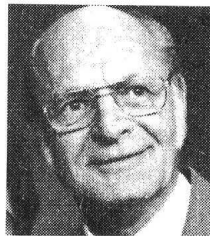


Ruben J Kaiser, 825 sq 73, of Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, passed away June 5, 1990, after a short illness. He was born Nov 29, 1916, and was married to Petronella B Wondra on May 25, 1946. He had lived all his life in Beaver Dam. He was employed at Monarch Range Co for many years, operated the Kaiser Shoe Store for 19 years, and later worked for Hillside Memorial Hospital until his retirement in 1981.

He was a veteran of World War II where he served as a First Lieutenant and pilot in the United States Army Air Corp's 484th Bomb Group, 825th Squadron.

Ruben, an active member of the Association, together with his wife, Petronella "Pete", attended many reunions and participated in the Association sponsored Italian tour in 1982, which included a tour of the Torretta airfield area and Cerignola.

He was reported missing in action on the December 11, 1944, bombing mission to Vienna, Austria. On the way to the target, engines one and three were running rough and had to be put in automatic rich. The I.P. was reached and owing to a sharp turn, the formation split up. After regrouping the formation went on to the alternate target Graz, Austria which was bombed successfully.



On the return to base, Lt Kaiser's ship remained with the formation for an hour, when owing to a fuel shortage they left the formation to take the shortest route home.

Finding that they did not have sufficient fuel to reach the Italian mainland, Lt Kaiser headed for the Island of Vis where there was an emergency landing strip. Over Yugoslavia, number three engine started cutting out due to fluctuating fuel pressure. At 11,000 feet all four engines cut out over the Benkovac area (44 03N 15 36E) owing to lack of fuel.

Lt Kaiser saw what appeared to be a piece of smooth white terrain, so they circled preparing to land. At 3300 feet he was able to see that the ground was not level, and ordered the crew to bail out. Seven of the crew bailed out, but Cpl Calvin Teel, the radio operator, had left his chute back in the waist position and did not have time to fetch it. Lt Kaiser and the co pilot Chester Jones elected to stay with him in the plane to land it. The hydraulic system being out due to loss of electrical power, the pilot made a successful belly landing and no one was hurt. The plane landed two miles east of Benkovac and was wrecked.

After destroying secret equipment, the pilot, co-pilot, and the radio operator were at once contacted by the Partisans who escorted them to Partisan headquarters in Benkovac. The rest of the crew that had bailed out with the exception of the ball gunner were picked up and brought to Benkovac to join the three crash survivors. The ball gunner, Eddie Yurochko landed in a pit, and was instantly killed when his head was slammed against the rim of the pit.

At Partisan headquarters the crew was well treated. Partisans gave them continuous bulletins until all of the crew members arrived about two and a half hours later. The Partisans carried all of the crew's baggage and spare clothing to headquarters. After spending the night in the house of the mayor of Benkovac, where they were very well cared for, the remaining nine members of the crew attended the funeral of Cpl Yurochko at St. Greya Church in town. The Partisans gave Cpl Yurochko a funeral with full mili-

tary honors. Two Catholic priests officiated at the ceremony and he was then interred in the Catholic cemetery one mile west of town with the grave site marked.

On the afternoon of December 12, 1944, the crew was taken by bus over a narrow and treacherous road and over a temporary bridge to Zara, Yugoslavia. The party embarked at once on a British cruiser where they spent the nights of December 12 and 13. The next morning they were transferred to a British destroyer which landed them at Bari that afternoon. The crew were well treated on both ships despite the overcrowded conditions on the destroyer which was carrying escaping British POW's.

Besides Kaiser, Jones, and Teel, the rest of the crew consisted of Lane S Mckone (N), Charles E Laster (B), Charles F Elsesser, deceased 1972, (N/G), Ralph H Christensen (U/G), Albino Frigo (T/G), Charles J Shanklin (E), and Eddie Yurochko KIA.

Ruben Kaiser was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal, a Mediterranean Theater Ribbon, and four battle stars.

Survivors include his wife, Pentronella Kaiser, one daughter: Julie Kaiser, three sons: Robert Kaiser, John Kaiser, and Ruben Kaiser, a granddaughter, and a sister Gertrude Kaiser.

Franklin C Moore, 824 supply, passed away January 16, 1990 after an extended illness. He leaves a wife, Ruby, three sons; Richard, Gary, and Thomas, who serves with the Air Force in Alaska, a ten year military career man. He leaves a daughter Anne. He was very proud of his children. T/Sgt Moore was named in the following document.



Meritorious Achievement Statement in Direct Support of Combat Operations March 24, 1945. Sergeant Moore has been section chief of the Air Corps and Technical supply of the 824 squadron from 9, April 1944, to the present time, 24 March 1945, in Italy. Prior to his arrival in the European theater and while still in the Zone of the Interior, (Continental United States) Sergeant Moore was called upon to combine various squadron material until such time as each individual squadron could function on its own. The plan was accepted and Sgt. Moore labored countless hours organizing equipment available to begin operations on arrival in a combat area. Once at his base, Sgt. Moore immediately began the never ending task of keeping his organization continually supplied with the multifarious requirements of a heavy bombardment squadron. Despite his foresighted planning, he was continually handicapped by lack of proper equipment, material and vital aircraft parts. With exceptional ingenuity and outstanding professional skill, Sgt Moore overcame these obstacles and on many occasions utilized salvaged material in order to get aircraft in the air for the following day's mission against the enemy. To assure a continual flow of supplies, he devised safer methods of storage and thus cut down on deterioration of valuable sensitive parts and equipment. In addition, he developed and installed a complete sorting unit to speed up the flow of vital parts, instituting this system in such a manner that even inexperienced personnel were able to quickly locate and provide necessary parts for proper aircraft maintenance. His never flagging energy and his untiring efforts on behalf of combat operations have been a continual source of inspiration to his subordinates and to combat crews.