

I sat down on a big rock its parts lying slightly apart. The pressure caused by a bomb had thrown it there. I had tea and bread and butter which I had taken along. At afternoon the heat was a strain for the workers. Several young girls not used to such work complained of a backache. I went to my mother, brought her a drink and showed her bomb fragments I had collected and which I wanted to take home as souvenirs. These fragments were remains of the iron covering of the bombs which had been two to three centimeters thick and which had been blown to numerous small pieces by the explosion. These fragments which were the size of nuts, sometimes even of matchboxes or palms were scattered everywhere, mostly covered only by a thin layer of earth. They had jagged edges as sharp as a knife.

I became bored, so I climbed up the hill once more. From there I could see the remains of the gatekeeper's hut down in the valley. A bomb had been dropped direct beside the house, which had fallen to pieces and buried the baby of the Rammels, the gatekeeper's family. When the rescue team had arrived, the baby was already dead.

It might have been nearly eight o'clock p. m. when my grandfather declared the work as finished. Quickly I ran to the workers scattered all over the place and told them this news. After having washed in the creek we were exhausted and walked back to the railway station called Selker. All of us felt relieved, for a strenuous day was over. Moreover, I was looking forward to going home by train.

At home I presented the metal fragments I had collected to my mother. I still keep these fragments long after the war had been ended as a keepsake from my trip to the bomb craters in the summer 1944.

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Beaufort, NC  
Dear Bud & Bea

Sorry to be so late with our dues, we've been busy with the 50th anniversary of WWII commemorative program that took us to a number of states where we displayed our WWII collection at each stop. We appeared before 50,000 adults and students at schools, even though the program ended November 11, 1995, we still are busy visiting schools where we give talks on WWII. The governor of North Carolina signed a proclamation declaring November 4 to 11 as WW II veterans week at our urging.

The students seem to enjoy my photo album and helmet and goggles. I bring a class A uniform that still fits (not me however). I usually ask a girl to try the uniform on, they comply with great enthusiasm but have difficulty with the fly buttons as zippers were not standard issue. The United States Secretary of defense gave Blanche and I a Certificate of Appreciation for all of the work.

One of our most enjoyable accomplishments was finding living Gold Star and Blue Star Mothers, there are still a few around we found to our surprise.

**Blanch & Walt Bondarchuk 825 Sq.**

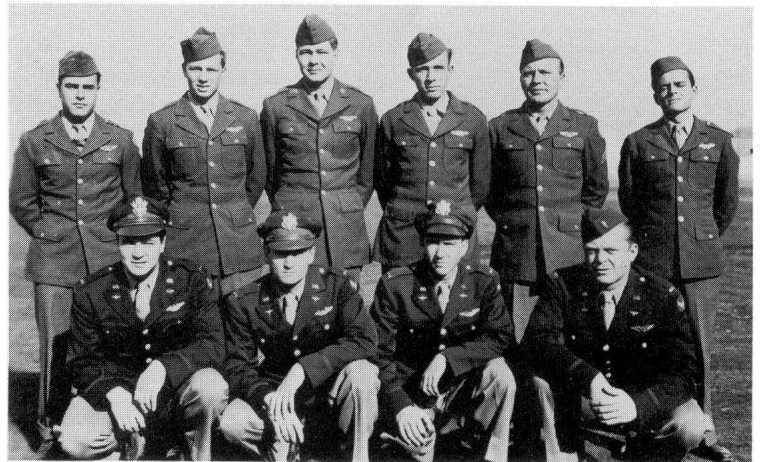
San Antonio, TX  
Dear Bud:

Re Torretta Flyer No. 28, Page 20: The reference to Alex C. Pietka, (lower right-hand column), a member of the Himmler crew, caught my attention. Later on Alex became a tail-gunner on the R.A. Dean crew. I was a member of Dean's first crew. On Nov. 20th, 1944 while returning from a mission to the Blechammer, Germany oil refineries, we were forced to bail-out, due to mechanical difficulties, over Bosnia, Yugoslavia.

After we were rescued on January 5th, 1945 and returned to Italy, we received orders to return to the United States. Bob Dean opted to stay on in Italy. It was at that time Pietka became a member of Dean's second crew.

I look forward to seeing you at the next reunion. Also I have enclosed a photo of the first Dean crew. On a note of interest, the late Eldon Fetter turned 20 years old on the day we bailed out (November 20th)!

Sincerely yours,  
**Bernard R. Button 824 Sq.**



*Photo of Robert A Dean Crew: Standing from left; Harry Hoogeveen B/G, Eldon Fetter E, Ernest Peterson T/G, Emil Horak R/O, Frank Kidd U/G, and Edward Atkinson N/G. Kneeling from left; Clarence Byers B, Robert Dean P, Jimmy Ingram C/P and Bernard Button N.*

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North Palm Beach, Fla.  
Dear Bud:

Enclosed is a check for Dad's membership dues. As before, please put the membership in Dad's name:

Dad and I enjoyed meeting you and the many other Association members in Dayton this past September. The dedication of the plaque and tree was beautiful. As always, we look forward to each issue of "The Torretta Flyer." You really do a great job.

Yours Truly,  
**Rodney E. Dillon 824th Sq.**