





**"AD-LIB"**

451st Bomb Group, Ltd.  
Publication

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and published by.....

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TAX EXEMPT # 36 307 0772

ranging for a section of our facilities to accommodate the cameraman, camera, and backdrop scenery that you will take advantage of this opportunity. All portraits (and candid shots) will be published in booklet form and offered to our membership for a cost of \$8. Whether you wish to subscribe to the booklet, or not, please have your picture taken so others will know of your participation. The photo-book publishers will also accept photos (of good quality) that we take, and wish to have included in the booklet. This will be the best chance to record our RE-UNION, in detail, as we have never done before. So, ladies, bring out the best party dress (gingham), and you guys, polish up the brass buttons on your best bibs (oshkosh) and let's have at it!

## TRANSPORTATION

**(AIR)** In an effort to make this reunion as attractive as possible, we have contacted all the airlines that serve the Dayton International Airport, (Delta, United, TWA, Piedmont, USAir, ComAir, Wright, Mid-State, Simmons and Trans-Midwestern) seeking whatever reductions in air fares that could be offered to the 451st. Only one nationwide carrier, DELTA, offered a clear-cut discount (25%) to our Group. It may behoove you to study the following copy, as submitted by DELTA, for your consideration towards its financial benefits.

*DELTA AIR LINES, in cooperation with the 451st Bombardment Group (H), WW-II, Ltd., has made special arrange-*

*ments to offer convention attendees at least 25%\* off regular round trip coach fares from all of their domestic cities to Dayton. Departures to Dayton must be between August 8-11, with a maximum stay of fifteen days allowed. Reservations must be made and tickets purchased at least seven days before departure. In some cases, the overall 25% discount may not be the most economical fare, depending upon the routing and special promotional fares available. DELTA will confirm you at the lowest rate available at the time your reservations are made. If you normally use the services of a travel agent, please have them place your reservations through DELTA's toll free number so that they can obtain the same advantages for you. For reservations and information, call DELTA . . . . . Toll Free . . . . .*

*In the Continental U. S.*

*1-800-241-6760*

*In Georgia only*

*1-800-282-8536*

Regardless of whatever airlines you have in your area, be sure to ask whether there is any special consideration towards veterans attending a military reunion function. Also, check to see if any special fares are available to "Senior Citizens." I know that none of you guys have attained that age bracket, nor if you had, would admit to it, but some airlines do allow a discount if you will confess to being 62 years of age — or more.

Upon arrival at the Dayton International Airport you will find transportation to the Stouffer's Dayton Plaza Hotel in the form of AIRPORT LIMO SERVICE. It runs, depending upon volume, approximately every 45 minutes. Cost is in the neighborhood of \$6 per head.

**(BUS)** For those of you that enjoy the comfort, reliability, and economy of GREY-HOUND, what more could you ask than to be off-loaded almost at the door of the Stouffer's. You'll be within easy walking distance, less than a quarter block, from the "command post" of the 451st.

**(MOTOR VEHICLE)** Probably the mode of transportation that most will use. With some excellent Interstate highways criss-crossing the area (namely I-70, East to West — I-75, North to South. . . or visa-versa, respectively) no problem should be encountered in finding the city where "Aviation began."

Parking, for the Stouffer's guests, is free of charge in the Dayton Transportation Center (multi-level parking garage) located immediately across Jefferson Street, and linked to the Hotel by means of a Skywalk. For those

that will be using their Motor Homes, parking arrangements are available on the lower level. Don't try for the upper floors or you'll end up with an abbreviated version of what you started out with.

For those that are PURE campers, the nearest campsites lay some distance from the hub of our activities. But, being a camper, as I once was, finding a suitable campsite poses no problem. Many publications and handbooks, by franchised campgrounds, are available.

So, for you motor minded participants, tis time to relocate those "A, B, or C" window decals and to find that old tattered Gasoline Rationing Book for your trek to the hinterlands of Ohio.

**(CYCLISTS)** Wait for a following wind . . . and start a'peddling.

**(A'FOOT)** FOO'ARD HAAR! . . . . . HUT, WHO, HEE, HOOR!!!! . . . . . HUT . . . . . HUT . . . . . HUT . . . . . CADENCE COUNT!

## FIRST INSTALLMENT OF GROUP HISTORY OFFERED

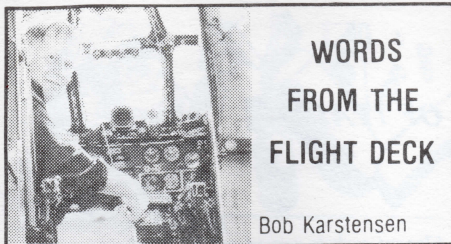
Starting with this issue we are presenting our membership the initial portion of the 451st Bomb Group's illustrious history. In the following issues of the AD-LIB we shall, to the best of our financial abilities, add the pages that will make up the total history. As you receive the additional pages you will find them numbered in sequential order and you can place them within the booklet cover with little difficulty.

The history of the Group will, to some, be of extreme interest and will bring back memories of people and events long since forgotten. To others it will fill that part of the history that they were not privy to know, nor experience. To the air crews, it will fill-in THAT part of the history that came before, or after their tour. To the POWs it may reveal just how important their role in the 451st turned out to be.

To Jack Garrison I "throw a salute" for his kindness in offering us the loan of his two volume photo albums. From these volumes I have been able to obtain the two Fairmont AFB (flight line & barracks) pictures. Other pictures from his album will be included as the history develops. The photo shown on inside back cover is a product of Karl Eichhorn, via Jack Garrison.

Several suggestions were presented that we establish a price for compiling the Group history. Something like \$2 per installment. I rejected this idea, on the basis that it took all you guys to make up that history, and you were all entitled to share the labors of your past. I contend that if you are satisfied with our effort, you'll do the right thing and support (financially) it continuance.





**WORDS  
FROM THE  
FLIGHT DECK**

Bob Karstensen

What more could a man ask than to be remembered? How often has that thought concerned you since we disengaged ourselves from the conflict in Europe? I'm sure we can all remember those that lost their lives, while engaged in that conflict. But how many take the time to give consideration to our dear friends that are departing our ranks, even now. Perhaps we all think that those that may mourn our passing will be our immediate family. But that's not totally true. Yes, they may feel the first impact of their loss, but there are certain others, upon hearing of their friends passing, also sense a deep loss.

But rather than to sit quietly and offer little acknowledgment several of our members have requested that we (the 451st) make a special mention in our publication, to the fact that their comrade has left the mortal bounds of this life, to seek peace in the life beyond.

To this degree each participant feels that the continuance of the 451st AD-LIB is a fitting tribute to the memory of their comrade. Thus in asking for this consideration each participant has pledged \$50 for each departed comrade. Knowing that for whatever measure it serves, their comrade will be remembered.

From William E. Potts . . . . . In memory of  
**Chaplain WILLIAM MC NEIL, HDQS**

From Marshall Word . . . . . In memory of  
**WILLIAM C. FENTON, 727th**

From John Thomas . . . . . In memory of  
**E. RANKIN FITE, 727th**  
and **ROBERT P. THORN, 727th**

If there should be anyone else that would wish to offer a commemoration to their departed comrade, whether on the roster as a former active member, or not, we would be glad for the support, and the chance to offer our tribute. The normal listing of our departed, in the rosters, will continue, but for those that wish to express a deeper feeling within the text of the AD-LIB, we make ourselves available.

**Burlingame Remembers**

A little piece of journalism, that I've had pinned on my bulletin board since our last reunion, has been constantly haunting me. It's something that was done by Bill Burlingame immediately after the Colorado Springs, Colorado "BASH," and was printed by his American Legion Post #144's paper. Its basic message (get involved and attend) isn't the

haunting part. What gives me the "willies" is to try and follow that "82 Reunion" with an "84 Reunion" that surpasses all previous. With Bill's article as a "club over our heads," we (the Dayton Committee and myself) will really have to "keep from backfiring and leaking oil." Bill, bear with us, we're a'flapping for all we're worth!

Meanwhile we'll let the rest enjoy that past memory:

**REUNIONS**

For those of us who regularly check the reunion columns in the Legion magazine BUT do nothing about trying to contact our old comrades, I urge you to DO IT the next time you see your old outfit listed.

I did it two years ago and am now enrolled in The Former Members of the 451st Bombardment Group (H), WW II. My wife and I have just returned from attending the 2nd National Reunion of this group at Colorado Springs, Colorado.

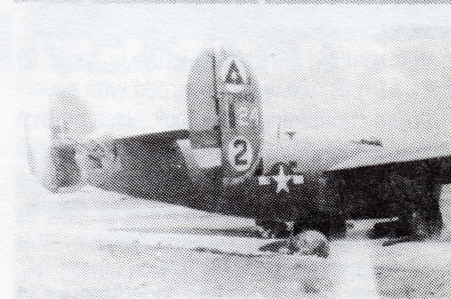
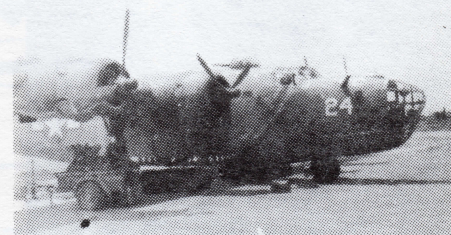
What a great three days we had recognizing comrades from thirty-seven years ago, looking at pictures of THEN and at us NOW, and meeting new friends from other squadrons. Our wives enjoyed themselves just listening to us reminiscing about the "good times" we had in Italy.

Our schedule for the three days was a full one. Friday consisted of: registration, social hour (debriefing), a formal flag presentation and patriotic music program conducted and presented by the 4th Infantry (M) Band, Fort Carson, Colorado, exciting audiovisual display of WW II photos and movies of the 451st Bomb Group. Saturday consisted of: a seven hour tour of the Air Force Academy, which included a showing of the film "Commitment to Excellence" followed by a question and answer period with Academy Superintendent, Major General Robert E. Kelley at Arnold Hall, a Memorial Service at the Cade Chapel, and luncheon at the Officers' Open Mess. The tour continued with stops at the Cadet Field House, which contains an INDOOR football field, 1/6 mile track, basketball court and hockey rink, then on to a panorama overlook of the Cadet Area and a short stop at Falcon Stadium, home of the Air Force Academy Football Team. (BEAT NAVY!!!!) What an impressive installation this Academy is.

Saturday evening we attended a Cocktail Reception followed by a "Gala" Banquet and address by General James V. Hartinger, Commander in Chief NORAD. The United States Air Force Academy Band presented a musical review "Moods in Blue" (this would be a hit on Broadway) followed by dance music until 2 a.m.

Sunday consisted of: an Interdenominational Worship Service conducted by two members of our Bomb Group who are now Reverends, and then it was farewell and good-bye time until 1984 when we will have the 3rd Reunion of the 451st Bomb Group (H) WW II.

**"STRAWBERRY BITCH"  
HOLDS 451st AFFILIATION**



When we visit the United States Air Force Museum, 11 August, it will be especially meaningful to take particular notice of their only B-24. Many of us will be unaware that the STRAWBERRY BITCH once shared a revetment with aircraft of the 451st, while stationed at San Pancrazio. And of course the 451st, on that occasion, shared that same field with the 376th Bomb Group (participants of the famous August 1st LOW LEVEL PLOESTI MISSION).

Jim Drumm phrased his thoughts perfectly, in his recent letter to this office.

*" . . . . . I guess the main thing that keeps drawing me back (to the USAF Museum) is the old desert rat "Strawberry Bitch" a B-24D. If you remember that old kite used to set about three or four revetments up from the open field we used to park in, when we shared the base with the 376th Bomb Group in San Pancrazio. It would be a good idea to bring this out in the next newsletter, since many wouldn't know that it was based with us." THANKS, JIM*

It should be noted, for those that joined the Group while it was stationed at Castelluccia di Sauri, the 451st was split after Gioia del Colle became inoperative, and the 724th and 726th went to San Pancrazio, while the 725th and 727th operated out of Manduria.

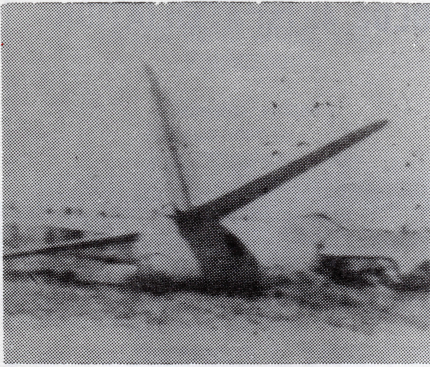
So bring along your camera (and FLASH) and have your picture taken with something that is still relevant to our past.

**JEST A RUMOR**

The 451st selected all ball gunners in a very unique method. If they didn't know that they were "short-sheeted" they were accepted.



## B-26 CRASH LANDING CLARIFIED



After running the above picture in Issue 10 of the AD-LIB, we were rewarded with several replies concerning what took place on that particular day. Most all letters seemed to tell the same story, but the one that came nearest to giving us some of the finer details, came from James R. Martin (727th).

His recounting is as follows:

"If my memory hasn't faded too far in the last 40 years, I recall the following, subject to some errors.

I was then S/Sgt, on duty in the control tower (Hiccup Tower). We had just been advised of the possibility of captured American planes, being flown by Germans, taking pictures through open bomb bay doors. If a plane comes over with open doors and without identification, the ACK-ACK crew was to fire a warning shot at them.

Shortly thereafter, this B-26 made a low pass, gear and flaps up and bomb bay doors open. I tried numerous times to contact him by radio, but failed. On the second pass, I thought he was going to land with the gear up so I gave him a red light with a biscuit gun to get his attention, in case he had forgot to lower the gear.

On the third time around, I contacted the English gun crew, at the base of the tower, to fire a warning shot as he was to the right of the runway (opposite the tower) and approaching the parked B-24s.

However, this shot was not necessary as it became obvious he was making an emergency landing. He landed on the right hand side, which was soft but rough. The emergency strip was on the tower side.

The landing was perfect except for the soft dirt which completely filled the tail section.

As I recall, it was a five man crew from a British Unit from South Africa. I do not recall any injured. His radio was shot out along with the hydraulic system. He couldn't lower the flaps and gear, or get the doors shut. We guarded the wreck for a couple days and then the plane was stripped of equipment. The crew returned in a few days and was very unhappy to find only the air frame."

## PAN-AROMA OF ITALY

*If I were an artist with nothing to do,  
I'd paint a picture, a composite view.  
Of historic Italy, in which I'd show,  
Visions of contrast, the high and the low.*

*There'd be towering mountains, a deep blue sea,  
Filthy brats yelling "caramel" at me.  
High plumed horses and colorful carts,  
Two-toned tresses on hustling tarts.*

*I'd show Napoleonic cops, the Carabinieri,  
Dejected old women with too much to carry.  
A dignified gent with a Balbo beard,  
Bare-bottomed bambinos, both ends smeared.*

*Castles and palaces, opera house, too;  
Hotel on mountain, marvelous view.  
Homes made of weed, bricks and mud,  
People covered with scabs, scurry and crud.*

*Chapels and churches great to behold,  
Each a king's ransom in glittering gold.  
Poverty and want, men craving for food,  
Picking through garbage, practically nude.*

*Stately cathedrals with high-toned bells,  
"Ricovere" shelters with horrible smells.  
Moulding catacombs, a place for the dead,  
Noisy civilians clamoring for bread.*

*Palatial villas with palm trees tall,  
Stinking hovel, mere hole in the wall.  
Tree fringed lawns, swept by the breeze,  
Goats wading in filth up to their knees.*

*Revealing statues, all details complete,  
A sensual lass with sores on her feet.  
Big-breasted damsels, but never a bra.  
Bumping against you — there should be a law.*

*Creeping boulevards, a spangled team,  
Alleys that wind like a dope-fiends dream.  
Flowers blooming on the side of a hill,  
A sidewalk latrine with privacy nil.*

*Two-by-four shops with shelving all bare,  
Gesturing merchants, arms flailing the air.  
Narrow gauge sidewalk, more like a shelf,  
Butt-puffing youngster, scratching himself.*

*Lumbering carts, hogging the road,  
Non-descript trucks, frequently towed.  
Diminutive donkeys, loaded for bear,  
Horse-drawn taxis, seeking a fare.*

*Elegant caskets carved out by hand,  
Odorous factories where leather is tanned.  
A shoemaker's shop, a black market store,  
Crawling with vermin, no screen on the door.*

*Determined pedestrians, courting disaster,  
Walking in gutters where movement is faster.  
Italian drivers, all accident bound,  
Weaving and twisting to cover the ground.*

*Barbers galore with manners quite mild,  
Prolific women, all heavy with child.  
Il Duce's secret weapon, kids by the score,  
Caused by his bonus, which is no more.*

*Arrogant wretches picking up snipes,  
Miniature Fiats, various types.  
Young street singers, hand organ tune,  
Shoe-shining boys, a sidewalk saloon.*

*A beautiful maiden, a smile on her face,  
With a breath of garlic, fouling the place.  
Listless housewife, no shoes on her feet,  
Washing and cooking right out in the street.*

*The family wash of tattle-tale gray,  
Hung from a balcony, blocking the way.  
Native coffee, God! What a mixture,  
Tiled bathrooms with one extra fixture.*

*Families dining from one common bowl,  
Next to a fish store, a horrible hole.  
Italian zoot-suiters, flashily dressed,  
Bare-footed beggars, looking depressed.*

*Mud-smeared children clustering about,  
Filling their jugs from a community spout.  
A dutiful mother with a look of despair,  
Picking lice from her small daughter's hair.*

*Capable craftsmen skilled in their art,  
Decrepid old shacks, falling apart.  
Intricate needle work out on display,  
Surrounded by filth, rot and decay.*

*I've tried to describe the things that I've seen,  
Pan-Aroma of Italy, the brown and the green.  
I've neglected the war scars, visible yet,  
But these are the things we want to forget.*

(author unknown) Submitted by Garland Jarvis, 724th

