

The letter from William B Keese M/Gen USAF Ret Read at the 2001 Reunion



Dear Fellow Members:

Because of physical limitations on my part I have asked my good friend, Harry B. Harris, former Romanian POW, to pass on to all of you some final thoughts from me.

I'd like to start this brief message with a note of sincere thanks to Bud and Bea Markel for the time and many efforts they have made in organizing and keeping the 484th reunion running smoothly for the past years.

When I think back to our reunion in Dayton I remember stating that I never gave any thought to the idea that we might be gathering for a reunion 50 years after the war was over, let alone one at this time. However the purpose of this message is not to discuss all that has happened to may of us over the years but to express a farewell to all of you and remind you that there are some benefits in growing

older. For instance:

People no longer view you as a hypochondriac.

Things you buy now probably won't wear out.

You can live without sex but not without your glasses.

When you talk about, "good grass" a you're referring to some ones Lawn.

Your back goes out more than you do,(mine sure does).

Your secrets are safe with your friends because they can't remember them either.

You're not likely to be charged with sexual harassment, despite what you may have been thinking at the time.

Enough of that attempt to add a little humor to the occasion.

I put in 35 years in the military and never fought harder to get a job then I did to get the assignment to command of the 484th Bomb Group.

There were times that I wondered if maybe I hadn't been too clever for my own good. That was particularly true on missions to Munich, Vienna, Blechhammer, and the like, however at the time I was primarily interested in getting the job done, a thought that I'm sure was in all minds - there were some places we just weren't interested in returning to. I know a lot of promises were made to the LORD at those times - and I hope they have been kept.

As I write this I think of the many good friends I made and regret I wasn't able to make more - and I think of all the fine men that were lost doing their jobs. Whether you were a member of a crew or one of the support personnel you were all very important and I close by saying simply

Thank you, farewell, and god bless.

William B. Keese, M/Gen. USAF (retired)

