

What's in this Issue

● The 16th annual reunion in Washington, DC September 10-14, 1997 drew a crowd of 300 people, The highlight of the reunion was the dedication of the Plaque and Tree in Arlington National Cemetery. The full report of the reunion is on pages 4 to 7.

● An additional scholarship award was given to a Washington, DC student at the banquet which was a first for the Association. The story starts on page 8.

● Member Bob Leavenworth sent in the POW stories. Bob is not pleased with how the history of WW II is taught in the public schools. He lectures at schools to fill in the huge gap between what is taught and what the war was really like. On pages 12-15.

● The information on how the Pima County Museum in Tucson, Arizona acquired its B-24 and how it was flown back to the USA from India to be put on permanent display is an interesting story. It is relevant because the 17th annual of the Association will be held in Tucson in 1998. One tour will take our members to the Pima County Museum to see this restored B-24 J. The restoration work under the direction and work of Virgil Faulkner is truly a marvel. This like- new aircraft sits in its own hangar. See pages 16-21.

● Never Forgotten Incident, a story of a fog bound mid-air collision of a C-47 with an unknown object is a testament of the strength of the venerable twin engine airliner. Story sent in by member Stan Hutchins. See page 22.

● More on the Innsbruck Mission. Additional information on this mission featured in Torretta Flyer No #27 Winter-Spring 1995 came in via the Internet from Dick Olson the son of Richard Olson now deceased. We then added Escape and Evasion reports found in the microfilms acquired by the Association some years ago. See pages 24-26.

● A letter from Italy from Michele D' Aronca prompted the editor to feature the 16, February 1945 mission for this issue of the Flyer. What is revealed here is that it was not generally known that Fascist Italian Air Force fighters were active in Northern Italy and were known to attack 15th Air Force bombers who left the protection of the formation. They operated mostly Me-109s but were also known to fly Italian built fighters. Refer to Pages 27-35.

● Your editor was prompted to write the editorial that was sent to major newspapers in response to a newsletter from the WWII Memorial Committee. The committee has proposed to construct a Memorial on the National Mall at one end of the Reflecting Pool. This veteran does not like the memorial as it does not tell the whole story of WW II. See page 37.

● Rest Camp in the USA, This really happened to member Andrew Lopez. How many other airmen enjoyed this privilege? Page 39.

The aircraft shown on the front cover is actually a North American B-24G-16 assembled in Dallas, Texas

Thanks & Regards

Our thanks to Fred and Betty Dierksmeier for all their efforts in coordinating the installation of the plaque & tree in Arlington National Cemetery.

Our thanks to Joe Shugrue for copying the Mission Records that were on display for the first time at the Washington DC reunion. Members are urged to plan on attending the 1998 reunion in Tucson where the Mission Records will be on display once again.

Our thanks also go out to Alan Davidson and Barrow Neale who brought copiers to the reunion. Members were able to copy Mission Records and other documents right in the display room.

A big thank you to Ralph and Caryl Carr for their help at the registration desk.

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