



# THE TORRETTA FLYER

Torretta Flyer No 14

Redondo Beach, California

Summer 1987

**JOINT REUNION OF THE 461ST AND 484TH BOMB GROUPS ASSOCIATION AND THE 15TH AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION SET FOR OCTOBER 14-18, 1987: PLACE COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO. SEE PAGE 6**

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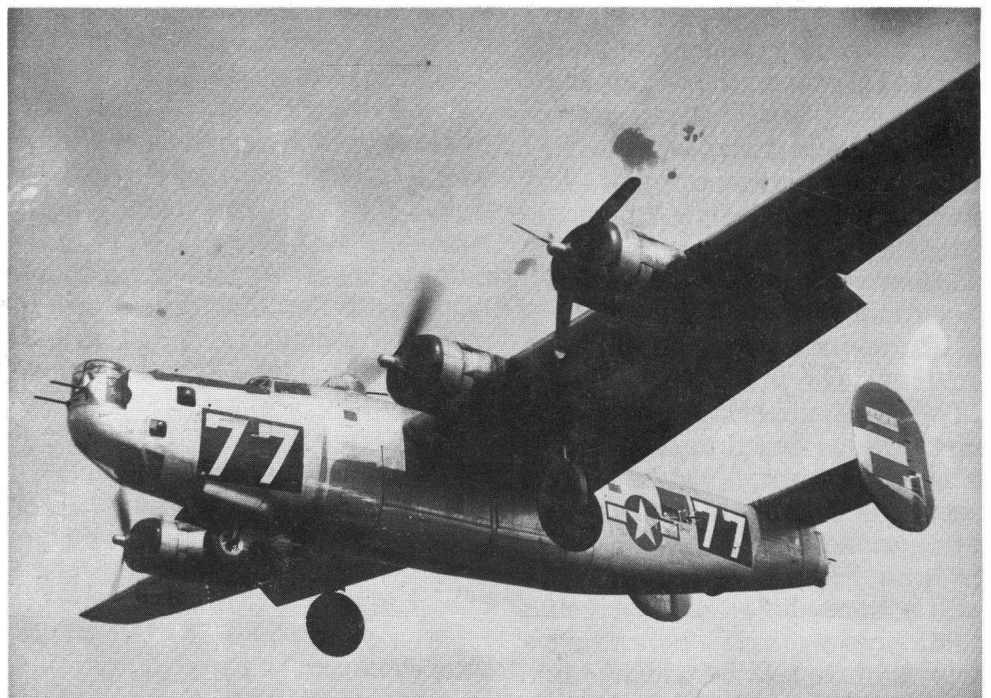
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Coming in on two engines, See Story on Page 13. Stan Staples photo 765



Preparing frag bomb clusters. See story on page 10. Robert Altman Photo  
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# STRENGTH IN UNITY

## Editorial

What brings our generation together is the sum of all the things that we share in common, our age, and war experience, the shared danger of combat. All Air Corps troopers of WWII, whether in the air or on the ground shared a very dangerous mission, that of fighting a war. A war we helped to win. This is our unity.

One of the goals of the Association is to write and preserve the history of our two valiant groups war time activity. There is much work to be done, such as doing research at the National Archives and at Maxwell Field to name just one activity. We need your help on this project.

You also can help by volunteering for committee work. The Scholarship Committee needs additional members. Or you may want to help out on the membership committee for your squadron. It is very challenging work. Using scanty clues and much determination the finding of new members can be very rewarding. Drop the Association a note to the effect that you would like to work on the membership committee and we will supply you with start up materials.

Make it a point to attend the next reunion in Colorado Springs, Oct 14-18, 1987. Not only does your participation demonstrate your support, it enhances the gathering greatly. You may meet a war time buddy, or an old crew mate and now two members are having fun, and then the wives meet each other spreading the enjoyment. A member from your squadron may overhear your war story, and stop to correct you drawing more participation in your little group, only now it is not so little anymore, and so on. This helps to make the reunion more enjoyable for more members. At our age, it just might be

the right time to kick back and enjoy each other's company more than we have in the past.

To heighten your pleasure we look for places to hold reunions that have a variety of recreation facilities with a good hotel, and a military establishment nearby. This enables our guests to enjoy the reunion, engage in their favorite recreations, and go on a tour of the military base. It is like a mini vacation with the reunion thrown in for good measure.

Show your support by: 1) Helping with basic research, {see side bar at right} 2) Finding new members, 3) Attending the next reunion in Colorado Springs, (A fabled vacation land, with the Air Force Academy). Show your support also by keeping your dues payments current.

Be proud of what the Association stands for. Our unity is our strength. We can accomplish much more. We are only limited by our imagination.

Bud Markel,  
President



### THE TORRETTA 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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Bomb Groups Association

### WANTED

The Association is always on the lookout for good stories to feature in the Torretta Flyer. We would like to strike a balance between stories of remembrances such as the great articles that appear in this issue with ones dealing with a specific subject matter. Example: Non fiction articles dealing with the development of the Luftwaffe's flak arm, and the ME-262 German Jet fighter's effect on daylight bomber formations, are but two subjects that would make interesting reading for our members. The editor welcomes research and contributions on these and related subjects from the membership. Your editor is especially on the lookout for a bibliography on the subject of the European Air War of 1939-1945. Locations of libraries holding documents and books on this subject and other sources would be especially helpful in expediting this research.

The object of this request is to improve the quality of the Torretta Flyer by making it gradually into a fine historical journal. This broadens its appeal and makes for more interesting reading.

Be sure your name, address, and membership number is shown on all submitted material. In addition, if at all possible, caption photographs with names of subjects, date photo was taken, and the place the photo was taken. Please contact me, Bud Markel, your Torretta Flyer editor for additional information at 213/316/3330.

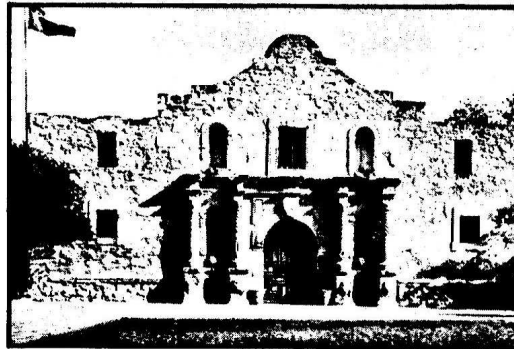
## THE SAN ANTONIO REUNION DRAWS THE LARGEST CROWD Over 700 Attend the 1986 Conclave

The San Antonio Marriott, (Riverwalk) Hotel was bulging with 700 plus happy guests gathered there November 12-16, 1986 for the fifth annual reunion of the 461st & 484th Bomb Groups Association. The room block of two hundred rooms sold out six weeks prior to the reunion. Overflow guests were accommodated at the Hyatt Hotel, until it too filled up, and had to pass guests on to other hotels

While the weather did not cooperate at the beginning of the reunion, by the end of the week it had turned warm allowing members to enjoy the famous riverwalk of downtown San Antonio. All of the scheduled events went smoothly thanks to the hard work of Clark Ecton and Harrison Word, our San Antonio reunion committeemen.

We tried a new banquet seating arrangement where guests choose their own tables from a displayed map, instead of the former system of blocking off sections of the hall by unit. This plan works well when the table places can be adjusted to seat one more couple when only one place remains. The hotel staff made these accommodations speedily and set up additional tables when banquet attendance exceeded the planned meal count.

The Marriott's meeting rooms were filled to capacity on Friday evening for the squadron dinners as extra tables were set, as again the gathering exceeded the meal plan. This is the event that brings out war stories, photo albums, and a lot of teary eyed embraces as old buddies meet for the first time since the war. Richard Behrens 766 Sq who was celebrating his birthday on that night was surprised when a beautiful birthday cake with just one candle was presented to him. This was arranged by his friend and crew mate Joel Fish 766 Sq. The opening ceremony of the ban-



quet was the presentation of the colors by the color guard from Lackland Air Force Base led by Sergeant Sandra Champion. This precision team, dressed smartly in air force blue with white scarves and polished boots, carried the flags proudly into the hall. Many an eye went slightly moist as the colors passed by. In the procession were the flag of the United States, the State of Texas, and the flags of the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups. This is the first time our group flags were included in a formal presentation of the colors. After the pledge of allegiance, the invocation was given by Chaplain Major USAF James R Wilson, Lackland Air Force Base. The roll call of the squadrons was then taken, followed by the toast to our departed comrades given by Ed Goree 764 Sq. He said in part:

*"To all of those who came before us, the wives, the families, and the men, we say:*

*They traveled the road. They fought a good fight, and they kept the faith.*

*We can not repay. We pass on to the new generation some of the verve and devotion that made their lives complete.*

*There must be a purpose in all things. We who are here to carry on may rejoice. It is commended that we live with spirit, contribute with charity, and with a humble nature show love and respect.*

*Recall, it is not the quarry, but*

*the chase. Not the laurel, but the race. Not the hazard, but the play. Make us God , enjoy always"*

Maj/Gen James James B Knapp USAF (Ret) 461st B G and Maj/Gen William B Keese USAF (Ret) 484th B G made the introductory banquet speeches followed by our guest speaker Lt/Col Mike Kenny USAF, the lead instructor pilot B1-B Bomber from Dyess Air Force Base, who presented a combined talk , and slide show, followed by a motion picture on the B1-B training program. Arthur Shak 824 Sq from Hawaii and Richard Durand 764 Sq. from Alaska won the member from the farthest distance prizes. James Love 767 Sq correctly guessed the name of the mystery target photo that was shown on page 2 of Torretta Flyer No 13. It was dubbed a mission assignment of both the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups. It looked like a target identification photo and it was ! Dig out the last issue and look closely. You will see downtown San Antonio. The mission of course was the 1986 reunion. He was given a beautiful framed print of the Ploesti Mission, that was donated by Clark Ecton 825 Sq.

The largest number of members from one crew were from the 824 Squadron and the 765 squadron, both numbering seven. They are:

**824 Sq.** Earl Svela ,pilot; Dexter Schultz, co-pilot; Abe Abramoff, bombardier; Ward Bernhardt, engineer; Arlis Foster, radio operator; and Frank Mendes, upper gunner.

**765 Squadron** Art Hughes,pilot; Bates Boles, bombardier; Robert Scanlon, engineer; Art Bettinger,radio operator; Wayne Boyce, gunner; Joe Bryant, gunner; and Dewey Large, gunner.

*Continued on page 31*

## REPORT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Just prior to the 1986 reunion in San Antonio, Chris Donaldson, 765 Sq, of the Scholarship committee, and his wife, Jean, travelled to Italy and met with Professor Umberto Albanese and Professor Riccardo Sgramella, both of Cerignola, who have worked together and expended their efforts on behalf of the Association to provide the names of the successful candidates for the 1986 scholarship awards. Prof

Sgramella also works at the same Technico Institute as Prof Albanese, where he teaches business English. His translations of correspondence between the Committee and the Italians has eased the flow of communications. Prof. Sgramella's paternal grandfather Pasquale Tufariello, now deceased, who also spoke English, worked at the Red Cross Club in Cerignola where one of his duties was that of an interpreter during the war years.

The Donaldsons also met the 1986 recipients, Ripalta Scalzo and Luisa Marinelli, and the parents of Lucia Nigro, who was away at law

school in Trieste at the time of the Donaldsons visit. The girls were absolutely charming, and well poi-



This photograph was taken in Cerignola, Italy last year during Chris Donaldson's visit. Standing center: Professor Riccardo Sgramella. Bottom From left: Professor Umberto Albanese, Ripalta Scalzo, Luisa Marinelli, and Chris Donaldson

sed. Mr. and Mrs. Nigro, were also delightful although they spoke no English. They all went to a great deal of effort and trouble to meet the Donaldsons. From what they saw and heard at the meeting, the Association may be assured that the girls are certainly most worthy candidates.

From the observations made during his visit, Chris reported that our organization is held in the highest esteem, not only by the students and their families, who received the 1986 awards, but also by the entire community in the Cerignola area and the surrounding region, who

have been made aware of the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups Association efforts in this project of memorializing and honoring our members.

Chris emphasized in his report that all incidental administrative costs are absorbed by the Association and the efforts and expenses of the committee are entirely donated, so that every dollar contributed is placed in a special account to be eventually paid out in awards. The Scholarship

Committee invites Association members to join the Committee in this worthwhile effort. Please contact either Chris Donaldson 765 Sq or Ed Goree 764 Sq.

In the United States, the story of the first scholarship awards appeared in the St. Paul Dispatch Pioneer Press recently. St. Paul, Minnesota is the hometown of Chris and Jean Donaldson. Chris received many calls from other 15th Air Force units expressing interest and admiration for the manner in which our scholarship program is being implemented.

## SELECTION OF SCHOLARSHIP CANDIDATES FOR 1987 HAS BEGUN

Professor Albanese Initiates Massive Publicity Campaign

The publicity campaign announcing the 1987 awards has begun in Italy. The scholarship notices have already appeared in the Local and National newspapers. The broadcast and TV media has also been notified.

It is hoped that the selection for this year's recipients can be completed in ample time to enable some Association members to travel to Italy to be present at the awards ceremony before the commencement of the next school term and long before the 1987 reunion in October. Hopefully this can be arranged before August, when much of Italy goes on vacation.

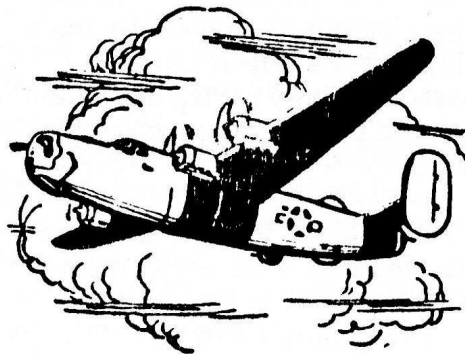
The scholarship committee, Chris Donaldson (765 Sq) and Ed Goree (764 Sq) reports that the selection process for scholarship candidates for 1987, has begun and again three finalists will be chosen. The first choice is for candidates who presently reside on, or near the former air field at Torretta, Italy, or are descended from persons who lived on or near the field during 1944-45, or who somehow were connected or employed at the field during 1944-1945. This would include descendants of the 3rd Company Italian Airport Interior Guard who were employed at the base for a short time in the spring of 1944. Candidates may also be chosen from a larger geographical distance from the base.

When the airbase farmland was leased by the Army Air Force at Torretta 1944-45, many farm families were displaced when their homes, barns and outbuildings were taken over causing extreme hardships for most of them. The land was used in the production of

wheat, that employed some farm families. Some were share croppers, as the land was privately owned by Baron L Zezza. Italian civilians also crossed the base property in going from their homes to work. Nowadays some grapes are grown in the area formerly occupied by the 824 squadron, and Italian tomatoes are grown around the 765 area. But most of the land lays fallow. After the war, the large land holdings were broken up into small sections and were parcelled out to many private citizens. Unfortunately economic conditions changed rapidly after World War II making it difficult for families to support themselves wholly from the reduced acreage. It is from this combined population pool that the scholarship candidates are drawn. It can be seen from the foregoing that the scholarship grants are most deserving and are supported wholeheartedly by the Association members.

Contributions to the Memorial Scholarship Fund are always welcome at any time. Make checks out to the 461st & 484th Bomb Groups Association, marked Scholarship Fund, and mail to the Association office at: 1122 Ysabel St. Redondo Beach, CA 90277

The End



### New Contributors to the Scholarship Fund

The list of contributors to the Scholarship Fund shown at right, is in addition to the list published in Torretta Flyer No 13.

Warde H Bernhardt 824  
George Bouras MD 824  
Meyer Brownstein 764  
Kelton G Bush 767  
Clarence L Bush 824  
George Christie 765  
Albert F Crisp 766  
Irvin H Davis 767  
Fred Dierksmeier 826  
Chris Donaldson 765  
George S Flamand 825  
Richard Freeman 764  
Albert G Gebron 824  
Roque Gonzales 764  
James D Gunnels 824  
Charles A Harford 825  
Charles J Heinzer III 827  
Howard U Heller 827  
John Hicks 826  
Roy E Huber 765  
Melvin R Jackson 767  
Leonard M Jorgenson 824  
William B Keese 484  
Robert H Koenig 765  
John F Konop 824  
Bert Lange 824  
Dewey E Large 765  
Richard G Lyke 764  
Adolph Marcus 824  
Beatrice M Markel 827  
Leo V Matranga 825  
David P McQuillan 767  
George H Miller 764  
William O Muller 767  
Vincent W O'Shea 826  
Sidney Ostrovsky 827  
Geno Pishione 765  
Burnis E Presho 765  
Charles Rothwell 764  
Ed Schrader 767  
Wilma Schrader 767  
Jack R Severns 764  
Arthur T Shak 824  
Howard R Sossamon 767  
TV Stradley 764  
James E Tessitore 764  
Carl H Voss 826  
David R Ward 826  
William M Warren 827  
Harry R Watkins 825  
Herman J Weber 826  
Grover W Wilkins 765  
Jack A Williams 825  
John F Wilson 764  
Thomas R Woolcott 824

**The 461St & 484th Bomb Groups  
Association  
1987 Reunion**

The 461St and 484th Bomb Groups Association will hold its 1987 reunion in Colorado Springs, Colorado October 14-18, 1987 at the gracious Clarion Hotel, 2886 South Circle Dr. Colorado Springs, CO 80906.

This reunion is being held in conjunction with the 15th Air Force Association. Registration for this fun packed multi-group homecoming will be accomplished in three parts as follows:

**1) Clarion Hotel sleeping room reservations.**

A) By Mail, use the Clarion Hotel advance reservation card on page 29.

B) By Phone dial: 1-303-576-5900 Please inform the hotel that you are a member of the 461St & 484th Bomb Groups Association in order to get the Association's special room rate of \$56.00 per night.

**2) 461St & 484Th Bomb Groups  
Registration:**

A) Pre registration by mail. Use the tear slip on page 27

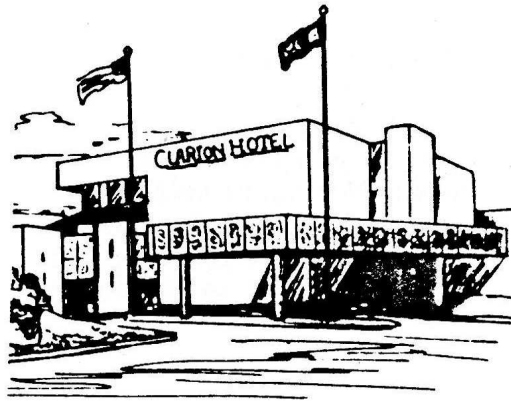
B) Pre registered guests need only to drop by the registration desk in the lobby of the Clarion to pick up identification badge and dinner ticket.

**3) 15th Air Force Reunion Registration:**

A separate 15th Air Force Association reunion registration packet will be mailed to all of our members. (Watch for Torretta Bulletin No #8)

**461St & 484th Bomb Groups Activity**

Saturday evening October 17th, 1987 the Association will hold its annual meeting and dinner at the Clarion. Members should



bring their current membership cards as voting is limited to members of record.

**Agenda**

- 1) Election of three Directors to the Corporation
- 2) Any other business that may come up as required.
- 3) Dinner and show and tell, bring your photograph albums and memorabilia to this event.

**15th Air Force Activities**

Headquarters for 15Th Air Force Association registration will take place at the Antlers Hotel in downtown Colorado Springs. (Use the shuttle busses) Pre-registered guests need only to step up to the desk and pick up their convention packets.

Membership in the 15th Air Force Association is not a requirement for participation in the 15th Air Force reunion activities. A 15th Air Force membership application form will be included with the 15th Air Force Association reunion registration packet. This is provided for your convenience as many 461St and 484Th members will want to join this fine organization to show support for the Best Air Force in the entire USA.

**ASSOCIATION NEWS**

**Membership Pins**

Cloisonne Membership pins are now available by mail from the office at \$5.00 ea. Made of blue enamel and trimmed in gold there are two models, one for each Bomb Group.

**Caps**

We will be reordering the baseball caps with Association logo. They should be in stock again within two months. Let us know if you wish us to put one aside for you. Just indicate on the tear slip- page 27.

**Torretta Flyer Reprints**

With the exception of issue No 13, the back copies of the Flyer are exhausted. They have become collectors items, but with reprint costs higher than original issues, we need to know what additional demand will be. Drop a line to the office or indicate on the tear slip page 27 if you would like back copies of back issues No 10, 11, and 12.

**Membership Roster**

Because new memberships have been coming in at an accelerated pace, we have delayed issuing the membership roster until July 1, 1987 so that more names can be included.

**The trip to Italy**

As of this writing the three candidates for the 1987 Scholarship Awards have not been selected. We had hoped to go to Italy this spring to make the presentations.

The trip will have to be made later on. We will advise all members by bulletin ASAP.

## NOTICES FROM OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

### 15TH AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

All members of the 461st & 484th Bomb Groups Association are invited to join the 15th Air Force Association. write PO Box 6325 March Air Force Base, CA/ 92518. See notice published elsewhere in this edition of the Flyer.

### ELLINGTON FIELD NAVIGATORS

Clark Lampard, 5830 Robin Hill Dr #2 /Lakeport, CA/ 95453, would like to contact anyone who trained as a navigator at Ellington Field in any year for the purpose of starting newsletters and organizing a reunion.

### BOMBARDIERS, INC.

This organization wishes to contact bombardiers of WWII to advise them of their activities. They publish a newspaper and hold reunions. Write to E. C. Humphreys c/o Bombardiers, Inc. Box 254 Eagle Harbor, MI 49951

### AVIATION CADETS

The Aviation Cadet Alumni Association is seeking former pilot cadets. send flight class, primary, basic, and advanced locations to: Major Bob White, USAF Ret. 54 Seton Trail/ Ormond Beach, FL 32074. Purpose: To help others to locate former classmates. Effort is non-profit and will not be commercialized. Include stamped envelope for specific class information.

### KOREAN VETERANS

One out of three American males is a veteran of military service; most who left the service after World War II, Korean War, and Vet Nam War were never issued the medals to which they were entitled. If one should wish to

obtain the medals and awards which he earned in service, but was never issued, we offer a free brochure to tell him how. Please send a self addressed stamped envelope to: Korean Veterans International/ PO Box 52033/ Tulsa, OK/ 74152.

**AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR OF ST LUFT IV & VI**  
Leonard E Ross/ 8103 E 50th St Indianapolis, IN / 46226 is looking for POW's who were held at: 1) Stalag Luft IV at the town of Keifheide or the railroad station at Grosstychow in Pomerania, which is now part of Poland. These camps held 10,000 prisoners. 2) Stalag Luft VI at Hydekrug in East Prussia. He reports a mailing list of over 2000 and that reunions are held each year.

### ROMANIAN PRISONERS OF WAR

Former POW'S held in Romania, can contact Roy Meyer c/o the Association of Former Prisoners of War in Romania at: 4589-G Northside Parkway/ Atlanta, GA/ 30339. They hold annual reunions, and publish a newsletter. Their insignia is a winged parachute, encircled by barbed wire.

### STALAG LUFT III

Former prisoners of war held at Stalag Luft III should write to: PO Box 787 Highland Park, IL/ 60035 for information about their organization.

### ESCAPE AND EVASION

The Air Forces Escape and Evasion Society is looking for members who successfully evaded capture from enemy forces. They are active in planning memorials, publish a newsletter, and hold reunions. Write to: Ralph K Patton/ 720 Valleyview Rd / Pittsburgh, PA/ 15243. Their insignia is a winged boot set in a decorated shield topped by Air Force crew member wings

## DECEASED LIST

This list represents those who have been reported deceased since the last edition of the Torretta Flyer. This information comes from various sources and is not always complete.

Bill Abbey 824  
Bill Adams 824  
Robert Bridges  
Clarence Byers 824  
Harold C Christenson 827  
Jess Compton 825  
Robert B Conrad 766  
Stephen a Cronan  
Michael J Donofrio 764  
Maurice A Forzese 827  
Irving S Gilbert 827  
Raymond Grenz 824  
Leo C Hartman 824  
Bernard Kelly 824  
Thomas E Key 826  
Richard Kinman 827  
Joseph Krakower 827  
Arthur Krug  
Eugene G La Pierre 824  
Gordon L Martin 764  
Harold McGuire 764  
William A Miller 825  
Leo Prone 824  
Julian R Rakower  
Robert A Roberts 825  
Chester H Rudel 764  
Laverne Sage  
Jim Sarros 827  
Edward D Schiffbauer  
Jesse L Smith 824  
Kenneth W Speith 824  
Harold B Strong 767  
Paul Vrtiak 827  
Paul E Walko 827  
Arthur Wolf 824  
Richard E Wood  
Edward Yurochko 825

# ATTACK ON OIL !!

## *I wanted to fly Spifires, but ended up in a B-24*

**By Stan Hutchins 824 Sq.**

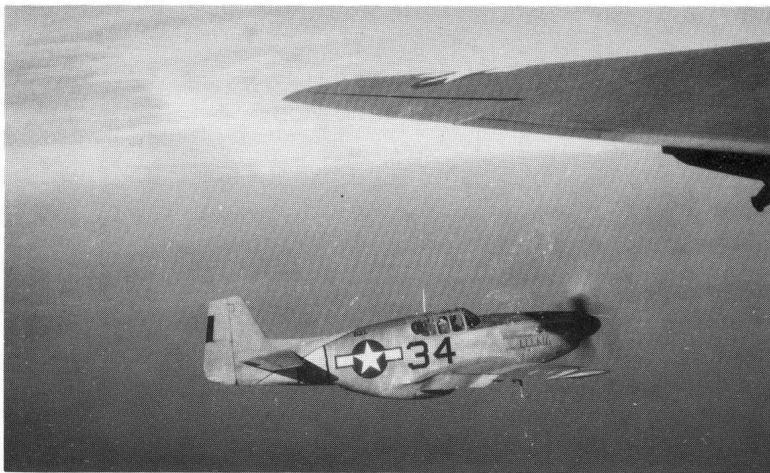
None of us who graduated from Alamo Heights High School in May of 1941 expected the Japanese to attack Pearl Harbor in December of that year or to be plunged into World War II after war was declared between the United States and Germany shortly afterwards.

To fly a "Spitfire" against the Abbeville based ME-109's of the Richtofen Wing, filled my mind while I sat in Miss Brigham's homeroom, played my sax at Friday assemblies, and made limeaids and choc shakes at Patt's Drugstore. That fall I became seventeen and applied to the RCAF for pilot training with the Commonwealth Training Center in Ottawa, since the US Army Air Corps had rules about age and college I could not meet. Soon after Pearl Harbor, I received a message from RCAF Group Captain Crabb, advising me that the US would not allow me to join Canada's pilot program.

With my friend Sparkie from Brady, Texas I took the Air Corps flying cadet tests in June of 1942 and waited until my eighteenth birthday to be sworn in. In the meantime the war was heating up, Hitler was stopped at the gates of Moscow, British and American forces were counterattacking Rommel in North Africa and the Doolittle raiders alarmed the Japanese in a surprise attack that did more psychologically, than actual bomb damage. The battles of Midway and Coral Sea stopped the westward advance of the Japanese naval forces. In my youthful eagerness to fight, I wondered if the war would last long enough for me to win those wings, now that the Air Corps, loaded with volunteers, placed me on hold with the 28th Infantry in Louisiana until

training facilities could be expanded.

I entered the San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center in late spring of 1943 for pilot training. I soloed at Hicks Field, went on to Perrin for basic flying, and advanced pilot training at Ellington Field. My flight training took six months from August 43 to February 44, accumulating 220 hours total time in the interim. Crew training commenced then and was completed in May of 1944.



Shortly after the Normandy Invasion, I was on the USS Santa Maria bound for Naples via Oran, along with 50 other air crews assigned to the 484th Bomb Group. My squadron the 824th was based at Torretta, Italy, south of Foggia, where the Italian Air Force had been based at Foggia up until the invasion of German forces that then occupied the airfield complex. Now it was the Americans turn to take over this soft rolling countryside in southern Italy, the only flat region with enough land to base the entire 15th Air Force.

Our mission was to strike oil targets from Germany to the Black Sea. The biggest oil refinery complex was in Rumania at Ploesti. It was there that we struck, twenty one raids, and my introduction to combat. When the Russians over ran Ploesti in late September of 1944, we moved our priority to synthetic oil plants scattered all over central Europe, taking time out to bomb German positions on the beaches of Southern France to support Operation Anvil, the invasion of Southern France on August 15, 1944.

The winter of 1944 was bitter cold. The Battle of the Bulge underscored the German's ability to increase the price of Allied victory. It was during this time after seven months of bombing missions that we got shot up badly on a raid to bomb the oil storage facilities at Floresdorf, near Vienna, Austria. Coming off the target one of our engines quit, and the aileron controls



were damaged by flak. The flight engineer reported a devastating loss of fuel from the wing tanks. Then a second engine quit. Still over the Alps, we could not sustain altitude and fell below our group.

**I put in a call to our , "Little Friends," and was surprised to see a P-51 off our left wing almost immediately.**

I put in a call to our , "Little Friends," and was surprised to see a P-51 off our left wing almost immediately.

Now it was a question of ditching in the Adriatic, making it to our secret base in Yugoslavia, or just maybe, gliding into the closest US Fighter strip near Rimini, in northern Italy. The last two engines were under strain and threatened to quit. The fuel gauges showed empty as the plane wallowed almost out of control because of the damaged control system, when the Island of Vis came into view.

There was no time for formalities. We shot red flares and started a steep descent to the 4000 foot strip neatly placed between the sea cliff and a small mountain. With less than a 100 yards to go, both remaining engines quit, we flopped on the undersize runway with a screech.

The field was Tito's headquarters supported by British and American Missions (OSS). For months, Allied aircrews in trouble used this Partisan refuge as a safe base to evade capture by German patrols. Our status changed from Missing in Action, to Delayed in-route.

15th Air Force Headquarters at Bari dispatched a C-47 to pick us up the following day. We spent the night in the attic of a small hotel where we were under the watchful eyes of a lady Partisan in full combat gear, complete with grenades, and burp gun. We were impressed by her attention to the field of fire from the attic window. The American boys were duly impressed.

The war in the air continued, our group was the last in the formation of several hundred B-24's under heavy fighter escort to attack the oil facilities at Lobuau, Vienna. Some thirty minutes before our target, while crossing Lake Balaton, Hungary, we saw a huge dog fight in front and to the left. Focke-Wulfs and ME-109's were dashing in and out of our formation with immense speed and daring. Our fighters jumped in the string of fighters, causing Germans to explode, filling the air with parachutes, flaming wrecks, and last minute near misses.

He came from 11 O'clock high raking us with ma-

chine gun fire, then the ME-109 half rolled and exploded in a huge ball of fire. Our left waist gunner, Joe O'Connell had made the impossible shot.

Now numbers of FW-190's were gaining on us from the rear, their air to air rockets zipped past us on both sides. Our left wing man, J B Johnson and crew blew up right in formation, just as our right wing man, a new crew that hadn't even unpacked yet pulled up to the right and disintegrated in a flash of fire and smoke. There were no chutes.

Our tail gunner, George Koch of New Jersey, caught one FW-190 with a good burst from his twin fifties. and peppered two more. We were alone now but still in the air as successive rows of FW's took their best shots and quickly disappeared with a deft, "flick roll."

The old bus moaned and shook as the firing guns filled the cabin with the smell of cordite. Then, BANG, a rocket blasted a three foot hole in our tail just aft of the ball turret that was the pride and joy of Mathew Jdzik, of Philadelphia. O'Connell was badly cut by flying metal turning his face and arms into a bloody mess. Still he stayed at his post and rearmed his gun blasting at every bogie that came in on his side.

Our own group had disappeared in the smoke ahead, nor were the others trailing far back of us to offer mutual cover. Now it was time to get out of German air space without delay. The engines were ragged, two turbos out, ( the original cause of our sagging position at the tail end of the formation). The wings were streaming gas, but we held our altitude as best we could to make it possible to join other home bound formations. Looming up were the fearsome Alps that we still had to cross.

Staggering out of Vienna was a scorched and tattered formation of B-24's. Large hunks of these airplanes were falling off, yet they flew on. As we cut them off by turning southwest, I could see these ragged warriors forming painfully into combat boxes, and I joined them eagerly. As we crossed into Northern Italy near the Udine area, the crews were lightening their aircraft by discarding through the waist window: radios, guns, ammo, pieces of gun turrets, and the normal miscellany that air crews found comforting on long combat missions.

We touched the old bus down gently at Foggia Main which was close to the general hospital where Joe would get the best care. Later we returned to Torretta, shook, tired, and completely spent with our meeting with Herman Goring's best. The war was to continue on.

**The End**

# "A COLD CAN OF BEER"

By Clair Alexander 764 Sq.

I was saving it for my last mission, if there ever was to be a last mission.

Our operational training for my flight crew took place at Mountain Home, Idaho. We were then directed overseas as a replacement crew and traveled by ocean convoy in a Liberty ship. We left Norfolk Harbor on September 1, 1944 and arrived in Naples, Italy one month later. After a few days of exploring the town, the army unceremoniously dumped us in a boxcar for the two day railway trip to a replacement depot. A squadron B-24 picked us up the next day and flew us to Torretta, Italy, the home of the 764th Bomb Squadron of the 461st Group of the 15th Air Force. Here we would spend the next eight months, living in a tent, with ankle deep mud or snow in the winter and blowing dust in the summer.

In the first few days of combat most air crew men realize that fate was playing a prominent role in their existence. Superstition became a large part of their lives, which was exemplified by: a new testament carried in the shirt pocket, a lucky charm, or a girl friend's stocking worn as a muffler. Thus, such events as the thirteenth mission were approached with apprehension. Our crew drew a big sigh of relief when the dreaded thirteenth was passed.

My eighteenth mission of February 7, 1945 stands out in my mind. The evening before, our name along with the other crews which were to fly the next day had been posted on the squadron bulletin board. A few discreet inquiries revealed that the aircraft were being loaded more gasoline and less bomb weight than normal. This could mean that we would be going deep into enemy territory the next day. I was awakened from a fitful sleep very early the next morning by the roar of aircraft engines as the crew chiefs began to pre-flight their ships. At 4:00AM we were roused out of bed. We rapidly dressed in the cold and dark, then hurried down to the mess hall to warm up and eat breakfast. We rode in the back of a truck to group headquarters for the day's briefing. A murmur swept through the crews as a curtain was drawn from the large wall map. Our route for the mission led to Vienna, Austria,

our heaviest defended target. Back in the truck to ride to the equipment shack to pick up our flight gear. Then on to the B-24 which had been assigned to us for that day's flight, Herb Frank, who was from another crew, was flying as co-pilot. In the early morning light we taxied out to wait our turn for takeoff on one of the two parallel runways. We rolled into position and just as the plane ahead lifted off, the tower gave us the green light. I opened the throttles and our ship slowly gathered speed. Rapidly approaching the far end of the runway, the 30 tons of aluminum, steel, gasoline, high explosives, and ten human beings lumbered into the air. Each B-24 climbed to its assigned place in the formation while the group circled the field. With all planes in their proper slot, we turned north for the long climb to Vienna. The trip to the target went smoothly and as Herb was an excellent pilot, I spent a good bit of my time watching the landscape below.

Four hours after take off we turned on to our bomb run, and all of us donned our flak vests and helmets. I was flying as we neared the release point, trying not to notice the black puffs of exploding shells which surrounded us. We dropped our bombs and started our turning rally, to evade the flak, when suddenly our ship was soundly jolted by a bursting shell. I watched as the plexiglass dome covering the nose turret was blown away with the fleeting thought that Jack Holcome, the nose turret gunner was blown away too. Simultaneously all four engines ran away. With the propellers in flat pitch and extremely high rpm, the airplane lost most of its thrust and I had to lower the nose to maintain airspeed. While Herb and I were striving to get the engines under control, Bill Kassay, the engineer/gunner called on the intercom in the tail section stating that Ray Eitel, radio operator/gunner had received a bad shoulder wound and asking if we were going down. I replied "Don't bail out, and give Ray first aid." Meanwhile in the nose, Jack who had just stepped out when the flak started, and Frank Gaudio, bombardier hearing the screaming engines and watching the altimeter unwind, tried to bail out through the nose wheel door. Luckily the emergency release wouldn't work and when they crawled back to the bomb bay, they found everyone still with the ship. Herb and I finally got three engines under control, but number two, trailing oil and heavy smoke wouldn't respond. Suddenly the bearing of this engine seized on the crankshaft and with a jarring thud the propeller

froze in place. Now we could see the ruptured propeller dome which had caused the the engine to pump away all of its lubricating oil. Motionless and in flat pitch, the drag from the three blades was much more than from from a feathered propeller. The blades' air-foil shape deflected a great mass of air and acted as a very large air brake. I put down 19 degrees flap, applied maximum climb power on the three remaining engines and was able to maintain altitude at 135 MPH indicated. This was 15 miles per hour slower than our minimum cruise speed.

By then we had lost 7,000 feet and the ships of our group were much higher and several miles away. So while one crew member applied first aid to Ray, the rest busied themselves in throwing everything overboard, that they could get their hands on. That even included ammunition, and guns to lighten the load as much as possible. There we were, all alone, over German territory listening to the radio and hearing a steady stream of reports of enemy fighters. Our route home lay to the south and unfortunately so did many of the lesser peaks of the Alps. As we were flying at the same height as some of the mountains and we had no idea of how badly the plane was damaged, we turned to the southwest toward Lake Balaton, Hungary and the Russian lines. Our course led us over a number of defended targets. The ground below was partially obscured by clouds, so we kept blundering into areas where the enemy would shoot at us. The flak was not intense, but accurate, for we were low and they could draw a good bead on us before firing. At one time I heard a crash behind me and on turning could see a hole in the canopy just behind my head. This was most disconcerting as all of our protective gear had been thrown out. Nearing Lake Balaton, the overcast beneath us became solid. Thus as all systems seemed to be operating properly and when dead reckoning indicated that we had reached the lake, we turned south for home. We saw nothing of the mountains of Yugoslavia passing below us. But now the land that we were flying over was in friendly hands, or least not occupied by the Germans. The skies cleared as we reached the Adriatic Sea and there far ahead we could make out the small island of Vis. Here Tito had located his headquarters and the British maintained a small emergency field.

The fuel system left a lot to be desired, therefore Bill Kassay, our engineer, could not accurately determine the amount of gasoline remaining. Even though we had been using only three engines for the last three hours, we had been under full power the whole flight. This, plus the fact that it now was time for our squadron to be landing back at our home base, indicated to us that we couldn't have much fuel left. So we radioed Vis and told them we would be landing with wounded aboard. The island is very mountainous and the field

was located in a closed in valley. All landing approaches were made straight in over the sea and take offs were in the opposite direction. There would be no missed approach and no go around. Because of the frozen propeller, I came in ,under power low and relatively hot. Thank God the brakes were working, for I had to stand the plane on its nose so as not to run off the end of the short runway. We all gathered around Ray to wish him well as he was being placed in an ambulance to be transported to the hospital. He would spend the rest of the war in the States recovering from a broken shoulder bone. Then our crew returned to its favorite pastime of counting the number of flak holes punched in the skin of the airplane. We had picked up between 60 and 70, depending on who had made the count.

Our crew ate dinner with the British in an open air kitchen shoulder to shoulder with Tito's communist troops. For the first time we saw pretty young girls in uniform with combat rifles slung over their shoulders. We were put in a high wheeled British Lorry for a trip to town. The canvas sides were deliberately tied shut so that we wouldn't be able to observe the defenses of the island. Thus we were not able to view this beautiful place which the Prince of Wales had used as a playground before he gave up his throne for an American divorcee. We spent the night at British headquarters. As there was no beds, we were given a blanket and told to find a spot on the wooden floor. I was to sleep the night like a baby, relieved that we were all safe and were not in an enemy prison. Even the aircraft after receiving a new engine, would be flown back to the squadron and like the crew, would be flying combat missions. Just before falling to sleep, I heard Herb Frank say to no one in particular, but loud enough for everyone to hear, "Whew! I sure am glad that's over. It was my thirteenth mission.

My last mission was a humdinger. I went to bed the night before hoping my final trip would be a milk run. I was awakened a half an hour early at 3:30 AM and was told that I was to go to the special briefing. Thus, I knew that something was in the wind as usually only the lead and deputy lead crews go to this one. Before leaving the the tent, I grabbed the can of beer which I had been hoarding for this last trip. At the briefing, we found our target was to be the marshalling yard at Roveretto, Italy in the Brenner Pass. Then the group leader got up and said, " Today just before we start on the run, three ships will break away from the formation and bomb the gun emplacements; Lightbody, Carlisle, and Alexander." My heart sank. There were only twelve anti-aircraft guns, but there would be only three aircraft in our formation. I had heard enough stories about crews being shot down on their last mission and I was not pleased that the odds had just increased and that Don and I would be added to these numbers. Next

a select number of us were told of the secret nature of the bombs which we were to carry. This included only the lead officers plus the few pilots and bombardiers of our three ships. The bombs were fragmentary and they had new radar controlled fuses which were set to go off 30 to 40 feet above the ground. The warning that we were not to get too close to the bombs as they fell did not help things. For we were to be very close as they fell from our bomb racks.

We took off and the group formed over the field. It was a hard climb to Northern Italy as we had to be at altitude when we crossed the enemy lines. When we were over the Alps and were about three minutes from the IP, our leader called over the radio, "The three ships can take off now." In we went with our three planes looking mighty lonely. The flak was right in there and we could hear the bursts going "Ker-Whoom, Ker-Whoom." After bombs away, our lead plane flew on in the unrelenting flak for what seemed to be several minutes, (probably no more than 5 to 10 seconds). With that I said, "To hell with this", and raked the bomber into a steep turn. Jeff Brown thought we had been hit and grabbed for the controls, but I waved him off. Now after 34 missions it was my turn to control a rally. After months of combat flying, we acquired a sixth sense of just how long we had before we must turn to avoid the newly aimed incoming shells. There had been many an expletive yelled into an oxygen mask when the day's leader did not act soon enough. Now, at what I thought was the appropriate time, I turned around to and had great satisfaction in watching a series of flak bursts outline a curved course we had just left. The Germans certainly had good equipment, but more important, they knew how to use it. Our bombing did their work, as the B-24s behind us received no flak even though they made several passes at the target.

Now it was my turn to be on the receiving end of some very expressive four letter words as our three plane formation played follow the leader, "like fighter planes" After the other planes broke off, Jeff and I tried a trick I learned in advanced flight training. Put an object on your lap and see how long you can keep it floating in air. So the crew was treated to weightlessness floating in air many years before the astronauts practiced this in a NASA 707. The angry words on the intercom from the floating men in the back soon put a halt to the aerobatics. But this didn't cool my euphoria of reaching my last mission with no more day after day killing, or being killed.

One of the crew, Don Askerman reported, "I looked all the way back to the tail and saw Hank Davies straddled in mid air like he was seated on the top of his tail turret." The relief radio man was furious. He said

he was going to see that the pilot got court martialled, repeating this over and over. When we landed Hank and I took him off to one side and advised him gently that if he made any trouble for our pilot, we would personally make a midnight visit to his tent.

But after we landed and parked Miss Lace and climbed out of the ship, I noticed that one of our crew had left. When I asked where he had gone, I got the full treatment. I was told, due to my flying he took straight off to see the squadron C O to have me court martialled and nothing they said could dissuade him. I sat down and waited for the truck. To forget this new turn of events, I opened my ice cold can of beer. It was frozen solid. We waited and waited, the canvas covers were put on the plane, and I could see the big brass holding the truck while they argued over my fate. Finally we caught sight of Capt. Ernest Parsonson, the squadron operations officer, approaching in his jeep. This is it, no more the hero dropping secret bombs, I was to be busted right on the spot. But all he wanted to know was why we were still there. Instead he took our crew picture, (Note only nine members present) So that was it. The beer had thawed by now, it was the best I ever tasted.

Now after 43 years I offer my apologies to the radio man for all that fancy flying. If I had known of his discomfort then I would have been . . . more . . . cautious.



April 24, 1945 Left to right back row:

1) Unknown; 2) Unknown; 3) Clair Alexander, pilot; 4) Hank Davies, tail turret; 5) Jeff Brown, co-pilot; and 6) Frank Gaudio, bombardier. Front row: 7) Lee Emanuel, engineer; and 8) Don Askerman, ball turret. Donald L Askerman photo 764 Sq.

# MISSION NO 50

**WE WERE TOLD TO EXPECT ABOUT 1100 88MM AND 105MM GUNS OVER THE TARGET**

**By:**

**Part I: G J Mayfield 765 Sq.**

**Part 2 : Marion M Pruitt 461st BG**

**Navigator 765 Sq.**

**Part 3: Official Document,**

## **Part 1**

On July 20, 1944. crew 36 of the 765th squadron landed with most of the crew completing the required 50 missions and a return trip stateside. The exceptions were Dennis, Bombardier; Mayfield, Engineer; and McRee, Radio Operator.

On the next mission I was scheduled to fly as a fill in engineer with another crew, some undoubtedly fill ins also. Col. Glanzberg, our group CO was to be the pilot. Col. Glanzberg never flew milk runs so I anticipated a difficult mission.

The briefing for the mission of July 22, 1944 was not good news at all. Col. Glanzberg was to fly 15th AF Lead on a mission to Ploesti, Rumania, one of the heaviest defended targets within range of the 15th AF. At the briefing we were told that 1100 anti-aircraft guns of 88 MM and 105MM caliber would be counted on to give some opposition. What an understatement. I had flown three previous missions to Ploesti and one to the refineries port of Potes-ti, and was very familiar with the smoke pots that screened 100 square miles of target area. We were assigned to a new B-24J Pathfinder aircraft that aimed the bomb drop by radar. With all that smoke we needed something.

**"Mickey Ships," carried the radar scanner in the place of the ball turret.**



Pathfinder aircraft usually carried the radar scanner in the place of the ball turret, meaning we had two less guns for fighter defense. Preflight was normal, but without the comradeship of our well knit crew #36 where everyone's strengths and weaknesses are known it was like being alone with nine other men.

**Flying with a new crew was like being alone with nine other men.**

Crew #36 had been to Cairo on R & R and a fortune teller told the Bombardier that he would be wounded and some of this crew were offering 10 to 1 odds that

it would happen on this mission. It was enough to make one a little more apprehensive than the usual pre-mission dreading.

Combat equipment was loaded including the "jewel" pots\*, these being standard steel helmets that airmen sat on when the flak got thick. One tended to pucker from your feet up to your crotch, hence the name

"Jewel" pot. Of course the pilot and co-pilot could not afford this luxury.

Take off, climb and cruise was normal as we watched the 15th AF form behind us. It was quite a majestic sight. We proceeded on course to Ploesti. I checked the fuel supply equipment and my position at the right waist gun. My job was to transfer fuel from the out-board reserve or Tokyo tanks after the bomb run when we were out of flak range. By burning this off in a designated manner, weight and balance was improved and helped to prevent an outer wing panel from being blown off if it was hit by subsequent anti-aircraft fire while still containing fuel. The other consideration was that the so-called engineers at Consolidated Aircraft forgot to install fuel quantity gauges for these tanks.

## **We were close to buying the farm.**

As we approached the target at around 26,000 feet we found the smoke screen in place. We hit the IP and turned toward the target. From the right waist I saw two flak bursts bracket the right wing, and someone in the nose called three bursts directly in front of our ship and at our altitude. Almost immediately a flak shell burst in the vicinity of No 4 engine setting it on fire, leaving a big hole on the top of the right wing where the right Tokyo tank was located. It was burning too. No 3 engine quit also.

The airplane started down out of control in the middle of the flak field. The bail out bell was ringing and Col Glanzberg ordered bail out. Suddenly the side slip pulled the fire out of the engine and fuel tank. I started yelling on the inter-phone that the fire was out. We had been trying to ride out the aircraft until we were out of the flak field before jumping. Col. Glanzberg got the plane under control at around 4,000 feet on the Number 1 and 2 engines, and asked for a crew count. We were all still hanging on. He headed for Turkey. After observing No 3 engine and finding it still there and apparently undamaged it was restarted and purred like a kitten for the rest of our journey. We discussed the fuel situation, because if we were to try to return to Italy we would need the fuel from the No 4 tank and any left in the right Tokyo tank that had been on fire.

Because of the fuel system design on this B-24J, I had to remove a fuel line and plug another over the bomb bay with a 50 caliber round in order to use the fuel from the No 4 and Tokyo tank.

On we went at tree top level leaving Turkey and turning back to Italy with out seeing another aircraft either German or American. Everything was thrown out, including our beloved "Jewel" pots to lighten the load. Two and a half hours later and after the rest of the group landed we limped in for a good landing at our base at Torretta. As we rolled to a stop fuel was leaking all over the aircraft. We didn't need a bail out bell to tell us to get the hell out once the aircraft stopped. The aircraft was junk, after just one mission, and my 50th.

When I got back to my tent, my crew were preparing for R & R in Rome which had just come under allied control. Col. Glanzberg had me passing information and instructions to new crews on the procedure we used to get our plane home. I never did get to Rome for R&R.

For this mission I received the Distinguished Flying Cross. I didn't find out about this until 39 year later when I attended the 461st & 484th Bomb Groups Re-

union in Williamsburg, Virginia and saw the orders, awarding the decoration.

Crew 36 departed Morrison Field, Florida February 1, 1944, flying our aircraft to South America, Dakar, and North Africa to Italy. We flew our first mission April 2, 1944, and during May, June, and July of that year the 765th Squadron lost 22 aircraft and crews. Crew 36 returned State Side on the troop ship General Bliss and arrived in New York on September 1, 1944.

## **Part 2**

At the Dayton, Ohio reunion in 1982 I was telling Leonard Cole, (he worked at group headquarters) about our mission to Palesti. Mayfield was listening and I was informed that he was the flight engineer that had plugged the gasoline line with a fifty caliber machine gun shell that enabled us to return to Torretta.

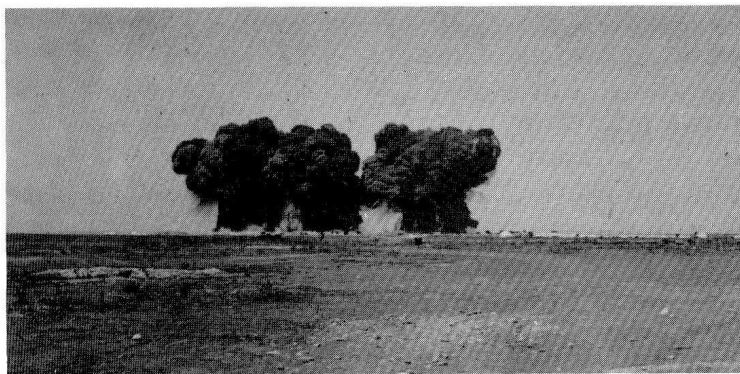
I remember this mission as it was the hardest a plane had been hit while I was flying as the Group Navigator of the 461st Bomb Group. This particular day was what I would call a routine start of a mission except it was a new airplane with the navigator seated behind the pilot. The radar operator Lt Gizelba was seated across at the radio operators position with his back to the co-pilot. We were leading the 461st Group of the 49th Wing as well as the 15th Air Force against the Romana American Oil Refinery at Palesti, Rumania.

We arrived at our initial point a few miles southeast of Bucharest, Rumania, and the bombardier took over. A normal bomb run was two to three minutes long before bombs away. We dropped the bombs and took a standard rally of a 45 degree to the right loosing 1000 feet in altitude as quickly as possible to confuse the anti-aircraft gunners. The planned route for the day was to go north of Palesti and turn west and return to base. I can not remember our altitude exactly on this mission, but it was 19,000 to 21,000 feet. As we started the bomb run I was seated at a table that I used in the navigation of the plane. I turned around to look forward between the pilot and co-pilot and could see the flak was very heavy over the target.

**As we approached the point where we were due to release our bombs, I saw four bursts of 88MM flak exactly in line at our altitude.**

As we approached the point where we were due to release our bombs, I saw four bursts of 88MM flak exactly in line at our altitude. I thought we were safe from that battery of anti-aircraft artillery, but where the 5th burst came from I do not know. This burst hit our No 4 engine and set it on fire. It appeared that to feath-

er No 4, both No 3 and 4 were feathered, which put us into a spin to the right. The spin threw me back in my seat as the bail out bell sounded. I can remember how



hard I pulled on the table to get in a position to try to bail out. A drift meter against my left leg would not let me get to the aisle and bail out through the bomb bay. Also fire was all under the bomb bay.

At 9000 feet the pilot pulled us out of this spin over the town of Palesti and immediately began calling for a heading. I gave him a heading to Turkey as it was the closest neutral country. As we got on course to Turkey, we found ourselves alone, and quite crippled. Just the type of meat marauding German fighters were looking for. The rest of our group was going north or west back to our base. We were fortunate that day that the Luftwaffe did not follow us. It was at this point in our journey that Mayfield plugged the fuel line with the 50 caliber shell.

South of Bucharest the pilot decided we could make it into Yugoslavia and asked for a heading back towards Torretta. After weighing the possibilities of bailing out over Yugoslavia, trying to make it to Turkey, or ditching at sea, calculations showed we had enough fuel to make it back to the base.

Approaching Torretta we found that the bomb dump was on fire with a 50 knot wind blowing cross wind from the west. All of the other planes of the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups were diverted to other bases with more of an east west runway, but Torretta was closer and our fuel supply by now was very low. We landed going to the north on the west side of the runway and came to a stop finally on the east side off in the dirt. The jar of the landing jarred something loose and opened a fuel line filling the flight deck with deadly fumes. My thought was to make it this far and then get caught in a fire a second time was too much for all on the flight deck. That was one speedy evacuation.

The following day the crew chief brought the fuse from the 88MM shell that was found stuck in number 4 engine, and I in turn presented it to Col. Glanzberg

as a souvenir of the mission.

### Part 3

## Official Report of Mission No 67 22 July, 1944 Romana Oil Refinery, Ploesti, Rumania

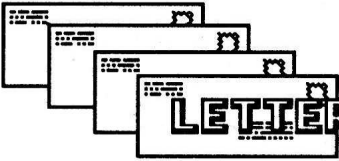
Despite the efforts of the Air Force on the 15th of July to finish off Ploesti, the Romana Oil Refinery was assigned to the group as its target for 22 July. Col Glanzberg led the wing. In the lead plane with him were; Lt Specht, Capt. Leffler, Major Pruitt, Lt Simeroth and Lt Gizelba. After the group was on the bomb run, Colonel Glanzberg's plane had number 4 engine knocked out by flak and number 3 engine set on fire. Captain Leffler salvoed the bombs as the plane went into a circle to the left. After loosing 8000 feet, Col Glanzberg and Lt Specht were able to level off the plane. The fire in number 3 engine was put out by feathering it. After the fire was extinguished the prop was unfeathered and the crew came home on three engines.

All planes dropped their bombs as briefed by the Group leader. All of them fell short of the target. Of the 22 planes on the bomb run, seventeen were hard hit by flak, and four were lost. Two planes, one piloted by 2nd Lt Clarence W Bloxum and the other one by 2nd Lt Elias R Moses, both of whom were flying their second combat mission, left the formation after the target and disappeared. 1st Lt Taylor bailed his crew out near the base when he had but one engine left. 1st Lt Holmes also bailed his crew out near the base when leaks in his gas line caused him to run out of fuel. One man on Lt Taylor's crew, F/O Irving Smithkin was fatally injured in parachuting to earth.

While the planes were away from the base on the mission, a fire, which had started in a wheat field west of the base, swept up the fire barriers which had previously been burned around the edges of the field. No damage was done to installations or equipment on the field, but the bomb dump was set on fire. Smoke from the conflagration covered the field, with the result that only five planes including the one flown by Col Glanzberg, were able to land. Capt Donovan, who had flown the mission as deputy group leader, took about half of the planes to Pantanella. The remainder of the planes landed at various fields in the area of Torretta.

The 280 heavy anti-aircraft guns at Ploesti had turned the trick for the first time of keeping the 461st Groups from reaching its target.

The End



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### A GEOGRAPHIC JOURNEY

By Bill Hogan, 827 Sq

I am not for nostalgia usually, But Fred Roessler's story in the Fall 86 edition of the Torretta Flyer prompted me to add some recollections of my own. I was one of Maj. Haldeman's crew. In May of 1944 we ran out of luck during the bombing of Weiner Neustadt, Austria. Heavy flak and Me-210's both hit us in that order.

### HARVARD, NEBRASKA

Altimeter check: flying so low down a railroad track that the top of the embankment was higher than the aircraft. Cross Country Flying: A squadron B-24E called the "Gutless Wonder" because of its reluctance to gain proper altitude. Our very own brand new B-24 H. Remove the cap from the center of the control wheel hoping for a girl's address, but reading instead, "Now you let all of the gremlins out". Ground crews abandon us to leave for overseas with the same sparse advice, "Never, no never tow an airplane with a cleat-track vehicle". Our smallest crew member driving the largest semi trailer on the base so we can gas up. Civilian personnel waving good-bye and good luck as we buzz the base in farewell.

### LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

Oh! well, we didn't need all that anti-ice stuff, parachute kits with a folding machete, and mini shot-guns.

### MIAMI, FLORIDA

Look at all those funny looking B-24's with the ball turrets in the nose! Come on guys these are Navy, "Privateers."

### TRINIDAD

Sleeping on a dirt floor as a variety of insects hum, chirp, and chatter outside, we hope it was outside.

### SOUTH AMERICA

It takes forever to fly across the mouth of the Amazon river at low altitude. From a higher altitude the dense jungle looks like a damp, weedy, thick green lawn, "filled with all kinds of horrible things." Keep it flying.

### ATLANTIC OCEAN

How far did the ATC say? 14 hours! Would you believe that we are running out of fuel at 13 and a half hours? Ditching a shoulder high wing aircraft with paper thin bomb bay doors can give you a sinking feeling. Shall we jettison the spider monkey we picked up in Natal, or the second engineer? Hold it there is the west coast of the, "dark continent now."

### DAKAR

First time landing on steel mats. Thought the wheels had come off. French barracks with port hole type windows. Natives selling knives made from empty 55 gallon drums. Never heard of rust -proofing.

### MARRAKESH

Airport men's room with footprints

embossed in the tile floor on either side of a tiled pit. Steady now! Standing guard at night in the pitch black, no night was ever darker. Returning from guard duty with one of those 1/2 candlepower right-angled G I flashlights. Sense anothers presence in the darkness. Heart drops into your shoe, then lift the beam upward. "Cigarette Joe?" asks a very tall French Senegalese perimeter guard. Wish I had a carton under my arm, but don't smoke. He understands though.

### DEJEDIA

Narrow dirt taxi strips. No maintenance stands. Have to climb up and walk on the aircraft. Tail stands over a wide ditch when parked. Monkey goes to ape heaven. Area contains rifle pits and loose ammo as hold-overs from the previous Luftwaffe residents. Shake out your shoes before putting them on in case a scorpion or worse has decided to relocate the night before. Railroad crossing sign with a neat missile hole through the upright. Gasoline pouring out of the vents due to daytime heat, but we need blankets at night. Destroyed German tank setting on an embankment next to the road to Tunis. Keep an eye on the natives and anything lying loose.

### TUNIS

An authentic belly dancer and the white walled U.S.O. building. See various other aircraft types at an adjacent field. Obsolete French Medium bombers with twin tails, basket weave Wimpy Wellington bombers whose counter rotating props



turn outward. A Spitfire flying along the African coast so we don't get stale. Decide to abandon the idea of letting our beards grow until our first combat mission because the oxygen mask makes your face itch. Barnum and Bailey never had camels this dirty or ugly.

## ITALY

Away we go, crossing just below Sicily on a beautiful day and I am getting stick time in the co-pilot's seat. The major taps me on the shoulder and points to the loose cover over the oil cap on No # 2 engine. " No Dzus is a bad Szus." So this is Italy. Easy on the pepperoni in my pizza.

The End

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Topeka, Kansas  
Dear Bud:

On page 19 of Torretta Flyer No 13 lower left, I have some additional names of our Radio Maintenance Crew as follows: Standing center top row next to Newton D Lewis, ( far left) and (L) Sagonavich is PFC James Lawler. Sipes; and PFC or Cpl Meguel Chavez. Kneeling from left: Sgt William Beatty; Sgt Harper; Bill Knapp (D); and PFC Eddie Gauthier.

William J Beatty 824 Sq.

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Bud

I was an original crew member with most of crew 63 in the 29th B Group at Boise, Idaho in the summer of 1943. Col Jimmy Stewart was a squadron CO but I never had the honor to fly with him. Good crews came out of the 767 squadron, 61,62, 63 were the top three. I did receive a nice letter from a

friend, Pete Henspeter of Bodfish, California. I sure never heard of that one before. He was on crew 75 with Robert E Scott of Mariposa, California. Pete saw my letter in the last issue of the Flyer.

Be seeing you,

Dennis Cheek 767 Sq

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Detroit, Michigan  
Dear Bud:

The picture of B-24 number 29 on the front cover of Torretta Flyer No 12 was the crash of Lt Mac Mullen's plane, 765 Squadron. We were returning from a mission to Linz, Austria January 29, 1945. We were unable to drop the nose wheel due to frozen mud during the approach. However we were ordered to allow the following plane to land ahead of us due to an injured flyer, so we started another approach. With number 4 engine feathered and working on the nose wheel, we were only 500 feet from the ground the other three engines cut out. Our navigator Seymour J Tenner ran past us to the front of the plane for his chute. We crashed about 4:30 PM and the ground crew didn't remove him until 9:00 Pm, being injured he died the next day.

A few days later a fill in bombardier stated that the crew chief had learned there was remaining gasoline so we didn't run out of fuel.

Later I learned that the fuel lines were damaged by flak and rubber fuel lines collapsed when the transfer pumps were started.

My sincere thanks to you Bud and your wife for the wonderful enjoyment at these reunions

George Christie 765 Squadron

Bud Markel,  
461St & 484th B G Assn

Dear Sir:

Sign me up for membership in this group. I flew as top turret gunner on ship #70 ,827 squadron 484th Bomb Group. I am a member of the original crew of ship #70 that we picked up in Lincoln, Nebraska. Enclosed is a picture of the original crew. Keep it for display at the next reunion.

Robert W Day 827 Sq.



*Top Row from left: :*

**James P Spaulding-Co/Pilot (Later Ist Pilot), John J Dunn-Navigator (later Group Navigator), Hewitt-Bombardier (Later Group Bombardier), Marvin N Watson-Engineer, and Lawrence A Moxely-Ball Gunner. Bottom: Robert W Day-Top Gunner, and Patrick M Layne Jr-Tail Gunner. Not in the photo are Wilburn M Kitchen-Pilot, and Willie Wong-Radio Operator who were in the hospital recovering from wounds at the time this picture was taken. Also missing from the photo is James Martin-Nose Gunner. Robert W Day photo 827 Squadron.**

Dear Bud:

Keep up the good work! I really look forward to receiving the Flyer and read each issue from cover to cover. On page 25 of Flyer No 12 the picture taken by Robert A Harrison, is of my crew #72 of the 827 Sq. " The Trouble Maker". They are from left: Bob Johoda from the S-2 section; Lewis R Cooke, nose gunner; Sgt Harlan F Meyer (ball/gunner); S/Sgt Edward J Bouzan (gunner) or Ernest Green our crew chief;; Sgt. Harold Gundlach, Radio/Operator unidentified nurse; Cpl George Custer ( upper gunner); Edward J Bouzan, gunner?; I believe the man on the extreme right was my navigator Arthur F Bouton who was killed in a refueling mission over Kansas after the war.

I have located most of my old crew, but the whereabouts of three remain a mystery. George Custer last lived in Chicago. Harlan F Meyer last lived in Bellflower, California, and Edward J Bouzan\* was from Boston. If any readers know anything about these men, they should contact me.

Thanks and I hope I have helped some with the picture.

\* E J Bouzan has been found and is now a member.

Sincerely,

Earl W Depue 827 Sq

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Editor, Torretta Flyer

Regarding "The Last Mission " on page 17 of Torretta Flyer No 12 Spring 1986 and the last two paragraphs of Wally Robinson's letter on page 20 of the same issue I quote the following from my personal log book dated April 2, 1944.

Crew 52, 766 squadron collided with another plane while flying ship 41-29336 on April 2, 1944

over Jugoslavia during the squadron's first mission and were lost. My log book lists crew #52 as Lt Wilson, pilot; Lt Loftus, co pilot; Lt Ross, navigator; Lt Whitney, bombardier; S/Sgt Wallace, engineer; S/Sgt Goldstein, radio operator; Sgt D V Fine, top turret gunner; Sgt Ed Ulrich, nose gunner; Sgt H Childs, ball gunner; and Sgt E McCoy, tail gunner. I was armament chief for that plane but don't know if there were any substitutions that day. I believe we heard later that Lt Wilson was a POW, but I never heard about the rest of the crew.

Walter R Dunn, 766 Squadron  
Newark, Delaware

**KNOWING SOMEONE IN  
HIGH PLACES CAN HELP  
SOMETIMES**

By T/Sgt Franklin S Ennis 824 Sq

Radio Operator crew # 9 Austin R  
Stanford, Pilot

I want to write this while I am still excited about our recent reunion. I also want to congratulate you and your committee for another fine affair, and to say that I thought San Antonio was a good spot for the reunion. At the Orlando reunion, I promised to send you a write up for possible publication in the Torretta Flyer, but put off doing it. Well here it is:

"On January 15th, 1945 there was a notice posted on the bulletin board of the 824th Squadron ordering Cpl Franklin S Ennis to report to the CO's office at 1500 hours. I was quite apprehensive about this because of a problem I had a couple weeks earlier in the mess hall. At the prescribed hour, I

showed up and Major Trotter started to talk about a communication from Washington about me. He wondered what I had been up to, to elicit such a personal directive. I stood there motionless imagining all kinds of punishment that would soon befall me. He then took out a red bordered order and slapped in on the desk, looked me straight in the eye, and leaned back in his chair. For one long moment nothing was said. I was beginning to shake inside, but then he gave a wry smile that broadened. The order which came from General Ulio directed him to have a cake baked for my birthday. This order had come to him from the Adjutant General's Office through the entire chain of command to the CO of the 824 Squadron. I was quite happy about this as well as being greatly relieved. I was directed to bring my crew and whoever else I wanted to the Mess Hall after dinner that day to receive the cake. We all showed up and the Mess Sgt in charge presented me with a very good birthday cake.

### A Birthday Surprise

It happened that my sister was a secretary in the AGO's office at that time and she had commented about her brother over in Italy who would have a birthday soon. So General Ulio got the details and had the order sent out. It was one of the more pleasant aspects of my tour of duty with the 824th. At the time it was news all over Southern Italy. Maybe some of the readers will remember it. Also our crew were promoted up to TO within the next three months

I am looking forward to the next reunion and making an extra effort to contact other members of the crew.

The End

Hi Bud

I am enclosing a photo of the crew of S B Porter 824 squadron. Hope to see you at the next reunion.

Bob Flippen, 825 Squadron



*They are standing from left: J Hotelan, ball gunner; Robert Flippen, engineer; Jim Burgess, tail gunner; Joe Heck, nose gunner; and David Dixon, radio operator; Bottom row from left: A Bloomfield, navigator; Harris, co pilot; S B Porter, pilot; and C Lloyd, bombardier. Missing Bill Newsum, gunner. Bob Flippen photo 825 sq.*

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Wilmette, Illinois

Dear Bud;

The name of the airman to the right in the photograph on page 14, of the Winter 84 Torretta Flyer No 11 is Phillip Tuttle. But I suppose you long since found that out.

Emmett S Goff 825 Sq

*Editors Note:* No we did not. Thank you for the information.

## THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A MILK RUN

*The following is excerpted from a letter to Ed Nesheim from Ralph Hallenbeck sent to us by Grant Hansen.*

We went to the Orlando reunion several years back. Most every one there from the 824 squadron had been assigned after I was shot

down. May 30, 1944. It is interesting that someone remembers that practice bombing mission after all these years.

### A hail of practice bombs came raining down on us

I remember the Adriatic incident only too well, maybe because of that plane that was coming over the top of us when part of its wing was clipped off. I jammed the stick forward and headed straight down to get away from it, jamming Maranti's head in the astrodome because the plane was going down faster than his head. I called over the intercom, "Don't bail out" because I knew my crew would be scared out of their wits. We pulled out at high speed just off the ocean. Then I saw the parachutes, and I circled to get the smoke bombs dropped on each guy as he hit the water. This was a good thing for once they were in the water we couldn't see them anymore. I remember calling rescue and circling till they came, and then flew over the Island as a hail of practice bombs came raining down on us. I had forgotten that the whole 15th Air Force was doing a practice mission on the Island of Pianosa that day. I was so

shook up and angry I went on the radio and announced, "Attention, all 15th AF aircraft, practice bombing is cancelled, all planes return to base. I repeat etc, etc. ." I didn't even think about not having the authority to do so. I was really ticked off especially when one guy had swam up to the island, only to hear the bombs and went back into the water.

We came around where the rescue plane was taxiing around picking up airmen from the sea as the smoke was dying down. With the load and the high waves he couldn't take off almost crashing as he hit the wave tops. After three tries he taxied about to burn off fuel and an hour later finally took off and headed for home. By then we too were low on fuel and returned to base. Every one thought we had gone in.

### Later they were going to put us in for some kind of award

Later they were going to put us in for some kind of award, but I nixed that idea in a hurry, as I felt we were only doing what we were supposed to do.

Later I worked for General Twining when he was Chief of Staff. I was chief of his General Officers branch for assigning and promoting of Air Force General Officers world wide.

Ralph Hallenbeck, pilot 824 Sq.

*Editors note:* Member Ralph Hallenbeck is a retired Brigadier General USAF

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Fort Morgan, Colorado

Hello Bud:

We had a great time in San Antonio, and are looking forward to Colorado Springs this fall. There-

was no one in San Antonio that we knew, but we made so many new friends it was well worth it. Our thanks to you for all the work that went into making it a success.

Kaye and C A Harford 825 Sq

**HOW AN A-2 JACKET  
ALMOST CAUSED A COURT  
MARTIAL**

Dear Folks

Eleanore and I are sorry that we missed the soiree down in San Antonio. I was operated for hydrocephalus fluid on the brain last October 10. The operation was a total success and I feel better than I have in 20 years.

Read with great interest the short article on Capt. Trotter in issue No #12 of the Torretta Flyer. He was the operations officer of the 826th squadron and I had a chance to know him better than most enlisted men.

The enlisted men on "Salvo Sally" had their A-2 Jackets painted by a French artist in Tunis, North Africa while we were waiting at D'Jeida, Tunisia for the airfield at Torretta to be cleared and drained by the Corps of Engineers.

In August 1944 I had finished my tour and wanted to add 50 small painted bombs to the painting of "Salvo Sally" on the jacket. Sally was the name of a newly born daughter of our pilot, Floyd Creasman. Our Sally was a "Petty Girl" adapted in style from Esquire Magazine. I went in to town and found an Italian lady who agreed to do the painting. I returned the following week after getting a ride to town with the cook who was taking the potable water trailer to town for a refill. He agreed to come by and pick me up when the tank was full.

The work was all wrong the bombs were scattered helter-skelter. She agreed to do the re-painting, but needed a solvent to remove some of the previous work. Because it was evening I wasn't in class A uniform, no hat, no tie. I took a straw covered Chianti bottle and headed for the MP post a few blocks down the street, and asked for a pint of gasoline after telling him the story about the bombs on the A-2 Jacket. He looks at me from one eye then the other and asks me to repeat the story, and even asks another MP to hear the tale. I got the gasoline and headed back to the woman. By this time my ride had left and I had to walk all the way back to the airfield.

Three days pass and I am in the clear, but later that day Captain Trotter calls me into the office and in a calm voice says, "I just heard a story about you from the MP's, tell me it's not true." I could only squeak out, "I am sorry Captain but it is." The expression on his face changed rather quickly and I found myself at the working end of a shovel digging a 3 by 6 by 2 foot hole in the hard chalice beside his hut.

I still have the A-2 Jacket and my stripes. The jacket still fits.

Joe Hebert, 826 Sq.

**HE WAS ONE DAMN FINE  
AIRPLANE DRIVER**

Bud Markel  
Editor Torretta Flyer  
Dear Bud:

I am forced to make some comments about Fred Roessler's article "Give it a good kick. I must limit my remarks to my association and knowledge of Major Don Halde-man, since I have no first hand information about the rest of the arti-

cle. His first name was Don not John.

He came to the 827th from a provisional group of training pilots in B-26's not B-25's. He was a fearless and damn good airplane driver.

**He wanted to know why I was only a 1st Lt. "Get promotion papers typed up, I'll be back soon and sign them".**

The first time he appeared at the operations shack, he asked me what my job was. At the time I was on the books as Operations Officer, Jim Lyle had not reported as yet. He wanted to know why I was only a 1st Lt. "Get promotion papers typed up, I'll be back soon and sign them". He left to find a place to live. My first ride was interesting. I was under the hood at about 8,000 ft, and he feathered all four. "You never can tell you may lose all four and should know how the machine reacts".

**I was under the hood at about 8,000 ft, and he feathered all four".**

We went to Blyth, California, to find good weather for training and a B-26 was on the ramp. He was continually jabbing me about my B-25 time and how much better the B-26 was. He stole the B-26 and we took a ride. Remember the saying, "One a day in Tampa Bay"? His purpose was to prove to me that the B-26 was a good plane, you just had to stay in front of it. On take off he brought the gear up and feathered the left engine and proceeded to make a steep turn to the left. We went around, landed on one taxied back, and took off on one. We climbed to 12,000 ft where upon he half-rolled and split s'd. I was convinced that the B-26 was a fine aircraft., it just had a bad reputation. Its combat record proved that it was a rugged machine, its loss record was one of the lowest in the European theater.

Bud I've said enough except to say- if he hadn't had so much confidence in his piloting ability, he may have made it.

I retired from Rockwell in January, hope to see you one of these fine days.

Hank Hewett  
El Toro, California

### Robert Kime is Remembered

Falls Church, Virginia  
Dear Bud:

I want to thank Stanley V Olsen and Robert Dean who helped me during those early days of my combat flying. Also thanks to Major Eugene Darby 824 squadron commander who checked me out on B-24's and then allowed me to fly right seat so I wouldn't jeopardize my pending transfer to P-38's, 1st Fighter Group, under Col. Charles Agan.

Our original crew included Charlie Harrison, navigator (deceased); Ted Ewing, bombardier who was wounded in the eyes over Trento (entrance to the Brenner Pass). I am in contact with tail gunner Koch, radioman, Joe O'Connell, and Bob Dean who was shot down twice in Yugoslavia and led one hundred flyers out from behind German lines. My good drinking buddy was Robert Kime who was scheming to get into P-51's but couldn't get squadron approval because he was an outstanding first pilot.

We tried to liberate two, "War Weary" fighters, a P-38, and a P-51 from the salvage yard that we intended to learn to fly by flying them home.

One day we drove to Foggia Main and tried to liberate two, "War Weary" fighters, a P-38, and a P-51 from the salvage yard that we intended to learn to fly by flying them home. But we couldn't get the tech sergeant in charge drunk enough. We needed new batteries and some gas.

After the war I lost track of Kime and then subsequently heard of his passing. He was special and it pains me to realize that we could have visited had I only known of his whereabouts sooner. I consider Robert Kime my best friend in the 824 squadron. Your association has brought such non-communication to an end, "Bravo."

Stanley Hutchins 824 Sq.

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Dear Sir:

On the back cover of Torretta Flyer No 13 is a picture of Col Glanzberg beside his P-40 that he often flew to check on formations. Ship 64 in the background of the same photo is from 767 Sq. that I loaded many a bomb on. I have in my notes that this plane made emergency landings in Northern Italy and the Island of Corsica before being lost on a raid over Ploesti in the summer of 1944

Yours truly,  
Melvin R Jackson 767 Sq.

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Hello Bud:

Edwin W Turner is standing next to the prop to the left of Fang Hansen in the photo on page 27 of Torretta Flyer No 12.

Charles L Kopetzky 824 Sq

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Racine, Wisconsin  
Hello Bud:

Thank you for the Caterpillar Club membership! Does that throw you?? It did me too!! Shortly after Torretta Flyer No #10 was received with my, "bailing out first mission story," I got a very nice letter with a Caterpillar Club Membership, a beautiful gold caterpillar pin, and a lovely letter from the Irvin Parachute Company of Canada. The letter said, "We welcome you to membership in the Caterpillar Club, your story in the Torretta Flyer is evidence enough to secure your membership".

Shortly after that I received a letter from Lt/Col Johnny Brown inviting my membership in the Caterpillar Association of the United States. Their home office is in Kenosha, Wisconsin just ten miles down the road. What a coincidence. Wow !! all of this after 42 years.

And now I have just phoned Doloras Anderson, wife of Donald Anderson, of Tony Nahkunst's crew of the 764 squadron who you wrote up in Flyer No #12, who is from Racine also..

Cap Jack Yetter, 766 squadron was in the control tower the night we bailed out, a Texan, who had been employed in Racine for over 40 years, and is now retired as is Boyden Supiano, the first Group Bombardier of the 461st. We get together from time to time.

When Yetter and I compared orders where I was assigned as a Squadron Bombardier, he was designated as the issuing officer for combat whiskey, and was ordered to comply strictly with provisions of paragraph 9 and 10. This was in P.A.C. 15th AF Memo No 25-3, 7 March 45.

"HO HO"! Did we get a chuckle over that.

So you see things are in good hands in Racine.

See you at the next reunion.

Amos Larson 766 Sq

Bud

I believe the personnel shown in the picture on page 10 of Torretta Flyer No 13 Fall 86 are not from the medics, but from 484th BG intelligence. The first man from left could be M/Sgt Phil Murphy, then Robson, and Johnson?

John Morgan 484th BG



latter and about 5 weeks later walked back into camp. Photo 1 above) From left: Wilson B Wilks Squadron Operations officer is shown awarding the Distinguished Unit Citation to Harry Solis 824.

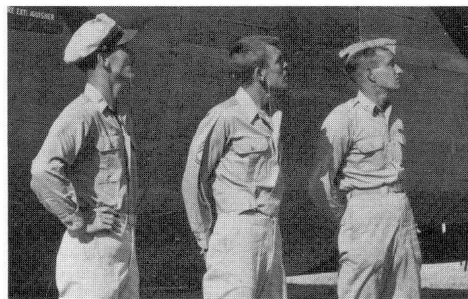


Photo 2 above) From left :Pilot John Trechter, Co-Pilot Harold L Wells, and Engineer Harold J Smith stand in front of ship #11 of which I was the crew chief.

Incidentally this crew flew 58 sorties accumulating 554 continuous flying hours without an engine change. This brought about my being awarded the Bronze Star.

Very sincerely yours,  
Walter M Rix 824 Sq

Bud:

This fellow's name is Tony Castelmare, an Italian from Cerrignola, who worked on the 767 base area as a boss over the Italians working at the airfield. I was wondering how the scholarship fund worked?



Maybe it is possible that Tony might have grandchildren who might be eligible for one of our grants.

Ed Schrader 767 Sq.

**A 765TH SQ.B-24  
FLOWN BY THE  
LUFTWAFFE**

Horgen,Switzerland

Dear Bud:

I am enclosing a photo of a 15th Air Force B-24 that was captured intact by the Luftwaffe and given the military registration number CL+XZ This plane was used by the Flug-Funk-Technisches-Institut at Oberpfaffenhofen, Germany in late 1944. The plane was equipped with special radar and radios. This same organization used another 15th Air Force B-24 coded NF+LF.

This aircraft carried number 39. On a mission to Munich Germany October 4, 1944 the aircraft and crew were reported missing in action.

The crew, with the exception of the co-pilot who was killed in action, were taken prisoner and became POWs. They are:

Pilot William E Waggoner \*  
Co-Pilot Norman G Schlarp-KIA  
Navigator Robert R Brina  
Bombardier Paul D Shaffer  
Rt waist gunner Ralph D Vinson  
Lt w gunner Frank C Hawthorne  
Top gunner Armend R Turgeon  
Ball gunner John A Peebles  
N gunner Woodrow W Smith\*  
T gunner Edward J Klepper\*

My opinion is that the Germans lacked a suitable four engine bomber for use as a test bed for engineering trials, and had to use captured aircraft as a substitutes.

Dear Sir:

I was surprised to see the picture on page 26 of Torretta Flyer No 12 of the plane my husband Major Frank M Poole 767 Sq. landed after being hit with the 155 MM shell! We have the picture from the 461St Liberaider and a picture of Ryan looking out the hole.

Frank retired as a Colonel in 1963. I am sorry to say he passed away July 4th ,1985 after a long illness. He enjoyed the Torretta Flyer as I have too. He is survived by his wife Dorothy, three children Frank, Peggy, Christine, and two grandchildren.

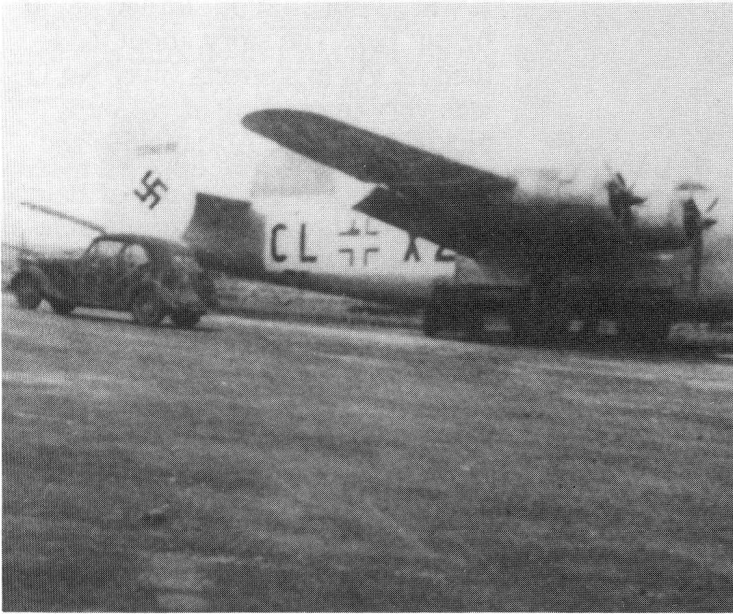
Sincerely,

Dorothy A Poole



Dear Bud

I am enclosing two photographs of two men who ditched in the Adriatic and were picked up by a German hospital ship and given the choice of being made prisoner or being put back in the sea. They chose the

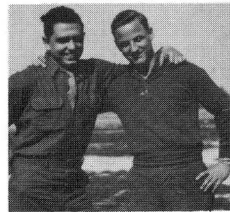


Toleen, 766 squadron for the kind thoughts he sent to Torretta Flyer No #11 that appeared on page 10. I loved him so much.

With warmest regards to you and Mrs. Markel

Wilma Stasney, 766 Sq, sister of Al Tokar deceased

I hope my book will be finished no later than June of this year. It will contain a number of stories of B-17's and B-24's in Germany and other occupied countries. Don Greer will execute the drawings on CL+XZ for the modeler.



Al Tokar is shown on the right of this photo.



out flight and did not fly combat again. Crew Chief Alan M Bro may know more about this

I was assigned at another time to the John Young crew.

Regards,  
T V Stradley 764 Sq

Well, Bud, again thank you for the magazines and help. Please keep in touch and all my best to you and yours.

Hans-Heiri Stapfer  
Horgen, Switzerland

*Editors Note*, names shown with the ( \*) are members of the Association. CL+XZ was a B-24 G10, S/ N 42-78247, built by North American in Dallas, Texas, presumably from Ford-built knock down kits, and assigned to the 461st Bomb Group, 765 Squadron.

Dear Bud:

In response to the picture submitted by M/Sgt John Tenery that appeared on the last page of Torretta Flyer No 13, I recognized the man standing behind Sgt Tenery as my Brother Al Tokar. Al certainly thought the world of John Tenery, and always spoke of him with the highest respect. I want to thank Les

Montrose, Colorado

Bud Markel

Attached to this letter is a photograph of crew 19, 764 Squadron. We were put on flying status October 1, 1944. The picture was probably taken in August, 1944 in Topeka, Kansas.

On November 1, 1944 over Graz we were struck by flak, the pilot wounded, #3 engine burning, and the hydraulics shot out. We got the fire out, the pilot cared for, and did get home. It is amazing that no one jumped. We were flying a new plane number 3, silver, and I think without tail markings. We being a new crew were detailed to, "de-cosmoline" the guns when it got on the line. It replaced # 3 "Stinky" which to my knowledge was still alive and apparently well. I don't know its disposition, but I do understand that the new No #3 was subsequently damaged in a check

Photograph of replacement crew 19. *Back row from left:* C T Hooker, bombardier; R A Weber, Pilot; O A Thomas, co pilot; and R D Picken, navigator. *Middle row from left:* T V Stradley, nose gunner; R E Moore, engineer; and W F Kane, radio operator. *Bottom row from left:* T T Miller, tail gunner; J T Lacey, top turret gunner; and J O'Conner, ball gunner. T V Stradley photo 764 Sq

Bud Markel

Dear Bud:

I am enclosing a picture of, "The Duck" 83 of the 827 Squadron and members of the crew. This is the plane mentioned in the winter 1984 issue of the Torretta Flyer No 11 on page 14. This is the same plane that spun as per the article by Ernie Green.

Raymond Strand 827 Sq



**Top row from left: Isadore Levine, Navigator; Raymond M Strand, bombardier; may be crew chief Ernie Green; Robert E Hatch, pilot; Woodrow Smith, co pilot; Jack Lawless Jr, engineer, and Robert V Brown, gunner. Bottom row from left: Daniel W Chicarella, gunner; Kenneth L Smith, gunner; John Brancone, gunner; and Rudolph S Martino, gunner. Raymond M Strand photo 827 Sq.**

Sincerely,  
Ray Surette, 826 Sq.

It wasn't our first but turned out to be our last. The story about the island of Vis in Torretta Flyer No 11 was very interesting as we were picked out of the Adriatic Sea and taken to Vis, then back to the hospital in Bari.

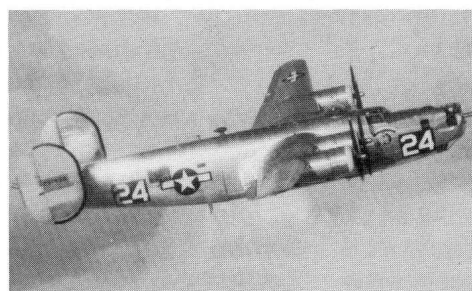


Muskogee, Oklahoma

Dear Bud:

In reference to the photo on the front cover of Flyer No 12, we were in #23 on the October 7, 1944 mission to Vienna and almost collided with ship #29. You know how it is when you are trying to dodge flak and stay in position and everyone is heading for the same spot in the sky. Also the picture on the back cover, we were in ship #34 and got a good dose of flak injuring the radio operator Spaulding Tukey and engineer Charles Priest. Ploesti was one mean place. Charles Priest was returned to duty later, but was killed in action on Dec 17, 1944 on a mission to Odertal, Germany. Tukey was rotated back to the states and I just learned he passed away on August 22, 1983.

I was also interested in Frank Hokr's article, "One Way Trip and Back" to Odertal in the same issue.



**Standing from left: Jan Worclas, Top gunner; Jim Hazel, Tail Gunner; John Toney, Nose Gunner; Wallace "Red" McLemore, Ball Gunner; Charles Priest, Engineer; and Spaulding Tukey-Radio Operator. Kneeling from left: J B Winstead, Bombardier; Leo F Cooper, Pilot; E Landry, Navigator, and Vincent Eckund, Co Pilot.**

The Tulsamerican, the B-24, built in Tulsa, that the crew of Leo F Cooper went down with on December 17, 1944

John F Toney 765 Sq.

461st & 484th B G Association  
Dear Bud and Bea

Received the Spring and Fall issues of the Torretta Flyer No's 12 & 13, and was pleased to read through all of the news you've accumulated. Of particular interest was the selection of the young ladies for the scholarship grant and how this wonderful idea has become a reality.

I was in Lyon, France about the time of the article written by M/Sgt Harold C Jacobs and heard rumbles about the Nazi slaughter of civilians. My job was to photograph the bombing effects of the sizable Lyons Marshalling yards. It was

Dear Bud:

Have not attended any reunions yet, but still hope to make that one in Las Vegas. Found this photo in my album. This is myself with the only Harley in the 484th Group



and 826 squadron. I got the bike from a pilot who had returned from delivering gas, ammo, and bombs to Patton's

army via Lyon, France. I used the bike to ride out to outlying farms to trade for roosters and such. You know what mess hall food was like.

We had the only tent with a wood floor and cinder blocks 3 feet high and a gas furnace to keep warm in the winter.



considerable of course, and I reported this directly to Col Glanzberg, the 461st BG CO. I accompanied many of these ferry flights to Lyon carrying gasoline and other supplies to the ground troops. People were almost starving at the time. One French lady gave me a small hand painted Cross of Lorraine on leather and a fine city map of downtown Lyon, both of which I still have.

The photo on page 26 lower left of Torretta Flyer No 12 was taken at the 461st BG NCO club. I may have taken it. I've forgotten some, but as memory serves me they are from Left: Standing with the beer can in his right hand, dressed in a flight suit and wearing glasses is John Gore of Long Beach, California, an aerial photographer. He became a casualty and was sent home. Standing in the middle holding a beer in his right hand with the dark hair and mustache is Sgt John Pegg 1st/Sgt 765 squadron. Standing at near far right with the glass in his left hand is Chief M/Sgt Claude W Hisey 461st B G HQ. Seated at left is an ex Brooklyn Eagle photographer who was sent home because of age. Seated center right is St/Sgt Herman Muhlmann, West Virginia, from the group photo lab. Seated next left is Tom Faherty, group photo lab from Manchester, New Hampshire

Regards,  
Jim Van Nostrand 765 Sq

Dear Bud and Bea.

Please excuse the delay in responding to the picture and short note regarding the Tailender, in the Spring 86 Flyer.

The origin of the name refers to the date of departure from the Z.I. (Zone of the Interior, USA) and not to any particular position in the flight formation. The reason for the



late departure from Lincoln, Nebraska was a bad tooth. I know because the tooth was mine. The base dentist required an extra day to fashion a removable bridge so I could bite my nails if 109's or flak came too close.

The following day (approximately April Fools Day) we departed from West Palm Beach, but after digging out the left main gear which had managed to find a soft place in the taxi strip. The "Jackass" was the handiwork of a sergeant based at Fortaleza, Brazil. His artistic skill may have been subject to question, but his work adequately expressed our feelings regarding the delays.

Incidentally, the dental masterpiece which made us late was so uncomfortable that it resides under several fathoms of Caribbean water. Our crew, which flew all but one of its missions in the "Tailender" was rotated back to the states for "R & R" and later reassigned to the Z. I.

I am enclosing a crew photo taken at Harvard AFF, Nebraska just before the fly aways were received.

Incidentally the photographer credited with the photo was the original pilot of the crew when it was formed at Gowan Field, Idaho. I refer to Forrest Nance.

Larry Weakley 824 Sq.

Crew members in the photo are as follows from left: Standing Yvon R Lemay-Eng, William B Taylor-Ball/Gun, Fred W Allen-Radio, Louis A Eimer-Top Gun, and Peter J McMahon, Nose Gun. Kneeling: George R Gilpin-Pilot, Delmar L Conner-Co/Pilot, Don L Kavanaugh-Navigator, and Lawrence P Weakley-Bombardier. S/Sgt William P Dunn-Tail Gun joined the crew at Torretta.

Dear Bud:

In writing the history of the 484th Bomb Group I thought that you would like to know what happened on May 10, 1944.

LIKE SHOOTING FISH IN A BARREL

It was May 8, 1944 and we had flown four sorties, our first being April 30, 1944. "Bud" Noel and crew were awakened early and walked to group headquarters for briefing for the day's mission. When the map covering was pulled back the map revealed a long red line going north to the western edge of Hungary and turning northwest to a town near Vienna, a place called Wiener Neustadt, Austria. The target was an aircraft factory and surrounding aircraft parked on the outside. We were to hit it with #6 frag bombs.

When it came time to be briefed on the weather, the weather officer said that clouds might be a problem, so the mission was put on hold and a few hours later was scrubbed for the day. May 9 came, the same procedure was followed with the same results. Again on May 10 we followed the script up to the weather briefing officer who said that the target would be clear and we would have a tail wind on our bomb run. Finally we were going to go.

Our group assembled over the field and took off going north across the Adriatic. It was quite a sight, planes everywhere, the whole 15th Air Force going after one target. We had climbed up to 21,000 feet by the time we reached Lake Balaton, our IP. As we made our turn to on our bomb run a burst of red flak appeared at our altitude and to our right we noted an ME-109. They had our altitude!! From that time on the flak was intense. Planes were dropping out of formation, some under control, some on fire. We looked for parachutes. What a sickening sight. We continued on our run, steady on course as the flak peppered us. Bombs were dropped over the target, thousands of six pounders, but the flak did not stop until we were well past the target. We had flown on our bomb run with a ground speed of 88 knots and were in flak for 26 minutes. No wonder it seemed so long,.

Upon landing we found that we had sustained no structural damage, had 212 holes in the plane but had incurred no injuries to the crew. Sergeant Jones and his crew had lots of work to do to repair our "Vicious Virgin".

Later we concluded that a front had passed the target before we arrived giving us a headwind instead of the briefed tailwind. Also we concluded that because of the stand down the Germans knew we were com-

ing and what our route was to be so they moved 500 88MM guns down from Vienna and had them deployed along our bomb run.\*

That evening I wrote my wife the following: The Germans had their chance today. If they didn't get me today they never will. I'll be home soon". They didn't and I was. I flew 51 missions in 93 days.

Orville Wildman 826 Sq.

*\* Editors note :* It was common practice in the ETO for the German Luftwaffe to mount flak batteries on railroad cars or motorized vehicles and move them about to protect vital targets. The highly rated 88MM cannon was used as an anti tank gun as well as for anti aircraft and was often mounted on a trailer towed by a half track. Correct site placements of the guns was dependent on the quality of Luftwaffe intelligence. As any veteran crew member can testify. "It was damn good".

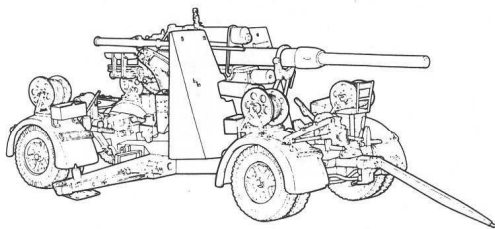


Photo below: Ground crew ship #56 Sgt Jones presumably is the one on the left. Orville Wildman photo 826 Sq.



**#56 Vicious Virgin Crew.** Standing from left: James Cain,engineer; Orville Cox, top gunner; Bob Neid, ball gunner; Murry Gould, tail gunner; Charles McDowell, nose gunner; and Arthur Anderson, radio operator. Front Row from left: Harold "Bud" Noel, pilot; John Enright, co pilot; Orville Wildman, navigator; and Jack Martin (deceased) bombardier. Orville Wildman photo 826 Sq



**Crew Photo:** They are from left top row: William H Miller, nose gunner; Robert W Bell, upper gunner; and Carton M Killian, radio operator. Bottom row from left: Aurelio S Lopez, engineer; Lester V Reall, tail gunner; and Charles F Lake, ball gunner.

Robert W Bell photo 825 Squadron.

Part 1

461St & 484th Bomb Groups Association  
REUNION REGISTRATION FORM  
1987 REUNION. COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO.  
OCTOBER 14-18, 1987

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Duty \_\_\_\_\_ Unit \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name to be shown on badge \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s) name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

I have attended past reunions as shown below:

81 Torrance \_\_\_\_\_ 82 Dayton \_\_\_\_\_ 83 Williamsburg \_\_\_\_\_ 84 Orlando \_\_\_\_\_ 86 San Antonio \_\_\_\_\_

Please observe the September 1, 1987 deadline for mail registration

*Pre registration by mail:*

The 461St and 484th Bomb Groups Association Dinner Saturday Evening  
October 17, 1987, 8:00PM

Before September 1 1987	Cost per person	Number	Total Cost
Dinner, October 17, 1987	\$25.00	X _____	Amount \$ _____
After September 1, 1987			
Dinner, October 17, 1987	\$30.00	X _____	Amount \$ _____
Past dues for 1986	\$15.00		Amount \$ _____
Current dues for 1987	\$15.00		Amount \$ _____
Membership pins \$5.00 Ea (includes decal)		X _____	Amount \$ _____
Donation to the Scholarship Fund			Amount \$ _____

Total Payment enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please reserve Association cap/s for me: Quantity \_\_\_\_\_

Back Issues of the Torretta Flyer wanted. Issue No 10 \_\_\_\_\_, 11 \_\_\_\_\_, 12 \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions regarding this form or about the reunion schedule please contact the Association office or phone (213) 316-3330

**Cancellation:** Full refund if written cancellation is received by October 1, 1987. After October 1, 1987 refund is subject to charges by caterers etc.

Please mail this form and your check to:  
The 461St & 484Th Bomb Groups Association  
1122 Ysabel st  
Redondo Beach, CA 90277

Part 2

Use this registration slip for sleeping rooms at the Clarion Hotel. 2886 S Circle Drive Colorado Springs, CO, 80906 and mail directly to the hotel.

IMPORTANT

When making room reservations by phone, (303-576-5900) please mention that you are a member of the 461st & 484 Bomb Groups Association, as this entitles you to the special \$56.00 room rate.

**ADVANCE RESERVATION CARD**

Reservations are accepted on a **GUARANTEED** basis only.



**GUARANTEED RESERVATIONS:**

- send a deposit of one night's room charge plus tax (7.6 %)
- include your credit card number (Am/Ex, D/C, M/C, VISA or C/B only.) If you do not cancel directly with the hotel 48 hours prior to arrival, you will be billed by the credit card company for one night's lodging, plus tax.

**CANCELLATIONS:** Please don't be a "NO SHOW". If you cannot stay with us, cancel your reservation by calling the hotel directly at least 48 hours prior to arrival and obtain a Cancellation Number.

**CHECK-OUT:** Check-out time is 11 A.M. **CHECK-IN** is not guaranteed prior to 3 P.M.

**CUT-OFF DATE:** Reservations made after September 14, 1987 may be subject to Higher Rates and space availability. Please be advised that specific room type and rate requests are subject to availability at check-in.

NAME OF GROUP **461st and 484th Bomb Groups Association**

LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ FIRST \_\_\_\_\_ MIDDLE \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY NAME \_\_\_\_\_ COMPANY PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

SHARE WITH: LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ FIRST \_\_\_\_\_

Guest rooms for this meeting are held as listed. Any variation is subject to availability.

Arrival: **October 14, 1987**

Departure: **October 18, 1987**

**PLEASE MAKE MY RESERVATION FOR:**

Arrival \_\_\_\_\_ Departure \_\_\_\_\_

Month \_\_\_\_\_ Month \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**GUARANTEED RESERVATION**

Deposit included AMX | DC | MC | VISA | CB

Credit card number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date \_\_\_\_\_

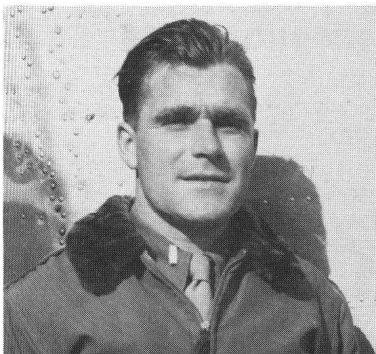
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

	STANDARD	DELUXE
SINGLE	56.00	66.00
DOUBLE	56.00	66.00
TRIPLE	56.00	66.00
QUAD		

Please check type of room requested

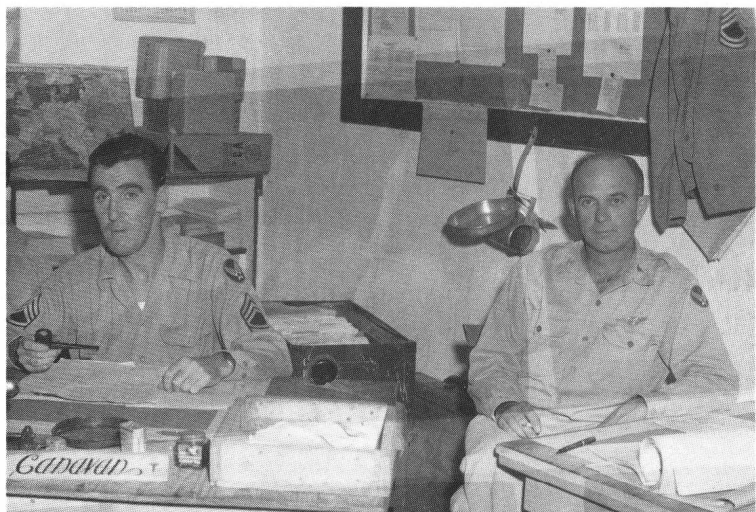
No Smoking Room

Clarion Hotel (303) 576-5900



**WHO ARE THEY ??**

The photos shown on this page have been picked at random from the Association's collection as the individuals shown are not identified. 461st photos to the left and 484th are on the right. Reader comment is sought. Send information to the Association office.



*Continued from page 3*

Great music was provided by the Gerry Snyder band that had our guests hopping through the evening.

The memorial program and brunch on Sunday morning was opened with a moving memorial service by Chaplain James R Wilson who used a folded United States flag to symbolize service to God and Country. The

names of the deceased members were read, and the service ended with the reading of the poem, "Pilot Bails Out." A sumptuous buffet brunch was then served.

Included in the registration package handed out to members on registering were Association membership pins and decals. Members of each bomb group (461 or 484) were given the appropriate pin and decal, incor-

porating the insignia of their group.

At the annual business meeting on Friday November 14, 1986. Your three directors, Bud Markel, Bea Markel, and Frank Valdez were re-elected by unanimous vote. Chris Donaldson, co-chairman of the Scholarship Committee, gave the committee's report that is described in detail starting on page 4.

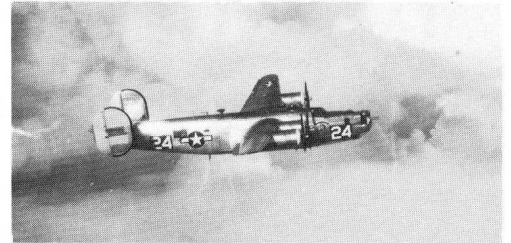
Picture page 764 Squadron. Photos from the Fred Hill Collection, 764 Sq



Unknown GI's



On the flight line, preparing for a training flight. Hammer Field. Dec 10, 1943



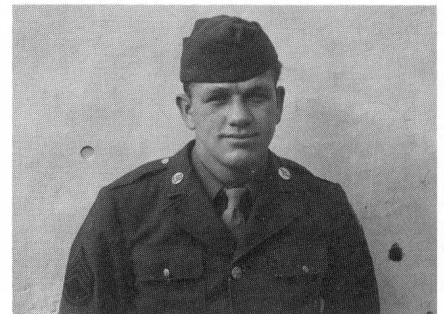
Ship 24, 764 Sq. Taken late 44 or early



764 Sq Officers's club bar. Photo taken mid 1944.



Staff Officers, 764 Sq. Hammer field December 28, 1943



Unknown St/Sgt

764 Sq



Crew #11, 764 Sq. Hammer Field December 15, 1943



NCO Club party. Hammer Field December 9, 1943

PICTURE PAGE 765 SQUADRON. PHOTOS



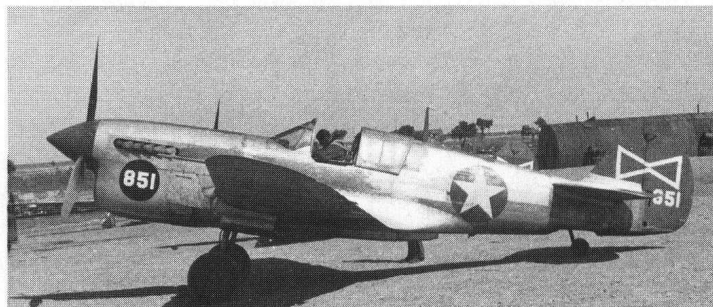
Ship #34 flown by Lt Vahl Vladyka, now an attorney in Texas.  
Stan Staples photo 765 Sq



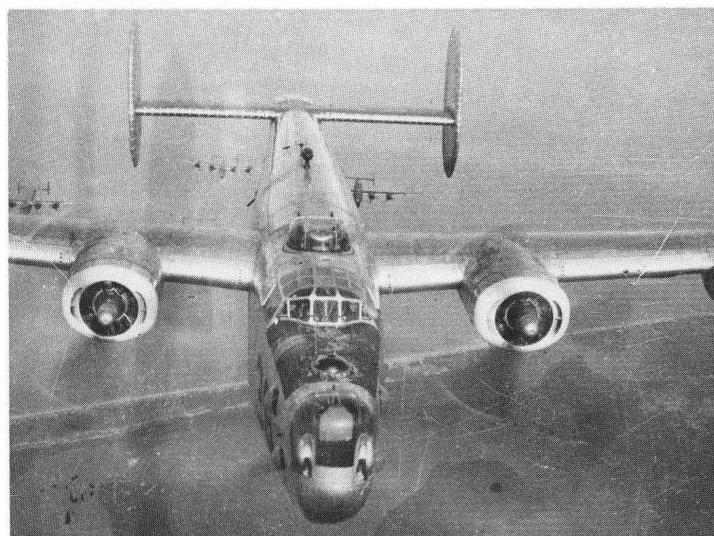
Crew of Robert E Arbuthnot, 765 Sq. Top row from left:  
Elza Massie, T/G; Bob Molyneux, G; Eric English, R/O; Warren  
Moss, N/G; Hugh Baker, E/G; and Roy Walkema, B/G. Bottom  
row from left: Robert Arbuthnot, P; Jack T Gunn, C/P; William  
Patterson, N; and Leland J Harp, B. Elsa Massie photo 765 Sq



P-40 F Flown by Col Glantzberg during mission assembly after  
take off. No other pilots were allowed to fly it under penalty of  
court martial. Stan Staples Photo, 765 Sq.



P-40 F Flown By Col Bill Keese, C O of the 484th Bomb Group.  
Stan Staples Photo 765 Sq



See photo at left: Note that  
the deicer boots  
have been re-  
moved  
No #4 Slot po-  
sition. Ship 36  
flown by Maj  
Jim Thaxton  
Stan Staples



Stan Staples, Pilot 765 Sq at left and George  
Craig Crew Chief. Stan Staples photo 765 Sq.

765  
SQ

766 Sq. PHOTO PAGE



Some ground crew personnel from the 766 Sq. /Standing from left: E Carpenter, Arm; Gordon Springfield, Prop Spec; L Duke, Radio; and E Fraser, Mech. Bottom row: C Percival, Arm; J Breuil, Arm; L Gebocke, Ord; and J McGuire, Ord.



Photo at left: Sgts Tidwell and Frazier

766  
Sq

Photo at right: Rome 1945  
Crowingshield, Wagner, Furrow, and Springfield



Photo at right:

"Rough Rider" one of the oldest ships in our squadron.

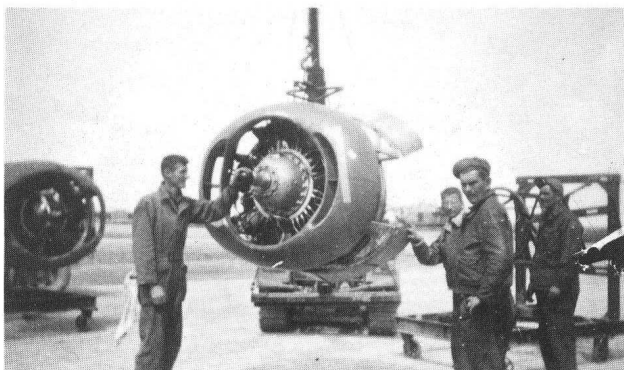


Photo at left:  
A bunch of the guys swinging an engine. From left: Ted Wise, "Jug" Myers, and Willie Jordan.





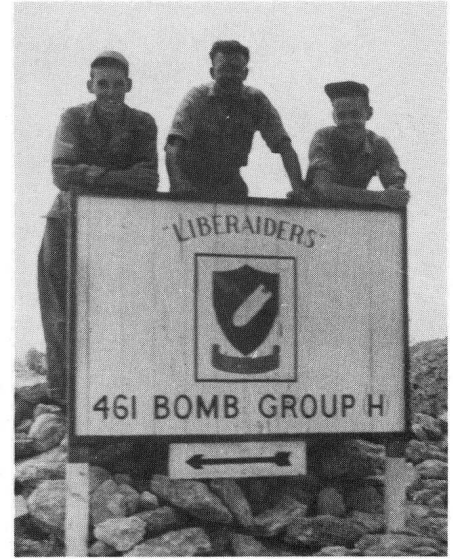
**767 SQUADRON PHOTO PAGE.**



Crew Chiefs ship 69



Wally Robinson



From left: James Mackin, B/T; Louis R Zipper Ground Crew; and Wally Robinson, T/G.



Photos on this page from Wally Robinson 767 Sq

767  
Sq

Left to Right: George McPeck, and Seth McKinney both of crew 65 shown with Italian children



Two Italian guards on duty at Torretta Field, early 1944. They are from left: Augilo Pascullo, and Fanuola Savino.



Gust Karalis, Crew 72, is the center of a little horse play

## 824 Squadron Photos



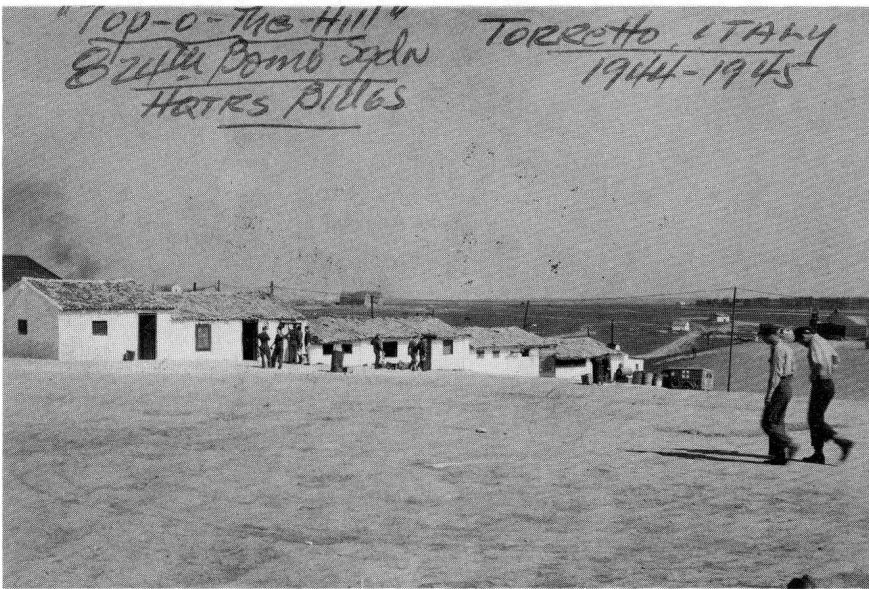
Al Pietka on the left, man on the right unidentified. Charles McKew Photo 824 Sq



Leo Prone, 824 Sq Lead Bombardier. Charles McKew Photo, 824 Sq.



Line chief M/Sgt Edwin M Turner in front of Col Keese's P-40 Grant Hansen photo.



"Top of the hill," 824 Squadron Headquarters buildings. Fang Hansen photo 824



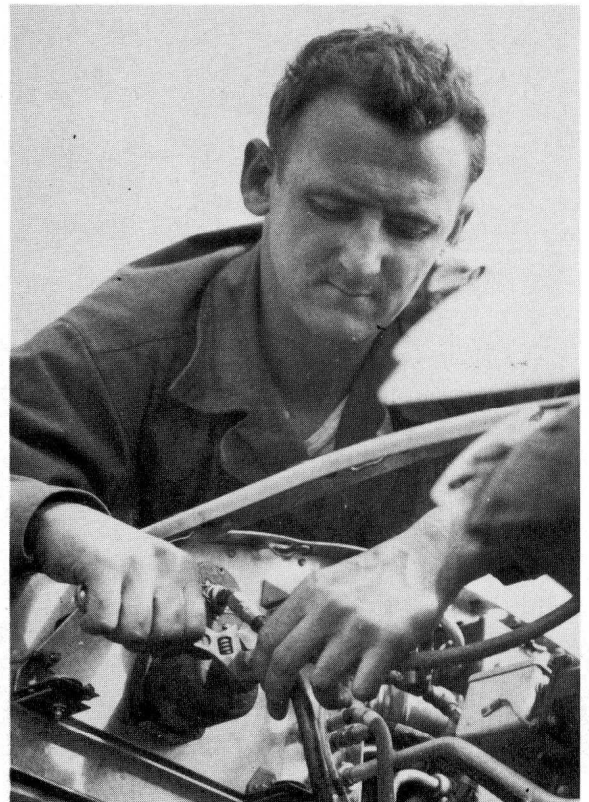
Flight line shuttle bus returns to the flight line to sweat out the return of a Ploesti mission.



Bottom right: Instrument specialist Sgt Charles Mckew completes the replacement of an instrument transmitter. Peter Drill photo 484 BG

824  
Sq

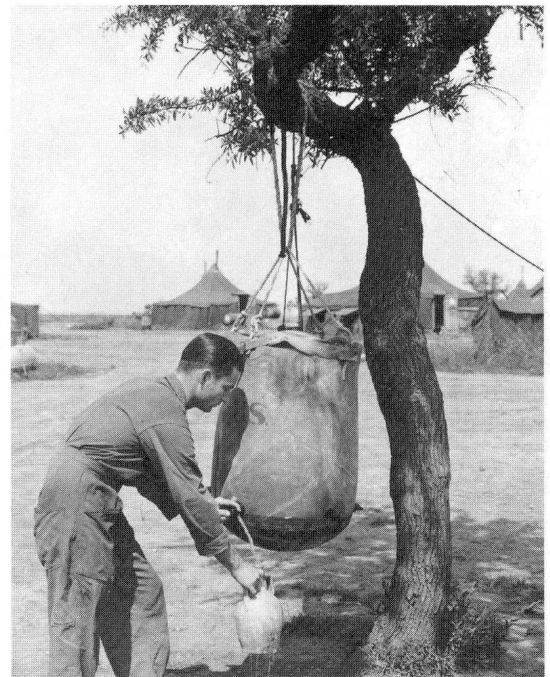
Bottom left: Line Chief M/Sgt Edwin M Turner removing 3 engine cowling after a mission to Yugoslavia Septem-ber 2, 1944. 15th AF photo.





## 825 SQUADRON PHOTO PAGE

All of the photographs on this page are from the Robert A Harrison collection. All individuals shown are unidentified. Reader comment is requested



# 825 Sq





**826  
SQUADRON  
PHOTO PAGE.**

Top Left: Ship 56, Vicious Virgin. JJ Dondero 826 Sq

Top right: Entrance to San Spirito Rest Camp. Joseph Dickman photo 826 Sq



Center left: Joseph Dickman, far right, painted the nose art Darling Darlene. M/Sgt Clyde Jones is at left. Cpl in center unknown. Joseph Dickman photo 826 Sq



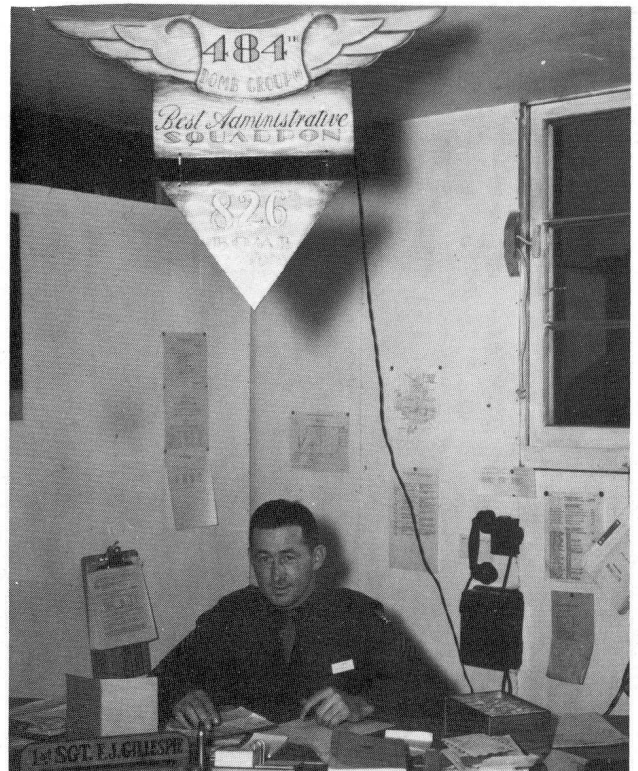
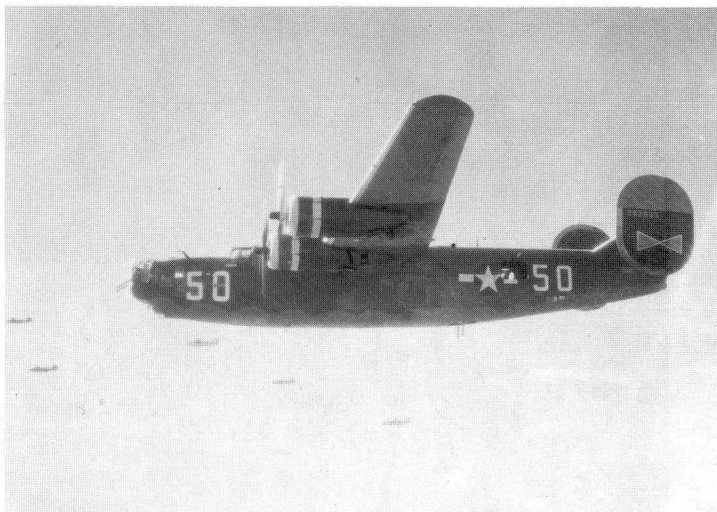
Center right: J J Dondero is shown in front of "Vicious Virgin", ship 56



Bottom right: First/Sgt F J Gillespie 826 Squadron at his desk. Joseph Dickman photo 826 Sq

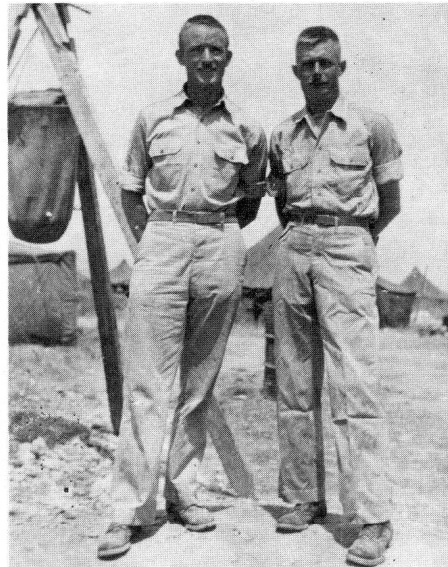
**826  
Sq**

Bottom left: Darling Darline on a mission. Joseph Dickman photo to 826 Sq





Sgt James Lowry playing a home made guitar. 827 Sq



Left to right: M/Sgt W R Rodgers squadron inspector, and St/Sgt George Poplin B Section flight chief 827 Sq



Early photo "War Weary" 827 Sq

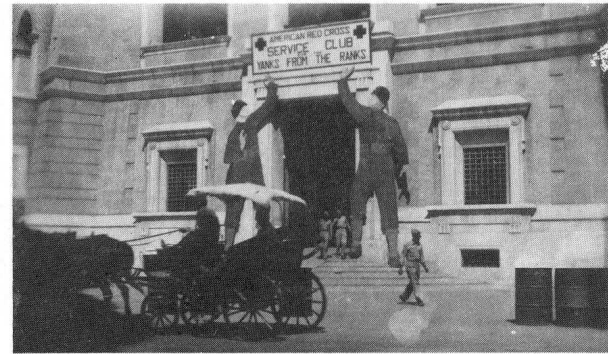


Above. Sgt Charles C Marrs

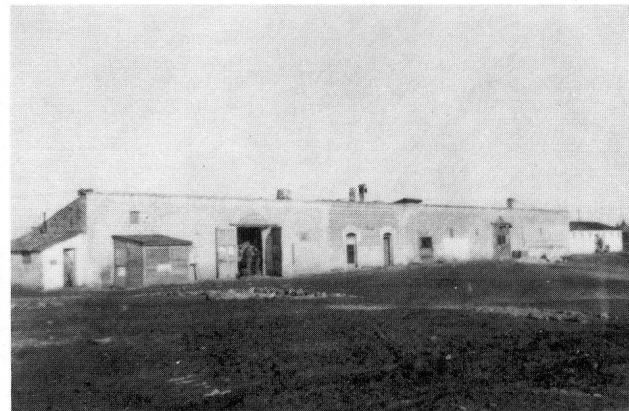
## 827 SQUADRON PHOTO PAGE

All photos on this page from James C Lowry 827 SQ

827  
Sq



Entrance Foggia Red Cross Club



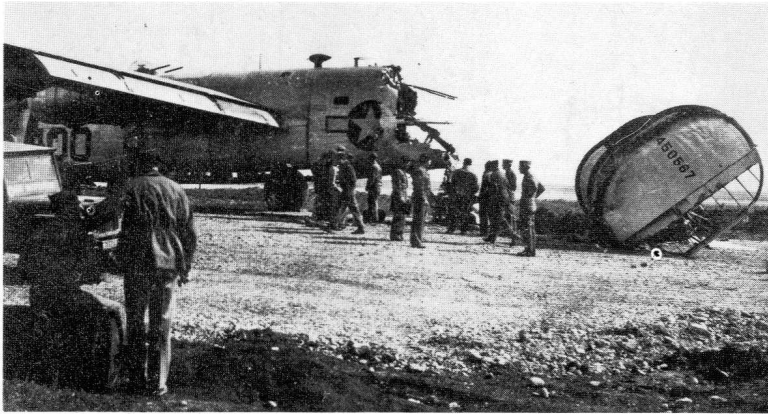
Headquarters building 827 Sq.



Bottom left. From left: Sgt Jesse Nogan, Sgt James Lowry, and Sgt Arthur Barkley.



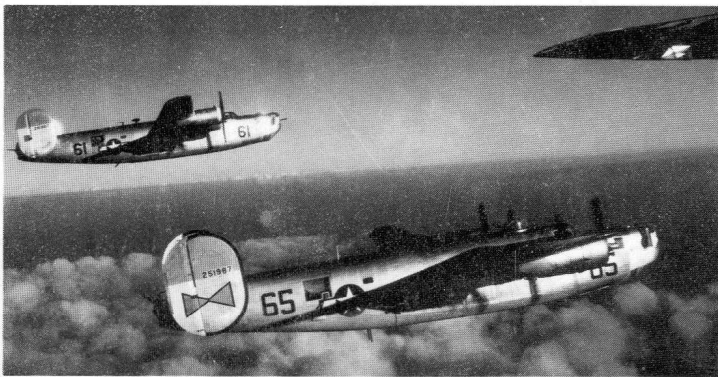
Bottom Right. Unidentified personnel 827 Sq



Brand New "Mickey Ship" damaged beyond repair from a fire in the waist. Robert Altman photo 484th B G



B J Milners crew 825 Sq From left top row: D O Christenson, (N); B J Milner, (P); B A Timbrook, (B); and C W Kerr, (C/P). Bottom row: L V Real, (T/G); C F Lake, (B/G); R W Bell, (U/G); J Killian, (R/O); B Miller, (N/G); and A S Lopez (E/G).



Center left: Ships# 61, and #65, 826 Sq showing the slightly nose attitude that most heavily loaded B-24s were flown to take advantage of lift from the fuselage. Robert A Harrison photo 825



Bottom right: unknown personnel. Robert Altman photo 484 BG  
Col Glantzberg's P-40 shown with ship# 65, 766 Sq. George F Brinker photo 461st B G.



James Spencer Crew 764 Sq From top left: Anthony Fortuna, (E); Howard Hass, (B); Don R Litell, (N); Alan M Anderson, (C/P); and James Spencer, (P); Bottom row: Ernest Troupes, (T/G); George Vesulka, (B/G); Vincent Falcone, (R/O); Donald Barill, (U/G); and Thomas Hagie, (N/G). Thomas Hagie photo, 764 Sq

40



## 461st & 484th Bomb Groups Association

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