



385th Museum at Perle

NEWSLETTER OF THE 385th BOMBARDMENT GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

COMBAT UNITS

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

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Perle Special Edition

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Our members who went to Perle sent wonderful stories and pictures of the event, which must have been thrilling for all who participated.

The stories are in French, German and Luxembourgise, but you may be able to get the gist of the stories, and if you're really interested, find an interpreter.

We're going to devote a goodly portion of this issue to stories - - too bad we all couldn't have been there to relish the friendship and admiration that was expressed.

CHAPLAIN

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Robert Valiere

*Prez Sez*Perle

The affair was successful beyond imagination. I'll leave it to Tom Newton to give a fuller description of what occurred. Roger said that there are prospects for substantially greater growth of the museum and the possibility of a new and larger building. The monument itself is in the center of town and is its center of attention. It is beautifully designed and one worthy of a special visit. Each of the several towns treated us royally and their gratitude was incredible. Until one realizes that this area of Luxembourg was invaded by the Germans, crossed by the Americans as they drove the Germans back to the German border, recrossed by the Germans during the Battle of Bulge, and then finally covered once more by the Americans as they drove the Germans back. For a dreadful period, from the middle of December 1944 through the end of January 1945, the area of Luxembourg we visited experienced the savagery of war.

An unexpected high point was the TeDeum solemn high mass at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Luxembourg City. Our group was seated behind the altar, probably not much more than 15 to 20 feet from the Grand Duke and Duchess, the Grand Duke Heirier and his wife, and the three eldest children. The service was conducted by the Arch Bishop of Luxembourg and the first half dozen rows of the church were filled with Ambassadors and their wives.

I will presume responsibility for sending letters of appreciation to the appropriate people in Luxembourg. At the same time, each of you should feel free to do so should you wish.

Savannah Heritage Museum

Bob Valliere has moved and I have seconded a motion to contribute \$5,000 towards the construction of the Chapel at the Heritage Museum. Ed Stern has expressed his approval in writing and Tom Newton has approved orally during one of our meetings at Luxembourg. George Hruska appears to approve, subject to adequate funds available. I have not heard from Verne, but presume he will write me promptly if he disapproves. Pettinger, incidentally, is enthusiastic. Unless I hear something to the contrary, I will contact General Schuler within the near future and secure from him instruction as to how this should be accomplished.

Very Truly Yours,

Mike

Chaplain Sez

Hello again,

The following is a take off on the AA-12 steps. It was made up and used in a sermon by our Pastor the Rev. David Braun. He titled it "I OWE GOD EVERYTHING".

1. "I seem to have been like a boy playing on the seashore, finding a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me." (Isaac Newton)
2. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."
3. "Problems are to be solved, but mysteries only to be explored." G. Marcel
4. Truth has to do with attitude.
5. "You have to look deep into my heart, Lord, and you know all about me." (Psalm 139)
6. "If you want to be great, you must be everyone's servant." (Mt. 20:26)
7. "I am not worthy of the least of all Thy mercies." (Jacob-Gen 21:10)
8. I have almost unlimited power to make a mess of my life and others' lives.
9. "The Lord is my sheperd." (Psalm 23)
10. Feelings discern; facts describe.
11. Love me! Let me love!
12. "Except as you become child-like, you will not enter God's Kingdom."

Think on these and see how true each statement is.

Sincerely in Love

Jim

July 11, 1998
4955 Antioch Rd.
Harrisonburg, Va. 22802

Mr. Ed Stern
P.O.Box 9466
Fargo, N.D. 58106-9466

Dear Ed,

The Ryan family returned home from the Luxembourg trip without any difficulties.

Everyone really enjoyed the trip. While we were there, Roger Feller had activities and ceremonies planned for each day. It was quite emotional for me and my family. There were very sad times, happy times and always "GREAT TIMES".

At the end of each day, we would think that nothing could possibly top all that had happened during that day, and, the very next day, Roger would have something planned just as spectacular or greater. What a wonderful and rewarding week!

The people of Luxembourg are so warm, so kind, and so thoughtful. It seemed as though they could not do enough for the American's. The people are just so gracious toward the American people for helping them become liberated. Everyone should be able to take a trip to Luxembourg and hear the stories from the men and women (who were children at the time) who actually lived the war!!!!

I think all of their "THANK YOU'S" belong to the Veteran's who served during the war (World War II).

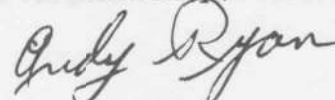
The 385th BGMA was well represented by the veterans from the U.S.. Those who weren't able to go surely did miss a wonderful time.

There isn't enough that can be said about Roger Feller, his wife Jeanny, and all of the people that put in their time and effort to help organize the week long events. It took many long hours and a lot of hard work and we "THANK" all of them.

When I started researching my brother's (Stephen Ryan) military life, I had no idea and could never have dreamed that it would climax with such an HONORABLE event that I just experienced in Luxembourg.

I am enclosing some pictures that I think would interest you and would be interesting to the readers of the "HARD LIFE HERALD".

Sincerely,



Andy Ryan



Andy Ryan and Mike Gallagher at Steve Ryan's Grave



Herman Heckel in front of Memorial at Perle



side View of Memorial

**Mark McGuire & Roger Maris
Bulletin from Fargo**

Yes, We knew Roger as a friend and a customer. Yes, he was just as nice as the publicity says-and generous. We had a baseball signed by Babe Ruth. Gave it to him to sign and put it in his Museum. He signed it and gave it to his favorite charity in Fargo.

Dear Ed,

Again, thank you for having called to ask how the trip to Luxembourg went.

The ceremony at the church and the dedication of the Memorial outside afterwards was, I believe, the most beautiful event I have ever witnessed. **IT WAS MAGNIFICENT!**

Enclosed for your use in any way you might wish to use it is a script of the ceremony from the church service. It was presented, paragraph by paragraph, by the minister of the church with an English translation after each paragraph.

Although the official language of Luxembourg is French, the natives actually speak an interesting mixture of French and German called "Luxembourgesch" (spelling?) which is totally beyond my comprehension.

President Mike Gallagher made a marvelous, brief and emotional speech in accepting the dedication of the Memorial. He was/is truly an excellent and articulate spokesman for the 385th.

Also enclosed is a copy of a Proclamation which I was able to obtain from the Governor of Florida, Lawton Chiles. At the dedication of the Museum, I first read it in French and then in English.

The Memorial and the museum had a cost of somewhere in the neighborhood of \$175,000; I got this information from a conversation which I had with the artist who designed the Memorial., and that estimate is "on the low side". This money came from the communities of Perle, Wolwelage and Rambrouch.

An item which came up in two of the conversations which I had with our members while there was that our Executive Committee (of which I believe you are a member) should definitely plan to pay for the air fare and registration to Savannah for both Roger and Geanny Feller next Spring. I shall convey this "officially" to Mike but, for now, I thought I would mention it to you.

All for now...as always, with every Best Wish

Sincerely
Bob Silver



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385th BOMB GROUP
United States Eighth Air Force

WHEREAS, the people of Perlé, Luxembourg, have created and are dedicating a memorial and museum to the 385th Bomb Group of the United States Eighth Air Force on June 21, 1998; and

WHEREAS, many young Americans gave their lives so freedom might be preserved; and

WHEREAS, there are 102 former members of the 385th Bomb Group now living in the state of Florida; and

WHEREAS, the people of Florida wish to convey to the people of Perlé their acknowledgment of this expression of honor and remembrance;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Lawton Chiles, Governor of the state of Florida, do hereby extend gratitude and appreciation to the residents of Perlé for this kind commemoration to the memory and in honor of all members of the 385th Bomb Group.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the state of Florida to be affixed at Tallahassee, the Capital, this 3rd day of June in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight.

Lawton Chiles
GOVERNOR

EDITOR'S NOTE: Please, everyone take the time to read this very thought - provoking and moving talk given at Perle dedication.

**PROGRAM FROM THE CHURCH IN
PERLE, LUXEMBOURG ON THE
OCCASION OF THE DEDICATION OF
THE MEMORIAL TO THE 385TH BOMB GROUP
JUNE 21, 1998**

Dear Guests from the United States, Dear Friends. Our community is receiving you with great pleasure and respect.

Even if you live several thousand miles away. Even if we have never met before and we do not know each other.

We have a lot in common, especially the events that occurred 54 years ago. You gave us the most precious thing you had, your children, to liberate us from helplessness and impotence.

Therefore, we declare today: **YOU ARE OUR FRIENDS. AND YOU SHALL REMAIN OUR FRIENDS FOREVER.**

As long as we are living, we want to present to you our profound gratitude.

And our children and all future generations should do the same.

In 556 days, we will enter the third millennium. Even if it will be the future generations who will judge and analyze the social, political, scientific, economic and cultural achievements and shortfalls of this century, one thing is already now established: This century was a very murderous one. Let us think of World War H.

Never did as many people die in a single war as in World War II. 55.3 million people died worldwide—39.6 million people in Europe and 15.7 million people in Asia. 170,000 American soldiers died on missions in Europe. These numbers are even more dramatic, despairing and absurd when we consider the physical and mental handicaps that affected many survivors (mutilations, amputations, paraplegias, PTSD, even if this seriously disabling mental disorder wasn't officially acknowledged until 1980).

The two monuments outside this church should perpetuate the memory of these horrible events. To forget is to betray.

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The intervention of aviation was decisive for the issue of World War II. 28,000 American aircraft were operating; 1.3 million soldiers made this possible. 2.5 million missions were flown and 2.7 million tons of bombs were dropped. 18,000 American planes and 79,265 soldiers of the U.S. air forces were lost. Of these 79,265 American soldiers that lost their lives on air missions, 18 of them are very close to our heart. They belonged to the 385th Bomb Group that started one night at its airbase, GREAT ASHFIELD (UNITED KINGDOM) at half past two A.M. It was the night of the 12th of July 1944 and the mission was to bomb Munich. As the squadron reached the frontier to Luxembourg, the lead bomber suddenly transmitted the following radio message, "MIDAIR CRASH!".

What was happening? The B-17 of Captain White had come close to the B-17 of 1st Lieutenant McDonald whose plane was flying just above Captain White's; Captain White's B-17 had probably been attracted by the suction created by the engines of the planes ahead. The crash was unavoidable. The B-17 of 1st Lieutenant McDonald broke apart, the Flying Fortress of Captain White also began to burn. The two planes fell down near Perle; the pieces were spread across a surface of several square miles. Two crew members—one from each plane—survived by parachuting. The other 18 had drawn their last breath.

Eighteen young men, only a bit older than the people you see standing here in front of you. (*Eighteen young teen-agers were standing near the front of the church, each holding a pink ribbon with the name of a crew member printed on it*) Eighteen young men, joyful, cherishing life, having future plans for wives, children, mother, father, sisters and brothers. Eighteen young men, representative of their 79,265 fellows who lost their lives on air missions.

Eighteen young men, representative of the 170,000 American soldiers who lost their lives on European battle grounds as the United States had appointed them to protect and restore freedom and peace in Europe.

The roads of our liberation were colored red with blood—the blood of our American friends.

For this. Dear Friends who are present here today, we deeply say, "**THANK YOU**".

As a sign of our deeply felt gratitude, we want to put around each of the crosses you see before you (*eighteen crosses were in front of the altar, each with a small red candle burning at its base*) ribbons bearing the names of the eighteen crew members: (*The teen-agers bearing the ribbons as described above came forward and placed a ribbon on each of the eighteen crosses as the names were read.*)

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Captain Richard White
2nd Lieutenant Clarence Gittins
Sergeant William R. Lord, Jr.
Flight Officer James W. Johnston
Staff Sergeant Marvin Nieman
2nd Lieutenant Patrick J. Flanagan
Staff Sergeant Harry E. Fitzwater
Sergeant Samuel L. Canter
Sergeant Homer C. Comegys
1st Lieutenant Robert McDonald
2nd Lieutenant Stephen Ryan
Flight Officer Francis M. Chrisman
2nd Lieutenant William T. Henry
Sergeant George E. Brown
Staff Sergeant Walter Barash
Staff Sergeant Peter Hefferman
Staff Sergeant Russel Hale
Staff Sergeant Pete Linton

(At this point, "Onward Christian Soldiers" was played on the bagpipes by Captain William Morrison of the US Air Force Base at Spangdahlem, Germany.)

Surely, the intervention of the two superpowers, the United States in the West and Russia in the East, was decisive for the restoration of humanity and freedom in Europe and Luxembourg. But we cannot omit, in this context, the existence of intense resistance and combat against the Nazi regime in Luxembourg itself.

Luxembourg did not want to endanger its morality and credibility again as had been the case during World War I. Therefore, the Germans met serious resistance and confrontation; this did not remain without consequences for the Luxemburgian people in terms of suffering, torture and death. This also explains a proportional death rate that is higher for Luxembourg than for the main war leading nations like the United States and France.

The resistance began to emerge as the Luxemburgian "Fraiwellegen Kompanie"—which was the former police force—was deported to Weimar on December 4, 1940. Against all promises, Himmler forced these men to work for Germany in Koln, Yugoslavia and Austria. After a rebellion, they ended in Dachau.

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The resistance was triggered a second time when 12,031 Luxemburgian young men, aged 20-27, were conscripted by force by the German army and had to fight and die in German uniforms. So many Luxemburgian people were brought before German courts and judged—against all principles of human rights—before they were convicted to sometimes definitive stays in concentration camps, to resettlement and to the death penalty. Had the war lasted longer, the Luxemburgian people could have been exterminated through the same Holocaust as the Jewish people.

The fate of two young men of Luxembourg will illustrate the resistance and suffering of the Luxemburgian people: I will present now the fate of Alfred Grethen, the brother of our Reverend. Alfred was a member of the "Fraiwellegen Kompanie" and was conscripted by force by the German army. He was one of the first four members of that group who lost their lives for Germany. He was shot by Yugoslavian partisans in Skofja, Slovenia. The bullet went through his money purse which the Reverend showed you a few minutes ago; then it penetrated his lungs. He suffered severe pain for several days until he died on October 31, 1941. He was buried in Skofjia Loka. Two Gestapo officers told Alfred's family the terrible fact; our Reverend was four years old at that time. The Gestapo officers left the parents in intense grief, telling them, "Your son has died for the Fatherland". From that time, the parents' personality and behavior changed: the father became much less talkative, the mother was always wearing black clothes. The other three young men who died with Alfred were Hermes Francois of Ettelbruck, Karger Jos of Redange and Kayser Pierre of Moestroff.

The second victim whose fate we will consider is Emile Tompers from Perle. It was on the 23rd of February, 1944 when he was taken by Gestapo officers. He had saved the honor and life of several young men by hiding them in a bunker and garage of his home. These men were actively opposing the Nazi regime. Unfortunately, the Gestapo discovered these men. Two of them escaped: Jhemp, the brother of Emile, by running away and Aloyse, his cousin, by hiding under straw. On July 18, Emile Tompers got the death penalty. On August 10, he died in Koln (*Cologne*) by decapitation, at age 33, leaving a wife, Anna and two children, Pol age 5 and Charlotte, age 3.

Let us think of the people of Perle who died during World War II:

Charel Colbach
Nicolas Eltgeroth
Marcel Everard
Alphonse Prising
Jean-Pierre Feller

Willy Kellen
Raymond Nickels
Eugene Paquet
Leo Rausch
Norbert Roder

Emile Tompers
Edmond Wamapach
Lea Zigrand
Georges Conrardy

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(At this point, the National Anthem of Luxembourg was played on the church organ.)

May 7, 1945: The capitulation of Germany, without any conditions, was signed by the German General Staff in Reims and in Berlin a day later by Field Marshall Keitel in the presence of Marshall Schukov.

People wanted nothing more than peace. Therefore, let's sing, "Shalom, Shalom, I leave you my peace. I give you my peace but another one than earth can give you."

At the social, cultural, political and religious level, many associations are created to protect and develop peace. In several months, the idea of a European Community will become even more real by the introduction of a single currency, the EURO. This is only the beginning; many urgent social problems still have to be solved. We have to continue and consolidate the idea of a European Community in order to create a real human community.

Are we experienced and mature enough to function as real European citizens with a European mind and not only as passive executioners of a given political framework ?

"I have a dream" said Martin Luther King.

"I have a dream" said Kundun, the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet.

What we should do today is learn from the past. The horrible events that happened during World War II and during so many wars afterwards and still today, the atrocities and inhumanities should be an admonition to engage all our forces in order to prevent them. When soon we shall see air fighters outside, we should not direct our attention only to the technical aspects that can inspire a certain fascination but we should think of the reasons why these planes are used. A fighter aircraft means violence, means destruction—even if their existence is necessary to assure the defense of a country, we should wish that we never have to use them. To achieve this objective, we have to engage in real politics of peace, comprehension, empathy and humanity. The formation the airplanes will be flying should symbolize this striving for peace through the commemoration of the 18 dead Americans who absurdly lost their lives here several meters above our heads.

"We have to learn to live together as brothers—otherwise, we will have to die as fools." Martin Luther King.

(Followed by the playing of the National Anthem of the USA)

CONCLUSION



Mike Gallagher opening ceremony Museum



A Memorial (across from the 385th Memorial) for the Luxembourg soliders of WWII



Memorial 385th Bomb Group
20th-21st June 1998
PERLE
Luxembourg



Under the Auspices of the
United States Embassy in Luxembourg
the 52nd Fighter Wing Spangdahlem
and the Municipality of Rambrouch

Wolwelange the 1st of July 1998

Roger Feller
22 Rue de l'Ermitage
L-8833 Wolwelange
Luxembourg

Dear Mister Stern.

Thank you for writing. The Now the monument is unveiled and it is the nicest site in Perlé . It was a great honour for us to have so much members from the 385th Memorial Association here in Perlé for the celebration, never bevor Perlé had a success like the two days for the 385th Bomb Group. You was asking about the two heads of the monument we did not use the roman good. There are two faces on the monument one is looking sade the other one is looking nice. I'm sure the members from the 385th B.G. can tell you more about the memorial and in a better English than I can.

The 385th Bomb Group Museum is a great suuces too. Every people is visiting the museum. The pictures you sent me are shown in special showcases as *Photo Collection Ed Stern*. Thank you very much for all the items we got from the members of the 385th Bomb Group. From the poeple of Perlé I got many original parts from the two planes even a leader flying helmet from Mc Donalds plane the padles from the sfe raft of the same plane, a machine gun gripp , a Mea west and many other pieces.

Every news paper from Luxembourg, Belgium and France reported about the ceremony.

I collect all and I will send it to you. In the next letter you will find pictures and reports.

All the best from a friend off the 385th Bomb Group and a special thanks to all the members who celebrates whit us the Memorial Day.

Dear Ed,

Elizabeth and I decided to accept the invitation to visit Luxembourg and attend the dedication of the Museum dedicated to the 385th B.G.

Roger Feller said he would take care of getting us hotel reservations which he did. He also took care of transportation to the various functions. He was a most gracious host and we really enjoyed our visit.

Roger plans to be in Savannah next April for our reunion.

Enclosed are a few snapshots taken in Luxembourg.

Regards
Herman Heckel



Chapel at Perle



Banner at entrance to Museum



View of room dedicated to Stephen Ryan



Ryan's sister placing wreath at crash site



Herman Heckel beside his picture in museum



Mike Gallagher placing flowers on Lt. Robert McDonald grave

Nouvelles adhésions à la «Legion of Honor» de la «Chapelle des Quatre Chapelains»

ier, sur initiative Friends*, 32 personnes à la «Legion of Honor» de la «Chapelle des Quatre Chapelains». Ceci en reconnaissance des services qu'ils ont rendus sans tenir compte ni de leur foi ni de leur origine. Cette adhésion, la «Legion of Honor» des Quatre Chapelains* a été recommandée par les membres de la chapelle. On espère ainsi encourager d'autres personnes à rejoindre la «Legion of Honor» de la «Chapelle des Quatre Chapelains».

Chapelains de l'armée des quatre confessions ont été invités et remerciés pour leur présence lors de la cérémonie de la «Legion of Honor» de la «Chapelle des Quatre Chapelains».



(Photo: Marco Schmit)

tion, le «Humanitarian of the Chapel» a été récemment attribué à des personnes lors d'une cérémonie au cours de la

personnes suivantes: René Ad Nicky Bettend, Marianne Bos, c Diederich de Mont derich de Conte Hamiville, José, de Bertrange, Fr Luxembourg, Lyi burg (D), Gillis Woerden (NL), I Christnach, Irène Sandweiler, Jean dange, Martin Pi (USA), Colonel de Florida (US d'Erpeldange, S Contem, Edmoi Contem, Liliane ningerberg, Jim ! bourg, Renée S xembourg-Belair de Sandweiler, F Hoscheid, Jean Moutfort, Sim de Moutfort, Yv

„Musée du 385th Bomb Group“ in Perle eröffnet

en ihrer 100-Jahr-Feier die „Société de musique“ und die Feuerwehr trafen am vergangenen Sonntag in einem amerikanischen Haus in Perle ein. Anlaß war die Einladung der jungen US-Soldaten, die im Jahr 1944 beim tragischen Absturz eines B-17-Bombers auf Perle ums Leben kamen.

Am Wochenende übernahm der 385th Bomb Group ein großes Militärmuseum in Perle. Am Samstag, den 12. September, wurde das Zentrum des Museums eröffnet. Am Sonntag, den 13. September, fand eine Feier statt, an der die Ehrengäste und die Mitglieder des Festkomitees teilnahmen.

Am Sonntag, den 13. September, fand eine Feier statt, an der die Ehrengäste und die Mitglieder des Festkomitees teilnahmen. Am Montag, den 14. September, fand eine weitere Veranstaltung statt, an der die Ehrengäste und die Mitglieder des Festkomitees teilnahmen.



Zahlreiche Ehrengäste und US-Veteranen hatten sich zur Einweihungsfeier eingefunden

(Photo: Marco schank)

Am Abend unterhielt dann die Big Band des Zweiten Weltkriegs.



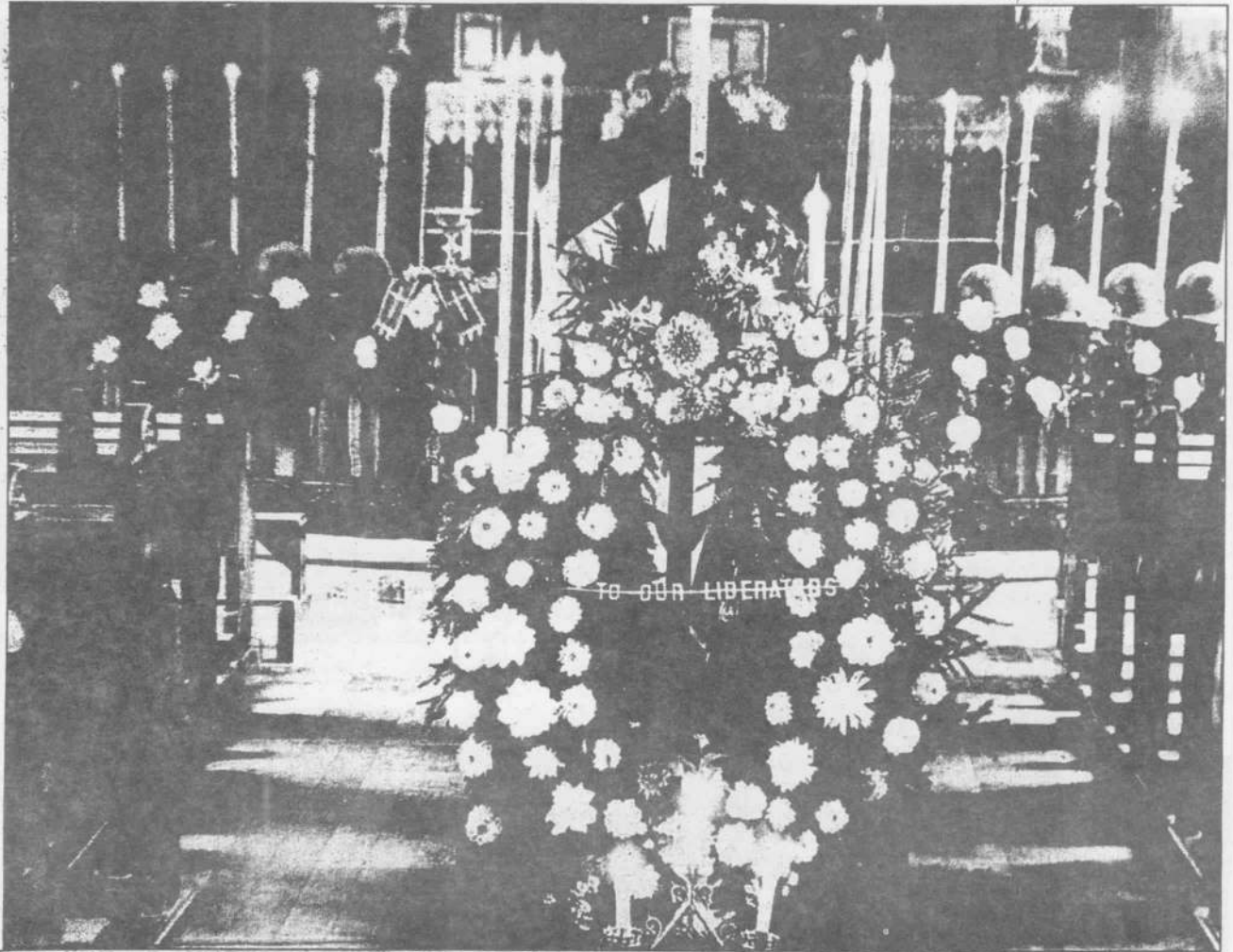
Devant le musée dédié aux forteresses volantes, un Sherman M4/A1 a tenu la vedette et rappelé des souvenirs à ce vétéran américain.



Une hélice pliée et les noms des 18 aviateurs US morts dans le ciel de Perlé: ce monument rappellera leur souvenir.



Une des rares photos de "Off-Spring", le B 17 de 385th BG.



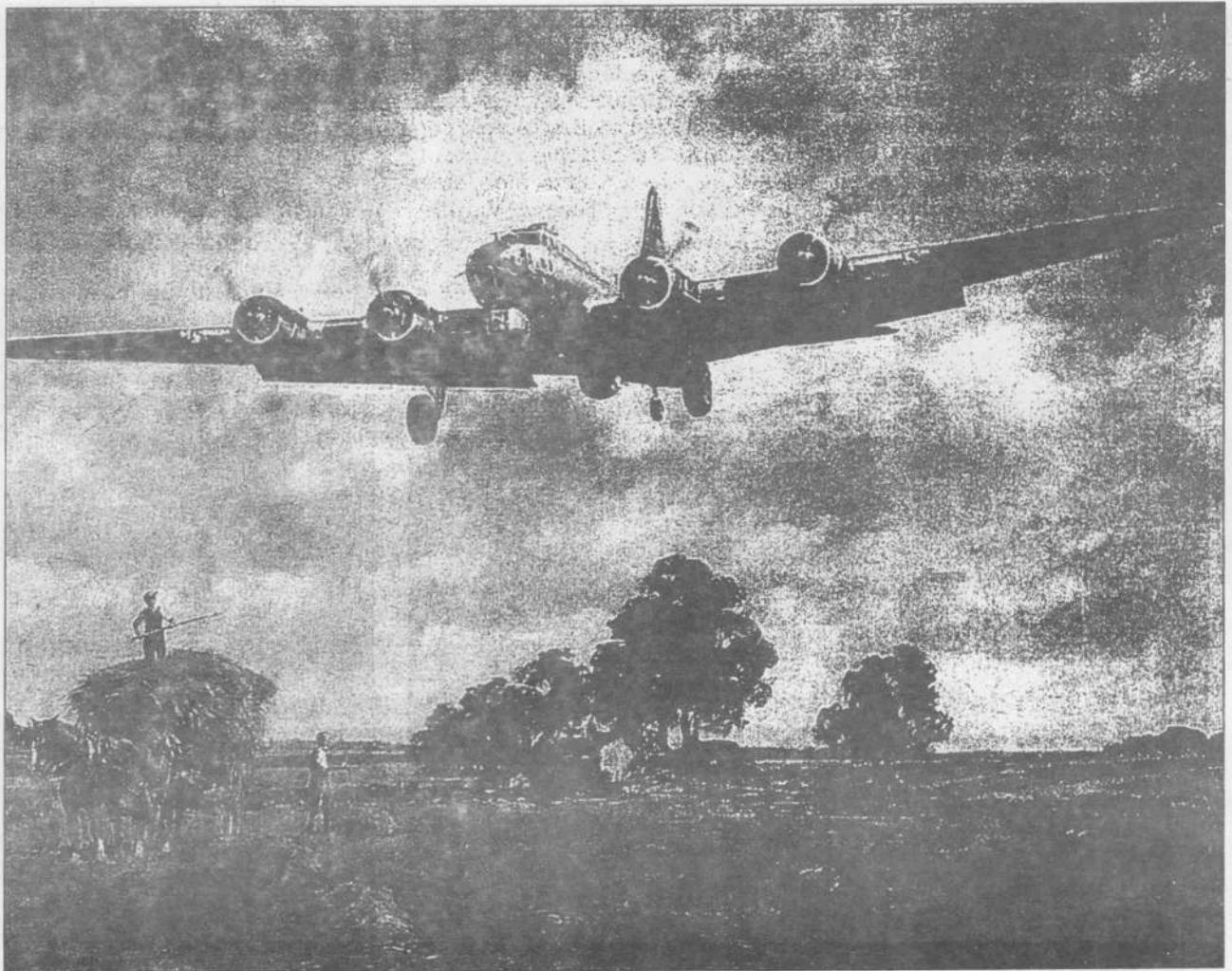
Die Kirche von Perlé, am 17. Oktober 1944: Erster offizieller Gedenkgottesdienst für die 18 toten Amerikaner



Zwei Crewmitglieder vor der „Off Spring“ – abgestürzt am 12. Juli 1944



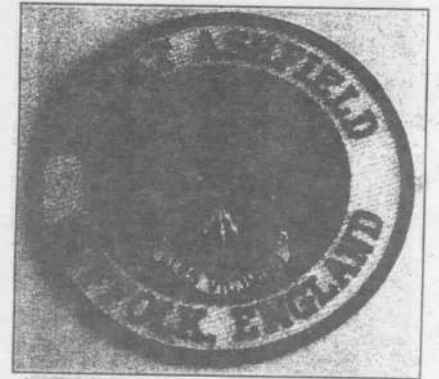
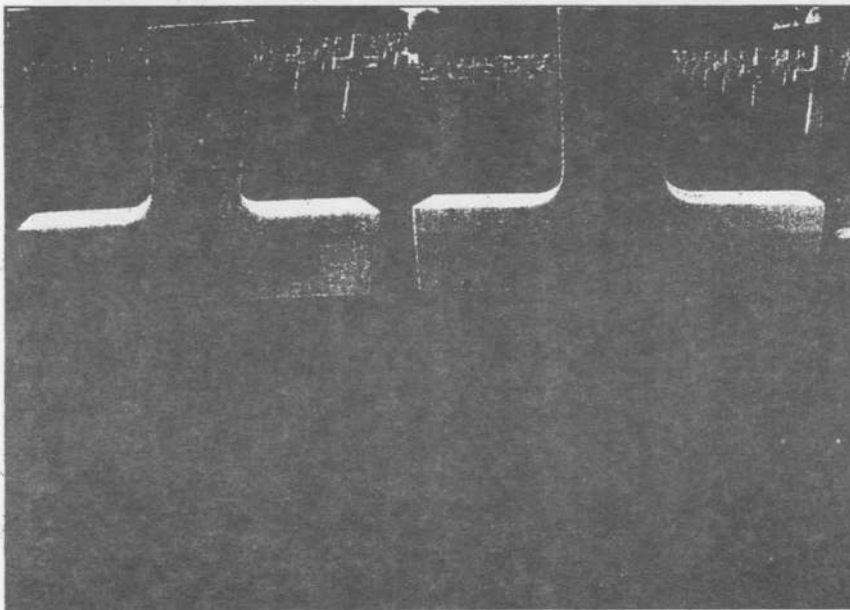
2nd. Lt. Stephen Ryan



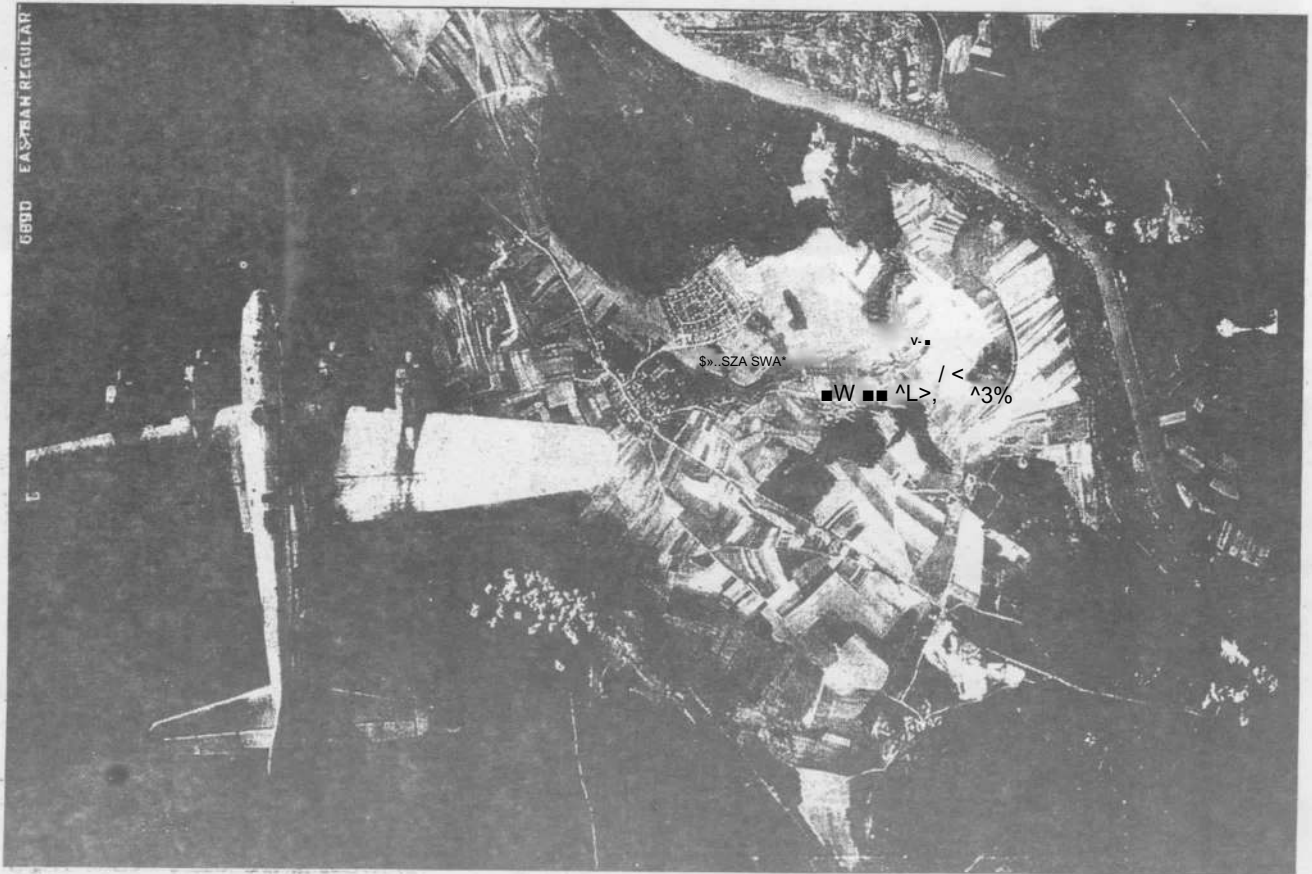
Rückkehr nach England - Zeichnung



Die Crew von First Lieutenant Robert L. McDonald vor ihrer B17, der Nr. 42-102606



*Gräber von Robert L. McDonald und Stephen F. Ryan
auf dem amerikanischen Militärfriedhof Henri-Chapelle, Belgien*



Originalaufnahme eines Bombenangriffs auf Neuburg

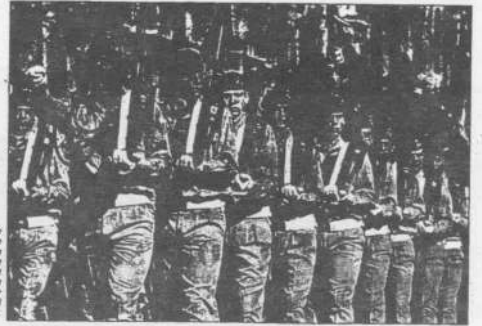
Pictures from Perle



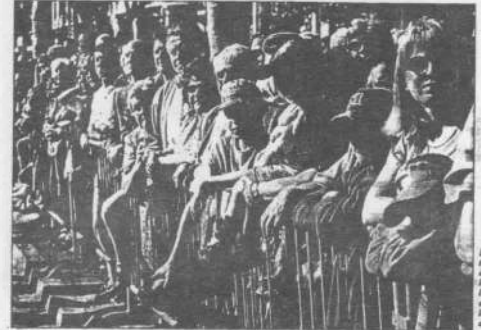




(Photos: Teddy Jaans)



Une compagnie à pied défile devant le tribunal pour le commandement de Luxembourg en l'honneur du Premier Jean-Paul Hoffen.



Le public assiste très nombreux à la procession de la Libération lors de la parade d'armes.



Les premiers nés de la jeunesse pendant la TeDeum en présence de la famille royale, du Premier ministre, Jean-Claude Juncker.



Pendant le Te Deum solennel la famille Grand-Ducade avait pris place dans le chœur de la cathédrale.



< L'Arctur^{ne} et Luxembourg^{ne} Mrs Ferntai Franck accuei^l chalm^{er}srunt^{it} Savv^{er}rain i l'atrie et la cath^édrale



Photo Guy WOLFF

Le Grand-Duc Jean passe en revue la troupe avec a ses cotés le lieutenant-repr^ésentant Henri et le chef d'état-major de l'armée, le colonel Michel Gretsche.

FLY. D-1 70th AAFPTO
 Leaving ATTC, Louisiana
 No Kunt, 675 actually
 get's easy, too Kunt



Ah, yes--life can indeed be
 very easy when you have a
 friend like the person named
 on the next line !

scribble

Remailed 8/16 !

August 2, '98

Dear Ed,

Thanks for your letter of 7/17.

Here are the names of those whom I can now remember from the trip:
 Mike and Marian Gallagher, Tom (?) Hagman, Eldred Harrington (he has a really fascinating military/war story to tell--he was in the merchant marine at age 17 and his ship, sailing alone without a convoy, was in the South Atlantic and sunk by a German submarine. He got to a lifeboat when the sub pulled up along side of them, gave them some first aid supplies and left. Didn't bother to kill them since the sub folks figured they never had a chance to make it to land. But they did make it to an island off of the Dominican Republic. After the State Dept. got him back to the states to have a visit with his family he was drafted after 3 days and went in to the Army Air Corps. He was with the 385th when it formed at Spokane and was with it to the end in 1945 ! Probably the only man in our group who was torpedoed by a German Sub.) Tom Newton, John Pettenger, Tom ? Nysander, Bob Smith and Bob Silver as well as Jim? Ryan --brother of crew member on one of the two crews. It seems like there should be others but that is all I can come up with.

Yes, please do run the picture of the "early Bob Silver" I shall send my payment after I pay off my credit card balance from the trip.

All for now.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature: rms

rms



No! use this photo - IT IS A CURRENT ONE, TAKEN FOR MY PASSPORT.

I would like to put my thoughts down on paper and record our heartfelt thanks to Roger Feller, we had an invite to attend for the weekend at Perle, Luxembourg for the unveiling of a memorial to the young men killed after a mid-air collision in 1944, also the opening of a museum again dedicated to Americans, British and the men of this village for the sacrifices in World War II. This will become a very long letter if I want to express all my emotions as being selfish of meeting up with my heroes I had been reading about since schooldays when I lived in London. It wasn't until 1944 that we Londoners heard the engines of hundreds of our bombers on their way to do their deadly job over enemy occupied Europe. Until then all aircraft, R.A.F. or U.S., had to circumvent the capitol, then if a 'plane was spotted it had to be the enemy!

But back to the weekend. From the moment we arrived at the airport we were made welcome and this warm hospitality continued until we boarded our 'plane to come home. By letter and telephone calls we had promised Roger that we would not make any demands on him, as he had to entertain and be constantly near the various 'big-wigs' that carried out their duties. Again, we were moved to tears by the words and actions of all folk who had been tasked to do something which brought home to the people sitting or standing, just what the men and women did during the years 1939-'45 which allows us freedom today. The Requiem service in the village church will stay in our memories forever, the moving visit to the Military cemetery at Henri Chapelle, Belgium to pay homage to the men buried there. To support the family of one of those men, 2 Lt. Stephen Ryan, was the least we could do and I knew I could not speak to them with words of comfort, I wanted to but courage failed me as we lost a brother in the war, a flyer and we still shed tears over him.

All these activities went off smoothly thank to Roger. The planning and organization, plus the weather was more than kind to us, we could not have asked for more. I will leave others to give the details as to what went on in this crowded weekend. Photographs could be sent again, I bet many will be sent in for publication. A special album has been purchased so that I can show folk all the photos, programmes (beautifully produced) and one of the treasured possessions - I took the 'HLH' where Roger is mentioned for the purpose of obtaining the autographs of my heroes. I was not disappointed! To talk to Michael Gallagher, Robert Smith, Willard Hagman, Tom Newton and John Pettenger. I could go on and apologies for not listing all the names, must mention Bob Silver, his speech in the museum was great.

This is enough from me, but felt I must make public some my thoughts, also Brenda's, in remembering the hard work, patience in dealing with our inquires. The perfect host - Roger Feller, he will be talked about for many a day by all the people from all the countries who were in Perle, 19.6.98 - 23.6.98 Thank you Roger.

Ron Durand
East View
14 Preston Paddock
Rustington West Sussex BN 16 2AA

Dear Ed,

Enclosed in a Xerox copy of the interior pages of the program on the day of the dedication of the memorial in Perle. It was hot sunny day with temperatures in the high 80's. The speeches of Mr. Colas, President of the Organizing Committee, and Mr. Unsen, Mayor of the Municipality of Rambrouch. After having been delivered in Luxembourgish, they were then repeated word-for-word in English. By the time it came to my remarks, I decided that everyone would be happy with the shortest speech in history. I followed Mr. Shukan, Vice-Consul of the United States to Luxembourg who was mercifully brief. I followed his lead. My remarks were as follows:

"Dignitaries, Honored Guests, Members of Lt. Ryan's Family, Members of the 385th Bomb Group, Dear Luxembourgers, and Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of the 385th Bomb Group Memorial Association, on my own behalf, and on behalf of the Ryan Family, I wish to express gratitude to Roger Feller for his extraordinary effort in creating this outstanding monument and the museum which we viewed last night. I know he did not work alone. We thank Constant Goergen, Joseph Colas, and Ferdinand Unsen and hundreds of Luxembourg volunteers who contributed to this major effort.

There is a beautiful poem entitled "High Flight". The last few lines of which I will paraphrase--"We have trod the high untrespassed sancity of space, reached out and touched the face of God".

These last few days here in Luxembourg, we have reached out and touched the face of goodness, generosity and kindness among all of you and it has overwhelmed us.

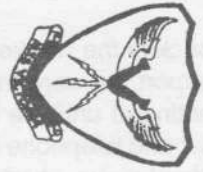
You have created ambassadors of good will who will preach your virtues everywhere we go.

This may be a small country, as has been said by earlier speakers, but it has a vast heart which has burst its boundaries and that of Europe, has leapt the ocean and envelopes the vastness of America.

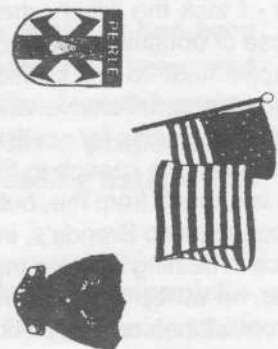
We shall not forget your kindness. We are forever grateful.

May God Bless you, and from the ravages of war may he bind up your wounds, dry your tears and grant you everlasting peace."

Very Truly yours,
Mike Gallagher
President



On July 12, 1944, a formation of American B17 Flying Fortress bombers were flying over Perlé on its way to Munich when two planes collided in mid-air. According to the 385th Bomb Group records, bomber 42-31917 was caught in the prop wash of the preceding plane and nosed up, hitting 42-102606. Two crew members parachuted to safety but eighteen did not survive. It was impossible during the German occupation to commemorate the lives of those who died in the accident but on October 17, 1944 a memorial service was held in the Perlé church in honor of the airmen, with eighteen candles and eighteen helmets in front of the altar. Parts of the two planes are still being recovered from the fields surrounding Perlé. Six of the airmen are buried in the American Military Cemetery at Henri Chapelle Belgium



Memorial 385th Bomb Group

Perlé

Sunday 21st June 1998, at 14:30 hrs

Under the auspices of the

American Embassy in Luxembourg,

the 52nd Fighter Wing Spangdahlem

and the

Municipality of Rambrouch

Mass in the church at Perli; 14.30 hrs

Priest Rev. Marcel GRETHEN
Chaplain Colonel Robert F. IPPOLITO

Presentation of the Colours**Introduction and Presentation of the Guests of Honour**

Master of Ceremonies
C. GOERGEN, President U.S. Veterans Friends Luxembourg

Welcoming Speech

Jos. COLAS, President of the Organizing Committee

Speech

Ferdinand UNSEN, Mayor of the Municipality of Rambrouch

Invocation

Chaplain Colonel Robert F. IPPOLITO

Dedication of the Memorial

Unveiling of the memorial by Ferdinand UNSEN, Mayor
and
Andrew, Barbara and Mary Ryan, brother and sisters of
Lt Stephen RYAN

Benediction of the Memorial

Priest Rev. Marcel GRETHEN
Chaplain Colonel Robert F. IPPOLITO

Musical Dedication

Captain William MORISSON (Bagpipe)

Offering of Wreaths

Municipality of Rambrouch
President of the Parliament Mr. J. Spautz
His Excellency the Vice Consul of the United States
Luxembourg Government Representative
The 385th Bomb Group Memorial Association, U.S.A.
The Organizing Committee, Perle
U.S. Veterans Friends, Luxembourg
Friends of the 385th Bomb Group, Perle

Speeches

His Excellency, Mr SHUKAN, the Vice- Consul of the
United States
Mr Michael Gallagher, President of the 385th Bomb Group
Memorial Association

Musical Dedication

Société de Musique Saint Lambert, Perle

Missing Man Formation 1630 hrs

52nd Fighter Wing, Spangdahlem Air Base 16.30hrs

Taps and Military Honors

Color Guard and Firing Squad, Spangdahlem Air Base
Taps presented by Marc Rodenmacher and Johny Lahr
Drummer: Swen Majerus

Moment of Silence**Dedication of the „Monument aux Morts“**

Unveiling by Ferdinand Unsen, Mayor,
Jean-Pierre Tompers and Camille Schrenger, former Mayors

Offering of wreaths and „Sonnerie aux Morts“**National Anthems**

Société de Musique Saint Lambert, Perle

Parade

D-Day Remembrance Group, Dudelage

Reception Centre Culturel Perle

offered by the Mayor of the Municipality of Rambrouch,
Ferdinand Unsen. “

Concert by „SHAPE Dixie Band“

Dear Ed,

This is a certificate and a 3 x 5 Fringed flag was sent to our 385th Museum in Perle.
John F. Pettenger



THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

This is to certify that the accompanying flag was flown
over the United States Capitol on July 4, 1998,
at the request of the Honorable Dan Miller,
Member of Congress.

This flag was flown for 18 385th Bomb Group Airman
killed on July 12, 1944 near Perle Luxembourg.

Alan M. Hantman, AIA
Architect of the Capitol

8049972

385th Bombardment Group Memorial Association

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

COMBAT UNITS

HQ SQUADRON
5484k BOMB SQDN
5494k BOMB SQDN
55-cl, BOMB SQDN
551rf BOMB SQDN

SUPPORT UNITS

424th Air Service GRP.
877th CLem Co. (AO)
DET. 155,18fk AWS

July 27, 1998

Michael R. Gallagher
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Mr. Ed Stern, Editor
Hardlife Herald
P.O. Box 9466
Fargo, North Dakota 58106-9466

Dear Ed:


You asked me to advise you of the names of the members present at Perle. I'll do the best I can, but there may be some omissions:

Robert and Jean Smith
John and Ruth Pettenger
Robert and Doris Silver
Tom and Darla Newton
Willard Hagman (with son, Lance, and his wife and 2 daughters)
Herman Heckel
Maurice O. Nysether (with brother, Eldon)
Eldred Harrington
Michael and Marian Gallagher

Also in attendance was the Ryan family:

Andrew Ryan (brother) and his wife, Betty
Mary and Barbara Ryan (sisters)
Steven Ryan (nephew), and his wife, Sandy, and son, Matthew

Also present were General Victor Renuart and his aide.

 Daniel Zoerb.

I can't vouch for the completeness of the list, but I think it is reasonably accurate

Very truly yours,



Mr. Stern

It was a great pleasure to talk with you yesterday afternoon. Somemore doors have been opened concerning my Uncle's death.

I have enclosed some information for you and the guys who flew with my Uncle.

- 1. Xerox picture of Uncle Walter.
- 2. Picture of Uncle Walt's plane (I will build these 2 planes for the guys - size as you see them) #917 and 606

I will be working on the 16mm film or the History of your group. If anything I can do further you can call.

Fr. Tom Yash

(717) 735-5447 Home, (717) 735-8754 Ext. 315 Prison Wed., Thurs. & Sunday 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM.



Postcard addressed to my Grandfather by this lady. She visited and took care of Uncle Walter's grave. Front of Post-card sent to my Grandfather when Uncle's body, Walter R. Boesch was moved from Perle to Belgium.

U. S. Military Cemetery
Henri-Chapelle (Belgium)



EDITOR'S NOTE: We received very complete information from Rev. Yash which well save for the future. President Mike's letter above summarizes the story.

MEMORANDUM

TO: *FILE*

FROM: *MRG*

DATE: *July 23, 1998*

RE: *Perle*

FILE: *385th Bomb Group Foundation*

Rev. Thomas A. Yaszcz (Yash) called to inquire about his uncle and to advise me of certain information which he has acquired over the past year. His uncle, Staff Sergeant Walter Berasch, was a radio operator flying as a ball turret gunner on the July 12, 1944 mission in which two aircraft collided over Perle. Rev. Yaszcz's address is 52 West Grove Street, Nanticoke, Pennsylvania 18634-3414. Rev. Yaszcz has been Chaplin at the State Penitentiary in Nanticoke for the past 12 years. His telephone number is (717) 735-5447.

He has uncovered information which I had not previously had. Assuming the flight formation to be a 4-plane formation in a diamond configuration with number 1 aircraft being the lead aircraft, number 2 aircraft flying right wing, number 3 aircraft flying left wing and number 4 aircraft flying low and behind number 1 aircraft. Number 4 aircraft is believed to have been caught in prop wash, lost control, and struck number 3 aircraft, the aircraft in which Lt. Ryan and Sgt. Berasch were flying. The collision probably occurred at 25,000 feet, the scheduled altitude for the flight. Being over enemy territory at the time, Sgt. Berasch was probably in his ball turret and an escape would have been impossible. Rev. Yaszcz believes that his uncle, while routinely a radio operator, volunteered for the trip. It was a 1,000 aircraft mission to an aircraft engine factory in Munich, Germany.

Rev. Yaszcz has sent much of the materials which he has collected to Ed Stern and Ed Stern will select among them for publication in the next issue of the Hardlife Herald. He has also collected other materials which he plans to send to me. Also, he is building two B-17's to accurately depict the two aircraft involved in the accident. These too he said he will send along to me for any use the 385th might choose to put them. It may well be that all this material can find its way into the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah. On the other hand, being specific to the crash over Perle, it might well be that they might better be sent there.

MRG/clm

385th BGMA

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3

HERO'S RITES ; TOBEMONDAY

Nanticoke Airman Was
Killed In 1944



STAFF SGT. BEROSH

The body of Staff Sgt. Walter R. Berosh, 23, who was killed in action while serving with the Army Air Force in Europe, will arrive in Wilkes-Barre tomorrow afternoon at 11:56 on the Lehigh Valley Railroad. It will be removed to the family home, 40 Lower Broadway, Nanticoke.

Sgt. Berosh, an aerial gunner and radio operator, was shot down over Luxemburg July 12, 1944. He had completed 16 missions and was decorated with the Airman's Medal with an Oak Leaf Cluster. Sgt. Berosh, a graduate of Nanticoke High School in 1940, enlisted in August that year, and was trained at various camps in this country before going overseas. He is survived by his father, John Berosh, and the following brothers and sisters: Mrs. William Scerbo and Mrs. William Hertz, Long Island, N. Y.; Mrs. Leonard Yash, Nanticoke; Margaret, of Newark, N. J.; Verna, Nanticoke; Joseph, at home; Thomas B. Berosh and John of Bridgeport, Conn. His mother died in April, 1947.

Services will be held from the home Monday morning at 9, followed by a requiem mass at 9:30 at St. Joseph's Slovak Church, Nanticoke. Burial will be in the parish cemetery, Nanticoke.



Orville R. Brown
Edward P. Calderaro
Hal R. Stockdale

June 1998
June 1998
July 1998