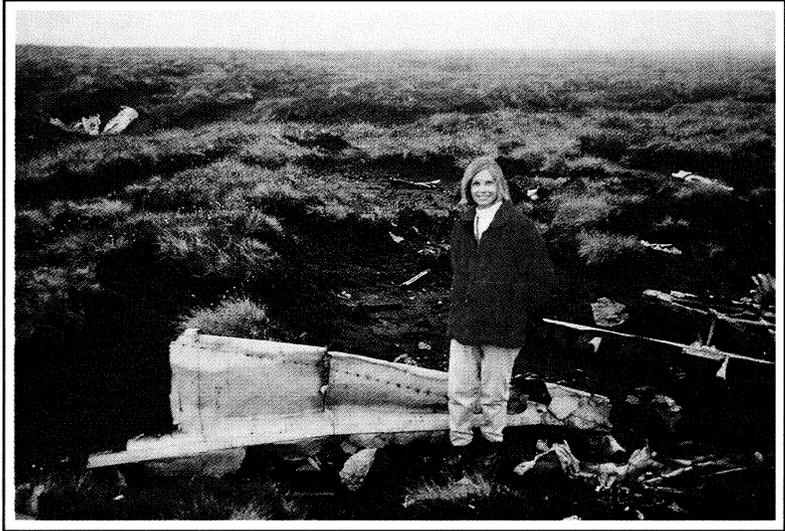


Hell's Angels Newsletter

303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

November, 2000



IN THE VALLEY OF THE CHEVIOTS IN ENGLAND, George Kyle, Jim Corbett, Jr., and Carol Kyle Sage stand next to a monument in memory of Allied airmen who lost their lives in crashes among the treacherous hills. Kyle's 360th Squadron B-17 crashed in December, 1944, killing two of the crew. Fifty-six years later, his daughter stands among the wreckage of the 303rd Bomb Group aircraft.

An Emotional Pilgrimage Back In Time 303RD PILOT ESCORTS DAUGHTER TO SCENE OF HIS B-17'S FATAL 1944 CRASH

By Carol Kyle Sage

On the cold, bleak winter day of December 16, 1944, 39 Flying Fortresses of the 303rd Bomb Group took off from Molesworth, England, destination railroad marshalling yards at Ulm, Germany. The airmen soon encountered horrendous blizzard conditions and the mission was recalled, but the aircraft were scattered and the 360th's B-17 Number 44-6504 was missing.

That B-17 lies broken, with pieces spread far and wide over the Cheviot Hills in Northern England. My father, George A. Kyle, Jr., pilot of that B-17, and seven others survived the crash, due in part to the heroics of a collie dog named Sheila, who located the wreckage. Sheila was presented with the Dicken medal, which is the highest award given to animals. Her shepherd owner and neighboring farmer were awarded special medals in a ceremony following the end of WWII.

Two members of Dad's crew, Fred Holcombe, the navigator, and Frank Turner, the togglier, died in the crash.

Almost 56 years after the accident, I had the privilege of traveling with my father to the "Return to Molesworth" reunion. Immediately following that emotionally charged weekend, we boarded a train bound for Newcastle, about three hours north, towards the Scottish border. Newcastle, on that Sunday, June 4 was cold and rainy, but our hearts were warm, for that is where we had planned to meet with the Corbett family, Jim Sr and Christine and their talented son Jim, North East England Aircraft Crash Researcher.

Through the wonders of computer email, Jim Jr and I had been corresponding for over a year. When Jim was

only seven years old, his father took him to see my dad's crash site; the overwhelming experience for the young boy whetted his appetite. Now, at age 23, he has performed dozens of crash researches and excavations, presenting all in his monthly newsletter. Jim actually mailed me a piece of Dad's B-17 plane, which I presented to him on a recent birthday. As you can imagine, it was pretty banged up, but still OK considering it was over 50 years old.

Dad spent three and a half months at the Newcastle General Hospital, following the 1944 accident. This is where he was when the Air Force got in touch with my grandparents and asked them for a photo of their son George, so that the doctors could rebuild his face. Stories I had never before heard came out of this trip, some sad, some funny, all poignant. While we were solemnly standing in front of Newcas-

(Continued on Page 9)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The Silver Anniversary reunion of the 303rd BGA in San Diego was an affair to remember. See pages 10, 11 and 12.

Veterans Frank Kulesa and Arthur Stevens add recollections to Walter Cronkite's account of the loss of "Quinine, Bitter Dose" on the mission to Hamburg 25 June 1943. Page 3.

Bombardier Carl Ulrich dreamed that he would die on a mission to Merseburg. He did. His best friend, 427th pilot Jim O'Leary, tells the story on page 5.

On the Hamburg raid, "Avenger" was shot down. Did Dutch villagers bury the airmen with honors under the noses of the Nazis? Page 7.

And Hal Susskind, on page 8, asks who's getting all the medals these days, and why not us?



303RD BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

Hell's Angels Newsletter

Editor--Eddie Deerfield

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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 Association are tax deductible. Regular Members include persons assigned or attached to the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) from its 1942 activation in Boise, ID, through its war years at 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 and in furthering the aims of the Association may, with approval, become non-voting Associate Members.

Membership years begin on the first day of January. The *Hell's Angels Newsletter* will only be sent to members whose dues payments are current. New annual dues are \$25 in the US and \$30 for foreign addresses, \$60 for a veteran's life membership and \$150 for a family member's life membership.

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THE HEROICS OF GEORGE STALLINGS AND HIS 360TH CREW under intense enemy fighter attacks on the Hamburg raid made them the most-decorated for a single mission. The crew's individual and collective bravery earned them (standing, left-to-right) Navigator J. Ford Kelley, *Silver Star and Purple Heart*; Pilot George Stallings, *Distinguished Flying Cross—US and British*; Co-Pilot Joe Bradbury, *Distinguished Flying Cross*; Bombardier Frank Kulesa. Kneeling, Radio Operator Mike Levin who didn't fly that day—his replacement, Dick Jones, was killed on the mission and awarded a *Purple Heart* posthumously; Ball Turret Gunner Arthur Stevens, Waist Gunner Walter Pallage whose replacement on this mission was Joseph Klasnick, *Silver Star and Purple Heart*; Tail Gunner John Stickler, Larry Pierson who didn't fly the mission, Waist Gunner Robert Yattaw, *Purple Heart*, and Engineer James Watson, *Silver Star*. An 11th man, M. S. Hlastala, flew as an observer, *Purple Heart*.

The Ordeal of the Hamburg Raid of 25 June 1943 STALLINGS CREW EARNED MOST MEDALS FOR SINGLE MISSION IN HISTORY OF 303RD

Walter Cronkite Wrote About The Agony Of Men Aboard "Quinine"

By Eddie Deerfield

Hamburg, in the early years of the aerial war, with its vital port facilities and submarine construction yards, was one of the most fiercely defended of the targets in Germany. On the mission of 25 June 1943 the 303rd Bomb Group lost three of 24 bombers, all 360th Squadron aircraft. Seven men died on *Avenger* (story on page 7), one was lost on *Witch's Tit*, and the other 13 crew men became prisoners of war. This is the saga of the third B-17, *Quinine—Bitter Dose*, which crashed in the North Sea with only the dead radio operator aboard.

The Flying Fortress, piloted by George Stallings, came under intense fighter attack in the target area. In a matter of minutes, Dick Jones, manning his single 50-caliber machine gun in the radio room hatch, was killed almost instantly when a 20mm. shell crashed through his chest. Joe Klasnick and Bob Yattaw, the waist gunners, were hit by shrapnel but continued to fire their weapons. Another 20mm. shell exploded under Ford Kelley's navigation table wounding him as he rose to fire the nose guns. Mike Hlastala, aboard as an observer, suffered two

broken ribs. Jim Watson, the engineer, escaped injury and during lulls between firing his top turret guns at incoming enemy fighters, moved about the B-17 to assist wounded crew mates and make damage assessments.

At the controls of the heavily-damaged bomber, George Stallings and Joe Bradbury knew a safe landing in England was impossible. When they managed to reach the English coast, Stallings ordered the crew to bail out. He then turned the aircraft toward the North Sea and bailed out, swimming back to shore. *Quinine—Bitter Dose* went to its watery grave with only the body of the radio operator aboard.

A few days later, after the crew returned to Molesworth, United Press foreign correspondent Walter Cronkite interviewed George Stallings and filed the following story, reprinted here with Mr. Cronkite's permission (see Open Forum, page 17):

A USAAF BOMBER STATION, England, June 30, 1943—

A little old lady stood on the pebbled beach with a glass of rum in her hand. From the surf, his hair matted with salt water and his flying suit dripping, walked a young American pilot. The little old lady handed him the glass of rum and said "I've been saving this for just such an occasion." Thus ended the saga of the Flying Fortress, "Quinine—The Bitter Dose."

George V. Stallings Jr., of Rowayton, Conn., the pilot, got the rum. A quarter of an hour before, after all his crew had
(Continued on page 4)

(STALLINGS from page 3)

jumped from their shell-splintered ship, he headed her out to sea and followed them. They landed on the coast but he fell a half-mile from shore and before he could unbuckle his parachute it had dragged him another half mile. Although he knew the rescue launch would soon be there, Stallings started swimming and reached shore before the launch reached him. He walked into the arms of half a dozen Britishers who had watched the lonely drama in the skies until "Quinine" plunged into the sea.

This all happened Friday after the Fortress raid on north-west Germany. But here's the story in Stallings' own words:

"We were hit when we were somewhere in those awful clouds over Germany. Enemy fighters blew the rudder off the ship and knocked a big hole in the stabilizer. There were 20mm. bursts all through the ship, and the smell of cordite was so strong that Joe (Co-Pilot 2/Lt. Joe E. Bradbury, of Bexley, Ohio) and I almost passed out. But that was the least of our worries because just then another shell severed the control cables. The rudder pedals fell limp under our feet and the control column just dropped loose against the dashboard.

"The ship was out of control for a couple of minutes, and the crew kept asking on the intercom, 'Now?' But Joe and I were too busy to answer. About that time, Stick (S/Sgt. John J. Stickler, of Johnstown, Pa.) called up from the tail, 'Pieces are flying off the ship back here.' That didn't help our morale any.

"We headed home then, jumping from cloud to cloud and hiding from the Germans, but they were getting shots in at us, and one started a fire in the radio room. All the boys were sticking to their posts and knew that Joe and I were busy so they didn't even bother to tell us about it.

"A minute before, one of the gunners had a narrow escape when a 20mm. shell took eight inches off the end of his machine gun. We got a 20mm. Hit in the nose about then that smashed the navigator's desk, shredded the maps and left Jim (2/Lt. James Ford Kelley of Silver Springs, Md.) with only a mercator map to get us home.

"We started lightening the ship by throwing guns, cameras, the spare radio and everything else that was loose overboard. We realized then there was little chance of getting home and started making plans to bail out, because Joe and I knew we could not control the craft well enough to land her.

"Then came the severest shock of all when we found the escape door stuck and the bomb bay doors also jammed. We finally managed to get the bomb bay doors open just as we reached England and two of the boys went out behind the injured gunner to give him help when he reached the ground. The others bailed out then, and I headed 'Quinine' out to sea. We wanted to get the radioman's body overboard by parachute, but that was impossible, so out at sea I bid him and the ship good-bye and managed somehow to keep the ship under control while I strapped on a 'chute and hurried to the open bomb bay doors. The 'Quinine' circled me once and then plunged into the sea."

All the crew members landed safely and the injured gunner is recovering in the hospital. Other members of the crew were bombardier 2/Lt. Frank E. Kulesa, of Detroit, Mich., top turret gunner T/Sgt. James A. Watson, of Houlton, Me., ball turret gunner T/Sgt. Arthur S. Stevens, of Jefferson City, Mo., waist gunner S/Sgt. Robert H. Yattaw, of Minneapolis, Minn. and nose gunner T/Sgt. Michael S. Hlastala, of Uniontown, Pa.

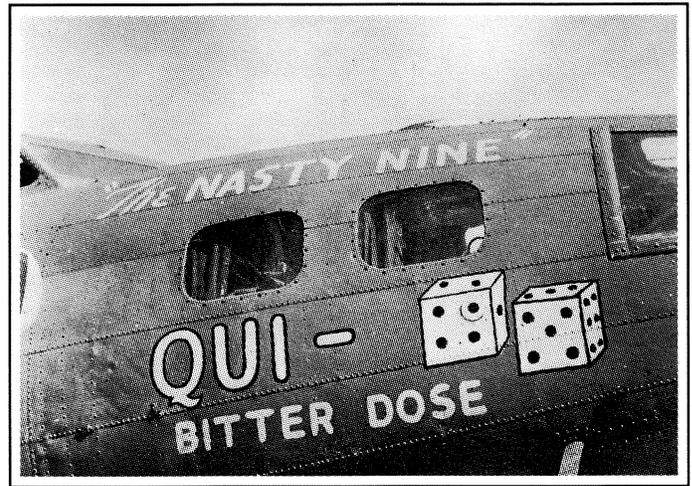


At the time he wrote the article, Walter Cronkite was not aware that five members of the Stallings crew had been wounded in the action against Hamburg, with a single fatality, and that the crew's valor on this one mission would earn it three Silver Stars, two Distinguished Flying Crosses, a British DFC and five Purple Hearts.

George Stallings and most of his crew survived to complete their tours of combat duty, but many have passed away in the ensuing years. Frank Kulesa and Arthur Stevens are still active members of the 303rd Bomb Group Association and offered the following recollections of that horrendous Hamburg mission.

FROM BOMBARDIER FRANK KULESA:

We had dropped our bombs and started for home when



NOSE ART OF "QUININE—BITTER DOSE"

fighters hit us. We tried to hide in the clouds but eventually got hit again and somehow George was able to keep us flying until we broke out of the clouds and were over the North Sea. It was decided to put the nose down and take a course for home. As we got lower one of the engines began to act up and had to be feathered. We were running low on fuel and we decided to lighten the ship as much as possible. We threw everything that was loose out. To this day, I can see the bomb sight hurtling down towards the sea below.

We finally reached the coast of England and were at about 5,000 feet when we prepared to abandon ship. We discussed how we would get the radio man's body out but it just couldn't work. I remember going out the bomb bay and pulling the rip cord which the force of the wind pulled out of my hand. I looked down and all I could see were roof tops and I wondered where I would end up. Fortunately, I came down in a tree. I pulled myself off and turned around and there stood a farmer with a pitchfork at the ready pointed at me. He didn't say anything, so I offered him a Camel and explained who I was. I'm not sure I made a great impression. After a while a British service truck came by and picked me and some of the others up and took us to a manor house where we had a drink and were checked over by a military doctor.

Without the superb flying ability of George Stallings and Joe Bradbury our mission could have ended very differently.

FROM BALL TURRET GUNNER ARTHUR STEVENS:

We had received considerable damage from the enemy. I had been ordered out of the ball turret. As I was completing stowing it, Dick Jones came rushing out of the radio room. His left hand gripped the ball turret mounting structure. As his back came into view, I saw a stream of blood larger than the width of a pencil arcing away from a wound in the upper part of his back. Dick came to rest just past the ball turret. There was no way that Dick could not have been dead. I told the other gunners that there was nothing we could do for him. I had spent two years in the Medical Department with 11 months of hospital training before being trained as an aerial combat radio operator and ball turret gunner. When Dick was killed, I took his place and sent SOS emergency signals the rest of the trip.

Parachuting was our only option. It was a first time experience for each of us. I watched the others. I had been told not to pull the rip cord too hard. I pulled it easy. The parachute did not open. Then I pulled the rip cord with all of my strength. The parachute opened. You worry about landing. I landed very lightly and had no wind on that bright sunny afternoon. I came down in a grain field with some British civilians watching me. A lady fixed me some tea. I was shaking so hard that I could not get the cup on the saucer. Next, I was a guest of the British Army. They gave me something stronger than tea. My shakes stopped.

I did not arrive back at the base with the rest of the crew and was never debriefed about the mission. After the British Army picked me up, they fed me and then finally arranged for transportation back to Molesworth.

FOUR OF THE 303RD'S HAPPY WARRIORS BETWEEN MISSIONS AT MOLESWORTH

In front (l-to-r) are Co-Pilot Lou Reed and Bombardier Bob Lyda of Pilot Jim O'Leary's 427th Squadron crew. In back are O'Leary's Navigator Mike Kacere and the ill-fated Carl Ulrich, bombardier on the Pete Cureton crew.

(PHOTO BY JIM O'LEARY NEAR
THE 427TH CREW QUARTERS)



Was My Best Friend at Molesworth Pitchforked To Death?

CARL ULRICH'S NIGHTMARES CAME TRUE AT MERSEBURG

For 55 Years, I've Been Searching For Answers About How He Died

By Jim O'Leary, Pilot, 427th Squadron

About two weeks before the mission to bomb the Luena synthetic oil refinery at Merseburg, Germany on 21 November 1944, I was in my room writing a letter to my wife, Barbara, when someone knocked. In came my good friend Carl "Twicky" Ulrich, bombardier on Pete Cureton's crew.

Carl and I had both been married to our respective fiancée's before departing the states for the UK. We stayed on base most of the time living an insular existence compared to our single peers.

I did a lot of slow timing of new engines, and Carl would ride in the right seat where he could take care of raising and lowering the gear and flaps, and get himself some stick time as well. Carl was also an accomplished musician, and made a hobby of collecting military songs which were popular during WWII. Carl taught me lyrics and music to some of the old

timers like "Shag O'Reilly's Daughter," "Roll Me over In The Clover" and RAF songs such as "There was flak, flak, bags of bloody flak, o'er the Ruhr, o'er the Ruhr." We both listened to Radio Bremen to hear "Der Bingle" and the Limericks sung by the Germans. But my fondest musical memory was being awakened every morning by Sgt. Monahan's AFN theme, "Opus Number One," by Tommy Dorsey.

Carl was adept at shooting craps, so we'd go up to the Officers Club, where I would watch him and the 427th Squadron Surgeon, Doc Anderson, manipulate

the cubes. I did not play, since I had learned my lesson in the Caddy Pen at the local Country Club in Des Moines, Iowa, where sharpies would cheat me out of my hard earned Class "A" Caddy's fee of \$1.85 for an 18 hole carry. When rolling the dice, Carl did not use phrases like "Fever in The Southland" or "Sixty Days," but such winners as "Jump up, Hawgmouth, and bite 'em in the ass."

We were both voracious readers who would make forays into Kettering, Northampton or Cambridge looking for good authors. We would then swap our favorites back and forth, and give away the "also rans."

But on this morning as he entered my room, Carl was very sober. As he paced the floor, I laid aside my letter and asked him "what's on your mind?" He sat down and finally got around to telling me that he had had a dream the night before that was terrifying in combat reality. When he told me that he had

dreamed the same dream three other times, I had a hollow feeling in my gut. I remember thinking "he is going round the bend." I then asked him to describe the dream to me.

Carl said that in his dream the CQ awakens him to tell him that he is flying that morning as Deputy Lead Bombardier. In his dream he gets up and dresses, goes to combat breakfast, and then to his Bombardier Briefing. The target is Merseberg. After take-off in the early morning gloom, they form up for assembly over the buncher. They then head for the Channel coast. Crossing the Channel they transit France and enter enemy territory. After opening bomb bay doors, they turn on the IP and proceed down the bomb run. They are below planned altitude and began to encounter heavy flak. Their number 3 engine receives a direct hit,

(Continued on Page 6)

(O'LEARY from Page 5)

there is a loud report and a flash of fire, and the aircraft starts a right rollover.

Carl then sees himself salvaging his bomb load, which is thrown out of the bomb bay in an upward cluster. Their B-17 dives toward the undercast and rights itself before entering the clouds. Carl sees no chutes. That is all, end of dream.

I thought of Carl Ulrich as a brother and almost the only person, besides my original crew, that I got really close to during my tour at Molesworth. I have wished many times down the years that I could have commiserated with Carl and shared his trouble, but I was too young and inexperienced at that sort of thing. It gives me some solace to think that maybe his telling me helped ease his concern.

On 21 November 1944, I was flying the Merseberg mission as leader of the numbers 3 and 4 elements in the 427th Low Squadron. My co-pilot, Lou Reed, and I were at the controls of "Earthquake McGoon," one of our favorite B-17's. Our 41st Combat Wing-B Air Commander was the Operations Officer from the 359th, W.C. "Bill" Heller. We knew that he was a cool and determined leader and as anxious as all of us to destroy the Luena Synthetic Oil Refinery, a major source of fuel for the German war effort. Our Intelligence also knew that it was defended by several Luftwaffe Gruppen, which contained FW-190A and D-9 Sturm Jagdgeschwaders. The Luena works were also defended by a ring of radar-sighted "Flak Artillerie" consisting of up to 750 guns including both 88mm and larger caliber's.

Our major problem on this day though, was the lousy weather. I overheard our Wing Leader talking to the two weather scouts, Blue Boy High and Blue Boy Low. I remember that he wanted to know the condition of the weather over the target. One of the scouts replied (as I remember) that the weather was clearing over the target. Bill Heller pressed him for exact details. The scout replied that the weather was clear at 16,000 feet over the target but that the flak was intense. The 303rd Group

was flying between a solid cloud overcast and a broken cloud undercast that were separated by several thousand feet. Our planned bombing altitude for the Lead Squadron was to be 28,000 feet. The 427th Low Squadron was to bomb at 27,500 feet. The High Squadron was to bomb at 28,500 feet. I listened as the Wing Lead again quizzed the weather scouts stating that he was "ready to start climbing", or words to that effect. Bill Heller decided to continue the run on Merseberg although we were gaining very little altitude. It was a tough call for our Wing Lead. I believed then and now that based on the weather scout's reports he made a right decision.

Later I determined that the 427th Low Squadron was at 18,100 feet when we finally approached the target. It was the heaviest flak bombardment I had ever been through. We were hit so many times that it sounded like rocks being thrown against a washtub. Our cockpit was full of floating Kapok as flak punched through the quilted lining. I was busily ducking when I glanced over at my co-pilot, Lou Reed, and saw him bobbing up and down. Our eyes met and we grinned at our heroic antics. Unknown to my crew or myself large numbers of Luftwaffe were assembling directly below us.

Before we reached the target two things happened: First, I looked up through our cockpit skylight and saw our Deputy Lead aircraft, piloted by Pete Cureton with Carl Ulrich as his bombardier, take a direct hit on the right side of his aircraft. There was an explosion and the Deputy started to turn turtle to his right. A clutch of bombs then emerged from his open bomb bay going upward. The Deputy then went into a steep dive toward the undercast and my gunners reported seeing two chutes leave the falling B-17. Cureton and Co-Pilot Red Raley then appeared to regain control as their B-17 entered the cloud cover below.

Then, immediately after the 427th Deputy went down, two fighters--an element leader and his wingman--split-essed out of the overcast several hundred yards ahead and came straight for

us. Our bombardier, Bob Lyda, instantly fired a long burst from his chin turret at the approaching fighters and I saw pieces flying off the wingman. Both fighters separated immediately and dove down out of sight. As they banked steeply I saw that they were our own P-51's. Escort fighters usually took great umbrage with bomber crews who fired upon them, but we heard nothing from those lads after the mission. They had to realize that they were making a hostile move on our formation. Bob Lyda had been raised on the Kansas prairie and had honed his shotgunning skills on fast flying game birds. Bob was both a dead eye bomb dropper and gunner.

Later that evening as I undressed in the QM hut I realized that I had witnessed Carl's dream. It really shook me and still does at this late date. For the next few weeks I bugged HQ wanting to know if they had heard anything from the Swiss Red Cross, who kept teams moving among high priority targets in Germany looking for infractions of the Geneva Convention. I specifically requested information regarding the Cureton crew and Carl Ulrich in particular.

One day I was given a message from 303rd HQ that they had received word from the Swiss Red Cross in London. The Swiss Report said that three Cureton crewmen had been pitchforked to death by German civilians after landing in their chutes. The only man named was Benjamin F. Dubois, the Deputy Lead Navigator, who had come into the 427th Squadron as the navigator of the Stewart Ackerman crew. There was no mention of my good friend Carl Ulrich.

I didn't learn the fate of Carl Ulrich until October 1993. My wife's cousin, Fleming Fraker, who did military research for author Herman Wouk and others, contacted John F. Manning, Chief, Mortuary Affairs Branch, Casualty and Memorial Affairs. Manning produced Xerox copies from declassified German records that listed the following dead: Peter Cureton, Benjamin Dubois, Carl Ulrich, Joseph Burford, Donald Bourlier, Lewis McCormack, R. Celichkowski and an

"unknown" who later proved to be Stonewall "Red" Raley. There was nothing in the report to explain how the men died. The ninth member of the Cureton crew, Radio Operator/Gunner James Ellis, was blown from the ship when it exploded in the undercast. His backpack chute was open when he regained consciousness as he descended badly wounded. The German Wehrmacht gave him good treatment and transferred him to a POW hospital near Leipzig, Germany.

According to "Might In Flight," all 303rd squadrons missed clobbering the target. The Low Squadron showed no bursts on their strike photos in the target area. The High Squadron was in and out of the clouds during the bomb run, and salvaged their bombs after leaving the target area. Four 303rd aircraft were lost during the mission.

In addition to the Cureton crew loss in an unnamed B-17, another unnamed Flying Fortress piloted by A.R. Virag of the 359th was lost during the bomb run when Virag's right wing was hit and the right aileron was knocked off in a collision with "The Duchess's Grandmother". Virag's B-17 was last seen going down about 5 or 6,000 feet below the formation. Ten or 15 minutes later, after losing altitude and having difficulty maintaining control, the B-17 was jumped by ME109's. The pilot then ordered his crew to bail out. All jumps were safely made and the entire crew became POW's. This would have been the Virag crew's 35th and last tour mission. "Heller's Angels" piloted by A. F. Chance of the 359th, was another downed B-17 with a crew on its last mission. The pilot and five of his crew were made POW's and three of the crew were killed in action. "Lady Alta" piloted by LeRoy Glass was the fourth 303rd bomber to be downed. The entire crew became prisoners of war.

My final attempt to access International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) World War II records was made in the fall of 1999. In its response, the ICRC did not tell me what I needed to know--how my best friend Carl Ulrich died on that mission of horrors to Merseburg.

Under The Noses Of The Nazis DUTCH VILLAGERS BURY 7 DEAD OF 303RD CREW WITH HONORS

A strange story of tragedy and compassion began on the morning of 25 June 1943 as 24 crews of the 303rd Bomb Group crossed the coast to bomb submarine construction shops at Hamburg. Joe Palmer and his men, flying "Avenger," would not return. Seven were killed in an attack by enemy aircraft and four were captured. The townspeople of Borgsweer, Holland, braved the wrath of the Nazi occupation to bury the slain Americans with honors.

Among the dead was the ball turret gunner, Burl Owen. In 1946, William and Thelma Owen, Burl's parents, received the following letter from Miss A. J. Nannen, a 15-year-old Dutch girl:

"On Friday, June 25, 1943 at 9 AM I saw planes approaching from a westerly direction bound for Emden, I believe, a German city across from here. As they returned I saw a plane on fire in the sky. It was a dreadful sight. Parts were blown off the burning plane. Near my house lay the tail. Suddenly the plane fell and crashed in a stretch of land. The disaster was terrible.

"Seven young men were killed there. Far from their families, far from home. Two of them, who had been in the cockpit, were charred. The five other bodies were broken but not burned. Their parachutes lay beside them. I don't understand why they did not jump.

"The seven bodies were put in coffins and taken to the church. All of us were quite overcome by what had happened. The entire village joined in mourning. Next day the burial took place in the churchyard. All of us were present. The mayor spoke and the minister offered a prayer in English. The organ played, and the seven were interred in a common grave. Poor boys who had to lose their young lives here, far from their families. We have taken flowers to their grave. All we could do."

According to Bill Owen, Burl's brother, their mother continued to correspond with Miss Nannen over the years. The Dutch girl in a later letter said the Germans came and wanted to exhume the bodies

but the villagers gave them identifications taken from the dog tags and talked them out of disturbing the dead. Burl Owen is now buried in the Margraten Military Cemetery in Holland. In plots near him are Pilot Joe Palmer, Co-Pilot Bob Sheldon, Engineer Elmer Duffey, Radio Operator Ed Gullage, Left Waist Gunner Sam Holder and Right Waist Gunner Norman Hornbacher.

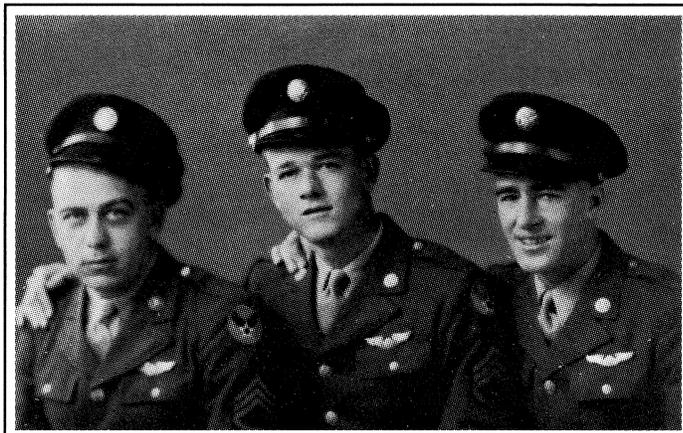
In an effort to learn more about his brother's death, Bill Owen was able to contact two of the four Palmer crew mates who managed to bail out, survived the German fighter attack and became prisoners of war.

"Claude Kieffer, the navigator, told me that things happened so fast he wasn't sure of what happened. He said the weather was terrible and very overcast. Planes were scattered everywhere. They didn't know where the 303rd was, so they joined another group. Enemy fighters were attacking, mostly from in front. When their formation turned to the right, "Avenger" kept going forward.

"Claude said he called to the pilot on the intercom to ask what was going on. There was no answer. In seconds, the tail section broke off and the B-17 flipped upside down. That was when he bailed out. He said he thinks the pilot and co-pilot were killed instantly in the attack, which is why there was answer and the plane went straight ahead instead of staying with the formation."

Alva Earl Hodges, the tail gunner, sent Bill Owen the following detailed account of the final minutes of "Avenger":

"On June 25, 1943 we



GOOD BUDDIES on Joe Palmer's 360th crew, their fate was sealed on the Hamburg mission of 25 June 1943. Engineer Elmer Duffey, on the left, and Ball Turret Gunner Burl Owen, center, were killed in action. Tail Gunner Earl Hodges survived as a prisoner of war.

made the run to Hamburg, the most inland trip to Germany so far. We hit a heavy cloud cover near the target area forcing us to peel off from our protective formation. Doom's Day! We really got nailed by fighter planes and were separated from our group. Lonely feeling as we lost altitude and veered off to the left with number three engine out. We knew we'd had it. Fighter planes jumped us like we were a sick dog and took turns coming in and raking us.

"Our plane went down, rolling out of control and burning. Only after the tail section broke off was I able to get out of the small door in the tail. I pulled the rip-cord and was in the silent air, swinging like a pendulum. I could see other chutes coming down. The Jerries came and I thought they were going to strafe us, but we were over water and they prop-washed us so we'd come down on land. I came down on a steep-pitched slate roof in Gronengen, Holland, and was picked up by the Krauts."

Although Bill Owen was unable to locate the other two survivors, Bombardier L. C. Appiequist and Photographer T. L. Stringer, he was able to correspond with Frans Auwerda, a 71-year-old

Dutch amateur historian. Auwerda referred Owen to a description of the crash of "Avenger" in a Dutch language book. According to the translation, "Seven of the 11 aircrew were killed. The funeral, with military honors, took place on the following day after a service in the Reformed Church at Borgsweer. The interest of the local population was enormous. This was not appreciated by the Germans at all."

The book claimed that a German officer attended the ceremony. This seems unlikely. His presence would have officially sanctioned a public display of sympathy for the enemy by the residents of an occupied country.



THE BRAVE DEAD AIRMEN of the ill-fated "Avenger" were paid tribute by the villagers of Borgsweer, Holland.

A Bonanza of Medals

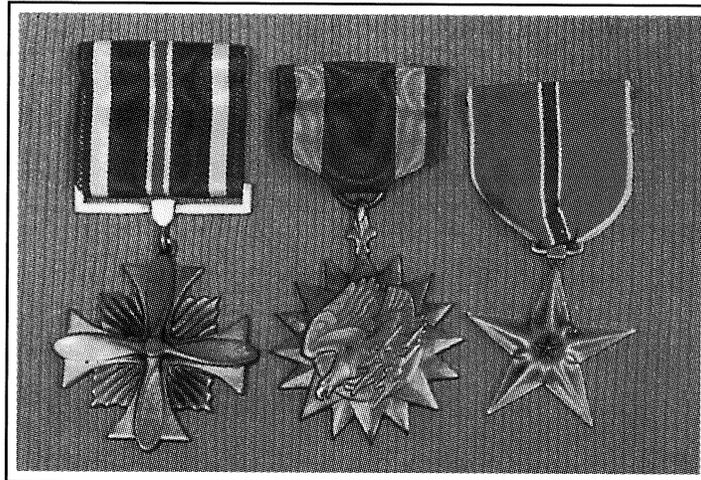
One of the most pleasant things about growing up in New York City about seventy six years ago was the Sunday walks my father and I took through Central Park right in the middle of Manhattan. The walks took us through the zoo and around the reservoir, a total of four miles. As a reward for not complaining too much, I was usually treated to a box of "Cracker Jack." Opening the box and anticipating the prize was the highlight of the occasion. The idea of rewarding someone for doing something out of the ordinary was probably started centuries ago.

Rewarding a person with a medal for an act of bravery was common in Armies down through the ages including the Civil War and World War I. Unfortunately the custom was not always followed by the U. S. Army Air Forces in World War II. For some reason, the "Powers that be," seemed to have an aversion to handing out too many Distinguished Flying Crosses. Ultimately, this decision seemed to flow down through the ranks and affected the number of awards made to deserving airmen for the rest of the war.

In later years, about the time of the Vietnam War, succeeding commanders swung the pendulum the other way and today awards seem to be as common as the prizes in "Cracker Jack" boxes. This increase was not bad. I believe that anyone who performs an act "above and beyond the call of duty," should be recognized and I congratulate the commander who took the time to recognize each heroic act performed by his airman.

Today I estimate that more than 50 members of the 303rd Bomb Group Association, and this may even be a low number, are entitled to awards earned during the war years but for some reason they are still having difficulty getting their rewards because the rules have changed over the years.

At first 1951 was the deadline for submitting applications for awards covering heroic actions made during World War II. Then it was opened up to allow applications that had been previously submitted and lost, to be resubmitted. But this did not take into account some heroic actions that had taken place during World War II for which the circumstances were not known until years later; as in the case of people shot down and who became Prisoners of War. At the present time, the appli-



Are you missing any of these medals? If so, the time may come when you are encouraged to try with a chance of getting them.

cation for an award has to be submitted through a member of Congress. But our success rate has been practically zero. With this in mind, I have written the following letter to the Director of Public Affairs for the U.S. Air Force.

August 24, 2000

Dear General

I'm doing an article for the November issue of the "Hell's Angels Newsletter," the 303rd Bomb Group Association's quarterly publication. The article will deal with the number of decorations awarded during World War II and the quantity distributed in subsequent years. We would also like to know if the requirements have changed over the years?

Many of our veteran members performed heroic acts during World War II but never received the awards they earned because the paperwork was lost or was never submitted for a multitude of reasons. Winning the war was one. In some cases the heroic airman was shot down and the full story was never learned until years later, in some cases decades later.

For the past several years, members of our Association have been submitting their paperwork to get the awards they earned but their success rate has been very low. It seems that every year the ground rules change. Now they have to go through their Congressman to even apply. Even when they apply their application gets rejected by "Air Force Personnel" because of "insufficient justification" and "the act doesn't merit a DFC."

I remember one case where an airman on a bombing mission went

into the bombbay of the B-17 to get rid of an incendiary bomb that had hung up. The aircraft was at 27,000 feet, temperature 45 below zero, plane under fighter attack and the airman went into the bombbay without an oxygen bottle or a parachute. The bombbay doors were open. If he slips on the narrow catwalk, he falls to his death. If he doesn't get rid of the bomb, the plane with its crew is lost. He got rid of the bomb and saved the aircraft and the crew. His request was rejected for "insufficient justification" and "the act doesn't merit a DFC." Who in the reviewing office was qualified to make the decision if they have never ever been in that situation?

As for my question, "have the requirements changed over the years." I have just recently read quite a few biographies of "airmen" picked at random, to see if I could notice any apparent change in requirements. I did notice that there has been quite an increase in the number of decorations awarded since General Arnold's time. He seemed to have an aversion to awarding DFCs. This was borne out in one of his memos.

I noticed that one "airman" received the DFC even though he was not rated. I'm sure he earned the award by standards in effect when the mission was flown but would he have gotten it, if it was judged by the same criteria with which our is?

Another "airman's" bio lists his getting 17 Air Medals, three DFCs, and three Meritorious Service Medals among other top of the line decorations. Those numbers would have been unheard of during Gen.

Arnold's tenure. I'm sure his actions earned them, but I'm questioning the apparent discrepancy in the number of decorations awarded between the two generations. That's why I am fighting to get my airmen the honors they earned. My generation put their lives on the line just as much as our successors but we have little to show for it in comparison.

I am in no way downgrading the accomplishments of our successors and the present day Air Force which is composed of thousands of dedicated, hardworking and talented men and women. I would also like to congratulate the commanders who had the foresight to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of their men and women by awarding them appropriate decorations when the occasion warranted it.

I'm not a stranger to combat. I flew two tours as a navigator with the 303rd Bomb Group during World War II and the sage advice I received on reporting in was, "Your chances of finishing a tour are slim and none." Like you, I was also awarded the Aviation Space Writers' Orville Wright Award; mine in 1964 for my work with the Second Air Division in Vietnam. Also like you, I headed the media branch of SAFOI in 1968. With your help, I hope to do an objective piece which should aid some of our deserving airmen in applying for "earned" awards in the future. For them time is running out. That is why I am asking for your support.

I'm enclosing a copy of the Hell's Angels Newsletter which I edited and published for 13 years. It is one of the best Bomb Group Associations' newsletters presently being published. It is now capably edited and published by a B-17 radio operator in WW II, a psy war officer in Korea and a career diplomat in the State Department, all one person.

Recommend you look at the 303rd BGA's web site. You may be pleasantly surprised.

Sincerely,
Harold A. Susskind
Lt. Col. USAF (Ret)

I have the utmost faith that my letter will be answered in the near future and that the answer will contain instructions on how our members should apply for their "earned" awards with a very good chance that they will now be successful.

(KYLE from Page 1)

tle General, Dad told how, during his long stay there, a hospital nun used to let the 21-year-old occasionally slip out at night for a beer, on condition that he brought her back a bottle of gin, which she would conceal in her habit.

The next morning, with the very capable Jim Sr at the wheel, we drove to the Cheviot Hills. This was the day I was waiting for. I would attempt the tortuous climb to the crash site. It was cold and dark, with ominous clouds threatening rain, but there no way was I going to cancel my climb! This is beautiful countryside, but the land is rugged and harsh; the weather was a brutal 37 degrees with howling winds. I wore long underwear, two pairs of socks, turtleneck sweater, sweatshirt, heavy coat, hat. The list goes on, but I was still cold. And this was June; I tried to imagine how cold Dad must have felt in that 1944 winter blizzard.

Continuing along the narrow, winding country road, passing an occasional shepherd with his sheepdogs and sheep, we arrived at Mount Hooly farm. This was where, in 1944, Dad climbed down to following the crash. While Dad remained at the farmhouse at the base of the mountain, I began the daunting climb with the two Jims. Both father and son are regular "hill walkers" and, with their long legs, took off up the mountain, leaving me with the Cheviot sheep.

I began to have serious doubts that I could make it, but I wanted to show these people that Americans never give up easily, so I persevered and we reached the site in just over an hour. It was a steep climb and very rough; we had to watch where we placed each foot because of the uneven ground, rocks and holes.

The site itself was nearly 3,000 feet straight up, the top of the world, or so I thought. And indeed, when we reached the wreckage, we were enveloped in clouds. It was an eerie feeling to watch as the clouds lifted and the tall, imposing rock formation called Braydon Crag became visible. Had the B-17's point of impact occurred a few feet

from where it did and hit the Crag, I would not be writing this today.

Once we reached the site, I assumed we'd look around for a few minutes, but we remained there for almost three hours. The Corbetts, were really great, not rushing me at all. They pointed out many things they had learned about the crash, from where the initial impact occurred to identifying and describing the remaining plane parts. Not long after impact, the bombs had exploded and formed a huge crater that is clearly visible today. Surprisingly, there's quite a lot to see. There are several large sections of the plane strewn about, scattered miles over the mountain. Jim discovered that one of the B-17's buried engines is leaking oil. We could see it oozing and glistening in the light.

At first I was very much aware of the black peat and carefully avoided stepping in it, but as I became more engrossed in the wreckage surrounding me, I ignored the peat and simply plodded through it. The winds continued to swirl around us, alternating with brief, sunny views of Scotland in the distance, to the unforgiving clouds that destroyed our sense of position. Fortunately, the very experienced Corbett men had brought along first-rate navigational equipment, including a detailed map.

Aside from the sound of the wind, it was totally quiet. This part of the Cheviot is a desolate place, not meant for mankind. Still, I felt a sense of peace here. Today's modern world seemed so very far away.

As cold as I was, the chill somehow seemed fitting. As I explored the wreckage, my thoughts were drawn to that cold, December day when two brave young men lost their lives in that crash. Jim Sr asked me if I ever think of them. I told him that I do ... often. I wonder what kind of lives Fred Holcombe and Frank Turner would have had. And I said a silent prayer for them and their families.

After the accident, Dad walked down that mountainside to the very farmhouse where he was now waiting for me. He showed me the barn where he had to lie down while waiting for medical



ONE OF THE ORIGINAL ENGINES of the 303rd's B-17 which crashed in the Cheviot Hills was restored and placed on display in Bamburgh Castle in England. Pilot George Kyle kneels next to the Wright Cyclone engine, with his crew picture mounted in front.

help. Walking down was almost as hard as walking up ... but when Dad walked it, he was battling a snow blizzard, bare feet, head split open, jaw broken. The snow that landed on his head congealing the blood, which I'm sure helped save him. I thought of all this as I walked down that mountain, retracing his footsteps 56 years later.

We had walked several miles that day, when you consider we had to zigzag up the mountain, then the long trek across the top to reach the crash site and down again. When it was over, my legs felt like jelly. The two Jims? I don't think they even felt it.

Jim Sr drove us to Millfield, a former RAF base, where Dad was treated before being taken into Newcastle to the main hospital. It is closed and locked up now, with padlocked gates prohibiting cars to enter. But Jim climbed the gate and found a farmer who, when learning Dad's identity, quickly agreed to open the gate, allowing us to walk in and take pictures.

I'm in touch with Joe Berly, radio operator on Dad's B-17, who told me that he remembers well Christmas of '44, while recuperating at Millfield. He said the RAF personnel tried their best at making the lonely and wounded soldiers feel comfortable. They cooked them a

traditional American Christmas dinner (Joe said it wasn't very good, but no one complained!). He remembers there was a piano and one of the RAF guys played some familiar American Christmas songs. He said of all the Christmases he's lived through, that one stands out foremost in his mind.

Before leaving England, we paid a visit to Bamburgh Castle, where an engine from B17 #44-6504, beautifully restored by Derek Walton, is on display in the Castle's aviation museum. The crew's photograph is prominently displayed in front of the engine. When people realized who Dad was, cameras began clicking.

All throughout our visit, we were amazed at how well we were received by the British people. Dad was overwhelmed by their generosity. I was touched to see that he was treated with utmost respect.

From the tremendous reunion at Molesworth to the emotional visit to the Cheviots, this is a trip that I will never forget. For most of my life, I have worked in the travel industry, enabling me to visit some wonderful places and meet terrific people all along the way. But nothing, nothing comes close to what we experienced that one short week in England!

FROM ALOHA TO ALOHA,

The 303rd Enjoys A Grand 25th Reunion In San Diego

"Aloha" in Hawaiian is both a greeting and a farewell. For 370 Molesworth veterans, family members and friends, the 303rd Bomb Group Association's Silver Anniversary reunion was a grand time from the first aloha to the last.

The site for the gathering was the Hanalei Hotel, a tropical paradise with a Hawaiian setting in San Diego's Mission Valley. The first scheduled event on Monday 25 September was an optional trolley bus tour of San Diego. The last event on Friday 29 September was a memorial service with the traditional reading of the names of 303rd veterans who passed away since the 1999 reunion. In between, there was a golf tournament, a visit to the World War II "Queen Mary" troop ship in Long Beach, a dinner cruise in San Diego harbor, a visit to the Zoo and a dinner-theater performance of "Forever Plaid." The entertainment highlight of the reunion was a full-fledged luau dinner featuring a troupe of Hawaiian hula dancers and other talented performers.

The essential heart of the reunion, however, was the pure joy of camaraderie as Molesworth veterans and their families joined in a feast of friendship and love. Rachel Frith's poem on page 12 captures the sense of the reunion. Bill and Doris Roche and the members who contributed hours and days of their time to make the reunion a success deserve high praise.

Along with the pleasure, there were many signal developments on the business side of the Association. A new Executive Board was elected, composed of **Richard R. Johnson**, president; **Frank C. DeCicco**, Vice President for Administration; **Walter J. Ferrari**, Vice President for Reunions; **Albert L. Dusliere**, Secretary; **Jack P. Rencher**, Treasurer; **William J. Roche**, Chairman of the Past Presidents Committee, and **Eddie Deerfield**, Editor of the Hell's Angels Newsletter. Changes of leadership at the squadron level brought in **Harold A. Susskind** as the 359th Representative and **William H. Simpkins** for the 358th. A change in the by-laws now limits all terms to one year, unless the incumbent is reelected.

Ed Miller declined reappointment as Membership Chairman and was replaced by **Dennis S. Smith**, son of the late **Carlton Smith** who handled membership affairs for many years. Miller was named director of the Lost 303rd Comrade Search Project, an ambitious program to locate Molesworth veterans who may not be aware of the existence of the 303rd Bomb Group Association.

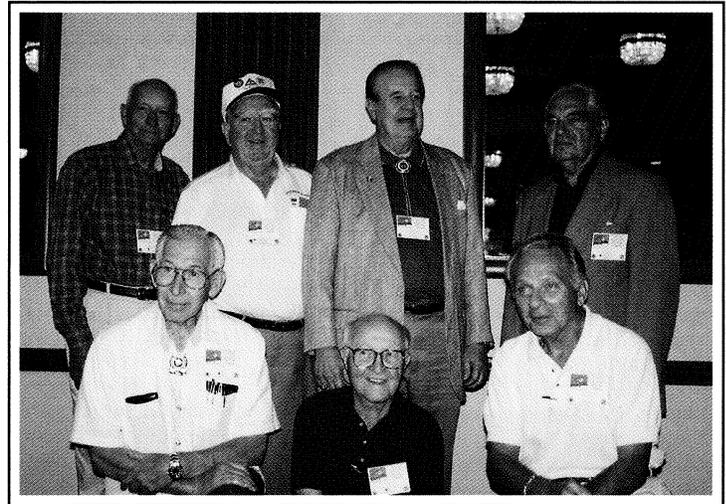
The dues structure, which has been static for many years, was amended to \$25 annually for veterans residing in the US, \$30 for overseas members, \$60 for a life membership for veterans and \$150 for a family member's life membership. 303rd veterans 78 years and older are exempt from dues payments.

Numerous awards were presented, recognizing outstanding contributions by members. Engraved plaques went to **Brian McGuire** (in absentia) for making the impressive memorial at Molesworth a reality, **Ed and Jill Miller** for their significant achievements over the years on behalf of the Association, **Bill Roche** for the San Diego reunion and other impressive accomplishments and **Robin and Sue Beeby** for their unique roles as 303rd representatives in England since 1993.

Four names were approved for engraving on the 303rd BGA Service Recognition Memorial at The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum—**Richard R. Johnson**, **James S. Reeves**, **Gary Moncur** and **Joanna M. Tressler**. Moncur was also awarded an honorary life membership for creating and managing the 303rd BGA Web Page. Others named to honorary membership were artist **Keith Hill** and author **Brian D. O'Neil**.

With an abiding faith in the viable future of the Association, Baltimore/Washington was selected as the site of the 2001 reunion, the renowned entertainment city of Branson, Missouri in 2002 and Portland, Oregon in 2003.

(PHOTO CREDITS: Anne Caruso, Coleman Sanders)



ELECTED EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association are (standing, left-to-right) President Dick Johnson, Past Presidents Chairman Bill Roche, VP-Administration Frank DeCicco and Newsletter Editor Eddie Deerfield. Kneeling are Treasurer Jack Rencher, Secretary Al Dusliere and VP-Reunions Walt Ferrari.



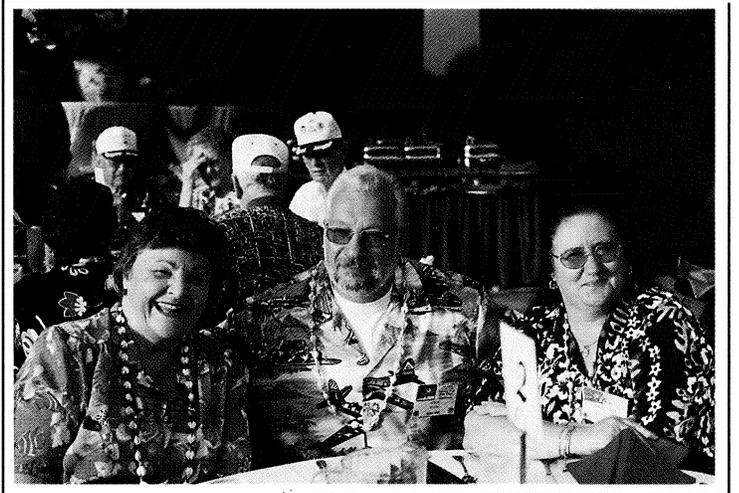
TIMM FAMILY AFFAIR—Harold "Red" Timm, seated at left, came to the reunion with wife Alice, sister-in-law Marilyn, brother Lloyd Timm, and, standing, daughter Kathy Schaubert and her husband, Dave.



TWO 359th VETERANS AND THEIR WIVES relax with refreshments outside the 303rd's Hospitality Center. Left-to-right are Ed Sexton, Florence Sexton, Barbara Bates and Roger Bates.



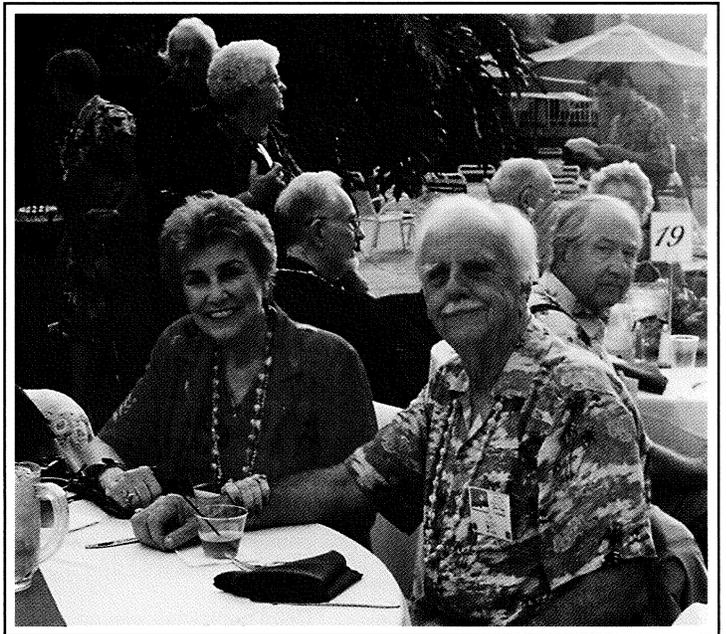
COLORFULLY DRESSED FOR THE LUAU are Lore and Van White. Van was elected Alternate Representative of the 358th Squadron.



THE 303RD'S REPRESENTATIVE IN ENGLAND, Robin Beeby, has the pleasure of the company of Barbara Gobrecht on his right and his wife, Sue, on his left.



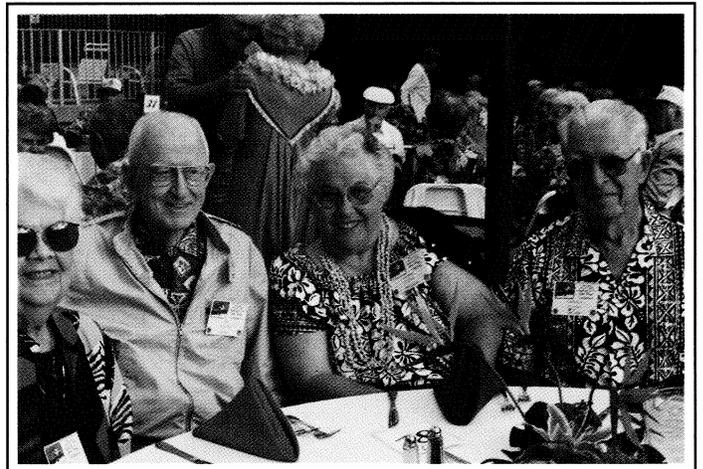
ALWAYS THE CONSERVATIVE, Bill Heller opts for a dignified sports jacket and bow tie as he and his wife, Ruth, enjoy the luau.



ALTHOUGH HOME IS ON THE RANGE for Texans Angele and Carl Dubose, they're comfortably "at home" at the luau.



A HAPPY GROUP OF HELL'S ANGELS gathers for a photo on the festive Hawaiian occasion. The entire reunion was marked by a spirit of love and congeniality from the heart. The 303rd's 25th Silver Anniversary reunion was, indeed, a joyous "family" affair.



A HAPPY ENDING TO A MEMORABLE REUNION for (l-to-r) Louise and Don Keating, Lavonne and Humphrey O'Leary.



AIR CORPS REUNION By Rachel Frith

Autumn leaves, rustling together to the appointed place the old warriors come. Pilgrims, drifting across the land they fought to preserve. Where they meet is not so important any more. They meet and that's enough for now.

Greetings echo across a lobby. Hands reach out and arms draw buddies close. Embraces, that as young men they were too uncomfortable to give, too shy to accept so lovingly. But, deep within these Indian Summer days, they have reached a greater understanding of life and love.

The shells holding their souls are weaker now, but hearts and minds grow vigorous remembering. On a table someone spreads old photographs; a test of recollection. And friendly laughter echoes at shocks of hair gone gray, or white, or merely gone. The rugged, slender bodies lost forever. Yet, they no longer need to prove their strength.

Some are now sustained by one of "medicine's miracles"; and even in this fact they manage to find humor. The women, all those that waited, all those who love them, have watched the changes take place. Now, they observe and listen, and smile at each other, as glad to be together as the men.

Talk turns to war and planes and foreign lands. Stories are told and told again, reweaving the threadbare fabric of the past. Mending one more time the banner of their youth. They hear the vibrations, feel the shudder of metal as propellers whine and whirl, and planes come to life. These birds with fractured wings can see beyond the mist of clouds, and they are in the air again, chasing the wind, feeling the exhilaration of flight, close to the heavens, this wild and blue yonder of their anthem.

Dead comrades, hearing their names spoken, wanting to share in this time, if only in spirit, move silently among them. Their presence is felt and smiles appear beneath misty eyes. Each, in his own way, may wonder who will be absent another year, and the room grows quiet for a time. Suddenly an ember flames to life. Another memory burns. The talk may turn to other wars and other men, and of futility.

So, this is how it goes. The past is so much the present. In their ceremonies, the allegiances, the speeches and the prayers, one cannot help but hear the deep eternal love of country they will forever share. Finally, it is time to leave. Much too soon to set aside this little piece of yesterday, but the past cannot be held too long, for it is fragile. They say, "Farewell, see you next year, God willing". Each keeping a little of the others with him forever.

Las Vegas Review-Journal editorial cartoonist Jim Day's humorous comment on the failed recruiting efforts of America's Air Force was carried in hundreds of newspapers throughout the country recently. Mr. Day and the Las Vegas Review Journal gave the Hell's Angels Newsletter permission to publish the cartoon.

See The Editor Comments on page 20 for more on the nation's difficulties in recruiting and holding on to military personnel.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

To be elected president to such a prestigious organization is indeed an honor to any individual. I anticipate no major problems in 2001, the first real year of the centennial.

The dedicated staff of the 303rd Bomb Group Association will see to it that I don't stumble too badly. And Marjorie will keep me straightened out. Having just finished another great reunion with our friends presents a challenge for our upcoming reunion in the Washington-Baltimore area. We have left the planning for that reunion in good hands.

Nearly every year we have been trying to find lost comrades and have had limited success until the magic of our web site came into existence. Now with the able guidance of Ed Miller we will be doing a more directed approach to that goal. We have received the consent of quite a few volunteers who will take a list of our missing comrades. Those volunteers will determine the whereabouts of those men and whether they are alive or dead. They will report quarterly to the project director.

We will continue to emphasize the goals of the 303rd Bomb Group Association and to use the resources that are available to us. We wish to continue meeting with our friends on a yearly basis and to do so as long as we are able. Our membership is strong because of the efforts of our past presidents and their staffs. As our mentor, General Lew Lyle, said at a past reunion, "We will go wide open until we run out of gas."

Our newsletter is the best in the military and will continue to be so under the editorship of Eddie Deerfield with input from our Editor Emeritus Hal Susskind and others. While other bomb group associations are fading away we are still going strong. We were among the first bomb groups in England and one of the largest, which gives us an edge in longevity.

Our members are all equal in stature no matter what befell some that others escaped. Even those who swept the floors and cooked and washed the dishes were equally important to the success of our mission. We cannot overlook their contribution to the war effort even though they didn't face the enemy on a daily basis. We are now one big happy family with a common goal: remembrance and friendship.

I hope to see you all in my old stomping grounds (Baltimore area) next September for more fun times together.

Dick Johnson

8th AF Heritage Museum Hires 31-Year-Old President and CEO

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum has retained C. J. Roberts as its new President and Chief Executive Officer. Roberts, 31, left his position as the Chief Administrative Officer of the National D-Day Museum in New Orleans to assume his new responsibilities in Savannah on September 15.

Roberts, with the support of famed World War II historian Stephen Ambrose, coordinated the planning, building, inauguration and operation of the D-Day Museum which opened earlier this year on June 6. He had previously served as Director of the George C. Marshall Museum in Lexington, Virginia, another institution dedicated to the courage and sacrifice of military veterans.

Lt. Gen. E. G. Shuler, Jr. (USAF Ret), the Heritage Museum's Board of Trustees Chairman, said, "We are confident that C. J. Roberts will bring the experience and vision we need to continue our growth toward national prominence."

Roberts was graduated from Indiana University with a Master's Degree, and did museum work as a graduate student. His wife, Sarah, is Director of Education for the Louisiana Children's Museum.

THE 303RD BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION'S CD-ROM HISTORY PROJECT

Here it is — the largest single collection of information about all aspects of the 303rd Bomb Group's outstanding contributions, on the ground and in the air, in defeating Nazi tyranny.

\$50 to members \$60 overseas \$70 non-members

Send check to Ed Miller, CD-ROM Project Director, P. O. Box 219, Temple, OK 73568-0219.

A MOLESWORTH PICTORIAL

Cooking Out—359th's B-17 Mechanics Show The Way



THE MEN OF BARRACKS 3 in 359th Squadron aircraft maintenance use their engineering skills to make a barbecue pit and rotisserie after rounding up a pig and six chickens in September, 1944. Ready to enjoy the feast are (front row, l-to-r) Willard Bailey, Peter Varveris, Robert Cunningham, James McShane, Elmer Roesner, Robert Stone, John Trubela, Fred Batchelor, Jerry Cardenuto, Al Tomlinson, Ted Hutchinson, George Evans, James Harrington and Mike Jacobs. In the rear are Clyde Engholm, George Olson, James Clark, James Fisher, Gene Archer, Charles Stoner, Al Oltremari and James Nolan. (ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE FAMILY OF THE LATE JAMES D. NOLAN)



THE MANUAL ROTISSERIE was made by Peter Varveris (left) and Jerry Cardenuto from a bicycle foot pedal fastened to the end peg of a tent pole.



DUNKING THE CHICKENS in a tub of steaming water made it easier for volunteer KP's (l-to-r) Fisher, Tomlinson, Jacobs, Nolan, Stone, McShane, Roesner and Stoner to pluck off the feathers.

Molesworth Diary

"YOU COULD CUT THE GLOOM WITH A KNIFE"

Our crew arrived at Molesworth on 27 September 1944. The next day, we were introduced to our squadron and shown around the base. The orientation ended with a visit to the control tower to watch the planes return from the mission to Magdeburg, Germany. As we climbed the stairs to the tower, we were a confident, perhaps cocky, bunch. Thirty B-17's had left Molesworth. Eleven planes did not return, shot out of the sky by German fighters. The defeated Luftwaffe had come back from the dead to welcome us to combat. You could have cut the feeling of gloom on that tower with a knife. Visions of fighting our way in and out of Germany on every mission filled our heads.

In a well-timed move, Col. Lew Lyle spoke to the entire Group a day or so later. He was a survivor of two tours and was into his third. He told us that we could beat the fighters. Our confidence returned. As it turned out, we were rubber-necks for the rest of our combat tour. Not a single fighter attacked our aircraft, but we would have ready for them.

John Dewey Dorsett
358th Co-Pilot

TAKE-OFF FAILURE DECIMATES MCGARRY CREW

I was on John McGarry's crew. We flew most of our early missions on *Lady Luscious*. After we were shot up pretty bad on one of the missions, we were told *Lady Luscious* would be repaired and sent back to the U.S. to help sell war bonds. Our 19th mission on 9 April 1944 to Marienburg, Germany to attack a Focke-Wulf factory was a disaster almost before it began. We were taking off in *Spirit of Flak Wolf* when an engine on the left side failed and we hit a tree. We couldn't gain altitude and crashed in a field about three miles from Molesworth, killing Lt. McGarry, co-pilot Cotham, navigator Halligan, bombardier Foe, engineer Grace and radio man Stuffert. Mike Vargus, the other waist gunner, and I, along with ball turret gunner Ira Friedman and tail gunner Walter Kowalonek were taken to the 303rd Station Hospital with 1st, 2nd and 3rd degree burns. I spent the rest of the war convalescing in different hospitals. I was discharged from O'Rielly General Hospital in Springfield, Missouri in October, 1945.

Ervin Hilborn
427th Waist Gunner

TWIN BROTHERS ASSIGNED 303RD, 94TH GROUPS

My twin brother Bill was a pilot with the 331st Squadron of the 94th Bomb Group. We got to visit quite a bit. He was shot down over Kiel, Germany on 13 June 1943. He was a prisoner of war for 23 months in Stalag III. My worry and concern over him sort of overshadowed every thing else. I worked hard. I wanted to help all I could to end the war. I enlisted in the Air Force and was sworn into service in January, 1942. I just had a great love for airplanes. All of us in the class I graduated with in mechanics school at Chanute Field,

Illinois were recommended for pilot training. I didn't pass the physical. It didn't make me feel bad because I like mechanics so well. Then, I went into training as an engineer/gunner on B-17's. I got deathly sick at low altitudes with high temperatures in the top turret, so they cut me out of that and I went overseas with the ground crew. One of the B-17's my crew and I maintained at Molesworth was *Miss Liberty*, the first aircraft in the 8th Air Force to complete 89 missions without aborting.

Willis G. Meyer
360th Crew Chief

MISSION ALMOST RUINS DANCE PLANS

On 27 August 1944, we left England to bomb Berlin. Just beyond the German coast, there was an impassable cloud bank that prevented our going to the primary target. So we turned north to a secondary target near a little coastal town in Denmark named Esbjerg. Offshore is a large island which made a perfect harbor for the German navy, and it seemed like they were all there. The flak was thick enough to walk on. To make matters worse, we had to go around for a second bomb run. During all this we lost #2 and #4 engines. Worse yet, there was a dance on base that night, and it was a "must" for the single guys on the crew.

It was crucial to lighten the load. Somewhere in the North Sea are our flak vests, machine guns, etc. We were luckier than others and made it back to base a little late, but safe and in time for the dance.

Gordon B. Nute
359th Navigator

SABOTAGED SHELL SAVES B-17 CREW

On 15 August 1944, I experienced one of the scariest missions of my 35 mission tour. We were flying in the lead of the low squadron, and I was co-pilot on the Nafius crew. As we started on the bomb run I looked out the side window and saw what I thought were flak bursts to the right of the formation. At that moment, the tail gunner came on radio shouting that we were under attack from enemy fighters. What I thought were flak bursts were 20mm shells now exploding all around us. The right waist gunner called out that we were hit in the flap behind the number three engine. We began to lose power in the engine and finally had to feather it. We were able to keep up with the formation and drop our bombs.

The flight back to Molesworth was fine with no more problems. That night, as we were eating supper, there was a call over the loudspeaker for the Nafius crew to report to the lobby of the Officers Club. We were met there by our aircraft's crew chief who showed us a 20mm shell he had removed from the number three engine's supercharger. It was full of sand instead of gunpowder. We owe our lives to some

(Continued on Page 16)

(DIARY continued from Page 15)

slave laborer in Germany who had sabotaged the making of this shell, which had gone through the number three engine's main fuel tank.

Richard "Spider" Smith
360th Co-Pilot

GENERAL'S HAND REMOVED FROM CONTROLS

As I gained combat experience, I was able to lead various elements of the formations. On 21 September 1944, our target was the marshalling yard at Mainz, Germany. This time I was piloting the 41st Combat Wing lead ship with wing commander General Robert Travis as co-pilot. It was his 25th and final mission. Flak was moderate in the target area and after bombs away I started the turn to get clear of the enemy fire. General Travis was apprehensive about our posture. He put his hand on the auto-pilot control knob and abruptly increased the angle of turn. This maneuver scattered the rest of the formation all over the sky. I reached down, took his hand off the control knob, and returned the aircraft to the original 20-25 degree bank. The formation rejoined and tightened up for the return to Molesworth.

On the bright side, less than four months later, 12 January 1945 to be exact, I married 2d Lt. Mary Shore, an Army nurse based at the Station Hospital four miles from Molesworth. The ceremony was performed by the local magistrate in Thrapston and then by 303rd Chaplain Merritt Slawson at Westminster Chapel in London. We had five days of leave at the Savoy Hotel before returning to duty.

William E. Eisenhart
359th Pilot

REMEMBERING VEGESACK AND OSCHERSLEBEN

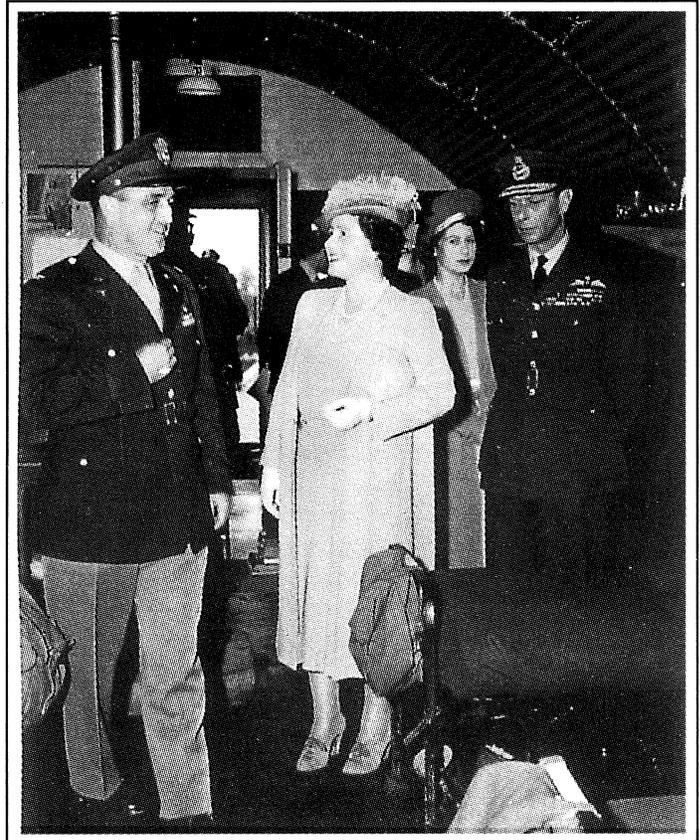
I remember particularly the mission to attack the submarine construction yard at Vegesack on 18 March 1943 because of the heroism of Lt. Jack Mathis, bombardier on *The Duchess*. He died at his bombsight after releasing the bombs and was awarded the Medal of Honor. I was nearby on the crew of *Knockout Dropper* on this flight. We lost one engine and our B-17 suffered quite a bit of damage but returned to base safely.

The mission to bomb the aircraft assembly plant at Oschersleben on 11 January 1944 was also very intense. On this mission I fractured my left hand after the force of a flak burst near our aircraft threw me from the radio compartment. We lost a lot of bombers on that day.

I flew on some of the best B-17's in the 303rd—*Thunderbird*, *Old Black Magic*, *Duchess*, *Knockout Dropper* and many others. The Flying Fortresses were often damaged by flak and enemy fighters but none prevented us from doing our duty and returning safely to base.

I really liked instructing new crew members on problems they would encounter in combat and solutions to possible emergencies. Many told me later how they had successfully done this or that on missions, and it made me proud. And I really appreciated the people of England who personally thanked me and other 303rd personnel for the way we risked our lives for them.

Lloyd A. Duncan
359th Radio Operator



A ROYAL VISIT TO MOLESWORTH IN 1944. Queen Elizabeth I, now England's Queen Mother, toured the 303rd's base in July, 1944. The guide for the royal party was the Group's CO, Colonel Kermit D. Stevens, shown above with Her Majesty The Queen, King George VI and Princess Elizabeth, currently the reigning monarch as Queen Elizabeth II.

303rd's 100th Birthday Greeting To Queen Mother Gets Royal Response

Among the thousands of congratulatory messages received by England's Queen Mother, who was 100 years old on August 4, 2000 was a letter from the 303rd Bomb Group Association, along with several photographs taken during the Royal Family's wartime visit to Molesworth in July, 1944. The letter was sent at the suggestion of Colonel Kermit D. Stevens, then commanding the 303rd, who is, himself, approaching the 100 year mark. It was written by Harry Gobrecht, the Association's historian.

The 303rd's birthday greeting said, in part, "Your visit program included a mock briefing that enacted details necessary for a normal bombing mission, inspection of squadron living areas and points of recreation, such as the Red Cross Club, where ice cream and tea were served. A formation of B-17 Flying Fortresses flew overhead in tribute to your Royal Family. Everyone in attendance later proudly claimed that your visit was one of the highlights of the time they spent at Molesworth."

Captain Sir Alastair Aird, the Queen Mother's private secretary, responded as follows:

"Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother has asked me to write and thank you for your letter. Her Majesty remembers well the courage and fortitude of the members of the United States Air Force during World War II and the sacrifices they made in the cause of freedom.

"The Queen Mother recollects visiting Air Force Station Molesworth in Cambridgeshire in 1944 and the photographs you enclosed brought back many memories.

"Queen Elizabeth was touched by your birthday greetings and sends you all her best wishes for peace and happiness in the years ahead."

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

303RD NEWSLETTER USEFUL TO US AIR FORCE ACADEMY

The article by Eddie Deerfield on Ken Kurtenbach (May, 2000) was a very useful addition to the growing record of Ken's performance as a leader in POW camps. The Hell's Angels Newsletter article included the citation for his Legion of Merit, which I did not have. The US Air Force Academy has a very important collection on prisoners of war, and this article will be added to it. Some day the Academy will have a museum and if it faithfully follows the plan which was developed under my direction some years ago, it will have a place to honor leadership by POW's who were airmen in all wars since the first World War.

Lt. Gen. A. P. Clark
USAF Ret.

MORE PRAISE FOR 303RD'S "MAN OF CONFIDENCE"

I was with the 359th Squadron and was shot down on November 5, 1943. It was my good fortune to be in the same camp under the leadership of Ken Kurtenbach. Good fortune is probably a poor choice of words, but he was a great man and a great leader. I feel privileged to have known him then and in his later years and am very pleased with the article in the newsletter. It was well deserved.

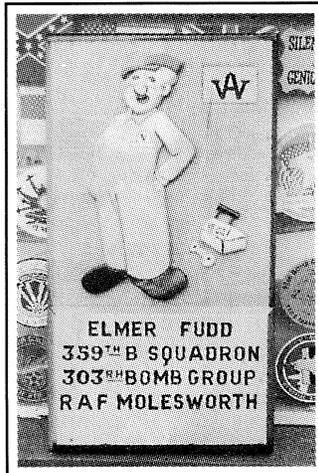
Edward J. Sexton
359th Radio Operator

BOMBING THE ENEMY WITH A DEAD FROZEN COW?

I have spent all morning thumbing through every page of *Might in Flight*, all past issues of the Hell's Angels Newsletter and all the "Experiences or Achievements" from our 1996 Questionnaires attempting to find the story of the inebriated crewmen who killed a neighbor's cow with a purloined jeep, placed the cow in the bomb bay of a B-17 they were scheduled to fly the next morning and then bombed Germany with the

dead frozen cow. I know I have that story somewhere, but simply cannot locate it. I'll keep looking for the source. Maybe one of our readers remembers.

Also, does anyone know the serial number of the 359th Squadron B-17 that had the Elmer Fudd nose art? The wood carving is by Bill Adams.



Harry Gobrecht
358th Pilot

CRONKITE DELIGHTED WITH 303RD REPRINT REQUEST

Thank you for your recent letter requesting permission to reprint Walter Cronkite's June 30, 1943 article, "Quinine" *Flew Back to a Sea Burial*, in the Hell's Angels Newsletter. Mr. Cronkite is delighted to have his article appear among the pages of your interesting and consistently well-done quarterly, for the benefit of the veterans you represent and serve.

Marlene Adler
Chief of Staff
Office of Walter Cronkite

SHE PRAYED FOR JOE VIEIRA'S SAFE RETURN

My first cousin, Joseph Vieira, was in the 303rd Bomb Group. Although I was around nine years old at the time, I well remember writing to Joseph and praying daily for his safe return. He had two brothers who were also serving in the Army. My sib-

lings (there were seven of us) and I were immersed in any news we could get about the "boys" and their well-being. We are all so truly blessed to have had so many brave young men who were willing to sacrifice so much, and stood so gallantly on so many fronts, to help rid the world of the terrible tyranny that was rampant during that period of history.

Jane Azevedo Avila
Tulare, CA

THE SEARCH CONTINUES FOR COMRADES-IN-ARMS

Looking for information on Richard Crigger, Francis Quig, Kenneth Boone, LeBurn Sprinkles, Neil Cunningham and Joseph Gordon—all fellow crew members in the 358th Squadron. We flew our 35th on 4/25/45. Any help greatly appreciated.

William J. Carter
381 Avenida de Las Sabinas
Green Valley, AZ 85814

I served as co-pilot on John Armfield's crew. We often flew *Sack Time* in the 360th Squadron. I flew 35 missions. I'm still looking for crew members I've lost touch with. Any information would help.

Dudley V. Marten
3769 Countryside Road
Sarasota, FL 34233

BRITISH WAR BRIDE'S FIRST LOOK AT AMERICAN GI'S

Roy Westphal and Howard Isaacson were together on a pass to Leeds in Yorkshire in August, 1943 when I met them. I was in the RAF and somebody at Molesworth had told them there were a lot of girls in Leeds so they came up. They had just arrived and were looking for a place to eat and so was I. It was about 4 in the afternoon and we were all in the same pub to see what they had. They were the first Americans I had seen and I did not know what they were. They told me they were Air Force and I asked why they were wearing

Army khakis. They explained they were U. S. Army Air Corps. Roy and I kept up our friendship and we were married in May, 1945. He was a parachute rigger assigned to the 427th Squadron. Roy died in 1991.

I read the Hell's Angels magazine from cover to cover, put it on the coffee table and read it again and again. Those were the days when we had a tough job to do and we did it with a smile and no complaints.

Kay Westphal
Cisco, TX

CORRECTIONS TO PHOTO ID'S IN AUGUST 2000 ISSUE

Could that "Jeff Cobucci" on page 10 really be Joe Cappucci, highly esteemed toggler on Bob Aker's crew?

Herb Shanker
359th Engineer

I'm the tall officer in the center of the back row of the photo on page 14 of the nine men in 360th Operations.

Fred T. Clark
360th Bombardier

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We stand corrected. How's this for getting it wrong — in an article in the Mount Vernon, Ohio, News, dated August 4, 2000 about a B-17, two of the crew members were identified as "waste gunners." Readers must have wondered what they were using for ammunition).

AN UNUSUAL DISCOVERY IN "MIGHT IN FLIGHT"

Looking through the book on our 303rd Bomb Group's history, I came across a picture of a V-Mail envelope on page 609. It brought back memories of the kind of V-Mail I used to send to my girl friend in the States. Imagine my surprise when I checked the return address with a magnifying glass and it was one of the letters I had sent! The girl friend finally became my wife.

Christ M. Christoff
358th Radio Mechanic

IN MEMORIAM

Parlan R. Allred	427 th	22 Dec 1999
Aldine Badger	427 th	Jun 1970
Leonard N. Barletta	360 th	Jul 1984
Naomi Bjorn		18 Aug 1999
(Wife of S/Sgt Edwin W. Bjorn-427 th)		
Howard J. Borhardt	360 th	25 Jul 1991
Charles E. Brahic	360 th	21 Aug 1991
Gerald R. Campbell	427 th	???? 1999
Harold H. Coesel	360 th	Apr 1982
William L. Dojutrek	360 th	Jul 1982
Stanley A. Drobot	360 th	18 Sep 1990
Henry T. Einkauf, Jr.	360 th	Jan 1981
Kenneth P. Fitzsimmons	359 th	25 May 2000
Walter Flesak	360 th	14 Mar 1994
Jacob R. Gornito	359 th	15 Nov 1995
Rodney K. Gow	360 th	Apr 1985
Robert J. Hannan	360 th	20 May 2000
George Kepics	360 th	12 Jul 2000
Harold Lehat	360 th	Jul 1972
Alex L. Lemanczyk	360 th	8 Apr 1999
David P. Lousteau	360 th	Jun 1985
Marcelin J. Maciejewski	360 th	Nov 1978
Harold R. Manning	1681 st	7 May 2000
H. Clifton Miller	359 th	17 Apr 1987
Steve A. Moyik	360 th	2 Sep 1996
Henry P. Nicklas	360 th	30 May 2000
Audley D. Nicols	359 th	27 Aug 1999
Robert Winslow Noll	360 th	23 Feb 2000
George T. Orvis, Jr	427 th	Aug 1987
Michael P. Osiecki	359 th	May 1973
Nicholas Pasquarelli	359 th	14 Feb 1990
Cornelius H. Pendl	360 th	31 Jul 1999
Winfred J. Plattsmier, Jr.	360 th	22 Jul 1996
Edward (nmi) Pupkus	360 th	30 Dec 1993
Wilfred H. Repsher	359 th	Apr 1983
Vincent Rybaltowski	359 th	Nov 1983
Donald E. Sanfacon	360 th	6 Apr 1989
Nicholas Santiwan	359 th	31 Jul 1991
Clarence M. Schools	360 th	Oct 1973
Walter E. Smith	427 th	14 Jun 2000
William H. Smith	360 th	22 May 2000
Jewett Spell	427 th	24 Jul 2000
Emory Staub	360 th	May 1984
Warner J. Steffey	360 th	27 Aug 1996
Leo A. Torre	358 th	26 Aug 1988
John (nmi) Trubela	359 th	3 Feb 1999
Alfred D. Wilson	427 th	28 Jun 2000
Anthony J. Wiezbenski	359 th	14 Feb 1991
Clarence L. Witkas	360 th	24 Nov 1990
Adolph J. Woltsieffer	359 th	18 Jun 1990
Marvin B. Wolverton	360 th	8 Oct 1998
Zygmunt Wroblewski	359 th	30 Mar 1993
Frederick W. Yerke	359 th	6 Dec 1998
Louis (nmi) Zaitz	360 th	31 May 1999
Martin J. Zuzock	360 th	9 Jun 1989

SUPER LIFE MEMBERS

(N) – New Super Life Members (R) – Repeaters
 Aloysius R. "Al" Pero (N) 427th

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Nelson J. Catlin	360 th
William F. Cziok	359 th
Louis R. De Mailo	359 th

Jerome L. Drewry	Family Member
Damon C. Elder	358 th
William E. Hanna	444 th Air Depot
Janice Haymond MD	Family Member
William C. Hutschenreuter	427 th
Aaron Shane Lee	Family Member
Val P. Lowers	360 th
Ian D. MacDonald MD	Family Member
Marion L. Niemants	Hdq
Morton Pinkus	427 th
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 Allen B. Syler (358th), 712 South 22, Arkadelphia, AR 71923-5622 (870) 246-4274 (Clarice)
 Charles A. Vardy (359th), HCR 2, Box 2495, Van Buren, MO 63965-9506 (573) 945-2246 (Mable)
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Grace V. Meddaugh	Widow	Donation to 303 rd BGA
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J. B. "Lewis" Halliburton (358th), 2327 N. Bent Grass Lane, Meridian, ID 83642-3995 (208) 888-5688 (Mary)
Harry F. Jenkins (359th), 6378 Barbara Street, Jupiter, FL 33458-6682 (561) 741-2024 (Nancy)
Arthur E. Johnson (360th), 1304 N. Lyle Avenue, Elgin, IL 60123-1218
Albert E. Martel, Jr. (427th), 26 Clarke Street, Lincoln, ME 04457-1134 (207) 794-8484
Walter H. McDonald (358th), 4418 McKendree Drive, Godfrey, IL 62035-4808 (Dorothea)
Nestok, Blake R. MD, 8210 Wooster Pike, Apt F, Mariemont, OH 45227-4022
Bryon Stoner, 2635 South 34th Street, Kansas City, KS 66106-4259 (Erin)
Blaine E. Thomas (427th), 3026 54th Street, #409, Lubbock, TX 79413-4241 (806) 795-0542 (Lucille)
James B. Taylor (358), 8 Deep Well Lane, Los Altos, CA 94022-2152 (650) 948-6596 (Evelyn)
John J. Van Geyten (360) 1779 Ross Road, #47, Lyons, NY 14489-9151 (315) 946-1426 (Shirley)
Everett E. Van Horn (359th), 4805 Alexandria Ave, Apt 11, Tampa, FL 33611-2017 (Eleanor)

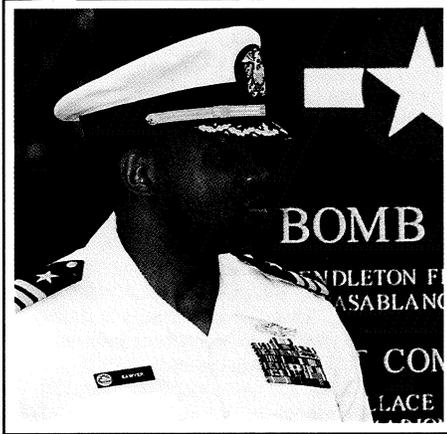
NEW FAMILY MEMBERS

M. Jane Avila, 3761 W. Prosperity, Tulare, CA 93274-9676 (559) 686-9656 (Joseph) (Cousin of Joseph Vieira)
James Bates, 1022 St Paul Street, Denver, CO 80206-3346 (303) 377-6445 (Son of Robert Bates-359th)
Chester G. Bennett, 11170 Hart Lane N.E., Bainbridge Island, WA 98110-3502 (206) 842-3084 (Nancy) (Brother of S/Sgt Kenneth A. Bennett-KIA 16 Feb 1945)
Samuel B. Blanchard, Jr., 10903 Nassau Avenue, Sunland, CA 91040-2136 (818) 353-1852 (Kristin) (Son of 2/Lt Samuel B. Blanchard-359th)
Jonathan Brinnier, 56 Plumb Brook Road, Woodbury, CT 06798-2117 (203) 266-4760 (Nephew of A. Fred Meddaugh Jr)
Katherine Brinnier, 285 Dughill Road, Hurley, NY 12443-6106 (845) 338-1791 (Sister of Allerton Fred Meddaugh, Jr.)
David W. Bruce, 1088 Redfield Terrace, Dunwood, GA 30338-3750 (770) 394-9409 Jennifer (Stepson of William F. Dohm)
Bryan J. Davis, 209 Tulane Drive, SE, Albuquerque, NM

87106-1413 (505) 256-5164 (Vicki)(GFA: Joseph E Stevens)
Thomas Domery Sr, 11 Elm St, Selkirk, NY 12158-2103 (518) 767-9109 (Eileen) (Eileen's Bro: T. E. Mulligan-359th)
Jerome L. Drewry, 6209 Woodacres, Hitchcock, TX 77563-1513 (409) 986-5570 (Son of James A. Drewry - 427th)
Mildred N. Gormto, 3409 Pickett Road, Durham, NC 27705-5324 (919) 489-8765 (Widow of T/Sgt Jacob R. Gormto-359th)
Janice Haymond, MD, 4210 S. W. 58th Avenue, Portland, OR 97221 (Cousin of Jack P. Rencher)
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Aaron Shane Lee, 828 Royal, #196, New Orleans, LA 70116-3115 (504) 558-0683 (Joanne) (Grandson of James E. Jeter)
Robert "Bob" Lynam, 113 Pinehurst Cove, Jacksonville, Ar 72076-3350 (501) 982-5720 (Son of O B Lynam - 360th)
Ian D. MacDonald, MD, 4210 S. W. 58th Avenue, Portland, OR 97221 (Cousin of Jack P. Rencher)
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Bill L. Owen, 3814 S. Donnybrook, Tyler, TX 75701-9622 (903) 561-7329 (Jean)(Bro of Burl M. Owen-KIA 25 Jun 43)
Michele Brabant Roberts, 1481 Lake Lotela Drive, Avon Park, FL 33825-9702 (863) 452-0008 (Richard)(Dau of 1/Lt Patrick H. Brabant-359th)
Mark Romstad, 249 N. Force Road, Attica, MI 48412-9741 (810) 667-3833 (Ann Marie) (Son of Alfred N. Romstad-360th)
William C. Thomas, 3804 70th Street, Lubbock, TX 79413-6023 (806) 771-0532 (Son of Blaine E. Thomas-427th)
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Kyle Young, 3652 193rd Court, Lansing, IL 60438-4212 (708) 474-9221 (Kathy)(Neph of Lt. Carl L. Ulrich-KIA)

NEW FRIENDS OF THE 303RD

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Charles A. Golden, PSC 46, Box 984, APO AE 09469 (Lt/Cmdr in Joint Analysis Center, Molesworth, England)
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Doug Hayworth, Rt 3, Box 67H, Anadarko, OK 73005-9784 (405) 247-7213 (Terri)(Major in Oklahoma Nat'l Guard)
Brenda E. Keegan, 6888 Golfcrest Drive, San Diego, CA 92119-24351 (619) 469-4677
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John L. Mozley, 842 N. Taylor Avenue, Kirkwood, MO 63122-2913 (Friend of T. R. "Buddy" Beiser-427th)
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Paul Robert Voller-Beard, Flat 11 Oakwood Amberley Close, Haywards Heath, W. Sussex, UK RH16 4BZ 01444 473727



MEMORIAL TO THE 303RD AT MOLESWORTH SERVES AS BACKGROUND FOR FIRST REENLISTMENT CEREMONY — Petty Officer Gary Hopkins, Sgt Charles Reaves and his wife, Sgt Nachele Reaves, take the vows to continue their military service. PO 1 Hopkins joined the Navy in 1982, and works in the Joint Analysis Center Watch. The Reaves first enlisted in the Army in 1990. He's in the JAC Support Element while she's in Operations. The oath was administered by Navy Lieutenant Commander Darren Sawyer, winner of the 1999 Carlton M. Smith Award for making the most significant contribution to the accomplishment of the JAC's mission. "Smitty," who served the 303rd at Molesworth as an Intelligence Officer, passed away in 1998.

IN ANOTHER CEREMONY WITH 303RD OVERTONES, Major Thomas Hardin (USAF Ret) reenlisted his son Master Sergeant Scott Hardin in the 52nd Fighter Wing at Spangdahlem Air Base in Germany. It was the second time that the father performed the honors in his son's career. Tom flew 35 missions as pilot in the 360th Squadron.



THE EDITOR COMMENTS....

The four US military service people seen above who re-upped for another tour of duty were exceptions to today's rule. Last year, the armed services fell 7,000 short of its recruitment goal despite offering lavish sign-up bonuses. For the last two years, 35% of those it did recruit failed to complete their initial enlistment, an historic high. To get some answers, the Army recently surveyed 760 officers enrolled in the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. Lack of confidence in the senior military leadership and a dislike for serving in peacekeeping operations were often cited. An instructor at the college commented "Because of gender integration and homosexuals in the military, there is a feeling that being a soldier is less macho, less soldierly."

Don Feder, in an article in the Boston Herald, called this perception correct. He wrote, "West Point, once the temple of the warrior ethic, now looks more like a sensitivity training session. A lecture by a World War II combat veteran was canceled because some cadets were offended by the veteran's earlier objections to women in combat." Feder maintained that the armed services once countered the attractions of economic incentives in the private sector by offering the psychic rewards of life in the military. "Foremost among these," wrote Feder, "was the feeling that soldiers were doing something tough and dangerous of which few men were capable. Soldiers took pride in surviving a harrowing boot-camp experience. Career men cherished tour-of-duty ribbons and field decorations. Male bonding and unit cohesion were more than sociologic jargon. Feminists, sensitivity trainers, those who mistake the military for an equal opportunity employer and generals who'll tell politicians anything to earn their next star—all are tugging on the military's life supports. National security will be the ultimate casualty."

Would most World War II veterans agree? I think so.

EDDIE DEERFIELD

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