

After the bomb run, I went back and sat down on the rear hatch and noticed to the left an egg size flak hole and also on my right. The shrapnel had come in one side and went out the other. If I hadn't moved to the waist window I would have been speared from one side of my hips to the other. At the expense of the two wing men, our lives were spared.

We had plenty of holes in the ship. The nose tire was in shreds. Doc briefed us for a tail heavy landing. He was going to drag the tail. All windows and hatches were open to help slow the landing speed. What we didn't know was that the right main tire was also flat. We skewed off to the right and plowed into a ditch tearing off the right landing gear, part of the wing severely damaging the ship's nose and bottom plates. The tower reported that all they saw was a cloud of dust and 10 men jumping out of the ship at the same time and running like hell away from the wreck. We all thought the ship might blow up, but it didn't because the co-pilot killed all of the switches before he left.

Doc was praised for the landing, but I don't think it flew again. It was #63, "Sweet Ginny Lee." I didn't see the name of the ship in your picture. I hope it was the same airplane, because at least now I have a picture of it.

I hope others will enjoy this story as much as I enjoy reading their stories in the Torretta Flyer.

I hope to get to one of the reunions in the future.

"Good Luck and God Bless All,"

Ernest M Ryan Sr 826 Squadron

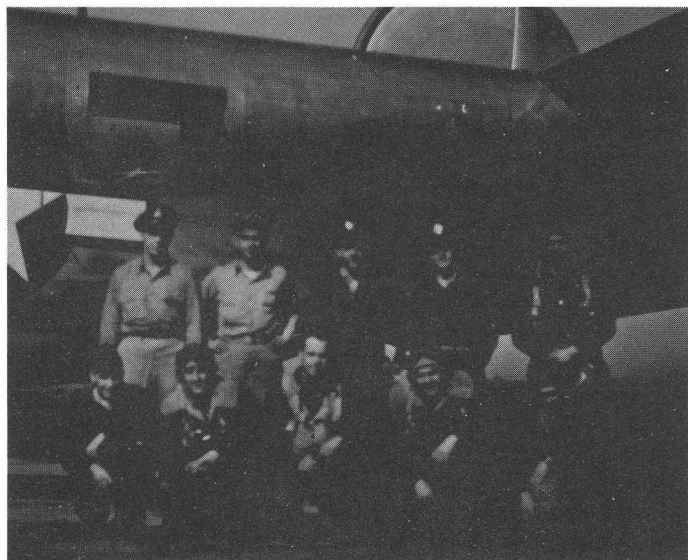


Photo (above) The crew of William D "Doc" Savage, Back row from left: Edward J "Bud" Paul-Navigator, Vincent G "Vince" Myerchin-Bombardier, Edward A Meeker-Co/Pilot, and Charles E Jines-Upper Gunner. Bottom row from left: Clair C Stebins-Engineer, Arthur F Mc Carthy-Tail Gunner, John F Galvin 3rd-Radio/Operator, Ernest M Ryan-Ball Gunner, and Samuel E Church-Nose Gunner.



Mercer, Wisconsin

Dear Bud:

I have been reading with interest the reports of plane #81 "Knockout" I flew several of my missions in it including one in

which we made an emergency landing in Yugoslavia with two dead engines.

We were still in Italy at the end of the European war and ferried #81 back to the states with my original crew plus two ground crewmen. The plane was left at Bradley Field, Connecticut.

Al Halweg 827 Squadron

Photo 1(left below) Ship # 81 Over the Adriatic Sea. Photo 2 (Below right) The two unknown groundcrewmen passengers who flew home with us. Photo taken at Bradley Field, CT..

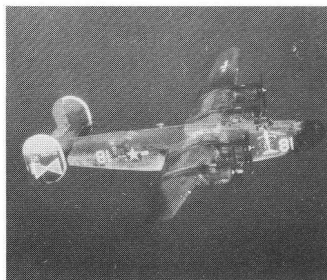
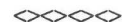


Photo 3 (above) Crew of Albert H Halweg 827 Squadron. Top row from left: Robert D "Bob" Fleck-Navigator, Nicholas "Nick" Kinda-Co/Pilot, Robert D "Bob" Davis-Gunner, Raymond M "Ray" Davis-Gunner, and Roger D Opheim-Gunner. Bottom row from left: Albert H "Al" Halweg-Pilot, Francis DeGennaro-Engineer, Arthur D Giovonine-Radio/Operator, Raymond A "Ray" Ballard-Bombardier, and Edward A "Ed" Denzin-Gunner.



Santa Maria, California

Dear Bud:

Regarding our earlier correspondence about the Lockheed B-38 (Boeing B17E modified with inline engines) I am sending you some more detail and some color on this one of a kind aircraft.

I met Bill Harshbarger at the local cardiac rehab center where all us old wrecks work out and socialize. He worked at the Lockheed-Vega plant in Burbank, California, during WWII and