



SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION JOURNAL



Vol. 19, No. 2

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

June 1980

THE MUTUAL SAVINGS LIFE INS. CO. (the Dobson gang) RIDES TO THE RESCUE

Over a year ago, at the request of many members, a solution was sought for the problem of printing an up-to-date Roster. The Treasury couldn't stand the cost of printing and mailing a Roster containing almost 4000 names and addresses.

The solution we came up with was to charge \$2.50 per copy for those who wanted one. We advertised this in the March 1979 Newsletter. Replies were sparse and we didn't even come close to covering the cost of printing and mailing. All checks were returned with the explanation that we had not received enough to warrant the printing of a new Roster.

When Odell Dobson (392nd), Vice President of the Mutual Savings Life Ins. Co. of Decatur, Alabama received his check back, he immediately got on the phone and offered to put the facilities of his company at our disposal. All it would cost the Association would be the cost of the paper and a few amenities to his dedicated crew.

I won't go into the amount of work this has entailed by Odell, Evelyn and the Mutual Savings Life Ins. Co. crew, as that would take pages, but I will say that the Roster is now completed and as of this writing, in the Company print shop.



Data Processing Folks — (left to right) — Don McBroom, Programmer; Vicki Hutton, prettiest girl in Alabama!; James Tote, Data processing mgr.; Dobson. Taken in front of line printer.



Print Shop Folks — (left to right) — Murray Woodard, mgr.; Bobby Bagar, Press operator; Kathy Griffin, Layout; Lynne Bolan, Multilith operator; Betty Morgan, Photo lab technician.

A word of explanation. The Roster includes the names of those members who joined before February 20, 1980. We had to have a cut off date and that was it. Our current plan is to keep this Roster up-to-date on an annual basis by printing supplementary lists each year. **SO HOLD ON TO YOUR COPY** and add these lists as you receive them.

I think we all owe Odell and his people a loud vote of thanks for accomplishing a very difficult job at very little cost to the Association. An appropriate vote of thanks would be a card or letter to these dedicated employees of the Mutual Savings Life Insurance Company of Alabama, a small company, but a company with a heart. Odell's address is RT 3, Box 223, Somerville, Alabama 35670.

A study made a little over a year ago proved that not all members were overanxious to obtain a copy. Rather than mail a copy (expensive) to a member who does not really want one, we will not make a general mailing. If you want a copy (free and ppd.) just drop a card or note to William G. Robertie, P.O. Drawer B, Ipswich, Mass. 01938. If everything goes according to plan, we should start mailing in July.

PRESIDENT'S FAREWELL MESSAGE

by Pete Henry

This will be my last column as the 25th President of the Second Air Division Association. (25 Presidents — 32 reunions? — seven served two terms.) I would like to dedicate the first part to another of our comrades who has made the final, great flight:

Charles R. Herbst 389th and 466th Bomb Groups

Charlie passed away 23 February 80 and his charming but grieving widow, Marion Herbst, called me that evening to inquire about having friends and relatives send contributions to the Second Air Division Memorial Trust for books to be purchased in Charlie's memory. I suggested that she place a notice in the newspaper asking for donations to the 2AD Memorial Trust, in lieu of flowers, and send them to the 2ADA President to be forwarded to the Central Library in Norwich.

Charlie flew 60 missions with the 389th and 466th Bomb Groups and he served on the Planning Board of Old Tappan, New Jersey for the past 20 years. Donations to the 2AD Memorial Trust totalling nearly \$700 have been received from almost 30 individuals who remember Charlie as a good husband, good friend and tireless worker. We wish him CAVU (ceiling and visibility unlimited) on this, his final flight.

Wasn't that March issue of the Journal a thing of beauty? The front page was the piece de resistance. Now we all know how the 2ADA came about and I'm using Xerox copies of that article in my recruiting efforts.

Some of you may recall that first time attendees to our reunions in 1974 and 1975 had a red band across the bottom of their name tags. For one reason or another, this has not ap-

peared for the last several years and I've asked Evelyn and Bill to reinstate the procedure. There is nothing like that lost feeling you get when you're with a bunch of strangers for the first time and I'm hoping that you will all introduce yourselves to these new people, show them the ropes, and make them feel welcome. Our first reunion was Wilmington, North Carolina in 1974 and we almost called it quits after that one because we felt like rank outsiders.

George Washburn (44th B.G.), Chairman of the Second Annual (minus 1979) Second Air Division Association Golf Tourney, has selected Friday afternoon, July 4, as the appropriate time. This means that those wishing to play golf may have to leave the Business Meeting (Friday morning - 9:00 a.m.) early to make their starting times. George will have a list for interested golfers to sign Thursday afternoon, and evening, and will make up the foresomes at that time.

Arrangements have been made to have our good friend, Tom Eaton, Chairman of the Board of Governors, Memorial Trust, lay a wreath on behalf of the 2ADA at the Memorial Day Service in Cambridge, England this year. It is our intent to have a representative of the Board of Governors accomplish this feat each year that the 2ADA does not hold their reunion in Norwich.

It has been an honor and a pleasure to serve as President of the Second Air Division Association, but for the life of me, I don't see how those seven former Presidents could take two years of it. I sincerely hope you have found my performance satisfactory. See you in Cambridge.

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Last Call

The 33rd Annual Reunion is now right around the corner (July 3,4,5) at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Cambridge, Mass. If you haven't made your reservation yet, you had better get with it. There are only a certain number of rooms blocked off.

If you do not plan on attending all the events, better telephone Evelyn Cohen (1-215-632-3992) because you will not be able to attend any single event without prior registration. We will not be able to accommodate 'walk-in' people due to the fact that we have to make commitments to the hotel well in advance.

Evelyn's new address is Apt. 06410 Delair Landing, 9301 State St., Philadelphia, PA. 19114. You've got the green flare — now let's go.

HE WON HIGHEST AMERICAN AWARD

by Andrew A. Rooney
(from Stars and Stripes, 11/23/43)

AN EIGHTH LIBERATOR STATION, Nov. 22 — Col. Leon W. Johnson was presented with the Congressional Medal of Honor today by Gen. Devers for exceptional bravery and outstanding leadership, but the boys at his station have known for a year that he is a great guy. For one thing, he always stops at the Big Tree and fills his sedan with soldiers going his way, and that, they figure, is outstanding leadership, Colonels who can sit in sedans with privates without being embarrassed are rare.

The heroism of Col. Johnson's and other Lib groups over Ploesti is an international legend. After weeks of practice at low level in Africa and diligent study of sand tables and contour maps, the Ploesti raiders took off. There were only 176 of them, 37 of which were under Col. Johnson's personal command. Of the 176 which took off that day 11 turned back before they hit the Rumanian oilfields, and 54 went down.

The men at Col. Johnson's station still talk of what happened that day. Each group had a specific target — "White Five," "Red Six" — all the code titles represented an integral part of the widespread oil refining plants. Johnson's group poured down over the mountains pulling sand after them as they roared over the Balkan plain towards Ploesti.

But something went wrong. As they matched the terrain under them with the memorized details of the sand table which they had in their heads and approached the target that was to have been theirs, they saw smoke and fire rising above the height at which they were flying. Another group had bombed their target and the only thing for Johnson's group to do was fly through the smoke and flame and bomb another target slightly beyond.

"As we passed through the flames," Col. Johnson relates, "the plane on our left wing blew 1,500 feet in the air and the ship on our right went down burning.

"I personally think our losses would have been greater if we hadn't been forced to fly through the fire of the other groups' bombing. While we were under cover of the smoke and fire we were comparatively safe from flak. It was after we got clear of that that the ground fire became intense."

Col. Johnson explains that in order to give ground guns a minimum time to shoot at them they "dived down to the deck from 150 feet." The deck for the B24s that day was anything from 20 feet down.

"I don't know whether you should say it or not," Col. Johnson says, "but right after we passed the target area my pilot, Maj. Bill Brandon, turned to me, grinned, and yelled 'all we have to do to get a medal now is get home'."

Many of the men who took off for Ploesti never expected to get back. They knew that the Air Force was counting on losses up to 50 per cent, and word was out that even if the losses were 100 per cent the operation would be a success if the target was destroyed.

Those cold figures are all right at headquarters but they don't make the men feel any better at take-off time.

"I didn't think much about not getting back

because I had a feeling that I would get back," Col. Johnson says. "Of course a lot of men have had that feeling and it didn't do them any good.

"I scare about as easily as anyone and I don't know as I'd want to do it again, but it is easier to take a few minutes like we did in the target area than hours of fighter opposition. The whole show was over in 15 minutes at Ploesti, although we were in the air for 14 hours. Sgt. Ray, our waist gunner on the trip, was on his first raid that day, and I had to assure him when we got back that they weren't all like that."

Soon after Ploesti Col. Johnson was promoted from group commander to combat wing commander. His group, one of the two original Lib outfits in the ETO, has been taken over by Col. James T. Posey, a West Pointer from Henderson, Ky. Col. Johnson led his group on 14 missions before he was relieved.



COL. LEON W. JOHNSON

The Ploesti hero is 39 years old and looks older. He graduated from West Point in 1926 and four years later qualified as a pilot. In 1936 he decided he'd have to know something about weather if he intended to be a leader in the Air Force, so he took a special course for Army men at the California Institute of Technology and got his master's degree in meteorology.

"I thought I'd be able to look out the window and decide whether we'd be flying that day or not," Col. Johnson says. He has been out of touch with meteorology since he finished four years' service in that field, helping to set up the USAAF's weather system back home.

He is able now to look out the window of his office and ascertain that it is either (1) raining or (2) not raining. He leaves anything more technical than that to his weather men.

Back home Col. Johnson's family, his wife and two daughters, Sue, 11, and Sally, nine, are living in a hotel in Savannah, Ga. The colonel calls his home Moline, Kan.

Around the station he is quiet, seldom bawls anyone out, and is as beloved by his men as a colonel can be by a bunch of boys who have seen everything.

S/Sgt. Bill Douglas, of Bluefield, W. Va., recalls an incident for which he expected, at best, to be broken and juggled.

"I went out to the control tower and parked the jeep pretty close to the runway. Col. Johnson came out to meet another officer who was being flown into the field. The plane, a small two-engined job, came down the runway and couldn't stop in time to keep from clipping the jeep I had parked there. I came out and Col. Johnson came over and wanted to know whose jeep it was. I told him, expecting to really catch hell. He just told me that the planes were

446th BG NOTES

by Vere A. McCarty (446th)

I have received some interesting notes from several of our 446th BG new members.

Joseph F. Keller writes, "Joined the 446th in Denver, Colorado in the summer of 1943 . . . radio operator on the 'El Toro'. Went to Bungay, flew the first Group mission to Bremen . . . flew the first to Berlin in 1944 . . . would like to hear from Group members. Was in the 707th Squadron, Plane number 129136.

Another new member, Howard C. Curyea, was an Aircraft Sheet Metalman in the 705th Squadron from November 1943 to June 1945. One of his jobs was spray painting the big "H" on wings and rudders of 705th aircraft.

Harold E. Brewer, M/Sgt, 705th Squadron, says, "Got your letter and am sending my 7 bucks to Ms. Cohen today. I was with the 446th from day one until it was disbanded. Ass't. Line Chief, then a plane of my own . . . 'White Litnin' " . . . the first unpainted B-24 in the outfit . . . no ball turret, but outfitted with radar."

Glasco E. Dukes arrived in England on D-day. Was right waist gunner and assistant engineer on "Lil Snooks", pilot was George Cush . . . 707th Squadron. Didn't get around much except for the R&R's in Scotland.

Another fairly new member, Joe Morrissey of Narragansett, R.I., has volunteered for any detail work in his part of the country . . . will be at the Cambridge Reunion. Joe was Radio Operator in the 705th . . . has lost track of crew, Lynn Moats, pilot; Lou Galaini, co-pilot; Leo Pearson Navigator; Robert (Pat) Coen, Armorer; John Milano, waist Gunner; Chuck Goddard, tail gunner; and Howard Zeller. If anyone knows of their whereabouts, Joe would like to know.

hard to see out of when they were taxiing and that the jeep shouldn't have been parked there. He suggested that next time I had business out there I should park the jeep up one of the little roads off the runway.

"He turned to the other officer then, told him he'd have the plane taken over to the shops and fixed up. 'That's what we have them for,' he said, and walked off. I never heard another word about it."

The order which gave Col. Johnson the Medal of Honor was cut Aug. 17, and as soon as he knew of it he wrote to the family of every man who went down on the Ploesti raid to tell them that he did not feel he had exclusive ownership of the medal but that he was accepting it for every man in his outfit who took part in the raid.

"I didn't do anything that every man behind me didn't do," he says, "The higher the rank you have the easier it is to get a medal."

Although the order was cut 17 days after the raid, Col. Johnson isn't hurt that the presentation wasn't until today. On the same order the Silver Star was awarded to a man for heroism performed in the Spanish-American war in 1898!

English
Weather

WAS OUR ENEMY!

by Glenn R. Matson (458th)
MSGt. USAF Ret.

It was just an airfield at Bourges, France on our 28th mission, 4 June 1944. Everything went as planned, take off OK, assembly and flight good. No flack or fighters to speak of. We dropped our 200 frag bombs and headed back to England.

Our troubles began as soon as we hit the English coast. We ran smack into a fog bank that covered the entire island. We could be longer fly formation when we hit the overcast, so we split up. Each aircraft was at its own discretion to find their way back to the home base.

Our pilots couldn't see a thing in the overcast, so they elected to go down to 300 feet, and possibly have better visibility. This was a little better, except we were flying in the land where they grew thousands of barage balloons. Also, England had some pretty high hills. Our nose gunner, SSgt. Joe Tomch was the pilot's eyes. Joe would call out the hills and obstructions ahead of us. It went like this for over an hour as we listened in on the interphone. Pull it up just a little Pappy. Looks good, better pull up about ten feet. Ok hold it. Come down slowly. That's good. It is getting thicker Pappy, I can't see too far ahead. Wow!, that was close. Pappy maybe you had better get up higher, I can't see a thing any more. Lt. Melton agreed, so he proceeded to climb to 14,000 feet. On the way up it was almost solid. We held our breath and caged our eyeballs.

Red, TSgt. Vernon E. Goring and I were standing by the right waist window, when out of the fog came this B-24 from our right side. We were on a collision course. I thought, Oh my God! we are going to collide. In seconds it was all over with. The B-24 went right over the top of us, so close I could have spit on it. Red called our pilot and told him what had happened. No one up front had seen it.

The crew was ordered to get ready to bail out. Lt. Vogel in another B-24 had cracked up on the runway, and they had to move it before anyone else could land. The ground controller told everyone to hold their pattern. What pattern, there was none. No one knew where anyone was. Lt. Melton told them we can't stay up here for long. We are running low on fuel and may have to abandon our ship, if we don't collide with another aircraft first.

He called our Radio operator, TSgt. George Bahner and told him to start shooting flares. No one told George what color, so the first one was red. When the flare went off it reflected from the clouds and fog. It appeared as an explosion to me. I immediately assumed the aircraft was on fire. I just knew we had had it now for sure. Fear told me to get the hell out. I started to climb out the right waist window. Red was standing by my side and grabbed my

chute harness and pulled me back. Then he told me what had happened.

At last we received instructions to land. It was raining and the runway was wet. We came in a little hot and as Lt. Melton applied the brakes we started to skid sideways, then went the opposite direction. The plane was snaking and sliding down the runway. We flashed by Lt. Vogel's disabled plane as our pilot got ours under control. We taxied off the runway and parked it. What an alleviation to be back on the ground.

We had a replacement gunner for SSgt. Willie Webster who had completed his 30 missions. This was also our upper turret gunners 30th mission, SSgt. Robert Maher. The rest of us had one more to go, except the replacement gunner, he had 29 more. I can't forget him, it was his first mission and he was flying with a veteran crew. All during this ordeal, he didn't say a word, just stared and watched us. When we got on the ground, he said, "I thought the enemy was in Germany, but it is not. This English weather is worse than anything I saw over France."

In my mind, this was the most physical and demanding mission our pilots, Lt. Charles Melton and Lt. John Krpan had ever flown. Lt. Melton went on sick call immediately, and they kept him in the hospital for days. He was completely exhausted.



HETHEL HIGHLIGHTS

by Earl L. Zimmerman (389th BG)

Your on a night training mission out of Biggs Field, Texas, at 30,000. Your whole crew is on board, the gunners are huddled together in the waist trying to keep warm (its 50 below outside temperature) and the engineer, radioman and one gunner on the flight deck. Both pilots, the navigator and the radioman are the only ones awake as position reports are sent in every half hour. Things are running smoothly, the engines are synchronized, the skies are clear and things are right with the world, but not for long.

The ground radio station is very busy receiving reports from many planes. The operator working 097 suddenly sits upright in his chair as all traffic has stopped due to an urgent message from 097. The message reads: "Supercharger blew at 30,000, engineer wounded in back, rudder control cables severed, command radio out, request instructions. The base Commander is notified and makes his way to the radio shack to relay messages to the pilot.

The first indication of trouble was the manifold pressure needle hitting the peg and then a loud bang and the sound of shrapnel hitting the side of the ship. The full length of the ship is riddled from nose to tail at the level of No. 3 supercharger, something like 'cut on the dotted line.'

The engineer, having his back to No. 3 engine, is hit with a small piece of the bucket. Did you ever notice the color of a supercharger bucket at night? It's almost white with heat and little flakes spin off now and then. The engineer advises, "That smarts."

As the plane is put into a shallow dive, the pilot notices that the rudders do not respond and the cables are found severed in the bomb bay section. The crew is ordered to put on parachutes and stand by. It was later determined that the oxygen lines to the nose section had been severed, but neither man in the nose loses consciousness as the plane descends from 30,000 feet.

A decision is made by the pilot to attempt a landing with crew members aboard. Those night jumps were for the birds. Landing instructions are received from the radio shack and a long upwind leg is accomplished without difficulty. The landing lights sweep slowly back and forth as the pilot works the throttles to compensate for the rudder. After touch down the plane is taxied to the parking area. After looking over his plane, Lt. Harold L. James still had a worried look on his face. He muttered, "I couldn't get the landing lights to retract."

Lt. James would later go to Ploesti, survive a mid-air collision over Seething and crash landings in B-24s and later Mosquitos. Would you believe he still thinks planes are here to stay? Today he is a licensed flight instructor and if you are ever near Round Rock, Texas drop by and say howdy.

HALESWORTH NOTES — ALLAH HASSID & TRINIDAD

by C. H. Freudenthal (489th)

For some time now, the entire research department of the 489th Group has been hard at work on twenty-three major projects. While some progress has been made, I must admit that the overall performance has been less than satisfactory. But let me tell you what *has* been done. With regard to aircraft names, we (?) have a list of 61 names, and have photos of about 30 or so — either in-flight or nose art. Twenty-one of them are identified by number and squadron. The attempt to find out why various planes were called what they were is not moving too fast, but there are some answers. Ray Blanchard wrote to say that MANISTEE was named for Manistee county in Michigan, which oversubscribed its bond drive quota and asked that a B24 be named for it. County officials also asked for a Michigan pilot, and that's how Ray got into the act.



From left to right — I don't know. Do you?

Thanks also to Harry Haid for writing on that. RUTH E.K. (ALLAH HASSID) was named after pilot Maynard Kissinger's wife. The Ruth E.K. part, that is. According to Maynard, two gunners, Herman Drawdy and Art DeVincenzi, added Allah Hassid after going through Marrakech. "According to these two stalwarts, Allah Hassid conveyed the message that it (the plane) couldn't be harmed or couldn't be touched . . . Come to think of it, it must have worked — the RUTH E.K., one of the original B24s in the 489th was still around at the end of the war."

Everybody knows, I guess, that the BETTY-JIM was named after Colonel Napier's two children, and the SHARON D. for Lt. Col. Vance's daughter. TIGER'S REVENGE honored the memory of pilot Robert Mitchell's brother, a fighter pilot who had been shot down. This word from Bud Chamberlain. That leaves about 55 or so to go. Has anyone got the story on ST. LOUIS WOMAN, BUCKSHOT ANNIE, PREGNANT PEGGY,

FOUR OR FIVE TIMES, FRANNIE BELLE, MISS GUS, HAPPY WARRIOR, OL' BUDDY, ROSE MARIE, JO or MIZPAH?

The Memorial Situation

A while back I received a letter from the Holton Parish Council expressing their approval of our idea, but pointing out that what used to be the airfield is now private property. They suggested I write to the owners, Bernard Matthews Ltd., which I have done. They also suggested a letter to the Waveney District Council, the local Planning Authority, and by the time you read this, I hope have their reply. Recently, though, Mr. Paddy Cox of Holton, wrote to me about the memorial project, and here's part of his letter: ". . . I am a member of the Holton Parish Council and was somewhat delighted to have received your letter regarding the possibility of erecting a plaque on the airfield. Naturally enough, this letter has been passed to Bernard Matthews (the Turkey processor) who owns the land . . . Anyway, I assure you your letter met with much approval by the Local Council. I have in fact been approached by our local priest, who has asked me to convey to you that if you meet with any difficulties it would be considered an honor to place the plaque in Holton St. Peter Church.

There appears to be much interest in the village of Holton, probably since I informed the local press of your letter and also gave them some information on the story of Lt. Col. Leon Vance and his subsequent Medal of Honor. This has been published in the Halesworth Times quite recently . . . If you have any information which you think would be of interest to me on the 489th, it would be so much appreciated. It would also help with the many discussions that take place in the local pub on the 'Yanks in Suffolk'. God! some of the Old Timers in the Village talk as if the Americans only left last week. . ."

Notes From All Over

". . . Received your subtle hint about a mini California reunion. Believe it or not, I have been contemplating such an event . . . A major factor out here is that they are spread the length of the state and it would have to be an overnight affair for many. This is OK but involves a bit more planning. I'll work on it." (Bud Chamberlain).

8-BALL NEWS

by Pete Henry

I am pleased to report that your former Group Vice-President, Charles "Joe" Warth, has been appointed a member of the Board of Governing Trustees of the *Air Force Historical Foundation* located at Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C. Joe said he believes this is the first appointment from the 44th Bomb Group and Second Air Division and, possibly, the first ex-crew member from WWII. Congratulations Joe.

"Red" Hand reports that over 200 reprints of "44th Liberators Over Europe" have been

mailed to all who ordered them and he can accept no more orders. We hope that all 44thers are pleased with their copy. "Red" donated a copy to the Second Air Division Association Memorial Library in the Central Library, Bethel Street, Norwich, England. The Deputy Divisional Librarian, Colin Sleath, sent us a letter dated 26 March 80 conveying his thanks to the members of the 44th Bomb Group for this most welcome addition. Until now, the Memorial Library only had a microfilm copy of the book. "Red" also sent a copy of the book to L/C William E. Bristol, Commander 66th Strategic Missile Squadron, Ellsworth AFB, SD. This unit was originally the 66th B.S. of the 44th B.G., and has been a missile unit since

"How wonderful to know that after these many years one can still vividly remember. I'm sure that you and all, relived some experiences which the 489th had gone through. The first (for me) occurred on May 30, 1944. We were set for a landing pattern over Halesworth. Our plane, the BABY DOLL, was on the right wing of the lower element. Just before the order to 'peel off' . . . our pilot, Lt. Floyd Harville, sensed something was wrong! . . . He said 'We're pulling out of formation.' Perhaps 20 seconds later the two remaining planes of our element collided in mid-air. Twenty of our comrades died in that incident. Do you recall? It's ironic that that day a photographer documented this on film. It was printed in *Look* magazine September 19, 1944 . . . I had a copy of that, but it was lost . . . Can you suggest where . . . to obtain another copy?" (Pete Ceritelli). (Ed. Note: I had a copy, courtesy of Jack McMullen, and sent one).

Short Memory Section

The ground echelon left Wendover for Camp Miles Standish, Mass., on April 2nd, 1944, sailed April 14th from Boston aboard the USS Wakefield, and disembarked at Liverpool on April 21st. First B24 of the air echelon left Herington, Kansas, for West Palm Beach on April 10th. And if you went through Trinidad, do you remember —

WELCOME TO WALLER

(In tropical, enchanting Trinidad)

"Moonlight spilling through palm trees — the fragrance of orchids filling the air — barefooted Hindus with rhythmic melodious voices — graceful olive-skinned maidens — parrots and macaws chattering in the branches overhead — a romantic Paradise was Trinidad — for your Trinidad, as you will find it, turn the following pages — Alas, War Changeth.

(Para 8 — All transient crews are confined to the Post . . .)

"Fill out your Form 1 . . . Inform the Alert crews of any mechanical or radio maintenance required . . . Crew Chiefs must stay at the plane until it is serviced . . . If the ship requires maintenance it must be left unlocked; a crew member must be left at the ship or a key must be left at Engineering . . . Crews will pull required maintenance inspections unless released by Engineering Officer . . . IFF, Bomb-sight, etc., will be removed by the ATC Security truck . . . An armed guard will be assigned to your airplane . . ." AH, TRINIDAD!

1963. Col. Bristol is actively reconstructing the unit's history and would welcome any information we can supply. Eventually the artifacts and information will be displayed in the now-proposed base museum.

For those of you who will be attending the Cambridge Reunion, we will have individual rooms for the Mini-reunions on Friday night, July 4, starting at 7:30 p.m. (Following 2ADA cocktail 6:30-7:30 p.m.) We also plan to have the "Shipham Pub" open for business in one of the suites so check the hotel lobby directory for the exact location and let the good times roll!

THANK YOU!

"Norwich 79" has probably faded fast into dim memory for most of those who attended, but the Memorial Library at least received 155 permanent reminders, in the shape of books and historical memorabilia, of that happy weekend. As a newcomer to the Memorial and the 2ADA, it was an excellent introduction to this aspect of my new job. I would like to thank all who brought donations with them — it was a pleasure to meet so many of you. But to the many hundreds more who were unable to attend, and who still keep the Memorial alive with their gifts of books and money, I would also like to say thank you.

As many members know, the Library is unique in Britain among collections of books on the USA (most of which are at Universities) in that it has always been a library for the man in the street. Books on American history and travel form a large part of the stock, and it was good to receive so many histories of individual states and towns from you. We have guide books for most States, but up to date tourist material is a good way of supplementing these and gives intending travellers an idea of the attractions offered by each locality, so if you can get town guides and tourist publicity leaflets for us, we would be glad to have them.

We buy almost anything that comes into our hands on American civilization and culture, provided that it is of general interest, and books which contribute to a mutual understanding between Britain and the States are particularly appropriate.

from the Library

It is very satisfying to be able to say that the \$50,000 addition to the Capital Fund of the Trust has now brought the purchasing power of the Trust's funds back to its level of several years ago. However, as Jordan Uttal pointed out in the September *Journal* this will not last for long, and donations will continue to be most welcome. Generally speaking, cash donations are most useful because they allow us to choose a title or titles which we do not already have in stock. It is understandable that people think of presenting books that they already have, and when this is preferred, a short note sent to me will quickly establish if we already have the book or not. We have 3 copies of some Reader's Digest titles, and this sort of duplication is a waste of someone's money which I should like to avoid if I can.

When I first got to grips with the Library, the imaginativeness of choosing this particular form for a war memorial struck me very forcibly. Its use is increasing all the time, which, together with the steady flow of support from the 2ADA, combines to maintain it as a truly living memorial to those killed in action. My hope will be to continue to develop its role so that it may also be a lively memorial.

Colin Sleath

P.S. The address to write to is: American Memorial Room,
Central Library, Bethel Street,
Norwich, NR2, 1NJ, U.K.

OUR CHAMP



by Will Lundy (44 BG)

Almost any military base worth its salt, American or otherwise, is never long without its pets. Besides the obvious reasons of love, companionship and entertainment, animals often reminded us of those pets we left at home. Those animals also could be an escape from the impersonal grind of military life.

In spite of this, pets were rather slow in arriving at Shipdham. Possibly it was due to the shortage of food in England, as well as our distance from cities. But finally a dog appeared and entered our lives — the lives of all of us. He didn't seem to be owned by anyone, but was entertainment to us all. Wherever the "troups" were he was sure to be near.

And what a dog! No, he wasn't unusually large, but what a physical structure. He literally bulged with muscles under his brown brindled coat. It seemed almost as though the perennial damp English weather had caused his coat to shrink and now it was stretched tightly over his ample frame.

His head was broad and strong, almost flat on top. Whereas most dogs have a bulge near their eyes this one did not. With his white skin stretched taut over the flat face it gave his eyes an almost oriental appearance. All in all, rather comical especially when he looked skyward.

One couldn't be sure of his ancestry, but it was obvious that many of his predecessors had come from those sturdy beasts that were developed to fight the bulls back in early England. Those terribly strong jaws, thick neck and broad chest, rippling muscles and a flair for competition all pointed toward this early selective breeding. However, somewhere along the

way his ancestors had lessened the killer instinct, substituting in its place a passion for fun. His greatest joy was in friendly, though strenuous, tug-of-wars. Thank goodness he never resorted to true combat!

His favorite passtime was a tug-of-war with those brave souls willing to thrust a stick, rag, limb, etc., in his general direction. Immediately, like an alligator after a fish, those big teeth sank into the object and the tussle was on. Who ever had offered the "object de combat" was in for an experience, as he would be pulled, shaken, and thrown about by that bundle of energy. The outcome was easily predictable — our hero always the easy victor while his opponent tried to get his joints back in place and/or slivers out of his hands. The only point in question would be the length of the contest.

However, one day the scenerio was changed. I was with a group of chowhounds waiting at the hangar area for the shuttlebus to take us to the messhall. With time on our hands, a couple fellows had engaged in this almost routine wrestling match with our undefeated champion. Braver than usual, I decided to join in the fun for a second or two, and was walking along the row of trees to find a dead limb. Locating a likely-looking, substantial piece, I casually reached down to pick it up. I got it about a foot off the ground when the explosion hit. That alert critter had already defeated the other two and had been watching me, seemingly reading my mind as I scouted for the limb. He timed his charge perfectly catching me completely by surprise as he clamped down on that limb in his mouth. One moment I was nonchalantly picking up a limb and in the next it was disintegrating in my hand. Or, was that my hand that I heard and felt cracking? It was the latter I was sure as his jowl covered part of my hand. Needless to say reflex action put me in hasty retreat as the still champion trotted away, triumphantly holding the shattered

limb. Defeated before I even got started, I hurriedly inspected my hand expecting to find part of it missing. And finally breathed a sigh of relief when everything seemed to be in working order, although a bit wet from the champ's saliva.

Glancing down the road, I could see our transportation approaching — along with my composure. Looking again for the dog, I saw him about to engage in yet another game. However, right from the start, this time he was both out-numbered and the stakes were higher — much higher. So high, in fact, that three guys were utilizing all their weight to pull down a live tree limb, while a fourth was shaking the smaller branches of the bent tree. The challenge was accepted immediately and once again those fierce jaws snapped shut on a mouthful of tree. With the "strike" made the tree was released with our champ being whipped off his feet and up into the air where he hung momentarily like a side of beef. The unusual position seemed to have stunned our dynamo, but then quickly the battle had begun.

In the meantime our transportation had arrived and we all climbed aboard as best we could, not taking our eyes off the confrontation. Dog against tree! This certainly wasn't the usual relationship between the two. That fine dog was shaking that tree limb for all he was worth, snapping his head back and forth, his feet flailing in the air.

There could never be but one outcome, although we were soon out of sight and didn't witness it. The tree never had a chance. Those bulging jaw muscles were forcing sharp teeth further through the branches with each motion. When we returned to the tree after lunch all that remained was a freshly cut and torn pile of tree branches. Our hero was nowhere in sight. He probably was somewhere among another group of G.I.'s seeking and relishing more games.

SOME DAYS YOU NEVER FORGET



by Del Wangsvick (453rd BG)

This was to have been the 453rd Bomb Group's Mission No. 202 and my No. 12. I was flying with Lt. Walt Cullen in Aircraft No. 510, a radar-equipped ship borrowed from the 735th Squadron — and we were leading the 453rd Bomb Group.

Existing and briefed weather included a snowstorm, stiff gales, and extreme cold. The first discrepancy found on preflight was a navigation light out on the tip of the starboard wing. Next, No. 3 Engine refused to start; finally, the booster truck got it going. Meanwhile, our fuel tanks were "topped off" at 2700 gallons. We joined the formation just as the forming was completed, assumed our lead position, and led the squadron into the bomber stream.

Over the continent the ceiling was very high. We tried to go over, then thru, the film of clouds. At 25,000 feet, with a temperature of -60 F, the heavily laden B-24's were sluggish; maintaining formation was a real challenge. The low temperature made our "bird-dog" radio unusable by making the control cable so stiff that I could not operate it. Other effects of the cold — as we learned too late — were to be more serious.

We were directed to exercise the bomb bay doors, and one of the aft doors froze open. The resulting increased "drag" upped our fuel consumption from 200 gal/hr. to 400 gal/hr. Overhead, a formation of B-17's easily cruised over the tops of our troublesome clouds.

A recall was ordered; as we turned back and dropped to a lower altitude, we were able to close the frozen bomb bay door. We were now directed to proceed to the magic "X" (shown on our map) on the North Sea where we could salvo our bombs. Unfortunately, a frontal system blocked our path, so we again started to climb to stay above the clouds. This action also cut into our fuel reserve. After salving our bombs, Walt Cullen (pilot) was advised by "Dusty" Rhodes (engineer) that our short fuel supply was now critical. (At this point, the "Group Lead" was turned over to the plane and crew flying "Deputy Lead".)

Dusty was working a very careful transfer of fuel to balance all of the main tanks. (Fuel in the reserve tanks — "Tokyo tanks" — could not be used because of frozen fuel transfer pumps.) We dropped rapidly and made landfall under a 400 ft. overcast. The armor glass windscreen quickly fogged over. At this point we were still under 400 ft., too low to bail out, and within minutes of "Old Buck", our base. The waist section of the aircraft was now occupied by "Jerry" Shulman — waist gunner, "Gill" Gillispie — tail gunner, "Dusty" Rhodes — engineer, Lt. Jim Gunnell — pilotage navigator and nose turret operator, and John Somers — radio man, in his compartment. Louis "Junior" Fournier was in the top turret. Cullen and Dean, pilots, were in their

seats. Lt. Friedgut — radar operator — was behind Cullen. Clark — bombardier — was between the pilots. I (Wangsvick — navigator) sat on the floor of the flight deck with my back against the pilots' floor; I quickly realized though, that such a position would invite a broken back with the impact which now seemed imminent, and I hurriedly nestled behind Dean's (co-pilot) seat with my back and head pressed firmly against his armor plate.

Our right wing tip was low, and Cullen and Dean were striving mightily to bring it up — and we would "cartwheel" if it struck the ground first. Cullen released his safety belt to give him more freedom of action. (He was rather short of stature.) At about 100 ft. of altitude, the pilots managed to stop the turn and get the wing level; our airspeed was over 200 mph as we rounded out above a forest of tall pine trees. We were now "skidding" to the right with engines No. 1 and No. 2 dead. Dean opened his side window and wiped the fog from his windscreen. Cullen called out on intercom: "We're going in!". Dean feared the crew may interpret this as an announcement of a safe landing — since the fighter landing strip of East Wrentham Airfield was in sight, and he called out: "Prepare for ditching!". Gunnell asked: "Should we throw anything out?" and Dean replied: "No time — get in position!". By this time, we were knocking off tree tops as we descended into the woods. Apparently, trees broke off the propeller on No. 3 engine; it wound up to a terrific rpm and then seized. Only engine No. 4 was now pulling.



The sound of trees being broken was almost deafening. About this time, Jack Dean, a Catholic — unaware that he had his "mike button" depressed — yelled: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, have mercy on our souls!".

By the time we were stopped, our aircraft was headed almost at right angles to our direction of travel, the wing was parallel with the ground, and the fuselage rolled to the right, breaking away from the wing both fore and aft. Dean's right hand dropped thru his still-open side window; he pulled it back, clutching dirt and twigs from the ground! He also had blood on his cheek where a pine tree had swiped at him thru the open window. He cancelled his intention to exit thru that window when he realized that he wouldn't fit. Cullen called to Dean to "Cut the switches!", but he couldn't do it: feeling pressure on his back pack, he realized that Cullen — who had

bounced off from his control column — had landed on top of him; the cockpit was at about a 45 degree angle with the wing and the ground. During the crash, Clark had ducked behind Cullen's seat — facing the armor plate — and now looked as if he had been in a fight. He was bent down, pulling at his leg and saying: "O my God, my foot is caught!". Cullen reached down and unzipped Clark's boot, and his foot slipped out undamaged.

The flight deck, below and behind the wing, had collapsed. The top hatch was opened, and the crew members in the forward end began to scramble out. Louie ("Junior") Fournier, in the top gun turret, was trapped as the floor had crushed up against his bottom foot rest. Dusty Rhodes, after checking to see that John Somers — radio man, was out and the waist area was clear, next reacted to the plight of Fournier, immobilized in the top turret. He got on top of the plane, ran down the fuselage to the top turret, kicked it's plexiglass cover like a football, and it popped off. Then he said: "Come on, Junior" and pulled him up between his "twin fifty" machine guns.

One member had "spilled" his parachute on exit and was trying to get it loose from the plane. Cullen yelled at him to "Get away from the plane before it blows up!". A quick count by Cullen revealed one crew member missing — Shulman, but he was not in the plane. In the pine forest, we had cleared a swath which resembled the wake of a lawnmower — on a big scale. We dashed to the end of this clearing and waited for the plane to blow, but nothing happened — NO fire and NO explosion!

We had come down in the best spot in the immediate area: The trees had cushioned our fall!

A GI with an armful of wood appeared and asked "What happened?", which should have been obvious. We asked if he could get us to a hospital, and he said they had a truck a short distance away. About that time, Shulman appeared, having run in the opposite direction from the rest of us. We had a wild trip to the hospital in the truck, as our driver, after having seen our plane, was sure that we were all dying.

Salvage personnel declared later that it was impossible for a large crew to survive that mess with no casualties — but we did, and we all felt that we had experienced a miracle! Only Cullen and Clark had injuries of consequence.

My memory tells me that we had 11 people on the crew; Dean remembers 12 and gives credit for our survival to the 13th Member — the One Who had guided us down to an unbelievable "landing". Coordinating Dean's memory with mine, the makeup of the crew was as follows:

- (1) Walt Cullen, Pilot,
- (2) Jack Dean, Pilot,
- (3) Del Wangsvick, Navigator,
- (4) Julian Clark, Bombardier,
- (5) Jim Gunnell, Pilotage Navigator and Nose Turret Operator,
- (6) Lt. Friedgut, Radar Navigator,
- (7) "Dusty" Rhodes, Engineer,
- (8) John Somers, Radio Operator,
- (9) "Gill" Gillispie, Tail Gunner,
- (10) Louie "Junior" Fournier, Top Turret Gunner,
- (11) "Jerry" Shulman, Waist Gunner, and
- (12) (?) "Jabo" Jablin (the red-head), Waist Gunner.

Not sure whether Jablin was along that day. If so, we had 12 crew members.)

Poet's Corner

THE UNSUNG HEROES LAMENT

Submitted by Louis F. Quinn (392nd)

*They sat in state, the heroes in the vaulted hall of fame
In proud and scornful silence, for each had made his name
In many a storied battle, on many a bloody sea
Though forged in fire, or carved in mire, each deed in history*

*There was little Davey Crockett, and the martyr Nathan Hale
And the rebel line that fell, in Shenandoah's bloody vale
There was Grant, who knew brief glory, but died another way
And others known to time alone, for each had had his day*

*There was on each haunted visage, a deep forbidding gloom
And every gaze upon a stranger, who shambled into the room
His face was worn, his clothes were torn, his flight cap was awry
In his left hand was a check list, and his right hand an R.B.I.*

*Great Caesar rose up to him, by virtue of his age
And the finger that he pointed, was trembling with rage
"What right have ye brash youngster, with these gallant men of yore?"
And the man replied, though not with pride, I flew the B-24*

*It was out on the plains of Kansas, in the land that God forgot
Where the wintry winds were piercing, and the summer sun was hot
We were young and brave and hopeful, fresh from ten days leave
But somehow we knew, and the feeling grew, they were really last reprieves*

*The runway strips were narrow, the snowbanks they were wide
While the crash trucks say, in a mournful way, you're on your final ride
There is sort of a maniac's madness, in the supercharger's whine
As you hear the ice cubes tinkling, in the turbo-balance line*

*The oleo struts are twisted, the wheels are not quite round
The bulkheads thin (Ford builds with tin), admit the slightest sound
The camouflage is peeling off, it lends an added luster
And the pitot head is filled with lead, to help the load adjuster*

*You taxi out on the runway, midst the groans of the tortured gear
And feel the checkriders practiced teeth, gnawing on your tender rear
The copilot dozing on the right, in a liquor-laden coma
Mingles his breath, like the kiss of death, with the put-puts foul aroma*

*Its off in the overcast yonder, though number one is missing
And the hydraulic fluid escaping, sets up a gentle hissing
The compass dial spins, in a way that broods no stopping
And row by row, the fuses blow, with an intermittent popping*

*There is no hope, no sunny ray, to dry their tears of sorrow
For those who land, and still can stand, must fly the plane tomorrow
It was named the Liberator, by a low and twisted mind
But the men who came to Liberal, no peace will ever find*

*The strangers voice was silent, a tear shone in his eye
And from all his honored audience, rose a vasty sigh
Caesar beckoned to him, with pity on his face
And bowing low, he turned to show, the stranger to his place*

OUR LIBERATOR, "BO"

*They built an arsenal with wings,
A harnessed hurricane of might,
Against whom Coering daily flings
His Luftwaffe, briefed to stop its flight.
They call this flying man o' war,
That fights, and then comes back for more,
The Liberator, 24!*

*Box car! They scoffed, and deep inside,
The insult really hurt our pride,
The pride possessed by men who know
They're well equipped to meet the foe.
Box car, you say! You never knew
Just what this ship meant to its crew,
But you, and others, soon shall know
About Our Liberator, "Bo".*

*She's awkward now, but in the air
Those bristling fifties mean, "Take care!"
For, even Jerry hates to deal
With ten hot Brownings spewing steel.
If we should hit the Reich today,
Those guns would hold the "Hun" at bay
So none could score a knock-out blow
Against Our Liberator, "Bo".*

*Her engines, often were they blessed
By each and all, for, without rest,
They faithf'ly kept us in the air,
In answer to each silent prayer.
Though often scanned by anxious eyes,
They brought us safe to friendly skies,
They gave her life, the will to go,
That launched Our Liberator, "Bo".*

*The patches? Yes, I must admit,
Are scars of flak and Messerschmitt,
Of wounds received while going in
To Hamm, or Mannheim, or Berlin.
To any target, any size,
Through Dutch, and French, and German skies
We've brought the battle to the foe,
Aboard Our Liberator, "Bo".*

*Her bombs have crushed "Hun" industry
From Prussia to the Zuyder Zee,
Destroyed communication lines,
And Carried out Allied designs
To cut the flow of gasoline,
Life's blood of Hitler's war machine.
Oh yes, she's put up quite a show,
This fighting Liberator, "Bo".*

*When peace has come, and we who fly
Have left the vastness of the sky
To go our sep'rate ways, once more,
Most hope to soon forget the war,
But I shall not forget my crew,
All that we've done, all We've been through,
And all the gratitude we owe
Our mighty Liberator, "Bo".*

Lt. Coquillette
Liberal, Kansas

John A. McNaney
Bombardier on Our Liberator, "Bo"

My ALPHA/OMEGA Mission

by Dan Winston (491st)

As an S-2 officer with the 491st B.G. in the U.K., I briefed crews daily and occasionally noticed a current of skepticism and lack of acceptance concerning some of the information regarding enemy capabilities about flak and fighter capabilities. After debriefing crewmembers would complain that the "poop" was way off and intimate that S-2 briefings only knew what we fed to them from the numerous reports coming down from higher headquarters and lacked the real knowledge of true evaluation of those flying missions. Incidentally, this attitude led to the use of officers who had completed their 35 mission tours as S-2 briefing and debriefing experts.

By the time September '44 rolled around our S-2 section decided that we would take a positive step and silence the critics by flying combat missions. I chose a mission in Ulm, Germany after passing up the "Noball" missions

in July and August. The "Noball" missions were short runs designed to soften up the potential invasion points and also to knock out rocket emplacements. In fact, one S-2 member flew 5 "Noball" missions, got an Air Medal and never flew another mission.

On the run to Ulm I flew with Lt. Linus Box and his crew of the "Ark Angel" in the number 2 position of the high echelon. The run to the target, after a relatively easy assembly over England was uneventful and standing between the two pilots, I thought how foolish I'd been not to have done this more often. The sky was clear, I had a wonderful view of France and Germany and all was great. Then we hit the I.P. and in the distance we could see the marshalling yards at Ulm, our target. Suddenly, as we approached the target, the sky became black with flak. Needless to say, I had new thoughts on the wisdom of combat flying and new respect for the combat crews. A black

cloud filled the flight deck and Lt. Box motioned to me to put on my chest pack 'chute. Terrible thoughts ran through my mind — my Mother will be awfully upset to learn that I'm a POW — where will I put my eye-glasses when I jump? Why did I pick this mission knowing it was a real long one? Would I have the courage to really step out of the 'plane or would someone have to push me?? Plenty of doubts arose.

While all this mental gymnastics were going on in my mind the engineer had dropped out of the top turret and was seeking the cause of the trouble. It seems that a piece of flak had hit the put-put motor and shorted it out, thus causing a heavy concentration of smoke on the flight deck. Thank goodness he solved the problem quickly and we relaxed, dropped our bombs on target and turned for home. The flight back was, happily, uneventful.

To illustrate my adventure, I painted a large ace of spades on my A-2 jacket with a red bomb slanted through it and the Greek alpha and omega symbols under the bomb. I proudly wore this at briefings from that time till the end of the war in May '45. Perhaps it was mental or wishful thinking, but I sensed a subtle difference in attitudes when briefing combat crews.

THE 453rd KEEPS ON TRYING

by Don Olds (453rd)

Hope everyone got to see the American Film Institute SALUTE TO JAMES STEWART. The 453rd was represented by actor Walter Matthau, one of the original cadre of the 735th Squadron. He spoke about being a S/Sgt. serving under Col. Stewart in England.

Bill Eagleson, Bombardier on Jack Nortridge's Crew 23 of the 733rd Squadron sent along the next photo and tells of an episode involving their crew mascot. Bill says . . . We discovered our mascot 'FLAK' while on leave in the Lakes Country. He, along with 'CORKY', another mascot we had who was named after the plane we flew most of our missions, were both stricken with distemper. This happened while we were all confined just prior

to D-Day. Flight Surgeon Major Harvey Lloyd, with much kindness, assigned me an ambulance to get the dogs to a veterinarian in Norwich. We drove through a countryside devoid of Yanks and packed with British tanks and troops.

Norwich was quite barren and when the ambulance arrived at the vets alongside the railroad station, a crowd of citizens quickly gathered around the ambulance. Their curiosity added to the scene. When the door opened they did not know quite what to expect. They were amazed when Nortridge and I stepped out with two sick puppies. Remarks ranged from, "Damn Yanks", to "Poor Pups", to "God Bless". An ambulance was about the only way to move around just then and Major Lloyd was one real compassionate guy in helping us to solve our dilemma. The pups did survive and in this photo Lt. Eagleson officially turns 'FLAK' over to Major Hamilton of Group Headquarters upon the crews departure from Old Buckenham.

A footnote to the above story . . . Doctor Harvey Lloyd is still listed in the Kansas City, Kansas phone book as a practicing physician. I wrote to him a couple of years ago, but received no reply.

Remember August of '44? Major Frank Webster left the 732nd Sq. to become CO of the 735th Sq. Capt. Roger Counselman left the group for the 355th FG, presumably to become a fighter pilot. On August 12th Lt. Milton Stanchfield and his crew failed to return from a mission to Dessau, Germany. This was the first loss the 733rd Sq. had sustained

since the 8th of May raid on Brunswick. S/ Sgts. Edward A. Conway and Herman Vanderwell were both seriously wounded in action and Vanderwell received the DFC. Lt. Harry Haynes transferred to the 353rd FG. On the 25th raid to Wismer, Germany, Lt. Charles Huntoon and crew flying 'HOO JIVE' failed to come home to Old Buck. They later turned up safe in Sweden.

Here is the picture that was omitted last time of the B-24 with its tail section slightly out of plumb. Again, if you want to know how to accomplish this feat, ask Hank Myers.



We're hoping for a good turnout of 453rd people in Cambridge. You folks that live within a hundred miles or so from Boston should try to make it over for one of the days and browse around, enjoy the films, meet some of your old compatriots, etc. Even if you can't make the banquet or spend the night, I'm sure you'll thoroughly enjoy yourself. Lot of memorabilia should be on hand.

Still looking for material to be used in the Journal articles. How about something from some of the ground crew? Certainly some stories and incidents can now be told. . . Surely the Air Force wouldn't prosecute after all these years. Or would they??



I REMEMBER: THE BOMBING OF SWITZERLAND

by Myron H. Keilman (392nd)

Freiburg, Germany, is a fortunate city. On two occasions communities of Switzerland were mistaken for Freiburg and bombed.

On 5 September 1943, with the latest model B-24s (H models with nose turrets), the 392nd Bombardment Group went into combat operations. Its four squadrons were well-trained for their precision bombing missions; however, it was faced with the same persistent enemy of precision bombing that all other Eighth Air Force B-17 and B-24 groups had to contend with — namely, the weather. Nazi fighters and anti-aircraft artillery (flak or ack-ack) never turned back any Eighth Air Force attack — but the weather did, and worse.

Aerial navigating at 20,000 to 30,000 feet altitude through cirrus clouds or above cloud-covered terrain to and from industrial targets of Nazi Germany was risky and often a futile effort. Without the aid of long range radio navigation equipment (LORAN) or terrain-scanning radar to “see” through the clouds, it wasn't unusual for the big formations of 100 to 300 airplanes to be blown off course and into heavy flak-defended areas; be unable to see the assigned target; bomb the wrong target; bomb some unidentified target (city) as a last resort; or salvo their bombs “safe” into the English Channel when they were recalled because of weather and no target of opportunity or of last resort could be found. 1 April 1944 was one of those days for the 392nd Bombardment Group.

Briefing for twenty-four combat crews was held at 0445 hours. The target: Ludwigshafen chemical works. A PFF (pathfinder) airplane assigned from 2nd Air Division Headquarters, with radar navigation equipment, would lead the group. A 392nd Command Pilot and a well-experienced dead-reckoning navigator would augment the PFF crew. I don't recall who the command pilot was but the navigator was Captain Koch, 576th Squadron Navigator. Take-off was started at 0645. After assembly over the 14th Combat Wing's radio beacon, the 392nd and the 44th headed for Ludwigshafen. Over the continent the group encountered a weather front with tops at 21,000 feet. As the formations departed the English coast, the Mickey set (radar) malfunctioned, but the command pilot chose to continue on with the mission. Without visual reference with the terrain, the lead navigator had to rely solely upon prebriefed estimates of winds aloft to carry out his dead-reckoning type of navigation. Of course, winds aloft can change by the hour as high and low air pressure patterns move, thus blowing the airplane formations from their briefed route. The navigator was helpless in knowing when and how much change was occurring.

Viewing the route flown versus the briefed route, one can see that there must have been quite a change in both the direction and velocity of the winds aloft. The formations were blown some 120 miles to the right of course and 50 miles further in distance.

In retrospect, it is quite obvious that when

the formations arrived over some broken clouds at about the time their arrival in the target area was due and a target of opportunity was sighted, the command pilot gave the order to bomb, and 22 airplanes dropped 1184 100-pound bombs.



After “bombs away” and the formation was heading home, the command pilot held a critique with the navigator and bombardier as to what community they had bombed. Their best estimate — according to time and distance flown and the forested terrain (Black Forest) — it was Freiburg, Germany; thus the radio operator sent back his strike report to that effect to 2nd Air Division command post. With this in mind and no further visible landmarks to change their opinion, they made their way back to the British Isles and their base at Wendling, Norfolk County. The formation landed at 1445 hours — a long eight hour mission.

Within hours, word filtered down through operation channels that Switzerland had been bombed. Our group commander, Col. “Bull” Rendle, spent the rest of the night on the telephone. Scrutinizing the navigator's and bombardier's logs confirmed the time that the community of Schaffhausen was bombed coincided with the time our bombs were released — and the target not positively identified. Thus it was concluded that the 392nd Bombardment Group bombed Switzerland on 1 April 1944.

Bombing Swiss territory was very serious as the United States certainly wanted to be a friend of Switzerland. Through diplomatic channels, sincere apologies were made; reparations would be paid for loss of lives and for damage done by 1184 100-pound bombs; and disciplinary action would be taken to prevent another occurrence.

What was the disciplinary action? The lead navigator, Captain C. H. Koch, was rebuked and never again allowed to perform the function of lead navigator.

As a personal friend, I really felt sorry for Captain Koch. He had flown as my navigator on numerous eight and ten-hour ocean patrol missions between Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands in 1942. He was as highly qualified and as competent an aerial navigator as there was in the US Army Air Force. When the radar set malfunctioned that day, the odds were against

precision navigation and the command pilot should have recalled (aborted) the mission.

By March 1945, the war was going well for the Allies. Great preparations were in progress for crossing the Rhine and driving on to Berlin. Eighth Air Force prime targets were

railroad marshalling yards, petroleum plants, and armament factories. Every bombardment group was equipped with radar airplanes to lead their formations. The German Luftwaffe was all but “dead” and posed little threat to our immense streams of bomber formations. So secure was the air supremacy that when the weather over England was bad at assembly altitudes of 10,000 to 14,000 feet, our bombers would fly to designated radio beacons in France for assembling. This worked out fine, and on the fateful day of 4 March 1945 our 2nd Air Division assembled near Paris.

I was leading the 392nd with two ten-airplane squadrons in a new radar (H2X) equipped B-24J, No. 454. Our target was a heavy tank depot at Aschaffenburg, southeast of Frankfurt.

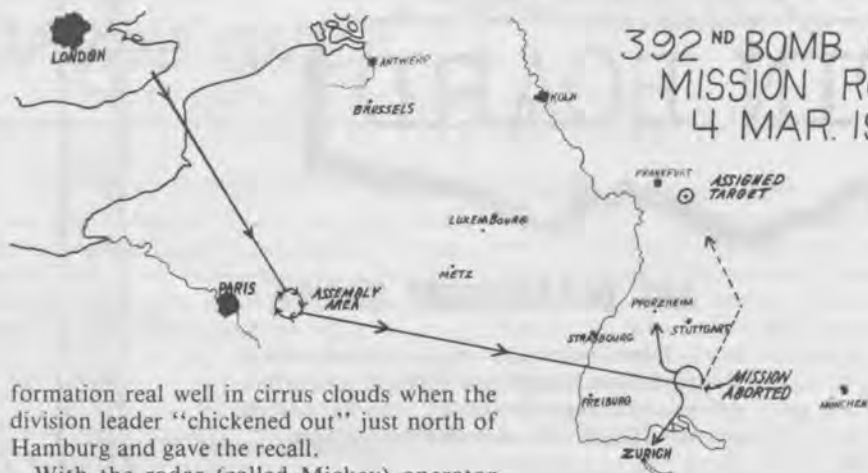
As the Division bomber stream of probably fifteen groups (360 airplanes) flew eastward, a great wall of strato-cumulus clouds confronted us. On command radio channel, I could plainly hear our division command pilot talking to the weather scouts in the target area. To this day, I can still hear the weather scouts reporting that the clouds were solid from 30,000 feet to ground level, but on we flew.

Very soon the formations ahead began disappearing from view as the clouds engulfed them. I was holding my two squadrons in tight against the 44th Bomb Group and was able to keep them in view as we penetrated the weather. My high squadron was holding perfect formation on me. If the visibility didn't get any worse, we would be able to complete the mission as our radar was “mapping” or “painting” the terrain beautifully.

Flying formation in cirrus clouds isn't bad except that propeller turbulence condenses the moisture-laden air into thick cumulus type clouds with extremely low visibility. If the airplanes are able to keep tight formation, they get through the clouds fine. Once you get out of position and lose sight of the leader, there's no way to get back together until an area of clear weather is reached. I experienced a simi-

lar condition on 3 March 1944, the first Eighth Air Force mission to Berlin. We were holding

lost us in the turn as we had lost the 44th. I just hoped they wouldn't wander into a flak-defended area enroute back to Wendling.



formation real well in cirrus clouds when the division leader "chickened out" just north of Hamburg and gave the recall.

With the radar (called Mickey) operator confirming that the division bomber stream was on course and not apt to run into a flak-defended area, I felt we were doing fine. Then — at the turning point south of Stuttgart, came the recall. I announced it over the interphone and asked the flight engineer to fire the recall color flares to inform all airplane commanders.

As the 44th started their turn toward home, we followed but soon lost them from sight. I left my seat and went to the Mickey operator's position and conferred with him as to a possible target of opportunity. His map showed Pforzheim, Germany, to be such a target. It was plainly visible on the radarscope, and we were at optimum distance and position to make a good bombing run. I gave the order to attack Pforzheim, and the lead crew pilot, Captain Proppers, initiated the bombing run. When I returned to my seat, the second squadron was missing. There was no way for me to know where they were. I did know that they

My lead squadron made a good radar bombing run on Pforzheim and returned to England without incident at 1320 hours. Shortly after landing, our second squadron returned without apparent difficulty. At their debriefing, the lead crew explained how they got on the outside of the turn and lost us in the cirrus clouds and heavy contrails; that upon breaking out of the clouds they came upon what they believed to be Freiburg, Germany, and bombed it as a target of opportunity.

The debriefing was hardly finished when Col. Lorin Johnson, our group commander, was called to the telephone and a long conflag took place. Zurich, Switzerland, had been bombed.

It was only a matter of checking bomb release time with the time of the bombing to confirm that it was the 392nd high squadron that had dropped the bombs on Zurich. Yes, it was a sham. The good U.S. ambassador had just recently attended memorial service and visited

the reconstruction projects of the previous bombing. Indeed, he was chagrined and embarrassed. "Disciplinary action must be taken."

Everybody became involved. General Eisenhower and General Spaatz at Supreme Allied Headquarters, General Doolittle at Eighth Air Force, General Kepner at 2nd Air Division, General Leon Johnson at 14th Wing, and, of course, Col. Lorin Johnson of the 392nd. What should be done and to whom should it be done. The pros and cons went down through channels, and then back up and then back down for several days. Finally the decision: "The officers of the lead crew (pilot, bombardier, and navigator) will be court-martialed for gross negligence in the bombing of a Neutral Nation."

I was the lead crew squadron commander, and this lead crew pilot, Lt. Sincocks, I personally admired. To me it was perfectly understandable how they got separated from their radar-equipped leader; how, in the clouds, they could have easily been blown to the left off course; how with poor visibility and scattered to broken clouds they could have mistaken Zurich for Freiburg. It seemed to me that the command pilot leading the division who "chickened out" after leading us into the clouds, held quite a bit of responsibility for the disaster. Even I could be responsible in some way, but to court-martial three fine, skilled aviators was questionable.

The court-martial was held at 2nd Air Division Headquarters in Ketteringham Hall, just southwest of Norwich. I was called to testify on behalf of the three accused officers. I did the best I could. I remember that Col. Jimmy Stewart was the president of the court. Col. Chavez, U.S. Senator from New Mexico, was the legal officer.

The trial lasted for most of two days. My officers were acquitted.

EVER MEET A GURKA? ...FRIGHTENING!

by Glenn R. Matson (458th)
MSGt. USAF Ret.

It was 1 Feb. 1944 when we arrived in Maraketch, Africa, after a long over water flight from South America.

A guard had to be posted on the aircraft all the time we were there. It seems someone was sabotaging them by placing a hand grenade in the nose wheel well compartment. When the gear came up, it would pull the pin on the grenade and blow up the aircraft. Very innovative!

While I was on guard duty one night I listened to the German propaganda program in English on the aircraft radio. They would play

up-to-date records by Bing Crosby and other famous singers. After a nice song they would then come on with the propaganda.

The rest of the crew went to Maraketch. SSgt. Vernon (Red) Goring was supposed to relieve me at midnight. Being otherwise detained, he did not show up until about three in the morning. At that point, I left for the barracks. It was dark out and no lights were on because of the black out, so naturally I got lost. I wandered around and ended up in the French Air Force area.

All of a sudden, out of the dark came the biggest black man I had ever seen in my life. He was over six feet tall with a fez type hat that was another foot tall. He was a French Gurka soldier, and had a rifle that looked six feet long with a bayonet almost three feet long. I heard the bolt fly open on the rifle and he challenged me in French. I froze in my rucks. I did not have to understand any French to know what he meant. I threw up my hands and yelled back to him, "American!" "American!!" He pointed that long rifle and bayonet at my stom-

ach and scared the life out of me. He looked me over real good and then he said something I could understand. "American?", "have cigarettes?". Hell, I didn't smoke. Now what am I to do? Then I remembered I had two of those five packs of cigarettes taken out of the 'K' rations I had eaten on guard duty. Slowly I took them out of my shirt pocket and handed them to him. I thought he was going to throw his rifle away when he saw them.

He was all excited and happy as a kid in a candy store. He lit up and smiled, then warned me to get out of this area and showed me in what direction to go. It was a good thing as I was out of cigarettes. Considering myself lucky to be alive, I took off for the barracks.

It later reminded me of a joke I had heard about Gurkas. They were famous for their extremely sharp knives. Well, as it happened, this Gurka sneaked up on a German soldier and swung at him with his big knife. The German looked at the Gurka and laughed, "Ha Ha you missed me." The Gurka replied, "Oh yea, shake your head."

BULLETIN BOARD

Evelyn
**MOVES
AGAIN!**



If some of you have been having trouble getting in touch with Evelyn Cohen over the past few months, it was because she was in the process of moving — something she says she will never do again. Believe that, and I've got a gold mine I'll sell you real cheap.

Her new address is Apt. 06410 Delair Landing, 9301 State St., Philadelphia, PA 19114. Telephone 215-632-3992.

Now make a note of that on a piece of paper and put it in a safe place. If you're like me you'll put it in a place so safe you'll never find it again.

LET YOUR GENEROSITY BE TRANSPARENT!

The Memorial Library is trying to form a collection of color transparencies on America, writes Colin Sleath. He thinks lots of you must have old slides of your home town and locality, vacations and trips, local events and festivals, etc., which are surplus to your own requirements. Even if they are not your best photography he wants them.

His collection will try to illustrate the scenery, history and community life of modern America. Almost anything could be of interest, so have a good sort out and see what you can send him. All he asks is that you put a caption on each transparency saying what it is and giving, if possible, a date (year). If you're not a photographer, go out and buy him a pack of slides from your local store.

The slides will be used by intending travellers to the US, schools working on projects on America, and community groups planning activities with American themes.

ART DEPARTMENT GROWS

It is always nice when a person with a particular talent steps forward and offers to contribute this talent towards making the JOURNAL a better publication.



Bob Harber of Crescent City, California (448th - 453rd) has just retired from teaching art in the Public School system of Crescent City and now has time to do more of the things he likes. Aircraft illustration is at the top of his list and he will be doing illustrated strips of incidents he remembers from the war years.

Much of what he can do for the JOURNAL will depend on members sending him stories that lend themselves to illustration. His address is 148 Pebble Beach Drive, Crescent City, CA. 95531. We now have a talented Art Department of two, as Bob will be working with Ed Hohman. Welcome aboard Bob, and keep those strips coming.

LOOKING FOR A VOLUNTEER

We would like to start publishing a column for each issue of the *Journal* covering the problems of the elderly Veteran. We are all getting there you know and many of our members could probably use some help with taxes, veterans benefits, jobs etc.

Our problem is that we need people with expertise in these fields to write the columns. If you think you can help, write to me at P.O. Drawer B, Ipswich, Mass. 01938. This is one time the word 'volunteer' does not qualify you for a section 8.



Bill Robertie

BAPTISM OF THE CHIEF

(NOT EXACTLY A "BLESSED EVENT"!)



by Archie A. MacIntyre (492nd BG)

The date — May 29, 1944. Crew 715-857th Squadron 492nd Bomb Group was just leaving the target area — Politz, Germany. I was the radio operator on Lt. Irwin Gaines' crew. Our plane was the "Silver Chief; 44-40201.



The worst seemed to be over. Our plane had taken her lumps over the target but we were all safe. We had our share of flak holes, but we had four good engines, we were in our slot in formation and on our way home. I had just verified bombs away from the putt-putt deck and was closing the bomb bay doors when the trip home changed.

A burst of flak directly below our plane sent a piece of shrapnel up through the putt-putt deck rupturing the flooring and throwing me backward against the nose wheel structure. At the same time, my parachute was ripped open. In less than a second the whole bomb bay and myself was engulfed in silk and cords. The wind caused the chute to bellow violently. All I could do was hold onto the nose wheel frame with all my strength and pray I wouldn't be sucked out the bomb bay doors. I could hear Gaines over the interphones asking for damage reports as well as Heist (Lt. Charles Heist — Bombardier) instructing me to close the bomb bay doors. My throat microphone was mixed up in my chute and I wasn't even sure I was on oxygen. After a second call from Heist, Gaines instructed Freeman (S/Sgt. Joyce Freeman, Upper Turret Gunner) to check on me. Freeman was out of his turret and down on the putt-putt deck like a shot. He had the bomb bay doors closed and me back on the flight deck in record time. We left the chute bellowing in the bomb racks.

I didn't have time to reflect on my close call. All kinds of things were happening. We were going through a flak storm. The big black blotches of smoke were everywhere. Hatley (T/Sgt. Clyde Hatley, Flight Engineer), who was stationed at one of the waist windows, was giving Gaines a detailed report of damage to other planes in our formation as well as warning him about a B-24 that was directly below us and too close for comfort.

Gaines pulled our plane up to avoid a collision. The plane followed us. I tried to identify the plane from my bubble window without success. After some anxious moments, the plane shifted directly under our left wing but it was still so close I felt I could reach out and touch it. I could see the two pilots, as well as black smoke belching from one of its engines, and series of flak holes along its fuselage. I decided to get a photograph of this plane, but because of tight quarters I couldn't aim or focus the camera.

I pointed the camera in the approximate location and tripped the shutter. I missed. Hatley reported the plane suddenly lost speed and altitude and headed earthward.

Hatley confirmed he had an extra chute and I decided to brave the bomb bays when the word came Bandits had just hit the groups ahead of us and we could expect them in seconds. I had just scrambled back up onto the flight deck when the Bandits came into sight. ME-210's flying four abreast in waves, their guns blazing, came at us at breakneck speeds. One of the ME 210's must have singled out the "Silver Chief" for action as he approached us in a direct line. His wings were dipping from side to side but his guns were not firing. Either this pilot was out of ammunition, he was trying to chicken us out, or he was going to ram us. Our fate was about to happen. Both our nose and top turret guns responded. The noise of four 50 calibre guns firing at one time, the rain of spent cartridges down on me from the upper turret, plus the endless stream of tracer bullets indicated we were scoring hits. My main concern was, what would happen if this fighter plane were to explode in front of us.

At the last moment, the ME-210 broke and went directly over our plane. As it did, Freeman got in some direct hits. Atchison, (S/Sgt. Robert Atchison, Rear Turret Gunner) made some final hits. The ME-210 plunged earthward, leaving a trail of smoke.

Before we could breathe a sigh of relief, the sky in front of us was filled with airplane hardware; oxygen bottles, radio equipment, engine cowlings and a fully inflated life raft. Most of the hardware bounced off our fuselage, except the life raft. It slammed into our right inboard engine. The impact almost tore off the wing.

The Silver Chief seemed to stand still and shake. The next few minutes seemed to encompass a lifetime and I am even amazed today at the discipline and control my pilots displayed under extreme conditions. While black smoke and oil bellowed from the damaged engine and the plane vibrated all over, both Gaines and Leggett (Lt. Charles Leggett, Co-Pilot) worked at a frantic pace to keep us airborne. Our main concern was whether the wing would hold. Gaines maneuvered the Silver Chief out

of formation and ordered the crew to dump everything overboard that wasn't needed to keep our plane in the air. With a feathered engine, remaining engines running hot, loss of oil pressure, plus the plane shaking; we couldn't keep up with our group, thus we started the trip home as a straggler. Groups came and went, we flew on a prayer.

The long trip back to England was memorable. We kept a constant watch on the damaged engine and wing. There was a constant request from Gaines to our Navigator, Lt. Walter Walkowitz, for position reports and ETA's. We worried about enemy fighters, the flak we would have over Holland and whether we could stay in the air for the five hundred miles. I counted many planes with the same problems as us. I logged position reports on a plane ditching in the North Sea as well as bail out situations.



In time we were over the "Wash", and with a few more prayers, over our field. We all took emergency landing positions except Heist (Lt. Charles Heist, Bombardier), he braced himself between Gaines and Leggett and called out readings on our indicated air speeds. The landing was rough but safe. We were home!

Crew 715 returned to Politz on June 20, 1944 and while the latter mission was rougher, we considered the May 20th mission as the Baptism of the "Chief".



TO 93rd BOMB GROUP MEMBERS

Charles J. Weiss (93rd B. Group)

Let's make the next Reunion at Cambridge, Mass. one that we won't readily forget. I am trying quite hard to recruit new members for the Association especially from the ranks of ex-members of the 93rd Bomb Group.

I still have many to contact, but if you are in contact with old 93rd Types who haven't as yet joined, try to persuade them to sign up! If you have no luck — please send me their names and I'll open all "stqps" — I'll even send them some interesting information on the 2nd Air Div. Assn. Along with an application form for membership. It might even cause a chain-reaction — talk it up! Thanks again and we'll see you at Cambridge in July.

THE PX PAGE

JAWS OVER EUROPE B-24 BOMBERS IN WORLD WAR II



"The destruction of Germany's great air industrial was accomplished almost entirely from the air. No one can stand among the ruins without a feeling of awe for the devastating power of such armaments. The courage and skill of our pilots and their crews in these operations is legendary. They deserve the highest tribute of all."

Jaws Over Europe is a book of over 200 photos showing the B-24 in action and at rest with a running commentary explaining the photos. For you nose art buffs there are 16 to ponder on.

Published in soft cover there are 120 pages of what can be described as rare photos taken by the author himself on missions over Europe. Even better is the price which is \$3.95 ppd. Simply send check or money order to Ursel P. Harvell, P.O. Box 655, Ellenton, FL. 33532. Phone 813-722-6038.

2nd AD BLAZER PATCHES



Evelyn Cohen informs me that she still has a large supply of 2nd AD Blazer patches on hand so if you missed ordering one that last time around DO IT NOW.

I wish we could show you this in the original colors but printing costs forbid this. Just take my word for it that they are beautiful and make a brilliant display at reunion where everyone seems to have one.

Cost is \$3.00 and send your check or money order to :

Evelyn Cohen
Apt. 06410 Delair Landing ;
9301 State St.
Philadelphia, PA 19114

ROKICKI DOES IT AGAIN — AND AGAIN

We won't repeat the entire story because that was in the March issue, but be it known that Rick has come up with some more 50s and can still provide this very attractive plaque for those who forgot to order the last time.

DESCRIPTION: Solid walnut 6x9x3/4 inches; Solid brass inscription plate (or black enamel over brass); plate size 2 1/2x5, four rounds of .50 cal. shells with steel belt clips and polished projectiles. No primers and safety drilled for legality. The inscription plate can read just about anything you desire. All you have to do is advise any pertinent information you want included. Example: Name, rank (if desired), Bomb Group, Squadron, location dates, Aircraft - and/or name, whether ground or flight crew, gunner, pilot, navigator, etc. If you were ground crew — mechanic, armorer, HQ, MP, Sub Depot, etc. etc. ALSO . . . money back guarantee if not fully satisfied. Cost for this item is \$25.00. Send order to Rick Rokicki, 365 Mae Road, Glen Burnie, MD. 21061. Any profit after costs is being donated by Rick to the Association Treasury.

Dear Rick:

The plaque arrived in today's mail in excellent condition. The hardest work I've done since my operation was trying to open the box. Believe me there was no damage. There couldn't have been.

Everyone in my family thinks the plaque is just beautiful and well worth the money. It will have a prominent place on my den wall.

I want to thank you once again for your time and effort spent on the project.

Gerry Covey (458th)

Dear Rick:

The plaque is just great! I am very pleased with it. It's even better than it looks in the picture.

That's a great value too, Rick, for \$25.00. I'm sure you could get twice that if you wanted to. You have done a great service for some of your old combat buddies — I am very proud of it.

I have the plaque on the wall in my office here at the drug store and it is a real conversation piece. Everyone thinks it's great.

Thanks again for your good work, Rick, and if you come up with anything else, please drop me a line and let me know.

Cliff Thomas (453rd)

Rick:

Clif Thomas, our town's No. 1 drug pusher, showed me the plaque w/50's — I'd like one, too.

Thought there wouldn't be a chance, with the limited number you were going to produce. Will try now that you have more ammo.

C.Q. Mateer (458th)

Dear Rick:

Received the plaque in good shape and am very pleased with it. I have had nothing but compliments on it from my friends. I think it is one of my better buys.

Thomas F. Walsh (458th)

Dear Rick:

You did a beautiful job on the plaque and I have it displayed in a case in the den with the rest of my mementos.

It was a very professional job and I am well pleased.

George E. Russell (44th)

Dear Rick:

Certainly want you to know I'm very pleased with the plaque. The quality of workmanship is excellent, and it is worth the money. As a reminder of where we were, what we were doing and why — it is worth far more.

Bob Grahlmann (458th)



458th COMMENTS

by George A. Reynolds (458th BG)

First, my thanks for the holiday greeting cards and letters about the unit history reprint. And while time hasn't permitted replies for each one, your thoughtfulness, kindness and compliments are very gratifying. Secondly, copies of the new book were sent to Norwich Central Library, AF Museum, the Smithsonian and other such facilities. So, from now on, our favorite Group's track record will be preserved in some of the nation's foremost historical data centers.

One interesting development occurred from my quest to obtain additional material for the reprint. Ed Silver in Calif. remarked about an unusual situation on his crew — that of having twin brothers assigned, (after the five Sullivan brothers went down on one ship, the War and Navy Depts. normally prohibited such).

Those brothers turned out to be Don and John Echols who now live in Ala. They did indeed serve on the same combat crew, not for long, however. The Dept. didn't interfere, but rather a war. Don was hit on his 14th mission and returned to the ZI for gunnery instructing after an extended hospital stay. John completed his tour, and in service, earning a reserve commission after hostilities ended.

Don recalls the crew had shades of black sheep, usually in hot water for one reason or another. En route to England from Iceland, weather forced a landing in N. Ireland, and their pilot, Allen Blum, had the reputation for speedy taxiing, (how's that about sins, Al?). When it was time to leave, Blum was doing his

thing and got on a perimeter section being repaired by locals who wouldn't yield to the approaching B-24. Into the boonies was the only way to go, and this stripped the nose gear completely away. The property officer (a major) set to receive the new Lib grew so riled he sent the entire crew on to England WITHOUT their personal gear, (it remained on the bird under armed guard and didn't catch up to them for weeks).

Later at Horsham, the EM were one of the few combat crews to pull KP, and they fouled up at that so much, mess personnel kicked them off the job. They passed out too many goodies to other off duty crew members.

Allen said the crew was just lucky. One mission required a deadstick landing when the only operating engine quit at 6,000 feet and three miles out. They aborted the lead position once with an engine ablaze, then dove at full throttle to squelch the flames. Upon returning to base, it was socked in by fog and they had no place else to go. Over to The Wash and zero altitude for an approach. The bird passed between two hangars on the field and just missed the water tower. On the next round, a last-second look averted collision with a vessel, The Wash, and some flare firing at the field's north end helped to complete a successful landing. Bombardier Ed Silver once brought their bird back home on little more than a wing and a prayer. Al, it seems that luck was probably spiked with a touch of skill too.

Add another "record" to the 458th list. The youngest crew member, 16-year old Sgt. De Sales Glover, the oldest, 46-year old Sgt. Wells Garner and now the Echols twins on one crew. Perhaps there were no other twins so assigned

throughout the entire 8th???

For several years I've had a photo of "Breezy Lady" resting on her snoot after an almost perfect nose gear-up landing. I've wondered about the incident and who the crewman was standing close by wearing a grin like the duration plus six months had arrived. Just recently I had the pleasure of learning that the nose gear didn't retract when the mission began, then wouldn't extend on returning. Navigator Walter Cline told the story, then identified himself as the grinner and a new 2nd ADA member. He says all of those one walked away from brought out his brand of happies. Welcome aboard, Walt. Also the Herman Mandel, C. C. Wilkening, Thurman Spiva, Paul Dirker and J. P. Johnsen.

A question for the troops (any troop). The 96th CW awarded a Certificate of Valor to some combat crewmen through their respective Groups. There are seven Maltese crosses on the certificate that appear to have been added (the ink's color is a different shade) as an afterthought. One cross is positioned at Bordeaux, Calais and Paris, France. Others are about Berlin, Hamburg and Munich, Ger. and the last is in northern Germany near the Baltic Sea. Col. Bob Vincent and I would like to know the significance of the crosses — perhaps there are others. Does anyone recall what the cross represents? A letter to the Ed. should be interesting and certainly appreciated.

One final thought. In 1945 a sound of silence sent that most famous Lib, "Lady Be Good" to her doom in the desert. Make some noise in 1980 for that ole buddy over here about the 2nd ADA and sign him up. It's later than we think. . .

A BROWNIE ON THE K-28 CAMERA MOUNT

by Norman N. Tillner (44th BG)

This incident occurred in the middle of June, 1944, and my memory of some details is understandably fogged by the passing of time; however, some of the events are as vivid as though it happened only yesterday.

I was flying right waist position on Pete Henry's crew, 67th Squadron, 44th Bomb Group. I don't recall what our target was on this particular day.

One of the officers, who shall remain nameless, had gotten into a bad batch of ale or something the night before, and had contracted a serious case of what was commonly referred to as the G.I.'s. After crossing the coast and beginning to let down on our return trip to Shipham, as soon as we could doff our oxygen masks, somewhere around fifteen thousand feet, this un-named officer made his way back through the bomb bay to the rear section.

Two other gunners were sitting with me on the step provided for the ball turret. We were facing aft, just idling away time and making small talk. I believe that the other gunners were Billy Mooroe and Mercuris P. (Greek) Mercuriadis.

The un-named officer quickly slipped past us and proceeded directly to the camera hatch beyond the waist guns. He promptly opened

the hatch and pivoted the camera mount down to prevent his falling out. With much haste, he dropped his heated suit, trousers and underwear to half mast and, facing forward, assumed the position.

From where we were sitting, we had a unrestricted view of the entire drama. I could tell from the look of ecstasy on this officer's face when he released the obvious tight grip that he had been holding on his sphincter, and explosively dropped his load, that I was witnessing probably the greatest moment of relief he had ever experienced up to that time.

The pleasure was rather short-lived, however. Due to the miniature tornados around the open camera hatch, he had managed to Zolotone* the camera mount, the hatch door, his back side down to his knees, and all appendages in the vicinity. Some of the load may have even gone outside.

He soon discovered to his dismay that the tissue from one box of K-Rations was highly inadequate for the monumental task ahead (or behind, as it was). Being basically a tidy person, he began searching the area for something to complete his clean-up chore. Barely within his reach were some boxes of bundled chaff. (For the uninitiated, chaff was narrow strips of aluminum foil about a foot long, which was designed to foul up enemy radar.) It must have

taken him back to earlier days of hiking and camping. He began using the chaff as though it were dried grass or leaves. He would personalize a bundle, then send it on its way to foul any anti-aircraft gunners who happened to be in the channel.

The cold blast of air on his posterior must have numbed his sense of feel, because even though his face showed no indications of pain, little ribbons of red began to appear where the chaff made tiny cuts in his skin. When he saw the blood and the futility of it all, even though the cleanup was far from satisfactory, he disgustedly hoisted his clothing right over the mess, secured the camera hatch and sat down for the balance of the ride home in relative silence.

By this time, we three spectators were so convulsed with laughter, that it is a wonder that we didn't all have to check into the Station Hospital for hernia repairs.

I have to assume that the officer in question assisted the ground crew in cleaning things up later, as it was an unwritten rule that he who fouled an aircraft would clean his own mess. This was generally applied to air-sickness, though.

*Zolotone: A patented spray painting procedure that must be seen for full appreciation.

LETTERS

Dear Evelyn:

I greatly appreciated the Dec. (1979) issue of the Second Air Division Association Journal.

I read with great interest the many articles written by members of the various Bomb Groups. However, I was just a bit disappointed in not finding anything written by some member of a crew of one of the four squadrons of the 448th (B.G.).

Since I was attached to Hdq. Detch., my work was with setting up missions, alerting the squadrons and all the many details involved with getting everything ready for briefing.

Please accept my attached check for my 1980 membership dues.

Wayne M. Kurtz (448th B.G.)

(ed: One sure way to see something on the 448th in print is to write an article. Since you were at the 'well-head', so to speak, you could probably write several articles. How about it?)

Dear Evelyn:

I look forward to the Journal so that I can get caught up on 2nd AD personnel.

Enclosed check for \$25.00 is for 1980 dues, two AD Blazer Patches (if available) and the balance to be applied to membership dues for some less fortunate 2nd AD member unable to cope with inflation.

Keep up the good work. The 2nd AD relies on your continuing effort.

Eugene D. Rosen (446th BG)

Dear Evelyn:

Just received the March copy of the *Journal*. I enjoy it a lot; it brings back a lot of memories, good and bad.

Our crew was with the 392nd Bomb Group and we were in the 576th squadron. We completed 27 missions before V.E. Day.

Enclosed is a picture of our crew. Back row left to right: I don't know the name of the first one; he was a special Bombardier who went on a few missions with us. The others starting with number 2 are: Lt. Robert Dieriff, Navigator from Allentown, Pa.; Lt. Chester Czerwitz, Bombardier; Lt. Jack Arnold, Co-Pilot from Nowata, Okla.



Bottom row, left to right: T/S Wm. Wilson, Engineer from Alton, Illinois; S/S Jim Braman, Waist Gunner from Moran, Wyo.; S/S James Harvell, Tail Gunner from Richmond, Va.; T/S Leonard Benson, Radio Operator from Big Lake, Minn.; S/S Ed McGuire, Nose Gunner from Brooklyn, New York. Missing from photo is S/S Carmelo Cosentino, Waist Gunner from Brooklyn, New York.

Also enclosed is a clipping from the *Yank* magazine that I saved because we were quartered with this crew during the period when they had those mishaps. They had some real stories to tell of their two bail-outs. We were a little envious of their caterpillar and goldfish club pins — denoting their having bailed out in the ocean and on the land; but not envious enough to have traded missions with them.

Hope you can use some of this for the *Journal*.

J. L. Braman
(392nd BG, 576th Sqdn.)

Dear Sir:

I read of the 446th Group Reunion and was elated when it dawned on me that it was really my own outfit, good old Bungay. I was in 7078 (Luck Sq) and my pilot was Daniel Bingham. My co-pilot, Mac McGowan was lost in the English Channel. My Navigator, James Cunningham, was from Texas. I had the pleasure of visiting "Bing", my pilot, at his home in Ohio.

My first mission was 13 August 1944 at 11,000 ft. We were supposed to bomb a highway intersection but when it was located, found that it had already been destroyed, so looked for a target of opportunity. We located a bridge near Rouen, on the Seine, but were clobbered good, taking damage to the hydraulic lines to the extent that the rupture spewed fluid all over the belly section. We were not sure of brakes or flaps, but all voted to ride it in. Chutes were tied to be used should brakes fail to function, but we didn't need to use them. The wheels came down and locked, but the flaps started down, then failed. We landed hot . . . I would very much like to come to Cambridge to the Reunion. Would be so much to hear about and perhaps talk a little, too. Good old Flixton Castle!

Bill Wight, Ex-bombardier

Dear Evelyn:

Am enclosing check for \$15.00 for dues and the Memorial etc. Am retired now after forty years and you will note by the new address that I ended up deep in the heart of Texas.

Am working on the reunion but many conflicting schedules as of now.

You are doing a great job with the reunions and I really enjoy the paper. Keep up the good work and we will join you the first chance we can.

Ralph S. Saunders (M/Gen. USAF Ret.)

Dear Mr. Weiss (Charles Weiss - VP 93rd BG):

In a recent visit to the RAF Museum in London, England, I met Sam Yandin of the 92nd bomb group who told me of your role as a historian for the 93rd bomb group. My brother served in the 93rd bomb group and was lost in April 1943 and our family has never received much information as to his experiences while in England. I was also a B-24 pilot with the 15th Air Force in Italy.

My brother was S/Sgt. Ronald L. Nelson, serial No. 12036525, having served with the 409th squadron of the 93rd bomb group. He was with them in Barksdale and Fort Myers prior to leaving for England in August 1942. Information I had was that his crew was assigned temporarily to the 329th bomb squadron but returned to the 409th sometime in March. I am particularly interested in the raid on Wilhelmshaven on February 26th, 1943 in which his ship suffered extensive damage and several members were injured. Their experiences on that raid were written up in *Liberty Magazine* in June 1943 and all members of my family have copies of that. The mission in which the ship was again shot down with apparently no survivors was on April 16th, 1943 in Brest, France.

The crew members of their ship which was called the "Night Raider" were Capt. Bob Fleener, pilot; J.J. Leary, co-pilot; Earl E. Ellis, navigator; George A. Pinner, bomb; Robert P. Jungbluth, eng.; T.J. Kilmer, gunner; Lewis Szabo, gunner; Steven Hedges, gunner; J.V. Roberts, gunner.

Any information that you can refer me to that would be pertinent would be much appreciated. I would be very happy to reimburse you for any expense involved.

Incidentally, the personnel at the museum were extremely kind and helpful in letting me use the library for some research. They went far beyond what I would expect.

I appreciate very much your assistance.

Maynard D. Nelson
1014 2nd Street
Old Sacramento, Calif. 95814

Dear Evelyn:

Just finished reading the December Journal and the stories and pictures of the 'young lions' brought back so many memories. Can it really be 38 years since 1942 when my husband enlisted in the Army Air Corp and we rushed into a war time marriage. I was a worldly 19 and he an older man of 21. Everyone said, "It will never last." We fooled 'em all — it's still the best thing we ever did.

I remember the day he left, in January of 43, wearing gabardine slacks, a checked jacket and saddle shoes. A month later I saw him in Atlantic City. G.I. issue from head to toe and no trace of the college boy I knew. The next stop was Amherst, Mass. for C.T.D. We lived in New Jersey so I was able to take the train up every weekend. I was now a 'cadet wife'.

Maxwell Field! Look proud lady, your husband is a cadet officer. The parades and air force showmanship, the Cadet Club and formal dances and my first real close look at B24s. The friendships were being made which will last for all of our lives.

Douglas, Georgia, Cochran Field in Macon — washout fields — it was a rough time for so many. Now my husband was really flying constantly and the fear of losing him was always there. We cadet wives were a close knit little group. It was a heartbreaking experience to say goodbye to one of us because her cadet would never return.

We made it! Advanced school Columbus, Miss. The officers uniforms tailor made and the hot pilot hat squashed to just the right angles. Then the wonderful day when I pinned on his silver wings and the wings of our friends whose wives, or mothers, or sweethearts couldn't be there. Some would never come back — forever 21 or 22. (Class 44) — you were all such eager beavers.

Ed flew his Liberator for 35 missions and Lucky L'Ass brought him back every time. Sometimes on a couple of engines and once on only one. They were wonderful, crazy, exciting years. My heart still does flip flops whenever I hear the Army Air Corps song.

I don't know why I wrote this, but I did so I'll send it to you.

Dot Reibold

P.S. Thank you for being so prompt in sending Ed's membership card and the sticker. I think you do a super job.

(ed: I don't know why you wrote the letter either Dot — but me and a lot of others are sure glad you did. Try it again — anytime.)

Dear Evelyn:

I am enclosing my check for \$15.00 for payment of my current dues and for a couple 2nd AD Blazer Patches. If there should be anything left over use for whatever; if its not enough let me know and I'll make up the difference.

I enjoy the Journal and the various articles very much and would like to see more of them from the ex-ground service personnel in Radio, Radar, Armament Maintenance, Mess, Admin., etc.

William M. Downey (389 BG Gee Shack)

Dear Pete:

Well I finally got around to answering my mail. Sorry I am so slow in writing. I took a trip to Dayton, Ohio Saturday to visit the AIR FORCE MUSEUM, they have the Mighty Eight book for sale in their book store, \$16.95 plus tax, they also had two books which some of our people might want - one book on the 392nd and one on the 492nd bomb groups, and they had a book that showed aerial pictures and maps of all the eighth Air Force air bases in England, they have a book store that has almost any book that pertains to airplanes of all nations, so if you and any of the others need books give me the title of them I will check on them and give you the prices.

I sent my money to Evelyn for the convention and some patches and decals. I got the group history of the 445th from Frank De Mola but have to copy it yet and return it to him, also received letter from Dave Patterson on the Jimmy Steward program and the photos I sent him. I guess this is all for now, I'll see you at the convention.

James W. Holliday (93rd, 445th BG)

Dear Evelyn Cohen:

Enclosed is a picture of our crew which flew together on twenty-eight bombing missions over Europe from Oct. 9, 1943 to May 13, 1944. We arrived in England in Aug. 1943 and were assigned to 93rd B/G. We were sent to Benghazi, Libya as replacements in 93rd for losses suffered in Polesi Mission. We stayed in Africa until mid-September then returned to England and Norwich. We underwent more training and then started our 1st mission on Oct. 9, 1943. We all started together and all finished about the same time.



Top row (l to r): Peter Heller, Los Angeles; Frank Slaby, Lincoln, Neb.; Gene Bottini, San Francisco; Vincent Cassata, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Michael Eastman, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Irving Page. Bottom Row: William Woodson, Palmetto, Fla.; Bill Touhy, San Francisco; Jerry Dunlay, Parzsons, Kansas; Ray Benton, Lubbach, Tex.

The enlisted men were assigned to a base defense group as a back up for the defense of the base prior to the Invasion of Europe. We all left for the States at various times. I arrived home in Sept. 1944. Would appreciate it if you could publish the picture in one of the newsletters. I received the 2nd Air Div. Decal and I.D. card. Thanks again for the application.

Irving Page

Dear Ms. Cohen:

I had the good fortune to see copies of the 2nd Air Div., 8th A.F. bulletins. I would like to get on the mailing list. I was Squadron C.O. 409th Bomb Sq., 93rd BG in 1942-43.

The picture in your December issue was of my Squadron — hard to make out, but I am on the ground standing in front of the nose of that B-24, "The Teggie Ann".

Enclosed is a check for \$7, which I'm told will cover subscription for 1 year — if not let me know.

K.O. Dessert

(ed: Bulletin? Bulletin? People have been shot for less than that.)

Dear Bill:

I have had several 389th people help me in locating orders on my father, Charles D. Cavit. Need help in locating someone with a good copy of group photo of Officer POW's at Timisul de Jos, Romania. Picture appears in book "Ploesti" by Duggan and Stewart. Would appreciate locating this only photo of my father taken at Timisul.

Dennis D. Cavit, Captain, USAF
7061 Munns (USAFE)
APO, NY 09690

Dear Ms. Cohen:

Please find enclosed my check for \$7.00 to cover Membership Dues for my Father, Francis W. Reddy. My Dad was absolutely thrilled upon receiving the Newsletter and reading about some of his long lost buddies from the 8th Air Force, 389th, 565th sq.

I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for locating my Dad's address and to tell you I know he would appreciate receiving any literature you may have concerning his group.

Chris Reddy

Dear Bill:

I received the March edition of the *Journal* this morning and after reading Ed Hohman's article "Near Miss Near Manchester" on page 8, I was so excited that I had to sit down and get a letter off to you right away. When you read the following you may see why!

In August 1948, a British European Airways Dakota (DC-3) crashed high in the hills near the village of Greenfield which is about 12 miles North-East of Manchester. A thick mist surrounded the hills and the airplane slammed into one killing all on board except a little baby which, by some miracle, had been thrown clear and was not too badly injured. The crash site was about 100 feet from the top of the hill known as Indian's Head and was a pretty rugged climb although it was not too steep, but because of freak weather conditions the rescuer's radios were not working too well and some of the local Air Cadets were called in to run with messages up and down the hill in relays.

I was one of those cadets and after the operation was over we were talking to one of the local hill farmers when he told us that just before the end of the war he had been walking with his dogs in that area when he was nearly hit by an airplane! He said that a bomber had roared out of the low cloud and made straight for him going by so low that the prop-wash knocked him over before the ship pulled up and disappeared into cloud once more. Naturally, he was really shaken and it took him over two hours to find his dogs after they ran off. He said the airplane was "a Flying Fortress because he could see the star on the wing", but when he described it he put both his hands up about a foot apart with palms inwards and said "it had two tails like this", which, of course, could only be a B-24!

Now you can see why I got excited — it is too big of a coincidence for me not to have contacted you!

Harry Holmes, A.M.R.A.E.S.

P.S.: I'll send a copy of this to Ed Hohman too.

Dear Evelyn:

A short time back I received the March *Journal* which I enjoyed very much. I also enjoyed the article "Hazardous Hamburg" by George Reynolds. I have been looking for material like this for a long time.

My brother S/Sgt. Alfred L. Bracksieck was right waist and 2nd radio on 100433 when it went down over Hamburg on 8-6-44.

All were killed on 100433 except the Pilot, Lt. Thomas E. Hancock from Aucilla, Florida and the Command Pilot from Three Rivers, Michigan, Capt. John E. Chamberlain. I have been trying for several months to locate these two men, maybe you can help thru the *Journal*.

Bill J. Bracksieck
12112 E. 32 pl.
Tulsa, Okla. 74145

To William Robertie:

I wrote you a letter about a year ago and this was published in your June newsletter, and I'm writing to say that one of the boys I mentioned has recently been in touch, so my thanks to you for publishing my letter, as we were rather special friends. I had several letters from men of the Second Air Division who had served in East Anglia not only with the 93rd, but at various bases around here during those far off war years, and some of them paid tributes to those of us who made those mountains of sandwiches and gallons of coffee. Can we ever forget, as one Walt Laughlin of Westport, Connecticut put it, they considered us "one of themselves". To us who helped it was an honor.

I would also like to mention that a local farmer called on me last September and said he had to go to America to read a letter from me, he had been staying with Buddy Altmayes (ex 93rd) in North Carolina and he is evidently a keen member of the 2nd Air Division Association and had seen my letter in the magazine.

Good luck to the Association.

Anne Ingham

Hi - Mr. H.C. 'Pete' Henry

I need your help.

Attached are two applications and \$14.00 to join your fine group. One is my father, the other my father-in-law.

To make an intriguing story short, they grew up 20 miles apart in Northwestern Ohio. They met again at Norwich, England as part of the 93rd, 328th. (Dad with one crew and Warren with another. Dad's original assignment was the 4th Anti-Sub — in Exeldoi, England.)

On Jan. 7, 1944, Warren's crew was found two men short; out of bed came Robert and given side gunner assignment to fill one vacancy.

Over the target the plane (B-24) was hit, again on the turn around and then, limping along over France, the final blow came.

Somewhere 60 miles south of Paris, the plane went down; with all but two fliers parachuting out.

Dad (Robert) escaped through the French Underground and Warren's parachute landed him in the midst of a German camp.

In Warren's case, with his leg full of shrapnel, God was with him to put him into Doctor's care.

Today, Robert's son (myself) and Warren's daughter are married (we met and married six years ago) and developing an avid interest in WW II.

We travelled to France this Fall and met the couple (82 and 77 years old) that hid my father out. (In Nemours, France.)

And now, Pete, can you help me reunite this flight crew together at your July Convention. Attached are the last known addresses of the remaining crew that Jan. 7, 1944.

Crew of

Robert K. Fruth (Waist Gunner)

L/C James R. Carnahan (Pilot), 6303 Cloverdale Dr., Washington, D.C. — or at Wright Patterson (originally from Dayton, Ohio); Lt. Ed Miller (Co-Pilot), 19 Niagara Lane, Commach, N.Y. 11725; Lt. William Hanson (Bombardier), 181 Windsor Drive, Daly City, Calif., 94015; Sigmund Spritz (Navigator), 3851 Bormann Ave., Baltimore, MD.; Warren H. Long (Engineer); Bill Spellman (Radio Operator), 101 W. 14th St., Jeffersonville, Inc.; Robert K. Fruth (Waist Gunner); Donald H. Crawford (Waist Gunner) (ill 7 Jan. 44), Lake George, N.Y.; Vail S. Wolfe (Tailgunner) (K.I.A.); Leroy Croy (Waist Gunner), Long Beach, Calif.; J.W. Sterns (Ball Turret), Orwell, Ohio (believed K.I.A.)

As you can see, I haven't got it all together yet, but I'm working with Dad and Warren. I've met Wm. Hanson in Daly City and need your help to find more information on the rest of the crew.

James A. Fruth

Dear Miss Cohen:

Just recently obtained the address for communicating with the 2nd Air Division Assoc. I obtained it from the librarian of the Norwich Central Library in Norwich, Norfolk. Isn't it strange I had to write 3000 miles away to obtain an address but 6/8 miles from home? Oh well.

Please tell me about membership in the 2nd Air Division Association. What have been it's activities in the past and what is planned for the future? Dues etc.

John Rex

(ed: You just never know who your next door neighbor is these days.)

Dear Ms. Cohen:

Keep receiving the *Journal* and wonderful info, but have not found any word on my Sq., 4th Ftr. Grp. Was stationed at Debden Air Field, Saffron Waldon, Essex. Am particularly interested in a Maj. Earl Carlow, last known address Bangor, Maine. He had been in the old Eagle Sq. Col. Johnson, later Brig. Gen. commanding. Any info appreciated. Thanks
J.J. Norton (4th FG)

Dear Bill:

As editor of the Newsletter, you receive many letters relating to experiences during WWII. With each written, the writer, myself included, is trying to relive a memory, some which may be pleasant, or others of a nostalgic nature.

How many flyers can recall the first time they met their fellow members?

When our group, the 489th B.G. was activated in Wendover, Field, Utah, it was customary for the officers to make themselves known to the enlisted members of the crew, by visiting them at their quarters. The first officer to enter our quarters, I was the radio operator, was our co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Don Bishop. Being a New Yorker, I acted like a "wise-guy" and, without introducing myself, instead asked "I'll toss you for \$10.00, to a complete stranger. This incident was the beginning of a friendship, which lasts to this very day. It "broke the ice" among us, per se, and we were all relaxed. This was only an instant impulse, on my part, but the reaction to it showed we would be part of a team!

This moment remains vivid in my mind, even to this day! Some may say "Big deal!" But to a Texan and a New Yorker, it was. Our crew was made up of natives of 10 different states; north, south, east and west. It can be said, we were actually an "All American" crew!

Enclosed is a photo of our crew, in front of our plane "The Baby Doll," taken in March, 1944. If you wish, you can retain the picture for your files. Perhaps others in the Association will do likewise.

As you wrote in your letter "don't stare at paper, with pen in hand", I have done so.

In time, I'll write of other things. For now, nostalgia and memories are getting to me. I don't want to ruin this letter.

Bill, writing such letters, although nostalgic, do help me get out of depressive moods. No matter how



The Baby Doll

Standing (l to r): Lt. Stanley Talik, Bombardier, Carlsboro, N. Mex. (deceased); Lt. Donald M. Bishop, Co-Pilot, Yoakum, Texas; Lt. Floyd C. Harville, Pilot, Shreveport, La.; Lt. Roy Smart, Navigator, Jacksonville, Fla.
Kneeling: Sgt. Joseph H. Dean, Flight Engineer, Elkton, Va.; PFC, Alphonse J. Buslovich, Tail Gunner, Nashua, N.H.; Sgt. Richard L. Olson, Upper Turret Gunner, Clarkston, Wash.; Sgt. Peter Ceritelli, Radio Operator, Bronx, N.Y.; Sgt. Alfred G. Mather, Lower Turret Gunner, McMinnville, Ore.; Sgt. Eugene I. Kader, Nose Gunner, Detroit, Mich. (KIA).

many years go by, occasionally we need an outlet.

Thanks for reading this.

Pete Ceritelli

(ed: I should thank you for writing. I will. Many thanks.)

Dear Mr. Clarey (492nd Gp. Vice President):

I have seven former members of the 492nd BG, 856th Squadron, that have been very helpful to me in my research on the military history of my brother.

If you can do so, please send me about ten applications for membership in the Second Air Division Association. I'm going to recruit you some members.

Ben Parnell

(ed: How about recruiting us an Air Force!)

Dear Evelyn:

Greetings from Watertown, Mass. Received my blazers and car stickers some time ago. Boy! those blazers are beautiful, just like you said.

I'm enclosing a check for \$36.00 for the Sat. Nite Banquet and cocktail party. There is a possibility I may be needing another one in the future. If so I'll let you know.

Just received my March issue of the "Journal". I wish I had known about this 2nd A. Div. a year ago or so — I would have liked to make that trip to England. I'd like to visit Wendling once more, before I kick off.

I'll be waiting for the new roster — so I can contact some of my ole buddies in the Ground Crew of the 577th Bomb Sqdn. of the 392nd Bomb Grp.

Bill Eagleson and I keep in close contact with each other. We exchange all kinds of literature, etc. on the 8th Air Force. We will be attending the reunion together. I'm looking forward to meeting you.

Is there a chance that Jimmie Stewart will be there also?

Hope this finds you in the best of health. We usually have beautiful warm sunny weather here in July. Incidentally the Museum of Science is right across the river (Charles) and is an extraordinary public attraction for young and old alike. See you in July.

Henry (Marshall) Hearn

(392nd Bomb Grp., 577th B. Sqdn.)

Dear Evelyn:

Please find enclosed my check in the amount of \$15.00 for my 1980 membership dues. You may use the remainder for whatever is needed most.

The history of the founding of the Second Air Division Association and why it was founded by Bill Robertie was just superb and I agree with him one thousand percent.

Long live the Second ADA.

Baxter W. Hensley

Dear Evelyn:

The article by John J. Long (389th) (March 1980) interested me very much. I would like very much to have John's address. I have included a stamped self addressed envelope for your convenience.

I ran into John Long all through the war. We both graduated from navigation school in Hondo, both flew out of North Africa and were based in Hethel. I flew on the Solingen mission on which he was shot down, and ended up at Stalag Luft — I having been shot down on a mission to Bremen twenty days after John became a kriegesgefangenen. I would like very much to correspond with him.

In fact, I flew the Solingen mission with Jack Martin and Fletcher borrowed the plane which had been issued to Laurens, my pilot, and did not return it. The rumor that Fletcher had followed Fravega down to cover him after Fravega had been badly hit was certainly repeated and believed by a lot of the fellows. I am glad that John can refute it.

Long is certainly right about Billy Mitchell. As they say these days, Billy was some kind of guy, and I will bet that he still is wherever he may be.

John McClellan

P.S.: Keep up the good work. A lot of us really appreciate it. I am trying to recruit as many members as I can. As you can see, I am almost as good a typist as I was a navigator.

Mr. Robertie:

Sorry it has taken so long to respond to your letter of information. I am enclosing a check for seven dollars for my membership as an Associate member. My father, then Lt. Warren J. Roseborough, served with the 492nd Bomb Group and the 467th Bomb Group during June to December, 1944.

He tells me his crew consisted of the following men, Castle Reed, co-pilot; Seymour Freeman, navigator; Billie F. Levis, radio operator; Jack W. Priley, Engineer; Allen J. Young, waist gunner; Joseph C. Domino, belly gunner; Robert Kraft, waist gunner; and Kenneth A. Dewell, armorer-gunner. We have had the good fortune to contact Robert Kraft just this past year, but this was saddened by the news that Kenneth Dewell had passed away the same year.

I would like to hear from anyone who might have served with my father and his crew or anyone who could supply me with photographs of aircraft, crews, questions, in fact anything dealing with the 492nd or 467th Bomb Groups.

I would appreciate it if you would pass them along to your readers in the hopes someone will respond.

Ronald F. Roseborough

Rd No. 5, Box 167-F

Dover, De. 19901

Dear Sir:

Enclosed please find check in the amount of \$2.50 for copy of Memorial Brochure.

Our crew was operational from 12th June through 30th August 1944. J. D. Long accompanied us on our first mission.

Also enclosed is a copy of a poem I acquired some years past. I long ago lost my last printed copy of it, but believe I have recalled most of it rather accurately. Apparently Lt. Coquillette was a much better poet than he was an admirer of the B-24.

I would like to see this poem published in the 2AD Journal.

Lou Quinn

(ed: See "Unsung Hero's Lament" printed elsewhere in these pages.)

Dear Bill:

At the 2nd ADA Luncheon in Houston on 2 Feb. 1980 we had some nice guests. In the enclosed photo they are from L to R: Mr. Robert Cresap, Mr. Philip Johnson, Myself, Ruth Johnson, Joanna Johnson and Dora Chase. Bob Cresap is a member of the Confederate Air Force and at the Luncheon he presented the movie "The Ghost Squadron". Mr. Johnson is Vice-Consul at the British Consulate in Houston. He is originally from Caerphilly, Wales, Ruth Johnson is Mr. Johnson's wife and is from Thetford. At one time she trained as a nurse at the "Norfolk and Norwich Hospital" in Norwich. Joanna is the Johnson's daughter and she attended school at Culford, near Bury St. Edmunds. The Johnsons have three other daughters attending school there at the



present time. They are Sarah, Siona and Helen. Mrs. Chase is Mrs. Johnson's daughter and her home is in Thetford. The Johnsons have been to the 2nd ADA Memorial in Norwich and they have informed me that when they return to England they are going to make another visit. They say that after meeting several members of the 2nd ADA and their wives they will have a more personal interest in the Memorial. I am not sure but Mr. Johnson may have signed up as a subscribing member.

Clint Wallace

Dear Bill:

Enclosed please find a check for \$2.50 to cover the cost of a copy of the Second Air Division Memorial Brochure.

Congratulations on your contribution to a really fine Journal and Newsletter. As a veteran of 30 missions as a navigator with the 445th, I very much appreciate the opportunity to enjoy a bit of genuine nostalgia, and look forward to making a contribution one of these days.

John F. Leary, Jr.

(ed: Never mind about "one of these days". How about right now?)

Dear Evelyn Cohen:

I do not have any connection with 2nd AD other than an avid interest. I am a veteran of Korea. I just want to receive your news bulletin which I find fascinating as it contains the human interest which will never be recorded in history books. For the bulletin I am willing to pay the \$7.00 per year and expect nothing else.

Hoping this will meet with your approval.

Donald R. Oakly

Dear Evelyn:

Enclosed is a check for \$20. for dues and 2AD Blazer (two each) and 2AD Decals (two each) — see the rest for extra postage or where needed.

As usual when *The Journal* arrives, I can't put it down (hardly) until its read cover to cover.

A hearty thanks to all those who make the interesting reading possible.

Pens Allen

(ed: A hearty thanks to you for reading and writing.)

Dear Evelyn:

Enclosed is my check for \$15.00, 1980 dues and two 2nd A.D. decals if available.

I look forward to the Journal and read it from front to back immediately.

J.C. Hetherington (453rd)

Dear Evelyn:

Enclosed are dues for the year and also would like two (2) Blazer patches.

In my previous letter, I did not specify my location in England or any details, so will do so now with the hope that it might "uncover" some of my former crew members or some of our mutual friends or other crews.

I was tailgunner on Capt. "Jake" Weber's crew and we flew lead position on 31 missions from Mar. 1944 to Aug. 1944 and were based at Horsham-St. Faith, 752nd Sqdn., 458th Bomb Group.

We were relieved from combat in Aug. 1944 and returned to the States in Sept. 1944.

I would certainly like to hear from anyone who remembers anything about the Sqdn. or Group who were there at this particular time.

Really enjoyed Ed Hohman's article in previous *Journal* about his Rest Leave.

Shortly after D-Day on which we flew our 24th and 25th missions, our crew was split into three groups and each group went to a different Rest Home.

I was fortunate enough to get to a Rest Home in Pangbourne, Berkshire.

The facilities were the same as in Ed Hohman's article. I celebrated my 20th birthday there on June 18, 1944, and the A.R.C. girls baked me a cake. We had champagne and the whole works. Those girls were wonderful!! What a night!

Well, I'd better close now before I make this a novel.

Ray Callahan

P.S. — Will send something for Memorial Fund shortly.

Dear Bill:

Enclosed is a snapshot of a B-24 (flying condition). Photo was taken Dec. 26, 1979. Plane was temporarily at Lindbergh Field, San Diego, Calif. The lady is my spouse.

Jim Tollefson



(ed: Since you have identified the spouse I'll identify the plane. It belongs to a club called "Yesterday's Air Force". They picked it up in India and flew it to England where it was painted in the colors of the original "Delectable Doris" of the 389th BG. Once completed it was flown to California. It has since appeared in several areas of the U.S. at air shows.)

Dear Mr. Henry:

A couple of weeks ago my past of 36 years ago flashed before my eyes. I was driving on Interstate 75 between Lexington, Ky. and Cincinnati, Ohio, when a Michigan car passed me and my eye caught a sticker on the rear window "Second Air Division — Eighth Air Force."

I have a CB radio and I noticed a CB antenna on the Michigan car, so I of course gave him a call and asked if the sticker said what I thought it did. Al Bishop from Livonia, Michigan and his wife were on their way home from Florida, told me all about the Association and we chatted all the way to Cincinnati. I was not even aware of the existence of this Association. When Al got home he was kind enough to send me the March 1980 issue of the "Journal" and of all things to see in my first issue was the article by John L. Long on the 389th B.G.

I was a Captain and Lead Pilot for 565th Sq. and the 389th B.G. my crew was with the group most of 1944 from D-Day through Battle of the Bulge. In fact we flew our last mission Christmas eve, Dec. 24, 1944 in support of our troops in Battle of the Bulge.

For the past 36 years, I have kept up with my 11 man crew which included our pathfinder navigator since we flew lead. All of my crew except one is still alive. In fact the morning I ran into Al on Interstate 75, I had just mailed that morning a report to all my crew members. It had taken me over a year to get them all to send me pictures of all their families, wives, children, and grand-children. My 11 man crew has expanded from 11 when we separated in 1945 to a total of 86 including wives, children, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law and grand-children.

We had one crew re-union at my home after 15 years and I have put out two picture album reports and put out addresses to all every year or two. I have seen a lot of them in my travels and they live from Conn. to California, all in different states except 2 in California.

I marked Evelyn Cohen for a copy of this and attached my check for \$7.00 for my first membership and will notify my whole crew of this fine organization. Would it be possible to get 10 copies of the March "Journal" so I could mail copies to them. If so please send them to me and I will be glad to pay for them so I can send a copy to all my crew. Just let me know the cost and who to pay for them.

Thanks to my CB radio and Al Bishop and his window sticker for this wonderful contact.

Tom Watkins, Jr.

(389th BG, 5655 Sq., Ser. No. 0-815025

Dear Mr. Henry:

Thank you again for your many letters and in particular your note of March 8 in which you have asked for information on my dear Charles and his flying record. I have written to his "buddies" and flight crew and am waiting further word for them. When I have gathered it together I will get it off to you just as soon as I can.

The response to the "Memorial Trust" in Charlie's memory has been most pleasing and I know that he would have been pleased to know that so many people thought so much of him. I have had calls from my friends who are amazed at the acknowledgment from England and wish they had contributed more — that is always nice to know.

I miss my "fly-boy" so much and even find it difficult to write this letter to you. He spoke so highly of his days with the "Jamaica" and the 466th Bomb Group, 785th Bomb Squadron. We did locate his pilot just last November and had a mini reunion at our home in January — I will give you all the details on that also.

Marion Herbst

Dear Evelyn:

Like all Veterans, I really enjoy the 2nd AD Bulletins.

But I am anxious about the complete absence of any reference, article or photo concerning the 466th Gp. during the PAST YEAR. One par. in Dec. 78 — and the 466th apparently has feathered all 4 somewhere east of Attlebridge. It's a pity that all 325 members lack all representation — maybe we're just too old and flak-happy!

Nostalgically,

J. W. Brown (787 Sq, 466 BG (A)

Dues and Library donation enclosed.

(ed: There's nothing to stop anybody from any group from writing — except inertia. Lead the way John.)

Dear Evelyn:

I enjoy the newsletter very much. By the way I am in the Appliance business and we carry a complete line of General Electric appliances and other brands. So if you or our members need anything, we have a very Special Price for them.

Frank J. Serratore

(ed: got anything with a "0" price tag? This inflation is killing us!)

Dear Mr. Robertie:

Until recently I strongly considered purchasing a copy of the reprint, "Liberators Over Europe". Then I heard from the former pilot of our crew, Mr. Fred Stone. He purchased a copy of the reprint and sadly discovered that none of the officers of the crew are listed on the roster, although all the enlisted personnel are. Thank God they were not missed, because they all performed valiantly.

I have a copy of "14th Bomb Wing", no publication date indicated, and Lt. Col. Harvell's "Jaws Over Europe", none of which list any of our crew as a part of the great 44th.

Therefore for the benefit of past and future historians would you please publish the following as the crew of "Shack Rat", tail insignia A (Bar "A"), last three numerals of the aircraft number 952, 506th Sq., 44th Bomb Grp (H):

1st Lt. Fred E. Stone 0747516

1st Lt. Andrew E. Patrichuk 0684623

1st Lt. Merritt E. Derr 0747767

S/Sgt. Charles J. Brown 32371366

S/Sgt. Samuel M. Cervellera 39118587

Sgt. Robert M. Foust 18217202

Sgt. William S. Strange 6295985

Sgt. Robert E. Ryan 17059318

Sgt. Morrie Meunitz 36264653

2nd Lt. Emery R. Lundy, 0752878, who was the Bombardier of our crew was reassigned upon our arrival at Shipdham and as the Navigator of another crew was shot down and captured on April 1944. Thank you!

Merritt E. Derr, Lt. Col. USAF Retired

(ed: For the benefit of past and future historians my name isn't listed either!)



Aircraft Recognition — Interior

photos by Hugh R. McLaren (389th, Assoc.)

