



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

Issue 41

Price \$5 (Free to Members)

Winter/Spring 2005/2006

## 2006 REUNION SITE SELECTED (Springfield, Illinois Gets The Nod)

The time has come to start 'popping' those vitamin pills and contemplate packing your suitcase. We're heading into our 14th biennial get together. It's coming up on the 4th to 7th of October 2006.

The city and hotel have been chosen. City: Springfield, Illinois. Hotel: President Abraham Lincoln Hotel (formerly the Renaissance Hotel). I'm sure you'll find both the city and hotel to be of the first class variety.

So many opportunities are available to explore the legend



The President Abraham Lincoln Hotel  
Corner of E. Adams & 7th Street  
Downtown Springfield

of our 16th President, Abraham Lincoln, that this planner is hard pressed to 'pick and choose' tour and events.

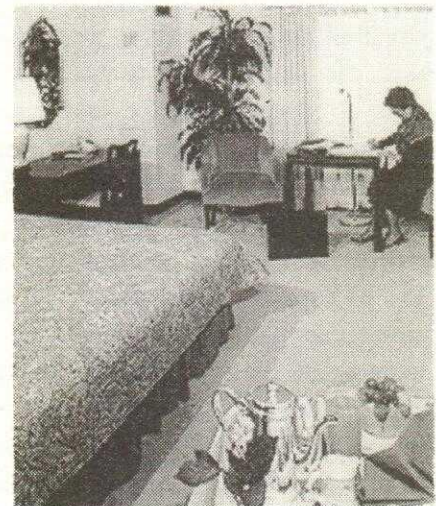
Springfield, as you know, is the State Capitol of Illinois. The President Abraham Lincoln Hotel is within walking distance of many State Government Offices, Lincoln Historical Sites, and/plus the State Capitol building, which can easily be seen from our downtown hotel location.

We've negotiated a room rate of \$89, (plus prevailing tax) which includes parking in the elevated lot next door, and many of the amenities we've come to expect. More information to follow.

*Hoping to see you there!!*

### CONTENTS

POW Assistance .....	2
Potential News Release .....	2
Bob's Birthday Party .....	3
Pilot's Story (by 'Jack' Dunsmoor) .....	5
Airman's Identification Card .....	12
"Little Friends" 49 Fighter Squadron .....	13
Ernie's Journal - 60th Air Service Squadron .....	14
S/Sgt John C. Bounds Recalls .....	17
Chatter From The Flight Deck .....	19
Our Diminishing Ranks .....	21
Short Bursts And Hang-Fires .....	23
'Andy' Pendleton's 725th Photos & Memories .....	27



Typical Room At The President Abraham Lincoln Hotel

**"AD-LIB"**

**451st BOMB GROUP (H), LTD.  
PUBLICATION**

Compiled and Published by Bob Karstensen

All rights reserved on contents by the 451st Bomb Group (H), Ltd. Reprinting, in whole or in part, without previous written permission is prohibited.

COPYRIGHT 2006, 451st "AD-LIB"

No membership dues are assessed  
(A not-for-profit organization)

The publishing of the AD-LIB; the seeking of new members; and all efforts towards the preservation of our 451st heritage is funded by donations and contributions. Checks may be made out to the

**"451st Bomb Group"**

and mailed to: 1032 S. State St. Marengo, IL 60152  
Phone (815) 568-7766 FAX (815) 568-0451

E.MAIL - bobk451@aol.com

**Tax Exempt Contribution #36 307 0772**

*We reserve the right to edit, shorten, clarify any article submitted to the Ad Lib. We may choose not to include an article due to length, content or negative implications - Editor*

**TO ALL FORMER PRISONERS OF  
WAR AND WIDOWS**

Let's make sure all the 451st Bomb Group former POWs and their widows have all the Veterans Administration (VA) benefits to which they are entitled.

If you do not have a 100% Disability Compensation rating, now is the time to try to upgrade your rating. Over 20 different presumptive conditions relate to our POW experience, including heart disease, stroke, irritable bowel syndrome, peptic ulcer disease, stress disorder, frostbite, traumatic arthritis, liver disease, etc. An upgrade to 100% could help you and your spouse financially, and make her eligible for the widow's benefit (DIC) if you predecease her. And if you have a 100% rating, you wife (or widow) is eligible for a free medicare supplement, ChampVA, with free medications-by-mail.

Widows of former POWs should be aware that new presumptives, heart and stroke, as of October 7, 2004, may make them eligible NOW for the widow's benefit if these service-connected issues contributed to their POW husband's death, and for which you may have previously been denied the widow's benefit.

As a volunteer American Ex-Prisoners of War National Service Officer, I would be glad to help you present a well-ordered claim to the Department of Veterans Affairs. If these is an AXPOW National Service Officer in your area, I would most likely ask them to help you. Please let us hear from you.

**(signed)** Fred Campbell, NSO American Ex-Prisoners of War 3312 Chatterton Drive San Angelo, TX 76904

Ph. 325.944-4002

e.mail - Fredrev@webtv.net

**A POTENTIAL NEWS RELEASE**

The city of Springfield, IL will soon be honored to host the fourteenth biennial gathering of one of the 15th Army Air Forces most highly decorated combat Groups of World War II: the 451st Bombardment Group (Heavy).

From October 4th to 7th 2006 the 451st Bomb Group will gather at the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel to celebrate and remember the events that gave them recognition as one of the 15th AAF's best.

Of the anticipated 200 attending, one will be especially well remembered; that will be the former Commanding Officer, Major General Robert E.L. Eaton (Deceased), whose leadership guided the Group through most of its perilous history. A history that garnered three (3) Distinguished Unit Citations for the 451st, and achievement that set this Group apart by the fact that very few Groups attained that number, and all were gained in the short span of only 8 months, and under one Commander.

The Distinguished Unit Citation (DUC), like the Navy's Presidential Unit Citation, is awarded for outstanding combat performance, and are given to all members attached to the unit at that time.

Upon entering combat in early 1944, and flying out of Southern Italy, the Group, on its tenth combat mission, underwent heavy German fighter and ground artillery opposition to bomb the aircraft factory at Regensburg, Germany to earn its 1st DUC.

Less than a month and a half later the Group attacked the oil refineries at Ploesti, Rumania, and though severely pounded by enemy aircraft and flak, managed to inflict severe damage to the oil installations, thereby gaining its 2nd DUC.

The 3rd Citation (still under command of Colonel Eaton) came about when the Group was called

upon to bomb the Markersdorf Airdrome (Vienna area), Austria, 23 August 1944. Again with heavy losses the Group managed to carry out its assigned mission and make the German airfield inoperable for enemy fighters.

Along with the 3 highly noted Distinguished Unit Citations, the Group participated in 10 major battles, ranging by definition from European Air Offensive to the invasion of Southern France.

In September of 1944 the 451st was one of only three combat groups that was chosen to convert their B-24 bombers to carry gasoline, bombs, and ammunition to General Patton's Third Army; who had, at this juncture of the war, outran their own supplies in the haste to outflank the German Armies.

During the course of the war the 451st Bomb Group lost more than 200 aircraft to enemy action, and just short of 400 of the flying personnel were killed in action during its 245 mission tour of duty. The Group spent 16 months in Italy (from January 1944, when it flew overseas with their own aircraft, until the enemy surrender in May 1945, all under combat conditions) and was deactivated in September of 1945, upon return to the United States.

The Group was proud of the role it played in bringing the war to an end in the European Theater. And it is with just as much pride that they again gather to reevaluate their part in a war that, horrible as it was, was fought on clear and precise issues; "We're the good guys -- They're the bad guys."

## Such a B'day Party You Should Have

It all started with an innocent little phone call from Ms. Bobbi Kelly (wife of the late Tom Kelly, 727th), asking if I'd like a little get together with some of the old "Chicago Committee," sometime in early August for a little dinner party at one of the hotels/restaurants in Chicago. I told her that I could easily clear my calendar for the 6th of August, since she was notifying me a full month in advance.

Happily, I checked the location of the restaurant (Jack Dempsey Bar & Grill -- Holiday Inn on Cicero Avenue) via the computer, and by the 6th of August I was all geared up to make the drive in.

Arriving at the site some minutes in advance of the 5 o'clock expectation time, I spoke to the Hostess at the Dempsey B & G, regarding reservations for a group of older folks numbering about eight or ten. She informed me that there were NO reservations made for that evening, by anyone, at all - Period. Confused, but not thwarted, I retreated to an outside bench to await, what I hoped was not a mistake on my part (wrong hotel, wrong time, wrong day). I hadn't sat there very long before Gerald Bowker (Copilot: Stacey Crew, 727th) and his wife, Dorothy, emerged from the hotel and welcomed me to the 'savior vivre' that was in the making.

Realizing that I was not in error, we retreated into the Lobby and seated ourselves to observe whoever entered and left through the main doors.

After a bit of conversation with the Bowkers I



Couple Of My Favorite Ladies  
Bobbi Kelly & Clara Massare

heard another plaintive voice asking, "Bob, Don't you remember me?"

There was a moment of hesitation as I thought I recognized the voice, but not in the context of being part of the "Chicago Committee." The voice and body was that of Clara Massare, wife of our late 451st Co-founder, Peter Massare, 727th. Clara and her son, Frank, had traveled all the way from Rochester, NY, through the invitation of Bobbi Kelly, for this little affair.

It was about then that I realized that this 'bash' was something more than "just a small get together." It got even more involved when I saw Audrey Smelski (wife of the late John Smelski, 727th),

out from Fulton, NY, and her daughter, Jill, arriving through the main doors. I could see that this was turning into a "Nation Wide" event.

But saying that New York was the only state represented from outside Illinois, seemed to go 'by the boards,' as suddenly the West, and West Coast, came into view. Doug Denton (Gunner: Smith's Crew, 725th) and wife, Elisa, from Riverside, CA and Alex Garcia (60th Service Squadron), from Lakewood, CA became part of the party. And from out of Phoenix, AZ came Richard Hayford, (Copilot: Wiersema's Crew, 724th) and his traveling side-kick, Randy Jones (noted for his deep interest in our operation and his photo display at our Salt Lake City Reunion 2002).

From the South came Carol Morin (representing Art Morin, Gunner: Jones' Crew, 727th). Carol hails from Newnan, GA.

Then from Plattsmouth, NE came Sedge (Mechanic, 727th) and his wife, Wilda Hill.

As to the original Chicago Committee that were in attendance were: Bobbi Kelly and daughter Karen; John Anderson (Gunner: Oakes' Crew, 727th) and daughter, Pam; myself and John (Pilot: 724th) O'Connor, with his wife, Anna and John's daughter, Kathy.

In total, as we all sat in a private dining area, were more than 25 451st members and guests.

By this time I realized that it was in celebration of my 80th birthday, coming up on 10 August 2005. It was further confirmed when they attached 'Birthday Balloons' to the back of my chair. This was the second time the 'committee' had so honored me. Previously, in 1991, they threw a 'bash' for the

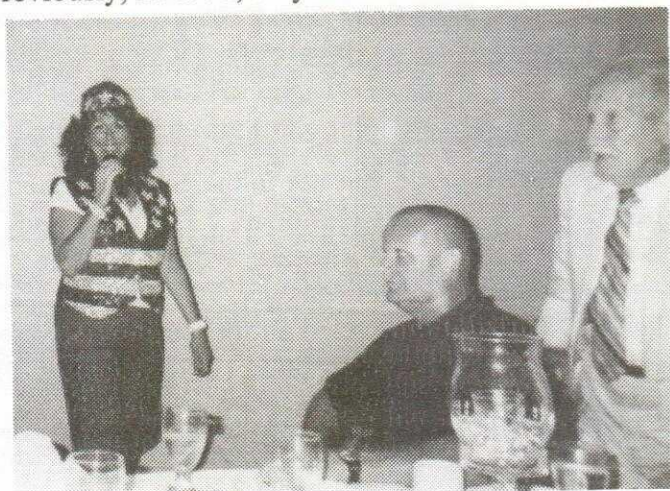
same purpose. But at that time I was a mere 66 years of age, barely through puberty .. Now they were conceding that I had finally reached my majority at 80.

To say the evening was impressive, is putting it mildly. After a sumptuous entree of baked chicken, along with a touch of ceremonial wine, we were entertained by a vivacious duo, calling themselves, "The Don & Lisa Show." Lisa, working in a congenial atmosphere with the attending guests, shimied and sang to everyone's delight. Their selection of music, fortified by John O'Connor and his ever present coronet, really loosened up the audience.

The 'creme de la creme,' at least for me, was the presentation of an honorarium check for my effort in keeping the spirit of the 451st Bomb Group alive and viable. I am deeply indebted to all who chose to see me into my eightieth year.



A Few Words Of Thanks From "The Old Guy"



Randy Jones & Dick Hayford Checking Out The Movements Of Lisa (The Shimmy Gal of The Don & Lisa Show)

# A PILOT'S STORY

## (Legacy Of A/C "Boot In The Ass")

*By John "Jack" A. Dunsmoor, Pilot 724th BS*

My earliest impression of the B-24 Liberator was walking around a "C" model parked alongside Goodyear's giant dirigible hanger in Akron, Ohio in early 1940. Never did I dream that I would eventually fly a B-24. Shortly after that I obtained a Private Pilot's license and then a Commercial Pilot's license in small single engine aircraft. I joined the Army Air Corps as a Cadet and had to learn to fly the "Army Way." First came preflight training at San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center next to Kelly Field, Texas, Primary Flight School at Curtis Field, Brady, Texas, and Advanced Training at Goodfellow Field in San Angelo, Texas, twin engine school at Lubbock, Texas, followed by commissioning as a Second Lieutenant and receiving the Silver Wings. I requested four engine training and was assigned to the Fort Worth Army Air Field for first pilot transitional in B-24s.

New pilots attended classes which included instructions concerning aircraft structure, ground handling, flight performance, all systems including hydraulics, electrical, fuel, engines, radio, turrets, arms, bomb loads, weight and balance. Such courses continued during the entire transitional period.

I was still awed by this huge plane (the largest in the Army inventory at that time). When I reported for my initial flight, my instructor took me through the usual walk-around inspection before getting on board. Upon being seated in the left seat, I remarked at the unusual width and size of the rudder pedals. My instructor just grinned and said, "You'll see."

The start-engine procedure began with using the detailed check list which resulted in a hearty roar when the engine engaged, and at the end the steady pulse when the engines settled down to idle speed. The sound of that twelve hundred horsepower was so much greater than that of the trainers we had just left. With all four engines running they spelled POWER, which could be felt with the ship straining against the wheel chocks. Running up the engines, one by one, for checking prop speed and feathering properties was a new procedure for the pilots.

Taxiing and take-off demonstrated the awesome power available to the pilot. The first flight was mostly a familiarization event. It included the usual turns, altitude changes, aircraft performance when stalled in different attitudes and the follow through exercises with the instructor on the controls. He demonstrated "engine out" procedures and the use of trim tabs to correct the yaw, plus adjusting the power on the remaining engines.

The instructor then gave me the controls. I repeated the demonstrated maneuvers and then he cut two engines on the left side when in straight and level flight at above five thousand feet. THEN I knew why the rudder pedals were so wide! With both of my feet on the right pedal I strained to overcome the yaw. I yelled for him to get on it, as well. The next demonstration was how to properly trim the rudder tabs to keep a straight course. The instructor was still grinning.

Taxiing the aircraft required an abrupt change from the tactics used on the tail draggers. To turn left, for example, required a mild increase in engine power on the right and a similar reduction of power on the left, with much care exercised to properly stop the turn for the desired heading. One taxied slowly to avoid over heating the brakes. In some ways it reminded me of a duck waddling.

This first flight was often referred to as the "dollar" ride as it puts the pilot on flying status with the benefit of flight pay. Good thing that it happened then, as later in a game of volley ball that same afternoon, I was spiked by one of my friends, Lt. John Hill. This left me with a fractured left thumb. Now you can fly the bird with a broken thumb, but the left thumb was used to push the radio button on the left fork of the yoke. Result--the flight surgeon said that he could not let me fly again until the thumb healed. Wow! I had an unexpected month's leave!

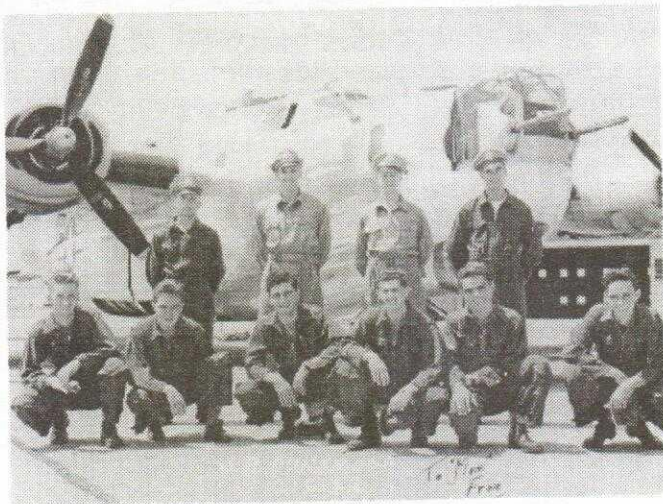
In addition to learning the fundamentals of ground and air handling, I noted the absence of instruments flying gauges on the right, or Copilot's

instrument panel. Another oddity was the absence of fuel gauges and tank changing valves on the flight deck. Oh well, that's why they included an Engineer on the flight crew. Fuel levels and necessary fuel transfer was accomplished by flying as level as possible while the Engineer gauged fuel levels by using the sight gauge and associated valves located on the rear of the bulkhead aft of the pilot's seat.

The Flight Engineer was a very important member of the crew. He called out airspeed on both take-off and landing so I could concentrate on the plane and the runway. He visually confirmed "gear-up and gear-down" to correspond with the cockpit instrumentation. Among other responsibilities, he started the auxiliary power unit (APU) and then, once airborne, turned the unit off. His duties would fill many pages.

Upon returning after my leave, I crammed in more ground school and flew every possible minute to catch up with my class. Even though BUSY, I did put in some time running over to Dallas to visit my future wife. We wed soon after (Now, after 61 years, we're still together.) Upon completion of B-24 transition we set off for Lincoln Army Air Field. There I met up with my crew. Each man had completed his own special training.

Aside from the gunners themselves, few people know of, or understood, the rigorous training each gunner endured before being selected for combat duty. Each man had to know the 50 caliber machine gun from the inside out (assembling blind-folded)



**DUNSMOOR CREW**

Front: Sam Strelecki [TG], Chuck Curby [ROG], Walt Wallach [AEG], Frank Miller [BG] James Watts [WG], Frank Foster[NG].  
Back: John Joesphic [N.], Tom Flowers [CP.], Jack Dunsmoor [P.],  
Walt Downing [B.]

and then qualify on the firing ranges and in flight. Additionally, the men had to qualify for operating the four turrets installed on the B-24. Most had to qualify for other duties including Flight Engineer, Radio Operator and Armorer Gunners. These men were not "just enlisted men" but were well educated folks who were essential to the missions ahead.

With very little time at Lincoln, we left for Biggs Field at El Paso for combat crew training. At our first meeting, before the initial flight at Biggs, I spoke about informal addressing of names. "We are Officers and Enlisted Men, no question, however for ease of communication and a sense of togetherness, I would like to be called 'Jack,' my nickname all my life. Each of us was a civilian and close to his family not long ago. We here are now a 'family,' so lets work together as a family. When we are away from our ship and around other people, let's just use common sense. I'm sure Walt, Pat and Joe agree. Now, let's fly."

We went through gunnery training, night flights, bombing runs over Alamagordo bomb range and cross country to distant locations. And, more and more of the same, plus more ground school. And very importantly, formation flying.

During this period, I asked the training commander (Captain McCarty) if it would be possible to take my wife on one of our "missions." He reminded me that this was war time, these were combat aircraft, and that it would take an Act of Congress to get permission. In other words, "NO!" Weelll, now ... I bent the ruled a little. I grounded my navigator, Josephic, for a day and wrapped my wife up in his flight suit, etc. I was the only married man on the crew and the lads were pleased to escort my wife to the plane. She was placed in the tail gunner's turret and told to "look busy." As we closed the bomb bay doors she was invited up to the "front office" to watch the proceedings. The men gave her a good tour of the ship during the mission over the Alamagordo bomb range. In preparation for the trip she had made sandwiches, accompanied by snacks and soft drinks for the crew. She can claim eight hours and ten minutes of flight time in a B-24.

Upon returning to Biggs Field, the men again huddled around her and escorted her back to our car while I went into Operations for debriefing. At de-

briefing, Captain McCarty happened to look out to the parking lot and saw my wife taking off the helmet and combing her hair. He turned to me and asked, "Is that your wife out there and did you do what I think you did? ... I'll be gol durned." The debriefing was very short, to say the least. Following that incident, my wife said she could hardly meet the Captain's gaze while at the 'O' Club.

Regarding my car .. On some weekends some of the men would ask for the use of my 1942 Chrysler Sedan. Each time it would come back clean and polished with a full tank of gas. Quite likely 100 octane.

Back to flying. One event sticks in my mind. On a night flight south-bound out of Biggs, the instrument panel lights went out just as we left the haze of El Paso's lights. It was pitch black and there was no reference to the horizon. I yelled for the Flight Engineer to hand up a flashlight. He did so, but inadvertently turned the ninety degree GI flashlight directly into my eyes! Talk about flying blind and at night! I saw the radio range station lights flash by just to our left and level with the ship. Enough air-speed and sheer luck allowed us to gain altitude and throttle back the engines to normal climb power. On a scale of 10, the 'clutch' factor was about a 9.95! The mission continued in a normal fashion once the instruments lights were brought back on line. (I didn't soil my shorts, but it was a close call.)

Another sobering experience happened over the Alamogordo Bomb range. The traffic pattern was a long rectangle arranged so the pilot was to enter on a downwind side, make a left turn and gain 1,000 feet in altitude, then turn left again and then turn the ship over to the Bombardier to use the Norden bombsight to finish the approach to the aiming point and 'bombs away.' The Pilot was then to make a rally to the left and lose 1,000 feet of altitude, turn left again in trail with other ships on the downwind leg. Fine, but on one evolution we made our left turn to get into the pattern and found another plane on the crosswind leg and already gaining altitude - almost at our level. We made a How Able maneuver pull-up to avoid impact. Close!

The parents of Gunner James Watts flew out from North Carolina to visit and stayed with us a few days. As we put them on a night departure from the commercial air field to head for home, a B-24 from Biggs crashed and burned on the side of

Mount Franklin. A grim sight as we watched the detached engines burn and tumble down the mountain side. The Watts' last words, as they boarded the commercial DC aircraft were, "Bring our Jimmy home safely."

After completion of combat crew training (and the end of my "all expenses paid" tour of Texas) we went to Topeka Army Air Field to pick up a new Ford-built B-24. The entire crew signed the receipt. We completed the compass heading calibrations, made some familiarization flights and were given a departure date.

Prior to departure the crew wanted to name the ship. We arrived at a name that, in today's "politically correct" society, might raise some eyebrows. "*Boot in the Ass*" was painted on the ship's nose. The name was derived from a slang phrase meaning we got a "charge" or "boost." For brevity, we'll shorten the name to "Boot." The artist painted the nicknames of each crewmen adjacent to their position. In one sense the "raunchy" name led to our crew keeping the plane for combat. I guess that no one else wanted to fly it.

At any rate, we took off from Topeka and landed at Grenier Field near Manchester, NH. After overnighing, we proceeded to Gander Lake, Nova Scotia. This was a surprise. Gander Field had an enormous expanse of concrete covered by hundreds of new aircraft waiting to be flown into the war zone. We spent a couple of days there waiting our turn to cross the pond. At that point we didn't know our destination.

As we neared departure, Chuck Curby and Walt Wallach came to me with urgent news. "Frank Foster is sick and had been vomiting in a hangar and the medics think he is malingering." (Frank had just turned eighteen as we flew from Manchester.) I felt otherwise and went to his quarters and found him all doubled up with pain. So, we commandeered an ambulance and saw an MD who diagnosed a bleeding ulcer! Frank wound up in critical care at Gander and we took turns "sitting" with him for a month until he recovered sufficiently to be flown Stateside. The lapsed time there was enough to earn us the right to wear a "Defense" ribbon. After Frank was flown to the States, we received orders to fly to the Azores and then on to Marrakech Morocco and on to Gioia del Colle, just outside of Bari, Italy.

*(Years later I reached Frank in New Orleans and found that after recovery and discharge from service he had become a lawyer and was nearing retirement.)*

The flight to the Azores was the longest leg of the trip on our way to our destination in Italy. We were confident that our Navigator was up to the task of finding this dot in the Atlantic Ocean. But, about an hour out from the ETA, we couldn't resist the idea of turning on the direction finder. After a few swings the DF needle settled down to point directly over the ship's nose. Joe was right on the mark.

Our landing at Lajes Field in the Azores was our first on pierced steel planking. What a racket! After on night at Lajes, we headed East and made landfall in Africa, landing at Marrakech. This was a new experience for us. Swirling dust .. Dust everywhere. We were barely able to see the 'Follow Me' Jeep to guide us to a parking spot. The crew hurried to get the covers on the greenhouse, and after cooling, on the engines. After stops at Oran and Tunis in Africa, we headed on to Italy, passing Mount Etna in Sicily. The only things of note upon landing at Gioia, was the mud and huge collection of US aircraft parked there.

From Gioia we flew to Castelluccio del Sauri to join the 15th Air Force, 49th Wing, 451st Bomb Group, and the 724th Bomb Squadron. We were directed into a revetment and we shut down the engines. We were assured by the Ground Crew that we were "home" and that our gear was safe and that we should report in at the Operations building.

The crew was assigned to a couple of standard 16' X 16' Army pyramidal canvas tents already erected in an olive grove. One for the Officers and one for the Enlisted Men. They were equipped with folding cots, blankets, mattress covers, pillow cases - and that was all! Back to the ship to load our personal stuff for transport to our respective tents. All was well, except that our new parachutes had disappeared. They were of a new issue which were equipped with a rather thick back, leaving a cavity for a number of items such as a folding machete, survival items and other things thought to be useful in case of unexpected departure from the ship. Good-bye to the chocolate bars and survival goodies also taken. *Welcome home. Oh well, so be it.*

After our orientation the next day, we did the

rounds and I met a man who later became a gong time friend (when the war concluded, we exchanged visits between California and Texas.) Sgt. Ron DeLashmutt was the Squadron Supply Sergeant. Among other things, he informed us as to what to use for stuffing our pillows and mattress covers. He also gave us practical suggestions such as hiring a local youth for housekeeping, doing laundry, etc.

Among the tents were several tufa stone buildings somewhat larger than the surrounding tents. A number of the original 724th crews had replaced their tents with much more comfortable quarters. Walt, Joe, Pat and I decided that, with the fall and winter approaching, we would also like to be comfortable. Back to the Sergeant. He knew of a couple of local bricklayers. Voila! We sketched out what we would like and hired the men. In a few days they had quarried the tufa blocks and erected the walls. Now, what to do for lumber for the roof? Back to the Sergeant. He suggested we get a truck and visit the harbor at Bari and pick up some dunnage lumber. Done--and now what to do for a leak-proof cover? Back to the Sergeant. Here's what was in our favor--none of us indulged in 'John Barley-corn' (save one and he used it sparingly.) Among us we had some bottle booze saved from various R & R trips to Cairo.

A few bottles and another trip to Bari produced the necessary water-proof fabric. Ah, the power of the black market. We finished up with a double sink (ends of large oxygen bottles), a swing faucet with both hot and cold water. We ran a water coil through the centrally located home-built kerosene burning stove. (The airmen in England had nothing on us!) We had clothing racks, storage for personal effect, plus small tables.

We found that cigarettes (none of us smoked)



Lt's Walt Downing & Werner Seiber



and booze were the medium for trade.

Group policy was to have each new First Pilot to serve as Copilot for five missions to learn the intricacies of combat flying. I had the pleasure of sitting in the right seat with a well-seasoned Pilot, Paul Johnshoy. What an instructor. I later flew many missions as his wingman.

A week before my first mission as Copilot, I had a mild case of the GI's, which lasted up to my first combat flight. I thought that I certainly would have to use the toilet located in the back of the aircraft. As it happened, the plane just ahead of us on take-off crashed just of the end of the runway. The tower fired off red flares and we shut down our engines to wait. At that moment nature issued me a strong reminder of my intestinal problem. Paul understood and pointed out an outdoor privy shack about 50 yards off the runway and suggested I make a trip over there as it would be much easier than climbing back to the facilities in the ship. I took his advice and no sooner was I seated than the crashed plane exploded. I had a clear view from vantage point from my throne. When I got back to my seat in the plane, Paul said, "The tower radioed that the mission was scrubbed." When we got back to the revetment, I caught up with the Flight Surgeon, Dr. Henry Quinn, who gave me something to conquer the bug that I had.

We acquired a replacement for our nose gunner. Frank Shinn was a former foot soldier who had requested flying duty to get points for return to the States. On his very first flight with our crew he was in the nose turret as we took off. Apparently he had not been briefed that he was to be aft of the No. 6 bulkhead on takeoffs and landings. Our mission included a maximum load. This, coupled with some turbulence, our Copilot Pat Flowers and I enjoyed the experience of approaching a high speed stall. Of course, our combined reaction was to gain airspeed by ducking the nose and then gradually, very gradually, getting the nose up and then joining the formation. This was our first mission with our full crew and with Pat back in the right seat.

In retrospect, I can only imagine how Shinn must have felt being first lifted off his seat and then being forced back into it as we regained control. When we returned from the mission Shinn came to me and asked, "Is that the normal way you get into the air?" It was then that I realized what had hap-

pened. Frank said, "I had a very good view of the earth coming up to meet us. If we had crashed, I would have been the first man to reach the ground." He turned out to be a good gunner.

Group HQ had also required that the Pilot and Copilot share the stress of flying alternate fifteen minutes periods. This was a direct reversal from other Groups, where the pilot flew the whole mission. In addition to this, I made sure that Pat made take-offs and landings every other flight to keep him up to date. I did not succeed in checking him out in the left seat. After a few attempts we left well enough alone.

In the early missions much was learned, principally formation flying. It seems that seasoned combat pilots had the view that, to the newcomers, formation flying was, "If you were within radio contact, that was sufficient." Emphasis was continually on maintaining a tight position with respect to the rest of the unit. On occasion, if I found myself lagging, I would naturally advance the throttles to catch up. The trick was to back off on the throttles soon enough not to over run my position.

As a kid, I recalled watching a flight of Army Observation planes come into Cleveland Airport for refueling. I noticed that one of the ships was wagging the tail from side to side. Later, I talked with the pilot and learned that he was a little "hot" in getting position and wagged the tail simply to slightly slow down. I tried this with our B-24 and found that it worked. After a couple of flights, Chuck Curby came to me and said, "Sam was getting a little beat up in the Tail Turret." No wonder. The turret is on the end of a 63 foot long arm. Believe me, I worked harder on formation flying. Pat Flowers, on the other hand, flew formation as though the tip of the wing was glued to the adjacent plane.

Sam, if I am correct, got credit for shooting down a ME262. Sam was a Master Carpenter and honored us with a couple visits after the war.

Our thirteenth mission occurred on Friday, October 13, 1944. We had been briefed that flak over Vienna, if any, would be light to moderate. Well, for Boot, it was anything but. Coming off the target, we rallied left and down and found the air full of nasty bits of metal from the German 88's below. Some of them found their way into our number three engine and other parts of the plane. We had to feather the

prop and shut down the engine.

Of course, that number three engine runs the hydraulic pump powering about everything in the ship. The same flak burst ripped up the right side of the ship cutting the elevator control cable and bursting an oxygen line. After adding power and adjusting trim to compensate for the No. 3 engine, we found that the elevator trim enabled us to fly quite well. Later inspection revealed that the elevator control cable had been severed just forward of the right side gunner's position, but that the elevator trim cable had been missed. The bomb bay doors were still open, causing considerable drag. We also found the intercom was useless.

Jimmy Watts came down from his upper turret, on the Flight Deck, and into the bomb bay and came back to say, "Hydraulic fluid covers the whole area, but I can fix it!" It seems that the more experienced Flight Engineers carried ammo boxes complete with tools, clamps, and sections of hydraulic hose. He hung out over the open bomb bay and, in spite of the fluid covered surfaces, made the repairs and closed the doors. This was all done with no parachute or safety ropes and only a walk-around oxygen bottle. He came up to the Flight Deck and said, "I got her fixed." This was evident as the air-speed had begun to creep up. Jimmy was decorated with the Distinguished Flying Cross for his bravery.

#### NARRATIVE STATEMENT

**JAMES W. WATTS, JR., 34670932, Technical Sergeant, Air Corps, 724th Bombardment Squadron, 451st Bombardment Group (H), United States Army.**

For extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flights as an Engineer-Gunner on a B-24 type aircraft. On 26 December 1944, Sergeant Watts participated in a mission to bomb enemy oil installations at Osweicim, Poland. While over the target, his aircraft suffered very severe damage from accurate anti-aircraft fire. The hydraulic system was badly damaged, all controls and trim cables on the right side of number six (6) bulkhead were shot out. In addition, the oxygen lines were cut and the interphone system was completely cut off. Leaving his position in the upper turret immediately after his ship successfully rallied from the target, Sergeant Watts proceeded to make the necessary repairs to enable his aircraft to continue to its base. Because of the break in the hydraulic lines, hydraulic fluid made the narrow catwalk in the bomb bays extremely slippery. With the

temperature at fifty (50) degrees below zero and the bomb bay doors open, Sergeant Watts, with complete disregard for his own personal safety, entered the bomb bay without his parachute and proceeded to make the necessary repairs. With outstanding skill and ingenuity, he succeeded in repairing the damaged lines and turned on the hydraulic reserve supply. Because of the extreme temperature, the fluid was frozen and the bomb bay doors would not close. Throughout the route home, Sergeant Watts continued to work tirelessly and diligently in an effort to prepare the damaged ship for landing. Because his fellow members of the waist were cut off from communications with the pilot, he made several trips through the dangerous catwalk to re-assure the men that everything was under control. When the ship arrived over the home base, Sergeant Watts successfully lowered the main gear and kicked out the nose wheel manually, thus enabling the pilot to land the plane without any further damage to the ship or injury to his crew. By his outstanding technical skill and courage, together with his strong devotion to duty and brilliant combat record of twenty four (24) missions against the enemy, Sergeant Watts has reflected great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the United States of America. Residence at enlistment: Willimaston, North Carolina.

\* \* \* \* \*

With one engine out we found the aircraft was flyable but we were slowly trailing the formation. A lonesome feeling. After we lost sight of the formation, I got on the fighter radio frequency to inquire if there were any fighters in the area. The immediate response was a voice asking me to look out my left window. I did - and found a beautiful checkered P-51! The pilot gave us the high-sign and pointed to my right window. Another checkered tail P-51. With that they both jinked off and up to cover us until we reached the Adriatic coastline. Tuskegee pilots! Much comfort on our flight deck.

*(Later, while on an R & R leave in Rome, I happened to meet one of the Tuskegee Pilots named, Elwood P. Driver. A chance to express thanks for the great aircover. Years later I had the pleasure of again meeting and working with "Woody" Driver, a fine engineer and mathematician, in a Federal agency in Washington, DC.)*

Our flight back to Hiccup Field was uneventful and I felt that, given a long enough approach to the runway, the crew could help us make up for lack of

elevator control. I went aft to give the crew the option of bailing out, but the men elected to stay on. I briefed them to get to the rear of the plane when we touched down and I hit the alarm bell, and to stay there until I again hit the alarm bell, then to come forward one by one until the nose wheel touched down. The tower was advised of the lack of elevator control and of our intention to land. We were asked to orbit until all the Group had landed.

Following what seemed an interminably long final approach we hit about 100 feet down the runway and the men did their part. Once the nose wheel was on the steel matting and we had slowed down a bit, I applied the brakes and kept them on as there was just enough pressure in the accumulator for one actuation of the brakes. The plane stopped just short of the midpoint on the runway. As can be expected, we were jubilant about getting on the ground. We had saved another B-24 for repair and future duty.

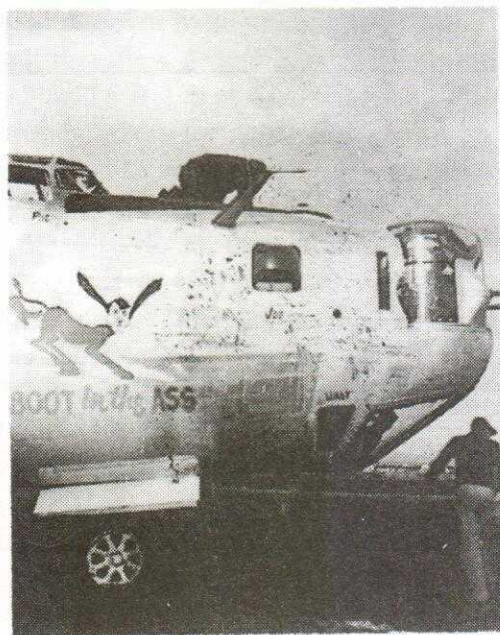
A Jeep came out from the tower and the driver got out and looked up at me and said, "Nice landing Lieutenant," and turned away. I replied, "Thank you Major," and then did a double-take when I discovered that the late afternoon sun made the silver leafs look like gold. What a way to meet our newly arrived Base Commander, Lt. Colonel Leroy L. Stefonowicz!

Now the irony -- a tug hooked on to Boot and towed her, not to our revetment, but to the salvage area. It seems that the ship had sustained major

damage and deemed not repairable.

We missed Boot. She flew well and used less fuel with lower power settings than many earlier ships. I suspect that was partly from a smoother skin due to Ford's riveting technique. After a short R & R leave in Rome, we flew a number of combat weary planes that were left by other crews that had complete their tours and returned to the United States.

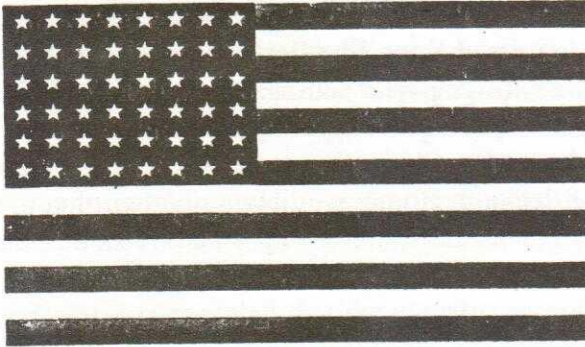
*We just recently (May 2005) learned that Boot did fly again! Robert Karstensen, President of the 451st Bombardment Group (H) WW II, Ltd, found an additional record concerning Boot relating that, instead of being cannibalized for parts, the 60th Service Squadron felt that repairs could indeed be made. Captain Henry Rollins took a Crew Chief and a couple of repair specialists from the Service Squadron for a test flight. Captain Rollins was a senior member of the 724th Squadron and a very experienced pilot. He related that the test hop demonstrated that the plane flew very well. The approach for landing was "soft" with no drift. However, upon touch down the right main gear suddenly retracted and the plane skewed off the runway and was destroyed with the tail section twisted from the fuselage. One can only speculate as to the cause -- perhaps hidden damage to the 'gear-down' lock. Fortunately, no injuries were reported for Captain Rollins or the crew. Boots had at last made its final trek to the salvage area.*



"Boot In The Ass"

REQUISITION AND SHIPPING TICKET		COMMODITY	
DATE	8/10/44	ISSUE NO.	C-2177-45
SHIP NO.	42-51369	CREW NO.	FR-009-BQ-2
TO	TOPEKA, KAN.		
PERSONAL			
1	10	24	REQUISITIONED BY: [Signature] TYPE: P 3 312P
2	10	26	REQUISITIONED BY: [Signature] TYPE: P 3 312P
P. John A. Dunswoor, 2d Lt. AC. CP. [Signature] 2d Lt. AC. [Signature] 2d Lt. AC. B. [Signature] 2d Lt. AC. B. [Signature] 2d Lt. AC.		AG. [Signature] CG. [Signature] CG. [Signature] CG. [Signature]	

REQUISITION AND SHIPPING TICKET



U. S. ARMY AIR FORCE



*R. Karstensen*  
SIGNATURE

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.  
PLEASE TAKE ME TO YOUR COMMANDING OFFICER AND NOTIFY NEAREST AMERICAN OR BRITISH MILITARY MISSION IN BELGRADE, BUCHAREST, POLTAVA OR OTHER NEARBY PLACE. ALSO, PLEASE ARRANGE FOR TRANSPORTATION.

THANK YOU

SHOW THIS TO RUSSIANS:

**Я АМЕРИКАНСКИЙ ЛЕТЧИК  
ПОЖАЛУЙСТА ПРЕДСТАВТЕ МЕНЯ ВАЩЕМУ КОМАНДИРУ  
И УВЕДОМИТЕ БЛИЖАЙШУЮ АМЕРИКАНСКУЮ ИЛИ  
БРИТАНСКУЮ ВОЕННУЮ МИССИЮ В БЕЛГРАДЕ,  
БУХАРЕСТЕ, ПОЛТАВЕ ИЛИ В ДРУГОМ БЛИЖАЙШЕМ  
МЕСТЕ. ТАКЖЕ РАСПОРЯДИТЕСЬ О ПЕРЕДВИЖЕНИИ.  
БОЛЬШОЕ СПАСИБО !**

I AM AN AMERICAN.  
PLEASE TAKE ME TO THE NEAREST AMERICAN OR BRITISH MISSION,  
OR TO THE NEAREST RUSSIAN MILITARY AUTHORITY.

THANK YOU.

JESTEM AMERYKANIN.  
PROSZE ODPROWADZIĆ MNIE DO NAJBLSIEZEGO POSELSTWA  
AMERYKAŃSKIEGO ALBO ANGIELSKIEGO, ALBO, DO NAJBLSIEZEGO  
WŁADZA ROSYJSKIEGO WOJSKA.

DZIĘKUJE SERDECZNIE.

POLAND

JÁ JSEM AMERIČAN!  
PROSIM VÁS ZAVEĎTE MNE K NEJBLIŽŠÍ AMERICKÉ NEB BRITSKÉ  
MISI, NEBO K NEJBLIŽŠÍMU RUSKÉMU VOJENSKEMU ÚŘADU.

DĚKUJI!

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

JA SAM AMERIKANAC.  
MOLIM Povedite me do najbliže AMERIKANSKI ILI ENGLESKE MISIJE,  
ILI DO NAJBLIŽE RUSKE VOJNICKE VLASTI

HVALA

YUGOSLAVIA

AMERIKAI VAGYOK  
KÉREM KISÉRJEN EL A LEGKÖZELEBBI AMERIKAI VAGY ANGOL,  
BIZOTTSÁGHOZ AVAGY A LEGKÖZELEBB LEVO OROSZ KATONAI  
HATÓSÁGHOZ.

KÖSZÖNÖM SZÉPEN

HUNGARY

ICH BIN AMERIKANER.  
BITTE BRINGEN SIE MICH ZUR NACHSTEN AMERIKANISCHEN ODER  
ENGLISCHEN MISSION ODER ZUR NACHSTEN RUSSISCHEN BEHÖRDE.

VIELEN DANK

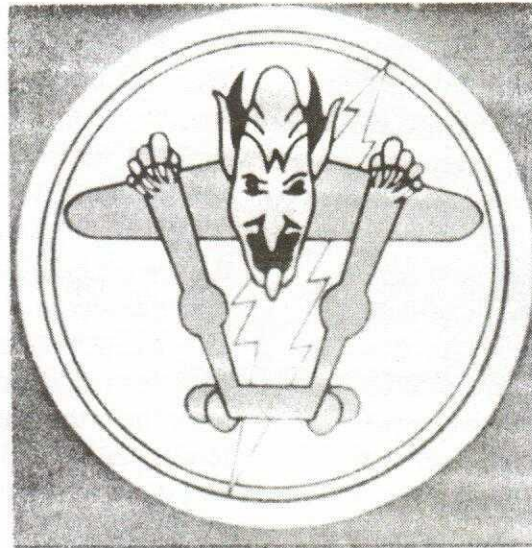
AUSTRIA & GERMANY



## "LITTLE FRIENDS:" THE 49th FIGHTER SQUADRON (Continued 16th Installment by Dr. Royal C. Gilkey)

October 8, 1944 was missionless because of bad weather, which led to its being declared "non-operational." The following days, 9-10 October 1944, were also no-mission days. Camp personnel performed routine duties.

On October 11, 1944, a mission was mounted. It was to provide penetration cover for six groups of the 5th Wing and withdrawal cover for the 49th Wing in a combined attack on the Vienna South Ordnance Depot. Although 17 Squadron "Lightnings" took off on this mission at 0820 hours (8:20 a.m.), nine returned early -- six because of mechanical difficulties and three as their escort. The remaining eight were able to provide cover for the B-17s from 1145-1205 hours (11:45 a.m. - 12:05 p.m.) before returning to base at 1354 hours (1:54 p.m.). Their position in the Group was first. The route followed varied from what was briefed. Our pilots changed course because of threatening thunderheads in the vicinity of Tjiesno along Yugoslavia's Dalmatian coast, detouring north to cross the Adriatic shore line at 27,000 feet over Otok Krk at 0943 hours (9:43 a.m.). Cloud cover made tracing their route impossible, but they flew generally northward until they found about 16 B-17s at 4727N 1538E. They covered these bombers for some 20 minutes on a northeasterly course to an area just north of Neusiedler See (Neusiedler Lake), leaving them there for a return to base. To do so, they crossed the Adriatic coast near Trieste (4536N 1346E) and proceeded from there to base, arriving at 1354 hours (1:54 p.m.). In clarification of all this, our P-38s flying at 30,000 feet met 16 B-17s over 4727N 1538E at 1145 hours (11:45 a.m.) and escorted them for 20 minutes to what was thought to be Neusiedler Lake. Flying at 29,000 feet, they left the bombers there at 1205 hours (12:05 p.m.). Our pilots recalled seeing bombs dropped at 1155 hours (11:55 a.m.) on what they believed to be Wiener-Neustadt area. They then flew a general course homeward and at 1255



hours (12:55 p.m.) crossed the Adriatic coastline in the vicinity of Trieste (4536N 1336E) their altitude being 13,000 feet. Calling the fighter formation good, they rated the bomber formation fair. No enemy planes were encountered, but tracking-type flak arose over what appeared to be the Austrian city of Graz. The pilot of one P-38 who had to return early because of engine-trouble spotted a lone "Liberator" homeward bound on a course paralleling Yugo-

slavia's coast. In order to investigate further, he flew within 2,000 feet above the B-24, approaching from 4 o'clock. The bomber's top-turret gunner began firing at him at 1045 hours (10:45 a.m.) as they neared Tresnic (4440N 1434E). The firing occurred while the B-24 was flying at 25,000 feet and the P-38 at 27,000 feet. No hits were scored. As for weather, thunderheads strung along Yugoslavia's Adriatic coast at 15,000 feet. Over that country's mountains, the cloud cover was 10/10 and continuous, the tops reaching to 30,000 feet. At 24,000 feet, there was an undercast whose coverage was 9/10 to 10/10. Radio security left something to be desired. Unnecessary chatter could be heard. Bombers informed that they weren't going to bomb their primary target because a weather-ship had said they couldn't get through to it. As had been the case on other missions, Colonel Daniel S. Campbell (San Antonio, Tex.) led both the Squadron and Group on this one. No early returns received sortie credit, but the others completing the mission did.

*(Editor .. Written into our Group's history are these facts: "Mission #132, the next day, 11 October 1944, was scheduled for the Vosendorf Oil Refinery, Vienna, Austria, with alternate target Graz Neudorf Engineering Works but weather and bad luck played a major role. We hit an unknown target near the primary target." It should be further stated that we lost NO aircraft, although the flak was*

*listed as Intense/Inaccurate/ Heavy Caliber.)*

On 12 October 1944, the mission was closer to home, the target being the Bologna Vehicle Shops in Italy. The assignment was to cover 49th Wing bombers. Our P-38s were to fly in front of the lead group of bombers to the I.P., with seven of them dropping "chaff" ("window bombs). This was calculated to disorient anti-aircraft fire. Eleven of the Squadron's P-38s took off at 0916 hour (11:45 a.m.). En route the effected rendezvous with the bombers at 1115 hours (11:15 a.m.) 24,000 feet over 4403N 0950E (along the Riviera di Sevante) between Genoa (Genova) and La Spezia. From rendezvous, the P-38s escorted the heavies to the Reggio region (4444N 1038E) before heading directly to the target. They arrived 26,000 feet over the target at 1145 hours (11:45 a.m.) and left a minute later (1146 hours, or 11:46 a.m.). Departure from the bombers was effected at Medicina farther to the east (4428N 1138E). The time then was 1150 hours (11:50 a.m.) and the altitude was 26,000 feet. After leaving the bombers, our fighters headed for home, landing there at 1250 hours (12:50 p.m.). All 11 pilots got sortie credit for completing the mission. The seven who dropped "chaff" in front of the bombers on their run into the target did an effective job. At Borgo Panigale (4432N 1116E), the pilots began dropping "window" from 26,000 feet, the time being 1143 hours (11:43 a.m.). Only after 28 "window bombs" had been dropped did they stop. They were then over Bologna at 1145 hours (11:45 a.m.). During the drop, the fighters were 200 yards in front of the bombers and flying at an indicated

air speed of 195 miles per hour. As to results of the bombing, smoke engulfed the southwest section of the targeted Bologna. Flak arose from Castelfranco Emilia (4436N 1103E), situated between Modena and Bologna, and seemed to lag behind the last group of heavies over the targeted city of Bologna. Speaking of weather, our pilots reported a solid overcast from Lake Bolsena (Lago di Bolsena) to the place of rendezvous, estimating the 10/10 cloud cover to be at 12,000 feet. Fortunately, it was CAVU over Bologna; but the target area was fringed by low-hanging scattered clouds from 5,000 to 8,000 feet in altitude. Regarding communications security, unnecessary radio chatter was heard. The bombers made radio contact with the fighters to inform them that they'd be three minutes early to rendezvous. Total mileage on the mission came to an estimated 850 for the round trip.

*(Editor .. For the date of 12 October 1944, our history reads: "Supporting a ground assault on Bologna by the 5th Army we bombed troop barracks at that city on the 12th. Good results were forthcoming and two large explosions were seen at the target."*

*The 451st Bomb Group led the 49th Wing with the 461st and 484th to follow, in that order. Major John M. Anderson (724th Squadron Commander) and Captain Stanley W. Jackson (724th Ass't Operations Officer) led the 49th Wing. We suffered no loss of aircraft and no loss of personnel. By most terms it was considered a "milk run," probably due, in part, to the early dispersing of "chaff" by the 49th Fighter Squadron).*

## **ERNIE COMMINS' 60th AIR SERVICE SQUADRON JOURNAL** (WhenThe Hair Was Short And The Dollar Was Long )

**5 April 1945**

Dear Mabel: Just saw "National Barn Dance," a real entertaining movie. Full of hill billy music and funny cracks. We have changed to summer time now and that means it stays light 'til 8 P.M., so our shows start later.

Spent a couple of hours over in the carpenter shop putting a few scraps of plywood together into a tiny radio cabinet, then painted it white. I left it

down in Ray's tent because he has the wire strung for it. Right now I'm listening to Jimmy Durante.

The building that is to be used as our Day Room is about finished and painted light blue and pink ( WOW, what dainty shades! ), with the rafters a dark brown. The fireplace, built into one end of this big room, didn't draw very well, but some Eytie stonemason experimented with various baffles and got the right combination to prevent smoke

from coming out to choke us. With the war so close to over, it doesn't make sense fixing things up so nicely, unless the Government intends to use all this somehow after the scrap is finished.

Today I started another project, getting the tent "summerized," and we may end up moving it to a less dusty location. This will be evening construction work, as I have to play volleyball, too. Every third night after supper my team is scheduled for an intra-squad game. So far we have won six and lost none. Probably for all this bragging, we'll be blanked tomorrow.

### 23 April 1945

Dear Mabel: Hello sweetheart, how are you tonight? It is now 8:30 P. M. by my new watch that I bought at our P. X. this week. The issue to our P. X. was a dozen watches, so we drew lots to see who would get to buy one. I haven't had the correct time on my person for about a year, ever since the waterproof Gruen went haywire. This will be a nice dress watch when I take you out to parties.

Yesterday Bob Bricker and I took a pass and visited a small town where he knows an Italian family. On the way we ate chow with Gabe, and he still made no mention of his family difficulties. Lax is now a Staff Sergeant. He got his promotion a few weeks ago. When we finally arrive at Bob's friends, such a lot of talk you never heard before! Of course I couldn't understand much of what the Italians said, but it turned out that a brother-in-law was under arrest for possession of U. S. property .. had to be Black Market stuff. Someone's husband had run off with a niece, a cousin was pinched by the M.P.'s for entertaining soldiers in her home, etc. Quite a mess this particular family was in, and how they can pour out the story, gestures and all!

Had a Vermouth or two and left for more pleasant surroundings. Stopped in other towns along the way, then spent a long three hours trying to hitch a ride off the highway into our camp. Started to rain



ERNEST R. CUMMINS  
B. 25 December 1916 / D. 20 December 2000

lightly and when we got picked up, finally, we were pretty wet. At camp I took a hot sponge bath and made chicken noodle soup for a nightcap, then slept fine.

Today I got a clothes rack built for hanging our uniforms. The tent is really shaping up. It has a ceiling too, making it seem more like a room, rather than a tent.

Just thought of another detail of our pass yesterday. Bricker is a cousin of the ex-Governor Bricker that ran for Vice President, and one of the trucks we rode in had a colored passenger who used to work for Governor

Bricker. He told us what a swell home he had. He gave the correct description of all the bathrooms, and kitchen too, So we knew he wasn't making it up. I get a big kick from the enthusiastic way these colored people talk ... "Well doggone!, Sho Enuff?, Wahta small wurle!"

Gee Honey, the war news is getting better and better. I'm nursing my mustache along to tickle you with it. By the way, hon, include your phone number in one of your letters, just in case I get a chance to use it. You told me what it was when the phone was installed, but I can't remember where I wrote it down.

I'll say good night for now, Peanut, with a big thanks for being Mrs. Ernie. That makes up for so much. Having you to look forward to, and to make you happy, and for me living with the gal I love,

Lucky Randolph

### 28 April 1945

Dear Mabel: Raining again. I guess this is the last shower of spring, or sumpin.' We've had some fine weather these last couple of weeks. Maybe this damp spell will keep the dust down, at the very least.

Well Peanut darling, I had me a trip this week ( working, not on pass ). Left at noon of the 25th and got back at sundown of the 27th. Covered 450

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

miles and passed through many towns and cities that I haven't seen for over a year. The bumps in the roads are right where they always were. Had for my relief driver one of those South Carolina lads with a pronounced drawl. I made him repeat about anything he said, and still did not understand most of it.

When we started I was wondering if this was to be one of those trips where we never got to the right place at the right time for getting fed. But this turned out to be the best ever for eats. Here is a brief account, via the menu route.

A regular dinner here before hitting the road. Six hours later a steak at Headquarters outfit. Driving thru a large city about 11 P.M. I decided to ask a Negro M.P. where I could find some hot coffee and he directed us to a dance hall where we got six sandwiches apiece, plus cake and coffee. The dance was with colored G.I.'s and Italian girls. From there we drove until 3 A.M. and slept in another Service Squadron's camp.

Next morning, fried eggs for breakfast and while we waited for the truck to be loaded we cruised uptown to the Red Cross where we checked our coats and bags. We had borrowed a Jeep and so off we went to another town where Harold Crooks and I had a pass a year and a half ago. The big building that formerly was used by the Red Cross there was converted into an Italian bank. I drove around town for half an hour looking for the damned place, wondering if my memory was failing. Finally found a Pro Station and the medic on duty told me where the new Red Cross set-up was. Result was another fine meal at their restaurant.

Back to the first town to get our bags and three servings of the best ice cream I've had overseas. Just like Looney's. In camp that night, but before starting our return journey, we had a big chicken feast. Hit the highway about 6 P.M. and took another route home. It was shorter, but more hills to

climb. Had trouble with our headlights, but there was a brilliant moon lighting the roadway. About halfway back to camp we blew a tire and decided to sleep in a transient Army Hotel; the "Sad Sack" by name. Even this had been moved. The one where I had previously stayed had been taken over by Officers and the new one is on the 4th floor of a large stone building. Only thing wrong with it was, all the windows are laying on the floor in tiny pieces and we got kind of chilly towards morning.

After another good breakfast in a big Mess Hall we got an Eyeie kid to change the flat tire and we got homeward bound again. A Jeep passed us a few miles out and the driver ( from the 60th ) tossed us four hot-cross buns from a snack bar in town. So we even attracted food "on the fly." Didn't realize your hubby looked so hungry! Back where the load was to be delivered the Mess Sergeant broke out a can of chicken and fed us, with fresh chocolate cake, YET! Finally back home for a good supper - full tummies all the way. What a surprise!

Found your April 14th effort waiting for me telling of the job switch in the Yard. Aren't you the lucky girl to have your choice of positions! Sure happy to know my little chick is so well looked after. You sure made Ernie chuckle with that explanation of the "Old Friend," (75 years). Why baby, I'd trust him even if he was only 74! I do wish you would write me from home instead of at work. Because then you could put in more personal thoughts - know what I mean? How about it, Peanut?

The war is progressing with marvelous speed. They are pinning the Nazis in smaller pockets every day and now the Russians, and our Armies have joined. Set's hope the rest of those fanatics commit suicide and let us get the hell out of here. Keep that chin up darling so this little boy, that loves ya, will be slipping his arms through yours. -- Kisses to my slick chick . . . Ernie





## S/Sgt John C. Bounds Recalls

Quite often we carry a story about an incident that catches the eye of one of our readers. In this case he was not only the reader, but a participant of the event. The story was carried in Issue 25, Spring 1995, and pertained to the incident where 2 aircraft from the 461st Bomb Group left their comparatively safe position within their Group and came to the aid of the stricken aircraft that our 'reader' was in. With two engines out and being harassed by enemy fighters, they were happy for the aid being offered.

That 'reader' was former S/Sgt John C. Bounds, Tail Gunner that day on the 2Lt Wesley E. McClure's Crew. He passed along his journal of missions that he flew from 2 February 1944 until his final mission on 26 June 1944. I'd like to include them, with a caveat that perhaps under the stress of combat, or lack of incentive, he failed to do a write-up on some of his later missions.

It should be noted that John was an original member of the Lester W. Snyder's crew, flying over in the first cadre from the US onboard the "Flabbergasted Fanny."

### **First Mission** - 2 February 1944 = 1 Sortie

451st bombed Durazio, Albania, radar installations and completely destroyed it. Flak was moderate, heavy and accurate. 6 Spitfires for an escort. One ME 109 sighted but Spitfires drove it off. 10-500 lb bombs. Counted as one sortie. 3 hours.

### **Second Mission** - 10 February 1944 = 2 Sorties

10-500 lb bombs. Military concentrations at Vallettri, Italy. Medium, light, inaccurate flak. Some fighters encountered. Flew over Isle of Capri, Naples, Mt. Vesuvius. Results unknown, but believe we hit the town. Counted as one sortie. 3 hours.

### **Third Mission** - 16 February 1944 = 3 Sorties

10-500 lb bombs. Target was R.R. junction and bridge. Heavy, light inaccurate flak. Saw Rome. Hit R.R. in several points. Minus 40° centigrade at 22,000 feet. Severe frostbite for Hinton. Counted as one sortie. 3 hours.

### **Fourth Mission** - 22 February 1944 = 4 & 5 Sorties

Target was aircraft plant at Augsburg, Germany. 6 Groups participated. No escort. Target was covered by clouds. We dropped bombs on secondary target, Regensburg. Overcast prevented good bombing. Heaviest flak yet. About 25 fighters sighted. 2 B-24's lost out of another group. Flew over Alps. Saw Danube River. 8-500 lb bombs. Counted as two sorties. 8 hours.

### **Fifth Mission** - 25 February 1944 = 6 & 7 Sorties

15th and 8th AAF made the raid on Regensburg, Germany, 8th AF had P-47 escort, we had none. Destroyed target. Heavy, accurate flak. Ap-

proximately 100 enemy fighters attacked as soon as we entered Germany. Finally got one FW 190. 20 mm shell exploded in bomb bays. Pappy salvoed bombs through doors. Nose oxygen and hydraulics system shot out. Target destroyed. Lost 6 of our bombers. Most successful raid ever pulled by the 15th AF. Counted as two sorties. 8 hours.

### **Sixth Mission** - 11 March 1944 = 8 Sorties

8-500 lb bombs to Toulon, France. Considerable damage to target. Heavy, accurate flak. At least one B-24 exploded by flak. Dogfight between P-38s and FW-190s. Passed over Corsica. Counted as one sortie. 8 hours.

### **Seventh Mission** - 18 March 1944 = 9 Sorties

126 Frag bombs on fighter base at Lavariano, Italy. Fairly good hits. Light flak. P-38s escorted us. No enemy fighters. Flew with Kelly's crew as Waist Gunner. one sortie. 6 hours.

### **Eighth Mission** - 28 March 1944 = 10 Sorties

12-500 lb bombs on the Marshalling Yards at Mestre, Italy. Good hits. Light flak. P-38 escort. Few enemy fighters. Flew over Vienna, city of canals. one sortie. 6 hours.

### **Ninth Mission** - 29 March 1944 = 11 Sorties

Milk run on Balzano, Italy Marshalling Yards. No flak, no enemy fighters. P-38's as escort. Complete coverage of target by clouds. No good at all, but counted as one sortie. About 6 hours.

### **Tenth Mission** - 2 April 1944 = 13 Sorties

12-500 lb bombs. Raid on ball bearing and aircraft parts factory at Steyr, Austria. Hit target good. Plenty of flak. Quite a few fighters but only one 110 attacked us and left when one engine started

smoking. Supposed to have good escort, but saw very little of them. Saw several B-24s go down from fighters. Hun picked on the 450th, the white tailed wonders. 9 hours. two sorties.

**Eleventh Mission** - 3 April 1944 = 15 Sorties

12-500 lb bombs on raid on Marshalling Yards at Budapest, Hungary. Good hits. Flak intense and damn accurate. Had P-47 escort, yet one 109 attacked our formation in the flak and I think he bailed out. Saw lots of enemy fighters on the ground. 8 hours. 2 sorties.

**Twelfth Mission** - 5 April 1944 = 17 Sorties

12-500 lb bombs. Raid on oil fields at Ploesti, Rumania. Supposed to have P-38 as escort, but didn't meet them until on way back. Good hits on target. Huge fires and smoke visible for miles. Heaviest flak yet. About 75 fighters seen attacking B-24s. G.I. Parachutes all over target. Knocked a whole flight of B-24' down. Rogers got a probable fighter. 8 hours. two sorties.

**Thirteenth Mission** - 17 April 1944 = 18 Sorties

216 frag bombs on airdrome at Belgrade, Yugoslavia. Flak moderate, heavy and accurate. Just got 24 holes in framing. Best escort we ever had: P-38s. No enemy fighters in air. Target well hit. Pop had narrow escape. About 6 hours. one sortie

**Fourteenth Mission** - 20 April 1944 = 19 Sorties

12-500 lb bombs. Marshalling Yard at Ferrara, Italy. P-38 escort. No enemy fighters. Some white and black flak. Very inaccurate. Cloud coverage prevented good bombing. 6 hours. One sortie.

**Fifteenth Mission** - 21 April 1944 = 20 Sorties

10-500 lb bombs on marshalling Yards at Bucharest, Rumania. P-38 escort. No enemy fighters. Called back about an hour before target, but got one sortie credit for it. 6 hours. No flak.

**Sixteenth Mission** - 24 April 1944 = 22 Sorties

10-500 lb bombs on Bucharest, Rumania Marshalling Yards. P-38 escort. Couple enemy fighters seen. Good hits on target. Large fires and a hell of a lot of smoke. Flak was heavy, intense and inaccurate. 8 hours counted as two sorties. Pretty cold. Several guys bailed out over Yugoslavia.

**Seventeenth Mission** - 28 April 1944 = 23 Sorties

10-500 lb bombs over Orbetello, Italy, military

installations and seaplane base. Flak in three different areas. Heavy, moderate and inaccurate. P-38 escort. No enemy fighters. 5½ hours. 1 sortie.

**Eighteenth Mission** - 29 April 1944 = 24 Sorties

10-500 lb on Toulon, France - submarine pens. Flak was heavy, intense and inaccurate. Smoke pots all over target area. Lots of smoke over target that wasn't artificial. Good P-38 and P-51s for escort. No enemy fighters. Several holes in framing. 8½ hours. One sortie.

**Nineteenth Mission** - 2 May 1944 = 25 Sorties

10-500 lb bombs on Radar and Seaplane Base at Orbetello, Italy. Flak in two places; heavy, moderate and inaccurate. No enemy fighters. Good escort. Missed target. Bombed the hell out of a lake beside the town. 6 hours. one sortie

**Twentieth Mission** - 5 April 1944 = 27 Sorties

10-500 lb on Oil Installations at Ploesti, Rumania. Whole 15th AAF made the raid. About 200 escort planes. Dog fights all over Rumania. Flak heavy, intense and accurate. Smoke towered 15,000 feet in the air. Visible for two hundred miles. Several enemy fighters attacked through flak because escort wouldn't follow them into it. Tail turret threw hydraulic fluid all over the tail end of shop. 8 hours. Two sorties.

**Twenty-First Mission** - 7 May 1944 = 29 Sorties

10-500 lb on Marshaling yards at Bucharest, Rumania. Good escort. Few enemy fighters seen. Flak heavy, intense and inaccurate. Target left in flames and smoke was 12,000 feet high. Weather bad. Flew in aircraft "Red Ryder." About 7½ hours. Two sorties.

**Twenty-Second Mission** - 10 May 1944 = 31 Sorties

216 Frag bombs on Air Base at Weiner Neustadt, Austria. Good escort, yet attacked by enemy planes in flak. Hell of a lot of flak, some pretty red stuff too. Target hit fairly well. 7 hours. Two sorties.

\*\*\*\*\*

At this point in time S/Sgt John Bownds ceases writing in his journal. It isn't until he does his last memorable mission that he gives us readers his final entry. For whatever reason he decides not to write, I can only guess. Two of the missions he de-

scribes were the two tough ones that garnered the 451st its Distinguished Unit Citations; February 25th (Regensburg, Germany) and April 5th (Ploesti, Rumania). He may have thought that any further entries would sound like 'milk runs,' after those two. So we readers are left to speculate what missions he could have flown between the 10th of May, and what follows on the 26th of June.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Thirty-Fifth Mission - 26 June 1944 = 49 & 50 Sortie**

10-500 lb bombs on Oil Storage at Vienna, Austria. Closest mission ever made. Lost two engines over target - fell 5,000 feet. Lost Group. Ready to bail out but waited. Gas low. 13 fighters attacked us and two Libs from 461st Group came down to us, guns blazing and saved our lives. Prepared to ditch in Adriatic, but barely made it to land. Prepared, again, to bail out over Italy, but spotted a British Spitfire Base on coast and landed on one engine. RAF boys gave us good Scotch Whiskey and fed

us. Got to home base 5 hours late. Thought this was it! Got a ME 109 on this raid.

As an addendum to the mission, John wrote: After the 26th of June mission, the next day our pilot, McClure, got a plane and we all flew over to the 461st, found the two crews that came to our aid and thanked them.

\*\*\*\*\*

After the initial article was published, John wrote: *"That was our crew, #50, on our ship "Flabbergasted Fanny" (# 41-29242). We flew overseas in it and I did my last mission with it. I was Tail Gunner; Waist Gunners were Gene Hinton and William V. "Pop" Berus; Ball Gunner was Clyde Bell; Nose Gunner was Louis F. Matkowski; Top Turret Gunner and Engineer was James T. Rodgers. Bombardier was Russell Hempel; Navigator was James H. Kaplan; Pilot was Wesley E. McClure (original Copilot on Dale W. Miller's crew). I cannot recall who was the Copilot."*



### **CHATTER FROM THE FLIGHT DECK**

Bob Karstensen

If you will allow me a minute or two I'd like to explain, or give you insight, into one recent operation that was performed recently by this 451st office. Many of you will note the increased number of our deceased members in our 'Diminishing Ranks' page. This was due, in part, to the number of returned mailings I get after each Ad Lib is mail-out. Issue 40 had some 65 "Change Of Address" before I stopped getting them from the 'destination' Post Office.

With this in mind I started looking into my database to review the status of these, and other 'seldom heard from,' members. I noted that many of these errant members hadn't been in contact with this office for some time; either with general correspondence or donations. But the Ad Lib, after being resent to the new address, was accepted.

In the database (I call it my 'roster') I saw that many of these members hadn't had direct contact since the late '90's, some not since they joined us in the early '90's.

I 'flagged' all those that caused me to wonder, and with the aid of the Internet, I explored the "Social Security Death Index" to see what I could find.

Having the member's birthday and last known address, I could zero-in on the person in question. To my surprise, out of almost 500 that I was concerned for, some 75 came up as having passed away. A few as far back as 1993. All that time our mailings were being accepted and no notice of the member's death was offered. I don't know if the material we were sending was of interest to them, or they just tossed it and never considered mentioning the demise of the person to whom it was intended.

It has always been the policy of this office that if the widow, children, or grand children wanted to be kept on our mailing list, they would be more than welcome. But we have to be notified of any of our members' demise.

As a follow-up to the afore mentioned conundrum, I see that other Bomb Groups (via their

newsletters) are suffering the same problem. An excerpt from the 459th newsletter, "Pathfinder," expresses the dilemma quite nicely:

"Quote"

"Many pieces of returned mail require the payment of 'postage due fees' and this must be paid when the mail is returned. Some of the reasons for a member not getting his mail are: ADDRESS CORRECTION, INSUFFICIENT ADDRESS (cannot be forwarded), RETURN TO SENDER -- UNABLE TO FORWARD, TEMPORARILY AWAY. (All these notifications come at a cost of 70¢, without the newsletter being returned, only a copy of the front page.)

Please keep us in mind when you have to change your mailing address and send us your new address where the mail should be sent.

If you have not received your newsletter and are wondering what has happened, it might be because of one of the above. Send us the mailing fees and we will remail the newsletter to your new address" (Pathfinder editor: John Devney)

"Unquote"

In the case of our last Ad Lib, the cost of re-mailing came to \$1.50 plus, including envelope. After a point in time I realized that the 451st treasury was being slowly drained, due to all the re-mailings. Plus, too, many of the TEMPORARILY AWAY members' were still AWAY when the newsletter was re-sent, incurring another 70¢ fee to the post office, just for that information.

It finally came to a point where I just noted the new address into the mailing roster (if the post office offered it), but refrained from sending out another copy. Those that did not receive Issue 40 Ad

Lib may request one, and with a donation to the 451st treasury, I'll see that they get it.

I should add that Issue 40 (44 pages) was well received by many of those that found it in their mailboxes. Especially those that endured the POW situation that was forced upon them after capture.

For a little more up-beat anecdote to this column, I have to relate a bit of past 451st history. This relates to the first nationwide reunion that we held in Chicago, back in 1980.

In the process of separating "wheat from the chaff" (non-relevant papers and magazines) I picked up a copy of June 1980 VFW magazine (Volume 67 Number 10). I started to toss it, but then wondered why (?) I had saved it and not tossed it. It was yellowed from age and printed on pulp paper, unlike the present 'slick' paper magazine that it is today.

As I thumbed through the pages I came to the 'Notice & Reunion' section. Taking a closer look at those that had placed ads, I stumbled onto the following. This was placed in, and for, the August 1980 Reunion section.

301st Sig. Opns. Bn. (WWII)—10-10, Rocky Hill, Conn.—John J. Donovan, 141 Wilmont St., Wethersfield, Conn. 06109.

446th Engr. Base Dpt. Co.—8-10, Salisbury, Md.—Ota J. Stevenson, Rt. 1, Box 324, Salisbury, Md. 21801.

451st (H) BG, 724th, 725th, 726th, 727th and HQ Sqdrs. (WWII)—1-3, Chicago, Ill.—Bob Karstensen, 1032 S. State St., Marengo, Ill. 60152.

455th AAA Bn., Btry. D (WWII)—9, Nashville, Tenn.—Buford W. Devers, 405 Glengarry Dr., Nashville, Tenn. 37217.

463rd Svc. Sqdr. (WWII)—8-10, Denver, Colo.—Edward A. Ellis, 321 Clearfield Ave., Norristown, Pa. 19403.

465th (H) BG, 780th Bomb Sqdr.—8-10, Disneyworld, Fla.—Jim Bagley, L. H. Recker Hwy., PO Box 110, Winter Haven, Fla. 33880.

(Continued on page 38)

### Tribute To Those That Have Gone Before

So many now. Once we counted four or five. Now, we count the pages. Some we recognize, others are just names on an ever-growing list, all beloved of someone.

Long ago they walked each day with death in fearsome places with no promise of long life, a

family, of growing old.

Somehow there is a peace in their passing. Today the old always pass on. We say it's God's will, nature's way. All the time remembering the young who did not make it in that long ago.

(Author: Bea Smith of Broken Arrow, OK)

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

## OUR DIMINISHING RANKS -- THEIR FINAL FLY-BY

### REPORTED SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

- Abrams, Macy S., 727th - 3 February 2004  
 Alderman, Hiram E., 724th - 10 October 2002  
 Arnold, Jr. Ora P., 727th - 24 October 2005  
 Ayres, Donald L., 725th - 16 May 2005  
 Barrett, Raymond L., 726th - Date Unknown  
 Bennett, James M., 727th - 28 August 2004  
 Berry, William F., 724th - 21 December 1998  
 Bestwick, Lamont J., 725th - 19 May 2001  
 Betz, John W., 724th - 7 February 2005  
 Blackmon, Linnon R., HDQ - 11 March 2000  
 Boyce, Milton S., 727th - 28 May 2004  
 Casavant, Roert H., HDQ - 14 August 2002  
 Cegla, Leo J., 724th - 5 December 2005  
 Christy, Charles B., 725th - 11 December 1997  
 Cortese, Bernard, 724th - 10 June 2000  
 Crumholt, Talmage E., 727th - 30 December 2002  
 Daudermann, Keith O., 727th - 13 November 2005  
 Dempski, John, 724th - 31 March 2002  
 Donahue, Gale D., 725th - 25 August 2004  
 Dorsey, Carl W., 724th - 21 September 2001  
 Drake, Robert W., 727th - February 2003  
 Duke, Martin E., 725th - 21 July 2005  
 Dunstan, William A., 726th - 20 March 2002  
 Dyer, Theodore G., 726th - 25 May 1998  
 Earhart, Keith G., 725th - 14 October 2004  
 Earnest, Clenon, 725th - 31 December 2003  
 Gates, Denzil E., 725th - 7 March 2005  
 Goss, Robert M., 726th - 1 May 1999  
 Graham, Thomas S., 727th - 3 June 2002  
 Hall, Billy, 725th - 6 June 2003  
 Haltom, Charlels C., 726th - 7 June 2005  
 Halverson, Stanley E., 727th - 15 December 2001  
 Harris, Wallace A., 726th - 3 December 2001  
 Heitzler, George S., 724th - 5 February 2005  
 Henness, Glen L., 727th - 3 July 2002  
 Hensley, Robert J., 727th - 16 December 2004  
 Herrick, Vernon L., 724th - 23 October 2003  
 Hite, George B., 725th - 1 July 2004  
 Holland, Sr., James R., 725th - 10 October 1999  
 Houkal, Henry C., 727th - 20 December 2003  
 Hubbell, William F., 724th - 26 September 2004  
 Jaffe, Alvin, 727th - 11 February 2005  
 Johnson, Joseph L., 724th - 21 May 2001  
 Johnston, Roger A., 724th - 11 July 2005  
 Jopson, Russell L., 725th - 23 January 2002  
 Kester, Clifford D., 724th - 17 January 1998  
 Klagmann, Otis R., 725th - 15 April 2000  
 Kornegay, Garland, 725th - 19 February 2004  
 LaChance, Geoffrey A., 726 - 21 December 2004  
 Lambros, Arthur P., 724th - 20 November 2002  
 Lampman, Arnold, 724th - 7 April 2005  
 Lapolla, Charles J., 727th - 2 September 1989  
 Larotonda, Jerry, 726th - 24 September 2003  
 Lawrence, Charles F., 724th - 19 October 1992  
 Learnard, Edwin O., 724th - 17 September 2004  
 Leavitt, Booth G., 724th - 6 September 2005  
 Lee, Carl W., 724th - 8 July 1994  
 Lien, Allan S., 724th - 29 October 1998  
 Loya, Marcel R., 724th - 22 January 2003  
 MacPherson, Harold J., 724th - 20 November 2002  
 Marretone, Angelo M., 725th - 3 July 2003  
 McCreery, Lawrence K., 724th - 25 January 2000  
 McHale, Thomas E., 726th - 26 July 2004  
 McKenna, William H., HDQ - 7 August 1993  
 McNeal, Lewis A., 724th - 1 July 2000  
 McSweeney, Robert F., 726th - 20 February 2004  
 Miller, Harvey B., 726th - 12 December 2004  
 Miller, Ralph B., 725th - 1 September 2004  
 Monninger, Earl F., 727th - 11 January 2005  
 Moore, Willard P., 726th - 12 October 2005  
 Muller, Francis J., 724th - 14 April 1999  
 Murphy, James T., 724th - 17 September 2000  
 Murray, John M., 725th - 13 June 1998  
 Nichols, Randol E., 726th - November 2004  
 Noonan, George P., 725th - 13 April 2003  
 O'Keefe, Edward J., 724th - 17 February 2003  
 Oleen, Robert A., 727th - 21 March 2005  
 Olsen, Earl L., 726th - 15 March 2005  
 Olson, Richard G., 726th - 19 September 2002  
 Orden, Burt B., 726th - 18 April 2005  
 Padgett, William E., 727th - 5 April 2001  
 Phifer, Clyde W., 726th - 22 March 2003  
 Platt, Madison, 724th - 25 September 2004  
 Podoloff, Doran M., 727th - 7 May 2003  
 Pratt, Audley G., 724th - 10 April 2004  
 Prouty, Richard E., 727th - 19 October 1993

Resnick, Marvin, 725th - 20 August 2004  
 Ridinger, Clifford K., 60th - 31 December 1996  
 Rose, Edward J., 727th - 10 October 1996  
 Ruelas, Jr., Paul, 60th - 14 November 2003  
 Scott, James J., 725th - 12 August 2002  
 Shelton, William T., 726th - 8 May 2005  
 Skrocki, Edward S., 724th - 21 January 2005  
 Stone, Leon, 726th - 31 October 2005  
 Swierz, Alies A., 727th - 13 September 2005  
 Thompson, James O., 724th - 2 March 1994  
 Thomson, Glenn H., 725th - 14 January 2005  
 Uhler, Samuel C., 727th - 15 July 2005  
 Upchurch, Leo V., 724th - 27 April 2001  
 Vance, Glenwood, 724th - 8 April 2005  
 Vernon, Jr., Frank, 724th - 12 January 2000  
 Wachter, John B., 727th - 2 March 2005  
 Wagner, Clinton C., 726th - 4 October 1994  
 Wegener, Paul E., 725th - 17 November 2004  
 Westrum, Harry W., 726th - 19 April 1999  
 Wingfield, Warren E., 725th - September 2003  
 Wintter, Archie H., 727th - 10 January 2005  
 Wolcott, Robert R., 727th - 29 April 2003  
 Wool, Joseph L., 726th - 3 April 2005  
 Wyant, Hobart D., 727th - 19 February 2001  
 Zallack, Anthony, 727th - 2 February 2005

Carl A. Martin, 727th - From Harry Kuser  
 Carl A. Martin, 727th - From John Miller  
 William H. McGuire, Hdq - From Albert Roemer  
 Edward L. Merritt Crew, 724th - From William Wagner  
 Randol E. Nichols, 726th - From Wife, Era Marie  
 Albert F. Ogg, 726th - From Albert Roemer  
 Clyde W. Phifer, 726th - From Thaddeus Kumor  
 William A. Ramsdell, 726th - From Morris Barker  
 Richard M. Rogers, Hdqs - From Ernest Bridwell  
 Leonard J. Rohrs, Hdqs - From Ernest Bridwell  
 Albert L. Roberts, 727th - From Son, Lane  
 Melvin G. Schwulst, 726th - From Robert Finkle  
 Reyes V. Torres, 725th - From Nicholas Zender

Crew #27 & "Boomerang," 725th - Janensch Crew - From Robert G. Campbell  
 Crew #58 & "Patsy Jack," 727th - Kavanaugh Crew - From Jack Bennett  
 Crew #64 & "Sod Buster," 727th - Read Crew - From Carl Webber

**SPECIAL MEMORIAL TRIBUTE  
 OFFERED IN THE NAME OF:**

Ora P. Arnold, 727th - From Leora Mitchell  
 Donald L. Ayres, 725th - From Wife, LaRene  
 John A. Burton, 725th/724th - From Lawrence Horn  
 Robert H. Casavant, Hdqs - From Wife, Alice  
 Leo J. Cegla, 724th - From Bob Karstensen  
 Carroll O. Daugherty, 724th - From Paul Brumbach  
 Perry M. Davie, 724th - From Wife, Nadine  
 Dominick J. DeLeo, 724th - From Lloyd Jenkins  
 Thomas K. Dow, 727th - From James Lewis  
 Albert W. Johnson Crew, 725th - From Stephen Cushner  
 Roger A. Johnston, 724th - From Bennie Hayman  
 Roger A. Johnston, 724 - From Marky Johnshoy  
 Stanton Leiter, 725th - From Wife, Florence  
 Stanton Leiter, 725th - From Stephen Cushner  
 Morris A. Manoogian, 724th - From Douglas Sanford

*A donation of \$50 or more to the 451st Bomb Group in the memory of a deceased comrade (or family member), as an alternative to flowers and other memorials, is an option for all members to consider.*

**THE ODE:**

They shall grow not old,  
 As we that are left grow old.  
 Age shall not weary them,  
 Nor the years condemn.  
 At the going down of the sun,  
 And in the morning,  
 We will remember them.

**LEST WE FORGET**



**Richard H. Hayford, 724th [COPILOT:  
NATHANIEL WIERSEMA'S CREW]**

I can't tell you how pleased I was with the subject matter in the last Ad Lib. The POW thing is very important to me and I am so glad to see you present so much good material.

*(Editor ... I was GLAD, too, that I hit a chord with you and other POWs with that issue.)*

**Harry C. Kuser, 727th [AEG: CARL MARTIN'S CREW]**

The notice (Issue #40) of Carl A. Martin's Final Fly-By was disheartening news. "C.A." was my pilot and at one time I also met Robert P. Mitchell (Navigator) who was a friend of "C.A.," both of the same Squadron (727th).

Carl deserves special tribute for a safe landing at Vis, when 5 minutes from landing we both knew the fuel gages showed empty 10 minutes before. After touch-down and before stopping at the end of a short runway, two engines began to shut down with no fuel. That day an angel must have been riding with us! After that day's long haul ("K" rations gone) the U.S./Partisan "Field Kitchen" was a welcome sight.

P.S. Both Issues 39 and 40 are extremely interesting for the presentation of facts and details. Excellent Work!

*(Editor ... Thanks for the kudo's and remembrances of Pilot Carl Martin and the connection with Navigator Robert Martin. They will be missed.)*

**Lloyd C. Nelson, 726th [GUNNER: WESLEY LINDLEY'S CREW]**

I enjoyed the article by Paul Vanderpool. We were good friends in the service and we married girls who were good friends - who - we met while in the service. P.S. I have a friend that I golf with who also enjoys reading the Ad Lib.

*(Editor ... Pleased to receive a 'thumbs up' for my efforts regarding the POW's that had to endure hard times while in German hands.)*

**Lawrence H. Horn, 725th [COPILOT/PILOT: GLENN KERRES' CREW]**

Received Issue 40 of Ad Lib yesterday and I commend you on another great job. I have not read the entire publication yet, but as you might suspect took particular interest in our story from "Chatter From The Flight Deck." I'm sure Jure Miljevic appreciated the article and I thank you for the write up. It would be interesting in knowing if you get any "fall out or feed back" from that article. Just wish there was some way to verifying the other crew members names, other than Lucas, Tupper and myself.

*(Editor ... Sorry Larry, I ain't getting no feedback [at least so far] from the article on your incident of 27 February 1945 [Issue 40 - Page 29]. Either the ranks are getting so thin from age that those still living just don't remember. I seem to be getting scant feedback from a lot of stuff that I ask about ... Sorry.)*

**William F. Jackson, 726th [PILOT: AIRCRAFT COMMANDER]**

I appreciate all you do for the 451st - and especially for the newsletter. I just completed reading the issue, "Summer 2005." Some of the flyers had very rough times as POWs. I was lucky to be picked up by friendly Partisans in Yugoslavia. I relate to some of the items that were written, especially the train trip. It was December, it was cold, and we were packed into a box car with many peasants, and it was standing room only. The train track was a narrow gauge. The forward progress was slow and we stopped twice when going over the mountains in order to cut and load wood for the wood burning locomotive. In the box car we had the choice of being somewhat warm, along with the smells of the passengers, or opening the door of the box car to get fresh, but freezing, air!

**John P. Mahoney, 726th [GUNNER: RICHARD COLEMAN'S CREW]**

What a great job you have been doing for these many years. I am especially enjoying Issue 40. I was

gunners shot down several enemy aircraft.

*(Editor ... Thanks, Paul, for your tribute to the crew that you served with. Of that crew I see that six have passed away, leaving three as current members. But your Navigator, Roland Cook, evades us as a member. Sorry.)*

**William Brogadir, 724th [ARMAMENT SECTION]**

By the way, the photo copy I've enclosed will bring back a special night to many of us, since I was the guy (dirty fatigues after loading bombs for the next mission) who had gone backstage to give a surprise visit to an old classmate, "Sheila Rogers." I knew her as Sylvia Saloman from our school days. She was part of the John Garfield USO show. John Garfield was as surprised as she was, and certainly was at a loss for words when Sheila came on-stage with me.



*(Editor ... It wasn't hard to locate you in the photo [dirty fatigues and all], nor John Garfield for that matter. But you never identified which one of the lovely ladies was your classmate. I attempted to seek out her picture on the Internet, but only found her date of birth (30 October 1924) and date of death [7 June 2003]. It listed a lot of acting roles, in both movies [The Gin Game, with Dick Van Dyke, for one] and on TV [with the late John Ritter]. T'was interesting to research.)*

**Gerald L. Honaker, 724th [GUNNER: MARTIN UHL'S CREW]**

I enjoyed the last several Ad Libs, especially the stories about Stalag 7A. "Big Stoop" was a familiar figure for me, as he patrolled the rear on our walk from Nurnberg. He died in the camp in Mooseberg.

My buddy, Mike, and I went to the central offices to look for our official records. We found

them and I have the pink interview sheets with me now. It was then that we heard that "Big Stoop" lay with his head cut off in another part of the building. We were told that the head had been removed with pen knives, but we did not see that event, nor the results.

Those last days at Mooseberg are still a vivid memory. I was suffering from 'blood poisoning' and was very lucky to be flown out so that the wound could be lanced and cured with sulfa drugs.

*(Editor ... Just to 'flesh out,' to our readers what put you into the POW status, I have this accounting: Shot down by flak over Udine, Italy while flying a/c 42-51880 [Purple Shaft] on 29 December 1944. Only two of the crew survived; Pilot Uhl and yourself. That was a bitter day for my crew [Captain Rollins' Crew], as T/Sgt Anthony Paonessa, our ROG, was flying as 'spare gunner' and was KIA that day with you guys.)*

**Csaba Becze [Overseas Historian]**

I'm enclosing two pictures of Lt. Dániel's Fighter plane, taken in late August, or early September. This was after he shot down 2Lt. Klein's B-24 Liberator on 22 August 1944

*(Editor ... These photos will be of special interest to Richard Macey and Morris Barker (726th), since they were both crewmembers onboard the "Wet Dream" that day and ended up as POWs.)*



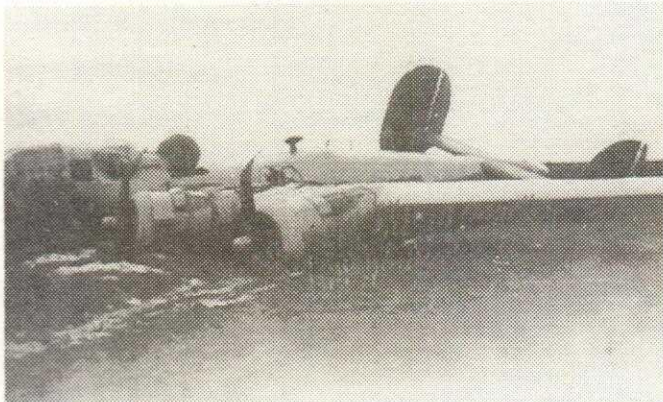


## 'Andy' Pendleton's 725th Photos And Memories



The three pictured here are, from the left: Carl French, born in Frankfurt Germany about 1904, or 06. Came to the US in the thirties and lived in Philadelphia. Next is Ray Knowles, who we called the "Procurer," and he certainly was that. I believed he was from California. And finally myself, 21 years of age and naive.

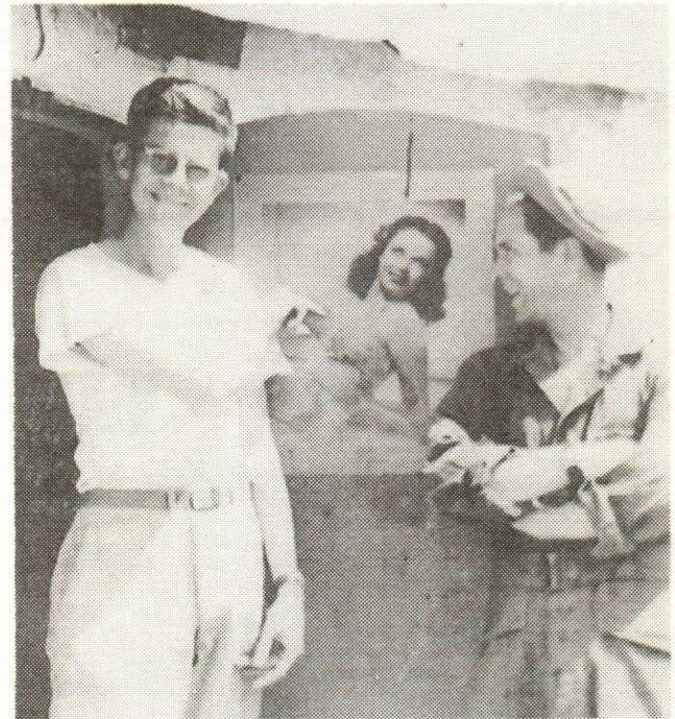
A little bit more on Knowles; he got two marine diesel generator engines from the Italian Navy Yards in either Naples or Taranto, wired them up and we had continuous round the clock power in the flight line area and power at night in the tent area. He was so talented as a scrounger, he was given a 6 X 6 for his own use. He told me once that he saw a line of trucks entering some Military Compound and followed them in. He ended up with a load of coal. He had many adventures with his truck and gained a great many useful items for the 725th.



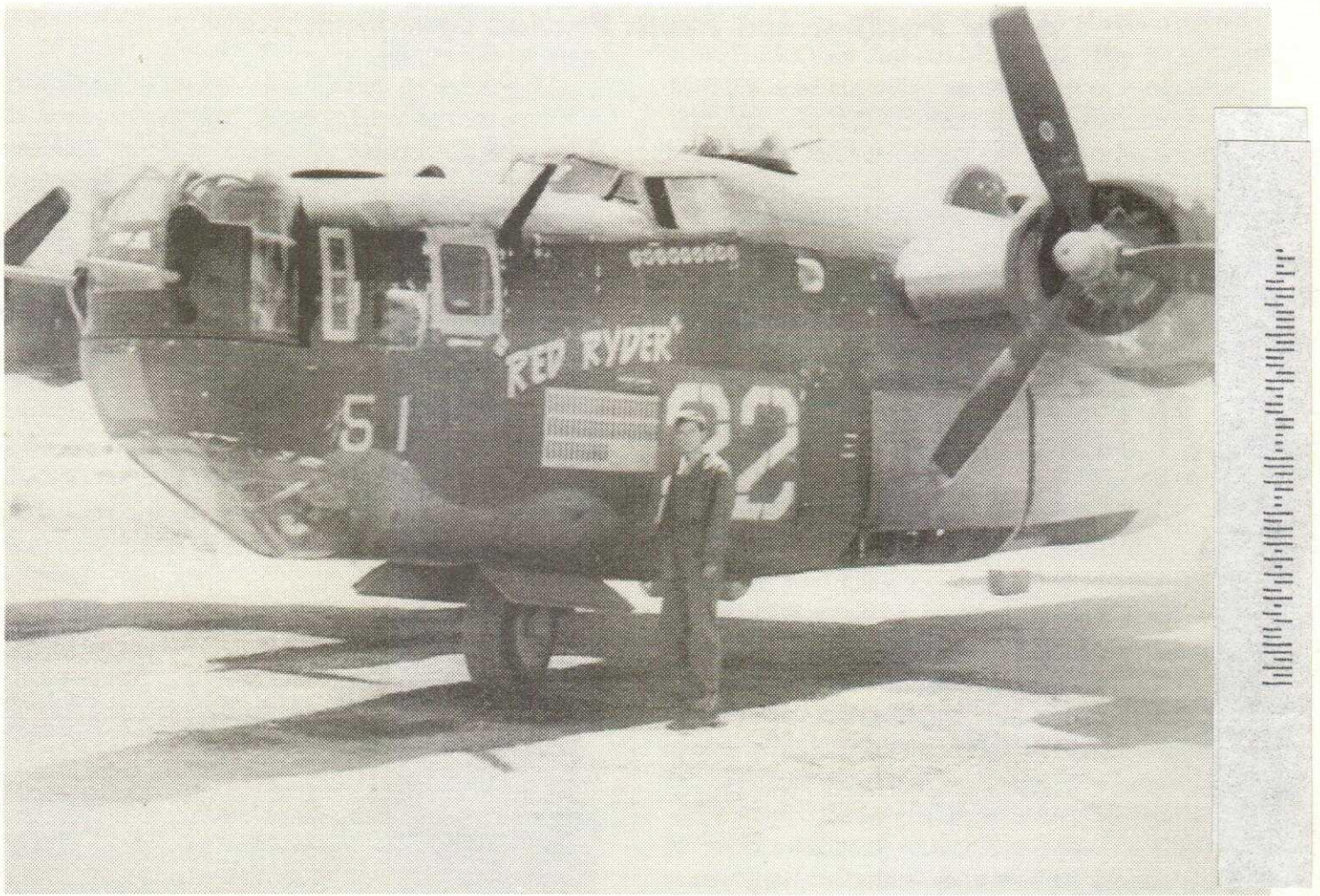
Don't know much about this accident. The plane bore fuselage number 29.



Myself and three Italian workers who helped around the Squadron doing odd jobs. They were all from Orta Nova and we are standing in front of the 725th Bombsight Vault/Maintenance shack.



Myself with a little adolescent activity. Laughing in approval is Carl French.



FORMER MEMBERS OF THE  
**451ST Bombardment Group (H) WW II. LTD.**

49th Wing

15th Air Force



GROUP HEADQUARTERS 724th 725th 726th 727th Squadrons

1032 South State Street  
 Marengo, Illinois 60152

**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**



Nonprofit Org.  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 Permit No. 21



0688  
 George E. Tudor  
 75 Tudor Road  
 Bristol ME 04539