

451st Bomb Group Newsletter No. 11 December 2017



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451st Bomb Group
c/o Susan Tudor Prince
14 Reservation Road
Andover, MA 01810

Cell: 978.866.0024 Email: kittyflea@hotmail.com

A MESSAGE FROM SUSAN:

Hello 451st & 455th Members, family and friends.

The last newsletter in May had the details for our joint Bomb Group reunion which was held in Sept, in New Orleans.

It was a terrific reunion organized by Dave Blake of the 461st BG.

We got to spend two days at the National WWII museum- a real must see. Saturday afternoon included the individual speakers program. Sunday had two memorial services, and a bus tour of the city of New Orleans.

See former 451st BG manager Win "Big" Jones take on the reunion on page 4.

Plans are being made for the 2018 joint Bomb Group reunion being held in Dayton, Ohio September 13th-16th, 2018. The spring 2018 newsletter will have complete details but hotel information is available on page 6 – please reserve early.

Thank you all for your continued support and most generous contributions.

Susan

NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE

Jonathan Tudor has posted an archive of prior newsletters. They can be found at <http://451st.org/Newsletters/newsletter.html>

451st Bomb Group Survivor Picture – New Orleans Reunion 2017



L to R: 1. Willard Gill (Ball Turret Gunner), 2. Nathan McKinney (Line Chief), 3. Wayne Vorpahl (Radio Operator-Gunner), 4. Ed Longenecker (Radio Operator-Gunner), 5. Achi Kozakis (Nose Turret Gunner), 6. Milo Sanchez (Tail Gunner), 7. Winson "Big" Jones (Top Turret Gunner) & 8. Earl VanBenschoten (Waist Gunner)

REUNION SPEAKERS

The speaker program is always a highlight of the reunion!

There were speakers from 4 different Bomb Groups. If you have access to a computer, you can watch the recordings of the speakers on YouTube.

Speakers presentations with YouTube links for the Newsletter:



Markersdorf Airdrome Mission: Win Jones, 451st Bomb Group

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cj3ougnPUCU>

Experiences in the War: Orren Lee, 465th Bomb Group

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51pXcBaMeul>

Anzio Beachhead: Byfield Gordon, 376th Bomb Group

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdoQEbScPxA>

Mission to Vienna, February 1945: Achi Kozakis, 451st Bomb Group

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xYTqgoOQdw>

Experiences in Pantenella: Carl Will, 464th Bomb Group

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qgSNKemri4A&t=108s>

WWII + Internet = Remarkable Connections: Scott Douglas

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zj0SvIHMOhM>

David Webster describes his collection of B-24 equipment:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h9XNmHFKDTY>

LOOKING FOR FAMILIAR FACES AT THE NEW ORLEANS REUNION – WIN JONES

When my daughter, Marsha, son, Mike and I arrived at the Reunion Hotel, we were anxious to find other 451st in attendance. Our faces brightened as we soon made contact with the following WWII survivors from our Bomb Group:

Nathan McKinney and his son Mike. Nathan looks great for his age—just short of his 99th birthday. His wartime job of serving as the “Line Chief” for our 727th Squadron no doubt contributed importantly to our missions and to crew survival.

Milo Sanchez was surrounded by six other most attractive members of his family.

Earl VanBenschoten was joined by his son, Craig, and his daughter in-law, Donna.

Achilles Kozakis was accompanied by two pretty daughters, Anna Carlson and Paula Hughes.

Edward Longenecker was a loving companion for his daughter, Lori Johanson.

Willard Gill was accompanied by a friend, Joseph Ryan.

Wayne Vorpahl was joined by his wife, Sue, and his daughter Jodi Semandel.

We were hoping to find Bobbi Kelly and her daughter Karen, in attendance. Their arrival was delayed 24 hours until Friday afternoon due to a flight cancellation. In addition to attending all of 451st reunions except one, Bobbi and her family members played major roles in the formation of our Alumni Group.

It was also a special pleasure to see Joan Mason and her daughter Susan Schroder at New Orleans. Joan and her “late” husband, Verne, were very helpful incident to our 2008 and 2010 Reunions at Deerfield Illinois.

Gail Polino and Michael Polino also made it to New Orleans. As relatives of the “late” Martin Aschenbrenner, they have been very supportive of our 451st organization.

My nephew Jerry Rubush and his wife Jamie were also able to join us.

Finally, but not last, our 451st B.G. managers, Susan Tudor Prince and her brother Jonathan Tudor were performing their usual top-flight job of greeting all involved along with coordinating activities. They were joined by Chris Prince, John & Sandy Tudor and Alison Morrell.

A few recent reunion attendees could not make it to New Orleans because of health factors. Sedge Hill, Randy Jones and Andrew Pendleton send their best wishes.

DONATIONS


We truly appreciate your generosity and support – without it, we would not be able to provide this newsletter.

Should you desire to honor a crew mate or family member, just make a memorial donation of \$50 or more. Please send this along with the full name and duty position of the person being honored.

Please send all donations to:

451st B.G.
c/o Susan Tudor Prince
14 Reservation Rd,
Andover, MA 01810

Tribute contributions recently received:

Donor	In Tribute To
Andrew, Philip L. (son in-law) Andrew, Tracy L. (daughter)	In memory of Terrell G. Prewitt, Pilot & John Haldare, Bombardier.
Aschenbrenner, Dean (son)	Martin A. Aschenbrenner, Top Turret Gunner on Cannon Fodder, 726 th Squadron
Buening, Ruth	In memory of John Rutledge, Navigator 727 th Sq.
Burlingame, William	In memory of Paul Brumbach Refueler/Crew Chief 724 th Sq.
Chalfen, Marc (son) Chalfen Nancy (daughter)	In memory of Melvin Chalfen, Co-Pilot, 727 th Squadron
Ciecelius, Kathy (daughter) Ciecelius, Tom (son-in-law)	In memory of John Rutledge, Navigator 727 th Sq.
Defino, Anthony (451 st B.G.)	451 st Bomb Group
Elliot, Sally (Eaton) (daughter)	Maj Gen. Robert E. L. Eaton, 1 st Commander of 451 st B.G. 
Gill, Willard (451 st B.G.)	451 st Bomb Group members
Jones, Winson (451 st B.G.)	Verne Mason, Nose Turret Gunner

Donor	In Tribute To
Kozakis, Achilles (451 st B.G)	1 st Lt. Harold S. Patterson's Lead Crew, Flight "B" 726 th Squadron
Levangie, Janet Locke (daughter) Locke, Paula (daughter) Locke, Thomas (son)	James P. Locke, Tail Gunner 725 th Squadron 8 th Air Force 493 rd B.G. May – Sept 1944 10 missions 15 th Air Force 451 st B.G. Oct 1944 – May 1945 25 missions
Milner, Joseph (451 st B.G.)	451 st Bomb Group
Mucak, Peggy (daughter)	Martin A. Aschenbrenner, Top Turret Gunner on Cannon Fodder, 726 th Squadron
Newman, Linn W. (451 st B.G.)	451 st Bomb Group
Pendleton, Andrew (451 st B.G.)	451 st Bomb Group
Polino, Gail (daughter) Polino, Michael (grandson)	Martin A. Aschenbrenner, Top Turret Gunner on Cannon Fodder, 726 th Squadron
Prince, Susan Tudor	451 st Bomb Group
Savage III, H. Elliott Savage III, Shelly	In memory of John Rutledge, Navigator 727 th Sq.
Schaffner, Donald (451 st B.G.)	Bob Mitchell who was shot down on his 1 st mission and walked out. He then flew 32 missions.
Stiffan, Lea (daughter)	Martin A. Aschenbrenner, Top Turret Gunner on Cannon Fodder, 726 th Squadron
Yates, Jane (wife)	In memory of Lt. Robert M. Finehout

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

If you have a write-up of your war time experience, song, poem, letter or diary entry that you or a family member is willing to share for possible inclusion in a future newsletter, we encourage you to email (kittyflea@hotmail.com) or send a copy to Susan Tudor Prince, 14 Reservation Road, Andover, MA 01810.

2018 REUNION HOTEL INFORMATION – Sept 13th – 16th Dayton Ohio

- Hotel is the Crown Plaza located at: 33 E 5th St, Dayton, OH 45402 | Phone: 937-224-0800
- Single, Double or Handicap Accessible rooms are all \$114 per night (plus taxes) which includes hot breakfast buffet.
- TO RESERVE CALL 1-800-689-5586 AND MENTION THE BOMB GROUPS REUNION.
- All walks in this hotel are short but if you have mobility issues, be sure and ask them to house you close to the elevators. Handicap accessible rooms are available. Please ask if you need these accommodations.
- Complimentary airport shuttle is available but you'll need to call the hotel in advance with your flight information to reserve a ride to the hotel.
- Group rates are good from 9/8—9/20, 2018
- There are no overflow hotel options available in downtown Dayton so make sure to get your room reserved.
- Cancellations may be made without penalty prior to 24 hours of check-in day.

LAST FLYBY

Here are the death notifications received since our May 2017 Newsletter:

451st Member	Squadron	Duty Position	DOD
Blank, Harry A.	727 th	Pilot	07.__.2016
Brumbach, Paul	724 th	Refueler/Crew Chief	04.04.2017
Chalfen, Melvin B.	727 th	Co-Pilot	2014
Jackson, David H.	727 th	Belly Gunner	10.24.2016
Ladoue, Joseph F.		Tail Gunner	2017
Locke, James P.	725 th	Tail Gunner	2012
Malkin, Morton M.	726 th	Flight Engineer/Gunner	09.30.2017
Mason, Verne H.		Nose Turret Gunner	05.06.2017
Rutledge, John	727 th	Navigator	09.__.2017
Stricker Jr., George R.	725 th	Pilot	11.__.2016
Webb, William C.			01.30.2017
Weinberg, Stanford G.		Ordinance	01.26.2015

MARKERSDORF AIRDROME MISSION & EXTRA JOKER - Introduction by Jonathan Tudor

The following series of articles are courtesy of Mr. Kurt Rieder, a WWII historian in Austria. As Win Jones described in his speech at the recent joint bomb group reunion in New Orleans, the Markersdorf Airdrome Mission resulted in the loss of many allied bombers. The first story is an eyewitness account of that day. The second article is from the German newspaper Schwarzataler Bezirksbote of June 15, 1951 and translated below. And lastly, information about the crew who flew in the Extra Joker that day*.

* The Extra Joker was piloted by Captain George Tudor (father of Susan Tudor Prince & Jonathan Tudor) on all his missions except this one. Since he was flying lead for the squadron that day and fragmentation bombs were being used, he swapped planes with Lt. Kenneth Whiting, whose plane had a Norden bomb site, vs. the Sperry in the Extra Joker.

Article 1 Aircraft Losses during WWII – Austrian Territory by Kurt Rieder September 27, 2017

“The following is reported by Mr. Hans Etschmayr of St. Gallen, Switzerland in 2004. Mr. Etschmayr at this time was an interested boy at the age of fourteen. Keep this in mind while reading the following account. It was also published in the magazine “Zwischen Rax und Schneealm” in October 2004.

The twenty-third of August of the year 1944, is a nice warm summer day. It is the day on which God himself has his protecting hand over the mountain pasture of Ameisbuehel.

At approximately 10 a.m. the first American bomber squadrons are flying over the Schneealm. They are coming off direction Neuberg and are heading towards Vienna. On advice of Mr. Hans, the alpine dairyman of the Lurgbauerhuetten, for safety reasons it is decided to bring the cattle into the barn.

At this time, Mary – the alpine dairymaid of Kernbauer is already retired into her bedchamber and waiting with the blanket all over her head upon the ending of the overflights. After finishing their work, also the keeper boys, Hans and Gustl are going to see the spectacle passing over their heads. In the meanwhile up there the situation has changed completely due to the interference of German fighter machines.

On this day the Americans deploy their new bomber type B-24. This aircraft is significantly larger than the B-17. Four B-17, are taking each B-24 in their middle, presumably to protect it. It's happening in this way that in each case one B-17 is flying in front of, behind and each one right and left of the B-24. And exactly one of such escorted B-24 is shot out of formation due to a German Fw 190. Hans spots one of these machines, with running engine and apparently full intact, pitching towards ground. It smashed into a scree somewhat behind the Heualm towards the Nass. He has not mentally processed the seen yet, as Juli, the alpine dairymaid of Eselbergerbauer, is excitedly passing around the lodge's corner pointing at a crashing bomber. Upon Hans' response the stricken bomber is already lost behind the Ameiskogel. Like the German fighter, he had also looked for a place to crash where he cannot harm anything.

A modicum of minutes later there is again excitement. One American, later proved as the sole survivor of the bomber crew, is floating from the sky. All are hoping that he is also dropping towards the valley. But this favor is not done to the residents of the alpine pasture. A field near the Kuehwand the chute is collapsing. A French man of Kernhof who is interned to help at the alpine pasture, is leaving to pick up the American. Soon we can see him walking towards the lodges again, holding the parachute under his arm and beside him the more than one head taller American.

It turned out that he had survived the loss of his ship without major injuries, disregarding a light facial burn. A Viennese holiday guest who is able to communicate in English asks him about their targets they had attacked today. "The suburbs of Vienna", is his response willingly. Upon hearing this statement all Viennese holiday guests are preparing to return to Vienna.

Hans and Gustl heading towards the trail down to the so called "Boedele" where they assumed the downed bomber. From there the path leads further downwards to Karlalm and later outwards to Nasswald. They are hoping to oversee the bomber's crash place from there. Immediately at the turnoff to Nasswald the tail of the bomber rests. A twin canon first attracts the boys attention to it. The boys like to fire a little bit around, but they are unable to find the trigger.



empennage of B-24H-30-FO "EXTRA JOKER" at Karlboden, the so called „Boedele“ south of Karlalm on Schnealpe - note the serial number: 295379 - photo: collection Herbert SIMONICS, origin unknown

The bomber itself rests at a nearly inaccessible, steeply sloping, shady hillside, covered with knee pines. From their position they can only spot a few parts. Already in the mood for returning to the alpine pasture they notice light smoke rising off a small hill somewhat above the empennage. They look after it and first time in their life they stand right in front of a dead man. The dead is laying on the side like for a little nap, facing away from them and his cloth is still smoking. His hair is almost completely burned, nevertheless it is possible to see that he was fair. On their way back a Fieseler Storch overflies the crash place. They can see the pilot sitting in the pulpit, wave towards him and set off upwards to the lodges. Up at the mountain pasture their animals make sure that daily routines come into one's own.

Next day Hans bring his sheep in the Baumtalgraben. There he finds a device with on both ends a heart-shape-like closing plate. These plates are connected via a massive tube. A second tube is constructed in a way to be able to get hooked in into the upper tube on one side. On the other side is a hinge. Is this hanging system set loose the lower tube is dropped by 30°.

Later he learned that this device was for series launch of relatively small bombs. He also finds a cone hit by one of these bombs into the hard ground of the alpine pasture. It's not deeper than 10 centimeters and not more than 100 meters off the lodges.

Thinking about the Americans dropping their empty machine gun shells, which are often sticking 2 centimeters deep inside the hard ground of the alpine pasture, it is a wonder, that nobody was harmed. The order of Mr. Hans to bring the cattle into the barn certainly contributed to this happy outcome. Keeping in mind the bomber just crashed hardly 150 meter behind the lodges, the Fw 190 approximately in the same distance in front of – additionally the bomb and the empty shells. This day could have come to a totally different end for the lodges at the alpine pasture of Ameisbuehel. The only beautiful thing are the tinfoil, dropped by the Americans to interfere with the German's radio control system. Some knee pines look like being prepared for Christmas.

For Hans and Gustl this year is the last one at the alpine pasture of Ameisbuehel. The war is ending and the pasture of Ameisbuehel lies exactly at the border between the British and the Soviet occupation zone. Prime in the year 1946 the situation becomes quiet down that it was possible to bring again cattle on the alpine pasture.

One thing more is to be said respective the downed American bomber. He rests entirely on the territory of Lower Austria, the former Niederdonau. Several parts, e. g. the empennage rests only a few meters off the border to Styria.

The morning of the following day when the American is doing his morning toilet behind the Lurgbauernhuette, on behalf of alpine dairymaid Marie, Hans is bringing him a piece of cake. Likely this gesture helped him in his uncomfortable situation.

In the course of forenoon he is picked up by the huntsman Schruf and is brought to Altenberg. His parachute was replaced by a second one damaged by fire. This was done by Hans who found the burned chute at Zermer. Late evening that day all three alpine dairymaids met in the lodge of Juli to share the silk of the parachute. Silk was extremely rare and Hans had the task of arbitrator. This was the first time in his life when the alpine dairymaids listened to him.

Postscriptum:

The occurrences of this implied twenty-third of august happened for me as reported. By reason of the article in the magazine "Zwischen Rax und Schneealm" of October 2004 and for better understanding the reporter wants to add the following to the previous report.

The two named keeper boys Hans and Gustl are Gustav Ambacher of Suedtyrol and the reporting Hans Etschmayer, at this time 15 and 14 years old. The mentioned Mr. Hans is Johann Baier, vulgo Lurgbauer. Juli, Steffi and Marie were the alpine dairymaids of the alpine pasture of Ameisbuehel. Steffi's supporting maid listened to the name of Trude Schauer.

It is unlikely that further crewmembers of the downed B-24 did survive the crash. I also want to mention Mr. Xaver Paier, an uncle of Eselbergerbauer, who lives in Neuberg. According my memory Mr. Paier was an official. Every year he has been a couple of time at the alpine pasture.

During one of his visits he brought an iron cross with him. Under his instruction I had to brick this cross into the rock pictured in the chronicles of Altenberg. The shown cross on the picture is possibly that one I bricked in during the year forty-four”.

Article 2 Skeletons of three missing aviators found in region of Rax

“ A couple of days ago an eerie discovery has been made by a huntsman on Schneealpe. On recently by snow melting cleared pebble stones he noticed the already skeletonized corpse of a missing American military aviator who has been killed by a crash of a superfortress six years ago.

The hunter notified the police office at Schwarzau. On June, 11th Rayoninspector Eichberger and Patrol Leader Wurm climbed up to recover the skeleton. They found it at the place where the hunter told them and when they looked closer at the surrounding they also found another two corpses – finally also remains of fabric and shoes, one American aviator badge, one lieutenant bar and one identification tag.

So for both policemen any doubts vanished that they had found here, in the border region of Lower Austria and Styria, all three lost casualties of the airplane crash of the year 1945. They left the skeletons in place to wait on instructions from Vienna. Only the identification tag: Kenneth A. Whiting O/809071-T/42/44 they took with them towards the valley.

During one of the last bomb raids in April 1945, one of those American superfortresses, flying over Lower Austria, has been hit by a flak shell which made it uncontrollable. Only a bit it continued airborne, then it sagged towards the ground. A small part of the 15-heading crew bailed out by chute. Most of those aviator soldiers went down with the ship and crashed with smashed bones on rocky ground near Schwarzau im Gebirge. Next to the debris 9 dead bodies has been found.

On the way back the policemen unexpected also discovered the dead body of the missing Viennese merchant Wilhelm Kraemer of Zieglergasse, who has been missing since May 13th . He had been committed suicide due to homely quarrels.

CREW on board the B-24H-30-FO 42-95379 "EXTRA JOKER", August 23rd, 1944:

1Lt. Alvin W. MOORE Copilot

2Lt. Francis BEDNAREK Navigator

2Lt. Edward Steven WANESKI Bombardier

1Lt. Kenneth A. WHITING Pilot

Sgt. Elmer J. ANDERSON Nose Turret Gunner

Sgt. Peter BREDA Engineer / Top Turret Gunner

SSgt. Milton R. NITCH Radio Operator / Waist Gunner

Sgt. Joseph GARBACZ Waist Gunner

Sgt. Harry BATES Ball Turret Gunner

Sgt. Oscar W. BATEMAN Tail Turret Gunner

"SEMPER LIBERATUS", patch of the 725th Bomb Squadron

sideview shows B-24H-30-FO 42-95379 "Extra Joker", while topview shows a B-24J Series (not to scale);

FORMER POW 'WOULDN'T TRADE' WWII EXPERIENCE – BLAINE A. BRIGGS, NAVIGATOR

(Note - The following is an excerpt of an article written by Pam Kragen that appeared in The San Diego Union-Tribune on January 24th, 2017. The [full article](http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/communities/north-county/sd-no-pow-20170118-story.html) is available online and includes video: <http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/communities/north-county/sd-no-pow-20170118-story.html>)

“Seventy-three years ago, Blaine Briggs parachuted from a burning B-24 bomber, broke his shoulder in a hard landing in the Italian Alps, was nearly shot to death by his German captor and then spent more than six months starving half to death in a prison camp.

Yet for all the hardship he endured and the millions of lives lost during the years-long conflict, the 92-year-old Briggs said he believes the war experience shaped him into the man he became. His time in the military and the camaraderie of the prisoners in the camp taught him lessons in courage, self-reliance, teamwork and trust. In short, he calls it the greatest educational experience of his life.

... Briggs and his B-24 crew shipped out on June, 3, 1944, to join the 451st Bombardment Group in Europe. Together, they flew 26 successful bombing missions over Germany, but their 27th mission was star-crossed from the start.

On Oct. 16, 1944, their plane was assigned to lead the 15th Air Force on a bombing raid but their plane wasn't cooperating. After they took off, the plane's nose wheel wouldn't retract and the bomb bay doors didn't open properly.

German ground guns shot out one engine, but they were able to manually open the bomb doors and drop their payload before a second barrage of gunfire took out their second engine and set the plane on fire in the foothills of the Italian Alps.

“When the captain gave the order to abandon the plane, we were happy to do it,” he said. “My main thoughts at the moment was to get the hell out of that plane.”

The navigator's seat was at the front of the plane below the cockpit, just a few feet from where the broken nose wheel's bay was wide open, so Briggs dropped through the hole at an altitude of 11,000 feet and fell like a stone with the orders to open his chute as close to the ground as possible to avoid

detection by German search crews. He pulled the cord at 2,000 feet and broke his shoulder when he hit the ground.

Over the next two days, he made his way alone down the mountain in the hopes of escaping into Italy. He came upon a German village where two homes had Christian crèches in their front yard.

As a minister's son, he considered asking the families for sanctuary but worried that the villagers would pay too steep a price from their government for showing mercy, so he moved on.

Eventually he was caught by a German officer and private on foot patrol. The private put a gun to Briggs' forehead and prepared to shoot, but the officer stopped him. During two interrogations by Gestapo officers, Briggs learned that 10 of his fellow B-24 crew members survived. The flight engineer, whose hands became frozen while trying to save the plane, is believed to have died in the crash.



Des Kriegsgefangenen	Name: B R I G G S		Staatsangehörigkeit: USA.	
	Vorname: Blaine A.		Dienstgrad: 1. Lt.	
	Geburtstag und -ort: 14.8.24 Chicago		Truppenteil: USAAF. Komp. ufw.:	
	Religion: Prot.		Zivilberuf: Student Berufs-Gr.:	
	Vorname des Vaters:		Matrikel Nr. (Stammrolle des Heimatstaates): 0- 713 106	
	Familiennamen der Mutter:		Gefangennahme (Ort und Datum): 16.10.44 Ostmark bezw. 17.10.44	
			Ob gesund, krank, verwundet eingeliefert:	
	Lichtbild		Nähere Personalbeschreibung	
			Größe	Haarfarbe
			1.83	braun
		Besondere Kennzeichen:		
		Name und Anschrift der zu benachrichtigenden Person in der Heimat des Kriegsgefangenen		
		Rev. W.M. Briggs 1070, 37 th Street Des Moines /Iowa		
		1058 B.A. BRIGGS Wenden!		

Photo of a German document obtained by Blaine Briggs that details his capture as a POW during World War II. (Eduardo Contreras / San Diego Union-Tribune)

The men were taken to Germany's Stalag 3 prison camp just four months after an infamous mass escape of more than 50 British POWs that was later chronicled in the book "The Great Escape."

Most of those escapees were shot dead, but Briggs said he and the American officers he was imprisoned with were treated well. In fact, at a reunion some 20 years after the war, the prisoners invited their German guard to join them because they thought he treated them fairly.

By November it was obvious Germany was losing the war. The Russians were closing in from the east, so the prisoners were marched 100 miles to another camp near Munich.

Food was so scarce, the prisoners survived on bread made with sawdust and watery stew with little meat. Briggs dropped 40 pounds before the camp was liberated by U.S. troops in May 1945. He and a buddy walked to an abandoned Germany air base and stole a Jeep that they drove to Frankfurt and caught a transport plane to Paris on the very day the city's electricity was restored.

"That was the night the lights came back on in Paris," Briggs said. "I've never kissed so many girls in one night in my life."

Briggs returned to the U.S. on a freight ship that dropped its gangplank on June 3, 1945, exactly one year to the day since he left for Europe..."

451st B.G EXPERIENCES OF JAMES P. LOCKE, TAIL GUNNER

(Note – James P. Locke flew 25 missions with the 451st B.G after he had flown 10 missions with the 8th Air Force.)

The following is mission diary for James P. Locke with the 451st as detailed in his own words.

"Nov 12, 1944 – Gunnery practice mission. Air to Ground on Taranto Gulf. Flying Time 4 hours.

Nov 18, 1944 – Target was Villafranco Devalois airdrome. Flying time 6 ½ hours

Dec 16, 1944 – Target was Brux Czechoslovakia oil plants. However after a bomb run over it we didn't bomb due to overcast. So, we bombed Pilsen Skoda Works in Czechoslovakia. Flying time 8 ½ hours. My 12th mission. (Note Pilsen Skoda Works was a munition manufacturing plant)



Top row, left to right: Broadwater, Hanley, McHale, Amos, Ogata, Miskoff
 Front row: Nall, Sims, Eskew, Tabor
 Flight crew, 726th Squadron, 451st bomb group

Dec 17, 1944 – Target was a Blechhammer Germany oil works. We were attacked by 50 ME-109's over the target. Lost quite a few planes to fighters. Flying Time 8 hours.

Dec 19, 1944 – Target was Blechhammer Germany. Aborted due to pilot's loss of oxygen while one hour from target. No credit for mission. Flying Time 7 hours.

Dec 20, 1944 – Target was Brux Germany. Due to lack of gas we bombed Linz Czechoslovakia instead. Flying time 8 hours. My 14th mission.

Dec 25, 1944 – Target was Wels, Austria marshalling yards. Flying Time 7 ½ hours.

Dec 26, 1944 – Target was Oswiecim Poland oil refinery. We were shot down by flak (German guns) at Gyor Hungary. I landed by parachute at a place called Magyharse, 2 miles south of Lake Balaton at 1:45 p.m. Flying time 6 ½ hours. My 16th mission.

Feb 19, 1945 – Target was Vienna, Austria marshalling yards. Aborted due to engine trouble. Flying Time 5 hours.

Feb 22, 1945 – Target was marshaling yards near Regensburg, Germany. However due to weather conditions we hit a marshalling yard in North Italy south of Munich. Flying time was 8 hours. 17th Mission.

Feb 23, 1945 – Target was Amstetten, marshalling yards south east of Linz, Austria. Flying time 7 ½ hours.

Mar 1, 1945 – Target was Absordorf Austria, 20 miles west of Vienna, Austria, oil works. Our numbers 2 & 3 engines hit by flak and we lost so much gas we had to land at Zara, Yugoslavia an emergency air field. The plane burned as we stopped rolling. Flying time 6 hours

Mar 9, 1945 – Target was Graz, Austria. The bomber group behind us was attacked by enemy fighters near Fiume Italy. Flying time 6 ½ hours (20th mission)

Mar 13, 1945 – Target was Regensburg, Austria. Flying time 8 hours

Mar 15, 1945 – Target was Klagenfurt Austria. Flying time 6 hours

Mar 21, 1945 – Target was Bruch, Austria. Flying time 7 ½ hours

Mar 22, 1945 – Target was Vienna, Austria. Flying time 7 ½ hours

Mar 23, 1945 – Target was Vienna, Austria. Flying time 8 hours 2

Mar 31, 1945 – Target was Linz, Austria. Flying time 7 ½ hours

Apr 2, 1945 – Target was Saint Polten, Austria marshalling yards near Vienna. Flying time 7 ½ hours.

Apr 5, 1945 – Target was Brescia, North Italy marshalling yards. Flying time 5 ½ hours.

Apr 8, 1945 – Target was Gorizia Italy. Enemy jet seen near Udine Italy also a FW 190 German fighter, didn't attack us. Flying time 7 hours. 30th mission

Apr 9, 1945 – Target was Bologna, North Italy, troop concentrations in support of allied offensive. Flying time 5 ½ hours

Apr 10, 1945 – Target was Bologna, North Italy, troop concentrations in support of allied offensive

Apr 11, 1945 – Target was Bologna, North Italy marshalling yards. Flying time 5 ½ hours

Apr 15, 1945 – Target was road junction near Bologna, North Italy. Flying time 6 hours

Apr 16, 1945 – Target was troop concentrations near Bologna, North Italy. Went over target but didn't drop bombs. No credit for mission. Flying time 5 ½ hours

Apr 17, 1945 – Target was Bologna, North Italy, troop and gun concentrations. Flying time 6 hours. Whee! 35th combat mission finished tour

Total combat hours 250 hours

I left Naples, Italy May 12th, 1945 on a Navy troop ship for the good old U.S.A. arrived in New York harbor May 20th, 1945.

Discharged from Air Force May 25th, 1945 at Fort Devens, Mass."

THE LEGION d'HONNEUR FOR US VETERANS – INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED BY JONATHAN TUDOR

Dear Veterans,

This is a follow-up to the January 2017 Newsletter to provide more detailed instructions on eligibility and procedure for applying for the France Legion of d'Honneur. Surviving veterans who flew missions to France are eligible to be considered for the Legion d'Honneur.



If interested, please see the steps below. Note that this medal is not awarded posthumously. I think it is worth mentioning that the 451st BG earned three Presidential Unit Citations, on July 12, 1944, September 3, 1944, and October 2, 1944.

1. Review the missions to France flown by the 451st to determine if any missions were participated in
2. If so, complete Proposal Memory Application
3. Send the completed application along with DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty to the French Consulate that corresponds with the Veterans home state

Below are the specific instructions received from the Consulate General of France in NYC:

Thank you very much for your call regarding the Legion of Honor, France's highest distinction. In order for us to begin to evaluate the veterans' applications, please kindly send the following documents:

- *the proposal memory (enclosed) to fill with precise details*
- *the Enlisted Record and Report of Separation/Honorable Discharge - DD214 (front and back)*

Please note that, upon receipt of these documents, the files will be submitted to our Embassy in Washington DC, then to the Grand Chancellery of the Legion of Honor in Paris, France, for a final decision. For that reason, it is very important that the file be assembled carefully, with precise details.

If I can be of any assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Tudor

Email: b24xtrajoker@gmail.com Phone: 207-730-0465

451st Bomb Group Missions to France

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Date</u>
12	Toulon Sub Shops	France	11-Mar-44
51	Carnoules M/Y	France	26-May-44
52	Lyon	France	26-May-44
53	Salon A/D	France	27-May-44
61	Antheor Viaduct	France	7-Jun-44

69	Le Pontet	France	25-Jun-44
75	Begiers	France	5-Jul-44
79	Toulon	France	11-Jul-44
80	Nimes	France	12-Jul-44
84	Arles	France	17-Jul-44
95	Le Pontet	France	2-Aug-44
97	Miramas	France	6-Aug-44
103	Toulon	France	14-Aug-44
104	Frejus	France	15-Aug-44
119	Lyons A/D	France	10-Sep-44
120	Lyons A/D	France	11-Sep-44
121	Lyons A/D	France	12-Sep-44
122	Lyons A/D	France	13-Sep-44
123	Lyons A/D	France	15-Sep-44
124	Lyons A/D	France	16-Sep-44
125	Lyons A/D	France	17-Sep-44
126	Lyons A/D	France	22-Sep-44

List of French Consulates in the US

Atlanta

Service area: Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Tennessee.

Location: Prominence in Buckhead, Suite 1840, 3475 Piedmont Rd., NE

Atlanta, GA 30305, USA

Phone: [\(404\) 495-1660](tel:4044951660) ; Fax: [\(404\) 495-1661](tel:4044951661)

Telex: 154 087 FSLT ATL

Boston

Service area: Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont.

Location: Park Square Building, Suite 750

31 Saint James Avenue

Boston, MA 02116, USA

Phone: [\(617\) 542-7374](tel:6175427374) ; Fax: [\(617\) 542-8054](tel:6175428054) ; Telex: 940 985

Chicago

Service area: North Dakota, South Dakota, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Wisconsin.

Location: Olympia Center, 737 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 2020

Chicago, Illinois 60611, USA

Phone: [\(312\) 787-5359](tel:3127875359) /60 /61 and 787-5385

Fax: [\(312\) 664-4196](tel:3126644196) ; Telex: 190 229 FRANSULAT CGO

Honolulu

Service area: Hawaii and the Pacific Islands under U.S. jurisdiction.

Location: 2 Waterfront Plaza, Suite 300

500 Ala Moana Boulevard

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813, USA

Phone: [\(808\) 599-4458](tel:8085994458) /59 /60 ; Fax: [\(808\) 599-4751](tel:8085994751) ; Telex: 723-8129

Houston

Service area: Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas.

Location: 777 Post Oak Boulevard, Suite 600

Houston, TX 77056, USA

Phone: [\(713\) 572-2799](tel:7135722799) and 572-0654

Fax: [\(713\) 572-2904](tel:7135722904) ; Telex: 825 078 FRANSULAT HOU

Los Angeles

Service area: Arizona, California (Mono, Inyo, Kings, San Luis Obispo, Kern, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Orange, Riverside, Imperial and San Diego Counties), Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada (Clark, Lincoln, Nye, Esmeralda and Mineral Counties).

Location: 10990 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 300

Los Angeles, CA 90024, USA

Phone: [\(310\) 235-3250](tel:3102353250) ; Fax: [\(310\) 479-4813](tel:3104794813)

Telex: 188 466 FRANSULAT LA

Miami

Service area: Florida, Bahamas, U.S. Virgin Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands, Cayman Islands.

Location: Biscayne Tower, 2 South Biscayne Boulevard, Suite 1710

Miami, FL 33131, USA

Phone: [\(305\) 372-9798](tel:3053729798) /99 ; Fax: [\(305\) 372-9549](tel:3053729549)

Telex: 153 632 COMA MIA

New Orleans

Service area: Louisiana.

Location: Amoco Building 1340 Poydras Street, Suite 1710

New Orleans, LA 70112, USA

Phone: [\(504\) 523-5772](tel:5045235772) ; Fax: [\(504\) 523-5725](tel:5045235725) ; Telex: 161 850 FFSLT

New York

Service area: Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Bermuda.

Location: 934 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

Visa section: 10 East 74th Street, New York, NY 10021, USA

Phone: [\(212\) 606-3644](tel:2126063644) ; Recorded information: (212) 606-3688

Fax: [\(212\) 606-3670](tel:2126063670) ; Telex: 824 158 FSLT NYK

San Francisco

Service area: Alaska, California (except for Mono, Inyo, Kings, San Luis Obispo, Kern, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Orange, Riverside, Imperial and San Diego Counties), Idaho, Montana, Nevada (except for Clark, Lincoln, Nye, Esmeralda and Mineral Counties), Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming.

Location: 88 Kearny St #600

San Francisco, CA 94108, USA

Phone: [\(415\) 397-4330](tel:4153974330) ; **Fax:** [\(415\) 433-8357](tel:4154338357)

Visas only: [\(415\) 616-4910](tel:4156164910) ; **Fax:** 397-7843

Telex: 184 284 FRANSULAT SFO

San Juan, P.R.

Service area: Puerto Rico & Vieques, U.S. Virgin Islands, British Virgin Islands, Turks & Cayman Islands, Anguilla, Caicos Islands, Montserrat.

Location: Mercantil Plaza, Suite 720, Ponce de Leon Avenue

Stop 27-1/2, Hato Rey, Puerto Rico

Phone: [\(809\) 753-1700](tel:8097531700) /01 ; **Telex:** 162 117 FSLT

Washington, D.C.

Service area: Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia.

Offices are open to the public from 8:45am to 12:45pm on weekdays.

Location: 4101 Reservoir Road N.W.

Washington, DC 20007, USA

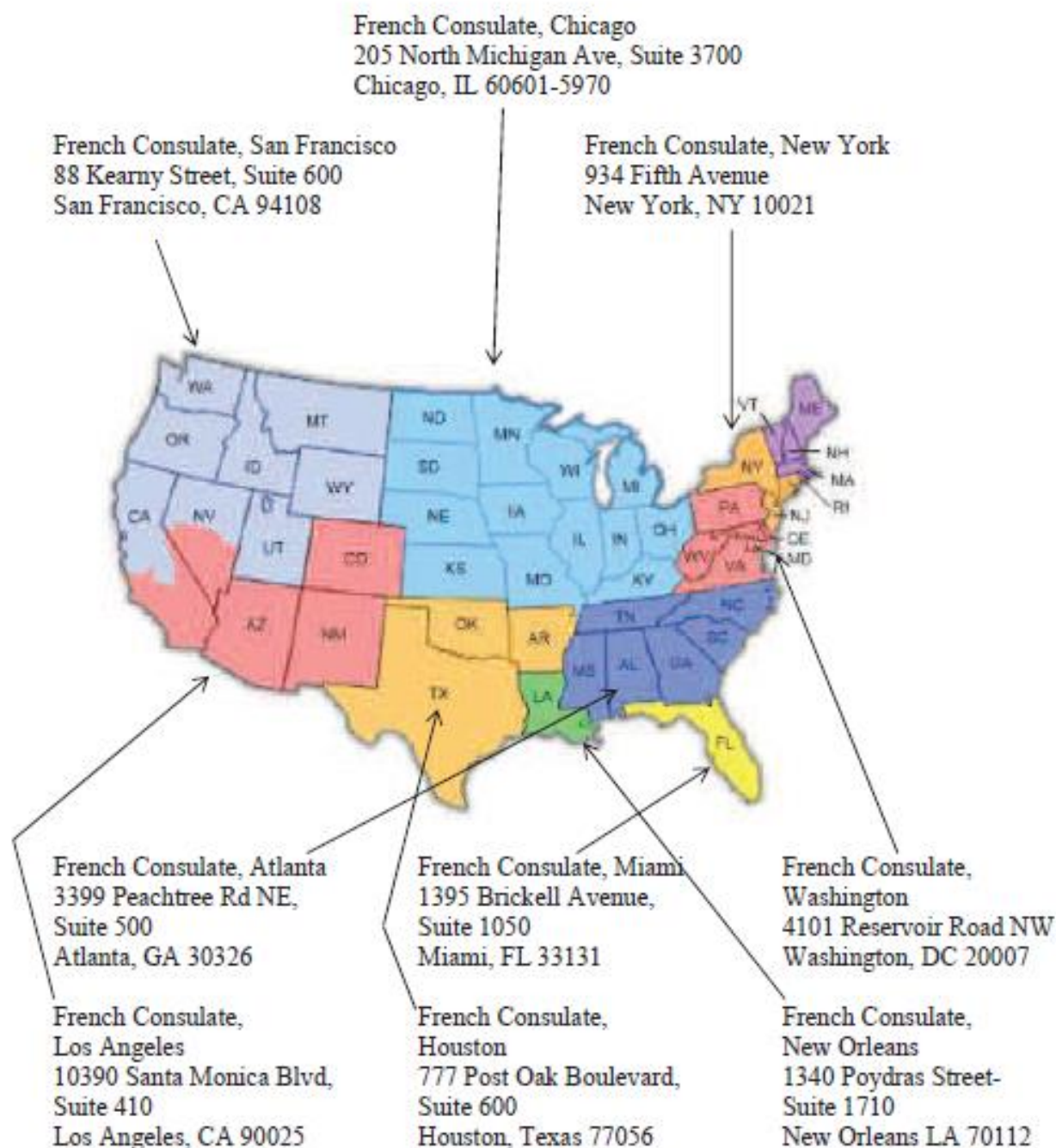
Phone: Embassy: [\(202\) 944-6000](tel:2029446000) ; Consulate: [\(202\) 944-6200](tel:2029446200) ;

Fax: Embassy: [\(202\) 944-6072](tel:2029446072) ; Consulate: [\(202\) 944-6212](tel:2029446212)

PLEASE NOTE:

The application should only be sent to the Consulate General of France in Boston if the veteran applying resides in MASSACHUSETTS, VERMONT, NEW HAMPSHIRE, MAINE or RHODE ISLAND.

If there veteran resides elsewhere, please refer to the map below to determine the appropriate consulate:



PROPOSAL MEMORY

For the rank of Knight of the Legion of Honor

LAST NAME :				
First name(s) :			Middle name/initial:.	
Date of birth :			City/State/Zip:	
Country of birth :			Nationality :	
Social Security N°:				
Current Address :				
City :		State/Zip:		Country:
Tel. :			Cell. :	
Fax:			Email:	
Current professional status :				
Professional occupation (before retirement, when applying):				
Military Career during the Second World War:				
Incorporation date :		Separation date	To the:	
(1)During peace time	From the:		To the:	
(2)During war time	From the:		To the:	
(3)Services in the resistance:	From the:		To the:	
(4)Civil services in the Army : Attributions:.....				
	From the:		To the:	
Total duration of Services (1+2+3+4)	 yearsmonths	
Military Services Bonus	 yearsmonths	

French official decorations already bestowed (when applying) :

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American and Foreign official decorations / citations bestowed (when applying) :

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Chronological progress of your professional career :

Education/University/College degrees, :

Elective functions, missions in France and abroad :

Services to the community, activities in the social field, community services ,

Works and publications :

Military facts and details related to the Second World War

Last rank obtained :
Military unit assigned to:
Military occupational specialty:
Wound(s) received in action ?: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (details)..... No... <input type="checkbox"/>
Duration and place of captivity as Prisoner of War (when applying)?
Name and address/tel. of 2 (two) character references:

Chronological progress of your military career during the Second World War :

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Battles and campaigns in France:.....

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Specific heroic actions, participation in battles/combat/missions, during the Second World War,.. (Please give accurate details)

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List of documents enclosed with application form (at the convenience of the applicant)

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THE 200 MISSION MAP FOR THE 451ST BOMB GROUP – courtesy of Donnie Reeves



The number of bomb symbols identify the number of times the location was a target during the first 200 missions. For example, Lyon was the designated target nine times during the first 200 missions.