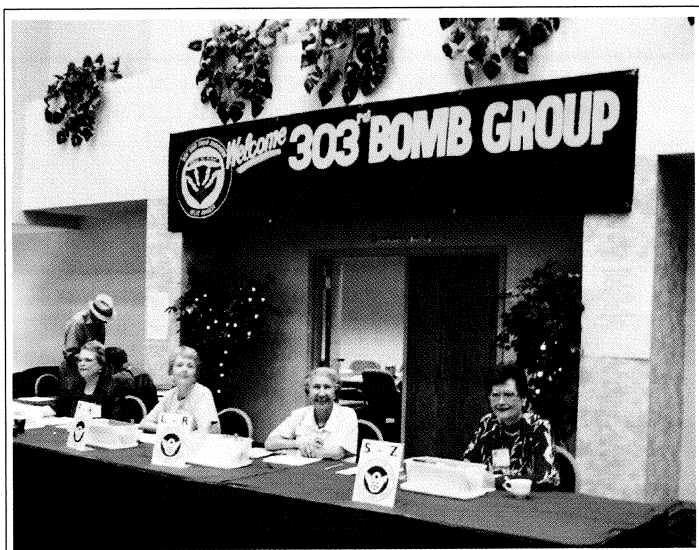


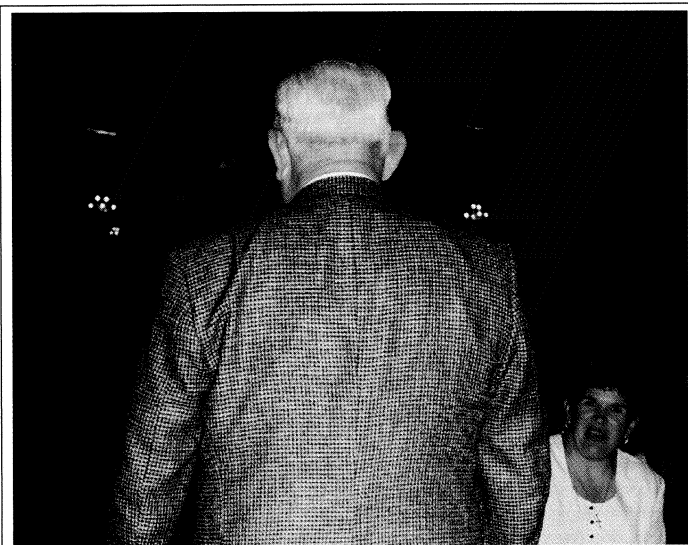
Hell's Angels Newsletter

303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

November, 1998



THE BEGINNING — It's Friday, 21 August, and the reunion registration team of (l-to-r) Jean DeCicco, Virginia Hargrove, Rosita Leal and Sue Gardner prepares for the opening rush..



AND THE END — It's Tuesday, 25 August, and Harry Gobrecht, 303rd Association President, says "good night" to a weary Kathy Johnson after a remarkable farewell banquet.

8th AF HERITAGE MUSEUM IS SHINING STAR OF MEMORABLE 303RD REUNION

Some 550 Molesworth veterans and their kin journeyed to Savannah, Georgia, for the 15th reunion of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, and came away inspired by the magnificent 8th AF Heritage Museum and thrilled by the companionship of fellow 303rd members and their families.

The turnout of family members was remarkable as wives, children and grandchildren flocked to Savannah and to nearby Pooler, home of the Heritage Museum, from August 21-25 to share precious time with their veterans.

In his remarks welcoming the 303rd to the Museum, Executive Director Dr. Barry Buxton said the building was not simply a repository of machines but rather a human tribute to the courage and sacrifices of the 8th Air Force veterans of military conflict.

This sense of honor and pride among the Molesworth veterans and their families was pervasive throughout the reunion, and made it one of the happiest occasions in years.

The reunion was graced by the presence of Kermit D. Stevens, the 303rd's longtime Group commander at Molesworth. Still spry at 90, Col.

Stevens was accompanied by his daughter, Ellen. He last attended the reunion in Boise in 1992.

Credit Walt and Ruth Ferrari for planning and conducting an outstanding gathering. From the beginning, their sensitive and conscientious handling of reunion business had been evident to all who had contact with them. They were among the most deserving of the multitude who were presented with awards at the farewell banquet.

There was a flurry of activity from Day One. Although the focus on **Friday** was to begin the registration process, John Ford had his Hospitality Centre up and running while Charlie and Vicki Sykes opened the PX in commendable style.

Saturday morning saw the first venture to the Heritage Museum and a special presentation to Gary Moncur, an Associate Member, who created for the 303rd Bomb Group

Association the most detailed and appealing Web Page of any WWII air corps unit. Gary's father, Vern, who passed away in 1985, was the first pilot of the 303rd's "Thunderbird."

Saturday evening was devoted to a dinner and cruise aboard paddle-wheelers on the Savannah River.

Sunday was THE day as the crowd gathered at the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum for a sombre service honoring the memories of our comrades who fell during World War II and those who have passed on since victory in 1945. There were poetry readings by Jim Taylor, Ed Gardner and Eddie Deerfield, gift presentations to the museum and the dedication of a new monument honoring members who have contributed most significantly to the success of the Association since its inception.

The presentations were in the form of woodcarvings fashioned by Britain's Bill Adams who attended the reunion with his wife, Joyce, as guests of the 303rd.

Membership Chairman Ed Miller conducted the Memorial Roll Call.

Much of the day at the museum was spent in enjoying a buffet lunch

and in touring the many exhibits. As Dr. Buxton had remarked earlier, it became immediately clear that the artifacts were there to point the way to the human dimension—the combat crews, ground crews and support personnel who had used them more than half a century ago to defeat a seemingly invincible Nazi enemy.

Monday's golf tourney, which brought out 26 of our duffers, was won by Fred Reichel, Spyder Smith and Bill Kelley (the late Ford Kelley's son) with a scramble score of 68.

The evening's Italian Buffet featured not only good food, but the piano antics of Miss Emma Kelly, a Savannah landmark, who was a character in the novel "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil."

A round of unit meetings on **Tuesday** morning culminated in a general meeting at which members elected Harry Gobrecht as President, Bill Roche as VP Administration, Dick Johnson as Secretary and Jack Rencher as Treasurer.

Finally, a farewell banquet that was a happy blur of performance awards, special awards and raffle prize drawings against a background of music by the 3rd Infantry Band.



303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

"HELLS ANGELS" NEWSLETTER

Editor & Publisher **Eddie Deerfield**

VOL. XX, No. 2 3552 Landmark Trail Palm Harbor, FL 34684 November 1998

The 303rd Bomb (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 303rds 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 303rds 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. Annual dues is \$10; \$15 for foreign addressees.

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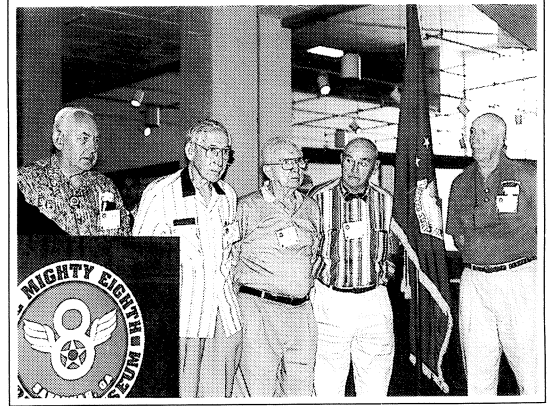
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THE GRAND OLD MEN — Among the first 20 members honored for making the most significant contributions of time and talent to the 303rd Bomb Group Association are (l-to-r) Ralph Adams, Bill Eisenhart, Eddie Deerfield, Bill Roche, Joe Vieira, Lew Lyle, Ed Miller, Harry Gobrecht, Jack Rencher, Hal Susskind, Bill Heller and Walt Mayer.

MUSEUM MEMORIAL SERVICE SOLEMN AND INSPIRATIONAL

Hundreds of Molesworth veterans, their wives and families sat in rapt attention as the 303rd Bomb Group's living and dead were honored in the Lewis E. Lyle Rotunda of the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum at the Association's annual reunion.

The day at the museum began in mid-morning on Sunday 23 August as the reunion crowd began arriving by bus and car. First, there was the sighting of the impressive building which blossomed out of land vacant little more than two years ago.

Even more inspiring were the magnificent exhibits inside which portrayed the dramatic human stories of the men and women of the 8th Air Force who fought and won World War II.

Molesworth members had special cause to be proud of the 303rd's exhibit case which is packed with personal artifacts, crowned by the Medal of Honor presented to T/Sgt Forrest L. Vosler by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

"Mission Experience," one of the most popular of the museum's offerings, gave family members a sense of what B-17 combat crews experienced on a bombing mission. It was realistic enough to give the shakes to many an air war veteran.

An excellent buffet lunch prepared by the Museum's talented kitchen staff was a welcome interlude in an event-packed day.

By 1500, everyone was seated in the Lyle Rotunda for the memorial service which opened with the posting of the colors by the 165th Airlift Wing of the Georgia National Guard.

The 303rd was welcomed by Dr. Barry Buxton, the 8th AF Heritage Museum's Executive Director, who reiterated what everyone felt—that the museum

was a tribute to the courage, dedication and patriotism which reflected the human side of war.

The invocation by Chaplain Robert L. Johnson was followed by poetry readings, a tradition which began at the Colorado Springs reunion in the US Air Force Academy's main chapel in 1995.

Jim Taylor of the 358th Squadron read *One Mission*, a pilot's account of an attack on a Nazi target. Ed Gardner of the 427th, a former prisoner of war, asked *Can You Take It?*, in words written on the wall of a German stalagluft, and Eddie Deerfield of the 360th told of *The Lady He Had Loved and Lost*, a reflection on the 303rd's B-17s.

What began months ago

as a tribute to Carlton Smith, the 303rd's late membership chairman, evolved into an Association Service Recognition Memorial honoring those members, living and dead, who made the most significant contributions of their time and talents over the years to furthering the goals of the Group's Association.

A bronze plaque on the front of the memorial in the Museum Garden reads:

In peace as in war, a measure of life is devotion to serving — the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) Association honors those members who served it with exceptional devotion after World War II.

A second bronze plaque on the back reads:

They also serve — the veterans of the 303rd Bombardment Group salute their ladies, without whose diligence and timely support the Association would not have grown and flourished over the years.

Membership Chairman Ed Miller took the podium to formally identify the first 20 men whose names are engraved on the monument. They are:

**Ralph B. Adams
Eddie Deerfield
William E. Eisenhart
Harry D. Gobrecht
William C. Heller
Robert Kidd
Wilbur Klint
Elroy C. Lehmann
Lewis E. Lyle
Walter J. Mayer
Melvin T. McCoy
Edgar C. Miller
Jack P. Rencher
William J. Roche
Chap. Edmund Skoner
Chap. Merritt Slawson
Carlton Smith
George V. Stallings
Harold A. Susskind
Joseph Vieira**

The monument has space for the engraving of a total of 40 names. The Board of Directors voted to add four names a year to the monument for the next five years. Wives, widows and non-veteran members are also eligible for consideration if they meet the high standards of Association service criteria.

Following the 303rd's memorial service tradition, the membership chairman intoned the names of the more than 60 members who have passed away since the 1997 reunion.

Chaplain Rene Gracida said the benediction, and, as the bugler blew taps, there were few dry eyes in the audience. The ceremony concluded with the retirement of the colors.

EDITOR'S NOTE — We received many requests during and after the reunion for the texts of the poems read at the service. They can be found on Page 6 of this edition.



THE ASSOCIATION SERVICE RECOGNITION MEMORIAL is the circular marble installation to the rear of the 303rd Bomb Group's highly praised principle memorial in the Museum's Garden.

From the President

Thanks to all of you for the honor of being elected as the 15th 303rd BG(H) Association President. 1998-1999 challenges are numerous. Thanks to a strong roster of officers, Squadron Representatives and appointed Committee Chairmen we will remain as the premier and best 8th AF unit Association. Our Savannah Reunion is now an event of the past - but it will long be remembered. The anticipated high temperatures and humidity failed to materialize. Our hard working and talented Reunion V P and his wife, Walter & Ruth Ferrari, did an outstanding job before and during the Reunion. Kudos from all of us.

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum was our key reunion event. Every-one was in awe on how much has been accomplished in just two and one-half years since the museum's May 1996 grand opening. The 303rd has an eye-catching presence that includes:

- ★Our 303rd showcase
- ★Our rotunda supporting unit banner and plaque
- ★Our WWII battle flag with streamers
- ★The large entrance rotunda named for and dedicated to our own Lewis E. Lyle
- ★Our beautiful Memorial Garden monument
- ★Our new cylindrical monument honoring those whose outstanding service has made our 303rd BGA great

★More Memorial Garden Wall of Valor name plaques and crew plaques than any other 8th AF unit

★The new St. Nazaire, France exhibit honoring the 91st, 303rd, 305th & 306th BG's

★Medal of Honor awardee photo gallery that includes our T/Sgt Vosler and 1stLt Mathis.

★Extensive 303rd artifacts, photos, etc. in the protected archive rooms.

More are being sought. ★Library viewing of the many Lew Lyle's 303rd BGA member video interviews.

★Movies that include many shots of 303rd combat scenes.

★The E&E exhibit which features some 303rd evadees.

★Four 303rd BGA members on the museum BofD. No other unit has more than one.

★The Keith Ferris art exhibition featuring several 303rd paintings.

We have established several important goals for the future.

★**Overdue WWII Awards** Assist Hal Susskind in his campaign to obtain awards for ground personnel and combat crewmen who were overlooked during WWII

★**Family orientated 303rd BGA** Make our Association more family orientated.

Increase family memberships and attendance at reunions. It was encouraging to see so many happy families at Savannah..

★**M8thAFH Museum Support** Increase 303rd membership in and continuous financial support for the Museum.

The memory of sacrifices and accomplishments made by each 303rd BG(H) member will be best perpetuated by our families & the Museum.

★**B-47 Aircraft at the M8thAFH Museum** The

museum's memorial garden B-47 tail surface will have our WWII red triangle "C"

The 303rd BombWing flew B-47's and other aircraft from Davis Monthan AFB,AZ from 1953-1964.

Many of their aircraft used our tail insignia. Our 303rd BGA has donated \$10,000 to help pay for the estimated

\$150,000 B-47 erection. We pledged an additional \$15-25,000+ from our members.

We are asking for \$1,000 contributions from members who can afford this amount with lesser donations from others.

★Tax deductible Gifts will qualify you for a museum membership.

\$1,000 gift contributor names will be shown on a Museum Rotunda "Honors Section". Lesser amounts are sought from others.

The B-47 will be highly visible from the I-95 highway

★**Future reunions** We want to make our 1999 San Antonio, Texas and future reunions as successful as past reunions - but reunion help is required particularly in the registration, PX and hospitality rooms.

Committee Chairmen also require help throughout the year. Please advise me if you are available to help

Bill Heller Resigns As 360th's Rep

(Following is the text of a letter addressed to President Harry Go-brecht from William Heller dated 14 September 1998)

"It is with extreme regret that I resign my position as Squadron Representative for the 360th Squadron which I once commanded. By copy of this letter, the Alternate, Richard L. "Spider" Smith is directed to assume the position of 360th Squadron Representative. He is further directed to appoint an Alternate and advise you of his name.

"Further, by copy of this letter, the Membership Chairman, Mr. Ed Miller, is advised that I will be unable to participate in the annual mailing about which we spoke at the Board meetings during the Savannah reunion in 1998.

"I have been exceptionally pleased to hold the Squadron Representative position and profusely—with endearment—thank the gallant members of the 360th Squadron who assisted so greatly in keeping me alive during our stint at Moleworth. I love them all.

"The reason for the above is the physical regimen on which I must embark and the prognosis that health will not be as robust as it has been in the past. Just as we did in our lives, we must assess our situation from time to time and act with prudence. There is nothing serious at the moment, and I sincerely trust that this will not spark a plethora of letters, phone calls and inquiries.

"Ruth joins me in wishing you all well. She was so pleased to see you all and especially to view the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum. We love you all. We shall attend every reunion we are able."

EDITOR'S NOTE — It's another end of an era. We'll miss your firm hand at the controls of the 360th. God bless.

DRIVE LAUNCHED TO FUND MUSEUM'S B-47

Contributions are sought to fund the 8th AF Heritage Museum's B-47 Installation Project. Checks with the notation "For the B-47 project" should be made out to the 303rd Bomb Group Association and mailed to Treasurer Jack P. Rencher, P. O. Box 7927, Boise, ID 83707-1927.

These tax deductible donations will be passed to the Museum where the B-47 will be installed.

SEE PHOTO ON PAGE 19

Farewell Banquet a Kaleidoscope Of Multiple Colorful Happenings

An avalanche of awards and a parade of raffle prize winners dominated the farewell banquet of the 303rd Bomb Group's 15th reunion, against a melodious background of tunes by the Third Infantry Division Band.

The program opened with the passing of the gavel by outgoing President Hal Susskind to his successor, Harry Gobrecht. Angele DuBose led the pledge of allegiance, followed by the invocation by Chaplain Robert Johnson.

The introduction of special guests included the mayor of Savannah who commented, apropos of the book title, that Savannah was a "garden of good—no evil!" After an excellent dinner and the din of friendly conversation, the happenings began.

Walt Mayer presided over the distribution of more than 40 trophies to a broad spectrum of members for services to the Association.

The most prestigious honor went to Kermit Stevens who led the 303rd from 05 August 1943 to 01 September 1944, the longest serving of all the Molesworth Station commanders. In presenting the award, Lew Lyle described his "mentor" as the man whose leadership set the high standards which in the postwar years have governed the 303rd Bomb Group Association.

Another signal recognition was given to Bill Adams, an English artist, who, over the years, has been carving wood plaques with 303rd themes. He and his wife, Joyce, were guests of the Association in Savannah where he presented 12 of his carvings to the Association and to the Heritage Museum.

Reunion Vice President Walt Ferrari took the podium to voice his and Ruth's thanks to the many

members who contributed to making the reunion a huge success.

Walt later added his appreciation to Ed and Sue Gardner for computerizing all the registration data and to John Ford and Bill Beasley for setting up and operating the Hospitality Centre. He noted that Bill became a reunion casualty when his legs gave out and he had to leave Savannah the day before the banquet.

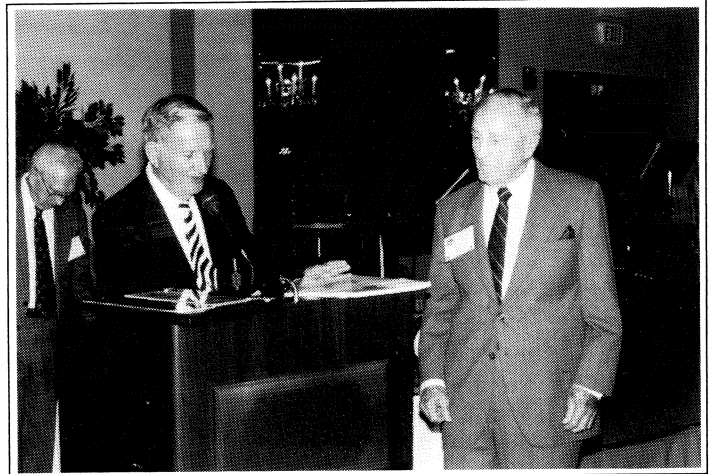
Walt had some interesting statistics on the reunion turn-out:

Total attendees — 556
Saturday Museum bus — 75
Sunday Museum bus — 500
Monday Museum bus — 49
Book tour — 94
Low country tour — 183
Dinner cruise — 369
Golf — 26
Italian buffet — 321
Banquet — 529

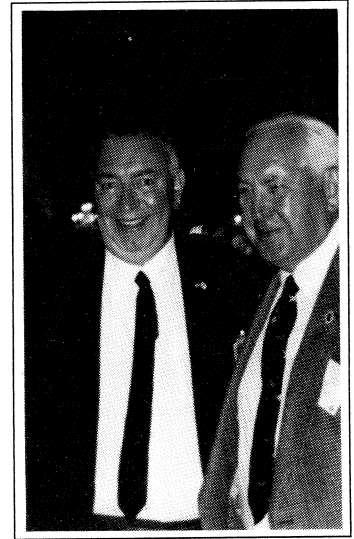
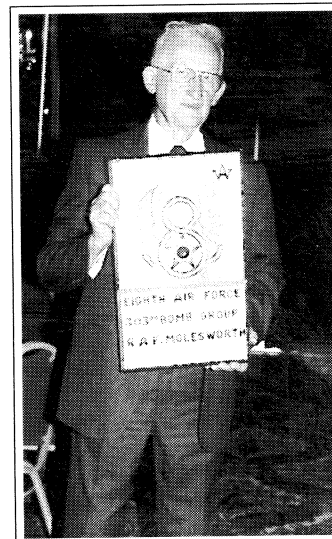
Despite the excellent dance music by the military band, relatively few of those at the banquet, compared to previous reunions, took to the hardwood.

Maybe the evening's events ran too long and our people were getting tired and ready to turn in. Or, perish the thought, maybe we're getting old!

EDITOR'S NOTE — We wish to thank the 303rd's corps of photographers for their talented submissions. Found throughout the issue are the works of Coleman Sanders, Anne Caruso, Kathy Schaubert and Dick Johnson.



PRESTIGIOUS AWARD — Col. Kermit Stevens, who was the longest serving commander of the 303rd at Molesworth, is lauded by Maj. Gen. Lewis Lyle who succeeded him in 1944 as acting CO.



THE ARTIST AND HIS WORK — Raffle winner Lee Faulkner holds one of six wood carvings donated by English artist Bill Adams. Bill is all smiles, as is Association President Harry Gobrecht to his left.



HONORING THE LADIES — Receiving awards for varying degrees of service to the 303rd Bomb Group Association were (l-to-r) Betty Lyle, Evie Simpkins, Betty Miller, Peggy Edmunds, Mary Klint, Sue Gardner, Sue Lehmann, Marjorie Johnson, Iris Magid, Corlis Girman, Angele DuBose, Mary Lee Deerfield and Betty Kelley.

LET THE POEMS BEGIN

A Traditional Interlude at the 303rd's Reunion Memorial Service

Following are the texts of the three poems read at the Memorial Service in the Lewis E. Lyle Rotunda of the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum on Sunday 23 August 1998. They are from an anthology titled *The Sky Was Never Still* published in 1996 by the 8th AFMME.

One Mission, by Duward Bare. Read by Jim Taylor, 358th pilot, who went on to become a career pilot with United Air Lines:

In the early morning darkness CQ stands inside the door, Shouts out the name of crewmen who must rise and fly once more.

First to breakfast, then to briefing the mission is made known. Guns and fighters are expected on the path that will be flown.

Standing beside the aircraft idle chatter fills the air. Try to keep the mind from worry waiting for the starting flare.

At the end of the runway engines make a mighty roar, release the brakes for take-off, they're on their way to war.

At the coast guns start firing; a chill goes down the spine. From here until returning, they're on the firing line.

The IP is a signal where feelings start to swell. 'Tis the start of the bomb run...also the door to hell.

Twenty miles of tight formation, see the target down below, It's one leg of the mission where only bombers go.

The flak gets thick and heavy, here fliers meet their fates. There is no escaping those deadly eighty-eights.

When time seems never ending, destruction held at bay, wait for that precious moment when they hear "Bombs away!"

Count losses, regroup together, more fighting still to come. Fighters and more ack-ack before returning home.

When at last the flight is over, weary crewmen only say, "There's sure to be a heaven 'cause we've been through hell today."

Can You Take It? An anonymous poem written on the wall of a solitary confinement cell in a stalagluft in Germany. Read by Ed Gardner, 427th navigator, who became a prisoner-of-war on the 10 January 1945 mission to Bonn:

It's easy to be good, boy, when everything's okay. It's easy to be cheerful when you're having things your way. But, can you hold your head up and take in on the chin when your heart is nearly breaking and you feel like giving in?

It was easy back in England, among the friends and folks. But, now you'll miss the friendly hand, the joy, the songs and jokes. The road ahead is stone, and, unless you're strong in mind, you'll find it won't be long before you're lagging far behind.

You've got to climb the hill, boy; it's no use turning back. There's only one way home, and that is off the beaten track. Remember you're American, and when you reach the crest you'll see a valley cool and green, America at her best.

You know there is a saying that sunshine follows rain, and sure enough you'll realize that joy will follow pain. Let courage be your password, make fortitude your guide, and then, instead of grousing, remember those who died.

The Lady He Had Loved and Lost, an adaptation of poems by Jill Chandler and Harold Gottlieb. Read by Eddie Deerfield, 360th radio operator/gunner, who was aboard the B-17 "Iza Vailable" when it flew back from Watten on 27 August 1943 with more than 200 flak holes in its fuselage:

He saw her in the distance. More than 50 years fell away. He was young once more, in the presence of the lady he had loved and lost, in England, in the upheaval of the second World War.

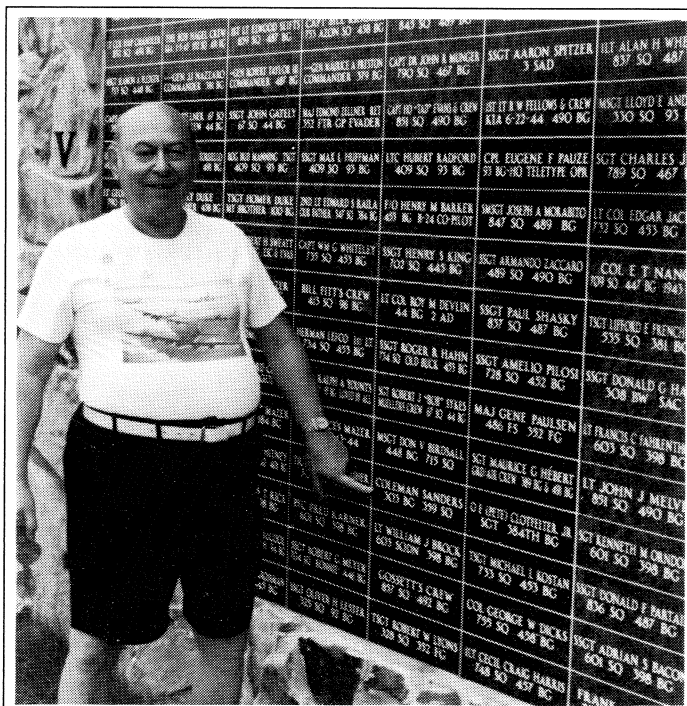
He wanted to touch her and to thank her for the many times she had been good to him; but, even now,

her beauty still took his breath away and he could only stand in awe.

What do you say after so many years? How do you relate to the moment? Heart pounding, a knot in his throat, he drew close to the lady he had loved so long ago.

The years fell away as he remembered her grace as she wheeled through the heavens, an eagle in space. The B-17, the Flying Fortress, once queen of the sky, a winged lady of an era gone by.

Memories grow dim and time passes too quickly, yet, those whom she took on missions untold still tell of her courage when stories unfold. He was once more with the lady he had loved.



A CASE IN POINT — Coleman Sanders, 303rd navigator, photographer and reunion personality, points with pride to his plaque on the Heritage Museum's Wall of Valor.

THUNDERBIRD CREW AND LATE PILOT'S SON MEET TO DEDICATE MUSEUM PLAQUE

By Gary Moncur

My father, Vern L. Moncur, was the first pilot of B-17 42-38050 *Thunderbird*. My father's love for that plane and his crewmen was a part of my life as far back as I can remember. The names of his crewmen have always been familiar to me. Though he didn't speak of his combat experiences often, when he did he emphasized what a great crew he had. He often said he was "blessed with one of the best." He passed away in January of 1985.

I began developing the **Thunderbird Web Page** out of love for my father and as a means to honor his plane and his crew's accomplishments. Dad kept a journal of his missions and had left some other memorabilia I wanted to showcase. When all this began, I had no idea what it would inspire, including being asked to serve as Webmaster for the 303rd BGA's internet web page.

On my **Thunderbird Web Page**, I had hopes of listing all the crewmen who ever flew on *Thunderbird*. With much help from Keith and Peggy Ferris and Harry Gobrecht, that was accomplished.

I never dreamed the original sketch of the *Thunderbird* nose art had survived all these years, but it was furnished to me by Betty Andrus, wife of *Thunderbird's* original radio operator James Andrus, who had drawn it.

The furthest thing from my mind was the possibility of meeting four members of the original *Thunderbird* crew and family of others. But, almost exactly one year after the web page went online, that dream came true.

As I became involved with the 303rd BGA, I learned of the plaques that were being placed in the Memorial Gardens of the **Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum** in Savannah, GA. I wanted to have a plaque made honoring *Thunderbird* and her original crew, so I approached my brothers and sisters and asked them to donate part of the expense. They all quickly agreed and the plaque was ordered.

The only thing that could be better than having the plaque placed in the museum, was having all the crew members or their families there for the dedication. That would

truly be the "cherry on top" of an already wonderful situation. I was able to locate four of the original ten *Thunderbird* crewmen and the families of four others. All were excited about the plaque and the possibility of meeting again after more than 54 years.

On Saturday, August 22, 1998, four of the original ten *Thunderbird* crewmen and families of two others met at the 303rd BGA reunion in Savannah. The dedication was a very emotional service and tears were shed by most everyone.

In attendance for the dedication and a reunion in the Marriott Hotel were: Billy Cunningham (Copilot) and his wife Callie; David Chang (bombardier), who flew all the way from Honolulu for the event; Robert Rosier (flight engineer), his wife Almedia, son Greg, daughters Donna and Martha and other family members; Walter Hein (ball turret) and his wife Florence. James Andrus (radio) was represented by his wife Betty, daughter Jackie and her family. Pilot Vern Moncur was represented by myself and my wife Susan.

Unable to attend the event were family of James Brooks (navigator) and Leonard Wike (waist gunner). We were unable to locate the other two crewmen, Thomas Dickman and Richard Baer.

Also in attendance were 303rd BGA President Hal Susskind, who conducted the ceremony, incoming President Harry Gobrecht, Ed Miller, Keith and Peggy Ferris and many others who have a place in their heart for dear old *Thunderbird*.

It was an event that will never be forgotten by all who were involved.



THE THUNDERBIRD CREW get together for their first meeting in 54 years, joined by the son of their late pilot, Vern Moncur. From left to right are Walt Hein, Robert Rosier, Gary Moncur, David Chang and Billy Cunningham.



MONCUR FAMILY HONORS CREW — The sons and daughters of late pilot Vern L. Moncur, of *Thunderbird*, pay tribute to his crew in a plaque in the 8th AF Heritage Museum's Memorial Garden.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Due to other commitments, Gary Moncur was unable to remain in Savannah for the banquet on Tuesday evening when he would have received a special award from the 303rd Bomb Group Association. After the plaque reached him by mail a few days later, he wrote to say, "I am very impressed and pleased. It is an honor for me to be part of the Association and help in my small way. I enjoy every minute of it. It's nice to be able to give something back to the men who meant so much to my dad."

The 303rd BGA Web Page address is:

<http://www.303rdbga.com>

The page went online January 31, 1998, and averages about 28 unique visits per day or about 840 people per month. Its contents include, in part:

Membership Information	303rd Officers	Reunion Information
Photographs	PX Information	B-17 History
303rd in Action Stories	Historical Overview	303rd Commanders
303rd Combat Team	Campaigns	303rd BG Missions
Hell's Angels	303rd BG Personnel	Original Crews
Original Pilots	303rd Named B-17's	303rd Aircraft
Stats & Facts	Cities Bombed	Honor Roll
Killed in Action	Goldfish Club	Murdered
Evadees & Escapees	Interned	Molesworth
Distinguished Unit	Medal of Honor	Awards

Schweinfurt Mission of June, 1998, a "milk run"

303RD VETERAN OF "BLACK THURSDAY" ATTACK ON BALL BEARING PLANT RETURNS TO SCENE

By Wilbur "Bud" Klint

To tell you I really enjoyed the trip to Schweinfurt more this time than I did in October, 1943, would be the understatement of the century. No flak, no fighters, and no rockets but just the open arm of friendship the like of which you have not seen before. I don't know when I have felt more welcome than with the first contact with our German counterparts.

These were the same people who 55 years ago were zeroing in on us with their 88mm flak guns with the intention of driving us from their area. This time, I was made to feel so much at home that I hated to leave.

On Monday, June 15, forty-nine members and families of the Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association arrived in Frankfurt, Germany. We were bussed from the airport to Schweinfurt for a most unusual get-together.

At a welcome dinner that evening at the Ratskeller in the basement of the town hall, we met and mingled with about 75 German veterans and their families. Most of those veterans were World War II "Luftwaffen Flakenhelfers." They had been conscripted out of high school at 15-16 years of age to serve in flak batteries, releasing soldiers for the Russian front. There were also a few German fighter pilots who had flown on "Black Thursday," October 14, 1943.

Next morning, we met at the St. Johannis Lutheran Church, the oldest building in town, dating from the 12th century, for an ecumenical service. The Lord Mayor (the first female Oberbürgermeister in the 1200 year history of Schweinfurt,) welcomed the group. The service was conducted by the Lutheran pastor, a Catholic priest and an American Army chaplain from a nearby military base.

After services, we went to a city park in the heart of town to dedicate an impressive memorial, designed and jointly funded by the Flakenhelfers and the SSMA. The dedication was attended by the American Consul General from Munich and an official of the German government, both of whom spoke to the crowd of several hundred.

Keynote speeches were given by the Lord Mayor, Georg Schafer for the Flakenhelfers, and I had the honor of representing the SSMA.

The memorial is a steel slab,

10 feet high and eight feet wide. At the top is a cleft, a jagged cut running to a point about half-way down the face of the memorial. On the left is German text honoring those who died in the air and on the ground during the Schweinfurt air raids. On the right is similar text in English.

Below the cut, in both languages, a statement acknowledges that while once enemies, we are now united in friendship with the common hope of a lasting peace.

It was a message to future generations about the futility of war, and the ceremony was well covered by the media.

Following the dedication, the Lord Mayor hosted a Champagne reception in the Town Hall, one of the few buildings that escaped bomb damage during the war. In the afternoon, we toured the SKF and FAG bearing plants.

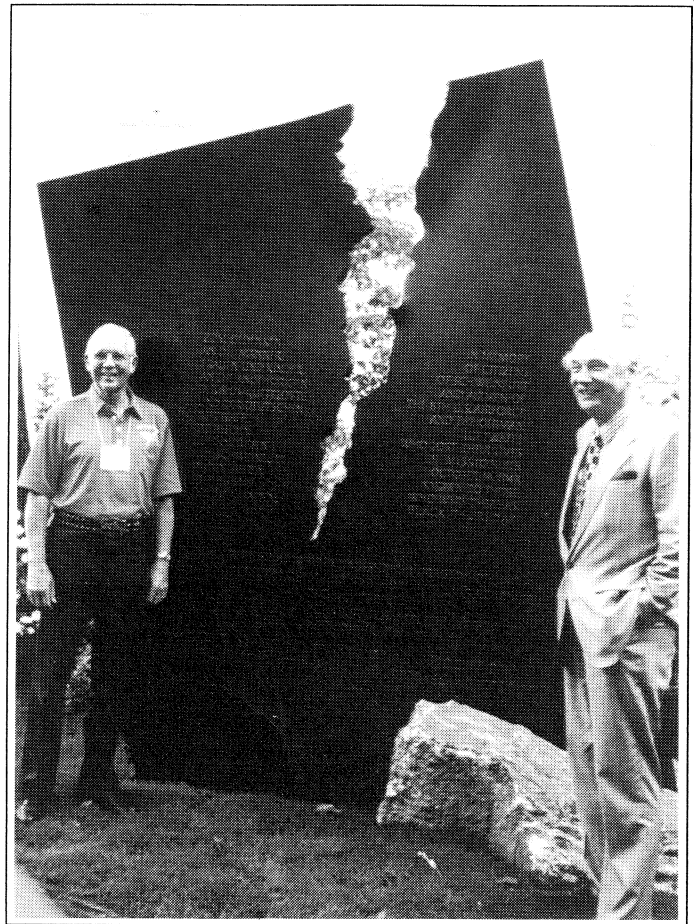
That evening, both groups were bussed to Nordheim, a small wine village, for a dinner featuring white asparagus (a local delicacy), and 1940's music by a German Oomp-pah combo.

On Wednesday, June 17, we toured Schweinfurt by bus. It was really interesting to see how the city had been restored after WWII. The population has climbed back to about 55,000 from a low of about 30,000 right after the war.

We went on to visit a Technical College, where we had a panel discussion with graduate students, a heart-warming event, followed by lunch in the school cafeteria.

We proceeded to Abrams Club on Richard Wagner Strasse to again have discussions, but this time with officers of the 2nd Brigade, 1st US Infantry Division. They were very attentive and seemed interested in everything our members had to say. The discussion continued for about 90 minutes and came to a scheduled close with both sides wanting more time for visiting.

We dined at the Officers Club at the U.S. Army Base which has been located near the city since



The 303rd's Wilbur "Bud" Klint (left) and Georg Schafer of the Flakenhelfers flank Schweinfurt's distinctive tribute to the healing of the rift between the US and Germany.

World War II.

Next morning, there was a farewell breakfast at the hotel, and then the bus left for Frankfurt and the trip home. This was truly an historical gathering and a wonderful experience for all who attended.

Many of our new German friends came to the hotel to wave a last goodbye and bon voyage. Several of us decided to stay another night. Herr Christian Kampf, an artist and restorer of artifacts and buildings who works out of a shop founded by his grandfather took us on a delightful walking tour of Schweinfurt.

The origin of the three-day gathering was a 1995 edition of the Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association's newsletter. I was editor at the time, and when Flakenhelfer Georg Schafer saw

a copy, he contacted me. His grandfather had founded the FAG bearing company, the full name of which is Kugelfischer Georg Schafer AG.

After the war, Georg spent some 40 years as a managing partner of the firm. I invited him to the SSMA reunion in Las Vegas in October, 1996. He and his wife attended, and a strong friendship between the Schafers and the SSMA was instantaneous.

It was at that meeting that plans were made for the joint venture Memorial in Schweinfurt. Georg also brought to that meeting some 70 photos of bomb damage to Schweinfurt, samples of FAG products, several books and other memorabilia which he donated to the 8th AF Heritage Museum to become part of the Second Schweinfurt display.

What Reunions Mean to a 303rd Vet's Wife and Daughter

A REUNION RETROSPECTIVE — STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART

By Alice Timm and Katherine Timm Schaubert

When Eddie Deerfield asked us to write a "think" piece about what the 303rd Bomb Group reunions mean to us, we accepted the assignment with enthusiasm. As the wife and daughter of a B-17 tailgunner and career military man (MSGT Harold R. Timm, USAF Ret), the Air Force has been an important part of our lives for more than 40 years.

Writing this article together proved to be challenging for several reasons. First, Eddie asked that we limit it to 600 words. I don't think we're going to make it. And one of us is a professional journalist, while the other has some serious doubts about her writing style.

In the end, we discovered that writing experience and style meant nothing. After considerable discussion about how to approach this assignment, we both came to the same conclusion—this story has to come from the heart, not the head. So, Mr. Deerfield, at the risk of deviating a bit from the assignment you gave us, we offer the following thoughts about the 303rd Bomb Group reunions—and they come straight from our hearts.

The reunion in Savannah was our third. Unfortunately, we missed the one in Pittsburgh last year. Since attending our first 303rd Bomb Group reunion in Colorado Springs, we all look forward to the annual pilgrimage that brings us together with the members, associate members and guests of the 303rd Bomb Group. The reunions give us an opportunity to personally honor and thank those who fought so bravely in order that we may enjoy the freedoms we so often take for granted today.

Each reunion has been memorable and special in its own way. Our first gave us an opportunity to put faces to names Dad quietly, but enthusiastically, talked about after he and Eddie Deerfield

"found" each other through the *Hell's Angels Newsletter*.

Eddie and Dad were crewmates on the Iza Vailable. Meeting each other again after more than 50 years was emotional for them—and for us. It was then that Dad started talking more about his experiences and emotions in the skies and on the ground during the war.

The reunion in San Francisco gave us the opportunity to get to know more of the members—and to learn more about the experiences Dad and Eddie's comrades experienced. We left that reunion once again wondering how any of you made it home from the war—and how you managed to share a smile or a laugh while constantly staring death in the face. We remember asking Dad how he ever got his knees straightened out after being in the tailgunner crouch position for hours in the cold skies over Germany. He replied simply, "Adrenaline."

The answer to that question made us want to ask others: What emotions did you experience when you were staring at the face of a German pilot only a few feet away from your plane? What did you do to deal with the stress of combat? How were you able to accept the death of your comrades when there was no time to grieve? How do you feel about the war now?

The reunion in Savannah and our visit to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum provided the

answers to many of those questions. The sound of the aircraft overhead, the narration by the young man in the film describing his feelings during combat as bombs and gunfire destroyed his plane and the graphic photos of combat veterans who lost their lives protecting our freedoms.

And who can forget the Memorial Garden? It is almost unimaginable to think that an entire crew spent time in POW camps—and all returned home. For us, the museum also personally immortalizes Dad and his Iza Vailable crewmates, thanks to Eddie's gracious donation of a memorial stone. All of these sounds and images will forever be etched in our minds, as will the expressions and tearful eyes of many from the 303rd who visited the museum that day.

As emotionally difficult

as it must have been to relive the events that shaped so many lives—and took so many others—in some ways it must also have felt like a homecoming. It took us all back to the beginning of what would form the basis for life-long bonds, friendships and freedom. Freedom that was born of death, tragedy—and triumph.

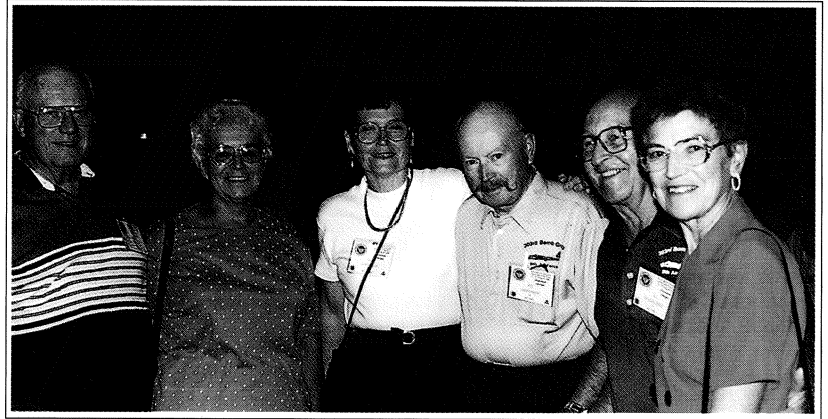
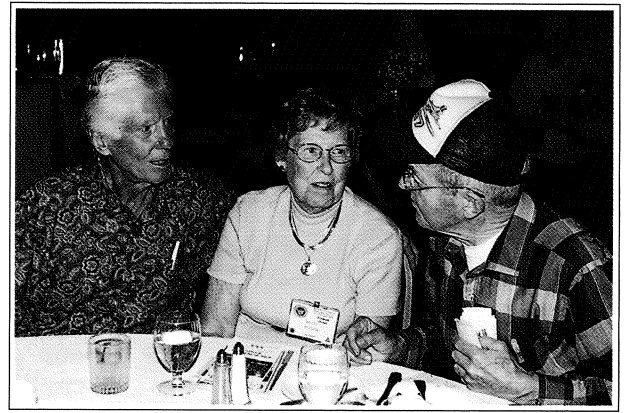
To the brave men and women of the 303rd, we can only say "thank you." Thank you for your sacrifices, bravery, commitment to God and country, and for sharing your memories and time with us.

You have given us an experience we shall never forget.

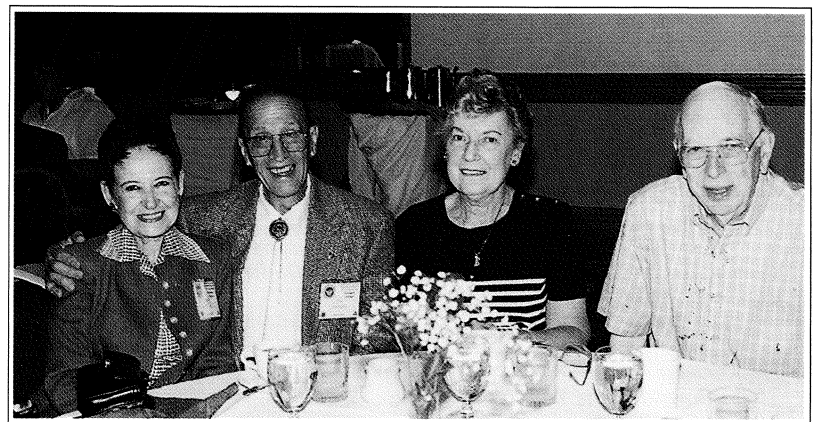
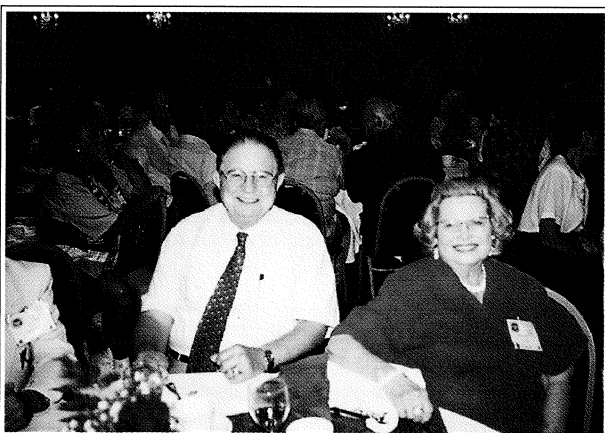
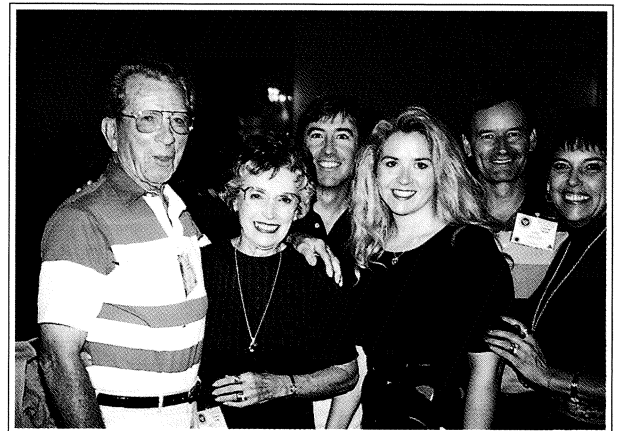
EDITOR'S NOTE — The *Hell's Angels Newsletter* would like to hear from family members of other 303rd vets. What do the reunion gatherings mean to you?

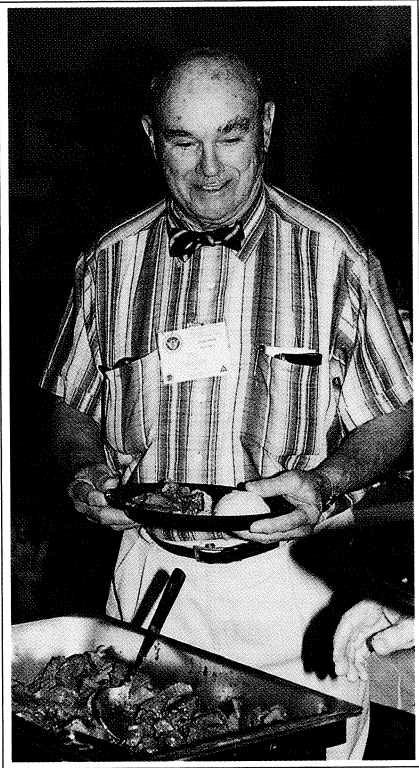


A VERY PERSONAL DEDICATION — Harold "Red" Timm and Eddie Deerfield jointly dedicate their crew plaque in the Memorial Garden. They were both aboard another B-17 *Upstairs Maid* when it crashed in the North Sea on the return from Kassel, Germany in July, 1943.

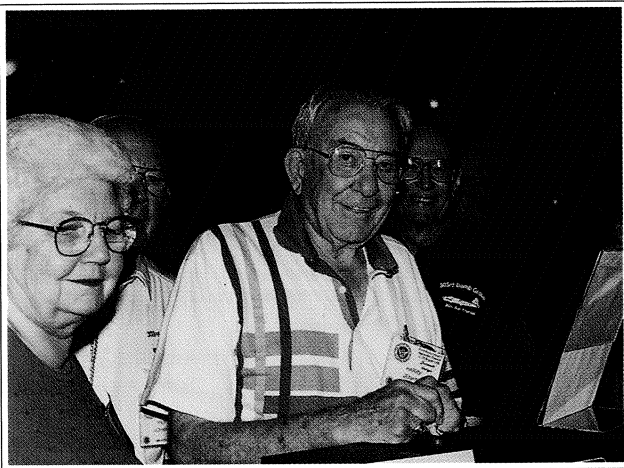
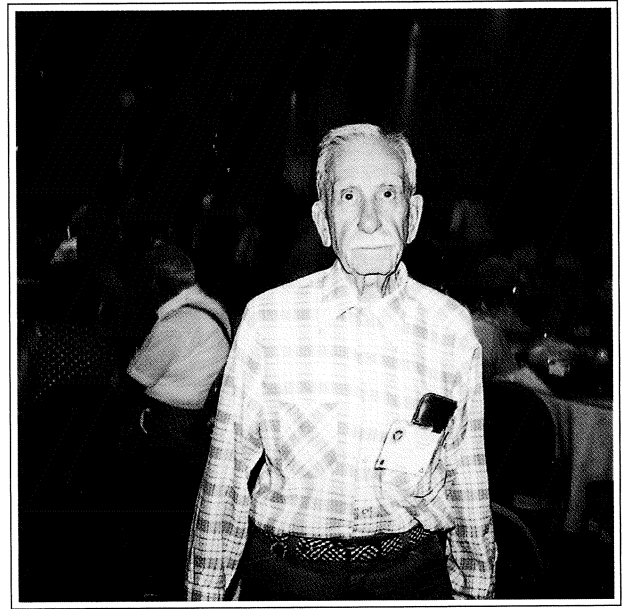


REUNION:





THE MANY FACES OF THE 303RD



Three generations of Polish family still honor 303rd crew

By Hal Susskind



Richard Czabanski with his son Dariusz and grandson David at the monument he built in memory of the airmen who lost their lives in the forced landing of the B-17. They were finishing preparations on the monument for the ceremonies held yearly at the crash site.

The date was 9 February 1945. There was a chill in the air as 39 crews filed out of the various briefing rooms and headed for their aircraft. It was the 313th mission for the Molesworth based 303rd Bomb Group and their target was the synthetic oil plant at Lutzkendorf, deep in the heart of Germany. The secondary target was the railway center at Erfurt.

Capt. William E. Eisenhart, Ops Officer for the 359th, was the Air Commander for the 303rd's effort with each of the squadrons putting up 10 aircraft except the 358th which put up nine.

It was a routine mission until they turned on the I.P. where they ran into swelling cumulus clouds and moderate and persistent contrails.

Just before "Bombs Away," the right wing of a/c #42-31060, piloted by Lt. A. K. Nemers, hit the tail section of a/c 42-39149, piloted by Lt. R.J. Barrat. The rear part of the fuselage - from the waist window back - was torn off and the aircraft was seen going down out of control in two sections.

A/C #42-31060 dropped down

about 10,000 below the formation after the collision and seemed to be under control. It followed the formation for about 45 minutes after the collision and then was lost from sight.

That night back at Molesworth both crews were listed as "missing in action."

It took almost 50 years to completely solve the mystery of what happened to both aircraft and their heroic crews. The first break in solving the mystery occurred in 1992 when Uwe Benkel, a German businessman whose hobby was searching for crash sites of both German and Allied planes to discover why the planes crashed and under what circumstances, unearthed the wreckage of Lt. Barrat's aircraft in a piney woods outside the village of Eisenberg. In his digging, Benkel came across a gold wedding band which belonged to a member of the crew. Two days later a German citizen brought Benkel another ring that contained the initials, R.J.B. which he had found in the wreckage two years earlier.

Benkel then contacted Hal

Susskind of the 303rd Bomb Group to see if he could locate the next of kin of the owners of the two rings and also the one survivor of the crash, the tail gunner, George Emerson who unfortunately was not a member of the 303rd BGA. Working through the press of the former-home towns of the ill fated crew, Susskind was able to locate the next of kin of the owners of the rings and also George Emerson, the lone survivor who just happened to be visiting his father in Boise, Idaho, his former hometown when the call came from a newsman from the local newspaper. When the newsman explained the purpose of his call it was the first news Emerson had of the fate of his crew and of the accident which had happened 47 years previous.

On September 25, 1993, as the strains of the hymn, "Tantum Ergo" permeated the cathedral like atmosphere of the piney woods, George Emerson, and the next of kin of the dead crewmen stood silently by as German Officials dedicated a monument to the fallen heroes. Eyewitnesses to the final flight of the B-17,

said that the pilot maneuvered his bomb laden aircraft away from the town of Eisenberg, thus saving the town from destruction.

To George Emerson, closure was only half achieved. He had to know what happened to the other aircraft?

After months of searching, he finally was able to locate Lt. Harry Schulz, the navigator of "Pogue-Ma-Hone" the other B-17 involved in the collision which after the initial contact, lost two engines and went into a tight spin and dropped from 32,000 to about 10,000 feet.

After they came out of the spin, the pilot Lt. Nemer, called for a heading toward the Russian lines, reasoning with two engines out and a head wind, they would never be able to reach England.

To lighten the load, but still they kept losing altitude, they threw out guns and all the unnecessary equipment. Finally they crossed the front lines and the order came to "bail out." Lt. Schulz and the toggler, Sgt H. Ganson hit the silk. When they reached the ground, the Russian troops came down a road firing at them. In the meantime they watched as their aircraft made a 180 degree turn, come back and attempt to land.

It went into the ground, nose first and instantly burst into flames. They later found out that there were four crew members still in the aircraft. It was later established that there were not enough "workable" chutes on board for everyone to jump, so the pilot had to try and land the Fortress.

After the Russians were finally convinced that Lt. Schulz and Sgt Ganson were really Americans, their commander ordered his men to find the other members of the crew. Going to the scene of the crash, they recovered the bodies of four members of the crew. They then found the body of the tail gunner. He had jumped but his chute failed to open.

Lt. Schulz asked the Russian Commanding Officer for permission to have a decent burial for the deceased members of his crew. The Russians did themselves proud. They made five finely decorated

coffins, got a horse driven wagon hearse, the village priest, and had a very nice service for the deceased crew members. Hundreds of villagers and Russians turned out for the ceremony and the burial.

"We buried five good men that day," said Lt. Schulz, "and I pray their lives were not given in vain."

In 1991, a group of Poles erected a monument near the crash site to the five American fliers who died and the four who survived. How and why the memorial was built was explained in a letter to Lt. Schulz written in June of 1991. Here is an excerpt from that letter.

"In my name and that of my family, I, Rysard Czabanski, would like to welcome you to Poland. This celebration should have taken place over 40 years ago but because of the communist reign we are 46 years late.

It was the wish of my father to commemorate those fliers of the American aircraft who died so young fighting against the German invaders. My father who never accepted the communist government, had tried to commemorate the place of the crash and to honor the memory of those who died in action. However, it wasn't possible to do it at that time. For so many years he kept the remains of the crashed bomber because he wanted to make a cross for them.

So it is me, his son, Rysard Czabanski who has executed his will. The cross and the monument I have done are my own work. So it's me and my family who have paid for everything. My two sons and my grandson, David, helped me with the building and arranging of the whole monument.

For so many years I dreamt of an American flag hanging next to a Polish one. Now I am very glad for

my dream has come true. I could prove to the old communist government that it's necessary to return to the American people."

The monument to the crew of "Pogue-Ma-Hone" is located on a hill near the road from Jaraczewo to Chwałkowo Koso, about 1.5 km from the place where the plane crashed. The stone monument contains the names of the five 303rd airmen who died in the crash. A small cross made of the remains of breaking ironplate from the B-17 stands to the left of the obelisk.

On June 15, 1998, Memorial Services were held in Jaraczewo, Poland for Lt. A.K. Nemer's crew, lost in their emergency landing attempt. The Memorial Services were arranged by Mr. Rysard Czabanski. The students at Jaraczewo's elementary school - some in their Polish Scout uniforms - participated in the ceremonies. Lt. Col. Leonard C. Stekiel, USAF (Ret) a B-17 pilot with the 94th BG, told the students of his experiences while flying bombers during WW II.

At noon the ceremonies were held at the monument that Mr. Czabanski erected. Mr. Czabanski told what he saw when Lt. Nemer made the attempted landing and assured the students that the airmen they were memorializing died in action for freedom in Poland and the United States. Polish and American flags were at full staff. L/C Stekiel led them in the Pledge of Allegiance and saluted his fallen comrades. A Polish youngster recited the following to end the ceremonies:

On February 9, 1945
These American Airmen,
For our freedom and America's
Gave their souls to God,
Their bodies to the soil of Poland
And their hearts to the United
States of America!



Rysard Czabanski is pointing to the spot where the B-17 fell. A cross stands in the depressed area of the meadow where the plane crashed. He is also pointing to where the monument stands in the distance and where three airmen of the plane landed after they parachuted.

As I see it!

Hal Susskind, Editor Emeritus

For the first time since I walked up to the front of the auditorium at the General Membership Meeting in Bellevue, Washington in 1985 and volunteered to edit the 303rd Bomb Group Association's newsletter, I no longer have a deadline staring me in the face and no longer do I have copy spread throughout all the rooms of my house. That is a subtle way of telling you I have stepped down as editor of the newsletter after 13 short years.

I'm happy to say that my replacement, Eddie Deerfield is a very capable, well qualified editor. Please give him the outstanding support that you given me over the years.

Also during the reunion I was succeeded as President by our very capable Historian, Harry Gobrecht. I look forward to working closely with Harry as Chairman of the Past Presidents' Advisory Committee.

It was a great reunion, Walt Ferrari and his wife Ruth did a fantastic job. Of course the visit to the 8th AF Heritage Museum was the highlight event of the stay in Savannah.

I was happy to see such a wonderful turnout - more than 540 - at this particular reunion. What impressed me the most was the number of family members who were in attendance, including a great number of grandchildren; in my case my 16 month old granddaughter made the trip.

What surprised me the most was the number of people who attended this reunion who also attended the first reunion in New York City in 1948. Someplace in this issue is a photo of "The Old gang."

Coming the greatest distance was Bill Adams, our wood carver from England and his lovely wife, Joyce; also Brian McGuire, from the JAC, who has done so much to keep the 303rd spirit alive at RAF Molesworth. Also in attendance was the popular aviation artist, Keith Ferris and his wife Peggy. Because of his many paintings, especially the mural in the National Air and Space Museum, in Washington, D.C., Keith has made the 303rd Bomb Group's aircraft "Thunderbird" one of the most famous aircraft of World War II. The Mayor of Savannah attended the Gala Banquet and read a resolution honoring the 303rd Bomb Group, which, as part of the 8th Air Force, had its humble beginning in the Azalia City.

During the year, the 303rd BGA made the leap into the 21st century

with the inauguration of the 303rd Bombardment Group's Web Site. If you haven't logged onto it yet you are missing a big treat. Our Webmaster is Gary Moncur, son of the original pilot of the "Thunderbird." Originally, Gary had a site of his own as a tribute to his dad, Vern Moncur and the crew of the "Thunderbird." When Ed Miller saw the site he talked Gary into starting the 303rd's own site; for which we are very grateful.

A very high percentage of the letters that I received as both president and editor, had to deal with awards earned but never received. Although military regulations have made it easier to file for an award, they haven't made it any easier to get it. The way we interpret the regulations that were in effect when we flew in WW II and the way the present day Air Force personnel interprets them are 180 degrees apart.

But what is the solution? Do we request clarification of why our requests are being turned down or do we roll over and play dead?

At the risk of sounding sacrilegious, I believe that most of the misinterpretations are due to the "Arnoldgrams" issued during the war regarding the awarding of DFCs. They stated that DFCs were no longer to be awarded automatically upon the completion of a flying tour but had to be justified in writing by paperwork submitted by the responsible officers in a squadron. This also applied to ground personnel who earned awards but unfortunately the paperwork was never submitted or lost.

As Chairman of the Past Presidents Advisory Committee, I hope to open up channels of communication between us and the U.S. Air Force's Military Personnel Channels to seek a solution to our problem of having all of our requests for awards turned down.

Recently an Air Force officer retired. During the Vietnam War he flew in the back seat of an F-4 and was the first nonpilot ace in the Air Force when he downed his fifth and sixth Mig -21s. When he retired his decorations included, the Air Force Cross, the Silver Star with two oak leaf clusters, the Legion of Merit and the DFC with five oak leaf clusters.

Maybe we should resubmit our requests for awards under those regulations. It's strange, they never even started with an Air Medal.

KEY BY-LAW CHANGES!

303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc., by-law changes were approved at the 25 August Board of Directors meeting at the Savannah reunion. It was an extension of discussion at the morning membership meeting in the Marriott Hotel's ballroom and subsequently ratified by members at the evening banquet.

Bill McLeod, a former 303rd Association president, was named to succeed Jack Rencher as Chairman of the By-Laws Committee.

He will consult with the IRS to assure that the by-law changes conform to the Service's requirements for tax exempt status.

In addition, Bill was asked by President Harry Gobrecht to review a proposal to revise the make-up of the Executive Committee:

"I have long believed that our (1) Past Presidents Committee Chairman and (2) Hells Angels Newsletter editor should be voting members of our Board of Directors and members of our Executive Committee.

"This would require that these individuals be elected to their offices by the 303rd BG (H) Membership, the same as now required for the President, Vice President for Administration, Vice President for Reunions, Secretary and Treasurer.

"Past Presidents Committee Chairman the Newsletter Editor are frequently consulted when executive decisions are required, and the by-law change would formalize the present procedure."

Other changes considered desirable in the interests of the Association will also be presented at meetings of the Board and membership at the 1999 reunion.

The 25 August 1998 approved by-law change motion was as follows:

"At this afternoon's Board of Directors meeting there was much discussion about the need to simplify and clarify membership categories. A motion was passed to establish —

Category 1: Veterans

of the 303rd, their spouses and relatives would be voting members.

Category 2: Other members who would be non-voting, dues paying "Friends of the 303rd."

This action has been taken to avoid problems with the IRS."

The approved motion will require a change to Article III and IV of our By-Laws. The following revised By-Law Articles include the approved changes and language simplification.

ARTICLE III — Membership

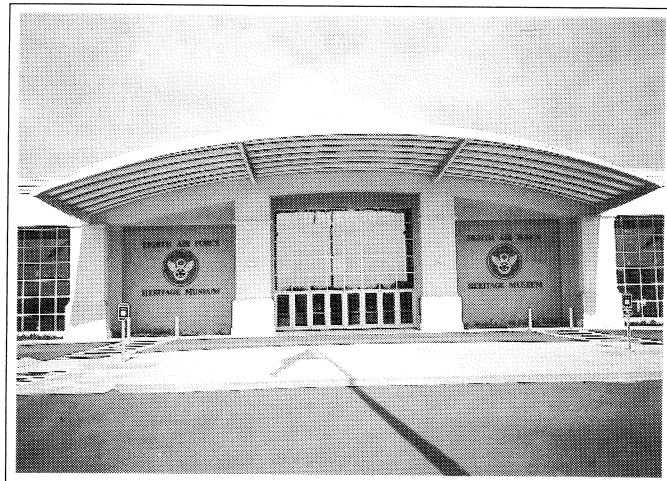
Membership in the Association shall be open to the following persons:

A. Regular Members — All persons who were attached to the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) during World War II, either in training or overseas. Regular members are required to pay dues and may vote.

B. Family Members — Those persons who have a connection to the Regular Member by blood, marriage or legal adoption, including spouses, children, parents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews or cousins of the Regular Member or his or her spouse. Relative members are required to pay dues and may vote.

C. Widow Members — All spouses or widows of Regular Members upon the death of the Regular Member. Widow Members will not be required to pay dues and may vote.

D. Associate Members — All "Friends of the 303rd" who are interested in the history, aims and goals of the Association. Associate Members will have all the privileges of membership, are



IMPRESSIVE FAÇADE — The architect who designed the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum near Savannah, Georgia, captured the sense of flight in elegant, soaring lines.

Heritage Museum Living Tribute To Veterans of the Mighty 8th

By Phil Sellers

From remote farms, small towns and street corners of a hundred cities they came. Their average age was 19. They wanted to fight for freedom and for liberty. They came to the Mighty Eighth, and this is their story.

required to pay dues but are not entitled to vote.

E. Honorary Members — Honorary membership may be granted to others upon approval of the Board of Directors. Honorary Members will not be required to pay dues and are not entitled to vote.

F. Life Members and Super Life Members — Life or Super Life Membership may be granted to Regular or Family Members upon payment of appropriate dues.

ARTICLE IV — Voting

A. Any Regular Family or Widow Member in "good standing" may vote either in person or by proxy (where proxy is appropriate.)

B. At all meetings voting shall be viva voce for the conduct of business.

C. For the election of Officers and Directors voting normally shall be by secret, written ballot, or by viva voce.

D. Associate Members may not vote.

E. Honorary Members may not vote.

It's a story of our country, of sacrifice and bravery, of resolution in the face of diversity. It's a story of teamwork towards the achievements of a larger goal. Just minutes from Savannah is a museum experience unlike any other.

From its very humble beginnings in World War II, to its ultimate domination of the skies over Europe, this is the story of the greatest air armada ever committed to battle.

Exhibiting history from WWII through Desert Storm, the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum is a journey of sight and sound and exhilarating emotion that recreates some of this country's proudest moments in its "darkest hours."

Through state-of-the-art visual displays, the unforgettable "Mission Experience," and the calm reflection of the memorial garden, the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum is an adventure for young and old alike.

EDITOR'S NOTE — The *Hell's Angels Newsletter* has invited the Museum to keep us up to date on its progress. This introductory article is the first in a series of reports on Museum news.

303rd Wreath Laid In Memorial Day Services At Madingley, England

By Robin Beeby

(Robin Beeby is the 303rd Bomb Group Association's official representative in England. In the cemetery at Madingley near Cambridge are the remains of a number of 303rd combat veterans.)

The annual Memorial Day Service was held at Madingley this year on May 25, which was one of our British public holidays. This, along with the fact that the day was one of the few sunny days this summer, boosted the attendance which was well up on the normal Sunday service.

The VIP's, including the Commander of the Third Air Force, Major General William S. Hinton, Jr. and the Lord Lieutenant for Cambridgeshire, James Crowden, were escorted to their seats to the sound of the bagpipes of the Grampian Association Pipers.

The Honour Guard and escort for the Colours was from the Joint Analysis Centre at Molesworth.

This year, the service took place under the flags at the far end of the cemetery. After the national anthems and remarks, the Lord Lieutenant made his address. He commented on the Eagle Pub in Cambridge and all the signatures written in candle smoke on the ceiling. 303rd veterans who visited the pub will remember that ceiling.

The Lord Lieutenant needs to be educated a bit on his 8th Air Force history—he told all those present that the *Memphis Belle* was the first to complete 25 missions. We know different!!!!

An excellent speech was then made by Major General Hinton, followed by the belated presentation of a Purple Heart to Major Earl W. Rudolph, USAF Ret.

The wreath laying itself was held around the flagpoles. It ended up as something of a "free-for-all" as no loudspeakers were around the back of the flags, so no one really heard when to lay their wreaths. However, all the wreaths were laid successfully, as the photo shows.

As one who took part, I hope that they revert back to the Wall of the Missing for next year.

After the wreaths were laid, all veterans, English and American were asked to stand so that they could be recognized. They received a warm round of applause.

After the firing of volleys and the flag raising, there was a fly-by in the "missing man" formation by four F-15E aircraft.

I believe that the number of wreaths laid this year was a record 105. This shows that, far from becoming a distant memory, more people are remembering and acknowledging the part played by "Our American Friends."

1997-98 has been very quiet as far as visits to England by 303rd veterans are concerned. There have been two gatherings at Molesworth that I have attended, the first being when Malcolm and Iris Magid made their annual visit.

A hangar dance was held at Molesworth on June 6 in the same T2 hangar where we held our 303rd dance a few years back. It was very well attended, including Gene and Corlis Girman.

Although I was not involved in organizing the dance, I put on a slide presentation showing the history of the 303rd Bomb Group and all the stages of a mission. It was done by computer, about a half hour in duration.

Unfortunately, Sue and I were unable to attend the reunion in Savannah this year. We send our love, and best wishes and hope to be with you next time. Until then, if any one is planning a trip to England, please call us or look us up.



SOLEMN CEREMONY — Robin Beeby represents the 303rd at the Memorial Service ceremony at the Madingley cemetery.

MICHEL LUGEZ, FOUNDER OF ST. NAZAIRE EXHIBIT AT 8TH AF HERITAGE MUSEUM, HONORED BY FRENCH GOVERNMENT

By decree of Jacques Chirac, President of the French Republic, on 14 May 1998, Michel Lugez, a good friend of the 303rd Bomb Group Association, was awarded his country's *Chevalier of Merit National Order* for rebuilding the American Memorial of St. Nazaire and conducting extensive research on the sacrifices made by Allied troops during the war.

He and fellow French patriots were instrumental in funding and establishing the impressive new St. Nazaire plaque and photo exhibit at the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum.

Following are excerpts from the text of a congratulatory letter to Monsieur Lugez from Association President Harry Go-brecht:

"I just returned from Savannah where over 530 members, wives, children and friends of the 303rd held their annual reunion. Our members spent a great deal of time at the Museum and one of the key attractions was the 'Four Horsemen' Saint Nazaire exhibit. The exhibit is magnificent and is located where all visitors can view it and appreciate the sacrifices made by both the citizens of Saint Nazaire and the 8th Air Force crewmen who died in an attempt to gain freedom for all of us.

"At our Board of Directors meeting on August 21, 1998, we voted to make you an Honorary Member of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association and it was unanimously approved at our membership meeting. Honorary membership has only been awarded to 10 people over the past 40 years since the Association was organized.

"We are all very proud to add you to this deserving list of exceptional people."

MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS AT THE 1998 REUNION

THE FOLLOWING MINUTES WERE COMPILED BY 303RD BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION SECRETARY RICHARD R. JOHNSON. THEY WERE CONDENSED TO MEET NEWSLETTER SPACE CONSIDERATIONS. FULL TEXTS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE SECRETARY.

Board of Directors Meeting of 21 August 1998

The meeting was called to order at 0903 by President Harold A. Susskind. The first order of business was a presentation by Brian McGuire regarding a set of lithographs by Keith Hill that didn't sell well. Brian has a total of 700 copies of various lithos that he is willing to have the 303rd or Museum distribute.

There were a few minutes of discussion about the shortcomings of our school's history books, with lost emphasis on the Second World War.

A presentation was given by Gary Moncur about the 303rd Web Page that he developed. His folder had many responses from hits, "This is one of the best Web Pages on the Internet and now receives 840 or more hits per month." Bill Heller moved that no advertising be accepted on our Web Site. Motion passed. Gary was given a round of applause for his tremendous effort on behalf of the 303rd.

A considerable discussion about the 1999 reunion ensued, with comments about the relative cost of rooms in Galveston as compared to San Antonio. Motion was made, seconded and passed that the reunion be held in San Antonio. There was lengthy discussion about using a professional reunion service if no member volunteered to take the responsibility. A professional service might negotiate a better room rate which would cover their costs since their profit comes from room rentals and food services.

Frank DiCicco agreed to help Hal with initial planning until volunteers can be lined up, and will coordinate with the reunion service if one is used for the 1999 meeting. A final decision will be made at the Tuesday Board meeting. It is likely the reunion will be held at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel on Lexington Street which is near The Alamo.

Bill Roche presented the treasurer's report and noted that the audit will come at the end of the fiscal year.

Harry Gobrecht, VP for Administration, had nothing to add to the report he had distributed earlier.

Walt Ferrari, VP for Reunions, gave a run-down on the various Savannah reunion activities.

As Chairman of the Past Presidents Advisory Committee, Eddie Deerfield reported on the Association Service Recognition honors. He reviewed the sources for the nominations and the approval process, and then distributed the names and justifications for each award. He said the monument would be dedicated in Carlton Smith's name at the Sunday service in the Heritage Museum.

The Secretary had no report.

358th Representative Walt Mayer said he made over 100 phone calls and did 10 news releases during the year.

359th Representative Bill Eisenhart said he gave several speeches.

360th Representative Bill Heller reported on his annual letter campaign inform members about dues.

427th Representative Vernon Stone reported on his efforts to increase membership.

444th Representative Henry Johansen reported that his group had a mini-reunion with only five attendees.

Widows' Representative Joanna Tressler has been encouraging grandchildren to join as Associate Members.

Associate Members Representative Charlie Sykes reported on the numbers of Associates and said he is using E-mail to encourage children and grandchildren to join.

Jack Rencher suggested changing the membership categories. The idea was favored, but deferred until the Tuesday Board meeting.

Ed Miller reported on Membership, noting that we have 40 new regular members and 77 Associates. However, 61 members have passed away.

Bill Heller added to his earlier report with a run-down on his efforts at contacting members and potential members about paying dues and joining the Association. He is spending about \$950 a year on his projects and is only asking postage costs.

Ed Miller reported on the Directory. He suggested that the Directory be sold to those who want one since they are so expensive to publish and cost \$3.00 each to mail. The request was approved.

He offered to prepare a "Reader's Digest" type of mission summary for each of our 364 missions, complete with crew loading and pertinent information. It will be available on the Internet and free to any 303rd veteran who wants one on a floppy disk. The system is to be finished by our reunion in 2000. He also discussed the Distinguished Service Awards.

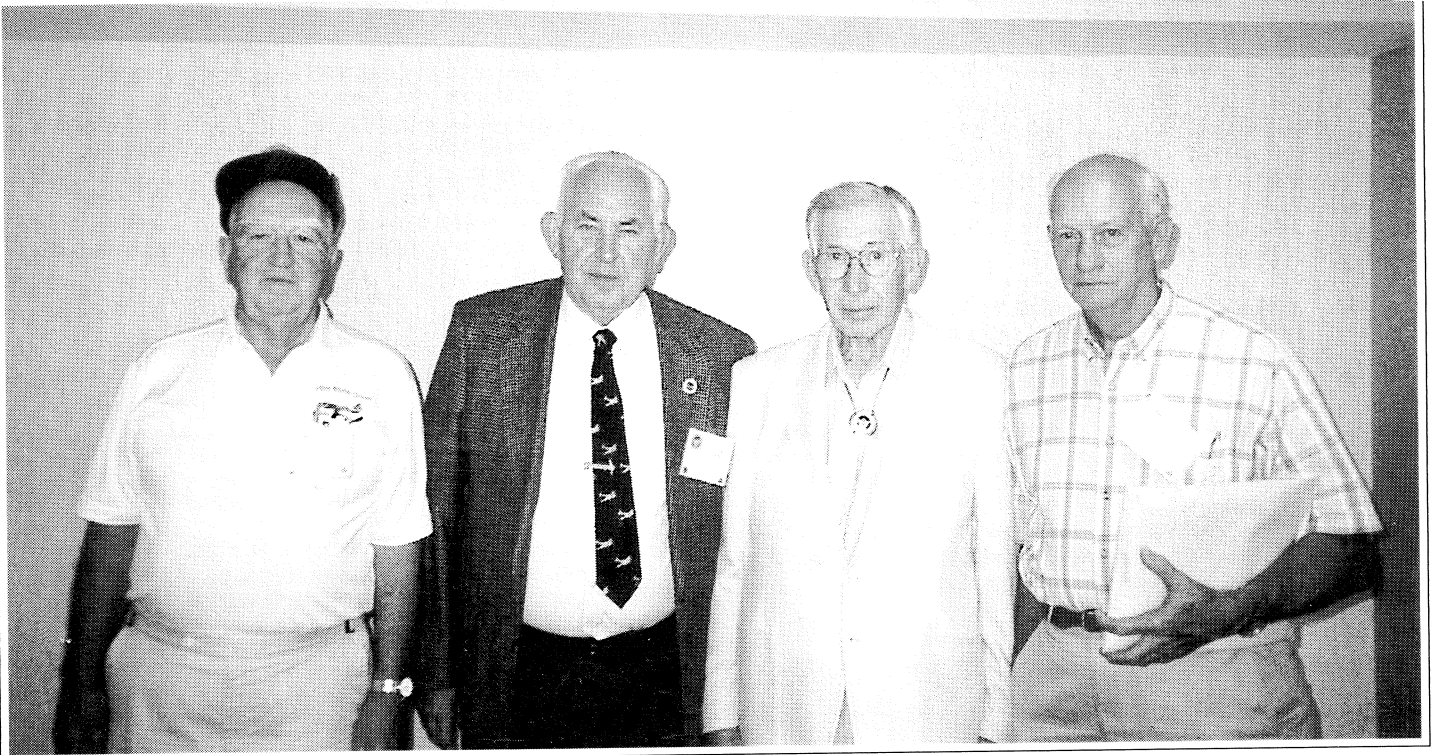
Eddie Deerfield is working to see that the November issue of the Hell's Angels Newsletter is ready on time. Hal Susskind is stepping down as editor and Eddie has agreed to take the job. Since Hal's newsletter computer system is getting on in years, the Board decided to give it to him for his use. Hal will still be a contributing editor. Eddie will buy a new computer to prepare the newsletter and the Association will cover half the cost.

Charlie Sykes reported that the PX is "changing gears," and will start relying more on mail orders. Harry Gobrecht mentioned the Museum might eventually be the outlet of choice. Charlie said volunteers are needed to help him and Vicki at the PX tables to give them more time to indulge in reunion activities.

Historian Gobrecht gets letters and E-mail at the rate of 350 already this year. The personal experience questionnaires are still coming in, with their most unusual stories going to the Newsletter Editor. The Museum is still accepting donations of war-related artifacts.

He reported also that there are still 159 copies of the Association's book "Might In Flight" to be sold from the print run of 500. The break-even point is near, and a profit of about \$7,000 will be realized when all the books are sold. Harry urged those new buyers to donate their first editions to a library.

Jack Rencher reported on the status of the mission reports. The Internet has increased his workload considerably. He is buying a new copy machine for his family business and he will also use it for the 303rd.



MEMBERS ELECT NEW OFFICERS — The Executive Committee of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association was elected to office by members attending the general meeting in Savannah on 25 August 1998. They are (l-to-r) Vice President for Administration William J. Roche, President Harry Gobrecht, Treasurer Jack P. Rencher and Secretary Richard R. Johnson. In a later development, Edgar C. Miller was given an interim appointment as Vice President for Reunions (see page 20.)

Lew Lyle reported on personnel changes at the Museum and noted that there have been 384 events scheduled there since it opened. He said the 303rd is the most (deservedly) well represented unit at the Museum.

He warned the Board about the destructive in-fighting at other units, and asked that we be diligent in avoiding this problem. He mentioned that the 379th Bomb Group had given up on its data base because of the high cost.

The Past Presidents Committee, headed by Eddie Deerfield, nominated the following officers to be the new Executive Committee:

Harry Gobrecht — President
 Bill Roche — Vice President for Administration
 Dick Johnson — Secretary
 Jack Rencher — Treasurer

Eddie said a candidate for the office Vice President for Reunions was not named pending a decision on where the reunion would be held in 1999.

Motion was made, seconded and passed that nominations be closed until the General Meeting on Tuesday.

At this point, discussions ensued concerning nominations for special recognition of those individuals who contributed time and services for many years to the Association significantly above and beyond the call of duty, whose names are and will be engraved on the new monument in the museum garden. There are 20 names already engraved and room for 20 more in the future.

Walt Mayer reported on the banquet awards program and noted that 44 will be awarded. In the future, the Past Presidents Committee will have the responsibility of recommending recipients for the banquet recognition's. Walt will continue to have the trophies made and present them.

Hal noted that the reunion attendance will inevitably fall off as the years go by, but that there was no need for further discussion of dissolving the Association as it was handled by last year's Board action.

The future status of the PX will be discussed at Tuesday's Board meeting. Also discussed was the difficulty of obtaining deserved awards from the military. Bill Heller said that it would be necessary to inundate the right people with cablegrams and letters as he has done in the past.

Donations were requested for a memorial in Poland for a crash there in 1945.

In new business, Harry Gobrecht talked about the St. Nazaire exhibit at the museum and about all the work in France at their memorial. French citizen Michel Lugez did an incredible amount of work in restoring the American Memorial in the St. Nazaire area. At Harry's motion, the Board voted to make Mr. Lugez an honorary member of our Association. A letter to notify Mr. Lugez will be sent by Harry.

The meeting adjourned at 1230.

In attendance for the entire meeting were Frank DeCicco, Eddie Deerfield, Bill Eisenhart, Walt Ferrari, Harry Gobrecht, Henry Johansen, Dick Johnson, Lew Lyle, Walt Mayer, Ed Miller, Jack Rencher, Bill Roche, Bill Simpkins, Vern Stone, Hal Susskind, Charlie Sykes and Joanna Tressler. Attending at the beginning as guests were Gary Moncur and Brian McGuire.

(EDITOR'S NOTE — The minutes of the General Meeting and Board Meeting of Tuesday 25 August 1998 will be carried in the February edition of the *Hell's Angels Newsletter*.)

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

The Association is facing two large hurdles over the next several months. First is the need to publish a new Master Directory. But first, we must feel confident that all our members have provided us with the recent changes to their address and phone numbers. The second hurdle is to find a way to encourage those members who are behind in their dues to send in their checks.

Over the next two Hell's Angels Newsletters we are making a special request to every member to send in their address and phone number corrections. And a special plea is made to our Widows. Based upon the number of applications (261), forwarded by our members, who planned to attend the Savannah Reunion, we found that our Master file was out-dated in 72 cases. This is almost 30%. If we are experiencing this kind of out-dated information in our Master file, it would seem senseless to publish a new Master Directory, without finding a way to obtain the hundreds of changes that will be needed to correct our Master files.

If you, the members, do not wish to send in your up-dated address and phone information, then the usefulness of a New Master Directory would be minimal.

HAVE YOU HAD AN ADDRESS CHANGE? HAS YOUR ZIPCODE OR YOUR TRAILING 4 DIGIT CODE CHANGED? DO YOU HAVE A NEW AREA CODE FOR YOUR PHONE?

For the second hurdle, at last count, we had 30 of our regular members that were behind in the payment of their dues. Now we estimate that a small portion of that number have reached the age of 78 and could be classified as Life Members, with no further dues required, if we knew who they were. And we must find away to keep those under 78, on our mailing lists, until they reach at age.

With respect to Associate Members, we have 59 who are delinquent. Many of these are related to our regular members and, I suspect were not told when their father signed them up, that they would have to be responsible for the annual dues.

PLEASE BRING YOUR DUES UP TO DATE NOW!!

The listings that follow are as of 18 September 1998:

Edgar C. "Ed" Miller, Membership Chairman
422 S. Walnut Avenue, Temple, OK 73568-0219
(580) 342-5119 email address: edmiller@pdi.net

NEW MEMBERS

- L2055 Arthur J. Habich, 1938 Driftwood Court, Bakersfield, CA 93309-5007 (805) 831-5579 (360th)
- L2056 Robert J Wolf, 1746 Crescent Rd, Rexford, NY 12148-1623 (518) 271-6745 (427th) Wife: Edith
- 2057 Thomas I. Akens, 3143 Country Road 275, Clyde, TX 79510-5247 (915) 893-4796 (359th) Wife: Eddy Jo
- L2058 Frank L. Farmer, 4803 El Canon, Calabasas, CA 91302-1305 (358th) Wife: Betty Jeanne
- L2059 George D. Turkel, 115 Floral Drive, Kissimmee, FL 34743 (407) 348-5759 Wife: Thelma
- A-514 J. Anderson Berly III, 464 Rice Hope Drive, Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464 (Son of Joel A. Berly, Jr.)
- F-515 William C. Burke, 202 Pin Oak Court, Sterling, VA 20164-2132 (703) 437-3243 Wife: Joyce (Nephew of James C. Burke)
- F-516 Daniel Dougherty, 29 The Glen, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009

- A-517 Frank X. O'Brien, 119 Ranch Lane, Levittown, NY 11756 Wife: Ellen (Son of William J. O'Brien)
- A-518 Mark Shoup, 100457 NW 10th Avenue, Iuka, KS 67065-9520 (316) 672-5911 Wife: Rose (Son of John Shoup)
- F-519 LTC John Howe, Unit 5605, Box 160, APO AE 09470-5160 (423rd Base Commander, Molesworth, England)
- LA-520 Ellen McBride, 5232 Floral Drive, Ventura, CA 93001-1037 (805) 643-1931 (Daughter of Col. Kermit D. Stevens)
- LA-521 Mary P. Stevens, 336 Quay Lane, Redwood Shores, CA 94065-1019 (850) 595-5933 (Daughter of Col. Kermit D. Stevens)
- A-522 William J. Neilson, 3709 Reichert Road, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9668 (Son of Harry B. Neilson)
- A-523 Airman Brady Redhage, PSC 80, Box 12421, APO AP 96367 (Grandson of Louis H. Redhage)
- F-524 Edward L. Frank, 1135 Elm Street, Reading, PA 19604-2957 (610) 376-4458
- F-525 Gregory Pierce, 1600 28th Avenue W, Seattle, WA 98199-4205 (206) 285-6783
- LF-526 Dr. Charles D. Kirksey, 3201 Wheatland Farms Drive, Oakton, VA 22124-1933
- F-527 Bill Reid, P.O. Box 455, Gilchrist, TX 77617- (409) 286-5059 Wife: Sandy (Nephew of R. L. Stone)
- F-528 John Marsh, 523 Mallard Street, Rochester Hills, MI 48309-3429 (248) 853-3964
- F-529 Walter Eberlein, 569 Mallard Street, Rochester Hills, MI 48309-3522 (248) 853-2478 Wife: May Belle
- A-530 Robert P. Reichel, 2811 E. Gresham Highway, Charlotte, MI 48813-9724 (517) 543-2507 Wife: Claudia
- A-531 Michael E. Reichel, MD, 514 Holden Road, Towsin, MD 21286-5636 (410) 825-5501
- F-532 Robert W. Youk, 28 Quail, Rochester Hills, MI 48309-3442 (248) 853-0783
- A-533 David M. Coppom, 1429 Ranch Court, San Jose, CA 95132-2472 (408) 926-6819 (Son of John F. Coppom)
- F-534 Steven G. Sanders, 560 Blossom Way, San Leandro, CA 94577 (510) 351-3919 (Son-in-law of John R. Shoup)
- A-535 Tim O. Touhey, P.O. Box 205, Bald Knob, AR 62010 (501) 724-5428
- F-536 Stewart M. Bestwick, 4186 Balmora Court, Charleston, SC 29418-6815 (843) 760-1197
- F-537 Steve Balestrieri, 4205 Big Ben Court, Charleston, SC 29418 (843) 207-8446
- L2060 T. Lamar Simons, P. O. Box 67, Lillington, NC 27546-0067 (910) 893-3282 (427th) Wife: Doris
- L2061 Robert W. Morris, 48 Hampton Lane, Fairport, NY 14450-9551 (716) 425-0409 (360th)
- S2062 William G. "Bill" Hendon, 1413 Arrowhead Drive, Gadsden, AL 35903-3609 (256) 547-7108 (358th) Wife: Lucy
- F-538 Derrick Raite, 30 Garden Road, Mansfield, Notts, NG18 5SX, England 011 44 1623 55115 Wife: Margo
- F-539 John "Scotty" MacNeil, P.O. Box 1077, Wappingers, NY 12590 (914) 897-2626
- F-540 William M. Coldren, 113 Bee Street, Summerville, SC 29483 (843) 871-5464
- 2063 Glenn J. Denning, 529-1 Silver Oaks Drive, Kent, OH 44240-8106 (330) 673-4268 (358th) Wife: Margaret
- 2064 Glen B. Walley, 519 E. Farriss Avenue, High Point, NC 27262 (358th) Wife: Mildred
- A-547 M. David McKenzie, 713 Carpenter Avenue, Mooresville, NC 28115 (704) 664-3624 Wife: Cindy
- A-548 Barbara Ann Barnes Stier, 2265 NE Bjorn Street, Poulsbo, WA 98370 (360) 697-4568 Husband: Bruce
- A-549 Marc N. Bech, 101 Coldwater Lane, Austin, TX 78734 (512) 261-0405 Wife: Christine
- LA-550 Kathy Schultz Davis, 13552 Dallas Dr, Carmel, IN 46033
- LA-551 Randy Schultz, 3796 Shelbourne Ct, Carmel, IN 46032
- LA-552 Terry Schultz, 3625 Brandywine Cir, Carmel, IN 46032
- LA-553 Nancy Schultz Byers, 29210 Grandview, Harrison Town ship, MI 48045
- SA-554 Timothy Smith, 1610 Northwood, Austin, TX 78703 (512) 474-8842
- F-541 Anthony Barone, 142 Sunset Ave, Farmingdale, NY 11735 (516) 485-6149
- F-542 Joe Call, 32 Harriet Pl, Lynbrook, NY 11563 (516) 596-0627

- F-543 Raymond Dwyer, 325 Atlantic Avenue, Oceanside, NY 11572 (516) 678-6427
 F-544 Domingo Buster, 111-40 120th Street, Queens, NY 11420 (718) 848-1726
 F-545 Robert "Bob" Maganza, 28 Narrist Place, Lynbrook, NY 11563 (516) 593-6846 Wife: Karen
 F-546 Thomas Link, 1616 Carman Place, Baldwin, NY 11510 (516) 223-0624 Wife: Karen
 F-555 Robert M. Theiss, 2853 Bayshore Avenue, Ventura, CA 93011-4127 (805) 658-7365
 LF-556 George A. Tanton, 3308 Monarch Drive, Huntsville, AL 35801 (256) 883-8145 Wife: Janie
 F-557 Wayne R. Book, P. O. Box 339, Canaan, NY 12029-0339 (518) 392-6959 Wife: Cathy

SUPER LIFE MEMBER UPDATE

- S413 Richard L. Dawes (427th)
 S993 Carl L. Dubose (427th)
 S3 William E. Eisenhart (359th)
 S821 I. Lee Fegette (360th)
 S1344 Richard C. Fortunak (359th)
 S639 Harry D. Gobrecht (358th)
 S2062 William G. "Bill" Hendon (359th)
 S1645 Robert L. Johnson (360th)
 S1418 Raymond T. Leal (427th)
 S222 Lewis E. Lyle (Hdq)
 S32 Walter J. Mayer (358th)
 S428 Edgar C. Miller (360th)
 S872 William S. Rader (Hdq)
 S1140 Mrs. Sylvia Reeves
 S1223 Jack P. Rencher (358th)
 S1015 William J. Roche (360th)
 S320 Donald R. Smith (427th)
 SA554 Timothy Smith

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

- L078 Harold A. Lanigan (358th)
 L287 Frank P. Weil (359th)
 L333 George W. Henderson (427th)
 L516 Donald W. Corrigan (359th)
 L1265 David S. Fitterer (360th)
 L1907 Arthur Akers (1199th)
 L2052 Wayne L. Trant (360th)
 L2055 Arthur J. Habich (360th)
 L2066 Robert J. Wolf (427th)
 L2058 Frank L. Farmer (358th)
 L2059 George D. Turkel (359th)
 LA384 William S. McLeod III
 LA520 Ellen (Stevens) McBride
 LA521 Mary Porter Stevens
 LA526 Dr. Charles D. Kirksey
 L2060 T. Lamar Simons (427th)
 L2061 Robert W. Morris (360th)
 L2062 William G. Hendon (358th)
 LA550 Kathy Schultz Davis
 LA551 Randy Schultz
 LA552 Terry Schultz
 LA553 Nancy Schultz Byers
 LF556 George A. Tanton

DONATIONS TO B-47 MEMORIAL

- Carl & Angele Dubose Jr (427)
 Bill & Mary Eisenhart (359)
 Lee & Louise Fegette (360)
 Joseph & Nancy Fertitta (358)
 Richard C. Fortunak (359)

- Harry & Barbara Gobrecht (358)
 Robert L. & Mary Johnson (360)
 Raymond & Rosita Leal (427)
 Lewis & Betty Lyle (Hdq)
 Walter J. Mayer (3580)
 Edgar & Jill Miller (360)
 Mrs Sylvia Reeves
 Jack & Louise Rencher (358)
 Bill & Doris Roche (360)
 Donald R & Barbara Smith (427)
 George & Mary Torrey (360)
Memorial Donations to the 303rd BGA:
 William G. Hendon (359)
 T. Lamar Simons (427)
 Samuel W. Smith (360)

IN MEMORIAM

- Carroll H. Brackey, 427th. 8 January 1994
 James S. Cheney, Hdq. 24 April 1998
 Frank H. Cochran, 360th. 4 May 1998
 Myron A. "Mike" Elling, 427th. 18 April 1998
 Marion F. Fitko, 360th. 30 July 1998
 William Kreutz, 444th. 19 April 1998
 Michael J. Kucab, 360th. 1997
 Joseph F. Leonard, 359th. 3 August 1997
 Meyer Levin, 360th. 18 May 1998
 Vernon V. Newman, 427th. 1 January 1997
 Curtis M. Olsen, 427th. 28 July 1997
 Lawrence A. Peacock, 427th. 26 June 1998
 Robert D. Quiggle, 359th. 15 June 1998
 Loren F. Rawlings, 359th. 9 November 1997
 Oron J. Rogers, 358th. 1997
 Blaine R. Ruark, 359th. 8 May 1998
 Donald M. Rusk, 427th. 3 June 1998
 Richard N. Snyder, 360th. 22 May 1998
 Jim White, 427th. 21 August 1998

The 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association also notes, with sympathy, the passing of Marion Bass Stevens, wife of Colonel Kermit D. Stevens (USAF Ret) on 4 September 1998. Ill health prevented her from attending the reunion in Savannah with her husband and daughter, Ellen. She was 84.



B-47 BOMBER gets a renovation work-over in preparation for display adjacent to the Memorial Garden of the 8th AF Heritage Museum. Donations by 303rd members will assure the painting of the Group's Red Triangle C on the tail.

THE EDITOR COMMENTS....

This was my first mission as pilot of the *Hell's Angels Newsletter*. It was a challenging and inspiring journey. The only pressure was self-imposed by the knowledge that I was succeeding a veteran of 13 great years in the 303rd's journalistic arena, and I was obliged to keep the faith.

In flying this mission, successfully, I hope, I was blessed with an outstanding crew. Editor Emeritus **Hal Susskind** contributed an article and column. President **Harry Gobrecht** wrote a fine piece. **Gary Moncur** wrapped up his reunion with his dad's *Thunderbird* crew in excellent style. **Bud Klint** produced a timely article on his peacetime return to Schweinfurt. **Alice Timm and Katherine Timm Schaubert**, wife and daughter of **Harold "Red" Timm**, wrote from the heart about their reunion feelings. **Robin Beeby** reported from England on the 303rd wreath laying at Madingley Cemetery where some of our dead rest. **Phil Sellers** inaugurated a new column from the 8th AF Heritage Museum. And on and on....

I was inundated by reunion photographs of superb quality. Most credit for sheer volume as well as keen talent goes to **Coleman Sanders, Anne Caruso, Kathy Schaubert and Dick Johnson**.

My task, then, was to take this wealth of news and picture ammunition and try to lock on the target by laying out 20 pages, writing heads, captions and many additional pages of original copy, sizing and slotting in photographs, doing donkeywork typing, putting all the elements together in the form of camera-ready pages, and then praying that the printer would live up to our established standards.

There's one regret—the *Forum* letters to the editor and the personal accounts of World War II experiences by Mulesworth veterans are missing from this edition. They were bumped on a space available basis. These features will return in all their glory in the February and subsequent issues.

There has been some confusion over the number of issues published annually. *Hell's Angels Newsletter* is a quarterly. The publication dates are February, May, August and November. Pages range normally from 16 to 20.

Please write your Letter to the Editor. We need to hear from you. Whether a letter praises or condemns or, far better, has something of substance to say, every effort will be made to print it. You'll find the address in the space below.

It's inevitable that an editor will put his own unique imprint on his work. In essence, however, my ultimate goal will simply be to sustain the appearance, contents and personality of our newsletter at the same high levels it has achieved over the years.

Eddie Deerfield

Oklahoma City Is 1999 Reunion Destination!

During the Savannah reunion, both San Antonio and Albuquerque were mentioned as sites for next year. These recommendations fell by the wayside when the Association was unable to find a local organizer. When Ed Miller volunteered to arrange the affair in Oklahoma City, his proposal was accepted by the Association president. Details follow in the February issue.



CHIN UP, CHUMS! Savannah reunion organizers Ruth and Walt Ferrari get words of encouragement from reunion veteran Jim Taylor.



FROM 1ST TO 15TH REUNION! All present and accounted for in Savannah were at least 12 members who attended the first reunion on 8 May 1948 in New York. From l-to-r are Bill and Mary Eisenhart, Barbara and Roger Bates, George Torrey, Rae Susskind, Van White, Charles Doback, Lew Lyle, Forrest Barton and Hal Susskind. Coleman Sanders is not in the photo—he was taking it!

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Hell's Angels Newsletter
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