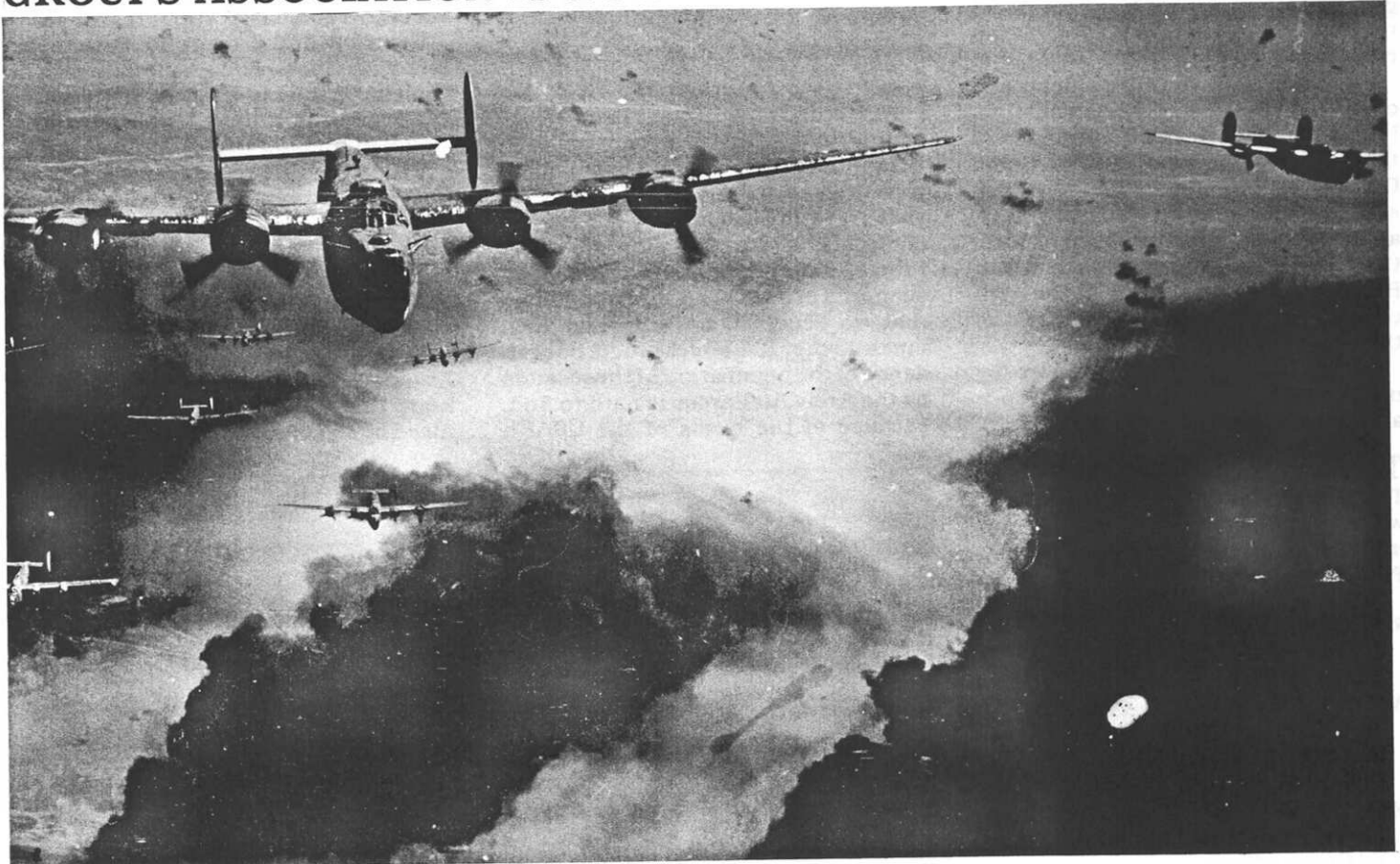


Bull #12

THE COPY TORRETTA FLYER

Torretta Flyer No. 11 Redondo Beach, California 90277 Winter 1984

THE FOURTH REUNION OF THE 461ST AND 484TH BOMB GROUPS ASSOCIATION IS NOW HISTORY. A REPORT. (See Page 3)



FORMATION OF 15TH AIR FORCE B-24's OVER PLOESTI, ROMANIA OIL REFINERIES. NOTE THE FLAK BURSTS AND CLOUDS OF BLACK SMOKE RISING UP FROM THE GROUND. THE 461ST AND 484TH BOMB GROUPS ATTACKED PLOESTI OFTEN.
JAMES C. DOOLEY PHOTO 461ST B.G.

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JOE HEBERT PHOTO (826) See Photo Page No. 32.

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

THIS IS TO ADVISE ALL OF OUR MEMBERS THAT THE 461ST & 484TH BOMB GROUPS ASSOCIATION HAS NOTHING WHATSOEVER TO DO WITH THE SEPARATE REUNION OF THE 461ST BOMB GROUP BEING PLANNED FOR SEPTEMBER 1985 IN COLORADO SPRINGS, OR AT ANY OTHER TIME OR LOCATION. THIS SEPARATE REUNION HAS NOT BEEN OFFICIALLY AUTHORIZED BY OUR ASSOCIATION AND NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE PARTIES INVOLVED.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Many members of both groups have written to us in support of our notice in the last bulletin in which we advised the membership of the Association's position that holding separate reunions would be divisive and could lead to the weakening of this organization, as this is not in keeping with the stated aims of our incorporation as the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups Association. Please note that several of these letters are printed in the Mail Call section of this Flyer. I might add, that as one of the founders of this organization, we did not bring members together, to have them go their separate ways.

Therefore, as your president and one of the directors of the Association, I wish to reassure all of our members that the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups Association, as it is now constituted, cannot be divided in any way, as the Association is made up of both: the 461st Bomb Group and the 484th Bomb Group, as set forth in the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws of the Corporation.

Please indicate your support by marking the Tear Slip in the appropriate space. (After mail call section)

The Active Committees

The following members and members' wives are serving on the various committees:

Publicity:

Jim Van Nostrand-765 Sq.

Flags:

Ginny Dudley-764 Sq.

Mary Lou Watkins-825 Sq.

Address Update:

James Dooley-766 Sq.

Rita Rees-764 Sq.

Charles A. McKew 824 Sq.

Memorial Scholarship:

Chris Donaldson-765 Sq.

Ed Goree-764 Sq.



THE TORRETТА FLYER

Official Publication of the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups Association

is distributed several times a year to members of the Association.

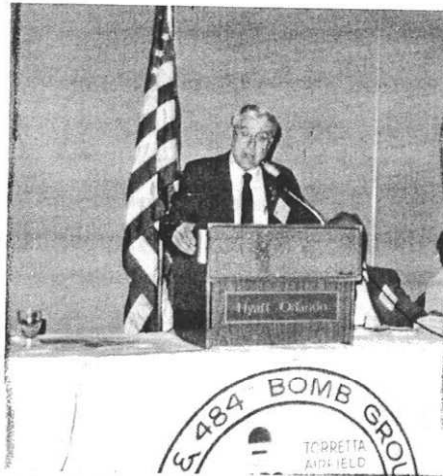
Editor: Bud Markel

Associate Editor: Bea Markel

The Association welcomes stories and photos for use in future issues. Direct all inquiries to Editor, Torretta Flyer, 1122 Ysabel St. Redondo Beach, California 90277. Phone (213) 316-3330.

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With this issue of the Flyer, we are adding an overlay to the map of Cerignola and vicinity, as an aid to members travelling to Italy, who may want to visit Torretta airfield. Italy is a land of contrasts, a juxtaposition of many things, old and new. This is readily seen at Torretta. The farm buildings that we occupied are still standing, much as they did 40 years ago, but evidence of the occupation of these lands by the Army Air Forces is hard to find, because of the terms of the USAF's

lease with Baron Zezza, the owner of the land, which provided for returning the fields to their original condition.

Once again we are asking members to indicate by the return of the tear slip, which is attached to this issue of the Flyer, if you plan to attend the next reunion in San Antonio in 1986. The actual dates are not fixed because negotiations with the hotels are not completed. The 1986 Reunion will revert to a 3 day schedule of events. This, of course, is a joint reunion of both the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups and their Torretta based support groups.

Beatrice and I want to thank the many members who graciously gave of their time during the last reunion, at the registration desk and other functions, in helping to make the Orlando get-together one of the most memorable. We also would like to take this space to thank those members and guests responsible for the plaque award and presentation to us at the banquet. Bea and I were taken completely by surprise at this gesture of your appreciation of our work for the Association, and it is rewarding to know that our efforts have been recognized by so many of you.



"DIPLOMACY" (R TO L: LT CAROSELLI, COUNT DE VERA D'ARAGANE, COL. GLANTZBERG, BARON ZEZZA, COUNTESS DE VERA D'ARAGANE, COUNT'S SON, LT. COL. HARRY OGLESBY PHOTO, 767TH SQ.)

NEXT REUNION:

The next reunion and annual meeting will be held in 1986 at San Antonio, Texas. Watch for announcement and dates.

We wish to extend a special thank you to all of the members who contrib-

uted to the computer fund. With prices coming down recently, our fund should be sufficient to meet the needs of the Association. Bless you all for your thoughtfulness.

See you all in San Antonio in 1986!

REPORT ON THE 1984 REUNION



The fourth reunion of the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups took place in Orlando, Florida, May 31st to June 3rd, 1984, at the Hyatt Orlando Hotel. Warm spring weather of central Florida greeted some 375 members and their guests to a historic 4-day reunion in Orlando. The Hyatt Orlando, the reunion site hotel, with its spacious grounds and guest amenities helped put our guests in a holiday mood. The nearby attractions of Disneyworld and the Kennedy Space Center provided just the right bond to combine the reunion, with a mini-vacation, which the attendees enjoyed greatly.

With so much military talk and war stories filling their ears, a special ladies event was held so that the girls could be by themselves to enjoy female activities on the first afternoon of the reunion. They were hosted by Disneyworld at the Club House for lunch and a fashion show, followed by a trip across Lake Buena Vista to visit the shops of the Village. When questioned about their day on their return to the hotel, they responded with big smiles.

Two styles of caps (ladies' and mens' models) were distributed at registration. They were blue and white baseball caps emblazoned with the Association logo. These proved to be very popular at the conclave. The caps were seen bobbing up and down at Disneyworld and other Florida attractions resulting in requests from guests, as well as the general public, for extra caps. During the rest of the reunion, the committee was quite busy keeping up with sales of the caps which members wanted for gifts for their grandchildren, crew members who were not present at the reunion, and family members. (NOTE: a few caps in the mens' style and many ladies' caps are still available at \$5.00 each. (See tear slip for order form)

Again this year, as in previous reunions, (with the exception of the first reunion in Torrance) Squadron dinners were held in separate rooms. This proved once again to be very popular. Dinner service was just beginning, when the albums and memorabilia

surfaced, drawing crowds around the tables.

It was announced at the Annual Membership Meeting that the next Reunion would be held in 1986, and that the Annual Membership Meeting for 1985, as required by the corporation by-laws, would be held in the Los Angeles area. The Scholarship Committee reported that preparations were underway to seek candidates for the first award to be made to Italian students, hopefully, by the end of 1985, so that the actual award ceremony would take place in 1986. The Association has collected \$3,000 to date for the scholarship award distribution.

REPORT OF THE FLAG COMMITTEE

The Flag Committee consisting of Ginny Dudley (Mrs. Jay) 764th Sq. and Mary Lou Watkins (Mrs. Harry) 825th Sq. working together via mail and telephone from Mary Lou's California home and Ginny's location in New Jersey, set out to fabricate new group flags. The original flags, probably resting in some remote army storage area, could not be found. Using designs of other group flags, the drawing of the great eagle of the United States and renderings of each group insignia, a composite outline was submitted to an artist to transform into a complete design. This was then enlarged to scale and given to a flag company in Philadelphia to reproduce.

Please see Tear Slip to order full color 8 by 10 glossy prints of the Group flags.



JOHN BILLINGS 825TH SQ. (L) CARRIES THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES AND BLAIR BROWNE 826TH SQ. (R) CARRIES THE FLORIDA STATE FLAG FORWARD FOR THE PRESENTATION OF THE COLORS.



JAY DUDLEY 764TH SQ. (L) AND HARRY WATKINS 825TH (R) TRANSPORT THE GROUP FLAGS TO FRONT OF THE BANQUET HALL FOR THE PRESENTATION OF THE COLORS CEREMONY.



MARYLOU WATKINS 825TH SQ. CO-CHAIRPERSON OF THE FLAG COMMITTEE HOLDS UP THE NEW GROUP FLAGS.

GROUP FLAGS SHOWN FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE END OF WWII



FLAG OF 461ST BOMB GROUP. NOTE THE 461ST INSIGNIA IN CENTER SHIELD OF THE BOMB AND LIGHTNING BOLT.



FLAG OF 484TH BOMB GROUP. NOTE THE 4 BOWTIES IN CENTER SHIELD. THEY DENOTE THE 4 SQUADRONS OF THE GROUP.

The opening ceremony at the banquet was the presentation of the colors. For the first time, the flags of both groups were shown to the members. We were all so proud of them. Members came up and had their photos taken alongside their group flag. It seemed as though everyone had been waiting to have a symbol, such as a flag with which to identify. It was like having arrested pride in your outfit all of these years. And, at last, this pent-up patriotic pride could be displayed. It was very moving to see the swelling chests and straight backs as they posed proudly.



Chaplain Ralph W. Bronkema from nearby Patrick Air Force Base gave the invocation. He was accompanied by his wife.

After the pledge of allegiance, led by the master of ceremonies Ed Rose (764th Sq.). The roll call of the squadrons was made. The members of each squadron were asked to stand to be recognized. Leonard Cole led the roll call of the 461st Group squadrons and Peter Drill did the same for the 484th Group.



LEONARD COLE (CENTER) 461ST B.G. CALLS THE ROLL OF THE SQUADRONS OF THE 461ST BOMB GROUP.



PETER DRILL (RIGHT) LEADS ROLL CALL OF SQUADRONS OF 484TH BOMB GROUP.

Chris Donaldson (765th Sq.) gave the toast to our departed comrades and read a very moving tribute that brought tears to many eyes in the audience.

After dinner was served many prizes were distributed.



1984 REUNION PRIZE WINNERS

Door prize drawing winner:
JOHN BILLINGS 825th Sq.

Attendees travelling farthest distance to reunion:

461st B.G.: JOHN A. WALL, R. 767th Sq., Kaneohe, Hawaii

484th B.G.: ELVIN W. BRUSH 825th Sq., Anchorage, Alaska

Runner-up winners travelling farthest distance:

461st B.G.: RALPH SEEMAN 766th Sq., Tacoma, Washington

484th B.G.: TOM WOOLCOTT 824th Sq., Cottage Grove, Oregon

In his address to the gathering, your Association President, Bud Markel, asked for volunteers for several new committees: (1) A committee to collect, preserve, and display uniforms, badges, medals and other articles of military wear, for showing at the regular Association reunions. (2) A committee to acquire, catalog, and distribute books, restricted to the subject of the air war over Europe during WWII. The idea behind this suggestion, was to preserve our military heritage and make this material available to members and their families. The books and related materials would be distributed via the postal service. (3) The Torretta Flyer is in need of writers, and editors to prepare stories and articles for the publication.

In conjunction with this, Bud asked for a committee that would do research at the National Archives, and other institutions, for use in the writing of the two group histories, with shortened versions to be published in subsequent issues of the Flyer. Bud also asked the members to volunteer services, such as transport, graphics, and printing, video transfer, legal and photography, which the Association now has to pay for out of membership dues. He closed his remarks by asking for continuing financial support via grants, donations and bequests.

Afterwards, members expressed interest in some of the committees and association projects. Through the efforts of Paul Lawrence (766 Sq.) and fellow crew member Franz Holscher (766 Sq.) the reunion displays and material were transported back to California. Jim Ellis (827 Sq.) provided the banquet photos that accompany this report.

We also want to thank Harold and Margaret Miller 767 Sq. for shipping the large and bulky exhibits back to California.



MEMBERS AND GUESTS DANCE TO THE MUSIC OF VAL CARUSO AND HIS BAND DURING THE BANQUET.



ED ROSE 764TH SQ. (L) MASTER OF CEREMONIES AND ORLANDO HOST, AWARDS A B-24 MODEL TO TOM WOOLCOTT 824TH SQ. OF COTTAGE GROVE, OREGON, RUNNER-UP IN THE FARTHEST DISTANCE CATEGORY. 484TH B.G.



BUD MARKEL 827TH SQ. (EXTREME LEFT) AND ED ROSE (L) PRESENT A B-24 MODEL TO ELVIN W. BRUSH 825TH SQ. OF ANCHORAGE ALASKA. WINNER OF THE FARTHEST DISTANCE CATEGORY 484TH B.G.



RALPH SEEMAN 766TH SQ. (R) FROM TACOMA, WASHINGTON REACTS TO HIS PRIZE (B-24 MODEL) HAPPILY IN THE RUNNER-UP FARTHEST DISTANCE CATEGORY 461ST BOMB GROUP.

We were also happy to accept the offer of Clark Ecton (825th Sq.) to host the 1986 Reunion Committee in San Antonio. Our thanks to member Russ Hayhurst (827 Sq.) who generously donated a B-24 Tie Clasp for auction at the Banquet!

Most Attendees Flight Crews:

(Each Group)

461st B.G. 2 crews with 5 members each:

767th Squadron

Leonard Roederer

John Wall

Frank Skroski

Frederick Schlosstein

Irvin H. Davis

764th Squadron

Jerry Roth

Charles Louis

Jim Johnson

Bill Jennings

John DeGraff

484th B.G. 6 crew members

824th Squadron

Felix DeSisto

Hilton W. Goodwyn

Richard D. King

Victor J. Seely

Ray Johnson

Glen Moss

SPECIAL AWARDS

1984 Standing Committee Members:

Publicity Committee:

BILL HARRISON 764th Sq.

JIM VAN NOSTRAND 765th Sq.

Scholarship Committee:

CHRIS DONALDSON 765th Sq.

ED GOREE 764th Sq.

Flag Committee:

GINNY DUDLEY (MRS. JAY) 764th Sq.

MARY LOU WATKINS (MRS. HARRY) 825th Sq.

To Orlando Host Member and Banquet Master of Ceremonies:

ED ROSE 764th Sq.



BEA MARKEL AND BUD MARKEL (CENTER) RECEIVE A PLAQUE GIVEN BY THE MEMBERS OF THE 461.484 BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION IN A SURPRISE PRESENTATION DURING THE BANQUET ACTIVITIES.

The last event of the 4 day reunion was the outdoor barbecue held Sunday afternoon, June 3rd. The warm weather lent a note of relaxation and informality helped by a huge beer barrel that never seemed to empty. Long and sometimes tearful goodbyes were said with the promise that most would hopefully be at the 1986 Reunion.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

THE PROCLAMATION BELOW WAS RECEIVED TOO LATE FOR PRESENTATION DURING THE BANQUET AT THE 1984 REUNION IN ORLANDO, AND IS INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL OF OUR MEMBERS.



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
Washington, D.C. 20330
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE 461st AND
484th BOMB GROUPS ASSOCIATION

On behalf of President Reagan, I am delighted to extend congratulations to members of the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups Association on the occasion of your Fourth Annual Anniversary.

Your personal courage and dedication in the perilous skies over Europe that earned two Distinguished Unit Citations for each of your groups are well recorded in Air Force history. You can take great pride in valiant service defending our nation's cherished ideals. It seems fitting that you have gathered to renew friendships formed in battle and to honor fallen comrades who sacrificed their lives to keep our country free.

Best wishes for many more such celebrations.

Verne Orr

THIS NOTE WAS HANDED TO US DURING THE 1984 REUNION:

I am the audio visual person at the hotel who provided the TV and tape player for your meetings. While walking through your exhibits in St. Cloud Hall (Hyatt Hotel) on Thursday, I have never felt so close to our nation's history as I did walking among the men of the 461 and 484 Bomb Groups. Looking at the memorabilia and listening to conversations, I finally realized the great sacrifices and commitments it takes to live and maintain freedom.

Although knowing none of you as anything but senior citizens, your convention and meeting has given me a respectful and proud understanding of our nation and its history.

Although what you did, and what you are, go greatly unnoticed in this day and age, I want you to know that what you did for me and my peers and for all future free people should never be forgotten. Thank you for being the men that you are and were, and for what you did for the world.

(Signed) W. A. Becher

SENATOR GEORGE MCGOVERN

We have had many inquiries about Senator George McGovern, who as many of you know, was a B-24 pilot with the 15th Air Force during WWII. To put the record straight, he was assigned to the 455th Bomb Group. The 455th, together with the 454th B.G. were based in the vicinity of Cerignola, not too far from Toretta. This information was taken from McGovern's biography, authored by Robert Sam Anson. It was published by Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

ANNUAL MEETING

Watch for announcement for date of the 1985 annual membership meeting. Location: Los Angeles, California area.

DUES REMINDER

Members who have not paid their 1984 membership dues, should send in their \$15.00 NOW, so that we can close the books for 1984. Dues for the year 1985, are payable: \$15.00, as of January 1, 1985. You may wish to pre-pay now as many members have already done.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Scholarship Fund was created to help needy Italian students further their education. By limiting the resident requirements to areas around Torretta and Cerignola, the scholarships will honor our fallen comrades by this living memorial. Your continued contributions are most welcome.



WHAT USED TO FIT INTO A TAIL TURRET, NOW LOOKS LIKE THE BALL TURRET! *SIGH*
Bill Hogan 827 Sq.

SICK CALL

Get well soon! ROBERT COLLIER, JR. (827th Sq.) is due to have surgery for a total left knee replacement 10/16/84

JAMES GOUGH (826th Sq.) is scheduled for surgery 3/23/84. Crew member, Ray Foss, wrote us that Jim would appreciate our prayers and cards.

FRED McGRATH (766th Sq.) has MS and other medical problems that prevents him from attending reunions but he welcomes correspondence from war time buddies. You can write to him at 1645 Joffre Road, Forked River, NE 08731.

TOM JAVARUSKI (764th Sq.) We were told, at the Orlando reunion, that Tom's wife, Marge, is responding to treatments for cancer. Although she gets tired easily and had to give up her job, her mental attitude is good.

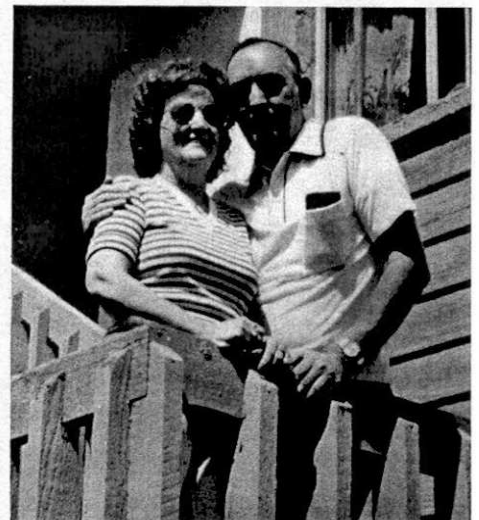


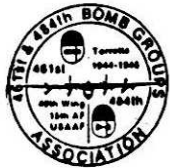
PHOTO OF MARGE AND TOM JAVARUSKI
764th Sq.

SUPPLEMENT TO THE OFFICIAL MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This roster is issued solely for the purpose of communication between members of the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups Association and is not to be transferred or used for any commercial purpose. The Association will terminate membership of anyone violating this declaration.

The information compiled in this Supplement is current as of the date of publication.



November 1984

461st Group Hdqtrs. Changes

Charles Dynes
2139 Wyoming Ave. N.W. 11
Washington, D.C. 20008-3915
No. 461004

Oma L. Vorpe (Mrs. Stanley)
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No. 461005

764th Squadron New Members

George Barulic
3715 Pinewood Ave.
West Palm Beach, FL 33407
No. 764129

Marion Blair
Rt. 1
Toulon, IL 61483
No. 764128

Harry A. Jenks
400 Brierly Lane
Pittsburg, PA 15236
No. 764126

Joseph T. Kucera
3511 Madison Ave.
Brookfield, IL 60513
No. 764130

Paul M. Perry
3148 Sandalwood
Port Neches, TX 77651
No. 764125

764th Squadron Address Changes Corrections

Charles D. Crowe
3490 Maclin Lane
Memphis, TN 38128-5353
No. 764119

Richard C. Eley
550 Lake Markham Rd.
Sanford, FL 32771
No. 764054

James L. Hardee
1864 Herman St.
Atwater, CA 95301
No. 764007

Kenneth L. Hilliker
706 Fairway Avenue
P.O. Box 227
Turner Falls, MA 01376
No. 764010

William J. Mocha
P.O. Box 74147
Tulsa, OK 74147
No. 764055

765th Squadron New Members

Alex Azary
3430 Andover Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
No. 765104

Gordon Ferguson
4517 Hulberton Road
Box 5
Clarendon, NY 14429
No. 765098

Arthur Lundh
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Phoenix, AZ 85028
No. 765102

Ben S. Murphy
Star Rt. 1, Box 218 A-13
Spring Branch, TX 78070
No. 765101

Charles A. Novak (O)
3440 Crescent Beach Rd.
Port Angeles, WA 98362
No. 765100-(O)

Roy E. Williams
12959 114th Ave.N
Largo, FL 33540
No. 765103

765th Squadron Address Changes Corrections

Elza S. Massie
910 Washington
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
No. 76590

Thomas W. Qualman
3120 Waterfront Drive
Brown's Ferry Landing
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No. 765050

Trefry A. Ross
28 Montana St.
Point Richmond, CA 94801
No. 765099

Arthur L. Young
RFD No. 1 Box 253
Faucett, Mo 64448
No. 765099

766th Squadron New Members

Sidney Millet Jr.
Route No. 1 Box 639
La Place, LA 70068
No. 766108

Kenneth E. Perkins
2202 O'Brien Drive
Murfreesboro, TN 37130
No. 766107

Ed H. Spettman, Jr.
Box 66, Route No. 4
Council Bluffs, IA 51501
No. 766106

Wilma A. Stastny (S)
202 Clubhouse Circle
Jupiter, FL 33458
No. 766109 *Sister of Albert Tokar (Deceased)

Leslie E. Toleen
315 Elmwood Rd.
Hoyt Lakes, MN 55770
No. 766105

John H. Williamson
20 Shaw Street
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No. 766110

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No. 766063

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No. 766044

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Nejecho Beach
Bricktown, NJ 07631
No. 766068

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No. 766005

Virginia Lowerins
(Mrs. Jesse)
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Luxora, AR 72358
No. 766082

Joseph S. Zippilli
25 W. Berwin Way
Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054
No. 766071

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5324 Mastin
Shawnee Mission, KS 66203
No. 767111

Harry Sullivan
4544 Deerwood Trail
Melbourne, FL 32935
No. 767113

John A. Wall, Jr.
45-455 B Mokulele Dr.
Kaneohe, HA 96744
No. 767114

Harry L. Walsh
155 La Blanc Way NW
Atlanta, GA 30327
No. 767112

767th Squadron Address Changes Corrections

Richard A. Carney
Rt. No. 3 Sherwood Forest
Cassville, MO 65625
No. 767005

Noel Dahlander
298 S.W. Reynolds Ave.
Port St. Lucie, FL 33452
No. 767097

Frederick Schlosstein
East Road
Warren, Ma 01083
No. 767087

Harold J. Seberle
8412 Redfield Drive
Port Richey, FL 33568
No. 767024

484th Group Hdqtrs. New Members

Robert D. Altman
B.P. 81
06802 Cagnes-Sur-Mer
Principal Cedex
France
No. 484019

824th Squadron New Members

Felix DeSisto
206 Suffolk Ave.
Revere, MA 02151
No. 824108

Thomas A. Downs
28W587 Leverenz
Naperville, IL 60565
No. 824110

John O. Ferris
24742 Mendocino Court
Laguna Hills, CA 92653
No. 824107

William A. Moncrief
PO Box 14485
Atlanta, GA 30324
No. 824106

George W. Rands
81 Hermon St.
Winthrop, MA 02152
No. 824102

William S. Smith
2501 Red Lion Rd.
Kirkwood, DE 19807
No. 824109

Paul H. Stewart, Jr.
Rt. 1 Box 138 B7
Equality, AL 36026
No. 824104

Lawrence P. Weakley
3613 Parisian Way NE
Albuquerque, NM 87111
No. 824103

Hermant J. White
770 S. Kershaw St.
York, PA 17402
No. 824105

**824th Squadron
Address Changes
Corrections**

Jerry Bartlett
R 9 Box 895
Henderson, TX 75652
No. 824050

David A. Hill
1615 Wilt Road
Fallbrook, CA 92028
No. 824026

Forest H. Parkins
416 Donna Drive
St. Albans, WV 25177
No. 824111

**825th Squadron
New Members**

William A. Johnson
Star Route Box 172
Deerwood, MN 56444
No. 825088

John Stonecipher
2405-C So. Bumby
Orlando, FL 32806
No. 825089

**825th Squadron
Address Changes
Corrections**

Elvin W. Brush
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Anchorage, AK 99509
No. 825081

Lester J. Walker
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No. 825090

Jack A. Williams
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**826th Squadron
New Members**

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14-18 Main Street
Casey, IL 62420
No. 826088

William F. Wilson
235 Van Hook
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No. 826089

**826th Squadron
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Corrections**

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No. 826032

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New Derry, PA 15671
No. 826023

Robert W. Seymour
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Pearisburg, VA 24134-0423
No. 826051

**827th Squadron
New Members**

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Bath, NY 14810
No. 827090

Michael P. Goodman
615 Fifth St.
New Brighton, PA 15066
No. 827094

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Portland, OR 97223
No. 827093

Charles C. Marrs
6715 Campfield Rd.
Baltimore, MD 21207
No. 827092

Raymond M. Strand
10619 S. Maplewood Ave.
Chicago, IL 60655
No. 827088

William M. Warren (O)
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No. 827088

Richard A. Warrington (O)
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Wilmington, DE 19806
No. 827091 (O)

**827th Squadron
Address Changes
Corrections**

Frank K. (Red) Hudson
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Portland, OR 97202
No. 827014

Albert Jorgensen, Jr.
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Guthrie Center, IA 50115
No. 827033

Jim Spalding
20 Mizzen - Rte. 2
Salem, SC 29676
No. 827022

**Additional
New Members**

Stanley Richman
29 Marshall Drive
Edison, NJ 08817
No. 765105

John A. Grimm
2311 Oak Glen Circle
Martinez, CA 94553
825-091

Rod T. Stewart
10860 Mooney Flats Rd.
Smartsville, CA 95977
826-090

Charles Percival, Jr.
110 Huntington Court
Williamsville, NY 14221
No. 766111

Robert L. Smith
1527 S. Franklin Ave.
Covington, VA 24426
No. 766112

Frank Roessler
5361 Clark Circle
Westminster, CA 92683
No. 827095

Clair Alexander
710 Mentor Rd.
Akron, Ohio 44303
764-132

Additional List of Contributors to the Memorial Scholarship Fund

Clark Ecton	825	Lillian A. Ellis (Skipper)	827
Edward A. Nahkunst	764	Warren Spray	764
William E. Jennings	764	William G. Rollins	767
George H. Miller	764	Frederick Schlosstein	767
Val R. Miller	765	Wallace W. Robinson	767
Walter W. Bondarchuk	825	Peter E. Ventura	765
Richard King	824	William J. Mocha	764
Rudolph S. Martino	827	Gregory E. Mazza	766
Gordon Ferguson	765	Sidney Ostrovsky	827
Ellsworth Goodell	826	Ralph E. Naven	765
William E. Nelson	764	John O. Ferris	824
Dwyer A. Green	764	Alfred J. Solomon	826
Monroe J. Wall	496	Meyer Brownstein	764
Peter Drill	484	Arthur C. Barkley	827
George Christie	765	Judson W. Moore	766
Burnis E. Presho	765	Chris Donaldson	765
George W. Rands	824	John Dunn	827
Ray Foss	826	George J. Barulic	764
Devere W. McRorie	765	Samuel Lodato	767
Edward R. Schwartz	826	Arthur Lundh	765
Joseph J. Dondero	826	Paul J. Schiappacasse	825
William T. Kesity	766	John Wilsor	764
Alfred J. Ottavio	767	Edwin T. Goree	764
Harry R. Watkins	825	Herbert G. Larson	824
John Hicks	826	John G. Oliver	764
James P. Strano	765	Jerome L. Levin	827
Leonard Brodsky	827	Arthur P. Coogan	827
Kelton G. Bush	767	George E. Kolbe	826
Carl H. Voss	826	Howard U. Heller	827
William J. Franklin, Jr.	766	Robert Chalmers	765
Nye E. Norris	461	John Stonecipher	825
Ralph W. Carr	825	Eugene G. LaPierre	824
John L. Underwood	764	Sigmund B. Markel	827
Robert W. Goble	826	Roy E. Williams	765
Lyman M. Delameter	461	John J. Stuka	827
Cyril L. Kline	764		

MAIL CALL:

Dear Bud:

You and friends have done too much to start splitting up the organization now, Bud. Few of the boys, including myself, know of all the trips you've made to parts of the country, letters you've written, phone calls galore, etc. necessary to make a successful reunion. You have simply gone ahead and done these things and I think some where along the line, these many details should be enumerated to the Association.

In short, I'm for keeping things as they are. Squadron mixers and dinners are important and were very well done at Orlando, I felt.

Looking forward to receiving the next Toretta Flyer and perhaps making the L.A. meeting in Fall of 85.

All the best to you and Bea.

JIM VAN NOSTRAND
765 Sq.

Dear Bud:

I agree that a break-up of the association as O'Bannon had suggested would be regrettable and indeed mentioned so in my response.

Best regards. Sincerely,

CHRIS DONALDSON
765 Sq.

Member, Paul W. Lawrence 766 Sq., sent us this copy of his letter to O'Bannon and Harrison:

Frank C. O'Bannon & Bill Harrison
Gentlemen:

I refer to your letter of August 7, 1984. What in hell is going on? Frank: you, Bea and Bud put the association together and it was Your good idea for the units joining together. Unfortunately, not enough of each group can attend these reunions to gain clout with the hotels. Together we're strong, but divided: Zonk!

I think your suggestion for San Antonio for a 1986 reunion is good but for the existing association rather than solely the 461st. It would balance the average trip distances for all. Does San Antonio have outside attractions for the wives and ourselves? Williamsburg was good and Orlando was great on that aspect.

I'm happy that my wife & I made the Williamsburg reunion as it was the only time to see two buddies, Art Farnham and Bob Faulkner, who we've since lost. I am looking forward to our next reunion as we have lost 3 of our guys and I came close to checking out, but we are still 7 strong!

Regretfully,

PAUL WM. LAWRENCE, JR.
766th B.S. * 461st B.G.
Aircraft No. 40
"Full Boost"

Dear Bud:

I received your letter today and you answered a question that I had wondered about. I received the notification from O'Bannon and it looked to me very much like the Association was splitting apart. I wrote to Ralph Seeman and asked him what he thought but to date no answer, your letter explains the situation. My response to O'Bannon was this: that I thought you had done a terrific job with the Association and I did not want to change it in any way. I am all for a meeting in San Antonio. The letter from O'Bannon I felt was rather strange because it indicated a split which as a member I think is very foolish. Anyway I am behind you and the organization 100%. I feel that you have done a magnificent job against a lot of difficulty and I for one have enjoyed the meetings and hope they continue on as before.

Again, I am behind you and the Association 100% and I will be in San Antonio for the next reunion, God Willing.

"BILL" WILLIAM H. PARKHURST
766th Squadron

Dear Bud and Bea

Just a very few words to let you know that I wrote to Harrison and O'Bannon to voice my objections over their plan. You are absolutely right in thinking that their plan would eventually "be devisive and weaken our Association"

Sincerely, ADOLPH "MARK" MARCUS

824th Squadron

Dear Bud:

Sorry to hear that there will be no reunion in 1985 so I'm looking forward to 1986, the one at San Antonio since I trained at San Marcos.

I hope those fellows who are trying to change the reunion would drop off! It's like the people who wanted to fix the Bell system, which wasn't broke. Now look what we have —

I thank you for the enjoyment I have had at the reunions.

CHARLES SHAFFER
827th Squadron

Dear Bud:

Another year almost gone — before I get wrapped up in the hussle of the holidays want to send the dues for 1985.

We did get a letter about whether the 461st should separate — I ignored it as I did the one we got before. It would be like a slap in the face after all the work you two have done getting everyting together. The first letter was from a Barnes after the Dayton reunion — then this one after Orlando — Sorry

they didn't have as good a time as the rest of us did.

HAROLD MILLER
767th Sq.



PHOTO OF HAROLD MILLER TAKEN DURING GUNNERY TRAINING.

Dear Bud:

I received a letter from Frank C. O'Bannon Jr. today & I was a little confused. You had mentioned that the next reunion would be in San Antonio, Texas - 1986. This letter I received says that the 461st Bomb Group is having a reunion in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in September, 1985.

Is the Frank C. O'Bannon affiliated with you or are they independent of your group?

I would like to know one way or the other. I enjoyed our reunion in Orlando, & I do want to be with the same group. Would you please let me know right away?

Thank You,

JAMES P. STRANO
765th Squadron

Dear Bud:

I recently received a letter from Frank O'Bannon, Bill Harrison and Sammy West dated 7 November 1984 stating that they were organizing a 461st Bomb Group reunion for September 1985 in Colorado Springs, Colorado. No mention was made of the 484th Bomb Group. I was under the impression that our next reunion was to be held in San Antonio, Texas in 1986.

I would like to know who authorized these people to arrange an additional reunion? Is this an official reunion of the Association and if so why wasn't the 484th Bomb Group mentioned? Why was I the only one notified of this proposed reunion when other members of my crew who live in this area did not receive any notification?

It seems to me that individual efforts of this type will only fragment our Association and lead to the eventual break-up of a good organization.

I would appreciate any information

you can provide pertaining to this matter.

Sincerely,

JERRY ROTH
764th Squadron

Dear Bud:

It was sad to read of Al Tokar's passing. I was looking forward to seeing him at one of the reunions - what a nice guy.

I also read of Col. Grogan's illness and dashed off a letter to his wife. He was one of the finest officers I knew and I related to her several incidents which showed his wonderful humanness and character.

Good luck at the reunion. In case you see any of the armanent gang from the 766th tell them my wife and I will surely be at next year's gathering.

Thank You.

LES TOLEEN
766th Squadron

Dear Bud:

In your letter of February 1st you ask about German mistreatment of American Jewish POWs. the enclosed short story, which I wrote years ago during a writing course I took at the University of Maryland, was based on a real incident. I was "Davidson" of the story. The "Fenner" character was greatly exaggerated, to create a personality clash; but almost everything else in the story was as it actually happened.

The incident occured in January 1945. the Germans did gather together all those POWs in our camp whom they knew to be Jews (some genius in the War Department had decreed that our dog tags must have an "H" stamped on them). We were concentrated in two adjacent barracks in one of the several compounds that composed the camp.

At the time, I thought this was the first step on the road to a concentration camp; but nothing further happened to us.

About that same time the Russians launched a massive. 150-division offensive along the entire East Front, which I imagine gave the Germans more important things to worry about than us.

MILTON RADOVSKY
767 Sq.

(See accompanying story, page 28)

Dear Bud and Bea:

I've been having some back trouble and had been hoping it would get better so I could make the reunion, no luck, so this is the first one I will miss.

Am sending a few pictures, the one taking a bath in a G.I. helmet is Robert Dixon. He was a radio man on our crew (Nance's) and I have lost contact with him. The last I heard, he lives some-

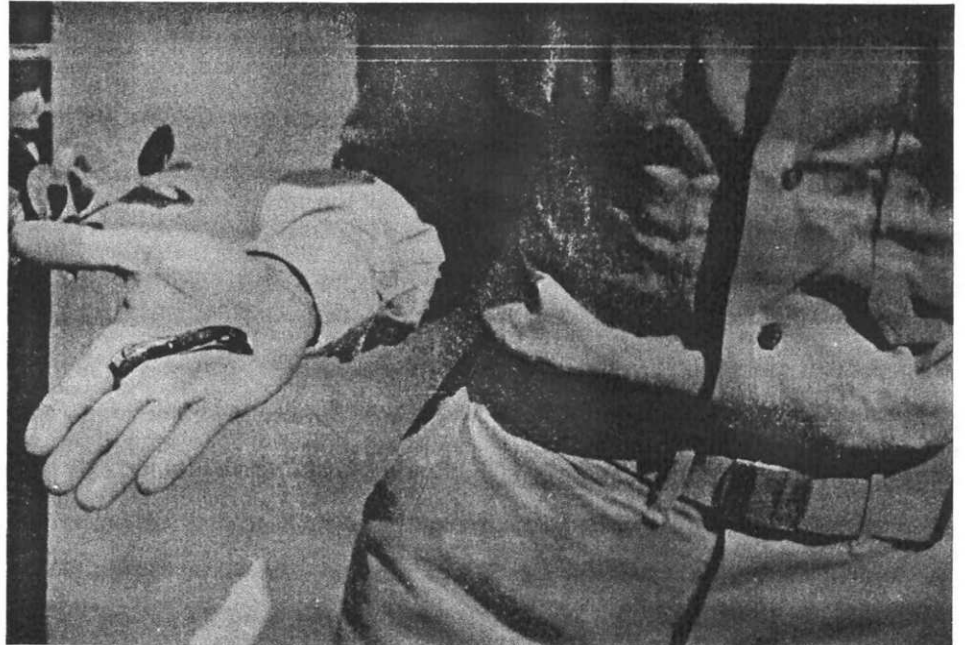
where in California.

The picture of the hand holding a piece of flak was taken of our tail gunner (Mel Albert's) on a mission May 10, 1944. He almost died but then made it. Mel was at the last reunion.

The other picture was taken in the tent area of the 824th. The only one I have seen is C. Kelley at a couple reunions. I have no idea what happened to the others.

Hope to see you next year.

EUGENE LAPIERRE
824TH Squadron



Dear Bud:

The copy of an old newspaper clipping, dated March 1945, surfaced during the past month. I sent a copy to each member of my old crew with their Christmas Greetings. The newspaper article was a product of some Public Relations work-up to sell war bonds. Thought you might like a copy. The ditching occurred February 5, 1945, about halfway down the middle of the Adriatic on a return trip from a bomb run on Regensburg. We were flying a B-24J No. 34.

The earlier reference to being "forced down" in the article occurred, December 11, 1944, returning from a mission over Vienna. We were flying a B-24H, "01'77", and after 7 members of the crew bailed out, the pilot, co-pilot, and radio operator crashed the plane in a valley a few miles from Benkovac, Yugoslavia, and were picked up by Tito's Partisans.

CALVIN R. TEEL 825th Squadron



Sidney Sergeant Safe After Second Plane Crash

Staff Sergeant Calvin R. Teel, 20 of Sidney, was forced down for the second time recently when his plane crash-landed in the icy waters of the Adriatic sea after bombing raid on Regensburg, Germany, his base headquarters reports.

Efficiency of rescue facilities and training is revealed in the crew's reaction to imminent "ditching" and the quick recovery of all the men by air-sea rescue service.

The sergeant, a radio operator and aerial gunner on a B-24 Liberator operating with the 15th airforce in Italy, had been forced down in Yugoslavia a few weeks before. Although the section was in Allied hands, it took the crew five days to get back. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Vance Teel, Sidney.

The plane was part of a large formation on the Regensburg raid and reached the target without incident despite a faulty airspeed indicator. Just as they were dropping their bombs on the objective a heavy burst of anti-aircraft fire struck one of the plane's wings, badly damaging the intricate fuel system.

All the gasoline began pouring into the tank for No. 2 engine. Everything went smoothly for a while until the big bomber was far out over the Adriatic

sea on the return trip. Then two engines, unable to get fuel, died.

The pilot could do nothing but nose the ship down in a steep glide to maintain speed and call the crew over the Interphone.

"When the plane began its sharp descent toward the water, we all knew the trouble was serious," Sergeant Teel remembered. "We had been 'sweating out' the trip back to base, but then we realized we wouldn't get there for a while."

With two other gunners, Teel hurriedly began loosening all emergency equipment which would be needed when they hit the water and then braced himself for the impact of the big plane against the sea.

"Everything went black for the next few seconds. I must have hit my head against the side of the plane when we crashed. The flood of cold water around my legs brought me back to my senses. I guess, because I jumped up on the command deck and followed the ball gunner out of the upper escape hatch.

"From there we made our way out to the right wing and dropped into a life raft which we had hung out the waist window just before we crashed."

Sergeant Teel and his companion maneuvered the dinghy around to reach several crew members who were lashing about in the water, trying to get away from the rapidly sinking plane.

They rowed around for about three hours, mostly to keep warm, before an air-sea rescue launch arrived to pick them up. Taken aboard the boat, they were rubbed down, given dry clothing, wrapped in blankets, and presented with steaming hot cups of malted milk. It was the first fresh milk any of the men had tasted since leaving America.

All were treated for exposure in a British hospital on the Italian shore, and stayed there all night.

"Lying down on the comfortable bed there, I realized how lucky we all were," stated Sergeant Teel. "A remark one of the fellows made while we were watching the plane sink, kept running through my mind. 'All ten of us are here,' he had said. Believe me, it was a wonderful phrase."

Sergeant Teel was graduated from Sidney high school in 1941 and attended Illinois State Normal university for a brief time. He has one brother, Corporal Gerald Teel, who is serving with an army combat medical unit.

Dear Bud:

Please keep the "Toretta Flyer" flying! The No. 10 issue had pictures of Jim English, a bombardier of the 766th. I was co-pilot on the crew he

finished missions with, along with Stan Hutchison, pilot, and Ted Bennett, navigator.

I also notice that Elias Moses is a new member. He was pilot of the crew I went over with but was shot down the week after we got there. He is listed with 765th but probably wasn't there long enough to remember it was the 766th! Keep up the good work, it is much appreciated.

TOM KEENEY 766th Squadron

Dear Bud:

I thought you might be interested in what happened to the 461st B.G. after VE day in Europe. I will try to list the events as they occurred:

1. At the time I was Squadron Bombardier of the 767th B.S.

2. Front line infantry troops, with high time overseas, were shipped to the 461st B.G.; then after a week they were flown to North Africa for flight to the U.S.

3. At the same time, the B-24's were modified with wooden racks so that they would hold insulated packaged food. The mission was to fly the food to Army Air Force P.O.W. camps and drop it at low altitude (500 ft.) right inside the camps. There were several (2 or 3) missions.

4. The aircraft ground maintenance personnel were sent to the China-Burma-India theater to assist in the build-up of B-29 groups.

5. The ground and flight personnel were sent via Africa back to the U.S.

6. Only a cadre outfit was maintained of personnel in each Squadron and Group. (I was one)

7. The cadre units were for final recordkeeping and packing of all necessary ground equipment and supplies for shipment to the U.S. (TAT) - to accompany troops.

8. All the requirements being accomplished by June 1945, the 461st B.G. cadre unit was ordered back to the U.S. We spent two weeks in Naples awaiting shipment on the U.S.S. America to Camp Patrick Henry (Newport News, VA.).

9. We were given 30 days leave at home, and orders to return to Sioux Falls AAF for reassignment.

10. It was there in September 1945 that I received the enclosed memorandum. Also, as the war had ended in Japan, personnel were being sent to the base closest to their home and were discharged from the service. I went to Portland, Oregon in October 1945 to be discharged.

I hope this memorandum will shed some light on the events of the 461st B.G. at the end of the war. I have never known when the 461st B.G. was officially deactivated.

Keep up the good work.

D.R. PERKINS 767th Squadron

Sept. 1945
RECORDS AUDIT P&D
Sioux Falls AAF
Sioux Falls, S. Dak.

Subject: Closing out the books.
To: Former members 461st. Bomb
Group (H).

This, in all probability, will be one of the last communications that I, as former Group Adjutant, will mail regarding the old outfit. I'm mailing this one to those whose addresses I have available from the Shipping List for return to the *ZI and from letters that have come to me. That is naturally a small list because many "high pointers" were transferred from the Group shortly before the Group returned.

If you are in communication with former members, you might want to pass some of this "dope" on to them. Some of the following information may be known to you, but I will repeat it for the benefit of any who may not have received earlier letters.

The Group and Squadrons were inactivated 28 August 1945 per GO 116 Headquarters 2nd AF (1945). All personnel returning to ZI by boat were transferred from the unit to Sq. X, 211th AAFBU (AS) Sioux Falls, S.D.

From Squadron X you know your own fate. Some men did not arrive at Sioux Falls as they were separated at the Reception Centers, but of those arriving here the above may help complete your personal 201 file.

What happened to our T.A.T. boxes? Here's all I could find out. On TWX instruction from Washington (SPTOM DC 1053) the Port Authorities segregated the boxes into three divisions. (1) The AAF equipment was sent to East Kelly Field, San Antonio, Texas. (2) QM issue, etc. was extracted and returned to normal supply and (3) The remainder was shipped to AAF Intransit Depot No. 5 Newark, N.J.

During the period 18th to 26th October I was on TD to learn what the Intransit Depot did with it. While there I was informed that they shipped the boxes unopened to MATSC, Olmstead Field, Middleton, Pa. After a few hours at Middleton I learned that the boxes had arrived there about mid Septembeer. They opened them. The Officer in charge of the warehouse said that Govt. checks, morning reports, sick books, etc. were turned over to the Base.

Base officials showed me letters of transmittal to TAG. I asked what disposition was made of packages not sent to TAG and they said all papers, etc., not official were burned. The cameras, radios, etc., that carried name tags were boxed and shipped to the Effects Quartermaster, Kansas City, Mo.

12

I could find no records of those items shipped. I did, however, locate some of our shipping cases; they were empty. I do not plan to go to Kansas City, but will probably write regarding my radio. You may do the same.

We have another battle participation award. the Awards and Decorations Officer showed me the letter recently. Here's the dope.

"Central Europe, 22 Mar 45 to 11 May 45 per 4th Ind, Hq ETO 18 Sept 45 to Ltr 49 Bomb Wing 21 Aug. 45 File 200.6."

In going through Group and Squadron mail recently I found a letter of interest to those of you who purchased Easter or Mother's Day flowers for delivery in the US and delivery in some cases not being made. Refunds may be had by writing

HQ. Adriatic Base Command
Army Exchange Service
APO 388 NY., N.Y.

This place is a mere shadow of its former self. I doubt if there are more than 5,000 here including permanent party. The paper says SFAAF will close by the end of the year.

Will be looking for you at the national convention of Veterans 1947.

R. FOSTER SCOTT
Major, Air Force Corps
*Zone of the interior (USA)

Dear Bud and Bea:

Too frequently when war stories are told they involve beastility, atrocity or the animal nature of man. When I was with the 824th Squadron, I learned of an event which represented the extreme opposite of this and which may be of interest to the Association membership.

We had a T/Sgt. who was in charge of our parachute room. He was not flying at the time but was a former air crew member.

As the story goes, during a mission, his crew was badly shot-up. While time has erased some of the details, I recall that there were some casualties and serious injuries involved. The aircraft was also seriously damaged and it was necessary for the crew to ditch in the Adriatic. The surviving crew members were picked up by a German hospital boat. Our airmen were made comfortable and wounds treated. The captain of the ship spoke perfect English or was so related. As part of his interrogation, he offered our airmen the alternative of being taken back to Germany as prisoners or to be returned to the waters in their life rafts. The crew requested a return to the life rafts. As was related to me, the men were given blankets and hot beverages.

A most amazing thing also supposedly happened. The German captain radioed our authorities and provided the crew's location. As a result,

477 *Leatherhead Moulden*
a short time later our men were picked up by a PBY flying boat.

Again, much is lost in the translation when such tales are related. Also, I may be a bit off regarding the actual details. However, I am convinced that there is some validity to the events related above.

I am fascinated about this display of humanitarianism of enemies during wartime. However, I would very much like to meet or hear from someone who was directly involved.

I am also certain that this would also be very interesting to our other members. I do not recall any names or dates, except that it took place several months prior to my arrival in Italy in October 1944.

HAPPENED TO BOB BEDWELL June 13, 1944
Sincerely,
HANK RONSON
824th Squadron

Dear Bud and Bea:

Much to my regret, I am unable to attend this year's reunion due to a family commitment, i.e. a wedding and graduation.

Needless to say, I am very disappointed in not being able to make it to our 4th Reunion.

I have a few good follow-up stories that tie in to the episodes by Trefry A. Ross of the 765th Squadron's "The Last Flight of Crew No. 14." I didn't fly that day (Dec. 17, 44) but my log book said "Sunday, Dec. 17, 1944, 765th Squadron was hit by fighters over Blechammer and only one plane returned. Sidovar (from our Squadron, the 766th) was hit by a 20 millimeter shell and was last seen heading for the Russian lines. I hope he made it. He's a swell guy." His was the only plane from 766th missing.

I flew to Blechammer two days later, Tuesday, Dec. 19, 1944 and was "missing in action" for 3 days. That sounds worse than it really was, because after a harrowing experience trying to stretch my gas I came down on *Vis and didn't have gas enough to get parked.

There are a few coincidences that I personally experienced that tied into the Oct. 4, 1944 mission to Munich where Capt. Tallant was killed in action. I'll try to get them to you later.

Have a good time. I'll be thinking of you and all of my comrades-in-arms, on June 1-4.

Best Wishes,
GREG MAZZA
766th Squadron

*Editors Note: See Story in this issue on the Island of Vis. See Page 27.



ADOLPH MARCUS, 824TH SQ. SHOWS HOW HIS PARACHUTE HARNESS STOPPED A GERMAN 20MM SHELL, SAVING HIS LIFE. (ROBERT A. HARRISON PHOTO 825TH SQ.)

Dear Bud:

Am writing to you in regards to the P.S. in your letter to me where you write that you found a photo of me, showing how my parachute harness stopped a 20mm shell. Consider it a PR story. I do not want any innuendoes from my fellow fliers, concerning the fact that a parachute harness can stop a 20mm shell. I don't think that is possible. So here is the true story, which I set out on the tables in the last two reunions. You were so busy, you and Bea, that you never noticed them. They consisted of my emergency kit, my dog tags, a four leaf clover and the remains of the 20mm shell.

On December 17, 1944, my crew and I flew "Old No. 15, The Ramp Rooster" in the 824th Bomb Squadron, to the Odertal oil refineries, in Germany. (Incidentally, Congressman McGovern was also a pilot on that raid)* Our late Pilot, Lt. Kime and a fellow member of our organization, Dick Brown, flew old "Ramp Rooster" that day. We were hit, just before we reached the target, by about 75 ME 109s. We were very busy keeping those Messerschmitts away from us, before we dropped our load of bombs on the target. The flak that day and the aggressiveness of the ME 109s was increased so that our formation was decimated.

But we accounted for quite a few enemy planes downed, so that our tail gunner (who is in an old age home now) was given credit for 2 planes and received the silver star. He is John

O' Neill. Chuck Ranck, George Davis, Robert Hughes, Arnold Reiff, and myself were credited with each accounting for about one and a half ME 109s. We were each, including our navigator, and fellow member, George Bouras and Bombardier Dave Nickerson, awarded the DFC. The majority of the crew were wounded in a very minor way, by flak and 20mm shell that found their way into and through our ship.

But to get back to the reason for this letter. In the midst of that "Battle of the Bulge" in the sky over Germany, a 20mm shell found its way through the skin of the ship, narrowly missed my pilot's leg, narrowly missed my navigator's head, passed through two sets of doors behind me, through one part of my parachute harness, between my arm and my body, through my left breast pocket, in which I had my emergency kit, dog tags, and four leaf clover, and a Jewish star on a necklace, after which it hit my control column, and blew it to smithereens. There I was in my nose turret firing at ME 109 in front of us, when I suddenly notice nothing in my hands. I could not maneuver my turret nor fire my guns any longer. Everything was gone.

Anyway, to make a long story short, how Lt. Kime and Lt. Brown brought back that sieve of a "Ramp Rooster" to base again, I'll never know, but they did, and it was then we discovered how really badly we were damaged. The "Ramp Rooster" could never fly again. It went out in a history of glory. You could look through those countless holes and see daylight out the other side. This ship had been Lt. Nance's ship until we took it over. Lt. Nance and his crew, which included John Hensel and Eugene La Pierre, all members of our organization, flew many a mission, but hardly had a scratch on it!

There was a hole through my emergency kit, in which I had a water bag, chocolate, matches, compass, quinine, etc. Government Issue. The water bag which, of course, was folded, was full of holes, the compass an top of a dry container of matches was cracked, the gum, chocolate, etc. were



RAMP ROOSTER. PHOTO TAKEN PRIOR TO MISSION DESCRIBED IN THIS LETTER. JOE HEBERT PHOTO 826TH SQUADRON.



RAMP ROOSTER OVER THE ALPS OUTBOUND ON A MISSION. NOTE THE MISSION TALLY (ROW OF PAINTED BOMBS) IS DIFFERENT THAN THAT SHOWN IN HEBERT'S PHOTO. KING BEACH JR. 827TH SQ. PHOTO

all cut in pieces. There was a hole in my flying heated jacket and one in my pocket, where the kit was. The harness could not be used if the occasion arose. The dog tags were rolled up from the intense heat of the shell.

I didn't know all this until we arrived back at the base, because our electricity in the nose, our oxygen and my turret were hit and we, Lt. Bouras and myself had to hook up in the pilot's compartment. We were lucky that day, but then, in retrospect, we were lucky on all the other rough missions. After all, we are here to tell the story. Some of our fellow fliers, starting in training in Savannah, Georgia, never again saw the light of day! Poor boys!

I cry inside of me, when I think of those poor boys including those at Normandy, and the second raid at Ploesti, low level. We had a party compared to what those kids went through.

Hope this long letter did not bore you. But that is the true story. Robert Ripley, and the PR story and picture, wrote it up wrong and I did not know this, until I left the service, but by then, I did not know who to contact to set the record straight. Anyway, it mattered no longer. It was a one shot deal to Ripley and the Air Force PR men, and was soon forgotten.

Even my crew, after the heat of battle, pushed aside the whole incident, and went on with the business at hand, which was more missions. We were just kids, and all the killing and dying, starting from our training in the States, were part and parcel of the war.

Today, when I look back at all these incidents, even the Normandy invasion and Ploesti, I shudder and realize how lucky we were. And all this is why I go to our reunions; To visit once again with those boys of yesterday. You and Bea work very hard to make all this possible for me. I find it very important, and on top of my priorities, to

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

pulled my right foot out of my boot to get free and jumped from the upper hatch in front of the upper turret to the ground.

We all ran about 200 yards to get behind a little mound thinking the plane would explode at anytime. It was behind this mound that I looked down and saw a four inch cut across the top of the boot on my left foot. Took off the boot and saw the bones on top of my foot were cut and this was the first time I knew I was hurt although I jumped down about ten feet from the plane and ran 200 yards. The rest of the crew had minor injuries and I was the only one to go to the hospital with a broken foot.

The plane was left guarded and untouched for three days allowing the 72 hours as the maximum time for the booby trap bombs to explode. They did not explode and after the three days they set a charge under the plane and blew the whole thing along with the eight bombs and the 2,700 gallons of gas.

Our crew flew the entire thirty-five missions and the 35th and last involved going over three targets with flack on all three, Bruck marshalling yard, Graz marshalling yard, and dropped our bombs on the third target, the Villoch marshalling yard. The flack damage resulted in losing the hydraulic lines and the pilot, Bob Shelton, told us we would not have any brakes for landing. On landing he instructed all of us to come to the flight deck and on touchdown to slowly walk to the rear through the bomb bay and try bringing the tail of the ship down and skid the tail to help stop the roll on the runway.

To the surprise of all of us, we only used half the runway as both tires were flat from flak damage. The plane ended up in the ditch on the right center of the field and as this was our last mission, the truck met us at the plane and a ride back to the tent. This last mission was on March 21, 1945.

Bud, this was the first time we ever flew the plane "Whats Up Doc" shown in the photo. Hope this gives you the information requested in the Flyer. The first mission for our crew was on August 14, 1944, the invasion of Southern France. Our second mission was Polesti on August 17, 1944, which I think was the last raid on Ploesti.

Best regards,

RYAN M. O'BRIEN
825th Squadron.

Dear Bud:

Enclosed you will find two pictures I have had since the war. They came out in the paper while we were in Torretta.

They have survived almost 40 years but I don't know what you can do with them.

The plane on its nose I believe was in an adjacent group. Not the 484th or the 461st. (Photo A)

The one showing the wounded man is from the 766th Area. This ship came in and crashed just adjacent to our tent area.

We had to cut through the side of the ship to get this fellow out. He was pinned upside down just above the auxiliary posser unit-put-put.

I believe the caption is wrong and that he was an officer. No one was hurt bad in this one although one of crew had been trapped under the top turret.

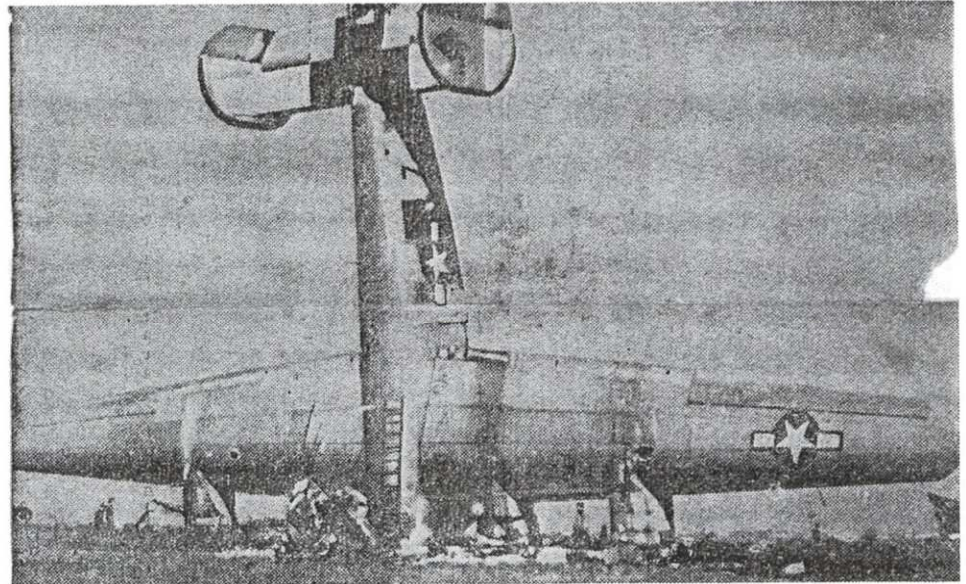
All the men in this picture are from 766th. I am on the left hand side holding his feet. Sgt. Kelly is on the upper right sitting. This was in the summer of '44. (Photo B) Thanks for all the

work and good luck to the 461st and 484th.

HARRY SIMCOX
766th Squadron

EDITOR'S NOTE: Photo A shows a B-24M, 44-50468 from the 455th Bomb Group, 740th Squadron. This group was based at San Giovanni in Fonte, just north of Pozzo Terraneo (see map page). The accident occurred in the spring of '45. Myself and my top turret gunner, Ralph (Red) Johnson were hitching a ride to Foggia and spotted the accident from the Road. We ran over to help, but were advised to keep moving because the ship was loaded with time set fuses. We didn't have to be asked twice.

BUD MARKEL 827th Sq



SIX MEN WERE KILLED INSTANTLY WHEN THIS 15TH AAF B-24 CRASHED SQUARELY ON ITS NOSE DURING A TAKEOFF. AN ACCIDENTAL APPLICATION OF BRAKES IS BELIEVED TO HAVE CAUSED THE ACCIDENT. (MAAF PHOTO)

THE MISSION COMPLETED



A WOUNDED GUNNER IS CARRIED FROM HIS WRECKED B-24, LIBERATOR BOMBER OF THE 15TH AAF WHICH WAS HIT BY FLAK OVER SOUTHERN FRANCE AND MADE CRASH LANDING AT BASE IN ITALY. (MAAF PHOTO)

Dear Bud:

I received your letter explaining the function of your organization and must apologize for my lengthy delay in writing. My father T/Sgt. Glen P. DeSpain 36024888, was a member of the Fifteenth Air Force based in Italy and may have been associated with members of your group. My father died in 1979 therefore all information that I am sending was obtained from his personal records and maybe of interest to you.

I had photocopies made of some documents, and copies of two pictures that you may find interesting. You may keep all material that I am sending.
Sincerely,
MIKE DE SPAIN (765th Squadron)

FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
Office of the Commanding General
A. P. O. 520
19 July 1944
Mrs. Clara DeSpain
New London, Iowa
My dear Mrs. DeSpain:

In the days since you received word that your son, Technical Sergeant Glen P. DeSpain, 36024888, is missing in action, you have no doubt been asking yourself many questions regarding his possible fate. The following information may be of some help.

The B-24 on which Glen was a gunner was damaged during an attack on the oil fields at Ploesti, Roumania, on May 31, 1944, and it became necessary for the crew to bail out. This occurred

over Yugoslavia, and since all ten parachutes were seen to open there is a good chance that the men reached the ground safely. If they did, we can expect to hear from them at some future date. They may be prisoners of war, or in the hands of friendly Partisans of that country. Any information that is received will be sent on to you at once.

In the time he was with us, Glen made a great contribution to the success of many missions in which he participated. He loved his home and his country enough to risk his life to preserve them, and has been awarded the Air Medal and two Oak Leaf Clusters for his services. I earnestly hope that your faith in his safety will be rewarded.

Very sincerely yours,
N.F. TWINING Maj.Gen, Commanding

Dear Bud:

I read the Flyer from the first page to the last. It is very interesting and I sure enjoy it. I was so sorry to learn of the death of Col. Robert K. Dusenberry. I flew several missions with him during the summer of '44. He was then a 1st Lt. and known as "Duse". I salute Mrs. Dusenberry for carrying on as a member of this unique organization. Also, the other wives who are members. The picture of Col. Glantzburg brought back memories. He was known to us as "Big G.". I flew a number of missions with him also. I believe of all the men I have known he came the closest to being fearless. I am trying to round up some snapshots I have and get them to you. I have a crew picture that is large, so I will get a copy on the way. I remember that we flew the first B-24 that was not camouflage painted to the group. Man, it stuck out like a sore thumb.

Sincerely,
HUGH BAKER 765th Squadron



T/SGT. GLEN P. DE SPAIN (765TH SQ.) 3RD FROM LEFT
MIKE DE SPAIN (765 SQ.) PHOTO

Written on V Mail Letter Form:

May 31st 1944:

Hit by flak (AA) over Ploesti (Rumanian Oil Fields). Lost considerable amount of gas. Left formation and headed for home. Engineer doing what he could to prevent further loss of gas. Crew threw everything loose out of plane to lighten load. Hit second time by flak somewhere in Yugoslavia. Very little damage this time. Co-pilot wounded from shattered glass of right cockpit window done by flak, shrapnel. Sighted coastline and Adriatic (gas running very low) turned right and headed for Isle of Viz (Vis). As approached Isle of Corcula, the gas read nil and navigator told pilot he thought it was friendly-held. Pilot gave order to bail out. I was 1st to go out Bomb Bay.

Glen P. DeSpain (765th Squadron)
Father of Mike DeSpain, Member
461st/484th Bomb Groups Assn.



GLEN P. DE SPAIN'S CREW: TOP ROW: SAMUEL N. NORRIS, EDWIN BAUMAN, EVERETT C. KAMPS, EDMUND F. STEFENSON; BOTTOM ROW: GLEN P. DE SPAIN (4TH FROM LEFT), ARTHUR J. MINDRIN, BUFORT E. CULLER, JEFFERSON L. FARREL JR., JOSEPH S. CURTIN, HARRY P. RANIERI, Mike De Spain PHOTO

VIENNA '44

By Emmett S. Goff, LTC USAFR (Ret), Former SSgt. Gunner, Corley's Crew, 484th Bomb Group, 825th Squadron . . . 1944



AN ME 109 BORES IN AT 3 O'CLOCK LOW FOR A HEAD-ON ATTACK, A FAVORITE TACTIC OF THE G.A.F. BECAUSE THE CLOSING TIME WAS EXTREMELY SHORT WHILE KEEPING OUT OF THE TOP TURRET RANGE OF THE B-24 LIBERATOR. DAVE HOYER PHOTO

They slept under the watchful eyes of sentries, making only occasional creaks as the wind snuggled around the ailerons and stabilizers and starlight glinted dimly on their wings. The sentries paced in front of them keeping company through the night until in a few hours, in the early dawn, they and others should come to life.

A half mile away in a farmhouse that had once been an Italian farmer's pride a soldier was finishing his coffee and cursing the war which kept him awake. Finishing his coffee he looked at his watch and reached for his jacket and flashlight. It was time to wake the flying crews, after which he could get some rest.

He buttoned his collar tightly and stepped out into the cold darkness. Crawling into his waiting jeep he cursed the coldness of Italian nights.

The noise of the jeep's brakes by the first tent woke the men as no bugle ever could and told them it was time to get up and that the mission was still on. Lights flickered on in the long rows of tents as men arose and pulled on warm clothes. It would be cold flying up there today, and wool socks and

shirts were things which helped.

Breakfast was hurried but quiet. Coffee and sandwiches were the fare. (These stories of American flyers eating well being so much nonsense. . .)

The fellows speculated as they ate on the mission they were about to fly. They figured from the bomb and gas load it would be a long one. Maybe Vienna. Or Budapest.

There was a faint hint of dawn in the east as the men crowded into the briefing shack. It'd be daylight by the time they were on their way and maybe dark again by the time they'd be back.

Like a school teacher, the officer mounted the platform and all voices hushed in anticipation as, pointer in hand he turned to the map and announced the mission. Today's attack would be on Vienna where they would hit marshalling yards and fresh shipments of supplies; oil, food, and ammunition. They should expect carburetor icing at 14,000 feet, partly cloudy weather on the way but clear over Austria.

Three hundred flak guns could be expected and fighters anytime after leaving Italy.

The men absorb the information intently, their eyes following the pointer over the map learning the route, distances, facts, figures, learning about emergency airfields and colors of the day.

On the wall hangs the portrait of a pretty girl, such as many dream of, love and cherish. Her soft warm eyes plead "please get there---and back!" The pointer has left the map now and the officer is answering questions. He's done his best to prepare the men, and secretly wishing he was young enough again to go himself.

It's beginning to get light outside as the men swarm out of the briefing and crowd into the waiting trucks, lined up ready to take them to their airplanes. Some joke. Some smoke. Some just sit and think, as the truck covers the half mile to the field. They talk about the card game last night, or the cook and the gunner who had a fight.

The sentries are gone, and the bombers are coming to life, with power generators burning and bomb bay lights on, and with crew chiefs making their last minute checks. Preparation gains momentum as the air crews start to arrive; the engineer, pilots, gunners, bombardier and navigator.

The engineer talks with the ground chief and learns about little things which may be wrong. He gives the airplane his own preflight check, item by item as his training has taught him.

The tail gunner crawls back to check his turret. If anything is wrong he'd better know it now. He charges his machine guns, checks his ammunition, tries his elevation and azimuth, and looks at the gun sights and oxygen supply.

It's light now and you gather outside and dress. You put on your electric suit and slippers, over which go heavier pants and jacket, and finally parachute, helmet, and boots. Time is growing short now and everyone hurries. The pilot's ready to start engines. It's time to climb aboard. Time to get to work. Time to get into the air, and on the way.

The engines cough to life, one by one till their roar deafens one's ears and shakes the ship. The crew chief hands the fire extinguisher to the gunner standing in the bomb-bay, looks him in the eye for a second, and is gone.

The engines are quieted finally and the pilot gets his signal to taxi. Slowly the man-made bird moves out of the revetment and bounces along the dirt road towards the runway where other bombers are lined up. Like cars at a traffic light, waiting their turn to take off.

Your turn comes finally. The ship quivers momentarily as the engines eagerly bite more air. Then you're off, racing down the runway . . . then your motion becomes quieter and you're airborne.

Somehow you always watch the ground when you're in the air, just as you like to watch the sky while you're on the ground. You look below you and on the ground. You are not alone today. Around you are other bombers who have just shaken themselves from the Earth. You fly along as brothers with your fuselages sparkling in the morning sun. You're all fighting to gain altitude and to assemble your formation. Your ship falls into line with others ahead and those coming up behind take up positions.

Like climbing a spiral staircase the bombers circle in the sparkling morning, gaining altitude and accumulating late comers. Then when all is ready, an order is given, and you are no longer circling, but heading out over the Adriatic and up towards Germany.

The sea is deep blue and pretty this morning, although no one has time to enjoy the scene. Everyone settles down to the business of checking instruments, keeping formation. And--watching for fighters. The engines roar steadily on and time goes by. It gets colder as you go higher and everyone has his heated suit turned up and his oxygen mask muzzled on his face.

The interphone is as busy as a partyline back home, with friendly joking and conversation. It's early yet and trouble isn't really likely until they're further north--in fighter country.

The nose gunner in his turret of plexiglass scans the sky and sees a speck racing along the horizon. There's a moment of tension, until one of our weather scouts is identified.

Ahead lies the coast of Yugoslavia, magnificent in the morning light as she rises sharply out of the sea with her red cliffs forming a contrast against low lying clouds. Red tracers reeling into the ocean below signify that the ships are test firing their guns and soon the dull staccato of your own guns and the acrid smell of powder let you know all is well, as the mission enters a tenses phase.

Excitement ripples through the formation as fighter escorts--P-38s from the 82nd--race up from behind and sail above you, then race on ahead looking for trouble. Small wonder the escort holds a big place in the bomber man's heart!

The course is shifted now, high over the plains of Yugoslavia. You head north, more directly towards the target. By now the Germans are guessing and waiting, narrowing down their choices of where we'll strike and alerting their fighters.



A GERMAN FW-190 FIGHTER PULLS AWAY FROM A BURNING B-24 AS IT MAKES ITS FINAL EARTHBOUND PLUNGE. JAMES C. DOOLEY PHOTO 461ST B.G.

Forty minutes till target time now and the Austrian Alps show through the clouds. They're impressive and beautiful with little valleys whose roads and villages in the snow make you wonder about the people living down there.

Flak suits are passed around and the flyers slip on their armoured vests and steel helmets. You've finally reached the I.P. ("Initial Point") and turning as one the formation begins the downhill run at twenty-five thousand feet.

The bombardier warns over the interphone against talking as he and the pilot tersely listen to one another's signals; the bombardier working his utmost on the target ahead and the pilot following his orders and holding to the run. Vienna is just something hazy in the distance ahead as you strain to see her outlines. You're first to go over today so you won't see flak 'till you're almost upon her.

The order comes for bomb bay doors

to open, and the rumble of air vibrates throughout the ship and runs up and down your back. And you feel strangely vulnerable hanging there with your insides exposed.

Ahead Vienna is now a city spread out like the chart at briefing; a city of a thousand years of history--a history in which you're now playing a part.

A black splotch of oily smoke suddenly mushrooms in the air ahead--and another! And another. They follow in quick succession, filling the sky with black smoke--feeling for you.

Your ship is dispensing chaff now...silvery stuff like Christmas tinsel which falls behind like a blanket, jamming the ground batteries radar. But they can still track and shoot you realize, as one explodes directly below and another whams alongside. The fragments slam into your fuselage, sounding like pebbles flung onto a tin roof. You can see the red flashes in the close ones and even sometimes the blink of the batteries below. And you swear you'll never go duck hunting again!

Number three engine is hit and is feathered, and the engineer and pilot are busy. The navigator checks to see that everyone is OK, and the co-pilot passes a warning to look out for fighters. You're off the target now, and the formation's tightly packed. It's a matter of group pride--and survival against fighters.

Shooting across the deep blue comes your escort, beautiful and reassuring. And then they're off again, playing around seemingly...but looking and ready.

The engineer is transferring fuel now and there are problems. And he sounds worried.

Then you hear it! "Dog fight at ten o'clock high," in the top turret gunner's deep voice. "On your toes." There's something going on up there alright, and your escort is grappling with it. Then behind you the tail gun-



A B-24 IN DISTRESS LEAVES THE FORMATION HIGH OVER THE ALPS (NOTE: THE RIGHT-MAIN GEAR HAS DROPPED DOWN) GEORGE F. BRINKER PHOTO 461ST B.G.



A TORRETTA BASED B-24 DROPS OUT OF FORMATION, FUEL VAPORS POURING OUT OF A RUPTURED FUEL TANK AFTER BEING HIT WITH ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE.

PHOTO BY JAMES C. DOOLEY 461ST B.G.

ner calls out: fighters attacking from behind you.

FW-190's and ME-109's sneak in at the formation behind, veer off and make passes with the bombers shooting back. A ME-109 goes down. As if someone had taken a pencil and drawn a thin vertical line in the sky. Two Liberators roll sideways and fall away bellowing orange flame, then blowing up. And a FW-190 breaks away and comes at you.

The tail gunner sees him and is excited. "Fighter!" he screams, "low at six o'clock!" He leaves his mike button down in the excitement, and the dull staccato of the guns grips your stomach. You pray and wait. Then, "I got him! I got Him!"

Your escort is busy now and the fight seems to drift off. Maybe you're safe for awhile and lucky today, and you begin to have visions of mail and the squadron club tonight.

But you're slowly falling behind the formation as a worried engineer fuses over the fuel lines and hydraulic systems. And someone else takes over your place. Over Hungary you realize that you're suddenly alone, with both your escort and formation far ahead. You've got to make it back by yourself. And sitting there - over a land sworn against you and your country, you realize what a privilege it is to represent all of those people - your countrymen, Americans - back in the wonderful United States, thousands of miles away.

Your luck is good and you make it back over Yugoslavia and now out over the Adriatic. Ahead lies Italy...resplendent in the white clouds and four o'clock sunshine. Off come the hel-

metts and oxygen masks, and you relax and light a cigarette. You turn on the radio compass for some American sawing *. Life is good and you're going to enjoy more of it - at least another days worth.

Dropping through the opening in the clouds is fun and then you fly along the deck, above cities and farms. Its peaceful. Another world.

At your base they've been waiting and watching, first for the main group as it came rumbling overhead and peeling off into the traffic pattern. And now some of them still wait and watch for stragglers. Like yourselves.

You're over the field at last, with fuel now your real concern. And you can't waste time on the pattern so you turn for the runway, firing flares. The hydraulic system is also out and you lower your gear by hand.

You're almost down now, nearing the end of the runway. Your engines increase their bite for a moment just as number two begins to cough. Then you're on the ground with wheels catching on the mats and smoking, and you're coasting across the field.

The gang's waiting at the revetment as the last engine is cut and moves on the ship. You all just sit still for a minute, suddenly very tired. Then you drop from the catwalk to the ground.

Doughnuts and smiles from Ellie Mae the Red Cross girls, and straight rye whiskey from the medics cheer you up, and you're eager for some chow and relaxation. But for a few moments the mission must be relived in interrogation, then it's off to the club and multi Vino and Congac, cut with grapefruit juice. And lots of talk.

The starlight is glinting on their

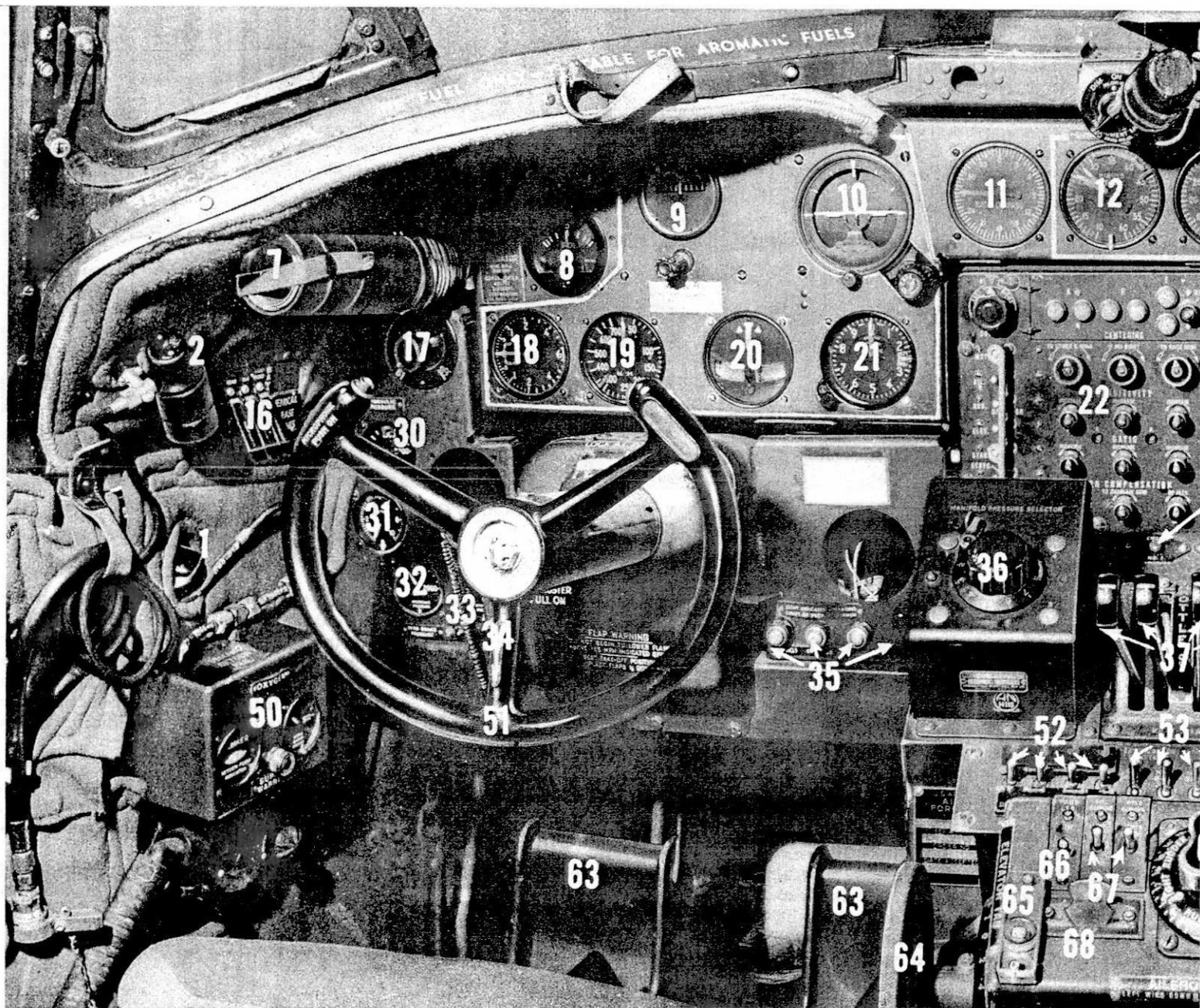
wings again as the bombers sit on the field, being readied for tomorrow. The wind tonight is cold again and as the sentries pace back and forth they pull up their collars a little tighter to keep warm, 'til in a few hours, in the early dawn, the bombers should once again come to life.

EMMETT S. GOFF, LTC USAFR(Ret)
Former SSgt, Gunner, Corley's Crew,
484th Bomb Group,
825th Squadron...1944

*Editors Note: The Author is referring to the Armed Forces radio broadcasts of American music.

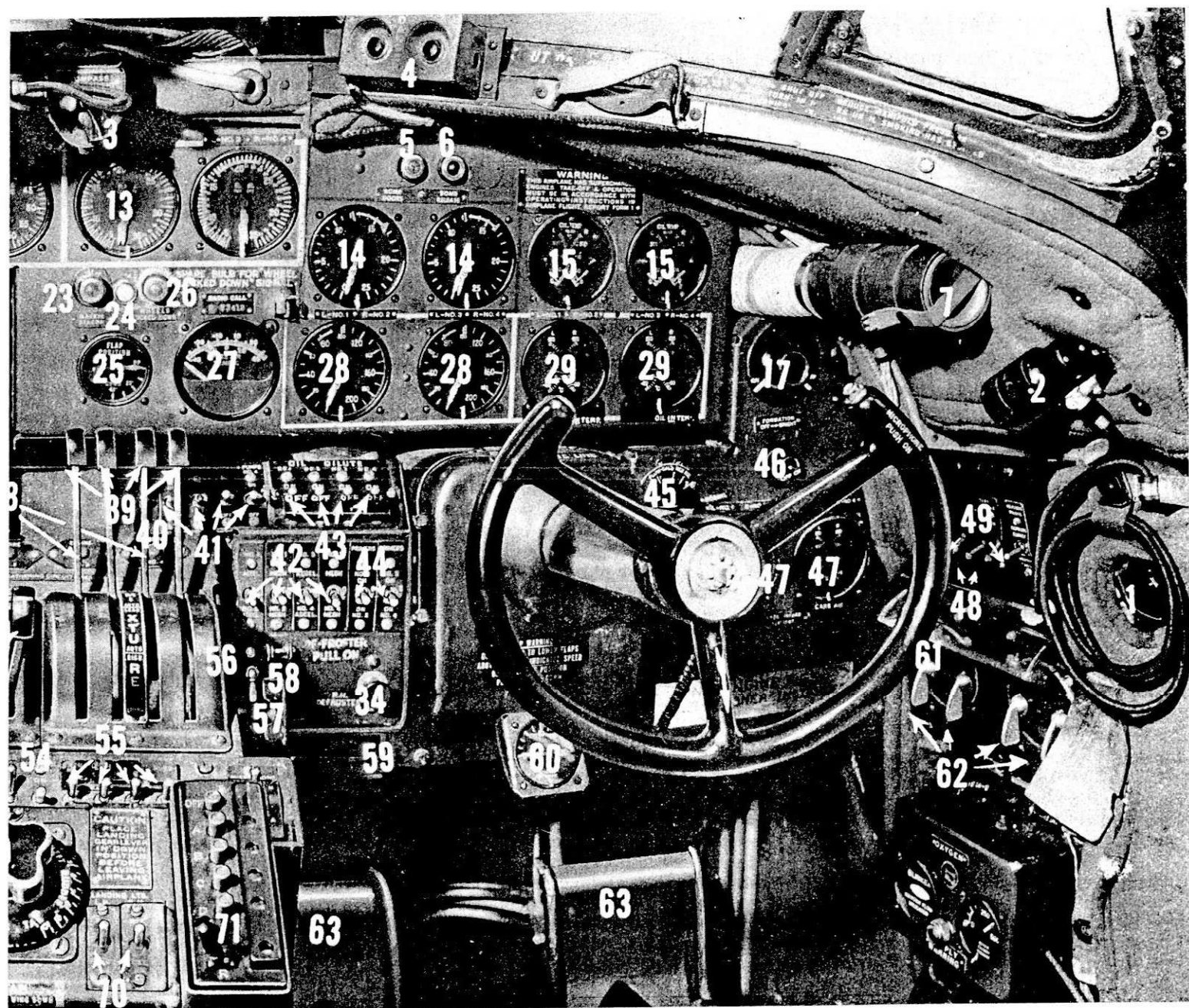


EMMETT S. GOFF (825TH SQ. NOSE GUNNER) LT. COL. USAFR(RET).



Cockpit of the Liberator... B-

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Fluorescent Light Switches | 19. Airspeed Indicator |
| 2. 24 Volt DC Fluorescent Light | 20. Turn and Bank Indicator |
| 3. Magnetic Compass Light Rheostat | 21. Altimeter |
| 4. IFF Radio Destroyer Switch | 22. C-1 Automatic Pilot |
| 5. Bomb Doors Indicator | 23. Marker Beacon Indicator |
| 6. Bomb Release Indicator | 24. Landing Gear Indicator Test Button |
| 7. Defroster Ducts | 25. Flap Position Indicator |
| 8. Pilot Director Indicator | 26. Landing Gear Indicator |
| 9. Directional Gyro | 27. Free Air Temperature Gage |
| 10. Gyro Horizon | 28. Oil Pressure Gages |
| 11. Radio Compass Indicator | 29. Oil Temperature Gages |
| 12. Manifold Pressure Gages | 30. Hydraulic Pressure Gages |
| 13. Tachometers | 31. Suction Gage |
| 14. Fuel Pressure Gages | 32. Inboard Brake Pressure Gage |
| 15. Cylinder Temperature Gages | 33. Outboard Brake Pressure Gage |
| 16. Chemical Release Switches | 34. Defroster Controls |
| 17. Ventilators | 35. Propeller Governor Limit Lights |
| 18. Rate-of-climb Indicator | 36. Turbo Boost Selector |

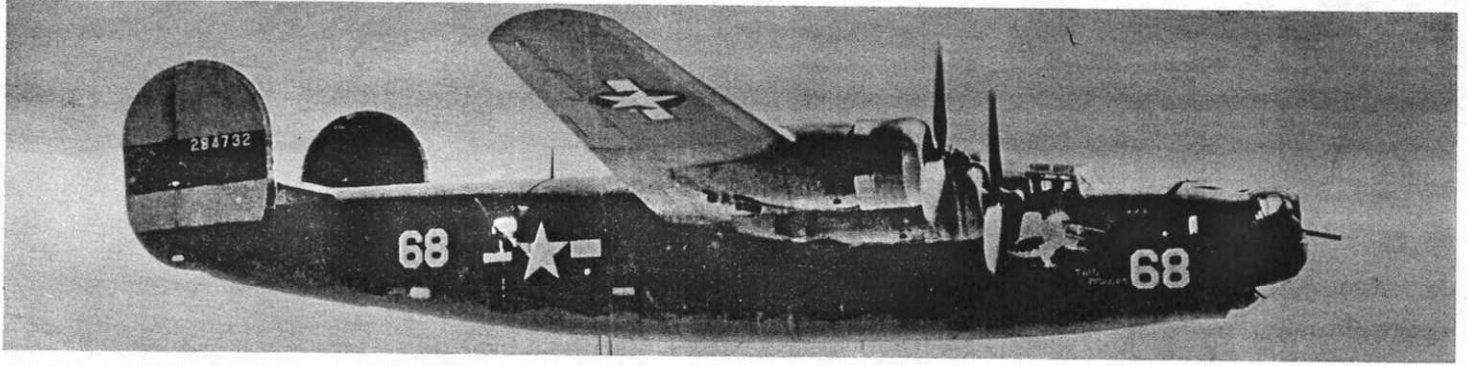


24 PILOT'S INSTRUMENTS AND CONTROLS

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 37. Throttles | 55. Cowl Flap Switches |
| 38. Propeller Feathering Circuit Breakers | 56. SCR 535 Power Switch |
| 39. Mixture Controls | 57. Throttle Friction Lock |
| 40. Bomb Bay Fuel Transfer Switch | 58. SCR 535 Emergency Switch |
| 41. Booster Pump Switches | 59. De-icer Control |
| 42. Engine Starter Switches | 60. De-icer Pressure Gage |
| 43. Oil Dilution Switches | 61. Emergency Ignition Switch Bar |
| 44. Primer Switches | 62. Ignition Switches |
| 45. Anti-icer Control | 63. Brake Pedals |
| 46. Formation Lights Rheostat | 64. Elevator Tab Control Wheel |
| 47. Carburetor Air Temperature Gages | 65. Alarm Button |
| 48. Main Storage Battery Switches | 66. Passing Light Switch |
| 49. Heater and Defroster Switches | 67. Navigation Light Switches |
| 50. Oxygen Panels | 68. A C Inverter Switch |
| 51. Pilot's Wheel | 69. Rudder Tab Control Knob |
| 52. Propeller Switches | 70. Landing Light Switches |
| 53. Intercooler Shutter Switches | 71. SCR 522 Control Box |
| 54. Pitot Heater Switch | |

THE B-24 IN COMBAT

Editor's Note: Taken from the Pilot's Training Manual, you may find this testimonial to the B-24 amazing after your wartime experience with this bird. But here we are to talk about it!



"TAIL DRAGON", A B-24 H-15 ONE OF A BATCH OF 66 IDENTICAL AIRCRAFT BUILT BY FORD AT WILLOW RUN, MICHIGAN, SHOWN ASSIGNED TO THE 766TH SQUADRON, 461ST BOMB GROUP CIRCA 1944-1945 (ITALY)

767 Sq. see Remnants by Stanley A. Schwenker

The B-24 is used today all over the world. It is the workhorse of every air force. Its formations are roaring over mountains, seas, desert, and arctic, laden with tons of destruction for the enemy.

Liberators are being used more and more in combat for one conclusive reason: The B-24 has everything—speed, climbing power, carrying ability, and above all, guts. The B-24's combat record is best told by those who have flown it through flak and swarming fighters, in mission after mission, and know first hand what it can do.

WHAT COMBAT LEADERS SAY:

"The B-24 has proved itself capable of delivering tremendous blows against the enemy over extremely long ranges, under unfavorable weather conditions and against heavy enemy opposition. If the gunners are properly trained, they can create havoc among enemy fighters. I have seen formations of B-24's penetrate heavily defended battle zones, completely destroy their target, fight off twice their number of enemy fighters and, through their maneuverability and firepower, destroy over 50% of all attacking enemy fighters without loss to themselves."

There and Back

"In the words of the old-time pilots, 'She'll take you there and bring you back.' I have seen B-24's shot up by 88-mm. anti-aircraft so badly it seemed impossible that the airplane could stay in the air. One pilot brought his B-24 back to base with half the rudder control completely shot away. We have had airplanes come back under almost unbelievable handicaps: with propellers shot off; with direct hits in gasoline cells by 20, 40 and 88-mm. explosive shells; with the 2 lower engine supports knocked completely off; with both ailerons gone; after complete loss of rudder control; after loss of elevator control. Airplanes have returned with controls so badly damaged they were landed on autopilot."

Maneuverability

"A good gunner will conserve his ammunition and make every bullet count. I was caught once, separated from a formation, with no guns working and 500 miles behind enemy front lines, by an enemy plane which had a full load of ammunition. We successfully evaded his attacks and forced him to expend all his ammunition. Maneuverability alone enabled us to return to base. One B-24 was separated from formation over the target and attacked by 15 ME 109's. Through skillful maneuvering and use of firepower this crew shot down 8 of the enemy fighters in a running battle of 100 miles and returned safely to base. In another instance a B-24 with the tail turret out was attacked in a running battle. Enemy fighters knew the vulnerable spot and, as they approached from the rear, the airplane was maneuvered so that the top turret gunner could fire at them. Nine enemy planes were shot down in this manner."

Instrument Flying

"The B-24 is a good instrument airplane. About 80% of our flying was instrument or formation or a combination of the two. It is a good indication of your flying ability and of the flight characteristics of the airplane when you can fly formation for 5 or 6 hours and do it well and then go back on instruments and fly a good compass course for 3 or 4 hours. The ability to get your plane back sometimes depends on this. I know that during training in the U.S. it is pretty hard to sit under a hood and fly instruments when you could just be cruising around. It's hard to sit in a Link trainer for hours at a time and work out your procedure. But it pays off when you get out where you have to be good in formation and instrument flying."

GUTS

"The housing around the propeller and 3 cylinders of our No. 4 engine were shot out. Two feet of prop on No. 1 engine was smashed, tearing a foot-

-and-a-half hole in the left aileron. The engine was vibrating like a bucking bronco. And we had a wing cell leak in No. 3. We were both flying that airplane with every ounce of skill we possessed. We put on 10% of flaps to get the best lift without too much drag, and kept our wings straight by using rudder. We muddled through the fighter attack and staggered away from the target on 2 1/2 engines. To gain altitude to cross a mountain range, we threw out everything that was movable, including oxygen bottles, gas masks, ammunition, radio equipment, and everything a screwdriver could get loose. Somehow she brought us back. We had to crash-land the plane but nobody was hurt. The first thing I did after we got away from the plane was to kiss the navigator."

Come-Back

"One of the B-24's was hit on the left wing, just outside the outboard engine. I thought the wing would fall off, since the shot went right through the main structure. You could have dropped a barrel through the hole, but the airplane continued to fly formation. A few seconds later a direct hit ripped a big hole in the bomb bay, severed the aileron cable, knocked out the hydraulic and electric systems and the oxygen system. We escorted it 800 miles to the base. It landed without ailerons and without brakes and was back in service in about 3 weeks."

Range

A fully loaded Liberator crossed the Atlantic in 6 hours and 12 minutes. The raid on the Rumanian oil refineries was a round trip of 2500 miles. Raids from Midway Island on Jap-held Wake Island involved a round trip of 2400 miles. British Air Chief Marshal Sir Christopher Courtney termed the Liberator the "most successful of all anti-submarine aircraft now used by the United Nations." The combat record of the B-24 speaks for itself.

The Rise and Fall of a Liberator

The following story is reprinted from the Liberator Club's publication "Briefing", Fall 1980 Edition.

Long-awaited attempts to raise a B-24 bomber from the 150-foot frigid depths of Hunting Lake in the High Sierras of Central California have been aborted, as they say in Liberator language.

Fresno rock concert promoter Gene Forte's underfinanced salvage mission took an ignominious beating - leaving Liberator wreckage strewn over the lake floor and a lawsuit filed to recover those portions removed during the ill-fated operation. And this modern-day Midas had everything he touched turn to red ink.

The 28 year old promoter "expected to spend \$100,000" in the salvage attempt which he hoped to recoup by setting up a "Liberator Historical Faire," charging spectators \$1.50 each for admission.

The promoter's lawyer acknowledged "poor planning" on the part of both Forte and the salvage company - noting there were no pre-arranged terms or methods of payment. The salvage firm held the B-24's wing, two engines and propellers, rear gun turret and several smaller pieces while demanding \$10,000 cash and \$40,000 in guaranteed pledges. (Four commercial divers at \$1,000 per day - were at Huntington Lake for over a week.)

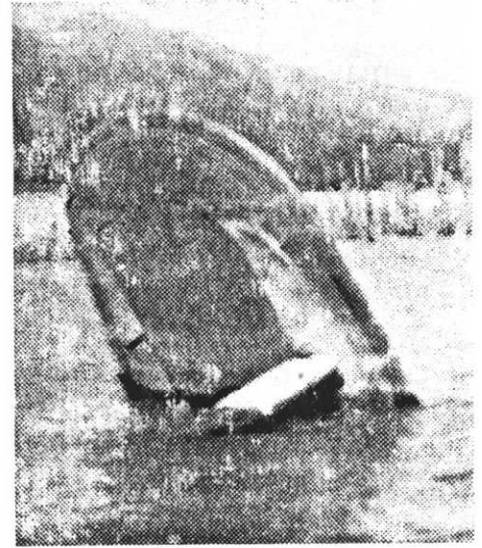
Lawyer Van Rozeboom claimed they could have finished the job in another day and retrieved the other half of the scattered wreckage. Because of costs involved, some observers have suggested that the remainder including bodies of crewmen reported to be in the tail section of the plane - might never be recovered.

The bomber (from the 461st BG) crashed into Huntington Lake Dec. 6, 1943 on a flight from Fresno's Hammer Field. The Lib had smashed through the ice-covered lake during a crash landing at night and sunk out of sight with six crewmen entombed until bodies were removed in 1955 when the wreck was finally discovered. Two survivors had mysteriously bailed out while the others remained aboard to ride the bomber to their deaths.

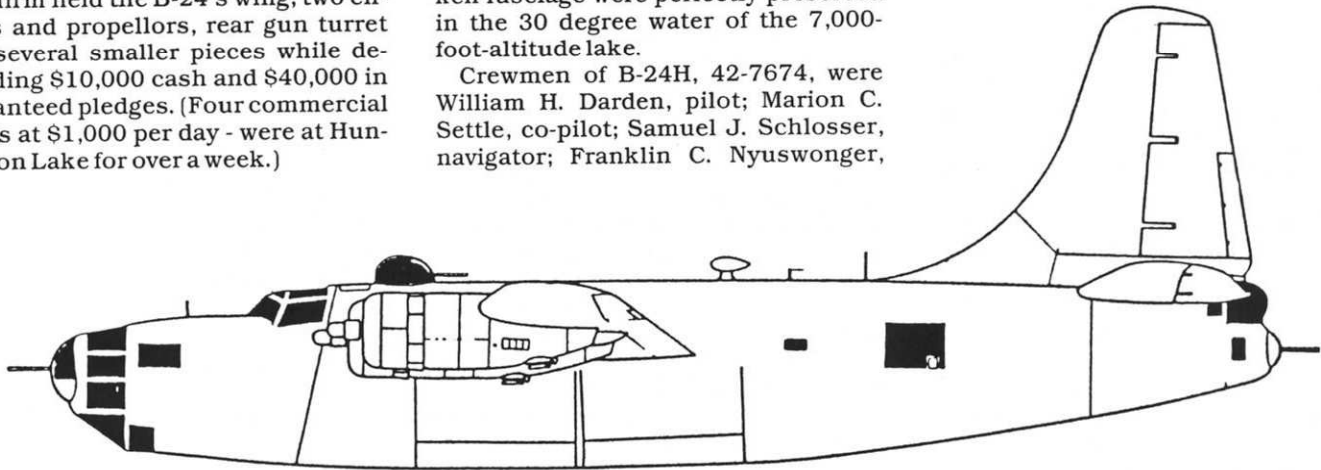
In 1955, Southern California Edison Co. drained the lake down to 93 feet in order to repair cracks in the dam. As waters receded the twin tails of the Liberator became visible and then the wing and engines appeared.

Bodies of crewmen found in the broken fuselage were perfectly preserved in the 30 degree water of the 7,000-foot-altitude lake.

Crewmen of B-24H, 42-7674, were William H. Darden, pilot; Marion C. Settle, co-pilot; Samuel J. Schlosser, navigator; Franklin C. Nyuswonger,



engineer; George J. Barulic, radio operator; Richard Spangler; Donald V. Vander Plasch and Richard E. Mayo, gunners. Settle and Barulic bailed out and survived.



PRESENTING THE B-24N

The new B-24N will soon be in operation in many bases in the continental United States. It incorporates a number of changes and new features developed as a result of the airplane's extensive combat experience.

The major difference in the exterior appearance of the B-24N is the single vertical stabilizer. Also, the new nose turret installation is ball type. This change has cleaned up the nose and greatly increased the pilot's forward visibility.

The most important change in the inside, as far as the pilot is concerned, is the relocation of many of the switches. Also, some of the instruments and other equipment have been moved.

The general flight characteristics of the B-24N are basically the same as

those of other series, and stalling speeds are the same. The principal difference is that in earlier B-24 airplanes the rudder does not give enough directional control at low airspeeds (around 130 mph) with an outboard engine not working. In the B-24N, however, rudder control is good enough to maintain straight flight with no yaw under these conditions. You can cruise with two engines out on one side at airspeeds of 150 to 155 mph and trim the airplane to fly "hands off." This condition has been tested, with No. 1 and No. 2 feathered and No. 3 and No. 4 pulling nearly rated power.

The control pressures have been improved making it much easier to hold the airplane under unbalanced power conditions. The rudder pressures are

now considerably lighter, and aileron and elevator pressures have been lightened to a point where they are very satisfactory.

The B-24N is powered with four Pratt-Whitney, Model R-1830-75 engines, which allow more horsepower for takeoff.

The takeoff, or turbo bypass, valve has been added to the engines on the B-24N. The operation of this valve will require some study by the pilot before he becomes proficient in its use.

Generally speaking, the B-24N is much more of a pilot's airplane and the average pilot will find much less difficulty when flying under unbalanced power conditions.

*Editors Note: Where was this Plane when we needed it?

HOW I GOT TO TORRETTA

Many air crews, including those of the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups, owe their lives to the existence of the emergency landing fields on several Yugoslavian islands in the Adriatic sea. Member Bill Kinyoun, 496th Service Squadron, sent in this report of his experiences travelling via military transport to Torretta.

While on detached service, Bill's duties took him to the Island of Vis where he labored to restore battle damaged aircraft, that had landed or crashed on the Island, for ferrying back to Italian bases:

January 13, 1944 that was our day. No one slept much that night we just laid in our bunks and wondered what was in front of us. We knew we were poorly trained men with little experience. As for myself I graduated from Aviation Cadet training at Yale University on September 9, 1943 as a 2nd Lt. I had had only 2 weeks trianing with the squadron in the field and that was on P-47 type aircraft. We were going overseas as a trained B-24 service squadron. While in Cadets at Yale, I had worked on a Liberator for a day and once during our two weeks trianing in Florida we worked on a B-24. We were to pick up a B-24 bomb group overseas, that we knew. Another thing, where are we going Europe, Mediterranean, Africa, India etc.?

We boarded a train and in an hour we were along side our ship. A little gray thing. How could that get across the water? Red Cross Gray Ladies were there to send us off with warm coffee as it was bitter cold and a GI orchestra was there to play a few march pieces.

I was platoon leader of the 1st platoon and consequently I was the first to lead the troops up the gang plank. We were carrying bed rolls, musette bags, overseas bags and besides I was carrying my flight bag. As I struggled up the gang plank under my load, Doc, Beck, Richardson and the enlisted men who were on the advance detachment met us with all kinds of remarks, joking and I quickly straightened up, looked around and snapped "where are the oars for this tub; they all laughed and 1st Lt. Bill Richardson took me to my quarters so I could get rid of my equipment and then we all placed the enlisted men in their quarters. When I saw what they had my heart bled for them. It was a shame to put men into a dirty hole like that. Approximately 500 men in bunks stacked 6 in a tier and a room not much bigger than 3 tennis courts put together. After we were all settled we went up on deck. Our first meal on the boat was good and while we were finishing it was dark and I was informed we were to pull out at dusk so

Richardson, Beck, and the rest of us went up on deck as we were MP's and were ordered by the transport commander to keep all the men below deck while we were pulling out of the harbor. It's a funny feeling that comes over you when they hoist the anchor and the boat pulls away and out into the Chesapeake Bay. We could see many lights in the bay and as we moved down the bay and out we finally dropped anchor in a few hours and waited most of the night then we could see the lights of the other ships doing the same and heard the noise of their anchor dropping. We knew then that the convoy was forming. At daybreak we hoisted anchor and on January 14th our convoy sailed out into the Atlantic to our unknown destination.

After we were about two days out we turned south toward Bermuda, a Navy blimp and seaplane came out and escorted us for awhile. We turned north and then changed our position about every fifteen minutes. We had a lot of ships in our convoy. I counted 97 with our destroyer escorts. After we were about 2 weeks out, British patrol planes picked us up and we were informed they were from the Azores. Then about daybreak the officer of the guard work me up and said he could see lights as if they were on land and thought we were at the straits of Gibraltar. He turned out to be right and the lights turned out to be Tangiers on one side and Tarifa Spain on the other side and we steamed through the Strait. We could look through the glasses and see people in the fields and finally we could see the rock of Gibraltar. By this time it was daylight and everone was on deck. One of the boys remarked "Gee there is no Prudential Life Insurance Sign on it." He was sure ribbed by those present.

Here at Gibraltar we picked up a Canadian Corvet squadron and they escorted us in the Mediterranean. We lost our American escort at Gibraltar. Lt. Ashley came running up and said we were going to Oran, we went past Oran as, we steamed down the mountainous African (North) coast. As we approached Algiers and were due south of the Baleric Islands our trouble really started. We had had submarine scares in the Atlantic but this was an aerial attack by the Germans. The flak put up by the ships in the convoy was intense. Beck and I were under cover watching when we both saw what appeared to be a man hit and leaning over the rail. I hit the deck with my steel helmet on and crawled with the shells hitting all around me to get the man. I reached up to pull him off the rail and it was a pair of overalls someone had washed and put there to

dry. I was glad no one was hit but felt mad I almost got killed saving a pair of overalls. I crawled back and almost got under cover when shells started to hit the deck again,* then I got up and ran to cover diving like a swimmer for cover and fell right on top of Beck and Doc Krajec. Nothing was said. (*Fragments of spent anti aircraft shells.)

None of us could sleep that night as we expected other attacks to follow as the wiping out of a convoy the size of ours would greatly aid the Germans. The following morning at 7:00 as I looked toward the north I heard a rapid succession of flak batteries come from the corvets and saw them shoot down a German observation plane.

As it came spinning down toward the water I looked to see if the pilot chuted out but saw no chute so I guess the pilot was killed by the flak barrage.

The following day was spent with one submarine scare after the other and a constant lookout for further attacks from the air. On February the fourth we sailed past a couple of small rocks. Our ship stopped and turned around. We didn't know what to think. Four other ships dropped out of the convoy and proceeded with us into the Bay of Tunis. We dropped anchor about a mile off of shore and could see a town with a lot of people. We saw several jeeps and war planes flying overhead. This was the first stop we made and we had now been on the boat 22 days. Looking around we could see beaches and sunken ships with stacks sticking over the water. The town turned out to be LaGoulette between Bizerte and Tunis. We stayed there at anchor for three days and were joined at anchor by 12 more ships on February 7 making 24 ships sitting here at anchor. The morale of our men was high but slowly slipping. At 2:30 p.m. on February 10th we hoisted anchor and sailed north toward Sicily. February 11 we passed about 2 miles off the west coast of Sicily and saw how rough and mountainous the terrain was. We all heartily agreed that the boys of the infantry had done a wonderful job capturing it as quick as they did, 18 days. That night as we were sailing north we could see a volcano glowing in the distance to the east of us. One of the sailors on board said it was near the Strait of Messina and in the Lipari group of islands. It was called Stromboli. On February 12 we sailed past the Isle of Capri and into the Naples harbor. It was here we first saw the destruction of war. Ships were sunk at the moorings and capsized in the bay. The buildings as far as we could see were in ruins. Mt. Vesuvius was directly in front of us and smoke was

pouring out her top. As we were looking at all the ruins a pilot came aboard and directed the tugs as we were pushed into the docks. The dock was a cement affair and badly damaged by the shelling it had taken. The troops were unloaded and loaded on 6 x 6 trucks. The first time we had touched foot on ground in 31 days.

The 6 x 6 trucks with the men pulled away from the pier and then traveled through the bomb scarred and ruined areas of Naples. We passed the old castle located on the waterfront and came out on a wide street bordered on one side by a park filled with bust statues and some very modern hotels on the other. We proceeded along this street and finally passed through a tunnel and as we came out we passed a military installation tented and this was a reple depot. We passed by this and then the road turned north for a short distance and then we turned to our left and came in view of a college campus. We pulled into the campus which turned out to be Costanzo Ciano College and it was badly damaged. We were given quarters in one of the buildings. The floors were of hard marble like tile, no heating and no windows. The buildings were either damaged by bombings or by the Germans as they had used this place too. We stayed here for several days under numerous German aerial assaults, not aimed at us but the planes passed over us to bomb our ships in the harbor. Naples was off limits as a serious typhus epidemic had broken out among the Neapolitans, and the 5th Army medical and sanitary corps were busy DDTing the buildings and the people.

February 16, Capt. Ramsey called me in and told me I was to stay behind with 6 men and pick up our equipment from the boat with trucks and take them to Bari on the Adriatic Sea. He told me I was to get the trucks the best way I could. I helped the men load on trucks and they were taken to a railroad station and loaded on *40 and 8's (four wheel, box cars) and that night they pulled out for Bari. The men and I looked for our equipment which was located at a dump about 5 miles east of Naples and decided to stay there in tents till I could find trucks. While we were there our first night, German planes again struck near us strafing the airfield at Capatachino and pulling up just over us. They were so low we could easily tell they were Messerschmit 109's with the cross clearly visible on the wings. We all were in our fox holes with our carbines and me with my 45 pistol and they were useless. (*40 & 8 a WWI term meaning 40 men or eight horses.)

On February 18th I finally rounded up 6 trucks and we loaded them and started out for Bari. We spent the night

at Foggia which was having an aerial attack as search lights were still trying to pick up the planes. We drove through the main street, passed a big red brick building, and on through the town. There was no place to stay and we could not drive at night as our lights would be picked up by night fighters so we pulled into what looked to be new military base all constructed with brick. As we approached we saw black soldiers with what looked to be towels wrapped around their heads. This was a detachment of Indians of the British 8th Army. The commander was a young white British Captain and he directed us to an American unit in the same encampment. This turned out to be a pipeline construction battalion. They took us in and fed us. That night Lt. Bob Fernandez asked me if I wanted to go to a club and we went. The club later became the Foggia Red Cross Officers Club and the three of us officers were among the signers of the book of record. I think we were on the second page.

The following morning we started out for Bari and passed through some towns called Cerignola, San Fernando de Pulia, Barletta, Trani, Molfetta and finally into Bari. We pulled into a big military station which turned out to be Air Force General Depot Number 5 and asked if they knew where the squadron was. They told us they were there and we went over to one of the warehouses and they greeted us with a lot of questions about what happened to us after they left. From all I could gather we were the lucky ones to come over on the trucks cause it took us 6 hours and on the train it took them better than 40 hours to cover the 200 miles. After we were all together we moved out of the depot and set up camp just outside the depot. We were in a farmers plowed field and then the rains came. Unless one has been in similar conditions and has experienced the Italian winters it would be hard to conceive the hardships and miseries we underwent. At times the rain made a large lake for us to drive our now acquired one jeep and weapons carrier through. I found out that a very good friend was our Commanding Officer and went to see him. We had a real reunion and Col. Manning (Omaha, Nebraska) asked me to make a flight with him and Capt. Rogers in their B25 to North Africa. We took off from Bari airport and headed southwest and in a little while we were over Palermo, Sicily, then Trapini and Marsala, and out over the blue Mediterranean sea. In a couple of hours we could see the rugged North African coast and we then flew over Bizerte. Looking down I could see ships sunk at the docks and many gutted buildings. We then changed our

course and flew down the coast toward Algiers. All along the coast I could see beached and sunken liberty ship, landing crafts, enemy ships as well as Allied. Soon we were over Algiers and I could see a large blue ship on the beach in the Algiers harbor. We circled the city and radioed Maison Blanche airfield for landing instructions. We then circled the field and set down on a steel runway that clattered from the time we touched down till we taxied off the runway and up to the well scarred hanger. A staff car, a French made Ford, came out to meet us and drove us into Algiers. We went directly to headquarters in the St. George hotel and completed our business. Col. Manning set me up in La Belle Tour hotel for the evening. Several other American officers staying there were interested in me as I looked battleworn and mostly I was the first one they had talked to who came back from Italy. Later that same night we picked up and went to the Algerian version of a Burlesque and it was rather corny as we say in English but by this time we had grown to enjoy it as we had had no entertainment of any kind up to this time and I enjoyed it immensely. We went back to the hotel and went to bed. I got up early the following morning, dressed and walked down to Rue Michelle to a transient officers mess and got my breakfast. The morning was spent just looking around the city which I thought was really beautiful. It was strange for me to see people dressed in sheets but that was the case and I accepted it with out question. They have been dressed that way for centuries and why should I try to change them. I saw an officers PX (Post Exchange) and bought some 1st Lt. Bars as Richardson and Welsch had received promotions and 1st Lt bars were unobtainable in Italy. They were still wearing 2nd Lt. Bars too. I thought I might be promoted sometime and I might as well have some on hand in the event that I should. This sightseeing took all morning and I was to meet Col. Manning and Capt. Rogers at the transient officers mess. I walked over and they were there waiting for me and we had lunch. Col. Manning told me we were flying to Constantine that afternoon and that a staff car would pick us up in a few minutes to take us back to Maison Blanche where we left our B25. After clearing the field we took off and headed our nose southeast toward the Atlas mountains and presently we were over them. We were only a few minutes out from Algiers when it started to snow and these north African snows are really bad. We could barely see the mountain tops but we skillfully eluded them. Occasionally we came out of the snow and could see towns with stone bulding and red tile

roofs on top of the mountains with no road leading into the town but a small donkey trail. In about 2 hours we were over Constantine. I could see a deep gorge running through the center of the town. There were several high bridges over the gorge. We radioed La Kraub airfield which is located about 15 miles southeast of Constantine and requested landing instructions. Capt. Rogers was at the controls and was instructed by the tower, the field was closed as the dirt runway was a sea of mud. He being a command pilot and no field to land at for several hundred miles chose to land, and with great skill and caution, set the B25 down on the eastwest runway. The plane responded beautifully to his coaxing and come to a stop at the end of the runway. We then taxied over to the operations tower and cut our engines. We radioed the tower to bring up a staff car as the Commanding Officer of the Service Command was there. A jeep came out onto the muddy field and picked us up and took us to operations. There we were met by a staff car and were driven to the St. George Hotel in Constantine. There we transacted our business and had a bite to eat in the restaurant. A beautiful little blonde French girl with dancing blue eyes waited on us. She spoke beautiful English with that certain midwestern drawl. Why she had the midwestern drawl, I don't know. We left the hotel and drove into town. Many French refugees were there. Col. Manning spotted a beautiful French woman he knew as he had been stationed in Constantine a year before. We stopped and talked to her and she was happy to see us. She invited us to come to her apartment but we were flying right back to Italy that afternoon so was unable. We left her and drove to a jeweler friend of Col. Mannings and had a nice visit with him and his son in their apartment. The son was highly educated, being a graduate of the University of Algiers. He spoke English with a decided accent, but we had no trouble conversing. The apartment was the most beautiful I have ever seen. The furniture being of gold Louis XIV and the walls in red satin. On the table was some Algerian oranges and they were offered to us. They were red in color and peeling them the meat was red. To my surprise they were as sweet as a candy bar. A bag of them was fixed up for us to eat on our trip back to Italy. Presently we left and drove back to the airport at La Kraub and took off for Tunis. We landed at Alouina airfield and checked on how a B-17 was coming that was being refitted there for Capt. Rogers to fly back to the United States in finding it not done and that it wouldn't be done for sometime we took off again for Italy.

We flew out over Cape Bone where only a short time ago we sat for 5 days on our boat. We flew over the Island of Pantelleria and in only a few minutes later we were radioing the airfield at Palermo Sicily for a landing as bad weather was setting in and we decided to stay overnight. Being a junior officer I had to stay at a different hotel than the other two and I checked in at Del Sol hotel. I washed and shaved and went out to a small native restaurant and had a spaghetti dinner which was very good and washed it down with a bottle of vino. That night I stayed in at the hotel and had a few drinks in the lounge with another American who was stationed in Palermo. The following morning he took me for a ride in his jeep to see the city and at noon we were back at the hotel. I grabbed another bite to eat and met Col. Manning and Capt. Rogers and we drove back to the airfield in a big Italian car. We signed our clearance papers at the red brick operations building. The enemy planes that had been destroyed at this field were being cleaned up and put in a corner of the field. I saw Me-109's, FW-190's and JU-88's along with Italian Savoia Marchetti's and Macci 202's. Some of the planes were still in tact and looked to me to be in flying condition. We taxied down to the west end of the runway and after checking the engines we firewalled the throttles and were roaring down the runway. We took to the air and circled Palermo and headed for Italy. We flew over the Lepari Island group and hit the Italian mainland. In another couple of hours we were radioing Bari Airport for landing instructions and presently we were on the ground back in Italy, our mission accomplished.

I left the Colonel and returned to my squadron who were still wallowing in the mud and only those who have been in Italy in the winter know what the mud is like. Days followed as we sat in the mud waiting for our bomb group to come. We busied ourselves making things and dodging a few bombs the enemy was dropping around us. On the morning of March 17 I had to have an infected wisdom tooth removed in the field and the infection swelled so that I developed lockjaw and had to be sent to the 26th General Hospital in Bari. After two weeks of treatment I was returned to the squadron who had moved to Torretta Field which was located 10 miles east of Cerignola. Someone had to sign me out of the hospital on the last day and I almost went nuts waiting for Lt. (Doc) Krajec to come down and get me. We returned to the field that night and the squadron was set up in tents. The following morning we got Company F of the 21st Engineers to grade and make roads and hard stands for our planes to park

on. Several days we later received word that our planes were to leave Alouina Airfield at Tunis and were to come in that day, April 6th. We moved our crash trucks out on the field and at 10 that morning the first plane circled the field and landed. The planes followed at 5 minute intervals until all 80 of them had landed and taxied to their hard stands. The crews jumped out and greeted us and questioned us about everything. Where they were? What distance are we from the front? Do the Germans straff very often? After all we were veterans we had been overseas two months before they came and I had had a stretch in the hospital (they didn't know it was a wisdom tooth that put me there.) The crews were taken to squadron area where Lt. Lawrence Ashley and our cooks had been working half the night to feed these men when they came in. Our C ration vittles were received with disgruntled remarks but were devoured heartily.

As all the ships came in we watched and that night we surveyed the fold and the B-24s were all well dispersed. We knew then that our work had started and we were ready to get going. The day was spent by the bomb group members setting up their squadron areas. That night we tuned in on our favorite radio program "Axis Sally" who to our astonishment welcomed the 484th Bomb group to the theatre and that the German airforce and ground air defense would shoot them out of the sky. She also named by rank and name the group commander and squadron commanders. Beck told me she had welcomed us the same way when we moved up but I was in the hospital and didn't hear it.

The next few days were spent in checking and repairing the airplanes and readying them for the coming first mission. That morning broke very suddenly. One morning the planes took off for several series of practice runs over a uninhabited island in the Adriatic. This accomplished with success the group was placed on full battle conditions and the next day we worked feverishly repairing the planes and that night we loaded them with bombs and at the crack of dawn the B-24's were running down the gravel runway and picking up into the early dawn blue, formed and were off to do their share of destruction. We could really think of the song we had learned while in training "off we go into the wild blue yonder, nothing can stop the Army Air Corps."

Adriatic Island Base Succors Allied Airmen



THE ISLAND OF VIS, OFF THE YUGOSLAVIAN COAST BECAME "RESCUE ISLE" TO MANY 15 AF CREWS. SHOT UP IN MISSIONS OVER EUROPE, UNABLE TO MAKE IT BACK TO ITALIAN BASES, MANY B-24S MADE FORCED LANDINGS HERE AND WERE FERRIED BACK IN C-47S. SOME B-24S WERE PATCHED UP HERE BY THE AF SERVICE SQ., OTHERS WERE SCRAPPED.

PHOTO BY JIM VAN NOSTRAND, 765 SQ.

On one of the Dalmatian islands off the coast of Yugoslavia is a landing strip which nestles among stubby, stonecovered grey hills. This airfield is an emergency installation for 15th AAF fighters and bombers and a refueling point for RAF planes of the Balkan Air Force. The field is served by a handful of grimy, grizzled aircraft repair specialists of the Fifteenth Air Force Service Command.

Once a top secret and extremely valuable base right on the enemy doorstep, it has snatched to safety many Allied planes and crews which otherwise would have been lost. Captain S.R. Keator of Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, who is in charge has been an aircraft engineering officer through the campaign in North Africa and Italy. In June, 1944, he was sent to the island with a handful of picked men, most of who are non-coms., highly skilled in their work. Their original task was to repair bombers which had been forced to land on a dirt strip used by the RAF fighters, but they stayed to put the island on a paying basis.

Since they first pitched their tents among the grapevines which surround the field they have repaired several hundred bombers and fighters which have landed on the runway, and have cared for numerous pilots and combat crewmen. Some 30 planes have been hauled into the fields to be scrapped.

Life on the island is far from dull, although there are no movies, no USO shows, no Red Cross.

"We've had as many as 37 planes come in for help in one day," says Captain Keator. "Some of them are only out of gasoline, but some of them are

badly shot up."

While there are seven enlisted men who are trained fire-fighters and rescue workers, there isn't a man in the Service command unit who has not performed some feat of daring in rescue work. Such activity is not limited to the Americans, RAF mechanics, Yugoslav ground crew workers, off-duty English ack-ack men. Partisan soldiers and civilians also perform their heroic tasks.

First-Lieutenant William Rice, of Marlin, Texas, assistant for Captain Keator, states he has seen half a hundred Yugoslav women raising an overturned fighter plane. Of course, they are likely to wreck a plane by pulling and hauling at it, but the important thing is to get the plane over as quickly as possible to find out whether the pilot is injured.

When the big bombers crash in landing, the clearance problem is more difficult, for muscles cannot clear a bulk from the runway in time for another ship to land. That is where GI trucks, wrecking cranes and other field equipment play an important part. Speed is the top consideration when a plane crash-lands, even if it is not followed by another plane, for at any moment another ship may wing over the hills for an emergency landing.

Occasionally GI's work all night clearing away wreckage, feeding and finding bed space for the flyers and caring for casualties.

Even on quiet days there is a thrill just being on the island. Across the water, within easy sight is the mainland of Yugoslavia, only a few weeks ago in German control. Closer are other Dalmation islands. They too

have only been recently cleared of the Nazis who infested them.

Invariably arriving combat crews are hungry, and they wolf down rations passed out by Master-Sergeant Jack B. Reichmuth, of Victoria, Texas, and Sergeant Robert H. Bullen, of Somerville, Massachusetts.

"You can't beat this place for atmosphere, boast Lieutenant Rice. "Partisans everywhere and most of them armed. Even the women soldiers." He indicates a chubby Partisan girl who stands nearby with her Partisan hat perched jauntily on top of blonde hair braided in long pigtails and her booted feet imbedded in the ever-present mud. She isn't armed, and she is healthily pretty in her lease-lend British battledress.

Working conditions are primitive. There are no shops, no hangars, no cemented taxi-ways nor parking stands for aircraft under repair. All the work is done in the mud under the open sky.

One side of the field is devoted to a salvage heap and operational planes being flown by Yugoslave pilots attached to the RAF. The other side is for American and English planes under repair. Here and there are a few British huts and American tents.

Headquarters for the islanders is in a farmhouse backed up against a low hill "Headquarters" is actually just a room decorated with Partisan posters and scantily furnished with two quartermaster folding tables, two medical cots, two chairs, a big cabinet, and electric light socket. There is no file cabinet and no typewriter. None is needed because "office" work is cut to a minimum.

THE LAST MISSION

ARTHUR E. FARNHAM. 766th Squadron. A member of the 461/484th B.G. Association, a much decorated pilot. His 16 decorations included the Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Soldier's Medal, Air Medal and Purple Heart. He passed away on 25 February 1984, and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors. Art received the DFC for the action described below:

It all happened over Vienna. We received a direct hit in the waist and two very close hits – one under the bomb bay and one just outside my window.

"Total damage caused was: One man killed, two men badly injured, the rest cut up, one of whom passed out from lack of oxygen; severed rudder and elevator cables, loss of oxygen supply in the waist, fire under the flight deck, gas leak in No. 3 tank, runaway prop on No. 3 engine, a big hole in the waist (two men could have stood in it) plus about roughly speaking 200 small holes, loss of electrical power (no auto-pilot to use for rudder elevator control plus no radio to call escorting fighters for help) and loss of our hydraulic system."

At this moment, T-Sgt. Thomas M. Connolly, Jr. of South Boston, Farn-

ham's Engineer, went into action as a one-man fire department and rescue squad combined.

"Tom performed his duties well," reported Farnham. "He put out the fire and told me to hang on long enough to fix the wounded men up. Not knowing that it is supposed to be impossible to fly a plane without elevator or rudder control and instruments, I flew it."

"Tom went to the waist and applied first aid to one man, and brought an unconscious man forward, where the navigator applied an oxygen mask and brought him to. Tom returned to the waist and applied first aid to another man and helped him forward. He then brought a third fellow forward where he could get oxygen."

Meanwhile Farnham was having his troubles, experimenting with improvised methods of flight to be found in no instruction book.

"Every time I pulled off just a little power the plane would dive," he explained. "So I would have to give her the gas again to keep her from overspeeding in a dive. I tried to get down to where we didn't need oxygen, but with a ship in that condition I could only lose about 500 feet in each semi-controlled dive, so Tom did most of his

work at altitude.

"Finally, about 30 minutes after No. 3 tank went dry, No. 3 engine couldn't get enough from the other tanks, so it decided to quit. Without rudder, I could only hold it straight by cutting No. 2 engine.

"With all this power off, the old blunderbuss started to dive, so as all the boys were revived by this time, I told them to step out for a breath of fresh air.

All crew members, wounded included, bailed out, with Lt. Farnham going out last.

"I landed about 20 miles from the rest and hit the side of a ravine, collapsing my chute and knocking me out.

"I was taken prisoner, but got away. Taken prisoner again by others, but was rescued from them by a band of guerrilla fighters that knew of my presence, because of the word they had received from the other crew members.

"After 40 days, we finally got back.

Art was a 33rd degree Mason. He is survived by his wife, Marjorie Farnham, two sons, two daughters and four grandchildren. He was 63 years old.



STANLEY C. VORPE. 461st B. G. Hdqtrs. Lead Navigator. Passed away 28 January 1984. Mrs. Vorpe wrote us: "He was very proud of his service to his country." His military service record: Graduated Army Air Forces Navigator School, Selma Field, Monroe, Louisiana, Sept. 25, 1943, Class 43-13 Flight 28, Stationed at Wendover Field, Utah, Hammer Field, Fresno, California; after overseas duty, Bow-



man Field, Louisville, Lockbourn Air Force base, Columbus, Oh., Separated from service Bowman Field, October 13, 1945. He flew 50 missions as a lead navigator and earned the DFC and the Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters. He is survived by his wife, Oma Wick Corpe, two sons, two daughters, and four grandchildren. Mrs. Vorpe is a member of our Association.

THE LAST MISSION



HAROLD Q. DANFORD. 764 Squadron, Pilot, Crew No. 14, passed away 26 August 1984. A member of the 461/484 Bomb Group Association. His wife wrote us of "Quint's" passing. It saddens my heart to tell you this. He had

been in failing health for several years. He so looked forward to the reunions, even though he was only able to make one. He was a pretty fantastic person and well loved by all. Sincerely, Betty J. Danford.



H. Q. DANFORD 764TH SQUADRON. SECOND FROM LEFT, BACK ROW.

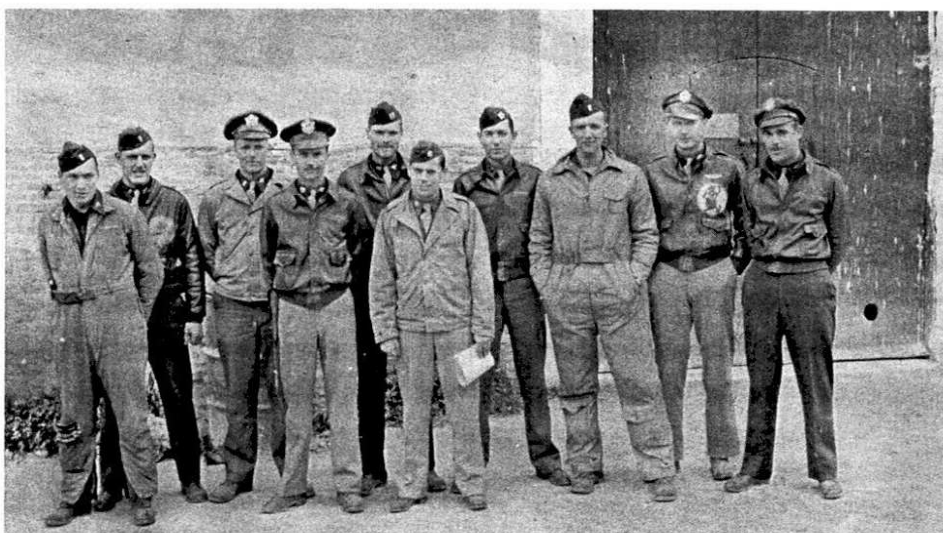


FRANK M. KIDD. 824th Squadron, Gunner, passed away 25 March 1984, his wife, Dorothy Kidd, wrote us: He was retired, had for many years been in real estate business. He is survived by his wife, one daughter, two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He was 72. Frank was a member of our organization.

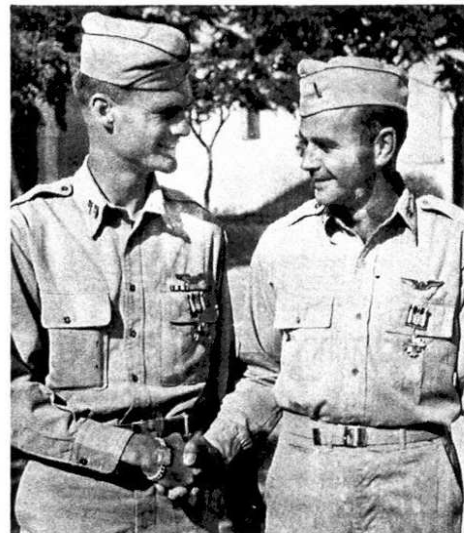


KENNETH R. NOVAK. 765th Squadron, Gunner. We have just learned of Kenneth's death from his wife, who wrote that he passed away on 28 May 1982. He was reported missing in action 21 February 1945 on a mission to Vienna, Austria, and returned to duty 23 March 1945. Among his decorations were the ETO Service Medal, and the Air Medal with two clusters. He was 58. His son, Charles A. Novak is a member of the Association.

DAVID P. McQUILLAN (767 Sq.) PHOTOS



767TH SQUADRON OPERATIONS OFFICERS (L TO R LT. KOLLENBORN, LT. TALLANT, LT. FRANKLIN, CAPT. DICKINSON, CAPT. MC QUILLAN, MAJ. BURKE, CAPT. WORD, LT. DAHLANDER, CAPT. BOCK, CAPT. HOWEMANN)



DAVID P. MC QUILLAN (L) CONGRATULATES LT. FAHERTY (R) UPON RECEIPT OF THE DFC. MC CULLAN WEARS HIS NEWLY WOUND FDC ALSO.

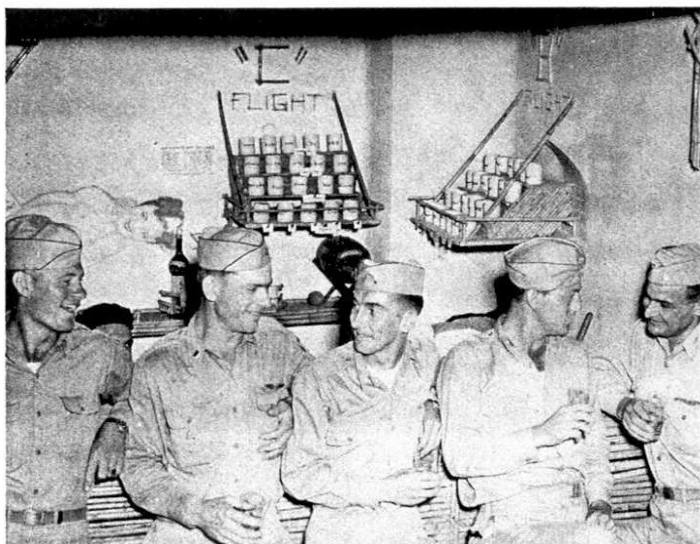
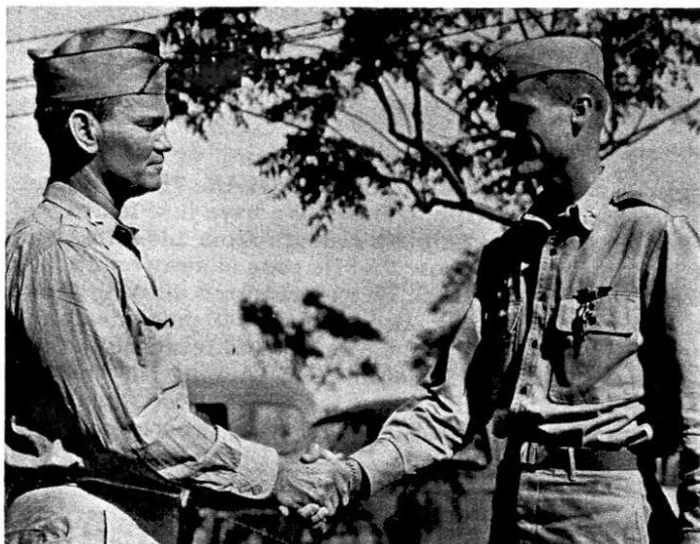


PHOTO OF THE 767TH BAMBOO ROOM, SHOWN L TO R DOUGLAS, UNKNOWN, COLES, RAWLS, AND PRUITT STANDING BEFORE THE BAR.



NCO'S OF THE SQUADRON MESS PREPARING THANKSGIVING DAY MEAL, 1944 TORRETTA (767TH SQ.)



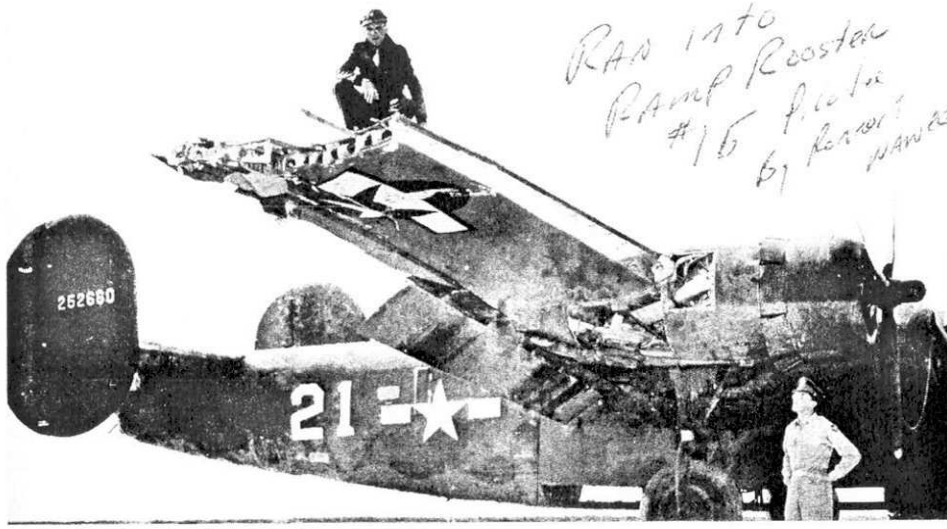
COL. LEE (L/H) C.O. 49TH WING AWARDS THE SILVER STAR TO DAVID P. MC CULLAN 767TH Sq. THIS WAS THE FIRST SILVER STAR TO BE GIVEN TO THE 461ST B.G. COL. LEE WAS LATER PROMOTED TO GENERAL.



DOC SULLIVAN "SWEATING OUT" THE BOYS COMING BACK FROM A MISSION, APRIL 1944

Collapsing occurred because it was untested close-up photos

PHOTO PAGE LOWELL K. DAVIS 824TH SQ.



THIS FORD BUILT B-24H WAS FLOWN BACK TO TORRETТА FIELD BY PILOT BILL ABBEY AFTER LOSING 12 FEET OF WING IN A COLLISION WITH ANOTHER B-24 DURING A PRACTICE MISSION OVER THE AEGEAN SEA ON 4 MAY 1944. HE IS SHOWN ON THE TOP OF THE WING.



A CONSOLIDATED (FT. WORTH) BUILT B-24-H OF THE 824TH SQUADRON LIES BROKEN AFTER A CRASH LANDING AT TORRETТА (SUMMER 1944?)

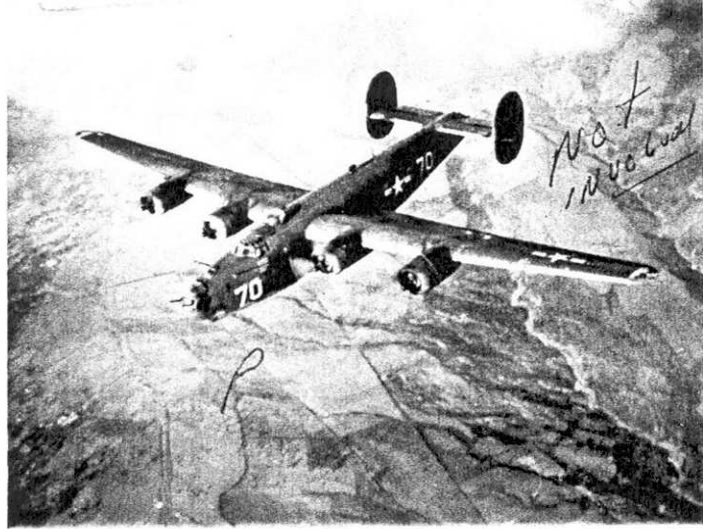
Back row of picture immigrant and Boston based



CREW 20 824TH SQUADRON. TOP FROM LEFT: VICTOR MORETINI UPPER GUNNER; GARLAND WYRICK NOSE GUNNER; GEORGE RANDS ENGINEER; JOHN CALE TAIL GUNNER; AURELIO GALLEGOS RADIO OPERATOR; WILLIAM S. JONES BALL GUNNER. BOTTOM ROW: FROM LEFT: ARTHUR SHAK NAVIGATOR; UNKNOWN; LAYTON



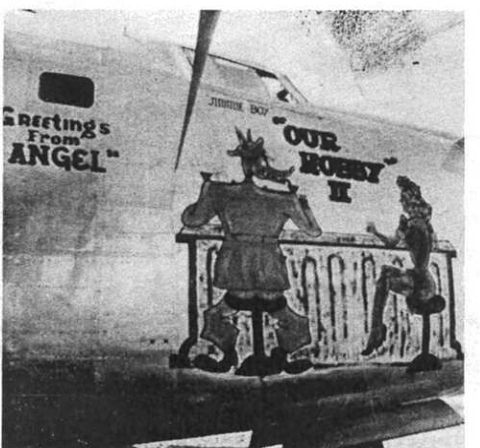
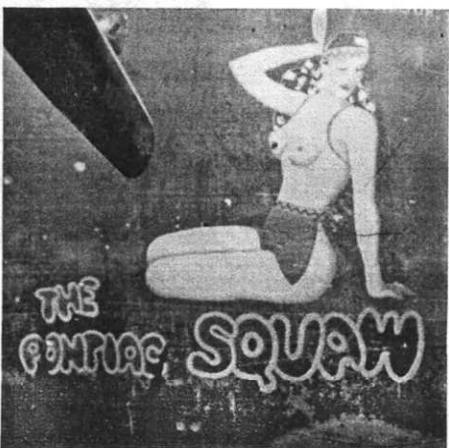
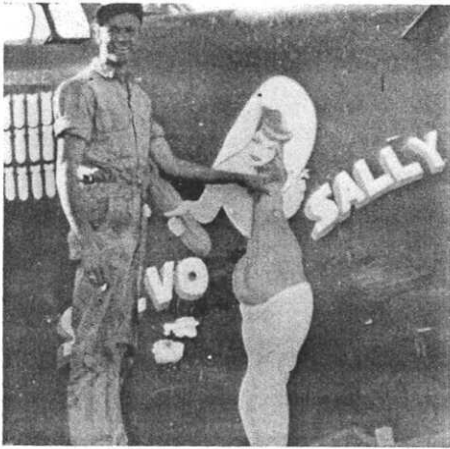
B-24 FROM THE 827TH SQ. CRASH LANDS RETURNING FROM A MISSION. ITALY 1944.

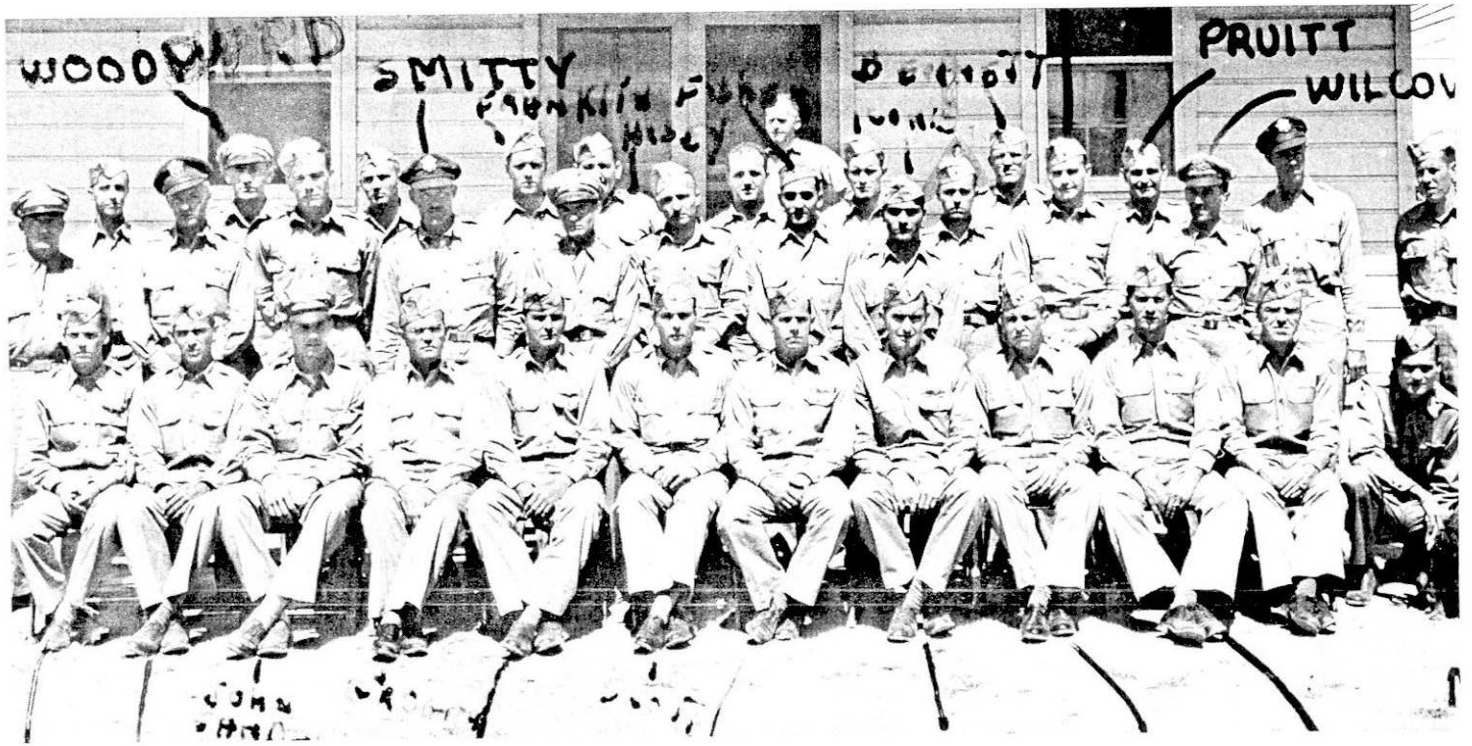


SHIP NO. 70 IS SHOWN WITH DAMAGE TO THE L/H WING TIP. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THIS PLANE WAS THE OTHER B-24.

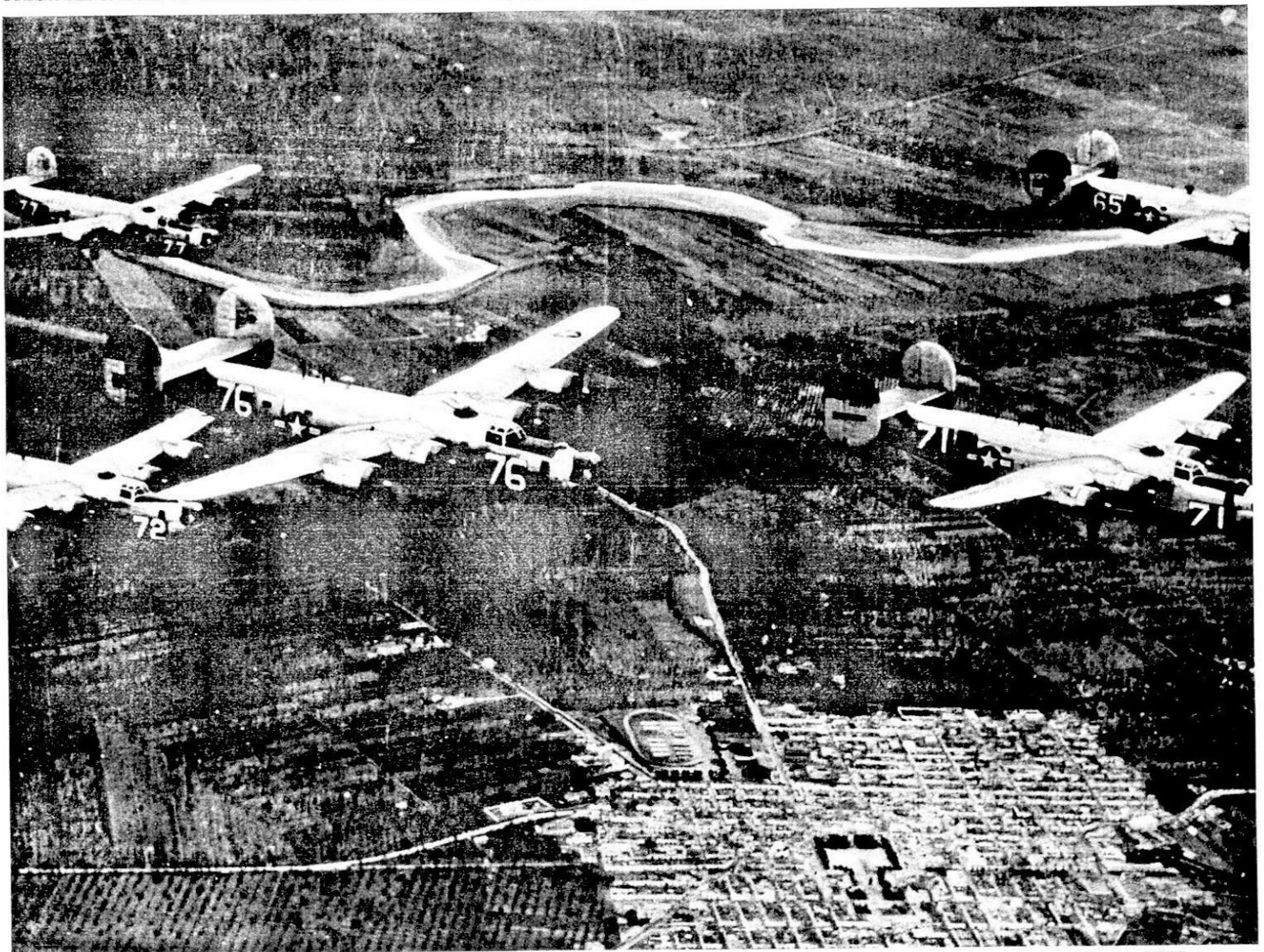


A B-24 FROM THE 451ST BOMB GROUP LANDS AT TORRETТА. THE 451ST ALONG WITH THE 461ST AND 484TH BOMB GROUPS MADE UP THE 49TH WING OF THE 15TH AIR FORCE. THE 451ST WAS BASED AT CASTELLUCCIO DUE WEST OF CERIGNOLA.





ORIGINAL CADRE 461ST BOMB GROUP GOWNEN FIELD (BOISE, IDAHO) TAKEN AUGUST 1943



B-24'S OF THE 767TH SQ. (461ST. B.G.) LET DOWN ON THE PLAINS OF PUGLIA, SOUTHERN ITALY, IN PREPARATION TO LAND AT TORRETТА AFTER A BOMBING MISSION AGAINST THE AXIS POWERS.



ALEX AZARY, A NEW MEMBER SENT IN HIS CREW PHOTO. THEY ARE IDENTIFIED AS FOLLOWS: STANDING, L TO R: WM. C. SHAFER, TAIL TURRET GUNNER; BROWN B. FOX, BALL TURRET GUNNER; ALEX AZARY, RADIO OPERATOR; BILLY CORNETT, NOSE GUNNER; DEVERE W. MC RORIE, ENGINEER; HARRY B. SMITH, UPPER TURRET GUNNER; KNEELING, L TO R: WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM, PILOT; ARTHURLUNDH, CO-PILOT; WILBUR "CHRIS" DONALDSON, NAVIGATOR; WM. DREWS, BOMBARDIER.



CREW OF JACK H. WRIGHT, PILOT, 766TH SQ. (*DENOTES DECEASED) STANDING L - R: *JACK H. WRIGHT, PILOT; *ROBERT PURCELL, CO-PILOT; WILLIAM KESEY, NAVIGATOR; *LEON CHURCHILL, BOMBARDIER; BENNY BOTHA, TAIL GUNNER (REPORTED MIA 1944); KNEELING L-R: HOWARD KAEMS, TT GUNNER; *JESSE LOWERINS, RADIO OP.; SPENCER NEWCOMBER, ENGINEER; JACK HALL, NOSE GUNNER; *PHILIP RICCA, BALL TURRET GUNNER. WILLIAM T. KESEY PHOTO 766 SQ.



THE CREW OF CAPT. CLYDE L. BOYER 767 SQ., 461ST B.G. CREW 77: REAR ROW L TO R: ROBERT G. OLSHIN, NOSE GUNNER; MELVIN P. TAUBE, RADIO OPERATOR; PETER GRACAPUZZI, WAIST GUNNER; ANTHONY P. CANZANGO, BALL GUNNER; OVIE D. FITZHUGH, ENGINEER; JOHN E. LANCELOT, TOP TURRET GUNNER. FRONT ROW L TO R. CAPT. CLYDE L. BOYER, PILOT; JOHN P. KEILMAN, CO-PILOT; JACOB R. LEBSACK, BOMBARDIER; ALBERT E. SMITH, NAVIGATOR. JACOB R. LEBSACK PHOTO 767TH SQ.



THE CREW OF JOHN F. WILSON, 764 SQ., 461 B.G.: JOHN F. WILSON, PILOT; VERNON C. NELLE, BOMBARDIER; ROBERT P. HOFFMAN, CO-PILOT; ROBERT S. BROWN, NAVIGATOR; PAUL M. PERRY, ENGINEER; RICHARD W. SCHILDT, WAIST GUNNER; PAUL G. BELLA, BALL GUNNER; EDWARD DUCHERRTH, RADIO OPERATOR; STANLEY MISZEWAKI, TAIL GUNNER; WINFREY MOORE, NOSE GUNNER. PAUL M. PERRY 764TH SQ. PHOTO

A howling wind flattened the marsh grass fringing the small finger of land that jutted northward into the Baltic. Icy rain blew in gusts against the sides and low, sloping roofs of the long wooden barracks. The eight-foot high double fences and huge rolls of barbed wire between them reflected with a million sudden twinkles the searchlights sweeping back and forth in the unpredictable patterns that the German tower guards predictably used during bad weather.

The fourteen inmates of Room 3 of the northermost barracks settled down to their usual after-supper routine of fun and games. Chappel spread his tools and sheets of tin on the long table in the center of the room. Fenner sat down opposite Chappel and opened his German grammar to the chapter on irregular verbs, and Davidson and Deene rehashed their last mission. The bridge players took their usual places at one end of the table, and the hearts players spread out on the lower level of one of the bunks ranged round the room against the walls.

Davidson went over to the stove in one corner, picked up two coal briquettes, and yanked open the firebox door. He threw the briquettes inside, hastily pulling his hand back from the searing heat, and slammed the door shut.

"I guess we can take this thing down," he said, eyeing the faded sheet of paper thumb-tacked to the wall over the stove. "Through the Door in Forty-Four' doesn't make sense now."

"It didn't make much sense when we put it up a year ago," said Chappel.

"It made no sense at all in August, when Dave and I got here," said Keene.

"We better get out of here this year," said Chappel, tapping a lip along the longer edge of one of his sheets of tin. His voice rose. "This is the eighteenth frying pan I've made here. All I dream about is frying pans. All night I see these goddam sheets of tin, and I tap-tap-tap miles of seams and out thousands of ends off thousands of powered milk cans. It's not right. I should be dreaming of breads not frying pans!"

He stood up, pushing the backs of his knees against the bench, and his voice rose to a mock scream.

"I think I'll go mad, I tell you. MAD!"

"Ok, Chappie, Ohhhhhkayyy," said Davidson. "Save it for Broadway, or at least for the next play we put on here. Try something new and different next time."

Fenner slammed his book down on the table. He stood up, stepped back over the bench, picked up his book and without a word retreated tight-lip-

ped to the confines of his lower bunk. "Home alive in Forty-five?" said Keene.

"What do your German buddies think, Fenner?" said Chappie. Fenner spoke some German, and thus had official sanction from Captain Johnson to trade with the guards for the barracks. He turned away from Chappie, studing his grammar, yet not studying it at all.

"Fenner?" said Kenne

"When do the Germans think the war will be over?"

"They don't confide in me!"

Fenner's roommates never openly expressed to each other the vague feeling of distrust he aroused in them.

The bridge players erupted into a noisy argument over a questionable three-no-trump bid, and Davidson moved over to a vantage point for kibitzing. After watching a few hands, he came back and sat down next to Chappie. The wind rattled the outside shutters, which had long since been closed from the outside by a guard.

"Hey, Fenner, what do you and the Germans talk about," he said. "I mean, besides the price of onions? Do they know what's going on? Do they know anything about the concentration camps?"

"They've never heard about concentration camps. That's a lot of prop-aganda, anyway."

"Propaganda, my butt!" said Davidson. He leaned forward, peered into the deep shadow of Fenner's bunk. "Is that what they say?"

"That's what I say."

"Christ! Don't talk to that idiot," said Keene.

"Who's an idiot!" Fenner burst out of his bunk suddenly. Before the war Keene had been a bookie's helper on the East Side of Chicago and was built like a toy bull.

"I'm sorry, Fenner," said Keene. "You're not an idiot. Go lie down."

Fenner stood there for a moment, glaring at Keene who was calmly inspecting Chappel's work. Then, feeling that he had defended his honor sufficiently, he sat down on the bench next to his bunk and reached for his book. Davidson climbed up to his bunk, over Fenner's, by stepping first on the edge of the lower bunk, then heaving himself up with an obvious grunt. Fenner glared up at him. Fenner spent a lot of time glaring.

"I've told you a thousand times, keep the hell off my bunk!"

"Fenner, just how am I supposed to get up here without using your bunk?"

"I don't care how you do it, just stay off!"

"Sure, Fenner sure. Say, Chappie,

what are you going to do after the War? Maybe you could go into the tinsmith business."

"Very funny, Dave. Very funny."

"How about you, Dave?" said Kenne. "You had a bakeshop in New York, didn't you?"

"Yeah. I had a good business, a good, steady neighborhood-type trade." He could almost smell the fragrance of the pastries, and the bagels.

Fenner snorted, as though questioning the size of Dave's trade, the quality of his cakes, even the weight of his one-pound loaves of bread. There was a lot in that snort, Dave felt, and not having an answer for it troubled him.

The door opened slowly and Parsons walked in. He held the door open.

"Dave, Captain Johnson wants to see you. In his room."

"He wants to see me?" Johnson did not talk much to lowly second Lieutenants, especially if they weren't pilots. "What about?"

"Maybe he's lonesome for you," said Chappie.

"He wants to see you right away," said Parsons, not looking at him.

"I'll try to crowd him into my busy schedule," Dave said from his perch. He landed on the floor beside Fenner with a room-shaking crash, just missing Fenner's left foot. Fenner jerked back, almost falling off the bench, Dave felt much better about not having replied to Fenner's snort.

He walked out of the room and closed the door, and started down the long, drafty hall toward Captain Johnson's room at the front of the barracks. He almost bumped into Feldman coming out of his room. It occurred to him that Feldman was heading for the latrine, but he turned and walked with him.

"What's up?" Feldman asked.

"Does Johnson want to see you, too?"

"Yeah. What's up?"

"I have no idea," Davidson said. He wondered why Parsons had avoided looking at him.

Inside, Captain Johnson stood looking out of the window. Rather, he would have been looking out of the window if the shutters had been open. Davidson and Feldman stood just inside the door, waiting for him to turn around. Finally he did, and took a sheet of paper out of his back pocket, and slowly unfolded it. With the bare overhead bulb lighting the front, Davidson could see through the back of the paper that it contained what appeared to be two columns of names. Johnson looked up from the paper, first at Feldman, then at Davidson. His face had lost its ruddy color. It seemed to Davidson that he had difficulty

speaking.

"I've just come back from a meeting with Colonel Riley," he said at last, rushing his words out. "The Germans have ordered that all Jewish prisoners are to be moved into South Compound." He looked away quickly, the paper shaking in his hand.

A star burst inside Davidson's brain, causing him to lose sight of the captain momentarily, and almost lose his balance. Feldman stared at Johnson as though not understanding what he had said. When Davidson had parachuted into the foothills of Austria he was prepared for the same kind of treatment the Germans had used on European Jews unfortunate enough to fall into their hands. Five months as an American prisoner-of-war in the company of men who were his friends had not prepared him for this. He had forgotten.

"When are we supposed to move?" asked Davidson.

"Tomorrow morning, right after roll-

call."

I'll miss the bread distribution, Davidson thought. "What if they try to move us out of the camp completely?" Johnson just shook his head.

Feldman finally found his voice. "They can't do it," he said. "It's against the rules of the Geneva Convention."

Johnson looked at the floor. "They can do anything they want."

Davidson turned and opened the door. Feldman followed him out into the hall, and closed the door. They stood there for a moment, looking at each other, seeing each other perhaps for the first time as a fellow Jew, not as fellow Americans. Without a word, they walked slowly toward their rooms, side by side. The hall seemed much colder, darker. They stopped in front of Feldman's room. Davidson had never felt particularly friendly toward Feldman, but he was reluctant to leave. When Feldman turned and opened the door to his room.

They know. Parsons must have told them. They know. What do they think of this? How do they feel about it? Are they going to let the Germans do this to me? I've read about the concentration camps. Have they? Do they know about the death camps?

There was not a sound in the room. Even Chappie's everlasting hammering was silent. Everyone looked at the floor, or the wall, or out the shuttered windows. No one said a word as Davidson walked, wearily, over to his bunk. I wonder how the Germans found out, he thought. He climbed with an effort up to his bunk.

"I've told you a thousand times, Davidson," said Fenner. "Keep the hell off my bunk!"

"Goddam you, Fenner, you son-of-a-bitch!" Keene hurled the table and smashed his hamhock fist against the side of Fenner's head.

Davidson heard nothing of the scuffle. I wonder how they found out, he thought. END



DISTRIBUTION OF TORRETTA FLYER NO. 11 DELAYED

While undergoing a 25 hour check (visit to doctor), found editor's hydraulic lines stopped up. Underwent a field repair (heart cath), resumed flight under red diagonal (provisional airworthiness designation in aircraft log book), after landing for overhaul and repair at service squadron (coronary by-pass), grounded while undergoing trials and field test. Expect to be ready for slow time and clearing of the log by 31 January 1985 (Doctors' release). See you all on the flight line in Los Angeles summer 1985 and the maximum effort (both Groups) mission in San Antonio fall 1986.



The Directors of the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups Association extend their best wishes for a most Happy and Joyous Holiday Season. We also wish that God Grant Us Good Health In The Coming Years so that we may enjoy each others company at future reunions.

'T WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the Group
The big wigs and wheels were grinding out "poop"
The bombers were parked on their hardstands with care
Waiting for armament soon to be there

The fliers were nestled all snug in their beds
While visions of milk runs danced in their heads
When out of the darkness there came a loud knock
We cursed the O.D. and looked at the clock

Briefing will be in two hours he said
So we threw him the hell out and went back to bed
Time marches on and the minutes fly by
So it's out of the sack and "make wit de fly"

We rushed to the mess hall quick as a flash
Ate cold powdered eggs and hideous hash
Then a long bumpy ride to the Group briefing room
Where the big wigs preside and dish out our doom

The target is told and the first six rows faint
For lo and behold Vienna it AIN'T
The brain has slipped up - my poor aching back
We're bombing a place that throws up no flak

So it's back to the truck and off to the line
The road is now smooth and the weather is fine
The crew is at stations - the check list is run
The engines run smoothly as we give them the gun

Then suddenly the pilot wails in despair
"Look at the tower, they just shot a flare"
We dash to the window with a heart full of dread
The pilot was right, the damn thing is red

So it's back to the sack and we sweat out our fate
For there's practice formation at a quarter past eight.

DIRECTIONS TO TORRETTA FIELD

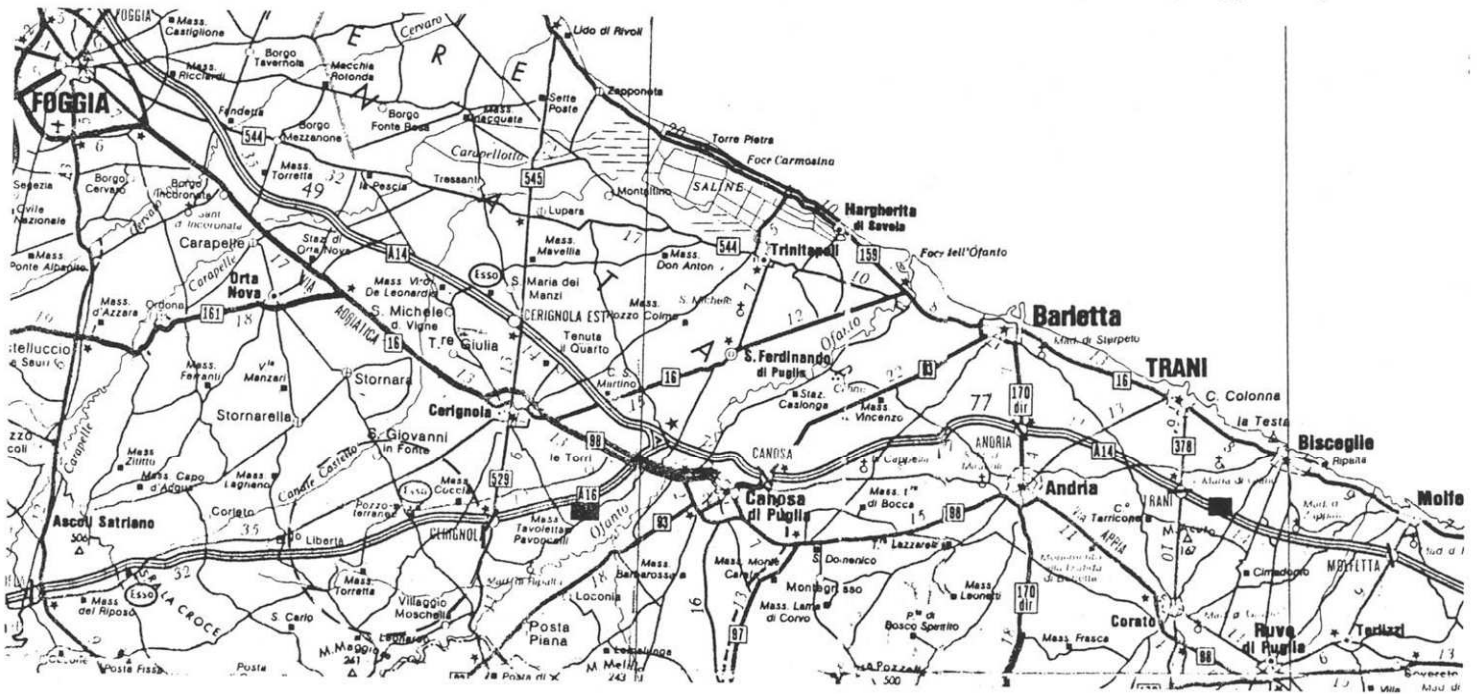
The map of Cerignola and vicinity shows most of the roads as they existed in 1944-45. Out of Cerignola head southwest to Pozzo Terraneo. At the junction on the west side, the 766 Sq. was located. Again, heading southwest toward Mass. Torretta, the 824 Sq. buildings come into view on the east side of the road. You'll note the large 824 painted on the west wall of one of the buildings. About halfway to Torretta on the right side, at about Pozzo Marano, the 827 Sq. was located. In the winter of 1944-45, a lake existed near the number six. As you

reach the junction, a road leads west winding around toward Posta Chlotilde. On rising ground, north of the road, a row of stable sits on the ridge. These buildings were used by the 764 Sq. Going east from Torretta Junction towards Mass. di Pozzo Monaco, the 765 Sq. was located.

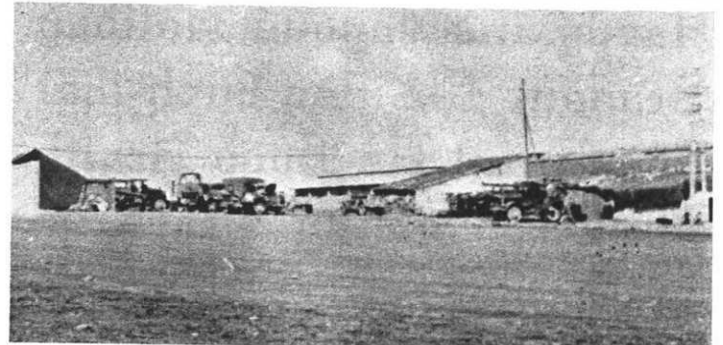
On the east side of the road leading back north to Pozzo Terraneo at the junction at K.12, a road leads on to structures used by the 496th Service Squadron. The 825 Sq., 826 Sq. and 484 Group HQ can be found by traveling northwest to the next junc-

tion and turning southwest for about 8 kilometers. The runways ran roughly north/south between the 484 HQ on the north and the 461 HQ on the south. Today, an autostrada (freeway) between Naples and Bari (west to east) bisects the former airfield between Pozzo Terraneo and Toretta (below).

Members wishing to visit the airfield area, can stay over in either Foggia, to the north, or Bari, farther east, where comfortable hotel accommodations and good restaurants can be found. Cerignola does not have Class A accommodations. (See maps opposite.)



SIMON P. FAHERTY PHOTOS 767TH SQ. READER COMMENT IS REQUESTED ON THESE TWO PHOTOGRAPHS AS NO INFORMATION WAS SENT WITH THE PHOTOS. SIMON P. FAHERTY WORKED AS A SQUADRON PHOTOGRAPHER AND IS A MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION.



CLARK ECTON PHOTO 825TH SQ.

825TH BOMB SQUADRON (H) HEADQUARTERS AREA

