

OHIO AIR FORCE  
SKY GODDESS  
SALLY B  
HIT PARADE  
RAUNCHY WOLF  
GOLDEN GOOSE  
WAR HORSE  
THE BLACKJACKER  
THUNDERBIRD  
OFF SPRING  
WANDERING DUCHESS  
CURLY'S KIDS  
HONKY TONK SAL  
HESITATING HUSSY  
GROUND HOG  
LIBERTY BELLE  
"HAYBAG" ANNIE  
HEAVENLY BODY  
CHOWHOUND  
MISS AMERICA  
STARS AND STRIPES  
YANK  
GELDING  
MARY ELLEN  
DRAGON LADY  
WINNIE THE POOH  
WAR WEARY  
STAR DUST  
ANGELS SISTER  
LIT. AUDREY  
LEADING LADY  
ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND  
LONESOME POLECAT  
BIG GAS BIRD  
HUSTLIN' HUSSY  
OLD SHILLEAGH I  
KENTUCKY WINNER  
PISTOL PACKIN MAMA  
MR. SMITH  
SUGAR JO

# HARD LIFE



# HERALD

THOROBRED  
SKY CHIEF  
OLD SHILLEAGH II  
PERRY'S PIRATES  
GIZMO  
MR. LUCKY  
MADAME SHOO SHOO  
SLO JO  
ROGER THE DODGER  
SLEEPTIME GIRL  
BARBARA B  
PAT PENDING  
POSSIBLE STRAIGHT  
MICKY  
HALF AND HALF  
MICKY II  
SHACK HUNNY  
ROUNDTRIP JACK  
MY GAL SAL  
HOMESICK ANGEL  
LATEST RUMOR  
SLEEPYTIME GAL  
SOUTHERN BELLE  
SPIRIT OF CHICAGO  
BIG STINKY  
VIBRANT VIRGIN  
MAIDEN AMERICA  
MISSION BELLE  
OL' RUM DUM  
HELLS BELLS  
MARY ELLEN III  
IN LIKE FLYNN  
LIL-LU  
STORK CLUB  
MAC'S HACK  
CRASH WAGON III  
PIN UP GIRL  
PRINCESS VAL  
BETTY JO  
LADY ANN  
PICKLE FINGER OF 7  
IMPATIENT VIRGIN  
SACK TIME  
RELUCTANT LADY  
Stars and Stripes 2  
SWEET CHARLOT  
MISSISSIPPI MISS  
SATAN'S MATE  
SLICK CHECK  
KITTY'S REVENGE  
THE JOKER  
AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'  
MARY ELLEN II

## 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. XVII NO. 3

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September 2000

# Santa Fe Post Reunion Tour April 8th

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\*Robert C. Smith  
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Mike Gallagher

# Chaplain Sez

Hi Everybody,

The other day, while taking my daily exercises, as I usually do, the radio was on and playing the song, "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands". That got me thinking of what to write in the column "Chaplain Sez!!". The thought of faith came to mind and the quote by Henry Ward Beecher.

"Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it with the handle of anxiety or the handle of Faith."

In the New Testament in Hebrews 11:1 it tells us what faith is. I found that the Contemporary English Version, I feel gives, the best description. "Faith makes us sure of what we hope for and gives us proof of what we cannot see."

And the author goes on to say in the 11th chapter and 6th verse: "But without faith no one can please God. We must believe that God is real and that he rewards everyone who searches for him."

What ever name or title you give to the Supreme Being, the Creator, you must have faith in Him. I do, I have, and even when I question Him my faith kicks in.

Through my training but even more from my own experience, I have found that my faith keeps me from going off the deep end. Being human, even though I am a minister, I need the strength of my faith to steady me.

This is my testimony, my affirmation, and I trust you can find it true for you.

Jim Vance

## President's Report

### Perle Trip and visit to Great Ashfield

Here are some pictures from the 385th European trip. We had a great trip with over 70 members, wives, children, and grandchildren attending. The tour group met at the Russell Hotel in London renewing old acquaintances and making new friends. After London we spent four days in Bury St. Edmunds, near Great Ashfield, with our English friends. We were warmly welcomed with a tour of our old base, lunches, dinners, rides in WW2 vehicles and the lovely services at All Saints Church. At the conclusion of the regular services at All Saints and during our visit to the American Cemetery at Madingley we had a

member Art Driscoll. Thank you Art for your work in preparing these touching and meaningful services of remembrances. After services at All Saints Church we were all welcomed into individual homes for Sunday lunch. We certainly do appreciate the hospitality of our English friends. We also attended a dedication service in the village of Reedham for a memorial plaque honoring the 385th and two of our crews, Hutchison and Pease. The two crews had a midair collision returning to our base from a mission over Europe and crashed near their village. It was a nice service with a parade, band, and speeches of dedication. 385th BGMA President Tom Newton gave a speech on behalf of the 385th. Following the dedication ceremonies a reception was hosted by the people of Reedham in their community hall.

Upon leaving the UK our buses took us through the channel to France and to Normandy for a visit of the D-day beaches of Omaha and Utah, the Invasion Museum of Arromanches. After viewing the beaches and seeing the obstacles the invasion forces had to overcome, the 8th Air Force looked more desirable. We visited the US Military Cemetery at Bayeau, to see all the white crosses and the sacrifice made by so many that we may live in freedom. For those of us that had relatives buried there, they escorted us to the grave site, presented us with a picture of white cross marker and played taps over the loud speaker system. Very touching.

On to Paris, visiting the Place of Versailles enroute, in Paris visiting Notre Dame, the Arc de Triomphe, a tour of the city, and evening cruise on the River Seine. I was happy someone else was driving the bus, I would hate to drive in Paris traffic. Now that I have seen Paris, how are you going to get me off the farm.

The hospitality of Luxembourg was outstanding and the food was so good. Roger Feller and his friends were waiting at the border with WW2 vehicles and signs to welcome us. Sadly we were on a different highway. The very picturesque village of Esch-Sur-Sure was our home in Luxembourg. It is great to be loved, respected and treated so highly as we are by our friends in Perle and the Municipality of Rambrouch. It was very special of them to change their National Day to share it with us. We had bands playing, parade, aircraft flyover, WW2 military vehicles and encampment, reception in the village community hall, laying of wreaths at our 385th memorial in the village square in Perle, a tour of the 385th museum in Perle, a special church service in honor of the 385th and a great dinner hosted by the Mayor of the Municipality of Rambrouch, in honor of the 385th.

All and all, everyone had an absolutely wonderful time together with a lot of fun and remembrances to share. The tour group is now looking forward to our next reunion in Albuquerque. Several of the tour group members suggested that tour group members get together for a lunch or dinner at the reunion to keep up the friendships made on the tour.

Tom Newton

# BULLETIN BOARD

## NEW HOURS

Pima Air and Space has announced new hours. For the months of June, July and August the museum will open at 7:00 am and close at 3:00 pm. The 390th will open at 8:00 am and close at 2:30 pm. (You know the 390th as the home of the world famous B-17G Flying Fortress.)

## CAN ANYONE RECALL????

One of our Fargo friends recently spent several months in Holland and Belgium. He reports that the Dutch people still talk with much gratitude about the Food Drop missions that we took part in during the first 7 days of May, 1945. There was no opposition from the German Air force, but we seem to recall that one of our planes was hit by ground fire. We think it was probably the last plane hit by enemy fire in Europe. Does anyone recall it?

## MORE ABOUT NORTH DAKOTA

We had a visit recently from Art Wohl, who some of you may remember as a combat crew gunner. We think there were only 6 of us from North Dakota in the 385th—The other one still alive is Warren Diederich, a pilot in the 548th, and we had lunch with him recently, too.

## CAN YOU HELP???

We had a call a few days ago from Jerry Monkman, a member of Tom Corcorans crew of the 550th Bomb Squadron in 1934-44. He completed his missions after the rest of the crew, who did their 25 ending in January, 1944. He was in the hospital and had to do 30 when Gen. Doolittle raised the requirements from 25 to 30.

He flew Mr. Lucky as his original plane, got 5 or 6 Air Medals and a DFC plus one confirmed kill

All his records were lost recently, including his Lucky Bastard certificate, and he's hoping someone can send him duplicates. His address is 1431 W Grammercy Pl, San Antonio, TX 78201-5127.

## DUES NOTICE

To keep the 385th BGMA expenses to a minimum it has been the Group's policy not to send out dues statements. We request the members to look at their Hardlife Herald address label to determine if their dues are due. When you examine your address label you will find a letter R and two numbers that indicate the year your dues are paid through. If you have a 99, 98, 97, 96, etc your dues are past due. Life members have a LM999 after their name. Due to our current financial position it was voted at our last reunion to increase our dues to \$20.00 per year and to request the life members to donate another \$100.00 or if they prefer make annual donations of \$20.00. We do appreciate and wish to thank the members that are current.

## "FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS"

"Flags of our Fathers" is a story of the raising of the American Flag on Iwo Jima by the son of one of the men shown raising the flag. It's a great "listen"; 4 cassettes, 6 hours just \$25.95. Available from Bantam Books, Random House, 1540 Broadway, NCY 10036

## MAYBE YOU CAN HELP!!!!

I just received a request from Bill Varnedoe for a photo of B-17s all lined up at Kingman, AZ prior to being chopped up for metal, or sold. I think I may have a lead on this for him. Do you have such a photo? Does anyone in the 385th have this photo?

I have enjoyed the latest Hardlife and always look for familiar names. I hate to see the OBITUARIES sheet.

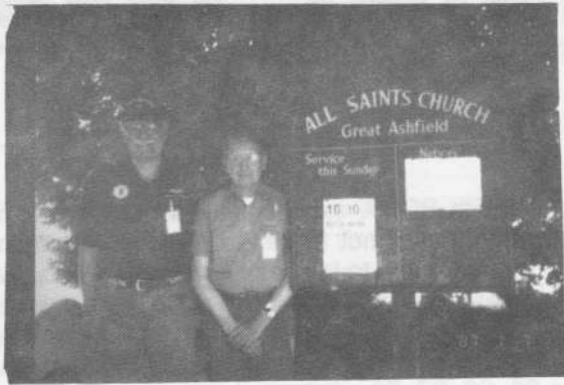
It was on this date in 1944 that I got the chance to see Berlin from about 25,000 ft. Now I wished we could have been at 50,000 ft and at about 2000 miles per hour. Oh well, we made it back OK.

Keep up the good work, you may get on steady.

Ken Laffoon.

E-mail: [laffoon@azstarnet.com](mailto:laffoon@azstarnet.com)

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** We don't have the picture from Kingman. If anyone does, please send a copy.



Herb Anderson & Eldred Harrington



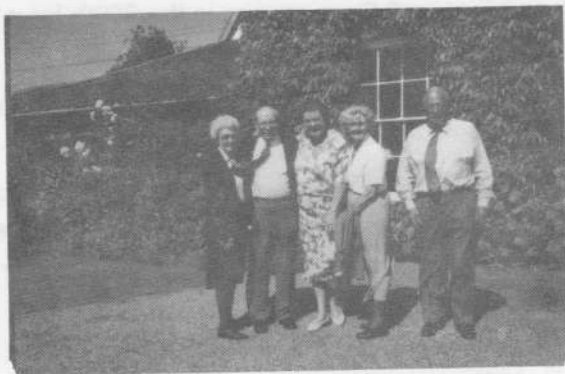
L-R: Tom LaCasse, Guide Pamela, Leo LaCasse, Guide Lynn, Ed Lowe, Kate Lowe.



Perle just after the church and outdoor ceremony Center-Leo LaCasse



Tom Newton-Perle 385th Museum



L-R: Kate Lowe, Ed Lowe, Home luncheon hostess Angela Miles, Darla Newton, Host Rawley Miles, outside their beautiful 100 year old home.



Is this an early model B-17? Jan, our printer, found it—the man in the picture is her grandfather.

Members of the 550<sup>th</sup> Squadron:

Hutchison, John N.	Captain
Curtis, Charles G.	Second Lieutenant
Epps, John E.	First Lieutenant
Gamble, Edmond J.	First Lieutenant
Kiner, Roy C.	Technical Sergeant
Carpinetti, Joseph J.	Staff Sergeant
Dukes, William J.	Technical Sergeant
Erhardt, John H.	Staff Sergeant
Corgnatti, Emilio M.	Staff Sergeant
Bobulsky, Peter Jr.	Staff Sergeant
Creegan, Frank L. Jr.	Staff Sergeant

Members of the 549<sup>th</sup> Squadron:

Pease, Warren J.	First Lieutenant
Brown, Edward B.	Second Lieutenant
Kaplan, Bernard (NMI)	Second Lieutenant
Jenkins, Robert E.	Second Lieutenant
Clift, William R.	Technical Sergeant
Gill, William (NMI) Jr.	Technical Sergeant
Owsley, Franklin C.	Staff Sergeant
Falls, Junior M.	Staff Sergeant
Dickason, Harold E.	Staff Sergeant
Bruner, Gail F.	Staff Sergeant

# A Service of Remembrance and Dedication

To mark the 56<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of the lives lost over  
Reedham Marshes  
of  
21 American Airmen  
of the 385th Bomb Group, from  
the 550<sup>th</sup> and 549<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadrons  
on February 21<sup>st</sup> 1944.



Conducted by:  
Mrs. Mary Blanche (Reader, Reedham Parish)

Reedham, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2000  
16.30pm

**ORDER OF SERVICE***(The words in bold type are to be said by all)*

WELCOME

U.S. NATIONAL ANTHEM

NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE BIDDING

We have come to worship God, but also, to give thanks for the lives of the 21 American Airmen who lost their lives 56 years ago above Reedham marshes and dedicate a memorial to their heroic memory. At this very special time we have those young men in our hearts, who, after taking part in a raid over Germany were returning to their base at Great Ashfield, Suffolk, yet the two B-17G planes in which they were flying, collided, killing all 21 crewmembers on board those planes.

Although our commemoration is 56 years on, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War has long been over, it is right for us to remember these men today at this service of Remembrance and Dedication. It is right for us to remember the part played by all nations. It is right for us also to remind the younger generation of what happened and collectively share the conviction that peace must prevail over oppression and continue to make that our commitment.

Therefore during this act of worship we shall affirm this commitment, pass this on through the attention this service is receiving through the media today and acknowledge our gratitude and the courage of these 21 young men who, despite the horror they saw around them, kept all our hopes alive.

LET US PRAY.

Almighty God, you have created us in your image and have called us to live in peace and mutual love. Forgive our sins and our failure to live according to your will; and give us grace to serve you, and our brothers and sisters for your sake. We make our prayer through him who died to reconcile the world to you, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

READING: St. John 15:9-17 (Mr. M. Adams, Chairman Reedham Parish Council)

DEDICATION OF NEW MEMORIAL

ACT OF REMEMBRANCE

Let us remember before God the 21 men who tragically died over Reedham marshes on February 21<sup>st</sup> 1944.

LAST POST

THE EXHORTATION (Mr. R. Murren, President R.B.L. Reedham Branch)

SILENCE

REVELLE

SHORT ADDRESS

1. Mr. Thomas Newton, President 385<sup>th</sup> B.G.M.A.
2. Mr. Ian McLachlan, Author 'Final Flights'

HYMN: 'O, Valiant Hearts, who to your glory came.'

PRAYERS

Let us give thanks for the example of courage and fortitude given to us by men and women who have endured war; especially giving thanks for the men we are remembering here this afternoon; and let us pray for all people who suffer, for those who, having survived conflict, still bear its marks in mind or body; and for all who have been bereaved through war. *Silence*

Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Let us give thanks for the gift of peace; and let us pray for all who live now amid conflict, and for those who live in fear of violence or oppression. *Silence*

Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Let us give thanks for the reconciliation that has been established between nations once opposed in war; and let us pray for the people of all nations and their leaders, that those divisions that remain may be healed. *Silence*

Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Let us give thanks for all who offer care and support to the people of the wartime generation, whether as individuals or through the work of statutory and voluntary bodies; and let us pray that they may have wisdom, vision and compassion in all they do. *Silence*

Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Let us commit ourselves to everything possible to the needs of the whole world. Where there is hatred give love; where there is injury, grant pardon; where there is distrust, restore faith; where there is sorrow, renew hope; where there is darkness, let there be light. *Silence*

Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN: 'Now thank we all our God'

THE BLESSING



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 385<sup>th</sup> 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 385<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group*

*Perle*

*Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2000, at 14:00 hrs*

*Under the auspices of the*

*490<sup>th</sup> S2<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Wing Spangdahlem*

*and the*

*Municipality of Rambrouck*

*1400 hrs 2 Over Flights KC 135 100<sup>th</sup> Refueling Wing England*

*1410 hrs Ceremony at the church of Perlé Mr Marcel Gehten*

*1440hrs Memorial Ceremony*

*Presentation of the Colors and Honor Guard*  
Ramstein Air Base

*National Anthems*

Société de Musique Saint Lambert, Perlé

*1445 hrs Introduction and Presentation of the Guests of Honor*

Master of Ceremonies  
Steve Majerus

*Welcoming Speech*

Steve Majerus

*Speech*

Ferdinand UNSEN, Mayor of the Municipality of Rambrouch

*Offering of Wreaths*

Municipality of Rambrouch

Veterans of the 385<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group

Friends of the 385<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, Perlé

Mr Patrick and Toni Flanagan son and grandson of 1<sup>st</sup> Lt

Patrick Flanagan who died 12th July 1944 Perlé (OFF SPRING)

*Musical Dedication*

Société de Musique Saint Lambert, Perlé

*Moment of Silence*

Taps and Military Honors

*Parade*

Vehicles of WW II

*1600 hrs Reception Centre Culturel Perlé*

hosted by the Mayor of the Municipality of Rambrouch,  
Ferdinand Unsen.

*National Anthem of Luxembourg*

*Speech Mr Ferdinand Unsen National Day of Luxembourg*

1800 hrs Dinner at Hotel Roder Perlé hosted by the Municipality of  
Rambrouch



# Invitation to lunch for U.S. veterans

AMERICAN war veterans were invited to individual homes for Sunday lunch when they visited a village in Suffolk yesterday.

During the latter part of the Second World War, B17 Flying Fortresses took to the skies out of Great Ashfield, near Bury St Edmunds. Although former United States Air Force personnel have forged links with all their old bases throughout East Anglia, there have been few as close as those between the veterans of the 385th Bombardment Group and the residents of Great Ashfield. The latest return to the base at the weekend featured a party of 71, half of whom were former service personnel and half being close family. Ian McLachlan, an East Anglian military historian, said: "When it comes to bonds of friendship between old American servicemen and local villages, Ashfield is special. "The locals pull out the stops.



WARM WELCOME: Veterans of the 385th Bombardment Group congratulate pilot Morris Hammond on his successful landing, and, right, they watch the aircraft prepare to land  
Photographs: MARK WESTLEY

There are not many places where an entire visiting party of more than 70 would be split up and taken to individual homes for Sunday lunch."

Former pilot Ellis Lanley, 76, on his first return to Suffolk since leaving the base 55 years ago, said: "If I

don't do anything else in life, this return has to be one of the great things which has happened to me in my time. "The people are great. There was a great feeling of camaraderie then and it's as if we have never left." The party toured the base and watched a flypast at the

weekend, as well as being given lifts in a dozen restored former American jeeps and other equipment owned by members of the Military Vehicle Trust. The visit concluded yesterday with a memorial service in St Andrew's church.



## 385th BOMBARDMENT GROUP REUNION



Trinity Sunday 18th June 2000



All Saints Church  
Great Ashfield

## BURTON GELBMAN LCOL USAF RET

1706 WEDGE CT.  
SUN CITY CENTER FL 33573  
813- 634-1458

August 3, 2000

Just a short note to say we had a wonderful time, with a wonderful group, on the trip to Great Ashfield and Perle'. The write up in the local paper explains it all.

We were sorry you couldn't make it but hope to see you in Albuquerque.

*Burt*

WEDNESDAY, August 2, 2000

MM 3HT  
THE SUN

3

### Retired military man receives a hero's welcome in Europe

Veterans return to World War II memorial sites.

By KAREN L. JACOB  
Staff Writer

Burton Gelbman was treated like a hero all over again this summer.

From a British airfield in the countryside across the English Channel to a small village in Luxembourg, townspeople honored the returning World War II aviator.

A retired lieutenant colonel, Gelbman and his wife, Joyce, who live in Sun City Center, traveled with other veterans from the 385th Bomb Group and their spouses during a reunion tour throughout Europe.

More than 50 years after the war's end, these American troops were still received with ceremony as liberators who helped restore freedom to their allies.



The town of Perle in Luxembourg has a monument dedicated to the 385th Bomb Group. Burton Gelbman served with the group as a pilot during World War II.

While in Europe, "we were treated like visiting heroes," said Gelbman.

They attended a service in Elmswell's All Saints Church, which contains a stained glass window and an altar in memory of the 385th Bomb Group.

Each of the veterans received a framed replicate of the window that day. A description of the symbolism

of the window of the win-

dow stand three poplar trees, looked for with such intensity by pilots and navigators on return flights. The trees rose above morning mist and the surrounding countryside and the sight of them meant the men were safely HOME."

They were also honored guests at the dedication of a new monument in Reedham, England, for two crews of the 385th that collided over the town in 1944 on a return mission, with no survivors.

"I was so impressed with the way the people there were so appreciative of what the boys did," said Joyce. "Even the younger generation was just so appreciative. They couldn't do enough for you."

While in France, they stopped at a memorial in Pointe Du Hoc, one of the landing sites for American troops in Normandy.

"That's where the Rangers scaled the cliffs to get over," said Gelbman. "It was the toughest job of the whole invasion."

Their tour continued on to the town of Perle in Luxembourg, not far from where the Battle of the Bulge was fought.

They have built a monument dedicated to the 385th and held a special ceremony for the visiting group.

Gelbman said the people there were continually thankful to the bomb group for their efforts during the war.

He's a member of the 385th Bombardment Group Memorial Association, which has more than 1,200 members.



Photos courtesy of Burton Gelbman

Joyce and Burton Gelbman stand at the memorial site where American troops scaled the cliffs of Pointe Du Hoc in France during the Normandy invasion.

**SPEECH GIVEN BY 385TH BGMA PRESIDENT TOM NEWTON AT THE DEDICATION OF THE MEMORIAL HONORING THE 385TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP AND THE HUTCHISON AND PEASE CREWS AT REEDHAM, ENGLAND.**

On behalf of the 385th BGMA and personally, I sincerely wish to thank you for having us here today and sharing our memories of that time many years ago. We pulled together and won the great battle over tyranny. You, here in the UK, had sacrifices of blood, toil, sweat and tears that set an example of courage for the Allies to follow. For over five years you had daily sacrifices with the loss of family, friends, threat of invasion, dreadful bombings, buzz bomb attacks, living in bomb shelters, food shortages, rationing, and long hours of work starting early in the morning. How many of you remember DBST? Double British Standard Time. Those sacrifices saw the axis defeated.

It is only fitting we honor those that made the ultimate sacrifice that we might live in freedom. The world at war demanded that we give our best in this immense battle. World War II united our two countries like nothing before or since. World War II changed the life of all of us who were in it. We all remember the Gold Stars in the windows of family and friends that lost a loved one.

Our 385th Bombardment Group Association is grateful to the people of Reedham for the installation of this beautiful monument to remember and honor two of our crews, Hutchison and Pease. They were lost in a tragic mid-air collision when returning from a mission on February 21, 1944. The skies were often filled with airplanes departing and returning from missions and mid-air collisions were all too frequent. The weather was not always cooperative. It was a fearful experience for many of us departing on a mission in marginal weather and returning to find the weather had deteriorated. With hundreds of aircraft returning, all low on fuel, some with wounded aboard groping their way down through the clouds and fog did produce some anxious moments. Again, on behalf of the 385th BGMA, I want to express our many thanks and we will never forget our time with you. Also, the farm fields that were covered over for airfields I am now happy to say are now back producing their crops. As in the words of the old song, there will always be an England and England shall be free as long as there's a cottage small beside a field of green.

**RANDOM THOUGHT**  
By Tom LaCasse

Many children were born to the survivors of the last great war...World War II. I came shortly after, in the late 40's and was born to a loving family, in a free country. The war was never discussed in our family; it just was not proper to bring the subject up. Sure, as a youngster, I would sit on my father's lap and ask, "What did you do, daddy, in the war?" He would normally reply something to the effect: "Son, I was a

Pilot," or just ignore answering the question, as if he were hiding some great secret. Through the years, I had learned, not to bring the subject up, and continued doing the things, a young boy, growing up on military bases would do while dad was still flying planes, and I was on the ground looking up. How I wanted to fly and be just like my father. To me, he was bigger than life itself, and I never felt as though I could reach his level.

I had an incredible opportunity in June of 2000, to accompany my father on a World War II reunion to Europe. On this occasion we were able to view, first hand, the areas, where the men and women of the 385th Bomb Group, lived, and the destruction that was created by war, across the Channel. The towns have all been rebuilt; the land has been reclaimed for use in agriculture, but some of the scars, still lay etched in the land and the surrounding structures, to give us a reminder, that a terrible thing, happened on these shores. A reminder to all, that the freedom that we have, as Americans, should be given to all, that live on earth. A reminder that as Americans and our allies, they fought for that very right, to be free, and to live in a country, where all men are equal, and our rights will not be taken away.

During our journey with the 385th Bomb Group, we had the opportunity, to stop in various cities, towns and villages throughout Europe. On many occasions, these same towns...towns with names like, Great Ashfield, England and Perle, Luxembourg and many others, the people met us with open arms. They paid tribute to the survivors and yes the dead (may they not be forgotten) with parades, food, real flyby and through their hearts. We were treated with love and respect, brought into their homes to meet their families. We talked of old times; remembered the past, and yes...we all had a good cry. The faces of old fly-boys, their wives, their children and the wonderful people that the Americans and our allies had liberated so long ago, were now saying "Thank You and welcome home."

These are the memories, I shall cherish, in my heart, for as long as I shall live. These are the memories, I shall pass on to my children in order that lives, that were lost, either through war or just old age, will not be forgotten. It was an experience that will always be deeply imbedded in my heart. The faces of the children...the faces of the old and not so old...the laughs and the tears that followed are now only a memory, and we, the next generation, should not allow those memories to dwindle. Let us carry on the work of our fathers, to instill freedom of our great nation.

I am sure I am not the first, nor shall I be the last, to welcome you all home. "You truly are, our HERO'S."

Sincerely, and with great pride,

Thomas L. LaCasse  
Proud son of Leo LaCasse

# Letters to the Editor

Dear Ed and Jane,

The last issue of the "Hardlife" asked for pictures taken on the trip to Europe, so, although I'm sure you will get plenty, I'm enclosing some that we took. Where I haven't written the names it is because I don't remember and I never received a list of all the people on the trip, which would have refreshed my memory.

We really had a wonderful time but missed not having you two along. For once Frank wasn't the oldest - Milton beat him by a few months! Bot of them - he and Helen - looked great and are still marvelous travelers. It was so good to see them after too many years.

For me, I had the joy of spending time with my sister and brother-in-law while at Bury. They live in Needham Market. I was so glad I was able to get to see them - it had been 8 years. Also got to see my best friend Doris and a male cousin so it was "Old Home Week."

The hospitality extended to the group at Great Ashfield and Luxembourg was really overwhelming. So many memories for all these people for so many years.

Right after our reunion our son sent Frank the book, "The Greatest Generation Speaks" and I read it with a box of Kleenex at my side!

Frank has had two nasty falls recently which shook him up quite badly and the last one - he missed a step coming out of the Golf Club and crashed into our waiting car - badly bruised his right shoulder, elbow and hand. It's been very painful and, worst of all, has prevented him from playing golf. Thank goodness he kept well on the trip and it meant a great deal to him.

We hope both of you have been enjoying a good summer - not our cool, wet, wet weather - and that you are both keeping out of Doctors' offices.

Warmest wishes from us both

Kathleen Marano  
67 Sullivan Drive  
West Orange, NJ 07052



385th Bomber Group Trip - June 2000  
Perle Luxembourg  
Some of the men all dressed up for the Memorial ceremony



Patrick Flannagan and son  
(Son and grandson of crewmember killed over Perle)  
At Memorial service with officers of 385th BG.



Officers of 385th BG laying flowers at Memorial in  
Perle, Luxembourg



Tom and Darla Newton  
385th BG Trip



The Henry Dworshaks



TO GET INFORMATION PACKETS  
FROM THE TOURIST BUREAU  
1077 West 12th Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Ed and Jane,

You are so right. It is hot in AZ.

We have had a great 2000. You see, I have not been in the hospital the entire year (I'm knocking on wood).

The Pima Air & Space Museum continues to grow. Additional buildings will be going up and additional attractions are being added. The place has close to 3000 airplanes for visitors to view.

Veda and I spent two weeks on Coronado Island in San Diego. What a great place that is - if only one could afford it. We saw Navy, Marines, and Navy Seals. We should all be proud of our young military guys.

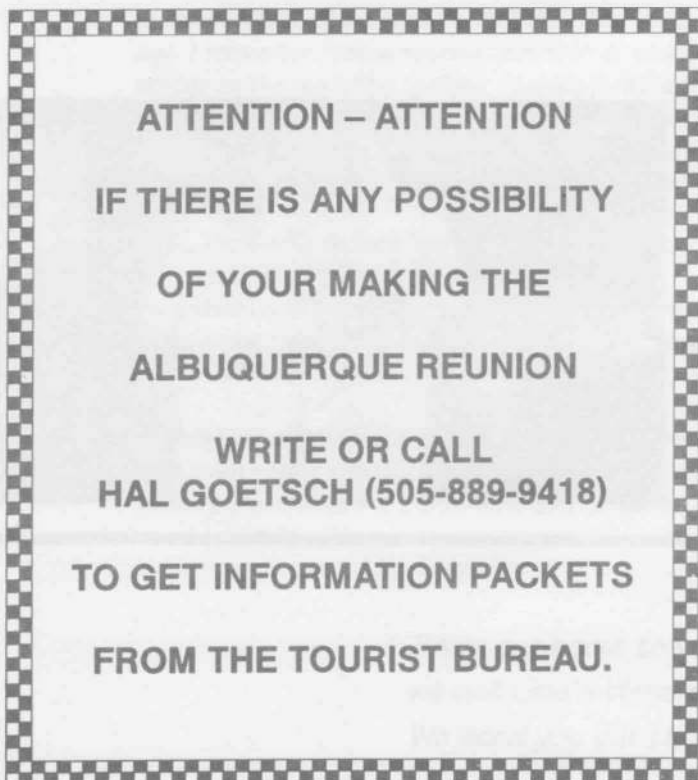
We are now in our townhouse just north of the Tack room. We sold the house we'd built in 1979, and we lived from 1982 to 2000 in that big house. Who needs a big house at age 75.

On August 30, 2000, Veda and I will celebrate our 53rd anniversary. Now that does not sound possible, but it is true.

I am hoping to make the next reunion in Albuquerque on April 4-8, 2001. My radio man who lives in NY tells me - if you go - I'll go. So look for us to be present.

Have a good year and keep your health

Ken & Veda



Dear Ed:

I enjoyed our phone chat the other day. Next time you are down Tucson way, be sure to stop at the Pima Air Museum. It's well worth the visit.

Upon returning to the Sates from England, I became a B-29 Pilot who, because of the "A" Bombs, was not needed in the Pacific Theatre. Assigned then to the Air Transport command at Long Beach, California, I flew quite a variety of aircraft into Davis Monthan at Tucson for storage. We were under strict orders not to remove anything from the aircraft. Much to our chagrin, we later found civilian scrap dealers looting the planes at will. Today, however, all the aircraft are gone except for those restored at the museum.

Ed, when we talked we discussed General Castle's on and off relationship with the 385th. My research shows Lt. Col. Castle leading the 385th to Paris on November 26, 1943. Col. Castle leading the 385th to Berlin on May 8, 1944. Col. Castle leading the 385th to Florennes on June 14, 1944. Col. Castle leading the 548th Squadron to Meresberg on October 30, 1944 in ship #643-30R with myself on his left wing in #736-40P and Mellors on his right wing in #625-28X. Capt. McErlane flew Section Lead in #743-37G. On this mission the entire 8th AF aborted over Germany because of weather conditions. However, mission credit was allowed.

My last diary note on General Castle was for December 24, 1944. He led the 8th AF on a mission to Gross Ostheim. In the final entries recorded for this mission I note, "As we circle the field awaiting our turn to land it has become dark and all the ships have turned on their landing and navigation lights. Against the backdrop of purple clouds on the horizon it is one of the most beautiful sights I've ever seen since flying. Like a giant Christmas Tree in the sky!

Upon landing we have found several of our aircraft are missing. Hiatt got an MEI 09 and the General is also missing. A lot of men have lost their lives today and it is Christmas Eve."

The only other direct notes I have on General Castle relate to his actions and his conditions prior to being shot down. I will not include their comments because historians have made them controversial.

I do however include a copy of a citation signed by General Castle which is directed to the 548th Squadron of the 385th BG. I had this citation framed and sent to my Bombardier, Col. Wm. Effinger at Castle Air Force Base in Atwater, California. Bill arranged to have it hung on the wall near General Castle's portrait at the Base Air Museum. I enclose copies of photos which show the citation and its placement at the museum.

Lastly Ed, I enclose two copies upon which I apologize for their lack of clarity.

One picture by an unknown photographer shows me flying my B-17 "Maiden America" with a nearby P-5, flying escort.

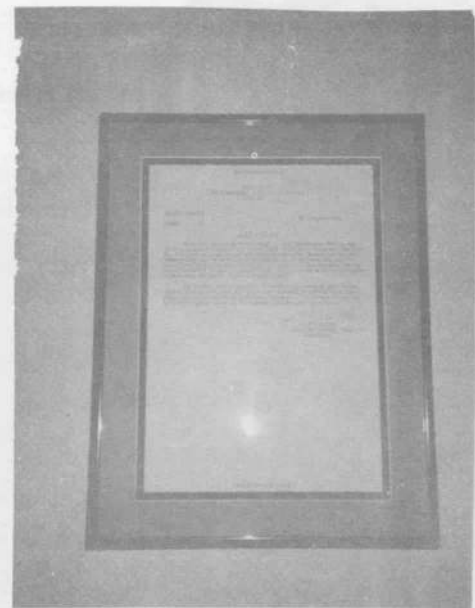
The other photo has me in attendance at an A-26 Assembly Line Dedication on the same day that the last B-17 is being built.

These photos share one thing in common. Both my B-17 and the Douglas Aircraft Plant are gone.

Ed, for a young fellow you sure do a great job as the Hardlife News Editor. We will continue to appreciate your efforts in the many years ahead.

Now doesn't that make you feel better?

With my best regards  
"Chuck" Halper  
20508 Harvest Ave  
Lakewood, CA 90715  
562-860-3221



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Some of these jokes make us squirm a little

An American touring Spain stopped at a local restaurant following a day of sightseeing. While sipping his sangria, he noticed a sizzling, scrumptious looking platter being served at the next table. Not only did it look good, the smell was wonderful.

He asked the waiter, "What is that you just served?" The waiter replied, "Ah senor, you have excellent taste! Those are bulls testicles from the bull fight this morning. A delicacy!"

The American, though momentarily daunted, said, "What the hell, I'm on vacation! Bring me an order!"

The waiter replied, "I am so sorry, senor. There is only one serving per day because there is only one bull fight each morning. If you come early tomorrow and place your order, we will be sure to save you this delicacy!"

The next morning, the American returned, placed his order and then that evening he was served the one and only special delicacy of the day.

After a few bites, and inspecting the contents of his platter, he called to the waiter and said, "These are delicious, but they are much, much smaller than the ones I saw you serve yesterday"

The waiter shrugged his shoulders and replied, "Si, senor. Sometimes the bull wins."

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**"LAND OF ENCHANTMENT"**



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Phone: (505) 247-3344 Fax: (505) 247-7025

Welcome to the 385<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Memorial April 3 - April 8, 2001

Please fill in the requested information and send to the address listed above.

Name:

Names of additional guests staying in room:

Street Address:

City:

State: Zip Code:

Daytime Phone:

Arrival Day and Date:

Departure Day and Date:

Please check the type of accommodations desired. All accommodations are not guaranteed and are subject to availability at check in. Confirmation will be sent after receipt of reservation.

- one person; one bed \$87.00 plus current tax (10.8125%)  
 two persons; one bed \$87.00 plus current tax (10.8125%)  
 two persons; two beds \$87.00 plus current tax (10.8125%)  
 smoking  non-smoking

Reservations must be received by March 12, 2001. After this date rooms will be based on the hotel's prevailing rate and availability.

We are providing one complimentary parking pass per room per night to be received at check - in.

Reservations must be accompanied by a guarantee for the first night's lodging via check or Credit Card.

American Express  Diners Club  Visa  Mastercard  Carte Blanche  Discover

Card Number Expiration Date:

Card Signature:

Check Enclosed Amount:  
Deposits are refundable if canceled 24 hours in advance

Please call in any special requests to (505) 247-3344.

Checkin Time is 3PM. Accommodations prior to that time will be handled on a space available basis.  
Luggage storage is available.

Checkout Time is 12PM. Luggage storage is available.

**We at the DoubleTree Hotel welcome you and look forward to having you with us!**

Dear Tom:

Last week Nancy and I presented the 385th BGMA Schweinfurt lithograph to the National Warplane Museum in Elmira, NY. She mounted and matted the litho and I made the frame and had a brass plate engraved "Courtesy of 385th Bomb Group Memorial Association."

Enclosed is a snap of Brian Howard, curator, accepting the picture in front of "Fuddy Duddy."

While we were there we met with Joette Knott, Director of Marketing and asked her if she would send you a packet of material regarding military reunions. If you have not received it yet, you can expect it shortly. This location may or may not be of interest to the 385th. If it is, I would recommend late September or early October as the foliage is at its peak then.

I have included a small brochure about the museum. We are members and are quite proud of the operation.

Best regards,

Donald R. Barker  
6718 Grape Street  
Bath, NY 14810-8304  
607-776-4583

E-mail: [nandon@linkny.com](mailto:nandon@linkny.com)



Dear Ed:

I refer to Editor's Note in the recent Herald about shuttle raids to Russia via Poland. As you may remember I was the 385th Ordnance Officer from the start of the operation in early 1943 until June of 1944 when I was sent to Hqs 3rd Air Division Hqs. During that period the 385th participated in 2 missions dropping canisters in Poland enroute to a "Turn Around" base in Russia. The canisters contained an assortment of items like ammo and medical supplies. I believe that all A/C returned to England via Italy.

Prior to the flights, 8th Air Force had assembled volunteer units that were positioned in Russia to turn the A.C around. One person that I knew that was a member of the turn around unit stationed in a place "Polentanria" Russia. I'm not absolutely sure of the name. One of our ordnance officers, Dave Endler of the 550th Bomb Sqdn volunteered to go to Russia with a turn around unit. He was back in England in less than a year enroute to the USA. All people involved were promised a return home instead of being assigned to European units.

From their short stay in Russia, probably indicated that the operations were not too successful.

If Dave Endler is still around, I'm sure he would tell anyone all about the operation.

I hope you 're doing well and enjoying life.

Personal regards,

Andy

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Dave Endler was your editor's roommate in the 550th—a great guy.

Dear Ed:

On page 3, Bulletin Board under Can You Help??? I might be able to give some information on the 385th and the Russian involvement.

While visiting my Navy friend who died in the same Nursing Home that Ray and Wynona Baer were, Sgt Ray Baer and I had some time to talk and he told me a few things so let's hope I get it right and don't mix this up with other stories. Sgt Baer said that a call for volunteers to relocate to Russian soil went across Great Ashfield and he decided to volunteer just to see what the other side looked like. He said that there was obvious tension as Americans and Russian soldiers mixed where ever they were at, I can't remember the name of the city/location. He was there in some sort of support position. One mission in particular the Sth AF made a shuttle run and landed in Russia, unknown to them they had been followed by a Luftwaffe MEI 09 who after following them for some distance determined the location that they were heading for. Upon the arrival of the 8th the object was to repair the sick birds, cannibalize the unflyables and the crews and good birds were to depart ASAP, returning to England.

heading for. Upon the arrival of the 8th the object was to repair the sick birds, cannibalize the unflyables and the crews and good birds were to depart ASAP returning to England.

However, just like in today's TV suspense thrillers something had to go wrong and in this case the 8th AF Air Commander found a Russian cutie and hit it off with her. In spite of the urging of his subordinate commanders to get the hell out of there he kept playing with her and a massive swarm of Luftwaffe fighters raked the base destroying many aircraft that had made it. A few good remaining A.C then took the aircrews back to England where after interrogation by 8th AF Generals, the truth was determined as to why they had not departed sooner and he was fired being reassigned to the states somewhere. <S>#\$\$%%&& those well built good looking, I can't say no to a Yank Russian women. He also said that Russian AAA was total ineffectual. When the war ended a Russian English speaking Soldatna (soldier) took everyone's name and address and fourteen years after the war they all received the Russian Newspaper, The Daily Worker.

Now after 5 years, my Navy friend having died 2 March, Wynona 3 March and Sgt Baer sometime in April of 1995 this is about what I can remember, hope it helps your search.

Blue skies,

Allen Holtman, MSgt, USAF Ret  
 Assc. Mbr, 385th BGMA  
 705 Mendocina Ct #12  
 Florissant, MO 63031-6093

Dear Verne:

I thought we agreed during the Savannah reunion the annual dues would be raised to \$25.00. I see you still have the \$15.00 annual dues I am enclosing a check for \$15.00, if this is not right please advise.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** It was raised to \$20.00.

I hesitate to bring this up because it took me so long to get on the "Hardlife Herald" mailing list. I am now receiving two Heralds and I only need one, however two is much better than none.

Our aircraft was named the "Heavenly Body" by permission of Hedy Lamarr who had the movie released at that time. We flew some 25 missions in that aircraft. While on a 48-hour pass, the Charles Lament crew flew the "Heavenly Body" on a mission to Bremen, and was forced to ditch in the channel. An account of this is included in the February 1991 Herald. We finished our 35 missions in pick-up aircraft.

The following is a list of the "heavenly Body" flight crew:

Edwin B. Perry - Pilot  
 Nicholas J. Stabile-Co-Pilot  
 Fred H. Nestler - Navigator  
 John W. Ostlund - Bombardier  
 George M. Shelly - Engineer  
 Robert S. Howell - Radio Operator  
 Robert Brow, Jr. - Waist Gunner  
 Robert T. Glakeler - Ball Turret  
 John W. Ranges - Waist Gunner  
 Russel W. Jacobson - Tail Gunner

Hedy Lamarr passed away January 19, 2000 in Orlando, FL. Probably without knowing that her beautiful picture was painted on the nose of B-17G #44-6008.

Best regards,

Edwin b. Perry  
 5100 J.D. Ryan Blvd  
 Apt #1306  
 San Antonio, TX 78245

Dear Mr. Stern,

I received my July copy of the Hard Life Herald. It is with a heavy heart that I report the death of my father and your past president Mr. Forrest V. Poore.

In actuality, my father died on October 6, 1999 but when I got the latest edition of the Herald, I decided to write you to inform your readership of his death.

I wrote a Christmas card, as I do every year, and the subject of the 1997 card was my dad. I would hope that you reprint it in your newsletter as a tribute to my father.

I have had the privilege of attending 2 reunions of the 385th and would encourage every member to invite their children to at least one of the reunions. There they could see for themselves, the meaning of courage, devotion to duty and sacrifice for country.

Thank you for your help in this request

Kevin M Poore  
 Life Member 999  
 1272 West 16th Street  
 San Pedro, CA 90731

1997

## THE HERO IN MY HEART

The world sees an *old* man, 31 years. Thin grey hair, cautiously piloting the slow lanes of the freeway. Eye-glass-hearing aided, his calloused hands from a lifetime's hard work, grip the wheel. Cell phone-sun roofed, tanning booth bronzed youngsters fly by him, rocking his car in their wake.

I see him in my mind's eye, 54 winters ago. Guiding his silver bomber between thick black bursts of deadly flak. Enemy fighters screaming down to meet him. Bullets slicing through the air into the fuselage of his Flying Fortress. Small puffs of electrical smoke, hydraulic lines cut, stiffened lifeless controls. The great motors grind and cough dead. 9 young men on their last flying mission, look to "Pappy" as he orders all to bail out. Parachuting into the contrails of his squadron, he is captured, a prisoner of war. Unsure if he'll ever see his young wife or son again.

In a German prison, God re-awakened a faith and gave him strength, a spiritual power to face fear and overcome adversity. After his discharge from the service, as a young boy, I went with him from one job interview to another. Waiting in the car, watching him with hope and a resume ask for a chance. Listening to him sigh at the end of the day, telling me, "...not today son, but there's always tomorrow." The quiet dignity of faith in himself and God's plan for him.

After our meal prayer, my son of 17 summers tells me he doesn't feel the influence of God in his life. Middle aged, I reflect back to the time seated in church, I demanded God to appear and show himself to me. Like many people, my profession of faith was limited to my five senses. Touch, hearing, smell, taste and sight. Show me and I'll believe.

During the war drafted, I ran far from my father to my future. I continued to challenge God and was greeted with silence. I saw but didn't see, listened but didn't hear, reached out but didn't feel. I have hurt and been hurt. I've given others tears and cried in return.

In the midnight of a summer's darkened alley some years back, I covered the bullet riddled body of a man my age. I remember feeling nothing. Not fear or sadness or anger. I caught my reflection in the window of the rescue as the red lights revolved, flashing in my face. I was tired of fighting life. I was so busy shouting, I didn't hear the soft whisper of God's spirit. It was then I *allowed* myself to believe.

Faith is the nexus between my father and I. My son is where I was not that long ago. He will, as all people do, come to his own faith. If my father taught me anything, if his life gave me anything, it showed me the power of faith. The ability to face fear with courage and honesty. To accept a higher power as a guide in life.

As a child I didn't have any real heros other than my Father. I *wanted* to be just like him. Wearing one of his old flight suits, I *learned* to fly. Using his old Zippo lighter, I learned to smoke. I was blessed to have children. Now I am what he is, a father.

I tell my son that it's O.K. not to believe in God, because God believes in him. 31 years of sunsets behind him, God awaits and gives the sunrise to warm and guide my father to the distant shore of his terminus. Before he goes, I'll shout once more that he is and for all the days that remain in my life, the hero in my heart.

*From our home to yours this holiday season,  
we ask God's blessing on you and your family.  
We send you our thoughts, prayers and love...*

Kevin Pam Matthew Kristin

Dear Mr. Stern:

I have been trying to contact soldiers in a particular crew, who fought in World War II with my brother Phillip Vincello. After researching from the National Federal Archives Center in Waltham, Massachusetts, I was directed to contact a gentleman by the name of Sam Lyke; whom is part of the Reunion Association for the 385th Bomb Group, Squadron 551st. He was most helpful and that is how I have come to contact you.

My brother's name is Phillip Vincello, his # was 11099459, he was a gunner in the belly turret stationed in England, "Ashley on the Green", to the best of his recollection. Bomb Group 385th, Squadron 551st. He is very interested in getting in contact with his crew. I am enclosing a check for \$20.00 to Verne B.J. Philips, P.O. Box 5970, Austin, Texas 78763, as directed by Mr. Lyke so that you could send a current copy of "Hardlife Herald" to my brother Phil. My brother's full name and address is: Phillip Vincello, 350 Barrington Ridge, Painesville, OH 44077-1506. It would mean a great deal to me to see my brother happy and to reunite him with his crew mates. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Virginia B. Vincello Mula  
678 Trapelo Road  
Waltham, MA 02453

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Here's a letter from member Foster Falkenstein, a pilot, who has been speaking to young people about WW2 and some of his experiences. He sent us the notes that he used to guide his talks, and they're easy to understand and meaningful enough so that we're going to print them just as he sent them to us.

Dear Ed,

It was a pleasure to speak with you again and thanks for getting me back on the mailing list.

As I said I have been giving speeches about my WWII combat experiences to Civil Air Patrol units, the Air Force Academy, ny church and others. And it is very rewarding to meet and work with the young people involved. And there are many misconceptions that need to be explained and straightened out. I am sending you my outline notes. Feel free to edit as you desire.

I would strongly suggest to all 385th members to volunteer to give speeches to the C.A.P. and others. We need to get the word out about WWII and there may not be much time left.

Cordially,

Foster Falkenstein

B-17 pilot—World War 2 - 8th Air force—385th Heavy Bomb Group—551st Sq—Great Ashfield England. After 3rd mission, lead crew, led Sq, Group Division. Between Command pilot-co-pilots seat. Awarded Good Conduct Ribbon, European Theatre of Operations with 2 Battle Stars, Air Medal, 2 Oak Leaf clusters, Distinguished Flying Cross. Received honorable discharge.

Private Ryan—War is Hell—Glamour, honour, mostly death, misery, suffering. Just plain hell.

Different atmosphere during WW2—different from Viet Nam, Korea, or the Gulf. Hitler taken over a lot of Europe, real wrong being done to humanity and to the world. US and Allies all together set out to stop those wrongs and make things right. Tremendous attitude difference towards our military and what we were doing and what we had to do.

That was the attitude then—WW2, get in it, get it done, get home.

We in the military worked closely together as a team—one for all and all for one. You did your job to the best of your ability and helped others to do the same in the hopes that you would survive and they would too. It is too bad that so much of that attitude has been lost.

On other points—our use of the Atomic Bomb gets more and more criticism. It costs thousands of lives, saved millions of lives, if we would have had to invade.

People today see us as villains and Japan as heroes. It just ain't so.

1. Nashville classification center.
2. Pilot-Bombardier-Nav.-None
3. Maxwell Field Preflight-Beautiful Base Society - Upper classmen
4. What a kick-in our faces all the time.
5. Rank-Why are you in US Army Air Corp.
6. Memory-Marching-Singing-Max Field
7. Drumming out.

1. Primary Stearman PT-17.
2. Chinese style - Group loop
3. 3rd Check Ride
4. You fly like a woman
5. Take control of airplane.
6. Passed - new instructor
7. License #107
8. Beautiful pilot-excellent instr.
9. Buzzard

Off to Basic.

10. Cadet Comm Hosp - Me 2nd in command
11. 3 bus loads - 101 cadets
12. Pee call
13. Lunch check? \$30.00 a month

## High Tail

1. BASIC BT13 - Vultee Vibrator
2. Night landings - Aux field - Light perception. 20' in air.
3. Local cross countries - 3 Aux.
4. Dropped map
5. B-17 Engine
6. Friday night retreat parade - as cadet commander-salute

## Advance Twin Engine

1. 2 planes - ATI 0 - Plywood
2. AT 9 - Metal Good looking - Hot plane
3. Hot like B26 bomber - that called flying prostitute - no visible means of support.
4. October 1, 1943-Graduated-Gold Bar coveted rank - no more cadet F - Lt. F - assigned to B-17.

## Sebring, Florida

## Hendricks Field - B-17 Transition

1. Tremendous amount cross country
2. Night flying
3. Instrument flying
4. Serious stuff- This was going to be your wartime fighting machine.
5. What you learned could save your life & others too.
6. What you didn't learn could cost you your life and others.
7. At last I was in my beloved B-17.

B-17 Specifications  
B-17 Flying Fortress

1. Wing span - 104'
2. Length - 75'
3. Height - 19'
4. Empty - 36,000 lbs
5. Gross - 65,000 lbs.
6. Bomb Load - 12, 800 lbs.
7. Max speed over 300
8. Landing speed - 150 MPH?
9. Engines - 4-Wright R1820
10. Radial - Air cooled-turbo charged
11. Non pressurized.
12. Armament - 10 50 caliber machine guns. Flying Fortress.

Avon Park, Florida  
Combat Training

1. Got our crews
2. Started training as a crew
3. In addition to cross country - instrument flying - night flying - We did.
4. Air to air target practice and practice bombing.
5. Navy - Indian River
6. Air to air - practice bomb not always work - Break downs - smoke
7. Get rid of ammo - Even throw overboard ruined gun barrels - attn Chewed Points was
8. 250' cal - B-17 head on. Flying pattern backwards.

## Camp Kilmer, NJ

1. Queen Liz - 27,000 other military  
**(EDITOR'S NOTE: We thought capacity was 16,000 when we rode it.)**
2. Largest passenger ship afloat.
3. 6 of us in a small maid's room.
4. Boat drill.
5. Zig zag to avoid German subs
6. Queen Mary - Sister ship
7. So we were off to combat.

## Europe

1. Dundee train - Bus - Base
2. Got checked in
3. Assigned airplane
4. Numerous briefings for actual combat
5. Nissan Hut - Mice - Soot - Stoves
6. Unheated latrine down the way
7. Base combed - Hanger & 2-B17.
8. Mustard Gas
9. After 3rd mission - Lead crew, lead our group - 3rd division
10. First mission lead - Wing man Engel  
10 holes - 100 holes

## Missions

1. Wake up - Toiletries - Breakfast - Chapel
2. Briefing
3. Map-Target & I.P.  
Reaction humor - serious - scared. How much ack-ack - fighter planes-any fighter support
4. After briefing pick up gear & go to plane.
5. Thoroughly check plane out
6. Start up , check & taxi out.
7. Take off and assemble - 1 to 2 hours
8. Tag on.
9. Channel-Test fire guns & arm our bombs
10. Go to I.P. & then to target or secondary or home.

1. Ruhr Valley-Ack Ack - Barn
2. After shot up - repaired check out British Task Force - Identify.
3. Ditch Winter North Sea - 3-4 min. Windshield shot out. Minus 50-70 degrees Fahrenheit  
Parachuted out - Land in the Thames & you'd die of pollution.
4. Before D-Day - parachutists - Saboteurs - We stood down - damages.  
Asleep^ - 2 planes-2 bombs - Someone yell air Raid.  
Woke up on top Air Raid Shelter.

## Other missions beside bombings

5. Supplies-FFI  
500' drop - One way in Tag alone - 500' open - take out  
German Armored coming down road
6. Tons - maps - Patton

## VI Buzz Bombs

1. 20 Diesels - Pass London shaving-told guys-German Kamakize-Poker game
2. First Raid - marshaling yards - Berlin-Bomb dun & area - 780 Ack ack  
3rd wave in-smoke cloud fighters.
3. 3rd Mission - Berlin - first wave
4. Ice on perimeter-sliding
5. Flew solo - my B-17
6. D-Day - May 7, 1945 - Ike's letter
7. Squadron - 12 planes, 3-4 missions
8. Engine shot out. Ships

## Lil Duckfoot

1. Pack of fighters - slow roll  
Oh my God - 1st pass 5 out of 6-high squadron  
2.5 planes.
2. Back Base night - long mission. Low gas  
Final approach-Bandits scramble  
lights out - moon dew.
3. Battle of the Bulge-Germans last large counter  
offensive - encircle & then close in & kill all  
Dip encircle & was annihilating our soldiers. One of  
my worst days of the war.  
3 days-worst fog - Jeep icicles.  
We couldn't help them out.  
Finally December 24-Weather broke - 8th AF sent  
out over 2000 BI 7 & 24. Took out of hangers. We  
so wanted to help our soldiers.
4. After VE Day - toured grounds

1. Capt. Frankenstein
2. Before VE Day - 10 days, 13 Months
3. Doolittle - Get down
4. Young Joe Kennedy - dad - London - 2 Tours
5. Fighter take off
6. Young Joe flying baby - me observer  
B-24 blew up
7. Piper cubs - proud.

Dear Mr. Stern:

I was interested to note, in the July, 2000 publication, a letter from Bob Wilson, who, together with Bob Platt, were my faithful pilots of the Barbara B, which pointed out that the insert in the February, 2000 publication, covering the June, 2000 reunion, contained a picture of the Barbara B.

This photograph shows the Barbara B with bomb bay doors open, presumable immediately prior to releasing her bombs.

I would like very much to have a picture, suitable for framing, of this particular photo.

Could you, perhaps, point me in the right direction? Who should I contact for that purpose?

I do not even have a picture of the Barbara B, but Bob Wil-

son has promised that he would send me one, as soon as he takes a breather from his globe-trotting.

With best wishes, I am

Yours very truly,

John S.. Pickett, Jr.

PO Box 717

Many, Louisiana 71449

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Write to John if you can help.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This relates to the death of Rose Mary Bishard, Bud Creegan's sister.

Dear Helen:

My thanks for your letter of July 3rd. Sue phones me this morning while I was driving to work and her sad news upset me quite a bit. Rose Mary and I have corresponded for many years and all her letters have been kept. From the sadness of Bud's story and my research came a rewarding friendship and there is a sense of loss even though we never met. I'm afraid I've been more remiss with my correspondence in recent months simply because my job keeps me away for a lot of hours. I'm sorry Rose Mary won't see pictures of the memorial but she at least knew it was planned and I'm pleased I told her that my work on the actual crash site had concluded. She expressed her pleasure over the discovery of Bud's camera, "a feeling of, " 'At last! There it is,'" was how she described the news.

When I next visit the memorial, I'll take some flowers from you and Rose Mary and lay them beside Bud's name - it will also be a small gesture from me to a friend.

Take care,

Helen Creegan  
728 S Eddy St  
Fort Scott, Kansas 66701

Dear Ed,

A friend of mine has some dog tags found on Communal Site #1. The details are:

Coston Vada B  
2391 72608 AF

A. Pos

Methodist

Can anybody out there remember this man or help with some of his history so that I may relay the information.

Many thanks

Mark Bloomfield  
Chimney's, The Green  
Beyton, Bury St. Edmunds  
Suffolk IP30 9AF, England

# Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum

## PRESS RELEASE

July 29, 2000

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Jeffrey Bilderback

Director of Exhibits and Collections

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum

912-748-8888 ext. 109

### **AWARD RECIPIENT ANNOUNCEMENT: THE BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES M. STEWART AWARD**

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum has named Astronaut and Shuttle Commander Colonel Eileen Collins, USAF, as the third recipient of the Brigadier General James M. Stewart Award. This annual award is given in honor of General Stewart and to an individual or group of individuals in recognition of distinguished contributions to United States civilian or military aviation or exceptional airmanship and leadership involving aerial flight. The award was presented to Colonel Collins on July 19th, 2000, by Mighty Eighth Board of Trustee member Ben F. Love of Houston, Texas.

Colonel Collins became the first female space shuttle pilot in 1995. In 1999 she became the first female shuttle commander on mission STS-93, which deployed the \$1.5 billion Chandra X-Ray Observatory. Col. Collins faced two major problems during the shuttle mission, including a loss of electrical power to the shuttle's center engine and a hydrogen leak. Her leadership and perseverance prevented a premature end for the mission, and the crew successfully completed their mission objectives. Lieutenant General E.G. Shuler, USAF, Retired, commented that in addition to her other attributes, the Board of Trustees selected Collins because of her "coolness as Shuttle Commander in handling two emergencies shortly after liftoff, and her appointment as the first female Shuttle Commander."

The Board of Trustees at The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum unanimously decided that Col. Collins displayed all of the characteristics of a Brig. Gen. James M. Stewart Award recipient. Previous awardees include Colonel John H. Beard, Mission Commander of the longest combat mission in history and General Michael E. Ryan, Chief of Staff United States Air Force.



Hello Mr. Stern:

I am sure hoping that you can help me in my search. My name is Terri Heberling and my father was a casualty of World War II. His name was Lowey I. Boyd and he was a member of the 385th Group - a turret gunner on the B-17B airplane. He was flying one of his last missions when the plane was hit and went down in the English Channel on January 13, 1945. He and one other soldier got out of the plane, floated on a life raft and froze to death on the Channel. He is buried in Cambridge, England. His SN was 33657419 and he was ranked a Staff Sergeant. I was born in July of 1944, an only child and never got to see my dad. I have all of his medals and his letters to my mother and grandmother, but I am searching for someone that may have known him or known of him. He was from a little town by the name of Grundy, Virginia and would have been 21 years old the week after his death.

It has taken me a long time to start this search, I am now a mother and grandmother and would like to leave his legacy with my children and grandchildren.

A dream of my mothers has been to visit his grave in Cambridge, England - She is now 72 years old. My husband and I are planning a trip on Labor Day weekend of 2001 to accompany her on this visit to England. One of my uncles visited his grave about 10 years ago, but that is the only visit anyone has made to his burial site.

I realize I am rambling on, please forgive me, and let me know if you find anything at all. I appreciate anything that you can do.

My telephone number at home (after 6:00 PM) is 937-667-8852. My address is 645 Thornburg Place, Tipp City, Ohio 45371 and my e-mail is [theberling@mvg.com](mailto:theberling@mvg.com).

Sincerely,

Teresa (Terri) Boyd Heberling

Dear Ed:

These photo are ones that I took in England. Actually, I took well over 100 pictures on the trip, but it would have been far too expensive to reprint them all. You'll find explanations on the back.

Best regards

Stephen Inglis



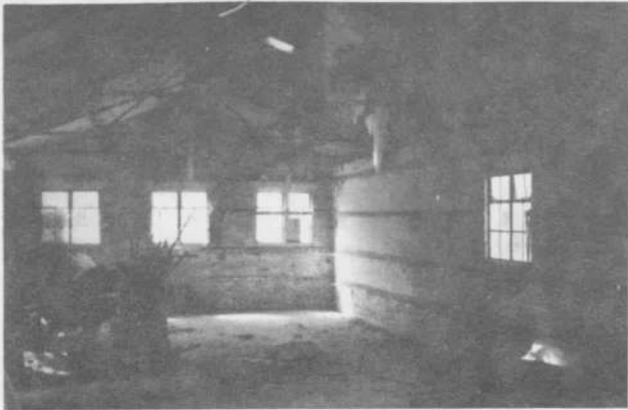
Quanset Hut, now being used to store farm equipment



Building now being used to store farm equipment.



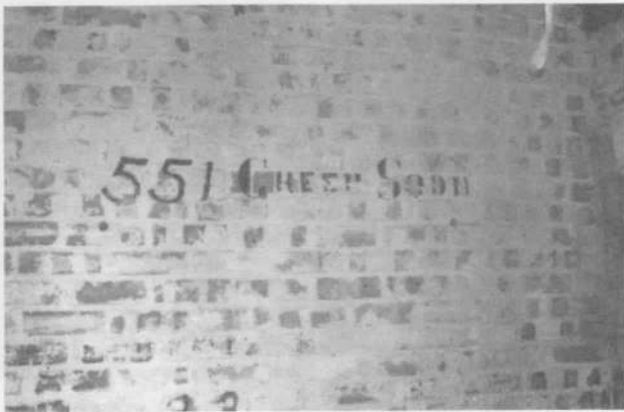
The three trees



The Parachute shop  
(or what's left of it...)



548th & 549th Bombsight storage



551st Squadron Bombsight storage



Farm owner Roy Barker in front of  
Bombsight & Parachute building



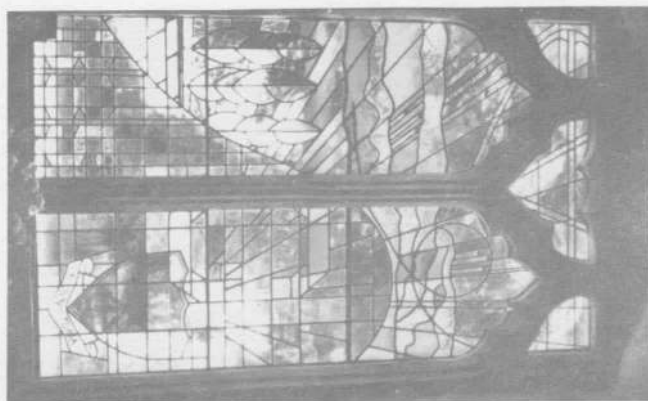
550th Squadron Bombsight storage



Old Taxiway at Great Ashfield



Main runway at Great Ashfield



Stained Glass Window-All Saints Church



Great Ashfield sign (other side)



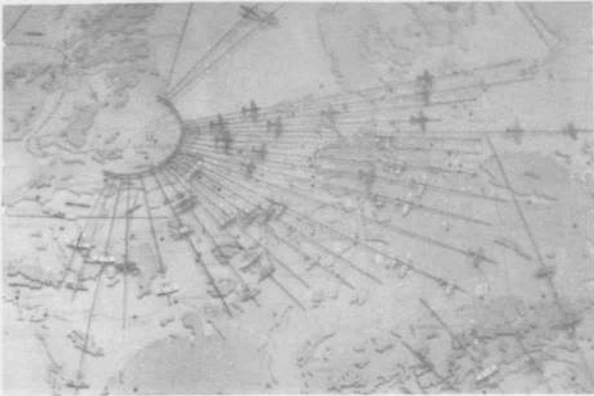
All Saints Church - Great Ashfield



Great Ashfield sign



Group photo at Flying Fortress Restaurant  
At Cambridge



Bomber Route Map in Chapel



The Chapel at Cambridge American Cemetery



Wreath laying ceremony at Cambridge American Cemetery



Art Driscoll of Nashville, TN meeting with Di Barker at All Saints Church on Saturday, to discuss plans for the memorial service, Sunday, June 18, 2000



Big Ben & Parliament in London



Art Driscoll holding the "Book of Honor" near the 385th Memorial Altar at All Saints Church. The next day, book marks were placed as tributes to 20 persons known personally by members of our 385th Tour Group

TWENTY PERSONAL TRIBUTES  
 385th Reunion at All Saints Church  
 Great Ashfield, Suffolk, England  
 Sunday, June 18, 2000

President, Tom Newton, asked Art Driscoll of Nashville, TN. to work with Roy and Di Barker of Kiln Farm on the north edge of the former Great Ashfield Airdrome, in planning for members of the 385th BGMA Tour Group to be involved in a special memorial service at All Saints Church. Personal tributes were cited for 20 of the 413 listed IN MEMORIAM in the "Book of Honor" which is displayed at the 385th Memorial Window and Altar.

Di Barker arranged for our participation at the end of the morning worship service just prior to the Colour Party removing the flags from the Altar which they had presented at the beginning of the church service. This guard of honour was formed by airmen stationed at a nearby RAF base.

Roy Barker presided over the "Book of Honor" and turned to the pages where bookmarks were placed by members of our tour group, who had a personal relationship with those KIA. Art Driscoll prepared the following list of tributes and read these citations during the memorial service, which identified the relationship between the person saluted and the person who placed the bookmark in the "Book of Honor." Apologies are herewith made for any errors or omissions, due to the shortness of preparation time and difficulty of contacting all tour group members about being involved in these personal tributes.

NAME LISTED IN BOOK OF HONOR	MEMBER OF 385TH BGMA OR FAMILY
BLANSIT, ROY H. (Tex) TTG Heuser crew KIA by mid-air collision 2-3-44.	SALUTED by his former pilot on one of original crews, Leo LaCasse, group training officer.
BOOKER, BRYAN (JR.) Pilot 549th SQ KIA.	SALUTED by Frank McCawley, RO who flew three missions with Booker crew.
CAMERON, ARCHIE M., WG lost at sea after ditching with Piper crew. 4 of 11 KIA first shuttle mission to Regensberg/Affica/Bordeaux, Aug. 43.	SALUTED by his former pilot, Leo LaCasse, who served as operations officer for 548th SQ.
FILTER, WILLIAM F. group training section, accidental death two days after war ended. POW friend returned to barracks was showing the group a German luger which accidentally discharged.	SALUTED by personal friend, Henry Dworshak, Adjutant of 548th SQ, who was standing next to Filter at the time of the accident in the barracks. Henry and Bill grew up together as young boys in a small community of 5000 people.
GILDEA, EDWARD J. Navigator on Driscoll crew KIA with Tripp crew over Dresden 3-2-45.	SALUTED by Mary Driscoll, wife of his pilot. Art Driscoll, who is reading the tributes.
GRAY, DELMER Pilot KIA over Regensberg 2-25-44.	SALUTED by fellow officer, Stacey Johnson, who lived in the same barracks and later was shot down and was a POW.
HEUSER, HERBERT A. Pilot KIA by mid-air collision on return from mission to Wilhelmshaven. 2-3-44.	SALUTED by Leo LaCasse, his original crew pilot, who left the 385th in Jan. 45 to become operations officer of 3rd Air Div.

TWENTY PERSONAL TRIBUTES - continued on page 2.

NAME LISTED IN BOOK OF HONOR

KERN, LAWRENCE C.

KRENGULEC, EDWARD regular co-pilot on Inglis crew, KIA in crash landing, flying with the Ruby crew 2-20-44.

MARTSCH, WILLIAM

MCDONALD, ROBERT L., Pilot KIA by mid-air collision over Luxembourg 7-12-44.

NESEN, WILLIAM RONALD, Pilot hit by flak over Freidrichshafen. Could not stay in formation. Hit by two German fighters at the French coast and crashed into the English Channel. Pilot and co-pilot did not survive 4-24-44.

OGLAND, ROBERT (JR.) KIA by German civilians after bail-out from Bloom's crew over Berlin 3-18-45. Buried in the Ardennes.

RIFAS, LEONARD 549th Check Pilot KIA over Frankfurt 1-8-45.

ROTH, RICHARD J. (Dick) bombardier flying with Heuser crew, KIA by mid-air collision on return from mission to Wilhelmshaven 2-3-44.

RUBY, BILLY E. Pilot of one of the original crews of 548th SQ. KIA in a crash landing near the Norfolk village of Tuttlington, after the plane caught on fire. Seven crewmen bailed out, but three died in the crash.

RUSERCKI, ALEXANDER Pilot KIA by mid-air collision 3-1-45.

RYAN, STEPHEN F. Co-pilot McDonald crew KIA mid-air collision over Luxembourg 7-12-44

TRIPP, LEON Pilot 550th SQ KIA over Dresden 3-2-45. Only two survived.

WORSTER, HOWARD M. Pilot with 548th SQ KIA over Coblitz when rammed by German fighter 5-12-44.

MEMBERS OF 385TH BGMA OR FAMILY

SALUTED by Eldred Harrington, Sgt. in charge of communications for 551st SQ.

SALUTED by Stephen Inglis, son of his original pilot, Harlan Inglis. Also SALUTED by Albert Audette, ROG on the Inglis crew.

SALUTED by John Roberts, a pilot.

SALUTED by Maurice Nysether, Navigator who lived in the same barracks.

SALUTED by his daughter, Janet Koon, who was only 13 months old when her father was KIA. At the American Cemetery in Cambridge, Janet found her father's name on THE WALL listed as MIA. She made a rubbing and took pictures.

SALUTED by Joe Kubr, who lived in the same barracks. Joe was a member of Keskes crew but flew with the Bloom crew 17 days prior to this tragic incident.

SALUTED by Mary Elizabeth King, granddaughter of Art Driscoll, who flew his first mission with Rifes 4 days prior to this date.

SALUTED by Leo LaCasse, his former pilot on an original crew before Heuser took over as pilot when Leo became Group Training Officer.

SALUTED by Stephen Inglis, son of Harlan Inglis, whose co-pilot Edward Krengulec, was flying with Ruby when both were killed riding the plane down to save Cletus Crouse who was stuck in the top turret during the fire.

SALUTED by Jesse R. Brown, co-pilot on Vaadi crew, who was shot down the next day over Dresden and was a POW.

SALUTED by Ed Lowe, co-pilot on Bom's crew who lived in the same barracks.

SALUTED by Jesse R. Brown, co-pilot on Vaadi crew. Shot down the same day over Dresden. All 10 crew members survived and were POWs.

SALUTED by Don Baker, brother-in-law, whose sister, Janet, was married to Howard.

TWENTY PERSONAL TRIBUTES - continued on page 3.

After the personal tributes were completed. I asked Milton Taubkin to place a bookmark at the beginning of the "Book of Honor" and Frank Marano to place a bookmark at the end of the list, as a symbolic remembrance in honor of all 413 members of the 385th who paid the supreme sacrifice for our freedom. Many of these were known personally by Milton, when he served as dentist on the group medical staff and Frank, who was Executive Officer of the 549th Squadron.

Frank Marano concluded our part in the memorial service by telling how he arranged to have the large stone Memorial Plaque moved from the base to the churchyard. The stone, quarried in Cornwall, had been dedicated on Memorial Day 1944, with General LeMay present. In 1945, when Frank was in charge of closing the base, he obtained permission from the Bishop to place the large stone plaque in the churchyard as a memorial to the 385th Bomb Group.

Earlier in the worship service, two officers of the 385th BGMA were asked to read passages of scripture from the Old and New Testaments. The FIRST READING, from Isaiah, Chapter 6, verses 1-8, was read by Leo LaCasse, our first vice president. The SECOND READING, from Romans, Chapter 5, verses 1-5, was read by Maurice Nysether, our third vice president.

Our personal participation in the memorial service at All Saints Church was a moving and meaningful experience. We are grateful to Roy and Di Barker for helping to make this possible.

But the ultimate expression of friendship and hospitality was the opportunity of being guests for Sunday lunch (more like dinner) in the homes of local residents. Mary and I were hosted by Stephen and Petrina Miles, which was a repeat of our 1996 visit in their home. Our grand-daughter, Mary Elizabeth King, enjoyed being with their children. Rachel, Emily, and Phillip. Louis Massari, his son John, and grandson Michael were also Sunday guests of Stephen and Petrina Miles.

Many other wonderful experiences were provided by our English and European friends during the 385th Bomb Group Reunion Tour. Hopefully, others will write articles to be published in the Hard Life Herald. Looking forward to meeting in Albuquerque during April of 2001. OVER AND OUT. Art Driscoll, 4500 Post Rd., H-75, Nashville. TN. 37205. Phone (615) 352-3530 FAX (615) 352-6995 [E-MAILartdriscoll@hotmail.com](mailto:E-MAILartdriscoll@hotmail.com)

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## PRESIDENTS REPORT

Marvin R. Tipp, due to illness, has regretfully tendered his resignation as Second Vice-president of the 385th BGMA. The Executive Committee was saddened to learn of Marvin's illness. We are unfortunate to lose him on the Executive Committee and sincerely wish him the best. Due to this development the Executive Committee has appointed Bill Varnedoe as 2nd VP and Art Driscoll as a member of the Executive Committee to fill the vacancy created by the death of our good friend and Past President Bob Smith. The 385th is fortunate to have men like Bill and Art that are willing to step forward and serve the 385th BGMA.

All 385th officers are elected at our reunions for a two year term. If you are willing to serve or wish to nominate a member for an office you may submit the name to Mike Gallagher, chairman of the nominating committee, or nominate from the floor at our reunion. I will be recommending that the 1st Vice-president be changed to President-elect for better continuity. The 1st VP at this time has no assurance that he will become President and cannot make plans accordingly. I feel this is a detriment to the group as planning reunions and activities need a long time frame. I would like your opinions.

I am very appreciative of the work our Albuquerque reunion host Hal Goetsch has accomplished. Things are lining up well with many interesting activities that will make for a great reunion. Be sure and mark April 4th to 8th, 2001 on your calendar to attend this reunion. It is always a fun time meeting old friends and making new friends with the same common interest, the 385th.

We are still looking for a member that will submit a location and serve as host for the 2003 reunion. We would like a proposal presented that we could submit to the members at our next reunion. If you have a location to propose, check with

The local Chamber of Commerce or Visitors and Tourist Board. They are always ready to give a great deal of help. Let's face it, that's their job, and they are experts in this field.

Since it is a big election year be sure to get out and vote. It is our way of showing that the American way of life is important to us. Fly the flag on November 11.

Tom Newton  
President 385th

Dear Ed,

Thanks for your note of congratulations regarding my being named to the Executive Committee of 385th BGMA. Enclosed are a couple of pictures that might go well with the article I submitted about the memorial service at All Saints Church. It was entitled "Twenty Personal Tributes." (Printed on pages 29, 30, & 31.)

Di Barker and Roy Barker arranged for us to participate in the Sunday morning service. This featured the placing of book marks in the "Book of Honor" kept at the 385th Memorial Altar. Hope the pictures can go with the article in the Hardlife Herald. Thanks for your long time service as editor.

Art Driscoll



Marvin Tipp visiting with Ed Stern on his recent Seattle trip