

visit once again with these paunchy old men.

Sincerely, ADOLPH MARCUS
824th Squadron

*Editor's note: Senator McGovern Flew with the 455th based near Cerignola.

Dear Bud:

For the Trivia Dept.: In bulletin No. 8, there was a letter from Member Wally Robinson, in which he stated that there were three men, including himself, from the 461st. who were from the same town. Believe me I can top that one. There were eight of us from the small town of Cheyenne, Wyoming that served at Torretta. Following are their names and duties: ? Cox, Tower Operator, Jim Elliott, Mech. 824th, Walt Kendall, Gunner, 824th (shot down over Blechhammer and taken prisoner), Frank Hammond, Gunner, 825th, Jacob Breisch, Pilot, 827th and Jacob Lebsack, Bombardier, 767th. How about that?



THIS PHOTO OF THE CONTROL TOWER OPERATOR WAS PROVIDED BY HARRY OGLESBY 767 SQ. THEY ARE NOT IDENTIFIED

In your message in Flyer No. 10 you mention a crash in which a bomb, which had been hung, came loose and blew the tail off the airplane. I can only recall this happening one time at Torretta, and I had a grandstand seat, and witnessed the whole thing. We were down for an engine change, and when the 484th returned from the mission that day, my crew and I crawled up on the wing and sat down to watch the Group land. The ship that crashed was No. 41, from the 825th Sqdn. Their Asst. Crew Chief was an old buddy of mine, and we had all been in France together shortly before this, so I knew all of the men on the crew. The crash appeared to be un-survivable, and I sat there on the wing and cried, after seeing it! It turned out that the man who was killed was a replacement gunner, and was hit by a fragment from the 500 lb. bomb. I have pictures of most of the crew members, but unfortunately forgot to write down their names at the time, and after forty years am unable to recall anything but a few nicknames. Perhaps in a future issue of the Flyer, you could ask if anyone remembers the names of the crew of No. 41.

Apparently, none of them belong the

Association, as none of them were at Williamsburg last summer. If someone can come up with some names I would like very much to get in touch with them.

Thanks for running the picture of Ellie Mae in Flyer 10. She and I were friends, and after the war she went to Alaska. I just missed her up there in 1946, as she had come back to the States, just before I went up there. Some of the people I worked with at Merrill Field at Anchorage, knew her, and after they found out I had been in the 15th they asked me if I had ever known a Red Cross girl in Italy named "Ellie Mae". It just about has to be the same girl, but I have never heard anything further of her since then. It would be nice if we could locate the old gal and get her in the Association. We had another girl that worked with Ellie Mae but I can't remember her name. She was nice, but rather shy, and I never did get well acquainted with her.

In the new member list, I found the name of a long lost friend, Robert E. Hatch, who was pilot in the 827th. I called him last Sunday and we had a wonderful conversation. Rudy Martino, who was Hatch's nose gunner, was at Williamsburg last year and we had some good yak sessions. Hatch is one of the few, if not the only man, to ever spin a B-24 and live to tell about it. He had a full bomb load, and the airplane spun six times before he got it out. It was damaged so badly that it had to be "Class 26'd". Bob has a picture of it, which he is going to send me. I'll have it copied and pass it on to you. Hatch told me that he is planning on going to Orlando, so make it a point to meet him. He is a fine man, and was one helluva pilot. I know, because I flew several of the missions to France with him.

Guess this is it for now. Again, our best wishes for the reunion!
Very sincerely yours,

ERNIE GREEN
827th Squadron

EDITOR'S NOTE: From orders dated 8 March, 1944, Harvard, Nebraska, Crew No. 41 shown below was part of the Air Echelon to be transferred for staging at Lincoln, Nebraska. Of that crew, JOHN C. CHAFFE, JR. the radio operator is an Association member. Because of maintenance problems and transfers of ships from one unit to another very seldom did crews fly their own airplanes. The chances that this crew is the one involved in the incident are somewhat remote. Reader comment requested.

Sq. Crew No. 41
JAMES R. PORTER Pilot
BILLIE R. SANDERS Co-pilot
LAWRENCE GLASSER Navigator

ISAAC W. SMOKE Bombardier
CLARENCE T. GAMBILL Engineer
JOHN C. CHAFFEE JR. Radio Operator
GEORGE A. VVAN VLIET Nose Gunner
WILBUR R. DYOTT JR. Ball Gunner
RUSSELL J. SCHNEIDER Upper Gunner

Mr. Bud Markel, Editor

The Torretta Flyer

Re: "What's up Doc" photo on page 19 of Torretta Flyer No. 10

Dear Bud,

The crew on this mishap were: Robert Shelton, pilot, Bob Swanson, co-pilot, Dick Hugo, Bombardier, Ryan M. O'Brien, navigator, and Robert Self, Stewart, Cartwright Whetstone, Knapp and Crysler. I forget the first names of the last five named.



PHOTO BY ROBERT A. HARRISON 825 SQ.

This happened on December 10, 1944, which would have been our 26th mission. The target was Brux, the synthetic oil refinery that produced one-half of all the oil within our range. On takeoff, engine No. 1 caught fire when we were about 50 feet off the ground, it was feathered and then No. 2 caught fire, No. 1 was unfeathered and No. 2 was feathered. We were ordered to take the plane out over the Adriatic and drop the bombs but could not land until all the planes were in the air. We were carrying two of the booby trap bombs along with six more 500 pound bombs and were not allowed to bring the booby trap bombs back to the base. The pilot could not gain more than 1,000 feet altitude nor reach the Adriatic to get rid of the bombs. The pilot asked the entire crew to come to the flight deck for a crash landing in a plowed up field about ten miles South of Torretta Air Base. I was the last to reach the flight deck and stood below behind the nose wheel with the flight deck waist high. When we hit the right wheel sheared off and rolled about one-quarter mile. The left wheel folded up the wrong way against the fuselage. The arm of the right side landing gear dug into the ground and spun the plane around 180 degrees and the fuselage split open on the pilot's side and the pilot and co-pilot went out through this hole. My right leg was pinned by the nose gear that came up through the bottom of the plane. I