so-called Battle of Britain. Perhaps, as far as the war in the air was concerned, there were really two Battles of Britain; the much-publicised one fought in daylight over the fields of Kent and the South-east, which was won; and the other, known by the citizens of Coventry and the industrial cities of the Midlands, which took place over their heads at night, and which, if seriously contested at all, was lost. Only the people were undefeated.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Thanks to the 94th for this story about the Queen Elizabeth. Many of us went over and came back on her.

Many 94th'ers were among the 15,000 GIs who boarded the liner *Queen Elizabeth* for the United Kingdom on or about 3 May 43. My husband-to-be Doyle, (331st) radio man, was one of them. He was raised in Colorado and laughs when he says, "I'd never seen anything bigger than a row boat and I couldn't believe that this massive great structure was actually a ship." Upon being told that she was the largest ship in the world there were some who would not believe she was British. Anything that big had to be American! And, sorry guys, but it is documented that many young GIs didn't even know where England was - "some little Island off the coast of France?" Really! But then, all we Brits knew about America was that it was full of "Yanks," gangsters and movie stars, and everyone was rich. How ignorant we were about each other back in those innocent days of our youth. But that soon changed, didn't it, when you all landed on that "little Island" that would become your "home" base of operations until the end of the War?

In June 1936, when the *Queen Mary* was arriving triumphantly in New York on her maiden voyage, plans for the second *Queen* were well under way. She was to be essentially like the *Mary*, with a few improvements, most of which had to be put off until long after the War, when she was finally completed as an updated luxury liner. Back in September 1938 when she (as a 40,000 ton hull) was ready for her first launching, war clouds had begun to gather. She was christened by the then Queen Elizabeth (the present Queen's mother) and was towed to a fitting-out basin to be finished. However, a year later the War started and halted her fitting-out job, and she stayed, unfinished, in the Clyde for two years, a prime target for enemy bombers, and took up space badly needed for the construction of warships.

On 2 Mar 40 as yet untried at sea, and upon Winston Churchill's orders, she crossed the Atlantic, alone and unarmed except for two guns on each side of the flying bridge. Captain J C Townley opened his secret orders at sea. He was to take the *Elizabeth* to New York, there to join the *Mary* who had been caught there when War began. The *Elizabeth's* grey superstructure was finished and sleek looking, but she was still raw on the inside. Pipes, wires were still exposed. No lights could be shown on board. She was a ghost ship with a skeleton crew as she silently zig-zagged her way across the submarine infested ocean. She was to maintain radio silence but would receive wireless messages through the Royal Navy, and was to maintain complete blackout.

Cunard officials in New York were notified, under oath of secrecy, of the *Elizabeth's* voyage and ordered to move the *Mauretania* from Pier 90 to make room for the giant ship. The news leaked out and thousands lined the dock to greet her. This was the two sister ships' first meeting, one of very few, for very soon they both sailed to Australia to be refitted for war duty, and spent the rest of the War carrying troops all over the world, but never docking together.

When Churchill offered the two *Queens* as transports for American troops, the foremost consideration was how many men could be carried safely on each voyage. There were sufficient lifeboats to take 3,785 people, and it was claimed, enough rafts for everyone on board. In June 1942 the *Mary* was carrying 10,000, but the Americans requested this to be increased to 15,000. The captains of the two *Queens* agreed

that 15,000 could only be carried during the summer months when men could sleep on the decks outside. But in winter weather it would be too cold, and dangerous if the ships rolled heavily.

Standee bunks were installed, about 6 ft. high, with scarcely enough room for a man to squeeze into them with the man above resting practically on top of him. The Army decided that each berth could be used twice, each berth having two occupants, one at night and one during the day, as the men did not sleep 24 hours a day. The ship was divided into 3 sections, each with a distinctive color. Each GI was given a metal disc corresponding to his assigned area and the number of his mess sitting. (If you missed one you went hungry - no favors.) Meanwhile you coped with seasickness and the first feeling of home-sickness, and a never-ending chow line - sleeping on deck, in passageways, on tables and anywhere with a half-way flat surface. But the *Elizabeth* got you there safe and sound - which, after all, was the main idea!

REUNION NOTES

The 50th Anniversary Reunion in Spokane August 25-29 was a smashing success, with 469 in attendance at the Saturday night Banquet, including over 20 "new" couples who were attending their first Reunion.

When your Editor arrived on the day before the Reunion was scheduled to start, we found the Sheraton Lobby filled with early arrivals, who got a fast start on the visiting and story-telling.

From then on, the hospitality rooms, the lobby, all the trips and functions were "oversold" as everyone got into the swing of things. The trip to Grand Coulee on Wednesday night, the boat ride on Lake Coeur d'Alene, the tour of Spokane, the visit to Geiger Field and Fairchild-all went off without a hitch and were enjoyed in perfect Spokane weather. The Friday night barbecue featured a great meal of salmon and/or barbecued chicken, an Air Force band for entertainment, plus some interesting Indian dancing.

The Ladies brunch at the Spokane Club featured some of Spokane's top Chefs giving our wives tips on culinary delights, which we men will expect to taste in the immediate future, please.

Forty or more took advantage of their visit to see the Canadian Rockies, and several couples combined the Spokane visit with a cruise to Alaska.

The Saturday night banquet and dance was outstanding in both the food and in the 18 piece band which entertained us until who knows what time. They were going full-bore when you Editor and wife retired to our very comfortable room. We'll add a summary of the very interesting talk by Brigadier General Jim Richards of Fairchild as a separate story.

OMAHA CHOSEN FOR 1995 REUNION

After a spirited discussion and election process, Omaha won out over Savannah as the site for our 1995 Reunion. Our Secretary, George Hruska will be the Host. Other nominees included Albuquerque, and Atlanta, with returns to Tulsa or Fargo being offered as a last resort.

New Officers elected were Robert C. Smith as President, Bob Valliere as 1st Vice President, Archie Benner as 2nd Vice President, Mrs. Jean Smith, Woman's Vice President, John Pettenger, Treasurer, and George Hruska, Secretary. Jim Vance and Ed Stern were drafted to continue as Chaplain and Editor respectively.

In his Treasurer's report, John Pettenger reported about a \$13,000 balance. A complete report will be printed in the Hardlife Herald in the Spring.

Frank Sutter confirmed earlier reports that the French Government no longer awards Croix de Guerres, having concluded that 1975 was the last date on which action would be taken.

We voted to continue to support the Sally B. with a \$500 contribution, and we voted to send Ian a token of our appreciation for his continual presentation of a wreath at the Memorial Services at Maddingley every year.

The possibility of a trip to England the 3rd week in June 1994 was discussed. 40 people are needed to make the trip a reality. Let John Pettenger know if you're interested.

A suggestion that we have Squadron meetings on Friday rather than Saturday was heard but not accepted because of the substantial number of late-comers who would miss that very enjoyable part of the Reunion.



One of the plaques awarded to Chaplain Jim, Vern Philips & Ed Stern

This list may be incomplete but it's the list we have of attendees at the Spokane Reunion. Let us know of any errors or omissions and we'll correct it in the December issue.

Last Name	First Name	# in party	Last Name	First Name	# in party	Last Name	First Name	# in party
Abrahamson	Clarence	2	Albrecht	Harold	2	Koon		1 2
Anderson	Oliver	2	Ardznckl	Anthony	2	Kubr		2
Anderson	Oscar	2	Am	Robert	2	Kuhn	Robert	2
Andrew	Hugh	1	Audette	Albert	2	LaCassc	Leo	2
Bailey	Robert	2	Balliere	Dob	2	Lapine	Raymond	2
Blanchette	Emery	2	Bash	Geraldine	1	Ledy	Warren	2
Bond	James	1	Bcmber	John	2	Lopiano	Robert	2
Brashear	Wesley	2	Benner	Arch	2	Lubicic	Charles	1
Brown	Jesse	2	Bennett	Rf	2	Lundberg	John	1
Brown	Charlie	2	Bexfield	Frank	2	Lybeck	Clifford	2
Clew	Harry	2	Dinks	Gerald	1	Marano	Frank	2
Colantino	Mario	2	Brackett	Chuck	2	Martin	Earnest	2
Collins	Donald	2	Bright	Charles	1	Mathews	John	2
Connolly	John	2	srocker	Joseph	2	Mathwos	Dyton	2
Conway	Tom	2	Bushey	Harold	2	McCawley	Frank	2
Cook	Gordon	2	Child	Helen	1	McGhee		1
Coudyser	Carol	1	Childreee	Jack	2	Menkoff	George	2
Coughlin	Charles	2	Clark	William	2	Moebius	William	2
Courtney	Roy	2	Cole	Earl	2	Mclillo	W.C.	1
Crawford	Lester	2	Colthorpe	Sidney	2	Monroe	Thomas	2
Davis	John	2	Cook	Burnell	2	Moravek	Karl	2
De Berg	John	2	Croley	Marie	1	Nestler	Fred	2
Derer	Joseph	2	Crowl	Kimber	2	Pangle	Duane	2
Deutsch man	Casimir	2	Csonka	William	2	Parker	Gordon	2
Director	Howard	2	DeGiacomo	Joe	2	Payne	Robert	2
Donnelly	Gera'J	1	Dentinger	Stanley	2	Peterson	Jennie	1
Douglas	Robert	1	Dickason	Elmer	2	Philips	Verne	2
Dworshak	Henry	2	Duletsky	Paul	1	Porter	Heyward	2
Dyklns	Dale	1	Eckhardt	Mrs. Reuben	2	Provencio	Juan	2
Eggers		1	Emmons	James	2	Punches	Joel	2
Elbert	Edward	2	Fife	Bill	2	Pyle	Byron	2
Fauber	Clarence	1	Flynn	Charles	2	Rasmussen	Elmer	2
Findeies	Ted	2	Fuller	Francis	2	Raymond	James	2
Fritzinger	Russell	1	Gallagher	Mike	2	Reinken	Floyd	2
Callan	Plato	2	Grabowski	Mildred	2	Richard	Sep	2
Gaul	Normal	2	Grundler	Carl	2	Richardson	Howard	2
Gazda	Walter	2	Guffey	Charles	2	Richey	John	2
Gesser	Jack	1	Gunther	William	2	Riva	Dan	1
Gildner	Wes	1	Hackney	Gene	2	Roberts	Standlee	2
Gillis	M. Drue	2	Hair	Thomas	2	Rogers	Buck	2
Girson	Marty	2	Halstead	Stanley	2	Salvador	George	2
Hach	Bob	2	Harrison	Tom	1	Schubert	William	2
Hanson	Carlyle	2	Heckel	Herman	2	Schuman	Jerome	1
Harmon	Jerome	1	Helman	Tom	2	Shalinsky	Milton	2
Harvey	Robert	2	Howard	Pat	2	Sherry	Alexander	2
Hawes	Grendell	1	Hruska	George	2	Snow	Elmer	2
Hill	Russell	2	Huber	Arkey	5	Stead	Gordon	2
Hoagland	William	2	Huber	Charles	2	Steele	Fred C.	2
Horn	Wayne	1	JHuff	W. Cloyce	1	Stetson	Francis	1
Howe	Homer	2	Hulse	Russell	2	Stigler	Franz	2
Hunter	Don	2	Ihlenburg	Fred	2	Struke	Andrew	1
Irons	Diement	2	liger		2	Sykes	Edgar	1
Irving	Charles	1	Johnson	Charles	1	Tanguary	Roland	2
Java	Harry	2	Johnson	E	1	Taubkin	Milton	2
Johnson	Donald	1	Kivl	Louis	4	Tenneson	H. Gunnar	1
Jones	Henry	2	Knight	Richard	2	Tipp	Marvin	2
Kavaliunas	John	2	Lancaster	o.v.	2	Todd	William	1
Kindya	Michael	2	Leswing		1	Tracy	Thomas	2
Klein	tMerrill	2	Love	Ben	2	Waizberg	Vincent	2
Klohe	von	1	Loyet	Mike	2	Wills	Robert	2
Knight	Elob	2	Luckie	Samuel	2	Wilson	Robert	2
						Wolkoweki	waiace	1
						Zink	Virgil	2

Lyke	Isam	2
Massari	Louis	2
Masters	Vince	2
McAllister	Floyd	2
McCauley	Charles	2
McDevitt	A.J. "Bud"	1
McDonald	J.G-	1
McElroy	Edward	2
McNamara	Frank	2
Messbauer	John	2
Mika	Leonard A.	1
Mika	Leonard R.	1
Miller	Arnold	1
Milligan	Robert	2
Molzhan	Richard	2
Montano	Arthur	2
Mudge	Jerome	2
Newton	Tom	2
Nicholls	William	2
Nolan	Ronald	2
Pansier	William	2
Payne	James	2
Peltzer	Harry	2
Pettenger	John	2
Pickett	John	2
Pool	Fain	2
Poore	Forrest	2
Radin	Norman	2
Ramacker	Jerry	2
Richardson	John	2
Ross	E	1
Roquette	Franois	2
Ryan	Paul	2
Schulte	Walter	2
Siederer	Herman	2
Smith	Charles	2
Smith	Ralph	2
Stern	Edward	2
Sunday	Wilbur	2
Surritt	Jack	2
Sutter	Frank	1
Tulare	Willis	2
Unruh	Marvin	2
Vance	James	2
Vencill	Rolland	2
Walls	Frank	2
Weikert	Ruel	2
Williams	Opal	1
Winton	Tyler	2
Wood	John	1
Wrigley	Harold	2
Zaputil	Steve	1
Zeigler	Wayne	2
Zwick	Joe	2

Smith, Bob 2



EDITOR'S NOTE: One of you gave us this at the Spokane Reunion - we don't remember who.

The words go with familiar tunes-- evidently some of you sang these - they're really good!



BLESS 'EM ALL



In five thousand years when the're digging for gold. In mud that is slimy and slick, a fortress they'll find there, all battered and burned. Eager beaver still holding the stick - there's many a hot rock who wouldn't turn back - and many a crew member there. They got no promotion this side of the ocean - the flak must have got in their hair - Bless 'em all - bless 'em all, the long and the short and the tall - Bless all the colonels who spoil all our fun, for we're saying good-bye to 'em all. As back from the target we crawl. There'll be no promotion this side of the ocean - A B-17 killed 'em all.

MARSEV DOTES & DOSEY DOTES

Marseburg and Magdeburg and little Ludwigshaven, a kid'll go crazy too - wouldn't you? Dusseldorf and Munster and Hoff and pretty Peenemunde a guy would get lazy too - wouldn't you? There's not a chance to go to France. It's really Shamesy Wamesy. A telegram from Uncle Sam. "Your down in Flamesy Wamesy." Merseburg and Magdeburg and little Ludwigshaven, a kid'll go crazy too - wouldn't you? a kid'll go crazy wouldn't you.

BLUE SKY

Black flak, shootin at me, nothin but black flak do I see, Flak, Jack is somethin to see, you don't need a buck, Mack cause it's free. Never saw flak looking so black, If it hits you, you ain't coming back. When you hear a crack right on your track. Think of the slak back in your sack - It's black flak shootin at me, nothing but black flak do I see.

BLUES IN THE NIGHT

From Hamburg to St. Lo, from Bremen to Bordeaux, wherever the big friends go, I've been on some milkruns, I've been on some ruff ones, but there is one thing I know, The black Flak will get you, a sorrissime thing to lead you to sing the blues in the night, See the bombers fallin, hear the Jerries callin, Achtung - I can't get my chute on, well brother you've had it - the weather, the flak - a slug in the back - and the blues in the night.

I WALK ALONE

We bombed Cologne - with our Mickey and G Box to guide us and our flak suits to hide me - We bombed Cologne and Merseburg too. From down below they shot a flare - black, flak, I'll have you know - From up above I heard a voice. O' God I wish I were there - We bombed Cologne with just our Mickey and G Box to guide us and our flak suits to hide me - We bombed Cologne.





MACNAMARA'S BAND



My name is Colonel Ensign - I'm leader of the Group. I'm down in operations just a grinding out the poop. I'll brief you on the mission, tell you how to fly the ship, I really ought to know cause I've aborted every trip.

CHORUS: Early abort - avoid the rush - early abort - avoid the rush - early abort - avoid the rush. When he leads the formation it's screwed up till we land while we wallow along behind him with our prayer books in our hand.

My name is Col. Jeffries - I'm the leader of the Squadron. So gather round you pilots and I'll give you all the poop - you wonder where the fighters are and where to find the flak - I'm the last one to take off and the first one to get back - Early abort, etc.



My sisters name is Minnie and she plots the Yankee flights - she monitors their radio by morning and by night - She listens to their corny quips until she's nearly daft - She's even been propositioned over Yankee V.H.F. Early abort - etc.

C'mon and join the Air Corps and get your flying pay - while others work and sweat and toil we mess around all day - our pilots can do many stunts and do them well of course - and if you think that isn't hard just try to loop a horse - You'll never mind - You'll never mind - come on and join the Air Corps and you'll never mind, etc.

They send you down to Duxford field and keep you there for years - and if you try to belly ache they pin back both your ears - on Duxford field a lousy place as you will quickly find but I don't care I'm leaving there - so I will never mind - You'll never mind, etc.

You're flying over the channel and then from where you sit, you see that prop come to a stop and then that engine quit. You can not swim, the ship won't float, the shore is miles behind - Oh, what a dish for the crabs and fish but you will never mind, -etc.

C'mon and join the Air Corps and never take a dare, if someone bets there's any stunt you can't do in the air, just show the boys how hot you are and while they stay behind you just be bold while they grow old and they will never mind - etc.

And then if you want to see your picture on the wall just fly on a little while and don't stay on the ball - you'll never know - etc.

Ten thousand dollars home to the folds - repeat - An engine goes balooney, another pilot croaks - Oh, ten thousand dollars home to the folks.

DOWN IN THE VALLEY



Into Ruhr Valley, flying so low. Some chair born bastard, said we must go - Flak loves P.R. ships - Blow jobs do too. Shuttle bug escort, what hapened to you - Send me a letter, send it to me - Send in care of Stalag Luft 3.

GENERAL RICHARDS PRESENTATION
AT THE BANQUET

Brigadier General Jim Richards, Commanding General of the Tactical Wing at Fairchild, and just moved up to Special Ass't to the Secretary of the Air Force in Washington, gave us some illuminating statistics about the Armed Forces, and the Air Force in particular, when he spoke to us at the Banquet on Saturday night at the Reunion.

Here are some of the figures he gave us which show the changes already made and in the works as the Air Force prepares for the 21st Century.

A.F. Today: 445,000 People
85,000 Officers
360,000 Enlisted
66,500 Women (15%)
293 Women Pilots
119 Women Navigators
68% Married
Racial Minorities 21%
23% Overseas
99% of Enlisted H.S. Graduates
54% of Officers Graduate with Professional Degree

Air Force	1990	Current
	Prior to Gulf War	
Active Duty	600,000	400,000
Wings	200	100
Major Commands	13	10
Major Divisions	19	0
	Now	End of Decade
Army Divisions	28	14
Navy	15 Carriers 550 Ships	10 Carriers 340 Ships
Air Force	36 Fighter Wings 400 Bomber Wings	19 Fighter Wings 180 Bomber Wings
Total Active Manpower	2.1 Million	-40%

Base Closures

1988 had 2000 Major installations worldwide of which 500 were in the U.S.

Closed or to be closed - 600 Worldwide, 150 in U.S.

Next Closure Commission in 1995.

Defense spending as % of Federal Budget

60% in 50s.
40% in 60s.
30% in 80s.
Going to be less than 15% by year 2000.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Of course Federal Budget in total dollars increased dramatically, so 30% in 80s was much more in actual dollars than 60% in 60s.

And the General ended with this paragraph:

If I were to make some predictions here tonight, one of them might be that we are headed toward a total uniformed military

force that could be well under a million by the turn of the century—less than half of what we had only three years ago. There's no question that defense budgets will continue to decline, perhaps to as low as two hundred billion annually by the end of the decade—that's compared to about two hundred and eighty billion today. If that's the case, then **the richest and most powerful nation the world has ever known will be protecting itself with less than one half of one percent of its population, and with less than three percent of its national wealth—think about it.**

How would you like to have an insurance policy that cheap?

WATERMELONS AND MONKIES

As the heavy bombers started reaching deeper and deeper into Germany, those in bomber command decided to try a new system in their tactics. It was decided that they would drop their bombs in central and southern Germany and continue on to North Africa to reload and refuel. Those bombers which were badly damaged and the pilots felt they could not make the trip headed for Switzerland where they were interned for the duration.

After several of these missions, we were allowed to view a 8 mm color movie made by a waist gunner of a round trip. He started with the men being awakened, eating and being briefed on the mission. Then on to the flight line where they crawled aboard their planes and took off. They then formed and headed for Germany. The film was well done. There were times when he focused on a bomber along side of them who was suddenly hit, burst into pieces and just disappeared from view. Others showed wings being blown off and the planes headed for the ground. It was a true view of what combat was really like.

When the bombers arrived in Africa, the fields were nothing but sand. The men slept near their planes as they were refueled and rearmed with bombs. One of the fringe benefits of these missions was the ability of the crews to obtain tropical fruit and the likes of oranges, bananas and wonderful huge watermelons. Our mouths drooled as we watched them smilingly eat whole sections of watermelon. Some brought fruit back with them. They also had ideas of bringing back other items, namely animals.

Some of the men from the 385th brought back all sorts of them, such as small burros and even monkeys. A friend of mine who was a gunner told how they even rigged oxygen for a burro they brought back. One of the gunners picked a monkey for his choice. It was the hit of Great Ashfield. Whenever a female approached, the little demon would do the filthiest sexual movement which most of the men found amusing. One day, near our workshops we showed him off to the men working there. It also attracted some nurses and Red Cross workers. About the time when a large crowd gathered, Colonel Vandevanter drove by and saw the group and got curious and had his driver pull over. He walked to the middle of the assembled, took one look and blew his top. He ordered the sergeant to get rid of that filthy animal right now.

Stories and photos had appeared in the British press and governmental officials let the Air Force know that they did

not look at it as funny. They ordered all those animals to be taken to the London Zoo to be quarantined so they could be tested for disease. They were scared silly that there was a possibility of hoof and mouth disease infecting the animals on the Islands.

The fruit did continue to be brought back. There was a young boy who lived near one of the bases who had a rare disease and it was absolutely necessary that he have bananas in his diet. The men of the base created a fund to see that he received a steady supply of fresh ones for the duration of the war.

Don Kabitzke

EDITOR'S NOTE: Another of Don Kabitzke's amusing stories. We don't vouch for any of them - but they're fun to read.



Wallace Wjotkowski & Friends



Jim Raymond & Friends



B-52 at Fairchild

WWII kindness saves pilot, starts friendship

By J ini Camden
Staff writer

For two men who first saw each other as enemies almost 50 years ago, Charlie Brown and Franz Stigler are remarkably good friends.

But then, their relationship survived some of the longest odds imaginable before they ever said a word to each other.

Fifty years ago this December, German fighter ace Stigler could have shot down American bomber pilot Brown and his crippled B-17.

Could have, but didn't. Instead of pulling the trigger on the guns of his Me-109, Stigler waved and let the B-17 limp home, across the North Sea to England.

And in that lies one of the strangest tales of the U.S. 8th Air Force in World War II.

Such tales are filling the meeting rooms and banquet halls of the Sheraton-Spokane Hotel this weekend as the 385th Bomber Group celebrates the 50th anniversary of its formation at Spokane's Geiger Field.

- Most people know that facility now as Spokane International Airport, but a half-century ago it was the training ground for the crews that would man the Flying Fortresses for the air war over Europe.

Stigler and Brown are honored guests of the 385th this weekend. Some 500 of the bomber crews and their families are in Spokane, where they toured Fairchild Air Force Base and filled Riverfront Park with parachutists and Indian dancers Friday. Today they'll take a nostalgic walk through the Davenport Hotel with Mayor Sheri Barnard and hold a banquet to mark the golden anniversary.

For Brown, a member of the 379th Bomb Group which was another 8th Air Force unit stationed in England, the friendly treatment is not such a stretch.

For Stigler, who shot down 28 Allied planes, perhaps including some from the 385th — well, let's just say time smooths over a few things. As one pilot from the group said, "I'd like to meet a German fighter — on the ground."

Besides, Stigler's a Canadian citizen now, and he did, after all, perform one of the most chivalrous acts of the war in the skies over Europe.

It happened Dec. 20, 1943, during an Allied bombing raid on Bremen, Germany. More than 500 B-17s were

sent to hit an airplane factory, and Brown's group was in the lead.

Brown, 21, had been flying about six months, but this was his first flight as an aircraft commander. Some 25 miles out from their target. Brown's bomber, Ye Olde Pub, was hit by anti-aircraft fire.

The bomber's nose was blown off, and one engine knocked out. The plane pulled out of the formation, losing speed and altitude, and was pounced on by 15 German fighters. Gunners in the B-17 shot down one fighter, and possibly a second, but the plane lost another engine and was raked with machine gun fire. With speed decreasing and frigid air rushing through the opening in the nose, Brown tried a desperate maneuver about five miles up in the air, a loop that caused the plane to plummet.

The entire crew blacked out from the force of the dive.

Meanwhile, Stigler had landed to rearm and refuel his fighter, Eva, after shooting down two B-17s from the raid.

"While I was sitting there, I saw an airplane coming up, just over the trees," Stigler said. "I took off."

Stigler approached the bomber carefully from behind, wary of the machine gunner in its tail.

"I had my fingers on the trigger. I was waiting until he points his guns at me," he said. The guns stayed motionless. Coming closer, Stigler saw the gunner on the floor, covered in blood.

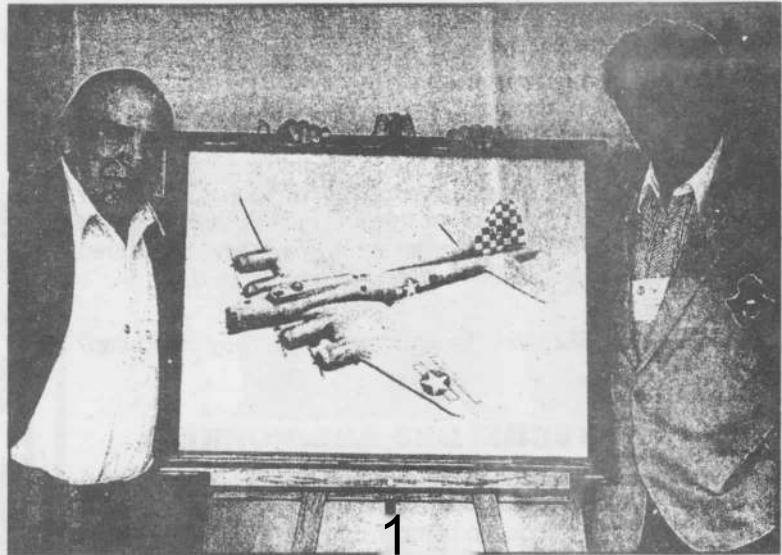
As he pulled alongside the bomber, he could see through the holes shot through the fuselage. Members of the crew were scurrying around, trying to save the wounded. The guns didn't move — they were frozen from the high altitude temperatures. Anti-aircraft fire had punched a hole through one wing, the tail was half gone and the bullet-riddled metal was peeling away from the plane.

"I have never seen a plane in such bad condition still flying," he said.

Brown had regained consciousness as the plane was levelling out, flying on one engine at treetop level. While struggling with the controls and trying to assess the damage, he looked out his right window.

"There's this nightmare — a German fighter. I closed my eyes and shook my head, thinking he'll go away. He didn't," said Brown.

Stigler guided the bomber out over the North Sea, hoping it would turn north to Sweden — a shorter flight to safety. Instead, Brown headed west for England.



Staff photo by Dan Pelle

Franz Stigler first made contact with U.S. pilot Charlie Brown 50 years ago over the skies of World War II Germany.

At that point, the German had three options. He could shoot the bomber down, try to force it back to Germany or let it go.

Stigler waved, and turned for home.

"Usually, we were shooting at airplanes. You never saw a person," Stigler said. Shooting the crippled bomber would be like shooting at a man in a parachute, something most aviators from both sides refused to do in the European theater.

"I gave him a 50-50 chance to get home."

Brown did get Ye Olde Pub home — barely. He landed at a field a few miles from the coast, where Air Corp officials were astounded that a plane in such bad shape could still fly. The bomber was marked classified and taken somewhere to be studied; Brown's report was sanitized to remove much of the details.

"All we could talk about was this crazy guy who let us go," Brown said.

More than 40 years later, Brown told the half-forgotten story at a reunion of his pilots' class. The more he thought about it, the more he wondered who the German pilot was.

There was no record of the incident in any of the official American, British or German war records. The latter isn't surprising, since Stigler never told anyone.

"I would have been court-martialed," he said.

But a Dutch author who wrote a book about chivalry among pilots connected Brown with a German air force general. That general convinced a magazine for German fighter pilots to print a letter from Brown asking for information about the incident.

Stigler, who emigrated to Canada in 1953 and now lives in Vancouver, saw that letter and called Brown, who lives in Miami. "I'm the guy," Stigler said.

The two met and became friends. They often appear together, as they will this morning at a meeting of the 385th, to tell their story.

The odds against them ever meeting were millions to one, Brown estimates. Like Stigler said, it was even money that Ye Olde Pub wouldn't make it back to England that day.

The odds they would both survive the war were also fairly long. Of Germany's 30,000 fighter pilots who began the war, only 1,200 survived, Stigler said, adding that he was shot down 17 times himself. Brown's unit also sustained heavy casualties, and he was shot down twice.

Among former enemies 50 years after the war, Stigler's not too worried about the kind of reception he'll receive today from the men of the 385th.

"Aviation is basically international. Underneath, we're basically the same people," he said.



Take a 'Sentimental Journey'

B-17 ready to transport area residents back in time

By Paul Dana
STAFF WRITER

Sitting on a small, thinly padded seat in the bubble-glass nose of a B-17G "Flying Fortress," the sense of history is awe inspiring.

To the front, looking out the window, sits the famous Norden bombsight, a clever device that changed the complexion of the air war over Europe during World War II by allowing "daylight precision bombing" from high altitudes.

To the left and right are two of the plane's 13,500-ca liber machine guns, which fought off swarms of attacking German fighters

To the rear of the nose is the navigator's station, from which 20-year-old kids guided hundreds-strong fleets of bombers far into enemy territory and, if they were lucky, back home.

And above and behind are positions for the rest of the 10-member crew, the rest of the plane that rained more bombs — 640,036 tons — on Axis targets than any other type of aircraft.

B-17s played a crucial role in winning World War II.

And this plane, nicknamed "Sentimental Journey," is the most restored example of a B-17 still flying.

It is on public display today through Sunday at the North Dakota Air National Guard base at Hector International Airport in Fargo.

The plane belongs to the Arizona Wing of the Confederate Air Force, a fleet of restored military aircraft — flying museums — from the World War II era.

The crew of five that has taken the plane across the country this summer stopped in Dickinson, N.D., last week. They planned on going to Devils Lake, N.D., before landing gear problems forced the plane to land at the Air National Guard base in Fargo, the only place around that had the jacks needed to hoist the plane up so repairs could be made.

While a trio of modern F-16s soared overhead, then landed in the bombardier could fire when he the background, showing just how wasn't aiming and releasing far the aviation world has come in bombs.

50 years, the crew rolled the relic Boeing fitted later models out of its hangar and into the turreted to counter German pilots dazzling sunlight Wednesday.

"Technology has its place, but way to attack the bombers was there's something magical about head-on, slightly out of reach of this," said Air Guard Col. Tom Pol- the top and belly turrets, kinghorn as he watched the sun- But during the Sentimental Journey catch the gleaming aluminum's use as a firefighter after the num skin of the plane.

This plane is priceless. It is flying history.

A total of 12,731 B-17s were built from 1935 until the end of the plane in 1978, it faced a daunting war.

Sentimental Journey crew mem- "We had to put all the bulkhead Bob Lauderdale said the Air heads inside. They had stripped all Force lost about 50 percent of the insides out and put in big



DAVE WALLIS/THE FORUM

Ground crew members and a few spectators take a look around the B-17G bomber parked next to the old Hector Airport terminal Wednesday after repairs were made to the landing gear.

planes in combat, and lost a "horrendous" number of crewmen.

Many planes that survived the war were melted for scrap aluminum.

Others, like this one, were used for sea rescue operations and to fight forest fires.

Sentimental Journey is one of only about 50 B-17s left in the world, said pilot-in-charge Dick Churchill. Only about 10 of the planes still fly. The rest sit in museums.

Because most of the people who bought planes after the war wanted the newest models, few planes survive that actually saw combat, Churchill said.

The Air Force commissioned Sentimental Journey, though that was not its original name, in March of 1945 after the war in Europe had ended. It was assigned to the Philippines, where it served as a re-connaisance plane for the last few months of the war.

The plane is a "G" model, which means it came equipped with all the upgrades devised through years of hard lessons in combat.

The most prominent upgrade is the twin-gun nose turret, which

soared overhead, then landed in the bombardier could fire when he the background, showing just how wasn't aiming and releasing far the aviation world has come in bombs.

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There was a guy that came to the plane twice a day for four days. He talked and talked. Finally he went in and didn't come back. (When he finally emerged, he said) Now I think I'm going to be all right.

Pat Dohl, crew member

tanks," Churchill said.

"We had to acquire the turrets. They are extremely hard to find."

The top turret, a rotating twin-gun bubble manned by a crewman who stood behind the pilot and copilot, was the rarest item.

"The top turret came off a B-17 that a guy bought right after the war and put it on top of a gas station in Milwaukie, Oregon," Churchill said.

In addition to the bulkheads and turrets, most of the wiring, many of the instruments and radios, and some of the sheet metal were replaced.

Many of the parts, especially the guns, had to be fashioned out of aluminum, based on old blueprints.

Once the members of the C.A.F. Arizona Wing completed the restoration, they painted the plane's tail with a blue stripe and a "U" inside a black triangle, the insignia of the Atlantic theater's 457th Bomber Group.

In truth, the plane requires constant restoration.

"We beg, borrow, steal and make all the parts," Lauderdale said.

Chief Flight Engineer Tom Nagle ran his hands over a few of the hundreds of thin metal panels that make up the skin of the plane to

find loose rivets, which he tightened with a screwdriver.

"It's a never-ending process, really," he said.

"Every year we do some kind of big project," Churchill said. "This year we pulled the fuel cells out ... and we completely rewired the wings."

The crew also changed two of plane's four enormous 9-cylinder, 1,820 cubic-inch Wright Cyclone radial engines.

Just fuel, insurance and basic maintenance drives the cost of the plane skyward.

"That costs us \$2,000 an hour to fly," Churchill said.

He said the wing spends \$150,000 a year to keep the plane up.

Confederate Air Force members donate all of the money and labor that keeps the planes flying.

Nagle, a retired police officer, and Churchill, a retired airline pilot, each spend about three months a year with the plane.

The work is a labor of love for the crew.

"When I was about 8 or 9. I found a B-17 in a World Book encyclopedia. I thought it was the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen," said crew member Nan Kleffman as she hand washed the grime off the underside of one of

the plane's wings. "I think everybody's story is the same."

The Arizona Wing does have two members who flew in B-17s in the war, but most are just people who love old planes.

Eagerly crawling through the impossibly tight passages inside the plane, Air Guard Maj John Trombley took pictures for his father.

"My dad flew these," he says. At the age of 20, Dale Trombley piloted a B-17 into combat over Germany. Trombley says his dad's plane suffered enough damage in one raid that it was forced to land in Belgium.

"Everytime he sees something like this his eyes water up," he said.

Kleffman said she meets some veterans who haven't seen a plane since the war and are elated to crawl inside, while others struggle with the memories.

"We had one man, I felt so bad for him, he would try to get in the door, then he'd back off. He'd try again, then he'd back off. He was crying so bad he couldn't get in the plane," she said.

Crew member Pat Dohl told a similar story.

"There was a guy that came to the plane twice a day for four days. He talked and talked. Finally he went in and didn't come back." When the man eventually emerged, he said. "Now I think I'm going to be all right."

The United States lost 8,314 bombers and 6,378 crews over Europe during World War II — a total of 79,265 American airmen died.

The plane will bring back old memories and stir new ones today through Sunday at the Air Guard base at the end of 23rd Avenue North.

The crew will give tours of the inside of the plane for a \$3 donation to the Confederate Air Force.



That's a water skier on a parachute in the sky



The Henry Dworshaks, Ed Sterns & Frank Maranos on Lake Coeur de'Alene



Arkey and some of his customers



Vince & Judy Masters, Frank Walls, Ruel Weikert & Winton



Getting the word at Fairchild



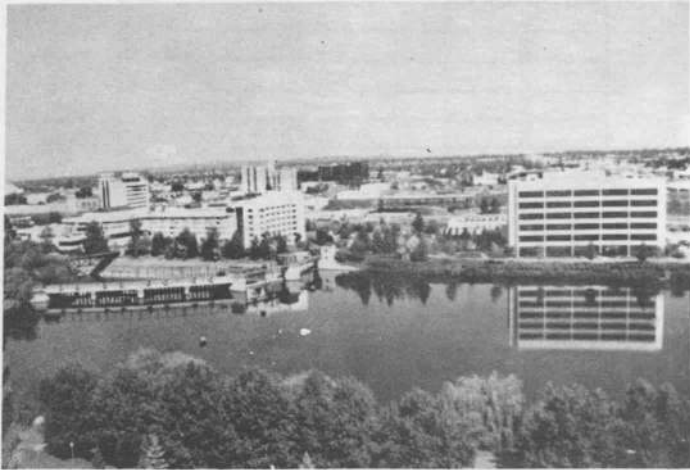
On Lake Coeur de'Alene



Host Bob Smith announcing the latest



President Sid awarded plaques to Chaplain Jim Vance, Ex-editor Vern Philips & Editor Ed Stern.



The view from our Spokane Sheraton headquarters



Com'on you guys, Smile!



President Sid presiding



The Saturday Business Meeting



"Lucky" Joe Jones made another Reunion



Bonnie & Arch Benner, Ivon Klohe



Photo Interpreters
Spokane Hospitality Room



Winton at 385th Plaque
AF Academy enroute Spokane



Waiting for bus for
Coeur de'Alene



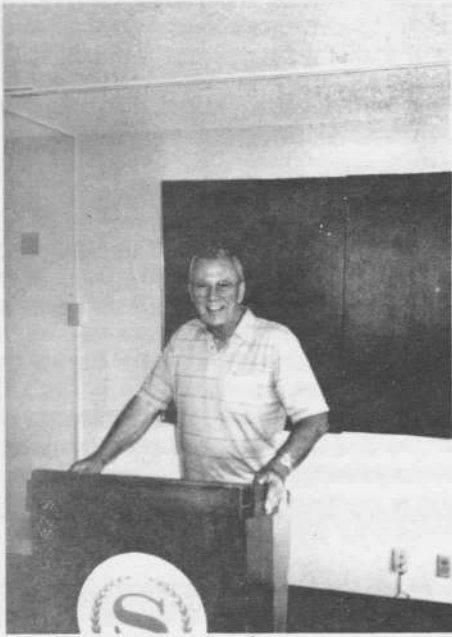
Winton at Lewistown, Montana Airfield



Merrill & Elaine Klein with Jim McDonald



Bob Payne & Winton



Leo LaCasse



Frank Bexfield



Jim McDonald



Winton, Judy & Vince Masters



Silver Eagle Benner



Winton & Jim Emmons at Geiger Field



On the visit to Fairchild, George Hruska & Jerry Ramaker tried to get the Captain to take them up, answer, "You are ooth too old and way too fat"



Were we surprised when we saw Sid Colthorpe in the tail gunners position of a B-52. Said he had re-upped, but Steve Zaputil is telling his buddy "No way can that Sid fly tail when I was turned down."

Letters to the Editor:

Dear Ed,

Trust you and yours had a wonderful time at Spokane and uiat you are both keeping in good health.

As you are aware, another picture made the reunion, I should say we have been informed by host Bob Smith of the name of the person that won it, this was painted by Mrs. D. Pleasance(82) who is the mother of Russell Pleasance. Mrs. Pleasance was due to go into the hospital and there was quite a rush to finish the picture before she did.

Now to the cartoon, you remember th '92 reunion, only yesterday so it seems. We were guests of Tom & Norma Hair at Long Mefford Bull dinner but owing to snags we were

not able to sit at the same table. Tom and I were very disappointed, however we sat with Ed Metcalf who was most emphatic that at his size & age he could still get into a belly turret and Peggy said NEVER!! But Ed said if I can't get into the turret at Parham Museum I will treat you & Leo to dinner. However, we have not got a ball turret at Parham, so the bets were off.

Some months later I met up with a friend I worked with, who as you can see, is a cartoonist and enclosed a copy of what we asked for, we have already sent one to Ed Metcalf, and awaiting a belly laugh from a belly gunner.

During the days of the reunion at Spokane, Peggy & I kept talking about you all, what you would be doing during those few days, it was a great pleasure having met all of you folks last year and we are forever bringing up certain instances, you could really think that all you folks don't exist until a hand is proffered to you and the warmth of that shake verifies your existence.

As you are aware, we have asked for the monies from our picture raffle to help with expenses of the HLH to the folks outside the states. We hope this can be done so that we can still remain on the mailing list, because as I have said to a lot of people, we've met, the Yanks Vets have made our retirement.

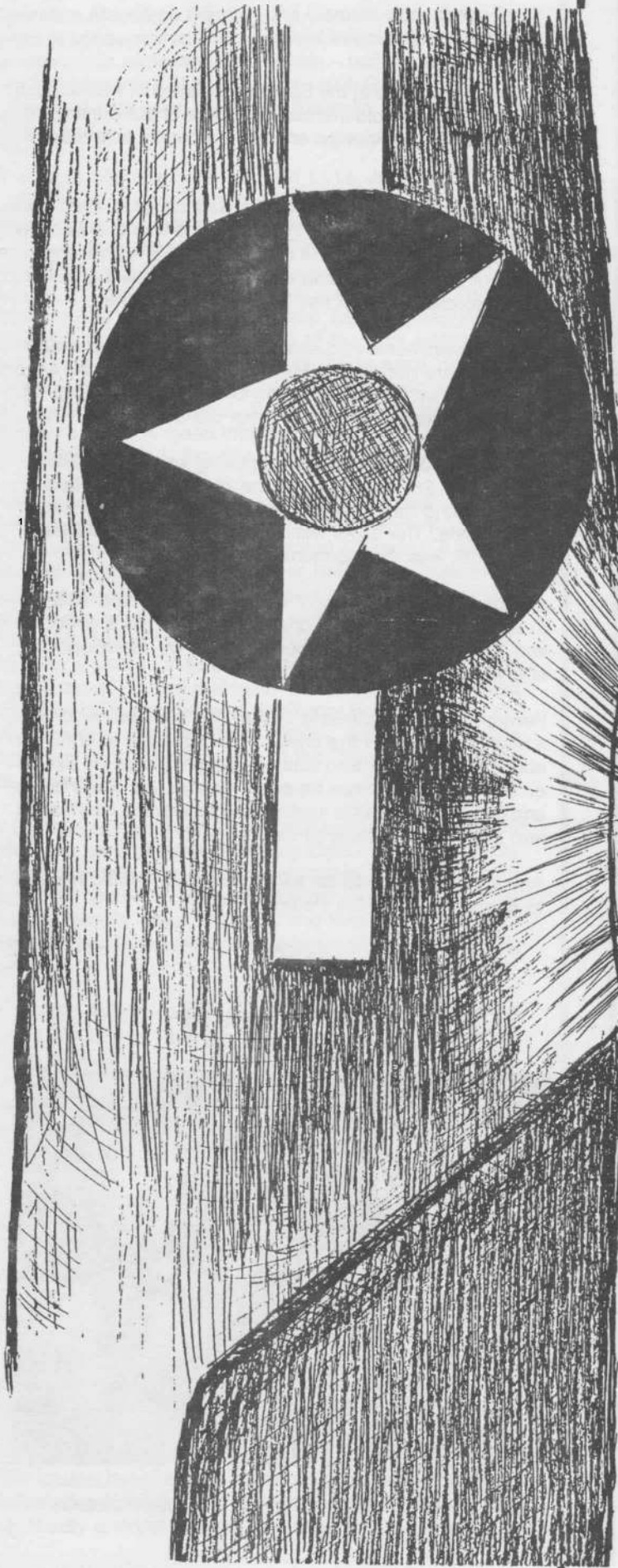
Mr & Mrs. L. Gordon
39 Combs Lane
Stowmarkaet
Suffolk
IP14 2DD



Jane and Jerry Ramaker present picture painted by Mrs. D. Pleasance of "our" area in England.



Jane & Ed Stern with Jim Raymond



HE SPUD HE COULD STILT
 GET IK/ THE BULL TURRET;
 BUT H-E DIDN'T IF= SAY
 HE GOULD TETGOT EGRIH

STOWMARKET
 ENGLAND.

Dear Ed,

I hope that I may use your excellent newsletter as the medium to express the feelings of Franz and Haja Stigler, as well as Jackie and myself for the exceptionally warm welcome extended to us by Bob Smith, Sid Colthorpe, the other officers, and especially the membership of the 385th BG Memorial Association during the Aug. 25-29 reunion in Spokane, WA. Both Franz and Haja were highly complimentary of their warm treatment and commented that the Spokane reunion was one of the best reunions that they had ever attended. The Brownies second that evaluations. Again many, many thanks.

I would be remiss if I did not commend Bob Smith and his assistants for putting together a highly effective, enjoyable, diverse, and just plain fun program in a most beautiful city where even the weather was perfect. The transportation was well organized and on time; the major problem in past reunions which we have attended. Franz and I extend special thanks to Gerry Donnelly and Bob Valliere for initiating our invitation to attend the reunion, through Bob and Sid.

A special bonus for me was meeting Gen. Bob Payne and Col. Ted Findeiss, two of my former Pilot Class 43-D classmates at Blytheville, AR, Advanced Flying School. No contact or knowledge of either of them since April 29, 1943. It was especially pleasant to learn that Gen. Payne had weathered his POW status rather well. Since our pilot class at Blytheville suffered well over 50% casualties in WWII alone, mostly in the 8th AF, just finding two combat survivors, several wars and 50 years later is a real upper.

Again with special thanks to the officers and membership on behalf of the four of us, as our RAF compatriots would say, "Well Done, God bless and Keep". Enjoy Omaha in "95".

Sincerely,

Charlie Brown & Franz Stigler
Les Grand Lieutenants
Internationale



Charley Brown & Franz Stigler telling their story.

Dear Ed,

We had a great time at the Spokane Reunion. It was an opportunity to renew old friendships. Three of our crew were able to attend the Reunion and we thoroughly enjoyed the time together.

One of the poignant events of the Reunion was when we talked with Jennie Martinez Peterson. She was at the same table as my wife and I at the dinner dance. She spoke with us about her efforts to find someone who could give her more information about her father: Roy Martinez.

When I arrived home I did some research in the back issues of the Hardlife Herald. The May 1991 issue lists all the missions flown by the 385th Bomb Group as well as lists of burials overseas of members from the 385th.

According to Jennie Peterson her father was reported missing on July 26, 1943. From the records in the Hardlife Times I found that three planes were lost from the 385th on that date. The pilots were: Harris, Duncan and Daniel. The target was Wessermunde.

It is hard to believe that no crew member survived from the three planes as we often observed planes get a direct hit and three or more parachutes would be seen opening afterwards.

Perhaps there is someone in the 385th BGMA who was a member of one of the crews who has some information about Roy Martinez who was co-pilot on one of the planes on that day. She knows his serial number, his home town, and date of death but is seeking more personal information and hopefully a picture of him.

Any information could be sent to me and I would be glad to forward it to Jennie Peterson.

Sincerely,

Elmer Snow
139 Runnymede Rd.
West Caldwell, NJ 07006-8114



Geo. Hruska talking to Jennie Martinez Peterson

Dear Ed,

Came across the enclosed a while ago but didn't have your address here in CA until the August Newsletter arrived. You've probably already heard of this Wall of Liberty but I wanted to make certain that you had this info.

My feeling is that all members of the 385th deserve to be listed on the proposed wall and surely those who died in the air over Europe should be so honored.

Because many records were burned, they're asking individuals to provide their names. Those who were KIA may not have living relatives to do so and I feel that if it is within the capability of the 385th BGMA to supply a list of those who served, living or dead, then by all means we should do so.

Perhaps the Air Force Associations, the VFW and other veterans organizations could supply further information to you or otherwise assist Salinger in this effort to pay tribute to ETO GI's.

Best Wishes,

Ed Johnson
(Gunner, Maryonovich Crew)

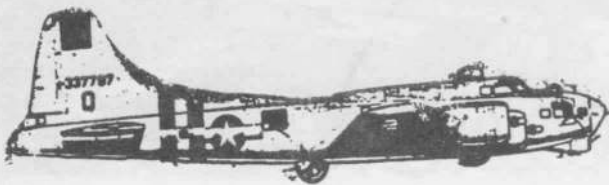
P.S. About the Air Medal: My understanding was that if a plane made landfall over enemy territory it was considered a mission, bomb drop, abort or whatever. We did not get Air Medals for shooting down e.a., even if confirmed (I had one confirmed and never got medal; actually, never got another Oak Leaf cluster.) But crews flying out of Africa or Italy did get the Air Medal for each e.a. destroyed. I don't know why the inconsistency. Maybe it was easier to FIND enemy fighters over Germany than over Italy.

Five million vets sought

Pierre Salinger is looking for the names of 5 million men and women who fought in Europe and North Africa during World War II.

Salinger is chairman of the Wall of Liberty Committee of the Battle of Normandy Foundation, which plans to carve the names into a series of walls that will be built in Caen, Normandy, near the Allies' D-D\$y landing spot.

Because a veterans' record center in St. Louis was burned down five or six years ago, Veterans or their families are asked to subnet names directly to the project. Applications may be obtained by calling (800) WW2-VETS.



Dear Fellow Veterans:

My name is Wallace Kuester, a resident of Peoria, IL. On February 23, 1944 I and my fellow crew members arrived at Great Ashfield to join the 385th B.G., 551st Squadron.

My pilot was Steven Kruppa, Navigator W.O. Henry Dagg, Bombardier Benjamin Gallegos, Crew members Lewis Vobrocek, Thoos, Turnbow, Tormohlen, Hosbach and myself as Radio Operator.

Our brief stay at Great Ashfield was as follows. Day 2, a training flight over the Irish Sea and Radio Op. proficiency exam. Day 3, we flew a 10 hr. very large raid over Regensburg, Germany, split up among crews of 4 planes. Two of these were shot down. Day 4, mission aborted due to fog. Day 5, Feb. 28, we flew what was described to us as a "milk run" over the Pas de Calais area of France looking for V2 installations to bomb.

Our pilot was I believe Lt. Gilbert Kemminn. Lt. Kruppa flew co-pilot. While flying at 12000 ft with bomb doors open, we took a direct hit by an 88 that cut the plane in two at the waist windows. The plane flipped over on its back and went into a flat spin from which it was impossible to move until the spin stopped. I and waist gunner Hosbach of Morton, PA were the only two to escape. We saw the plane blow up on our way down. I landed in the arms of the anti-aircraft gunners and Hosbach and I spent the next 14 months as prisoners, where we did meet Turnbow who had been shot down on the previous mission. We were at Stalag VI and IV, also three months of marching to keep ahead of the Russians.

Through the kind cooperation of Col. George Hruska, I recently received information showing that some of the crew were buried in cemeteries in France and Belgium.

The purpose of this letter is basically to find out what happened to our co-pilot who did not fly with us on that fatal day. I heard that he finished his 25 missions and returned to the States. He was red-haired and freckel-faced and the officers called him "Red". I do not know his name.

The second puzzle to me was the fact that on that Sunday we went out to a hard stand and were standing next to a plane named "Blue Champagne" with a picture of a champagne glass and bubbles, also a leggy young lady, and that is the plane I always thought we went down in. However, George Hruska sent me a casualty list showing that the "Blue Champagne" went down April 14, 1944..

If there is anyone in the 385th that has any information or memory about this time, I would appreciate hearing from you.

Sorry, I couldn't make it to Spokane, maybe next time.

Sincerely,

Wallace Kuester
5323 N. Isobell
Peoria, IL 61614
Ph: 309-691-8151

Dear Ed,

My family had saved all my letters to them, written while in service in WWII. An Aunt living and working in New York City while I was in combat aboard "Rum-Dum" clipped all articles daily, from the "New York Times". On Aug. 16, 1944 the following appeared:

"The Fortress Rum Dum has roared over Europe on 65 combat missions without once turning back short of target, dropping more than 366 tons of high explosives and incendiaries.

The B-17's ground crew includes:

M/Sgt Forrest A. Keen of Macksville, Kansas, Chief
Sgt. Stephen Zarnowski of Exeter, NH
Sgt. John V. Bolger Jr. of Auburn, NY
Cpl James F. Lavin of Chicago, IL."

End of Article.

It was Cpl. Lavin that conceived of the odd ball character Rum Dum and painted him on the nose.

The above names should be chiseled into the records of the 385th B.G.M.A for their super human efforts.

Sincerely,

Gene Silberberg
550 Bm Sqdn.

Dear Mr. Stern,

To complete my research regarding my home town Holten, in the eastern parts of the Netherlands, I am (still) looking for a picture of a B-17G from 385th Group, 549th Sq.

This specific plane was shot down on October 10th, 1943, during the Munster raid, and crashed in Holten. My hobby-colleague (Martin Hols and I have been in touch with a.o. the pilot Mr. William B. Whitlow. Although we do have pictures from the crew, we never have been able to locate a picture from the aircraft.

The a/c's serial number was: 42-3539
Individual Code: XA-P

I hope you want to put this request in your 385th BGMA Newsletter.

If there is anyone who is in the possession of a picture of the above mentioned a/c-it doesn't matter how the plane is shown-I should very much like to have a copy. I will refund the costs.

Looking forward to reply's...

And congratulations with the Groups 50th Anniversary.

Sincerely
Herman J. Steunenberg
Dijkerhoekseweg 3
7451 LV Holten (ov)
Netherlands



Dan Riva at Squadron Meeting



Sep Richard & old friend Betty Tipp



Frank Walls



Getting the fish off the fire at the BBQ

Dear Ed,

I know my only right to write is to caption the pics I have enclosed, but first I've got to comment on what a 1 st rank job our 549th pilot Kernel Smitty did at Spokane. Job ONE, Mr. Smith. We should take him on steady! Thank him.

First picture: is of the four housepainters at the firing wall; four remnants of the John Richey crew OHIO AIR FORCE left to right: Jack Gesser TG; Tom Helman CP; John Richey AC; and Tmmy Hair LWG. Hypergraphics on the hats?

OHIO AIR FORCE
B17f
Record 1 2 Jerry Kills
Munster Germany
10/10/43

The second picture is same four at the banquet.

And by the way of a bit of background music on the best of three of the four, be it noted that the handsome young man named HAIR is one and the same as Colonel Thomas Hair, USAF (ret), the author of the piece on B-17 combat gunners that you have said you will print soon, our top-ranking member.

It took big swigs of emotion potion to get the skipper out of Florida, as hobbled as he was with two bad knees. But we are glad to report that he is to get two new metal ones very soon; the left one on 20 September, and the other one on 1 November this year. This the price of hours and days and years at his desk, left seat in a TWA 707 and 747. No he never made Kernel (corn), but he was Cap,n RICHEY for a many a year and many more.

A major event (for me that is) was when tailgun GESSER went crosswise with Franz the Llushwaffel pilot, the little jerry in a FFW-190 who claimed he had been shot down eleven times by Fort gunners, three of those by tail guns. Oh my, all Jack said was, I think the only Folke Wolfe I ever got was over Emden, and the kraut barrel fuse was lit. Emden? You say Emden? Ach ein bien dumcoft etcetera, get away you hear? I'm afraid of you, you're the one that gave me this, and he pointed to a 3 inch red dent in his forehead...And Jack, backing off quick, sputtered, wasn't me, I never shot pilots, only prop spinners. And Franz then turned and slowly limped away. End of conversation.

Ed, in the event someone else doesn't report the story of Charlie Brown and Franz of the Luftwaffe, I'll take off on it, and I ony have ONE-engine (I lost a leg to an airplane two years ago, which makes me one left).

Charlie Brown? I met the man in the Hospitality Room; whatta guy, a big guy, big enough to eat hay, sociable and very likable; but Charlie Brown, you gotta know you've got us all scratching our hairless, atrying to figure you out.

And Franz? I met him in the Coffee Shop, on Saturday, and I could kick myself for asking that dumdum question if by chance he drove a BMW, and he smiled and said, oh no he didn't have that kind of money. (BMW-Bavarian Motor Works-made the Folke Wolfe 190's engine).

What I should have asked if he was the bum that nailed Mike (Siwek) and me over Bremen on November 29th of '43. It was a Folke Wolfe that did that job, and remarkable it was the only time in 25 missions apy jerry ever broke our skin.

I don't know what part of the CB story I missed out on but I came in where he was trucking along at 100 feet on 2 engines (don't know what 2) with the plexiglass-nose shot off deep in the heart of and maybe 30 minutes from Sweden. All the crew but Charlie was in the backroom, and he musta been poop'n marshmallows in all that wind.

About here is where Franz gets in the act. It seems he had landed to refuel/rearm and was climbing aboard for another go when "whoosh" went a Fort on two-engines and shot off nose but 100 feet overhead. When Franz caught Charlie, he observed the tail gunner slumped and bleeding. Said he, I don't shoot dead men, so then pulled up onto the Fort's right wing to see a long Charlie achugging away, aheading for merry old England.

Franz said he wished they would head for Sweden (about a half hour away he said) but when they didn't and were on a heading west, he saluted and turned back, not to know if ever they had made it home until but recently when he found CB and now the two of them tour about telling us old guys how easy we were.

Ed, if I could, I'd ask, I say there Charlie Brown, I'd like to know. When the jerry pilot waved you that hiball, meaning I would guess, so-long pal, did you answer him with a friendly wave of your own, or did you just flip him off, in the good old American way? Ed, you wanna bet?

Tom Helman
718 Sherman St.
Medford, OR 97504
(503) 772-7876



Dear Ed;

In recent issues of Hardlife Herald, I have noted a couple of comments concerning airplanes and missions about which I may be able to provide some information.

I have misplaced the name and address of a former 385th mechanic who asked you to include a couple of names of airplanes on the front of Hardlife. One of these was originally my airplane.

My crew and I arrived at the 385th Bomb Group in early December 1943 and were assigned to the 551 st Squadron. I was the first pilot and the only one of the crew that was married. My wife, Cathy, was about five months pregnant when we told her goodbye on our way to England. I was celebrating New Years in the Base Hospital with pneumonia when my crew came up with a name and had our airplane painted without consulting me. The painting on the nose showed a baby in a diaper setting on a spring with a bottle in one hand and a bomb in the other. The name was "Off-Spring". Since they had named the airplane after my child to be, I think they knew that I could not object.

The "Offspring" was a new B-17G but it seemed to attract flak. It spent a lot of time on the ground "out of commission". On the first all out Berlin mission on March 6, it was out of commission. Since the 94th Bomb Group nearby had an airplane but it was short on crews, we were selected to fly with them. As could be expected, we had the worst position in the formation (Tail-end Charlie) and the worst airplane. We could not get one engine started and neither could the Ground Crew. This turned out to be the day my son, Larry, was born. The Offspring was also out of commission with battle damage for my 21st and last mission, April 11, 1944. We flew the "Mission Belle". I think it was the oldest B-17 on the Base.

I see by Ian McLachlan that the Mission Belle had made a crash landing on February 9, 1944, which I was not aware of.

On April 11, our target was supposed to be in, or near Pozan, Poland, but the whole area was covered with clouds. By the time we reached the Pozan area, our #4 engine was overheating so much that I knew that we would never make it back to England with it running. We headed for Stettin, our secondary target. Since it was in Germany, we could bomb through the clouds. We lost our #1 engine to a FW190 before reaching Stettin and our #3 engine to flak over Stettin. We managed to feather #3 but could not feather #1.

I was leading the Low Squadron of our Group and Col. VandeVanter was leading the Group -1 think he was leading the Wing on that mission. I advised him of my condition and he said, "I suggest that you head for neutral territory, stay over land as much as possible, and bailout, if necessary."

Before we found Sweden, we lost our #4 engine. I landed in a farmers field in Sweden with one engine left, a much better choice, I thought, than being a POW, or freezing to death in the North Sea. There was no way that we could have ever made it back to England.

I think we were the only crew from the 385th that landed in Sweden. While attending an Internee Reunion in 1987 sponsored by Sweden, I discovered that the Swedes had listed the Mission Belle as being from the 305th Bomb Group.

If any of you know the fate of "Offspring", I would love to hear from you.

Duane Pangle
639 Winslow Drive
Yuba City, CA 95991

385 TMB G M A

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