



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

Issue 45

Price \$5 (Free to Members)

Winter/Spring 2009

2008 REUNION REVIEW

WOW!! What a terrific conclusion to our nationwide biennial reunions. This being our fifteenth. In total we had 45 members (Survivor's . . . as our Reunion Manager, Winson 'Big' Jones, calls us) that were in attendance. That may not seem like a lot, but with our diminishing ranks, it was a GREAT attendance. It was back in the late 80's, early 90's that we could count on two to three hundred to make the journey. Our largest attendance was in Omaha, NE when we drew some 330 'Survivors and families' that loaded 13 buses and went out to visited our old Air Base at Fairmont, NE as part of our program.

Though our attendance was small, the events that 'Big' Jones put together were tremendous. Working from afar, (Issaquah, WA) with a support team made up of his own family, along with Verne Mason, David Eagles, Sedge Hill and Jack 'Little'

Jones, they put together two days, (17th & 18th of October) of solid activity.



Winson "Big" Jones
2008 Reunion Manager/Coordinator

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|---------|
| Frank Massare's 'THANK YOU' Letter. | 4 |
| Captured (By George Held). | 5 |
| Crash Site Exploration (By: Barbara Baker Johnson) . . . | 9 |
| Gunner's Poem (Unknown Author) | 10 |
| "Little Friends" 49th Fighter Squadron | 11 |
| Miller's Missions (By Lindley Miller) | 13 |
| Ode To The Bombardier (Unknown Author) | 15 |
| World War Two Letters (By Bill Jackson) | 16 |
| Chatter From The Flight Deck | 22 |
| Diminishing Ranks / Memorials | 23 & 24 |
| Short Bursts & Hang Fires | 25 |
| Photos Of The 1989 Norfolk, VA Reunion | 27 |

Friday Evening Banquet: Started it all when both Clara Massare (widow of Group cofounder, Peter Massare) and I were honored as founders of our alumni 451st veterans association. We, Clara Massare, on behalf of Pete, and I were awarded Certificates in acknowledgment for our past efforts. Awards were also given to Ralph Helmericks, James Martin, Mike Stauth, Harry Rhode and Roberta 'Bobbi' Kelly for having attended all the reunions since we started conducting them in 1980. But to go along with those that had participated in attending a number of reunions, there were some

"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 2009, 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

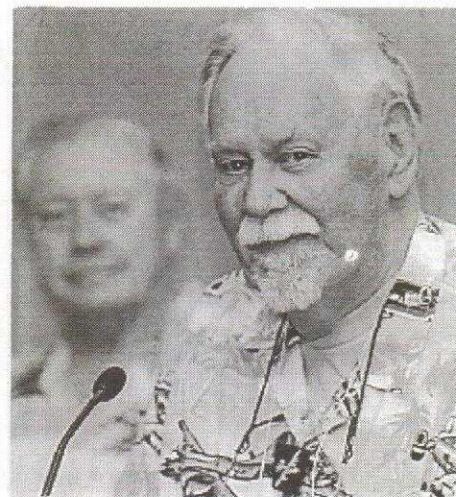


Clara Massare

Honored Wife Of Our Late Cofounder, Peter A. Massare

that came for the first time. I have to thank 'Big' Jones for his persistence in encouraging them to come. Two that had to cancel out at the last minute were John Dilks and Harold Brinkmeier, all due to health problems. To say the least, 'Big' Jones put a lot of formality into this program, and I, for one, appreciated every moment of it.

Saturday Morning: Our program at 10 am, brought together an array of 451st members that spoke to the subject that they were most familiar



Bob Karstensen

Cofounder Of Our 451st Bomb Group Organization

with while overseas; Sedge Hill spoke on the ground maintenance of aircraft, Stanford Weinberg, on loading of bombs, Jim Martin, on control tower operation, Mike Stauth on in-flight maintenance, Nathan Firestone on navigation, Alan Wolfley on bombardier's duties, Wilson Landis on piloting and David Eagles read a bit of warfare history as written by John A. O'Connor, who couldn't make this gathering.



Those That Have Attended All 15 Reunion
Seated L. to R.: Harry Rohde, Ralph Helmericks, Mike Stauth Standing: Bobbi Kelly, Jim Martin

Saturday Afternoon: Another array of speakers that spoke to their experiences from their days in combat, while flying out of Italy. First off we heard from a former Tuskegee pilot, Robert Martin, that often flew escort for us while we bombed much of southern Europe. His input was certainly appreciate by those of us that remembered seeing those "Red



Friday Evening Head Table Seating
 Seated L.toR Jeanette Laxton (Daughter Of The Late Gerald Hopkins, Pilot On 'Little & 'Big Jones' Crew) , Jack "Little" Jones, Clara Massare
 Standing: Winson "Big" Jones, Bob Karstensen

Tailed" P-51 off in the distance .. and sometimes close-up.

Next up came two speakers (Clare Musgrove & Robert Wilson, unattached to the 451st) that were featured in a book titled, "The Forgotten 500." This book described the ordeal that many evadees endured while in enemy territory before being evacuated by various means.

Linn Newman, 724th, told us about his interment in Turkey after a mission to the Marshalling Yards in Bucharest, Romania on the 15th of April 1944. His ordeal, and release, was featured in Ad Lib #29 (Winter 1997).

Not "former members," but true supporters of our organization, are George R. Frisbee and Randy Jones. George, son of the late George Frisbee, 725th Crew Chief, raffled B-24 models and other artifacts, to the benefit of the 451st treasury.

451st Bomb Group Reunion Chicago--October 17th and 18th, 2008 Group Picture of Survivors Present



(Identification Left to Right)

Bottom Row: James W. Bitzinger, David H. Eagles, Robert E. Ashba, Paul V. Anderson, Jack E. Jones, Winson Jones, Robert Karstensen, Kenje Ogata, Achillies Kozakis, Gus Margaritis.

Row B: Sedgefield D. Hill, Lloyd O. Boots, Verne H. Mason, Gerald W. Bowker, James Casperson, Leslie Brue, Tyrol B. Coley, Albert DiCicco, J. Dean Eckersley, Alfred H. Epperstine, Linn W. Newman.

Row C: Nathan U. Firestone, Ralph E. Helmericks, Albert C. Hutton, Alexander Kuras, Wilson Landis, James P. Locke, Edward W. Longenecker, Don Schaffner, James R. Martin, Richard E. Minor, Seabert J. Nelson, Peter G. Polmen.

Row D: Louie M. Lopez, Rex W. Ridenour, Harry O. Rohde, Hermilo J. Sanchez, Mike Stauth, C.E. Thompson, Earl VanBenschoten, Stanford Weinberg, Harold J. Wesley, Alan Wolfley, Henry C. Wurthmann.

Randy Jones was hard to miss. At his own expense, had brought all his 451st artifacts from Phoenix, Arizona, that he had either authored, created, or reproduced. His display required a large portion of our hotel "Welcoming Area," and was appreciated by all that viewed it. He promised to pass these artifacts to a major Air Force class museum, sometime in the future.

Saturday Evening Gala and Banquet:

After a bit of libation at the Cash Bar in the foyer, we seated ourselves for our Gala Dinner. This was not to be a normal 'chow-down' with a few remarks from the Head Table, but rather a gathering with a lot of "Pomp and Ceremony."

The Reunion Committee had garnered the assistance of local military oriented and some talented youths, to add Pomp to our after dinner ceremony. The 'Sons of American Legion' had a local representative give our Invocation, prior to our dinner. The American Legion (Post 738) and Boy Scouts (Troop 150) gave us a wonderful presentation that fit well into what Win Jones had planned.

'The Big Band Sound of Deerfield,' gave us a bit of Military Music during some of the presentations. And prior to, and after having our 'Group Survivors' photo taken. The music of the 40's brought a lot of our attendee's onto the dance floor. There was a wonderful blend of us oldsters and younger folks 'tripping the light fantastic.' So ended the formal part of our get-together The last one planned for our 451st Bomb Group.

Most of those that traveled some distance to participate, departed on Sunday. All in all - it was a departure from what we've usually had at our previous reunions. All was conducted within the confines of the hotel ... No out of hotel trips.

Those that aided Win "Big" Jones in this spectacular endeavor were:

Diane Kay Jones - Reunion Support.

Marsha Morris - Reunion Support.

Verne H. Mason, 726th - Chicago Liaison.

David H. Eagles, 726th - Committee Member

Sedgefield D. Hill, 727th - Committee Member.

Jack E. Jones, 727th - Committee Member.

LETTER TO WINSON "BIG" JONES & REUNION COMMITTEE

Thank you and your 451st Bombardment Group Reunion Committee for organizing such a great final reunion. It was truly an honor for me to be in attendance at this event. My entire family and I are especially grateful to yourself and Jack "Little" Jones for remembering my father, Peter A. Massare, for both his involvement with the 451st Reunion Group as well as his heroism during the war.

My dad, as you know, passed away in 1996, nearly 12 years ago, and our family misses him dearly. My mother was extremely proud at honored to be at this reunion. As you know, she was very touched emotionally by Jack's speech and the certificate you presented to her.

My dad never talked much about the war and his experiences. Like many other who served, he never really talked about his missions or accomplishments. He lost a brother in the Marines and like many of you, lost many comrades and close friends in the war, so he remained reasonably silent about many things.

Later in life, and once he connected with Bob Karstensen, he worked hard with Bob and other to

contact fellow service men and women and organized the "451st Bombardment Group." He always thought the world of Bob and was appreciative of every member's involvement and service to our country.

THANK YOU AGAIN, and to all of you involved with organizing this final event and thank you for remembering, and honoring my father. He would be so proud of everyone.

THANK YOU to Bob Karstensen, and the many others involved with the 451st reunions, and the many others who are no longer with us, for their close friendships with my mom and dad.

Lastly, and most importantly, to all who served proudly with my father, thanks you for your war contributions and making America the greatest country in the world. We will never forget your heroism and the better life you provided for our future generations.

Sincerely: *Frank*

Frank Massare, on behalf of the entire Massare Family.

CAPTURED

(Second Installment by George Held)

I spent the next two days uneventfully making my way towards my destination. With no way to measure how far I had traveled, I guessed it could not have been more than 10 or 12 miles. By this time, I could not walk, reduced to crawling on my hands and knees. My rations sustained me, and the mountain streams flowing through the area provided me with adequate drinking water. The weather remained comfortable, and my extra clothing protected me through the cool nights. Since I was still in a heavily wooded section, I could find no breaks, no trails or signs of civilized life. I had hoped to meet up with another member of my crew, but I saw no one. I became more distraught as I realized the futility of my predicament. I could not travel; I had made no contact with anyone, and my chances of survival were getting slimmer and slimmer.

Then, from out of nowhere, three men startled me. Initially they seemed as amazed at coming upon me as I was shocked by them. They were young, in their twenties, roughly dressed, unkempt, unshaven, and obviously part of an armed guerrilla group. The blond one aimed his rifle at me and indicated that I get up. As I raised my hands over my head, they began to chatter, and I could recognize from the Slavic tongue such words as American and flyer. They were laughing, obviously elated to have stumbled onto such a bounty, while I was terrified as to what my fate might be. It was apparent they



Lt. George Held
Born 1921 - Deceased 2006

were unfriendly, and for their first demand, they gestured to me seeking the location of my parachute. When I indicated I did not have it, they became angry. As they approached me, I noticed the features on one of them as Mongolian. He might have come from Tibet or Outer Mongolia; I did not know why this frightened me ever more. The other two appeared to have the features of the Serbian groups in Croatia. They all wore side arm in addition to the antique type rifles they carried, and I as recollect, the weapons probably dated from World War I.

The blond-one, who seemed to be the most aggressive, began to strip me of my belongings and as he did, I noticed his arm covered from wrist to elbow with assorted watches. As he removed my side arm and began to rummage through my pockets, he smiled to reveal a shiny gold front tooth. They had apparently done this before since they were laden with spoils they had seized from previous captives. Terrified, I thought to myself these men must be "Chetniks" and right now, my life was not worth a plug nickel. They could strip me, kill me, bury me in the woods and nobody would ever know.

He did a good job, cleaned all my pockets, then he pointed to a ring on my finger. It had been my father's ring, he had worn it throughout his experience as a prisoner of war in Germany during World War I; although filled with sentiment, I was in no condition to object or negotiate. That was the last of

my possessions, and I wondered what was to be next. Some discussion between them ensue, but strain as I did, I could not make any sense of it. It seemed they were deciding what to do with me and I could only wait like a prisoner in the dock, sweating out the verdict.

The next few moments seemed endless. I stood terrified awaiting their next move when "Blondie" moved towards me, prodding me with his rifle indicating for me to move ahead. My limp, assisted by the tree limb I had acquired, brought no sympathy from my captors, but rather prompted a stronger and more demanding prodding to move ahead more quickly. The three obviously knew their way out from the forest and I wondered where we were heading as we shuffled ahead. Finally after what seemed to be an intolerable pain-filled hour, we came upon a clearing where I saw a dirty, dilapidated, old wreck of a pick-up truck that looked as tired and as haggard as I felt. As I was loaded into the rear of the open truck, "Blondie" remained at my side guarding me while the other two entered into the front of the vehicle. It was then, I realized I would not be killed and was probably being transported to their Command Post or Headquarters.

We drove for about half an hour, passing simple rural homes with cultivated-farmed land; the only crops recognizable to me were potatoes. The few people we saw as we passed stared in amazement. In my recognizable American flyer's uniform, I was not surprised that they looked upon me as somewhat of an oddity in these surroundings. A few more miles and this setting gave way to a slightly more developed neighborhood, where I could distinguish some additional dirt roads, a set of rusty railroad tracks and a small building what had the appearance of an official structure, probably built around 1890. We had arrived at our destination, and I could make out a signpost as we entered the station. It read simply, "Daruvar." Less than a village, it looked more like an outpost.

We stopped, unloaded the truck and they marched me into the building. Entering the dark interior, I could make out four rooms while being escorted before that appeared to be an official. A small mousy-looking individual, dressed in typical work black suit, sat in a dimly lit room behind a schoolroom desk where a large framed photograph of Adolph Hitler hung directly on the wall behind

him.

Some conversation developed between the four while I stood knowing that I was now in enemy hands. The short conversation ended when the presumed supervisor led me to an area of the building where they were to incarcerate me. As he closed the cell, and with the door locked, he left me alone, I almost felt a sense of relief; relieved to be alive, relieved to have survived the last 3 days ... and now behind bars in an enemy cell ... captured.

The cell in "Daruvar" was quite simple. A wooden cot with straw for bedding, no water or lights, nothing to read, no communications. They fed me once a day and although I sought medical attention for my leg, they provided none. I was beginning to get uneasy; I had not washed or shaved for three days and the unsanitary conditions began to take its toll. Itching and scratching, I was certain lice were biting me. I could only assume that this outlaw group was negotiating with the Germans to turn me over for a price. My leg still hurt but since I was off it most of the day, I was relieved from the throbbing pain. Six days had passed since my bail-out and I was growing nervous.

The next morning two German noncommissioned Officers appeared at my cell to escort me, by car, from the prison. Using my high school German, I learned that their orders were to bring me to their superior, a German Captain stationed in Zagreb, the capitol of Yugoslavia.

The trip to Zagreb was boring, the picturesque countryside revealed nothing significant and the trip was extremely hot and tedious. The drive, in an old 4-door jalopy, must have taken four hours before we reached the outskirts of the city. I recognized the signs as we approached the city and it was then that the German escorts advised me that we had to board a train for Vienna. As we drove through the heart of the city, people were staring at me, and occasionally, when we would stop for traffic, I could see one of the hold his hand up in the "V" sign of victory; obviously some were sympathetic to the Allied cause.

We arrived at the train terminal only to find that the train to Vienna was not running and there would not be another until the following morning. It was then that my two escorts, in typical Laurel and Hardy fashion, went through their confused antics. Finally, after the called their Captain to explain

what had happened, the Captain instructed them to escort me to his quarters. Therefore, back into the car and through town again we proceeded to the Captain's quarters.

His well maintained civilian apartment was in a residential section of Zagreb, and my two guards left at the doorstep and promptly departed.

The Captain occupied the premises with the help of his housekeeper, who was preparing supper as I entered. He spoke perfect English and immediately briefed me on my next destination. I was to go, by train, from Zagreb via Vienna and Budapest to the German prisoner-of-war processing center in Frankfurt-am-Main known as Dulag Luft, after which I would be shipped to a permanent prisoner-of-war camp, probably one of the Stalags. The Captain was friendly; not a military man; not arrogant, not what I expected; I was not surprised when he invited me to join him for dinner. His was the first display of civility I had seen. He afforded me the opportunity to bathe and shave, after which I felt almost normal again.

When we sat down to eat, I learned that the housekeeper had prepared his favorite dish -- brains. I had not eaten a decent meal in days, and just the thought of eating brains turned my stomach. However, the dish was delicious, and the fact that I was ravenous contributed to my ability to down almost anything. I have never eaten it since, and the unique texture and flavor still lingers.

The Captain was very interested and asked many questions about the United States. His curiosity was self-serving and apparently not for military purposes; I was grateful to be under his watch. Later that evening he led me into a bedroom that was on the ground floor and all the windows barred. The room, simply furnished, revealed a hide-a-way bed, a carpeted floor, packed bookcases, a writing desk, and decorative pictures. Well-lighted, obviously the Captain's study, he locked me up for the night. This was a welcome change, very different from the previous nights I spent in the grubby cell in "Daruvar."

Certain that my plane and crew had been reported downed, I was concerned that the only word my mother would receive from the Army was a 'Missing In Action' report. Official word could not come from me until after my arrival at a permanent prisoner of war camp, and I had no idea how long

that could take .. It was then that I decided to write a note to advise her that I was alive and well. I found paper and pencil in the desk drawer, composed a short note saying that I was alive and well and she should not worry. I then carefully folded the note and placed it in my shirt pocket, believing I'd find a way to forward it.

The following morning we drove to the railroad station. It was early; people were walking in the street, staring as we drove by. I sat beside the Captain in the front seat; with the window open, easily recognizable in my Army suntans. As he slowed down at the pedestrian crossing, I reached into my shirt pocket and tossed the folded note into the crowd as he raced forward. The Captain had his eyes fixed on the traffic directly ahead; my action went undetected by him.

It was the end of August 1944; I was on the Missing In Action list, as I would learn later. No notification of my whereabouts, or my condition could be disclosed until I arrived at a permanent German Prison Camp, that had contact with the International Red Cross. That note, tossed from the car window that late summer day in Zagreb, found its way to the United States via the Serbian Red Cross, and was delivered to my mother on Christmas Day 1944, four months later. It was the first news she would receive about that eventful day in August 1944 that would confirm that I was alive.

At the railroad depot, the German Captain turned me over to two German guards assigned to accompany me to my destination. within a few hours, we arrived at our first stop and disembarked. I marched between my two escorts through the streets of downtown Vienna. Limping, and still demanding medical attention, they paraded me past the destruction and devastation of a building, where now was only rubble. They explained that Allied bombers had leveled this structure. They claimed the building housed a children's nursery and the bombing killed many children. I was uncomfortable after viewing the site. Evidence of repeated aerial bombardment was everywhere, as was the expressionless stares from the people as they passed me on the street. The exposure to massive air raids from Allied bombings contributed to their appearance and revealed defeat and despair.

My two guards led me to another terminal to board yet another train. I learned, after questioning

them, that they had instructions to transfer me to the authorities in Budapest. This world wind tour of Europe was beginning to torment me, and I did not look forward to the possibilities ahead. The uncertainty of my next destination, and my inability to contact Allied or Red Cross facilities made me uneasy. No one friendly knew of my condition or location, and I became uncertain of my prospects. While the treatment I received so far was tolerable, I would have preferred a regular German POW camp supervised by the International Red Cross. We boarded the train for Budapest. By now, I had become accustomed to the staring and gaping, as we moved through the station. Americans, particularly those walking about on foot, were an oddity. A few hours later we arrived at the depot in Pest, Hungary and boarded a bus for Buda. I had just learned that the muddy waters of the Danube River, which we were just crossing, separated Buda from Pest. My escort delivered me to an official at a prison gate and promptly departed.

The prison, for that was what this appeared to be, did not resemble a military base, but rather a Federal Institution and I assumed a Hungarian Penitentiary. The facade of the building bore no insignia or clues to distinguish it as a German installation, and I instantly became suspicious. Escorted into an office decorated with German memorabilia, a German Major immediately began to interrogate me. I would not answer his questions and only volunteered my name, rank, and serial number. This infuriated my interrogator who began to scream and threaten; now he took the course of intimidation

and terror, threatening to turn me over to the Gestapo if I refused to cooperate. I knew the Germans had a deep hatred for Jews, and here I, a Jewish American prisoner of war, I trembled. In spite of my anxiety, I managed to hold firm to "name, rank and serial number." After about forty-five minutes of threats, I was removed to a prison cell. It was dark, isolated, stone cold and bare; no bed, no facilities, no windows, and the clank from the closing steel door echoes like a hammer striking an anvil. I could only feel my way about this mausoleum-like chamber. I sat quietly for what seemed an eternity, too frightened to think or move. If my previous situation had been intolerable, my present predicament exceeded the limits of my imagination; I never expected to leave alive. I had heard many stories about the Nazis; I did not anticipate this treatment.

Once a day I ate a thin foul-tasting watery stew. The effects of my solitary confinement outweighed my craving for food. I was fearful and before long a feeling of desperation overtook my thoughts, and turned to survival. I recall praying, or rather my way of praying -- I tried to make a deal with God -- If "He" would get me out of this situation, I would change my religious way. What nonsense! I had been an agnostic all my life; who was I fooling? Certainly not God, if indeed there was one.

As the days ran into each other, I found it more difficult to fight off the loneliness and surrender that began to take hold. It was critical for me to ward off this depression, and with concerted effort, I redirected my thoughts to happier times.

(Editorial Comment ... At this point in this well written narrative, and after some input from our readers, I'd like to offer further information such as: crew makeup that day, THE aircraft flown, and other a/c lost that day: 22 August 1944..

This is the crew listed on MACR #8005 (725th Squadron) and what is known about them:

2Lt Robert L. Worsthorn, Pilot - Returned to Base - Deceased December 1985.

2Lt Marvin Resnick, Copilot - Returned to Base - Deceased August 2004.

2Lt George Held, Navigator - POW - Deceased March 2006.

2Lt Jerome B. Finegold, Bombardier - POW - Alive and well.

Cpl Thomas E. Ford, Nose Turret - POW - Not Located.

Sgt Rpbert E. Bedell, Upper Turret POW - Not Located.

Sgt Herbert M. Brocker, Lower Turret - POW - Deceased January 1994.

Sgt John R. McDonald, Waist Gunner - POW - Not Located.

Cpl Clinton E. Cross, Waist Gunner - Upon return to Base killed on practice mission 14 November 1994.

Sgt Loren H. Urseth, Tail Turret - POW - Deceased March 1971.

Cpl Joseph H. Mount, Photographer - POW - Not Located.

An oddity to this crew makeup, is the replacement Gunner, Cpl Clinton Cross, for the crews regular gunner, Sgt Ramon V. Pastori. I find that Sgt Pastori passed away June 1998.

As to the aircraft flown by Lt. Worsthorn that day. It was A/C #41-28816, Model H, nicknamed "SCRAPPY."

Other a/c lost on 22 August 1944. From the 724th B.S. we lost 42-78445, nicknamed "TODDLIN TROLLOP;" 2Lt Alfred M. Donelson, Pilot. All onboard KIA, except the Bombardier, 2Lt Kenneth R. Collins who was POWed.

The 726th lost two a/c; 42-52111, nicknamed "OLD TAYLOR." 2Lt Maurice J. Beaucond, Pilot. 7 KIA. 2 POWed.

The other 726th a/c was 42-51300, nicknamed "WET DREAM." Pilot was 2Lt Valerian E. Klein. 3 KIA. 6 POWed.

The loss for the 727th was a/c 42-78145, nicknamed "CON JOB." Pilot was 2Lt Richard A. Turnbull. 2 KIA. 9 POWed.

The target for that day, 22 August 1944 was the Vienna Oil Storage plant in Austria.

Although our losses were truly notable that day, it was not as bad as the following day, 23 August 1944, when we lost 3 a/c from the 724th, 3 from the 725th, one each from the 726th and 727th. That Markersdorf Mission garnered us our 3rd Distinguished Unit Citation).

CRASH SITE EXPLORATION

By; Barbara Baker Johnson

Bob:

I am sorry to have taken so long to write to you about our trip to the site where my late husband, Lyle H. Baker's B-24 went down.

Being of a veterinary family - my husband, Lyle Baker, saw our sons, Richard, Gary and Robert all become veterinarians. Through that means, we became acquainted with a young Hungarian Veterinarian named Zoltan Nagy. Dr. Nagy spent some time with friends in North Carolina, and with my son in Terlock, CA. Both hosts were Veterinarians.

We had planned a trip to Hungary, plus the other Baltic countries, and Dr. Nagy offered to take us to the site where Lyle's plane went down. We were also in touch with a man named Nandor Mohos, who was collecting data on the planes that went down during WW-II in Hungary and the immediate area. At the last minute we had to change our planned date to meet there. With that change of dates, 'Zoltie' could not go. However he arranged to have the author of the book of records of planes that had gone down, and to also have a man with metal detector to hunt for any metal from the plane.

On Thursday, October 21, 2004, we met "Zolie" with a rented car and he drove us to Nagykanizsa, Hungary the nearest town to the site of the crash. Before each mission Lyle had always said a prayer,

and prayed that if the plane went down, it would not kill any children, or other people. Their target was the Aircraft Factory at Wiener-Neusdorf, Austria.

The site was about 5 miles out in the country, on an old rutted road with lots of mud, so it seems that Lyle's prayers were granted - no loss of life among the civilian population.



HUNGARIAN MUD RUN

We hopped from one fairly dry area to another and passed one large house. We finally reached our area, rather hilly and planted with oak trees. THIS WAS THE SITE! There were wild pigs on the other

side of the hill, so we had to be quiet not to disturb them.



THE SEARCH GROUP

L to R: Everett Johnson, Barbara Baker Johnson, Unknown: With Metal Detector, Writer: Zoltan Talos

We recovered one bullet, a shell casing and some rocks. The trees were planted about 50 years ago, so we thought any remains would probably have been covered up.

It was interesting, and good to know that no one else on the ground had been killed, but sad in the fact that most of the crew perished and only my husband, Lyle Baker, and the Bombardier, Millard "Pete" Mulry were the only ones able to bail-out to become POW's.

We have, over the years, been able to visit 'Pete' and his family in Texas. Pete had been sure he was the only one alive and was sent to a Budapest jail for a while. Then was put on a train for Stalag Luft III. My husband had borrowed twenty dollars from Pete just before they left on that fateful mission. Later, unbeknownst to either one that they were on the same train, Lyle saw Pete and ap-

proached him and said, "Here's the \$20.00 I owe you." Pete was sure he was seeing a ghost. I later asked Pete what he did with the \$20.00, He said "To buy you a gift." Pete always felt that his greatest gift was just to return home.

(Editor ... To further flesh out the events of that day; 16 July 1944, I offer this information. The aircraft flown by the crew was named "REDDY TEDDY," a/c #42-52087 from the 726th Squadron. It was never verified if it was flak that brought the aircraft down from over the target, but a fire ensued and forced the evacuation of two of the two surviving crew members; Baker and Mulry.

The rest of the crew is as follows:

Captain Francis L. Fort, Pilot - KIA

2Lt Lyle A. Baker, Copilot - POW

George S. Campbell, Navigator - KIA

1Lt Millard E. Mulry, Bombardier - POW

Sgt William J. Kilcoyne, Nose Gunner - KIA

Sgt Frank S. Hooper, Upper Gunner - KIA

Sgt Joseph H. Booker, Ball Gunner - KIA

S/Sgt Aaron E. Butler, R Waist Gunner - KIA

S/Sgt Kenneth J. Broster, L Waist Gunner - KIA

Sgt Norman E. Feldman, Tail Gunner - KIA

Over the course of my researching I have located the final resting places of 7 that were killed on that mission.

Francis Fort, Frank Hooper and William Kilcoyne are buried in the Zachary Taylor National Cemetery at Louisville, KY.

Aaron Butler, Norman Feldman and Kenneth Broster are buried in the Lorraine American Cemetery at St. Avold, France.

Joseph Booker is buried in the Ardennes American Cemetery at Neupre, Belgium.

I could not find the final resting place for George Campbell.)

A GUNNERS VOW

I wished to be a pilot, and you along with me; but if we all were pilots, where would the Air Force be?

It takes guts to be a gunner, to sit out in the tail; when the Messerschmitts are coming, and the slugs begin to wail.

The pilots just the chauffeur, and its his job to fly the plane; but its we who do the fighting, though we may not get the fame.

If we all must be gunners; then let us make this bet: We'll be the best damn gunners that have left this station yet!

"LITTLE FRIENDS:" THE 49TH FIGHTER SQUADRON

(Continued 19th Installment by Dr. Royal C. Gilkey)

The next day's mission went to Vienna, Austria where the target was the Osterreichische Sauerwerke. The fighters' job was to cover four groups of bombers belonging to the 47th Wing during their penetration to the target, time over it, and in withdrawal. For that purpose, 18 P-38s took off at 0945 hours (9:45 a.m.) on October 17, 1944. Of these, three returned early to base, two because of mechanical difficulty and one as a spare. The other "Hangmen," flying last in the Group, made rendezvous with the 47th Wing's B-24s over Prem (4741N 1546E) at 1130 hours (11:30 a.m.) and at 24,000 feet. Escorting the bombers to the target, the fighters skirted Vienna's southern outskirts to avoid flak, and reached their objective, the target, at 1220 hours (12:20 p.m.), their altitude being 25,500 feet. They stayed in the target area until 1240 hours (12:40 p.m.) and then left at 25,000 feet. Our pilots saw the bombers for the last time at 1235 hours (12:35 p.m.) over Vienna (Wien), Austria. The bombers appeared to be swallowed up by thick clouds covering the area. Our P-38s remained in the target area five minutes longer in the vain hope of picking up the bomber formation. They then proceeded to the environs of Neusiedler Lake (Neusiedler See), but that yielded nothing. Course was finally set for home after instructions to do so were received by radio transmission (R/T) from the Group leader at 1245 hours (12:45 p.m.). The pilots reported their formation was good, but the bombers seemed to be strung out along the route. Bombing could not be observed because of solid (10/10) cloud cover obscuring vision. A lot of flak was encountered in the target area. It was intense and accurate on the bomber formation. Barrage-type flak covered the target area. Tracking-type flak was run into over Munchendorf (4804N 1623E) near the Austrian capital.

The weather was poor on the mission. Pilots re-



port 10/10 cumulus over Yugoslavia's mountains at 26,000 feet, the cirrus coverage was 5/10. During the mission, radio security was excellent. There was no radio communication between bombers and fighters. Only the Group leader's message instruction the P-38s to head for home was sent by radio transmission at 1245 hours (12:45 p.m.). Sortie credit went to the 15 Squadron pilots who completed the approximately 925-mile mission.

(Editor ... The 451st was also flying into the Vienna area that October 17th. Our target that day was the Vosendorf Oil Refineries. Our fighter cover was to be from the 15th Fighter Command. Precise Fighter Squadron not listed on the Group's Operational Orders. Our 49th Wing was to be the last over the target. We suffered no losses and apparently all a/c returned to Base.)

Despite having to handle the interrogation of the Squadron's returning fighter pilots and prepare a narrative mission report on their operations for the day, S-2 Lt. Royal C. Gilkey found time to give a lecture on security to the unit's enlisted men. What he had to say carried the weight of his experience of service as the Security Officer responsible for the lives, safety, possessions, and equipment of the personnel on the base. Ensuring security during wartime was something never to be taken lightly. That point he hammered home by citing the ruination that could occur as the result of any lapses. Each soldier should be on guard against any inadvertent slips of the tongue or other carelessness that could jeopardize his outfit and render it vulnerable to hardened enemy action, surreptitious or otherwise. Continuing vigilance should be maintained to ward off the ever-present possibility of avoidable disaster. A question-and-answer period followed the discussion. It was a tensely instructive session held in the Squadron mess hall, setting the tone for two follow-up security lectures on October 18 and 19, which

were non-operational days.

Flying missions resumed on October 20, 1944. On that day, a long mission to Regensburg was undertaken. The Squadron's P-38s were to rendezvous with two Groups of the 5th Wing and then provide escort for the B-17s during penetration to the target, the bomb-drop, and subsequent withdrawal. The objective was to deliver a devastating blow to the Regensburg Oil Refineries in Germany. Take-off time for the Squadron's P-38s was 0853 hours (8:53 a.m.). While 17 "Lightnings" got off on the mission, only a dozen reached the target at 1235 hours (12:35 p.m.). They remained over it until 1248 hours (12:48 p.m.), before proceeding back to base, which they reached at 1510 hours (3:10 p.m.). The Squadron occupied the second position in the Group during the long 1100-mile mission. There were as many as five early returns, accounting for only 12 "Hangmen" over the target. Three pilots experienced mechanical difficulties, causing them to return early. Also, back early were an escort and a spare.

The first checkpoint was Caorle, an Italian town at the mouth of the Livenzo River (emptying into the Gulf of Venice at the north end of the Adriatic Sea). The P-38s flew on course to reach it, then proceeded to the vicinity of Fuschl (4714N 1249E) in Austria. A turn southwest brought them near to Gschnitz (4703N 1123E); and from there, they flew on to the target area. When they left Regensburg, their route took them over Reichach, thence east to cross the Istrian peninsula's coastline at 4504N 1340E. Returning to base from there posed no difficulties.

What happened at rendezvous and subsequently, got complicated. Our P-38s met a couple of groups of B-17s at Casarsa (4557N 1251E) at 25,000 feet, the time being 1112 hours (11:12 a.m.). These bombers were escorted to Fuschl (4714N 1249E). It was there that the "Lightnings" realized they were escorting the wrong bombers, causing them to turn southwest to get on course again. Twenty-five thousand feet over Pfaffenhausen (4806N 1027E), they made rendezvous with the briefed bomber formation at 1211 hours (12:11 p.m.) and escorted it to the target area, which was entered at 25,000 feet, the time being 1235 hours (12:35 p.m.). Our pilots stayed there until the bombers were lost from sight in the solid (10/10)

overcast at 1248 hours (12:48 p.m.). Flying at 29,000 feet, the P-38s left the target zone but were unable to locate the bombers for withdrawal escort. By the time they crossed the Istrian coast, their altitude was down to 15,000 feet at 1350 hour (1:50 p.m.).

The pilots reported no enemy air resistance, but there was flak. It was encountered over the Regensburg (4900N 1202E) and its environs. Pilots called the flak, scant, inaccurate and heavy. Similar flak was seen to burst above the bombers at Mindelheim (4804N 1029E). Not far from Gschnitz (4703 1123 E), an explosion was seen, leaving black smoke in its wake and a trail descending from the center.

Solid (10/10) overcast obscured the target at Regensburg. The top of this overcast ranged in altitude from 18,000 to 20,000 feet. Under these circumstances, the results of the bombing could not be reported. They just weren't observable.

With reference to radio security, there were no communications between the fighters and bombers. Contact was made by radio between the fighters themselves, the Group leader having told them that they were escorting the wrong bombers and should return to the course as briefed.

The 20 October 1944 mission was marred by this miscue, making for confusion in the air and requiring a resolute effort to rectify it. Illustrative of some uncertainty as to place was a belief expressed during interrogation at rendezvous was actually effected over Pfaffenhofen (4803N 1105E) instead of a town of similar name. Sometimes it's difficult to identify precisely particular places being flown over because of variables like weather affecting judgment.

(Editor ... Our target for the 49th Wing on 20 October 1944 was the Milan Industrial Targets in Northern Italy. Specifically the 451st was to bomb the Alpha Romeo Works, while the 461st was to target the Isotta Fraschini Works and the 484th to level the Breda Works; all targets lay in close proximity to each other. Flak was scheduled to be light as only 4 guns were reported to be at that location. We suffered no aircraft losses.)

TECH SERGEANT LINDLEY MILLER'S MISSIONS

(Editor ... As I had stated, prior to placing (former AEG T/Sgt) Lindley Miller's mission journal into our Issue 44 Ad Lib, I was reluctant to include it due to the inconsistencies of facts as I found them. But reluctant as I was, I still felt it worthy of inclusion, due to the simple fact that it was a chance to get some input from you airmen that recall that date, or those missions, and could flesh out what you remember. That .. Or set me straight if I screwed-up.)

August 28, 1944 - Giurgie, Italy

We set out to bomb a train bridge over the Danube which provided the only direct rail communication between Bucharest and Sofia. The bridge was close to Giurgia, Italy; and we completely demolished it. There was no flak or fighters seen, which was a good deal.

(Editor ... Upon checking the world atlas I could find no connection with the city of Giurgia being in Italy. It is actually located IN RUMANIA, and the Danube River did separate Bucharest and Sofie, but by some great distance. We actually did bomb Giuriui, Rumania, which were on the 11th and 23rd of June 1944. Missions number 64 and 68 for the Group.)

September 2, 1944 - Szeged/Szajol RR Bridge

Today we set out to remove the Szeged and Szajol railroad bridges over the Tirea River in Hungary. I flew today with Major Bowen (Pilot) and Col. Eaton (Copilot); and it was a short and uneventful trip. We hit our target well and destroyed the large bridges at several points. No flak or enemy fighters were perceived, and it was a good milk run.

On the third, another plane crashed on take-off and burned for an hour and a half. Finally, she blew up with ten five hundred lb. Comp. "B" bombs going off at the same time. It was a tremendous explosion and flames shot up 2,000 feet in the air. Steel was flying everywhere, and two red hot pieces



"AT EASE - REST - SMOKE IF YOU HAVE 'EM!"

Sgts: Lindley G. Miller, Harold D. Graham,
Dick L. Moreau

dropped close by me.

(Editor ... The Accident Report for B-24J - A/C #42-51679 (726th Squadron; Pilot 1Lt. Earl P. Haubert) on 3 September 1944 reads thusly:

"The aircraft was on its take-off stretch, halfway down the runway and No. 2 prop ran away. The pilot could not bring it back with the proper procedure. He immediately cut his switches, as a result he had only one application of

brakes, as his electric hydraulic pump was inoperative, due to the switches being off. The aircraft was slowed down but not enough to control it. The ship turned slowly to the left and nosed over about 50 yards from the runway. All the crew aboard safely departed from the aircraft. Aircraft destroyed by fire and exploding bombs."

The confusing aspect of this incident was the fact that it carried a load of bombs, but no mission was scheduled for that day, even though the Accident Report regarded it as a 'Combat' fatality.)

September 17, 1944 - Lyon, France

Well, after a brief rest at Capri, we are now flying again and are temporarily attached to the A.T.C. We were to transport supplies (gas, bombs, bullets, etc.) to the Seventh Army and leave them at Lyon. By the way, we were the only Group in the 15th Air Force that was chosen for this type of work; and, perhaps, it was because we had sustained so many losses of late. The weather was poor over S. France and we were forced to land at Aiz en Provence, since Lyon was closed in. We visited Aiz and I met a cute little French blonde (Pierete) and had myself a date for the evening. However, Tudor got 'ticked' and we took off on instruments and headed home. No one else came back except our good little crew!!!

(Editor ... FALSE! We were not the only Group to transport supplies to, and for, Patton's Tactical Air Force. The whole 49th Wing (451st, 461st and

484th) were called in to do this job. Nor were we attached in any way to the A.T.C's. We were called upon because we were 'armed,' and could defend ourselves if we encountered German fighters, whereas the transport a/c were not armed, and could not defend themselves.

For the next few of Miller's entries, he seems to have reviewed his flight log and improvised the missions out of sequence.)

October 9, 1944 - Ferrara, Italy

Today we set out to bomb a railroad viaduct in N. Italy. We were carrying 2000 pound bombs, Comp. B. We never found the target because of poor weather, and jettisoned our bombs rather than land with them. A very easy milk run and it is the kind we all enjoy.

(This mission, according to my research, occurred on the 10th of October and the target is listed as Castelfranco M/Y, Italy. Even though the weather was bad, my database shows that bombs were dropped in a nearby target.)

October 7, 1944 - Vienna, Austria

Today turned out to be another very disastrous day for all concerned, especially us. We were out to bomb a large group of oil refineries, only four miles east of Vienna, Austria. We had to fly a Mickey Ship (Burma Bound) from the 724th Squadron. Shortly after takeoff, we lost two of our four generators and were therefore, forced to turn off the radar set and not operate our turrets. The trip went along okay until we hit the I.P. when we were hit by mucho and very accurate flak (400+ and heavy guns). It was a very large caliber type, and it went high or low - just level. The whole flight was badly shot up, however, I guess we got it worst of all. We didn't have any men killed aboard our ship, as did several of the other planes; but, today, no planes returned to our base, setting down to other fields along the return route. The flak tracked us for a good 10-14 minutes, and we took a direct hit on the number two fuel cell and the latter gushed gas at the rate of about eight gallons per minutes into the bomb bay. We also had out No. 1 and No. 4 engines shot out; and our No. 2 engine supercharger rendered useless because of hits in the induction system. We also lost all of our electrical system and parts of our oxygen system. Capt. (now Major) Gould, our Copilot, had his left wrist all but shot away as well as being hit in the throat. Capt. Tudor

was hit in the left wrist (cutting the tendons) and several times in the leg; our Mickey Operator was hit in the hand and leg; our nose gunner (Navigator) was hit in the face and eyes; and our top turret gunner was hit in the head. I transferred the balance of the fuel out of No. 2 tank and used our No. 4 tank to operate the No. 2 engine. We limped home on all but one engine. We set course for Yugoslavia and got prepared for a crash landing on Vis. I got the gear down manually and prepared the waist gunners to pull chutes after we hit. We made a beautiful landing among other crashed ships; and they pulled old 'Burma' off the runway - her flying days probably over. We returned to Italy three days later. The Partisans that day were okay, and we lost two planes outright and had three dead men on other returned planes. We hit the target well and should be justly proud after taking such a hits. Capt. Tudor received the Silver Star and me the D.F.C for our parts in this raid.

(Editor ... Seems that Miller got his dates mixed up. The split mission of October 7th was to Vienna, Austria (Red Plan) and to Komarno, Hungary (Blue Plan). But there was no loss of a/c such as he proclaims. One a/c from the 727th WAS lost over Vienna. That a/c was 42-51409, "LUCKY TEN," piloted by 2Lt Harvey Robinett. It had to have been the mission to Austria on the 13th of October, he was referring to. On that mission we lost 8 a/c; 1 from the 724, 2 from the 725, 2 from the 726, and 3 from the 727th.)

September 25, 1944 - Athens, Greece

Forgot to write this one up. Today, we set out in poor weather (vis. 1,000' and raining) to bomb enemy fleet concentrations in the harbor of Athens. We had a very interesting trip, but missed our target - four heavy cruisers. This was another pre-invasion bombing. We were forced down at Lecce, Italy, because of bad weather. We returned shortly afterwards; and today, I had Capt. Gould, our new C.O. as pilot.

(Editor ... My records show that our target that day was supposed to be the Submarine Pens in the harbor of Athens, but our only available target seemed to be the Athens/Eleusis Airfield, where it was claimed that we destroyed some 11 enemy aircraft on the ground.)

October 31, 1944 - Podgorica, Yugoslavia

Today we set out to bomb German troop instal-

lations in Yugoslavia. The target was covered with an overcast; and, so after cruising around a while, we returned to base.

(Editor ... That mission was written up thusly:
 "A last minute hat-trick briefing and preparation for a mission on two hours notice sent us to bomb

troop concentrations at Podgorica, Yugoslavia. Bad weather and command 'Snafued' us on the whole deal. Flights were wandering all over the sky (not that the icing helped), two runs were made over a target 10/10 obscured by clouds and the formation straggled back in flights quite some time apart.")

ODE TO THE BOMBARDIER

By: Author Unknown

On a lonely road, through a cold, black night
 A grizzled old man trudges into sight,
 And the people whispered over their beers,
 "Here comes the last of the Bombardiers."
 What is a Bombardier? - No reply;
 The men turn silent, the women sigh
 As a death like silence fills the place
 With the old gray ghost of a long, lost race.

It's hard to explain that catch of breath
 As they sense the approach of death,
 Furtive glances from ceiling to floor
 Till something, or someone opens the door.
 The bravest of hearts turn cold with fear ...
 The thing in the door is a Bombardier.
 His hands are bony, and his hair is thin
 His back is curved like an old bent pin.
 His eyes are two empty rings of black
 And he vaguely murmurs, "Shack, Shack."

This ancient relic of the Second World War
 Creeps across the room and slouches at the bar.
 No one speaks, but they stare in the glass
 As the old man shows a worn Bombsight pass,
 And the hollow tones from his sunken chest
 Demands a drink, and only the best.
 With the glass to his lips, they hear him say,
 "The Bomb-bay's open, Bombs Away!"
 With no other words, he sneaks through the door
 And the last of the Bombardiers is seen no more.
 But all thru the years that phrase has stuck,
 When you say "Bombardier" you add,
 "Hard Luck!"

WORLD WAR II LETTERS

By: William F. Jackson

Another fine bit of descriptive writing came to this office some time back from Bill Jackson, 725th Aircraft Commander. Within its tome he starts with his induction into the Army Air Force, his various Training Schools: Pre-Flight, Primary, Basic, Advanced, B-24 School, Replacement Depot, and Phase Training With Crew, and finishes with his Separation from the Service. He pretty much writes about his social activities, since he is somewhat restricted to this format due to wartime adage, "A slip of the lip can sink a ship."

Since much of his writing is prior to his entry into the 451st, I have decided to start these installments with his chapter entitled "P.O.E. - San Francisco."

Bill Jackson signed up for the Army Air Corps in May of 1942 when he was at Quincy College, Quincy, Illinois. He was finally called into service in March, 1943, one of the last of his class to leave college. He was discharged in November, 1945. During this time he wrote almost daily to his parents; Frank and Wanda Jackson in Quincy, Illinois. Following are excerpts of some of these letters.

(P.O.E.-- Port of Embarkation)

4 August 1944 - You are not suppose to know where I am, so I must use my Tonopah, Nevada address until I get an A.P.O. number. There are many things which I am not permitted to tell you, so I don't have to bother writing a long letter with many details. Ha!

Oh, I suppose you have been looking for me to arrive home. Well, forget it. It was, as many of our group feared: Absolutely no leaves from here on out. Even after our C.O. at Tonopah assured us in his farewell speech that we would get a leave. No soap. It's not bothering me any because I have exciting things to look forward to, but I suppose you're disappointed. The fellows at Walla Walla got leaves before they left their Phase Training. Such is life.

Everything is certainly wonderful here. Good

food. Oh, boy! I went swimming in a nifty pool this afternoon and saw a USO show this evening. Dick Stabile played the alto sax for us. Wish we were staying here awhile. Perhaps I can tell you more next time. Don't expect to hear from me very often in the near future.

7 August 1944 - Lindsey is going to mail this in town, so I think I'll be able to tell you about my recent excursion, even though my present location is a military secret. (It says here.) Several crews were given passes from Saturday afternoon until late Sunday night -- really a good deal! Bostrom, Williams, George, Ted and I clicked around together.

Have you seen the LIFE magazine, issue of about July 31? It features pictures from the "Top of the Mark," meaning the Mark Hopkins Hotel which is atop Nob Hill in Frisco. Really gives a marvelous view of the city! We stayed at the Fairmont Hotel, which is across the street from the Mark. It is difficult to get accommodations, particularly for a Saturday night, and we spent quite a bit of time before we found something available at the Fairmont. Frisco is a hilly city. It surprised me. It's up and down all the time, and what a time we had! I enjoyed myself to the extent of some \$30 as I figured this was my last opportunity for a long while to come. We ate at Johns' Rendezvous Saturday night and watched the floor show intermittently. A \$4 dinner and it was quite the nuts. Had gobs of stuff that was new to me, like Cracked Crab, Anchovies, and Pigs' Knuckles -- I was stuffed before they brought our steaks. Delicious! That Cracked Crab is pretty darn good, too. We toured a good many spots that night. While we were at Johns' Rendezvous, a Chief Petty Officer told us he had two extra girls if we cared to dance or join them. He was just back from overseas and the girls were his wife's sisters. Nice girls. Needless to add, I took advantage of the opportunity.

We ate breakfast Sunday morning (almost noon) at the Golden Pheasant and found it delightful.

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



WILLIAM F. JACKSON
2ND LT - AC
William F. Jackson
1st Pilot



Charles W. George
Co-pilot



Theodore W. Wengert
Navigator



Wallace H. Glass
Bombardier



Morton W. Malkin
Engineer



James P. Nichols
Radio Operator



Lawrence W. Prochnow
Ball Turret Gunner



Robert L. Miller
Nose Gunner



LeRoy M. Possell
Top Turret Gunner



Doyle E. Treece
Tail Gunner

While there, the five of us got chummy with three girls just in from Sacramento for the weekend, so three of us got dates. Went to the matinee at the Golden Gate Theater to see Jimmy Dorsey. I guess you know how well I like Jimmy. He had a good show. We ate dinner at Kit Carson's, which is a very nice spot. Another expensive, but tasty meal -- fried chicken for me. Then we walked around, stopping every now and then at one of the better bars. I was the only non-drinker and non-smoker in the crowd, as usual, but my companions respected my tastes and we got along very well. All seven of them held their liquor well, and not one was in the least bit tipsy. Maybe it's funny, my mentioning this, but it's the first time I ever made the rounds of bars just for the purpose of drinking. I can't see it, myself, but I'm in the minority and I'd rather be with friends than be alone.

Well, by 8:30 p.m. we were ready for some dancing, so we were off to the Mural Room of the St. Francis Hotel where Ted Weems was playing. He broadcast on a coast to coast hookup while we were dancing. That rather ended up the evening for us because we had to take the girls to the Oakland ferry and beat it back to the Post, ourselves. It isn't hard to get a date in Frisco because most of the boys could get dates. Beckstrom had one of the most beautiful girls I've seen.

I suppose you've been waiting to hear from me. I haven't received any forwarded letters yet. I don't know why you decided to stop writing every time I move. If you don't write to my Tonopah address, it'll be ages before I hear from you. I still don't have an APO number. I'm enjoying life here and hope to stay awhile.

9 August 1944 - The last time I wrote was Monday. I haven't been writing very often, but then I haven't received any mail for a week, so I don't have any ambition to write. Beckstrom, Hempel, and Swede have left, along with a few other friends. We got another pass yesterday afternoon. Wood and I toured Frisco together. Went to Johns' Rendezvous again. Had a pretty good time. There were six WACS there, out for an evening of fun, so I had an opportunity for dancing a little. Went to the International Settlement. You've heard of that spot, haven't you? We did take in a movie also: "Going My Way," with Bing Crosby. Good show! Back on the Post this afternoon. Went swimming, played ping

pong, saw a USO show at the amphitheater. What a life! Some of the boys are getting anxious to move on, but I'm in no big hurry. I'm writing in bed. Wally and Ted are playing chess on the bed beside me. How are things at home?

11 August 1944 - I received my first mail in nine days, but no news from home. If your waiting for a new address, try this one:

Jackson 0-705024, AAF APO #16426AO - KK15 c/o Postmaster, New York, N.Y.

Things are happening now. Certainly got a fine issue of flying equipment "n'sech." Perhaps you thought my other flying equipment was pretty good. Well, this is decidedly an improvement all the way around.

Was busy this morning but had a chance to swim this afternoon. I hope to see Just, Crusty, and a few other Liberal boys tomorrow. Wish I had a chance to "buzz" Quincy. Most of my activities now border on military secrets.

13 August 1943 - I suppose I'll be wondering about you at home, for I won't be in a position to pick up mail for a few days and already I haven't heard from you for eleven days.

Got up into the blue yesterday for three hours. Good deal! Was busy all day today, but got to church service this evening. I took a suitcase to Supply today and shipped it home via Express collect. A lot of junk -- things I don't have room for. My diary is there (last year's). Must get to bed early tonight so can arise at a rather early hour.

16 August 1944 - Have really been around since I last wrote, and it's all been interesting and exciting. Wish I could tell you all about it. The crew are all well and happy. We're having a good time. I have often wondered if there weren't some good-looking WACS in the Army. Well, they're here. Wow!

The Officer in Charge said that we were permitted to say that we're in the New England states. It looks like we'll be with a good many of our friends from Phase Training and most of them have proceeded our crew.

P.S. I'll send my Elgin watch home if I get it ready some time. I was issued a G.I. watch today. My Elgin hasn't been dependable the last couple weeks. It probably needs cleaning as the last time was a year ago, well, almost, and I've been in the Tonopah dust and sand since then.

P.P.S. I made an allotment to start with September's pay. \$100 a month sent to Papa Jackson.

17 August 1944 - Just came back to the barracks after seeing a USO show. Very typical and yet, good. Well, I've been sitting here for five minutes trying to think of something to write. The things I usually write about are the ones that are now suppose to be secret. I would like to mention the locality, the weather, the trip here, the future prospect, etc., but "no soap." I find myself quite eager to get started on the next lap. I'm really looking forward to it.

There was a dance at the Service Club for the Enlisted Men last night. Remind me to tell you about it sometime. Ha! The food is very good. Oh, nuts! I don't know anything to say.

P.S. I had some pictures taken while stationed near Frisco. I ordered three 6x8 and one 8x10. You should receive them soon. I haven't planned their distribution, but don't get hasty. I might want one or two for girl friends.

21 August 1944 - There's so little that I'm permitted to tell you. I am still in good shape and so it all the crew. We get plenty of sack time except when we're on the move. I did get to church last night. The chapel is small but still large enough to hold those that who attend evening services. The pianist was absolutely lousy! The singing lacked a little in quality, but was certainly loud. I got quite a kick out of it! Ted and Wally actually went with me.

Today has been an easy one. I slept until noon. Spent some time playing ping pong and pool. Also dug out my clarinet and tooted a while. I hadn't played my gob for over a week.

I got to thinking about Andy Dunn yesterday and he was still on my thoughts today. The last time I saw him must have been back in grade school days. Do you still exchange Christmas cards with the Dunns? I'm sending a card to the Secretary of State asking for an election ballot. I hope to get some mail soon as the whole crew is awaiting news from their States.

23 August 1944 - Perhaps you've noticed a change in my writing schedule. I write every second or third day, instead of every day. It isn't that I don't have time, because I have time on my hands more often than not. It's just that there's so little I can tell you, and then not receiving any mail makes

a big difference, too. If I had a letter from you each day to answer, I'd write more often, as I used to. It's been three weeks now since I received word from you, and I expect it'll be a couple more before I get some mail.

Wally and I went canoeing yesterday afternoon, which was a lot of fun. Went to the show both last night and tonight. "Dixie Jamboree," (very poor picture) and "Thousand Cheer." I'd seen it several months before, but it was worth seeing again. Life is pleasant enough. Some of the fellows seem restless because of the inactivity, but I take things as they come. Charles is reading the "Post" in bed. Ted and Wally are sitting in on a poker game. I'm going to get some shut-eye.

P.S. Did you send some money to that Minneapolis photo shop for more crew pictures?

24 August 1944 - I dropped over to the Officers Club, and what do I hear? Fibber McGee and Molly on the radio. My gosh, I haven't listened to their program since I left home. It sure sounds good. I can see you sitting in the chair by the radio, Mom, darnin' pop's socks while you, Dad, are working on your books at the desk, and getting in your laughs at Fibber in between figures.

Another day -- like yesterday and the day before, and the day before that ... not a bad day, though. Some Link Trainer, a short hike, canoeing on the lake, a bit of jive on the clarinet. The rest, sleeping and eating.

I tried to find something for your birthday, Mom, but there's not much. I'll keep looking and perhaps the next place will have something suitable. I'm censoring the mail of my crew members. I like that!

26 August 1944 - Another day, and the situation remains unchanged. Saturday night coming up. There's a dance at the Officers Club tonight which I plan to attend, if I'm still here. The female situation is about like that of Tonopah, so it'll be mostly a matter of listening to the dance band.

I played pool for the whole afternoon yesterday and found it very interesting. Maybe it's because I made a few lucky shots. The game didn't use to interest me. There are some exceptionally good ping pong players here -- the Chaplain is one of the best. I managed to beat one of the "hot shots" last night and upped my spirits some. (What trite to be writing when there's a war going on! Oh, well, I guess

I'll get to it sometime.)

28 August 1944 - Went to church yesterday morning. Had a pretty good crowd there. It didn't knock me out any, though, because I didn't know any of the hymns and the sermon was unimpressive. I've been doing the usual thing which means practical nothing. I wrote letters to the parents of all the Enlisted Men of our crew. I would probably be going to the movies all the time except that I've seen all the pictures.

I found "The Robe" by Lloyd Douglas in the post library. However, transients are not allowed to take out any books, so I probably won't be able to read it, not unless we stick around here a while longer.

There was a dance at the Officers Club last Saturday night. Quite dull. I'm going to sign off now and run over to see the boys.

29 August 1944 - I did manage to get that copy of "The Robe" by Lloyd Douglas. I read it last night. It's very good. I have liked all of his books: "White Banners," "The Green Light," "Magnificent Obsession," "Dr. Hudson's Secret Journal" -- they are all similar and I've felt the same way when "The End" comes in view. It doesn't seem like a finale, there should be more.

Reading a book or seeing a show certainly takes me out of the present. Then all of a sudden it's finished and I'm back in life again, with problems of my own to face. There was a change of features at the post theater, so I took in the evening show: "Crime by Night" was the disappointing title. However, the show was surprisingly good. Plenty of laughs in it, too. I've certainly taking in the movies in the last four months.

I'd like to tell you why I'm here and was we have to look forward to, but "no can do." That's why I talk about books and shows. Hump! Everything's okedoke! Wish you well at home.

1 September 1944 - Was talking football to a new acquaintance last night and had the darndest time trying to remember Alf Bauman's name. Do you know whom I mean? Alf was the Northwestern football star who worked in the Phi Gam House with me two summers ago. I thought about it for an hour before his name finally came back to me. And while I was thinking of that, I recollected a few other fellows and incidents of that summer. I did have a good time up there. That was just about my

first time away from home, wasn't it? Speaking of being away from home, I don't really miss being away from Quincy. It's just my parents and a few other friends that I miss. I like Quincy and know that it's a better place than most of the fellows call "home." But I've had a chance to look around and know that there are other nice places, too.

There are just two sections in the U.S. that I haven't seen: the northwest -- Washington, Montana, North Dakota, and in the southeast -- Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida and the Carolina's. And I believe I have a pretty good idea of their type of country. I'm tell you, viewing the country from the air is a marvelous way. I hope you have the opportunity some day to fly from coast to coast.

I guess I was leading up to what I was thinking about last night: Where would be the nicest place to live? Now, that's a tough one to answer because it depends so much on personal likes and dislikes ... and so many other things, too. Long Beach, California might appeal to some. Salt Lake City is a good town. And I can't help but remember the summer we went to Denver. One thing I'm trying to keep in mind is that there must be water -- a lake, river, or an ocean. Isn't that one reason you liked Minnesota -- because it had lots of lakes? Minneapolis should be okay. Marg liked it there, didn't she? Then there's Oklahoma City and Kansas City, too. I was impressed by their nice residential section. Pittsburgh is quite a smoky place, but Philadelphia might do, because Pennsylvania looks pretty good to me. Did we ever his Charleston, West Virginia on that last summer vacation we had together? It's in country much like Tennessee. The more I go on, the more places I think of for consideration. Of course I'm just thinking of countryside, more or less. What the towns have to offer the citizens is important, too. Several years ago I talked about going to Texas. Remember, Mom? Well, I've seen a good part of Texas and that part wasn't so appealing, though I reckon Dallas would be a good spot. I'd never choose any place in Florida, that's a cinch.

Still, I wonder if this little survey of a place for a home isn't artificial, you know what I mean? I can't help but think of the sailor on the train pulling into Liberal, Kansas. "Boy, this sure looks good to me!" Of course it did, it was his home -- the dust

bowl itself, almost. As to the size, well, anything from 20,000 on up, I suppose. It takes that large a population to really develop their "situation."

I doubt if I'd enjoy a large place like New York City. It's tall buildings look mighty impressive -- the Statue of Liberty looks good, too, but I'd never want to call it home as Ted does. The climate farther inland is off times better than right on the ocean.

Say, I almost got started on a book. I'll close this up for now. Everyone is well and happy.

P.S. Don't take that too hard about not missing

Quincy. I'm not really so sure about that. Ha!

5 September 1944 - I'm allowed to tell you that I'm somewhere in North Africa. This is just a note to let you know that I am well, and very much interested in my recent activities. Have been on the move. I'll have a lot to tell you when I get back home. Still have not arrived at any place where we can receive mail, so I just hope it's accumulating. Food and quarters have been adequate, though sometimes not what we were use to in the States. I hope everything is okay at home and that you're as much interested in life as I am.



CHATTER FROM THE FLIGHT DECK

Bob Karstensen

Since our last Ad Lib I've had a bit of help in relocating some of our, mailed-to, but lost, members. Pamela Todd, Associate 451st Member and Curator of the Kearns Historical Society, near Salt Lake City, UT, put her efforts into relocated quite a few lost members. Pam, along with several others, gave me quite an assist in this venture.

Now on to something of a different tone. First off, I have to apologize for the lateness of this issue of the Ad Lib. Seems that 'technology' is advancing faster than I can mentally and physically keep up with. As an old adage goes, "The faster I go, the behinder I get."

Such is the case when my computer decides to give me a hard-time, and won't compute like I want it to, I have to take it to my computer GURU, James Bykowski, from nearby Woodstock, IL. He always gets me back on course. Besides Frank Maszare, who introduced me to my (mostly) reliable and workable DOS programs back in 1984, there is no one that understands DOS better than Jim. I am much in debt to him for his continual help.

In another field, where technology is leaving me behind, is the world of 'newsletter printing.' Where once I laid out what I wanted printed; text and pictures, the 'printer' now would appreciate it if I could bring in a computer disk and pictures and they will assemble it with their newfangled technology. Since I wasn't into the 'disk' mode and

brought my last effort to them in my usual fashion, whereas they had to print it with a copier, rather than the old 'offset' method. That didn't work all that well in printing the Issue 44 Ad Lib. As you may have noted in some of the pictures, a bit of graininess from that system. Hopefully I can get them to revert back to the old system for this issue.



Marcel Ertel
(Our French Connection)

Word has recently been received that our 'French Connection,' Marcel Ertel has passed away.

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

Martin A. Aschenbrenner, 726th Gunner -
From Son, Dean.

Donald L. Ayres, 725th Bombardier - From
Wife, LaRene

Robert E. Barnd, 726th AEG - From Wife,
Marion

Stanley Cisz, 727th Gunner - From Crewmate,
Bob Gillies.

Glen A. Chambers, 726th Pilot - From Son &
Dau-in-law; Chuck & Sue

Custer's Crew 16, 724th - from Crewmate,
Lloyd Jenkins

Oscar E. Cwienkala, 726th Gunner - From
Crewmate, Wilbur Miller

George Frisbee, 725th Crew Chief - From Sis-
ter, Marie Roberts

Paul G. Johnshoy, 724th Pilot - From Com-
rade, Alan Wolfley

Frank J. Lather, 727th Pilot - From Wife,
Sally

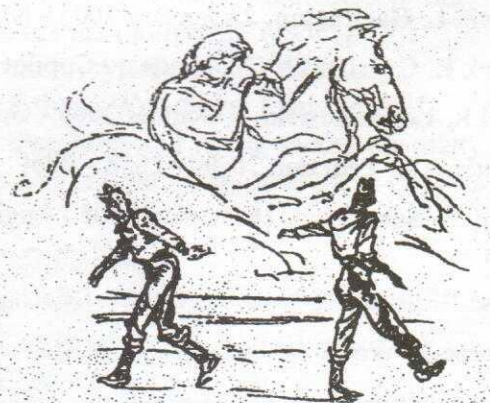
Peter A. Massare, 727th Pilot - From Crew-
mate, Jack 'Little' Jones

Joseph N. Naranjo, 727th Gunner - From
Comrade, Jack 'Little' Jones

Forrest A. Rinehart, 727th Pilot - From
Daughter, Janet

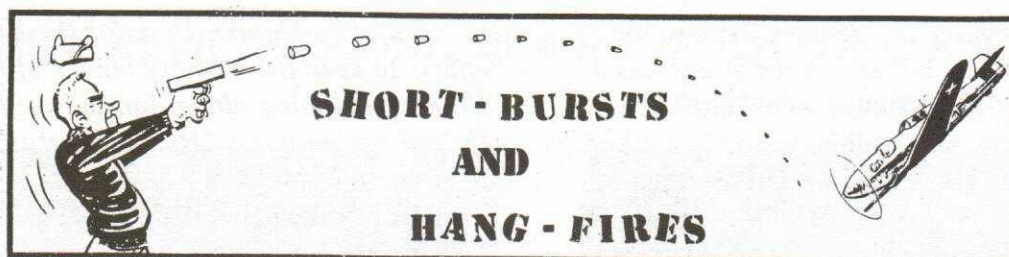
FINAL FLIGHT

I sometimes sit and wonder, as the years go speeding by,
If our lives aren't shaped and guided by our comrades from a'high.
We had learned to do together, and to share our dreams and plans.
We had learned a bit of all the things it took to be a man.
But life was not so kind, it seems, war takes a heavy toll.
We saw our comrades leave our ranks, and join the HONORED ROLL.
They died in simple silence, or in anguish and despair.
They've blazed a route for all of us, that we may meet "up there."
Some day we'll hear their voice again, when our bodies cease to roam.
The call will come through LOUD and CLEAR,
"BOX THE STRAGGLER IN, BOYS,
LETS TAKE THIS FLYER HOME."



REMEMBER

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



**Stanford Herlick, 726th [NAVIGATOR:
THEODORE C. KING'S CREW]**

Thanks, again for sending me the summer edition of 'Ad Lib.' I see that I am one of the 700+ members still up and about -- even at age 87. I'm in good health and playing golf and also bowling a couple time a week. I want to thank you for all the information you have provided me about my Squadron and crew. Enclosed is my check to help out with your costs.

*(Editor ... GOLF & BOWLING!!" Next thing you will be telling us about your entry into the next Olympic games. Whatever, "Hang in there" ;-)
And, too, thanks for your generous contribution to the cause.)*

**William C. Atkinson [727th ASSOCIATE
MEMBER]**

I am writing to inform you that my Dad, James C. Atkinson MD died this past August 21st, following a very brief illness. He was 85.

The 451st Bomb Group remained a significant source of pride for Dad all of his life, particularly in his later years. Of particular pride to him was the fact that he was an original member of the Group, and that he, and his crew flew all of their missions in their own plane, named 'THE JOLLY ROGER,' which they flew overseas from Fairmont. This, I realize, was unusual. The only crew exception was the substitution of Charles Isherwood for William Watson (who was ill) on the day they were shot down.

As you may recall, my brother and I took Dad back to Romania last year to see the area where he parachuted down, and the location of his imprisonment in Bucharest. As we stood among the plowed fields near the village of Calinesti, where he had landed and was captured, he told us, "Boys, I should have died that terrible day, and God only knows why I didn't and four of my crew did. What I do know is that every day since then has been a gift." He was a remarkable man.

(Editor ... Thanks, Bill, for this heart warming tale of your Dad's post war feelings.)

**William A. Lipkey, 727th [GUNNER: ROBERT
BLAIN'S CREW]**

In the Ad Lib #44 I read about my Flight Engineer passing away. I'm probably the last survivor of my crew. I really don't know, but seeing T/Sgt Roy M. Ritota's name, it set off a sad note. Needless to say, our ranks are diminishing.

(Editor ... In looking over my data on your crew, I find that of the 10 that I have listed, I have located 6 of your crew: Blain, Plonis (deceased), Ritota (deceased), Recchia (deceased), Christiansen (deceased) and yourself. I haven't been able to find Evans, Fabrey, Novak nor Dronzewski.)

**George E. Tudor, 725th [PILOT: AIR-
CRAFT COMMANDER]**

Your recent letter on Lindley Miller being in the Korean conflict is news to me. I have always had strong communications - telephone and letter - with all the members of our crew, and with the widows when the crew member had passed away. I have never heard a word about Korea by Miller or his wife, Patsy. Is it possible you had info about a different Miller? Lindley Miller's middle name was Garrison. I'm almost sure that he would have mentioned Korea to me in the dozens of times we talked.

(Editor ... I can only relate to you what Lindley had sent me in the 'Forward' that was in his mission journal he sent me. I believe I mailed you copies of those pages. You would have thought that being in the Korean conflict would have been noteworthy enough to have related those facts on to you. Tis' a puzzlement, probably never to be resolved.)

**Wilbur F. "Bing" Miller, 726th [PILOT:
AIRCRAFT COMMANDER]**

It was August 2004 and I was in North Wales, PA on business. Unfamiliar with the town and eager to get back to my office, I stopped on a side street behind a Police Officer who was busy giving a

ticket. I asked directions and he gave them to me and I prepared to leave, but across the street was a large sign, reading "CPA Steve Cwienkala." The name is not common, so I walked inside and asked the young man inside if he had a relative named, "Oscar."

He looked at me kinda funny, then said "Yes, but my uncle Oscar died in a plane crash in World War Two!"

I said, "Yes I know -- I was his Pilot."

He called his Dad in Chicago and we have been corresponding ever since.

(Editor ... What a nice, and unusual, FIND. I'm sure it made your day, as well that of Steve Cwienkala, and others concerned.)

Lloyd L. Jenkins, 724th [ROG: ROBERT E. CUSTER'S CREW]

Just a note to tell you how much I am enjoying your latest masterpiece. You do an excellent job and I look forward to receiving every issue.

I believe Mort Sternberg and I are the only surviving members of Bob Custer's crew. I am sending a check in memory of the other fine members of crew #16.

(Editor ... You and Mort well may be the only survivors of Crew 16. All crew members have been accounted for, with the exception of George Smith, who hasn't been located yet. Try as I may to locate him .. with a common name like George (NMI) Smith, there must be a million of them out there.)

Donald R. Weissend, 724th [ROG: ADAM E. METZ'S CREW]

Thanks so much for another great issue, #44 of the Ad Lib, which I recently received. Of course it was the first thing I want to read in the day's mail. As usual, it was a fine piece of work and much enjoyment to me. I think I still have almost every issue that I have received, and just for old times sake I thumb thru them occasionally.

(Editor ... Thanks, Don, for the KUDO's on my efforts to keep the memory/legacy of the 451st alive. I'll keep plugging along, for as long as I can. As the old saying goes, "Hang in there!" And my answer is, "I'll try.")

Andrew Pendleton, 725th [BOMBSIGHT SECTION]

I'm surprised that Lindley Miller's Pilot was unaware of his sight defects. I flew with them several times and never did Lindley make any secret of his problem, wearing his glasses almost all the time when airborne, or on the ground.

I hope you are able to continue your good work on behalf of the 451st organization. I know that we are all old now and tired, but I beg you to keep it up as long as you can. It means so much to so many.

(Editor ... This story about Lindley Miller, and his vision problems, has raised a lot of eyebrows among our readers. My understanding of what has been told, is that Lindley wore the newly perfected glass type contact lenses while in the air. Maybe spectacles while not in the air. There was no way that he could wear spectacles while at altitude during a combat mission. All Gunners were issued 'goggles,' with Polaroid lenses to protect us from the bright sun what we always encountered while above the clouds. There was no way that spectacles could be worn under the goggles. Goggles, along with our leather helmets and oxygen masks, were also meant to protect us from high-altitude frost bite. With temperatures down to minus 40 degrees, we had, and needed good face protection.

And too, Andy, I appreciate your last statement about how much our legacy means to everyone involved. I'll keep forging ahead until I get it right ;-). Also, if I may add, your monetary contribution was deeply appreciated.)



PICTORIAL REVIEW OF OUR 1988 NORFOLK, VIRGINIA REUNION

Courtesy: John Stargu, 726th Squadron



All Stand For The Pledge Of Allegiance
By Master Of Ceremonies: Alex Kuras
Standing L - R: Alex Kuras, Lois Pafford, Karen Buethe
(wife of Guest Speaker), Bob K., Jo Eaton, Bob Eaton



M/General Robert E.L. Eaton Addresses 300 Plus Surviving
Members Of His Former Command



John Anderson And Daughter Pam Present Bob K. With
"Special Award"



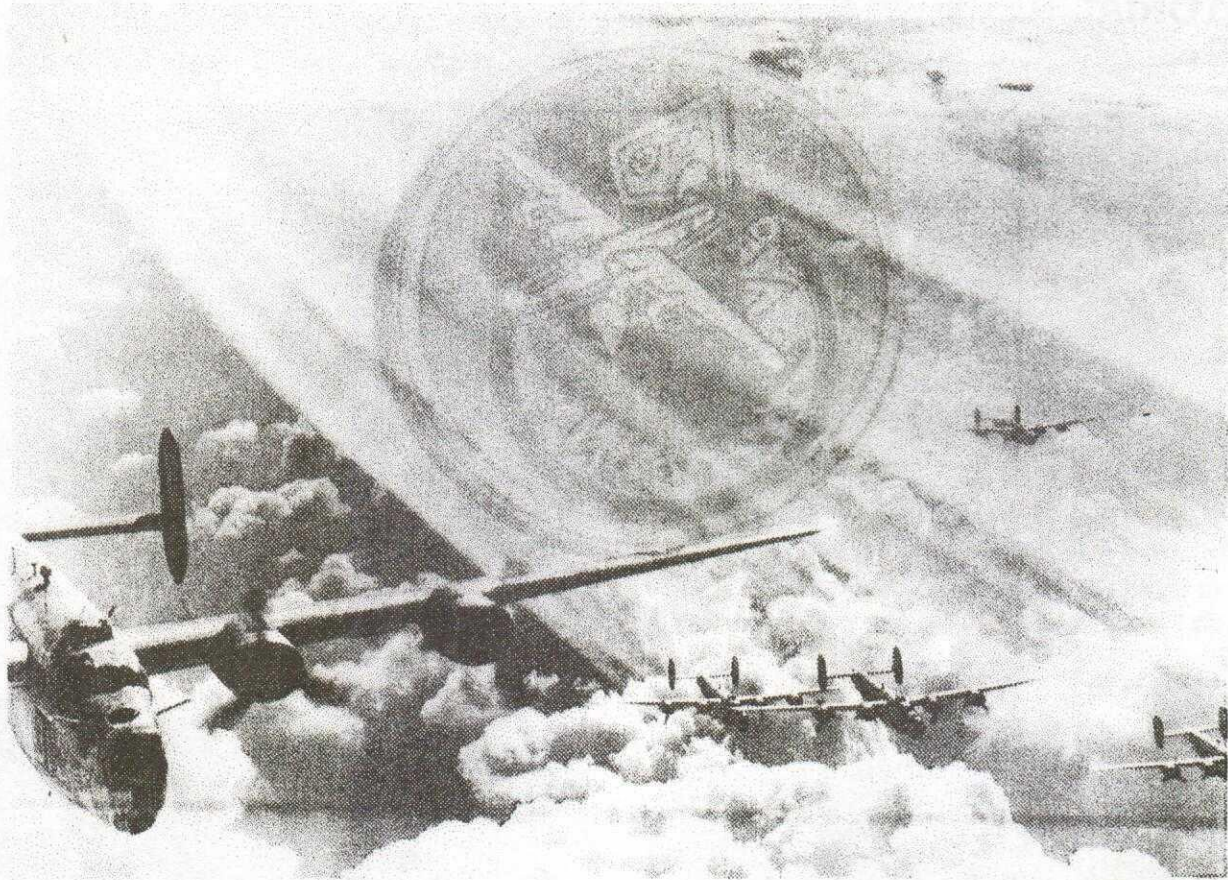
"Special Award"
Beautiful Hand Crochet Wall Plaque



Awards Presented To Bill Bihn (Mr. Voice - Singing Ability)
John Pafford (Mr. Words - Spiritual Leadership)
Lois McNerney (Mrs. Music - Piano Accompaniment)



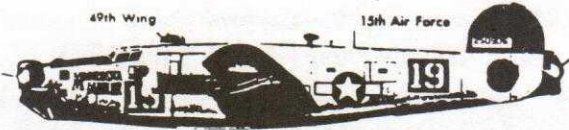
One Of The Forty Tables Of Happy Banquet Diners
Saturday October 15, 1988



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