

Text of the Toast to our Departed Comrades, Reunion Banquet

Clarion Hotel, Colorado Springs, October 17, 1987 as presented by Chris Donaldson, 765th Squadron.

As the Presidential campaign heats up, it has become popular to question the origins of one's public statements. So let me quickly and gratefully attribute these few thoughts and words to a variety of authors, including the biblical prophet Amos, Pope Gregory the XIV, the contemporary greeting card writer, known as Flavia, author James Jones, and very likely others whose words and ideas I unwittingly utter.

From all of these are derived thoughts for an occasion like this...When we reflect on those no longer among us. Just as some come into our own lives and quickly go, others stay on awhile and leave footprints on our hearts that remain as long as we live. It is these that we honor tonight.

The phenomenon of military service and its effect on those who have experienced its extreme moments is both indelible and profound. It calls to mind: leadership through service, the nobleness of causes, love of justice, devotion to others and to the corporate ideal we call country. There are indeed such things as nobility of purpose, sense of mission, unselfish devotion to duty and love and care for those with whom we serve. We know this is so...For we have experienced these things long ago in faraway places, in events that remain central to our lives.

Author James Jones spoke of the generation of men who would walk into history, looking backward, peering over their shoulders behind them at their own long towering shadows trailing across the earth. None of them, he said, would every really get over it. So as we go onward, even while looking back into the shadows of time, let us honor and rededicate our memory of those missing from our presence... whether from the war years of 1944 and 1945, or this year or last year, or all the years in between.

Let us be grateful for their lives and their contribution of love and service in the noble cause that united us all so many years ago, and as it does today.

It is to them that we raise this toast....

The End

After the roll call of the squadrons, an engraved drawing of a B-24 in flight that was donated by Merle P Yanney of the 824 Squadron, was awarded to the wife of a lucky member from the 825 Squadron. Plans for next year's reunion were announced. The 1988 reunion of the 461st & 484th Bomb

Groups Association will take place Labor day weekend September 1 to 4, 1988 at the San Francisco Airport Marriott Hotel.

It was also announced at the reunion that the Association has started to collect a special fund to help some of our members with moderate incomes to attend the next reunion. This fund is financed by contributions from members with the first contribution coming from Bob Quinlan, 825 Squadron. The fund would be used to defray transportation and incidental costs. Sleeping rooms, reunion functions, and the attendant meals within the Marriott hotel will be provided at no cost to members by the Association. Payment of other reunion expenses will depend on the size of the fund at the time of the reunion. Friends of these members, who have expressed a desire to attend the 1988 reunion, should submit the names to the Association office. While this arrangement is restricted to the 1988 reunion only, if the membership wishes they may, at the next business meeting vote to re-establish the fund for forthcoming reunions.

End of Report.



Western Entertainers performing at the Flying W ranch party, and dinner



The tailgate party held just prior to the Football game at the Air Force Academy Stadium. Reading from L to R are: Ed Nesheim, Frances Hansen, and Grant (Fang) Hansen. Seated L to R Gloria Meshel, and Stan Bennett, all from the 824 Squadron.