

partisans. Several other crew members ended up in another squadron in the group. Only the engineer and I remained in the 827th.

As late replacements we missed the chance to bomb Ploesti, probably fortunately. But we flew the same planes, we were shot at, we endured the same mud, we suffered the same Spam and lima beans, and we drank the same vile vino. In fact several of our crew were shot down and bailed out. Crew 308 (Pilot Anderson & Navigator Johnson) was forced to abandon its ship and was brought out by partisans. I must admit, however, our chance of survival was probably much greater when our crew participated in operations in 1945 than the previous year.

I'm trying to round up my crew for a reunion. Thus far the pilot, Bob Wehner, and I are agreed. Perhaps we'll see you in Kansas City.

Sincerely,
Russell L. Hawes



Photo above: Tonopah, Nevada December 1944. Standing from left: Robert J Wehner-P, Victor Watson-C/P, Russell L Hawes-N, and Edwin B Carlock-B. Kneeling from left: John E Taylor-E, Pius M Zerr-R/O, Howard F Glasser-B/G, Glendon F Smith-N/G, James H Edmonson Jr-U/G, and Marshall L Byford-



Photo above: Officers of crews who trained at Tonapah during late September to December 8, 1944. They are from left: Funk, Howard J Barcus-P, Joseph M Mahon-P, Tony S Bakes-B, Henry C Wiedmaier-C/P, William L Hulslander-N, Henry A Hain-N, Kenneth W Anderson-P, Ferdinand Wiederspahn-P, William C Meyer-C/P, Thea J Easterwood-B, Victor Watson-C/P, Edwin B Carock-B, Robert J Wehner-P, Allen F Patterson-C/P, Russell L Hawes-N, William H Gardiner III-B, McNabb, and Walter Baran-P crew 309.