



world. The plane is beautifully restored inside and out. There are four 500 pound bombs (empty) in the bomb bay. All of the turrets have complete armaments. There is even a bomb sight in the nose compartment. Not being a bombardier, I can't say whether or not it's a Norden. The only disappointment was that they kept my ball turret retracted.

I thought this might be of interest to the membership.

Sincerely,
John Hicks 826 Sq.

Santa Maria, California
Dear Bud:

You asked in the Torretta Flyer for names of additional members of the 484th and 461st BG. A name that I haven't seen or heard so far is Don Reiter.

Sgt Reiter joined John Roedel's crew #76, 827 squadron, about half way through their 50 missions. He was a radio maintenance man who decided that the only way he was going to get home before the war was over was to get on a flight crew and get 50 missions credit. So he volunteered to be a ball turret gunner, (that is real desperation). The original crew members eventually rotated back to the ZI (Zone of Interior) and left him to finish up on his own.

I looked him up as I passed through San Francisco in 1948. He was in the grocery business at the time and we discussed the possibilities of getting a commission in the Air Force.

The next time we met was at Stead AFB, Reno, Nevada, about 1952. I was a weather officer and he was a Strategic Air Command pilot going through the SAC survival course there.

We met again, going in different directions, at Goose Bay, Labrador. He was a Major and crew commander of a B-47.

After that I think I gave him a weather briefing at Greenham Common, AFB in England. Then we lost contact.

I believe he was from Oakland, California.

Regards as always
Fred M Roessler, 827 Sq

Moscow, Ohio
Dear Bud:

I was crew chief on "Miss Fire" until I took over a "Mickey Ship." I made some of the supply runs to Lyon, France, also. Included with this letter are some clippings from here and there that might be of interest to the members. Hope to see you all in Nashville.

From the Stars & Stripes Liberators Turned Into Transports

This is another of those "now it can be told stories." It concerns the big bellied Liberators of the 15th Air Force, the Seventh Army, the Tactical Airforce, and the critical days of September 10-October 5, 1944 when the Seventh, and the fighter-bombers were almost stopped in Southern France for want of aviation fuel, oil, ammunition and bombs.

The Seventh Army was plunging up the Rhone Valley under direct ground support of the Tactical Air Force and taking everything in stride. The situation was promising.

Then came the problem of supplies for the fighter bombers, There were plenty of supplies in the ships laying off the wrecked port of Marseilles and there were even considerable stocks on the docks. But to unload and transport them over the cratered roads leading from Marseilles would take days to reach the emergency airfields in and near Lyons, the temporary supply center for the fighters, and time was figured in hours and minutes.

So they consulted Major-General Twining who in turn called on Colonel William L Lee, the Wing Commanding Officer. He ordered the heavy bombers of the 49th Wing to be made ready immediately to run the stores to France.

On September 10, the first formation of Liberators stripped of turrets and turret guns took off from home fields to Southern France, loaded with supplies. They landed at the Lyons-Bron airfield. Officers, men and local help unloaded the aircraft. Portable pumps were rigged to the Liberator's big gas tanks and poured into 50 gallon drums. Just enough fuel was left on board for the Libs to fly back to their base. As the fuel drums were being filled, 50 caliber ammunition and 500 pound bombs were being unloaded to be rushed to fighter refuelling points on the field, and the fighters took off to continue the support of the Seventh Army, then well past Lyons.

All in all, between September 10, and October 2, 1944 the Liberators flew 704 unescorted sorties, carrying 1,000,000 rounds of ammunition for the Tactical Airforce.

"MICKEY"

Makes Bad-Weather Raids a Cinch for 15th AAF Bombardiers.
By Don Williams Stars and Stripes staff writer.

In a Flying Fort over Germany, November 22, 1944. flak bursts punctured the cloud ceiling below. Clusters of 500 pound bombs hurtled from the open bays and were swallowed up in the dense swirling mass. The bombers wheeled and headed for home.

The communique probably would read; "Heavy bombers of the 15th Air Force attacked targets in Germany and Austria to-day. Intense flak was encountered at some of the targets. Bombs were dropped by instruments, but the results could not be observed because of the heavy cloud formations.