

Hell's Angels Newsletter

303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

November, 1999

438 Attend Oklahoma City Reunion RETURN TO MOLESWORTH AND REUNION IN SAN DIEGO PLANNED FOR NEXT YEAR

The 303rd Bomb Group, after amassing a record 364 combat missions against the Nazi enemy in World War II, is returning to its base at Molesworth for what has been dubbed "the 365th and final mission." The visit will coincide with the dedication of a magnificent memorial to the veterans of the 303rd, soon to be constructed outside the main gate of the RAF base.

A surprisingly high turn out of 438 303rd Bomb Group veterans, families and friends heard the news in Oklahoma City, the 16th gathering since the war ended more than 50 years ago. They also learned that the Association's Board of Directors had approved San Diego for the 17th reunion.

Tamarac Travel, Inc., has been named tour agent for the return to Molesworth, scheduled from 31 May to 8 June. Estimated per person costs are \$1,299 plus air fare. In addition to the Molesworth visit, which will feature the Memorial dedication and a hangar dance, other activities will center around three days in London and four days in Cambridge.

Dick D'Amato, Tamarac representative, said information packets, including registration forms, will be mailed this month to everyone on the 303rd's member roster.

The return to Molesworth will be led by the 303rd's own retired Maj. Gen. Lew Lyle.

Bill Roche, in his capacity as Vice President for Administration, announced that the next official reunion of the 303rd Bomb Group Association will be held from 25-29 September in San Diego at the Hanalei Hotel. The farewell banquet will feature a Hawaiian luau.

Registration materials will be mailed to all members well in advance of the San Diego reunion dates.

Cost estimates to build the impressive Memorial to the 303rd Bomb Group, now in the blueprint stage and subject to further modifica-

tions, are \$25,000. Initial costs will be defrayed by contributions from personnel now based at Molesworth, British and American corporate interests and private citizens. The balance will be covered by donations from members of the 303rd BGA, with a possible increment from the Association's treasury, if needed.

To learn how to donate, see the story on page 20. All donations are tax deductible.

Ed and Jill Miller earned the praise of all who attended the well-organized and pleasant gathering in Oklahoma City from 8-11 October. Tours away from the Marriott Hotel included the National Cowboy Hall of Fame, the Omniplex Aviation Museum, a day at the races and a visit to the restaurant row in Bricktown. The city tour included the site of the disastrous bombing of the Federal Building.

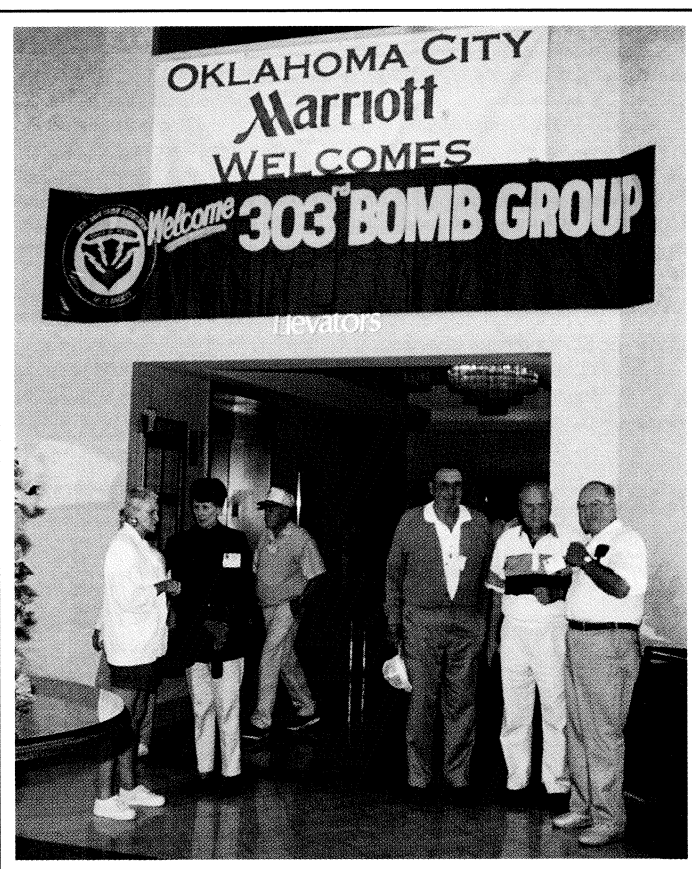
Hal Susskind, Chairman of the Past Presidents Committee which serves also as the Nominating, Awards and Memorials Committee, presented the following slate to the membership:

William J. Roche, President
Richard R. Johnson, VP Adm
Al Dussliere, Secretary
Jack Rencher, Treasurer

They were elected unanimously, and Roche then named Jim Taylor as Vice President for Reunions.

Susskind also announced the annual selections for engraving on the Association's Service Recognition Monument at the 8th AF Heritage Center:

Edward W. Gardner, Jr.



EARLY ARRIVALS FOR THE 303RD'S 16TH REUNION, held in Oklahoma City from 8-11 October, included (l-to-r) Joan Beasley, Mary Lee Deerfield, Bill Beasley, John Ford and Bill Roche. A few days later, Roche was elected President of the 303rd BGA and Ford was elected 359th Squadron representative on the Board, with Beasley as his Alternate.

J. Ford Kelley
Charles McClain
James B. Taylor

Special awards presented at the farewell banquet went to Gary Moncur for extraordinary accomplishment in designing and maintaining the 303rd Bomb Group Association's internet Web Page and to Ed and Jill Miller for outstanding efforts in conducting the reunion.

Moncur and Miller made interesting large screen presentations of their Web Site and CD-Rom projects, each a

remarkable tribute to the history of the 303rd. Harry Goebrecht presented to Lew Lyle a bound copy of all issues to date of the Hell's Angels Newsletter for the 8th AF Heritage Museum Library.

The most solemn occasion was the annual Memorial Service featuring readings by Quentin Hargrove, Jim Taylor and Eddie Deerfield. The names of ninety of our member veterans who have passed away in the last year were called out, followed by the playing of TAPS.



303RD BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

Hell's Angels Newsletter

Editor--Eddie Deerfield

VOL XXI, No. 4 3552 Landmark Trail, Palm Harbor, FL 34684 November, 1999

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 Bombardment Group (H) and to provide opportunities for 303rd veterans, families and friends to meet.

Because members are helping to perpetuate the history of the 303rd Bombardment Group (H), dues and/or donations to the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc. are tax deductible. Regular Members include persons assigned or attached to the 303rd Bombardment Group (H), from its 1942 activation in Boise, ID, throughout its war years at Station 107 Molesworth, England, to its 1945 deactivation in Casablanca. Spouses, children & grandchildren of regular members may become Family Members. All other persons interested in perpetuating the history of the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) and in furthering the aims of the Association may, with approval at a membership meeting, become non-voting Associate Members.

Membership years begin on the first day of January. Our Hell's Angels Newsletter will only be sent to members whose dues payments are current. Annual dues are \$10 and \$15 for foreign addresses.

Copyright©1999 by the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association Inc. Contents of the *Hell's Angels Newsletter* may not be reproduced in any form without the express written permission of the editor, Eddie Deerfield.

Editor Emeritus: Hal Susskind

OFFICERS -- 303RD BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION

President

William J. Roche (Doris)
1428 Gleneagles Drive
Venice, FL 342924206
TEL: (941) 485-5073 EM: dbroche2@aol.com

Vice President - Administration

Richard R. Johnson (Marjorie)
5901 Joe Road
Deale, MD 20751-9739
TEL: (410) 867-0597
EM: fortdriver@aol.com

Vice President - Reunions

James B. Taylor (Evelyn)
421 Yerba Buena Avenue
Los Altos, CA 94022-2152
TEL: (650) 948-6596

Secretary

Albert L. Dussliere (Lorene)
1901 5th Street
East Moline, IL 61244-2421
TEL: (309) 755-5339
EM: ald@derbytech.com

Treasurer

Jack P. Rencher, P.O. Box 7927
Boise, ID 83707-1927
TEL: (208)343-2265
EM: jpreacher@aol.com

ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

358th Bomb Sqd. Representative

Walter J. Mayer
W. 14605 Taylor Road
Cheney, WA 99004-9425
TEL: (509) 299-3250

359th Bomb Sqd. Representative

John W. Ford (Florice)
4248 W. Colby Street
Springfield, MO 65802-5612
TEL: (417) 831-3819
EM: warrenburke@worldnet.att.net

360th Bomb Sqd. Representative

Richard Smith (Betty)
790 Crenshaw Drive
Hemet, CA 92543-8044
TEL: (909) 6524793
EM spider@ivic.net

358th Bomb Sqd. Alternate

William H. Simpkins (Evelyn)
348 S.Cologne Ave., Box 217
Cologne, NJ 08213-0217
TEL: (609) 965-2871

359th Bomb Sqd. Alternate

William M. Beasley (Joan)
1613 Magnolia Avenue
Lady Lake, FL 32159-2197
TEL: (352) 753-8500

360th Bomb Sqd. Alternate

William Eason
RR# 1 Box 404
Vincent, Ohio 45784-9742
TEL: (740) 989-2326
EM: weason@speed1st.net

ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES (Continued)

427th Bomb Sqd. Representative

Fred E. Reichel
553 Mallard Street
Rochester Hills, MI 48309-3431
TEL: (248) 852-2980

Headquarters & Supporting Units

444th Air Depot Representative

Henry G. Johansen
8989 E. Escalante, Site #78
Tucson, AZ 85730-2899
TEL: (602) 886-6093

Widow Member's Representative

Joanna M. Tressler
Rd#1, Box 373-K
Northumberland, PA 17857-9766
TEL: (717) 473-3816

Editor, Hell's Angels Newsletter

Eddie Deerfield (Mary Lee)
3522 Landmark Trail
Palm Harbor, FL 34684-5016
TEL: (727) 787-0332
EM: ED303fsra@aol.com

427th Bomb Sqd. Alternate

Albert L. Dussliere (Lorene)
1901 5th Street
East Moline, IL 61244-2421
TEL: (309) 755-5339
EM: ald@derbytech.com

Hdq's & Supporting Units

444th Air Depot Alternate

Maurice J. Paulk (Opal)
205 W. 12th
Wood River, NE 68883-9164
TEL: (308) 583-2583
EM: mjpmtman@kdsi.net

Associate Members Rep

Lance Stoner
11422 W. 70th Street
Shawnee, KS 662034026
TEL: (913) 268-3944
EM: lstoner@gvi.net

APPOINTED COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Membership & Roster

Edgar C. Miller (Jill)
422 S. Walnut Avenue
Tempe, OK 73568-0219
TEL: (580) 342-5119
EM: edmiller@pldi.net

PX Administrator

Charles R. Sykes (Vicki)
16281 N. 3 1st Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85023-3008
TEL: (602) 993-8015
EM: PX303BG@aol.com

Computer Data Base

Edward W. Gardner, Jr. (Sue)
5764 Lakeview Drive
Interlochen, MI 49643-0246
TEL: (616) 276-7126
EM: ewg303nav@aol.com

Historian, 8thAFHS & 8thAFH Museum Liaison

Harry D. Gobrecht (Barbara)
505 Via Deseo
San Clemente, CA 92672-2462
TEL: (949) 361-2662
EM: pilot8thaf@aol.com

Budget & Ways & Means

Edgar C. Miller (Jill)
422 S. Walnut Avenue
Tempe, OK 73568-0219
TEL: (580) 342-5119
EM: edmiller@pldi.net

RAF Molesworth England Rep

Brian S. McGuire (Dina)
JAC-USEUCOM
PSC 46 Box 404 APO AE 09469
TEL: USA 011-44-1480-394274
TEL: JAC 011-44-1480-842626
EM: mcguire@betac.com

Group Advisor

Lewis E. "Lew" Lyle (Betty)
207 Ridge One
Hot Springs, AR 71901-9118
TEL: (501) 321-1956

By-Laws Committee

William S. McLeod, Jr. (Alice)
1676 West Mesa
Fresno, CA 93711-1944
TEL: (559) 439-8922

Webmaster

Gary Moncur (Susan)
4483 Palmer Drive
West Valley City, UT 84120-5052
TEL: (801) 969-7639
EM: glm@xmission.com

Audit Committee

Frank C. DeCicco, Jr. (Jean)
6 Kitty Hawk West
Richmond, TX 77469-9710
TEL: (281) 341-5004

Mission Reports Administrator

Jack Rencher
2901 Hill Road (POB 7927)
Boise, ID 83707-1927
TEL: (208) 343-2265
BUS: (800) 635-8930
EM: jpreacher@aol.com

United Kingdom Representatives

Robin & Sue Beeby
40 St. Catherine's Road
Kettering, Northants, England NN15
5EN TEL: UK 1536-516-423
TEL: USA 011-44-1536-516-423
EM: RJBeeby@aol.com

CHAPLAIN -- CATHOLIC

Bishop Rene H. Gracida, 4126 Ocean Dr., Corpus Christi, TX 78411-1224

CHAPLAINS -- PROTESTANT

Rev. Everett A. Dasher (Helen), Rt#4 Box 425, Saluda, SC 29138-9159
Rev. Warren L. Hedrick (Alma), 3 Andrew Avenue, Sanford, ME 04073-3149
Rev. Robert L. Johnson (Mary), 2208 W. Granite St., Siloam Springs, AR 72761

Number 364 Safe For Bashor Crew

THE LAST MISSION OF THE 303RD BOMB GROUP IN WORLD WAR II

By Oliver "Lee" Bashor

This mission was on the 25th of April 1945 to Pilsen, Czechoslovakia to bomb the Skoda armament works visually. I was a First Lieutenant, Aircraft Commander (Pilot) on the last mission of the 303rd Bomb Group.

My crew and I were assigned to the 359th Squadron at Molesworth. We completed 21 missions over Europe as a part of the 359th Squadron, then we were transferred April 20, 1945, to the 358th Squadron so I could become one of three Flight Commanders for the squadron.

Our first five combat missions to Essen, Schwerte, Betzeorf, Minden and Zossen were completed in seven days. The next four missions to Berlin, Plaven, Hamburg and Furstenau were completed in six days. The next eight missions to Berlin, Bremen, Halle, Kiel, Unterlusz, Bayreuth, Leipzig and Hitzacker were completed in 10 days. The next four missions to Freiham, Royan, Straubing and Dresden were completed in six days.

So the 22nd and last mission for my crew was to Pilsen on the 25th of April 1945. I don't remember the serial number or name of the aircraft that I flew.

On this mission to Pilsen, take off and formation gathering was fairly routine. I believe we flew "V" formation and I believe I flew just under the leader of the squadron of a thirteen plane unit which was a part of three squadrons

(approximately thirty three airplanes) in formation.

The report of the mission in the "Might In Flight" book is a good summary of the mission. However, it states that Allied radio had broadcast a warning to the Czech workers to stay away from the factory since it was the target. Such an advance mission warning was unprecedented. It seems to me that we did not learn of this broadcast until we were about half way to the target. We felt we were in trouble from anti-aircraft fire because Pilsen had a reputation for lots of anti-aircraft fire and we were scheduled to fly less than twenty-five thousand feet above the surface so the accurate low altitude anti-aircraft fire would be a problem.

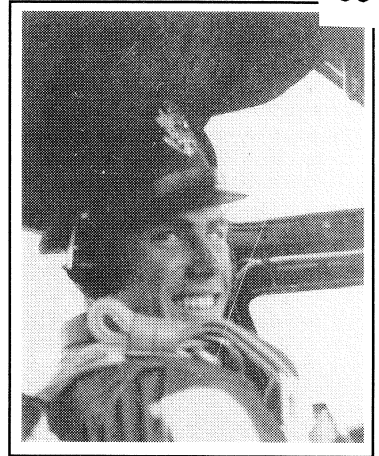
As reported, we had lots of P-51 support but that would not help us over the target. In addition, the requirement to visually sight the target before releasing the bombs required us to abort the first bomb run, and on the second bomb run we had intense and very accurate anti-aircraft action.

The report states that we made two passes at the target, however, it seems to

me we made three passes. Maybe this was due to the number of times we opened and closed the bomb bay doors. I was so busy with flying that I thought we made three runs instead of two. I do not recall how many holes the anti-aircraft put in our aircraft but we know that there were many.

We were very fortunate as a crew to complete this 22nd mission and not have any of the crew injured this time or on previous missions.

Returning to Molesworth was fairly routine for my aircraft but it was exciting when it came time to land because many of the aircraft landed without gear or flaps and the end of the runway looked like a parking lot. Three airplanes landing ahead of me all veered off the runway and I was able to land with an



1st LT. LEE BASHOR at the controls of *Sweet La Rhonda*.

open runway from formation.

Except for the many holes in the airplane, we did not have any other major damage.

Two "Continental Express" missions were planned to show ground crews and others the extent of war in Europe.

I flew a B-17 and crew back to the United States, and trained West Point graduates to fly the B-17 until World War II ended.

EDITOR'S NOTE—
The Bashor experience was the up side of the 303rd's last mission. For the down side, see pages 4 and 5 for the traumatic disintegration of the Warren Mauger crew.



THE BASHOR CREW IN FRONT OF *SWEET LA RHONDA*.

Standing, l-to-r, are engineer Paul Reed, ball turret gunner Norman Green, co-pilot Ira Baker and bombardier Harry Adams. Kneeling are tail gunner Bob Thiesen, waist gunner Bob Hanson, pilot Lee Bashor and radio operator Vic Shook. Navigator Lou Fish was not present.

Number 364 a Disaster For Mauger Crew

THREE DIE, FOUR TAKEN PRISONER, ONE EVADES ON 303RD'S FINAL RAID

EDITOR'S NOTE—The last 303rdBG(H) B-17 crew to be lost on the last day of 8th Air Force bomber operations, on 25 April 1945 against the Skoda armament works in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, was hit by anti-aircraft fire immediately after "bombs away." Pilot Warren Mauger ordered his crew to bail out. Lt. Mauger managed to open his parachute after the Fortress exploded, despite burns on his face and hands. He spent 10 days evading capture by German troops. Following are highlights of his story of evasion.

By Warren Mauger

As the farmer got closer, I could see that he was waving a white cloth. Somehow, by gestures and words, I asked him the way to travel west to get to our lines. He told me the best he could and offered his old farm jacket for me to wear. The jacket not only helped me keep warm, but also made me appear as one of the local farmers. My pants were all stained and burnt and no longer resembled an Air Force officer's uniform.

As I approached a river crossing, I saw a reconnaissance car approaching. I jumped down along the bank and lay there. It passed. Just before I got to some woods in the hills, another German soldier came out of a bomb shelter and spotted me. He walked on.

It was 1:00 p.m. I crawled into a drainage ditch and pulled a great quantity of leaves over myself. I moved out at about 5:00 p.m. Ahead of me sat a German soldier with his girlfriend. I strolled by them practically unnoticed. At the bottom of the hill was a set of railroad tracks. I followed the tracks in the darkness for about a mile. When it looked like I was coming to a city, I left the tracks and struck out cross country.

In the first faint glimmer of sunlight, I could see a small town looming up. I heard the roar of some trucks coming up from behind. I dove for the drainage ditch at the side of the road. A convoy of German army trucks passed.

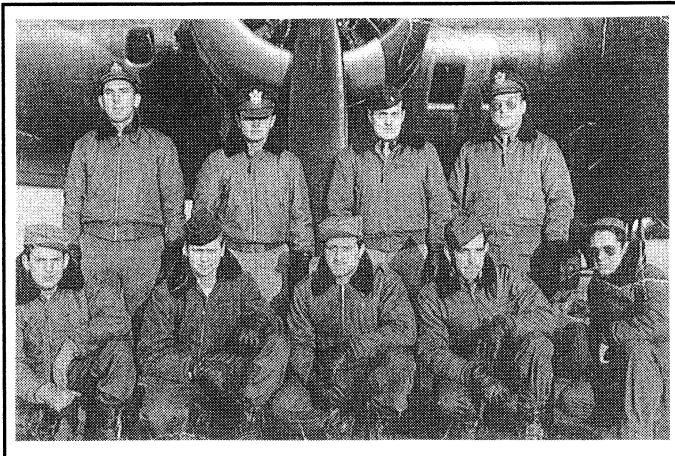
Once on the outskirts of town, I started looking for farm houses. I got into the barn unnoticed but as I climbed into the hay loft, on my heels was the farm's dog. It barked and howled until the farmer got up. The farmer said I could not stay on his property for if the German police found me there, he and his family would be shot. He did show me a spot to hide during the day. He left me there and, most important of all, left a small amount of food.

Progress the second night heading west was pretty slow. When the sun rose, I was glad to bed down. By sundown I was feeling well rested, and walked through the night.

About 5:30 in the morning, a farmer overtook me with his horse and wagon. He bid me hop aboard. After about a half hour, he pointed up the road. Through the trees, there was a military check point. Everyone passing had to produce proper identification credentials. I jumped from the wagon and headed for the hills. The farmer moved off at a slow pace and the soldiers at the check point did not see me or suspect anything.

The sun was setting now. I would sleep this night. I found a wooded area with a lot of leaf cover. As in the past, I awoke very hungry. I approached a house and was welcomed at the door. I told the farmer that I was an American flyer. He apparently understood and bid me come in. A family of six lived in one room of this farm house. I shared a meal with these kind and generous folks and was again on my way.

At about noon I came to a mountain stream, and, just beyond the bridge, I could see a small town. After crossing the bridge, I rapped on the door of one of the houses. A young lad, about 12 years of age, answered the door and let me in the house. It appeared he was the only one home. He offered me some sour milk soup. He told me he was a member of the Hit-



THE MAUGER CREW—Standing, l-to-r, are bombardier Norman Gadois (his replacement on the 25 April 1945 Pilsen raid, E. G. Moss, was killed in action), pilot Warren Mauger, who evaded capture; co-pilot William Burgess, taken prisoner by the Germans, and navigator Bernard Brown (his replacement, G. E. Knox, became a POW.) Kneeling are radio operator Matthew Grden, taken prisoner; engineer Glenn Walling, killed in action; engineer Gerald Craven who was not on board; ball turret gunner Francis Kelley, killed in action, and tail gunner James Haley (replaced on the mission by E. M. Dugan who became a POW).

ler Youth and showed me his uniform. He said that it was all but mandatory to belong. Somehow I believed him and left feeling that he would not notify anyone of my being there.

I would sleep the rest of the day and walk this night. I bedded down in the dense undergrowth along a field. By the time I awoke it was dark. I walked along rolling fields. Before the night was over I was again looking for someplace to bed down. I spotted a large farm house and a very inviting hay stack. Their dog was chained, and its barking seemed not to disturb the farmer so I approached the hay stack. As I was digging, I came across a sleeping man in a German army uniform. I made a fast exit and found some other place to sleep.

Toward late afternoon the next day, I came upon a large river that could not be crossed except by the bridge. Again the military check-point was there. I had not waited long when there approached a group of six men. I got on the road ahead of them and let them catch up to me before I came to the bridge. All seven of us walked by the guards without a hitch.

I hadn't walked

very far into the city, when I became aware that I was being followed by two German soldiers. My pace did not increase for fear that they might suspect something in my actions. They were closing the gap. I mounted the steps of a church and gave a slight backward glance. To my relief, the soldiers continued down the street.

Entering the church, I slipped into one of the back pews. When the church was empty I went to the front and identified myself. The priest understood immediately and motioned for me to follow him. We went outside the back of the church and onto a small street. He called to a woman in a second story window. She disappeared and returned in a minute with her arms full of bread. She threw them down, with myself and the priest doing the catching. I thanked both of them and headed down the street with my shirt bulging with large pieces of black bread.

Now I was coming to the end of my fifth day - or was it the sixth? One loses track of time after a while in these situations. I was up pretty early the next morning and was anxious to get going. As I walked

(Continued on Page 5)

MAUGER—**Continued from page 4**

along, I had breakfast—a fine meal of hard black bread. The farmers paid little attention to me. The ones that did look my way probably thought me a vagrant for I certainly looked the part, dirty and unshaven.

Late in the afternoon I approached a village. The road leading into this village again had soldiers. Going past the soldiers in a group had worked so well before, I decided I would try it again. Some farmers from the neighboring fields were heading for their homes now. I fell in with one of the groups and again passed by the soldiers. Things didn't go so well though. Shortly after passing the sentries, a soldier on a motorcycle caught up to the group and looked us over pretty well. He proceeded on about a half block and wheeled around. He was coming back pretty fast. This was time to leave.

I bolted across a front lawn of one house, into the back yard and over a large picket fence. I must have jumped it like a hurdler. Up a large terraced hill I raced. The first terrace I hit head first. I lay there a few minutes, my heart pounding and finding it hard to breathe. Slowly I raised my head. Down the road the German motorcyclist drove back and forth, stopped at every house and searched. I was afraid to proceed up the hill for fear of being seen. It was getting near dark, so here I would stay for awhile.

I had no sooner stretched out on the ground when another German soldier came strolling up a small path toward my hiding place. It was too late to run. I had to do something fast. I put on the act of a man completely stoned. I got up, staggered around and fell down a couple times. He smiled while watching this and then turned and strolled up and over the hill.

When it was good and dark I headed west. As the sun started to heat things up the next day, I began to feel better. I walked along the edge of some woods. About a half mile ahead two farm hands were working with hoes. As I approached, they moved to intercept my path. Both men appeared to be friendly, judging by their gestures. I made an attempt to identify myself. It was successful. They were elated at this discovery. This meeting proved

to be one of the greatest pieces of good fortune in this whole adventure.

One of these two was a young lad of about 15, the other a man in his 20's who introduced himself as Andre Vesille. Andre was to be the key to my survival for the next several days. We walked to the crest of a small hill. Spread out below us was a village of not more than 15 houses. Off to one corner of the field on this hill was a large hay stack. Upon getting to the stack, the two men began to pull large clumps of straw out of the base. In a short time they had hollowed out a sizable cave. They motioned for me to crawl in. Once I was in, they covered up the opening, leaving me a small air hole to the outside. Andre said that he would come back later. The hay stack was dry and warm—not half bad really.

At sundown, Andre was back. He beckoned for me to come out. We sat there by the stack and tried to communicate. I munched on the small lunch he had brought. I found out that he was a Russian who had been captured at the front. He and his wife and child had been shipped to this small village to help with the farm work. He was very talkative and was a joy to have around. Before he left, he said he would return the next day. I then settled down to a fine nights sleep with the first distant rumble of artillery.

My little Russian friend showed up and again he brought supper. This time my meal consisted of two pieces of black bread, two raw eggs, and a small bottle of milk. I had never eaten raw eggs before, but they tasted fine. After supper we again sat and chatted. The little spot in the haystack was out of view of the village, so we felt quite safe. After he left, I settled back for the night and again listened to the rumble in the west. The artillery roar was closer this night. Again I quickly fell asleep.

The next morning was bright and clear. About 2:30 in the afternoon, I looked out the little hole and saw a stranger looking in at me. He was an old man with a cane, well dressed in a black suit and a gray hat, apparently someone of importance in the village. Andre came at about sundown. I told him what had happened. He told me the man was the Burgermeister and that he was placed in the village because of his sympathetic feelings toward the Germans. He had the only

telephone in the village and would call the military if he sighted any enemy in the area.

Andre rushed me off to another hiding place. My new refuge was a one man bomb shelter about 300 yards from the haystack. These shelters were four-foot square holes approximately six feet deep. They were filled with straw to within three feet from the top. Over the top were placed logs. The logs were raised on one end so a person could slide in on his stomach. He bid me farewell here. I ate the small lunch he left and settled back for the night.

Early in the following afternoon, some small children arrived at the shelter and decided to play inside. They laughed and bounced all over, chattering and really enjoying themselves. When they finally discovered that they weren't the only ones there, they fled, terror stricken. It wasn't long before they came back, but this time with their mothers, fathers, aunts and uncles. The people seemed more curious than angry. I showed myself at the entrance which seemed to satisfy their curiosity. They soon left and I was wondering if they would bring back the Burgermeister, the police, or worse, some German soldiers.

It wasn't long before Andre arrived, this time with his young friend whom I had seen on our first encounter. I quickly explained what had happened. In a minute, I was racing across the fields with each man pulling me on either arm. I found it very difficult to run because I had been off my feet for a long period of time. The new hiding place was the same old hay stack. Andre explained to me that the previous day the Burgermeister had called the authorities and that they had searched the hay stack. When they found no trace of me, they assumed I had moved on. This was indeed a good place to hide in again. That night the rumble of artillery was much louder.

The next morning, it must have been Sunday, for Andre had with him his wife and son. She had brought a nice lunch and a wash cloth, soap and a towel. We walked to a small brook where I cleaned up. After this we settled back to a fine picnic lunch. Andre's wife and son never took their eyes off me. I must have presented a curious sight to them. The rest of the day I spent in my cave. The artillery bursts were now

getting so close that the ground shook. I could hear the distant sound of the cannon, the whine through the air and the explosion when the missile landed. I also heard something else now, machine gun fire.

Sometime after midnight, the machine gun fire on both sides became intense. You could distinguish the American fire by its low pitch and slower rate than that of the Germans. The artillery on both sides were now firing. Toward morning I could hear many voices of German soldiers. I heard another sound, one I could not reconcile with the once mighty German army. Teams of horses were moving the biggest share of German equipment for this retreat. Evidently, the bombing of oil refineries had taken its toll. The army had no fuel to move its mechanized equipment. This lack of fuel had knocked out most of its tanks also.

Finally, the artillery bombardment stopped. It was now about sun-up. Intermittent machine gun fire was still present though. All of a sudden, Andre was peering in the peep hole. He told me he and his family were going into the hills. He said he would be back as soon as the fighting subsided.

Most of the day was filled with sporadic sounds of small arms fire, with an occasional larger report from heavy artillery. Tanks could also be heard rumbling about. I had always been happy to see Andre and it was no exception when again I saw him at the peep hole. Excitedly he told me that the Americans were at the intersection of the village roads. We ran down the hill together. I couldn't keep up too well, so Andre helped me along.

At the intersection stood three light tanks firing down the road. Behind these tanks were two jeeps. I approached the last jeep and was about to identify myself when I took a second look at the helmets these soldiers were wearing. They had netting over them and their shape was hard to distinguish. Then, a G.I. spotted me and tossed me two packages of Camel cigarettes. THANK GOD, it was all over!

I turned to Andre, but how do you thank a man who has probably saved your life? The words we exchanged were superfluous, but he somehow understood my feelings. I gave him my watch, something he had admired many times. What a small price to pay for his great service. ■ ■ ■



MASTER WOOD CARVER BILL ADAMS WAS HONORED FOR HIS ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENTS BY VIC TURNER, LOCAL MAYOR IN LONDON.

BILL ENTERED TWO OF HIS CARVINGS IN A LONDON ART SHOW, AND WAS AWARDED PRIZE MONEY IN THE AMOUNT OF £850, ABOUT \$1,350.

Bill Adams — A 303rd Treasure in England

By Eddie Deerfield

For more than a decade, Master Carver William F. Adams of London has been chipping away on wood, often the tops of old oak school desks, to create works of art honoring the men and aircraft based in England during World War II.

The 303rd Bomb Group has been a principal beneficiary of his talents, with scores of wood carvings created for individual veterans, as well as donated to the Association as reunion raffle prizes. The only compensation Bill Adams asks is a photo of the recipient for his personal album. His masterful carvings, with a strong focus on the nose art which adorned bombers and fighters, are on display at the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum, the Joint Analysis Center at RAF Molesworth, and many locations on several continents.

Adams grew up in London, surviving the Nazi blitz as a young lad, and developing a lifelong love for the American flyers and their planes crisscrossing the sky overhead. His carving skills didn't fully emerge until long after the war when he was struck down by a vascular brain tumor, ending his profession as a lorry driver.

"I thought my life was over," Bill said. "I loved driving, and saw nothing ahead for me. But once I settled down at the Day Care Centre and started carving, my life started to change. I began to realize there was more to life than driving a truck."

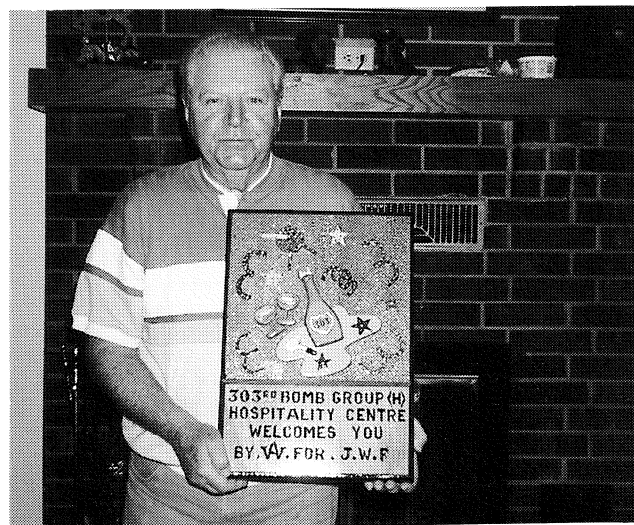
Bill and Joyce Adams were guests of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association at the Savannah reunion in 1998. In Bill's own words, "Right up until I attended your reunion, I always said I was just an ordinary run-of-the-mill guy, no one special. At the reunion, I found out different. One couple, when I was going down the hallway to my room, stopped me and asked if I was the English chap that had done the woodcarvings. I

said, yes, I was. They both said that I did fine work and made a lot of people happy. They said, 'You are very special to us.'

"That couple wasn't the only people to say that. I have never had so many people say that to me before. I have never been honored like I was honored at the banquet. The 303rd Bomb Group holds a special place in my heart."

Bill Adams is far from ready to hang up his carving tools. He made a special appeal for more 303rd nose art photos. Mail them to him at 91 Pelly Road, Plaistow, London, England E13 0NL.

Onward and upward, Bill. You're a good man.



303rd's REUNION HOSPITALITY CENTRE plaque, carved for posterity by Bill Adams. It was presented to John Ford, who will bring it to future reunions to mark the way.

303RD'S WAR DEAD HONORED AT MADINGLEY MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE

By Robin Beeby

303rd Bomb Group (H) Association Representative in UK

The last Memorial Day service of the century was also a more meaningful ceremony, with the thoughts and prayers of all those present going out to both the previous generations who had played their part in keeping us free, and to the current generation out in the Balkans, helping to keep others free.

The day was cool and overcast, but at least it wasn't raining!

The first sound was that of the bagpipes, as the Honor Guard, this year being the JAC team from RAF Molesworth, was escorted in by a lone piper of the Grampian Association of Bagpipers. The national anthems of the UK and the USA were played by the United States Air Forces Band in Europe.

The first speaker was the Lord Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, James G. P. Crowden. He remembered from his boyhood the many American aircraft that flew over his home in Cambridge, and the visitors to the Eagle Tavern who wrote their names on the ceiling of the Pub. He said that they still come back today, but fewer come each year. His message was that "You shared our history, you fitted into our domestic life, and came to our rescue. We owe every one of you, both those buried here at Madingley, and those who still come back, our freedom from tyranny today. Promise that you will keep coming back."

Robert L. Jones, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/Missing Personnel Affairs and himself a Vietnam veteran, asked for all veterans present to stand and be recognized. He stressed that we should remember the names of all veterans that had taken part in previous conflicts for "Without names, memory is lost; Without memory, the past is lost." He specially asked for us to remember those normally forgotten this day, the selfless service of the families left behind, and to remember their sacrifice.

A memorial Carillon, installed by AMVETS and the American Battle Monuments Commission, was then unveiled and dedicated.

Brigadier General Donald A. Hoffman in his address stressed the unique American-English bond. He pointed out that this was the first Memorial Day service here since the Madingley Cemetery was dedicated on 16th July, 1956, that American bombers were again flying from British soil "into harm's way". His final comment says it all - "Never forget that Freedom is never free".



TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF 303RD COMRADES, Robin Beeby, the Association's representative in England, prepares to place a wreath at the Madingley Cemetery near Cambridge.

After the official party laid their wreaths, it was the turn of the remaining hundred or so wreath layers to lay their tributes along the wall of the missing. I was again honoured to lay the wreath on behalf of the 303rd Bomb Group Association. Following a minute of silence, the delicate sounds of the carillon rang out for the first time over the Cambridgeshire countryside.

A twenty one gun salute was fired, and taps sounded and echoed across the graves whilst the flags were raised from half mast. With perfect timing as the bugles stopped, four F15-E's from RAF Lakenheath flew over in the Missing Man formation.

EDITOR'S NOTE—303rd veterans and family members planning to visit Molesworth should write to Brian McGuire at JAC, PSC 46 Box 404, APO AE 09469 or telephone (44) 1480-842626 to make welcoming arrangements.

*This is the soldier brave enough to tell
The glory-dazzled world that "war is hell."
Lover of peace, he looks beyond the strife,
And rides through hell to save his country's life.
by Henry van Hyde*

War is Hell!

by Hal Susskind

Speaking before the graduating class of the Michigan Military Academy on June 19, 1879, William Tecumseh Sherman said..

"I am tired and sick of war. Its glory is all moonshine. It is only those who have neither fired a shot nor heard the shrieks and groans of the wounded who cry aloud for blood, vengeance and more desolation. War is hell."

Over the years hell and war seemed to have become synonymous. How many times after a mission have you heard a combat crewman as part of the debriefing say, "We gave them hell today!" But if the mission was rough as it was at Oschersleben and Magdeburg, the phrase was expressed a little differently as: "The Luftwaffe sure shot the hell out of us today."

It was back on 24 October 1942, that the word "Hell" became an accepted word in the 303rd Bomb Group as a B-17F #41-24577, christened, "Hell's Angels, piloted by Capt Irl E. Baldwin arrived and became an important member of the 358th Bomb Squadron.

After conflicting stories, it was finally decided that it was named after a 1930 movie called "Hell's Angels" starring Jean Harlow and Ben Lyon. The director was Howard Hughes.

Another one of the original B-17s also in the 358th Squadron and part of the air echelon was "Hell Cat" which was ferried to England by Lt. Oran T O'Connor and crew. Did the addition of these two aircraft make the 358th a "Helluva" Squadron? Unfortunately, "Hell Cat" piloted by Lt. O'Connor was lost over Lorient, France on 23 Jan. 1943 on the Group's 11th mission, "Hell's Angels" survived that mission.

On 14 May 1943, "Hell's Angels" entered the history books when it became the first Air Force heavy bomber to complete 25 missions in the ETO.

On January 7, 1944, "Hell's Angels" became the official name of the 303rd Bomb Group according to the following notice in the Group's Daily Bulletin. "It has been voted by the group staff and squadron commanders to name the 303rd Bomb Group "Hell's Angels." This will be used from this time on in connection with all publicity for this group."

On January 20, 1944, "Hell's Angels" with thousands of names and messages scrawled upon her fuselage took off for the US on a bond selling tour. Lt. Col. Ben Lyon who starred in the 1930 epic was on hand to give her a royal sendoff. Happy to be on board were the original ground crew who saw her through her 48 missions.

During WW II, there were thirteen 8th AF Bomb Group's that had B-17s named "Hell's Angels" (91st,

92nd, 93rd, 94th, 96th, 303rd, 305th, 381st, 384th, 388th, 401st, 452nd, and 458th. And of course, The Flying Tigers, originally China's first line of defense against the Japanese during the early part of WW II, named their 3rd Squadron "Hell's Angels."

Since you heard so much about the movie "Hell's Angels" I thought you'd like to read a short synopsis of it.

It is the contrasting story of two brothers, Roy (James Hall) and Monte Rutledge (Ben Lyon), who leave Oxford and join the British Royal Flying Corps at the beginning of World War I.

One brother, Roy, falls in love with Helen (Jean Harlow), a sexy, voluptuous, platinum blonde. However she is capable of two-timing him. Its most remarkable moment

and famous line is delivered by blue-eyed Helen, who wears a slinky velvet evening dress with beaded straps. As the slutty fiancée of unsuspecting Roy, she tells brother Monte: "Would you be shocked if I put on something more comfortable?" The plunging neckline on her dress caused a tremendous controversy. (For that era)

While flying their mission, the brothers are shot down by the Germans and captured. A shell-shocked Monte is shot by his brother to prevent him from revealing important secrets to the Germans. As Monte dies in his brother's arms, Monte forgives his brother. Angry and in retaliation, the Germans execute Roy.

Most memorable wartime scenes were: the beautifully photographed aerial dogfight skirmishes, German zeppelin raids over London, and the red-tinted and two-color Technicolor scenes.

Filming the aviation epic presented many problems for Howard Hughes. No one was able to locate a Gotha or any other kind of German bomber from World War I. The best available compromise was a Sikorsky S.29, a large twin engine biplane about the same size as a World War I bomber. Roscoe Turner had purchased the plane in 1926 with plans to run an airline between Atlanta and New York, but a lack of funding made it necessary for him to lease the big Sikorsky to Hughes to use in the movie.

With modifications it was made to look like a German bomber. However one of the scenes in the movie called for the "Gotha" bomber to go into a long dive to simulate being shot down. Unfortunately, because of a mechanical malfunction, it failed to come out of the spin and all on board were killed in the crash. Most of them were close friends of Hughes.

"War is Hell."



BOEING VOLUNTEERS RESTORE 1943 B-17F TO FLYING STATUS

By Gregory Pierce
Boeing Functional Architect

The *Boeing Bee* is the only flyable B-17F that was actually built in The Boeing Company's Seattle Plant II factory. It now can be found parked on the eastside of the Museum of Flight in Seattle.

This aircraft first rolled out of Plant II on February 13, 1943 as B-17F-70-BO, serial number 42-29782. It was flown to the United Airlines Modification Center at Cheyenne, Wyoming and then to California to be used to train aircrews. In June 1943, it was assigned to a training unit at Moses Lake, Washington. On January 24, 1944, it was sent to Britain and returned to the United States on March 10, 1944. The log record shows no evidence that it was ever in combat.

After the war, the bomber was put to use spraying insecticides and dropping fire retardant. The late 1960's brought the Flying Fort to the silver screen in the movies "1000 Plane Raid" and "Tora, Tora, Tora."

In 1989, after the filming of the movie "Memphis Belle," Seattle owner Bob Richardson died unexpectedly. Possession of the aircraft was transferred to the Museum of Flight in Seattle. 1991 saw The Boeing Company lend its support to the Museum of Flight for the restoration of the B-17.

She was moved to a hanger in Renton, Washington where a core group of more than 70 volunteers (mostly Boeing employees and retirees) began the painstaking process of bringing the aircraft back to its 1943 standards. Parts from all over the world were located and a group of volunteers hiked into the hills of the Olympic Mountains to locate a wreck of a B-17. They removed the section of the fuselage that housed the ball turret and carried it out on a pole.

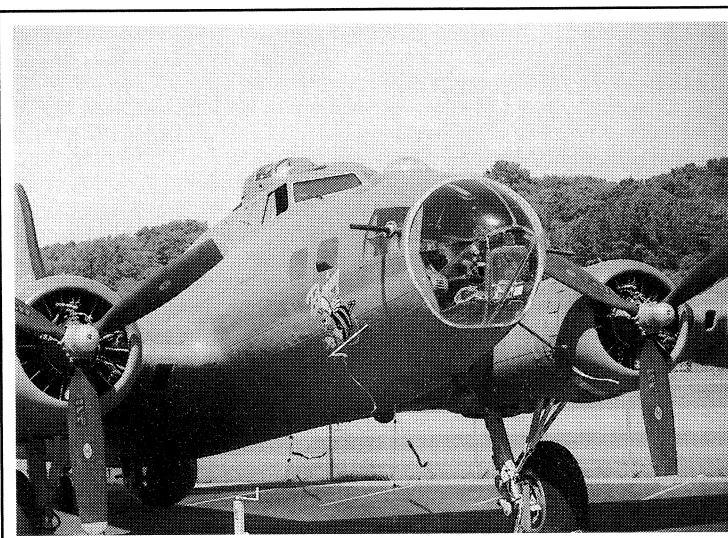
All in all, the volunteers contributed over 100,000 hours of labor to restore the *Boeing Bee*. Crew Chief Pat Coluccio said, "To the fraternity of Americans who stepped forward to protect our country, words cannot express our gratitude to all of you".

On May 9, 1998, with "Buzz" Nelson in the pilot seat, she took to the air and flew from Renton to Boeing Field. Nelson commented, "My father was Project Engineer on the B-17 program so I grew up with the Flying Fortress mystic. After all the years of the volunteers knocking themselves out on the restoration it was a thrill for me to fly. I hope that the Museum will choose to fly it often so others can experience the sight, sound and smell of this historic airplane."

First flown on May 30th 1942, a total of 3,405 "F" models were built. Of those, Boeing produced 2,300.



MORE THAN 70 VOLUNTEERS worked for more than 100,000 hours to restore the *Boeing Bee* to flying status, 55 years after it first left the factory.



THE AIRWORTHY B-17F BOEING BEE, when not aloft, has a place of honor outside the Museum of Flight in Seattle.

It was outwardly almost identical to the earlier B-17E. Externally, the F could be distinguished from the E only by the use of a single piece plastic nose. Apart from the optically flat bomb-aiming panel, the nose transparency was frameless.

There were over 400 internal changes: a new ball turret was fitted, external bomb racks were provided, wider paddle-bladed propellers were fitted, an improved oxygen system, carburetor air intake dust filters, dual brake system, more photographic equipment, an electronic link between the autopilot, and additional ball-and-socket machine gun mounts in the nose were introduced. Another gun was added at the opening on the top of the radio compartment, firing upward from the transparent hatch just above the wing trailing edge.

303rd Bomb Group Pilot Bill Eisenhart remembers, "It was a great airplane and from my experiences in combat, I'd say that it was responsible for bringing many of us home safely. Although sleek in design, it was a rugged combat platform."

After Ordering Crew to Bail Out

303RD PILOT LANDS STRICKEN WEA ON GROUNDS OF BRITISH MENTAL H

By Iris Drinkwater
Military Historian

On the outskirts of the south coast seaside town of Dawlish, in the county of Devon, England, a number of boys were playing football during the afternoon of January 23rd, 1943, when suddenly they heard the sound of an approaching aircraft. That in itself was no great surprise to the boys, who were used to hearing, or to seeing, friendly aircraft returning from bombing missions to France, and as no siren had sounded out a warning, they knew it had to be a 'Friendly'. But even to the untrained ears of the boys, the plane was producing a different sound than others they had heard. There was no steady roar from four engines, and it seemed much closer to them than usual. Then suddenly it came into sight, wheels down and little higher than the hedge surrounding their football pitch, with only one of its four engines running. As they all ran out to the centre of the field to get a better view, it didn't occur to them the pilot was trying to land his crippled plane on their pitch. As the plane headed straight for them, and would surely have ploughed right through them, the pilot lifted it high enough to pass over their heads, then down it came again, roaring off through the fence, and on towards the grounds of the nearby Langdon mental hospital. They dashed off in pursuit.

Within the grounds of the enormous hospital, it had been a day like any other day. Severely disturbed patients lived in secure areas, surrounded by high fencing, but the others were permitted to work on growing fruit and vegetables, under the close supervision of ancillary workers. The area used for growing cabbages had been ploughed in preparation for planting, and work was in progress in other areas, including the farm shop, when to everyone's amazement, a huge plane came crashing through fencing, and on towards the cabbage patch. Then just as it seemed it must crash into an oak tree, which was amongst the trees which lined the wall at the end of the cabbage patch, the wheels sank into the soft earth, and the plane came to a standstill. From all directions, doctors, nurses, patients and ancillary workers rushed out to greet their unexpected visitors. Expecting to see a number of airmen climb from the plane, they were surprised when just the pilot emerged. He was immediately surrounded by a mix-mash of humanity, all talking and asking questions: "Where were the rest of the crew?" "Where had he come from?" "Why did he land here?" And then, of course, because he was in England, he was offered a cup of tea.

Meanwhile, west of Dawlish, on the outskirts of the bleak moorland known as Dartmoor, a girl was riding her pony, and several young boys were roaming. In winter especially, Dartmoor is one of the most inhospitable places in England, which is why a prison was built there. Dartmoor covers an area in excess of 60 square miles. There are mountainous hills, known as Tors, and man-eating bogs. As if that were not enough for any would-be parachutists during WWII, American and British Battalions had established gunnery ranges in the more remote areas, which were strictly off limits to the general public. Single track roads are the only means of gaining access to isolated farms and moorland towns and villages such as Princetown, and Widdecombe-in-the-Moor. Few venture onto the moor in winter, unless they know enough about the place to find their way off it again. In winter, the fog rolls in quickly and without prior warning, hiding all landmarks. Get stuck on the moor in a winter's fog, and if the bogs don't get you, then hypothermia will, with the chances of survival being as bleak as the moor itself. And so it

was, that on January 23rd, 1943, a girl rode her pony, and the boys roamed.

Most English children had become conditioned to wartime, and there was a deep seated hatred for an enemy who had caused so much destruction, and who was depriving everyone in England of even the most basic of commodities such as food and clothing. Parents of children everywhere were constantly reminding them of the danger of enemy airmen, who could be landing by parachute, for whatever reason. They were warned not to approach them under any circumstances. But, with the bravado of children, they heeded the warnings, but secretly vowed that they would not be intimidated. After all, they were English, and weren't the English determined not to be intimidated by their enemies?

So that when a lone parachutist was seen descending close to where the boys were, the boys rushed over, determined to deal with their hated 'enemy' as soon as he fell to the ground. The girl, meanwhile, who was older than the boys, also disregarded the warnings of her parents, and, instead, instinctively, knew that this was someone who would need help. She quickly rode over to where the boy had drawn his penknife, and found herself confronted by a young American airman, scarcely older than herself, who was more than a little frightened by his ordeal of a first time parachute jump. He was shivering in the cold January day, and so, without more ado, the girl leapt off her pony, and insisted he ride, whilst she led the pony back to the warmth of her parents farm, where she was to learn that he was T/Sgt. Everett S. Dasher, the Radio Operator from a B-17F, serial number 41-24606, nicknamed *WEREWOLF*, on this day one of 21 B-17's despatched from their base at Molesworth, England, to bomb the port of Lorient, France.

Although the young airman did not know it at the time, the rest of his crew had also survived their enforced departure from their plane, whilst his pilot, who had promised to follow his crew out of the aircraft, could find no place where he could abandon the plane without fear of it crashing and causing death and destruction on the ground, and so he had stayed with it, and landed it alone, wheels down, using the one serviceable engine. Last to leave the plane had been the Co-Pilot, Donald W. Hurlburt, who had refused to go until Pilot George Oxider promised to follow him.

As the crew descended on their parachutes towards the inhospitable Dartmoor, their problems became obvious. "It's tough enough to have to bail out of a Flying Fortress, but it's sadder by far," according to Lt's Donald Hurlburt and Donald Grant, "to find yourself hurtling into an American Artillery range where your own guys are lobbing 155mm howitzer stuff all over the place." But they needn't have worried, for the men of the Battery, commanded by Capt. Cecil Harvey, had seen the airmen leave the plane, float down and disappear behind a neighbouring hill. They sent out a Jeep to pick them up. The Jeep got stuck in deep mud, but eventually accomplished its mission. It was the first time that either flyer had jumped. Neither was injured, but both were slightly nervous and shaken up.

Top Turret gunner, Fred Ziemer, parachuted into the arms of a farmer who, convinced he had captured a German parachutist, marched Ziemer off to a policeman.

Right Waist gunner, Samuel Maxwell, landed on a mountainside in his bare feet. The snap of the parachute as it opened, had thrown his shoes off.

Ball Turret gunner, Bob Smith, came down in the middle of a flock of sheep, scattering wool all over the countryside.

The remainder of the crew wandered over the uninhabited

WEREWOLF HOSPITAL

moor for hours before being found by British Home Guards.

Many conflicting stories about the pilot who landed his plane on one engine, appeared in the press, until George Oxrider told his story. They had flown through cloud at an altitude in excess of 20,000 feet, and all but three of their guns had frozen up. The only guns left operating were one waist gun, the nose gun and the top turret gun. Then, before they reached the target area, flak knocked out the cylinder in their #1 engine. The manifold pressure immediately dropped ten inches, making it impossible to keep up with the rest of the formation.

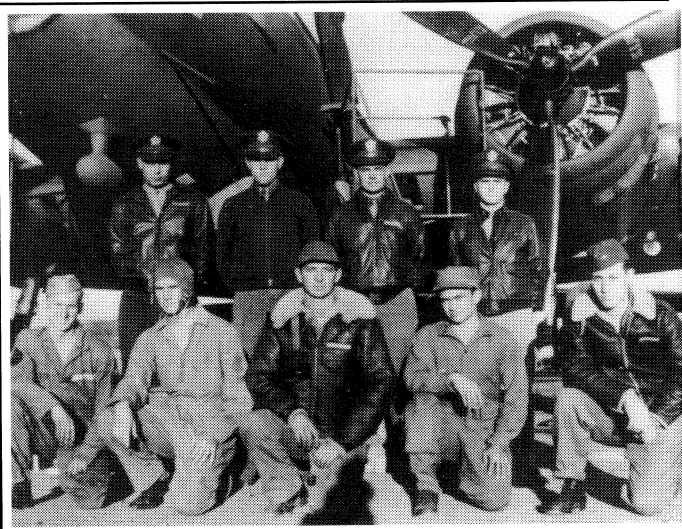
Said Pilot George Oxrider: "I cut the corner, planning to rejoin them on the flight back, and ran into a mess of FW 190's. They got the #4 motor and then the #3 motor, setting them both afire. The FW's stayed with us until we reached the Channel, and then they had to turn back because they were out of ammunition." By the time they were within 50 miles of the south coast of England, the fires were under control, and the props on #'s 3 and 4 engines feathered. But on reaching the coast, #1 engine gave out, leaving them with just one engine running. George checked with his navigator on what airfields were within a reasonable distance, but there was only one hole in the overcast. By now they were flying at an altitude of 9,000 feet and the altimeter was slowly dropping. Finally came the order for the crew to stand by for bailing out, but they thought their pilot was kidding. They didn't know what bad shape they were in. One by one they jumped until, with the exception of the navigator, the co-pilot and the pilot, all were gone from the aircraft. The navigator had discovered, just in time, that he had his parachute harness on, but not his chute. He snapped it on, and bailed out.

"My co-pilot wouldn't leave until I promised to follow him," said George Oxrider, "so I told him to go ahead, I'd follow him. When they were all gone, I shut off the alarm bell—it made a hell of a racket—and slipped the plane through the hole in the overcast. My one engine was purring beautifully—it never did get hot. After two or three circles, I levelled off to land on a rugby field, coming in pretty fast. And then out of nowhere, a bunch of kids appeared in the middle of the field. Down at one end, there was a wooden flagpole, a hedge, and beyond that, another field with several roller coaster bumps in it, and a tree lined wall at it's end. I gunned the motor for what little it would take, cracked off the end of the flagpole, skipped the hedge, and set the plane down fast. It was an alfalfa field. I landed on one rise, went up and down to the next, up and over that one, and then I shoved the stick forward, so that the wheels would plow into the ground. They did, too. When she stopped, her wheels were in the soft ground up to the hubs, and her nose came to rest between two trees, only a few feet from the stone wall."

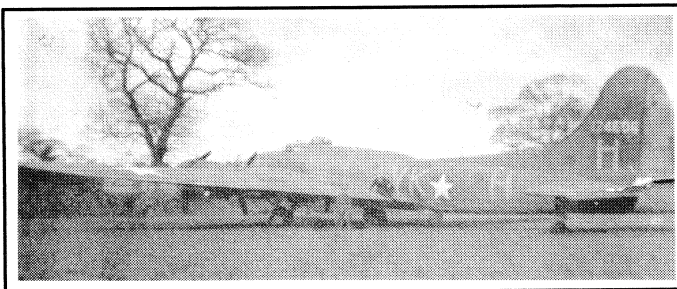
As George Oxrider climbed from his plane, he was greeted by a large number of people who had come streaming out from the nearby buildings. It didn't take him long to figure out that they were hospital patients, and that he had set his plane down in the grounds of one of England's biggest mental institutions.

CONTINUED IN THE FEBRUARY 2000 ISSUE: WEREWOLF GETS THREE NEW ENGINES AND A NEW 2,250 FOOT RUNWAY WITHIN 14 DAYS TO RETURN TO COMBAT STATUS.

EDITOR'S NOTE—Iris Drinkwater, born in southwest England, was nine years old when *Werewolf* crashlanded. Her first direct contact with the 8th Air Force didn't occur until 1990 when she replied to a letter from an American airman whose B-17 had crashed on her hometown beach. She and retired RAF Traffic Controller Maurice Rowe are writing a book and carrying out research projects as their personal tributes to the 8th Air Force.



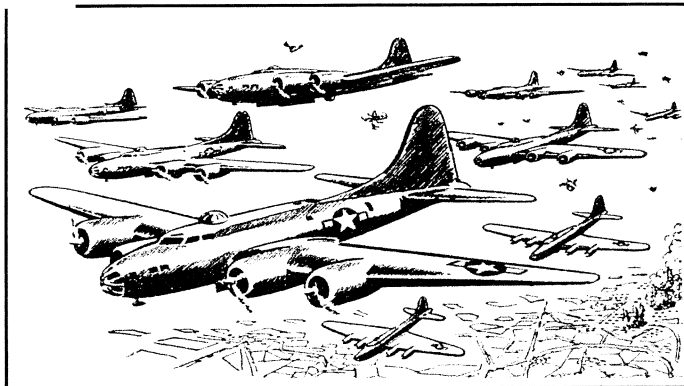
GEORGE OXRIDER'S ORIGINAL CREW—Most were aboard the ill-fated *Werewolf* when Oxrider ordered them to bail out over the south coast of England. Standing, l-to-r, pilot George Oxrider, co-pilot Donald Hurlburt, navigator D. R. Grant and bombardier Thomas R. Thomas. Kneeling, engineer F. B. Ziemer, radio operator Everett Dasher, tail gunner J. K. Sadler, waist gunner Clifton Finscher and waist gunner Samuel Maxwell. Not shown is ball turret gunner Bob Smith. Only Thomas and Finscher missed the bailout.



PILOT OXRIDER BROUGHT WEREWOLF TO A STOP with its wheels half mired in mud on the grounds of the Langdon Mental Hospital near Dawlish, England.



THE FLIGHT PATH OF WEREWOLF as the B-17 descended on one engine to land on a football field on the hospital grounds. The football pitch is still clearly visible in this 1997 photo, although many of the buildings shown were constructed after the war.



Signs of the Times?

TODAY'S US AIR FORCE MECHANICS SEEM TO HAVE A LIGHT TOUCH

Aircraft maintenance crews in the modern US Air Force apparently display a sense of humor that would have been unthinkable among Eighth Air Force ground crews during World War II. But, that was a far different time and a far different generation.

Here, reportedly, are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by US Air Force pilots and the replies from the maintenance crews. "Squawks" are problem listings that pilots generally leave for maintenance crews to fix before the next flight. "Solutions" are the maintenance crews' replies:

SQUAWK—Left main tire almost needs replacement.
SOLUTION—Almost replaced left main tire.

SQUAWK—Test flight OK, except Autoland very rough.
SOLUTION—Autoland not installed on this aircraft.

SQUAWK—#2 propeller seeping prop fluid.
SOLUTION—#2 seepage normal. #1, 3 & 4 abnormal.

SQUAWK—Something loose in cockpit.
SOLUTION—Something tightened in cockpit.

SQUAWK—Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.
SOLUTION—Evidence removed.

SQUAWK—DME volume unbelievably loud.
SOLUTION—Volume set to more believable level.

SQUAWK—Dead bugs on windshield.
SOLUTION—Live bugs on order.

SQUAWK—Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.
SOLUTION—That's what they're there for.

SQUAWK—Number three engine missing.
SOLUTION—Engine found on right wing after search.

SQUAWK—Aircraft handles funny.
SOLUTION—Aircraft warned to be serious.



THE MEMORY OF TOM BUONO was honored in the Raiders' Lounge of the Offutt Officers' Club with the dedication of a lithograph depicting the action which earned the 303rd bombardier a Distinguished Service Cross. Robb Hoover points to the medal.

TOM BUONO'S HEROISM CELEBRATED AT OFFUTT

By Robb Hoover

Friends gathered to honor the memory of Tom Buono at a ceremony in the Officers' Club of the Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha, Nebraska. As a B-17 bombardier for the 303rd Bomb Group, Tom was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second highest honor for valor in combat, for his actions in a raid over Schweinfurt on 13 April 1944. He passed away early in 1999.

The DSC citation read, "Before the plane reached the target it was viciously attacked by enemy fighters, and Lt Dello Buono was seriously injured by a 20mm shell which exploded on contact with his flak suit. Despite the seriousness of his wounds, Lt Dello Buono manned his nose guns until the target was reached, and then dropped his bombs squarely in the group's pattern. He then returned to his guns and, ignoring his pain and the danger of frostbite from the cold air blasting through the nose, refused to leave his post until fighter attacks had ceased and the enemy coast passed on the way home."

Tom Buono later served in the Korean War and as an RB-50 crewmember in the 55th Strategic Recon Wing. He completed his military career as a planner at SAC HQs from 1959-65. While at SAC, he helped formulate the original requirements for the electronic warfare system on what was later to become known as the B-1 bomber.

After military retirement Tom continued his work in the electronic warfare field with AIL Eaton Corporation.

Brian McGuire, a retired Air Force officer now working at Molesworth, England, commissioned an aviation lithograph which depicts the B-17 action for which Tom was awarded the DSC. The framed lithograph and Distinguished Service Cross were emplaced on the wall of honor in the Raiders' Lounge of the Offutt Officers' Club, next to the picture of General Curtis E LeMay, who had pinned the DSC on Buono 21 July 1944.

To seal the occasion, we friends of Tom lifted a toast in his memory: Tom Buono, our comrade-in-arms, a member in good standing of the greatest generation.

From The President

As I take the position as the sixteenth elected president of the 303rd Bomb Group Association, I feel a certain amount of trepidation. The work done by the preceding presidents make it a difficult position to merit. Our immediate past president, **Harry Gobrecht**, had the additional position of group historian. He is the author of the book "Might in Flight," the history of all of the 303rd combat missions. In this capacity he has a knowledge of all of our history and has just about every book written about the 8th Air Force plus copies of both the group and wing mission reports and a copy of all the missing aircraft reports from the 303rd. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Eighth Air Force Historical Museum and has achieved a special prominence for the 303rd in the museum displays.

His predecessor, **Hal Susskind**, attended the first reunion in New York in 1948 and edited the 303rd newsletter from 1985 until 1998. During that time it was recognized as the outstanding newsletter among those published by the other groups in the Eighth Air Force Historical Society, and he was presented an award as "Man of the Decade" at the 1995 reunion that was organized by **Eddie Deerfield**, who succeeded Hal as the next president of our group. Eddie served in both World War II and Korea and then served in many countries in the Diplomatic Corps. Some of his stories about those times are both interesting and hair-raising. His tenure as newsletter editor continues the high standards set by Hal Susskind. Eddie has also served as Vice President of Administration and, with his wife, Mary Lee, organized three reunions. **Ed Miller** preceded Eddie Deerfield after serving as Vice-President of Administration and Secretary. Ed also stepped forward to arrange the reunion in Oklahoma City when difficulty delayed the decision of where this reunion would be. There was very little time to make all the arrangements but he managed very well.

All of these were preceded by presidents who also contributed much to the organization over the years. My own contribution was as Treasurer and Vice-President of Administration under Harry Gobrecht which was largely just a title since Harry took care of all the administrative details himself. I was a navigator in the 360th squadron on **Roger Erickson's** crew from just before and just after D-day. Unfortunately, Roger was lost on a mission in June when flying with **Bob Lynch** while checking out as a lead pilot. Since Ed Miller, who was Vice-President of Reunions, was so busy setting up the reunion in Oklahoma City, Harry did assign me the task of locating and organizing a reunion for the year of 2000. After some research of the possible sites on the west coast I (with Harry's approval) decided on San Diego. The reunion will be in the Hanalei Hotel which is a smaller hotel with a Hawaiian atmosphere and our formal dinner will be a luau with Hawaiian music and dancing. The date will be September 25th to the 29th of next year. It will be different from other years in that it will be during the week rather than over the weekend. I think it will be a most interesting reunion and San Diego offers many attractions which might include a trip to see the Queen Mary (many of the Group's members made an ocean trip to or from England on her), golf, a bay cruise, and maybe a shopping trip down to Mexico. I recommend that you plan on attending. I will do everything I can to uphold the traditions of our Association, although as I stated earlier, I will have a very difficult time in meeting the example set by my predecessors.

Bill Roche



MEMORIALS DEDICATED IN THE LAST YEAR, such as 303rd Chaplain Robert Johnson's unique plaque, may not have been installed yet in the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum Gardens. The problem is poor drainage, delaying construction of two new walls on which the plaques will be mounted.

HERITAGE MUSEUM OPENS "HEIR" MEMBERSHIP DRIVE; BATTLES GARDENS DRAINAGE PROBLEM

The Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum near Savannah, GA, has launched a membership campaign for a new category called "Heir Of The Eighth." It's open to all children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of veterans of the 8th Air Force.

Judy Walker, Director of Development, said, "This is an annual membership and may be given as a gift by parents and grandparents." A special rate of \$30 has been established, below the cost levels of all other categories. The other annual membership categories are Individual, Allies, Family, Honor Guard, Squadron Leader and Wing Commander Circle.

Ms. Walker noted, "We need to grow our membership to 20,000 from the current level of 5,000. The Heritage Museum is a very dynamic museum. Whether our visitors are local Savannah residents who can visit monthly or residents of Seattle, Washington, who have made a first-time visit to the museum, we need the support of each. Our mission is to preserve the personal histories of the members of the Mighty Eighth and to share those stories with the next generation."

Ms. Walker said there's no change in the lifetime membership status of those who joined The Commanders' Club prior to September, 1998, although the new emphasis is on annual memberships. She suggested that those interested in membership for life or in one of the annual categories should get in touch with her for further details at P. O. Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402 or call (912) 748-8888.

About mid-year, many veterans were notified by Pamela Sconyers, Director of Finance at the Heritage Museum, that their new plaques had been placed in storage until additional walls can be built. She explained, "The Memorial Gardens has a drainage problem, and we would like to have this resolved before adding any additional weight on the grounds."

Museum President Barry M. Buxton said a survey would be conducted on how to improve the drainage at the north end of the Gardens where two walls are scheduled for construction. When asked about a target date, he said the project had "number one priority."

An often-asked question is "Why was the Savannah area selected as the site of the museum?" On 28 January 1942, in the Chatham Armory on Bull Street in Savannah, the U. S. Army's Eighth Air Force was activated. After deployment from Savannah to England, the Eighth entered combat and for the next one thousand and one days engaged in aerial battles which changed the course of the war.



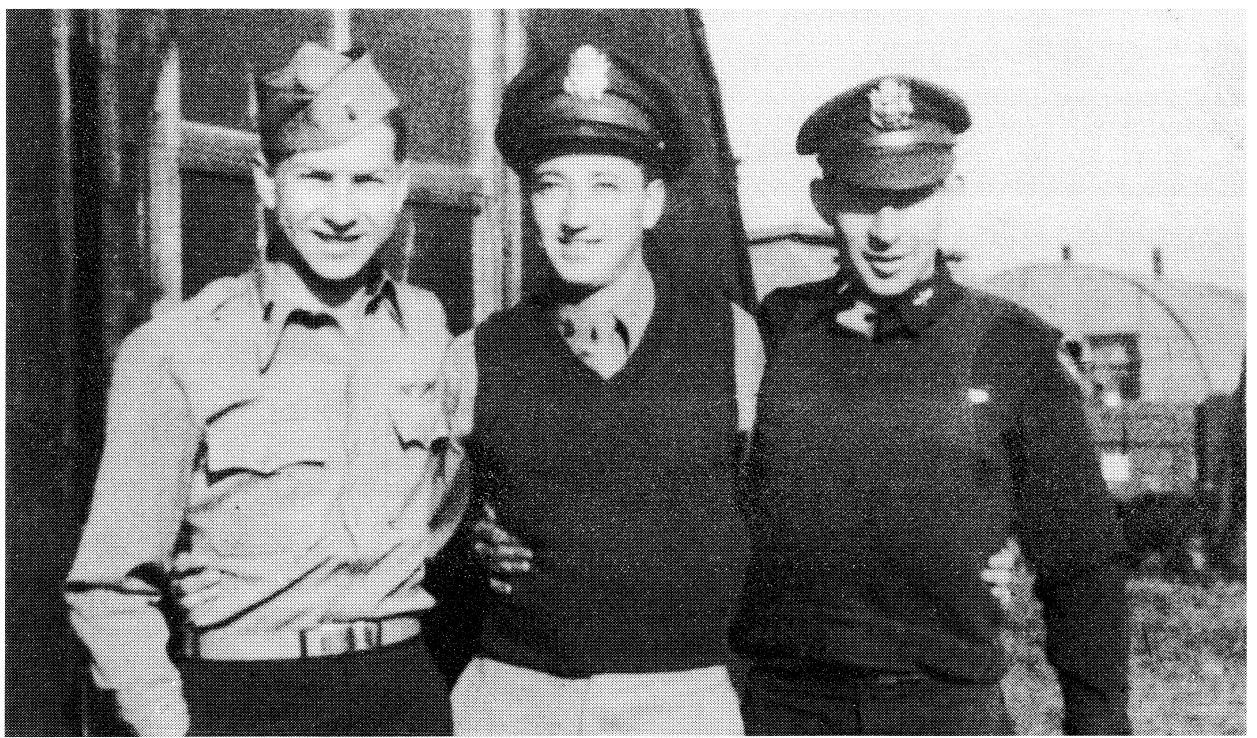
303rd Pin-ups of the Month

TOP, LEFT—John Hughes, under *Iza Vailable Too*, on Bob Heiliger's 360th ground crew.

TOP, RIGHT—At ease after a mission to Mersburg, Germany on 24 August 1944, are the 358th's (l-to-r) ball turret gunner Joseph Grundon, tail gunner Gerald Newman, engineer Victor Leimgruebler, radio operator James Adkinson, waist gunner Martin Olive, co-pilot William Bowman, navigator Morris Sweig and pilot Gareth Lee. Bombardier Charles Townsend missed the photo op—he suffered a flak wound and left by ambulance.

LEFT—Arthur Brown, ground crew on the 427th's *Flying Bison*, and Recon, the squadron's mascot.

BELOW—Three good friends, the 358th's (l-to-r) pilot Bill Cox, navigator Ben Starr and pilot Jack Rencher. Cox retired as a colonel after serving on flight status in three wars, Starr became a Hollywood script writer with many notable credits and Rencher went on to a highly successful business career.



Molesworth Diary

MURDER NEAR MAGDEBURG

I was radio operator on the Walter Mayer crew. We were shot down on September 28, 1944 on the mission to Magdeburg. We had our two right engines shot out and made it back to seven miles on the U.S. side of the front lines, near Wilz in Luxemburg, where we bailed out. Douglas Hicks, our engineer, had bailed out near the target. Two German storm troopers went to pick him up. They began beating him up. Some slave laborers went to his aid. When the two SS men saw they were outnumbered, they shot and killed Hicks.

Three missions after Magdeburg, we crash-landed at a fighter strip in Belgium where we smashed up the B-17, a B-24 and two fighter planes. After being hospitalized, I fell behind my crew, checked out for squadron lead and finished my 35 missions on February 3, 1945 going to Berlin.

Ernest Tuescher
358th Radio Operator

EXPERT HELP ON THE NORDEN BOMBSIGHT

My first assignment as an officer was with the 17th Bomb Group, and then on to the 34th Bomb Group whose Operations Officer was a Lieutenant Colonel named Curtis Lemay. They were flying B-24's, so I was soon transferred to the 303rd Bomb Group at Boise where my training on the Norden bomb sight was needed.

I was out checking the lead plane for one mission at Molesworth when General Travis squeezed himself into the plane. He mentioned that his brother William was coming to Wing HQ and should be a help in the bombsight department. Captain William Travis was head of the bombsight school at Lowry when our class of 16 cadets went through and graduated on December 5, 1941.

Morris B. Sjoberg
427th Bomb Sight Officer

STERKRADE MISSION MOST MEMORABLE

Flak had our planes rocking on the bomb run over Sterkrade, Germany 22 January 1945. The red bursts of shells were all around us. A piece of flak entered the cockpit and hit the armor plate on the back of my seat, bounced off and struck the oxygen tank. The tank exploded, knocking our engineer out of the upper turret and across the cockpit. The forward escape hatch door was blown off. Two engines were shot out and feathered, a third was damaged and being bailed. We got back to Molesworth with one full engine and that third one just turning over.

The next day, our crew chief, Joe Ruark, asked, "How the hell did you get this thing back?" We later found out that the wings and engines were so damaged that they were just dropped and replaced. Over 400 holes were patched on the rest of the plane. The miracle of the mission for our crew

was that no one was injured. Six of our crew members, at various reunions, when asked about their most memorable mission, answer emphatically: STERKRADE.

Lou Grandwilliams
359th Co-Pilot

HIGH JINKS AT LOW LEVEL

We were the "stalwart" officers of *Lady Luck*. Can't remember which one of us dreamed up this gag picture



in early 1943. Drab days around the hutment at Molesworth made the search for levity a must. Using a cast-off steel cot frame for a bombing platform provided a realistic run as follows: Loyd Griffin, pilot, steering a steady course on the bomb run with his broom stick; Walt Swanson, co-pilot, pointing out bogies at 2 o'clock high; Bill Preston, navigator, taking dead aim at another bogie at 11 o'clock low, and there I

am, using my trusty Norden beer bottle sight, ready to drop a 500-pound brick dead on target.

Bob Taylor
360th Bombardier

TROUBLES ON AND NEAR THE RUNWAYS

I was driving a "cletrac" on the perimeter road with Sgt. Erwin Heins when a jeep pulls along side and the driver yells that they need us near the 360th parking area. A B-17 had been set afire from an incendiary that was accidentally fired from a ball turret across the field. Hein and I hooked up to the B-17 and pulled it away from the burning fuel on the revetment.

Another B-17 returning from a mission could not lower its landing gear. It would extend only halfway. The plane kept circling until the others had landed. It came in with wheels in half-retracted position. The gear held up for half the runway and then collapsed. The B-17 skidded to the right side of the runway and came to a stop about 100 yards from the perimeter road and almost adjacent to the main hangar. Those that were watching really made a run for it, including me.

Major Melvin McCoy gave us orders to prepare for removal. A staff sergeant in Class A's was close to the right wing, smoking while the wing was dripping fuel. I told him

(Continued on Page 16)

Diary

(Continued from page 15)

in so many words to get away! I asked Captain Jones, the Provost Marshal, to clear everybody away, and he did.

Raymond A. Espinoza
444th Engine Installer

DAMN THE ABORTS—FULL SPEED AHEAD

We aborted on a raid to Merseburg because of a runaway propeller. Upon landing with our bomb load, the squadron brass were waiting for me. They took the plane up for a test flight as I returned to the barracks, fell in my bunk and went to sleep. That afternoon, I was awakened by one of our officers who informed me that I should have reported to Group headquarters on landing. He told me to blame the squadron for not having me read the SOP. I did that, and the C.O. nearly had a heart attack. I was grounded and instructed to read the Standing Operating Procedures to get my crew back. I vowed I would never turn back from a mission again unless an engine fell off.

On a later raid, our hydraulic system blew on take-off, but we continued on the raid, left the squadron early on the return and landed safely ahead of the others. On another raid, the oil pressure on one engine was extremely high, but we continued to the target. I would not have aborted unless an engine blew or stopped.

John D. St. Julien
360th Pilot

THIRD MISSION REWARD IS VISIT TO PARIS

My first mission was on January 6, 1945. The Battle of the Bulge was in full swing. The third mission on January 8 was my most memorable, to Coblenz, bombing through clouds. We took some flak on the bomb run and lost two engines, one on fire. The bomb release mechanism failed, and the engineer and I released the bombs manually. By the time we had all the bombs released, our rapid descent had put out the engine fire. We were down to less than 5,000 feet and the rest of the Group was nowhere in sight.

We got a radio reading from Rheims, France and headed 180 degrees. It was the wrong way. By the time our mistake was discovered, we were heading into Germany. We turned back and got a new direction. By this time, we were low on fuel and crash landed near Tournay, France. All the villagers came out, took us to the town where we spent two days. I stayed at the Mayor's house. Next stop was a Ninth Air Force base for B-26's. From there to Paris and the Hotel Francais for escapees and evaders. During several days in Paris, I visited historic sites and listened to Ray McKinley's and Glenn Miller's bands at Rainbow Corner. I met a lot of GI's who had come from the front. They were 81st Airborne. It wasn't until late January that I returned to Mowlesworth and resumed missions, finishing 35 on April 25.

William J. Carter
358th Ball Turret Gunner



WILLIE WOLFF HONORED IN BELGIUM—The 359th Squadron engineer returns to Cerfontaine, scene of his aircraft's crash-landing in 1943. From the left are Roger Anthoine, author; Willie Wolff, M. Body, town mayor and M. Maufroid, eye witness to the crash and owner of the WWII jeep behind them. (Photo by Betty Wicker)

303rd's Wolff Honored by Belgium Allies For Feat In Evading Nazis in 1943

By Roger Anthoine

At the end of April, 1999, my friend Willie Wolff was my guest in Europe. He had been a top turret engineer on a 303rd B-17 downed in Belgium in 1943, an event in which I then was involved.

His return to this continent was highlighted by a reception in the town hall at Cerfontaine, Belgium. This village had seen his B-17G *Woman's Home Companion* (#42-39795) belly-landing on 30 December 1943 when returning from a raid on Ludwigshafen, Germany.

As an underground operator dealing at the time with aviation matters, I was closely involved in the aftermath of the event and after the war was able to co-author a small book on the crash.

After the successful belly-landing, Willie and bombardier Nelson Campbell succeeded to evade capture and returned to England and the United States. Two others (ball turret gunner L. W. Fitzgerald and tail gunner L. B. Evans) did not survive the pre-crash combat and five (pilot W. C. Osborn, co-pilot J. Jernigan, navigator E. L. Cobb, radio operator G. I. Daniel and waist gunner E. D. Wolfe) were captured.

The 10th member, waist gunner Vincent Reese, stayed with the underground to eventually be captured and summarily shot by the Germans along with seven airmen from other units.

Another ceremony attended while we were in Belgium in April was organized in nearby Chimay in memory of those eight aircrew and locals shot in cold blood in the woods near St. Remy/Chimay.

(EDITOR'S NOTE)—The 303rd's Might in Flight history adds that Osborn and Jernigan evaded capture with the help of the underground for six months. They were leaving Brussels for Paris in an automobile when they were betrayed, driven to a Gestapo prison and then transferred to a Stalag Luft.)

OPEN FORUM

READERS—THIS IS YOUR SPACE. LET'S HAVE YOUR COMMENTS ON THE WAY THINGS WERE OR THE WAY THINGS ARE. WRITE TO: EDITOR, HELL'S ANGELS NEWSLETTER, 3552 LANDMARK TRAIL, PALM HARBOR, FL 34684

ENORMITY OF EVENTS CAUGHT UP WITH HIM

The May issue of the Hell's Angels Newsletter about the 1943 mission to Kiel in which Don Stockton was killed was of particular interest to me. Our 427th crews were billeted in adjacent Nissen huts, and John Stockton and John Barker were our close friends. On this raid, we were flying in number three position when Stockton was struck. He involuntarily pulled back on the yoke sending his B-17 into a steep climb causing our flight to follow until copilot Barker and the engineer moved him from the controls.

After the debriefing, we were in Barker's quarters talking over the raid when the enormity of the events of the day caught up with him, and he had to be sedated by our Flight Surgeon.

Edwin G. Lamme
Eureka, CA

MEDALS—IN DEFENSE OF THE PAPER TRAIL

As I recall, after January 1, 1944, you had to be recommended for the DFC by the Squadron Operations Officer resulting from the critique of the mission. He wrote up the citation for the Squadron Commander's signature. If the write-up got to Group Headquarters and was not disapproved, I can assure you it got forwarded up the ladder. We in the HQ personnel section only knew of those approved when we received the medals and citations for recording in the Group's records.

John Ford
Springfield, MO

DID YOU KNOW CHARLIE FARRELL?

I am trying to locate anyone who might have known my uncle, S/Sgt Charles E. (Charlie) Farrell. He served with the 427th Bomb Squadron, and was shot down over Germany on March 28, 1945. He was in a B-17 named *Jigger Rouché II*, piloted by 2nd Lt. C. A. Frederickson. I have con-

tacted the National Personnel Records Center and was informed that his records were destroyed during a fire in 1973. I would appreciate anyone who might have known or flown with him to contact me.

Lenell Farrell
3228 Glen Ellen Circle
Sacramento, CA 95822

A CZECH PERSPECTIVE ON AN ALLEGED MURDER

The Hell's Angels Newsletter dated February, 1999 said that from the evidence it appeared likely that Sgt. Smith, the tail gunner on *Earthquake McGoon* was killed by civilians after parachuting. It said we would never know for certain how the life of Smith ended.

I wish to state that my own research finds that the Czechs didn't kill any Americans. The Czechs helped POW's, although death threatened them, too. Most is Brux, one town with two names in Czechoslovakia, where this happened.

A German doctor's report says Smith died of a broken neck. This fracture could have come from hitting the ground in his parachute, not from being hanged in a tree. The main reason some people think Sgt. Smith was killed and hanged is that four American aircraft were shot down about the same time on 17 April 1945. Stories circulated that some of the circling were murdered by civilians or German police.

Radovan Helt
Czech Republic
(Editor's Note—The above was condensed from a six page letter to emphasize the main points the writer wished to make)

ARE LT. NESTER AND HIS CREW STILL AROUND?

My father was lost during his service with the 303rd. His airplane was *Neva, the Silver Lady*. I am presently trying to contact members of the crew of Lt. Harry Nester. I've been successful in locating Jacob Strouse, the radio man, and

Edward Kuester, the bombardier. My brother has spoken to both these gentlemen, and it was interesting to hear a firsthand account of what happened that fateful day. The courage of all who were compelled to hazard themselves in this mighty endeavor is truly humbling.

I was born after my father's death and consequently am only able to share his life with those of you who were his contemporaries. If you know of Lt. Nester or others of his crew, please write to me.

Gary L. Bovey
4619 Baker Drive
Everett, WA 98203

WEIRD COINCIDENCE IN FRANKFURT

My wife and I were flying to Istanbul from Miami, and we had a short layover in Frankfurt before boarding the connecting flight. The last time I was in the Frankfurt area was on August 15, 1944, a day I'm sure members of the 303rd who went on the mission to Wiesbaden will never forget. We lost nine B-17's to German fighters. Lufthansa puts the name of German cities on its planes. Imagine my surprise to see WIESBADEN on the A-320 we were to board to fly to Istanbul. When I explained to my wife, she termed the whole thing "a weird coincidence."

Irving Birken
Tamarac, FL

MY FATHER IS NOW IN A MUCH BETTER PLACE

My father, Joseph Manina, who served with the 303rd, died last June. I'm glad that he had a group of friends as yourselves, ones that he thought very highly of. I've heard so many stories of his service times, and can remember each and every time he told me a story how his face would light up and he'd get that grin. I'm sure that right now he's in a much better place, with the friends and comrades he served with, and no longer has to suffer the disease

that took him from us.

My mother's address is shown below, and we would like to hear from any of Joe's old friends.

Dave Manina
Mrs. Betty Manina
3247 Brigadoon Way
San Jose, CA 95121

A TRIBUTE TO DAD AND THE MEN WHO FLEW IN COMBAT

Staff Sergeant Howard Nardine was my father. He was a ball-turret gunner and radio operator, and his air crew completed their 25 missions with all members surviving, although their original *Snap, Crackle, Pop* was later shot down. It was only after seeing the Hollywood movie *Memphis Belle* some 50 years after his own involvement in the events depicted there that my father was forced to confront his long suppressed unpleasant memories of missions he flew.

He subsequently attended a reunion of the 303rd and I know it did him much good to re-establish old ties with his crew. He passed away in 1993. His involvement with the 303rd was a proud part of who he was. If you knew Howard Nardine when, know that he lived a truly selfless, noble and rich life, and he is survived by a wife and two grown children who are all far, far better off for having known him. I don't know that my generation could duplicate his bravery and that of all the men who served on the Flying Fortresses.

John Howard Nardine
Silkeborgvej 108, 2.th
Arhus C8000, Denmark

PLEASANT SURPRISE FOR 303rd PIN UP MAN

What a surprise I got when looking through the May issue of the Hell's Angels Newsletter. There I was sitting on the front of the wing with four of my ground crew buddies under the caption of 303rd Pin-Up Men of the Month. I really enjoy the newsletter and cannot wait for the next issue to come out.

Ray E. Derr
Nescopeck, PA

CORRECTION—It's the Marion (not Muriel) Bass Stevens Exhibit at the 8th AF Heritage Museum. The August photo caption erred.

DIRECTORY DONATIONS NEEDED

The 1999 Membership Directory was published at a cost of \$5,399.60. Donations are still needed to defray this cost. Please send all donations, dues, changes of address, phone numbers and notices for "In Memoriam" to the Membership Chairman: Ed Miller, 422 S. Walnut Avenue, Temple, OK 73568-0219 (580) 342-5119 or edmiller@pdi.net

IN MEMORIAM

Walter E. Barnes	360	22 Feb 1999
Lloyd B. Beaver	427	17 Dec 1998
Malcolm E. Brown	359	27 Jun 1978
Norman A. Cote	360	31 May 1998
Lloyd A. Duncan	359	18 Apr 1999
Gordon W. Farnham	360	30 Jun 1999
Paul K. Fink	1114QM	14 Jul 1999
William C. Fluke	360	10 Feb 1999
Esther Fojt		Oct 1998
wife of Oldrich Fojt-dec.	427 th	
Herbert E. Kalhoefer	359	27 Jun 1999
Irene Kintner		16 Jul 1999
wife of James K. Kintner	3 rd Stat. Comp.	
John R. Kosilla	358	9 Jul 1998
Albert P. Lopes	444	27 Jul 1971
Jack B. Lucey	360	21 Oct 1996
Charles W. Mars	427	22 Jul 1999
Glenn H. Oberman	358	12 Jun 1999
Ellis J. Sanderson	359	4 Jul 1999
John R. Seddon	358	17 Dec 1998
Edwin Siegel	360	Aug 1999
David Strange		26 Jul 1998
Son of T/Sgt Joseph B & Lucille Strange	359 th	
Lawrence W. Tichenor	427	23 Jul 1998
George W. Vogel	359	25 Jun 1999

SUPER LIFE MEMBERS

Arvid Anderson	358 th
Robert C. Bridges	360 th
Louis M. Christen	427 th
Keith & Peggy Ferris	Honorary Member
Alan E. Frey	360 th
Carl J. Fyler	360 th
Eugene E. Girman	359 th
William C. Heller	360 th
Mrs Betty Kelley	Wife of J. Ford Kelley
Robert W. Krohn	427 th
Lewis E. Lyle	Hdq
Robert W. Morris	360 th
A. Ralph Peters	359 th
Martin E. Plotcher	360 th
Coleman Sanders	359 th
Schweinbraten, George E.	Associate Member
(Brother of Leslie H. Schweinbraten, KIA—358 th)	
Samuel W. Smith	360 th
Sheldon A. Stafford	358 th
Kermit D. Stevens	Hdq
Glen R. Swenson	359 th
Robert L. Taylor	360 th
Robert C. Umberger	359 th
Welsh, H. Ronald	Associate Member
(Son of 2/Lt Harry A. Welsh, dec—359 th)	

NEW REGULAR MEMBERS

George L. Arvanites (427), 1741 Simmons Court, Claremont, CA 91711-2622 (909) 625-3016 (Barbara)
 Christopher Balzano, Sr (358), 235 Wynclyffe Ave, Clifton Heights, PA 19018-1229 (Elizabeth)
 George T. Blossom (359), 18683 N. Shore Drive, Middletown, CA 95461-8628 (707) 987-0266 (Barbara)

Marvin R. Blumberg (360), 3108 Q Via Serena, Laguna Woods, CA 96523-2753 (949) 609-0723 (Ida)
 Joseph R. Ganshert (358), N 1728 Jeffery Road, Monroe, WI 53566-9690 (608) 325-3801 (Louise)
 Charles "Glenn" Glasgow (427), 6410 Rockpointe Dr, Tampa, FL 33634-6273 (813) 886-1977 (Patricia)
 Monroe C. Hein (358), 1328 15th Street, Baraboo, WI 53913-3324 (608) 355-0775 (June)
 Bernard Jurosek (427), 18375 Hickory Ridge, Fenton, MI 48430-8506 (248) 634-4774 (June)
 Joe T. Kunkel (358), 1615 S. Wallace Street, Moses Lake, WA 98837-2426 (509) 765-8730 (Margueritte)
 Robert H. Johnson (358), 1305 Cherokee St, Kalamazoo, MI 49007-2012 (616) 345-2405 (Mary)
 Donald I. Lau (360), 3570 W. Mingo Circle, Tucson, AZ 85741-2842 (520) 575-0857 (Mary)
 Harold R. Manning (1681), 6718 N. 14th Place, Phoenix, AZ 85044-1126 (602) 279-6148 (Lois)
 Joseph J. McGinty (Hdq), 2400 Commonwealth Ave, Strathmore, NY 08248-????
 James K. Sadler (358), 712 Park, Gatesville, TX 76528-2340 (256) 248-1416 (Macele)
 Jewett Spell (427), 1262 Hwy 195 N, Blevins, AR 71825-9065 (870) 874-2596
 Charles D. Wagner (427), Rt 4, Box 103, Pikeville, TN 37367-9217 (423) 881-4144 (Margery)

DONATIONS/MEMORIALS

Albert L. Dussliere 427 Donation to the 303rd BGA
 Helen M. Gibson Assoc In memory of brother Fred Mason
 Robert W. Morris 360 Super Life, to 303rd BGA
 Martin E. Plocher 360 Super Life, to 303rd BGA
 Kermit D. Stevens Hdq Super Life, to 303rd BGA
 Glen R. Swenson 359 "In Memory of my Buddy 1st David E. (Moose) Johnson, who died in November 1997"
 Ronald Taliaferro Assoc Donation to the 303rd BGA
 Robert L. Taylor 360 Super Life, to 303rd BGA

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Milton B. Abernathy (358), 8068 Burwell Circle, Port Charlotte, FL 33981-3342 (941) 697-3685 (Lillian)
 Stewart S. Ackerman (427), New phone area code (856) 848-0354
 John R. Bitter (427), 5328 Creekbend Drive, Carmel, IN 46033-9193 (317) 566-0024 (Jane)
 Anthony J. Boland (358), 10110 Dorian Drive, Plymouth, MI 48170-3630
 James E. Eubanks (358), 345 Windcroft Circle, Acworth, GA 30101-6300 (770) 917-1214 (Marilyn)
 John F. Gardner (427), 230 N. Craig St, #202, Pittsburgh, PA 15213-1540 (412) 683-3536 (Toni)
 James A. Hickey (359), 5992 N. FM 56, Glen Rose, TX 76043-5718 (254) 898-9102 (Carol)
 George A. Kyle, Jr. (360), 3909 N. Ocean Blvd, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33308-6401 (954) 224-0194
 Jess W. McLaughlin (427), 2901 W. Main St, Ozark, AR 72949
 Norman W. Putney (358), 825 Dale St SW, Hutchinson, MN 55350-3055 (612) 587-3387 (Marjorie)
 Harold L. Scott (360), 444 Hemingford Grey, Fort Mill, SC 29708-7907 (803) 547-3883 (Juanita) New Zipcode
 Ralph R. Strohsack (427), 107 Stonehedge Dr, Elyria, OH 44035-1245 (440) 277-5782 (Gerri)
 Arni L. Sumarilidason (358), new phone # (345) 945-4495
 Glen R. Swenson (359), 43465 Spider Shores Road, Marcell, MN 56657-2115 (218) 326-8437
 Harold R. Timm (360), 1200 Peak Court, Windsor, CO 80550-5763 (970) 686-7238 (Alice)
 Gilbert P. Travis (444), 1213 Wigwam Street, Mesquite, NV 89027-6708 (702) 346-0965 (Jewel)
 George Turinsky (427), 3282 Sunset Terrace, Auburn, CA 95602-9241 (916) 332-5074 (Anne)
 Bonnie M. Ziegler, 11125 E. Turnberry Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85255-8059 (480) 342-9185 (Ken) (Daughter of G. Neil Bech)

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Richard Beebe, 6426 Elkhardt, Apt B, Richmond, VA 23225-7823
 Ronald Block, 3930 Belmont Street, Hamtramck, MI 48212-3366
 (313) 875-5052 (Son-in-Law of Fred Reichel-427th Rep)
 Benjamin Clary, 52847 Flower Court, Shelby Township, MI 48316-3404 (248) 254-7482
 Ted Davis, P.O. Box 15, Richeyville, PA 15358-0015 (714) 632-5488 (Judy)
 Helen M. Gibson, 19 Packanack Rd, Wayne, NJ 07470 (Sister of Fred Mason, 427th)
 Lloyd J. H. Grant, 3431 Lori Lane, N., Lakeland, FL 33801-9341
 (941) 668-9430 (Tracy) (Son of 2/Lt Lawrence H. Grant-427th)
 Abraham Jenkins, 15 Bryant Crescent, Apt 2G, White Plains, NY 10605-2718
 Gary A. Manning, 710 Carmen Heights Dr, Dundee, OR 97115-9750 (503) 537-2394 (Son of Harold R. Manning-1681st)
 John "Pat" O'Brien, 17072 Norlene Way, Grass Valley, CA 95949-7161 (530) 273-4920 (Claire) Nephew of 1/Lt Vere A. Wood-427th
 Bud Peed, Box 846, McHenry, MD 21541-0846 (301)387-8571 (Pat)
 Johannes H. Reusink, Scholtemaatweg 15, Winterswijk-Ratum, The Netherlands 7106 CT
 Deborah Ward, 116 Sheffield Dr, West Grove, PA 19390-9737
 (610)869-3048 (Daughter of T/Sgt Wm F. Goudy, Toggelier, 359th)

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Robert O. Akers	359 th
Cecil H. Allen	359 th
George L. Arvanites	427 th
Christopher Balzano, Sr	358 th
Irving Birken	360 th
Robert E. Black	360 th
Arthur Bluethenthal	427 th
Marvin R. Blumberg	360 th
Stanley Bober	427 th
Carl O. Books	360 th
William D. Cargill	359 th
Milbury C. Charlton	427 th
Floyd L. Clark	427 th
Norman M. Clark	358 th
Thomas R. Coulson	359 th
Stanley V. Davidson	358 th
Dominick De Lorenzo	359 th
Sandra J. Edgerton	
(Dau of Harry & Barbara Gobrecht)	
Theodore S. Essock	444 th
Thomas G. Fennell	444 th
Walter J. Ferrari	427 th
James G. Force	359 th
John L. Fox	360 th
Charles J. Fulanovich	358 th
Charles Glenn Glasgow	427 th
Richard K. Gobrecht	
Thomas D. Gobrecht	
(Sons of Harry & Barbara Gobrecht)	
Wallace Goldfarb	358 th
Benny J. Gorchesky	427 th
Graham C. Gould	359 th
Robert E. Greene	358 th
Fred H. Gruenberg	360 th
Stanley Gurka	359 th
Harold J. Hall	360 th
Delos H. Hamann	359 th
Raymond D. Hammond	359 th
Monroe C. Hein	358 th
Ervin Hilborn	427 th
James E. Jeter, Jr.	359 th
Arthur E. Johnson	360 th
Bernard Jurosek	427 th
George A. Kyle	360 th
Debra J. Lange	
(Dau of Harry & Barbara Gobrecht)	
Donald I. Lau	360 th

Roger C. Lee	427 th
Harold R. Manning	1681 st
Costa Markos	358 th
William F. Miller	359 th
Charles "Ted" E. Moon	358 th
Sterling L. "Pete" Morrison	Assoc Member
Grover C. Mullins	358 th
Joseph A. Murphy	358 th
Bernard M. Parker	444 th
Robert J. Passenat	359 th
Patrick Pecchia	358 th
Robert J. Phillips	444 th
J. Stephen Proffitt, Jr.	359 th
Rexford I. Proud	360 th
Fred P. Reichmann	358 th
George K. Richter	427 th
James K. Sadler	358 th
Aloysius I. "Al" Sapak	360 th
George E. Schweinbraten	Assoc Member
(Bro of S/Sgt Leslie H. Schweinbraten-KIA)	
Harold L. Scott	360 th
Edwin Siegel	360 th
Jack Joseph Smith	360 th
Lawrence S. Smith	358 th
Susan (Vossler) Snow	Assoc Member
(Dau of T/Sgt Forrest L. Vosler—Medal of Honor)	
Evan R. Soule	358 th
John W. Spence	359 th
Joseph E. Stevens	360 th
Byron Stoner	Assoc Member
(Grandson of T/Sgt Charles H. Stoner-359 th)	
Alexander C. Strickland, Jr.	427 th
Robert C. Tracy	358 th
Hector F. Vitale	360 th
Stephen A. Vosler	Assoc Member
(Son of T/Sgt Forrest L. Vosler—Medal of Honor)	
Charles D. Wagner	427 th
Donald S. Webster	427 th
Robert M. Wetz	427 th
Edward J. Wienczek	427 th
Gordon A. Winkler	360 th

NEW E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Max R. Bartholomew	paulkattner@hotmail.com
John H. Broshear, Sr	BroshearSr@worldnet.att.net
Wallace C. Clines	clines88@postoffice.swbell.net
Ray Cossey	ray.cossey@virgin.net
(Honorary Member 303 rd BGA & former UK Representative)	
Dyle K. Davidson	www.jody53.a.webtv.net
Bill Eason	weason@1st.net
(360 th Bomb Squadron Assistant Representative)	
Albert H. Elliott	monty@lightspeed.net
Jack J. Gardner	EJGardner@aol.com
Harry S. Goland	harrygoland@usa.net
Warren L. Hedrick	hedrick@grolen.com
James C. Hicks	ukhicks@hcc-uky.campuscwix.net
Louis C. Jurgensen	loujurg@sunet.net
Le Roy L. Mace	macelm@ntslink.net
Edward A. Maggia	pow11144@prodigy.net
Stephen H. Mudge	misixflsix@webtv.net
James L. Mussi	jmussi@earthlink.net
James W. O'Leary, Sr.	sqdnldr@campuscw.net
Lawrence C. Pierson	LCPierson@webtv.net
Jack P. Rencher	jprencher@aol.com
(Treasurer of the 303 rd Bomb Group Association)	
Robert A. Rettinhouse	bobrett@mediaone.net
Robert A. Rowe	alonzo75@ij.net
Jack Silver	SB17vet@aol.com
Van & Lore White	loreduffer@aol.com

THE EDITOR COMMENTS....

George Herbert Walker Bush, 41st President of the United States, is bailing out of airplanes again. As a Navy pilot during WW II, he jumped from a burning Avenger to save his life. He was 20 years old. He's 75 now, and should know better. He doesn't have to jump out of anything higher than his bed.

The newspapers quoted him as saying, "Old guys can still do stuff." My first reaction was to feel sorry for the man. He's gone bonkers, I thought. I can't imagine that **Barbara** was up there pushing **George** out the airplane door.

I bailed out of a burning B-17 over the south coast of England in September, 1943. If I told **Mary Lee** that I wanted to do that stuff again, she'd have me committed to the nearest asylum. My first and only jump was a mess. I don't want anything to do with that business.

When our pilot **Bob Cogswell** on *Lady Luck* sounded the alarm, I gathered the two waist gunners, the ball turret gunner and the tail gunner around the side exit door. I was the radio operator and the only one still on intercom with the pilot. The five of us looked at the ground 10,000 feet down, then looked at each other. I said to the pilot, "Captain, we think you can bring us down safely. We'd like to stay with the ship." He replied, "You can stay if you want to. I'm bailing out."

I gave my comrades a "thumbs down" signal, meaning we were jumping. It didn't occur to me that it was the same gesture the Romans used in the Coliseum to terminate a gladiator.

I was the last to go through the waist door. When **Paul "PJ" Davis**, the man in front of me, jumped and pulled his rip cord, I saw what looked like his head torn off by the shroud lines. I learned later it was his helmet, but I didn't know it at the time. The future didn't look very bright.

I bailed out, counted to 10, and pulled the rip cord. I should have counted to 1,000. When the chute opened, it stopped me so fast that I thought I'd been castrated. If I moaned a little on the way down, the sound was in mezzo soprano.

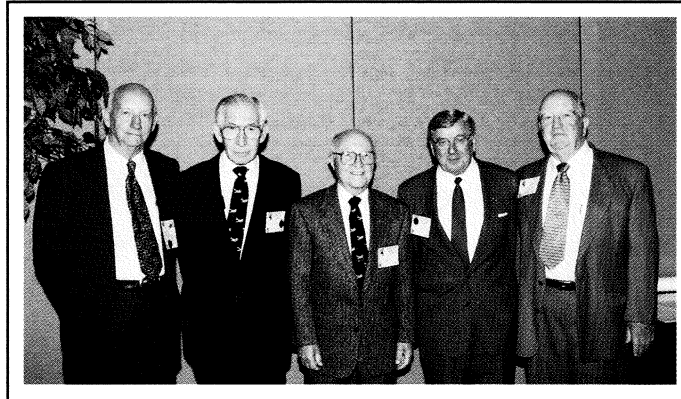
As the ground came closer, I remembered that even trained paratroopers broke their legs if they didn't land just right. The problem was, I was coming down backwards. The earth was rushing up from behind, not in front of me. How do you hit the turf and roll under those conditions? We never had that instruction in training. Most of the films were about VD.

I collided with the earth, and the impact must have knocked me cold. When I came to, I was on my back in a farmer's field. I'm alive, so far, so good, I thought. Except that the farmer was standing over me with a pitchfork pressed hard against my chest. There are few things more embarrassing for an American combat airman than being speared to death by a patriotic British farmer.

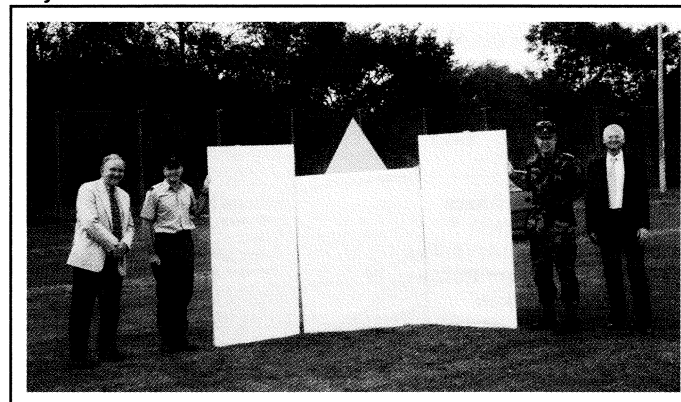
He had seen all those chutes coming down and thought the Nazis were invading. I guess my Chicago accent set him straight, and he took me home to tea.

Do I want to bail out again just to prove that I can do it? No way! I'm a year older and maybe a year wiser than Mr. Bush. Editing the Hell's Angels Newsletter is enough of a challenge.

Eddie Deerfield



GUIDING THE DESTINIES OF THE 303RD BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION into the 21st Century are newly elected officers (l-to-r) Vice President for Administration **Richard Johnson**, Treasurer **Jack Rencher**, Secretary **Al Dussliere**, Vice President for Reunions **Jim Taylor** and President **Bill Roche**.



FIRST STAGE MOCK-UP OF MEMORIAL TO THE 303RD BOMB GROUP OUTSIDE THE GATE TO RAF MOLESWORTH—Exhibiting the early visual concept are (l-to-r) **Keith Rockham**, Managing Director, **Perfitt, Ltd.**; Squadron Leader **Clive Wood**, RAF Commander at Molesworth; Lt. Col. **John House**, 423rd Air Base Squadron Leader and **Brian McGuire**, directing the Memorial project.

DONATIONS SOUGHT TO COVER COSTS OF 303RD MEMORIAL AT MOLESWORTH

The 303rd Bomb Group Association's Board of Directors has issued an appeal to members to make donations to help build the Memorial at Molesworth. The first costs will be defrayed by donations from military personnel stationed at Molesworth, British and American corporations and local citizens. After those funds are applied, 303rd donations will be used, with the unspent balance remaining in the 303rd treasury for other approved projects. Make your check out to 303rd Bomb Group Association, mark it "For Molesworth Memorial," and mail to Treasurer **Jack Rencher**, P.O. Box 7927, Boise, ID 83707. All contributions are tax deductible.

303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.
Hell's Angels Newsletter
Eddie Deerfield, Editor
3552 Landmark Trail
Palm Harbor, FL 34684-5016

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PALM HARBOR, FL.
PERMIT NUMBER 303

*****AUTO**ALL FOR ADC 34299
EDDIE DEERFIELD
3552 LANDMARK TRL
PALM HARBOR, FL 34684-5016