

44TH BOMB GROUP VETERANS ASSOCIATION



8 BALL TAILS

Vol. 1 - Issue #6

Non Profit Veterans Organization

Journal of the
44th Bomb Group
Veterans Association

Summer, 1996

EIN #68-0351397

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



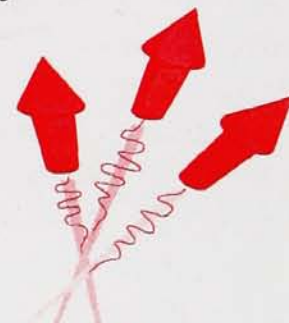
SEPTEMBER 13

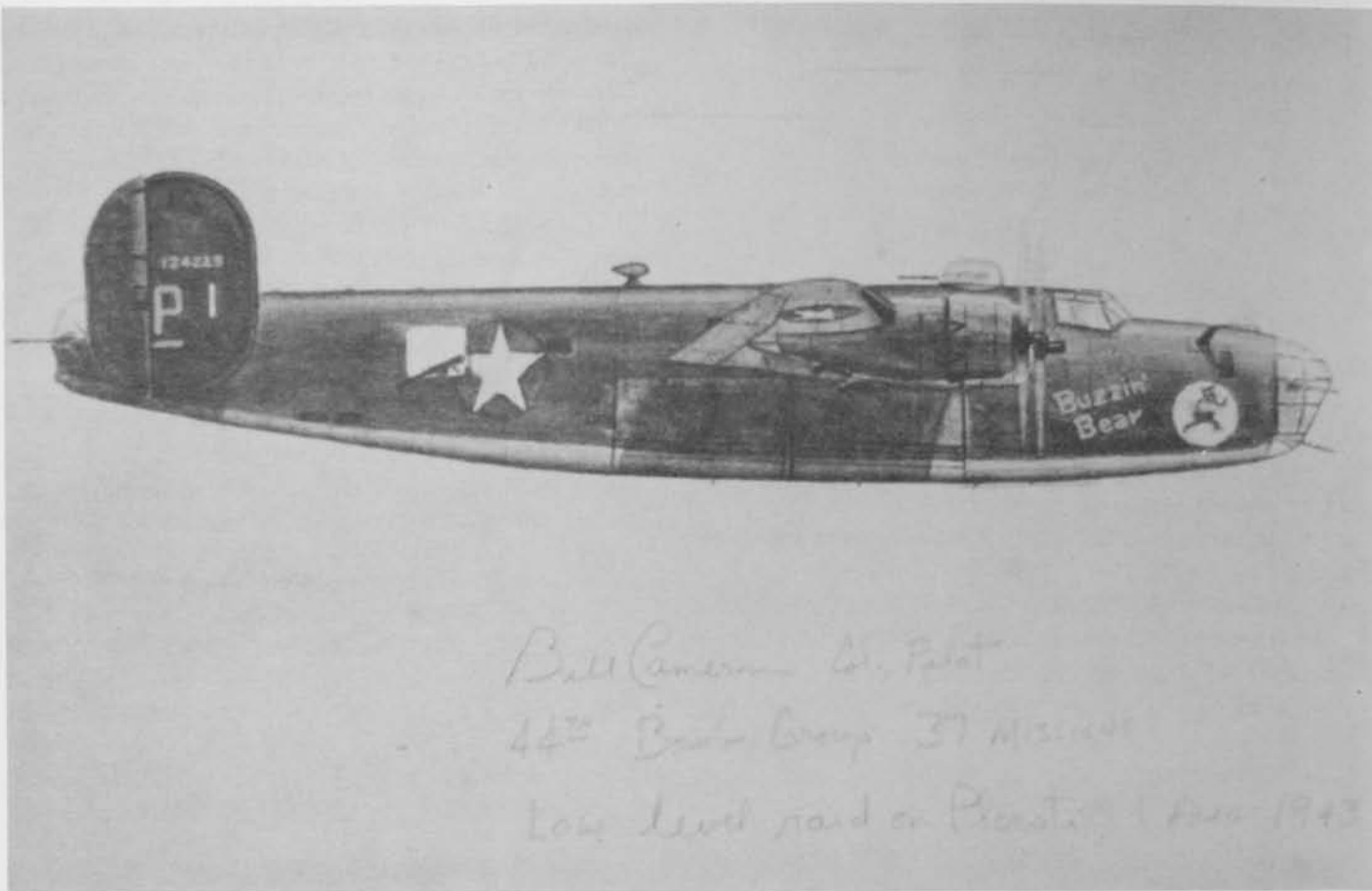
*to our
President Emeritus
&
Gallant
Combat Leader*



GENERAL LEON W. JOHNSON

92 YEARS YOUNG





And Then There Was One

In this issue we are featuring two aircraft, the first, B-24D 41-23807 U, "Little Beaver," one of the nine original 67th Bomb Squadron assigned aircraft. Her crew chief was MENNO UNRUH. The other aircraft is B-24D 41-24229 P "Buzzin' Bear," a direly needed replacement which arrived at Station 115 in late April 1943.

Inseparable to the record of these two aircraft is the story of the incredible combat career of now retired COLONEL BILL CAMERON.

Bill's initial assignment to the 67th Bomb Squadron was Co-Pilot on the crew of LT. CHESTER "GEORGE" PHILLIPS who, because he habitually called everyone "George" became himself known as "George." After stateside training at Grenier Field, New Hampshire, the crew deployed in their newly named "Little Beaver" for England on October 4, 1942.

The 44th Bomb Group, consisting at the time of three Bomb Squadrons, the 66th, 67th and 68th, assembled at Shipdham Airfield, designated Station 115, located 16 NM West of Norwich in East Anglia. During the next two months, the crews flew training missions and the aircraft were cycled through the Lockheed plant near Belfast, Ireland for combat modification. In late November and early December, the Group flew a series of diversion missions in support of other 8th Air Force bombing strikes and three bombing missions on December 3, 12 and 20. The "Little Beaver" crew aborted the December 6 mission with engine problems and did not successfully complete a mission until the January 3 raid on St. Nazaire, France.



S/Sgt. Menno Unruh, Crew Chief of "Little Beaver."



Lt. Chester "George" Phillips

The crew of the "Little Beaver."

**Standing: Mike Denny, Engineer; George Brice, Radio; Unknown; Dale Glaubitz, Gunner; Chuck Foreman, Gunner; Bill Cameron, Co-Pilot.
Front: Ed Phillips, Assistant Radio; Tom Bartmess, Navigator; Chester "George" Phillips, Pilot; Jim DeVinney, Bombardier.**





15 February 1943, The 44th over Dunkirk Harbor

Bill remained on the Phillips crew through the terrible months of February, March and April when the daylight bombing attrition decimated the 44th Bomb Group; especially the 67th Squadron. Of the original roster of Pilots and Co-Pilots their losses were: Major Donald W. MacDonald, Squadron Commander and Command Pilot shot down with Capt. Art Cullen on the 15 February raid on Dunkirk Harbor to sink the German Radar Ship TOJO; Lts. Rufus Oliphant and Co-Pilot Charles Wilkes, also lost over Dunkirk; Lt. J.B. Long and Co-Pilot Lt. John McCormick killed in a mid-air collision with a 66th Squadron aircraft on the 16 February raid on St. Nazaire; Lts. Clyde E. Price and Co-Pilot Robert E. Forrest, along with Lts. Robert W. Blaine and Co-Pilot Lawrence J. Roetto were simultaneously shot down on the bomb run over Rouen, France on March 8.

The "Little Beaver" flew on each of these tough missions including the TOJO raid on which Major MacDonald was lost. (See accompanying story.)

By the 8 March 1943 raid on Rouen, the 67th had lost five of its original nine crews. Jackson Hall had been grounded for medical reasons. Two weeks later "Bucky" Warne and

crew were lost on the 22 March raid on Wilhelmshaven. Lt. William A. Roach, Jr. had just arrived with his new airplane, so the 67th was again down to three aircraft and crews. "Suzy Q", "Little Beaver" and the new "Annie Oakley."

Turning to experienced co-pilots to bolster the force, Lt. Bill Cameron quickly soloed in the "Beaver." With an American transfer from the RAF, Lt. Bill Dabney as Co-Pilot, a new crew was formed and assigned a newly arrived aircraft, which was promptly named "Buzzin' Bear," (Bill was a product of UC Berkeley, The Golden Bears).

In a small way of celebrating the formation of the new crew, they were granted a three day pass. Cameron and Dabney accompanied by Howard Moore, who had taken command on the 67th after the loss of Major MacDonald, went to

London. Upon their return to the base in the early morning hours of 14 May, they learned that the Group was preparing for a mission launch against the Krupp Submarine Works in Kiel, Germany. Although it was a maximum effort mission, the 67th could muster only three crews. "Suzy Q" was being repaired, so the third

14 May 1943 Shipdham Airfield, "Sweating Out" the return of the Kiel Raid. The 67th: Three up-an empty sky on return.





M/Sgt. Marion Bagley, Crew Chief on "Buzzin' Bear."



M/Sgt. Bagley and his crew.

The Crew of the "Buzzin' Bear" - May 11, 1943

Bottom Row: Bill Cameron, Pilot; Bill Dabney, Co-Pilot; Jim DeVinney, Bombardier; Tom Clifford, Navigator (not in photo).

Top Row: Jerry Sparks, Radio Operator; Jerry Grett, Waist Gunner; Gola Gibby, Flight Engineer; LeRoy Winter, Assistant Engineer; Ernie McCabe, Waist Gunner; Frank Maruszewski, Tail Gunner.



(OP-4-44311-4327845 SPARKS, GRET, WINTER, MCCABE, MARUSZEWSKI, CAMERON (PILOT) DABNEY, DEVINNEY)

crew to be piloted by Lt. Robert I. Brown, Major Moore's Co-Pilot, on his first mission as Pilot, was forced to fly a replacement aircraft named "Miss Delores." This aircraft had, to this point, a dubious record for completing missions. The other aircraft and crews were, of course, Lt. Roach in "Annie Oakley" and "George" Phillips and Co-Pilot Lt. Everett W. Wilborn, Jr. For the first mission the crew was to fly without Bill Cameron in the right seat. ALL THREE CREWS WERE LOST. Robert I. Brown and Co-Pilot Hartley A. Westbrook and five others bailed out and were captured. Three Gunners in the waist and tail went down with the plane. Hit directly by heavy flak right after target, Lts. Roach and Co-Pilot Ross A. Henney plus six of the crew were KIA, the Navigator and Bombardier successfully bailed out and were captured. "Little Beaver" was hit directly under the flight deck at the same time as "Annie Oakley." Phillips and Wilborn, along with five other crew were KIA, four others successfully bailed out and were captured. OF THE ORIGINAL 67TH PILOTS, NOW THERE WAS ONE!



England-June 1943. Low level Training flight prior to the North Africa deployment. #1 "X" 41-23816, 68th "Black Jack"; #2 "L" 41-23817, 67th "Suzy Q"; #3 41-23774, 67th, "Hitler's Nightmare."

Newly promoted 1st Lt. Cameron had flown his first mission as Pilot on April 4 in "Little Beaver" on a diversion mission along the Dutch Coast. His second crew mission was over Brest, Germany in his new aircraft "Buzzin' Bear." Ed Mikoloski was his Navigator on this 16 May raid. On May 17, and again on May 29, Cameron and the Group flew missions to Bordeaux and La Pallice, France. All three missions were without losses and the post-Kiel mission morale took a sudden rise. During June, the 44th flew low level practice missions over England and prepared for the Africa deployment on June 26.

Between "warm-up" raids against Italian targets on July 2, 5, 10 and 15 Cameron flew low level training missions in preparation for Ploesti. On June 17, Cameron and Co. took "Buzzin' Bear" to Naples. Instead of the usual light defenses of the Italian targets, this day the Group encountered fierce fighter opposition comprised of both Italian and German E/A. The "Buzzin' Bear" crew wrote a page in history when during some thirty minutes of constant attack, they destroyed three Macci 202's, one ME 109 and one ME 110, all officially confirmed, and no crew injuries.

For the first time with "Buzzin' Bear" enough

damage occurred on #3 engine from a probable 20mm hit that caused a loss of oil pressure and Cameron was forced to feather #3. At this point they began to drop behind the formation. In addition to the #3 shutdown, they had high cylinder head temperatures from the high power settings attempting to stay with the formation. The high power settings with rich mixture in attempts to keep the engines cool, had depleted their fuel reserve. Additionally, they had lost the two generators. All things considered, the decision was made to attempt to reach Malta rather than a return to Benghazi. Sometime after setting course for Malta, they saw land ahead and while Navigator Clifford argued it was too early to have reached Malta, the fuel situation dictated a landing as soon as possible. With the usual Cameron luck, a long shining strip was sighted on the land which they could identify as a landing strip. As they turned toward it, one engine quit. Flight Engineer Gibby quickly transferred fuel and got it restarted. Cameron also restarted #3 engine and proceeded with a straight in approach and landing. Prior to that time, the crew had donned their May Wests and parachutes and stood by to bail out if things got quiet. A safe landing was made, and rolling to a stop, they were met by a British Officer in a jeep who informed them that they had landed, not on Malta, but Comiso Airfield on Sicily, just a few miles from the front lines. He advised them to remove their aircraft as soon as possible, it was a big target!

By loading 600 gallons of fuel by hand from British 5 Imperial Gallon Jerry cans most of the day and into the twilight, and lacking any food, the Buzzin' Bear was back in the air sometime after midnight, enroute to Malta. After landing, Cameron, DeVinney and Clifford, fortified by two pieces of stale toast and a cup of tea in the Officers Mess, attempted to sleep in chairs. The location of the other crew members remains a mystery.



June 17, 1943, The "Buzzin' Bear" crew at the "Self-Serve" station, Comiso Airfield, Sicily.

A return to Benina Main was accomplished the next morning. When the near starving Cameron caught up with him, Major Moore's greeting was "Where in Hell have you been?"

In the afternoon of that day, Cameron was instructed to attend mission briefing for a very important target. In the briefing he learned that he was to lead the Group in "Suzy Q" against transportation targets in Rome. Half of Moore's crew had dysentery and "Buzzin' Bear" was undergoing four engine changes by the ground crew and half of the flight crew. Apparently not expecting an attack on the Holy City, defenses were light and the mission uneventful except that this was Cameron's 26th mission. In his words, we have his thoughts on what was to be his 27th mission, Ploesti:

"After the Rome raid, we started practice bombing and flying in larger formations of aircraft at low, very low, altitude. I had actually completed my combat tour of duty with the Rome raid, and I didn't believe that Howard (Moore) or Colonel Leon Johnson really expected me to fly the upcoming mission. I don't know why I did either. However, it was "high adventure" and although I didn't know what the destination would be, I hated to miss out on it. Furthermore, the crew of the "Buzzin' Bear" didn't want to go with a new pilot. As

an additional incentive, I was thoroughly enjoying the low-level flying. So I went.

The only other individual that I am aware of who had also completed his tour (there probably were others) and volunteered to go was Captain Roland B. "Sam" Houston, one of our best people and an old friend. Sam was killed with crew while following Jim Posey's formation over Target Blue Five. He bombed successfully, but went down during assembly for the return. Sam's gunner also shot down the German Fighter as they were crashing."

Flying the slot directly behind Colonel Johnson in "Suzy Q", Bill Cameron was the designated deputy leader should "Suzy Q" go down. Notwithstanding that his target had already been mistakenly struck by another flight, Colonel Johnson took his formation through fire and smoke, attacking fighters and withering fire from an unexpected Flak Train to deliver their bombs on target, then turned to fight their way homeward until the enemy, out of fuel and ammunition, gave up the pursuit. True to form, two aircraft returned to Benina Main non-stop with four engines running, "Suzy Q" and "Buzzin' Bear" piloted by the Bullet Proof Pilot Bill Cameron.

Two weeks after the Ploesti raid Howard Moore, having completed his combat tour, turned command of the 67th Bomb Squadron to the newly promoted Major Bill Cameron. Bill was making preparations for the return of the Group to England when the Group was ordered to mount a raid on the airfield at Foggia, Italy. So on the 16th of August, one day after taking command, with great great pride, the new commander, with some new crews having arrived, scheduled seven aircraft. There was Jim Hill and Charlie Henderson, the veterans; three new pilots and crews, the Cameron crew with two new pilots, Lt. Leighton C. Smith and Flt. Officer Joseph S. Milliner (had flown Ploesti with Henderson) in "Buzzin' Bear," and a veteran crew from the 506th, Walter Bunker with Dick Butler, who had been transferred to the 67th, as Co-Pilot. Lt. Walter R. Bateman and crew, on their first combat mission were in "Suzy Q", and the new crew of Lt. Carl S. Hager were in their new plane "Black Sheep." In his words, Bill Cameron describes that day:

"Because of their experience, I scheduled the former 506th crew to lead the 67th. Previous missions to targets in this area, as well as the one I had flown to Foggia, had been made without loss and not much opposition. So on 16 August, I proudly watched them take off—the first mission of the Squadron under their new



"Little Beaver."

Commander. It was a heady feeling!

The first hint of trouble came when the veteran lead crew returned early with engine trouble. Later, when it was all over, only Hill returned! Our men had run into an estimated seventy-five to a hundred German fighters which had been recently moved down to Italy. Our Squadron lost five of the seven planes and crews, including my own "Bear" and the "Suzy Q." It was very hard to take. From that day on, I never sent a crew out on a mission that was not absolutely required, or a crew that I did not consider tried and ready for combat."

Bill Cameron signed on for another tour, took the Squadron back to England, then the return to Africa and back to England. He relinquished command of the 67th when he was promoted to Lt. Col. and replaced Bill Strong as Group Operations Officer where he remained, with the exception of a stint as Vice Group Commander, until the end of the war. In his post-combat crew service, Bill Cameron flew nine more combat missions as Command Pilot without mishap.

In reading this combat account of two aircraft and a pilot, even a quick mental count of missions, losses and injuries during the time when the 67th Bomb Squadron had been mathematically wiped out twice, the uncanny survival of the two aircraft and one pilot defies explanation. Then to explain the loss of his original crew and their airplane the first time they flew without him, followed by the loss of his own crew and airplane the very first time they went into combat with another pilot. Discounting some early mechanical

problems caused by Turbo-supercharger mismanagement, guns freezing up because of inadequate oil, and poor electric heated flying suits, the "Little Beaver" and "Buzzin' Bear" were tireless and reliable. Neither the Phillips crew or "Buzzin' Bear" ever had a casualty and Cameron only once shut down an engine, and that was precautionary, until the engine was needed for landing and was re-started.

In some typically brief remarks at our 44th Bomb Group Reunion in Rapid City, SD in 1989, General Leon Johnson stated, "In my view, Bill Cameron is the finest combat pilot I have ever known." When one reflects on the amazing circumstances and puzzling relationship of his presence and an imperviousness to danger, General Johnson could well have added: and the luckiest! In the words of Ernie Pyle, it could be said, "He is a fugitive from the law of average."

Bill Cameron and your President/Editor have been friends and Air Force colleagues since those Shipdham days. Thus I feel entitled to say his gentle, polite and caring demeanor belies that within lives the "finest combat pilot" our General Johnson knows.

The German Ship TOGO

By Steve Adams

August, 1955, Col. Bill Cameron arrives on Guam to take Command of Hq. 7th Air Force (Advanced). Greeted by Capt. Roy Owen, Operations Officer. Lt. Col. Dick Butler was also there serving with SAC's 3rd Air Division.



The morning reconnaissance flight of 15 February 1943 over Dunkirk Harbor showed indications that the German ship TOJO was preparing to sail from the harbor. There was some mystery about this ship, thought to be a raider, with a puzzling Japanese name. If the ship were allowed to slip out to sea our intelligence was that she would be raiding allied shipping lanes. Crews were called and hurriedly briefed. The 44th launched 17 planes which rendezvoused with aircraft of the 329th Squadron of the 93rd Bomb Group. The formation was led by Capt. Arthur Cullen of the 67th with Major Donald MacDonald, 67th Commander as Command Pilot. This aircraft and the aircraft of Lt. Rufus Oliphant were both heavily hit by AA immediately after bombs away. Major MacDonald and six of that crew were KIA; all of the Oliphant crew were lost. Unfortunately the enemy ship survived.

Later intelligence revealed the ship was not a raider, but a radar equipped Nightfighter control ship and her name was not TOJO but TOGO and she was being moved up from the channel ports area to fill a gap in the Ostmark area. She was equipped with a Dreh-Freya at the bow. This was an early warning radar that operated in the 90 to 200 Mhz band; the effective range was between 20 and 40 miles over flat terrain or water. She had two Y lenses amidships and a FuG Wurzburg-Riese. This was a fighter ground control radar and height finding system for air raid warning radars. Fixed installation and rail mounted. Search capabilities: Azimuth 360 degrees, elevation -5 to +95 degrees. The R.A.F. Code name for this radar was "Basket." There is no information as to what finally became of the ship, or if it was ever attacked again. The TOGO was renamed Rudolf Lück in September 1943; she would keep this name until the end of the War when she was again renamed Svalbard and was put back into service as a merchant vessel. It is thought the name TOGO was shortened from Togoland, which was a German protectorate in Africa before the first World War, but was taken away from Germany at the end of that war.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE IN '97

Here's what you've been waiting for! We have just put together the itinerary and broad details of the return to England next year that you voted on at San Antonio. And we have gone you one big extra with an optional extension to France and Belgium.

Here's how we will be doing this:

Day One - May 27 To accommodate our members from all parts of the country, we will be using eight gateway cities (San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, Cincinnati, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Boston, Miami and JFK New York and three airlines (Delta, Virgin and British Airways) to have everyone arrive in London (Heathrow or Gatwick) on the same day, May 27. You will be responsible for your own round trip transportation to the Gateway airport nearest to your home. You will be met at your London arrival airport and transferred to our hotel. You will have dinner at the hotel that evening, otherwise you have the evening free.



Day Two - May 28 Morning; London sightseeing tour with included lunch. Afternoon tours, your choice: Coach 1-Kew (Royal Botanical) Gardens; Coach 2 - Hampton Court; Coach 3 - Hendon RAF Museum. Dinner at Hotel.

Day Three - May 29 Free Day - Golf available - Dinner at Hotel.

Day Four - May 30 Travel to Norwich - Check in Hotel - afternoon free to shop and explore Norwich, Dinner at Hotel.

Day Five - May 31 Free Day - Golf or optional tour to Coast; Cromer & Sheringham or Great Yarmouth and The Broads; alternatively a visit to the Royal Residence at Sandringham Castle. Dinner at Hotel.

Day Six - June 1 Visit to Shipdham, visit the Heritage Centre and Church with a Memorial Service at the 44th Memorial. Visit and tour the Airfield and Squadron Sites. Visit Arrow Air Hangar and new Visitor and Pilot's Lounge. Enjoy a Wine, Beer and Soft Drink Reception with the people of Shipdham at the hangar followed by a Barbecue and dance music in the hangar.

Day Seven - June 2 Depart Norwich for RAF Duxford and American Air Museum, then on to Eastbourne, Check-in and Dinner at Hotel.

Day Eight - June 3 Optional tour of Sussex historical sights - Pevensey Castle - 1066 Country, Bodiam Castle, etc., or Free Day for golf or relaxation.

Day Nine - June 4 Visit to "Ruthless" Memorial on the South Downs and Social Program with people of Eastbourne (hopefully a reception with the Lord Mayor).

Day Ten - June 5 The England only group return to London area for last night stay. Dinner at Hotel. (French & Belgian Tour group cross the Channel today, see add-on itinerary.)

Day Eleven - June 6 British Tour only - Transfer to departure airport.

FRENCH AND BELGIAN EXTENSION

- Day Ten - June 5 Depart Newhaven for Channel crossing arrive Dieppe 10:15 a.m. Short stay in Dieppe before traveling on to Rouen for two night stay. Dinner at Hotel.
- Day Eleven - June 6 After Breakfast travel to Bayeau, pause to see the Tapestry, then on to the D-Day American Landing Beaches and the American Cemetery at Omaha. Return to Rouen. Dinner at Hotel.
- Day Twelve - June 7 Leave Rouen, travel to Giverny for visit to the artist Monet's house and garden before checking into hotel for dinner, staying for two nights.
- Day Thirteen - June 8 Completely Free Day. Opportunity for Bateau Mouche on River Seine, visit the Eiffel Tower, The Louvre, or golf can be arranged.
- Day Fourteen - June 9 Leaving Paris, travel eastward to Reims and on to Bastogne where the 101st Airborne were besieged. Then on to visit the Ardennes American Cemetery before proceeding to Liege for the night. (Bed and Breakfast.)
- Day Fifteen - June 10 Depart for homeward journey making a sightseeing visit to Brussels enroute via Calais/Dover to London for overnight. Dinner at Hotel.
- Day Sixteen - June 11 Transfer to London Gatwick or Heathrow Airport for departure.

Costs:

(1) The Members will be responsible for transportation for round trip transportation to your nearest Gateway airport from your home.

(2) The average round trip air travel cost from the Gateway City to London and return is \$669. The England only ground package cost will be \$1,463. The France/Belgium add-on is \$498. Adding the average round trip airfare, the cost for the England only tour is \$2,132. Adding the round trip airfare to the entire tour is \$2,668 per person plus travel costs to the Gateway city. These costs are subject to fluctuations in International monetary exchange rates and in airline fuel price adjustments. This is based on double occupancy, includes all breakfasts and dinners where noted, a couple of lunches and a couple of dinners "on your own." If you desire single occupancy, there will be a surcharge of \$304 for the England portion and \$160 for the Europe extension. Otherwise, you will be riding in deluxe, air cooled buses operated by one of the oldest Coach Tour firms in England. Staying in superior hotels with private facilities and our buses will be available for side trips of our choice for up to 75 miles (150 miles round trip) deviation from our scheduled route daily.

My 44th Friends, it won't get any better than this. We are going to travel with the friends we love and pay our respects to our fallen comrades in a spirit of light hearted enjoyment they would wish us to have in their memory.

*We are limited to 124 people.
First come, first reserved.
(# 125 and after go on standby)*



Fill out the Reservation Form herein, make out a check payable to 44th BGVA in the amount of \$300 per person who will be traveling and send to our Treasurer:

Gerald W. Folsom, Treasurer
44th BGVA
P.O. Box 2367
Salt Lake City, UT 84110-2367

(Position on list will be determined by postmark or by date and time if paid in person at the Reunion.)

Information on cancellation policy and available trip insurance will be sent by mail after receipt of reservation.

44th Bomb Group Veterans Association Return to England/France '97 Reservation

- Yes, I want to join the group for the May 26, 1997 England Tour ONLY.
- Yes, I want to join the group for the May 26, 1997 England Tour and continue on the entire trip.

I will be traveling alone with my _____ and _____ . (Names)

I am enclosing _____ x \$300 per person = \$ _____ total
(Must be mailed to reach 44th BGVA Treasurer by October 15, 1996.)

Number of golfers: Pay your own Green Fees:

at London at Norwich at Eastbourne at Paris

Signature and name printed: _____
Signature

Name Printed

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone: () _____

My Airline Gateway City will be:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> San Francisco (Delta) | <input type="checkbox"/> Boston (Virgin) | <input type="checkbox"/> Miami (Virgin) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seattle (British) | <input type="checkbox"/> New York (British) | <input type="checkbox"/> Dallas (British) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Los Angeles (Delta) | | |

You will receive airline reservation information by mail.

Eastbourne, England, The "Ruthless" memorial placed by the people of Eastbourne for the 506th James O. Bolin crew, all lost in a crash landing at this site 2 February 1942.



BATTLE WEARY

They said he was battle weary.
You could see the look in his eyes.
Which came from sixty five missions.
Thru Italy's trouble blue skies.

His hands never shook nor trembled.
But the calm deliberation,
Of each and every movement,
Was fraught with determination.

I'd read of battle weary troops,
But what that really meant to me,
Was someone overly tired.
And that a little rest would free.

True, that is what it really is,
And also the correct remedy.
But I never knew how precious,
Nor hard, that little rest could be.

I never knew that a stomach,
Could consistently refuse food.
Nor how much a mind can stand,
That can do a little more than brood.

Nor how long human teeth could stand,
Nights of continuous grating.
And the terrible love hunger,
Which seems to know no sating.

Nor the twitching, straining muscles,
As they fight once again in dreams,
And of the groaning and despair,
That ends in a curse or in screams.

Yes, they say he's battle weary,
You could still see it in his eyes.
But you'll never know what it means,
Until at your side he lies.

A poem written by a gunners father who knows what his own son and also many boys are going through after doing his tour of missions is completed, and also what the boys go through during their tour of operations.



M. P. ETIQUETTE

*So you haven't got a hat bud?
Well what do you know,
We've got just the place,
For a sloppy G.I. Joe.*

*What if you have been overseas,
Your here and don't forget,
There's still some rules and regulations,
Known as military etiquette.*

*Yes sir you guys got ribbons,
But listen to me bud,
Just because you got used to it,
You can't go around covered in mud.*

*Now I got it from the Provost,
And he gave it to me straight,
He sez to me, "Lay for those guys,
Who always come sneaking in late."*

*It's up to us he says,
Who ain't been out of the states,
To let each of these veterans know,
Exactly how they rate.*

*So if you catch 'em out of line,
Give it to 'em good,
Cause there's a war going on,
And that's to be understood.*

*So you fellows see where I stand,
I've just got to run you in,
Cause if the Provost finds out,
He'll take it out of my skin.*

*So start polishing, shining, shaving,
And stay right on the ball,
Cause if your not all shiny,
We won't win this war at all.*

Editor: The following article is the latest episode in the continuing saga of B-24H E-101, "Corky," shot down over Dortmund, Germany 28 January 1945. We featured "Corky" in the Winter issue with a cover reproduction of the original Robert Taylor painting "Welcome Sight" which depicted "Corky" amidst a formation of 44th Libs overflying Ely Cathedral on a return from a mission. Doctor Robert Reid of London, Ontario, Canada owns the painting and has become the preeminent historian in the life and death of the aircraft and fate of her crew. He is a member of our Association and is truly an amazing individual. His quest for the facts of the shoot-down and story of each of the crew will probably rank as the most thoroughly investigated combat loss in the history of 8th Air Force.

Corky (Continued)

By Dr. Robert Reid

In the Winter edition of Eight Ball Tails, the Patrick Colosimo's capture was described by two young boys. In following up with Horst Munte in Dortmund and with Stephen Klemp, the newspaper reporter for the local newspaper, the story became rather more clear.

My father had been ill and I planned a trip to visit him at the end of January. Horst was quite persuasive that I come to Dortmund and eventually we arranged to meet on the 27th of January, which would allow me to be there on the anniversary of the crash.

I arrived in Dusseldorf at 10:30 on a Friday evening in the middle of a blizzard. While driving up the Autobahn to Dortmund, having passed 20 cars in the ditch, I began to wonder what I was letting myself in for as the weather deteriorated. It was with some relief that I pulled into the gas station where Horst had arranged to meet me. By this time there was almost eight inches of snow on the ground and I was beginning to question whether I was being sensible.

However, after a good night sleep and breakfast, I was ready to go investigating. Stephen and Horst explained what they found from the telephone calls that had been made to the newspaper following two articles in November, 1985. There were 16 witnesses, claiming to have seen the crash, but on subsequent phone calls, several were describing another crash. On the 28th of January, 1945 there were in fact three B-24's that crashed in the Dortmund area. "Corky" from the 44th bomb group, a second B-24 "Miss America" from the 389th Bomb Group, 566 Squadron and a third from the 93rd Bomb Group, 409th Squadron.

The other two Liberators went down on the southeast part of Dortmund, having completed their

bomb runs. Horst had a list of the crew from Miss America of the 389th and five of this crew were killed. In the other crash, the information is not as clear, but five bodies were buried at the same time as the eight crew from "Corky" and four from "Miss America."

This partly explains the confusion when Patrick Colosimo, the survivor from Corky, had been told by the Germans that a number of his crew were still alive. It would seem that the reports were rather fragmented as to the number of survivors and dead, and in fact it's confusing even to this date who the survivors were as there were reports of two survivors from Miss America being killed by civilians but not being found till after the war. One of the families from Corky's crew had been told that one of Corky's crew had been killed by civilians. However, when the local graves registry was reviewed, only one of the crew from Miss America who was killed is missing from the burial list from the 9th of February. All the crew from Corky were listed on this list. It's easy to see how the reports became confused, particularly because of the language difficulties.

The witnesses to Corky's crash were mainly older people and young children and youths under the age of 16, all the rest of the male population being drafted into the army. This means that any witnesses would either be over 90 now or around 60. This in fact was very much the distribution that we found in the telephone reports. The plane exploded in the air and a wing came off, the main fuselage broke in two in the region of the bomb bay and wreckage was spread over 1/2 a kilometer north and south of the main east and west Autobahn in the north of Dortmund in the area of a small suburb known as Altenderne. The first of witnesses on the scene were a young boy and his sister. He was around 14 and she was around 10 years of age and she describes finding a tall blond American lying with a parachute that was partly burnt and damaged. He was dead and her brother apparently cut the parachute off and they ran away with it, as it was forbidden for civilians to go near a crashed enemy bomber or remove anything from the crash site. Shortly afterwards, a local farmer who's property lay approximately 150-200 meters from the crash site came up and described finding a tall American, but without a parachute and another crew member laying approximately 50 yards further west who apparently had a gold band on his wrist with the name Walker inscribed on it. This subsequently disappeared and as there was no other identification on this airman, he was not identified at the time, though we now know this was Joseph Walker, the engineer on Corky. The farmer also noted four or five crew members laying close to the main fuselage. The number and location varies according to the witness and it maybe that they had been removed later and gathered close together for

Corky Continued:

removal. The tail unit had apparently come down south of the Autobahn and again the descriptions vary as to whether one or two of the crew were found in this location. The wing came down to the north of the fuselage, almost in the back garden of the farm house, an engine and several bombs were found unexploded in this area also.

The fuselage apparently burned for a period and because of the risks of unexploded bombs, a cordon was put around the crash site and non-military witnesses were strictly limited following this. This story was given to us by the son of the farmer who was 10 years old at that time, his father just having passed away within the past two years.

Most of the witnesses that called in knew about Patrick Colosimo, that he had been blown across the north end of Dortmund coming down in the suburb of Mengde and being taken into custody by the local police. He was badly hurt, having been burned, his hair being singed, being cut also in the head and with a broken leg.

We could not, however, find any witnesses to Maurice Corwine, the pilot, until very recently in early March when another witness called into the newspaper following a follow up article regarding my visit and it would seem that Maurice came down between the crash site and Mengde as he had exited the plane at a much lower altitude. He apparently came down close to a flak battery, manned by young girls, and the description was that he had been taken to a farm house close by which tallies somewhat with the story given to me by relatives of the other crew members.

While this was happening at the north of Dortmund, at the south end, the crew members of the 389 plane, Miss America, were descending by parachute. Their plane having suffered a very similar fate of having a wing blown off by flak and the co-pilot, pilot, engineer and three gunners managed to get out of the plane and survive the descent, five of the crew did not survive. One of the five is not listed in the mortuary records in Dortmund and what happened to him is not clear as he was known to have left the plane.

Tom Riggles - Co-Pilot, Keith Holdrige - Radio Operator, and Will Crum - one of the Gunners, are all alive and having contacted them they confirmed some of the details of the raid that day.

The civilians around Dortmund were particularly

upset with US aircraft and all survivors described having been fortunate in having been captured by the army of Luftwaffe. Will Crum describes being escorted by a Luftwaffe, Sergeant Major Heinrich Fischer, back to the air base back in Dortmund and Fischer having to threaten a group of women with his gun, who were intent on assaulting the prisoner, to keep away.

The survivors from Corky, Miss America and the other B-24 were gathered together at the air base in Dortmund over the subsequent few days and Will Crum remembered Patrick being brought in. Apparently the Germans had wanted him to be taken to the hospital, but he declined and wanted to stay with his fellow survivors. He was quite badly burned about the head. He had several other cuts and a broken ankle. None of the survivors remember Maurice Corwine well and it's possible that he wasn't actually brought to the air base as several other survivors had been taken to local police stations and then directly transferred to the Prison of War processing center near Frankfurt. The remainder of survivors from the 28th of January raid, were transported to Frankfurt by train, four or five days after the raid and then transferred to the Prisoner of War camp.



Dr. Robert Reid with German Historian Horst Munte at the site of the "Corky" crash in the suburbs of Dortmund, Germany. Note the dark area of grass where the main fuselage and one wing came to rest.

With the story from Stephen and Horst, and the members of Miss America's crew, what happened to the crew from Corky was almost completely cleared up. Three parachutes were reported as

coming out of the aircraft and one of them, I understand from two other 44 bomb group observers, had been caught in the explosion and was damaged. The evidence would suggest that this was Robert Lough, the co-pilot, as he was considerably taller than the other members of the crew as can be seen in the photograph in the last edition of Eight Ball Tails. The confusion over whether or not there was a parachute is explained by the removal by the two young witnesses.

How the story, that one of them had been killed by civilians, came about is not clear but what we suspect is that this was misidentification with one of the other crew members from one of the other aircraft. The civil records for that time are fairly complete, though all the Airfleet 4 documentation from the air base were destroyed at the end of the war. The local mortuary records account for all dead, except for one crew member from Miss America, who was known to have

Corky Continued:

parachuted safely according to his colleagues, but was not found until after the war. He may be the victim that had been discussed earlier as a possible casualty due to civilian maltreatment.

In some of the papers that Horst Munter gave me, there was a form signed by 2nd Lieutenant Herbert Copelan, 3046 QMC company that investigated the crash at the end of 1945. Herbert is now a physician living in Florida. His memories of that time are patchy, but he was able to give me some details about the investigation. At that time, because of the number of casualties, investigations were frequently not as in depth as would probably have been optimal, but he indicated that the crew from Corky had all perished at the crash scene.

In early 1946, they were moved from Dortmund, to the Ardennes National Cemetery in Belgium and later, all except, Burt Steinmiller, Edward Weinman and Robert Lough, were removed to the US for burial in their hometowns, Wayne Scott was buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington.

After having discussed all the information over breakfast, Horst and Stephen took me out to the crash site. The crash site is traversed by the main east/west Autobahn. Surprisingly, it's not yet been built on, though one can see that within the next few years, the houses will expand out from the town, but at this point it's much as it was in 1945. The fields are still cultivated and because of this, the farmers are reluctant to allow anyone to dig on it. The soil contains clay and there's only a very short period in the spring when the ground is not frozen or waterlogged to allow a proper search. Ten or twelve years ago an engine had been found, but this had been sent for scrap. A propeller had been found also and blades of this had been given to individuals. Horst and I later went looking for one of them which was apparently set outside a building in the south end of Dortmund; however, it had been there three months before, but was gone when we got there. It had been removed following renovations to the front of the building and the owner's weren't helpful.

The other propeller blade was in the possession of a technical sergeant in the German airforce and apparently he had been transferred to Canada (strange coincidence). In the field where the main fuselage section had come down, there's a slight change in the contour of the land and in the color of grass, apparently related to the fuel and the burning of the soil at the time of the impact.

It's a very quiet spot with a small road along its northern boundary, mainly used by families walking children and surprisingly peaceful despite being so close to the main Autobahn.

The photographs show the site of impact of the main fuselage and the point where the tall section came down.

The wing, engine and apparently five bombs came down in the field to the north of the lane, close to the farm house.

The snow on the ground and the weather, according to the witnesses, were very similar to that 50 years before. Later that day, Horst and I drove out to the crash site of Miss America to meet one of his friends who spent almost four years going up and down the crash site there and has collected large numbers of parts of the aircraft, but most are very small, the largest piece being a hydraulic pump and an engine cowel flap.

The following day, which was the 51st anniversary day of the crash, Horst and I went back out to the crash site at noon, the time of the crash.

The scene was very peaceful and didn't belie the violence that had occurred. It was a bright sunny day, though mildly overcast, very similar to that in 1945. There were people walking along the lane with small children from church, several crows and magpies were flying around, this being the only sound until an aircraft was heard. I have to admit, it rather sent a shiver up my spine. It was one of the commuter airliners going into the local airport. It gave me a rather eerie feeling. Several people came over to speak to Horst and one or two knew about the crash and asked what we were doing.

On leaving the crash site, we drove down to the cemetery where the crews were initially buried. It's a quiet place, just across the road from the main cemetery. The plots where the Allied air crew were buried have not been used since. The cemetery is dominated by a large monument to 6,000 Russian workers who were killed in a number of air raids during the war.

As the weather was brightening up, Horst took me out to the Mohn Dam where the Royal Air Force used the famous Bouncing bomb to blow the dam up. On the south side of the Autobahn about five miles from the dam is the crash site of one of the Lancaster's from the raid. In contrast to the farmer in Dortmund where Corky crashed, here they had to give up cultivating part of the farm in the area of this site because of the number of visitors to the monument that has been placed there in memory of the crew.

In all, there were approximately 40 Allied aircraft crashes in the vicinity of Dortmund during the war. Horst, since he retired as a teacher, has investigated almost 32 of them and has found artifacts in many of the sites and also documented the stories of the aircraft. He still has many witnesses to see, one of the elderly gentlemen who called the newspaper, was one of the people first on the scene, was willing to go with us to

Corky Continued:

see the crash site. Unfortunately, because the weather was rather cold he couldn't as he was in frail health. He said he'd be happy to do it later and I suppose it's an excuse for another visit to Dortmund. This time to perhaps comb the field with Horst with his metal detector to see if he can find any artifacts from Corky.

I would like to thank several individuals for their help in my search for information about Corky including Will Lundy, Pete Henry, all of the members of the crews of Corky who have corresponded with me, and to Douglas Howard from the Department of Army Mortuary Records, Alexandria, Virginia, and Tony Mastradone who has aided the search for information in the National Archives.

Frequently, government workers are given little credit for doing their jobs, but in all my dealings with the people in Washington, they've been extremely helpful and understanding in helping me get information.

Some more first hand stuff on "Corky"

Dear Will:

In the Volume 1, Issue 4, the article on "Corky" is accurate about Rueban Rickett's crew flying three missions on the 8th, 10th and 17th of June, 1944.

Webb Todd's 68th Squadron history is in error (omission) - there was a mission by the 68th on the 10th of June. The mission was to Orleans Buchy, France. I verified the dates with my form 5 flight records.

On the 7th of July, Rueban Rickett's crew took the plane to Bernburg, Germany, not Darenburg. This was the day of the "Big Shoot." We could not get fighter cover because all our fighters were engaged with the German fighters. We were attacked by JU-88's coming out of the sun just as we prepared to turn on the IP. The Navigator's window was shot out. The three lead aircraft (of our Section) were hit - they, in turn, hit each other, going down in a massive spin, apparently locked to each other. Some chutes were observed coming out but how many I don't know.

Rickett's crew became the lead 68th aircraft at that time, bombs were dropped by the Navigator, me! Some bombs hit the target, and aircraft plant. But most of them took out the main road through town.

Rickett's crew flew "Corky" to Saarbrucken on the 16th of July and the mission on the 12th of July was to Munich. A previous mission to Munich was also made on the 11th of June, I believe.

All of the above dates are from my form 5 flight records and diary.

Rueban Rickett was an excellent pilot. His service record would show he was an A&E aircraft mechanic before going to flight school. He was a rated B-17 pilot who was taken out of phase training as a B-17 co-pilot and sent to B-24 transition training. He picked up all his crew except the Navigator at Wendover Army Air Base in Utah.

I, as Navigator, joined the crew in phase training at Gowen Field Army Air Base at Boise, Idaho in January, 1944.

Any time that we had aircraft mechanical problems, Rueban could diagnose the problem and save the ground crews many hours of hunting. I think that he

was one of the best and safest B-24 pilots in the Air Force.



**January 28, 1996,
Dr. Robert Reid overlooking
the crash site of 68th
Squadron Corwin crew
aboard "Corky" shot down
51 years prior over
Dortmund, Germany.**

On 12th of July, 1944 we were scheduled for a raid on Saarbrucken, but had to abort because of a blown engine. The weather was so bad we had to get to

an auxiliary field to land. We were directed to Molesworth, a B-17 group. When Rueban landed, we had a full load of bombs and 2300 gallons of fuel. He "greased" that B-24 in so smoothly you couldn't feel it touch down. When I complemented him on the landing, his reply was, "This is a B-17 field and I don't want them thinking I'm driving a truck!" He was proud of the B-24 - so were we all, the B-17 gets glamorized, but the B-24 was the real work horse in all theatres.

Best wishes,
Elwyn A. Meyer, 68th
Idaho Falls, Idaho

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Back on the job again! We just returned from a six week+ vacation to the beautiful Provence region of Southern France, then a three night visit in Paris on our way to London for five days. I put Lolly on a return home flight on July 9 and I stayed over for a run up to Norwich/Shipdham to complete plans for our 44th BGVA England trip next year. Also, I met with Steve Adams (our English representative) and Nigel Wright, President of Arrow Air Centre. In this meeting we came to an agreement on management and funding of the construction of the Arrow Air Centre addition which will be the Visitors Centre housing the 44th B.G. museum and the Arrow Air Heritage collection. While the actual construction plans were not ready for review, we went through a verbal description of the addition and I looked over the site and was impressed. The room will occupy a vacant spot on the rear of the existing building accessed from a hallway that will provide access from the Pub. The feature of this location is that the exterior side of the addition looks over the airfield and will have large windows that will present a view clear across to the old Control Tower. The draft of the funding and construction agreement is currently being reviewed by your Board of Directors. Hopefully this will soon be completed and signed, funds transferred and construction begun. Our dream of preserving and transferring the wall art from the 14th CBW walls to the new building will not be possible. The old Rix farm was recently purchased by Mr. Andrew Doubleday. He is an ardent supporter of the 44th and the preservation of the Shipdham heritage of our outfit. In that sense, he has denied the removal of the wall art in the fear it would not survive the transfer. Instead he has promised renovation of the buildings to protect that which remains and will allow access to view the CBW area by anyone making arrangements through Arrow

Air Centre or Steve Adams.

Our mail-out of some 1800 letters to former 44th people who have never belonged to a 44th member organization has, to this point, provided rather disappointing results with only 48 memberships so far. Although by using "Address Correction Requested" we have new addresses for a bunch of those people, and knowing Art Hand, rest assured he will keep pounding the beat and that number will grow. Those who have come into the fold after all of these years are astounded that we found them and amazed to find that someone still cares enough to make the effort to locate them. Most of those newly found members are looking forward to meeting with us in St. Louis.

You certainly have observed that for this issue, we have moved the cover picture of our featured aircraft "Buzzin' Bear" to the inside so we can pay tribute to our President Emeritus and Combat Leader GENERAL LEON W. JOHNSON on the occasion of his Ninety Second Birthday, September 13.

Should you care to wish him a HAPPY BIRTHDAY and CONTINUED HEALTH with an individual card, he may be reached at 9100 Belvoir Woods Parkway, Fairfax Apt. 334, Ft. Belvoir, VA 22060.

See you in St. Louis!



Roy Owen, President

Beating the Bushes

By Art Hand & Will Lundy

DR. MYRON F. SESIT: Sutton Place South, New York, NY 10022 (212) 486-9055. 68th Squadron. Joined 8/3/42; tour to Africa September 1943, etc.

FRED HEICHEMER: 42 Lincoln Avenue, Binghamton, NY 13905 (607) 723-3157. 68th Squadron. Joined 11/2/44; C/T on 4/10/45. Co-Pilot for Beckingham. Transferred to 459th BG.

JEROME WILNER: 10209-D Ashbrooke Ct. Oakton, VA 22124. 68th Squadron. Bombardier for N. Anderson. Joined 10/25/44. Home on 5/28/45.

CHESTER F. CRANTZ: Box 36, 293 Main, Vulcan, MI 49892. 68th Squadron. Gunner on Cary's crew. Joined on 10/8/43. C/T on 4/1/44.

GEORGE C. TRIBKE: 102 West Willow Avenue, Woodstock, IL 60098-2571. 68th Squadron. To ETO Queen Mary, 9/5/43, returned same way 6/16/45.

FRANK A. WILSON: 1904 Oneida Avenue, Muscatine, IA 52761. 68th Squadron. Returned from ETO 5/22/45 on A/C #44-50769.

MYRON H. LONGAN: 26 Park Lane, Milton, PA 17847 and (717) 742-9219. 68th Squadron. Radio Operator on J. Cary's crew. C/T 4/1/44.

ROBERT C. MANTHEY: 1019 N. Franklin Street, New Ulm, MN 56073 and (507) 354-6692. 68th Squadron. Gunner for Bravakis crew. Transferred to 458 BG.

RICHARD E. KING: 2517 Henderson, Memphis, TN 38127 and (901) 357-7752. 68th Squadron. Joined on 4/27/44. To ZOI 5/28/45. Flew home on 42-95021.

PHILIP L. CARTIER: 382 Ferry Road, Sacp., ME 04072 and (207) 284-5709. 68th Squadron. Gunner on Borah's crew. Joined 6/23/44; C/T 2/14/45.

WILLIAM JACOB: 50 Fairfield Street, Bristol, CT 06010 and (203) 582-4505. 68th Squadron. Was transferred to 231st Hospital (Wymondham) 3/26/44.

ROBERT HENSLER: 2032 Pleasant Street, South bend, IN 46615. 66th Squadron. In from 391st Squadron, 34th BG.

CLYDE SILVIS: 156 Beckwith Dr. Battle Creek, MI 49015 and (616) 962-2346. 68th Squadron. (No details on him yet.)

ELBERT B. "Jim" WALTON: 825 East Belt Boulevard, Richmond, VA 23224 and (804) 231-3904. 68th Squadron. Gunner on Van Dykes crew. In 1/28/45 and home on 5/28/45. Flew in A/C #42-95021.

DALE STUFFLEBEAM: 620 East Van Buren Street, Washington, IA 52353 and (319) 653-3018. 68th Squadron. In on 1/27/44; C/T on 7/4/44 to 8th AF HQ.

ROBERT C. SWANK: 2929 East 800 North Ossian, IN 46777-9105. 68th Squadron. Engineer on Kay's crew. In on 6/23/44. C/T on 11/21/44.

ARTHUR C. RUHL: 18375 Ankenytown Road, Fredericktown, OH 43019 and (614) 694-5203. Gunner for Kessler crew. Joined on 8/3/43 and C/T on 4/1/44.

JOSEPH E. WAWERNA: 7702 Rosewood Drive, Port Richey, Florida 34668 and (813) 868-2937. 68th Squadron. Front Gunner for Gayman. Joined 5/1/44, completed 22 missions.

DARRELL D. BELYEU: 3433 North Dougals Boulevard, Spencer, OK 73084 and (405) 771-5719. 68th Squadron. Aircraft Mechanic. To ETO 9/5/42; flew home 5/30/45 A/C 42-95001.

EDWARD W. DANZIGER, III: 1341 Missouri Avenue, Bridgeville, PA 15017 and (412) 221-6565. 68th Squadron. Radio Operator on Kiggins crew. Joined 1/22/45. Flew home on 5/21/45 via A/C #44-50755.

EDWARD A. WEDDELL: 1448 Westminster Drive, Fairfield, CA 94533-1827 and (707) 425-3176. Engineer on Lt. Honmyhr's crew. In Sq. May, 1944, C/T November, 1944.

ALBERT PSCHIRER: 370 Michigan Avenue, Mansfield, OH 44905 and (419) 589-6922. 68th Squadron. Engineer on Seever's crew. In 7/16/44 and C/T 3/24/45. Had DS to Belgium November, 1944 into '45.

RICHARD F. COWARD: 119 First Street, Nederland, TX 77627 and (409) 722-8515. 68th Squadron. Gunner on Seever's crew. Also in on 7/16/44 C/T 3/24/45.

CARL C. SHOOK: 9151 South 700 East, St. Paul, MN 47272-9512 and (317) 525-6799. 506th Squadron. May have been known as "Curtis."

RICHARD A. BOYKIN: P.O. Box 128, Port Haywood, VA 23138 and (540) 725-5426. 506th Squadron.

Beating the Bushes (Continued):

COL. JAMES G. CARY: Ret. 5580 North Shore Way, Pensacola, FL 32507 and (904) 492-0423. 68th Squadron. Pilot of own crew. Arrived 10/8/43 and C/T on 4/1/44. Transferred to 448th BG.

EDWARD W. ROBARDS: 6476 Halcyondale Road, Sylvana, GA 30467 and (912) 857-3830. 506 and 67th Squadrons. Co-Pilot for E.C. Yatkones. Arrived in 67th Squadron 8 June 1944. C/T November, 1944.

WILLIAM FATUR, SR.: 8201 Sante Fe Drive, #165, Littleton, CO 80120. 68th Squadron. Gunner on Borah's crew. Joined 6/23/44 and C/T 2/10/45.

SIGMUND GOLDMAN: 1670 Huron Terrace, Maitland, FL 32751. 68th Squadron. Navigator for Beckingham's crew. In on November 2, 1944 and C/T 30 March, 1945.

PERCY GAUDIN: P.O. Box 125, Kiln, MS 39556. 66th Squadron. Gunner for J. McKenna. POW 6 August 1944.

LLOYD K THOMPSON: RR #1, Box 145 L, Sedans, KS 67361. 68th Squadron. Gunner for Principe's crew. Arrived on 3/5/44 and C/T 8/24/44.

DANIEL BERGER: 1351 S.W. 125th Street, #314, Pemborke Pines, FL 33027 and (305) 436-5878. No details, but listed as 68th Squadron. Todd doesn't have him.

TOM REEVES: P.O. Box 511, Clearlake Oaks, CA 95423. 66th Squadron.

VINCENT V. VRANAS: P.O. Box 41555, Sacramento, CA 95841-1555. 66th Squadron. Bombardier for Paul Dusossoit. Arrived about February, 1945. Flew 17 missions.

LOUIS A. TEBBE: 523 East Sunset Avenue, Santa Maria, CA 93454 and (805) 922-2206. 68th Squadron. Nose Turret for Roy Boggs crew. Joined 8/3/44, C/T and flew home on 5/28/45 in A/C #42-52643.

HOWARD W. BEAMAN: 3113 Calvary Road, Council Bluffs, IA 51503-1907. 66th Squadron. Waist Gunner for Lt. McPhillamey, POW 26 February 1943.

EDWINE. ROSS: Route #4, Box 56B, Eupora, MS 39744. Cannot identify.

EDWARD PICARDO: 6532 39th Avenue, N.E., Seattle, WA 98115 and (206) 522-5926. 67th Squadron. Tail Gunner for Jay Spencer. First mission August, 1944 and completed tour 12/31/44 - New Years Eve!!



“Joe” the Navigator

A poor downtrodden soul is he.
Who guides our planes o'er land and sea.
Fogs don't alarm him, clouds or foam.
His d/f loop will get them home.
The gunner on this loop may star.
But poor “Joe” tells them where they are.
The pilot brags, “I dodge the flak.”
“Joe” gets him there. “Joe” brings him back.
The bombardier waits his load to drop.
At his wireless sits the radio op.
The wrist gunner, his lonely vigil keeps.
And o'er them all a deep peace creeps.
While all alone, brow damp with sweat.
The busiest guy you've ever met.
His desk alive with charts and maps.
Compasses, dividers, a Dalton perhaps.
A sextant, star tables, a few log forms.
He's the most crowded soul that was ever born.
And when the results of the raid are read.
Hats off to the gunner (of course he's dead).
For his part in the marvelous bombing spree.
They gave the pilot the D.F.C.
The bombardier's aiming the load was hot.
The D.F.C. was the praise he got.
Then for the navigator, forgotten cuss
The simple admission. “Yeah! He was with us.”



Art Hand will be taking orders at the Reunion for felt Group Patches for jackets. Each of the Squadron colors will be available. See Art at your convenience.

44TH BOMB GROUP
VETERANS ASSOCIATION
1996 REUNION
OCTOBER 3-7, 1996



Do the
"Missouri Waltz"

&

"Meet Me In St. Louis"

so you don't
sing the



"St. Louis Blues"



44TH BOMB GROUP VETERANS ASSOCIATION

1996 REUNION - October 3 - 7, 1996

*Holiday Inn Westport
St. Louis, Missouri*



REGISTRATION FORM

LAST NAME _____ FIRST, (name tag) _____ SPOUSE _____ SQ # (one only) _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE # (____) _____
 GUESTS _____ RELATION _____
 GUESTS _____ TOTAL TO ATTEND _____

- | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|----------------------|------|-------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option #1: | Full Reunion | \$110.00 per person: | No.: | _____ | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option #2: | Thurs, Fri (Sq. Dinner, Sat (Banquet) | \$70.00 per person: | No.: | _____ | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option #3: | Sat (Banquet), Sun (Buffet), Mon (Breakfast) | \$80.00 per person: | No.: | _____ | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option #4: | Saturday Banquet and Dance only | \$35.00 per person; | No.: | _____ | \$ _____ |

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|------|-------|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tour #1: | St. Louis 8:30 - 12:30 Friday | \$13.00 per person: | No.: | _____ | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tour #2: | Grant's Farm 1:00 - 4:30 Friday | \$13.00 per person: | No.: | _____ | \$ _____ |
| | | | | | <i>Total:</i> _____ |

(Please check your arithmetic.)

Meat Selection (Banquet only) Beef Chicken
 Sunday Champagne Brunch at Casino St. Charles @ 12:00. I would like to go? Yes or No How many?

REGISTRATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY SEPTEMBER 16, 1996. NO REGISTRATIONS WILL BE PROCESSED AFTER THAT DATE.

*****NO SHOWS FULL REFUND*****



MAIL TO: Jim Clements • 4124 Calculus • Dallas, TX 75244-7311

✂ Cut on line!



44TH BOMB GROUP VETERANS ASSOCIATION

1996 REUNION OCTOBER 3-7, 1996

HOTEL RESERVATION FORM

LAST NAME _____ FIRST _____ PHONE # (____) _____
 ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 # OF NIGHTS _____ # IN ROOM _____ ARRIVAL DATE _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____

SHARING ROOM W/ _____ SMOKING NONSMOKING KING 2 DBL

Check in time is 3:00 p.m.; Check out Noon. Rate: \$69 (up to two in room) + Tax 13.224%

CUT OFF DATE: September 9, 1996. Reservations received after this date will be processed on a space available basis. Rates are firm for days before and after reunion.

CANCELLATION: Deposit refundable if cancellation is received 48 hours in advance of arrival. Record your cancellation number. Call (314) 434-0100.

TO CONFIRM YOUR RESERVATION, INCLUDE FIRST NIGHT'S DEPOSIT BY CHECK PAYABLE TO HOLIDAY INN WESTPORT, OR MAJOR CREDIT CARD INFORMATION.

AMOUNT _____ SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____ CHECK # _____

CREDIT CARD # _____ TYPE _____ EXP. DATE _____



Mail to: Holiday Inn Westport • 1973 Craigshire • St. Louis, MO 63146

Airport Limousine Available: Call from courtesy phone in lobby.

1996 44th BOMB GROUP VETERANS ASSOCIATION



REUNION NOTES

REGISTRATION

It is absolutely imperative that registrations be received by September 16, 1996. No registrations will be processed after that date. If there is some question about being able to attend, send your registration in anyway as all no shows will be refunded. If, however, you have sent your registration in earlier and it become apparent you will not be able to attend, please let us know as soon as possible, so we can keep our numbers straight with the hotel.

The options listed on the Reunion Registration Form are designed to make your schedule more suitable and equitable. There can be no deviations.

The Registration Desk will be open Friday at noon for those arriving on Option #2. For those that selected Option #3, the Registration Desk will be open from 11:30 to 1:00 Saturday to pick up Registration Envelopes. The Registration Desk will again be open at 5:30 Saturday for those attending on Option #4, at which time late arrivals on Option #3 may get their tickets. Please double check your registration before sending it to ensure you are paying the correct amount.

There will be a large Bulletin Board in the lobby that will have complete information regarding the events of the reunion. Most of the questions you might have will be answered on the board. Dress Code: Informal, except Banquet night. Jackets and ties for the gentlemen and dressy attire for the ladies.

Tour #1: See St. Louis.

For those of you that have not visited St. Louis recently or never have, this tour will give you a chance to become familiar with The Gateway to the West.

A stop at the Cathedral of St. Louis is included. The interior contains one of the largest and most beautiful displays of mosaic art in the Western Hemisphere - covering domed ceilings, numerous arches and wall panels.

A narrated tour will acquaint you with the city's downtown/civic area. You'll learn both past and present history of Laclède's Landing and the historic riverfront.

A stop for picture taking will be made at the magnificent Gateway Arch.

Other interesting sights of the city will be included as time permits.

Metrolink

For those of you that would like to enjoy some of the other points of interest, the Metrolink is highly recommended. It will get you to your destination quicker than you can drive in your car, and with no parking worries. The Hotel will furnish Limo service to and from the airport Main Station. Fare to any station on the route is only fifty cents. There will be a map of the routes on the Bulletin with all the information you will need to make your trip a success.

TOUR #2: GRANT'S FARM

Located on the estate of the late August Busch, Jr., Grant's Farm is one of the most popular attractions in St. Louis. Built on land once farmed by Ulysses S. Grant, it now has a miniature zoo, bird and animal shows, a collection of horsedrawn carriages and a trophy room. Ride through the game preserve on a trackless train where you will see the various animals and a log cabin built by Grant in 1854. A visit to the Clydesdale stallion barn is a highlight of this attraction.

Enjoy a lunch or snack on your own in the Bauernhof Courtyard.

Tour No. 1 and 2 are so times that you will be able to enjoy both of them; even if it slightly delays your lunch until approximately 1:30 at the Bauernhof Courtyard at Grant's Farm.

HISTORIC ST. CHARLES

Founded in 1769, it is the oldest city of the Missouri River and was Missouri's first State Capitol. Many craft, antique and speciality gift shops line the cobblestone streets. There are wine gardens of the small Missouri's wineries.

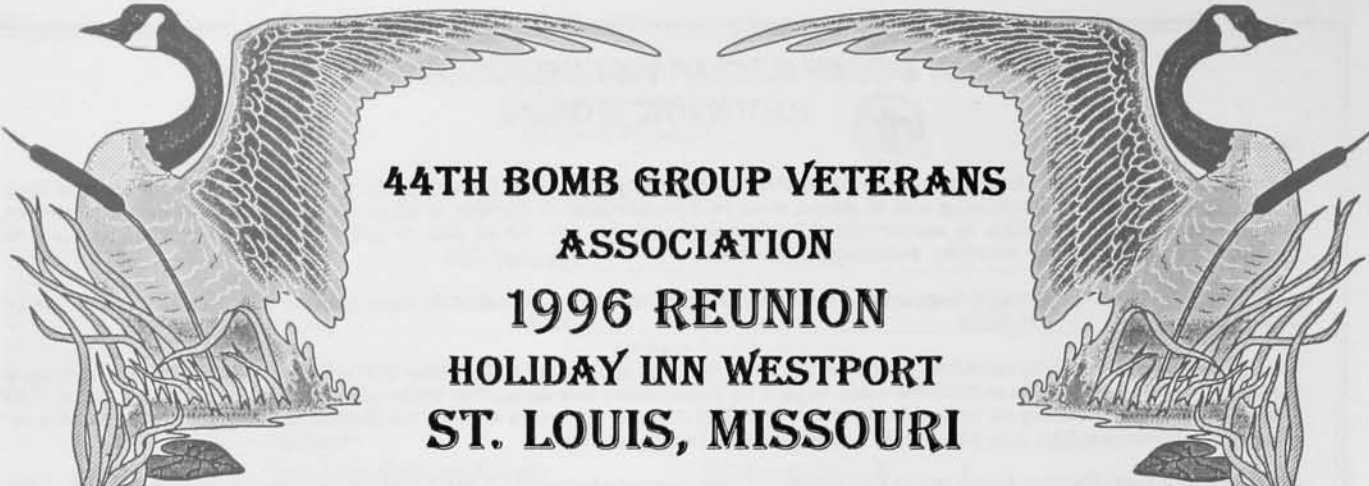
The day we will be there, St. Charles will be celebrating Oktoberfest. Oktoberfest is a citywide celebration of St. Charles' German heritage, featuring a parade, German bands, grape stomps, ethnic food, costumes and enjoyment. There will be a free shuttle bus making the rounds of the activities.

Shuttle buses will start loading at the hotel on Saturday at 1:00, and the last one will leave St. Charles from a designated location at 4:30. However, any one can return at any time on our buses.

CASINO ST. CHARLES

On Sundays the Casino features a lavish Champagne Brunch of more than twenty selections of palatable foods for \$8.95 (with discount coupon). There will be free admission to the casino after brunch.

The bus from the Casino will pick up those wishing to go at 12:00, returning at 3:00. As the bus is being furnished at no charge, it is necessary we have reservations before hand. Therefore, on your registration form, please check the appropriate place.



**44TH BOMB GROUP VETERANS
ASSOCIATION
1996 REUNION
HOLIDAY INN WESTPORT
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI**

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- October 3, Thursday** *Registration all day.
12:00 Hospitality Room opens.
4:00 to 5:00 Reception Ballroom.
Dinner on your own.*
- October 4, Friday** *8:30 - 12:00 Tour #1. See St. Louis
10:00 Hospitality Room opens.
12:30 - 4:00 Tour #2. Grants Farm
6:00 Squadron Dinners - Ballroom
(Room assignments to be announced).*
- October 5, Saturday** *9:30 - 11:30 General Business Meeting
12:00 Hospitality Room.
1:00 Shuttle buses to St. Charles
4:30 Last bus returns to hotel
6:00 Banquet. Color guards and candle lighting
8:00 - 11:00 Dance with Air National Guard Band*
- October 6, Sunday** *10:00 Hospitality Room opens.
6:30 Buffet Ballroom - entertainment to follow*
- October 7, Monday** *7:30 - 10:00 Farewell Buffet Breakfast in Ballroom.*



SOME NOTES ON THE REUNION RESERVE SEATING FOR THE REUNION BANQUET

Reserve seating for the Saturday Banquet will be implemented by using a Floor Plan of the Dining Hall that will be displayed on a bulletin board in the lobby. The Floor Plan will display each table which will be numbered.

Adjacent to the bulletin board there will be a listing of the dining room tables with numbers and spaces to enter names.

To reserve spaces at a table, select one from the Floor Plan and enter the names of those to occupy the seats on the list under the table number. Do Not "Ditto". Each space reserved must contain a name (initials of first name o.k.). There are ten seats at each table.

Be sure to check with all those in your party to determine that they have not reserved any other table. Any duplicate seats will be deleted from the list.

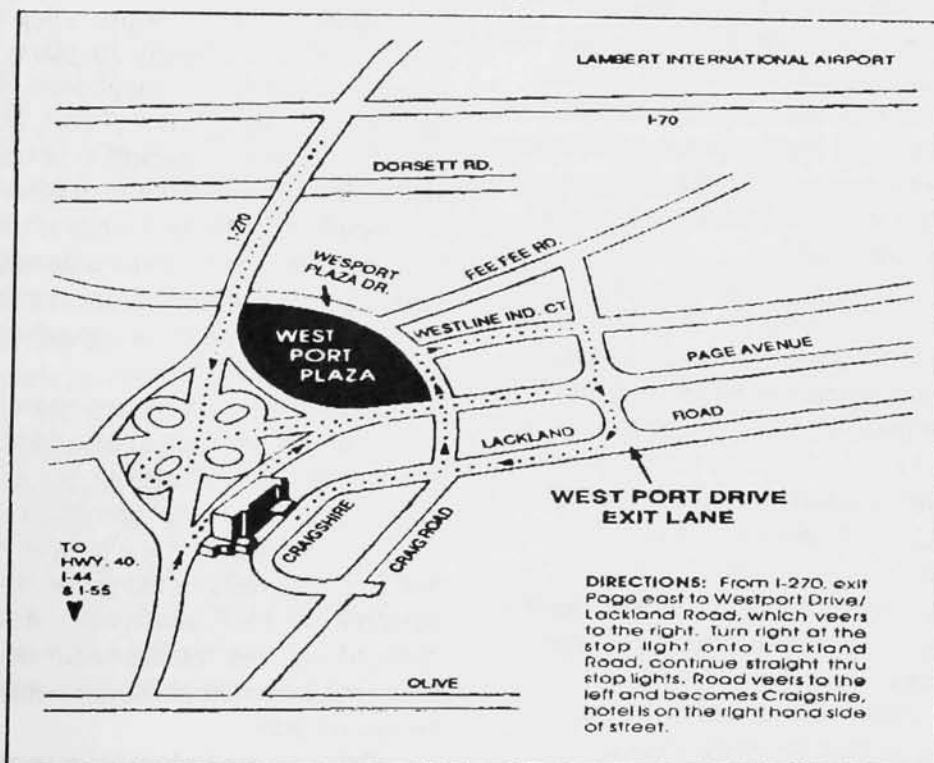
To make this arrangement a success, will depend upon each persons cooperation by adhering to the procedures.

EASY COME, EASY GO

Simple directions to

Holiday Inn
WESTPORT

1-270 and Page Avenue



Courtesy van shuttle to and from Westport Plaza and the airport
12 Minutes from Lambert International Airport
Conveniently located at the center of West County business and entertainment

For Reservations, Call (314) 434-0100

1-270 and Page Avenue, 1973 Craigshire, St. Louis, Missouri 63146

WILL SEZ

Although the Turner Publishing Company announced in their last "Flyer" that August 2, 1996 would be the deadline for reserving your copy(ies) of the 44th bomb Group "The Flying Eightballs," it might not be too late to send in your money for your copy. They would like for all of us to participate by sending in our order for a book as well as your personal biography. Our book will be larger and better with each order submitted, and personal accounts of war experiences, photos, etc. will be welcomed! We can have one of their best books published if we all contribute.

In the Spring 1996 "Tails," Page 8, Ann Carpenter Wing began her article with a plea to all of us - one which I've been nagging at you for some time. She said, "To those of you who have not recorded your experiences during the war, please do so! It means so much to future generations. You are an important part of history. I can tell you from a personal viewpoint that this knowledge means a great deal to me and my children and grandchildren." She is absolutely correct, and went on to tell you her story. If you missed it, dig out your copy and read it.

Your President, as well as all of his Board, are determined to make this 44th Bomb Group the top organization of not only the 2nd Air Division, but the entire 8th Air Force, so far as the recording of our history is concerned. We are making progress, but we can do so much better if we can get each and every one of you to get YOUR story onto paper and to us to preserve for you and your family.

It is so disheartening to get a letter from a wife or child, even a grandchild searching for ANY information about YOU, the veteran who served with us in WWII or later. Sometimes I am lucky and manage to dig up some information for those kinfolks, but all too often I have so very little that I can give these folks. All too many of you are far too modest, hiding behind the words that "I didn't do much, no one will be interested." Not so, let me assure you. I've been bugging you for quite some time, more as a personal request, but please remember that your own family surely want your stories themselves - first!

If you can't type, write - if you can't write, print. And if you can't even do that, try using a voice recorder; talk your story into a tape recorder. But do get your recollections recorded somehow. One of our combat men got his wife to write down his story - not all at one time, but many evenings during the winter. He was an only survivor from his crew, managed to evade immediate capture, made his way across France,

and with help from French Resistance, crossed the Pyrenees in winter. We now have it in our archives! Your time with the 44th is just as important and will help us with our goal to be the most complete historic bomber group in the U.S.

In the same vein for those in the 66th Squadron, Steve Adams of Norwich, England still needs much more data for his 66th Squadron history book which he is compiling. He asked me to thank those of you who have sent in their stories, especially for the first year of the War, but lately your mail has dried up. He needs material about all periods of the War, but especially important at this time is the 1944 period and Spring of 1945. So while each of you are working on your personal stories, try to remember to help Steve with any story which he can use for this 66th Squadron history. He is a fine young man who devotes most of his off-work hours, not only for the 66th Squadron history, but for the entire organization as well. I can't say enough good things about this very productive historian! Please remember him.

Before I wrap this up, I should also caution you with a few words about your personal photographs. As time permits, all of us should review those albums, books, or even shoe boxes to determine what you have, and try to gather them into some order. And especially make an effort to identify the place taken, as well as the names of those in the photos! Most of us can identify the people in our photos, but strangers would not. Photos can do a great job of helping us all tell our stories, but if the personnel in them are identified, it will complete the story. Try not to write on the reverse side with a ball point pen - it damages the photo itself. Best suggestion is to type or write the names on another piece of paper or adhesive paper which can be attached on the back.

Just recently I have received two "shoe boxes" of photos of various sizes to be added to our archival records. I am thrilled with all, but all too many are blank on the reverse side, not identified. They would be so much more valuable if the people were identified so that future viewers would know exactly what that person looked like, which base, which airplane (more difficult), etc. Yes, it takes some time and mind-searching to remember some names, but the story will be much better.

While you are reviewing your photos, tie a knot on your finger to help remind you that I, as your archivist, need more photos to go along with our stories to expand our story for the public knowledge as the years fly by.

Thanks for listening.

Will Lundy

More on Dan Culler our 66th Squadron Author

Editor: In Vol. 1 Issue #4 Page 27, Winter 1995 of the Tails we did a short article plugging Dan Culler's book Black Hole of Wauwilermoos. In his story Dan tells the riveting account of the savage treatment he suffered after his capture from an escape attempt whereupon his status was changed from internee to civil prisoner.

After appeals to the Swiss Government, Dan and his wife were invited to Switzerland by the President of the Swiss Confederation. While the visit resulted in an official apology by the Swiss Government, the return to the sites of his torture and humiliation have resulted in a relapse to a state of psychological trauma in which the memories of his torture are affecting his life quality.

Dan has sent us a package of the correspondence he has had with the Swiss and the Chief of Staff of the USAF. We are including these letters in their entirety. Hopefully they will stimulate your interest in the Dan Culler story. It is a story that needed telling. You may have a change in perception of the "neutral country."

From:

Daniel L. Culler
750 South LaBrisa
Green Valley, Arizona 85614-2232
April 11, 1996

Dear Will:

I'm very sorry that I haven't got back to you before, but have been having a rough time of it since I returned from Switzerland. Anyone who tells you you can go back and relive horrors of your past are full of baloney.

I appreciate all the information you sent me, and others have flooded me with much information, but sorry to say, not the things I really needed. Maybe General Fogleman will be able to get me some more. I have sent to every place that anyone has suggested to get duplicates of my records, but its the same thing — everything destroyed.

I at least wanted to send you a check for books ordered through the 44th Journal. It seems not very many interested, so there is very little money to send. I'm sending an extra \$10 for placing the ad in the Journal.

Most of my orders came from the Swiss Internees and from Switzerland, France, Germany and Brazil. I have my book in every state, and many who ordered the first one have sent for reorders. Maybe people are tired of hearing about WWII.

I was just interviewed by our local TV station yesterday, but I have decided after a night of horror, that will be the last time. It's too hard on my wife Betty to watch me have those nightmares and try and bring me back to reality.

The people who ordered the book through the 44th are the following: 2 - Will Lundy; 1 - Cliff Powell; 1 - Joseph Crandell; 1 - John Wikle; 1 - Robert Lehnhausen, and I believe 1 - Henry Baumgardner. That makes seven ordered, so I'll send \$7 + \$10 to the 44th, so check #3036 will be for \$17.

Thanks for your support.

Enclosed is some information you might be interested in.

Sincerely,
Dan Culler
(520) 625-5581



CHIEF OF STAFF
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON


11 Mar 1996

Dear Mr. Culler

Your story of the trauma and suffering you endured in Wauwilermoos is a gripping one -- one I'm sure would be of interest to military members and retirees. I had my staff research the requirements for getting your book, *Black Hole of Wauwilermoos*, into Air Force exchanges and I am passing that information on to you.

If you will contact the AAFES buyer, Ms. Teri Waters, she will provide you with the proper procedure to go about getting your book into the exchange system.

Thank you for the opportunity to read your compelling story.



RONALD R. FOGLEMAN
General, USAF
Chief of Staff

Attachments:

1. AAFES HQ POC
2. '95 AAFES Suppliers Handbook

cc:
Ms. Willis, AAFES HQ

Mr. Daniel Culler
750 S. La Brisa
Green Valley, AZ 85614-2232

HQ AAFES
ATTN: Ms. Teri Waters
Buyer, Stationary Branch
PO Box 660292
Dallas, TX 75266-0202
(214) 312-3239

THE PRESIDENT
OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION

Berne, December 7, 1995

Mr.
Daniel L. Culler
750 S. La Brisa
Green Valley
USA - AZ 85614-2232

Dear Mr. Culler,

Your visit of 30 October 1995 in the Federal House in Berne was not an easy one for either of us. For that reason I want specially to express my gratitude for your friendly words addressed to me and our Embassy staff in Washington. I shall remember you as a person who has learned to accept our country without hate - despite the traumatic experiences.

I am pleased your visit did not release just negative feelings but that it made constructive meetings and pleasant memories possible. I hope this improvement will intensify during your futur visits.

With best regards to your wife,

Yours sincerely,



Kaspar Villiger,
President of the Swiss Confederation



CHIEF OF STAFF
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON


12 February 1996

Dear Mr. Culler

Thank you for the signed copy of *Black Hole of Wauwilermoos*. I appreciate your kindness and look forward to reading your book. I just returned from a long overseas trip, so I haven't had a chance to open it yet.

I will ask my personnel staff to look into the medals you mentioned and report back to me. Although it may take some time to research the matter, you will be hearing from me again.

Thank you for thinking of me and for taking the time to write.



RONALD R. FOGLEMAN
General, USAF
Chief of Staff

Mr. Daniel L. Culler
750 S. La Brisa
Green Valley, AZ 85614-2232

April 4, 1996

Carla McClain
Citizen Staff writer
Tucson Citizen
PO Box 26767
Tucson, AZ 85726-6767

Dear Ms McClain:

I read what I considered an excellent article in your paper, "Veteran Relives Torment in Switzerland". I was concerned and angered over the retraumatization that Mr Culler experienced as he returned to the prison where horrific traumas had occurred to him. I have much respect for the courage it must have taken for Mr Culler to revisit the scene of so much misery and pain. Few people can truly appreciate the suffering Mr Culler has endured while a POW and in the following fifty years. Chronic posttraumatic stress disorder, such as he has and is experiencing, is a very serious disorder in which a person suffers from flashbacks, night terrors, uncontrollable reliving of the traumas, numbing out, emotional deadness, depression, and often feelings of going insane.

As a psychological trauma therapist, I have worked with WWII vets suffering from posttrauma reactions. I agree with Mr Culler that these wounds need to be healed, assimilated, and a closure and letting go obtained. I also agree that returning to the

1132 S. Desert Senna Loop Tucson, AZ 85748 (520) 298-6824

2

scenes of the brutality is one way relief can be obtained. However, the chance of retraumatization is great unless there is organization, support, predictability, and a gradual reintroduction to the trauma memories. Psychological trauma is a reaction to an event which is sudden, overwhelming, fragmenting, and filled with overpowering emotions. The manner in which he was reintroduced to his prison cell was cruel and inhumane (taken to the prison at night without warning by a TV crew). Mr Culler's description of his reaction, "memories of 50 years ago came rushing through my mind like a bolt of lightning....I fell against the wall and cried uncontrollably. My legs buckled beneath me....I wanted no more" says to me that retraumatization has occurred.

Mr Culler still needs to somehow make peace with his experiences. I would like to say to Mr Culler that the impact of PTSD can be lessened; peace can be found. Find an understanding and empathic person: a friend, minister, therapist, or physician, and talk through your traumatic memories but do it in small doses over time. Don't rush into these memories but do talk them out. Good luck.



Bob Gilliland, PhD
Trauma Specialist
Pinnacle Management Group

The Forgotten Man

Submitted by 7th PR Gp Assoc Secretary
Richard Brown of Downey, California.

Through the history of World Aviation
Many names have come to the fore
Great deeds of the past in our memory will last
As they're joined by more and more.

When man first started his labour
In his quest to conquer the sky
He was designer, mechanic and pilot
and he built a machine that could fly.

The pilot was everyone's hero
He was brave, he was bold, he was grand
As he stood by his battered old bi-plane
with his goggles and helmet in hand.

To be sure those pilots all earned it
To fly then you had to have guts
And they blazed their names in the Hall of Fame
On wings with baling wire struts.

But for each of our flying heroes
There were thousands of little renown
And these were the men who worked on the planes
But kept their feet on the ground.

We all know the name of Lindberg
And we've read of his flight into fame
But think, if you can, of his maintenance man
Can you remember his name?

And think of our Wartime heroes
Gabreski, Jabara and Scott
Can you tell me the names of their crew chiefs
A thousand to one you cannot.

Now pilots are highly trained people
and wings not easily won
But without the work of the maintenance man
Our pilots would march with a gun.

So when you see the mighty aircraft
As they mark their path through the air
The grease-stained man with the monkey wrench
Is the man who put them there.
(Anonymous)

***Editor: We're not going to forget 'em EVER!



FOLDED WINGS JULY, 1996

James C. Beam	506	506th C.O.	7/96
Earl E. Brahmer			8/20/94
Edward M. Burtsavage	67	Navigator	11/95
Williams S. Aldridge	67	Pilot	6/26/96
Joseph L. Cadrin	68		Unknown
Richard Castillo	68	Howell's Crew	12/8/95
John N. Clark	68	Sq. Exec.	3/21/96
Sylvester D. Cole	67		5/31/96
Joseph L. Cumbria	68	Bowman's-Nichols (Interned)	Unknown
Howard F. Dart	68	Armament	Unknown
Albert J. D'Anna	68		Unknown
James P. Davie	66	Kimball's Crew	10/6/95
Kenneth S. Dropek	68	Bowman's Eng.	1992
William F. Drumel	506		1995
Ted R. Fernbach	68	Alexander's Crew	3/22/96
Robert M. Flake, Jr.	66		Unknown
Agrippino P. Gesimondo	66		Unknown
Stanley R. Gordon	68th	Bomb (Bowmans)	11/30/83
Don R. Hill	68		Unknown
O.K. Kady Hill	506	Pilot	2/96
Arthur Ingvertsen	806	Chemical	1983
Frederick A. Kenyon 68 &	506	Stahler's	Unknown
Milton J. Krueger	66		Unknown
Edward R. Kupczynski	66		Unknown
Bruno W. Lorenzetti	68		5/4/96
Leon Mascola	506	Marx's Crew Nav POW	Unknown
James H. McMaster	506	Gurman's Gunner POW May 28, 1944	Unknown
Tom McKenna	66	Assoc (Brother)	4/15/96
Howard Mertz	464th	SD	Unknown
James Musser			1986
Alan F. Oberlin	67		6/22/96
Frank Orehowsky	506	Titter's Crew	2/8/96
Carl Satterlund	506	Co-Pilot	11/15/92
Everett D. Smith	66		Unknown
George B. Strutz	67	Griffith's Gunner (Intern 3/18/44)	3/9/96
George Sweeny, Jr.	68	Schaefer's Crew	Unknown
Marion Tiemeir	506		Unknown
Joe Werenko	66		11/28/95



Colonel James C. "Seal" Beam Folds Wings

Funeral Services were held Monday, May 13, 1996 in Gulf Breeze, Mississippi for retired USAF Colonel James Carroll "Seal" Beam, 78. He had been a resident of Gulf Breeze for 17 years.

In World War II, Col. Beam was Commander of the 506th Bomb Squadron, 44th Bomb Group. He led his Squadron on August 1, 1943 when the 44th Bomb Group, flying B-24 Liberators with three other B-24 Groups flying at tree top level bombed the German oil refinery at Ploesti, Rumania. For the high level of success in this daring raid in which a third of the force was lost fighting its way to the targets through ferocious anti-aircraft and enemy aircraft defenses, the 44th was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for Bravery. Col. Beam was individually awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. He was also awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters. He had stated that his proudest moments were giving the Oath of Office to his three sons as each graduated from the Air Force Academy.

Colonel Beam is survived by his wife, Mary Jeanette Beam, his three sons, James, Charles and Lance, nine grandchildren, four step-children and three step-grandchildren.

Thankful to Families and Their Interest!

Editor: Sometimes fate seems to step in whether you want her or not. I had this letter from Frank Orehowsky, my editorial reply and an illustrative picture of B-17's flying above some B-24's all ready to go into the last issue. Then we had to cut a few pages to allow for our Reunion Centerfold, so I saved the Orehowsky piece for this issue. Sadly, we received a letter from his daughter Anne George telling us of her father's passing. I think her letter certainly tells the kind of 8-Ball guy her Dad was. I wouldn't take any bets that the B-17 versus B-24 argument isn't still raging on in the Heavenly Hangar and that Frank is in the middle of it! Thanks Anne for sharing your memories of Frank with us.

Editor: Some good words from Frank Orehowsky of 512 Montgomery Avenue, Jenkintown, PA 19046.

12/2/95

It took 50 years for an appropriate organization such as yours to surface. Congratulations, it pays fitting tribute to the Libs and the men who flew in them. Keep up the good work. I dropped out of the 8th AF Historical Society because of their preference to laud the B-17 and being indifferent to what Libs and their crews contributed. The 44th BG Vets Association fills a deep need.

Good Luck
Frank Orehowsky
50th Sqdn.

Editor: Thanks Frank; I'm in agreement with you on the 8th AFHS B-17 bias. I think if the movie producers had featured a B-24 outfit in a major picture, all of the Liberator crews would have reaped their fair share of Air War Europe fame. Between "Memphis Belle" and "12 O'clock High" our kids are still saying "Dad, tell me again, what was the name of that bomber you flew in combat?" We know though who it was up there bombing from 4 to 5 thousand feet above us, and the times their bombs came whistling down through our formation. Ah, well that Fortress - Liberator argument will go on as long as any of us are on our feet!

Editor: What it looks like to me is those Liberator Boys are going to, once again, get to read the graffiti on the Fortress bombs as they plummet through the "Lib" formation. Let me tell you, it's an undecipherable rush to read "Up yours, Adolph" on a 500 pounder as it sails down past the cockpit window!

May 28, 1996

Dear Sirs;

I am writing this letter, being the oldest daughter of Frank Orehowsky, who passed away February 8, 1996.

My father subscribed to your publication, as well as many other WWII periodicals, and was an active member of the Eighth Air Force Association.

My dad was 18 when he went overseas, and served with the 44th Bomb Group, of the 8th Air Force in England as a Flight Engineer; B-24 Liberator. He participated in 24 raids over enemy held territory, one of which I remember his telling me many times as a child; the infamous "Ploesti" bombing mission. He advanced in rank to Staff Sergeant, and received the Air Medal with three Clusters, Bronze Star and numerous battle ribbons. He also was involved in D-Day; going over the English Channel not once, but twice, as I so well remember his telling me.

After coming home, my dad continued to serve his Country, but as a civilian. He worked at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, starting as a Pattern Maker, and retiring as a Senior Project Engineer, Submarine Division in 1985.

I would feel it an honor to have you mention my dad in "Folded Wings," and let any of his buddies that are still around read it in your periodical, as he communicated with many after joining the Association, and rekindling friendships with them.

Thank you,
Sincerely,
Anne George
1200 Van Kirk Street
Philadelphia, PA 19149
(215) 537-4835

The "official" caption on this photo says "(A) Formation of B-24 Liberators shown operation in perfect coordination with B-17 Flying Fortresses in "Round the Clock Bombing" of industrial and naval nerve centers of the German War effort. This photo was taken during an actual operational flight on an unnamed German Target."



**44TH BOMB GROUP VETERANS
ASSOCIATION BOARD**

President: Roy W. Owen (506)
6304 Meadowridge Drive
Santa Rose, CA 95409
Phone: (707) 538-4726 Fax: (707) 538-1212

Vice President: James H. Clements (506)
4124 Calculus Avenue
Dallas, TX 75244
Phone/Fax: (214) 243-4657

Secretary: Edward M. Dobson (67th)
118 South 15th Avenue #1
Bozeman, MT 59715-4130
Phone/Fax: (406) 587-2490

Treasurer: Gerald (Jerry) Folsom (506)
954 Lowell Avenue
Salt Lake City, UT 84102-3620
Phone: (801) 359-6159 Fax: (801) 533-8747

Office Historian: C.W. "Will" Lundy
3295 North "H" Street
San Bernardino, CA 92405-2809
Phone/Fax: (909) 882-2441
Summer: (619) 932-7349

44th Group Vice President to 2nd ADA
Richard D. Butler
16494 Wagon Wheel Drive
Riverside, CA 92506
Phone: (909) 788-7421 Fax: (909) 780-1459

Director: Edw. K. "Mike" Mikoloski (66th)
626 Smithfield Road #702
N. Providence, RI 02904
Phone/Fax: (401) 353-0144

Director: Robert I. "Bob" Brown (67th)
#8 Metarie Court
San Ramon, CA 94583-3824
Phone: (501) 828-4529 Fax: (510) 828 1551

Director: Robert J. Lehnhausen (68th)
709 West Meadows Place
Peoria, IL 61604-3447
Phone/Fax: (309) 685-2490

Director: Sherman N. "Bud" Dowsett (506th)
14550 Wolf Road
Grass Valley, CA 95949
Phone/Fax: (916) 268-1019

Director: Melvin G. Trager (HQ Squadron)
2522 Red Oak Trail
Crest Hill, IL 60435-3197
Phone/Fax: (815) 725-3439

44th BGVA Rosters

For you late joiners and short memoried long time members, we want to remind you that our membership rosters are still available from Art Hand for \$7 postpaid.

It's a wonderful way to keep track of your crew and other squadron friends and it is kept up to date with addenda published regularly. Send a check for \$7 made out to 44th BGVA (please note ROSTER in the lower left corner of your check). Mail your order to our

Membership Co-Chair:

Art Hand
517 Elm Street
Paris, IL 61994

44th Bomb Group Veterans Association Application for Membership

Name: _____ Squadron: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Spouse's Name: _____ Crew Name (if applicable) _____

Inclusive Dates of Service with 44th: _____

If this a family lineage membership, give parent name: _____

Mail Check to:
Gerald W. Folsom, Treasurer
44th BGVA
P.O. Box 2367
Salt Lake City, UT 84110-2367

Annual Dues: \$15
Life Membership, Age 60+: \$100
Life Membership, Age 40-59: \$125
Life Membership, Age 39: \$150

WHY BE A 2ADA MEMBER? THE JOURNAL ALONE IS WORTH MORE THAN \$15 A YEAR!

The Second Air Division in Europe was made up of fourteen bomb groups, five fighter groups, plus other attached units, and, for all intents and purposes, these groups ceased to exist when WWII ended in May, 1945. Luckily for us, that wasn't the end of the Second Air Division. It would take too much space to describe the actions that created the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division USAAF and the Second Air Division Association that have been so closely entwined over the last 45 years. Instead, I urge you to read Jordan Uttal's fine articles on pages 15-21 of *Turner's General History of The Second Air Division, USAAF, 1942-1945*, to gain an understanding of our roots within the 2nd Air Division Association and the importance of the 2ADA to the eventual formation and life of the 44th Bomb Group (H) Association. That does not mean that relations between the two organizations have always run smoothly, but there has always been a 2ADA Vice President for the 44th Bomb Group. The big change in the relationship, to the advantage of the bomb groups, was the 1994 change to the 2ADA bylaws that mandated six *voting* Vice President slots in the Executive Committee instead of three. The effect of the change has been a shift in control of the Executive Committee to a more democratic board that listens to the needs of the groups, not always the case in the past.

It is now up to those of us in the bomb groups to take advantage of the shift and to become more active in 2ADA affairs, both in membership and in attendance at yearly conventions and scheduled regional dinners. Here's why. First, our most important link to history is the Memorial Room in Norwich, and our point of entry is the 2ADA representative to the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust. Bud Koorndyk holds that position, and has performed brilliantly in furthering our interests there. The disastrous fire that destroyed the Norwich Library is beginning to be seen as an opening opportunity to an unbelievable future for the library and the Memorial Room. We need to be part of that endeavor. One need only look back to the treatment of the Enola Gay and the end of the war in Japan by the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum to realize that it's up to us to preserve our history as we lived it; not as some juvenile historian rewrites it to suit his liberal, revisionist theories. The Memorial Room will preserve our history and it needs our wholehearted support. Our point of contact is through the Second Air Division.

Second, we probably have another four or five years as a viable group association. At some point, a reduction in numbers will likely make it advantageous for us to regroup within 2ADA, both for the pages we "own" in

the *Journal* and the conventions, where the 44th always has its group dinner. The main objection to 2ADA conventions in the past has been the large number of people in attendance, and our people have preferred the smaller, stand-alone 44th conventions. As we lose members to age, we need to be able to still function as a group but may eventually find it easier to function under the umbrella of the Division. The 44th has certainly benefited by its independence, but we lose nothing and have much to gain by increasing our membership in 2ADA and our attendance at 2ADA functions. It may be too expensive or impossible to attend both the 2ADA and the 44th conventions in the same year, but, when circumstances permit, such as a 2ADA convention or a regional 2ADA dinner in your area, you might find it worthwhile to attend. It will certainly broaden your knowledge of important happenings where the Second Air Division Association is involved: the Norwich Library and our Fulbright librarian, Savannah and the 8th AF Heritage Museum, and the new American addition to the Duxford Air Museum in Cambridge, to mention a few. Less than half of our 44th members belong to the 2ADA, and 44th attendance at 2ADA conventions is usually small, but it will be to our group's, as well as your own, advantage to increase both. The cost of 2ADA membership is only \$15 per year, and the *Journal* alone is worth more to you than that. Make your check payable to "2ADA" and send to: Evelyn Cohen, 06-410 Delaire Landing Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19114. Meanwhile, you and the 44th will continue to be presented by an active 44th Vice President on the 2ADA Executive Committee.

Ralph Elliott (467th Group VP)
6000 Rafter Circle
Tucson, AZ 85713-4365

Editor's Note: All you Group VPs should make sure Ralph's succinct comments appear in your group's newsletter, so that the message reaches the right people. If you don't have a newsletter or don't want it in there, why don't you get about 10-20 of your group's 2ADA members to mail say five to ten letters with a copy to all non-2ADA members? I'll supply the copies free! Just ask!

THE MIGHTY 8TH AF MUSEUM OPENING

Article and photographs by: Forrest Clark

Several memorable events took place during the opening day of the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum that reminded all of the 8th Air Force veterans of their proud tradition dating back half a century.

First there was the number of notables in the WWII 8th Air Force and the air war. Second, there were the ceremonies held throughout a long day marked by ceremonies; and thirdly, there were the memorials to the men who didn't come back.

A 32-square foot cake measuring 8 feet long and 4 feet wide was wheeled into the huge rotunda for the grand buffet that was served to 2,000 veterans, their wives and families. The cake was decorated with a huge 8th Air Force logo and symbol in color. The cake was cut and 2,000 pieces were served to those present.

Another highlight of the day was the introduction of distinguished guests, among them Col. Paul Tibbetts, pilot of the B29 that bombed Japan in 1945; Col. Francis "Gabby" Gabreski, WWII fighter ace and 8th Air Force writer and historian Roger Freeman whose book the Mighty 8th is a classic in its field.

I had a chance to get to see Gabreski and meet him. He was delighted in the Heritage Museum and its exhibits and in the fact that so many were still able to be there on the opening day.

Phyllis DoBois talked with me and others in the 44th Bomb Group and was very proud of the archival space at the museum and the way it was fashioned. She took a glowing report back to the Second Air Division Memorial Library at Norwich, England.

There were the dedications of the various memorials in the Memorial Garden and tributes to all the groups.

The Glenn Miller concert by the Band of the Air Force Reserve put a fitting conclusion to the day's many events.

Of special interest to all 44th veterans is the memorial plaque in the rotunda giving the Bomb Group list of its achievements in WWII.

The atmosphere of remembrance, nostalgia and pride experienced by all was outstanding.

So vivid was this atmosphere that for any 8th Air Force veteran it was an easy matter to recall the sights and sounds, the faces and the figures of the crew members who did not return from that air war.

One touching moment was when two men, both veterans of the 8th Air Force stood at attention during the playing of the Air Force hymn, tears on their faces. Yet they stood erect and proud dressed in their WWII uniforms.

Another veteran dressed in full flying gear including a parachute harness and oxygen mask circulated throughout the crowds of veterans.

To add to the memories were the many friends who met at the opening and who said as they left and the final music of Glenn Miller faded away, "We'll meet again, I don't know where, I don't know when."

Museum officials said that already many groups have made reservations to hold reunions in Savannah and to include the heritage museum in their plans. Since the opening, this number has increased.



Photos:

Top Right: Opening Day, May 13, 1996 The 8th Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, GA.

Bottom Left: Dedication Ceremonies at the opening of the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum.

**By Forrest S. Clark
44th Bomb Group**

ACES OF WWII MEET

The gray haired man with the burly build and posture sitting to one side in the crowded rotunda of the new 8th Air Force Heritage Museum was once the most feared fighter pilots of WWII whose guns claimed 28 enemy planes.

I recognized him immediately as Col. Francis "Gabby" Gabreski of the famed 61st Fighter Squadron of the 8th Air Force. I asked if I could sit next to him and I took the one remaining vacant chair. I noticed that many old timer pilots of the 8th came up to him, shook his hand and greeted him warmly.

Gabreski not only commanded one of the most feared U.S. fighter squadrons of the war in Europe 50 years ago, but was captured and spent some time in a German prison camp. His exploits as a persistent fighter pilot who kept up a relentless battle against the FW190s and Messerschmidts earned him the admiration of fellow pilots, but also of many of the Luftwaffe pilots. When he was captured after crashing his fighter, a German officer said, "Gabreski we've been looking for you for a long time."

His keen sense of combat and flying record contributed to making him the leading American fighter ace, but also helped establish a legend that has continued to this day.

It was most appropriate that he should be there when the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum was dedicated 50 years after the war. He is still a symbol of American flying in wartime and in the records of history ranks with Eddie Rickenbacker of that earlier war, WWI.

He may walk a little slower and squint a little more, but those large hands once controlled fighter planes in some of the greatest air war battles of history.

Younger people came to him as he sat near me just to see him and express their good wishes to him. There may never be another air war like that in which he engaged and the bombers also, but the memory is alive in the 8th Air Force Museum a few miles outside Savannah, Georgia.

One officer summed up the feelings of most of the air war veterans when he said, "This was our time and we should be proud of it and our part in it."

All of the 44th BG men and their wives present felt this pride and yet is was tinged with a nostalgic sadness that so many of their comrades in the air were left behind and never grew up to see this day.

Each man in his own way contributed to that victory 50 years ago, fighter aces, as well as bomber pilots and their crews.

ANOTHER FORREST CLARK REMEMBRANCE

Return to Belén

On a recent trip to New Mexico, my wife and I were on our way down I-25 south of Albuquerque when I spied a sign reading "Belen Ahead 2 Miles."

Immediately something clicked in my mind and I slowed down to make the exit. There was a flashback inside me by the name Belen that carried me back 52 years to a spring day in 1943.

I was drawn off that interstate highway by a memory stronger than I could resist. My wife said, "What are you doing?" I didn't reply, but drove straight through town to the railroad station. As if my mind was in a time warp, I immediately recognized the station. Then the whole story flashed before me.

In the spring of 1943 I was stationed at Clovis Airbase and received orders to a new assignment at El Paso, Texas to join a combat crew and later the 44th Bomb Group. I had a 3-day delay enroute to reach El Paso. I took a train westbound from Clovis and got bumped off the train at a small station 30 miles south of Albuquerque. That town was Belen.

Fifty-two years later I found myself in that town and looking at the same railroad station. I went inside and found a woman at a desk. "I think I was here before, 52 years ago," I said to her. She smiled and said, "No. Not another one." I told her how I recalled sleeping on the floor of the station in the spring of 1943. She reached up to a keyboard, took down an old rusty key and said, "follow me." We went into the station and she unlocked door, opening it into a large room. "Here is where you slept", she said.

Sure enough everything looked the same and I could see the railroad and hear the sounds of 52 years ago. Above one wall was a drawing. I looked at it closely and saw, "Kilroy was here." Then I felt at home.

That station is today a historic site occupied by a museum of some WWII objects, but above all, it is a place of memories and overwhelming nostalgia to me.

Editor: This stirs memories of those wartime built GI troop cars with double deck bunks and GI mess kitchen cars and those hot, hot trips down through the Southwest. Neat places like Blythe, California; Casa Grande, Arizona; Deming, New Mexico and Van Horn, Texas.

*Editor: The Ralph Golubeck story on "Princess" (p. 33, Vol. 1, Issue 4) in the Winter '95
8-Ball Tails prompted this letter from Richard J. Comey to Ralph.*

I hope the following information is of some benefit to you. My fiancée was named Charlotte, so I, in turn named all of the B-24s I flew "Princess Charlotte." Though I trained in B-24s, the first Princess Charlotte was a B-17 which I flew across the Atlantic with my crew.

The first few missions, including Ploesti, I flew with Joe Flaherty, 66th Squadron, 44th BG. He was a single-engine pilot who came to the 44th straight out of flight school, and was permanent co-pilot on several missions until I got there.

He sat on the left side and I sat on the right. It was sort of a cooperative effort between the two of us to get the plane to the target and back. Our fourth mission (13 July) saw us lose two engines and land at Malta on a small field. We left the first B-24 Princess there for repairs. The Princess that went to Ploesti kept her engines running all the way in and all the way back - for which we were duly thankful. While several people shot at us, including a "75", we were extremely lucky as the Princess only picked up one bullet hole, as I remember it.

We flew her to England. But immediately after Ploesti I moved to the left seat and my regular co-pilot, Tom Drysdale, moved back in to the right.

Back to Ploesti - we bombed White V, right behind General Johnson. However, so many planes were shot down, disabled or out of position, it was like we were all alone after hitting the target on the nose. So we re-joined another squadron of the 44th and came home.

The 44th made a second trip to Africa (in September) and we had a mission to Wiener-Neustadt. Besides losing an engine, we acquired an unbelievable number of holes in our plane. We landed near Naples at a British fighter base and left the plane there. We rode back to England on a DC-4.

On a later raid (11 December 43) out of England, we received a direct hit on the nose, right above the Navigator, Louis Trouve. The force of the explosion knocked him backwards over the nose wheel doors, and out he went. Fortunately, though wounded, he opened his chute, landed in a bay and was picked up by the Germans. (Lou and his wife, and Charlotte and I got together in New York after the War.)

After Lou was gone, we found flames were licking out of the hole in the nose, so I pressed the alarm button, "Prepare to Abandon Ship." The Ball Gunner (Neitzel?) saw Lou go by his turret and decided things were really serious. He tried to get out of his ball, but some empty shells or perhaps a belt or two had jammed the back exit door. With brute strength - and he was not a very heavily built guy - he pushed the door right off its hinges and got out. The Bombardier passed out in the nose turret and we thought he was a goner.

It turned out the flame was fed by a broken oxygen line and when the oxygen was used up, it went out! By then I was half way out of my seat and preparing to signal "Abandon Ship" when I realized things were not so bad, and finally got things back on keel again. However, we were now alone and I headed for the Channel, losing altitude at a rapid pace. When we reached about 10,000 feet or so, the Bombardier's voice comes on the intercom. He was alive and ok - just passed out from lack of oxygen.

We very luckily crossed the Channel and returned to Base without encountering any German fighters. The hydraulic system was shot out, but there was enough pressure still in those spheres to work the brakes. I should have stopped at the end of the runway and received a hero's welcome, but I taxied back to our pad and coasted very slowly off the edge of it when the pressure finally ran out.

That "Princess Charlotte" (Really Nice & Naughty) like all the others, got us home ok. We were blessed with good fortune as far as the crew was concerned.

I believe I saw her fuselage on the junk heap later. (Yes, she crashed at Shipdham on 4 January 44 while on take off). I still have the stencil that says "Princess Charlotte" used on some of these planes.

Completed 25 missions in the Princesses - some bore the name in paint, others mind only. Some bore two names, but as far as I was concerned, they were all Princesses and all great. I flew missions for the 66th Squadron, although for Ploesti we were assigned to another squadron (67th?) to fill out the formation.

Charlotte and I have been married 50 years and are living here in Stowe, Vermont.

Regards,

Richard J. Comey, 66th

This is an excerpt from the headquarters monthly log. Probably kept under the watchful eye of Col. Goodman Griffin, Group Exec. We came by this among some rescued microfilm from the Norwich Library fire. We'll publish some more as we get it.

44TH BOMB GROUP - SHIPDHAM AUGUST, 1944

Quite a few changes in personnel this month, but we're thankful for no change in weather. We've had a full month of real, honest-to-goodness, sun shiney weather and we're all campaigning for more. During the month, 91 Officers and 228 Enlisted men returned to the Zone of the Interior by way of different Replacement Depots. The 44th went on ten missions into Germany and ten more into France; having done an excellent job on most of them. Two missions went off on the 4th; the second one being our 200th operational mission, a high reaching goal in the past, but now an occasion for celebration and an opportune moment to pay tribute to those of us who could not see it reached.

The 15th of the month brought many changes in key personnel. Col. John H. Gibson, Group Commander, former American Airline pilot, and holder of the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, and recommended for the Distinguished Service Cross, returned to the States on DS for a 30-day recuperative leave. Coincidentally, the name of Colonel Frederick R. Dent, Jr., former 44th Group Commander, appeared on the same letter orders from Eighth Air Force, to return to the States. On this day Colonel Eugene H. Snavely, a former 44th Group Operations

Officer, assumed command. On the same day Major Robert E. Felber, Commanding Officer of the 67th Bomb Squadron and holder of the Distinguished Flying Cross with two Oak Leaf Clusters and the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters also returned to the Zone of the Interior for a recuperative leave. Major William R. Cameron, who had been acting as Group Operations Officer in the absence of Major William H. Strong (also DS to the States), and who had formerly been Commanding Officer of the 67th Bomb Squadron, resumed his old command. Major Cameron is holder of the Distinguished Service Cross, the Distinguished Flying Cross, and the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters. Lt. Col. John I. Turnbull, former Group Operations Officer of the 492nd, has now taken over as Group Operations Officer here.

On the 2nd of August, Captain Withers V. Tolbert, Group Bombardier and holder of the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, finally started that long but gratifying trek home. Coincidentally again, Captain Joseph J. Young, a former Group Bombardier who had been on DS to the 492nd, and holder of the Distinguished Flying Cross with one Oak Leaf Cluster and the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, also departed for the States by authority of the same special orders. On this day, Lieutenant

Norman A. Vickery, who completed his operational tour as a member of the 66th Bomb Squadron, stepped in as Group Bombardier. Lt. Vickery is holder of the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Purple Heart.

On the 19th of the month, Tech./Sgt. Verl T. Marnell, a former Group Operations Clerk here, returned to his old stomping grounds. On the 28th, Tech./Sgt. Arthur H. Tillett finally made his way back to the Homeland. (0382)

On the 11th of the month, seven days after our 200th operational mission was flown, the Group took time out to celebrate the occasion. Now we shall take time out to glance over some of the highlights of those 200 missions. The Group began operations on the 7 November, 1942 and completed its first 100 missions in 16 months. They then went on to complete its second hundred missions in five more months. During this string, the organization was twice cited by the War Department for distinguished action. The first citation came after the attack on Kiel on 14 May 1943 when the Libs were attacked by 120 enemy aircraft during an unescorted bomb run over the target. They dropped their incendiaries effectively and in four minutes destroyed 15

enemy fighters. Their total score for the mission was 23 German planes destroyed and 13 probably destroyed. The second citation was for the first and historic low level attack on the Ploesti Oil Refineries in Rumania on 1 August 1943. On this operation they flew through bitter opposition and over exploding bombs of a preceding Group, to drop their explosives with devastating results. Brigadier General Leon W. Johnson (then Colonel), who was Group Commander and Air Commander of this mission, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his action that day. Eleven Distinguished Service Crosses and 16 Silver Stars were awarded to other members of the Group for their contributions toward the successful fulfillment of the mission.

During those 21 months, the Group had operated from Africa twice and was credited with the destruction of 354 3/4 enemy planes. The highest score attained in any one day, was made from a North African base when the Group attacked the Messerschmidt plant in Austria on 1 October 1943. Creating a record that would be outstanding for even a fighter Group, our Libs accounted for 51 FW-190's and ME-109's. However, the score that was probably the most outstanding rung up, was made on the Vegesack attack on 18 March 1943, when they were engaged in a vicious air battle, destroying 17 enemy aircraft while losing none themselves. *Editor: Total must be wrong - only 330 for total was official.*

Eighty-four of their 200 missions were to Germany, with the others ranging over France, Austria, Italy, Rumania, Poland,

Norway and Holland. They have bombed three capitals, taking part in the first aerial attack on Rome and striking Paris and Berlin on numerous occasions. The Group also took part in the first 8th Air Force Attack on Germany proper, when they participated in the blow on Wilhelmshaven on 27 January 1943.

Now, for the celebration, but first we would like to reprint for you, the announcement that came out in our Daily Bulletin on the preceding day.

HEAR YE! HEAR YE! HEAR YE!

You are invited to step inside to the greatest carnival since Noah—the 200th mission party of the 44th—on Friday, August 11th—Beer—Hot Dogs—Dancing Girls—Games of Chance—The first officer found waring insignia of rank to be shot out of a cannon by the lucky private who wins the draw—No rank for the day—what there is is reversed—Colonels become Privates and vice versa—Master Sergeants are reduced to 2nd Lieutenants.

Athletics in the morning—the most colossal display of muscles and grit since David scored a probable on Goliath—see the First Sergeants battle the Privates at volleyball with no holds barred—Watch Capt. “Stretch” Weaver and his “Stringbeans” compete with Sgt. “Fat Stuff” Rosen and his “Pumpkins” in the most outstanding display of Eighth Air Force pin-ups since Mr. America signed with Minsky.—See Col. Gibson’s “All-Brass” softball team take the field against Lt. Horne’s “Single-Bar” boys—Bike races, sack races, chin races, horse races—And to top off the afternoon, a softball

game between the two leading station teams—pop bottles specially designed for umpires supplied to all spectators.

And in the evening, the Carnival moves into Hanger #2. Dice tables, games of chance, concessions of all sorts—The USO show “Petticoats,” the biggest and greatest entertainment spectacle since the Follies of 1918.—Brimming beakers of beer brewed by Britain’s best—Luscious hot dogs so tender they yelp when you bite into them—Special entertainment by Station celebrities including the following songs: “Going My Way?” by Capt. Vaughn — A duet by Lt. Col. Shachtman and Major Barnes entitled “We Got Plenty of Nothin” and Capt. Wright leading his S-2 choir in “It ain’t Necessarily So”—

Its the biggest thing to hit England since the Blitz: The Flying Eightballs” 200th mission celebration. You can’t afford to miss it: It will be something to keep from your children. Come one, come all: It’s Carnival Time at Shipdham.

Well, suffice it to say that in that announcement, you have read the story of what happened, before it happened. It was all that and then some.

To start the day off right, the boom: of our stubby little cannon at 1000 hours, signified reveille - a fine time of day for reveille. Anyone who might be looking toward innovating a permanent change in the standard Army hour for rising, could probably find a host or votes of approval here; although we suggest that this “Gallup Poll” be made when it’s all “Over, Over There.”

The festivities were opened with a softball game between Col. Gibson and his “All-Brass”

and Lt. Horne and his "Buckin'-One Bars." It was good fast-moving game, but Horne and Co. pulled a bad bit of strategy by winning the game, although the score was close, 2-1. They are now known as just "The One Bars."

Interest then turned toward kegs of beer flowing along the sidelines and other athletic events such as football, volleyball, football throwing, baseball pitching and a three-legged race. This last race featured the team of Johnson and Phillips (General Johnson, 14th Wing Commander and Lt. Col. Phillips, 14th Wing A-3). They were doing nicely until just after the turn into the home stretch, when they seemed to make a coordinated duo-swan dive into the ground. But they got back on their three-legs and finished in time to congratulate the winners.

One of the most popular gestures of the day was General Johnson, holder of the Congressional Medal of Honor, driving to the ball field. In place of the usual emblem of rank, there was a small khaki flag adorned with buck-sergeant stripes. The General was at the wheel and the sergeant, his regular driver (Mike Fusano), was taking his ease in the back seat.

All rank and army rule was dispensed with for the day, with the exception of the Military Police and Lt. Col. Griffin, the Ground Executive Officer, who became an M.P. The rules stated that any person found wearing rank insignia was to serve beer for five hours. However, in the course of the events, someone decided on a more suitable punishment - a dunk in the fish pond beside the Aero Club. It all started with Lt. McCaslin, the Group Training Officer, who was

found "impersonating" a Master Sergeant. Before the afternoon was half over, the dunkings were frequent regardless of whether a person was found violating the rules of the day or not. "Baths" were even handed out to General Johnson, Col. Gibson, WAC Lt. Luce, our Cryptographic Officer, and Phyllis and Sally, our Red Cross girls. Phyllis and Sally were dressed in coveralls but they had their own clothes soaked when two men dressed in the familiar blue skirts, jackets and hats were also given a "swim." A few unfortunate officers, visiting the post at the wrong time, were thrown into the drink before they had a chance to explain. But it only served to get them into the spirit of things also.

In the evening, the carnival moved to one of the hangers and the U.S.O. show "Petticoats" featured the entertainment program and was heartily acclaimed by all. Beer was more than plentiful - five kegs are still unaccounted for - guess someone enjoyed a prolonged celebration.

Well, a good time was really had by all - but it ended with the close of day. Operations were resumed on a normal keel and the Group went on to do an excellent job of bombing on the following day.

On the 16th of the month, Billy Conn and his retinue arrived at this station to put on a boxing show for the boys. It was a good show and Conn showed that he is all we've heard about him.

All in all, it was a good month of living and also a good month of war.



The 8-Ball Tails

**Official Journal of The 44th Bomb Group
Veterans Association, Inc.**

Compiled, written and published tri-yearly at 6304 Meadowridge Dr., Santa Rosa, CA 95409, Roy W. Owen, President and Editor. Printed and mailed Bulk Rate at Salt Lake City, UT under USPS Permit #6923. Generally, the material herein is non-copyright except when so noted. The text and photos are otherwise reproduced from personal photographs, diaries, memoirs or official USAAF and USAF documents and photos which have been released for publication. Except for copyright material, permission is granted for the contents of this journal to be reproduced for personal archives or the journal of other incorporated non-profit Veterans organizations so long as this publication is properly credited.

Those submitting letters, stories and photos to the Editor or Historian must do so with the understanding that this material will most likely be published as a matter of interest to the members/subscribers of the Association and this journal. While every attempt will be made to answer all of the material received, there is no explicit or implied guarantee that an answer will be provided or published. Except for specific requests for the return of original documents and photos, all material submitted will become the property of The 44th Bomb Group Veterans Association, Inc.

Due to space limitations and to ensure the clarity and brevity of submitted material, the Publisher/Editor reserves the editorial license to add, cut or otherwise modify all submitted material so long as the original context of the material is maintained.



MAIL CALL



This comes from:
George Hill
W9TGN
2116 Ewing Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201-2004

Hi Will,

The enclosed cartoon brought to mind an incident that I have not written before. So here is a couple short ones for you.

On our first trip to Africa (June '43) M/Sgt Bagley began teasing me about taking along and eating a full can of Spam. That was not true, of course, but from then on until we returned back to the States in 1945, I was "Hey, Spam!! or Hell, Spam.

Later, Our Sgt. Wade Bond, who was a great kidder and joker, was ripe for retribution. Wade always had a caper or story to tell, always working on someone, usually with one of us winding up the goat. But we got even with him one time!

As you know and remember, most of us carried our coffee "Cups" with us all the time. After continued usage and dips in the hot water tubs for cleaning, these cups were usually mud-colored inside.

One day we got hold of his cup, unknown to him, and we drilled three or four tiny holes in it, just below where his lips would come while drinking from it. For a week or so we had much fun chiding him about being a sloppy eater, as coffee was dribbling down his chin! Unfortunately, one day he decided to scrub his cup, discovered our work.

On our second trip to Africa (Sept. '43) we shared an airfield with a B-17 group just outside of Tunis. Near us we could see the ancient aqueduct that the Romans had built - a short distance away. It has served ancient Carthage. One day it was announced that a German supply dump had been discovered containing among other things, a large supply of all kinds of liquor!

Rather than destroy it, a decision was made to divide it up amongst all of the men. I can still remember a fair-sized box of all kinds of booze coming into the Communications section for all of us to enjoy. The Commanding Officer of the field said that he was closing down the field for 24 hours - and for us to "get rid of it!!"

What a party we had. We really had a ball. I woke up the next morning with a big head, but to this day I say, "Bless that C.O.!" He was a real wise man.

All is well here. Mary and I took a trip to Alaska last

September and enjoyed it very much. It is a beautiful country.

Our Radio Net is still going strong, but with the sunspot cycle at near bottom, we have not been able to talk to our English members every week, but conditions should improve a bit.

A PBS television program called "Nova" had a very interesting program about a group of men (Darryl Greenamyer - Ex-Lockheed Test Pilot) who went up to northern Greenland to reclaim a B-29 that had been forced down nearly 50 years ago. What a job! Won't tell you the story as I taped it and if you haven't seen it, I'll be happy to loan it to you.

A couple weeks ago I noticed a fellow in line ahead of me at the checkout, had a cap on from the 40th Group - a B-29 outfit from the Pacific. I only got a short chance to talk to him - a minute or two - but he said that there was a Squadron in his group that should have belonged to the 44th!?? (Possibly was the 404th BS, which was borrowed from the 44th at Will Rogers in July '42, sent to Alaska to stop the Japanese invasion of the islands??).

Regards to you and Irene
See you in St. Louis!



This comes from:
Albert E. (Ed) Jones
12415 Eagle Point Place
Little Rock, Arkansas 72211
(501) 227-4198
3/4/95

Dear Will,

The reason that I knew Ed Clark was because he was my C.O. at the Shipdham Control Tower. Before he was there, I worked for Clifford T. Lee who was transferred to Germany some time after Normandy invasion. Ed and I were shipped back to the States at the same time, had our 30-day furlough, and went back to Sioux Falls for re-assignment.

Even though he was my boss, I considered him a good friend, but we lost contact until preparations for the 44th BG Reunion in England in 1992. At that time, I found out about and joined the 44th BG, 2nd Air Division and 8th AF organizations. That is how I was reunited with Ed, though we didn't actually meet until we were at the Reunion in the Hotel Nelson in Norwich, England. Since then, Ed and our wives have attended two 2nd Air Division Mini-Reunions or Regional Meetings in Dallas.

We planned to be at the Dallas meeting this year as well as the 2nd Air Division in Norwich. However, I was forced to forego both because of the planned cataract surgery on 21 March. Hope that I'll make the next 44th meeting in Texas.

I worked at the Shipdham Tower from about August, 1943 until July, 1945. I was in charge of the Alert Crew which worked directly for the control tower, and worked out of a

front room on the first floor of the tower. The Alert Crew took care of most, if not all, of the "hands-on" duties of the control tower - we parked, serviced visiting aircraft, maintained, corrected, updated records of location and condition of all B-24s on the base. Pulled them out of the mud with a clet-track when they got off the perimeter taxi strip, and various other duties.

One of my primary duties was to operate what we called the radio jeep. This jeep was equipped to communicate with the tower, as well as with pilots of aircraft. Similar to the checkered van, but much more mobile.

During bad, foggy weather, I would take the radio jeep as far out in the field as possible and look for our bombers on their cross wind leg, get them turned toward the runway and above the trees until landing time. Once, when they were very low on gas - one pass or else - they decided to "Follow the Leader" and one make it, all make it, or none. Fortunately, they all made it, but they looked like a string of weenies going down the runway. Probably couldn't happen again without a few crashing.

I learned the area outside the base so well that one of my jobs was to find the bombers that had gone down, radio back directions for the ambulances and fire trucks, give identifications of the plane. Through all of this, of course, we had to observe radio silence when in effect. One of our duties was to hand-carry changes in orders to the lead commander prior to take off on missions. We had to enter the plane and actually hand it to the command pilot. Incidentally, we had an extra receiver in our radio equipment and when not too busy, could listen to local broadcasts via the earphones.

The fire trucks were housed in a building next to the tower (east) and the crew on duty had quarters in that building. However, all tower and fire crews off duty staff lived in a Nissan Hut directly behind the tower building.

For much of the time in England, the fire crews and tower staff were assigned to the tower from the various squadrons in the 44th BG. I was from the 340th Service Squadron. But finally the Air Force formed squadrons just for their type duties, called Complement Squadrons and to which we were then assigned. However, I never lived in the squadron area and can't remember its number.

Since our flights were day missions, our main night duties consisted in landing British bombers who's own base was too fogged in to land. Our radio jeep was equipped with a metal stand for one man to stand on while directing the aircraft where to park. Of course, on these nights, the regular control tower radio operators were, to say the least, quite busy.

Will, I can't remember the names of the guys who rode motorcycles (one was Bill Hawkins) but they were the Air Force MP's. They did spend some time on duty around the tower a lot, and were our friends. In fact, it was in that setting that I first learned to ride a motorcycle - the WWII Harleys.

I could tell you lots of things that happened at crash sites

around the area during the War, but I'm sure you are getting bored, so will hush for now. (*No, I'd never get bored by stories about the good old 44th*).

I am sorry that the old 44th HMG was sort of disappointing, but am looking forward to meeting with our new one. Keep up the good work.



This comes from:
Donald C. Prater
1608 E. Candlestick Drive
Tempe, Arizona 85283
Phone: (602) 820-3838
Fax: (602) 839-7778
6/11/96

To Roy Owen & Gerald Folsom:

Gentlemen:

Thank you for "finding" me. For years I have belonged to the Air Force Association and have read each month's magazine carefully searching for some information relative to the 44th Bomb Group. I have never seen a thing. Don't know how you located my name but I am thankful you did.

I definitely am making plans to attend the 1996 Reunion in St. Louis October 3-7. This will be a triple bonus for me. First I hope to see some of my friends from the Korean War Era (1951-1955), second, I was born and raised in Mexico, Missouri which is only about 1.5 hours drive from St. Louis, and third, the Oktoberfest in St. Charles will be right up my alley - I am of German-American heritage and love German polka and waltz music. I will bring my lederhosen, Hut, and other paraphernalia with me.

There is a registration form enclosed with your mailing to me. Should I use this form and go ahead and register, or should I wait to receive my membership number from you prior to registering?

Thanks again and I look forward to October in St. Louis.

Sincerely,

P.S. Wife's name: Phyllis C. Prater

Military Organizations:

1951-1953 - 44th Bomb Wing (44th Air Police Squadron)

1953-1955 - 806th ABG, (806th Air Police Squadron)




This comes from:
Daniel Berger
1351 S.W. 125 Avenue #314
Pembroke Pines, FL 33027
Phone: (305) 436-5878
Wife's Name: Shirley Berger
68th Squadron
6/12/96

To Gerald Folsom

Sir:

Enclosed please find check in the amount of \$15 for membership in the organization and future copies of the 8-Ball Tails.

Yours truly,



This comes from:
James (Jim) Branson
3908 O'Briant Place
Greensboro, NC 27410
Phone: (910) 665-0393

Gerald:

Thanks for your letter of May 31, 1996, about the Association of the 44th Veterans.

Enclosed you will find a check for the annually dues (\$15). Below you will find name, address, phone and wife's name (Nancy Branson).

Sincerely,
506th Bomb Squadron


This comes from:
Robert J. Stine
2600 Quail Place
Bartlesville, OK 74006
(618) 333-0636
6/11/96

Dear Roy:

Thanks for your letter of May 31, 1996, advising that the association will hold a reunion in St. Louis in October, 1996.


You indicated that your records do not show that I have previously belonged to your organization. On January 3, 1995, I forwarded to the Association my Check No. 5539 in the amount of \$15 covering the 1995 dues. This check cleared my bank on January 9, 1995. Since I received no further communication from the Association, I assumed it had faded away as the 44th Heritage Memorial Group did. Consequently, I made no attempt to tender my dues for 1996.

Since I now know the Association remains active I am, with copy of this letter, sending my check to Gerald W. Folsom, Treasurer, to cover my 1996 dues to the Association. Please enter my name on the membership list. My wife's name is Wintress C. Stine.

So that you will know that I qualify to membership, I was assigned to the 68th Squadron in early August, 1942 at Will Rogers Field as navigator on Tom Holmes crew and flew to the UK with the 68th Squadron. I completed 26 missions with the 68th Squadron. The low level raid on Ploesti (August 1, 1943) was my last mission. I was navigator on the lead ship of the lights attacking Blue Target flown by Major John Diehl with Col. James Posey as Command Pilot in the co-pilot's seat.

I returned to the zone of interior in late August, 1943.

Sincerely,


This comes from:
Irvine G. Smith
405 North Columbus Street
Lancaster, OH 43130
Phone: (614) 687-1958 Fax: (614) 654-2509
6/13/96

Dear Roy & Gerald:

Nice to receive letter and information of the October Reunion.

For the time being...I have enclosed a check for membership of \$15. I hope I can attend the reunion in October...for the moment, I have a conflict. I will know if I can attend late next month. I will let you know if and when...and thanks for the registration form.


Information you have asked for:

Wife: Mary Peters Smith. Extra: have two sons both married with son and daughter each. Names: Frank R. Smith in business with me...and second son David S. Smith - Sales Manager for local Lancaster Glass Co.

I was a 1st Lt. with the 80th Chemical Co. stationed near Norwich with 44th BG.

Will be glad to receive anything in the future relating to our war efforts.

Many thanks,


This comes from:
Raymond Kovach
4102 Pershing Avenue
Parma, OH 44134

Dear Art:

In the "8-Ball Tails" Issue #5, Spring, 1996, I read the story - "A Brother Returns to East Anglia" by Tom McKenna, brother of Jim McKenna, 66th Pilot, KIA over Hamburg, August 6, 1944. Tom McKenna was at the San Antonio Reunion and asked if any of the crew or anyone who know Jim, get in touch with him.

Being on Jim McKenna's crew as Radio Operator and Gunner, I wrote to Tom the same day. I had hopes we could maybe get together some day, or at least write, so I could tell Tom what a great guy and Pilot Jim was.

I received a letter from his wife, Jane with the sad news that Jim died on April 15, 1996 and that he had sent the articles and pictures about his brother Jim to the 44th Bomb Group Magazine shortly before that. Hearing Tom has died was a real shock. I felt like I was shot down again! At best, we can say, he found out where and how his brother Jim died, and I believe he located his body and brought him home!

Art - Percy Gaudin - Tail Gunner on Jim McKenna's crew - I don't believe has joined the 44th Bomb Group Veteran's Association. I do not think he was ever contacted. His address is: Percy Gaudin - Tail Gunner, P.O. Box 125, Kiln, MS 39556.

P.S. Art - If Percy Gaudin is not a member of your group yet— mail him a copy of Issue #5 of your 8-Ball Tails. But if he is and has received a copy of Issue #5, put check in treasury pot.

Thank you,



***This comes from:
Oliver E. Duerksen
Lt. Col (Ret) AF
2650 Yale Avenue
San Angelo, TX 76904***

Dear Mr. Folsom:

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$15 for my annual dues.

I am one of those who did not know your (our) organization existed. I am proud of whoever started it. There are not so many of us remaining, time and health takes their toll.

I was a member of the 66th Squadron, arriving in England in December, 1944 and Shipdham AAF Station 115) in January, 1945. Capt. Will R. Vahrenkamp was our adjutant at that time. We had trained (B-24) in Mt. Home, Idaho, and arrived as a crew replacement. Lt. John Muldoon (from Nebraska) was our crew pilot, I was co-pilot, Karl D. Grossman was Navigator.

My wife, Wilma J. Dougherty Duerksen died April 4, 1995. She was from Illinois.

Thanks for getting in touch,



***This comes from:
Mrs. Don R. Hill
311 N. Genessee
Bellaire, MI 49615***

March 28, 1996

Dear Will,

Evidently Art Hand did not tell you that Don died last August. I can however give you at least some of the information you asked for as he spent most of the early summer making a tape of his most exciting life experiences.

The following information comes from the tape as closely as I can report it. Don joined the crew of James Collins in Pueblo, Colorado. This crew trained together there. Don mentioned that they made an almost unbeatable volleyball team during training. He also mentioned, somewhat boastfully, that since he had been on the pistol team in college, he helped train his crew in the use of the automatic colt 45's they were given. They were sent to England on the Queen Elizabeth, arriving in Glasgow on June 6, D-Day.

After a 15 day orientation training period in Ireland four of the crews were sent to Shipdham. Here they replaced some of the crews lost during the Ploesti raids for which the 44th Bomb Group became famous. Colonel Johnson became a General about this time. Don mentions him with great respect. He said that he, Don, didn't eat breakfast and so often missed the bus to briefing. More than once, the General stopped and picked him up as he was walking down to join the others.

As to the events of the August mission you asked about, Don put the date as the 7th of July rather than the 9th. It was during their fifth raid into France. Their ship was hit by flak, tearing through the wind screen and destroying it. The co-pilot (Fred Schuyler) was badly wounded in the shoulder. The same flak hit Don in the belly as he was sitting behind the co-pilot. He said on the tape that this was his one heroic moment in life. He gave the co-pilot first aid ignoring his own wounds. He added that he really was so shaken by the sight of the other man's wounds that he really did not realize he had a problem until he had done what he could. Then he realized that his flak suit had shorted out and he was quite badly burned on the stomach and legs. He carried these scars for his lifetime. After landing, he and the co-pilot were taken to the hospital, but he was released in a few days and went on many other raids.

I do remember him telling of the incident of Stanley Ducki, though I don't remember his mentioning the name. Don flew as a replacement on several crews toward the end of the war. He also helped with the radio shack on the ground at the base. As I remember he was supposed to be at the shack or had just left when the accident occurred. He often said that he believed the LUCK of the Irish (his mother was a Reiley) was working for him.

Don was, as most of you men are, very proud of his Air Force career, and rightly so. We had 47 happy years together, and yet I often thought that he was closer to the men of his crew and Group than we could ever be. Or at least in a very special way that those who were not part of the time and place could ever be. I only wish he had been in touch before he died.

Thank you for being concerned and doing something about it.

Sincerely,
Marion Hill



Elmer Reinhart, a great old Ploesti Raider turned Beach Boy, living in Waikki. Here with your Prez on a recent visit to Honolulu. We had lunch and a good visit. Hadn't seen each other since Norwich in '92 where he was dating not one, but two lovely English ladies on alternate evenings!



Picture Taking Time

Those of you that attended the HMG Reunion at Colorado Springs in '86 and or the Reunion at Rapid City in '91 will recall the photograph album that was produced during those reunions. This project was highly successful and provided valuable keepsakes.

As we predict a large attendance at St. Louis, it would seem to be a good time to repeat this operation. Therefore, "REUNIONS" Inc., the same company that produced the last albums, has consented (at no obligation to the 44th BGVA) to photograph all couples and individuals plus candid shot of some of the activities. These pictures will be then made into a "Memory Book" available at a nominal cost.

A photographer will be set up all day Friday in the Hotel for this purpose. It is suggested that those not going on the tours be photographed in the morning so as to permit those on Tour No. 2 to have their pictures taken in the afternoon upon returning from the tours.

How you want to dress for these pictures is optional, casual or otherwise.

There will be ample pages devoted in the album to candid snapshots of activities taken by members, so bring your cameras. Members that were not able to attend the reunion are invited to send in 35mm pictures of themselves to be included. Also those arriving Saturday can have their pictures taken by a designated member and be included in the book.

Those photographed will be sent color proofs and asked to indicate the pose they wish to be used in the book. At that time they may order pictures if so desired.

This is an excellent opportunity to have a lasting record of your friends in the 44th Bomb Group Veterans Association, so please cooperate and make this project a huge success.

44th Bomb Group

VETERANS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 2367

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84110-2367



Address Correction Requested

Bulk Rate U.S. Postage Paid Permit #6923 Salt Lake City, UT



Reunion '96 October 3 - 7