



FOR THE MEN WHO FLY 'EM • FOR THE MEN WHO KEEP 'EM FLYING

Issue 29

Price \$5 (Free to Members)

Winter 1997

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

1st: THE 1996 OLYMPICS - NEXT: THE 1998 451st BOMB GROUP REUNION (WHAT'A WAY TO GO)

There you have it; Atlanta, GA has been selected to host our 1998 fall reunion.

DATES; 9th (Wednesday) to the 13th (Sunday) of September 1998.

HOTEL; THE WESTIN ATLANTA AIRPORT, just moments away from the Hartsfield Atlanta International Airport.

The selection of Atlanta, as our 1998 reunion site was predicated on the availability of good 'in and out' air transportation and excellent shuttle service to the host hotel; plus a hotel that fits the standards we're use to. We all know that Delta Airline is based there; IT along with most other major airlines make this one of the busiest air terminals in the nation. And for those driving, its fairly easy location is appreciated, if approached by car, camper, moped or bicycle.

We've managed to maintain our hotel room rate close to that which we paid in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1996. As to our registration charges, that has yet to be worked out as we make plans for all the events that will make our reunion enjoyable to all.

So, for all those that are 'hanging-fire' as to our reunion plans, now you have the location and dates. It will be up to you to plan accordingly so we can have your company - come next September. We hope to see many of the new faces that have been found since our last get-together, along with you 'old guys' that have kinda fell by the wayside as we approached our senior years. There is nothing like the camaraderie that we find when we visit with an old buddy that we once thought we'd probably never see again.

GETTING TOGETHER (By Bob Karstensen)

Have you given thoughts to friendships that you started, "over there?" Have you wrote that line of greeting, that you really DO still care?

Have the years been slipping by you, with that chasm of intent getting deeper, wider, longer, from the letter, never sent?

Aren't there friendly words to offer, to that buddy, close and dear? Cause that guy that shared your life, back then, won't always be this near.

Have you given thoughts to meeting, ... these comrades from the past? Can you sense the joy you'll capture, when your hands are firmly clasped?

Can you brush away the cobwebs, that have cluttered up your mind? Sure ... you'll recall, with clearest vision, what's been blotted out by time.

You may never even notice, that your buddy's gray and bent. Nor the lines now formed upon his face, like yours, were heaven sent.

He'll appear as lean and youthful, as you remember him to be. And the lines, now etched upon his face, ... your eyes, will never see.

Now, take his hand and hold it firm, and sweep those years away. You'll never find a truer friend, than you made back yesterday.

So, use this YEAR, this MONTH, this DAY, and make those plans quite clear. You'll make that promise NOW, my friend, that we'll meet sometime this year.



THE WESTIN ATLANTA AIRPORT HOTEL

"AD-LIB"**451st BOMB GROUP (H), LTD.
PUBLICATION**

Compiled and Published by Bob Karstensen

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**MORE ABOUT OUR HOST HOTEL:
THE WESTIN ATLANTA AIRPORT**

Although much more detailed information about the reunion will come along at the appropriate time, I thought you'd like to hear some of what's now known.

The location of the WESTIN is close-by to the Hartsfield International Airport, but not that close that air traffic noises will cause any discomfort. But close enough that shuttle service is complimentary and swift.

I'm sure we are all aware that Atlanta is the hub for Delta Airlines, which services many of the major cities in the U.S. And in that regard we tried to see if Delta could offer our membership any special discounted fares, so's to offset cost of travel. But I found out that the parameters in which we had to operate, precluded any special air fares from Delta, directly. You will find it more prudent to work with your local Travel Agent for your Senior Citizens Fare, and plan at least two weeks in advance of your flight.

For those that will be driving to the reunion, I will include directions and maps when I send out our 1st Class Mailing - Registration Packet - in early 1998.

We have negotiated a room rate of \$80, for single or double occupancy. This rate does not include the various State and Local taxes; which at this time total 12%. But we still come in under \$100, whereas rack rates (off the street prices) are in the range of \$170 to \$185, and that's without figuring in the taxes. Just from the price alone you can guess that it is ONE fine hotel and will serve us well for our 1998 reunion.

Also "hammered out" was a 20% discount off all meals served in the restaurant, or room service menu prices. As you can see we've tried to keep our costs low, as many are on fixed income and want to attend but can't afford prices that are too outlandish. I'm aware that even with what's been negotiated, some are going to be stressed, regardless. But of prime concern is that we put on a quality program so you will go home feeling rewarded. We've done it in the past and I hope we can continue to do it in the future.

THE 726th "REC" ROOM

(by Achilles Kozakis)

Winter in southern Italy can sometimes be extremely harsh. It is cloudy, wet, cold and the penetrating winds bite without mercy. Such was the day I visited the Rec Room.

The Recreation Room was a musty, cold, damp and empty place, void of any people. One lonely bulb hangs helplessly from a wound cord attached to a brass socket as if to say, "Turn me on and warm my soul."

A table, a bench and several chairs completed the interior furnishings. No heating is available. Perhaps this is the reason there is no one present. A single window located on the far end wall, most likely placed there for ventilation, is collecting dust along it's edges for the next "spring cleaning." Thus, the picture of the Squadrons recreation room is complete.

A quick survey of the room revealed, in the far corner, a table with a dusty and drab colored record player and scattered around it were perhaps an even dozen recordings. It was evident by the growth of dust and cob webs that these had sat motionless for some time. The webs, of course, made a good home for the lonely spider that lighted on the chair nearby.

Having no source of music, no radio or recordings of my own, I was delighted by the find that would make up for the last two months, void of any euphony. It didn't matter what the recordings were. It was MUSIC and that's all that mattered. But upon closer inspection and to my delighted surprise, the records contained several classical tunes and a variety of then current pop songs and instrumentals; songs like "Let Me Love You Tonight," "I'll Be Seeing You," "Stardust," "One O'Clock Jump," "Praise The Lord and Pass The Ammunition," and several other tunes of the early forties. Man, what luck! I knew someone was watching over me. As my Aunt Bessie said, "God will always be with you." God bless Aunt Bessie!!

As it turned out, most of my leisure hours were spent in this cold, lonely and most uncomfortable room. But I realized that it's not the look or the feel of the environment that gave me these moments of relaxation, it was the warmth and joy one feels that counts. My imagination created an atmosphere of "Sunny Italy," and with that warm, restful, happy-to-be-alive feeling and the satisfaction of a few hours well spent. For now, the war can wait!!

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451st PUBLIC RELATIONS AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR ENTITY

Throughout the study of the heritage of the 451st Bombardment Group, you will find articles and stories that were generated by the Public Relations Office for the betterment and education of the uninformed. Many of these stories arrived back home to our local papers for public consumption. Your editor has studied many of what was turned-out and put together, not only some typical stories, but thoughts and efforts that pervaded the Office and their operation.

PRO FUNCTIONAL PROCEDURE

I like to think of public relations as a journalistic enterprise with all the problems of a model newspaper. If conducted properly, it can be a successful business venture, unhampered by army administrative red tape. To accomplish this the public relations officer must organize his department along definite lines of practice. He must establish policies in order to make his section function efficiently and usefully. With this in mind he will conform to the objectives of all good public relations - to inform the public concerning the achievements of his unit and individuals of his organization. (Memorandum 47-1, 8 February, 1944, Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force.)

The first prerequisite for good public relations is a sincere interest in the work by the group officer and the squadron representatives. Lacking this fundamental concern, the work becomes boring, the methods slipshod, and the quality of copy is lost. In brief, the success of public relations is proportional to the interest taken.

We were fortunate in that Colonel Eaton saw the value of public relations, and furthermore, that if an officer is confronted with a non-cooperative attitude, he must first become a salesman. For only with the full cooperation of his commanding officer can he do a first rate job. From the beginning the enterprising officer should strive to promote friendly liaison with the commander. He's got a good start in the right direction once that is accomplished.

The problem of trained personnel confronts ever new officer in the public relations field, and I was no exception to the rule. I knew there was a former newspaperman in one of the squadrons. To get him released from his

department required cajolery, promises and a good sales talk. His name is Sergeant Raymond J. Schrick. Another Squadron furnished Corporal Royal S. Denton, formerly a student in the school of journalism, University of Oregon. Corporal Irving Schwartz and Private First Class Morton Smiler rounded out the staff. Neither had written before, but were eager to learn. Later we included Corporal Richard Kraus and Technical Sergeant Alva J. Salsbury, the former to write, the latter to do our photography work. All the men are on the job full time.

Our office is adjacent to the photo department, a relation that has paid dividends ever since. However, with the expansion in our activities the present office space is inadequate. The commanding officer has approved the construction of a separate building for public relations, the funds to be provided by the group. The dimensions might prove helpful to others: 30 feet by 15 feet. Built of stone it will include a fireplace to provide a comfortable place in which to work during the winter.

Assuming that public relations section is ready to function, the officer must decide how many stories to write per month and what type. That question can best be decided by the individual. The solution depends upon a number of intangibles which are peculiar to each organization. As mentioned above, avid interest on the

part of the staff will naturally reflect greater production than a careless attitude. As difficulties are ironed out the production curve will be graduate upward until the staff finds a level that will meet with the satisfaction with all concerned.

We have functioned as a public relations section for four months, and the production curve reflects the expansion of our activities. The first full month showed a total of



618 stories and 75 pictures. By the end of the second month we had written 866 stories and included 41 pictures. The third month put us over the 1,000 mark, and the pictures jumped back to 82. The fourth month ran the curve up to 1,046 stories and 81 pictures.

Our policy is to write as many feature stories as possible without detracting from the quality of the over-all copy. In time that plan will limit the assembly-line type of story. On the other hand the public relations officer will render better service to the personnel of his group. Time is necessary to develop the original stories which have appeal to the reader. It is our theory that one 600 word story will have a better reception than three or four paragraph, 100 word routine stories. However, one must not concentrate on one type to the neglect of the other. An equitable balance can be maintained when one finds a monthly norm for his output. We have set the average between 1,000 and 1,100. Any group will be given adequate coverage with that number.

As rule of thumb for a successful public relations officer is to know as many men in his group as possible. To sell our product we use the personal interview method in all feature type stories. A complete questionnaire on every individual will be sufficient data for routing copy. We try to inject into each story the personal touch, rather than grind out stereotyped copy for super-production.

As in any going concern, the public relations officer should realize the value of stimulants. These are a double purpose--a reminder to the commander that public relations works, and to show to the men that their stories are being printed. Fortunately higher headquarters has provided the lower units with a steady flow of clippings. These we display in a prominent place. Whether he knows it or not, the public relations officer thereby makes use of the cheapest form of advertising. The shrewd officer will make friends by the generous distribution of pictures within the command. It doesn't take much time to make extra prints. That brings up the question of public relations photography.

Again we were fortunate. The group photo officer, Lieutenant William Dwyer, had cooperated fully with us, often anticipating our wishes. In units where the photo department is not helpful, the public relations officer must first sell himself, and secondly, his product. That, too, is an individual problem.

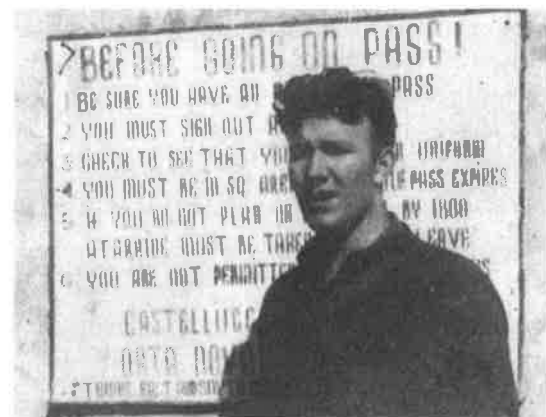
We think of public relations as being very similar to a newspaper. The individuals in the section are the reporters who write the daily happenings and events that occur in the lives of the soldiers. The problems of management are the concern of the Public Relations Officer, himself.

An editor of a newspaper must observe the rules of good journalism to sell his paper. The enterprising public relations officer will do well to follow the methods of his civilian counterpart.

ROBERT L. SANDS Capt., Air Corps, Public Relations Officer



LT. BILL DWYER (PHOTO OFFICER) AT STORY BOARD



CPL ROYAL DENTON, 724th PRO WRITER

4 November 1944 (By Sgt. Ray J. Schrick)

SUBJECT: Monthly PRO History for October

1. On Oct. 23rd, Capt. Robert L. Sands, 451st PRO for slightly more than six months, was called to Wing on DS to take over duties as Wing PRO. The 451st office was left in charge of Sgt. R.J. Schrick, who has been working with Capt. Sands since the office was started on April 14 with a total facilities of two scratch pads and one pencil.

2. The 451st PRO continued to lead 49th Wing in production for the sixth straight month. Total stories sent in were 1,134. Emphasis from here on will switch even more to quality features, with quantity leveling off at slightly above 1,000 stories a month.

3. Radio production showed its third straight monthly increase, and the 451st continues as the top group in the Air Force in this line. Nine persons made the trip to Rome for home-town recordings in October; Capt. Morris Manoogian, Capt. Paul Johnshoy, Capt. Garland Jarvis, M/Sgt. Thomas Peplow, M/Sgt. J.R. Kynard, M/Sgt. Garland Cole, T/Sgt. Leo Stoutsenberger, S/Sgt. Walter Summery, and Miss Inez Brown (Red Cross). The 451st is the only group in Air Force sending men to Rome for Broadcasts in support of the Sixth War Loan Drive, and the latter part of the month was devoted to getting them lined up.

4. A story on Col. Robert E.L. Eaton, departing group commander, appeared in Naples edition of Stars & Stripes on October 24, the best single play yet recei-

ved in the S & S.

5. Production was hampered, though not lowered, in October by winterization. PRO set up an enlarged office next to the photo lab which gives most of the conveniences of a newspaper editorial room, including central heating from an oil-burning stove.

Ray J. Schrick Sgt., 19102891 Public Relations
(*Editor; an overview of one months radio activities*)
28 February 1945

SUBJECT: Radio Report for February.

TO: Public Relations Officer, 49th Bombardment Wing (H).

1. Following is the 451st GP radio report for February, in breakdown.

DATE; NO. OF RECORDINGS; NAME; SUBJECT MATTER

Feb. 19 - 2 - 2nd Lt. James T. Murphy & 1st Lt. John J. Emmerling - Russian experience.

Feb. 19 - 2 - 2nd Lt. William C. Anderson & 2nd Lt. William E. Loranger - Linz Mission.

Feb. 19 - 2 - 2nd Lt. Chester H. Ennis & 2nd Lt. Malcolm W. Hardesty - Vienna Mission.

Feb. 19 - 1 - S/Sgt Myron T. Simpson - Russian experience.

Feb. 19 - 2 - T/Sgt Raymond F. Morkes & T/Sgt George M. Olson - Russian experience.

Feb. 25 - 2 - 1st Lt. Ralph J. Stumpf & T/Sgt Raymond A. Day - Rough Flak Times.

Feb. 25 - 1 - 1st Lt. Henry C. Houkel - Vienna experience.

Feb. 25 - 2 - 1st Lt. Don W. Robinson & T/Sgt Emmett D. Martin - DFC.

Feb. 25 - 2 - 1st Lt. Vincent Cantelmo & S/Sgt Dilworth R. Hammond - Bail-outs.

Feb. 25 - 2 - S/Sgt John D. Cassidy & Sgt Martin Kornbluh - Yugo experience.

Feb. 25 - 2 - Sgt Frank Fumagalli & Sgt Dean F. Gaffner - Yugo experience.

Feb. 25 - 2 - Sgt Warner F. Case & Cpl William W. Blue - Clerk duties & Truck driver.

Feb. 25 - 2 - M/Sgt Richard M. Rogers & M/Sgt Ralph L. Johnson - Visits with Infantry.

Total 24 Recordings

Ray J. Schrick, Sgt., Public Relations

SOMEDAY, SOMEWHERE, THE COLONEL MAY WRITE HIS WONDERFUL DIARY

By Sgt. RAY J. SCHRICK (Special to The Stars and Stripes)

WITH THE 15TH AAF IN ITALY, Oct. 23 -- Col. Robert E. Lee Eaton, of Belleville, Ill., was leaving his bombardment group for "an unannounced assignment." He had packed all his belongings, but there was one thing more. The diary he had never written.

Col. Eaton smiles as he opened his mind on that dairy. He'd always said these B-24 Liberators were wonderful planes. Now his arguments had the backing of 50 personal missions -- 122 for his group -- a citation from the President of the United States, the Dis-

tinguished Unit Badge with one bronze cluster, and above the left pocket of his khakis, a double row of combat ribbons.

OLD TIMERS

His group had come across in December. It was perfect timing for the great air offensive against Europe. Now Col. Eaton was the oldest remaining group commander in Italy, in months of service.

Col. Eaton pulled out the War Department orders, the Presidential citation. This was one of the few written parts of the diary:

" . . . Notified to prepare maximum aircraft in the group for a bombing mission to Regensburg, Germany, ground personnel worked feverishly, enthusiastically, and with untiring intensity . . . "

That was it, the ground crews, too. It was hard to say it in words, that the clerks who served as call boys played as important a role as the gunners who faced an enemy fighter. You couldn't catalogue it as the difference between an ingenue and the actor with his name in lights. He thought of armorers who loaded bombs half the night, ordnance men who fused them. They got the work but not the headlines.

There were no cobwebs fogging the colonel's memory as he looked back on 10 months of combat climaxing six months of training.

Steyr, Toulon, Bucharest, Ploesti . . .

Ploesti, "Grim determination of combat crews, professional skill of ground personnel." The group got it's cluster to the Distinguished Unit Badge for April 5. The thing the colonel remembered was the bombers drifting badly, so many of them singly. Engines out, 200 flak holes in one bomber, hydraulic systems shot and tires blown by fighter shells. And those that didn't come back.

Ferrara, Orbetello, Rimini, Plombino.

Small names. The trace of a smile fled. His nose gunner had died over Plombino. A group loses so many men on the small names, milk run targets, hit once and maybe never again.

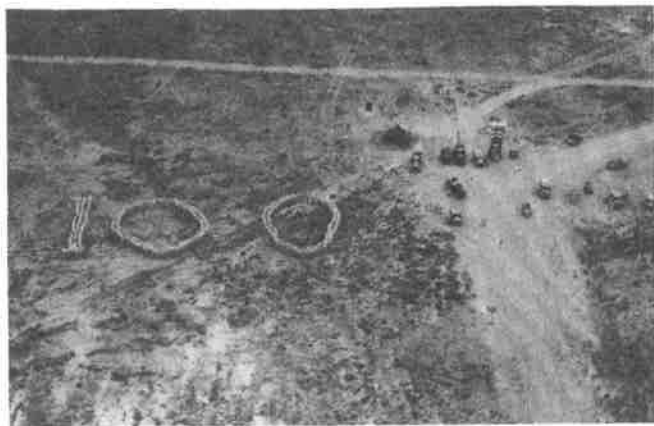
Each eight-hour mission stood for one thing. Brux, Czechoslovakia, the longest he or his group ever flew . . . Budapest, Hungary, the fighter that almost rammed his lead bomber . . . Markersdorf, Austria, with the biggest losses his group ever suffered . . . Weiner Neustadt, Austria, heavily defended but destroyed without loss.

TRADEMARKS

And the trademarks that made some missions stand out. The day his bomber blew a tire on landing, and the plane ahead did the same thing. Quick throttle work saved a two-shop crackup . . . His group's 100th mission -- Ploesti again -- when 800 men greeted him, forming a big '100' next to the runway . . . A group show in the one-year anniversary, with a GI swing band, when he told his men, "I am proud to be one of you."



Colonel Robert E. Lee Eaton



100th MISSION RETURN TO CASTELLUCCIA AAF

The last page was a clipping. "A career militarist, Col. Eaton graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1931 . . . received his wings in 1932 . . . a tour of duty in Hawaii . . . Washington in 1936 . . . advanced to full colonel in 1943 . . . commander of a heavy bomb group, destined for overseas service . . ."

Ending with the usual small paragraph -- "son of Mr. and Mrs. M.J. Eaton, Rt. 2, Greenville, Miss., his wife, Mrs. Jo Kathryn Eaton of Belleville, Ill., twin children Robert E.L. Eaton, Jr., and daughter, Sallie, both of Belleville." The colonel was glad they saw it. Even a career militarist thinks of home.

He closed the diary as the phone rang. It was time to meet the new commander.



COLONEL KNAPP (Left) ASSUMES COMMAND

(Dateline - August 10, 1944)

15th AAF IN ITALY

The B-24 Liberator Bomb Group (the 451st not identified in the name), commanded by Colonel Robert E.L. Eaton, 119 S. Charles St., Belleville, Ill., today completed its 100th mission by bombing the Ploesti Xenia Oil Refinery, Rumania.

Flying Airplane #13 to commemorate the group's record, Col. Eaton threw a challenge to "Dame Superstition" and won hands down. After several hours of research through the records, Lt. Ellis E. Eno, deputy group commander, Ft. Dodge, Iowa, came up with many combinations of the number 13 as a cat has lives. Col.

Eaton passed it off to pure coincidence, but vows that 13 will be his lucky number from now on.

There are 13 letters in his name. His pilot on the 100th mission, William E. Tuney, Louisville, Ky., also has the same number. Col. Eaton has been commissioned for 13 years, and has been in command of his group for 13 months. Thirteen officers and men who flew on the group's first mission to Fier, Albania, last Feb. 3 accompanied the colonel on the 100th mission. The estimated time of return from the target was 1330 hours, take-off was at 0613 and the briefed target time was 1013 hours. The formation crossed the Adriatic at 13,330 feet, and last but not least, 13 of the group's original airplanes are still flying regular combat missions.

800 ground personnel voluntarily paid tribute to the airmen when the group formation flew over the field. Forming a huge hundred (100) on the side of the runway, each man covered his head with a white handkerchief, the numerals standing out in sharp relief to the dark brown earth. Later the men stood stiffly at attention as the colors were dipped in salute. During the 100 missions the group has dropped 6773 tons of bombs, is credited with 3079 sorties (individual), and destroyed 124 enemy aircraft. The personnel of the group hold 2 Legion of Merit awards, 8 Silver Stars, 81 Distinguished Flying Crosses and clusters, 10 Soldier's Medals, 41 Purple Hearts, and 3513 Air Medals and clusters.



COL. EATON (Standing Far Right) WITH HIS 100th MISSION CREW

(Editor -- ANOTHER STORY GLEANED FROM THE PAGES OF THE STARS & STRIPES

Add to the roll call of ground force fighters who have had a taste of high altitude warfare the names of Capt. Ray S. Sawyer of Manchester, N.H. and Capt. Vernon J. Hale of Cadiz, Ky, both of the 34th Infantry Division. The two officers recently spent a week at a 15th AAF Liberator base in southern Italy to see how the bomber boys live and went along on a mission to Linz to see how they fight.

"As far as living conditions go," said Capt. Sawyer, who has taken part in several major Italy engagements, "I'd trade places with a 15th AAF man any day. But I certainly would not relish any more excursions over a hot target like Linz. When you're under artillery fire you can crouch behind a stonewall or dig a foxhole. But when the flak starts coming up, there's no place to hide. It's a helpless feeling."

Capt. Hale, a division headquarters company com-

mander who has seen action in Sicily, at Salerno, during the advance on Rome and the drive past Florence to the Po Valley, turned thumbs down on the long tiring trips of heavy bomber crews have to make. "Flying for eight hours at from 15,000 to 20,000 feet was more tiring to me than an action-packed patrol. I'd hate to think of flying 49 more like that."

(Dateline: 19 October 1944)

LIBERATORS RUN SUPPLY MISSIONS TO FRANCE

This is another of those "how it was done" yarns, concerning the big-bellied B-24 Liberators of a 15th Army Air Force wing, the 7th Army, the Tactical Air Force and the critical days of September 10 - October 5, when the 7th Army and the fighter-bombers were almost stopped in southern France for want of aviation gas, oil, bullets and bombs.

The 7th Army was plunging up the RHONE Valley under the direct support of the Tactical Air Force, and taking everything in stride. The situation was promising. Then came the eternal question of supplies for the all-important fighter-bombers, for air superiority had to be maintained if success of the 7th was to be assured.

There were plenty of supplies in the ships off the wrecked port of MARSEILLES, and there were even considerable stocks on the docks. But to unload and then transport over the cratered roads leading from MARSEILLES would take days to reach the emergency flying fields in and near LYON, the temporary supply center for the fighters. And time was figured in hours and minutes.

So they called Major General Nathan F. Twining, Commanding General of the 15th AAF, who in turn called Colonel William L. Lee, Weatherford, Texas, and Jackson, Miss., the wing commanding officer. Colonel Lee ordered the heavy bombers of his wing to be made ready immediately to run the bombs, gas, oil, ammunition to France.

On Sept. 10 the first formation of Liberators stripped of turrets and turret guns, took off from home fields loaded with supplies. Eleven hours later they landed at LYON-BRON airfield. Officers and men and what help there was at the field unloaded the aircraft.



OFFLOADING GAS WHILE FIGHTERS WAIT IN BACKGROUND

Portable pumps, part of the cargo, were rigged to the big Liberators' gas tanks and the precious fluid was pumped into empty drums. Just enough gas was left in the Libs to enable them to make the return trip to Italy. As the drums were filled, the 500-pound bombs and .50 caliber ammunition unloaded, crews rushed them to fighter refueling points on the field. And the fighters took off to continue the support of the 7th, then well beyond LYON.



FRENCH CIVILIANS FLOCK TO LYON AIRDROME

The unprecedented conversion of the heavy bombers into half-protected transport aircraft amazed the curious Frenchmen who came by the thousands to the airdrome to view the four-engined bombers which only five days before were blasting installations in the LYON area.

Discipline was strict for everyone. No smoking was permitted within 300 yards of a plane. Everyone had to police his own area, keeping the civilians away, and then get out as soon as the plane was unloaded.

All in all, between Sept. 10 and Oct. 2, the Liberators flew 704 transport sorties without escort, carrying more the 800,000 gallons of high octane gasoline and more than 1,000,000 rounds of ammunition for the Tactical Air Force.

As the ground situation improved, supplies were flown deeper into the interior, providing quicker supplies for the hard working fighter-bombers. The greatly extended supply lines of the 7th correspondingly lengthened the supply of the supporting Tactical Air Force, but the resourcefulness and thoroughness of the supplying Liberators took up the slack, and supply lines were maintained.

Total supplies transported by the Liberators: 847,016 gallons of aviation gasoline; 10,994 empty drums; 1,276,030 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition; 24,360 gallons of oil; 802 tons of bombs; 500 pounds of grease and 90 fin crates.

EDITOR ADDENDUM

I hope you readers have noted that this edition of the Ad-Lib is about as ambitious an effort as I've ever done - 40 pages! I had some stories that I just had to put in, and some that were left out because of insufficient room. I hope you like what I've included. Along with making this a worthwhile project, comes the overhead: printing, mailing and other costs. I hope you will find it in your hearts (and checkbooks) to help underwrite some of these costs. I enjoy doing this, but can't do it without financial help--Bob K.

15th AAF IN ITALY -- THE STORY OF WALT AND ROCKY COULD BE FANTASY. BUT IT'S TRUE!

They never knew each other in civilian life. Both aerial gunners, both on B-24 Liberators for a combined total of 131 missions, they've never been on the same combat crew. Seldom in the same organization. But for two years Walt and Rocky have been following each other around like Pat and Mike.

S/Sgt Ross L. Koch (Rocky), 940 Michigan Ave N., Fond Du Lac, Wisc., and S/Sgt Walter E. O'Laughlin (Walt), 623 N. Greely St., Monticello, Ill., enlisted on practically the same day in July, 1941. They first met at basic training at Scott Field, Ill.

Walt found himself working in the mess hall, and Rocky was there -- a cook.

They were separated when Rocky went to Harlingen, Tex., Aerial gunnery school and Walt to Las Vegas, Nev. They met again two months later, both awaiting crew assignment at Tucson, Ariz.

Walt and Rocky got different crews and different outfits. They went across at different times. They didn't know it, but they both went to England. They never wrote to each other.

Down in Bangazi, Libya, one afternoon, Rocky was carting a big bunch of grapes in one arm and a watermelon in the other. He'd been sent down for some special bombing out of North Africa after already seeing a few places like Bremen, Kiel, Schweinfurt, and Cologne out of England.

Rocky plunked his goods on a restaurant table, looked up, and let out the familiar cry, "Walt, you old so-and-so." "Rocky, what the ---'re you doin' here?"

It was Walt and Rocky bombing Foggia, Naples, Bari, and Cities of Sicily, both of them on different crews, both in different outfits, but seeing each other frequently -- until the low-level attack on Ploesti, Rumania.

Walt thought Rocky had gone down. Rocky thought Walt had gone down. Each, unknown to the other, had received the Distinguished Flying Cross for that mission.

Time passed, and they went back to England. Up in Norwich, England, Rocky was enjoying refreshments at a Red Cross. Walt walked in. They had some good days together, in between bombing more targets on the order of Munich, Leipzig, Vienna, and Regensburg.

Came Bremen again, and Walt was wounded. Rocky thought Walt had gone down. Walt thought Rocky had gone down. Walt was sent back to the States to recuperate. Rocky stuck around, hoping to be in England for the invasion. He was there through 101 missions, then he was classified "war weary" and shipped home for a rest.

Rocky was just back from furlough, walking down the company street of his re-distribution center at Miami Beach, Fla. "The first guy I saw was Walt."

Walt had married, and they brought each other up to date on their own Two-man war. Both were ready to go overseas again. The two men left Miami Beach at different times. Walt and Rocky came together in the same overseas replacement squadron at Chatham Field, Ga. Why they parted there, Rocky said, "Well, Walt, I

doubt if I'll be seeing you for a long time." "Just take it easy," Walt replied, "I'll be seeing you."

Walt stood in the Red Cross in Foggia the other day, thinking of noting in particular, when their seventh meeting took place.

"Walt, you old so-and-so" -- the traditional greeting. "What'd I tell you," Walt reminded him.

The two are waist gunners in different squadrons of the same Liberator group. Rocky had picked up a Purple Heart since their last meeting for wounds received on a milk-run to northern Italy.

Walt and Rocky want to finish 50 missions from Italy, they go to the Pacific for 100 against the Japs--on the same crew for a change. They figure to have 500 missions between them before they quit.

"If Walt goes down, I'll quit flying," Said Rocky, "We've met everywhere else, and we'd be sure to meet in Germany."

By: Sgt Ray J. Schrick Portland, Oreg.

(Editor: To further flesh out the story about "Walt & Rocky" and their connection with the 451st. Not much is known prior to the time they came into our 451st, other than what's reported in this article.

But, according to my research, S/Sgt Walter E. O'Laughlin is not listed as having flown the low-level Ploesti mission on 1 August 1943 with the 8th Air Force (Reference: From the bible of the low-level Ploesti mission titled "PLOESTI," by Stewart & Dugan). I don't mean to impugn the story as written in the overseas Ad-Lib, but my research shows differently. Walter came into the 451st as a member of Harold S. Patterson's 726th crew. Those that made up that crew were - as shown below. Standing: Thomas Thurman, CP; Harold Patterson, P; William Bodie, B; Burton Shilling, N; unknown. Kneeling: Gunners; A. Kozakis, D. Rodriguez, W. O'Laughlin, L. Balzer, G. Really, W. Carrington



S/Sgt Ross L. Koch, on the other hand, DID fly the low-level Ploesti mission with the 389th Bomb Group. Upon joining the 451st, he was assigned to the Robert E. Smith, 725th crew. The make-up of that crew is as follows: Robert E. Smith, Pilot; Charles A. Oinonen, Copilot; Charles E. Yenker, Navigator; Louis S. Sagi, Bombardier; Robert G. Burley, AEG; Edward E. Benquiat, ROG; Gunners; Douglas M. Denton, Vernon W. Jutson, Jonie C. Easler, and Ross L. Koch.

Of the two principles in the story, it is known that Walter "Walt" O'Laughlin passed away in May of 1990. Ross L. "Rocky" Koch is still to be located as is the case with the story author, Ray Schrick.)

THE STANLEY PERLMAN OVERSEAS JOURNAL

Some months back, Stan Perlman sent me his personal journal, written while overseas. The journal was in its original form and never rewritten from the handwritten entries, thus giving this editor some difficulties in making out some of the words, which, at that at that time may have been written in haste. Not wanting to burden Stan with "What was that word?" I chose to note each unintelligible word with a (--?--), thus giving the reader the choice of putting in his own wordage. It doesn't happen all that often, but just so's the reader knows ahead of time, he won't feel that something was purposely censored from the original entries.

Stanley Perlman's journal is pretty much self-explanatory. He gives a strong feeling of what it was like to be a member of the ground crew and the personal feelings that went along with it. I have to imagine this is what some of you readers, especially you ground personnel, want to see published in the Ad-Lib. ME TOO! But right now this is the best, and most informative of all the entries recieved to date.

MY TRIP TO EUROPE TILL V.E. DAY

By M/Sgt Stanley Perlman
451st Bomb Group (H)
726th Bomb Squadron
APO 520

12/5/43 .. Snowy cold morning; had a hard time starting #2 engine. Left Lincoln at 0630 in the morning. Still T/Sgt, sweating out the Flight Chiefs T.O. Arrived at Morrison Field 1730 in the evening. What a difference between the climate from 32 degrees to 84 degrees. Saw a P-39 come at us near Jacksonville, Florida. Boy, the Navy is full of airdromes along the coast.

12/6/43 .. Morrison Field, Florida. Had briefing this morning; physical; lecture on ditching, and took atabrine once a day till we arrived at destination. Wonder where? Morrison Field is really beautiful. Just like the time Sunny and I came down on our vacation, nice warm and beautiful. Well, I made my last attempt to reach Marilyn. I suppose she just don't give a hoot.

12/8/43 .. Left Morrison Field at 0200. Its a funny feeling to take-off in the dark. I'm still on the catwalk closing the door and starting the put-put. Still on the flight deck, took over engineer position a number of times. I guess Johnny (Max D. Johnston) and I are (--?--?) at the combat crew as yet. This sure is a rest from the boys of the Squadron. It's a first over water flight, not suppose to land at Borinquen, but we did. While they were towing the airplane back the tug ran into the rudder. Looks like we'll have to stay over a day. The Puerto Ricans sure salute the 2nd Lieutenants. Lots of Civil Service employees here. Surprisingly beautiful barracks for foreign service. Would be rather nice to have it this way all the way across. Some of the boys went to town - had a venereal lecture, but they didn't listen.

12/9/43 .. Left Borinquen at 0630. Slept and ate all the way across the water. Arrived at Waller Field 1500. Wow! It is hot, about 100 F in the shade. Well, its overseas now, mosquito nets they say, nuts we say. Still taking a daily shower.

Last place for Coca Cola. So its South America. Passed over Trinidad, Venezuela.

12/10/43 .. Left Waller at 0600. Had to get the water, damn combat crew is not on the ball. Plane behind us stuck in the mud and these B-24s can really sink in soft mud. Arrived at Belem, Brazil about 1530. Still hot as hell. Talk about mosquitoes, they stand with a pitch fork ready to puncture you. The Navy is here with PBY-5's: patrol work. What do you know, all the bananas in the world you care to eat. Oh, yes, it cost us \$0.50 a meal, we're now on per diem - \$7 a day. Pulled a 25 Hour. Just Johnny and I; Chris is in there pitching. Doc don't care, all he thinks he has to know is to run a put-put.

12/11/43 .. Left Belem at 0630, arriving at Natal, Brazil about 1600 in the afternoon. Passed over the Amazon. It must have taken us about 15 minutes to cross it, muddy as hell. Passed a B-17 like it was standing still. Gas consumption high, have to reload ship to make the ocean jump. Natal - had to check our knives and guns. Sure wish I had a camera. Natal is really beautiful. Sweating out a tent to sleep in.

12/12/43 .. We're not scheduled to fly tomorrow. Pulled a 50 hour. Mosquito nets again. Bananas galore, pineapple right off the bush.

12/13/43 .. Natal. Red Cross is really doing their share. the A.T.C. is really wonderful. This is a jumping off place to Africa. C-87s, C-54s, DC-3s and A-30 (Baltimores for England) Saw an Italian Transport, what a piece of crap. No wonder the Italians stink in fighting.

12/14/43 .. Natal. Got up late. Still able to take a shower and keep myself clean. Laundry is done by yours truly every day. No dirty clothes, that's my motto. Went to the beach today about 8 miles from the base. The "Gooks," that's the Brazilians, are all over the beach. Fellows go in swimming naked. Women don't even mind. Let me tell you the good old USA is still the cleanest place in the world.

12/15/43 .. Got paid today - \$57 bucks, another day, another \$7. Guess what? Met Georgie Dunn, what a surprise. He really looks good. He's a crew chief engineer on a C-87.



Sgt ROBERT H. McGEE (CREW CHIEF of "THE CHAPLAIN")
& M/Sgt STANLEY PERLMAN (FLIGHT CHIEF)

12/16/43 .. See a show every night. Natal is still swell to take life easy. Humphrey Bogart in "Sahara." Bought a watch today for \$24 bucks. Pulled the rest of the 50 hour aircraft check. Oh yes, I and Johnny re-rigged the ship, very little wrong with it. I grounded the ship, told engineering the starter was no good. Another day, another seven dollars. Ice cream at 1430, what a life.

12/17/43 .. Natal. I think we leave tonight. Taxied "Meemie" to another spot where its level. Filled her up with gas. Field is all full-up with 24's. Something must be going to happen, but soon. Went swimming again for the last time. Tired of eating bananas and pineapple.

12/18/43 .. Left Natal 0200 in the morning. We sweated the trip out for gas consumption. The route is properly briefed to the Pilots, our Navigator, Boden-chuck really knows his stuff. Its our longest hop in the air - 11 hours - what a load. I almost made the pilot turn back for gas trying to siphoning out the wing tanks. No body dared smoke for four hours while we kept transferring gas. Guess that's all the sunburn I'll get for a while. Dakar our next stop. Forgot to say, had a hell of a storm. Coming across the "pond" we flew above it, then under it about 50 feet off the ocean. Came in "on the beam," what a fog it was. But Lt. Long is a dandy pilot, he brought it down like a baby.

12/19/43 .. Arrived Dakar, North Africa about 1230. Its a bit different than Natal - rain, mosquitoes. What a hole. The native Africans walk around barefoot and no clothing, Br-r-r, and I'm freezing to death. Still taking atabrine. What a smelly place, rain and more rain. This place is full of malaria that's why we had so long a lay-over at Natal. Bought candy, it seems to have a wax in it.

12/20/43 .. One of the ships of the 727th was lost at sea, ditched. We're moving on this morning - Dakar, that's where I want to be far away from. Got stuck trying to get around "Flabbergasted Fanny." Finally on our way to Marrakech. Flew through a mountain pass about 11,000 feet. Passed over the Sahara desert, nothing but sand and more sand. Saw one flying field in the middle of it. Arrived at Marrakech, French Morocco. They would not let us out of the plane till we sprayed it against mosquitoes.

12/21/43 .. French troops all over the place. It's a French Flying Corps school. DB-7's and French OB's. Boy the good old USA really puts out a dandy airplane compared to the other countries. Nothing too good for the American flyers.

12/22/43 .. I'm still sleeping in the airplane. Pulling a 50 Hour. Chris is the only one willing to help. Going to

town to see what the Arabs do and how they live. Phooey, it stinks. Horses do as they please, what a smelly joint. Women walk around all veiled up. Going up to the Red Cross, had oranges (beautiful Sunkist oranges), ice cream; only cost 10 cents. Taught Johnny how to play chess, now he beats the daylight out of me. Had pretty good service out at our bird - no trouble. Took a hot shower at the Red Cross.

12/23/43 .. Still here at Marrakech. Going to town - doing odd things around the airplane. No word as to when we move up. Went to town by myself. Stole off with some soldier, went to Mediria. It's a town behind walls. The boys all have tales of their visit to the place. Give me the good old USA for cleanliness.

12/24/43 .. Still here. Think we'll leave tonight. Took another shower in town at the Red Cross. Hope the folks aren't worried. I wrote Mom a few letters from Natal, Brazil.

12/25/43 .. Left Marrakech, French Morocco for Telergma, Algeria about 250 miles from Tunis. Of course we hear all kinds of weird stories, but I don't believe half of them. We're really getting near the zone of battle now. Arrived about 1700 in the evening. They had turkey waiting for us and it was raining cats and dogs. Yet we are suppose to set a tent up. No more tents, so we moved in with a couple fellows from the

725th. Here in Telergma we find Arabs all over the joint. It seems like the ground crew and combat crew separate. Hurrah, glad to get rid of the bums.

12/26/43 .. Pulled bomb bay racks. It looks like they're going on some trial missions. I built a stove. It really gets cold at night. Filled my mattress cover with straw. Beautiful scenery.

12/27/43 .. Went on mission. The boys are doing fine keeping the airplanes flying. The combat crews are always making a fuss about the planes. They just don't care.

12/28/43 .. Overcast, no flying. Bought a mat from the Arabs, and eggs. Traded cigarettes for eggs. Cigarettes talk. One of the gunners from a B-17 shot an Arab who stole a parachute. The Arabs can get 200 bucks for them to make clothes. Chow is fair, still eating eggs. Writing letters every day. Do hope I get some answers soon.

12/29/43 .. Went to the Sad Sack Theater. Saw pictures almost every night. Another mission today. Damn field is a regular mud hole. Planes are stuck by the score but Peplow rams them out. I don't like to mention it, but we've been on the outs for quite some time. Someone's out to get my tail so I'm laying low till I find out a little more. I don't care much for Bobulinski, he always did get in my hair. I believe I'll outlast him in the outfit.



Lt. RICHARD S. LONG'S CREW
NOT NECESSARILY IN ORDER

STANDING: J. SCHNEIDER, J. BODENCHUK, R. LONG, D. SPENCER
KNEELING: C. HANBERRY, E. LONGNECKER, V. DeCRISTOFARO,
N. BILOWICK (ABSENT), N. MESSER, R. MATTHEW

Also T/Sgt Moore (Instrument Man), nothing but a nuisance.

12/30/43 .. Boys are still doing good "keeping 'em flying." maintenance. Damn if it don't look like we'll ruin the darn planes before we get to combat. I'm anxious as hell to find out just what its like. Arab children all around. It looks like a regular marketplace on the side of our tent area - "Tangerine Joe, Eggs Joe." The Arabs are all bundled up in rags. They squat down; you just don't know what they're doing, sh__ing or pi__ing - just can't tell. Damn ammo links from the planes in front are causing a lot of damage.

12/31/43 .. New Years Eve. Still in Telergma. Going to town today - Constantine. Who do you suppose I ran into: Lee, from the 385th. He tells me Travbridge, Wellington and the gang are around. Had a swell chow in town. Soldiers galore. What a way to go to the latrine. Just back up and leave go. The French have no idea how nice it would be to sit down and rest at it. Cold ride home.

12/31/ - 1/1/43 .. Took out my Thompson Sub Machine gun and let go. "Happy New Year - Happy New Year" Had everyone laid out under their beds while I spat out 30 rounds. A few letters came, but none for me, as yet.

1/1/44 .. New Years Day. Raining and snowing. Turkey for dinner - pretty good. It's about the fifth tent that burned down tonight. Mud up to our knees. Wish I had my boots. I'd like to break that guys neck in Lincoln who said we wouldn't need them.

1/2/44 .. Still raining. Just lay around for sack time. Wrote some more letters.

1/3/44 .. It stopped raining today. Watched "Bachelor Bomber" make a lousy landing. Landed three quarters down the runway. Couldn't stop - crossed the road and buried the nose in the mud. Hope she'll be back on line; can't afford to lose ships.

1/4/44 .. Sprung a leak in #229. Kauerauf landed it and she threw gas all over. What a job. Lt. Hunt, pretty good Joe. More practice runs, they're quite expensive. Met up with M/Sgt Troubridge, M/Sgt Nyqiert from the 97th Bomb Group, my old outfit. Troubridge would like to get in the Group. I'm pretty proud to show up to those boys.

1/5/44 .. Too bad for flying. Next to Constantine, 27 miles away, three hour trip, rough road, got a little tight - but had lots of fun. Met an Arab named "Miss," who could speak good English. Showed us the town. Boy, the Americans are sure free with their dough. They spoil them. Cleanliness is no more - it's strictly in the States. It gets worse as we go along. Still taking my helmet baths.

1/6/44 .. Snowing and raining. Gave my laundry to the Arab with a mule. The clothes come back, but it has the damn Arab smell. It just ain't kosher.

1/7/44 .. Got paid today - not bad, just per diem money. \$27, not bad. Still have a payday coming. Shoes are giving out. It better dry up soon. Trying to get clothes so we can keep warm. Washington might have spent his time at Valley Forge like this, only we burn gasoline to keep warm. When in the hell are we leaving?? Don't like to admit it - I did it in my britches. I went to a show. Mother nature told me when, but I paid

no heed to her. I just missed by 8 steps. Ruined my clothing and all. Drove the boys out of the tent. Egad, what a mess. Doc Kramer told us everybody's got them.

1/8/44 .. Flying today. 3 ships got stuck in the mud.

1/9/44 .. Rations today. It seems like I just wished I had a whole carton of Clark Bars. I paid \$0.50, traded another candy bar and a package of cigarettes for a Clark Bar - they're good! One plane bogged down, #751.

1/10/44 .. Sunny day. Maintenance; ammo links still damaging our ships. Major Marshall came and told us the boys landed in Italy seven days ago. They arrived safely, no one lost. Maybe we'll leave soon.

1/11/44 .. Another sunny day. Runways in Italy not finished yet, OH me!

1/12/44 .. Just sat around mighty proud of my stove. It really keeps us warm.

1/14/44 .. 100% of our airplanes in the air. Hope we do as good in combat. 726th on the ball.

1/15/44 .. Boy, the stories they tell us. These P-38s can sure go. Lee just brought in a P-39 and P-38 in from the Kasserine Pass, just some 50 miles from where we are stationed. Thoubridge tells me ground troops are pretty safe behind the lines, but it looks like we're going to be beautifully close.

1/16/44 .. Paper work being checked by M/Sgt Epperson. Good old Joe knows his stuff. I'd like to know just half of what he does.

1/17/44 .. Ration Day .. 8 Packages cigarettes; 3 candy; 1 cake soap; 2 packages chewing tobacco. Not very much but will have to do. Still sweating your letters out, Mom.

1/18/44 .. Baggage racks to be installed in the airplane. The Colonel just returned from Italy. O'Boy, at last we're getting ready to join the echelon in Italy.

1/19/44 .. Loading ship about 0400 in the morning. Big bon fire - burning all the straw. Everyone taking their stoves in the airplane. Couple Lieutenants are hauling motorcycles in the rear bomb bay.

1/20/44 .. Depart Telergma at 0800 to Gioia del Colle, Italy. Passed over Sicily. I can remember the outline of the coast after flying a couple hours over the Mediterranean, in formation, past Taranto. Beautiful green grass from the air. Can hardly see our field from the air. The landing mat blends in with the grass. So this is our Base. All the members of the Staff are moving in together - naturally includes me. (Of course I'm snubbed for some reason. I know, not really.) First Sergeant fixed us up a nice place on some rocks. I don't like the company, myself .. Just the Inspector.

1/21/44 .. Took the day off making a bed out of crates the equipment came in. The boys were sure glad to see us. They were on all kinds of details, so they're back on the line now away from the Major.

1/22/44 .. Still NO mail. I guess the boat sunk with all my mail on it. Routine maintenance.

1/23/44 .. Made a dandy bed. Looks like a skeleton, but it's springy and I think it has knee-action. I'm now an expert bunk maker. Practice mission - 9 airplanes.

1/24/44 .. Mighty comfortable. We're sweating the Jerries out. They bombed Bari a month ago, knocked the hell out of the ships in the harbor. Received my first let-

ter from home. It's about time. I sent a telegram home. I received a letter from Marilyn. I guess this going overseas got the best of her. I like it. I hope she keeps writing.

1/25/44 .. Getting ready for a mission. Setting up our equipment takes time.

1/26/44 .. Crew Chiefs know their job now. Work is easier for me. All I have to do is suggest. I like working with them.

1/29/44 .. Beautiful day today. Peddlers on Mussolini's highway selling homemade cookies, not bad. Lots of black market eggs; 20 cents apiece. A cake they want \$3 for.

1/30/44 .. Gioia del Colle. First official mission today. Bringing out flak suits, helmets and all. Went to Yugoslavia to bomb a Radar Station. Navigated about 800 miles, they missed the target by 15 miles: Well, its a start anyhow.

1/31/44 .. Payday for some, but not for us. We didn't sign the Payroll. Maybe the 10th. Give Italy back to the Italians, let's go home.

2/2/44 .. 2nd mission today. Dropped 100 tons. Two men shot up by anti aircraft. 1 ship lost on landing; tire flat and landing gear caved in. 726th didn't get a scratch.

2/3/44 .. Day spent in getting ships ready for another mission.

2/4/44 .. Target cloudy. Brought back 5000 lb. bomb load. Ticklish business landing with load. Went to San Pancrazio.

2/5/44 .. Rained all day.

2/7/44 .. Below zero weather. Whoever said "Sunny Italy," should be shot.

2/8/44 .. Clear and cold. 4th Mission. Still at San Pancrazio. Changing engines on #229 (1 & 3 feathered - ran out of oil over the Adriatic on 3rd mission.) Shaw, Nelson, Olson, Ferree, Sumner and myself stayed at 58th Service squadron. If only our outfit could serve food like this. Heard one of our ships lost on take off. Ice on wings - #151 - T/Sgt Cole's ship. Lt. Hunt & crew lost, except 2nd engineer. Three ships came back shot up. Nose gunner on #636 killed - a swell kid, too.

2/9/44 .. Still working on airplane. Rainy weather slowing us down. Notified I'd made M/Sgt.

2/10/44 .. Returned to Gioia. #636 copilot shot in the leg. It seems to be a hard luck ship. Feathered 3 engines on the way over. Captain Winski quite a pilot; cool and collected.

2/11/44 .. Mission called off. Weird gale, I could swear our tent was going to blow away.

2/12/44 .. 6th mission. All ships back. Lt. Roman's crew (#687) bailed out. Pilot brought ship in by himself .. How? Controls checked

okay on test hop.

2/13/44 .. Bad weather.

2/14/44 .. Bad weather. Mail is slow for me.

2/15/44 .. Still no mail .. What gives!

2/16/44 .. Handed the Germans another plastering, targets hard to see.

2/17/44 .. Was on guard with Epperson. Went to town, Gioia, to see what it was like. NO GOOD. Give it back to the Italians.

2/18/44 .. Rain and snow.

2/19/44 .. What a war.

2/20/44 .. No flying.

2/21/44 .. Rain ruined runway. Too soft for take off's.

2/22/44 .. Mission. All ships returned.

2/23/44 .. Maintenance all day.

2/24/44 .. Mission. All ships returned. My flight still going strong.

2/25/44 .. 10 ships on mission. Lt. Coleman went down over target. Dropped bombs at Regensburg. #738 and crew landed somewhere. Last seen blazing away with guns at ME 109 all the way down. A Jewish fellow named Leo Greenberg went down with Coleman. He went to (--?--) a day before I talked to him, "You know I need to do a little of this praying for the work you're doing." Finally got my boots .. HURRAH !!

2/26/44 .. Knyerd lost without a ship. Place is flooded. Ships all landed at different fields. They can't get home.

2/27/44 .. More returns. Field very bad. #082's #1 supercharger and intercooler blown out . Johnny went to Foggia.

2/28/44 .. Rain.

2/29/44 .. Payday. Rain.

2/1/44 .. All ships got back. Can land but not good to take off from.

3/2/44 .. Sun shining.

3/3/44 .. Get ready to move. They tried to leave me behind to move the equipment. I'm p__ed off. I think they're trying to get rid of me because I won't become one of those brown noses. I'll just bide my time.

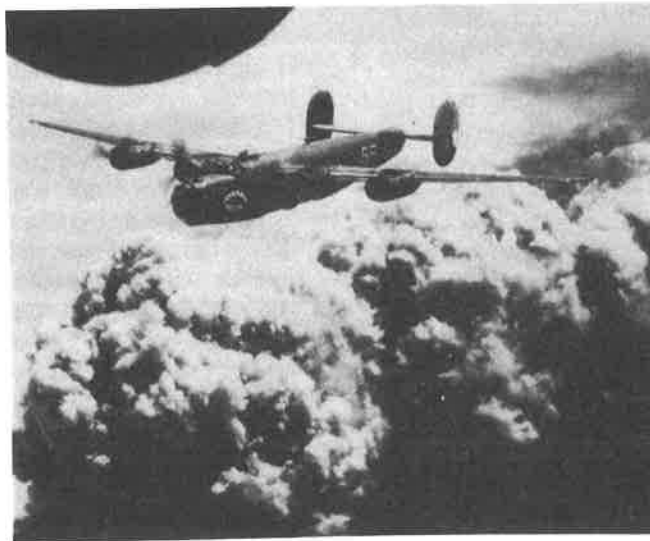
3/4/44 .. They went south to San Pancrazio - that's where I was before. Damn good landing strips. The boys did well, we're ready to go the next day, after moving, for a mission.

3/5/44 .. We're still at Gioia. The tent is set up at the Engineering Office. Life of luxury till we send all the equipment.

3/6/44 .. What a mud hole. Lots of rain.

3/7/44 .. Left Gioia for San Pancrazio. The boys did a good job and are to be complimented on their work.

3/9/44 .. Practice raid .. Something big.



"SCREAMIN MEEMIE" JUST DOING IT'S JOB

3/11/44 .. Pulled mission. Only small holes in 2 ships. Our luck is still holding out.

3/12/44 .. Loaded frags. Usually means rain. It's the 8th time.

3/13/44 .. Dropped frag bombs. Loaded 1000 lbs.

3/14/44 .. Didn't say before, but get some good music on my radio. In fact, fell asleep and sorta half awake could not turn it off. I woke up and said what a dream I had. Dreamed I couldn't turn the radio off. Well, I didn't, I ran the battery out.

3/15/44 .. What a muddy hole. I don't see how these landing gears are taking it. Going through holes that are two feet deep. We're lucky as hell. Six 1,000 lbs. today.

3/16/44 .. Raining so hard couldn't see the Mess Hall - more sack time. Rumor has it that our boys bombed their own boys. They say the front lines moved up fast and the ships weren't notified till it was too late.

3/17/44 .. Early mission. Rained like hell. I believe its punishment for yesterdays raid. They knew damn well there wouldn't be a mission. Mission again with incendiaries. Going to burn them up. Been in action 45 days. 147 anti-aircraft holes - changed 11 engines - lost 1 airplane in enemy territory.

3/18/44 .. All ships off. All ships returned.

3/19/44 .. Received the first package with Milky Ways. Thanks. Funny, mail getting pretty regular.

3/20/44 .. Went to Lecce on pass today. Had a pretty good time - got lit.

3/21/44 .. "3 Feathers," a ship in my flight .. another feather in her cap. Lt. Slater brought it back. Sure glad to see them all. It was a lost ship. Lost for 11 days. Everyone thought it was lost and back she came. Had a bad engine. Changed it at Corsica.

3/22/44 .. Two fellows killed today playing around a German ammo dump. That's a hell of a way to go after all the training they got. But guys will never learn. #082 still down with supercharger trouble.

3/23/44 .. Rain today. Still had a mission.

3/24/44 .. Damn boots really get heavy after you wear them on a long walk.

3/25/44 .. Epperson made a test apparatus, found a leaky intercooler on #082.

3/26/44 .. Checks okay. Still blows couplings. What next?

3/28/44 .. Snow. Bomb bay doors frozen on two ships. I'm an early bird at pre-flight. I sorta get nosy, Bub.

3/29/44 .. Another one of my ships had a nose gunner killed. I talked to him this morning about his electrical suit. I saw the ship coming in for a landing. My heart sunk. I could see him laying against the guns. It seems like a 20mm shell did the works from a ME 109. Ship sent to 60th. Bias is really down and out. Hope we get it back soon.

3/30/44 .. No flying.

3/31/44 .. Payday. Rain - no pay. Anyhow it was Sunday. Stood in and listened to the radio. These damn boots drive you nuts. I'll bet I put in my ten miles hiking a day.

4/1/44 .. Damn windy out. Nothing unusual.

4/2/44 .. What damn weather. Mud up to our knees.

Still down on flights.

4/3/44 .. Early mission. Must have got us out about 0200 in the morning - tired.

4/4/44 .. Very disastrous. 2 ships (#078 & #087) took the works. Found a piece of flak in the oil tank and a bullet from one of our own guns. Even got to look out for some of our own boys doing dirty work.

4/5/44 .. Ploesti. Knocked the hell out of the target. Another bad day. 8 ships in the Group down in flames over the target. Very hot area. Our Squadron is still damn lucky.

4/6/44 .. Maintenance - patching holes and tires changed.

4/7/44 .. Some guys moved today to our permanent base (Castelluccia). Changed engines on #111. "Old Taylor" is still a damn good ship.

4/8/44 .. Foggia, 68 miles from the front line. Flew up on "Old Taylor." Slow timed "Taylor." Really buzzed the field. What beautiful scenery. Revetments for all ships. A beautiful river nearby. Oh boy, showers everyday. Still like to keep clean. Ready for mission tomorrow, I don't think they'll go. We're now number 1 in the Wing. No more the babies of the Air Force.

4/9/44 .. Our boys are taking a rest now. All Flight Leaders are only flying one in every 4 missions. Squadron pretty fortunate. So far - Ploesti, Budapest, Styer, Weiner Neustadt. Other Squadrons looking at ships with original color. Most near 25 missions.

4/10/44 .. Finished setting up our tent. Dug a trench right outside. enough for Epperson and I. Another straggler in the tent. He's just lazy and a good for nothing (--?--).

4/11/44 .. View very beautiful, situated on a high plateau, 200 feet above the valley overlooking about 30 miles.

4/12/44 .. Mission .. One "early return" (abort), a mechanical defect in the airplane, or just don't care to go to the target.

4/13/44 .. Flying. Beautiful weather.

4/14/44 .. Received two new ships, "Screaming Mee-mie II" - Lt. Long & Sgt Johnston. A silver job.

4/15/44 .. #082 four engine change. "Physiological effect." Everybody became scared to fly it, so we decided to give it new life. Four new engines. Lots of dust causing bad rings.

4/16/44 .. Mission. Over 400 flak holes. Still lucky, nobody hurt - WHEW!

4/17/44 .. Maintenance today. No flying.

4/18/44 .. Still down. Looks like we fly three days and down two. Going swimming almost everyday at a dammed up place in the stream .. Bono Joe Bono!

4/19/44 .. Mission over Germany. Fog and rain brought bombs back. And its rough landing with a load.

4/20/44 .. Mission today. Four more engine changes. Still getting in our swimming.

4/21/44 .. Darling your picture sure enlightens the heart. Wished I were home.

4/22/44 .. #082 just finishing. Going to Gioia to see Howard Tobin. What a set-up he has, food is the best.

4/23/44 .. Gioia .. Howard has enough ice cream to snow me under. Talked over old times. #082 test hop-

ped.

4/24/44 .. Bari .. Howard took pictures. I swear I'm going to get a "Napoleon Hat" one way or the other. Spread out the sides of the tent. Made a lot of room. Just like in the States.

4/30/44 .. A rest for six days.

5/1/44 .. Month of May. Summer just around the corner. Invasion soon, I'll bet.

5/3/44 .. Down to the river again to go swimming naked. Gee, but its swell. Lost my soap, then my shoes, in the water.

5/5/44 .. Mission okay.

5/7/44 .. The "Polecat" returned. Is Lt. Bias happy. Just like a kid. The Colonel is on his tail. One more abort and out. Sgt Hanson will keep him in there. I'm for it all the way. It's about time Hanson got a break. This makes me with six ships again in my flight. Squadron still doing damn good.

5/8/44 .. Planes shot up again. Our luck is still damn good.

5/9/44 .. No flying.

5/10/44 .. "Cannon Fodder" came back today. Had 76 holes in it. Up to 17 ships now.

5/11/44 .. River again.

5/12/44 .. Did I tell you .. bought my Napoleon hat from Bari. Ho, Ho, going to take pictures of it.

5/13/44 .. 0230 in the morning .. there is suppose to be two missions, but the second one clouded up and rained it out.

5/14/44 .. Mothers Day. Hope Marilyn bought Mom a swell Mothers Day gift.

5/15/44 .. 727th Squadron lost a ship on take off. Took pictures of it. "Little Butch" -- tire blow-out.

5/16/44 .. River again.

5/17/44 .. 2000 lb loaded. Armament couldn't get them all loaded .. too much work.

5/18/44 .. Rain.

5/19/44 .. Stand down.

5/20/44 .. Playing volley ball almost every night. Call me "Spiker Perlman."

5/21/44 .. Hell of a wind. Supply got new Chief, Little. We sure made a change, he's out to help the boys.

5/22/44 .. Mission. Boys are going up to Po Valley. Will pass over the beach head to boost the boys moral. We do this quite frequently.

5/23/44 .. Back up to Northern Italy to a road bombing. They sure did some poor bombing. Missed the road, hit everything else. They said a bomb landed in the middle of a town. Changed landing gear on #636. Lightning struck 25 feet away. I really had a laundry mark in my drawers. I can still see that smoke blowing away.

5/24/44 .. Weiner Neustadt .. Cloudy overcast. Brought them back; the damn blokes. Why in the hell didn't they drop them. Can't win a war this way. 6 ships on again. Group has about 42 missions. Getting near 50 mark for some crews.

5/25/44 .. Mission today .. France between Toulon

and Nice. All 6 of my ships flying. All came in okay. No opposition. They knocked the hell out of the target. Hear tell of a hard mission tomorrow, have to get up at 0230 in the morning. Poor ole Bias - made a copilot because of poor formation flying. That's why it was called "Lonesome Polecat."

5/26/44 .. Got up at 0230 this morning. Going to Lyon, France, a nine hour mission. Went swimming, washed my jacket. All planes returned safely, not a fighter nor a bit of flak around. Where in the hell are they. If they would have had trouble they would have to land in Switzerland.

5/27/44 .. Today is my day off - spent it in Foggia. Had a lousy day, nothing to do. The people in Foggia are still Fascist. A pretty Italian girl did stop to talk to a fellow and I took her picture. Also a picture of Mussolini on the Red Cross building. What a character. Our ships had mission to Lyon area. Luck still holding out. Lots of flak holes but all returned safely. Knocked the hell out of the airfield.

5/28/44 .. Stand down .. Engine change #111.

5/29/44 .. Mission today - Weiner Neustadt. "Bodacious Critter" cracked up on runway during take-off. All returned safe. Took a flight to Gioia to see Harvey .. he moved! Prop governor trouble.

5/30/44 .. Styer, Germany. Rough mission .. so they say. Lots of fighters. #082 had a blow out on taxi strip. All

returned safely. Lots of flak holes. The boys are getting accurate. The fellows think it was an aerial bomb that put a ship down.

5/31/44 .. Payday .. Warm breeze 0300 in the morning. Today: Ploesti, Germany. They sure are pouring the soup to us. 14 birds to be ready. We need a rest. Luck still good. Knocked the hell out of the target. Smoke 20,000 feet up. (--?) of "Old Taylor" crew completed 50th. Received pipe tobacco and hair oil today. Bono Joe Bono.

6/1/44 .. It's June already. Stand down. We certainly need the rest. Went up to Naples, saw my old buddies of the 97th. All look the same. Saw Mount Vesuvius from the air. All the lava just covered the whole mountain and valley. I forgot my camera .. Damn it!

6/2/44 .. Up at 0200 this morning. Early take-off at 0500. Budapest today .. No flak, no fighters. The Jerries must be on the Western Front. All ships came home safely.

6/3/44 .. Early mission but the firing of two Red Flares grounded the mission. Went swimming. Had shots today.

6/4/44 .. Mission today: Northern Italy near France. No fighters, no flak. 1 more to go and we'll have 50 without a loss.

6/5/44 .. Another mission today. Still no mail from the gal friend. I'm not the only one, though. We completed our 50th mission today without losing a ship nor having an accident. Ain't that swell. We're to get some



PERLMAN: NAPOLEON HAT & ALL

sort of Citation. 5 out of 6 of mine flew.

6/6/44 .. 51st mission - going strong. #082 had aileron shot out. #114 cylinder shot. All returned safely from Ploesti. INVASION started this morning at six. Hooray. Anxiously awaiting some good news. Reason no mail, is probably all transports being used for invasion purposes.

6/7/44 .. Stand down.

6/8/44 .. Too windy .. mission cancelled. #580 still a problem child with landing gear. Worked into the early hours of the morning.

6/9/44 .. Mission today: Munich. #111 another engine change. #078 coupling blown. Hit the secondary target. Lt. Slater's crew finished fifty missions in "Three Feathers."

6/10/44 .. New crew flying "Three Feathers. #114, "Lonesome Polecat" ditched in the Adriatic. Well, there goes our consecutive record of 53 missions without loss of an airplane. Still no mail. 7 wounded and 2 killed. #580 left to get the wounded.

6/11/44 .. Giurgui, Rumania - oil dumps. #078 has engine change. Probably go to the rest camp tomorrow.

6/12/44 .. Left for the rest camp, San Spirits near Bari. I don't actually feel like going, but I think it will break the monotony of things. We have Villa 36 .. 15th AAF rest camp. Nothing to do but lay around and enjoy the Adriatic waters. Three of us fellows are together; Baker, Little and myself.

6/13/44 .. Got up about 0900 this morning and had a late breakfast. The smell here is nauseating fish smell. Went to Bitanto, took a picture of the "Piatzo." Dance tonight at the Club. Club is the center of activity.

6/14-18/44 .. On the 17th B-29s hit Japan proper. Might leave today. Getting boring just lounging around. Did nothing the whole week, now I'm tired.

6/19/44 .. Back at Camp this evening. Boy's say they've had nothing but stand downs 5 days straight.

6/20/44 .. Another stand down. Getting awful boring; ain't it. What a way to win a war.

6/21/44 .. Started out to be a good mission. Germany's new capitol, Breslow, but red flares put a stop to that. Went swimming; got a cold.

6/22/44 .. Went to Northern Italy. Made a good show on the target there. Supercharger changed on #111. Nothing exciting.

6/23/44 .. Up at 0300 in the morning. Bucharest oil field. No fighter opposition, again. Lt. Taylor finished today. Hate to see him go home, but he sure deserves it if anyone does, one of the best. Rumor has it we will return to the States to take over B-29s. I'd sure love it if they figured on being home by November 4th. It's a pleasant rumor, anyhow - hope so.

6/24/44 .. Stand down. Seems like we're running out



T/SGT ART GALLAGHER - NCOIC, ORDNANCE
HEFTING THE 100 POUNDERS

of targets.

6/25/44 .. Went to France to bomb a telephone exchange. Ships okay.

6/26/44 .. Going to Vienna today. Almost all our crews are finishing up their 50 missions. #429 forced down. Lead ship from 384th dropped out and protected McClure because of his bad engine. That was their 50th, too. Load - 500 lb'ers.

6/27/44 .. Stand down today. Beautiful day, went swimming. Wrote about 5 letters. Received a birthday present from Mom. My Mom thinks of everything.

6/28/44 .. Went to Bucharest. #636 had the same trouble. Top bomb rolled over the bottom, knocked lines out. All returned okay. Went to Foggia. Dave Carter called and told me to meet him. Had a damn good time shooting the bull. He's going home on the 15th of July. Received some mail from the little woman.

6/29/44 .. Stand down. Nothing special .. getting bored. Bad throat. Peplow says no work, so I just take it easy.

6/30/44 .. Payday \$45.05. I forgot all about my 3 years up on the 27th. I now collect additional "Foggy" pay, 5%. Had a big fire today, burned 40 acres of land. Went swimming. Water hole running dry.

7/1/44 .. July already! Holy Mackerel! Stand down and practice missions. Taxied #636 across the runway to her revetment.

7/2/44 .. Boy oh Boy. #580 going on her 3rd consecutive mission. Going to Hungary. I think they'll hit bad weather at Budapest. They hit the target. Sure running out of crews. More men finishing tomorrow.

7/3/44 .. Bucharest today. Lots of flak, no fighters. More members of the crews finished. Gas tank change on #636. Only 5 crews left to fly. Rest ready to go home. Mail from E and Aunt Ruth.

7/4/44 .. 4th of July. Nothing exciting happened here. All they did was leave go a 500 lb bomb. Really a maelstrom.

7/5/44 .. France today. #580 got 2 fighters. Three more guys from Mosen's crew finished. Rain. We're shy combat crews. Lasiter, Olson and Pelcher joined up. Received a letter from Sunny and Rhea. Hope Steve is alright.

7/6/44 .. Northern Italy. Still going strong. No new crews, yet. Taking it easy.

7/7/44 .. Went to Germany. 75 miles south of Breslau oil storage. #229 assigned to me. Phooey!

7/8/44 .. Went to Vienna. They saw 6 B-24s shot up in mid-air. Still no crews. Morris is a pretty good boy. Said good bye to Slater and his crew. Home to US in "Strawberry Bitch." What a buzz job he gave. Took an aerial with him.

7/9/44 .. Stand down. USO show today. 13 year old

REMEMBER: YOUR \$\$\$ DONATIONS HELPS OUR CAUSE

more cans in.

9/9/44 .. Went to Trani and had a steak dinner with French Fries. Went to Bitonto to have some more fun. Got back pretty late.

9/10/44 .. Stand down.

9/11/44 .. Well the boys are making shuttle runs to Lyon, France. At the moment the army has turned us into transports for supplies to troops in France. Because all bridges are blown up and the supply line stretched so far, we're supplying them with gas, oil and bombs, at the fighter field in Lyon. 12 - 500 lb bombs; 18 empty barrels (the boys fill the barrels up with gas from the Tokyo tanks.)

9/12/44 .. Too windy and gusty to take off. "Klunker" looks like new.

9/13/44 .. Taking off again for Lyon. What a load: bombs, barrels, oil and a full crew, plus 2 Majors. But we dropped the ball turret so it makes the ship about 1,700 lbs lighter. Some ships are carrying gas in the bomb bay. They took sleeping bags - might decide to stay there all night.

9/14/44 .. Stand down.

9/15/44 .. France again.

9/16/44 .. Stand down.

9/17/44 .. Put in bomb bay tanks. Went to church this evening. Had a nice service in Foggia. Held it in a gymnasium. Felt right at home.

9/18/44 .. Went to (--?--) this morning. Really enjoyed the service. Met Dave Rosenfeldt. Had a good chat. Service was about 3 hours.

9/19/44 .. Didn't go to (--?--) this morning. Had a little work this afternoon. Almost got my eyes shot out with a shell. Went up on a flight this afternoon to shoot landings. Removed the bomb bay tanks. Going to France tomorrow.

9/20/44 .. Stand down. We'll have to sit out another day. We expect to stay there overnight.

9/21/44 .. Another stand down. Damn it,



THE VICTIM - "SLOPPY BUT SAFE"
LOST WING IN LYON, FRANCE



THE CULPRIT - P-47 AFTER CLIPPING WING ON 727TH A/C

that makes about 6 in a row.

9/22/44 .. Friday. Left for Lyon, France on one of our ferrying trips. I went in "Klunker." Left with 100

gallons of oil, 18 empty gas drums, 12 - 500 lb bombs, 1,000 rounds of armor piercing ammo and 13 men on the crew. 80,000 lbs of weight. Arrived at 1130. The field is so crowded that we circled for over an hour. A P-47 ran into a B-24, tore the whole wing off. Ships take off and land every second. It's such a beautiful field. The Germans occupied it and had about 30 hangers. There wasn't a one left of them, just the remains. The reason we did ferrying was because the US 6th, 7th Armies moved up to the Belfort Gap so fast that supplies were needed something awful. Our Engineering Officer gave four of us a 2 day pass, so we went into town. Got to town on a street car. I shall try and describe the trip. The street cars are on a one way track. They are red and some are open street cars, like we had in the 1925'6. They have modern buses - electric. Everyone is so friendly. All the people look at you and smile. Was not a bad looking girl in the bunch. They all wear a beautiful hairdo and smell of fragrant perfume. The town is so clean. The important means of transportation are bicycles. It's nothing like Italy. People are so neat. We arrived in town about 1400. Went to cross the Rhone River. All the bridges were blown up by the Germans. What they did was to blow up the center section of each bridge. drop a span - they did it so neatly. There are about 12 bridges across the Rhone. I took pictures of them. but the day was sorta dark. We found a hotel room off the center of town. Then we had dinner. The way they serve, you're first impression is that you'll starve. They served us tomato salad with pickle juice over it and bread. So we filled up with bread and tomato. Sure were stuffed. Then came our soup, then macaroni, then the meat, all at different times. We sure learned a lesson. Spent the rest of the time at the Cafe and Night Spots.

9/23/44 .. It rained today. Guess we won't be able to return. Walked all around all the stores and cafes. Bought a few pictures and stuff. Took some more pictures. Hope they come out. Was able to get hold of some film for 14 francs.

9/24/44 .. It looked good enough to take off. Went out to the airport. First took a bunch of pictures. A lot of Frenchmen stopped us. It was Sunday morning, "We're all glad to have you here, the Americans are always welcome." So we was, and they were, very friendly with us. We met up with one Frenchman who spoke English. He told us about the autocracy committed by the Germans, concerning the treatment of a Jew, or anyone that was circumcised. How they took reprisals on children and (--?--) them in a church. How they fed salt water to a crowd of 80 in a box car and found nothing alive when they opened the car. How they wanted everything their way. He said it was hell. We went back to the airfield and when we went back we found we were in hot water. Our Group stopped ferrying. We did our next best thing and took the #484 ships and went to Marseilles to sweat out a ride to Rome. Our trip to Marseilles was beautiful. We flew back at 200 feet off the ground and saw all of France on the way down. Stayed at Marseilles over night to get the "Rome Courier" C-47 tomorrow morning.

9/25/44 .. Arrived in Rome this morning. All the fields were closed. They had a heavy rain. We aren't able to get a ride home from here, so we started hitch

hiking. I took a picture near the Coliseum with the fellows. Passed by the Arch of Triumph where Mussolini marched his troops. Saw the Piazza Venezia myself. Sun in our eyes so couldn't take a picture. Finally got a ride to Naples. Arrived late at night.

9/26/44 .. Went to the airport this morning to bum a ride. No go. Started thumbing home again. Hit the wrong road and it sure took us a long time to get home - and here I is. It's Yom Kippur and I sure messed up. Sorry I couldn't keep it this year. Finally received pictures from Marilyn.

9/27/44 .. Airplanes turned back into combat status. Vienna and Budapest.

9/28/44 .. Little more work on the old "Klunker."

9/29/44 .. Rain.

9/30/44 .. Payday.

10/1/44 .. October already.

10/2/44 .. Nothing much. lousy weather, and I'm feeling punk.

10/3/44 .. Same.

10/4/44 .. Still punk.

10/5/44 .. 104 fever. Off to the hospital. Just took it easy for about 4 days. only an upset stomach.

10/9/44 .. Mission weather clearing. Greece.

10/10/44 .. Mission. Still nice. To Budapest again.

10/11/44 .. Vienna again.

10/12/44 .. Bologna, Italy. My old "Klunker" still operating. Mail very bad. Gets dark very early.

10/13/44 .. "Klunker" didn't return. landed at Falkner Field, Northern Italy. Two engines hit. Don't know when we will get it back. Crew's safe, that's all that counts. No one hurt. Terice lost his ship. I sure like to have Lt. Jackson as a 1st pilot.

10/14/44 .. Hall lost his #952. Went to Blechhammer. (--?--) lost his, too. Flak awfully heavy. I've been pre-flighting for Cole.

10/15/44 .. Hall came back. Went to Isle of Vis. Had an aileron shot out. Helping out on a radar ship.

10/16/44 .. Juganatos has the radar. Johnson ship, #198 supercharger ran away. Pulled 90 inches mercury. Pulled off runway. Blew a tire. Cracked a landing gear. Class '26.

10/17/44 .. Mickey ship assigned to me. Lots of work to be done. Cleaned plugs. Old ship. Looks like their feeding me the axe. I'll fool them and get it up there.

10/18/44 .. Washed it down for a paint job. Rainy weather - changed tire.

10/19/44 .. Painted Mickey. Fast, too, in about four and a half hours.

10/20/44 .. Went on mission to Northern Italy. A Captain Bombardier toggled his bombs into a corn field. What a waste of money. Trying hard to blame the airplane.

10/21/44 .. Rained again. Flew the ship when I wasn't around. It rained and soaked the cockpit. Put deicer boot on.

10/23/44 .. Mission to Munich. Its about time that that beer garden was knocked out. Missed target. Phooey!

10/24/44 .. Got some pictures back. Guess I'll send some home.

10/25/44 .. More boots. Nothing interesting. Just a pile of work.

10/26/44 .. Stand Down. 1 hour practice hop. I hope to hell the change of engine helps. It's not safe for combat. Meeting.

10/27/44 .. Had the engine down in 3 hours, but no new engine. Installed flame arrestors. The war has certainly slowed down on all fronts.

10/28/44 .. New engine ready to hang this evening. Work and more work, and rain everyday around 1530. It rains - what a mess.

10/28/44 .. Engine hung. Still working on all modifications. Stand down. Johnny got a new radar.

10/30/44 .. "Bad Penny" went down over Vienna. All other ships okay. Wickman's; major flak damage. Test hop today - okay. I think I'll go on pass.

10/31/44 .. Finished working on boots and modifications. Test hop. Payday.

11/1/44 .. November 1st. Connected up deicer system. I guess I'll go on pass tomorrow.

11/2/44 .. Bari - Luckily I got a ride to Bari. Had a pretty good time. Some good American ice cream at the Red Cross. Hell, all the soldiers have disappeared. Bari is pretty empty.

11/3/44 .. Mickey going on radar mission. Solo's and stand downs for everyone else. Mission for us. Sweat it out. It didn't come in. Must have been damaged. Isle of Vis.

11/4/44 .. Went to Munich today. Ship okay. Hit secondary target. Marshalling yards. I wrote a long letter about Lyon, France to Mom. One ship just came back from the target with a little trouble. On the way back a fighter jumped him. Hit the top engineer and belly gunner. "Klunker" came back. Sholtis to get it. I made up my mind not to take it because of the work it needed.

11/5/44 .. Mine at Isle of Vis near Yugoslavia.

11/6/44 .. (No entry)

11/7/44 .. Vienna. No ships lost.

11/8/44 .. Packages starting to arrive.

11/9/44 .. Three from Sunny; cookies, olives. Cookies, pretzels, olives, candy and newspaper. Today we got lights. Packages all over the table. Got to put these away so the mice don't get at it.

11/10/44 .. Ship flew navigational trip.

11/11/44 .. Nothing interesting today.

11/12/44 .. Inspectors from 15th AAF came today. I'll be darned, didn't do a damn thing. No flight.

11/13/44 .. Plane went to Gioia. We built a shack for winter. Moved in on double bunks. What a heated argument. Then we all laughed. Ship returned with radar camera.

11/14/44 .. Solo mission. Damn early return - radar out. Built double bunks.

11/15/44 .. Stand down - good. Rumor: no more airplanes or tires into the Group. Something cookin'. What's up? Maybe CBI (China-Burma-India).

11/16/44 .. "Klunker" all fixed up. Hope he goes thru another 50 missions. Sure need some good weather to fly around bomb krauts.

11/17/44 .. "Klunker" went down. #54 - bomb dropped on left wing of ship.

11/18/44 Munich. #41 - #2 engine shot out . No power. #3 oil pressure went out. Crew bailed out near Rome. Happily all safe.

11/19/44 .. Vienna. All back safe.

11/20/44 .. Blechhammer today. Got the hell knocked out of the Squadron. Four ships finito. #46 nose-up at the end of the runway. #50 brakes shot out. #55 to depot. #48 missing. Mine will fly tomorrow. Still no replacements. Less and less ships all the time. What gives?

11/21/44 .. Another mission to Northern Italy. Thanksgiving right around the corner.

11/22/44 .. Mission to Munich - again. They got the hell knocked out of them. Boys in waist had flak go through the side of the ship, through his flak suit. Didn't do anything but knock him on his rear. We had a football rally this evening. Pretty good stage show.

"THE RANK"

11- REICHENBACKLE	C.
99- BERRY	C.
00- LIPKE	C.
55- WYRICK	G.
44- BARTLETT	G.
77- WILLIAMS	RE.
66- COFFEY	QB.
33- WAGNER	L.H.B.
22- WILSON	R.H.B.

PROGRAM

YOU CAN'T TELL THE PLAYERS FROM THE PAGES WITHOUT A PROGRAM...IC URS

Thanksgiving Day... Challenge

WHO FEEDS WHO

"THE FILE"

6- SHRICK	L.E.
1- KING	L.E.
0- SORECKY	C.
7- NICHOLS	G.
9- KAUFMAN	G.
4- HUENNEKENS	G.
3- FREEMAN	R.E.
2- WAGNER	Q.B.
8- BECKES	L.H.B.
5- ENNIS	R.H.B.

THE LOSING TEAM IS TO SERVE DINNER TO THE WINNING TEAM.

451- Bombardment Group H.

11/23/44 .. Thanksgiving. Well, what do you know - turkey. What a meal. Really had some leftover to make sandwiches. The other day, toast and the chicken salad. Oh boy! Mail is slight.

11/24/44 .. My ship flew today. I went to Ariano. Had a good time. Show offered by the Red Cross. It was swell.

11/25/44 .. Airplane took off at 0100 this morning to Munich by itself. The only one that made the run at night. Came back okay. Radar hit the target perfect.

11/26/44 .. Late test hop. Multi packages. A footlocker full of candy.

11/27/44 .. 100 hour inspection. Taking it easy. No

mail.

11/28/44 .. What a rain last night. Nice and warm by the fire. Sack time.

11/29/44 .. More rain and more rain. Movies inside. More sack time.

12/1/44 .. Good sack time. Loads of rain.

12/2/44 .. Mission to Breslau. Nothing much - smoke pots covered target.

12/3/44 .. One year overseas. Amore, Beer Party, Red Cross - not bad. First bit of anti-Semitism I've noticed. Some jerk at the party caused it.

12/4/44 .. Stand down. 2 more shots. I have enough holes - bet you could blow thru me.

12/5/44 .. Boy this laying around really gets me. I'm bored stiff. More packages. We're certainly getting our fill.

12/6/44 .. By Gosh, Christmas is getting near.

12/7/44 .. (No entry)

12/8/44 .. Still down. Getting a lot of sack time.

12/9/44 .. Still down. Rain and mud - more rain, more mud. It's just one continuous cycle.

12/10/44 .. etc. .. over again.

12/11/44 .. Well, they finally got off on a mission. Certainly picked a tough one. Linz - oil city. News about the same. #3 and #4 engine change.

12/12/44 .. Rained like hell today. Ice cold rain. We try to work but its too cold.

12/13/44 .. Ship finished. Test hopped this evening. Have to get it ready for tomorrow. Radar is finally in good condition.

12/14/44 .. More rain. Put some time on the ship. Nothing new. Beautiful mud: Phooey.

12/15/44 .. Well, off on a mission. Delayed fuses. Propaganda leaflets to Linz. Ship came back okay. Bombed through clouds.

12/16/44 .. Brux, Germany. The two air forces are hitting same target. When we got there it was all shot up, so we took Innsbruck.

12/17/44 .. Think they went to Brux again. Boy, they took off at 0800 in the morning and didn't return till 1630 in the afternoon - and its damn dark.

12/18/44 .. Blechhammer today. What a surprise the Group got today. Fighters escorting them took off after a bunch of fighters that were attacking the formation in front, leaving the formation unescorted. Then another bunch of enemy fighters came in front and rear and knocked down B-24s like flies. The Luftwaffe finally showed up. Replacements are starting to come in from Gioia again. We lost 2 aircraft.

12/19/44 .. Blechhammer today - again. More fighters attacked. Getting rough again. Very few ships returned. Lot came in early, our Group lost about 8 today.

12/20/44 .. Blechhammer again. Flying right along now there's a break in the weather. Mail is pretty good. My ship has flown 5 out of 6 days.

12/21/44 .. Pison Skoda works, Czechoslovakia. Bombed by radar. All our squadron returns okay.

12/22/44 .. Stand down. Went to Ariano again. had a

AGAIN, REMEMBER: YOUR \$\$\$ DONATIONS HELPS OUR CAUSE

darn good time.

12/23/44 .. What a cold and miserable day. Stand down.

12/24/44 .. News isn't hot this morning. Germans have not been stopped yet. Stand down - bad weather. This evening the Germans have been slowed down by the Air Force. It shows the Air Force is needed to assist. One cannot do without the other. Just had a beer. Club looks pretty nice. Too many over there now, but it looks quite nice.

12/25/44 .. Christmas Day. Brux. Poured before and during take off. All to give the Heine a Christmas package. All returned safe. Turkey was excellent.

12/26/44 .. Went to Oswiecim, Poland to bomb oil targets. 1 ship (724th) went on through to Russia. I had an early return. Most all ships were hit by flak. Three emergency landings on airfield.

12/27/44 .. Stand down.

12/28-29-30/44 .. (No entries)

12/31/44 .. New Years Eve. Snow. Shooting flares all over the joint. Couple hit our tent. We almost got in a fight with the officers. Boy, some of them are really ignorant. - Happy New Year -.

1/1/45 .. Pre-flighted. Cleared snow off the wing. Had a good dinner, too, turkey, again.

1/2/45 .. Had a practice mission. Wind too bad. Enjoyed the sack - lots of bed time.

1/3/45 .. Didn't feel so good today. Upset stomach. Took pills - very uncomfortable all day. I'm all fever.

1/4/45 .. Took Epsom Salts to clean out. Mission to Brenner Pass today. Mine not scheduled. Still taking it easy. Sent \$100 home.

1/5/45 .. Went to Brenner Pass yesterday. Today - bad weather. Still feeling punk.

1/6/45 .. Little better today. Still a stand down. Ships flying a practice mission. Boy, those engineers are stupid.

1/7/45 .. Still a stand down. Poured all night. Mud galore. Cold as a bitch.

1/8/45 .. Mission today - Linz, Austria. So far mines been on it. Seems like all the Air Force is out.

1/9-10-11-12-13-14/45 .. Practice missions. Snow / Rain. Stand downs.

1/15/45 .. Mission to Northern Italy.

1/16-17/45 .. Practice missions.

1/18/45 .. Russians take Warsaw.

1/19/45 .. Boy, what news. Mission to Yugoslavia. Missed the bridge. M/Sgt T.W. Norton, Group Inspector, has asked me to come up to Group as Ass't Inspector. I'm thinking seriously of going. The outfit seems to be falling apart. Peploe's on the warpath.

1/20/45 .. Mission to Vienna, so far as we know. Nope, it was Linz, Austria. All shot up over Brenner Pass.

1/21/45 .. All ships out, mine and two others still in. Mine leading Wing formation. Colonel Stefonowicz flying. Delayed fuses, dummies. Mission cancelled.

1/22/45 .. Mission cancelled. Boy, the Russians are really going to town. 200 miles from Berlin.

1/23/45 .. Snow - cancelled again. Russians are not stopped yet. I hope they get to Berlin.

1/24/45 .. 4 miles from Breslow - 160 miles from Berlin, O'Boy, mission cancelled again. Steve went home.

1/25/45 .. Mission cancelled, again. We're not doing very much for the war effort. Read the article about David Brinn being killed in last gazette. Have to guard the booby traps.

1/26/27/28/29/45 .. Still a stand down. Practice missions, too. Phooey!

1/31/45 .. Mission today to Yugoslavia. They sure hit the target. Got flak coming back. Hanson's ship got the works ("Patches"). Pilot got a piece of flak thru his hands. Pretty good mail.

2/1/45 .. February already. Got to get payed.

2/2/45 .. Mission to oil refineries.

2/3/45 .. In and about Vienna.

2/4/45 .. Down today.

2/5/45 .. Mission to Regensberg. Small flak holes - no fighters.

2/6/45 .. Stand down. Practice mission. Received about six letters - BANKNIGHT.

2/7/45 .. Mission to Vienna, right over the heart of the city. Lost Major Reichenbach. Pretty good C.O. - Eager as well. I think he was Jewish, not sure. Ships got shot up pretty bad.

2/8/45 .. Mine flying today. Right over the center of the city. Had to bomb by instrument. Vienna again. Came back okay. Latest news is that one man fell out of the ship. It was hit on the left side of Reichenbach ship. But it was pretty much under control headed for Russia. Hope they're all okay.

2/9/45 .. Went on a mickey mission to Germany. Weather is bad up there, so they're going to bomb by instrument. Planes returned okay. Think they hit the target.

2/10/45 .. Stand down. Had flak holes and intercooler work. Worked all night. Changed plugs.

2/11/45 .. Stand down. Local missions.

2/12/45 .. Went on a mission to Yugoslavia - Northern Yugo. Received packages from Uncle Saul and Aunt Helen.

2/13/45 .. Went to Vienna today. Again, got hit in the



ATTEND ITS ANNUAL PRESIDENTIAL BALL, TO BE HELD IN THE OFFICERS CLUB ON SATURDAY EVENING JANUARY 20, 1945.

726th SQUADRON SOCIAL EVENT DURING JANUARY

tail.

2/14/45 .. Down for maintenance.
 2/15/45 .. Stand down.
 2/16/45 .. (No entry)
 2/17/45 .. Mission to Vienna.
 2/18/45 .. Mission. All returned early (--?--)
 2/19/45 .. Mission to Vienna, again. Sam Kalser came in on the 18th. He's in the 456 BG. Had a darn good talk. Everyone okay with him. Still cold and rainy.
 2/20/45 .. Brenner Pass. Still down for landing gear change.
 2/21/45 .. Changed landing gear. Finito. Ready for tomorrow.
 2/22/45 .. Mission.
 2/23/45 .. Brux. Mine came back a little early but hit a secondary target. Credit for a mission. #2 supercharger change. Hit.
 2/24/45 .. 727th flew. Went up to 60th. Hit in bomb bay, right side.
 2/25/45 .. Hit in firewall of #4 engine - and oil tank. Lost all the oil.
 2/26/45 .. Beats me!!? Don't remember.
 3/12/45 .. 60th mission.
 3/13/45 .. Mission today - Vienna.
 3/14/45 .. Received a pile of letters. To be exact, ten, everybody wrote.
 3/15/45 .. Mine didn't fly. Juganatos went home.
 3/16/45 .. Moosebierbaum. Came in at 1800.
 3/17/45 .. Beautiful (--?--). Big flak hole in #2 engine.
 3/18/45 .. Rained. Pulled nose section off engine.
 3/19/45 .. Marshalling yard. No flight for me. Mared tools.
 3/20/45 .. Didn't fly again today. Rumor of Germans seeking peace. Patton's going to town. Practice mission for me. Well, what do you know .. Perlman received the Bronze Star. As yet I haven't seen the orders, but they announced it at the meeting. Another medal - getting up in the world. Someone stole my two blankets tonight. Damn their hide.
 3/21/45 .. Mission to Brux - "Chaplin." Well, mine almost made it. There was an early return. Mine took its place. After it reached the formation Group called it to return. Mickey's were not allowed to fly unless on a mickey mission. When it returned I pulled the oil screen and too many filings. Had to change an engine. Beautiful day. Springs first day. Nice and welcome. Received four letters. What a citation. Received a Bronze Star for my work during the time I served as Flight Chief, via Captain Richmond. I suppose in appreciation of the work. Maybe Peploe also had a hand in it.
 3/22/45 .. Mission to Vienna. Boys shot the works today. Five feathered engines. The lead ship made it thru. Pulled 45 inches, 2,300 RPM. I'm still working on mine. Yesterday #54, Sholtis' ship, the ball turret operator got killed. They landed in Yugoslavia. My ship was suppose to fly in that position this ship flew. No one would have been hurt. Well, that's fate.
 3/23/45 .. Vienna today. What a mission. Right down main street in Vienna. All our ships shot up. Pulled 5 off the runway; Numbers 42, 46, 47, 48, 49. Hydraulics sys-

tems shot out - wings shot out. Slowed timed my engine at night, damn them. It wasn't necessary. Lead Bombar-dier hit by flak, knocked him on his tail so they missed the target.

3/24/45 .. Vienna again. All three ships returned safely. Beautiful day. Contemplating going to Rome soon. Received a letter from home today. A nice letter. It's still gets cold, alright.

3/25/45 .. Went to Vienna again today. Ships returned okay. Developed pictures today. Had an enjoyable time; shall try it again soon. Airplane flew practice again today. Played ball. Took a picture.

3/26/45 .. Went to north of Vienna. Bombed oil targets. Played hardball. "Patches" ran out of gas today. Received a letter from (--?--), maybe she'll continue writing.

3/27/45 .. Nothing new. Stand down. Worked on my #3 engine change. Froze up. Got an old one just as bad.

3/28/45 .. Test hop today. Okay. This evening went to the Seder. Truck broke down on the way to 2nd Bomb Group. Arrived; there were no seats so we stood and ate Matzo till it came out our ears. On the way home broke down and waited 3 hours for transportation. Got home early about 0200 in the morning. Met Raphael at the Seder. I'm tired.

3/29/45 .. Tired. No mission. Worked pretty hard. Didn't seem like I accomplished anything.

3/30/45 .. Loaded my ship for radar mission, but it was only as a spare. Played ball all day today. Had a quart of ice cream for supper. Received a letter from Milt.

3/31/45 .. Mine went on a mission today. My waist gunner hit in right fin. I'll have to change it. Stand down for me tomorrow. All ships returned okay. 62 missions.

4/1/45 .. APRIL FOOL: worked pretty hard all day. No fun - heavy wind. Still a restriction on the news. The 3rd is running over Germany. Patton can't even be found. I shouldn't be long now - we hope.

4/2/45 .. Ruined my watch and the second hand fell of it already. Darn it. Ship ready again. Helped print some film and pictures. Shall send them home. Weiner Neustadt today. Home of a Messerschmitt factory. Parade for Major General Twining. Pretty good. Hot as hell.

4/3/45 .. Stand down.

4/4/45 .. Stand down. What a wind and sandstorm. Didn't do a damn thing. Just lay around.

4/5/45 .. A year ago since we bombed Ploesti the first time. Went to Northern Italy. Our planes were at altitude. Fighters went down to knock the ack ack guns out. Still a lazy day. Took a shower.

4/6/45 .. Mission to Northern Italy.

4/7/45 .. Vienna under Russian fire.

4/8/45 .. No more Vienna targets. What a relief. That was hardest to hit. My plane flew today after about 7 days on the ground.

4/9/45 .. Received word from Sammy Kalser. Will see him tomorrow.

4/10/45 .. Sam and I shot the bull all day long. Had a pretty fair time.

4/11/45 .. Received Bronze Star today from Col. Leroy Stefanowicz. "Always glad to pin the Bronze

Star on a Crew Chief.”

4/12/45 .. President Roosevelt passed away. God, that's tough. He certainly was going to town. It really hurts, we all will miss him and his work.

4/13/45 .. Fuel tanks leaking. Will have to pull them. News is still good. Sad regret for Roosevelt's death is felt.

4/14/45 Sad news, President Roosevelt passed away. Hearing him over the radio will certainly be missed. Bombed Northern Italy today.

4/15/45 .. Boys are still going strong, 45 miles to Berlin. Almost even with the Russians. The whole front going to town. Bombed up Northern Italy today.

4/16/45 .. Finished my fuel cells. New President Truman spoke this evening. Seems too ordinary, but he endorses Roosevelt's policies. He made the mistake being introduced by Speaker Rayburn. Started to speak when interrupted, "Harry wait till I introduce you."

4/17/45 .. Did nothing today - nothing at all but loaf. Took a shower. Patton cut Germany in half in Czechoslovakia.

4/18/45 .. Nothing new. Kibitzed around. The Group flying mission to Northern Italy. Ernie Pyle died (killed in Iwo Jima).

4/19/45 .. Flew local today. Nothing unusual. News is still good. Patton in Czechoslovakia. Mission again.

4/20/45 .. Russians are letting go to get at Berlin.

4/21/45 .. Nothing unusual.

4/23/45 .. Got a new airplane. So they wished another stinker off on me. Too darn many hours.

4/24/45 .. Worked all day on inspection. Russians surrounding Berlin.

4/25/45 .. United States meeting in San Francisco today. Plane flew practice; okay.

4/26/45 .. Surrounded Berlin all the way yesterday. Boy am I lazy. News ought to be good when it comes on again. Hell of a hot day today.

4/27/45 .. Have 2/3rds of Berlin. 5th Army on way to Milan.

4/28/45 .. Practice missions.

4/29/45 .. Have 4/5ths of Berlin. First rumors of peace. Today Himmler asked US and British - they didn't accept.

4/30/45 .. Getting more of Berlin. 5th and 8th on rampage.

4/31/45 .. Another rumor of surrender, to Russians, too. Close to Swedish frontier.

5/1/45 .. Scheduled for a mission. Red flares called it off. Fellows said it would be the last mission. Hope so. Maybe surrender today. Hitler died this evening.

5/2/45 .. News is very good tonight. I shall write about it. Worked in the morning. Played ball. VE day. The Germans surrendered; Italy up to Innsbruck. This evening the airwaves are full of it. YIPPEE !!

5/3/45 .. Berlin fell completely. Everyone is giving up. Rumors are flying fast and far. We might stay for a long time in this joint.

5/4/45 .. Northwest Germany surrendered to Montgomery in behalf of Eisenhower. Also Denmark. Won't be long now.

5/5/45 .. Another surrender of 3 armies in Czechoslovakia. Norway is next and radio announced that preparations are being made now for surrender. Rumor has it we will be going home. We hope not a long wait. I'll bet I go to Rome first.

5/6/45 .. Dornitz has call in all the submarines. I'll bet an unconditional surrender been signed.

5/7/45 .. Took a physical today. Churchill will speak tomorrow - VE day tomorrow. O'Boy, its just about over.

5/8/45 .. VICTORY -- Its all over but the shouting. Had a formation this morning. Major McKinnis gave a speech. Home again. Won't it be swell. I'm sure Mom is happy. Maybe on to Japan. I hope not. Everything looks favorable.

(Editor: Perlman's final comments, upon conclusion of journal) "How do you like how my story ends; right on the last page."

OUR DIMINISHING RANKS -- THEIR FINAL FLY-BY

Anderman, Edward G., 726th - UNKNOWN

Beam, Paul E., 725th - 30 June 1997

Blevins, Grover C., 725th - 27 July 1996

Buckley, John D., 726th - 20 December 1996

Carstetter, Fred R., 725th - 1995

Coulsting, Stanley J. 725th - UNKNOWN

Cox, William A., HDQ - 17 May 1997

Gentry, Willie W., 724th - 29 October 1996

Kynerd Jr., Johnson R. 726th - 6 January 1997

Lamiman, Floyd R., 727th - 5 September 1996

Landon, Meron L., 724th - 25 July 1997

Moreland, Frank M., 726th - 29 June 1997

Muldoon, Ray A., 724th - 22 June 1997

Oinonen, Charles A., 725th - 19 September 1997

Stoutsenberger, Leo S., HDQ - 24 October 1997

Woodman, Allan S., 726th - 11 May 1997

Zentz, Philip L., 727th - 20 August 1997

Monetary Memorial Tributes

TO Peter Massare from Arthur Morin, Ernest Cummins, Sedgefield Hill.

TO Lou Sagi & Charles Oinonen from Douglas Denton.

TO Floyd Lamiman from family.

TO Charles C. Jack from James Williams.

TO John D. Buckley from family.

TO Johnson R. Kynerd from wife, Mary.

TO Palmer W. Gums & William W. Blue from Joseph Palumbo.

TO Philip Zentz from Leonard Strickler.

TO Joseph Petrovic from wife, Toni.

TO Walter Flannelly from wife, Helen & family.

TO Meron Landon from Paul L. McMillen.

TO Harry Fox from Reverend Paul Johnshoy.

TO William Sullwold from Robert Zimmerman.

TO Palmer Gums from Robert P. Mitchell.

TO Allan Woodman from Sedgefield Hill.

TO William H. McManus from Theodore Rill.

TO Robert Barnd from William B. Phifer

EVADÉE STORY REVISITED

Recently I received a 'Confidential Report' (Courtesy Col. John O'Connor, 724th) concerning the only known 451st crew that was forced to evade into a neutral country. To the best of my knowledge this was the only known case recorded in the 451st annals. It happened to the crew of 2nd Lt. Lyall E. Johnson, with 1st Lt. Clifford D. Kester flying 'right seat.' And the neutral country, to which they sought refuge was Turkey.

In Issue 23 of the Ad Lib I carried a story, "INTERNEES: THE FORGOTTEN, THE MALIGNED," which dealt in detail the situation that confronted the internees in Switzerland during the war. This peaked my interest, and with subsequent contact with Lyall Johnson brought about his tale of how they were taken into custody and eventually liberated and sent back to the U.S.

Since this 'Confidential Report' delves more into the combat aspect of the mission, I thought it worthy of inclusion.

CONFIDENTIAL

To; A.C. of A.S., Intelligence, Hq., Washington, D.C., thru A.C. of S., G-2

RUMANIA

Report of Crew in B-24, No. 42-52246, 724 Bomb Sq., 451 Bomb Group, who attacked Bucharest 15 April and subsequently made forced landing in Turkey same day.

From M.A Turkey Report No. 9765 Filed 10 May 1944

Source: Crew; B-2

SUMMARY:

This was the first mission for all of crew except 1st Lieutenant Clifford D. Kester and T/Sgt Simon Rangel who had each completed at least ten missions previously. Difficulties were experienced with tail turret and oxygen system about 45 minutes before target was reached, after plane reached an altitude of about 18,000 feet. Formation difficulties were experienced on three occasions, the last of which occurred almost over the target at which time the formation was heavily attacked by fighters just before they were able to complete reforming, after being forced open by element leader's sudden reduction of power. The plane on which this report is based was severely hit by fire from fighter aircraft, salvoed bombs somewhere near target, results unobserved, and dove from 21,000 feet to cloud layer at about 9,000 to 10,000 feet. They escaped further fighter action in the clouds and managed to effect safe landing in Turkey. The Navigator and Bombardier jumped with parachutes near target during dive. Presume they jumped safely although this not unconfirmed. Two crew members slightly wounded, one now completely recovered and the other almost completely recovered. Crew now interned in Turkey.

Crew consisted of the following personnel:

1st Lieut. Clifford D. Kester, 0681116, Co-Pilot
 2nd Lieut. Lyall E. Johnson, 0811392, Pilot
 2nd Lieut. George F. Nixon, 0704130, Navigator
 2nd Lieut. Robert M. Wade, 0682745, Bombardier
 T/Sgt. Simon Rangel, 18056462, Engineer
 S/Sgt. Robert J. Gabel, 13167943, Engineer
 S/Sgt. Walter L. Lark, 37417738, Radio Operator
 Sergeant Irving Garbel, 16078730, Gunner
 Sergeant Irvin L. Williams, 16134550, Assistant
 Radio Operator

Sergeant Linn W. Newman, 15130878, Assistant
 Engineer



Standing: Lyall Johnson, P; Lauren Woolhouse, CP; George Nixon, N; Robert Wade, B
 Kneeling: Robert Grable AEG; Walter Lark, ROG; Linn Newman NG; Irving Garbel, WG; William Lentz TG; Irvin Williams, BG

This was first mission for all of crew except Lieutenant Kester and T/Sgt Rangel. Crew flew No. 6 position in bottom flight of first attack unit and took off about 0640 GMT April 15, target Bucharest marshalling yards. While passing over Adriatic Sea at about 9,000 feet all equipment and guns were tested and checked OK. On arrival at the border of Rumania about 0920 GMT at an altitude of about 18,000 feet all equipment again checked OK, however about ten minutes later the Sperry Ball Turret oxygen system began to leak and required refilling at 20 minute intervals. About the same time the tail turret Azimuth control ceased to operate automatically. It was possible to move the turret only about 5 degrees to either side manually and this was difficult. Automatic vertical control ceased to function also the manual vertical traverse of the guns was possible from zero degrees to full down position only. It was also necessary for the gunner to keep his hands on the manual controls at all times in order to hold the guns in any position above that of full down. The guns themselves functioned perfectly, but their restricted and difficult traverse severely limited defense of the plane from attacks originating from the rear. The tail gunner made continuous attempts to repair his turret before the crew was engaged in combat but was unsuccessful and could only guess at the cause of the trouble. He believes that something fouled the gears and states that hydraulic pressure of the system was normal. About this same time the interphone to the left waist gun position ceased to function.

At about 0945 GMT formation difficulty was

experienced when the flight leader suddenly reduced power causing the rear element leader to dive under him while Nos. 5 and 6 were forced out of position to either side and down. About five minutes were required to reestablish the proper formation. About 1010 GMT the same formation difficulty was encountered for the second time and the trouble was repeated in less severe form at about 1027 GMT as the formation was on final approach to the target.

Weather had been clear to within 30 minutes of the target when broken to solid clouds were encountered at about 10,000 feet. The initial point about 22 miles West of the target was observed through broken clouds and the run to the target was being made largely on dead reckoning. It was understood that the formation leader only would determine the time of bomb release and that bombs from other airplanes would be released on observation of the fall of the leader's bombs.

No fighters or anti-aircraft fire of any importance had been observed up to the time when formation was slightly broken on final approach at 21,000 feet. At this time and just before it was possible to properly reestablish the formation, numerous attacks were made from the rear by fighters thought to be FW-190 and ME-109's. First attacks were made by fighters diving directly out of the sun and from five o'clock and these fighters were not observed until they were very close to the formation, at which time they had already opened fire. This first attack was made by two planes judged to be ME-109's who attacked individually in very rapid succession. The first withdrew, after a very close attack, down and to the right of the bomber, and the second passed very close over the bomber and withdrew down and to the left front. This attack was unobserved by the tail gunner and defense was limited to the top turret which did not appear to be effective. Engines No. 2 and 3 were hit by 20 MM shells and No. 2 caught fire but continued to run. The oil pressure on No. 3 dropped below 30 lbs, and it was necessary to feather this engine immediately. Immediately following the first attack several additional attacks were received from five to seven o'clock. Approach was from about the same level or from below the bomber, and these fighters appeared to be FW-190's. One of them, observing the inability of the tail turret to fire on him, reduced speed and sprayed the bomber with 20 mm shells which caused considerable damage. The right waist gunner received nine small pieces of shrapnel in the rear of his left thigh, one 20 mm shell hit the armor glass of the tail turret and shattered it but failed to come through, and two more hit armor plate on the lower part of the tail turret without directly injuring the gunner who was blown about five feet back into the plane through the open door of his turret, apparently when his oxygen supply exploded. He received some slight cuts around one eye from shattered glass but was otherwise uninjured.

Before the tail gunner was blown out of his position he claims one fighter which came within the traverse of his guns was hit and dove away smoking around the engine and fuselage. The tail gunner claims one fighter damaged.

During this action the bottom turret was not in operating position and from the time action began until it was completed waist gunners did not have time to

complete lowering the bottom turret and additional defensive power was therefore lost due to their failure to have this turret in position before the bombing run began. The crew states it was the policy if their group not to lower ball turrets until enemy fighters were actually observed. The advisability of following this policy in areas where enemy action is probable seems to be very questionable and certainly operated to considerable disadvantage in this particular case. The pilot was notified by interphone when one of his waist gunners and tail gunner were hit. He was unable to maintain position in the formation due to loss of Number 3 engine and decided to salvo his bombs and dive for cloud cover. Bombs were salvoed at approximately the same time they were released by other planes in the formation and are presumed to have struck somewhere near the target although it is not likely they struck the target proper and results were unobserved. The pilot notified crew members by interphone that he was diving for cloud cover and repeated his notice three times. This notice was heard by three members of the crew but was not heard by the front turret gunner and apparently not heard by the Bombardier or Navigator.

As the dive for cloud cover began, one enemy fighter was exposed to the fire of the top turret gunner who says he got in some good shots, the engine was enveloped with smoke and the plane dove vertically into the clouds. He claims one fighter probably destroyed. Several additional attacks were made by fighters as the bomber dove for cloud cover but no other claims were made and no additional serious damage to the bomber was caused.

During the dive which was quite steep the Bombardier and Navigator, being out of communication with other crew members, thought the plane was out of control and decided to jump. The front turret gunner started out of his turret but had some difficulty and when he had freed himself from the turret the Bombardier had jumped and the Navigator was ready to jump through the nose wheel escape hatch. The Navigator checked with the front gunner to see that he was uninjured and that his parachute was available and then jumped. The front gunner was unable to observe the opening of the parachute of either the Navigator or Bombardier but presumes they opened safely. These jumps were not observed by other members of the crew.

The front gunner would have jumped immediately at this time if he had been able, but one of the rip tabs on his armored vest was missing and by the time he was able to remove the vest and attach his parachute the plane had reached the clouds, he was able to see that the pilot and co-pilot had the plane under control and he refrained from jumping. During the dive No. 3 propeller became unfeathered and the engine ran away. On completion of the dive however the crew was able to refeather the engine and continue flight on three engines. The fire on No. 2 engine had blown out.

At first a course was set for return to Base but cloud cover was lost in about ten minutes and as fighter attacks were resumed the moment cloud cover was lost, course was reset to about 130 degrees to regain the advantage of cloud cover, which was kept until the Black Sea was reached at a point just south of Burgas. From this point the plane was flown about five miles to

sea and then followed a course to Istanbul. The field at Istanbul was not observed and landing was effected successfully, with wheels down, at Sarigazi where the crew surrendered to Turkish authorities. They were taken to Istanbul and the two injured men, Garbel and Grabel, were placed in Turkish military hospital there. On April 18th they were sent to Ankara where competent civilian specialists examined both Garbel and Grabel. It was determined that Grabel was completely recovered and had suffered no injury to his eye. It was also decided that no effort would be made to remove shrapnel from Garbel's leg. His wounds are healing nicely and he appears to be well on the road to complete recovery.

All secret and confidential material was destroyed prior to the landing of the plane in Turkey. The IFF equipment was blown up and the bomb sight was jettisoned into the Black Sea. The airplane which is very severely damaged is now interned in the hands of the Turkish military authorities at Sarigazi.

I have had the privilege of conversing with a British officer in whom I have considerable confidence who inspected this plane subsequent to its landing at Sarigazi. He confirms statement of the crew regarding extent of damage to the plane and states that it contains from 15 to 17 holes, each of which is from 4 to 8 inches in diameter and obviously caused by cannon fire. It is of particular interest to note that he says there were no holes in the airplane caused by bullets of smaller caliber and that he confirms the fact that the bullet-proof glass protecting the tail gunner was shattered but not penetrated. This appears to be quite conclusive proof that this glass withstood the direct impact at short range of a 20 mm shell.

This crew was not briefed regarding the fact that aviators landing in waters adjacent to Turkey and subsequently reaching shore are treated as shipwrecked mariners and can be released from Turkey within one to two weeks. In the particular case at hand, due to severe damage to the aircraft, injury to crew personnel and possible damage to life rafts, it would probably have been inadvisable to land in the water anyway and the failure to secure this briefing was probably of no consequence, however it would seem advisable to include this subject in all future briefing so that Captains of crews can take advantage of this possibility if conditions on arrival near Turkey seem to justify an attempt at a water landing. Airplanes landing in Turkey will never again be of any value to our war effort regardless of their condition on landing and their loss is therefore of no consequence.

/s/F.A. Pillet F.A. Pillet Colonel, Air Corps, Air Attache.

Forwarded:

RICHARD G. TINDALL, Brigadier General, U.S.A.,
Military Attache

A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

(Signed) NORMAN W. MOCHEL, 1st Lt., Air
Corps, Adjutant

* * * * *

Reprinted from Issue 23 under the title "INTER-NEES; The Forgotten, The Maligned"

By Lyall E. Johnson - PILOT 0-811392

Your request for information about our internment got me to thinking about that interesting period of my life. This is the first time I have ever written anything

about it. As you guessed, we were sworn to secrecy about part of our experience, but I am sure the statute of limitations has expired long ago.

Picking a place to put the plane down was a problem. We had no maps to speak of. They were blown out when the Navigator and Bombardier bailed out, so the only thing we had to navigate by was a little silk map out of the escape kit. However, we found the mouth of the Dardanelles and headed west towards Istanbul. It was mostly obscured by clouds but we spotted a runway south of Dardanelles. That was a relief as we were on two and a half engines with no hydraulic system and smoking badly. I set up a landing pattern and on the base leg lowered the gear manually. We were then committed to land as the only place we could go was down. About that time I realized there were barricades all over the runway! The airport was just being constructed! I made a very smooth landing - ploughed right through the barricades and brought it to a stop with the air bottles.

We waited by the plane for about an hour before Turkish troops arrived and took us to a prison in Istanbul. The next day we had a visit from the American Air Attache, who told us we would be moved to Ankara in a couple of days. I was most happy to leave that prison. The lice and bedbugs were fierce there!

Our internment officially started when we arrived in Ankara. The quarters were not bad. We were kept in an old run down hotel complete with barred windows and a guard. However, we were paroled every day from 8 A.M. until midnight, and Ankara was an interesting city. The Air Attache brought us a supply of used civilian clothing, and we were ready and willing to partake of whatever Ankara had to offer.

If I remember correctly there was a breakfast of sorts available, but we were on our own for the other meals. I especially remember the six and seven course meals enjoyed at Baba Karpic's, and the excellent cosmopolitan restaurant, a couple blocks from our quarters.

We were the only American flight crew in Ankara, but there were two or three other fellows interned there also. I don't remember their exact status or nationality. We had no idea of how long we were going to stay there, so we organized a softball team to take on the fellows at the British Embassy. Unfortunately one of the British players died of a heart attack at our first game, that ended that. We were invited to parties at the British Embassy and some of the University staff were also very friendly, so our social life was pretty good.

After about five weeks the Air Attache arranged for our escape. It was planned for the wee hours of the morning so we wouldn't violate our parole arrangement.

All-in-all it was an interesting experience - not one I would have volunteered for - but interesting. The Turks reported our plane had been hit some 220 times. I would have guessed considerably more!

Lyall E. Johnson, Lt. Col. USAF Ret.

(Editor .. On another page of information, Col. Johnson added that they (all surviving members of the crew) left Ankara by train and eventually by plane. Their route took them through Syria, Lebanon and Egypt. And as noted before, they were sworn to secrecy and were not allowed to serve in a combat capacity (in Europe) for

the rest of the war.

Further digging for information brought out the fact that the two Johnson crewmembers NOT on the mission, but part of Lyall Johnson's original crew were; Lt. Laurens A. Woolhouse, Copilot and Sgt William C. Lentz, Gunner. Both these crewmen have since died; Woolhouse in June of 1973, and Lentz in December of 1982. Woolhouse became a POW when he flew as replacement copilot for Lt. Charles Haun on 11 June 1944 against the oil storage plant at Giurgia, Rumania. Lentz joined the Donald McCabe crew as a replacement and when McCabe finished his tour, flew as spare gunner until he, Lentz, also finished his tour.

Of the Lyall Johnson's crew, four have now passed away; Robert Wade, Bombardier - George Nixon, Navigator (both became POWs as a result of premature bailout) - Larry Woolhouse, Copilot - Bill Lentz, Gunner. Four have yet to be located; Walter Lark, Irvin Williams, Robert Grabel and Irving Garbel. And the search is on for Simon Rangel, from the Kester crew, as well. 1st Lt. (now, a retired Colonel) Clifford D. Kester lives in California. Several ORDERS follow:

HEADQUARTERS

NORTH AFRICAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES ARMY

APO 534

AG 210.482/300-P 31 May 1944

SUBJECT: Orders

TO: 1ST LT. CLIFFORD D. KESTER, 0-681116,

AC

2ND LT. LYALL E. JOHNSON, 0-811392, AC

S/Sgt. Robert J. Grabel, 13167943

S/Sgt. Walter L. Lark, 37417738

Sgt. Linn W. Newman, 15130878

Sgt. Irvin L. Williams, 16134550

Sgt. Irving Garbel, 16077830

1. Each of the above named individuals, having been released from internment, is relieved from further assignment to the 724th Sq, 451st Bomb Group, 15th Air Force, will proceed without delay to Personnel Center No.2, reporting upon arrival to the Commanding Officer thereof for trans-shipment to the United States by first available surface transportation.

2. Upon arrival in the United States, the Commanding General, Port of Debarkation, will assign each individual to an Army Air Base near his home and report his arrival and assignment to the Commanding General, AAF, Washington, D.C. The commanding General, Port of Debarkation is authorized to place each concerned on temporary duty with POW Military Intelligence Service, Washington, D.C., for a period not to exceed three (3) days and will grant him a leave of twenty one (21) days before he reports to permanent station.

3. Travel by rail and/or surface transportation is authorized except as hereinafter indicated. Travel by military aircraft from this station to Personnel Center Number 2, is authorized.

4. Notification will immediately be made to correspondents and publishers to discontinue mailing letters and publications to them until further advised as to new address. WD, AGO Form No. 971-1, 9 October 1943 (V

Mail Notice to Correspondents and Publishers) may be used for this purpose.

5. PCS. TCNT TDN 91-66 P 431-02-03-04-07-08 A 212-40425

By command of Lieutenant General DEVERS:

(signed) F.C. Pishon, Lt. Col. AGD, Asst Adj Gen

HEADQUARTERS

1ST REPLACEMENT DEPOT

PERSONNEL CENTER NO 2

APO #761 U.S. ARMY

220.33 9 June 1944

SUBJECT: Orders

TO: See Distribution:

1. Pursuant to Authority contained in Letter Orders, Hp NATOUSA, File Number and dates indicated below, the Officers and enlisted personnel whose names appear on this order are relieved from further assignment and duty in North African Theater of Operations and will proceed by the first available surface transportation to the United States. TCNT. TDN.

2. Upon arrival in the United States, the Commanding General, Port of Debarkation, will assign each individual to an Army Air Base near his home and report his arrival and assignment to the Commanding General, AAF, Washington, D.C. The Commanding General, Port of Debarkation, is authorized to place each individual on temporary duty with POW Military Intelligence Service, Washington D.C., for a period not to exceed three (3) days and will grant him a leave of absence of furlough of twenty-one (21) days before he reports to permanent station.

3. These Officers and enlisted personnel will notify correspondents and publishers to discontinue mailing letters and publications to them until further advised as to new address. WD AGO Form 971-1, 9 October 1943 (V-Mail Notice to Correspondents and Publishers) may be used for this purpose.

LETTER ORDER, HQ NATOUSA, FILE AG 210-P-RANGEL, Simon (ENL) 2 June 1944

Rangel, Simon 18056462 T/Sgt

LETTER ORDER, HQ NATOUSA, FILE AG 210,482/300-P, 31 May 1944

KESTER, CLIFFORD D. 0681116 1ST LT AC
JOHNSON, LYALL E. 0811392 2ND LT AC
Grabel, Robert J. 13167943 S/Sgt
Lark, Walter L. 37417738 S/
Sgt Newman, Linn W. 15130878 Sgt
Williams, Irvin L. 16134550 Sgt
Garbel, Irving 16078730 Sgt

(Other names followed - not relevant to Johnson/Kester Crew)

By order of Colonel MANNING:

(signed) WILLIAM EVANS, 2nd Lt., Infantry, Actg. Asst. Adj. General

NOSE GUNNER, S/SGT LINN NEWMAN'S PERSPECTIVE OF MISSION 15 APRIL 1944

What follows is the memories of one of the enlisted men aboard a/c 42-52246. After a bit of solicitation by this office, Linn wrote up his recollections of the happenings and submitted the following photos.
(Con't next page)

The first day, upon arriving into the 724th Squadron, they took our plane to another base. We were sent to a briefing for introduction, etc. When we returned our plane was gone, our luggage was on the ground and most of it had been searched by the ground crews, who took our new .45's, flashlights, liquor and other prized possessions. Needless to say, we weren't overjoyed with our reception by the people we were to be living with and depending on for the duration.

The next day the Squadron had no mission, so we were sent up on a training flight with our crew.

The following day, May 15, 1944 we were sent on our first mission to bomb the marshalling yards at Bucharest, Rumania. Lt. Clifford Kester was assigned to fly with us as copilot, and his engineer, T/Sgt Simon Rangel flew as engineer. Our copilot Lt. Larry Woolhouse and tail gunner, Sgt Bill Lentz were left behind. Our engineer, Sgt Bob Grabel flew as tail gunner.

We all test fired our guns while flying over the Adriatic. The tail turret jammed and wouldn't rotate, although the guns would fire and move up and down. Our regular tail gunner probably would have been able to solve the problem, but our engineer wasn't that familiar with the turret. This was to prove somewhat important later on.

The following details are partly from the pilot and navigator and partly from my own observations in the nose turret. Our 451st Group was to join the rest of the 15th Air Force over Yugoslavia, or Rumania. Our navigator said we were off-course, but with radio silence we could only follow our lead planes. When we neared the target at Bucharest we saw the rest of the 15th Air Force and the P-38 fighter cover leaving. We started our bomb-run with ball turret up and the bomb-bay doors open when our flight leader slid over to our position and we had to take immediate evasive action. This threw us out of formation and the German fighters were just waiting for something like this.

The first fighter, a FW-190, came in from about 5 o'clock high. On his first pass he hit all four engines; #2 and #3 were knocked out, with #3 catching fire, but it was quickly extinguished. We feathered both engines and jettisoned our bombs - we were almost over the target at this time. We were unable to close the bomb-bay doors and with the #3 engine out meant we had no hydraulic system. A ME-109 came in low on the tail. It was obvious the tail turret wasn't moving and with the ball turret up, he hit the tail with 3 cannon shots - one in the center of the bullet-proof glass and one on the armor plate in front of each knee. None of the 3 penetrated but some glass shattered. The concussion blew the tail gunner out of his turret, but he wasn't hurt other than some tiny bits of glass in his face and one eye.

A second FW-190 joined the fun, but caused little further severe damage, other than to ruin our intercom. The last words we heard in the nose section was to be ready to bail out.

The pilot put the plane in a steep dive to head for cloud cover at about 9 or 10,000 feet. The #3 engine ran-away and caused tremendous vibrations - we far exceeded the spec's for B-24s in the dive. The bombardier and navigator were ready to bail-out - they had the nose wheel hatch open and all the maps, etc, were gone with the wind. The navigator bailed-out first. The bom-

bardier waited to make sure I was out of my turret and then he left. I had one foot out the hatch but I couldn't get my flak vest off as the cloth rip cord was gone, so I couldn't hook my chute on. I looked up through the controls and saw both pilots in their seats, so I pulled my foot back in and stayed aboard.

We lost the fighters and were able to feather the engine again when we leveled off. The pilots found we were too low and losing altitude slowly so we wouldn't be able to cross the mountains in Yugoslavia. Turkey was the alternate emergency landing site so we headed that way.

With our maps gone, we found one of the simple ones in an escape kit for general directions. We headed for the Black Sea and followed the coast to Turkey. We jettisoned everything moveable over the Black Sea to help maintain altitude. Nearing Istanbul, we saw a runway on the Asian side. Sgt. Rangel and I were able to lower the landing gear. As we made our approach we saw the runway was still under construction and there were wooden barricades all the way down it. We were committed and couldn't pull up so it was just like hitting the pins in a bowling alley and wood was flying everywhere. We had no brakes so this helped slow us down and we went off the runway into the dirt. It was really a beautiful landing and we had two excellent pilots to be able to bring us so far, so well.

We climbed out of the plane and found we were in some sort of a military reservation. We saw an artillery piece on a hill pointed at us and a small detachment of Turkish troops came up to us on horseback. We rescued what belongings we had in the plane. I was able to reach in my turret from the outside and get my flying boots with my moccasins inside. I always wore moccasins in my flying boots instead of shoes -I learned my lesson too late. When in flight, and when I left my turret, my boots stayed inside and when we pulled out of the dive the turret turned so much, from the centrifugal force, that I couldn't reach in from the inside. Thus I had to get my boots from the turret from the outside.

We were taken in a military vehicle to a small headquarters building. No one could speak English, but we were able to make ourselves understood. We were given some delicious hot tea served in delicate glasses. We remained there for a while until they received orders and two military vehicles (obviously American made) transported us to Istanbul. We were taken to a reception center in Istanbul where we stayed 3 days. We were interrogated in the General's office where we were again given tea and bread. Everyone, including the General, were very polite and pleasant. We were taken on a walking tour of the city by a Private who spoke English, obviously he was from the Intelligence Department. The American Military Attache took us for a ride along the Bosphorus to meet the President of the American College of Beirut in Turkey. The Military Attache told us he had counted over 250 holes in our plane and promised he would send us a pictures. The plane was given to the Turkish Air Force.

We were put on a train at night for the trip to Ankara, where we would stay. We arrived in Ankara in the morning - supposedly unknown to anyone, and we were transported to a small hotel which was to be our home. The Military Attache in Ankara met us there and

brought us some civilian clothes used by previous internees. We were not allowed to wear any of our Air Force clothes.

The pilots had a separate room and the six of us enlisted men were in one room. We shared one bathroom and usually had cold water. Our rooms were on the first



**DOWNTOWN ANKARA, TURKEY
NEWMAN, KESTER & GARBEL**

floor facing the street, and across the hall from the main office. There was a Turkish Army Sergeant, in charge of the hotel, in residence, but one or two officers stopped in every day or two. We had two Russian pilots on our floor who flew down from the German front in a stolen plane. They kept to themselves but ate in the same restaurant that we did. A German pilot flew down from the Russian front and was also on our floor. He was very nice and used to play Ping-pong with us. He claimed to be the champion Ping-pong player in Hamburg. He didn't stay very long, as he was taken away by British Intelligence. The second floor was off-limits to us. There were 15 or 20 Turkish Communist political prisoners and they weren't allowed out. A couple of days before we left, a B-17 crew was brought in. I think they may have been over Greece, or Rumania.

We were allowed out from 10 AM to 10 PM everyday, but couldn't leave the city limits. There were also a couple of restricted areas we weren't allowed to venture into, as Sgt's Rangel and Grabel found out. We had breakfast in our hotel if we wanted it. This was always tea and an egg omelet. The remainder of our meals were usually eaten at Baba Karpic's restaurant. We went to lunch there the first day and were immediately escorted to a table reserved for us in the south west corner of the restaurant. Baba Karpic came to our table to welcome us and this table was reserved for us as long as we were in Ankara. We always had the same waiters and one spoke French and could understand a few words of English. We quickly learned a number of lessons - their coffee is a very strong Espresso and it is to be sipped as the cups are half full of grounds, you also drink your Raki mixed with water, not straight. This restaurant, by the way, is where some of the previous American Internees started the soon to be popular drink; the SCREWDRIVER.

This restaurant was the best in Ankara and we were expected to eat there so the food was safe and so were we; although most of us tried other places a few times.

The Axis Diplomats ate in one section, even the German Ambassador. Franz von Papen was present one night. Each group of nations; Japan, Germany, America, England and France had their own sections in the dining room and the tables in the middle were for Turkish Diplomats. There was always a Hungarian orchestra playing with their violins and cymbals. Baba Karpic was White Russian who escaped to Turkey, as did many others after the Revolution. He was a very delightful, completely bald, portly individual who managed to keep all parties separate and mostly at peace. He seemed to like our crew very much and gave us a party the night before we left; although no one was supposed to know we were leaving. At the party he had several from the Military Attache office with 3 or 4 American girls from the Lend Lease Office for dinner, seating us at the center table. Each of us were given a little gift and a box of his own cigarettes embossed with his name in gold.



CREW & FRIENDS

STANDING: RED PETERSON, COLONEL VALENTINE (MILITARY ATTACHE), CPL YOUNG, ELEANOR BERGMAN (LEND LEASE SECRETARY), WALTER LARK, CLIFFORD KESTER, SIMON RANGEL, LYALL JOHNSON, COLONEL PILLET (AIR ATTACHE/AMBASSADOR)

KNEELING: DALLAS SMITH, GEORGE KARCEK, ROBERT GRABEL, IRVING GARBEL, IRVING WILLIAMS

The American Ambassador had a party for us a few days after we arrived. We made a number of friends amongst our various allies and with our own U.S. personnel. There were 2 American pilots from the first Ploesti raid who were instructing Turkish pilots at Izmir. There had been other internees before us, but they had been clandestinely moved out; one was moved out in a coffin.

The Turks did not want to offend the Germans, so they were very careful about releasing American internees (we were supposed to stay for the duration). The tides of war had changed by the time we arrived and the Germans were no longer in favor.

After several weeks we were released very quietly and directed to return to the U.S. and not leave for the duration. Four of us were sent to Adana, Turkey by train. We then took the American Military Transport flight to Cairo, Egypt with stops at Beirut and Tel Aviv. Sgt Rangel, and I believe Williams and Lt's Johnson and Kester, were sent to Cairo by train through Syria, Palestine and what is now Israel.

The four of us were stationed at a camp in the desert near Zagazig, Egypt. We were sent into Cairo after

being issued uniforms, where we were interrogated by the Military Intelligence Office. We were to remain under the Military Intelligence awning until we arrived in the U.S.

We were again interrogated in Algiers after we arrived there. We stayed with the Headquarters Company across the street from Allied North Africa Headquarters for a week or so. The rest of our crew joined us there and we were flown to a repo-depo in the desert at Oran.



ABOARD THE USS CADWALDER
STANDING: GARBEL, 2 SHIPS CREW, JOHNSON, KESTER
KNEELING: GRABEL, WILLIAMS, NEWMAN, LARK & RANGEL

We were kept isolated there for a week or so, until



IRVING GARBEL, (NAVY PERSONNEL), LINN NEWMAN

after the invasion. We were then sent back to the U.S. on the Liberty Ship, Cadwalder, about June 13, 1944. We traveled slowly in a convoy and disembarked in Brooklyn in about 2 weeks.

After a few days in Brooklyn we were sent to an Army Camp somewhere near home. Lt. Kester and I were sent to Indianapolis, at which time I lost track of the rest of the crew. I was home about the 4th of July.

We covered about 15 countries and 5 continents; flew our first and only combat mission, were shot down and interned for 15 days. We were out of the States for about two and a half months.

IN RESPECT: PILOT TO GUNNER

Recently this letter came from Mary S. Beam.

It is with a heavy heart that I write to you and tell you that Paul E. Beam died on June 30, 1997. His heart valve stopped working and he was gone very quickly. He was a true soldier to the end and he never forgot the war, or any of you all. He loved the men who fought with him.

His pilot, William 'Chuck' Paddock was a man Paul respected very much. He wrote this letter and I would appreciate so much if you would publish it in the 'Ad-Lib.' Paul loved this magazine so much. It would be appreciated so much by me.

(signed) - Mary S. Beam, wife of Paul E. Beam

To the Pastor, Mary Beam, Family and Friends of Paul Beam:

Several days ago our friend Paul Beam was taken from us. This has created a great void in our lives.

Paul and I became friends in Salt Lake City on the 4th of January. Paul was one of nine Americans to join me to make the ten-man crew of a B-24 bomber. We affectionately called our B-24, MY GAL, for the girls we were leaving behind as we headed overseas to Italy. The forming of the crew was of great concern to me; but, this quickly passed. I had nine great crew members. Paul brought to the crew compassion, consideration, generosity, a Christian background that I appreciated and a wonderful personality. Paul was a stalwart member of the crew.

Paul flew with the crew and I on 27 missions. I always felt confident knowing Paul was on board pro-

tecting the back end of the plane. Our bombardier was responsible for keeping the gunners on their toes and it was always reassuring to hear Paul respond from way back in the plane on check calls.

Paul was flying on 16 July when the crew received the Distinguished Flying Cross on orders dated in October. But, for some reason Paul's name was omitted. Thankfully, the issue was corrected on 28 September 1991. Paul was the guest of honor at a Distinguished Visitors Reception at Pope Air Force Base when he received his Distinguished Flying Cross.

On 30 July, our 27th mission, Paul suffered a devastating injury as a result of flak and fighters. The injury had a damaging affect on Paul's well being. Not once however, did I hear Paul speak in anger. He was always pleasant in spite of his problems.

Mrs. Paddock and I had the pleasure to also meet Paul's wife Mary. We truly enjoyed them both over the years. I have grown to appreciate Paul more and more for the contribution he made to the crew, and for his and Mary's companionship after the war. In this regard, Mrs. Paddock and I wish to make a contribution in memory of Paul Beam. Our sympathy goes out to Mary and the family; but, please know we are thankful the Beam family became part of our lives.

Our love and best wishes to Mary, Paul's family and his friends.

(signed) William C. Paddock

(Editor ... AMEN!)

ERNIE CUMMINS' 60TH AIR SERVICE SQUADRON JOURNAL (Alias: Ernie's Journey)

Con't from Issue 28
25 March 1944

Darling Peanut: Here is a corner of my tent that I thought I would verbally sketch for you. Stove pipe made of tin cans, my foot locker at the head of my bunk, and the latest Time Magazine ready to read. Also the electric light (our luxury) and the fire extinguisher hanging on the tent pole - just in case, hi.. We laid boards on three quarters of the floor and graveled the part at the door and under the stove. The gallon can is what we cook soup in these nights! The field jacket belongs to S/Sgt Steve Hatt, who is currently sweating out a letter from his girlfriend in Santa Rosa, telling him whether he is engaged or not. He asked our advice on how much money to send her for a ring of her choice, if the answer is what he hopes - AH Romance! This view of the tent, honey, is from one of the other guy's bunk where I sat, there being two more cots, on the right and left, plus a table, wash stand and stool to complete the furnishings. The metal shield between stove and wooden pole keeps the sometimes red-hot drum from igniting things, and also prevents my tootsies from roasting; my cot being close to the furnace, HI.. Guess who's picture is hanging at the head of my bed?

On this detached service, here is the way our mail system works--any of us who happen to visit the main camp picks up letters for everyone here. Last night between twelve and one A.M. a Master Sergeant jeeped up to our tent and hustled inside with a handful of letters. The guy who is sweating out word from his girl telling him if they will be married or not, gets wide awake and hopefully uses his flashlight to see if that critical message was among 'em. Result: nine letters for one man, one for another, and none for lovesick Steve Hatt, little Ernie, or the Wallior twin.

The other day I dragged out a puzzle I got in a Christmas box and let the fellows try their hands, with the result that the college man got very disgusted with himself when he was not able to solve it. But he kept at it and eighteen hours later he rushed hither and yon spreading the word that he had conquered the pesky thing. For a while he claimed that it was impossible to solve, and almost called me a liar when I said I had done it, Hi..

You can see from the above, Peanut, that nothing has been happening to us here, so I'll say ta-ta for another day. All my love to you, Mrs. C., and I mean that! --
The Lucky Cpl.

26 March 1944

Dear Mabel: The gang in this tent were just passing around photos, and I got out the few that you and the folks sent during the past year. When they got to the snaps of your Victory Garden, one fellow exclaimed, "God, when does the rhinoceros come charging out of that jungle?" Another asked, when looking at the net for the beans to climb, "What sort of giant spider spun that

huge web?" Probably the winter garden is not as lush as those chard and lettuce plants, but I'll bet there is still plenty of foliage visible.

28 March 1944

Dear Mabel: Now don't you go out and buy a fancy Easter bonnet, Peanut. Ernie has to pick out your hats, hi! All my love, Ernie

(editors note: along with this brief note, Ernie sent home a V-Mail Easter cartoon originated via the 62nd Service Group, but not suitable for reproduction in this format.)

4 April 1944

Dear Mabel: Just about a year ago a letter was on it's way to you from our first camp, the sandy desert tent city which oddly enough was surrounded on three sides by water. In that year I guess you have collected a hundred and fifty letters, more or less. Some fair reading (I hope) and others probably sounding discouraged or disgusted, maybe plain bored. But Baby, all the observations that your hubby made he wanted you to share, see? Gosh, if you were only here and we were ordinary tourists, what fun we could have! You will be hearing about my wanderings in person, before long, and when some particular story has been repeated a hundred times, I'll have t check with you to see if the details were being exaggerated a little more at each telling, hi..

COMMENT

On an early morning take-off for one of their missions, the B-24s were starting to leave the runway about a half mile from our tents. Our refueling tankers had gassed up two Squadrons of eight planes each, and were no longer on the flight line, but once again were standing in chow formation waiting for powdered eggs and hot cakes. One of our ship, about the fourth to roll down the strip, had the misfortune to blow a tire, swerve sideways and collapse it's landing gear. Now remember there are several planes in motion at the same time; one just airborne, gaining altitude slowly; another half way down the strip, past the point of stopping; one just starting to gain speed, and still another turning from the taxi strip, getting lined up. While the crippled ship was still sliding down the runway we saw a crewman jump out the waist window, which is just aft of the bombay, towards the tail section. He tumbled and flip-flopped along, finally resting in a heap at least 150 feet from where the plane stopped it's motion. The following B-24 decided it could not shut down power, and just did clear the crashed plane, which caught fire and exploded in a fireball just after it's mate had passed over. The explosion scattered debris quite a distance and one engine could be seen flying a long arc against the smoke. The crewman who abandoned ship was not to escape the fate of his mates, as part of that engine, as though drawn by a magnet, came to earth right where he lay, and if he lived through the initial contact, it finished him off. Other planes ceased the take-off, reversed their direction

by taxiing to the end of the field where the fire was burning, and then took off away from the wreck to avoid having to fly over it. We ate our breakfast, but with less gusto than usual.

(editor's note: Ernie must have written this from memory some time later. Facts contained in this write-up differ somewhat from the article researched in the Ad-Lib (Issue 28 - Page 9) entitled "Nephew Searches for his Uncles Past." Ernie has admitted that some of his journal was taken from memory some years later, but his letters to Mabel were saved and drawn upon for this tome ... You are excused, Ernie)

CASTELLUCCIA DI SAURI

The permanent duty station for the 60th from April 5th, 1944 to June 3rd, 1945.

9 April 1944

Dear Mabel: Easter Sunday, good morning sweetheart, and Greetings to you. I guess the little garden is wearing it's prettiest blooms this spring, and the love nest at 104 San Francisco Blvd has many beautiful bouquets around. For that practical reason, I didn't wire flowers to either you or Mom. Our Special Service was doing that for prices of four to twelve bucks, hi..

Notice the address--37th Service Group. Peanut dear, for the past few days I've been pounding the highways, carrying my bed with me and sleeping wherever I happen to be at midnight. The full moon has made the country very lovely to drive through. Once again I am back with the outfit, and our newest location is a fair one, with rolling hills and not such an outcropping of rocks as before. Right in the next tent is a good Larry Kuney, and not too may miles away are stationed the gang that left us about New Years. I found Steve Tanner and a dozen of the others, had a swell chat with them too, and as soon as I can get a pass, I intend to visit and bum around with Gabriel Pierre. He is living inside an old school house and although I've passed through the town several times, the rig I was driving prohibited my parking and looking him up. The darned trailer is so long that the sun shines on the front end and it rains on the back of the load! Well, almost, anyway...

The strangest sights can be seen along the highways. Inside of three hours I was highly amused by coming upon an irate Italian whose cart had been overturned, breaking two large kegs of "vino" he was hauling between towns; and English truck backed over a curb and neatly uprooted a tall pole holding a street light, which crashed to the pavement with a hell of a noise; a spare wheel bounced off a truck ahead of me and sped merrily down the crowded sidewalk, while pedestrians dodged nimbly into doorways and alleys to escape; and in one little village we found that the M.P.'s had not only labeled the entire place "off limits," but had even placed large signs on the horse drawn taxis, proclaiming them "out of bounds," .. Wonder why?

I learned, while talking to Steve Tanner, that a lot of the G.I.'s in this district had taken their overcoats into some tailor shops and had them cut off short, added belts and patch pockets, making look very dressy indeed. As summer is on the way, maybe I'll try that too.

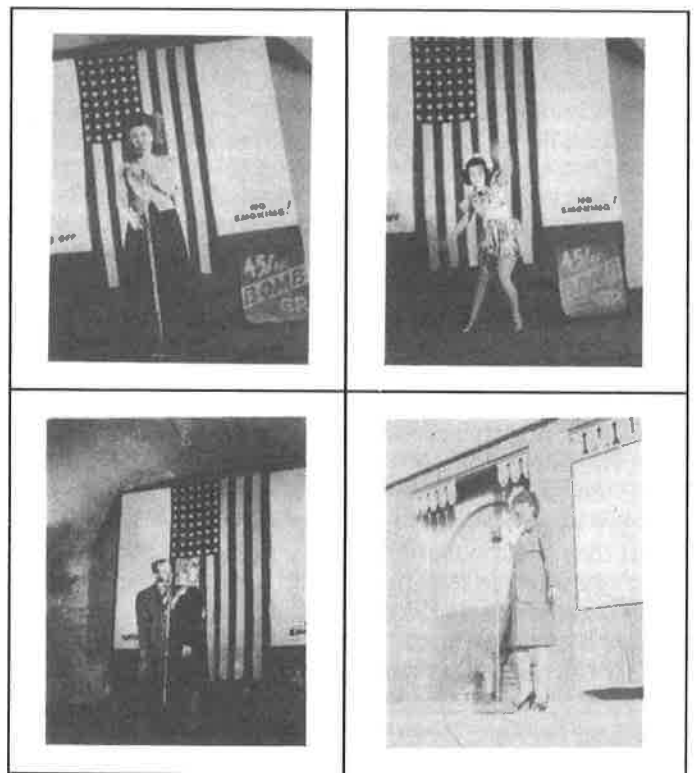
13 April 1944

Dear Mabel: Well, what do you think happened

today? We had two treats; first a Red Cross girl issued coffee and doughnuts in camp and second, included in our rations was one each, bottle of Coca-Cola! No kidding! The first we've seen since coming overseas, and was it delicious? Even the belches tasted good, hi.. Tonight I took a snapshot of the other four fellows in our tent, all toasting with this precious liquid.

21 April 1944

Dear Mabel; Early in the morning, another pleasant day coming up, and no work until after dinner. so this is a chance to chat with my gal. There was a U.S.O. Show here in camp with a juggler, a card sharp who did tricks with a deck, two gals who sang, and of course the Master of Ceremonies. The tall girl had a great voice but was bowlegged and the shortie played the accordion. Our performance was a matinee, another outfit got to see them at night.



SINGERS, DANCERS & COMICS AT USO SHOW

Also, in the line of entertainment, we are getting movies every other night. Either the projector or the operator is always messing up the picture, and sometimes by the time the film reaches us the sound track is ruined. Last night we saw the first and last reels, then the middle one, hi, hi..

The Squadron Club is in full swing every night, too, and it is a lucky man who gets back to his own tent without stumbling over a tent rope or falling into a slit trench. They could blame it on darkness, but even if the sun was shining, a percentage of the guys would lose their way, regardless.

Gosh honey, the country we can see from camp is pretty now, everything green and sprinkled here and there with white stone farmhouses. The spot we are on

is up on the edge of a small plateau, giving us a grand view when the weather is clear. Away off we see mountains, which usually look to us to be coal black against the sky, and a few towns sit atop nearby hills. Probably when it dries up good, the grass will brown just like California. I expect to see plenty of dust here this summer, if the war isn't over by then, ha..

Well, today I'm forced to be a good housewife and do some laundry, so here goes Ernie to heat the water. What if your husband comes home with dish-pan hands, Mabel, will you still love him? Cheer up, baby, and wait a little longer for Papa, the rest of our lives will more than make u for these long months apart. Current expression going the rounds: "I've given the best years of my WIFE to the Army" ... Luff and stuff.

(Excerpt from 24 April 1994)

Margaret tells of her trip on the tanker, quite a thrill that must have been. Hope you get another one, lover. I



"TIN-TAPPERS"

SHEET METAL SECTION OF THE 60th AIR SERVICE SQUADRON

"LITTLE FRIENDS:" THE 49TH FIGHTER SQUADRON (Continued) - 5th Installment By Dr. Royal C. Gilkey

The Squadron's pilots had a break from combat missions on July 29, 1944 because of a stand-down. There was a training flight, however. Getting out of practice could breed untoward consequences.

According to the Squadron Diary, a mission was flown on July 30, 1944; but there was no Narrative Mission Report in the record to confirm this. According to the diarist (name unknown), 49ers flew as escort for "window-dispensing" pilots from the 37th Fighter Squadron in support of the 47th Wing bombers attacking Budapest in Hungary. Excellent bombing was reported. Maybe that was because of no run-ins with enemy aircraft and the absence of any flak. To judge from the Diary entry for the day, this was a trouble-free mission from the fighters' standpoint.

..... (Editor: *The 451st Operational Report shows that we, (49th Wing - 451st BG, 461st BG and 484th BG), along with the 47th, 55th and 5th Wings would penetrate Hungary for the purpose of destroying Administrative*

had an experience the other day that could have been bad, but turned out to be "just close." Harold Crooks, who witnessed it, told me afterwards he thought for a minute he was going to have both Mabel and my insurance to go back to after the war! What a comic, the big bum.

(Comments regarding Ernie's close encounter)

One of my embarrassing moments at Castelluccia happened because of the hump-backed nature of the runway, making it impossible to see one end from the other, at ground level. My gasoline rig was empty and to refill it was necessary to drive it to the opposite side of the field, where the pipeline terminal was located. When I reached the end of the runway, following standard rules and regulations, I stopped and looked to the tower, which was tall enough to be seen from both ends of the runway. The guy up there would either flash a green light to go, or a red stop signal, and this time I got the red light.

After I had been sitting there for five minutes another gasoline tanker joined me, and the red light was aimed at us from the top of the tower. If there was a ship about to take-off at the other end of the strip, I thought to myself, it was sure taking its time. When another ten minutes went by, I said to hell with the lights and got in gear to cross the planking to get on with my business. You don't have to guess the outcome ... when my rig was half way across, here came a B-24 on a take-off roll, and although I was light weight and in third gear, it seemed the truck was standing still. The pilot didn't tank any chance of clipping me, he shut down his power and clamped on his brakes, and by the time he passed behind me I was he would run off the end of the planking but remain on good hard dirt that had been graded. My ears burned, but nobody ever asked who the "jerk" was that didn't pay attention to the traffic lights. Another stroke of luck.

Buildings and Aircraft Factories. Our fighter escort would provide penetration, target and withdrawal cover. Fighters would also provide Chaff dispensing prior to our reaching the target. Target for the 49th and the 55th Wing was the BUDAPEST DUNA AIRCRAFT FACTORY BUILDINGS. We bombed at 23,000 feet - No losses.)

The last day of the month involved a mission of record, in which the whole 14th Fighter Group took part. Rendezvous was to be effected with six Groups from the 5th Bomb Wing going to Rumania to hammer Ploesti. The plan was for pilots of the 37th and 48 Squadrons to release protective "window," while the 49th's P-38s flew top cover. The 49ers took off at 0824 hours, their position third in the Group; and rendezvous was made with the heavies an hour before noon at high altitude (28,000 feet) between the I.P. and Ploesti. The bombers may have reached the target several minutes early. Anyway, their escorting P-38s stayed in the target area for almost half an hour (from 11-1125 hours). "Chaff"

was released at 1055 hours. While the bomber formation was good, the escorting fighters were somewhat scattered. A thick smoke screen obscured the target, so bombing results went unobserved for the most part. There were, however, several smoke columns of smaller dimension than had been noticed during earlier bombing. While there was no aerial resistance, a heavy barrage of flak was fired at the bombers. Our pilots saw a red-colored explosion over the target at 1105 hours adjacent to the bombers. Conjecture was it could have been a flare at 20,000 feet. It may have been a bomber exploding. No one could say for sure. Otherwise, there were no losses reported. A dozen of the Squadron's planes returned safely to base. One of the 13 taking off on this long 1,100 mile mission had to return early because of engine trouble.

..... (Editor: Mission 94 for our Group did not necessarily coincide exactly with the mission of the 49th FS, but it brought us in close proximity when we bombed the BUCHAREST/PRAHOVA OIL REFINERY. Also included in the air armada were the 47th, 304th, 55th and of course, the 5th Wing. All bombing targets in the area. On that mission we lost one aircraft (#42-52614 from the 725th BS), which ditched in the Adriatic Sea due to lack of gasoline. Aircraft pilot was ILT Donald G. McKelvey. Two losses of life due to the mission were S/ Sgt Earl G. Smith (Ball Turret Gunner) and 2LT Richard O. Gates (Bombardier).

No operational flying (other than training & maintenance routines) was done on August 1, 1944. It was a day of rest from combat flying. There would be plenty of time to do that later.

The Squadron stood down on August 2nd, which was a kind of carbon copy of the preceding day. The routines of maintenance and training were continued. 2nd Lt. Royal C. Gilkey returned to S-2 duty with the Squadron after a week or so serving with Group Headquarters. He was never happy "upstairs" but yearned to be back with a line outfit.

His association with the pilots had meant a lot to him, and returning to their midst seemed right in every way. Working in public relations with Group Headquarters had left him dissatisfied, and he made that known. It worked.

..... (Editor: August 2nd may have been stand-down for the 49th FS, but it became another work day for the 451st. We bombed the LE PONTET OIL STORAGE in Southern France. On that mission we lost one aircraft from the 727th BS. A/c

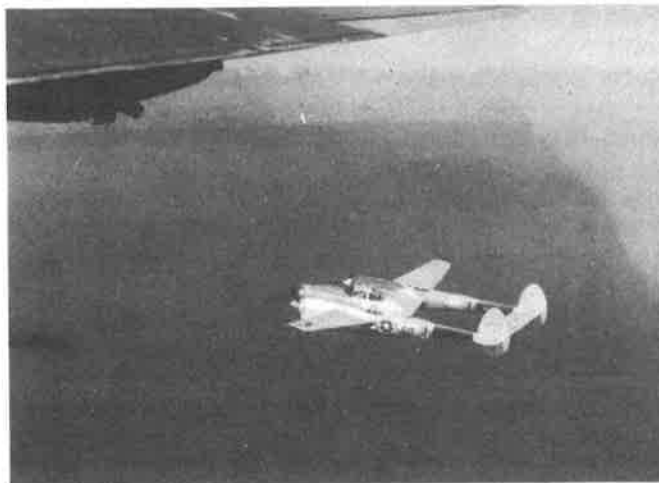


PATSY JACK (#42-64445), flown by pilot 2LT George S. Cappleman. Lt. Cappleman managed to get his aircraft into partisan territory and had everyone bail-out. All evaded capture, with the exception of Photographer Sgt. Winston F. Dandrew, whose chute failed to open / Note story in Issue 26, page 5.)

August 3, 1944 was a busy day for the Squadron's fliers. The 49ers and the 14th Fighter Group flew a "doubleheader." The initial mission went to Friedrichshafen in Germany. Our P-38s were to drop "window" bombs before conducting a sweep over the target area. Fourteen Squadron "Lightnings"

took off at 0750 hours for a target that lay along Germany's southern border on the shore of Bodensee (Lake Constance) separating the Third Reich from Schweiz (Switzerland). Two of the starters were spares and returned early. The other 12 winged their way to a distant destination. They were to make rendezvous with three Groups of heavy bombers of the 49th Wing out to hit the AC FACTORY & FUEL REFINERY at Friedrichshafen. Eight P-38s had the specific task of dropping "window" (also called "chaff") ahead of the lead Group of bombers as they closed in on the target. Our fighters were uncertain about the exact place of rendezvous by reason of a solid overcast over Ancona Point, but contact was made with probably the last wave of bombers at 0900 hours. It wasn't until 1055 hours that the fighters made rendezvous with the rest of the 49th Wing's three Groups at 26,500 feet. This very likely occurred between the I.P. and the target itself. With the fighters flying about three miles ahead of the bombers, the "window" bombs were released. Air speed at the time was approximately 200 miles per hour. Once this part of the mission was completed, the P-38s conducted a fighter sweep, in the course of which they passed B-24s leaving the target area. By reason of the heavy overcast, bombing results could not be observed. No enemy aircraft appeared to challenge the raiders, but the bombers

flew through scattered flak in the target area. North of Bolzano in Alpine Italy, flak was also encountered. Below the Alps in the Udine area of Northern Italy, airdromes were seen but without any aircraft on them. When flying over these airfields, our pilots were at 20,000 feet. The time was 1215 hours. There was haze over the Adriatic Sea. During the mission, the 49ers flew second in the group. They reached the target area at 1055 hours, their altitude being 26,500 feet. By 1300 hours, they were all down



"LITTLE FRIEND" / P-38
TUCKED NICELY BENEATH OUR WING

at base. The mission was regarded as successful.

..... (Editor: With the protection of the 49th Fighter Squadron the 49th and 5th Wing were to bomb the OBER RADERACH CHEMICAL PLANT, located 4 miles NW of Friedrichshafen (72 flak guns). Other Wings bombed bridges and factories in the immediate area. Due to unexplained reasons the 451st ended up bombing an alternate target: the VIPITENO BRIDGE (0 flak guns). It was reported that there could be as many as 125 to 150 fighters in the area. We incurred no losses.)

The second mission of the double-header on August 3, 1944 involved patrolling and a fighter sweep in Yugoslavia covering places around Beograd (Belgrade), including Valjevo, Stara Pazova, Saraorci, and Preljina. The patrol and sweep were to be flown to the prudent limit of fuel capacity. Participants in the mission included four pilots from the 49th Fighter Squadron and two apiece from the 48th and 37th Squadrons. One pilot came back early, the seven who completed the mission

succeeded in inflicting considerable damage on the enemy. They shot up radio towers and locomotives, as well as tugs and barges. No enemy aircraft were encountered. There was flak, however. A 37th Squadron pilot was hit by it, but managed to get back to base.

Two lucky pilots got to go home, having completed 50 combat missions. Both 1st Lts., they were Lawrence ("Larry") A. O'Toole and Gunvald B. ("Burt") Thorsen. Another pilot did not fare so well. He was Lt. Paul J. Ragusa, whose tent caught fire. His belongings were lost in the fire, but he did save a camera and \$400.

On August 4, 1944, a mission was scheduled, only to be called off and replaced by a stand-down. Humor was injected when a G.I. masqueraded as an old man claiming to be a P-38 pilot just arrived from the States and "ready" for duty. It takes things like that to relieve the routine of life in camp.

(continued next issue)



CHATTER FROM THE FLIGHT DECK

Bob Karstensen

PUBLICATIONS - From the exposed position, as editor of this publication, I am blessed to be offered other newsletters and publications in the mutual agreement of "swapping." (I'll put you on my mailing list - if you'll put me on yours) Such prestigious Groups (serving in Italy) as the 376th, 449th, 450th, 455th, 456th 459th, 460th, 461st, 464th, 484th, and the 49th Fighter Squadron ALL share information. All our newsletters are exchanged on a complimentary basis. And all are found to be truly dedicated to their respective organization. What is so great is that from time to time we "borrow" from each other - a fact, an item, a happening, etc. And it's really good to see that most editors are dynamic and creative in what they offer. Much history is recorded in these post-war literary works.

But apart from such complimentary publications I receive from these organizations, there are also publications that are on the market that deal in B-24s, 15th Air Force, and military aviation in general.

The 15th Air Force Association's magazine, **SORTIE**, gives its reader an overall view of Groups that served in Italy. It also highlights some of their accomplishments during the hostilities of WW-II. You can join for a subscription fee of \$20 per year by sending your check to: 15th Air Force Association, P.O. Box 6325, March AFB, CA 92518.

Regarding B-24s, there is still the fine publication called the Liberator Club "**BRIEFING**," that comes out of San Diego, CA. It is now written, compiled and published by George Welsh (the founding editor was Bob McGuire who has since passed away). It's 4 issue per year subscription costs \$15 and may contain up to 40 pages of informative B-24 jargon. Address is: Liberator Club, 15817 Bernardo Center Drive, Suite 102 -Box

124, San Diego, CA 92127.

Another recent entry into my aviation library is a publication called, "**MEMORIES**." Its editor/publisher, Ken Decker, calls it a Flight Community Forum, since it is dedicated to all aspects of combat during WW-II. This monthly publication started out as an organ of the 31st Fighter Group, but has since (under Ken's stewardship) branched out into all facets of aerial wartime combat. For a "one-man operation" I think that Ken does a Herculean task of putting this all together. You can access Ken via: Ken Decker, Memories Publication, 410 Cloverdale Road, Chenango Forks, NY 13736. Be sure to include your \$20 subscription and a mention of where you heard about them; from The Fight'n 451st.

PROPOSED DEDICATION - From the 460th Bomb Group editor, Duane L. Bohnstedt, I received a letter regarding a proposed monument to be placed in the area of Lake Balaton in Hungary. Lake Balaton will be remembered by many pilots and navigators as a reference (pilotage) point while heading north on bombing missions. The proposed monument (a B-24 propeller blade and hub) is to be placed in commemoration to all those men and planes that were lost, or crashed enroute, while flying in Hungary.

As yet nothing has been finalized regarding the outcome of this venture. Duane was just making an overture to me, and to other Group leaders, as to the feasibility of such a project. My response was that such a project should be borne and financed by the people of that area, and not by the men that sacrificed their lives to free that nation. Of the several overseas dedications I have attended, none of the financial burden was placed upon the wartime participants, rather it was picked up by the prominent and the wealthy of the area. I know there may be an argument in favor of us (as a wartime entity) helping to finance this project as a tribute to our fallen comrades, but I have found that the truly dedicated historians of these areas can somehow manage to prevail in raising the funds.

Duane already has people in place in Hungary to instrument this dedication and all they need is the money

to proceed. If any of you feel differently about involving yourself in this project, let me know. I'll put you in touch with Duane so this 15th AAF/460th BG plan can go forward.

AIR ARCHIVES - Recently, while "surfing" the Internet, I came across a couple of gentlemen (one is a retired Naval Aviator so he needed an "Act of Congress" to be a gentleman [only kidding]) that do WW-II research for a very nominal fee. Both are certified researchers for the Air Force History Office and National Archives, and have access to documents in all federal repositories. I have found it encouraging that both are descended from WW-II veterans. Steve Riordan's father fought with the Navy in the Pacific from '41' through '45,' and subsequently flew PB4Y-2s for VP-23. His cousin was an engineer and top turret gunner with the 389th BG until he was KIA'ed on 4/1/44. Rob McKee's grandfather was a pilot with the 98th BG until 4/19/45 when he collected 300 flak holes and lost the left rudder. He wisely decided to visit Switzerland. His was the last B-24 interned. Steve Riordan is a North and South Vietnam Air War Vet so he knows about flak and fighters. Neither men are driven by money. Both are motivated to help the average guy that doesn't have the wherewithal, or expertise to locate documents relevant to a personal search. Since finding them, and starting an exchange of e-mail, I have steered several of our members and families in their direction, I, from what sources I have in-house, can come up with some of the answers concerning our Group, but when it comes to the finer aspects of research, I'm somewhere out in left field.

Their modus operandi starts with a \$30 search fee to ascertain the type, location and volume of documentation available. This \$30 is like an estimator's fee in an automobile garage. It is not refundable and is not included in the final cost. After project approval, they put together a comprehensive and comprehensible case-bound report on the veteran's combat record. Their sources include all kinds (and any kind) of official documentation including group histories, statistical summaries, mission records, Luftwaffe records and frequently copied photos. Quality photographs of many subjects are also available if you want to pay the extra cost. The turn-around time is about six weeks from receipt of the \$30 fee to shipment of the report. To those of you 451st'ers that are curious about something or other about your past, here's the chance to put someone knowledgeable into the search.

You can reach them by mail at:
 Steven J. Riordan IV, Commander, USN
 9208 Cedar Way
 Bethesda, MD 20814-2808
 Ph. 301.493-6504
 OR:
 Rob McKee
 3913 Arizona Place
 Plano, TX 75023
 Ph. 972.618-8805

As of 11 November (Veteran's Day) 1997 they have added a "Web Site" into the internet. For the enterprising "SURFER," look under: www.aviation-archive.com

PHOTOS FOR FUN

Interesting And/Or Follow-up Pictures

726th follow-up pictures regarding Carmelina Castiline - Cinderella Waif (Story Issue 28, Page 11).



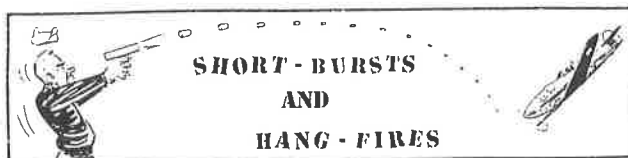
CARMELINA HOSTS PARTY AT OFFICERS CLUB



AT THE "CASA" OF HAROLD TODD, (726TH GUNNER ON SHIMANSKI'S CREW) CARMELINA DOES HER SHARE IN MAINTAINING A CLEAN AND A WARM HOME ATMOSPHERE FOR HER BOYS



READING LESSONS FROM ONE OF THE CREW



Ernie Cummins, 60th [CRASH CREW] ... I was glad you put Wes Nelson's address in your report regarding his interest in B-24s -- as a "younger generation" admirer. I had talked with him at the Minnesota reunion and exchanged letters since then. He seems very concerned at his feelings about the crew of EXTRA JOKER be put in the best prose.

In the expanded roster of expired members was another fellow who wrote me two interesting letters, David Henshell, 725th Sqdn. He helped winterize our camps in the fall of '44, and got many of the G.I.'s relatives back in the U.S. to mail clothes, food, toys, etc. to equip an orphanage in Italy.

(Editor ... Your letter, Ernie was too flattering for me to put it ALL into this format. I thank you nevertheless. As to Wes Nelson; I know where you're coming from. I, too can sense his deep feelings, not only for the EXTRA JOKER crew, but for all us guys that took part in THAT war. He made many solid friends at the reunion, especially among the ground crews with his devotion to his cause.)



LT. DAVID HENSHELL, 725th ENGINEERING OFFICER WITH CHILDREN OF A LOCAL ORPHANAGE

As to Dave Henshell and his efforts to aid the orphaned children in Italy .. that was a revelation to me. Dave never mentioned it in any correspondence I've ever had with him. Now it's beginning to surface. Like in all good men, sometimes their attainments (and honors) aren't noticed while in life, but after they are gone, accolades are bestowed. The Carmelina/Todd story, in Issue 28 - Ad-Lib, should have alerted me. Now, your telling me of what he did regarding procurement of items for the orphanage puts me in awe of his humanity. But too late to let him know, personally.

Ernie, I'm placing your donation into the 451st treasury as a memorial in Pete Massare's honor.

James Bitzinger, 724th [NAVIGATOR: CLAUDE DONAGHUE'S CREW] ... Thank you very much for enrolling me as a member of the 451st. I had often won-

dered if there was any history available for our Bomb Group. I was astounded to receive your packet of "Ad-Lib's" and read them with great interest.

I was not aware that seven other crews were lost on 23 August, Markersdorf Raid. I have even greater gratitude that I am a survivor. Our crew had many close calls compressed into a short time period. Unfortunately I never knew many members of our Group very closely. Because of that, many names are not familiar.

But I did fly on a mission with Col. Eaton as our copilot. I was the (Navigator) nose turret gunner and kept a log as assistant to the Group Navigator. This was in early August.

I found the description of the POW camps informative and will enable me to share the experience with others. I still find it difficult to describe my activities as an airman to those who were not there.

(Editor ... Your words sure ring true, Jim. I'm glad that our attempts at renewing your memories of what happened back then give you some satisfaction. To the readers I should explain that you were part of the C.E. Donoghue crew and went down, and became a POW, on that infamous day; 23 August. You were one of six that survived. The LOST, that day were: C.E. Donoghue, Pilot; G.L Hogan, Copilot; C.O. Roettger, Bombardier; R.A. Randville, AEG. I'm sure that your gunners, Claude Baker and Wayne Johnson, will be pleased to see that we have finally located you.)

Elwood V. Wilson, 725th [PILOT] ... I'm sorry I have not responded to your request for donations sooner. Thanks for the "nudge." I enjoy the 'LIB.' I am blind and my wife, Betty, reads it to me and she enjoys it as much as I do.

(Editor ... I'm glad I'm striking a chord with you "noble warriors" from days gone by. Glad, too, that you look forward to getting your copy of the Ad-Lib. It does keep Betty on her toes, doesn't it? She probably knows more about the 451st than she ever expected (or maybe wanted) to know.)

James H. Rowsey, 726th [PILOT] ... (After writing about the loss of his wife, various legal adjudications he's involved with, problems with loss of hearing) OH!, what I wouldn't give for a good old fashioned shooting war. My health is holding up fairly good for an 80 year old ex-bomber jockey, but my hearing is gone. Best of luck to you. Hope this check helps.

(Editor ... It sure is hard to understand what's happening to us ONCE stalwart, youthful, dedicated (and some of you), SMART & HANDSOME, cavaliers from the 451st. Where once we could spot a ME-109 at 2,000 yards - now we have a hard time seeing the sign for the men's room. Where once we could hear a Pratt & Whitney running "out of phase" - now we're not even qualified to test a smoke detector. Where once we could "strip" a fifty caliber machine gun blindfolded - now we can't even pull up our own zippers. And last but not least; where once we had the reflexes to "Stick a wingtip in their waist window" - now we doubt our ability get the family car into the garage. Lordy, Jim, don't tell me we're getting OLD! [Thanks for another of your generous donation].)

Rick Zepf, 726th, [FLIGHT CHIEF] ... Rec'd Ad-Lib - most, most excellent compilation! Continued

success to you and the 451st organization!

I remember well Col/Gen Eaton. M/Sgt Major of Group, Dick Rogers, was close friend of Peplow, Chase, Bihn, Cole and myself. One day in '44, Dick informed us that he was bringing Col Eaton to our tent at a certain time. Eaton arrived in jeep with Dick; entered the tent and discussed operations, maintenance, conditions, etc., for about 25 minutes - most enlightening meeting. The Col was a very interesting and responsible officer.

I am familiar with many other passages, places, photos, etc. noted in the Ad-Lib. Some info is incorrect, due to the fact that Peplow and myself being at the incident at the time.

(Editor ... Thanks for the kudo's on the publication. And thanks, too, for the insight into the way Col Eaton managed the Group, by going straight to the "guys in the know." As to the flaws noted in the magazine; the only blame is that time has taken it's toll. I try, from my vantage point, to make corrections, where necessary, and not to print anything that is too outlandishly wrong. I've had some guys claim that their best buddy died in their arms, when in reality they weren't even on the same mission when the incident occurred. Others have said that they were POW'd on one date; but my records (MACR's) give another date. I guess a guy harbors in his mind what he wants the others to know, and in time believes his own exaggerated version.

John Hanford, 727th [ARMAMENT] ... You've done it again! Love those Ad libs which provide so much interesting information! I especially enjoyed Karl Eichhorn's Naval Research because I sailed from Virginia to Naples on the Liberty Ship, John Harvard and returned on the USS General M.C. Meigs. His story brought back a lot of memories. Enclosed please find a contribution to help carry on the good work you perform for so many of us.

(Editor .. Thanks John. The way you put it - it's worth the effort.)

Harold Dennis, 724th [BOMBARDIER: LLOYD BOOTS' CREW] ... Short history. I was a Bombardier in the 451st. Came back in January 1945. Went to pilots training. Received my wings at Enid, OK. Flew B-29s, B-50s and trained on B-47s. Rated as a Pilot, Bombardier, Navigator and Radar Observer in 1952. Transferred to Army in 1957 to fly helicopters; which I had a Battalion of H-47s and VH-1s (Heuys) in Vietnam in 1965-66. Retired from Army as Colonel in April 1970.

(Editor .. Seems that your military career didn't stop with just the 451st in your resume. We're glad that you feel the 451st is still important to you. If only more of you Career Military would send me your resume, we could show the world that the 451st could spawn some responsible citizens into the community. By the way, Harold, thanks for identifying Duane Maybay in the photo (last page - Issue 28). Don Schaffner was pleased that together we found him. Seems that most of those pictured were of the Boots' crew.)

Alan May, 727th [GUNNER: CLAREMONT BROWNELL'S CREW] ... RE: Issue 28, page 9, 8 February 1944 incident. Our B-24 was half way down the runway when this crash occurred. We flew thru the smoke and flame. I remember it all too well.

(Editor .. Seems that the Hunt Crew's crack-up has

brought back a lot of memories to those that witnessed it. And like I've said in the past, everyone has his own version of what exactly happened. Somewhere's in the middle of all the rhetoric are the bare facts. When it comes to the place of impact - some report that it was a couple miles from the end of the runway; others have it near the end of the strip. I have to go with "the end of the strip," otherwise how could the ground crew have been there so fast to try and aid the distressed. And too, photos were made of the crash shortly after it occurred. Certainly not a possibility had the crash occurred a couple miles out.)

Martin Kornbluh, 726th [AEG: IBAR SPEL-LACY'S CREW] ... Read every page of the Ad-Lib with a passion - and sometimes over twice. Your Issue 28 (Spring/Summer 97) was more than just interesting - referring to page 11 and concerning Harold Todd and Carmeline.



LT. HENSHELL WITH CARMALINE

She did help us keep things more tidy for a short while. How she came by, and how she left us is beyond me.

(Editor ... Thanks for the two pictures you sent along with your letter. I have passed along copies to Harold Todd for his enrichment. Hopefully by showing the photos to the rest of the 726th Squadron someone will make identification of those seated in the Officers Mess.)

Richard Coleman, 726th [PILOT] ... RE: A/C "Hard to Get" Seems that you have uncovered a case of duplication of aircraft names. The bird which I drove from Nebraska to Florida and finally to Italy, with a stop on North Africa, was a late model "G" or an early "H." And it was loaded with a couple thousand pounds of OD paint. That was the plane I was flying on the Regensburg mission on Feb 25, 1944 when it was knocked down by a couple ME-109s over the Italian town of Udine at the head of the Adriatic.

I am searching for the photo from which the enclosed crew picture was made on an office copier. However, you can see the fuselage is not shiny like the one you reproduced in your issue number 28 on page 23. The

other significant difference is that OUR girl is not sitting and waiting for us like the one in issue 28.

I don't know anything about the plane you found, but the one I flew on that day in Feb. was OD and the girl was running.

(Editor ... AH HA! Another conundrum has surfaced. You are absolutely RIGHT and you are the first to bring it to my attention. The A/C that you show in the picture is OD and shows a running person of the opposite sex. (Now why would she be running with a nice bunch of guys like yourselves, who were godparents to that lovely lady?) And the picture I ran was a silver A/C with a sitting lady (but still alluring). Perhaps someone can explain the duplication of names after they read this.)

Bob Mitchell, 727th [NAVIGATOR: HARRY BLANK'S CREW] .. In memory of 1st Sgt Palmer Gums, a donation is enclosed. Though we were not in the same squadron, our paths crossed on several occasions.

After the war I saw Palmer on a couple occasions as he farmed near the small town of Ringle, WI, and was very active in county government. Ringle is about ten miles from our residence.

I attended his wake and had the pleasure of visiting with one of his daughters. She mentioned a pilot by the name of Maybay who kept in close contact with Palmer and his family. Maybay was not assigned to the 727th Squadron so I probably had never met him.

Palmer's daughter seemed most pleased that someone from the 451st had attended her father's wake. I was honored to pay last respects to such a fine airman.

(Editor ... Thanks for remembering 1st Sgt Gums of the 724th Squadron by your Memorial Donation. I was glad to hear that LTC USAF Duane Maybay [Copilot on Lloyd Boot's crew] had continued to maintain contact with Palmer, even after the hostilities. Thanks for representing us at the wake.)

Tom Sullivan, 727th [CREW CHIEF] ... Thanks for the latest issue of Ad Lib. I enjoyed all of them very much and look forward to the next one. It seems that there is more and more info coming out with each issue. I often wondered over the years, what the name of the Liberty Ship that took the 727th to Europe. This last issue cleared that mental cloud. It was the S.S. Harvard. For 20 days, every time I came on deck, I read the name posted on a plate on the wall of the bridge superstructure. How could I have forgotten!?

(Editor .. If nothing else, Tom, we do stimulate the old mental regression button. Karl always does a nice job of sending me these worthwhile articles. I often wonder what he's got up his sleeve next.)

John W. Stout, 727th [ROMG: RICHARD PROUTY'S CREW] ... We flew the ATHENS mission of September 24th. We may or may not have been the lead ship, but I remember our nose gunner giving his opinion that the ships in the harbor were shooting at us. The officer in the copilots seat was very emphatic that they were not. This was a routing mission (#12 for the crew).

(Editor ... The mission of September 24th stands out real well in my memory also. According to my journal the 724th led the Group with Major Leland Younkin flying as Command Pilot and Captain Henry Rollins as Aircraft Commander. It did have light flak at the target.

Just where it came from really didn't bother me. I just wanted to get out of it. The target was not the harbor of Athens, but rather the Athens/Eleusis Airdrome nearby. The following day, September 25th, the Group did hit the sub pens in Athens Harbor. Thereafter we never bothered Greece any more.

Morris Manoogian, 724th [INTELLIGENCE OFFICER] ... Sometimes, after reading the latest edition of the Ad Lib, I get sort of a quilt complex, realizing I have contributed so little over the years. As you know I was in S-2, but flew 27 missions with various crews and after leaving the Group in April of 1945, I took about a trunk full of pictures and memorabilia of the Group. All was destroyed in a disastrous fire in our home in 1955. And I'm still not over that loss. However I have seen lot of the same pictures in the Ad Lib over the years; but I had some beauties I took myself on various missions.

In my twilight years my memory has faded somewhat, but the Ad Lib serves to bring back some of those memories. Especially when names such as Col Eaton, Beane, Anderson, Major Jones, Tom Moran, Younkin, Sanford, etc., are mentioned. I can recall contacts that I had with each one. Especially Sanford, whose plane I was in after it got damaged over Oswiecim on Dec 26th, and we headed east towards Russia, losing altitude but made a safe landing in Poland somewhere south of Lublin.

I've really had a charmed life, otherwise I wouldn't be here thanking you for the Ad Lib. Dick Vail was my good friend and his wife was my wife, Doris', good friend. The night before the fatal mission to Toulon, I told Dick I'd be flying with him in the morning and he was very pleased - "A milk-run," he said. At the briefing, Major Willhite scheduled himself and I decided to fly with Lt James and Major Lawton on Vail's right wing. I saw the luckless crew get a direct hit, no chance whatsoever. So you see, Bob, I've had a charmed life, and I guess the good lord has his reasons.

(Editor ... Why is it, Morrie, that so many of the events of the 724th are ones that I had participated in. I can't relate to the Vail tragedy as that was before my time. But on my previous visit to France, I did get to pay my respects to many of his crew when I visited the Rhone National Cemetary in Draguignan, France.

As to that infamous day when we bombed Oswiecim, Poland, I was sitting in the nose turret of the Deputy Lead ship piloted by Captain Rollins; Major Sanford's Operations Officer. I knew you guys were in a heap of trouble when you took that hit in the bomb bay, just after the I.P. You guys (Captain Stan Jackson A/C pilot) sure lost a lot of gasoline before you departed for points East. As a result of your misfortune, Rollins took over the Group as we headed home and was later kicked upstairs to C.O. vice Sanford was temporarily away.

Regarding the 83 years of life you have already experienced - I see no reason that you can't milk another 10 or 15 more out of that youthful carcass, even with all the 6 surgeries you've had these past 3 years. Plus, your generous donations to the 451st cause have shown that you prize, and appreciate, your association with this ongoing project.

Clyde Phifer, 726th - [GUNNER: ED SHIMANSKI'S CREW] ... I found out that you were also a

nose gunner. You know, Bob, we had the best view of anyone onboard. Sometimes I think I could see too much. We were actually outside the airplane, in a turret that was sitting on a small shelf. We had 2 sets of metal doors between us and the inside. Without the Navigator or Bombardier opening the doors, we were stuck. Remember?

(Editor ... AH, I remember it well ... A piece of flak, a fighter's shell, the plexiglass all shot to hell ... AH, I remember it well. (I wish I had the voice of Maurice Chevalier to get my song across.)

Helen Flannelly, 724th [COMPLIMENTARY MEMBER] ... I would like to donate \$50 to the fund in memory of Walter Flannelly - *donated by his wife, Helen and Family.*

Walter and I made the first three reunions and had wonderful, happy times at all three. Now I have wonderful memories of the 451st. Good luck and good health to you.

(Editor ... Not much to add, Helen. You and your son, Robert, must try for our next reunion so you can experience "What once was, can be again.")

Ray Kravetz, 727th [BOMBARDIER: JAMES PARK'S CREW] ... John Racinowski was a gunner on our ship called "Con-Job," which incidentally we flew for fifty missions, including 5 missions over Ploesti. In response to John's inquiry as to what happened to James Piasecki, he is living in Cicero, IL and had his name legally changed to James Masters.

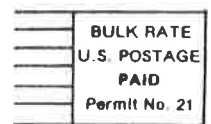
(Editor ... I've got a pretty good handle on most of Parks' crew already, Ray. But the fact that Piasecki altered his name was news to me. I searched the Cicero area and came up blank. Not to be stopped, I sent "Postal Search Cards" to all the James Masters' living in Illinois. Nothing yet - but still hoping.)



The above photo shows the ingenuity, and resources, of what a guy will do to get a "schnapps" once in a while; especially if it's homemade.

Just where the photo came from, and who's pictured, I can't remember. I'm pretty sure it was from someone in the 726th. There is a handwritten caption above the photo (not shown in this rendition) that names one of the original 726th pilots. There may be a story with this picture that someone can relate to me.

As it is I just look at it, with my demented mind, and conjure up different versions of what I see. Perhaps one of them could be, "Corporal, I'm going to have to put you on report ... By the way, you're adding too much heat to the kettle!" Or, "Are we far enough out of camp that the CO won't get wind of this?" Still, and better yet, "Are you going to stay with it all night, Sergeant, or should we post guards? And if we post guards, can we trust them?"



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