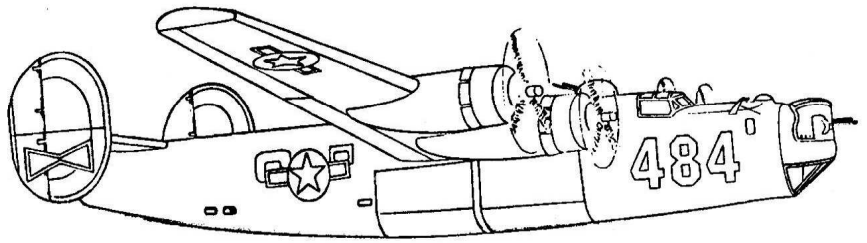


The Torretta Flyer

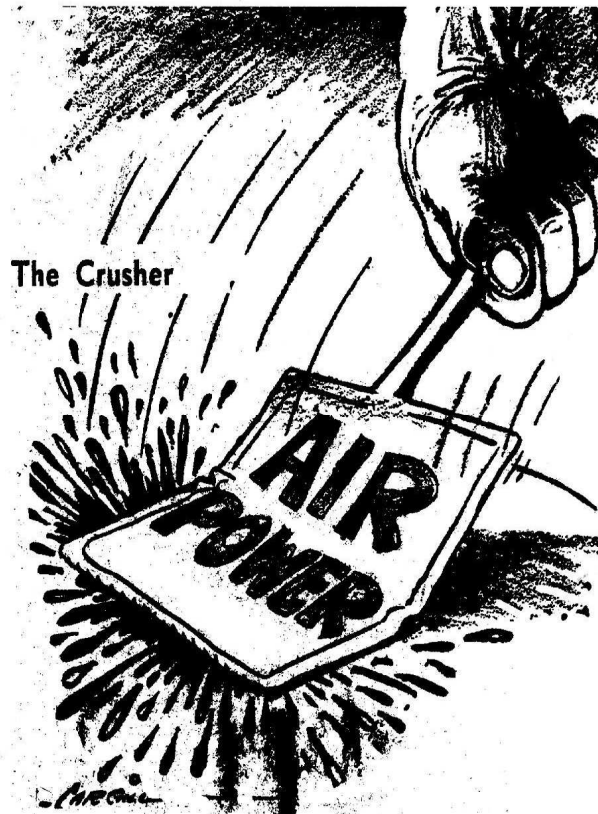


Torretta Flyer No 38

484th Bomb Group Association

Spring-Summer 2001

The 2001 Reunion Comes To Atlanta ,Georgia, Oct. 3-8, 2001 See pages 4 & 5



The Allied Air Forces of World War Two controlled the skies over Western Europe from mid 1944 to May 1945 due in part to the contribution of the automobile industry of the USA to the total war effort. Thanks to Willys, Packard, General Motors, Ford, Studebaker, and Chrysler for pitching in with such gusto!

Editor's Notes

Welcome to issue No. 38

For those of you who were not at last year's reunion in Dallas, TX, you did not hear Professor Umberto Albanese invite every member of the 484th Bomb Group to visit him and his wife in their home in Cerignola, Italy. This all came about because Bea and I had invited the Albaneses to attend the previous reunions in Washington, DC and St. Louis. Last year they accepted and came to the reunion and we did our best to entertain them. This was their first trip to the USA and Texas. Being immersed in the culture of the old west was a new experience for them. It was obvious that the professor and his wife were having a wonderful time as he reciprocated by inviting everyone to visit them back in Italy. He was so convincing in his invitation that member John Nicolai who has extensive travel experience has organized a trip to Italy that will feature a stop in Cerignola to visit Umberto Albanese and his wife Antonietta. The 2002 Italian tour information can be found on page 9.



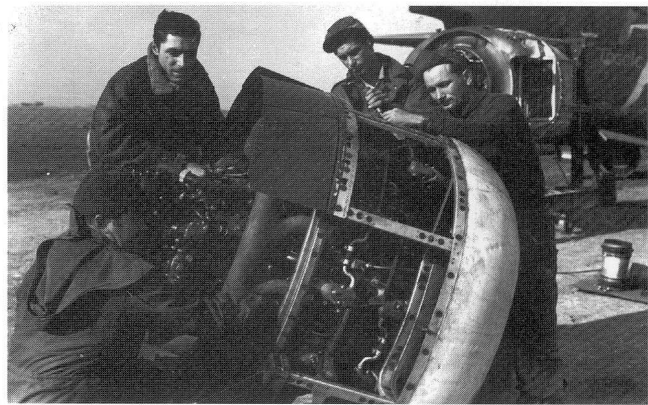
When planning this issue I ran across Intelligence files describing air battles fought between 8th and 15th Air Force pilots flying piston powered fighters against the new Me 262 Jet fighters of the Luftwaffe. What surprised me was that the slower P-51s were shooting down the jets in goodly numbers., this in spite of the 150 to 200 MPH speed advantage of the Me 262s over the P51s. These combat reports, to the best of my knowledge, are being published for the first time. The accompanying photo shows an American soldier pointing to the nose cone of a jet engine indicating the location of the starter motor. See Page 14 for more on the Me 262.

A new book, "The Mustang Story," by Ken Delve reveals some of the secrets of this famous airplane's phenomenal performance, especially the explanation of the "Meredith Effect" by J Leland Atwood. This explains the aircraft's low drag allowing the this piston aircraft to fly faster than any contemporary fighter aircraft of its time. In essence cooling air for the coolant radiators is allowed to expand before passing through the radiator core. Thus reducing the drag of the airplane to a low of about 2%. Compare this design with the let it all hang out in the slipstream theory of design as in the P-40. While the Spitfire and Me 109 used the Meredith Effect partially, the idea was fully developed for the Mustang after many hours in the wind tunnel. Note the P-51 pho-

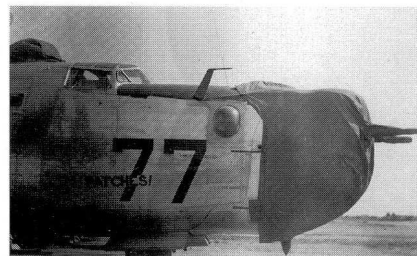
to shown above, the slender air intake below and behind the wing. The radiator chamber, a large box like structure, was located within the fuselage and behind the cockpit, whereas the practice in the RAF and Luftwaffe was to place the radiators on the bottom wings near the roots. See page 30 for full explanation.



A P-51 showing the low air scope that led into the chamber producing the "Meredith Effect," See page 30.



The personal stories by Joe Shugrue (page 11), Ed Lamb, (page 21), and Stan Hutchins (page 31), fill out the story portion of this issue. I have added a poem, "Remember This Man." (page 33). The theme is to remember the men who kept your aircraft in repair. It is true even today, if you work for an airline it's assumed you are a pilot, ignoring all of the other skills needed to keep an airplane in the air.



The Last Item is the complete list of all the B-24s flown by the 484th Bomb Group during 1944-1945 from its base at Torretta (a crossroads). It was compiled by John Beitling. See story starting on page 34.

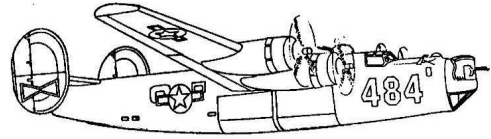
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The 484th PX Items

484th BG Logo patch, stitched, 2 3/4 " in diameter -----	\$5.00.
B-24 three- dimensional tie tac, silver, 1 3/4 " -----	\$5.00.
Association Pin with 484th Logo- - -	\$5.00.
Baseball Cap, red & white. side view of 484th silver B-24 on front, postage inc. - - -	\$12.00.
Miniature Plaque 1 3/4 " with display stand, postage inc.-----	\$20.00.
Back issues of the Torretta Flyer, (25) Nos 13 thru 37, postage inc.-----	\$130.00.
Individual issues-----	\$7.00 ea.

The Torretta Flyer



Issue # 38 Spring- Summer 2001

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The Torretta Flyer is the official publication of the 484th Bomb Group Association. Normal distribution is limited to members only. Requests from nonmembers for copies should be directed to the Editor.

Contributions of stories, articles, memorabilia, and graphic materials to the Torretta Flyer are always welcome. Only clean typewritten manuscripts and Microsoft Word disks are acceptable. Handwritten letters will no longer be published. Please contact the Editor for further information.

The Torretta Flyer reports primarily on the history of air warfare during WWII and the accomplishments of members of the 484th Bomb Group during WWII. From time to time the magazine will cover other subject matter related to aeronautical events as material becomes available. Readers are encouraged to submit their own stories or material from other sources.

Editor, Bud Markel
Associate Editor, Bea Markel

Board of Directors 2000-2001
484th Bomb Group, Bud Markel, Bea Markel, John Billings, Ken Hubertz, and Ed Schwartz

Scholarship Committee,
Dick Muscatello, Chairman, Joe Hebert, Vernon Janke, and Ross J Wilson

Membership Committee
Al Kline, Adolph Marcus, Jack Robson, Herb Weinstein,

Publicity Committee, Adolph Marcus, Bud Pressel

Direct all inquiries to the Editor, Torretta Flyer, 1122 Ysabel St. Redondo Beach, CA 90277-4453-13, USA Phone (310) 316-3330 . We can be reached via the internet at **BUD484BG@AOL.com**. Also, visit our web site at <http://members.aol.com/bud484bg>. Faxes can be received at prearranged times.



**Phone Reservations
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Guest Room Information

Number of Rooms: 638
 Suites / Parlors: 24
 Double Doubles: 274
 Kings: 341
 Concierge Level: 71 Rooms
 Number of Floors: 16
 Tariff Plan: European
 Check-in Time: 3:00 p.m.
 Check-out Time: 12:00 noon

Accommodations:

638 guest rooms, 22 suites/parlors, Concierge Levels (2 floors).
 All guest rooms specifically designed for the business traveler.

Restaurants and Lounges

Name	Seats/ Capacity	Cuisine	Meals Served	Entertainment
Bentley's Steakhouse	90	American	D	
Allie's American Grille	200	American	B, L, D	
The Lobby Lounge	60		Snacks	
Bentley's Sports Bar	125		Hungry Hour Snacks, L, D	Satellite TV, Games

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Recreational Facilities

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 Racquetball Courts • Basketball Court • Health Club • Men's and
 Women's Saunas • Game Room • Golf Nearby

Places to See / Things to Do

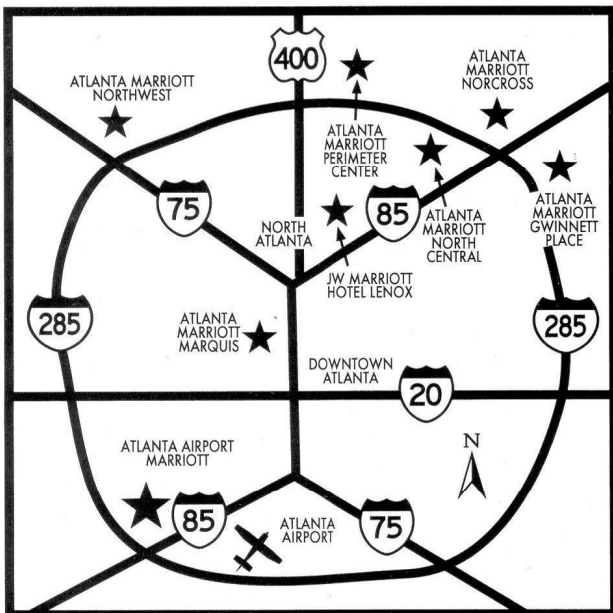
Stone Mountain • Six Flags Over Georgia Amusement Park •
 Turner Field (Braves Baseball) • Georgia Dome (Falcons Football)
 • Southlake Mall • Underground Atlanta • Lenox Square / Phipps
 Plaza • CNN Center • Cyclorama • Jimmy Carter Library • Margaret
 Mitchell House

General Information

Credit Cards Accepted: American Express, VISA, Mastercard,
 Diners Club, Carte Blanche, Discover, JCB, Enroute

Hotel Tax: 13% on rooms, 7% on food and services

Reservations: Must be guaranteed to credit card, company , or
 advanced deposit.



Location Benefits

Near Atlanta's major highways: 85, 285 and 75. Five minutes to
 Hartsfield Int'l. Airport, 10 minutes to Turner Stadium, 15 minutes
 to downtown.

The Atlanta Reunion Tours

City Tour

Board the bus for a driving tour of Atlanta. Begin at the north side of the city in Buckhead, where gracious mansions and sweeping lawns await you. Ride past the Carter Presidential Library and Dr. Martin Luther King's gravesite. Once downtown, see Atlanta's Peachtree Center, the CNN Center, Turner Field, Centennial Olympic Park, and the Georgia State Capitol. Lunch is on your own at Underground Atlanta. Six city blocks in the heart of downtown Atlanta have been transformed into a spirited urban marketplace featuring restaurants, specialty shops, and entertainment emporiums. After lunch,



enjoy free time for browsing. Meet outside at the Kenney's Alley entrance to Underground Atlanta. Tour the World of Coca-Cola at their three-story pavilion. First served at a pharmacy soda fountain located very close by, Coca-Cola is now enjoyed in more than 160 countries, more than 448 million times a day. Learn the story of Coca-Cola through fascinating exhibits, an extensive collection of memorabilia, classic radio

and television advertisements, a fanciful representation of the bottling process, and a futuristic soda fountain that you must see to believe. 9:00 am board bus, 3:30 P.M. back at hotel.

Margaret Mitchell House and Atlanta Cyclorama

Board bus for the Margaret Mitchell House, birthplace of "Gone With the Wind." Arrive at the Visitors Center for a short film about Margaret Mitchell, author of one of the world's most beloved novels. Tour her apartment in the adjacent turn-of-the-century house, which has been recently restored. Enjoy exclusive archival exhibits, including her original typewriter on which she crafted her classic novel. Docents will share her life story and the impact that her book and the movie had on the world. Following the tour, stop by the Museum Shop for a visit. Enjoy lunch on your own and time to shop at Peachtree Center, home to more than eighty shops and restaurants located in downtown Atlanta. Spend the afternoon at Grant Park, home to Atlanta's Cyclorama as you revisit a memorable chapter in our nation's past, the Civil War's Battle of Atlanta. The Cyclorama Building houses a massive circular painting and diorama. Experience the story of this 1864 conflict from a revolving 184-seat viewing platform literally surrounded by the action. Enjoy a stop in the Civil War Museum and bookstore before leaving. 9:30 am board bus, 3:30 P.M. back at hotel.

Stone Mountain

Board bus for Georgia's Stone Mountain Park, where you will find 3,200 acres of natural beauty just minutes from Atlanta. Riding proudly across the north face of the world's largest exposed granite mountain are Confederate President Jefferson Davis, and Generals Robert E. Lee and "Stonewall" Jackson. On the drive, your guide will preview the attractions at the Park. Arrive at Stone Mountain to begin your adventure. Your tour includes admissions

to all six attractions. First, take a cruise on the Scarlett O'Hara Paddlewheel Riverboat (cruises run on the hour). Next, stroll through the Antebellum Plantation, a complex of nineteen buildings that depict a time gone by. Then, visit the Antique Car and Treasure Museum. There is also a train that takes you on a five mile ride around the base of the mountain. Then, consider taking the, Skylift for a breathtaking view of the carving from a Swiss cable car. Complete your visit with a stop at the Discover Stone Mountain Museum, which highlights the people and stories that made Stone Mountain a legend. The bus or buses will be available at the various attractions to assist with transportation between the attractions. The park also has a tram available. While there, enjoy lunch on your own at one of three eateries in the park, including The Depot Chicken Restaurant, the Stone Mountain Inn, or Gondola Grill. 11:00 am board bus, 5:00 P.M. back at hotel. Prices are in the reunion tour package.

Make Your Room Reservations Early

Because this year's reunion is the last one, we may have a number of guests who will want to attend at the last minute, we urge all of you to make your sleeping room reservations early to take advantage of the reunion rate of \$87.50 per night.

Additional Scholarship Grants Given In The Fall of 2000

These three letters were received after the publication of *Torretta Flyer No#37 Fall -Winter 2000*



Cerignola, 27 September, 2000

Dear President

Dear president and members of 484th Bomb Group Association, my name is Carmela Ciciretti and I am a student at a secondary school in Cerignola. I should like to give thanks to you for the opportunity your organization offered me. It was very important to be awarded scholarship prizes by 484th Bomb Group Association.

Thanks to you I shall be able to realize my dreams, to go on studying and graduate in medicine in order to help the people who need, especially those less fortunate than me. To be always at disposal of those needing medical attention of everyone, of my friends who, together with me, represent the new Cerignola and intend changing it for a better one.

We will be better thanks to you and your help which makes us feel like fighting for a better future.

I thank you for what you gave me, for having trusted me, for this beautiful dream come true. I promise I shall not disappoint you, I am confident I shall succeed not only for you but, above all, for me.

Regards from
Carmela Ciciretti



Dear Members of the 484th Bomb Group Association, My name is Maria Cannone. I am seventeen years old and I attend the fourth year of Liceo Scientifico. I am happy for this prize. For the

first time I consider myself very lucky and I thank you very much. It is an exciting experience and I will use it to improve myself and to believe more in myself.

This will be the starting point for me. I hope to come up to your expectations. I have great ambitions for my future life; I hope to become a psychologist or specialist in education.

This will require years of hard work, but I shall try and I am sure to succeed. With the scholarship I wish to go and visit America, where I could improve my English and I could know a different way of life.

I'd like to know more about your association; could you send me a copy of "Torretta Flyer"? I thank you with all my heart again!

Yours sincerely,

Maria Cannone



Cerignola, Italy

Dear members of the 484 Bomb Group Association

My name is Francesco Paolo Montingelli and I am 15 years old and attend the third class of Istituto per Geometri in Cerignola Italy.

I am well advanced in my studies even for a 15 year old and I have great ambition for the future in technical work because I hope to be an architect or engineer.

I am very happy to have won one of scholarships assigned by your association. I already knew of your initiative, the scholarships program, before which I never thought I would be recognized.

I'd like to meet the president and members of 484th Bomb Group Association organization. I hope it will continue its activity to help students like me. I consider myself very lucky and with this letter I would like to thank you all for the prize I have received because it is very important to extend a hand for study and future work, in fact I will use this scholarship to continue my studies.

I wish to thank you with all my heart, Best Greetings,
Francesco Paolo Montingelli

Report On Association Activities

by Bea & Bud Markel

First, I have to report that like many of you dear members, I was just recently hospitalized once again, and once again have recovered. I was in the middle of putting together material for this issue of the Flyer and it has taken me a while to get back to it.

Since the last Flyer and the 2000 Reunion, in Ft. Worth/ Dallas, Texas, all members should be aware that the 484th Bomb Group Association, a California nonprofit corporation, will be dissolved

Special Vip Guests **Professor Umberto Albanese and wife,** **Antonietta**



From Left: Bud Markel, Antonietta Albanese, Bea Markel, and Umberto Albanese

as of December 31st of this year, as approved by the Directors and Members of the Association. To the best of our ability and with the resources available, we have achieved our goal of bringing the members of the 484th together as a Group and we have established living memorials, by way of voluntary member donations to a Scholarship Fund Awards program for the young people near our Torretta airfield in Cerignola, Italy, as well as students in the U.S.A.; Harvard, Nebraska and Washington, DC. We have also placed and dedicated 484th Bomb Group Commemorative Plaques at the USAF Museum Memorial Park, Wright- Patterson AFB, Ohio, and at United States National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia. We have not as yet, established a location for the accumulation and preservation of the Group history for perusal of future generations.

Report On The 2000 Reunion

The best one yet! We received this comment from so many of our members who attended the Dallas/Ft. Worth Reunion. Our Group was given recognition by the Mayor of the city of Irving,

Texas, and honored by a special flag flown at the Texas State Capitol, by proclamation, on the official 484th Bomb Group Day and presented to the 484th BG at the Banquet, together with a certificate from the City of Irving, Texas.

We were honored and pleased to have in attendance at this Reunion our Honorary Member from Cerignola, Italy, Professor Umberto Albanese, who has been in charge of the selection of the students for the Scholarship Awards and the presentation ceremony in Cerignola since 1986.

This was the very first trip to the United States for the Professor and his wife, Antonietta, which was not an insignificant undertaking, given the language barrier. Their enthusiasm at being present at the Reunion was matched by the reception given to them by our members.

At the Reunion banquet, Professor Albanese made his presentation to the Group with regard to his special feelings for the service to his country by members of the 484th Bomb Group, and the significance of the Scholarship Awards Program. His presentation was in Italian, of course, and was translated into English, in increments, by our own Richard Muscatello. He also presented a framed certificate from the City of Cerignola to the 484th Bomb Group. His wife, Antonietta, gave her own special presentation in the English she had mastered, and it was warmly received by members in attendance. In appreciation for all of his efforts and work for the Association, a certificate of recognition and appreciation was presented to Professor Albanese.

With funds donated by our member, Reed Sprinkel, his wife, Rita, and the Association, a bronze sculpture by the American Western Artist Frederick Remington was given to Umberto and his wife.



The Remington "Bronco Buster"

Continued from page 7

Special Thank you to:

1

Reed and Rita Sprinkel for their generous contribution to the gift for Professor Albanese and his wife.

2

Fang and Edith Hansen 824 Sq for the wine supplied not only to the 824th Squadron members but to all members at the Squadron Dinners and Banquet as well.

3

Bud Pressel 825 Sq for the chips supplied by Martin's Potato Chips.

4

Betty Schroeder, Claude Schroeder's (827 Sq) wife, for the colorful identification keychains she made and brought to the reunion for distribution. Betty passed away the beginning of this year.

5

Thank you to our own Rev. John Nicolai for his fine invocation at the banquet.

6

And, our appreciation to our linguists, Richard Muscatello and Herbert Weinstein, for their help in breaking down the language barrier with the Albaneses.

Annual Meeting Report

The annual business meeting took place on Sunday, October 29, at 9 AM. Minutes of the Members Meeting of October 9, 1999, were read and approved. The financial report was read and approved. The current financial status of the Memorial Scholarship Fund was reported as approximately \$12,429.04 as of September 30, 2000. Current paid 2000 membership total: 421.

Scholarship Report

The Scholarship Committee reported that for the year 2000 the amount of \$600 each, had been awarded to fifteen students in Cerignola, Italy, for a total of \$9,000; and the amount of \$1,000 each, had been awarded to two students of Harvard Public School, Harvard, Nebraska for a total of \$2,000. Contributions to the fund for the year 2000 to date is \$645.

Members approved the recommendation that the designation of the location of the Association's archives upon the dissolution of the Corporation as of December 31, 2001, be made by the Board of Directors.

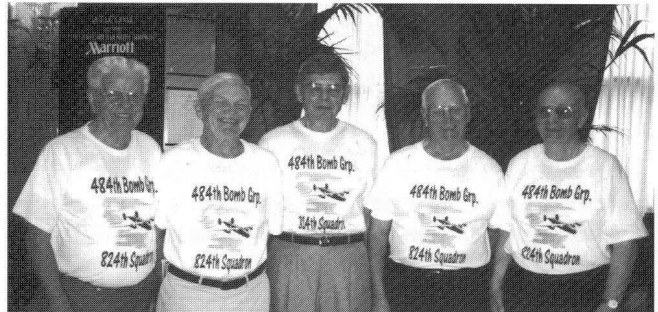
Election of Directors

In accordance with the Notice of Annual Meeting for the purpose of electing Directors for the year 2000-2001, the election of directors took place. The Directors are: Bud Markel, Beatrice Markel, John Billings, Ken Hubertz, and Ed Schwartz.

Under new business, members approved the recommendation that the Chairman designate the site of the next Annual Meeting to be held in accordance with the by-laws for election of directors, the time and specific place for same to be announced.

End of report

Please identify these men pictured below!



H i Bud!

This is a copy of the picture of the guys processed from a film in a camera I found in a restaurant near the Dallas Airport Marriott that I spoke to you about in an earlier letter, I hope you can help me identify the man (middle one) who owns the camera as I would like to return it to him. They obviously had a good time at the reunion judging from their expressions.

Thanks again Donna Parent
Donna Parent
19 Latern Ln
Merrimack, N H
Home Tel 603-424-0414
Work Tel 603-456-7227
Home e-mail: Vrab @Juno.com



B-24 42- 51835-38 damaged beyond repair, see page 34

The Return To Cerignola & Southern Italy is Now A Reality For Members

10 Days May 1 to May 10 2002

A custom group travel experience by Brevik Travel International, Inc..



Overhead view of piazza (public square) fronting the Catholic Church on the Via del Corso (main street) of Cerignola, Italy. At the upper end of the square the building across the street housed the Red Cross Club. View is looking north east



The Red Cross Club in Cerignola as it appeared in 1944-45, just to the left as you face the front of the Catholic Church. In the photo at left this would be to the top of the Piazza.

Always Intriguing Italy

Prepare to explore one of the least known areas of always intriguing Italy. Italy is a land of art and not the least among the arts that have attained their highest expression in Italy is the art of hospitality. The Italian welcome is as warm and traditional as a glass of fine wine. Travelers of ancient times gave the country its first name: Land of Wines. Italians are such good hosts because they get so much practice, welcoming visitors from the world over. Italy is one of the most popular destinations in Europe, and all seasons are good for visiting Italy. Italy is an international playground where visitors from all continents mingle with the gregarious Italians. There are really three Italys, the Alto Adige in the Dolomite North, Central Italy as far south as Rome, and "Il Mezzogiorno" the romantic South. In traveling from the far north, or even from Rome southward, the contrasts are acutely evident.

Norman castles, Roman theaters, Arab pleasure palaces, the ruined temples of Ancient Greece, the beaches, pine forests and the sea of a deep, dark blue Il Mezzogiorno (Southern Italy) is an unforgettable experience.

As was suggested by Umberto Albanese and enthusiastically endorsed by so many attendees at the 2000 reunion in Dallas/ Ft. Worth, a tour to Italy has been arranged by John Nicolai and Lorraine Nicolai for May 1 to May 10, 2002. The trip will include visits to Rome, Naples, Pompeii, Sorrento, Isle of Capri, the Amalfi drive, Solerno, Bari, and Cerignola. Time in Cerignola will include a visit to former Torretta airfield, visits with the Albaneses and the people of Cerignola.

Send Away Now For Tour Information

For a brochure on the tour and the complete Southern Italy itinerary contact Brevik Travel International, Inc. at 44-227 Monterey Ave. Ste. 3 Palm Desert, CA 92260. Tel. (760) 341-9795 Fax (760) 346-0749 Email: groupsales@brevictravel.com. Or check with John Nicolai 1143 E Coulee Rd Bismark, ND, 58501-1263. Tel (701) 223-0591. Email johnnicolai@aol.com

Some Commentary on "What's Up Doc,"

by T/Sgt Robert E Self, Engineer-gunner

In Vol. #12 of the Torretta Flyer that you just sent to me, on page 30 in the article "What's Up Doc." The continuation of the story by M/Sgt Harold C. Jacobs 825th Squadron, I take issue with his viewpoint as I was the engineer on the morning of Dec. 10, 1944 on that very airplane that attempted to take off normally.

I was the engineer on the Howard Steinberg crew and we drew # 34 "What's Up Doc" for what was to be an all out maximum effort mission. Anything that could get in the air that day was supposed to fly. When we got to the pad of # 34, the plane was not ready to fly. They were still working on it. The bombs had not been loaded, the guns had not been put in the turrets nor any ammo laid out along with the guns, They loaded the bombs and just tossed the guns and ammo into the plane and told us to install and load after we were airborne.

He states in his article that a new crew was flying that day. He tries to lay the blame for the engines catching fire on inexperience of a new crew. Jacobs, what is your idea of a new crew? I don't think he could have any reason to call a crew that was taking off on their 25th mission a new crew. We knew about engines, mixtures etc. His statements were made by a Saturday armchair quarterback. He was not in the plane and any thoughts of his were just that, thoughts. Before he made the statements and wrote the article that he did as if he were the last word on what happened, he should have checked his facts. I don't remember ever having been contacted by him.

As we were in line waiting to take off, the pilot said to the co-pilot and myself that "This plane was born to groundloop" You see, we had flown this plane other times, one being on August 22, 1944 to Vienna, Austria. That day we had engine trouble and lost #2 as we approached Austria. We could not keep up with the formation, being heavily loaded and losing altitude. It was discussed among the crew and we had the choice of turning back or going on and picking up the formation as they came off the target.

The group was to come in from the north east over the target headed home. When the formation left us, we were hit by Me 109s and FW 190s. There were about 15 of them and they gave us a going over but we got two and the fighter escort that came to our rescue took out many more of them. It is documented that a 109 came out of the sun and I along with our navigator looked him directly in the face as he cut out the radio antenna with his wing. One of them hit us on the right wing just behind the #3 engine and left a hole about a foot across. One of the 20mm shells went into the #2 engine from the rear.

We got to the target and the formation was not in sight, as they were to bomb from 26,000 ft. We were at this time flying at only 13,000 feet. The pilot told the bombardier to line up on the target as we were going in. With one engine dead we could not hold a perfectly straight heading and I think this is what saved us

from being hit by flak or fighters.

They threw everything but the kitchen sink at us and as we pulled away from the target, we could see at high altitude the group getting ready to bomb. They passed us up and beat us home. For some reason that only the good Lord knows, the fighters did not attack us again. We finally landed at home base and the plane was filled with unexploded 20mm in the gas tanks. This plane was on the ground in repair for over 6 weeks, Now back to the Dec 10 crash. We had gotten about 50-75 feet off the ground when one of the crew came from the waist to tell me the engine was on fire. I went back to the waist to see it and the fire was extended past the tail. I got it cut off and feathered and we were just maintaining an altitude of about 300 to 400 feet. #3 caught fire so we had no choice but to start #2 back. Got #3 put out and in a short time #2 was back on fire so we cut out #2 and started #3 back.

We were told we could not land until all aircraft were off the runway for the mission. We decided we were going to land anyway and we started on the downwind leg and I was firing flares, any flare I could put in the pistol. In fact I shot the entire contents of the flare kit. We were about half way down the downwind leg and still about 300 ft. and flying on three engines with a full load of fuel and loaded with booby trap 500 pounders. At this point the three running engines quit. I was standing between the pilot and co-pilot as usual on landing to call air speed. When the engines quit, the pilot shoved the nose straight down and then he and the co-pilot pulled the control straight back and we were lucky in that the field had just been plowed and it had been raining. We hit and one wheel sheared off and the plane turned and went down the field backwards, filling the rear compartment with mud and there were bombs laying around the plane with broken off fuses. Only the navigator got hurt, his foot was cut when the strut of the nose wheel broke back and landed on his foot. He was standing on the catwalk directly under the top turret, which did not fall, for whatever reason. The plane was finally blown up where it lay after sufficient time to give the bombs a chance to explode if they were going to. *See photo page 34.*

Robert E Self, T/Sgt
Engineer
Howard Steinberg Crew

Editor's Note:

The B-24 was built in such great haste that not enough engineering man hours were devoted to many of its systems, including some gross errors in the fuel transfer design. Also fuel burn out could not be estimated with any accuracy unless the engineer plotted a cruise control chart.

View From The Nose Turret

by Joseph Shugrue, 827 Sq



Herb Brooks was not the closest friend I made, during World War II, but I have perhaps thought about him more than any other during the past 50 plus years. He had been in southern Italy, at the Torretta Air Base 100 miles or so northeast of Naples for several months when I arrived in the summer of 1944. We were both nose turret gunners on B-24 bombers of the 15th Air Force which was engaging the Germans and East Europeans in the fierce air war over Europe. At the time, I was 18 years old. He was a year or two older and had several bombing missions to his credit on the way to what he hoped would be 35 and his ticket home. He was friendly and kind to me, a good guy. He gave me several tips from his experience on daylight bombing missions. I liked him a lot.

We were both in the 827th Squadron of the 484th Bomb Group and lived in nearby tents mired in an ocean of Italian mud, which surrounded a huge complex of steel mats, and tufa block buildings that served as our air base. Just a year earlier Allied forces had invaded the Italian mainland. After a bruising campaign fighting their way up the peninsula, they were still battling Germans in northern Italy. The first mission my crew flew was a relatively easy one (a milk run) supporting General Mark Clark's troops in the north by destroying German barracks and warehouses in lightly defended Bologna.

The Bologna mission did not prepare us for the next day, Friday, October 13, 1944, when I got my first taste of real war.

Both my crew and Herb's were in a raid against Vienna, Austria. While a young man, Hitler spent several years in Vienna among tramps and drunks, working odd jobs, often sleeping on park benches, eating in soup kitchens, and nurturing his fierce hatred of non Germans.

When he became German dictator, he seized Austria and made Vienna one of his main arsenals. Around the city were refineries, aircraft plants, ballbearing factories, and underground complexes. Out of Vienna, railroads serviced the East and Balkan fronts. Vienna was the most heavily defended enemy city in southern Europe. But we came to Vienna that day not to destroy a city, but to help stop a madman. A few months later, the Soviets took Vienna. Former resident Hitler killed himself soon after.

This was the first of seven missions I would fly to Vienna. After several hours of flight, we turned on to the 20 minute bomb run to our target. We were not allowed to deviate from or take evasive action from that run which was set by ground commanders. We saw the billowing black clouds of flak through which we had to fly many miles ahead of us. The reaction was shocked obscenities. Ready to fire on us were nearly 400 dreaded 88-millimeter guns controlled by German-developed radar, which for that time was surprisingly sophisticated. Fear of instant death was a constant companion on these runs and the sense of relief when one was fortunate enough to make it through was a feeling unduplicated in my life's experience. The loss of men and aircraft over Vienna was phenomenally high.

On that mid-October day, the temperature at the 24,000-foot altitude at which we were flying was 45 degrees below zero. The primitive aircraft of that time were not pressurized nor heated. Threats from the cold ranged from frostbite from which all of us suffered regularly to freezing to death, which happened on occasion. In anticipation of the frequent failure of our crude and fragile electrically heated suits, we wore several layers of winter clothing. We also wore a holstered 45 automatic pistol for defense on the ground, a parachute harness, an inflatable life preserver (Mae West) and flak jackets, which were impossible for most of us to keep on, and still squeeze in to our turrets or get through the ship's tiny passages. I sat on mine, which was one of the smart tips Herb gave me. From many missions, our planes, and sometimes our men, came back riddled with flak.

For a human to function at the altitude we flew, it was necessary to wear an uncomfortable, rubber oxygen mask for hours at a time. Death caused by two or three minutes of oxygen deprivation was not unusual. Vulnerability to failure of oxygen masks required constant intercom checks of each position by the pilot.

The 29 ships in our group (nine returned early) approached Vienna around noon in the traditional tight formation which was designed to concentrate the fire of our guns at enemy fighter planes if they attacked. In our six-plane squadron box, the ship assigned to Herb's crew was out of my line of vision. Over the target, ground



fire struck with deadly accuracy. In a Fourth of July type spectacular, we saw three nearby planes shot down. Others, which were hit, eased away from the formation possibly to become victims for waiting German fighters unless they could find the protection of U.S. P-38s, P-47s, or P-51s fighters. Brave, talented black officers of the famous Tuskegee Airmen Group piloted many of these.

One of the planes was hit, enveloped in flames and spun lazily toward the ground. Terrified but fascinated, I rose in my turret straining to watch it and look for parachutes. I saw none. One plane that was hit I thought might be Herb's. Before we got back to base, our pilot confirmed that the plane with Herb's crew had gone down. I was torn between relief over my own survival and depression over the loss of those for whom this Friday the 13th was fatal. Photography confirmed that our bombs destroyed a large section of Vienna rail yards.

When I got back to my tent a remarkable thing happened. As I was about to collapse on my cot, I glanced across the way and saw the figure of a man sitting on the ground outside of Herb's tent holding his head in his hands. Could that be Herb? Thank you Lord it was Herb! Conversation with him revealed that he had been told to stand down from that day's mission because his plane was involved in an experimental program to install radar in the nose. A navigator replaced him. During the next three months, although crushed by the deaths of some of his crew members (three or four of them did successfully bail out after they had dropped their bombs), Herb plunged ahead seeking assignment to any mission where there was an opening. He got in 33 missions. He told me that some evenings he went out to one of the ships, donned his flight gear and practiced getting out of his turret to the nose wheel door through which he would escape in the event his ship was hit. He said he cut his time in half with practice and urged me to do the same. I never did. With two missions left to go, Herb could refuse a mission. He turned down Vienna.

One day when I was in a chow line with Herb and others, a conversation developed that was not uncommon among threatened young soldiers. It was suggested to a married gunner that he give his "lonely" wife's phone number to Herb who would be going back to the States in a few days. The man's hot retort was

that Herb was going to get shot down and killed before he ever got to his wife. The accuracy of that prediction was tested the very next day, January 20, 1945 when our Wing attacked Hitler's boyhood home, Linz, Austria.

Herb and I were both there. A ship just ahead of us got a direct hit, caught fire and exploded in our faces. Herb's plane did not seem to have trouble over the target, but ran into bad weather on the way home. It made it back to the Adriatic Sea then disappeared into a cloud bank and was presumed lost. I convinced myself that Herb was not on that plane. Somehow he had cheated death again.

He just wanted too much to live. I piled out of the truck that brought us back to our area and ran to his tent expecting to find him. He wasn't there. I never saw him again. Herb Brooks, whom we considered the luckiest guy in our outfit, apparently had his luck run out a few days before he was slated to go back to his home in New York City. My guess is, however, Herb did go home that day to heaven.

The Germans surrendered approximately three months later. Finishing with 28 missions, I went home and married a fine woman who has put up with me for nearly half a century. We have great children and grand children. It has been a good life, but there has been a drop of guilt mixed in with the joy. In trying to disentangle God's strange game plan as all veterans of wartime combat seem to do, we are thankful for the great blessing we have been given, but do ask,

"Why me, Lord?" About Herb Brooks and all the rest of our buddies who died we ask, "Why them, Lord?"

In a recent motion picture, which brought tears to my eyes, a dying army captain who had saved a private's life on the battlefield, embraced him and whispered, "Earn this! Earn it"

Vets continue to think about and pray for our departed comrades in arms particularly at national holidays. We try with varying degrees of success to lead decent lives in their memory. But we never deceive ourselves into believing that we can ever earn the sacrifice they made for us.

In January 1944, a month after my 18th birthday, I was called to World War II volunteer service with the U.S. Army Air Corps. Eight months later, after hasty training as an aerial gunner and

B-24 bomber crewman, I found myself flying out of war torn Italy to bomb cities in Europe such as Milan, Munich and Vienna which, not long before, I had been studying in high school classes. Casualties were frighteningly high, and none of us had much confidence that we would survive the 35 missions required before we could go home. The terror to which airmen of both sides were introduced in the skies over Europe during World War II has been described by hundreds of talented writers over the years. My preference here is to contrast that terror with my most wonderful memory of Italy.

In the midst of the terror, there was a time of tenderness when my crew was briefly snatched from the jaws of war and sent to rest camp on the beautiful Isle of Capri. This came 10 days before my 19th birthday and was a marvelous birthday present. There are those who believe we must suffer on earth so we can enjoy heaven more fully. Our experience with war similarly enhanced our delightful few days on Capri. All we knew about Capri came from the famous song about it that topped the charts in the 1930s. It described Capri as having blue skies, flowers and romance. I was ready for all of that and was not disappointed.

We made a 17 mile boat trip to the tiny island in the Bay of Naples, leaving behind the filth and cold of the city. Capri, with its unaccountably mild climate, is recorded in Greek mythology as being the home of the Sirens, the lovely maidens whose music enchanted Ulysses. The scenery is magnificent with varied flora, flocks of migratory birds and fine bathing beaches. On landing, we rode a quaint funicular, which glided up over steep cliffs to the village of Capri, dominated by a piazza or village square. Here local people congregated at all hours. These Capriotes, industrious, religious, happy-go lucky were quite different from mainland Italians. Most spoke English learned from U.S. and British tourists over the years. Their speech was now peppered with slang picked up from U.S. airmen whom they loved instantly as rescuers of their tourist trade, which had been almost destroyed during the war.

Our stay on Capri included sumptuous food and drink, served early and late, lively entertainment, and tours by carriage all over the historic island including the mountain tips, like the Leap of Tiberius from where it was said the cruel and powerful emperor had tossed his victims into the sea. Totally captivated by the island, Tiberius had abandoned Rome to rule from Capri, making this tiny bit of paradise the center of the Roman Empire and of the entire Western World, including Judea where Christ was preaching at that time and where he was put to death by Roman soldiers.

Now it was American soldiers who fell under the spell of the Blue Grotto, the famous cave known for the eerie, deep blue reflections of the sunlight inside. It was American soldiers pausing on the village terrace, hypnotized by breathtaking views of the Bay of Naples with the city of Naples and infamous Mount Vesuvius in the background.

And, yes, I did meet a girl to help me enjoy all of this. Diana was a year or so younger than me. She waited on me in a gift shop run on the square by her family. She spoke perfect English. Always smiling, she referred to the shop as her "clip joint." I fell for her immediately and was pleased that she seemed to like me, too. In Italy proper, any respect-

able young lady would always be chaperoned, but on Capri things were more relaxed. Diana was allowed long afternoons off to spend with me during which her two sisters tended the shop.

Hand in hand, we explored the labyrinth of narrow, picturesque alleys of the village she knew so well. Seeing that I was often lost, she demanded that I lead the way and filled the alleys with her laughter at my confusion.

One of the lines of the Capri song is, "She whispered softly, it's best not to linger." We did not. Knowing how brief my stay would be, we filled every minute with a joy that is associated with the discovery of adulthood and is never quite repeated in later years.

Diana was attractive. She was full of life, cheer and song. It was impossible to be sad or worried in her company. She knew all the popular American songs, which she sang and, sometimes, we sang together. That was a different time, and the kisses and embraces were romantic, but proper. Sister Rosario, my eighth grade teacher, would have been proud of me.

The tenderness Diana showed me was unique and a sweet tonic which renewed my courage. It elevated my self-esteem and touched my soul in a way that nothing else at that time could have. The memory of our week together helped carry me through the terror to which I had to return.

After I left Capri, I never saw Diana again. She accompanied me to the Grande Marina where I nearly missed my ship back and had to be pulled aboard by my buddies as it was underway. As the song says, "Though I sailed with the tide in the morning, I left my heart on the Isle of Capri."

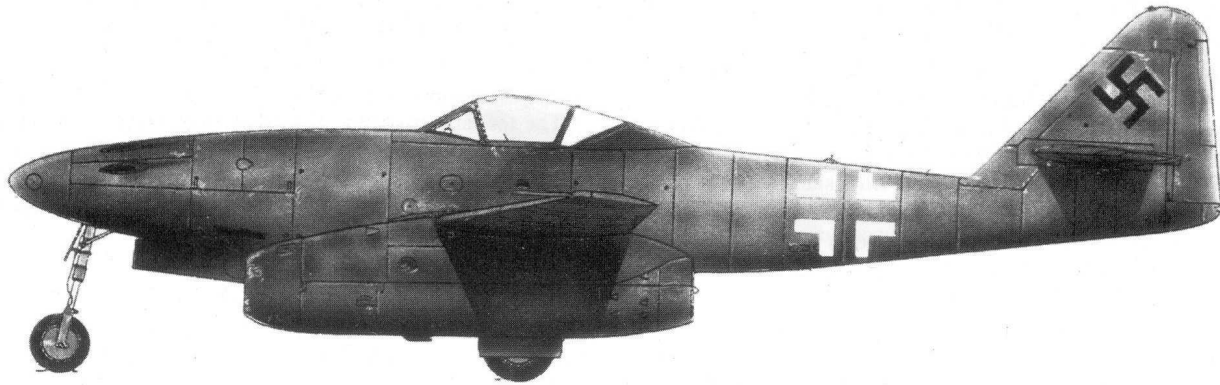
Diana and I corresponded briefly while I was still in Italy, sending messages back and forth by way of other soldiers going to the week of rest. I still have her first letter. She sent me some Capri dates and wrote, "I remember you liked them very much, but I cannot feed them to you because we are so far apart. Too bad. I am sorry you could not spend your Christmas here in Capri. When you come back to Capri, I will sing for you again, and this time I will remember the words to "Goodnight, Wherever You Are". Happy New Year to you with wishes that you finish your missions soon and become a B T O (Military slang for Big Time Operator) back in the States. O.K.? So long, Joe, and Roger."

Arrivederci, Diana. Thanks!



Air to Air Tactics Piston Aircraft Used In Attacking Jet Fighters

American P-51s and P-47s take on the Me 262



Editor's Notes

The Me-262 was the first jet powered fighter plane to enter in combat. It happened during the latter half of World War Two in 1944 by German invention. It was hoped that this new fast aircraft would eradicate the ever darkening skies over Europe of increasing Allied aircraft raids. As you can see from the accompanying combat reports and from our own experience, the skies remained firmly in Allied control. Why did this come about?

The airframe was designed to accommodate two jet engines of low power of under a thousand pounds of thrust. This was the concept back in the late thirties, a smaller engine would use less strategic materials that were already in short supply because the war started too soon before stockpiles of essential war material were filled. Also a small engine would be easier to develop and handle. Jet engine development had been going on since 1937, and in 1939 the first jet powered aircraft actually flew in Germany. Among top German leaders it was thought it would only be a matter of time before jet turbine engines would be dependable enough to put into mass production. If the truth were known, as good as the engines were in design and construction the jet turbine engines of WWII were never

reliable enough for final production. The time frame from concept to finish was just too short even for an advanced industrial nation such as Germany.

The airframe of which much has been written was of conventional design with innovations to accommodate the new requirements of jet engine power such as the variable horizontal stabilizer. Using aluminum sheets riveted to formers and stringers the method of construction was much like any other aircraft of the period.. Lighter construction materials known as composites used in modern jet aircraft were yet to be invented.

In mid 1944 when Germany should have been sending out peace feelers they were faced with war now on all fronts, east, west, in the Atlantic, and in the air. With assaults on their homeland from the air, movement of goods and men on the ground was becoming increasingly difficult. The development of the jet engine went on in full fury. Some in Hitler's camp began to believe that superweapons could turn the war around even while the land was being gobbled up by the invading armies. These leaders were seemingly beginning to lose their sense of reality. The quickest way they thought to undo the calamity of total occupation by the victorious Allies was to depend more on the Superweapon. The Jet fighter in a sense was a superweapon. At first it was

to be a Blitzbomber, to wipe the invasion beaches of Normandy free of enemy occupation, and so more time was lost in the perfection of a pure fighter plane.

While planning this issue of the *Flyer* I found the intelligence reports describing the combats between our fighter pilots and the German Me-262 that appear on the next pages. To my surprise the combats were not always one sided with the victories going totally to the fastest aircraft. This is not to forget that even with all its mechanical problems the Me-262 was a formidable adversary that took its toll of Allied bombers and fighters. To read more about jet vs piston combats, read the book, 'The Messerschmitt Combat Diary, Me-262' by John Forman and S E Harvey.'

The following narratives of P-51 and P-47 combats with Me-262's have been selected from U.S. 8th Air Force Combat Reports as being of general interest. Some previous encounters were reported in earlier issues.

374th Fighter Squadron

Combat on November 6th, 1944, in the Bassum Area, with 8/10 clouds, a general overcast with tops at 25,000 ft. I was leading Yellow Flight at 20,000 ft 1100 hours, approximately. 5 miles south of Bremen. I spotted 2 Me-262s to the left and slightly above our bombers. They made a pass at our bombers at 7 o'clock, proceeding in a long shallow dive to the right. They rapidly pulled away from us. Group commander called us back into formation.

"I then proceeded back to 10,000 ft. when I spotted 2 more Me-262s. These jets were not attacking our bombers, but proceeded at about 6,000 ft. along the bomber track., four P-51s stayed on their tail. The jets made a long diving turn to the left back into Germany and we were able to gain on them. They were drawing away from us in level flight when they started turning to the left. The P-51 to my left closed in and started firing. The Me-262 immediately reversed direction and pulled over in front of me. I fired one burst at 30 degree deflection and observed no hits, but it was then that he must have thrown on his jet power.

"I was turning inside of him and with my next two bursts I observed strikes along the fuselage and canopy, and the enemy aircraft began smoking. He went into a spiral to the right at approximately 2,000 ft. and ended up going straight down obscured in his own smoke and flames. The tactics used in destroying this Me-262 proved very effective. We bracketed him so that he was apparently unable to return to his base. I claim this Me-262 destroyed."

Observation:

The Me-262 can be out turned at any speed. The P-51 can out climb Me-262 at low altitude. The Me-262 can out dive a P-51. The Me-262 can out climb most any piston powered airplane at high altitude. The Me-262 can fly good formation.

486th Fighter Squadron

Combat in the Enchede-Lignin area on November 1, 1944 8/10 cloud tops at 6000 ft and excellent visibility. I was flying number four position in Red Flight. We first saw this Me-262 at our altitude which was 31,000 ft. He made a pass on the flight in front of us and started a diving turn to the right. At about 12,000 or 13,000 ft. Red flight was closing in on him. I had more speed than my element leader as I was passing him. I called on the R/T (radio transmitter) and told him I was going after the Jerry.

"Just about that time the Me-262 made a turn into me. I turned with him and it put me right on his tail. I was using the K-14 sight and first opened fire at approximately 200 yards, saw hits in the tail section, closed up to about 150 yards and shot out his right jet as he was climbing to leave me behind. After I shot his right jet out the Me-262 went into a flat spin to the right, the pilot bailed out a few seconds later.

While the empty plane was spinning down about 16 plus P-51s and P-47s were taking shots of it. The Me-262 did not catch fire. The pilot bailed out at about 19,000 ft. My flight leader had been able to close within firing range of the enemy aircraft when he made the 180 degree turn. He fired several short bursts and I observed strikes in the tail section. Then the enemy pulled up to a climb, the captain followed him, but I was in a better position to close to a shorter range."

77th Fighter Squadron

Combat on November 1, 1944 over Goor, Holland with conditions of solid overcast at 10,000 ft I was flying Yellow 3 and while we were escorting bombers in the vicinity of Gutersloh, Germany we investigated a contrail above at about 1350 but we never did catch up with it.

At 1414 after we had returned to the bombers an Me-262 bounced Yellow Flight right from above and behind while we were at 31,000 feet. Yellow Flight turned to the left in pursuit as this jet aircraft went down. At 10,000 feet the jet pulled up to the right and toward bombers and as Yellow Flight followed, the jet went to left and down full out toward Zuider Zee right above cloud level at approximately 10,000 feet. P-47's were in pursuit at this time too.

"The Jet started wide turn to right at about 10,000 feet to 14,000 feet and I kept cutting inside. I closed steadily pulling over 70 inches. I opened fire at approximately 300 to 400 yards at 60 degrees deflection pulling on through to zero degrees and 100 yards. I fired several long bursts and observed strikes on left wing and left side of fuselage which started to smoke. The Jet continued on straight course for approximately 30 seconds then pulled up to left in almost a straight climb, and pilot bailed out. My flight leader took pictures of the pilot in his chute.

In my supporting Statement 1 was flying Yellow 2. I saw Yellow 3 make his attack on a Me-262s. He closed in to about 400 yards in a turn and started firing. I observed strikes all over the left wing and fuselage. The Me-262 straightened out for a few seconds, then pulled up into a very sharp climbing turn, and the pilot bailed out. The Me-262 started to spin, and pieces began to break off."

On November 2nd, an escorted bomber formation of the U.S. Eighth Air Force encountered about 19 Me-163s and Me-262s. The Me-163s were observed to have both square and rounded wing

tips, but all resembled the silhouettes in other respects. In the Duisburg area, 15 Me-163s were sighted coming up singly and climbing at an angle of from 45 to 60 degrees. Black and white smoke was emitted until the rocket motors were cut off at the altitude of the bombers. Two Me-163s were destroyed in combat with the escorting P-51s (Mustangs).

The first Me-163 climbed up through the bomber formation and having cut off his rocket motor, then made a 180 degree turn during which a P-51 apparently unobserved by the enemy carried out an astern attack from 400 yards range and obtained strikes. The belly of the aircraft exploded and flame enveloped the fuselage, causing the aircraft to lose height like a falling leaf. The pilot abandoned the aircraft.

The second Me-163 was observed circling and losing height under the cloud base at 25,000 ft. The enemy aircraft straightened up and a P-51 endeavored to close range, but was unable to do so at an indicated airspeed of 325 m.p.h. The enemy aircraft commenced a diving turn to the left, enabling the P-51 to fire a short burst. The Me-163 then tightened his turn and carried on for 360 degrees. The rate of turn of the enemy aircraft was tighter than expected, but the P-51 was able to hold his deflection and obtain strikes on the tail of the ME-163 which slowed down the enemy aircraft to such an extent that the P-51 overshot. The P-51 made another attack from astern and obtained strikes on the tail unit which caused the enemy aircraft to catch fire and crash.

Comments: Although at this stage very little is known of the Me-262s aircraft it would appear that the following four points can now be definitely assumed:

- (1) It is not fitted with dive brakes.
- (2) It will gain very high forward speed in a shallow dive.
- (3) Its turning circle at all altitudes will be inferior to contemporary fighters.
- (4) Its fuel consumption at sea level will be very high indeed.

Evasive action has been previously advocated to our pilots that should they be intercepted, then climbing turns, steep turns, etc., would probably be the best evasive action.

In the light of our latest knowledge, however there is one other maneuver which might be worth while, but this maneuver should only be adopted when it has been decided that continuation of the flight objective cannot be maintained owing to the certainty of being shot down by the enemy fighter.

Suggestions:

Should an airscrew propelled fighter be intercepted at altitude above 15,000 ft. a fairly certain method of avoiding being shot down is to put the aircraft into a half roll and a very steep dive, throttled back and in fine pitch.

The Me-262 without dive brakes cannot dive at over 30 degrees without reaching excessive high speeds, therefore it will not be able to follow a standard fighter.

It will probably lose sight of it in the dive and if not will only be able to keep it in view by turning outside it in a position where it will be unable to carry out an attack. At the completion of the dive when the ordinary fighter reaches ground level it will probably have been lost to view by the Me-262, but failing this it should go into and hold a steep turn at ground level. This will make it very difficult indeed for the Me-262 to carry out an attack.

The fuel consumption of the Me-262 at ground level will be such that it will be unable to continue endeavoring to attack a normal fighter for more than a very short time and will probably abandon the operation.

The disadvantages of this method of evasive action is that the fuel consumption of the standard fighter will also be increased but not to the same alarming extent as the Me-262 and therefore, although the object of the flight may have to be abandoned, the aircraft can return to base without being damaged.

332nd Fighter Group (Tuskegee Airmen)

Lt. Roscoe C. Brown, 100th Fighter Squadron, 332nd FG. "I was on the west side of the third and fourth sections of B-17s of the 5th Bomb Wing at about 27,000 feet when at 1215 hours, we noticed three Me-262s coming in at the bombers at eleven o'clock, breaking to one o'clock. The attack was below the bombers. The jets were attacking individually rather than in formation. I called the flight to drop tanks and peeled right on the three Me-262s. I fired at one from 2,400 feet, having him in the extreme range of my K-14 gun sight.

"He went into a dive and I went with him down to 22,000 feet where I broke off pursuit because of the exceptional diving speed of the jet. I climbed back to 27,000 feet. It was then that I sighted a formation of four Me-262s under the bombers at about 24,000 feet. They were below me going north. I was going south. I peeled down on them toward their rear but almost immediately I saw a lone Me-262 at 24,000 ft climbing at ninety degrees to me and 2500 ft from me. I pulled up at him in a fifteen degree climb and fired three long bursts at him from 2,000 feet at eight o'clock to him. Almost immediately the pilot bailed out from 24,500 feet. I saw flames burst from the jet orifices of the enemy aircraft.

The attack on the bombers was ineffective because of the prompt action of my flight in breaking up the attack. The jets appeared unaggressive to fighters and used diving speed as evasive action. They seem to employ the antics of attacking bombers from below where they are not easily visible to our fighters."

Captain Edward L. Thomas and Lt. Vincent I Mitchell, 99th Fighter Squadron, 332nd Fighter Group: "Our formation was about thirty miles southwest of the target when I saw two Me-262s make a pass on a box of B-17s off to our left at approximately 1208 hours. The pass was made from five o'clock high. We dropped tanks and followed them from the bombers' altitude which was 26,000 feet to about 20,000 feet, without gaining on them. At approximately 20,000 feet, the two jets started a wide right turn and my flight started cutting off the turn, trying to close the range and pick up a deflection.

The two Me-262s were in loose string, so we attempted to catch the rear jet. Lt. Mitchell, who had joined my flight, closed with me to a range of about 450 yards and started firing from a forty-five degree deflection and we both observed hits on the jet. He apparently had not realized that we were so close on him, for as soon as the hits were observed he pulled his nose up, did a quarter roll to the right, and split "S"ed away from us. In the meantime the first Me-262 had tightened his turn until he was almost head on to us, thereby preventing us from following the second jet. The Me-262 then broke to his left and pulled up and

away from us. These two jet aircraft pilots appeared to be experienced which was evidenced by their tactics in this encounter. They used power after we were observed in the area."

Lt. Earl R. Lane, 100th Fighter Squadron, 332nd Fighter Group: "I was flying number three position in a flight of four aircraft covering B-17s of the 5th Bomb Wing. I was at 29,000 feet at the time. At about 1210 hours I noticed four aircraft, apparently enemy, in string passing from three o'clock to nine o'clock under the bombers. They were completely out of range. I did not notice any damage to the bombers. After seeing these aircraft I began looking around. We "s ed" across the bombers and made a turn back to the right when I saw an Me-262. The Me-262 was in a thirty degree dive, coming across the bomber formation. He appeared as if he was peeling for an attack on the bombers. I came in for a thirty degree deflection shot from 21,000 feet. He did not quite fill my gun sight. I fired three short bursts and saw the plane emitting smoke.

A piece of the plane, either the canopy or one of the jet orifices, flew off. I then pulled up and circled over the spot where he went down. I saw a crash and a puff of black smoke. Two seconds later, I saw another piece hit close to the first piece. I was at 17,000 feet when I broke off the encounter. The jet was a steel blue-grey camouflage.

After this encounter I teamed up with another friendly aircraft and headed for home. Before leaving the area, a black P-51 with German markings approached me at 22,000 ft. at five o'clock. The friendly pilot I was with yelled "break right". I did so and the enemy aircraft broke off and flew north. The jets I saw were not using power. They were unaggressive to fighters and dived and climbed but seldom turned. In attacking bombers the jets came out of the sun and flew across the middle of the bombers from five to ten o'clock or came up low and behind the last one of the bombers.

There is a need for fast speed in areas where jets are expected. Also it is essential to weave close to the bombers when affording cover because the low attack on the bombers by jets cannot be observed easily from a distance."

On 24 March 1945, when B-17s of the Fifteenth Air Force attacked Berlin from Italian bases, approximately 30 to 40 Me-262s plus a few Me-163s opposed our formations from 50 miles south of target to Berlin. Bombers claimed 6 Me-262s destroyed and 6 probably destroyed, with losses of 2 B-17s to jet aircraft. Fighters claimed 7 Me 262s destroyed, 2 Me-262s and 1 Me-163 probably destroyed., and 5 Me-262s damaged, with loss of 1 P-51 jet aircraft.

The following are some selected first hand accounts by pilots of their encounters. Colonel William A. Daniel, 308th Fighter Squadron, 31st Fighter Group. "On 24 March 1945. I was leading a formation of P-51s providing close escort on penetration, target and withdrawal cover over Berlin, Germany for the bombers of the 5th Wing. At 1225 hours, from 28,000 feet, just south of the target, I observed 2 Me-262s headed towards the bombers from 11 o'clock. The bombers were headed north, the enemy aircraft were headed east and I was headed west, putting me 90 degrees from the enemy aircraft and 90 degrees from the bombers. As I saw the 2 enemy aircraft turn into the bombers from the stream about 7 o'clock, I turned in and started to close in and fire, but observed 4 more enemy aircraft turning in. I waited for the six enemy aircraft to turn, then closed in on him from about 4:30 o'clock, at 28,000 feet, to 500 yards and fired. No strikes were observed although the enemy aircraft made a snap roll and went into a spin. I observed a para-

chute and 4 blobs of smoke. Lts. Doherty and Wilder later confirmed the observation of the parachute.

These enemy aircraft were of a blue-gray color. No contrails or belly tanks observed. The enemy was only moderately aggressive and made evasive moves, My indicated speed was approximately 400 miles per hour while the Me-262s was about 450 miles per hour."

F/O Thurston L. Gaines, Jr 99th Fighter Squadron, 332nd Fighter Group on 24 March 1945, I was flying number four (4) position in yellow flight furnishing penetration cover for B- 17s of the 5th Bomb Wing. At approximately 1210 hours we were escorting B-17s at an altitude of 27,000 feet about thirty (30) miles southwest of the target, when three (3) Me-262s were seen diving on the bomber formation from about thirty thousand (30,000) feet. The Me-262s were in string and made their attack from five o'clock high at the rear section of the bombers. The first jet missed his bomber apparently and continued his flight under the bomber formation without altering his course. The second jet made his attack in a glide and after firing a burst from his guns applied power to his engine. This was evidenced by the fact that a puff of dark smoke was emitted from the jet nacelles. This jet continued his attack under the bomber formation and started a turn to the right. Immediately after observing the puff of smoke from the jets, a B-17 was seen to do an abrupt high wing over to the right and started to spin in the same direction. The second Me-262 to make a pass at the bomber fired from approximately 1500 feet. By the time I had released my wing tanks the jet aircraft had made his pass and as I gave pursuit, soon discovered that his rate of speed was too fast for me to close in on him.

Consequently, I started a climbing turn to the right at approximately 20,000 feet when I observed an Me-262 in a steep right turn about one o'clock slightly high. I pulled the nose of my aircraft up and started firing from about 200 feet with thirty-five degree deflection head on and closed to approximately 8 feet, with seventy degree deflection. No strikes were observed nor did the enemy aircraft attempt to take evasive action. It appeared that the jet pilot did not see me because he made no attempt to bear his guns on my aircraft but instead continued in his steep right turn. The rate was not exceptionally fast for an almost head-on approach, and I would estimate that I fired a good three second burst at a climbing deflection shot. All of the Me-262s that I observed in the area appeared to be black with blue-gray under surface. No markings, belly tanks, or rockets were observed and I did not observe contrails during the encounter.

Lt. Robert W Williams, and Samuel W Watts Jr. 100th Fighter Squadron, 332nd Fighter Group "At about 1215 hours, while escorting B-17s of the 5th Bomb Wing, Lt. Brown, the flight leader, called in enemy aircraft attacking our bombers. They were higher than the enemy aircraft and had the advantage, so we thought. When I saw the first enemy aircraft they were in somewhat of a line abreast formation making very shallow turns. They must have been cruising at least 450 MPH because I had an indicated 380 MPH after my dive with everything full forward. The jets continued almost straight and in a slight dive disappearing in the distance. At 1220 hours my wingman called to me that we were being attacked by two Me-262s from five o'clock high. They came in a close formation and fired at my wingman. I was about 500 feet above them so I rolled over into a steep wing over and developed a high speed stall from which I recov-



A Me-262 is caught in the gunsight of a pursuing P-51

ered but immediately developed another. When I pulled out I dropped down almost in trail of the jet aircraft. I noticed a simultaneous trail of propulsion from both aircraft. They continued straight through in a shallow dive for almost a minute after the attack and while still in very close formation they started a shallow left turn. I picked up a 2 1/2 radii lead on the jet on the right and fired a long burst. I fired another burst and held it for about two seconds. I noticed hits on the aircraft and saw him fall out of formation and I believe that he went down. I had to break off the attack because my wingman called to me for help. In these encounters I observed that the jets stay under the bombers beneath where they cannot be seen by the fighters.

They fly a close formation using jet propulsion intermittently. They were very unaggressive to fighters. Jets take advantage of their speed and make shallow turns in order to not lose speed.

Lt Joseph E. Chineworth, 100th Fighter Squadron 332nd Fighter Group: "At approximately 1215 hours while engaged in escorting B-17s of the 5th Bomb Wing, my flight was attacked by three Me-262s. I was flying number two position and was at 29,000 feet at the time of the attack. The jets came in from ten o'clock low and passed under us making a fairly tight 180 degree turn to the left. At this time we were to the left of the bombers and above them. While the jets were in their turn, we dropped tanks and started a dive to the left of the enemy aircraft pursuing them for 5,000 feet downward. At this point I lost my flight leader and picked up the number four man in our flight. Together we went after another Me-262 that had just passed in front of us. I made a ninety degree left turn and was on the tail of the jet about 1,500 feet away. I fired three long bursts and then my guns stopped. I saw hits and pieces fly off his plane. Black smoke came from the enemy aircraft as he started into what appeared to be an uncontrolled dive.

I used a five degree to a zero degree deflection shot at him. My ship was equipped with the new K-14 gun sight. As I was pursuing the jet, I had my throttle full forward but I did not notice my air speed or my manifold pressure at the time, but as I pulled away I was indicating from 355 to 375 MPH at 17,000 feet. My attack lasted for about five minutes. I saw approximately nine Me-262s. Several of the jets I saw were not using power. Their approach to the bombers was without the use of power. They appeared unaggressive to fighters. They flew almost in a U formation with one behind the other."

Lt. Charles V Brantley, 100th Fighter Squadron, 332nd Fighter Group: "Between 1200 and 1220 hours while flying as escort for B-17s of the 5th Bomb Wing my element leader and I encountered an Me-262. We were at an altitude of 25,000 feet flying practically abreast when two Me-262s came in from behind and slightly below us. Both aircraft appeared to be coasting as I saw no indication of power. One jet was between us and the other one was to my flight leader's right. I dropped my nose, being well within range and made several bursts on the ship that was in front of me from dead astern. My flight leader fired on the other. The jets broke in a slow turn in opposite directions, pulling us apart. I followed my target in a dive for a short while observing hits on the fuselage. I then broke off to join my flight leader. The dive was very shallow and at no time did I go below 20,000 feet. As I broke away the Me-262 steepened its rate of turn and dived. It was seen by my flight leader and other pilots to go down in flames. I encountered another Me-262 while joining my flight leader. This Me-262 passed me at approximately ninety degrees. I fired but no hits were observed. I was unable to pick up the correct lead and could not turn fast enough because of one wing tank which had stuck. The jets were able to pull away from us without using power. Altitude is essential in successfully combating the fast Jet aircraft.

Lt Reid E Thompson, 100th Fighter Squadron, 332nd Fighter Group reports, "between 1200 and 1220 hours, while weaving over bombers of the 5th Bomb Wing, 3 Me-262s made a pass at the bombers from seven o'clock low. I was at an altitude of 26,000 feet when I saw the Me-262s come up make a pass, level off and go zooming up and over the bombers at one o'clock. They also did a wing over and made another pass from two o'clock high. I called in the enemy aircraft to my flight leader I was going down to intercept them. I peeled down and told my flight leader, I was going down to intercept them. I peeled down with my tanks on and reached a speed of 300 MPH. On the way down a flight of five of our aircraft passed me and I broke away to the left and dropped my tanks.

In the turn I saw an Me-163 in a turn to the left at two o'clock to me. I tightened my turn and fired two bursts with a seventy degree deflection, but I was out of range, at about 4,000 feet. The jet went into a dive almost vertical and I dived behind him still out of range and looking for him to pull up and allow me a shot at him. He began to dive from 26,000 feet and on the way down., he did three barrel rolls to the left and I rolled with him. On the completion of the rolls, I pulled out of the dive at 10,000 feet and leveled off at about 6000 feet. I estimated the jet to be about 4,000 feet in front of me and when I last saw him, he was still going down. I circled the area where I last saw him and located a puff of smoke and wreckage where I judged him to have gone in. I then joined a friendly aircraft and left the area. The jet appeared unaggressive and employed a dive as evasive action."

Nathan F. Twining, CO 15th AF

Research by Bob Leavenworth

Nathan F. Twining was born the son of Clarence Walker and Maize Twining, 11 October 1897, in Monroe, Wisconsin. His distinguished military career spanned 44 years and culminated with his appointment as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1957-1960.

Twining began his military service in the Oregon National Guard as a Corporal, 16 June 1916. He was promoted to Sergeant 25 March 1917 and served until 28 May 1917. He entered the United States Military Academy 14 June 1917, and as part of an accelerated wartime class was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the infantry, 1 November 1918. He did not, however, see combat in WW I. He was promoted to First Lieutenant 1 July 1920. Subsequent promotions included: Captain 20 April 1935, Major 1 September 1938, Lieutenant Colonel 15 July 1941, Colonel 1 February 1942, Brigadier General 15 June 1942, Major General 5 February 1943, Lieutenant General 5 June 1945 and General 10 October 1950.

Twining attended the Army's Primary Flying School, Brooks Field, Texas, 1923-1924, and his principal assignments and rise to military distinction began with his official transfer to the Army Air Corps, 16 November 1926. A Flight Instructor at March Field, California, 1929-1930, he became Commanding Officer of the 26th Attack Squadron, Schofield Barracks, Territory of Hawaii, 1 July 1930 to 21 March 1932. Transferred to Fort Crockett, Texas, he was Station Engineering Officer for the 90th Attack Squadron and subsequently Group Adjutant, 3rd Attack Group, 24 March 1932 to 26 February 1935. He was Assistant Operations Officer, 3rd Wing, Barksdale Field, Louisiana, from 1 March, 28 to August 1935. At Maxwell Field, Alabama, he was a student at the Air Corps Tactical School, 1 September 1935 to 20 July 1936, and he attended Command and General Staff School, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1 September 1936 to 25 June 1937.

Twining earned his Command Pilot rating in 1937 and served as Air Corps Technical Supervisor, San Antonio, Texas, 1 July 1937 to 31 July 1940. From 9 August 16 November 1940 he was Assistant Chief, Inspection Division, Office of the Chief of the Air Corps (OCAC), and then Chief, Technical Inspection Section, Inspection Division, OCAC, 17 November 1940 to 10 December 1941.

With the outbreak of WW II, Twining was assigned to Operations Division, Headquarters Army Air Force (HQ AAF), from 11 December 1941 to February 1942. An Executive Officer within HQ AAF, February to May 1942, he served as Director of War Organization and Movement, HQ AAF, May to July 1942. Following his promotion to General Officer, Twining was designated Chief of Staff, United States Army Forces in the South Pacific Area, 20 July 1942 to 4 January 1943, and Commanding General of the 13th Air Force, Solomon Islands, 5 January to 12 December 1943. While commanding the 13th Air Force, he and 14 airmen were forced into the Coral Sea during a B-17 flight from Guadalcanal to Spirito Santo Island, 26 January 1943. They spent the next 6 days in 2 rubber rafts before being rescued 1 February 1943.

Twining was assigned to the European Theater of the war, 6 January 1944-25 May 1945, as Commanding General of the 15th Air Force and Mediterranean Allied Forces. After quick tours at



the Legislative and Liaison Division, HQ AAF, and United States Army Strategic Air Forces, 24 June 1 to August 1945, he was appointed Commanding General of the 20th Air Force, 2 August to 15 October 1945. While commanding the 20th Air Force, his planes dropped the only 2 atomic bombs used in time of war on Hiroshima, Japan, 6 August 1945, and on Nagasaki, Japan, 9 August 1945.

Following WW II Twining was Commanding General, Technical Services Command, Wright Field, Ohio, 8 December 1945 to 30 September 1947. He then served as Commander in Chief, Alaskan Command, Fort Richardson, Alaska, 21 October 1947 to May 1950. Following his assignment as Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel, Headquarters United States Air Force (HQ USAF), 14 July to 9 October 1950, he was appointed Vice Chief of Staff, USAF, 10 October 1950 to 29 June 1953.

General Twining was appointed Chief of Staff, USAF, 30 June 1953-14 August 1957. He served as the first Air Force Chief of Staff to be appointed Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 15 August 1957-30 September 1960. He retired from the Air Force 30 September 1960 after 44 years of distinguished service. Remaining active, he was Vice Chairman of Holt, Rinehart and Winston Publishers and a consultant to the Martin Marietta Corporation until his subsequent retirement in 1967

In June 1981 General Twining and his wife, Maude, moved to the Air Force Village, San Antonio, Texas, where the General could receive medical treatment at Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland AFB. At Wilford Hall, 29 March 1982, at age 84, he died of a heart attack. He was survived by his wife, Maude, and their 3 children: Major Richard G. Twining (USAF, retired), Nathan A. Twining and Olivia Twining Hansell.

General Twining was a major figure in the development of United States airpower. During the 1950s as Vice Chief of Staff, Chief of Staff, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Of Staff, he helped create and define aerospace doctrine and operations at the onset of the jet and nuclear age.

General Twining's primary awards and decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Navy Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star, the Airman's Medal, the Order of the British Empire, and the French Croix de Guerre with palm, as well as other U.S. and foreign decorations. Also, in tribute to his outstanding achievements, General Twining was accepted into the Aviation Hall of Fame, 1976.

General Twining was the author of "Neither Liberty Nor Safety: A Hard Look at U.S. Military Policy and Strategy", Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966.

Easter Egg Surprise Left GIs Shell Shocked **by William Allan 37th SQ.**

From Sortie, 17th Bomb Group Newsletter

Easter always triggers memories of a Sunday morning in France years ago. Our bomb group was flying daily cover for Gen. George Patton's Third Army, which was racing across Germany.

Crews lived in tents on the lawn of a chateau and had fallen into a monotonous routine: Up at 0400, breakfast at 0430, briefing at 0500, and takeoff at dawn.

Sometimes we were back by noon and were met on the airfield by Jeeps dispensing a choice of the world's worst bologna or peanut-butter and jelly sandwiches. That usually meant another mission was to be flown that afternoon. Once back for the day, there would be debriefing, dinner and bed.

It's still difficult to understand maybe it was a throwback to those gallant World War 1 days, but each member of a combat crew was issued a candy bar and pack of cigarettes for each mission. At debriefing, there was a shot of whiskey, always very good American stuff.

But the food, mission or no, was terrible. For breakfast: powdered eggs which tasted like Fels Naphtha soap, or pancakes so heavy they lay undigested until you got back on the ground and attacked them with the government's booze. The meat was always canned spiced ham at dinner with dehydrated potatoes which never fully regained their moisture and remained hard. Never was there a fresh vegetable, a salad, or anything that didn't come out of a can, box or sack. Food was consumed without comment. There was nothing else in the land of haute cuisine at the time.

Except once in a great while, farmers' wives came through the tents selling eggs. Not powdered eggs but genuine "in the shell fresh eggs." The women came around only during the day, and only those not flying could take advantage of their bounty. Cigarettes were the currency then. Great stories have been told about what a cigarette would buy in France during World War 11, but do not let anyone fool you. By far the most rewarding thing a cigarette could bring was a fresh egg.

Always there was bartering. The farmer's wife argued, "Un cigarette, un oeuf " And we argued back, "Un cigarette, deuz oeufs." Cigarettes issued for missions usually were of lesser known brands, and under no circumstances would the ladies accept them. Nor would they accept money, French or invasion currency, or

even Hershey bars.

So we smoked the lesser brands and bartered with the popular cigarettes, and the farmers' wives always won. We usually coughed up one good cigarette for one egg. Even so, fresh eggs were available only when the hens were laying and we were not flying, and the combination was rare.

This particular day began like the rest: Up at 0400 in that awful mental fog, with half the guys figuring to skip breakfast, when a magical four words swept through tent city: "Fresh eggs for breakfast."

V-E Day did not get more attention. No one really believed it, but no one wanted to chance losing out either. We all lined up, mess kits in hand, visions of two over-easy .

And there in one of those big GI aluminum pots was the soriest looking mess of hard-boiled eggs ever to greet man. Some were an ugly brown, some an awful purple, and some various shades between. Grousing was instantaneous and punctuated by the worst of profanities. Once everyone was convinced they really were eggs, the conversation centered on what

some bleeping so-and-so had done with the bleeping eggs.

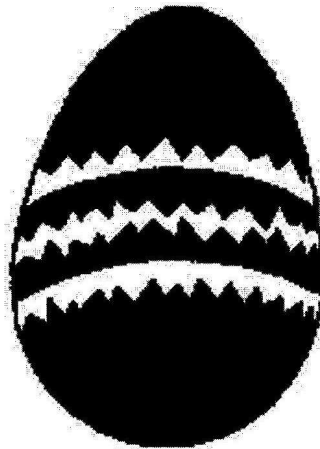
As it raged, from the rear of the serving line came a giant of a man, in olive drab and in tears. It was the mess sergeant, and through his rage and tears he too was spouting profanity.

Slowly, the truth emerged: He had spent several previous days bartering with the farmers' wives. And most of the night trying to color the eggs for the occasion. It was Easter Sunday.

He had used coffee and onion skins, among other things. And in his opinion, the least we bleeps could do was show a little bleeping appreciation.

We, of course, hadn't realized it was Sunday, let alone Easter Sunday, and his speech (and our profanity on Easter Sunday) all but put us on our knees. We feasted on hard-boiled eggs, flew the mission, and thanked the Good Lord we got back to an Easter dinner of spiced ham, dipped in some sort of batter (meant to be pancakes), fried, and served with dehydrated potatoes palatable only with gobs of ketchup. I do not recall the mess sergeant's name, but I'd still like to wish him a very happy Easter, complete with fresh eggs, real ham and the rest of what today we take so much for granted.

The End



World War Two Days by Ed Lamb

Using faded memories and available facts here is the story of Edgar R Lamb ASN 18194942. Neither saint nor sinner; neither hero nor coward; it is a story like millions of others. But, like fingerprints, the experience of each individual is unique.

In the fall of 1942 I was attending Capitol Hill Junior College, in Oklahoma City, having graduated from high school in August. The war was underway and A-20 attack bombers from Will Rogers Field could be seen through the school windows as they trained. The urge to join the war effort overcame my academic interest. The Aviation Cadet program accepted recruits to sign up at age 17. In January 1943 I took tests to join the program. The test score combined correct answers and elapsed time. Since I was late getting to my paper route, I finished in about half the allotted time, which resulted in a high score. On January 29, 1943 I was enlisted on inactive status since I could not be active until age 18. At that time it was over a one year wait before people were called up.

Soon thereafter I talked to Navy recruiters. They said it was possible to transfer to the Navy flight program because I was not yet sworn in to the Army Air Corps. The Navy gave me a train ticket to Ft. Worth. After a quick check there I was rejected because of bad teeth so I caught the next train home.

On March 23, 1943 at 6:30 PM I received a phone call instructing me to report for duty on March 25. It was the final training class before cadets were first sent to a college for initial training. Most of the next day was spent checking out of school and saying good-byes.

On March 25th, I reported at 8:00 AM for medical checks and paperwork and ended with a swearing in ceremony. That evening we boarded a train for the Aviation Cadet Center in San Antonio. Except for week long visits to friends and relatives it was my first time away from home. I did not know a single person. One of the cadets had worked as an ambulance attendant. He entertained us with tales of picking up the victims of A-20 crashes in baskets. As the train clicked along a few doubts about the future came to mind.

The next month passed in quarantine. The usual basic processing occurred. Military haircut, shots, and more tests. The doctors conferred about my sway back. It was most impersonal standing naked while several doctors discussed my back. We learned close order marching. I tried to make a special drill team but my walk has a bounce and regardless of how perfectly I marched my head always bobbed up and down in the formation. I qualified for Navigator, Bombardier and Pilot training. My lowest score was Pilot but that was my choice without hesitation.



We entered Pre-flight training in San Antonio in the Class of 44A, which would be the first class to graduate in 1944. Aviation Cadet training was meant to instill total discipline and an honor code. The days began with reveille and we fell in formation ten minutes later for inspection. Spit polished shoes and uniforms crisp. A few weeks later we were issued shorts for hot weather. The shorts were cavalry riding breeches cut off at the knee and all size 44. With my 26-inch waist the shorts were never unbuttoned and could be put on like a sack and cinched in place with the belt - saving a few precious seconds.

Pre-flight was 9 weeks divided into lower class and upper class. Lower class lived downstairs in the two story barracks. Hazing was prevalent although not official. Most every night I was called upstairs and put in a brace by the upper classmen. This is an extreme form of attention and sweat popped out immediately. Sometimes a

lighted cigarette was held close to my bare stomach but I couldn't suck it in another millimeter.

Classes went smoothly. My only problem was learning Morse code and passing the 10 word a minute test. But perseverance paid off. We had many college athletes in the program. One day we ran a 2 1/2 mile cross country for time. Only two college track people beat me but I learned what shin splints were as I limped for the next two weeks.

A bad molar sent me to the dentist. The office was a wooden building with several rooms. Each room contained four dentists. After a brief exam the dentist extracted the tooth. It wasn't easy. When he looked at the tooth it had roots heading in all directions. He was overcome with his success. Still holding the tooth in his forceps he showed it to the other dentists in the room then raced through the building showing off his trophy. Neglected, meanwhile, I could only wait and spit.

Next stop was Primary flight training at Victory Field, Vernon, TX. The barracks were one story brick and much nicer than San Antonio. Food service was also much better. We no longer had to sit at rigid attention as we ate.

My first flight ever was with my instructor on June 30, 1943. He gave me the controls briefly. What a feeling! Training proceeded normally. On July 11th I soloed. It was not a special experience. We simply took off and circled the field in the traffic pattern to land again. During this time of first solos we used auxiliary fields. One of the cadets made his first solo. On landing he came down too soon and dipped into the corn tassels well short of the runway. Gunning his engine he circled again. Meantime the instructors cleared the field of all traffic. Twice more he grazed the corn field before finally making a lousy landing. Afterwards

he was called Crash Gold.

The following days were spent in a combination of dual and solo flight. Solo flying was the greatest of pleasures. To fly away from the field and practice loops, lazy eights, stalls and tailspins was pure joy and a sense of absolute freedom.

Much of the instructor's time was spent teaching the feel of an approaching stall. At altitude a stall was not a problem. We intentionally stalled and followed this with a spin in order to practice recovery procedure. Stalls were very dangerous at low levels. The plane crashes before control can be regained. Another emphasis was instilling a constant vigilance for loss of power and locating an emergency-landing site. At any time the instructor would cut the throttle and we were expected to find a perfect landing place and land upwind without risking a stall. After a few times a little trick was to let the student almost touch down before giving full throttle. Just when you were gaining altitude and patting yourself on the back for a great emergency landing the instructor would again cut the throttle. This time there would be a fence or trees dead ahead.

One day the instructor took me to an auxiliary field that we had all to ourselves. He got out and told me to practice touch and go landings. On one of the landings I was too far down the grass runway. When I started to give it full throttle I thought I was too close to the end of the runway and chose to abort the take-off. As I approached the edge of the field I ground looped and the engine died. The instructor walked across the field in blistering July weather to restart the engine. That may have led to the end of my career.

All good things must come to an end. When the last cadets had washed out and it was smooth sailing ahead there was another check ride. This time I was told that I had washed out of Primary for flying deficiency. My last flight was August 5th.

My next stop was Sheppard Field at nearby Wichita Falls. From the best to the worst. On arrival the First Sergeant gathered us on wooden bleachers and laid down his law. He was built like a fireplug and challenged anyone to step forward if they wished to question his authority. The balance of August was spent in survival. Because of a drought the water tasted and smelled terrible. A water fountain in the barracks was wired on all the time. To get a drink it was necessary to hold your breath when within ten feet.

Sheppard Field was a place with nothing to do but wait. Naturally, the Army Air Corps had to do something so we were marched out to the drill field every day for close order marching. Dust was so thick that you could not see the end of the formation and sometimes not even that voice bellowing out commands. With my developing street smarts it was time for action. On a trip to the dispensary for a routine medical checkup I saw a pad of appointment slips on the reception desk. Every morning after that I handed my appointment slip for a chest x-ray to the drill sergeant and was excused from formation.

The problem was to goof off all day without rousing the interest of MPs. And, how to stay cool. Since there was no money to buy cold drinks in the PX I discovered a special place. The PX was a large building raised about three feet off the ground. In the center was a refrigerated room and a curtain of ice water dripping down around it. Each day I turned in my x-ray slip and took a pocket book over to the PX where I relaxed in my private hide-away.

In September I was sent to Aerial Gunnery School at Tyn-

dall Field, Panama City, Florida. There we were housed in buildings with 10 men to a room. The grouping was alphabetic so my roommates' names began with "K" or "U". One fellow came from Milwaukee where his father owned a cheese factory. Once a week a large box came to him filled with snacks. Delicious! Tyndall Field had a snow white beach. Except for a lot of seaweed in the surf it was a perfect playground.

Several of the guys went to the PX every night to drink beer. One of the stay at homes complained loudly about the disturbance when they returned late. One night as the beer drinkers were crawling into their bunks there was a massive splattering sound. For an hour the complainer carried on about the terrible smell. Next morning we learned that someone had filled a helmet with water and poured it from his top bunk.

Being a lowly Private I drew guard duty twice. Once it was at the motor pool on a cold night. I quickly located an ambulance that was the ideal place to stand (sit) guard duty. The other time I was taken to the gunnery range about 4 miles from the Field. It was the darkest most isolated place in the world. Armed with a shotgun I could hear an occasional car on the distant highway. Nothing but dark shapes and weird sounds. If someone had dared to approach I would probably have shot him first and then said "Halt".

Our training was fun. We fired shotguns on a skeet range and rode in the back of a pickup in a special metal frame that allowed us to stand. As the truck drove along a winding trail, skeet targets were launched from every direction. We had one flight in a Hudson bomber to shoot at a towed target. It was the only flight on which I had a queasy stomach. Later I found out that everyone who had the greasy mock turtle soup for lunch had the same problem.

In November, wearing shiny Gunners Wings, I was sent to Salt Lake City with a 10-day delay enroute to go home. I had left my friend from Milwaukee as our train passed through Memphis. Later I discovered that I had picked up his B-4 bag from the vestibule at the end of the rail car when I got off. During the trip he had moved his bag and they all looked alike. The stationmaster was able to telegraph the train and my bag arrived home in a couple of days.

The base was outside of town, maybe in Provo. We spent a few weeks there while Headquarters shuffled papers. Finally in late November we gathered at the rail station and names were called out for the various positions on a bomber crew. That was the formation of the crew of the Archangel. We then boarded the train bound for Peterson Field, Colorado Springs, CO.

Our crew consisted of Paul J Schiappacasse- Pilot, Louis Pacheco-Bombardier, Walter Scheurs-Engineer, Marion G Young-Radio Operator, James E Rook-Ball Gunner, Leo Raymond Bolduc-Nose Gunner, Walter T Trechok-Armorer and Waist Gunner and me Tail Gunner. Because Schiappacasse was a B-17 Pilot and not checked out on B-24s we were assigned a new Pilot, Curtis G Green, Jr.

Colorado was very pretty when we arrived about the first of December. There were several inches of snow on the ground but it was so dry that it brushed off like sugar. Pikes Peak was visible nearby.

About two weeks later Trechok asked me to go to Denver with him. He had gone to Armorer School at Lowery Field and knew a couple of girls in Denver. We hitchhiked the 75 miles and

got to the girls' apartment mid afternoon. There were two GIs there, recently returned from the South Pacific. They had nearly finished a bottle of Peach brandy. The six of us sat around the remainder of the day and finally it was bedtime. The girls went upstairs to stay with a friend. One of the GIs was passed out in the bathtub. The other GI and I shared the bed. When I was almost asleep there was a big commotion. The GI jumped up and started yelling at Trechok. He accused him of sitting on his uniform. The GI then went into the kitchen and came back with a large butcher knife. He proceeded to chase Trechok around the chair about three times before I could get him to calm down. There was a knock on the door. The girls had come back to see what all the fuss was about. Since Trechok was no longer interested in staying there we walked around in the snow with the girls the rest of the night.

On New Years Eve we left Peterson Field for Harvard, Nebraska. That had to be the coldest place I had ever seen. Our wooden barracks had poorly sealed ice covered windows down both sides. The only heat was a coal-burning stove in the center. Showers were hot but otherwise you kept most of your clothes on. At night we walked to the Non-commissioned Officers Club. Fortunately the flight crews had sheepskin jackets, pants and boots. These could withstand the north wind and freezing temperatures.

There were a number of training flights. The only two I remember were a night flight to St. Louis which was a beautiful sight from the air and one where we tried to land at the wrong field. Another field was about twenty miles away from Harvard. We made our final approach and almost touched down before the mistake was recognized. The Harvard tower controller immediately knew what we had done so when we landed he said "Hi Ho Silver" and shone a spotlight to light our way as we walked from the plane to the operations building.

The group's first loss occurred at Harvard. Someone had left a live round in a ball turret gun. While the plane was being serviced inside a hangar the gun discharged. A bullet penetrated an office wall and struck a man in the stomach causing a fatal injury.

An attempt was made to break up the crew because Schiappacasse was not qualified for B-24's. There may have been other issues but I was not aware of them. In any case the six enlisted men made an appointment to see Captain Gorton, the Commanding Officer of the 825th Squadron. We pleaded passionately to keep our crew intact. We were already deeply attached to the real pilot, Schiappacasse. It worked and the crew stayed together although it was somewhat later, after Schiappacasse moved to the left seat, that the threat of dissolution finally ended.

In February we began our journey overseas. To provide space on the planes for some Headquarters people, eighteen aerial gunners, including Trechok, Bolduc and me, went by ship with the ground echelon. We first stopped in Topeka, Kansas where I celebrated my 19th birthday. My parents and sister drove up from Oklahoma City. The next stop was Camp Patrick Henry in Virginia on March 4th. On March 13th we took a train to Newport News where we embarked on the Liberty ship, William D. Mosely.

The trip across the Atlantic and into the Mediterranean was crowded but pleasant. That is except for those who were seasick. They spent their time in the toilets, called heads, or

leaning over the rail. We were quartered in the forward hold with bunks tightly spaced five high. Much of my time was spent watching the ocean and the porpoises playing in the bow wave.

Because of our aircraft recognition ability the 18 aerial gunners were assigned to the Navy gun crew. There were 3 anti-aircraft guns, a number of 20mms and a 5-inch gun on the stern with a maximum elevation of 18 degrees. My job was to pass the powder bags between the storage locker and the stern gun.

At the end of March we were in the Mediterranean. Early in the evening on March 3 we were under a submarine attack. There were no losses but the sound of depth charges was a reminder that we were in the war zone.

At 4:00 AM on the morning of April 1 General Quarters sounded. Since I was still awake I immediately sprinted from the forward hold, across wooden catwalks built over the deck cargo amidships, to my post in the stern. Even though the Navy gun crew had their quarters in the aft structure I was the first to arrive. Our ship was out of position about a mile or so from the convoy. Another 3 or 4 miles out was a cruiser, which was part of the escort. The cruiser was lighting up the sky with anti-aircraft fire. I could hear a plane in the distance. It was very dark and as I stood alone I tried to see the approaching plane but could not. All of a sudden a JU-88, which was below deck level, appeared. He had to raise his left wing as he skimmed across our fantail to avoid crashing into us. I had a clear view of the distinctive greenhouse nose and cockpit. Evidently he was a torpedo bomber and did not see us until the last minute because we were away from the convoy. Only recently did it occur to me that I was the first person in the 484th to see an enemy plane. If the JU-88 pilot had seen us in time to drop a torpedo this might have been the end of my story. There were many times when I saw enemy planes but not within 50 feet again. There were rumors that our ship got credit for one plane. The history of the 484th reports that 17 JU-88s attacked.

After an overnight stay in the harbor of Augusta, Sicily we landed at Brindisi, Italy on April 8, 1944, 28 days after departing the U.S. We were loaded on railcars for an overnight trip to Cerignola and the airfield at Torretta. The boxcars were small and the train traveled so slowly that when we tired of riding we could trot alongside. We arrived in late afternoon. Trucks brought our six man pyramidal tents. Telling my two crewmates and three others who would stay with us awhile to pick up a tent I ran to find a good location. I staked our tent site on a small knoll -next to an olive tree. That night it rained very hard. Because of the good natural drainage we were the only tent that did not have water on the floor. Early April was cold. Our bedding was a cotton mattress sack filled with straw and two blankets. Later, we received cots. Needless to say the flying suits made good pajamas for a week or two.

Meantime the planes were flying across. They first flew via Lincoln, Nebraska and Morrison Field, Palm Beach, Florida to Brazil before crossing the Atlantic to Dakar. After stops in Marrakech and Djedeida in Africa they arrived at Torretta on April 14th. Once again we were a full crew. Ralph Crafton had joined the crew in Harvard as Navigator. Carl Naimon had replaced Pacheco just before we left the States.

There were several training flights. The most important though were the check rides that qualified Schiappacasse to be our Pilot. Green transferred to the 461st and James I Adams was assigned as our co-pilot. The crew, which was named Archangel by Shippy's father, was finally complete. Incidentally, we flew several different planes including Numbers 33, 37, and 41 so there was never any plane with a name or nose art on it.

This might be a good place to introduce the cast. Paul J Schiappacasse (deceased) was from Flint, Michigan and had graduated from Notre Dame. His service began in the infantry, which no doubt contributed to his down to earth manner. He was very much our leader because of our total respect for him. He may not have been the world's best pilot but he was as decent as any man can be. He was the only officer to be called by a nickname, "Shippy". James I Adams (deceased) was from Massachusetts. He later lived in Seekonk but I do not know if that was his original hometown. Like most officers he maintained a certain distance from the enlisted crew. He was a good co-pilot. Ralph Crafton was the Navigator. His hometown was originally Kansas City but after the war he has lived in Memphis then small towns in Arkansas and Mississippi. I heard that on the overseas flight from Brazil to Africa he made landfall within two miles of his target. Later he was offered the position of Group Navigator if he would stay for another tour, The Bombardier was Carl Naimon (deceased) from New York City. Since all bombs were toggled when the lead bombardier dropped, I can not evaluate his skill. He also was aloof from the enlisted men. In fact, he seemed to live on his own planet. Shippy said that was a characteristic of Bombardiers. Since they were the ones who actually dropped the bombs and thus pulled the trigger on targets and people below, it probably took a special attitude.

The Engineer, Walter "Dutch" Scheurs, was from Cedar Rapids, Iowa now living in Riverside, California. He had a Teutonic sense of precision. His knowledge of the plane and everything in it was phenomenal and was tested on several missions. He manned the Top Turret. The Radio Operator was Marion G. "Red" Young from Bonham, Texas, now living in Peralta, New Mexico. Red was a big, raw-boned Texan. He walked tall. His battle station was Waist Gun. Leo Raymond Bolduc (deceased) was the Nose Gunner and came from Worcester, Massachusetts. He was a milkman before entering service.

James E. "Rookie" Rook came from Hermine, Pennsylvania near Pittsburgh. He now lives in Stuart, Florida. Rookie was the Ball Gunner. He had the tough personality of one born in the steel and coal mine country. He laughed at the worst dangers and always met life head-on. Our Armorer and Waist Gunner was Walter T. "Dusty" Trechok. He came from Boston and now lives in Melbourne, Florida. Trechok was Lithuanian and not allowed to speak English at home when a child. He was a big strong guy who was always a little belligerent. Probably he had to fight ethnic battles while growing up. My nickname was "Junior" since I was the youngest by a few months. My position was Tail Gunner. Besides the Ball it was the most isolated part of the plane.

A day or two after arriving in Italy, three of us, probably Bolduc and J.C.. Morgan, who was in our tent temporarily, and I went exploring. We strapped on our 45's in their shoulder holsters and walked to a cluster of houses about three miles away. It turned out the natives were friendly. Since we were at war with Italy it was a nice surprise. Boldy spoke French so he was able to communicate reasonably well. Of course talking included a lot of hands and gestures.

Our living conditions were somewhat primitive. We bathed outside using our helmets for sponge baths. When it warmed up a little we suspended a water-filled oxygen bottle from the olive tree and had shower baths. Before too long the Group built a bathhouse with hot water showers. Like existing buildings on the field the bathhouse was constructed of tufa a type of limestone that looked like concrete blocks.

We then began training flights. All of our flying was in formation and that took a lot of practice to get right. Our formation for the 484h Group was usually in flights of six or seven planes with six flights total. These were identified by the phonetic alphabet as Able, Baker, Charlie, Dog, Easy and Fox. The individual plane positions were in two vees. Dog 11 was the lead plane in Dog flight with Dog 12 on his right wing and Dog 13 on the left. The second Vee would be Dog 2 1, etc. Sometimes a seventh plane flew in the diamond position as Dog 3 1. Flights were arranged left and right and stair stepped upward to permit the optimum bombing pattern when all bombs were dropped at the same time. The arrangement also provided the least danger from falling bombs and ejected shell casings to the planes behind. It also provided the best overlapping field of fire for the gunners with the least obstruction due to other planes. The Group leader flew in the Able 11 spot and the Squadron leaders flew in the 11 spot of their respective flights. Since there were four Squadrons and six flights two of the flights were composed of three planes from one Squadron and three from another. Formation flying was as tight as possible over the target and when under fighter attack. That meant that wings overlapped and sometimes a wing tip was almost in your waist window. Such flying required a lot of coordination and practice. It also took a lot of trust so the same pilots liked to fly together.

Our enlisted crew got acquainted with a farm family about a half-mile away. The wife did our laundry. The house was a typical long two-story building. The grandparents lived upstairs. They had lived in the U.S. for a while. The husband, Ralph, and his family lived in two rooms downstairs. The remainder of the ground floor was a barn with animal stalls. We visited about one night a week. Ralph would get his five-gallon bottle of vino and fill a smaller bottle. Between Ralph's English and Boldy's French we could converse pretty well. The countryside was rolling hills. During the summer the fields were covered with red poppies.

My first combat mission was April 30th to bomb railway marshaling yards at Allesandra, Italy. It was a tune up mission with light anti-aircraft defense. The next mission was again a milk run. On May 10th we flew where the big boys flew. The target was Wiener Neustadt an aircraft factory and field near Vienna, Austria. As we approached the target heavy flak began bursting all around.

Looking down I saw a line of 80 white mushrooms receding into the distance. It then struck me that these were the parachutes from at least 8 planes. These were from other Groups in front of us. The 484th had 2 wounded and 20 missing. My first 4 missions were with either Greene or Captain Gorton, Squadron Commander, as pilot. Finally on May 22nd Shippy was checked out on B-24's and flew in the left seat as pilot with Jim Adams as the new co-pilot.

Missions were flown almost daily with Wiener Neustadt and Wels also near Vienna being the toughest. On May 31, 1944 we made our first trip to Ploesti. This was a very important target. Five oil refineries were in the complex. Heavy flak and fighters were a given. The raid went smoothly. Dropping down to 15,000 feet from the normal bombing altitude of 20 to 22,000 feet we were coasting home. For some reason the lead navigator took us over a copper mine at 8,000 feet near Bor, Yugoslavia. We received a direct hit on the right side of the tail by a small anti-aircraft gun like a 37mm. The concussion stunned me for a brief time. When I regained my senses I heard Rookie saying the tail was gone. From his position in the waist he could not see the tail turret

12 feet away because of the smoke. A little later he said "No, the tail is still there but they got Junior".

The plexiglass covering the turret was all gone and I was covered in debris. However I felt OK and pushed my mike button to tell the crew. There was no sound. The usual side tone on the intercom that let me hear myself was silent. My thought was maybe Rookie is right and I am gone. Fortunately it was only the intercom and not me that was gone. The plane had extensive damage. The right elevator and rudder were missing. There was a hole in the fuselage next to the tail turret about one by three feet. Dutch came back and found all the control cables on one side severed and others frayed. Adams had jammed his knees against the control yoke to keep the plane from pitching up until Shippy could engage the autopilot called George. Meanwhile the four of us in back were standing by the open escape hatch. After a few minutes of assessment it was decided to try to get home. Shippy made a sloppy landing. When the CO drove up to chew him out he looked at the plane and congratulated him. The plane went to the salvage yard.

This may be a good place to describe our flying gear. The Nose, Ball and Tail gunners had cramped quarters. Although we had the bulky fleece lined flying suits we could not wear them on the job. My usual uniform was an electric suit, boots and gloves. Over this I had lightweight coveralls. Next came a Mae West life preserver that could be inflated by two small carbon dioxide cartridges. Over the suit was a parachute harness. The parachute itself was a chest pack and hung on the side of the fuselage just outside the turret. Also hanging next to the parachute was an escape kit and my regular GI shoes in case I had to walk home. These were attached to a "D" ring that could snap onto the parachute harness. In addition I could wear a steel helmet and a flak vest. The intercom mike consisted of two carbon buttons held against my larynx by an elastic strap. Also, I had a 45 automatic in a shoulder holster. We normally went on oxygen at 10,000 feet. The rubber masks caused heavy sweat that ran down onto our throats. Since the outside temperature could be 25 or so below zero the sweat turned to ice. A towel used as a scarf corrected that problem. Most of the time I was comfortable. The plexiglass was like a greenhouse and, when the sun was beating down, it became hot. When the electric boots or gloves did not work it was freezing.

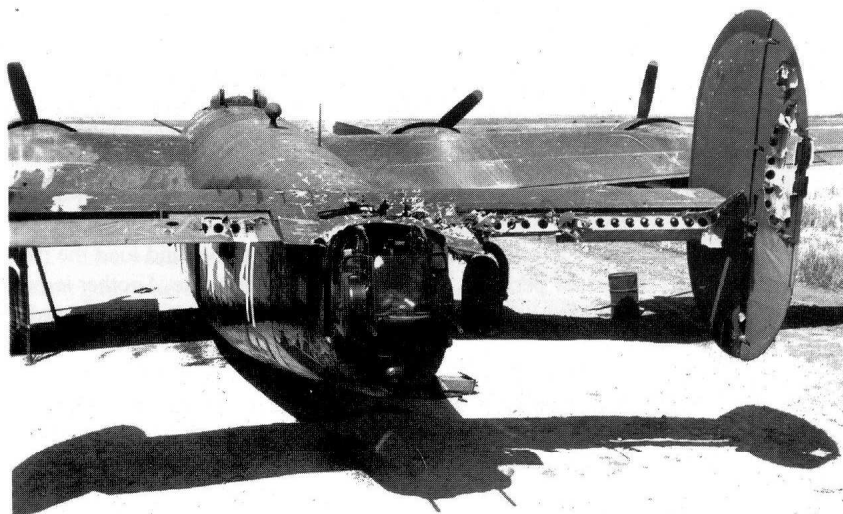
The tail turret was made by Consolidated who made the plane. It was hydraulic powered. Normally I partially closed a valve. This reduced the response speed a little but gave extremely smooth tracking. The guns were 50 caliber Brownings. Ammunition was stored in boxes in the back of the plane with tracks to carry the linked belts to the guns. The gunsight was electrical. It projected

a circular reticle, which was placed on the target. The system was simple but effective.

Our Field was about 9 miles from the small town of Cerignola and 20 miles from the city of Foggia. Houses in town were built of stone. There were no commercial buildings. The Cathedral was the dominant structure. Houses were side by side and opened directly on the street. Like Ralph's house they had a living room and at the back one or more small rooms. It was a treat to go to town for a haircut. The barber worked in his living room and a daughter would bring a basin of hot water for the shave and haircut. Standard price was ten lira or ten cents in the military script we used. Another treat was eating in town. Again the meal was served in a private house with perhaps a small table and chairs. The preferred order was eggs and chips, which were cottage-fried potatoes. Another common sight was plywood boards smeared with tomato paste and leaning against a wall drying in the sun. Fliers and dust from the street added their special touch.

One day I caught a ride into Cerignola to mail a package. Hitching a ride in the back of a 6x6 truck was the usual transportation. My cap blew off on the way. Since the truck stopped close

to the post office I decided to go ahead and mail my package. Unfortunately MPs stopped me for being out of uniform. A few days later I was called before Major Sherrick for disciplinary action. His sentence was to take a truck and the biggest goof-off in the outfit and pick up litter in the tent area. Although The Table of Organization qualified me for Staff



Ed Lamb's damaged B-24.

Sergeant I was still a Corporal. This was a result of the animosity against our Crew. At any rate the unfairness of it all struck me. We had returned from the rough Ploesti mission and here a Major who did not fly was telling me to pick up litter for a minor infraction. I asked him if I would be on the next promotion list to Sergeant. I knew Shippy had put my name in every month. The Major said my name had been removed. I then said if I was not on the next list I would refuse to fly. He said that was a Court Martial offense. I said no stripes, no flying. He said it was too late since the list had already been sent to Wing Headquarters. I said, "You SOB that's your problem". I expected to be dragged away to the nearest dungeon but I was so mad I didn't care. Sure enough I became a Sergeant in July and Staff in August.

Cigarettes were a common currency. We received a ration of toiletries, cigarettes, beer and chewing gum every week. I traded my beer and cigarettes for more gum or less desirable brands of cigarettes. These were traded to Italian kids who came through the tent area with almonds and oranges. A pack of cigarettes would

fetch a helmet full.

The number one morale booster was mail. Daily mail call after a mission could brighten the whole day. Various friends, my parents, sister and grandparents wrote frequently. A young lady who I met shortly before enlisting wrote about once a week. Spotting her pale blue envelope among the letters was like a glimpse into the Promised Land. She reminded me of all that was missing in life and the hope of what the future held. It would be impossible to measure the importance of mail.

The most difficult hazard was flak. For each target there was an initial point or IP, about 20 miles away. At this point control of the plane was turned over to the Bombardier. We had to fly straight and level until the bombs were dropped. For a well defended target like Ploesti and Vienna the flak was very intense. These black puffs of smoke began filling the sky. When they got closer you could see the red flash inside the black smoke. When they were closer yet the explosions would rock the plane and you could hear a sound like hail on a tin roof as flak struck the plane. This flak was the shards of the exploding shell. They were jagged and usually about 2 inch wide by an inch or so long. When the flak was really close you could smell the acrid explosive. I do not recall tasting flak but the other four senses of seeing, hearing, feeling and smelling were all too common. The worst part of flak was that we could not do a thing but sweat it out and hope it did not have our number.

There were 15 to 18 crews in our Squadron and normally half flew on each mission. On mission days we were awakened by an orderly between 3:00 and 5:00 AM. There was breakfast then briefing. This occurred in a room with a large map on the front wall. The first thing to see was the red string that marked our flight path. Ploesti, Vienna, Munich and several others were most dreaded. The S-2 or intelligence officer, Holstius, was a super nice guy. After mission details were covered we filed out and deposited personal effects, wallets, letters and other items that might identify us or our families in a box for safekeeping.

One day, breakfast led to a near mutiny. The Mess Sergeant cooked up the regular fare of Spam and powdered eggs the night before. At breakfast the Privates and Pfc's on the serving line dipped a pile of cold watery eggs on our trays. On this particular day we returned from a rough mission and discovered that the Mess Sergeant had fresh eggs and cooked them to order for the Ground Echelon while we were out dodging flak. Lt. Holstius led the debriefing after each mission and we hit him with a barrage of complaints. Breakfast was much, much better after that. Not good, but much better.

Missions continued. One special one was June 9th. We were heading for Munich when we had to abort for some reason, probably because we could not transfer fuel from the auxiliary wing tanks to the main tank. At the north end of the Adriatic we headed home. Shippy dropped down to about 10,000 feet so we could get off oxygen. We were relaxing and eating K-ration snacks when Boldy called "Flak, 12 o'clock". The crew started kidding him when he said "It's real". We had accidentally flown over a surfaced submarine. The Bombardier was in the bomb-bay re-inserting pins in the bombs to make them safe. By the time he could be notified and we could circle back, the sub had submerged.

The next memorable mission was June 13, 1944. Due to weather, we bombed the alternate target, Innsbruck, Austria. The mission is described in a Presidential Unit citation. Of 37 planes that took off, three returned because of engine trouble, three were damaged by fighters or flak and dropped out. Six did not return. Five were

shot down by fighters and one ditched in the Adriatic.

We were flying in position D 23. There were seven planes in our flight but tail end Charlie flying D 31 aborted because of engine trouble. Approaching the target we were hit hard by fighters. Six Me 410 twin engine fighters attacked the three planes in Fox flight. On three successive passes all three planes behind us were shot down. On the next pass I got one. He dove down and later at debriefing, a gunner in another plane reported he exploded soon after. Boldy, in the Nose, and Dusty, at Waist, each received credit for a fighter. One of my guns jammed and the other was on the verge of quitting.

As the Me 410s circled for a new pass I tracked them as I worked on my guns. At this time I spotted a number of single engine fighters approaching from 4 o'clock high. It looked like Me 109s joining the party. At this time the Me 410s broke away. A second glance at the approaching fighters showed they were P-51s and they soon chased our tormentors away. The Citation reported that Me 410s, Me 210s, Me 109s and FW 190s were involved. It was the heaviest fighter attack we ever had.

Some of our training was not well suited to actual combat. In gunnery school we had to strip a machine gun down to its components then reassemble it while blindfolded. This was to demonstrate our knowledge. In the real world of a tail turret things were different. The two guns were mounted outside the enclosed compartment. To reach a gun it was necessary to open a small access hole and reach one hand through the opening. The hand either had a heavy glove on it or it was frozen stiff by the outside air temperature of 25 below zero. About the only service we could perform was to pull on a charging handle which was connected to the gun by cable. You could extract the bullet in the chamber and load the next one. That took care of a misfire but little else. Another lesson was the pursuit curve. Professors had determined that in order for a fighter to attack a bomber its relative motion always followed a path towards a point directly behind the bomber known as 6 o'clock level. As long as the fighter was flying with its nose pointed at the bomber then the proper aiming point was between the fighter and 6 o'clock. It works every time. Except when 10 to 20 attackers formed a line abreast in front of the formation. They then did barrel rolls while firing guns and rockets as they flew through the formation. They did not follow a pursuit curve since they did not aim at a particular plane but simply fired at random towards the formation. If they were able to hit someone then the damaged bomber would fall out of formation and they could attack the straggler.

Reviewing the list of missions there was a break from June 13 to June 22 and another to July 3rd. One of these weeks was the time we had a rest leave on the Isle of Capri. It was a great treat. The enlisted crew stayed at the Metropole Hotel on the harbor. Italian cooks took the Spam and powdered eggs, which were the usual fare, and created delicious breakfasts. Capri has mountain peaks of 1200 to 1500 feet on the east and west ends. Between these in a saddle lies the town. A funicular or cable car connects the harbor, Marina Grande, with the town of Capri. The island is near tropical and was a favorite summer resort for Europeans with many fancy villas. The Red Cross had a hospitality house but the most relaxing thing was simply walking around or more accurately up and down. A highlight was a visit to the Blue Grotto. This is a cave at the west end of the island at the base of a 1200-foot cliff. The entrance is a very low opening

from the sea. Rowboats enter by pulling on a chain suspended from the ceiling while everyone ducks low. Once inside, the cave opens into a large room. All the light comes from an underwater opening and creates an incredible effect of silvery blue water that illuminates the interior. Capri lies in the Bay of Naples. We were heading back to Naples and war all too soon.

Missions began again. Another one I recall was July 7th to Blechhammer, Germany. This was a very long flight. Fortunately we had P-51s as escort with a range sufficient to cover us at the target. We were attacked by Me 109s and FW 190s. However, our escort intercepted them. It was the only time I witnessed German fighters flying into their own flak to escape American fighters.

One night Boldy, Rookie and I went into Cerignola. Someone suggested that it would be fun to swipe a jeep from the motor pool. We tried several but none could be started. Finally Rookie was able to start a Weapons Carrier. This was like a small pickup. We drove back to camp. Parking it in the officers tent area, we removed the distributor rotor and padlocked the steering wheel. On our return from the mission next day we learned the Supply Officer had driven it to town where he was detained by the MPs. Since he was unpopular the search for the culprits was half hearted.

On July 11th the Archangel crew was forever changed. Our target was the submarine pens at Toulon, France. We were flying deputy lead position A 12. Because it was our responsibility to assume the lead in the event something happened to the leader, a Staff Pilot, Captain William Riddle, flew as Pilot and Shippy as co-pilot. Records show that Crafton was replaced with two navigators but I don't know why. He was perfectly capable of leading the Group. As we dropped our bombs we suffered a direct hit by a shell which did not explode. It may have been an 88mm, which was fired by the standard anti-aircraft gun or perhaps a naval shell since there were warships in the harbor. The shell entered the plane just forward of the bomb bay and exited in front of the windshield on the right side. Shippy's leg was severed and there was extensive damage to all the control cables in front of the cockpit. The plane fell about 5000 feet on its left side. The bailout alarm sounded and once again the guys in back stood by an open escape hatch. Meanwhile Dutch crawled into the nose section and worked furiously to clear the mess. In the process he cut his hands badly. Red pulled Shippy from his seat and placed him on the bench in the adjacent flight deck. He tended Shippy's injury and attached a cord to his parachute in case a bailout was ordered. After a short time Riddle gained partial control and headed for Corsica. The only available runway was a fighter strip used by the Free French flying Spitfires. As we turned onto the final approach Dutch was sweating us out. He was sitting co-pilot and knew we had no rudder control and had to use the engines to turn. However, he looked at Riddle and saw that he was in control of the situation. With a 3000-foot runway we had to slam on the brakes hard.

After the ambulance took Shippy and Dutch to the hospital we examined the damage. At the point of entry the shell had formed a semi cylinder in the aluminum skin with greasy rifling marks on it. Recently I talked to a Ground crew member who had records on all our planes. He said that when our B-24 was flown back to base three engines were damaged by the maximum power settings during take off.

Red, Dutch and Captain Riddle all received Distinguished Flying Crosses and Dutch and Shippy Purple Hearts for this mission. The only other crew member to ever receive a Purple Heart

was Carl Naimon who was struck in the thigh by flak on an earlier mission.

The next three weeks were the hardest time I had. Although I flew four missions to Wiener Neustadt, Ploesti twice and Bucharest the hardest part was not knowing what would happen to the crew. We were hoping to have Adams for our Pilot or at least keep the crew intact. I was so discouraged I accepted the fact that I would not live to return home. For three weeks I seldom shaved and went all day with my shoes untied. It was during this time that I started smoking. My addiction was to chewing gum, but there was no gum for a few days. One night Boldy, Rookie and I went to a movie at the 461st who shared our field. Being helpful buddies they suggested I smoke a cigarette. Next day it was 3 packs a day and continued for many years.

All of my remaining missions were flown as a replacement gunner. The practice was to put an experienced pilot and gunner on new crews. Sometimes two or three of us would fly together. Many of these missions were flown in the Ball or Nose turrets. My only recollection of flying the top turret was watching the long narrow wings called Davis wings flap up and down about a foot while in flight. It took a while to feel comfortable about the wings not falling off.

Several other missions bring back memories. On August 9th the target was oil refineries in Hungary. I was flying Ball and we had a combat photographer on board. Normally the Ball was retracted except just before dropping bombs to observe their fall or whenever fighters attacked. The Ball was suspended from a large hydraulic shaft. To prevent its unintentional lowering two large hooks held it in place. To lower the Ball it was necessary to pump the hydraulic pump handle twice to raise it slightly, then when the hooks were disengaged, a valve was opened to lower the turret. This operation was automatic on our crew with either Red or Dusty lowering the Ball as soon as fighters were spotted. Fighters attacked and I waited to be lowered. I saw an Me 109 about 150 feet below us flying parallel to us. His goggles were pushed up on his helmet. He was point blank but for some unknown reason did not attack. At this time I opened the door and jumped out. The combat photographer was standing there stupidly looking at the hydraulic pump. Grabbing him with both hands I threw him about five feet to the Waist and lowered the Ball myself. By this time the attack was over. The German fighter pilot had been a sitting duck and lucky I could not fire. We were also a sitting duck and were lucky that the German did not shoot us down.

Two missions were flown on August 14th and 15th in support of the invasion of Southern France. As we returned to the French coast there were mountain ridges paralleling the coast. Far below I spotted a B-24 that must have lost an engine. He would fly down a valley until he found a gap to make his way to the next valley. He was making a valiant effort to get to sea but with not enough power to fly over the ridges. I watched him do this three times before he disappeared in the distance.

The next flight to France found me in the Ball turret. As we approached the coast I said a prayer. Suddenly I was gripping two soft hands instead of the hard plastic control handles. Being skeptical I searched for crucifixion nail holes and felt them. At that time a great sense of peace filled me. I felt no assurance that I would survive the mission or the war but there was absolute knowledge that everything would be all right. That knowledge has remained ever since.

My last mission was on August 22nd. Our Pilot was Eppings. Adams and Scheurs were also on board. The mission was to Lobau near Vienna. The 484th received its second Presidential Unit Citation. Thirty-nine bombers took off; six returned due to mechanical problems. Three planes failed to return and two made forced landings on Vis an island off Yugoslavia. Twenty-five planes received severe damage from flak or fighters. We were one of the planes landing at Vis. One engine was out and another leaking oil due to flak. Vis was crowded with crippled planes. We had to clear one on the near end of the runway and then miss an overturned B-24 at the far end. We spent the night there. A Captain from the 82nd Fighter Group, one of the Tuskegee pilots flying P-51s, was also there. He said that he had immunization shots the day before. When his flight spotted bogies while flying at 20,000 they peeled off to investigate. The next he knew he was in a vertical dive at 5,000 feet. When he pulled out no one else was in sight. English anti-aircraft provided protection and Tito's Partisans used it as a staging area. We gave the Partisans our 45 automatics. Because Vis was considered occupied territory we flew from there to Bari for an overnight stay in the hospital. After delousing and a nice shower we relaxed in pajamas and robes before returning to base.

Within a few days I was headed home after completing 35 combat flights. Because long dangerous missions were given double credit I had completed 50 missions. First we went by truck to the 7th Replacement Depot or Repple Depple north of Naples which was across Italy from Cerignola. Here we were prepared for the trip home. Periodically we gathered in a field where we were asked to turn in any contraband such as guns because if found later we would not be allowed to sail. The local cadre must have made a killing from the piles of stuff that were turned in. One day we were asked if we would donate blood. They paid \$10 for type "O". Since my paydays were erratic I was broke. A truck took us to the blood center. After a sample was drawn we stood in line waiting to give a pint. Soon a technician called me out of line. It seems that I was not type "O" even though that was on my dog tags. No blood, no money. Later in the States I was typed as "A neg".

From the Repple Depple we transferred into a former Police barracks in Naples. It was a large stone building surrounded by a high stone wall topped with broken glass. I wrote to my grandfather that we were staying in a real building and sleeping on soft bunk beds - soft pine that is. For almost two weeks there was nothing to do except sightsee in Naples. Since I did not have the money to visit nearby Pompeii and Vesuvius, which was erupting, I simply wandered around. One day I stopped in a real barbershop for a haircut and shave. The barber sang a little opera music and shaved me with a straight razor. He began each stroke with the razor held at arms length and then swooped in one continuous motion to shave me. I hoped his hand eye coordination was good.

On October 8th we embarked on a newly built liner, one of the USS President ships. Traveling unescorted we reached the US on October 22nd landing again at Newport News. The accommodations and food were great compared to the Liberty ship.

I was shipped to Camp Chaffee at Ft. Smith, Arkansas where my papers and pay were updated. My next station was Santa Ana, California with a 10-day delay enroute to go home. I was welcomed home like a prodigal son. The folks had freshly painted the inside and everything was spick and span. Several relatives came over. One of my first actions was to call the young lady who had

written so faithfully. We had a party line and it was 20 minutes before a man on the line would get off. Finally I called her. She was busy that night. Whatever romantic illusions I had were dashed in a bucket of cold water.

One of my closest buddies was Red Broderick from Little Rock. We discussed going to California together. I tried to buy a Nash 400 so we could drive but could not close the deal. We agreed to meet in Kansas City and catch the Santa Fe Chief to California.

Arriving in Santa Ana we were treated royally. They operated on double rations so there was an abundance of food, especially milk and ice cream. I was in Santa Ana about six weeks. It was a reassignment center so there was no duty. Every two or three days I came back to camp to see if my name was posted. Otherwise my time was spent in Los Angeles. Hitchhiking was easy. My aunt and her family lived in Hawthorne so I spent quite a bit of time with them. My social life had been nonexistent since going into service. In fact I did not leave the base at Sheppard Field, Tyndall Field or Salt Lake City. In the other locations we were treated like second class citizens. It was nice to smile at a girl and get a smile in return.

Some time was spent at the USO in Hollywood. For Thanksgiving a half dozen girls invited six of us for a nice dinner. One of my cousins was 17 and working at Paramount as a graphic artist. He gave me a private tour of the studio and sound stages one Sunday. Another cousin was in the service. One evening we helped two young ladies with a car problem. Their tail pipe was dragging the ground. A short piece of bailing wire led to several enjoyable evenings. I met two other young ladies who invited me for dinner. That caused one of those embarrassing moments we like to forget. Their father told a story at the dinner table about his experience in World War I. His outfit uncoupled a tank car from a French train that was filled with wine. Two nights later I forgot where I heard the story so I repeated it at their supper table.

On Christmas day Red Broderick and I were hitchhiking back to camp. A man picked us up and invited us to his house for dinner. He lived in an orange grove and his chickens ran free. Picking up his 22 rifle he walked outside and shot two chickens for our dinner.

California was a nice change of pace. At the end of December, I was assigned to an Aerial Gunnery Central Instructors school at Laredo, Texas. Again there was very little to do off the base.

After completing the Instructors course where the top 10 percent would be given their choice of new stations I discovered that my choice of Will Rogers Field meant that I was best qualified to remain at Laredo and teach.

At least I got to be a flying instructor instead of in a classroom. We flew B-17s and B-24s. Sometimes the students were training to be instructors and sometimes they were armorer officers. It was an easy schedule with one or two flights a day several times a week. There was an Air to Ground range where we flew at 100 feet and shot at canvas planes on the ground. Texas thermals were terrible and we bounced all over the sky. Preparation for a flight was to spot empty ammunition boxes at strategic locations throughout the waist area because most everyone got airsick.

The most interesting training involved frangible bullets. Bullets were made of powdered lead and clay and were designed to be fired from 30-caliber guns but have a 50 caliber trajectory. We fired at specially designed P-39s that had armor on the leading edges of their wings and counters that recorded hits. The frangible bullets pulverized on impact. It was very realistic. Because

the bullets were quite brittle they frequently broke off in the gun barrel. We would dismount the gun and poke a ramrod through the barrel to clear it. Since time was always short, to give all the students a turn, I would simply lean out the waist window and poke the ramrod in the gun muzzle while the gun was in place. One day while hanging out the window my identification bracelet fell off. It was a heavy silver bracelet, which my Mother gave me. My wrist felt naked for a while.

Nuevo Laredo was across the border. It was a dirty little border town but was a favorite place to buy a steak and guacamole dinner. Later seeing how meat was handled hanging outside small shops I was glad I did not know too much.

In June, I volunteered to go overseas again if I could fly on an A-26 Attack bomber. This was a bigger version of the A-20. They had one on the field and I became familiar with the armament. No go.

In July I got a 3 day pass and decided to go to Monterey, Mexico about 150 miles south of the Rio Grande. Another fellow from a different squadron was going so we went together. The bus was a typical Mexican bus with an assortment of passengers not all people. Monterey was a pretty city and we had a pleasant vacation. On the first day we saw a couple of American ladies but did not get acquainted until the last day. They were schoolteachers from Ft. Worth. At any rate we arranged to meet them in their hotel lobby about an hour before our bus left. When it was time to leave our farewell hugs took a little too long. The taxi got to the bus station after the bus had left. No problem he said. I know how the bus goes so I will catch it. A few dollars later we returned to town and found another bus parked in front of a hotel. He was leaving in about 45 minutes so we bought tickets and got on with our bags. There was no point in sitting there wasting time on our only visit to Monterey so we took a little stroll. My buddy got back before I did and I found him waiting but the bus and my bag was gone. Being intrepid souls we soon located a train station where a train was leaving at 10:00 PM. By this time I was flat broke so my friend loaned me money for a ticket. We started to board the train and I had lost my ticket. I considered trying to slip aboard but didn't so my friend left without me.

Next morning at 5:00 AM I was back at the original bus station and on my way home. Sure enough a gorgeous 17 year old Mexican girl was my seatmate. She was going to visit her grandmother in San Antonio. Her English was little better than my Spanish but I was too beat to care whether we talked or not.

My best friend, D H Harris, was in the Navy, having enlisted at 17 while in high school. When I heard he was getting married I managed a three-day pass and headed for Muskogee. After traveling all day and night and half the next day I arrived in time for the wedding. My parents had come also and that afternoon we returned to Oklahoma City. Next morning I headed back to Laredo. That night I caught a ride with a truck going to the base in Laredo. All the highways were two lane. As we entered an S-curve under a railroad underpass the lights went out. Not knowing whether the driver had a good look at the road ahead, I opened the door and prepared to jump if we left the road. That was preferable to the oil drums stacked two high on the trailer crashing into the cab. Fortunately we stopped OK and fixed the lights.

My wildest ride ever was with a Staff Sergeant from Ft. Worth. He took passengers to pay for his trip in his 1941 DeSoto coupe. The war time speed limit was 35 MPH but the driver averaged over 80. From Ft. Worth I hitchhiked home as usual. On the return trip we stopped at a red light in Hillsboro. A young lady stopped along side. When the light turned green the race was on. It continued for 100 miles. We made almost impossible passes, just squeezing back in to miss oncoming traffic. Each time she stayed glued



Ed Lamb, 2nd from left bottom row

to our back bumper. The Good Lord must have been watching over me once again.

There was always a poker game going in the Day Room. One of the guys was a professional gambler in civilian life. He always won. Each month a week or so after payday he would rake in a pot and buy cokes for everyone. That meant he had reached his \$1000 goal. That compared to my pay with flying status of \$144. One night I was visiting another squadron and came across a crap game. It was my lucky night. I returned to my barracks with crumpled dollar bills in every pocket of my flight suit. I emptied it on my bunk. There was \$900. Next day I opened a bank account in town. No point in giving it back.

In July we began training on B-29s. They were interesting. We made several flights with fellow instructors acting as students so we could work out the best training procedures. The war ended before we could train actual students. VJ day was almost a nonevent. Someone filled six balloons with natural gas and tied a strip of toilet paper to each one and then lit the paper. When the flame reached the balloon there was a small explosion. It wasn't much of a fireworks display. Everyone listened to the radio but there was no celebration.

With the war over and flights suspended it was time to look after old Ed. Knowing how the Army Air Corps hated a vacuum I went over to the parachute packing building. This was staffed with civilians. They let me practice packing parachutes. More than that I got assigned there so I could account for my time, it also led to the only two dates I had while in Laredo - to the movies on base.

After the war, a point system was set up for discharges. It was based on time in service and time in combat. I was fairly high on the list so one day I was sent to Amarillo, Texas for discharge. On Saturday October 25, 1945, about 4:00 PM, I was free again. My grandfather was living with a son in Amherst, Texas. Since we were very close I decided to see him before heading home. That night I was catching a ride from Lubbock towards Amherst. In my only other time there, I recalled that the highway ran down Main Street. The driver had never heard of the place but I knew we would go through it. Well about 10:00 PM, I stopped at a diner in Muleshoe to get directions. It turned out that I was 20 miles past Amherst, which was 2 miles off the highway. Someone was heading back east and offered to take me back. At 11:30 PM I got out on Main Street in Amherst - not a person in sight not even any lights on. About then a man walked out of the shadows. He asked if I was Ed Lamb. He was the Marshal and was expecting me.

Monday morning my aunt drove me into Littlefield to a clothing store. I walked out a civilian with new shoes, slacks, shirts, two sport coats, and a gaudy tie called "Paint Swish." The next day I went home.

A View of the Mustang:

by J Leland Atwood, Vice-President, North American Aviation



The Mustang aeroplane, authorized and ordered by the British Purchasing Commission in April 1940, did turn out to be a significant factor in aviation and military history. Its day to day service and performance in the latter stages of World War Two and its approach to the speed plateau that faced the reciprocating engine propeller driven designs of 1903 to 1945 did make it a sort of benchmark and paradigm standard for that class of aircraft.

Not being a qualified pilot, I cannot offer any comment on its military and combat characteristics except for general performance parameters, but I have every reason to believe that its armament, flying characteristics, and general utility were satisfactory and at least average for the time and conditions. Its principal points of merit were more related to basic engineering factors which were speed and range. These were interrelated, in that, range over enemy territory without a speed advantage could be almost sacrificial.

There is a fine article in the June 1995 issue of the *Aeronautical Journal* of the Royal Aeronautical Society by David Lednicer entitled "A CFD Evaluation of Three Prominent World War 11 Fighter Aircraft." As indicated, he employed modern computational fluid dynamics and finite element analysis to compare the Spitfire, FW190, and the Mustang. In summary, he rated the Mustang as 20 to 30 MPH (32-48km/h) faster than the others, and defined its drag from the radiator cooling system as only 2 to 3% of the total drag.

The achievement of this low cooling drag has a legitimate background of research and analysis, primarily from British sources most prominently presented in Royal Aircraft Establishment Report No 1683 by F. W. Meredith, BA, in August 1935. I had read a modified version of this report, published about 1939, and offered the rear fuselage mounting of the radiator, which I believed would optimize the potential of the Meredith Effect, in my representations to the British Purchasing Commission in 1940. This, along with other considerations, led to the initial order for the original Allison powered Mustang.

Rather interestingly, a considerable number of competent participants and observers have credited the low drag to other

elements such as the wing section profile and the algebraic method of fairing the fuselage lines, etc. Lednicer's analysis supports the cooling drag reduction conclusion, although he does assign a small drag increment to the somewhat steeper slope of the Spitfire pilot's windshield.

In recent years, during retirement, I have spent some time and effort to trace the record of the cooling drag research and have learned quite a lot. David Birch of the Rolls-Royce Heritage Trust and author of *Rolls-Royce and the Mustang* has most generously supplied me with copies of some very pertinent documents involving Royal Aircraft Establishment reports, patents, and wartime research and typed reports from the Rolls Experimental Department then at Hucknall. Among these papers are RAE Report No 1702 by R. S. Capon, OBE, BA, FRAeS, dated 1936, in which he extends and amplifies Meredith's thesis, British Patents No #471, 371 and No #472, 555 in 1937 by Ellor and de Paravicini, and other papers on the same subject.

It is apparent that the principle of cooling drag reduction by restoration of the momentum of the air after it passed through the radiator was well known before the war and had been applied in aircraft configurations of the Spitfire, Me 109 and others, but it seems that, as is often the case, "the Devil was in the Details." Lednicer's analysis shows aerodynamic losses in the Spitfire's radiator air intake, and a Rolls-Royce report in July 1942 estimates that the Spitfire could have gained 13 MPH (20km/h) by utilizing a more complete air exit closure.

In all candor, I think the Mustang intake would probably have been little better except that flow separation created a serious vibration and irregular buffeting which forced a lot of wind tunnel work and detail improvement. I credit the North American Aviation aerodynamics and powerplant installation engineers with improving the air intake and smoothing the airflow so that most of the potential of the Meredith method could be realised. The difference in speed between the Spitfire Mk IX and the Mustang P-51D with the same engine is generally recorded and agreed as 405 vs. 437MPH (652 vs. 703km/h) most of which can be attributed to the difference in cooling drag at high speed.

The End

Attacking Oil Installations In Italy **by Stan Hutchins, 824 Sq.**

The San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center was in full operation by late spring of 1943 as I entered the classification and preflight phases of pilot training.

My flying was taught in six months, in 220 hours in the air, which was hardly enough to cause Herman Goring to miss a nap.

At last, just after the Normandy invasion, I boarded the USS Santa Maria bound for Oran and Naples, along with some 50 equally new air crewmen.

Our bomb group, the 484th (Pathfinder at that time), had been very busy and was late in picking us up at the Gioia, Italy, replacement center. My squadron, the 824th, was located at Torretta, near the former German air base at Foggia. In pre war time, Foggia was where the Italian Airforce trained long before the German occupation.

Our mission was to strike oil targets from Germany to the Black Sea. The biggest oil field/refinery complex was the Romanian field at Ploesti so it was there we struck 29 raids and my introduction to combat.

When the Russians overran Ploesti in late September 1944, we moved our priority to the synthetic oil plants scattered all over central Europe.

The winter of 1944 was bitter cold. The Battle of the Bulge underscored the Germans' ability to increase the price of Allied victory. It was during this time, after seven months of bombing missions, that our crew found it necessary to "drop in" to Yugoslavia while returning from a raid on the oil storage facilities at Floresdorf, Vienna.

Coming off the target, one of our four engines quit, and the aileron controls were damaged by flak. The flight engineer reported a devastating loss of fuel from the wing tanks. Then a second engine quit.

Still over the Alps, we lost our ability to hold altitude and fell below our group.

Now it was a question of ditching in the Adriatic, making it to our "secret" base in Yugoslavia under the noses of the Germans, or, just maybe, gliding into the closest U.S. fighter strip near Rimini.

The last two engines were under strain and threatened to quit. The fuel gauges showed zero and the airplane wallowed from damaged flight controls just as Vis came into view.

There was no time for formalities. We shot red flares and started a deep descent to the 4,000 foot strip neatly placed between the sea cliff and a small mountain. With less than 100 yards to go both remaining engines quit and we flopped onto the undersized runway with a load screech.

Our status was changed from Missing to Delayed with a minimum of paperwork.

I continued flying missions until VE Day and flew home in June 1945. I was scheduled for B-29 training and the Pacific War when the atomic bomb put an end to the suicidal commitment of the Japanese people.

After the war I attended the University of Texas, started a securities business in Alamo Heights and later became a staff officer in the Air Force.)

Between two five year tours in the Pentagon, I was assigned

to Headquarters U.S. Air Forces, Europe, in Weisbaden, Germany. There I ran into a charming German real estate agent whose job it was to locate suitable housing for American families. As we drove, I discovered that my agent was none other than Albrecht (Abby) Goring, nephew of Herman, and a Focke-Wulf squadron leader during the "the late unpleasantness."

As we recounted our experiences, it became obvious that we had been involved in the same battle for Hitler's oil, but on different sides.

By that time Abby was talking with both hands, so we decided to stop at a little wine restaurant where we would be in less danger of crashing his Mercedes. This was when we discussed the events of Aug. 22, 1944, which was our very noisy first meeting.

Our group was the last in a formation of several hundred B-24s under heavy fighter escort to attack the oil facilities at Lobau, Vienna. Some 30 minutes before the target, we saw a huge dogfight in front of us. Focke Wulfs and ME-109s were dashing in and out of our formation. With immense speed and daring. our fighters jumped into the string, causing the Germans to explode, filling the air with parachutes, flaming wrecks, last-second misses and some non misses.

The ME-109s were just a ploy; serious numbers of Focke Wulfs were gaining on us from the rear and their rockets zipped past us on both sides. Our left wingman blew up right in formation just as our right wingman pulled to the right and disintegrated. No chutes.

Our tail gunner caught one FW-190 just as the pilot launched his rockets and put hits on two others. We were alone. Successive rows of FWs took their best shots and then disappeared with a roll.

The B-24 moaned and shook as our turrets' guns filled the cabin with cordite. (You could smell it right through the oxygen masks!) Then, a rocket blasted a 3-foot hole under our tail, just aft the ball-turret. One man was badly cut by flying metal, which turned his face and arms into a mess; still he rearmed his single .50 and blasted everything coming in on his side.

Our own group had disappeared into the smoke ahead. Now it was time to get out of German airspace without delay.

The engines were ragged, two turbos were out, the wings were streaming gas. But we held as much altitude as we could so that it would be possible to join another home-bound formation. Besides, we still had to cross the Alps. Staggering out of Vienna was a sorry looking bunch of B-24s. To our amazement, large hunks of these airplanes seemed to be falling off, yet they flew on. I could see these ragged, molting birds begin to make a "box," and I joined gratefully.

Somehow we landed at Foggia Main, which was close to a general hospital where our injured crewmen could get the best care. We returned to our squadron late and a little shook by that first meeting with Abby Goring.

My 1961 meeting with Abby also made me late and my bride of June, 1944 found the reasons only marginally adequate. German "champagne" is called sekt and this was Abby's way of saying he was glad I made it.

The 484th Bomb Group Is On Display at the New England Air Museum, Bradley Field, CT



Member Bob Powers, 825 Sq (shown at right) arranged this display at Bradley Field, Windsor Locks, CT

The words that appear below are taken directly from the museum display.

Staff Sgt. Robert D. Powers, of New Britain, CT was accepted in August, 1943, for the Army Air Force Aviation Cadet Training Program at age 17. This program was canceled in January, 1944. Powers was sent to Aerial Gunnery School and then assigned to a flight crew for training with B-24 bomber aircraft.

In August, 1944, the crew flew to Italy and was assigned to the 484th Bomb Group, 825th Squadron as part of the Fifteenth Air Force. Powers flew his first 17 missions at age 18.

On his twenty second mission, on February 21, 1945, he was a waist gunner on the plane leading the 484th on a mission to Vienna, Austria. His plane was hit by anti aircraft fire directly over the target. The tail gunner was killed and several others including Powers were wounded. He bailed out at 25,000 feet, landed in the city, and became a prisoner of war. He was liberated by the Fourth Armored Division near Frankfurt, Germany.

Powers was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, Purple Heart and Prisoner-Of-War medals. His medals and memorabilia are displayed in the case below.

The B-24 Liberator was the most widely used heavy duty bomber flown, with over 18,000 built. Designed by Consolidated Aircraft, it was also built by Douglas Aircraft, Ford Motor Company, and North American. The Liberator was powered by four Pratt & Whitney 1200 hp super-charged R-1830 engines and Hamilton Standard propellers providing cruising speed of 160 m.p.h.

The Crew of ten consisted of pilot, co-pilot, navigator, bombardier, engineer/gunner, radio operator/gunner, armorer/gunner, nose gunner, top turret gunner, 2 waist gunners, ball turret gunner and tail gunner. All turrets carried twin 50 caliber machine guns. Each waist gunner manned a single 50 caliber machine gun. The ball turret had to be handcranked up into the fuselage before landing. At altitudes of 23,000 - 27,000 feet, interior temperatures reached 20 to 50 degrees below zero.

Remember This Man!



A 484th BG Crew Chief

Through the history of world aviation many names have come to the fore,
Great deeds of the past in our memory will last, As they're joined by more and
more.

When man first started his labor, in his quest to conquer the sky, He was
designer, mechanic and pilot, And he built a machine that would fly. But
somehow the order got twisted, and then in the public eye, the only man that
could be seen was the man who knew how to fly!

The pilot was everyone's hero. He was brave, he was bold, he was grand,
as he stood by his battered old biplane with his goggles and helmet in hand.
To be sure these pilots all earned it, to any of you have to have the guts , and
they blazed their names in the hall of fame on wings with balling wire struts.

But for each of these flying heroes, there were thousands of little renown,
and these were the men who worked on the planes, but kept their feet on the
ground.

We all know Lindbergh, and we've read of his flight to fame, But think,
if you can, of his maintenance man, can you remember his name?

And think of our wartime heroes, Gabreski, Jabara, and Scott . Can you
tell me the names of their crew chiefs? A thousand to one you cannot!

Now pilots are highly trained people, and their wings are not easily won.
But without the work of the maintenance man, our pilots would march with
a gun. So when you see mighty aircraft as they mark their way through the
air, the grease stained man with a wrench in his hand Is the man who put
them up there.

This poem was printed in the 449th (SAC) newsletter in 1984 (author and source unknown).

B-24s Assigned to the 484th Bomb Group

In consultation with John Beitling the B-24s assigned to the 484th BG are corrected further. Some aircraft numbers are not shown as they may be in error due to typos or errors in transferring the numbers from one list to another.



Serial	Sqd	No	Dis	Ship Name
41-28765	827	301	ZI	
41-28780	824		CR	
41-28803	826	61	CR	Dry Run
41-28826			CR	
41-28835	826	64	SL	Puss N'Boots
41-28836			TX	
41-28860	826	501	TX	TS-Chaplain, The
41-28890	824	200	CR	
41-28935	826	26	ZI	Me Worry
41-28937	824	16	CR	
41-29426	825		TX	Sally D 11
41-29492	827		SL	
41-29502	825	12	SL	Akward Angel
41-29507	824	22	CR	
41-29513	827		CR	
41-29519	824	24	TX	
41-29529			TX	
41-29530	827		TX	American Beauty
41-29531	827		CR	
41-29539	824	18	TX	Tailenders
42-50394	825	38	SL	Hanger Annie
42-50395	825	38	TX	
42-50-396		48	CR	
42-50398	825	48	SL	Imagination
42-50528	825	300	CR	
42-50569	825	31	CR	Times' A wastin'
42-50642	825	39	ZI	Little Mac
42-50797	825	41	CR	
42-50934	824	28	CR	Little Joe
42-50970			TX	
42-51130	826		zi	
42-51147	827		zi	
42-51173	827	88	SL	88II
42-51362	825	38	ZI	
42-51694	824	24	CR	
42-51753	824	21	ZI	
42-51804	827	86	ZI	
42-51805	827		zi	
42-51806	827	80	CR	
42-51818	825		zi	
42-51833	826	53	ZI	
42-51835	825	38	CR	
42-51851	825	40	CR	Pot Luck
42-51852	824	27	CR	
42-51853	201		SL	(pathfinder)
42-51882	826	51	CR	
42-51884	824	12	SL	
42-51925	824	14	CR	El Pagliaccio
42-51967	826	61	CR	Strange C argo
42-51987	826	65	SL	
42-51988	824	15	SL	Demai's Delinquent
42-51993	827	700	ZI	A Broad Abroad
42-52002	824	16	CR	
42-52016	827	77	CR	
42-52037	825	34	CR	
42-520-41	824	17	CR	
42-52072	827	72	ZI	Miss Kay
42-52371	824	23	TX	Fertile Myrtle
42-52438	825	30	CR	Damned Yankee
42-52490	826	59	SL	
42-52501			TX	
42-52513	827		CR	
42-52576	824	15	SL	Ramp Rooster
42-52602	825		CR	Stew Bum
42-52614	824		TX	Lakanookie 11
42-52632	826	55	CR	Flan--ng Mamie
42-52633	826	50	ZI	Darling Darlene
42-52635	825	45	CR	OL'45
42-52641	824	25	SL	Century Limited, The
42-52647	824	27	SL	Leading Lady
42-52648	827	76	ZI	Sweet Revenge
42-52653	825	36	CR	Sleepless Night
42-52655	824	17	DI	Fether Merchant
42-52658	825	35	ZI	Stud Horse,
42-52660	824	21	TX	Rum Runner
42-52661	827		IN	Sinful Cynthia
42-52667	827	72	DI	Troublemaker
42-52668	826	63	SL	Malfunction Sited by Ford
42-52671	826	53	CR	Sa Wrong Gal, Dream Girl
42-52672	827	77	CR	OL'77
42-52675	826	58	SL	Miss Fire
42-52677	827		CR	Hustlin'Hussy
42-52678	825	47	CN	
42-52679	825	48	CR	
42-52680	824	28	CR	
42-5268-3	827	70	SL	The Uninvited, Hot Rocks
42-526814	826	54	CR	Umbriago
42-52685	825		CR	
42-52686	827	73	CR	
42-52687	824	20	CR	Guardian Angel
42-52689	826	51	CR	Sa Wrong Girl
42-52690	825	32	CR	Rum Hound
42-52697	826	63	CR	Savo Sally II

The 484th Bomb Group Association

Serial	Sqd	No	Dis	Ship Name	Serial	Sqd	No	Dis	Ship Name
42-52700	827	75	SL	Generator Joe	44-40896	824	4	CR	
42-52705	826	52	ZI	Toggle Anne	44-40648	826	54	CR	
42-52708	824	10	ZI	Big Drip	44-41116	824	21	?	
42-52715	826	56	CR	Vicious Virgin	44-41120	825	43	DI	
42-52723	826		TX		44-41136	825	33	SL	
42-52757	826	49	CR		44-41139	825	30	ZI	
42-52773	825	1	DI		44-41143	826	55	CR	
42-52774	827	84	DI	Lady Luck	44-41145	825	48	CR	
42-52775	826	62	CR	Flying Dutchman, The	44-41147	827	71	DI	
42-78114	826	65	CR		4448765	826	33	ZI	
42-78153	826	59	TX		44-48767	827	82	CR	
42-78200	826	32	CR		44-48828	826		MC	Bells Of St. Joe
42-78224	826	56	CR		44-48988	825	46	CR	Great Speckled Bird
42-78229	827	89	CR		44-493446	825	48	ZI	
42-78268	825	33/41	CR	Buzz Job 11	44-49371	824	19	CR	
42-78283	827	74	CR		44-49388	824	16	ZI	
42-78289	825	44/49	ZI	Fargo Express	44-49699	824	27	ZI	Pontiac Squaw
42-78298	827		CR		44-49721	826	502	CR	
42-78304	827	78	SL		44-49724	824	20	ZI	
42-78327	825	49	SL		44-49738	826	62	ZI	Imagination
42-78351	825	34	CR	What's Up Doc ?	44-49773	826	60	ZI	
42-78364	826	51	CN		44-49858	825	302	CR	
42-78368	825	33	ZI		44-49884	824	12	ZI	
42-78389	825	43	TX		44-49890	826	56	ZI	
42-78439	825	39	IN		44-49924	826	503	ZI	
42-78494	827	80	CR		44-49936	827		CR	Hell's Hangover
42-78515	825	43	CR		44-49939	827	74	ZI	Roll Me Over
42-78599	824		ZI		44-49941	824	22	ZI	Black Jack 11
42-78616	824	29	CR		44-49957	825	200	ZI	
42-94729			TX		44-49988	824	15	ZI	Painted Lady
42-94730	825	31	CN		44-50002	824	14	ZI	Pagliaccio
42-94732	826	69	TX	Tail Dragan	44-50239	825	502	ZI	
42-94733	824	11	SL	Feather Merchants. II	44-50319	825	31	ZI	Snuffiels Pubing Mission
42-94734	825		CR	Sleepy Time Gal	44-50363	825	29	SL	
42-94736	825	40	CR		44-50364	826		ZI	Our Hobby 11
42-94737	827	83	SL	Duck, The	44-50401	824	14		
42-94738	827	81	ZI	Knock Out	44--5W3	824	28	CR	
42-9,4739	826	60	SL		44-50406	827	703	ZI	
42-94740	825	31	CR	Big Dick	44-50437	825	44	ZI	Moe's Meteor
42-94741	826	62	CR	Vivacious Lady	44-50476	827		ZI	Peggy Ann
42-94742	825	36	?		44-50567	825	400		
42-94746	826	56	CR	Vicious Virgin	44-50569	825	31	ZI	
42-94751	827	85	CR	Miss Snow Job	44-50587		400	ZI	
42-94753	825		TX	Pouting Squaw, The	44-50610	825	315	ZI	
42-94755	825	33	TX	Weary Willie	44-50716	825	302	TX	
42-94758	824		TX	Collapsible Suzie	44-50738	824	28	ZI	(Sharks Teeth)
42-94928	827	77	TX		44-50739	824		ZI	
42-95275	827	82	CR		44-50742	827	78	CR	
42-95277	824		CR		44-50762	825	44	CR	
42-95282	827	77	ZI	Booby Trap	44-50816	825	51	ZI	
42-95349	824	15	ZI		44-50821	826		ZI	
42-95360Z	827	87	ZI	War Weary	44-50825	827	79	ZI	
42-95369	825	37	DI		44-50831	824	11	ZI	
42-95396	825	37	?		44-50852	824		ZI	
42-95623	825	53	ZI	Jean	44-50871	824		ZI	
42-99851	824		CR	Hak Strainer	44-50919	824		ZI	
44-10484	826	63	SL	Sweet Ginny Lee	44-50933	824		ZI	
44-10550	827	73	ZI						

Original Aircraft Assigned to the 484th Bomb Group

by John Beitling

These first Aircraft were ferried from the Zone of the Interior (USA) by 484th BG flight crews to Torretta, Italy. Additional aircraft were ferried up from Gioia del Colle the replacement depot for the 15th Air Force.

*Code ZI= Returned to the USA, TX= transferred to another BG, CR=Crashed, IN=interned,
SL=Salvaged, DI= destroyed by other means*

41-28803	826	61	3-24-44	CR	10-16-44	42-52679	825	3-29-44	CR	6-13-44
41-28826			2-20-44	CR	3-8-44	42-52680	824 28	3-24-44	CR	8-24-44
41-28835	826	64	3-22-44	SL	10-26-44	42-52683	827 70	3-20-44	SL	4-22-45
41-28836			3-24-44	TX		42-52684	826 54	3-27-44	CR	6-11-44
41-29426	825		3-17-44	TX		42-52685	825	3-24-44	CR	5-31-44
41-29492	827		3-24-44	SL	5-31-44	42-52686	827 73	3-20-44	CR	9-14-44
41-29502	824	12	3-27-44	SL	4-17-45	42-52687	824 20	3-27-44	CR	11-11-44
41-29507	824	22	3-29-44	CR	5-10-44	42-52689	826	3-24-44	CR	6-12-44
41-29513	827		3-29-44	CR	5-10-44	42-52689	826	3-24-44	CR	6-12-44
41-22951	824	24	3-27-44	TX		42-52690	825 32	3-24-44	SL	8-10-45
41-29529			3-27-44	TW		42-52697	821 6	3-24-44	CR	8-28-44
41-29530	827		3-18-44	TX		42-52700	827 75	3-20-44	SL	5-4-45
41-29531	827		3-19-44	CR	5-10-44	42-52705	826 75	3-24-44	ZI	5-23-45
41-29539	824	18	4-2-44	TRF		42-52715	826 56	3-24-44	CR	6-13-44
42-52438	825	30	3-23-44	CR	8-20-44	42-52723	826	3-24-44	TX	
42-52490	826	59	3-24-44	TX		42-52757	826	3-18-44	CR	6-11-44
42-52501			3-27-44	TX		42-52773	825	3-24-44	DT	5-31-44
42-52513	827		3-19-44	CR	5-10-44	42-52774	827 84	3-19-44	DT	11-17-44
42-52576	824	15	3-27-44	SL	12-20-44	42-52775	826 62	3-17-44	CR	12-6-44
42-52602	825		3-26-44	CR,	6-13-44	42-94729		3-29-44	TX	
42-52614	824		3-29-44	TX		42-94730	825 31	3-27-44	TX	5-4-44
42-52632	826	55	3-24-44	CR	8-22-44	42-94732	826 69	3-26-44	TX	
42-52633	826	50	3-20-44	ZI	5-29-45	429-4733	824 11	3-29-44	SL	8-6-45
42-52635	825	45	3-27-44	CR	2-7-45	42-94734	825	3-24-44	CR	5-31-4
42-52641	824	25	3-30-44	SL	8-10-45	42-94736	825 40	3-23-44	CR	8-22-44
42-52647	824	27	3-29-44	SL	3-2-45	42-94737	827 83	3-20-44	SL	10-25-44
42-52648	827	76	3-20-44	ZI	5-29-45	42-94738	827 81	3-29-44	ZI	5-30-45
42-52655	824	17	3-27-44	DI	6-13-44	42-94739	826 60	3-24-44	SL	3-24-45
42-52658	825	35	3-27-44	ZI	6-1-45	42-94740	825 31	3-31-44	CR	6-26-44
42-52660	824	21	3-26-44	TX		42-94741	826 62	3-24-44	C R	6-13-44
42-52661	827	71	3-19-44	IN	6-13-44	42-94742	825 36	3-29-44	TX	1-210-45
42-52667	827	72	3-20-44	DT	10-23-44	42-94746	826 56	3-24-44	CR	11-1-44
42-52668	826	63	3-27-44	SL	1-30-45	42-94747	826 57	3-24-44,	ZI	6-17-4/5
42-52671	826	53	3-20-44	CR	6-11-44	42-94751	827 85	3-20-44'	CR	3-17-45
42-52672	827	77	3-20-44	CR		42-94753	825	3-20-44	TX	
42-52677	827		3-20-44	CR	5-29-44					
42-52678	825	47	3-24-44	TX	42-52675					
42-52678	826	58	3-24-44	SL	8-9-4					

The Last Mission

After Glow

*I'd like the memory of me
to be a happy one.
I'd like to leave an after glow
Of smiles when life is done.
I'd like to leave an echo
whispering softly down the ways,
Of happy times and laughing times
And bright and sunny days.
I'd like the tears of those who
grieve, to dry before the sun
Of happy memories that I leave
When life is done.*

P	2/L	Russell K	Bolton Jr	827 027	P	Capt	Eual E	Stone	826
C/C	Sgt	Henry W	Cushard jr	826 116		2/Lt	Moses D.	Stone	826
N	2/Lt	Clair	Daniels	825	R/O	T/Sg	Walter G.	Stowe	824
P	1/Lt	Lyman N	Fairbanks	827 058		Maj	Gilbert E.	Strauser	826
		Dorothy	Fetter	827*	B/G	Sgt	John D.	Strey	825
B	I/Lt	Michael P	Goodman	827 094	B/G	S/Sg	Richard E.	Stromback	826
B/G	Cpl	Glenn A	Lloyd	827	R/O	S/Sg	Alfred G.	Strout	826
E	S/Sg	Aurelio S	Lopez	825 094	Cpl		George C.	Stuart	825
G	S/Sg	Ralph E	Parkhurst	827 208	T/Sg		Amo L.	Stuebinger	825
		Phyllis	Peters*	826	T/Sg		Howard C.	Stump	826
		Daniel R	Peters*	826	G	S/Sg	Mathew W	Subiclak	826
P	2/Lt	Paul J	Schiappacasse	825 003	N/G	S/Sg	Floyd W	Suddreth	825
		Betty	Schroeder*	827	G	Sgt	Trez T	Thompson	825 216
R/O	Sgt	Edward H	Stoerkel	827	R/O	T/Sg	Willis	Wong	827 214
					E	Cpl	A J "Red"	Wise	827 141

* Indicates Family members. Betty Schroeder, the wife of Claude Schroeder, 827 Sq., who made those hand knitted items (name tags and dieter's flip flops) as gifts for our members at the reunions, passed away earlier this year after succumbing to cancer. She had attended every reunion with Claude.

Harold E Bolton, 827 Sq

Harold E Bolton, 827 Sq, M/Sgt, 78, a Crew Chief of the 827 Sq. He and his wife, Inez, attended reunions in 1983, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, and 1993.

Clair Daniels, 825 Sq

Editor's Note

This information came to the Association via e-mail in December 2000. The source quotes from a letter from Howard Doescher 825 Sq the pilot of the crew he headed on a Mission to Ploesti in May 31, 1944. The navigator Clair Daniels was a native of Tacoma WA. His death was reported in *Torretta Flyer* #35 Fall-Winter 1999, where it states that Lt. Clair Daniels is interred in the Sicily-Rome Military Cemetery. The questions at the end of this letter were answered by return E-mail. The crew did fly more missions with 2/Lt J L Czyl as replacement navigator. Lt. Daniels is also listed in the 1999 Memorial Book.

Following is a quote from a letter from the pilot, Lt. Doescher, dated July 7, 1944 to a friend of his in our home town, Spokane, WA which describes the occurrence: "On May 31, 1944 we flew a very rough mission and our crew had a close one with death. We went on a long raid, we got the hell shot out of us at the "get go", and on the way home too, in fact we were only five miles from field when we ran out of gas, heading for the ground like mad. I rang the alarm bell and the men started bailing out. Everyone got out of the plane. When I left, the plane was only 250 feet from the ground. Just as my chute opened, I hit the ground, so you know how close we really were. My navigator's chute never did open and he was killed. Four other men on the crew received the Purple Heart that day, and I was recommended for the DFC. Our navigator was from Spokane, I don't know whether you knew him or not. He was much younger than you. Maybe you saw a write up in the papers about him sometime in June. He was killed May 31, 1944" (I assume that the field Lt. Doescher refers to is Torretta.)

A little later in the letter, Lt. Doescher wrote: "After our accident, the Sq sent us to a rest camp for a week, so that we would forget it. Now we are flying again and have flown nearly every day. You see our squadron really has lost a lot of crews since we've been over here. We left the states with 18 crews, now we only have six original crews left. Of course mine is one of them. My captaincy has been put in already. Sure hope I live long enough to get the darned thing. We have 25 missions to our credit now, and we only have 25 more to go. Anyone who tells you this theatre of action isn't rough just tell them they are crazy, and I told you to tell them so.

It appears the mission in question might be the same one

described in the 461st BG web site as "Mission No. 36, 31 May 1944 Concordia Vega Oil Refinery- Ploesti, Romania". Apparently the entire 49th Bomb Wing 451st, 461st and 484th BGs were all on the mission.

In addition to any information about Clair, we'd like to find out if anyone knows what happened to his crew after his death. Did Lt. Doescher get his DFC? (Answer unknown) Is Lt. Doescher or any of the crew reachable? (Answer ! Yes the pilot is a active member of the Association.)

Thanks, Hal Fogelquist



Lyman Fairbanks, 827 Sq

Lyman Fairbanks, 827 Sq (Lt Col USAF, Ret) business founder and aviation enthusiast was born in Washington, DC. He moved to Arlington, VA at an early age, residing there until his death, April 16, 2000.

After his combat tour flying B-24 Liberators in WW 11, he was stationed at Boiling AF Base. In 1945 he started his business which continues today. In 1945 an Air National Guard unit was founded at Andrews AFB, where he flew one of the first airplanes at the inaugural ceremony there, becoming Air Base Group Commander of the DC Air National Guard. In 1951 he was recalled to active duty and flew combat in Korea.

He is a 10th generation of the first Fairbanks in America, Jonathan I, builder of the Fairbanks House 1636, the oldest wooden house still standing in America at Dedham, MA. He was an active member and past President of the Arlington Rotary Club, Washington Golf and Country Club, and Resurrection Lutheran Church. He is missed by his wife of 59 years, Mary Ellan Wittstatt Fairbanks, a daughter, Penelope, Holloway, a son, Lyman (Nick) III a granddaughter, a grandson, a great grandson, a brother, Bernard and his many friends.

Private burial was at Arlington National Cemetery not very far from the tree and memorial plaque installed by the 484th Bomb Group Association.

Michael P Goodman-B, 827 Sq

Michael P Goodman-Bombardier on Carl K Williams crew passed away March 30, 2000. His crew was shown on the recalled mission of October 23, 1944. They were flying Baker- 13, plane 42-74774. The mission was recalled due to bad weather over the target, Munich, Germany. The 484th BG was split into two forces that day, Red and Blue, the Williams crew were assigned to the blue force,

The crew on that day were: 2/Lt Carl K Williams-P, 2/Lt William J Schneider-C/P, 2/Lt Vernon D Hood-N, 2/Lt Michael P Goodman-B, Sgt James O Clemons-E, S/Sgt Edwin F Wilcox-R/0, Sgt B H Thompson-U/G, Sgt George K White B/G, S/Sgt Vincent J Scarpuzza-N/G, and Sgt Joseph H Wythe-T/G.

Phyllis Peters Daniel R Peters

Phyllis Peters (March 5, 2000) the wife of member Richard W Peters (826 Sq) for 53 years has passed away Their only son Daniel R Peters also has passed away. Daniel was in the Air Force during the Viet Nam War and attended the 1996 Reunion.

Paul J Schiappacasse, 825 sq

Paul J Schiappacasse 83 passed away 9/7/2000. He was born in St. Clair, Michigan on August 1, 1917 and was a resident of Flint, Michigan, most of his life. He graduated from St. Matthews High School in 1935 and also a graduate of University of Notre Dame in 1941. He married Della Morrison on June 3, 1989. Mr. Schiappacasse was a Pilot serving in the U. S. Army Air Corps during World War 11, flying 34 missions in the European Theater, awarded the Air Medal with I Cluster, Purple-Heart and 4 Bronze Stars. He was a member of St. Matthew's Catholic Church, member of Genesee Sportsman's Club, Knights of Columbus #695,

Elks BPOE #222, Retired Officer' s Association and the VFW. Surviving are wife, Della; stepson, Joe and wife Pam Morrison of Flint; stepdaughter, Mary Beth Collier of Flint; stepdaughter. in-law, Chere Morrison of Flint, 7 grandchildren, Scott, Stephanie, Courtney, Christin, Chad, Emily and Anna; 4 great grandchildren, Jack, Vienna, Andrew Paul and Alyssa. Paul Schiappacasse was a Pilot with the 825th Squadron. The story of his crew is best described in the story appearing elsewhere in this issue by crew-member Ed Lamb-TG, .

Willis Wong, 827 Sq.

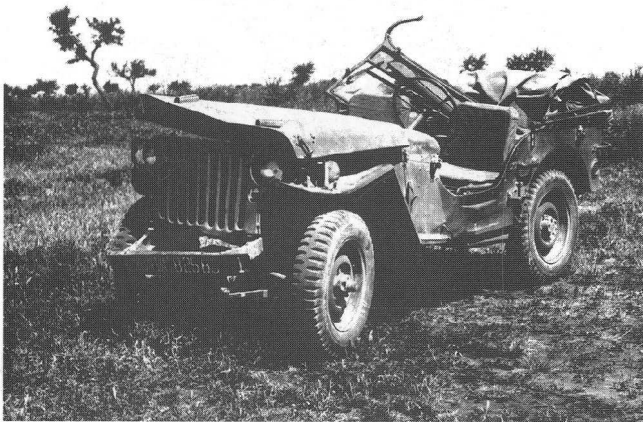
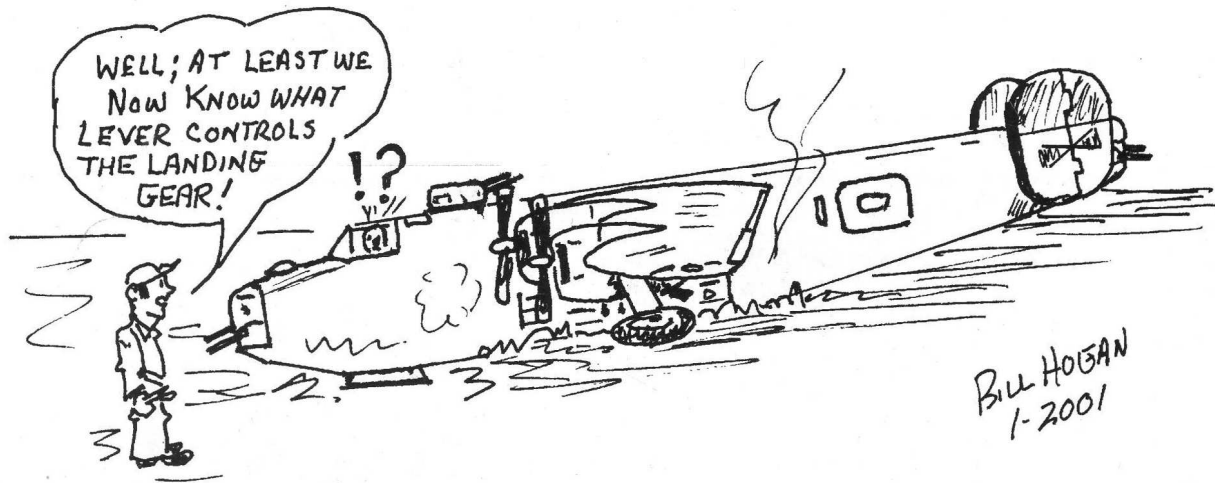


Willis Wong extreme Right

From his Pilot, Willie Kitchen: Willis Wong was assigned to my crew on #70, 827th Squadron., the latter part of 1943. He was very conscientious, always doing his job well. He flew with me until May, 19 when I was wounded by flak over Romania. Shortly thereafter he was also wounded, and was sent back to the States, where he had further radio operator training. I lost touch with him, but learned he had been assigned as radio operator on a C-46, flying the Hump in the China-India-Burma theater until the end of WW 11 in Europe. In 1996 he joined the 484th Bomb Group Association, and we were reunited at the San Diego Reunion after 52 years. Willis was such a likeable, friendly person, and always got along well with everyone. I am grateful we had the opportunity to enjoy his company at several reunions, and we were honored to have been his guests at the 1998 Flying Tigers Reunion here in San Antonio, Texas. He will be sorely missed by many. He was a very good friend. Willie Kitchen.

From his daughter, Cynthia Wong: My father was a gentle and loving man who never talked much about his past and never about his wartime experiences. It wasn't until after my mother passed away and I began to spend more time with him that I learned more about what he had done as a young man, particularly about his participation in the second World War. As I found out more and more, I was amazed at what he and the other men and women who served during the war had accomplished, and the more proud I became of my father. He and his comrades performed feats that seem nothing short of miraculous. Yet to Dad, the past events were just a matter of course.

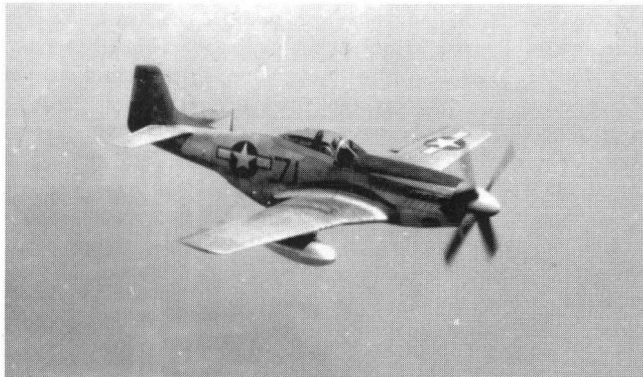
My dad served for two years on a B-24 called #70 as a radio operator and wing gunner. He and his crew were based in Cerignola, Italy. He was wounded when their plane was shot at and was sent back to the states to recover. Then he was sent to the China-Burma-India theater where he served on a C-47 with the 14th Air Force's 1333rd ATC unit (Air Transport Command) transporting supplies over the Hump (the Himalaya Mountains) from India to China. He flew with this unit until the war ended. All together, he served for four years. Cynthia Wong



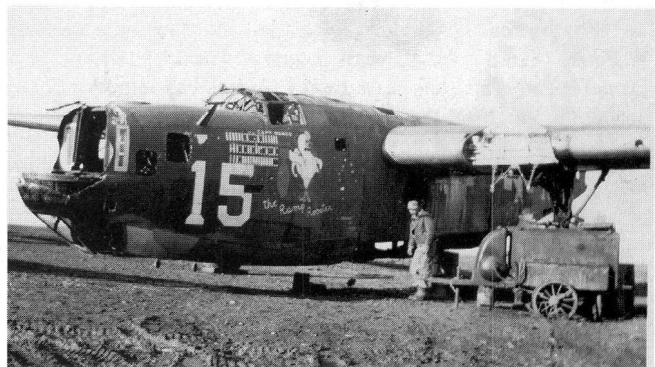
Denny Posten's Jeep before repair, well not really. Photo taken at Torretta.



Denny Posten's restored Jeep, not the same one at left of course, but the repairs were expensive he admits.



P-51 from the 332nd Fighter Group (Tuskegee Airmen) identified by the all red tail. See page 14



Sad end to a proud bird, "Ramp Rooster" 42-52576 of the 824th Sq. See page 34

484 th Bomb Group Association
1122 Ysabel St. Redondo Beach, CA
90277-4453

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