

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

NOT to be outdone by the nation's press, we are including in this issue a historical piece about the changes taking place in Eastern Europe. The Berlin Airlift story starts from the time when our relationship began to deteriorate with the Eastern Block nations. It was our staunch determination not to be forced out of Berlin that brought on the Airlift, to the great surprise of the Russians. They underestimated us, they didn't think that air shipments could supply a city of three and a half million people, and they didn't think we had the guts to stick it out. Well, history proved them wrong. What is interesting to conjecture is: If the airlift had not taken place would the Russians be so anxious to retreat from Eastern Europe now? The article first appeared in "Air Power History" the journal of the Air Force Historical Foundation. It is reprinted by permission of the author Dr Roger D Launius Ph.D Command Historian, Military Airlift Command, Scott AFB,IL.

Dr. Launius earned his Ph.D. in History at Louisiana State University in 1982, following an MA. in History from LSU and in History from Graceland College, Iowa. He was the Chief, Office of History, at Ogden Air Logistics Center before assuming his present post.

Because of the length of the main article on the Berlin Airlift. The regular stories sent in by members will appear in Flyer No 19 which is planned for Spring 1990 release.

The Last Mission list is a bit long as compared to previous issues because of a back log of unpublished notices and the increased rate of members passing, no doubt, as a result of our advancing age.

This issue was originally set for fall publication, but because of the pressures of outside activities it was delayed. When it became apparent that the political upheavals in Eastern Europe were going to be more than temporary, we looked for a story that would tie-in a very important event in Air Force history with 'today's news'. This further delayed this issue.

In the last three quarters of the 1989 we have received many interesting letters that we are sharing with you in this issue. The one from Fred Roessler regarding the Allison powered B-17 (B-38) is most interesting in that this version, had it been put into production, would have been faster than our beloved B-24. Luckily for us the P-38s, P-40s, and early P-51s had a higher demand for the Allison, and the B-17 had to keep their clunky Wright 1820s.

NEWS OF THE ASSOCIATION

New Members New memberships are the life blood of any organization. While the Association does as well as other similar veterans' groups the potential of undiscovered members is too large to ignore any longer. As an example we have 3000 names on our data base without addresses. We know there are at least another 3000 or more out there that we have no information on at all. Some of these names appear on micro film records that are in our library, but require funding to print out.

The main goal of the Association is to bring members together. We have never been funded adequately to give serious consideration to a large scale search for new members by using paid publicity. This fall, Beatrice and I attended a Veterans Meeting Planners Conference in Washington. DC. During the course of the meeting, we met the representatives of several companies that provide locator services for a per person fee.

We need funds to pay for this type of locator service as well as funds to pay for advertisements (publicity) in the print media.

Micro Films The Association has in its library sixteen each 16mm microfilm reels of 2000 pages each from Maxwell Field. This represents 32,000 pages of documents dealing mainly with the WWII history of our 461st and 484th units, the 49th Wing, and the 15th Air Force. At the time these reels were purchased, the Association had the loan of a 16 mm reader-printer which had to be returned. A 16MM micro film reader printer is priced between \$3000 to \$6000 depending on model and discounts. At a bulk rate of ten cents per page, printing out the reels to 8 1/2 by 11 inch pages would represent a budget of \$3200 plus the cost of covers and bindings. These costs are beyond the present operating budget of the Association.

Bequests to the Association We have received notification from one of our long time members, Emmet S Goff (484th BG 825 Squadron) indicating that he has included instructions in a letter to the executor of his will that his various Air Force memorabilia be donated to the 461st & 484th Bomb Groups Association. This is in addition to materials previously sent to the Association.

He has suggested that we invite other members to make similar bequests to the Association. This is an idea worthy of all of our 461st and 484th members for the build-up and preservation of the documents, and photographic exhibits we have been assembling to record the history of the two groups. We applaud his most welcome bequest in carrying out one of the stated purposes of the Association and ask all our members to do the same.

Scholarship Grants An important event in the history of the Association took place when the scholarship grants were increased from three to four students in 1989. The awards ceremony this fall in Cerignola took an unexpected turn as you will read about in the Report of Scholarship Committee member, Chris Donaldson.

Modem Our thanks and gratitude to member Leon Usher, 825 Squadron, for the very timely gift of a modem. The Association can now receive electronic mail, information from data banks, institutions, and commercial services. Members wishing to send in stories using MacIntosh compatible programs may do so via modem also.

ITALIAN TOUR

We have had requests from members on the possibility of a new tour to Italy. A suggested tour has been planned that visits the major attractions of the country. The suggested all inclusive tour price for 1990 departure will be in the range of \$2600.00 to \$2800.00 for a 13 day all escorted tour. (Tour prices for 1991 will be slightly higher). Cities visited are: Venice, Florence, Pisa, Rome, Pompeii, Sorrento, Capri, Foggia, Cerignola, and Bari. The price includes air fare from New York, all ground transportation, transfers, continental breakfasts, 9 Dinners, First Class hotels with private bath, English speaking guide, and all taxes and service charges. To set the tour in motion a minimum of 30 persons need to participate. No dates have been set for this year, or 1991. Members interested in this tour should fill out the tour portion of the tear slip included in this issue. More information can be obtained by calling the office at 213/316/3330.