

Hell's Angels Newsletter

303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

JULY 1991

50th Anniversary

Boise Targeted for 1992 Bash

On a rainy windswept weekend, in weather reminiscent of what they had flown and worked in at Molesworth during World War II, the Hell's Angels Group held a reunion to celebrate the 49th Anniversary of their organization and make plans for their 50th.

More than 430 members - regular and associates - gathered from all parts of the country to enjoy the program put together by Harley Cannon, vice president for reunions. The program included a day at Arlington Park racetrack, a visit to Chicago's famous museum, a Memorial Day service to honor fallen 303rd personnel, election of officers for the coming year and the Gala Banquet which featured Harley Cannon and Charlie Rice doing the Hula.

The general membership meeting held on Memorial Day was both action packed and well attended. Highlights of the meeting was the election of a slate of officers headed by Carl DuBose as president; amending of the by-laws, and introduction of the 303rd's chaplain corps including: Chappie Slawson, Charlie Rice, Howard Gravrock, Everett Dasher, Fr. Bernard Schumacher, Warren Hedrick, David Michael, Forrest Smith, Charles Spencer and Morris Vold.



ELECTED — Pictured are the 1991-92 Officers of the 303rd BGA. They are: (l to r) William S. McLeod, V/P Admin.; Ford Kelley, Secretary; James B. Taylor, V/P Reunions and Carl DuBose, Jr. President.

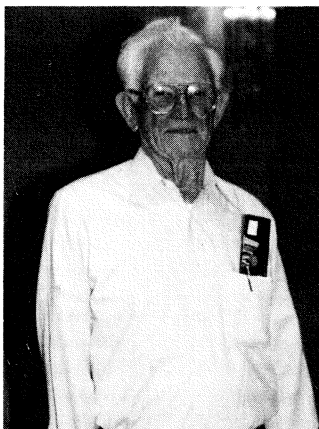
Plaques of appreciation were presented to Association past presidents: Don Harison. Charles McClain, Bill Eisenhart, and Bud Klint. Mrs. Sue Lehmann accepted the plaque for her late husband, Al. Others receiving recognition were Hal Susskind, Lew Lyle, Bob Kidd, Harley Cannon and Harry Heller. Past presidents who have previously received awards include Dick

Waggoner, Joe Vieira and Carl Fyler.

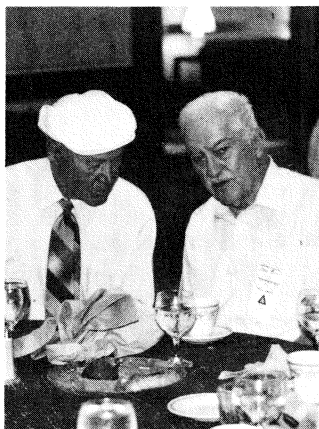
A status report was also given on the status of The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Center. A colorful brochure containing a biographical information form was also distributed. This brochure is being mailed to the membership of the 303rd Association by the Heritage Center Board.

A Memorial Day Service honoring all former 303rds who lost their lives in the war and those have since passed away was held in the tent in back of the hotel.

Plans are already underway to make the 50th Anniversary bash in Boise, Idaho in September of 1993 the best attended and most enjoyed of all reunions held to date.



TWO YOUNGSTERS — William C. Malone, (l) 85 years old from Knoxville, TN with the 359th at Molesworth and Joe Petrie (r) with white cap, former 360th tail gunner during WW II, were judged the oldest members to attend the reunion at Schaumburg. Both are looking forward to Boise in '92.



HULA ANYONE? — Harley Cannon doing the Chicago version of the Hula



303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC. "HELLS ANGELS" NEWSLETTER

VOL. XV, NO. 2 Editor: Hal Susskind
2602 Deerfoot Trail, Austin, TX 78704

JULY 1991

The 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc., a tax exempt organization under IRS Code 501(c)(19), founded in 1975, is chartered in the State of Florida to perpetuate the history of the 303rd Bomb Group and to provide opportunities for 303rders to meet and do things together.

Because you are helping to perpetuate the history of the 303rd Bomb Group, your dues and/or donations to the 303rd Bomb Group Association are tax deductible.

The Association is open for membership to all persons assigned or attached to the 303rd Bomb Group, from its activation in 1942 in Boise, Idaho, throughout its war years at Molesworth Air Base in England to its deactivation in Casablanca in 1945. Spouses of 303rders may also become members. All other persons, interested in perpetuating the history of the 303rd Bomb Group and in furthering the aims of the Association, may apply for Associate status.

Membership years begin on the first day of January. In the future, the 303rd Bomb Group Newsletter will be sent only to paid up members. When you pay annual dues, the membership chairman will send you an updated membership card.

HERE ARE YOUR OFFICERS FOR MAY 1991-SEPTEMBER 1992

President - Carl DuBose, Jr. (427)

Vice President for Administration - William S. McLeod, Jr. (358)

Vice President for Reunions - James B. Taylor (358)

Secretary - J. Ford Kelley (359)

Treasurer - Charles S. Schmeltzer (358)

Squadron Representatives

358th

Walt Mayer
William H. Simpkins

359th

Charles J. McClain
Harold A. Susskind

360th

William Heller
John W. Farrar

Membership Chairman (Roster) - Carlton M. Smith

PX Administrator - Robert E. Kidd

Newsletter - Hal Susskind

Advisor - Lew Lyle

Boise Reunion Committee - Jim Taylor, Jack Rencher, Mel McCoy,
Walt Mayer and Bill McLeod

427th

Wilbur (Bud) Klint
Fred Norman

444th

Henry C. Johansen
Melvin T. McCoy

Headquarters

Carlton M. Smith
John R. Craven

From The President

Our goal for the next eighteen months will be to have fun accomplishing what is necessary to make our organization outstanding. The reunion committee has been at work for some time to make Boise a wonderful experience for all of us. Don't miss it!

We have set certain goals which we hope to attain. We will continue to locate those who have not heard of our association. Each member can assist in this by writing a letter to the editors of papers in his area including a way to contact someone for information.

I think most of us want to further construction of the heritage center.

This will be best accomplished by individual contributions. A few other carefully selected memorials may be placed by the group.

The association is financially solvent, but we could do more if we received additional super life memberships and if everyone paid his dues promptly.

It has been suggested that we encourage our children and others to become associate members. This might be the way to perpetuate the association.

This is our association, memorializing our group; all of your suggestions will be carefully studied.

Carl DuBose, Jr.

In This Issue et cetera

We ran a story in the December 1986 issue of the newsletter captioned "Bombing Bonn, A Cold and Unusual Mission," by Tom Donahue. It told of the experiences of a 360th crew that had been involved in a mid-air collision with another aircraft and crash landed in a snowstorm in friendly territory. In this issue we bring you the story of a 427th crew that was also involved in a mid-air collision, that same day and the same place. Read "We Remember Bonn" on page 8.

Lew Lyle called to say that the records retrieval program is back on track and that George Stallings & Co., is forwarding a set of mission reports to Dave Matthews and Mal Magid in Georgia and a set to the historian, Harry Gobrecht in California. By the September issue of the newsletter we should be able to give you a rundown of the missions that have been copied and the procedures for securing copies of the ones you are interested in. Lew also says that the 8th AF Heritage Center in Savannah is proceeding on schedule and he predicted that the Center will be in operation by 1992 in time for a 303rd Bomb Group reunion in Savannah, the birthplace of the 8th AF.

The 1991 reunion has come and gone but like the wartime at Molesworth fond memories still remain. Attendance was below that of Fort Worth and Norfolk but the program put on by Harley Cannon and his reunion committee was most enjoyable. The day at Arlington Park Race Track was most gratifying especially to top handicappers like Charlie Rice who picked the winners of the first two races as well as the daily double. Even though the weather was a bit like England, the visit to the museum with its theatre and WW II submarine was quite interesting. All in all, I'd say that it was a four star reunion. The accommodations were excellent and the meals equally as satisfying. For my wife and me it was a very pleasant reunion since we got to meet and spend some time with Dr. Katy Kaiser, the daughter of a close WW II buddy, "Tailwheel" Kaiser, the most unforgettable character of the war. Katy, a professor at Marquette, also got to meet with John McCall and a few other friends of her dad.

The squadron meetings were well attended and quite interesting. A suggested change in the by-laws calling for a greater representation on the Board of the Association

from each of the squadrons was proposed in the 359th meeting. It was pointed out that during the war years each of the squadrons had commanders, operations officers, adjutants, etc. It seemed to work quite well during the war years because the 303rd compiled an enviable record. It is something to think about between now and the '92 reunion.

Age is no barrier to attending future reunions says William C. Malone (359th) who at 85 years was the oldest member in attendance. Joe Petrie, ex-tail gunner from the 360th was another "youngster" who enjoyed the comradeship of old friends.

The Dick Lutz crew had five in attendance but that was topped by Bob Krohn's crew which had six. At the Norfolk reunion all nine attended. At the general meeting, Bob made the sad announcement that his copilot Paul B. Kindig had died the day before.

The food at the gala banquet was excellent. The Hawaiian Revue was made more entertaining by Harley Cannon doing the Hula and Rev. Charles Rice twirling the gourds without getting all tangled up in his work. He claims he mastered the art of twirling back in New York many years ago.

Reunions are an excellent way of meeting a lot of new friends from the 303rd. During the war years your complete time was shared with the fellows in your own squadron with whom you worked and flew. People in the 359th occasionally got to meet some fellows from the 360th because they shared the same mess hall. Rarely did they get to meet anyone from the 358th and 427th Sqdns. because of the physical makeup of the base. Reunions allow us to cross over those lines and share experiences that we never knew about, except through reading the newsletter. But then we can only print what you send us.

As we approach our 50th Anniversary, it suddenly dawns on us that we were a damn good outfit; our records bear this out. But what made us great? What made us great was not just the aircraft we flew or the bombs we dropped. They contributed. It was all the people of the 303rd, the flyers and the ground personnel, and their dedication to the job at hand that contributed to the victory. Let us all celebrate that victory at our 50th Anniversary bash at Boise in '92.

Hell's Angels Forum

Your Chance to Sound Off!

A LOVE STORY

Dear 303rders:

We had planned to be with you in Chicago but it was not to be. All our plans were made with our Travel Agent but at the last minute we decided to cancel and attend the 303rd Memorial Installation at the Lone Star Flight Museum, Galveston, Texas where we saw a few of you 7 April 1991. I am 81 now and neither mama nor I are in the best of health and Chicago was a far place from San Antonio. Nevertheless we were with you in spirit and thought.

It was just as well that we did cancel because while at Galveston I became ill and have been very sick for the last month with a severe viral infection. I think missing this Reunion has been one of the greatest disappointments of my life because short of some miracle I shall never see you again, at least in this life. I love you people because you have been so much a part of my life and mamas. Mine since Molesworth and hers since our initial attendance at the San Diego Reunion.

Words are just inadequate to express our true feelings of just how much your friendship and expressed love have meant to us down through the years so just let us say thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Remember us in your thoughts and prayers. If I have given you half of the joy and satisfaction you have given me then my mission with you has been most rewarding. We shall always be happy to hear from any of you and now may the Lord watch between me and thee always. Amen

God bless you and yours always.

**s/Chappie and Mama
Ch. Merritt O. Slawson
227 Cocawood Drive
San Antonio, Texas 78228**

WE ALSO REMEMBER BONN

Enclosed find a copy of the story by the surviving members of the G.N. Smith Crew. Each of the crew submitted their recollections of our 13th mission to Bonn, Germany, January 10, 1945. I believe Ed Gardner, our navigator, discussed this story with you during a telephone conversation some time ago. Besides my own remembrances it was my pleasure to try to put all

the ideas into one story.

The December 1986 issue of the "Newsletter" included a story, "Bombing Bonn A Cold and Unusual Mission" which intrigued me because of the similarity to our mission the same day. The crew involved in the story was in the 360th Squadron and we were in the 427th so I thought it was another collision. The matter never completely left my thoughts so in 1989 I decided to try to learn more about our mission of January 10, 1945. I wrote to the National Archives and obtained a copy of the official report of that mission by the 303rd. Imagine my surprise when the documents I received revealed that the plane from the 360th was the other plane we met over Bonn. The records indicated that the pilot of the other plane was a Roy Statton. Hoping my luck would hold out I looked in the roster of the 303rd members at that time and found the name, address and phone number of a Roy Statton. Once again I hoped that the Statton in the roster was the same person I was seeking. A phone call verified this was one and the same person. My wife and I visited with Roy and his wife last summer and they were planning to attend the reunion in Schaumburg.

**Al Dussliere
1901 5th St.
East Moline, IL 61244**

Ed. Note: Tom Donahue, the navigator on Statton's crew authored the original story in the Dec. 1986 issue of the newsletter.

NEW MEMBER

I was in the 360th of the 303rd flying as radio operator/gunner from June of '43 to May of '44. I've been out of the country for most of the last 30 years in the U.S. Foreign Service, and learned of the 303rd Association recently after I retired. I flew most of my missions with Capt. Bob Cogswell on "Iza Vailable." Bob went down and was lost on B-29's in Korea.

My main purpose in writing at this time is to request a membership roster so I can contact some of the men I flew with.

**Eddie Deerfield
One Eton Overlook
Rockville, MD 20850**

Ed. Note: According to his info sheet, Deerfield flew 30 missions

as a radio operator with the 303rd. He survived a crash in the North Sea on his sixth mission and a bailout from a flaming B-17 on his 13th. In 1951-2 he served in Pusan, Korea as a detachment commander of a psychological warfare unit.

Wiesbaden in Retrospect

Whenever the Hell's Angels Newsletter arrives I have to sit down and eagerly absorb it from cover to cover. It is always good to relive those events of long ago.

I have written a short article on the involvement of our flight crew in the Wiesbaden mission of 15 August 1944. It was done in an attempt to convey the impression of being a crew member on the actual mission.

If you believe the story will be of interest to your readers you are welcome to use it.

Keep up the good work!

**William C. Crawford
2901 Woodgate Court, N.E.
Marietta, Georgia 30066**

Bill Crawford's very interesting story of the raid on Wiesbaden will run in the September issue of the newsletter.

ORIGINAL SKY WOLF

On page 11 of the September issue of the newsletter you have a picture of the "Sky Wolf" and lead crew. I am enclosing a picture of the original Sky Wolf w/crew. This picture is official as you'll notice by the printing at the

bottom of the photo taken on 10/13/42.

I have a picture of all the original crews in the 358th Sqdn.

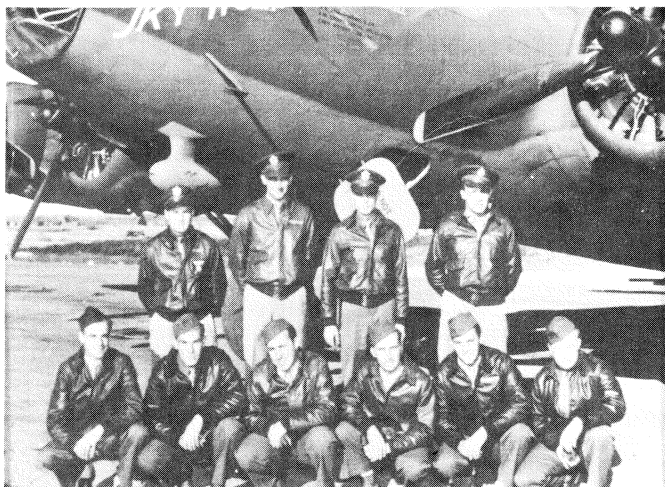
**Samuel P. Maxwell
63 Blake Dr.
Arden, NC 28704**

Ed. Note: I'm sure the historian would be interested in seeing the photos of all the original crews in the 358th.

REMEMBERING THE BIG O

I enjoyed reading your "If I live to be 200 years old..." in the March 1991 *Hell's Angels Newsletter*. Reading it sent me reviewing old note books I have saved over a lifetime of accumulating memories of the past. And I found what I was looking for in a thin black book identified by the caption: Oscherleben....Number twenty-six. (I had later penciled in the notation: "Behind the Eight Ball"). I had participated in that memorable mission!

If my number 25 mission had been Oscherleben, I might not have decided to do an extra five. But number twenty-five had been such a breeze, flying over the Bay of Biscay looking in vain for a boat (a bombardier's dream target!) Lt. Col. Calhoun and Major Shumake were my pilots and Jake (Norman Jacobson) was the navigator, but even with a crew of that experience and skill, we were forced by cloud cover to bring our bombs back. So mission 25 left me with a feeling of dissatisfaction — and after a bit of



ORIGINAL — Sky Wolf crew (l to r) Lts. Morales, Swaffer, Hunter and Zasadi. Bottom Row (l to r) Sgts. Hinds, Carroll, Burns, Hill Blake and White.

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deliberation, I volunteered to do another five missions. When the flak and fighters of the Oscherleben experience appeared, you can be sure I questioned the sanity of my decision to do five more.

If you can bear with me, I'll quote from the exuberant, written impression of a very young 22 year-old during that fierce yet exciting battle:

Colonel Cal was going; Jake was going, so I figured I'd go too. It was to be a deep penetration . . . and our Group would be leading the Eighth Air Force, and General Travis accompanied us. It was a meaty target.

As we assembled over the field I wanted to steal a few winks, but in the dawn's grey brown I had to keep alert for wandering aircraft from other squadrons and other neighboring air fields. Planes were all over. I could see the winking Aldis Lamps and the pyrotechnic flares, their colors denoting the different groups. It was an early, busy sky. I had my camera and some colored film along, so I was bound to get some good shots. Ah! the sun was reflecting on the sky just above the horizon. I waited for pictures until I had the proper red, black and grey-blue colors balanced. I hope they're good. In the early morning light I was able to see the tiny, patchwork fields take on colors of yellows, greys, greens and browns as the sun rose. I took a picture of this, but I doubted success.

The weather across the coast didn't look too promising. Maybe we'd have to use our Pathfinder. Well, that wouldn't be so bad. I've hollered long for permission to accompany a pathfinder mission. But of course as bombardier, I naturally prefer visual sighting. We were hardly across the Zuider Zee, when I looked up to discover what seemed like hundred of planes milling around. Friendly and enemy. A formation of enemy fighters pulled up at nine o'clock level, ten o'clock; then at eleven o'clock they peeled off and came at us in threes and fours — in rapid succession. This wave barely engulfed us before another was positioning itself for attack. Some squadrons had twelve planes, others had thirty. It had been so long since I had seen the type of ferociousness now attacking us that I was momentarily spell-bound. One o'clock and eleven o'clock; wave after wave — they

certainly were determined. Most of their attacks seemed to begin on us as the lead ship, but then were diverted to lower squadrons or groups. Oh, oh, here comes a fellow— After us— Good Lord, I fired as well as I could, but the gun position was awkward and the plexi was a bit dirty at that position. He kept boring in at us, but I could no longer bear on him — I could only stand there with my mouth hanging open, watching and trying to convince myself that this fellow couldn't hit us. Hit us, hell—! He wasn't concerned with fire power, he was going to ram us! My aching back! Cal lifted our right wing and just then the FW passed right through where we had been. Whew . . . they shouldn't do that. One of our men called out to say he thought the German was wearing a new type of oxygen mask; another said that only 15 rivets were used to hold the FW tank brace on. The FW was close! Nice going, Cal!

I don't know how long these attacks continued. The general was calling them fast and furious until one gunner, not knowing who was calling fighters, said in exasperation, "yes, yes, but don't call them so fast; I can't shoot at 'em all anyway."

We came in south of the IP, but Jake spotted it and we headed straight for it. I was able to confirm it by a near-by stream. Then we were off to the target. Surprising view . . . thirty miles away was the forest near which my factory target was located. The woods showed up clearly, but the little town was lost in a grey haze. So I put the sight on it and just waited. In fact I had time to set up my camera so I could possibly get some target pictures. As we approached. I had time to check my pre-set drift, etc. It was all good. Soon, I could discern the runway, the town, and then the target. I had plenty of time and good visibility, so my synchronization was good. Because of the time we had, everything was quite deliberate; I would have no excuse for missing. I had one eye on the indices, and one on the bomb rack indicator. The indices met; the lights disappeared. No, two lights remained, so I jumped my salvo lever to make sure all the bombs dropped. With the plane again in Cal's hands, I grabbed my camera and crawled under the bombsight, camera poised for my

bomb-fall. Oh, boy, there they were, right in the middle of the assembly hanger I had aimed for. The nose glass was smeared, so I imagined the picture would be no good. But I watched the bomb pattern blossom, covering the target completely. That, then, was my justification for number 26. That FW shop would be closed—for a long time.

Our journey home was marred by light, but damn accurate flak, which, I admit, worries me more than it used to. Hanover guns warned us away and Osnabruck was under clouds. When we began to let down, we were fired upon by coastal guns. We penetrated the overcast in mid-channel and came through at 3500 feet. All too soon there was nothing to see but fog. (Jolly old England.) We were 700' above ground but couldn't see it. Nothing seemed visible! Whooee—! Jake was pinpointing like mad. Just a little patch of ground was all that was visible.

Obviously, too soon I had thought ourselves safe. Zoom—zoom an element of B-17's drifted by. We saw them when they were half way past. Ulp! Now I was really sweating! Harder than ever before. This was sudden death staring us in the face. Plane after plane loomed, then disappeared. Yi! That was close, really close. Much too close! Ahh, there was the 360th area. Good God, I'll bet there are thirty unseen planes circling the field. Many at our level! For the first time I began to resign myself to fate. This was a horrible mess — far worse than being fired upon and being able to fire back. At this point I can honestly say I was afraid. I'm not exactly sure of what I was afraid of, but I was shaken. I seemed such a senseless way to end up.

Cal was flying at close to stall speed and only 300' off the ground. He spotted a runway, flew up one side, and turned sharply around for position to land. As we came in, we found a ship just ahead, and planes were appearing from every which way. But we settled to the runway behind three other ships. Good piloting and safe at last! As we rolled down the runway, we could see that landed ships were sitting everywhere on the field. Some wheel-deep in mud. Hmmm—we still risked having a desperate ship settling on top of us. But of course we still had our marvelous luck, and finally ended up in the Eight

Ball's dispersal area.

If I remember correctly, the General said something about not having to do that sort of thing, and of seeing the light. At that point, I wondered if I had seen the light. But I did go on to finish 30 missions. And it is interesting: as I read my notes again of the Oscherleben mission, the events stand out in my mind; but before the prompting of notes, I recalled most vividly the anxiety caused by the fearful landing conditions at Molesworth. I also confess I was proud of the success of the bomb drop that day.

I imagine you have read Brian O'Neill's *Half a Wing. Three Engines and a Prayer*. For me it brought back many things I hadn't thought about for forty-some years. I was fortunate, my crew and I finished the war unscathed and proud of our war contribution. For me, in my beginning adult years, those were exciting times.

Jack Fawcett
2229 Knolls Dr.
Santa Rosa, CA 95405

I read with very special interest your excellent article in the Austin American-Statesman of Jan. 11, 1991 re: the Jan. 11, 1944, 8th AAF raid to Oschersleben, Ger. As I recall, it really came down to the First Division's raid to Oschersleben.

My bomb group, the 401st stationed at Deenthorpe, was one of the two groups comprising the 94th Combat Wing, 1st Div. Usually a third group was assigned by mission until the 457th At Glatton was activated toward the end of Feb. 1944. (Polebrook of the 351st Gp. was the other)

On Jan. 11th, we followed, that is the 94th Wing, the 41st Wing in the sequence march to the target. This was my fifth mission. The 401st Bomb Group was trained as a unit and flew our new B-17Gs to England in Oct. of 1943. We became operational in Nov. 1943.

I recall seeing many of the 41st Wing shot out of the formation as well as a number from the 94th Wing. I echo with a loud "Amen," Stouill's comments, "If I live to be 200, etc."

The 401st Group was the one, and the 94th Wing, that Major Howard, the former Flying Tiger performed his incredible heroics by alone jumping 30 Luftwaffe fighters and shooting down six. He stayed around us as long as

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his ammunition lasted and even beyond, making bluff passes at the enemy. My group returned to Deenthorpe singing his praises. This ultimately, and deservedly, won for Major Howard the Congressional Medal of Honor.

In addition to congratulating you on a fine article, I wanted to tell you about two people in the 303rd, among others, who I knew. One was Elmer Brown, a navigator in the 427th Sqdn. Elmer was ahead of us into the 8th by three rough months. However, Elmer and I both graduated from Bombardier School at Roswell, New Mexico on Jan. 2, 1943 in the class of 43-1. Then a week later we were sent, along with 22 other new Bombardiers, to Hondo, Texas Navigation School. As a consequence, I flew raids as a lead Bombardier, but also as a navigator when needed.

The main reason I am writing is to share with you an article which appeared in the 8th AF News of Aug. 1978. It relates some details of the crash in the Cheviot Hills, of Dec. 16, 1944, of a crew from the 303rd and the 360th Bomb Sqdn. My very close friend, Joel A. Berly, Jr., of Florence, SC (now) was the radio operator on Kyle's crew. You may have still been at Molesworth when this crash occurred. I believe and read that you flew 40 missions, so I assume you returned following your 30th mission on June 6, 1944, for a second tour.

Again, congratulations on a very good article.

Donald M. Anderson
2307 Quarry Road
Austin, TX 78703

A Voice from Czechoslovakia

I try to find up the fate of shot down American pilots since 1944 to 1945 in the territory of the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia. I live in West Bohemia and after several years of exploring and gathering materials I have been able to complete most accidents of Allies pilots in our area.

I and our group SLET engage the history of the air war over Czechoslovakia after several years working on air raid, 25 April 1945 on Pilsen. During seven years we obtained a lot of information referring to your plane B17-G-44-83447, 1st Lt. W.F.

Mauger shot down over Pilsen during air raid the 25/4/1945. We know place where have fallen pieces of B-17G and airman. We are running a penance correspondence with Mr. Warren F. Mauger. Our help, Mr. Fyler. I write to Mr. Fyler at the ending of 1990 years but I haven't been replied so far.

We investigate with now after next the crews B-17G, 44-83447.

2nd Lt. William T. Burgess
0-834560

1st Lt. George E. Knox
0-396463

S/Sgt Matthew W. Grden
13129217

Sgt. Earl M. Dugan
17133691

Are they crews of yours the 303rd BG Assn., are you know their address or their families?

2nd Lt. Henry G. Moss
0-782878 KIA

S/Sgt Glenn R. Walling
19205113 KIA

S/Sgt Francis H. Kelley
35226095 KIA

Are you address their families?

I would be very interested in all materials concerning the air raid against Pilsen on 25 April 1945, inform in more details of crews B-17G, 44-83447, their 303rd BG sorties. Exist their photos and their plane or photos from the air raid on 25/4/45?

We working on publication about air raid 25/4/45 on Pilsen. I write you a few line about our group SLET. During May and June 1990 we held an exposition on American pilots shot down at our Pilsen region during World War II and the air battle over West Bohemia. (enclosed photos, we own the most of exposed things).

During summer 1990 our group organized 10 days search on looking and finding the exact places of accidents or shot down American planes in Northern Bohemia. We found four paces in the Ou Mountains. Your 303rd lost 12/9/1944 two B-17Gs during air raid on Brux.

Pilot R.L. Clemensen, 42-31177, "Lonesome Polecat"
Pilot A.B. Mehlhoff, 42-107196, "Temptress"

Perhaps, we ask too much in hope in your high position in 303rd BG Assn. "Hell's Angels" and believe in many of your war veteran friends. We appreciate any new details to find answers to many still unsolved questions.



ON DISPLAY — Display case in Pilsen containing information and photo of Lt. W. Mauger who was shot down on 303rd last mission. Also pictured in crew photo are Sgt. Joe Vieira, L/C Dick Cole and Lt. Larry Lifshus.

Jaromir and Martin Kohout
Tesinska 3

312 00 Pilsen
CZECHOSLOVAKIA

P.S. Some years ago I managed to get one copy of your magazine "Hell's Angel's Newsletter," it is splendid because of its contents, it contains a great deal of information concerning 303rd BG, that we are interested in extremely and that are very useful for our work because they bring us problems and activity about the 303rd BG Assn. "Hell's Angels."

ENGLAND IN '92

Thank you for your part in putting on a great reunion. The hotel was great, as was Arlington (race track) and everything else. The committee did an outstanding job. We are both looking forward to Boise. I was among the first to arrive there sometime in May or June 1942. Came from McChord Field in Tacoma. The base wasn't even opened and we pitched tents on the lawn of the State Capitol.

Enclosed is a copy of Reunion News I received from the East Anglia Tourist Board regarding next year and the arrival of the 8th AF in England in 1942. Thought you would be interested. Are we planning a trip? If so, I'm sure you'll have something in the next "Hell's Angels" Newsletter.

Hank Pratton
25 Ingersoll Blvd.
Canton, IL 61520

Ed. Note: Harley Cannon deserves the credit for the reunion.

First of all, congratulations on your (s)election as the permanent editor of our great Newsletter. To echo all in attendance at Schaumburg, you do the greatest job.

Frankly, having lived in Chicago

all my life, I was a bit less than ecstatic about Schaumburg as a reunion site. Now, after all the bills have been paid, I really enjoyed it, but have no doubt that it was all due to Harley's maximum effort to put it over, which he certainly did.

Which brings me now to our next site. Our crew (K. Baehr, Pilot) were probably 'new boys' to the 303rd. We joined the group right after D-Day in June of '44 and flew our 35 from then until Oct. 19, '44. John King, co-pilot; Tom Peacock, navigator and myself, the bombardier are the only ones on the active roster. Thankfully, we flew our tour with no casualties but some nasty scares.

Boise is naught to us except the place the group formed up and the home of the baked potatoes. Molesworth is the place for me. Every time I see Dean Jagger look down that runway my hands start to sweat. My wife and I have been back to the UK several times since the War and 13 years ago, were able to find parts of the old base. We were unable to go with that tour a couple years ago, as we had already made our own plans.

There is quite an article in today's Chicago Tribune about the plans being made for group reunions to be held in East Anglia next year for the 50th Anniversary. I had previously received an article from an RAF friend who now lives in Sudbury. I sent a copy on to you almost at the same time you had made mention in the newsletter.

I wonder if anyone else feels this way? I'm not looking forward to Boise, but would be delighted to go back to Merrie Old.

William H. Smith
3524 Golf View Dr.
Hazel Crest, IL 60429

Fallen 303rd honored on



Flag which flew at Molesworth during WWII.

Eulogy to Lt. Smith's Memory

I remember back in the "twenties," when on Armistice Day, November the eleventh, at 11 o'clock, all traffic in the city would come to a stop. We would then observe a moment of silence in memory of all our military who lost their lives in World War I and who were buried in cemeteries in France and Belgium.

Many times in school, the reading of the poem, "In Flanders Field the poppies grow, Between the crosses, row on row," I promised myself that if I could, that one day I would visit one of those cemeteries and all those "crosses, row on row." Well, since then I've seen many of those "Crosses" in Cambridge, England; Manila in the Philippines; Point Loma, San Diego and at our beloved Arlington Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

Our Constitution guarantees us, "Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Assembly, Freedom of the Press, and the Pursuit of Happiness." Well, when you see all those, "Crosses, row on row," you will realize that all these freedoms we enjoy have not been free, but have been paid for by thousands of comrades who have paid the full value and price. We must always remember and honor their sacrifices!

Today, as you look at our symbolic grave site and the small white cross, you will notice it bears the name of 2nd Lt. Harold E. Smith, and the date on it, April 10, 1945, the day he died. I remember Smitty, he was 17 years old when he joined our crew, too young to be awarded a commission, so he accepted the rank of Warrant Officer. But that did not deter him. He was given additional training at Alconbury, England and became a lead navigator.

I remember the day he died. He was flying with Lt. Murray's crew over Oranienburg, Germany when three German jets, their cannons blazing, flashed down through the group and chose Murray's plane as their target. Murray's aircraft and his crew died in a burst of flame.

I always wondered where Smitty's little white cross rested and many years later while we were in England on our Molesworth reunion, I checked with the authorities in Cambridge and found out that Smitty does not have a little white cross. His remains were never recovered, so he is immortalized on a wall of missing airmen at Rotterdam, Holland.

How many thousands of other American soldiers, sailors and airmen have died and rest in unidentified graves throughout the world; truly we must never forget their sacrifices. As the poem reminds us - to whom they passed the "Torch" - keep the Flame of Freedom bright and pass the privileges they left us, to those who follow us; that is the sacred trust.

by Harley E. Cannon

As part of this year's reunion, more than 400 members of the 303rd Bomb Group Association gathered in a big white tent in the rear of the Marriott Hotel for the Memorial Day Service honoring former comrades - some who fell in combat in WW II and others who have passed on in the years since.

The ceremony started with the posting of the colors by an Army Color Guard from Headquarters 86th U.S. Army Reserve.

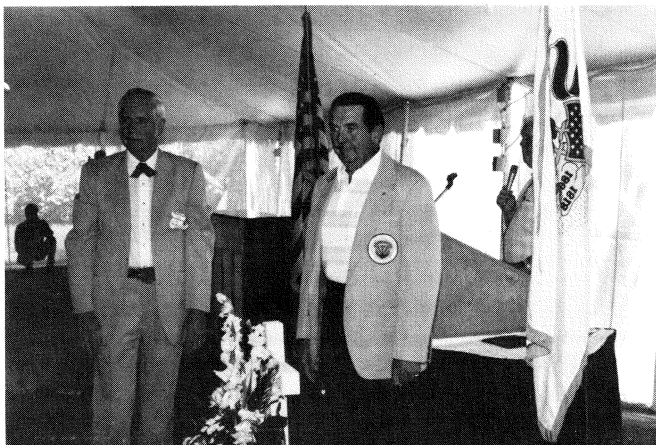
The invocation was given by the Rev. Everett A. Dasher, Saluda, SC, a member of the 303rd BGA. The welcome address was given by the Association President Wilbur (Bud) Klint who read the list of members who have died since the last reunion in Norfolk, VA in 1989.

Miss Karen Jirsa of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Mt. Prospect was the soloist. She sang the hymn, "For All the Saints Who from Their Labors Rest."

MEMBERS WHO PASSED ON

Seymour Feldman
Darwin D. Sayer
Ted N. Peter
David B. Foreman
Frank Juns, Jr.
Fay Lacquement
James A. Ellis
Joseph J. Kalafut
Horace Dale Bowman
Eugene A. McMahan
William B. Hopkins
Harold E. Godwin

Carino J. Colancecco
Antoni Bednarchuk
Richard R. Ellis
Joseph J. Ramaika
William R. Branham
Dana A. Hodge
Stanley W. Jasut
Donald O. Lesch
Lyle W. LeRoux
Benjamin Losiewica
Howard Montgomery
Raymond J. Kowatch



President Bud Klint and Past President Bill Eisenhart lay wreath at reunion Memorial Ceremony.



Laying wreath in memory of Lt. Smith.

both sides of the ocean

Memorial wreaths were laid at the site by past and present presidents, Bill Eisenhart and Bud Klint and also by a member of Lt. Smith's crew.

A Eulogy to Lt. Smith's memory was given by Harley Cannon. This was followed by Benediction by Chaplain Charles Rice.

Karen Jirsa then led the congregation in the singing of "God Bless America," which was followed by Taps played on the trumpet

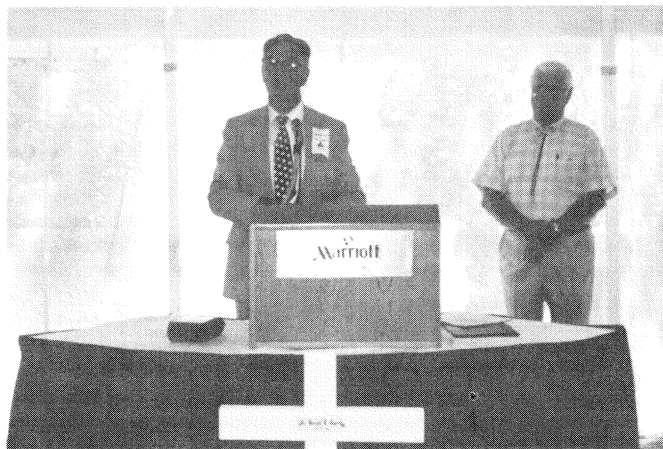
by Warren Hecht of St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

The colorful and somber ceremony was ended with the retirement of the colors. The American flag used in the ceremony was the same flag that flew in front of the Group Headquarters building at Molesworth Air Base during the combat days of World War II. It will be used in all the future reunions.

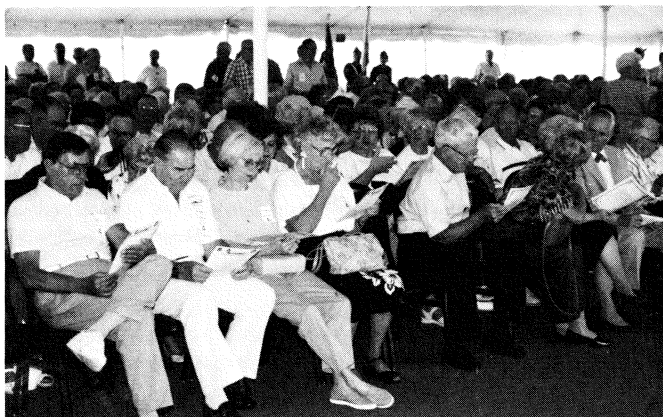
SINCE NORFOLK REUNION

Bonnie Hope
Richard S. Brooks
John W. Hendry
Calder L. Wise
Peter A. Benigno
Dwight A. Phillips, Jr.
Cameron L. Self, MD
Alexander Dombrowski
Phil O'Hare
Ralph Neathery
Carl L. Mohr
Gilbert Bengtson

Walter R. Kyse
Leo McConaghy
E.C. "Al" Lehmann
Jim Reeves
William R. Calhoun, Jr.
Albert R. Westfall, Jr.
Harold L. Shrader
Ballard T. Byers
William A. Broughton
Reinhart E. Roth
George E. Knox
James B. Linn



INVOCATION — by Rev. Everett A. Dasher as Harley Cannon looks on.



Part of capacity crowd at Memorial Service.



Ray Cossey laying 303rd wreath at Cambridge Cemetery.

On Sunday 19th May I was privileged to be invited to represent the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association at the Memorial Day Service held at the Cambridge American Military Cemetery and Memorial, Coton, Cambridgeshire, England. On behalf of your Association I laid a memorial wreath, on the ribbon of which were the words "We remember the names . . . we recall faces."

In all 76 wreaths were laid on behalf of Bomb Group Associations and by military and civilian representatives of both American and English interests.

The addresses given included those by Mr. Norbert Krieg, Consul General of the Embassy of the United States of America in London and by Major General Marcus A. Anderson, Commander United States Third Air Force.

The service culminated with a fly-by by four A10's of the 509 Tactical Fighter Squadron, 10 Tactical Fighter Wing from R.A.F. Alconbury.

This annual ceremony is always very well attended by both Americans and British persons and is a fitting tribute to those of your colleagues who gave their lives in the protection of our mutual freedom.

Ray Cossey, Hon. Member
5 Woodland Drive
Thorpe End, Norwich
NR13 5BH England



Part of capacity crowd at Memorial Service.



IN MEMORY OF LT. MELVIN ALDERMAN

Sources for this article include Mission Reports from the National Archives, Washington, DC, recollections of crew members and a diary of missions kept by one of the members of the crew. The G.N. Smith crew flew with the 427th Bomb Squadron of the 303rd Bomb Group.

December 18, 1944, during the Battle of the Bulge, we began our tour of duty with a mission to Koblenz, Germany. From that beginning up to January 10, 1945 we flew eleven more missions. Our next mission would be Number 13.

About four or five o'clock in the early morning hours of January 10, 1945 we were awakened with the cheery message, "You're flying today." The normal routine of wash, shave and breakfast followed. After breakfast we went to briefing, where we learned the primary target for the day was an airfield at Bonn/Hangelar, Germany. After briefing, some of us made our way to the Chaplain of our choice before we gathered up our gear and caught a ride to our plane. Most of the time we had flown A/C42-39875, "Buzz Blonde," and that was our plane assignment that day. We loved that plane and more so the ground crew who kept her in great condition all the time. We were a little more nervous than usual about this mission because it was Number 13.

The takeoff was uneventful in spite of the snow on the field. Assembly into the formation was routine if assembly can be considered a routine matter. The mission was uneventful until we reached the IP, but here and in the target area there were 2-3/10ths middle clouds, tops 16,000 feet, and 8-10/10ths thin cirrus clouds with dense persistent contrails. The conditions made formation flying and bombing difficult. The first run over the target accomplished nothing because the lead ship could not get its bomb bay doors open. We came around again for a second pass, but a B-24 formation came across underneath us. They were on time and on course; we were not, therefore we went around again. On the third pass, the flak guns were zeroed in on the squadron quite well. We were the left wing aircraft in the high element so the pilot, G.N. Smith, was flying right seat. At the IP he moved us down and in trail of our element lead. Our high element lead was supposed to "tuck in" to the right wing aircraft of the squadron lead. This would put us close to the right of the right wing aircraft of the second element. It seems as if we made a "360" to the right followed by a short bomb run. The pilot was concentrating on his element lead aircraft. Very shortly after "bombs away" the squadron started a strong left turn, which turned us into a blinding low angle sun. At full power and almost in the contrails of our element lead we began moving to our left and up to our left wing position on the high element lead.

After "Bombs Away," the bombardier, Bill Dohm, leaned over to look out the glass nose to see the bombs hit, but lo and behold, what he saw was not what he expected to see. Instead of seeing bombs falling, there was the cockpit of another B-17 directly below the glass nose. It was so close to the "Buzz Blonde" he thought he could have reached down and shook hands with the engineer in the upper local turret. At this time he grabbed the "mike" button and called out on the intercom, "Pull up, pull up." Knowing this B-17 would be coming through our nose very shortly he jumped up and started a rapid exit to the catwalk. He yelled to Ed Gardner, the navigator, "Get out of here, get out of here." By this time he was beside the navigator.

The next thing that he recalled, he was on his back (head toward the tail) looking up into the cockpit. There were ammo belts on his legs, the navigator down around his feet and a terrific wind blast coming from the front which was so strong he could hardly move. His helmet and oxygen mask were gone as well as his right glove. He guessed he left the glove

WE REMEMBER BONN

stuck to the "mike" button. Having volunteered several times in the pressure chamber (during flight training) to remove his oxygen mask to demonstrate the reaction of someone passing out from lack of oxygen, he was aware of what would happen to him and the navigator very soon if they were without oxygen very long. He attempted to get the attention of someone in the cockpit for a 'walk around' bottle of oxygen. He guessed they were too busy attempting to get control of aircraft because they didn't get the oxygen. He and the navigator were right next to the escape hatch. He yelled at the navigator to release the hatch door and bail out. He released the door but would not bail out. He yelled again but he still hesitated. He thought he must have pushed the navigator out so he would be able to bail out. He couldn't move so he stuck as much of his upper body out of the hatch hoping the wind blast would suck him out. This must have worked because he did not remember leaving the aircraft.

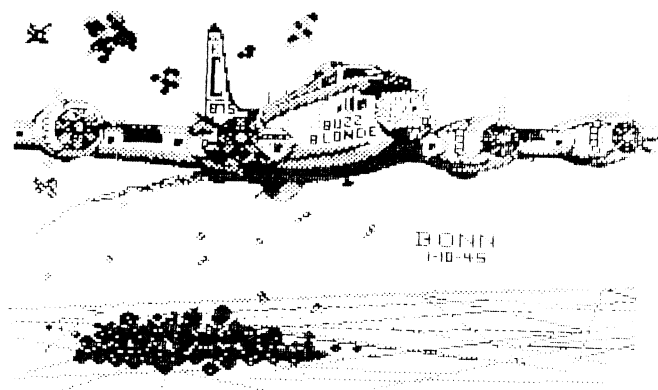
The navigator saw the bombardier jump up from his place in the nose, tear off all his connections and dive through the opening in the catwalk. The navigator looked to the nose and saw a black shadow, which was the vertical tail of a B-17. He got out of his seat as a collision occurred which smashed the entire nose section away to within four or five inches of the no. 1 bulkhead. He was spread-eagled against it, think he would be crushed. But at that moment we broke away, and he backed into the catwalk aided by the terrible force of the bitterly cold wind.

Somehow the navigator had disconnected his heated suit, intercom and oxygen, and lost his helmet and gloves. He raised himself into the flight deck and beat on the engineer's legs who did not respond in any way. Back in the catwalk the bombardier made motions to release the hatch door and bail out. It was then that the navigator realized that his chute was still in the nose (he hoped). Reaching into the right hand corner by the bulkhead he found the chute still there. He hooked it on the left side of the harness but could not attach the right side. Once more he tried to attract the engineer, but to no avail. He could see the pilot and co-pilot intently trying to fly old "Buzz Blonde" and slid back into the catwalk and released the hatch door.

Ray Miller, ball turret gunner, called out over the intercom, "Someone just bailed out. Someone else bailed out. What the hell's going on up there?" He was told to get out of the ball and in record time, he did.

Reacting spontaneously the pilot pulled back on the wheel, which pitched us up at a strong angle. The collision must have banked us to the left because we were banking into the aircraft of our low element. Pulling back again on the wheel we went over them into the clear beyond. When we tried to bank back right to stay with our squadron we found the ailerons were jammed in fixed position, luckily neutral. It was necessary to use the rudder for turning. It was effective but slow. We were to the left of the squadron but going in the same direction.

The crew members behind the bomb bay felt a tremendous jolt and heard an extremely loud noise. Most thought we had been hit by a direct burst of flak. In the waist area anything that was loose flew about. Al Dussliere, the waist gunner, was thrown forward but was able to maintain his balance. He returned to his gun at the right waist window. Looking out he could not see any of the other planes in the formation and he could feel that we were pulling away to the left. He looked forward



inside the plane and could see the radio operator, George Parker, who appeared to be OK. Then he looked to the rear of the plane and saw Mel Howell, the tail gunner, who also appeared to be alert and manning his guns. Again looking out the right window he could see smoke coming from no. 3 engine. The wing was battered and bent and the horizontal stabilizer was a tangled mess but we were still flying and apparently in some semblance of control.

The pilot at some time during the action looked down between the pilot and co-pilot seats and saw the bombardier lying on his back without helmet or oxygen mask. They had been ripped off because of the collision. There was nothing anyone on the flight deck could do to help him. A little later he was gone. About this time the pilot realized a flap of fuselage was bent back and laying against the lower half of the windshield. At the same time he realized Number 3 engine was shaking like hell, so he feathered the prop. Looking to the right he noticed the right wing was bent in two places, drooping down like a wounded bird. This was the reason for the aileron jamming. About three inches were gone from the tips of Number 3 prop.

The engineer named Masengill, flying with us as a replacement, found some GI blankets and gave them to the pilot and copilot to wrap around their legs to shield them against the minus 68 degrees wind rushing in through the open nose. The engineer was sent back to the waist to get out of the wind and inform the rest of the crew that we were going to descend to a lower altitude where it would be warmer. With three engines we couldn't keep up with the rest of the squadron.

After being pushed out of the plane the navigator said his next conscious memory was of hearing popping sounds. He opened his eyes to a grey quiet world in the clouds. He was somewhere over Germany falling freely. The popping was in his ears.

He tried to hook the chute on the right side of the harness, but with frozen hands it was an impossible job. He debated as to when to pull the ripcord but decided that he must see the ground first. Finally he broke out of the clouds; the earth appeared to be far away. He tried once more to hook the chute - it frustrated him. He touched his ears and found they were frozen crispy hard. He pushed on his right ear and the cartilage cracked.

Then it was time to try pulling the ripcord, which took many attempts because he could not use his hand. At last he hooked the little finger in the ring. The parachute opened well, but he was left dangling by one set of ropes. So far, so good. He was over open country and thought possibly he could evade capture. Suddenly he heard the sound of bullets zinging by, then heard the sound of gunfire. He looked around and saw a group of men beyond some trees: they were the source of the fire. He oscillated the parachute wildly as he came down into a snow drift on a hillside. When he dug out of the snow there were many irate German citizens with rifles pointed at him, who were being exhorted by a Major of the SS to shoot the "terroflieger, luftgangster, Amerikanischer!"

It was not to be, for several Luftwaffe personnel drove up in a German version of a jeep, ran over to him, helped him carry his chute and assisted him into the jeep. They drove away while the Major excoriated his rescuers.

BY THE G. M. SMITH CREW

COMPILED BY AL DUSSLIERE

The navigator was now a POW. He wondered what had happened to the bombardier, to the rest of the crew and to "Buzz Blonde." For the navigator it would be many months later, after the war was over, before most of the questions would be answered.

When the bombardier regained consciousness he didn't know where he was or what was happening because he was falling with his back facing the ground and he was looking up into the sky. He looked over his shoulder and returned to reality when he saw the ground coming up and he knew where he was. He thought he was below 18,000 feet, the oxygen level, but how far he didn't know. He estimated he was at about 10,000 feet. At this time he thought it time to start opening his chute. It was a good thing he did because when he tried to grasp the rip cord he could not bend his fingers. His right hand was frozen as hard as a rock because of the missing glove. He guessed it must have remained on the "mike" button when he called out, "Pull up, pull up." With his right hand out of commission, he grabbed the rip cord with his left hand and pulled like "hell." The "Man" upstairs must have helped because the chute opened and down he floated.

It wasn't long before he hit the top of a barn and rolled off. His "welcome committee" was right there to welcome him to his new life in Germany.

Without a navigator or maps it was decided that we should head south toward France, stay on top of the clouds until jumped by fighters, then drop into clouds to frustrate them. The tail gunner assisted in keeping the plane on course by reporting the position of the sun. About the time we got down to the tops of the clouds there were no more clouds, also no fighters. At about 6000 feet we were given the opportunity to bail out. The pilot and co-pilot were going to stick with the plane so the rest of the crew chose to do the same. During this period of decision we encountered intense and accurate flak. Shortly thereafter the co-pilot saw a C-47, "Gooney Bird," taking off from an airstrip which we assumed was on friendly acres. We had no radio reception at all from the time of the collision. Even with the condition of the plane it was decided to attempt a landing.

When we turned downwind to the strip and extended the landing gear the pilot heard a clear voice in his headset say, "17, if you're going to land here, pull up your gear; this's a fighter strip. Land alongside the strip; we need it to keep going." The gear was retracted and the voice said, "Good Luck."

Using the rudder for directional control, the first approach was not "lined up." A "go-around" by turn needle and mag compass got us headed in the right direction, but just above the trees. The strip was out of sight for almost all of the next approach. After a few fervent prayers to Jesus, there was the strip in beautiful alignment. Reducing power and setting it in the snow on its belly was a strong sense of relief. Letting it toboggan to a slow stop nearly 180 degrees to the left was, by contrast, almost fun. During the landing our plane demolished a number of small light aircraft parked along the side of the runway.

The five gunners were in the radio room in crash positions. As the plane slid down the side of the runway, the snow stormed up inside the plane as if we were in a blizzard. Later we jokingly told the pilot and co-pilot that it was the smoothest landing they had ever made.

As soon as the plane came to a halt the gunners jumped from the plane and realizing there was no fire leaped up on the wings to assist the pilot and co-pilot in exits through their respective windows. Ground personnel met us and informed us we were in Luxembourg.

"Buzz Blonde" was a mess. Most of the nose was gone, the right wing was wrecked, the horizontal stabilizer a disaster, the ball turret was practically inside the waist of the plane with the support column pushed through the top of the fuselage and the belly smashed in from the landing. If we had known the extent of the damage we might not have had the extreme confidence we had in the ship. Using what equipment he

We Remember Bonn

could scrape together, the radio operator got word back to the base that we were down, fortunately in friendly territory.

The realization then hit us that we had lost two of our buddies.

We spent four days in Luxembourg and five days in Paris before returning from "MIA" to the 303rd on January 20.

On January 22nd we flew our 14th mission to Sterkrade, Germany. We were hit with about 17 minutes of intense and accurate flak over the target. The toggler and the tail gunner were wounded, number 3 and 4 engines were shot out and the rest of the damage to the plane was so severe we were forced to make an emergency landing in Ghent, Belgium. The plane, "Cheshire Cat" was a mass of holes. This is another story.

The rest of our missions were not as eventful as 13 and 14 except for our 32nd mission to Hamburg, Germany on March 20, 1945, when we were hit by about 30 ME 262 jets. Luckily we survived that too.

The 35th and final mission for most of the original crew was to an airfield at Furstenau, Germany on March 25th.

During his forced vacation in Germany the bombardier was entertained at four different sites: Memmingen, Obermassfeld, Nuremberg and Mooseburg. His transportation between these sites was not the kind he would recommend, rail (40 and 8 boxcars) and mostly foot power. The last change of "hotels" was from Nuremberg to Mooseburg. He walked those 21 miserable miles in ten days. He remained there until liberated by General Patton's Army. No more bedbugs, lice or fleas.

After his capture the navigator was taken to Oberursel, an interrogation center located near Frankfurt on the Main. A few days later he met the bombardier. They were together just a few minutes and then separated. The navigator was taken to Wetzlar for two days and then taken by train to a prison camp at Barth. He remembered that when the prisoners were being marched from the train to the camp they were pelted with snowballs thrown by German children. The last part of April the German guards left the camp and the prisoners were on their own for three days until the Russians arrived. The prisoners were flown out of the area in the middle of May by B-17's of the 8th Air Force.

The faith expressed in the diary about our two lost buddies, "I know they are safe" was rewarded. We learned months later that Gardner and Dohm were prisoners of war. Mel Alderman was killed in action in a mid-air collision on his 35th and last mission a few days after the rest of us had completed our missions. Smith, Gardner, Dohm, Parker, Howell and Dussliere got together for the first time after the war was over in Chicago in 1950. We still see each other on a regular basis.



Coleman Sanders, Shirley Sanders and Ken Edwards.



Jean and Frank DeCicco at the races.

Dues Status As of 15 May 1991

	Regular	Associate	Total	Percent
SLM	137	1	138	9 +
LM	526	3	529	36 +
1992 +	16	6	22	1 +
1991	398	46	444	30 +
In Arrears:				
1990	70	6	76	5
Others (2 + yrs)	228	19	247	17
	1375	81	1456	100

Proposed Budget Operating Account

303rd Bomb Group Association
1 Sept. 1991 - 31 Aug. 1992

INCOME

Member Dues	\$6100
Reunion (Boise)	6000
PX Profits	750
Interest/Dividends	3874
Misc./Other	100
Total	\$16824

EXPENDITURES

Administration	\$300
President's Exp.	500
Newsletter/Roster/Publicity	8500
Memorials/Plaques	1000
Reunion Advances	3000
Records Retrieval	3000
PX Advance	0
Misc./Bond/Other	524
Total	\$16824

May 1, 1991

Treasurer's Report to Officers, Directors and Members

	Beginning of Fiscal Year	Increase Decrease	May 1, 1991
Life Membership CDs	\$52738.00	+ \$2378.00	\$55116.00
Money Market Account	\$26422.58	+ \$3202.91	\$29625.49
Checking Account	\$ 2597.31	+ \$1723.41	4320.72
	\$81757.89	+ \$7304.32	\$89062.21

Respectfully submitted

Charles S. Schmeltzer, Treasurer



UNVEILING — Gene Girman (l) unveils a reproduction of the Keith Ferris mural featuring the Thunderbird at the Lone Star Museum in Galveston, Texas, in April. More photos of the Schaumburg reunion will run in the September issue of the newsletter.

Meetings, meetings and more meetings . . .

During the recent annual reunion in Schaumburg, the outgoing and incoming Boards of Directors held two meetings and sandwiched in between was the general meeting of the membership. The official minutes of those meetings which were duly noted by the respective secretaries covers more than five pages of single spaced typing. Rather than take up half the space of this newsletter by printing them in their entirety, I will try to summarize the discussions. If anyone desires a copy of each of the meetings I will be more than glad to forward a copy to them.

Board Meeting of Sept. 27, 1991.

Members present: Wilbur Klint, president; Harley Cannon, VIP for reunions; Charles Schmeltzer, treasurer; Carl DuBose, secretary; Hal Susskind, 359th rep. and newsletter editor; Henry Johansen, 444th rep.; Harry Gobrecht, historian; Carlton Smith, Hdq. Rep., roster and membership chairman; William McLeod, 358th rep.; Malcolm Magid, nominating committee chairman; Walt Mayer, reunion committee, and Lew Lyle, advisor to the 303rd.

The minutes from the previous board meeting at Las Vegas were accepted. Treasurer Charles Schmeltzer presented a report of the Association's financial status. (Figures appear elsewhere in this newsletter.) Bill McLeod, budget committee chairman presented a budget for fiscal year -1 Sept. 1991-31 Aug. 1992 which was accepted by the board. (Figures appear elsewhere in this newsletter.)

A motion by Bill McLeod that we correspond with children of deceased members, offering them an opportunity to join the Association was passed. This suggestion was originally proposed by Sylvia Reeves, widow of former membership chairman Jim Reeves. Mrs. Reeves offered to donate an IBM computer used by her late husband in his membership functions. Board agreed to accept her generous gift but left the decision as to whom should use the computer to the incoming board.

Board agreed to coordinate the fiscal year date of the Association (September 1) with the fiscal year date of the PX (July 31) for the convenience of auditing and reporting.

Walt Mayer gave a report on the proposed 1992 reunion in Boise, Idaho. He introduced Jack Rencher who has been involved in the early planning. Early proposals are: a float trip on the river; a visit to the World Center for Birds of Prey; a Green Belt Tour train ride along the river; a visit to the Arts in the Park; etc. Rencher has the reunion planning well in hand and will coordinate all future plans with the new VIP for reunions. Since this will be the 50th Anniversary of the 303rd Bomb Group, suggestions were made to publicize the event as much as possible. Walt Mayer also described the possibility of producing 3000 (more if needed) place mats containing a reproduction of a Keith Farris painting on the front with a list of all of the 303rd's missions on the reverse side. These would be distributed at the Boise reunion.

Lew Lyle gave a presentation on the progress of the "home" for the 8th A.F. at Savannah, GA. 1992 will also be the 50th Anniversary of the 8th A.F.

Hal Susskind was appointed permanent newsletter editor by the executive committee. Harry Gobrecht was appointed association historian as well as unit contact person. It was agreed that a set of the archive reproductions would go to the historian and one set would go to Malcolm Magid in Georgia.

Bob Livingston presented several changes in the by-laws; the major change was the one calling for the removal of all term limitations for all officers except the president. It was agreed that he present his changes to the membership at the general meeting. It was also agreed that the bonding requirements be left in the by-laws.

Alvin Morton, who has been active in the placement

of wreaths in cemeteries made a proposal to the board for the establishment of a foundation for the placement of additional wreaths in additional cemeteries. His request to present his proposal to the general membership was denied due to the competition such a campaign would have with efforts to raise funds for the memorial at Savannah.

President Klint described the memorials placed at Barksdale and Galveston by the Association during the year.

The reunion committee was authorized to design plaques memorializing the 303rd to be placed in Boise during the 1992 reunion. It was also recommended that the Association's Executive Committee decide what kind of memorial be given in the future upon the deaths of officers or members of the Association provided they are given timely notices.

The minutes were signed by Carl DuBose, secretary of the 303rd Bomb Group Association.

General Meeting 1400 Hours, May 27, 1991, Schaumburg, IL

President Klint called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by Father Schumacher.

Secretary's report: moved, seconded, reading to be dispensed with and accepted. Passed.

Treasurer's report: moved, seconded, the report be accepted as presented. Passed.

By Laws Committee Report: Bob Livingston presented several proposed changes to the By Laws:

1. Removal of the restriction on the tenure of officers other than the presidency.
2. Elimination of the requirement of a written ballot.
3. Provision for super life membership.
4. Require associate members to pay dues.
5. Provide for the listing of the election of officers in the order of business for the general meeting.
6. Unit contact person will maintain contact with the Eighth Air Force Heritage Center.

motion was seconded and carried.

President Klint presented the proposal for and described the purpose and progress of the Heritage Center. He also described the method of financing and requested participation by members by individual contributions. A pamphlet was distributed which offered an opportunity for individuals to contribute. Magid added to Klint's remarks.

President Klint described the accomplishments of the preceding months. Finances are in good condition, annual dues payers are very important, and memorial plaques have been placed at Barksdale Field and The Lone Star Flight Museum at Galveston, Texas.

Walt Mayer presented plaques recognizing former presidents who had not previously received recognition. Presentations were made to Harrison, McClain, Eisenhart, Wagner, and to Mrs. Lehmann for the late Al Lehmann. Hal Susskind was recognized for his publication of the newsletter. President Klint recognized others who had contributed to the association's actions and to the reunion.

Malcolm Magid, nominating committee chairman, presented the slate of officers nominated by the committee. During the presentation, Walt Mayer nominated Bill McLeod for Administrative Vice-President from the floor. Results of the election were: President: Carl DuBose; Vice-President, Adm: Bill McLeod; Vice-President, Reunions: James Taylor; Secretary: Ford Kelley; Treasurer: Charles Smeltzer.

Jim Taylor and Jack Rencher made a presentation of events planned for Boise.

Meeting adjourned.

**Carl Dubose,
Secretary**

Board Meeting, May 28, 1991

Present: Carl DuBose, president; James Taylor; Bill McLeod; Ford Kelley, Jack Rencher; Bob Livingston; Hal

Susskind; Walt Mayer and Bud Klint.

Carl DuBose's opening remarks included the following objectives:

- *Setting major priorities
- *Enhancing the social activities of the Association
- *Expanding Group recognition through Memorials and publicity
- *Locating "lost" members
- *Continue sound fiscal programs

James Taylor announced the formation of the Boise Reunion Committee: Jim Taylor, Walt Mayer, Jack Rencher, Bill McLeod and Mel McCoy.

Jack Rencher briefed the Board on the tentative Boise Reunion Program:

- *six hour river raft trip, including bus ride and lunch
- *Bird of Prey location (a view of near extinct birds, e.g. Falcons)
- *USAF fighter and tanker displays
- *Try to secure 3 airworthy B-17s
- *Art in the Park
- *If enough interest, golf and bridge sessions
- *Basque dancers
- *Working on speaker selection (it was the consensus of the Board that long speeches and formal meetings are not well received)
- *Plans:

Hope to have 800 attendees

Will start letters campaign to members very soon

Will work on system on pre-assignment of tables for banquet

Hal Susskind reported that an Association Roster will be included with the mailing of the next newsletter.

Bill McLeod resigned as 358th Sqdn. rep. Walt Mayer was appointed to replace McLeod. Will Simpkins was selected as 358th alternate.

Discussion re: Reunion to follow Boise. Jim Taylor will investigate the selection of Savannah, GA as a possible site but this hinges on the completion of the 8th AF Heritage Center by then.

A motion was unanimously passed to go on record thanking Harley Cannon for his outstanding performance in the planning and implementation of the 1991 reunion. The secretary was directed to send a letter to Harley Cannon confirming the Board's gratitude.

The secretary was asked to notify the 8th AFHS that historian Harry Gobrecht will be the contact person for the 303rd.

Jim Taylor will look into ordering new stationery for the Association.

Mrs. James Reeves has offered to donate an IBM computer to the Association. Carl DuBose will make the necessary arrangements for accepting the computer.

The letters to Harley Cannon and the 8th AFHS were mailed on May 30, 1991.

The minutes of the meeting were prepared and signed by Ford Kelley, secretary of the 303rd Bomb Group Association.

England in '92

On page 5 of this issue are two letters inquiring if the 303rd is planning any type reunion in England in '92. Before we can plan anything and keeping in mind that we are committed to hold a reunion in Boise, Idaho in September of 1992, we have to get an accurate count of all the members who are interested in hopping the ocean in '92 or possibly in '93. All interested members are asked to contact the new VIP for Reunions, James B. Taylor, 421 Yerba Buena Ave., Los Altos, CA 94022, as soon as possible. Results of the survey will be published in the September issue of the newsletter.

IN MEMORIAM

Harold L. Schrader (427th) died suddenly of a heart attack on April 26, 1990 in Cave City, KY. He is survived by his wife Virginia.

William A. Broughton (427th) died Feb. 5, 1991 after a long illness. He lived in Chalfont, PA and is survived by his wife Emily.

Ballard T. Byers (427th) died of cancer on May 11, 1991. He flew 35 missions from Jan. to June 1944. After the war he was a pilot for Pan American World Airways for 32 years. He was 74. He is survived by his wife Frances.

Albert R. "Roy" Westfall, Jr. (427th) long-time member of the 303rd Bomb Group Association died on April 30, 1991 of heart failure after battling a bout with pneumonia. He lived in Cisco, TX and is survived by his wife Kathleen.

William R. Calhoun, Jr. (359th) died in March 1991 in the hospital where he was undergoing open heart surgery. "Cal" joined the 303rd as a 2nd Lt. at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho in early 1942. He went overseas to Molesworth with the 359th Sqdn. and later became its Commanding Officer. Clark Gable flew several missions with "Cal" in the "Eight Ball." With Gen. Robert Travis as Air Commander, he flew the lead aircraft on the notorious raid on Oschersleben, one of the

roughest raids of the war for the 303rd Bomb Group. After the war he again made headlines when he had to ditch an aircraft in the Pacific. All the crew were rescued. At the time of his death he lived in Fort Worth, TX. He is survived by his wife Virginia. (More on "Cal" in the next newsletter).

Jim S. Reeves (427th) died at home at his desk while working on the history of the 303rd. Jim who was a tail gunner on Lt. Newton's crew, was shot down on Sept. 9, 1944 on his 28th mission to Ludwigshafen, Germany. He became a POW and was released on May 4, 1945. Jim became Membership Chairman of the Association in October of 1986 and took over as historian in February 1991. Jim is survived by his wife Sylvia who graciously donated the IBM computer that Jim was using to the Association. Sylvia has asked me to pass on her thanks to the Association for the lovely flower arrangement and to all the members who have called and written expressing their sympathy.

James B. Linn, (360) died on April 12, 1991 in Kokoma, IN. He is survived by his wife, Mary Maxine (Clark) Linn and two daughters; Mrs. George (Sherry) Myers and Mrs. Richard (Cynthia) Kuntz and five grandchildren.

A HUGE THANK YOU!

A huge thank you from the Chicago Reunion Committee to the many helping hands who assisted in making this another memorable reunion! It is a heartwarming experience to have so many of our 303rd "family" working together for the pleasure of us all. We would especially like to thank the gracious volunteers who manned the registration desk, including Tina Elkins, Ruth Cannon, Bev Mayer, Evie Simpkins, Barbara Heller, Betty Miller, Mary Klint, Shirley Kindred, Helen Hoke and Sue Lehmann. The closeness of the 303rd members in 1942-45 is still evident in 1991.

Harley Cannon & Walt Mayer
On behalf of the Chicago Reunion Committee

NEW MEMBERS

- 1613 Magner, John H., 1 Eastwood Dr., Greenville, PA 16125
- 1614 Gorchesky, Beeny J., 1710 Jaffa Dr., Johnston, PA 15905
- 1615 Rose, Jack W., 10 Greens Lane, Pleasanton, CA 94566
- 1616 Lombardi, Mondo, 6055 Springburn Dr., Dublin, OH 43017
- 1617 Forve, Frank, 3184 Serra Way, Fairfield, CA 94533
- 1618 Kiggen, William P., 1295 S. Crawton Ave., Hemet, CA 92343
- L1619 Rogan, Dave L., 211 Arthur Heights, Middlesboro, KY 40965
- L1260 Clay, Joseph R., Sr., 3709 Berry Ave., Groves, TX 77619
- 1621 Clark, Jimmie W., 3260 State Street, Salem, OR 97301
- L1622 Deerfield, Eddie, 1 Eton Overlook, Rockville, MD 20850
- 1623 Struck, Thomas H., 14950 S. E. Edelweiss, Boring, OR 97009
- 1624 Hoke, Robert E., 218 S. Wapella Ave., Mt. Prospect, IL 60056
- L1625 Bartholomew, Dale E., 248 Sodom Hutchings Rd. SE, Vienna, OH 44473
- 1626 Charron, Ray, 19701 Abraham, Mount Clemens, MI 48043
- 1627 Rasmussen, Gerald G., 2957 N. Swallow Dr., Port Clinton, OH 43452
- 1628 Madey, Herbert P., 6829 S. Komensky, Chicago, IL 60629
- 1629 Braden, Richard, 49 Fairground Ave., Dayton, OH 45409
- A120 Krutt, William R., 3475 Middlefield Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94306
- A121 Woodul, 1008 Portofino, Arlington, TX 76102
- A122 Rocketto, Harold J., 18 Stenton Ave., Westerly, RI 02891
- A123 Stouse, June Mrs., 2515 Country Club Dr., Bullhead City, AZ 86442
- A124 Rogala, Alan R., 45 River St., Ludlow, MA 01056

Upgraded to Super Life Member

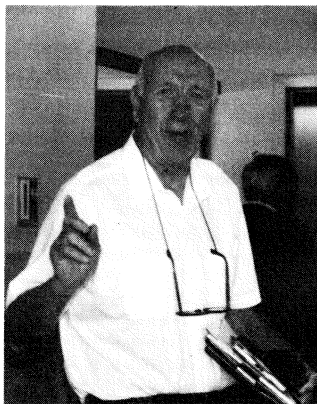
Broderick, George V.
Mackin, George T.
William H. Simpkins
Forrest Barton

Julian Dennis
Fortunak, Richard C.
Ole Lovold

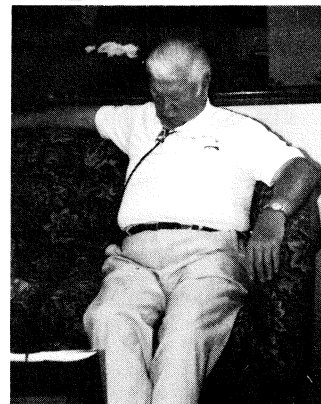
Donations

Manifold, Donovan B. \$10
Harrelson, Thomas K. \$15

Kastenbaum, Bernard M. \$25
Fortunak, Richard C. \$25



Walt Mayer says, "I'll see you in Boise in '92."



Harley Cannon after the "Company" has gone.

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Boise in '92