

# Hell's Angels Newsletter

303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

February, 2003

*Hell's Angels Newsletter 303rd B.G.  
Eddie Deerfield-Editor: 30 Oct '02*

*Dear Eddie:*

*It's been 5 years since we've found the mistake on the 303rd's plaque at the museum in Savannah, Ga.*

*I was in the 1199th M.P.'s for 2 years more or less and I want the 1199th to get credit and be remembered instead of the 1119th. I'm not perfect and I know everybody makes mistakes but that plaque will be there after I'm dead and gone and I want the 1199th to be remembered with the other ground support troops.*

*Can anything be done to get this changed? Thanking you for your efforts.*

*Sincerely Yours*

*Art Akers P.F.C.*

*303rd Bomb Group 1199 M.P. Co.*

*The 303rd Bombardment Group (H)  
"Hell's Angels" Combat Team  
at Molesworth, England*

*Air Combat Units*

41ST COMBAT WING (H) HEADQUARTERS  
303RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) HEADQUARTERS  
358TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)  
359TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)  
360TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)  
427TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)

*Supported by Ground Units*

3RD STATION COMPLEMENT SQUADRON  
8TH AF DENTAL UNIT  
18TH WEATHER SQUADRON  
202ND FINANCE SECTION  
249TH MEDICAL DISPENSARY  
303RD STATION HOSPITAL  
328TH SERVICE SQUADRON WHICH BECAME THE  
444TH SUB DEPOT  
863RD CHEMICAL COMPANY  
1114TH QUARTERMASTER COMPANY  
1119TH MILITARY POLICE COMPANY  
1681ST ORDNANCE S & M COMPANY  
2097TH ENGINEERS FIRE FIGHTING PLATOON  
425TH AIR SERVICE GROUP CONSISTING OF  
HEADQUARTERS & BASE SERVICE SQUADRON  
575TH AIR MATERIAL SQUADRON  
851ST AIR ENGINEERING SQUADRON

A "LETTER TO THE EDITOR" BY ART AKERS APPEALS FOR A CORRECTION on the bronze plaque fastened to the back of the 303rd Bomb Group's marble monument at The Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum. He was a member of the 1199th Military Police Company at Molesworth (see photo on page 16). The plaque shows the 303rd Bomb Group unit as the 1119th.

## 303RD MP VET'S LETTER RIGHTS A WRONG ON GROUP'S MONUMENT

Arthur Akers served at Molesworth with the 303rd Bomb Group as a PFC in the 1199th Military Police Company. He was understandably distressed when he discovered that a bronze plaque on the Group's monument at the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum in Georgia listed his unit as the 1119th Military Police Company. He appealed to the Hell's Angels Newsletter for help in correcting the mistake.

This was Akers' second letter to the newsletter. His first was published on the Open Forum page of the August 1999 issue. That letter prompted the 303rd Bomb

Group Association's Board of Directors to initiate action in 1999 to correct the listing.

Harry Gobrecht, the Association's historian and liaison with the Heritage Museum, confirmed at that time that the 303rd Board's review committee had not recognized the mistake before the list was furnished by him to the Depue Monument Company of Savannah, Georgia.

Gobrecht cautioned the Board, however, that removing the plaque from the memorial to return it to the foundry was risky and could damage the marble. He recommended "that we not tamper with the present Combat

Team plaque and let it remain as now written and installed" unless Depue agreed to be responsible for any damages. Since the company was not responsible for the error, such an agreement with Jim Fogarty of Depue did not materialize.

Gobrecht said he "disassociated" himself from the project. He later explained, "I agree that the 1199th MP Company error is unfortunate but believe that Art Akers would understand if we do nothing if making the change would involve a real risk in damaging the marble monument."

(Continued on page 16)

### IN THIS ISSUE

Inside look at secret glide bomb project—pages 3, 4.

Preparing for reunion in Portland, OR—page 5.

303rd loses three B-17's on 1943 mission to Bremen—pages 6, 7.

World War II memorial in Washington, DC to open in 2004—page 9.

HAN Books presentation photos—pages 10, 11, 20.



### 303<sup>RD</sup> BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

## Hell's Angels Newsletter

Editor--Eddie Deerfield

VOL XXVI, No. 1 3552 Landmark Trail, Palm Harbor, FL 34684 February, 2003

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 303<sup>rd</sup> 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*, published quarterly, will only be sent to members whose dues payments are current. 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.

Copyright©2003 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

### ELECTED OFFICERS — EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### President

Walter J. Ferrari (Ruth)  
5361 Belle Mead Drive  
Aiken, SC 29803

TEL: (803) 648-5598 EM: ferrariw@bellsouth.net

#### Vice President - Administration

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

#### Vice President - Reunions

Walter J. Mayer  
4109 Sunny Creek Circle  
Spokane, WA 99224  
TEL: (509) 456-0209

#### Editor, Hell's Angels Newsletter

Eddie Deerfield (Mary Lee)  
3552 Landmark Trail  
Palm Harbor, FL 34684-5016  
TEL: (727) 787-0332  
EM: ED303fsra@aol.com

#### Secretary

Richard Bowler, Jr. (Catherine)  
P. O. Box 3126  
Burlington, VT 05401-3126  
TEL: (802) 863-2784  
EM: dickbowler@aol.com

#### Treasurer

William J. Roche (Doris)  
1428 Gleneagles Drive  
Venice, FL 34292-4306  
TEL: (941) 485-5073  
EM: dbroche2@aol.com

#### Past Presidents Chairman

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

### ELECTED TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### 358th Bomb Sqd. Representative

Van R. White (Lore)  
3156 La Ronda Place NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87110-2631  
TEL: (505) 881-8111

#### 359th Bomb Sqd. Representative

Harold A. Susskind (Rae)  
2602 Deerfoot Trail  
Austin, TX 78704-2716  
TEL: (512) 441-6475  
EM: susskind@webtv.net

#### 358th Bomb Sqd. Alternate

Kenneth Clarke (Barbara)  
3504 Plumb Street  
Houston, TX 77005-2928  
TEL: (713) 668-7404

#### 359th Bomb Sqd. Alternate

Roger K. Bates (Barbara)  
961 Amstrutz Drive  
San Jose, CA 95129-2219  
TEL: (408) 252-7226

### ELECTED TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS (Continued)

#### 360th Bomb Sqd. Representative

Edgar C. Miller (Jill)  
44 N. Country Club Drive  
Crystal River, FL 34429  
TEL: (352) 563-1172  
EM: emille7@tampabay.rr.com

#### 427th Bomb Sqd. Representative

Edward W. Gardner, Jr (Sue)  
P O Box 246  
Interlochen, MI 49643-0246  
TEL: (231) 276-7126  
EM: EWG303nav@aol.com

#### HQ, 444th Air Depot Representative

Herny G. Johansen  
8989 E. Escalante Rd., #78  
Tucson, AZ 85730-2830  
TEL: (520) 886-6093

#### Widow Member's Representative

Joanna M. Tressler  
109 Mountain Road  
Northumberland, PA 17857-9766  
TEL: (570) 473-3816

#### 360th Bomb Sqd. Alternate

John A. Coyne (Blanche)  
61 Pillon Road  
Milton, MA 02186-4329  
TEL: (617) 698-3173

#### 427th Bomb Sqd. Alternate

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

#### HQ, 444th Air Depot Alternate

Maurice J. Paulk (Opel)  
205 West 12th Street  
Wood River, NE 68883-9164  
TEL: (308) 583-2583

#### Family & Associate Member Rep

Lance Stoner  
11422 W. 70th Street  
Shawnee, KS 66203-4026  
TEL: (913) 269-1950

### APPOINTED COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

#### Membership & Roster

Dennis S. Smith (Marianne)  
142 Vista Drive  
Sonoma, CA 95476-3607  
TEL: Residence (707) 938-0634  
EM: Da1smith@pacbell.net

#### PX Administrator

Charles R. Sykes (Vicki)  
P. O. Box 33474  
Phoenix, AZ 85067-3474  
TEL: (602) 993-8015  
EM: PX303BG@aol.com

#### Historian, 8thAFHS & 8thAF Museum Liaison

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

#### Ways & Means, Lost Comrades

Edgar C. Miller  
(See listing as 360th representative)

#### Audit Committee

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

#### RAF Molesworth Representatives

Timothy Quilter, a US Navy reservist at the Joint Analysis Center, and Bruce Henninger, Head of Protocol, have offered to assist. Persons planning to visit the base, however, should first contact UK Representative Robin Beeby and advise him of travel plans. Mr Beeby will make the appropriate contacts and coordinate a visit to RAF Molesworth.

#### 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. R. L. Johnson (Mary), 2208 W. Granite St., Siloam Springs, AR 72761

#### CHAPLAIN -- CATHOLIC

Bishop Rene H. Gracida, P. O. Box 217, Tynan, TX 78391-0217

#### Group Advisor

Lewis E. "Lew" Lyle (Betty)  
205 St. Charles Circle  
Hot Springs, AR 71901  
TEL: (501) 321-1956

#### By-Laws Committee

William S. McLeod, Jr. (Alice)  
1676 West Mesa  
Fresno, CA 93711-1944  
TEL: (559) 439-8922  
EM: B17bomberbill@aol.com

#### Director of Internet Operations

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

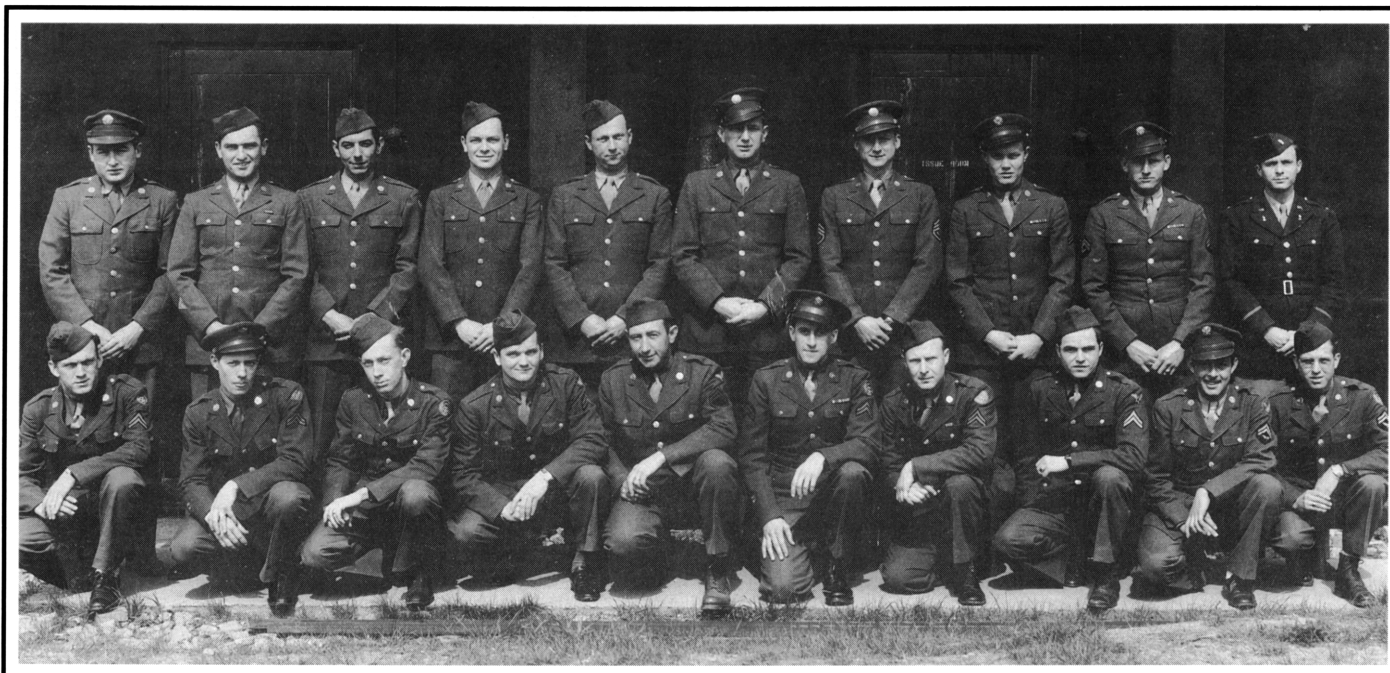
#### World War II Awards

William H. Cox  
441 Sandstone Drive  
Vacaville, CA 95688  
TEL: (707) 448-0571  
EM: Coxbije@aol.com

#### United Kingdom Representatives

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





**AMONG THE LEAST KNOWN OF 303RD BOMB GROUP ELEMENTS AT MOLESWORTH** was the Special Weapons Section, 19 men and their commanding officer, charged with conducting the top-secret "Grapefruit" missions—the launching of glide bombs from B-17's to German targets. The author, Bob Brassil, is standing at the extreme left. Lt. Joseph Rose is on the extreme right. Milton Bigley is next to Lt. Rose.

# TOP SECRET GLIDE BOMB PROJECT ONE FRUSTRATION AFTER ANOTHER

## *21 Months of Preparation Yields One Snafu Mission*

By Robert D. Brassil

A highly classified secret glide bomb, developed in 1942 at the Army Air Force Proving Ground at Eglin Air Base in Florida, was selected as a top priority weapon to combat the devastating effect that German U-boat attacks were having on Allied merchant ships crossing the North Atlantic Ocean. At Eglin, I was among the first men assigned to the project, code-named "Grapefruit," and then continued in this specialty with the 303rd Bomb Group.

Most of the German submarines that caused the enormous Allied shipping losses operated in "wolf packs" out of heavily fortified ten-to-twelve feet thick steel reinforced concrete pens at French coastal cities such as St. Nazaire. Initial RAF and later Eighth Air Force bombing attempts on these important targets in the late months of 1942 met with stiff German resistance. There was heavily concentrated and accurate fire from anti-aircraft gun emplacements and fierce combat pursuit by top Luftwaffe fighter squadrons. Eighth Air Force bomber losses were heavy.

The use of a 2,000-lb glide bomb was a possible way to defeat these concentrated coastal defenses. The assembled, gyro-controlled bomb had a fixed gliding angle of approximately 5 to 1, allowing it to travel a longitudinal distance of one mile for every thousand feet of pre-release altitude. The idea was to use B-17 bombers with external bomb racks, each carrying two one-

ton glide bombs. The B-17's would fly to a point over the Atlantic some 20 to 25 miles from the French coast and dive toward the target, releasing the winged bombs to glide into selected submarines pens. Delayed fuses would provide a sideways "bowling ball" type impact to cause additional damage by the tumbling one-ton bombs prior to explosion.

I was one of fifty men who, after completing Army Air Force AM and Instrument Specialist schools in late 1942, was hastily shipped to Eglin Air Field to learn how to assemble glide bomb units and test their battery energized flight control gyro-mechanisms. After a few weeks of training, we traveled by train to Halifax, Nova Scotia, to join Canadian-trained RAF personnel from Poland and British Commonwealth nations on a midwinter sailing to Liverpool, England on the British troopship *Louis Pasteur*.

Our group of 50 was split-up and attached to separate B-17 groups of the 1st Bomb Division to await arrival of a priority shipment of the glide bomb equipment. Milton Bigley and I were among the 19 assigned to the 303rd BG.

When the shipment of the glide bomb equipment failed to arrive as scheduled, Bigley and I volunteered for 359th aircraft line assignments and functioned as mechanics until October 1943, when large wooden crates of glide bomb equipment were finally delivered to Molesworth. They were piled on the tarmac behind the 359th Squadron Headquarters building.

With the arrival of the glide bomb equipment, the nineteen of us at Molesworth were assigned to a "Special Weapons Section" under the direction of Lt. Joseph Rose of the 1681st Ordnance S & M Company. Our immediate job was an expedited effort to unload, assemble and prepare the glide bombs.

(Continued on Page 4)

## GLIDE BOMB from 3

Each assembled glide bomb had to be hoisted and delicately balanced prior to a final tightening of the two steel bands that attached the glider wing section to the 2,000 pound explosive. About 50 glide bombs were assembled, placed on steel cradles, and stored in an outdoor area of the bomb dump.

The wooden glider section had a fixed wing and a tail assembly containing adjustable twin rudders. A metal "black box" straddled the 4 by 4 twin booms and was located directly behind the wing. A rod connection from the "black box" to the twin rudders allowed gyro controlled servomotors to adjust the flight direction of the released glide bomb. The box also contained a unique, compact sealed 12-volt battery that was specifically developed to supply in-flight electrical current for the gyro and servomotors.

Prior to release of the glide bomb, a spring-loaded switch assembly allowed a retractable rod to be inserted to keep the gyro in a caged, locked or rigid position and the electrical power from the battery switched off. When loaded under the wing of a B17, a retractable electric extension cord supplied B-17 electric current to the "black box" by switching the external bomb rack release switch into a "select" position.

It was critical for the caged gyro to be "revved up" and properly spinning for some period of time before the pilot starting his bomb run dive at the target. His B-17 would have to reach the required glide bomb release speed of 190 MPH.

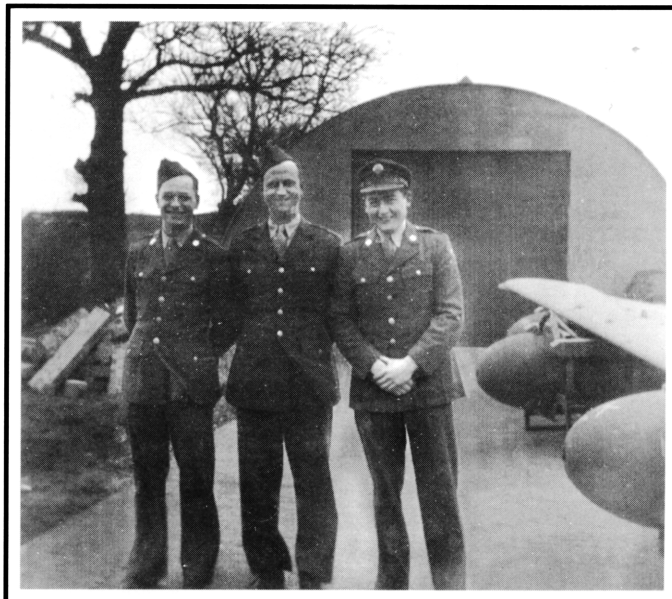
A "salvo" position of the external bomb rack switch would release the glide bomb and simultaneously uncage the spinning gyro and transfer B-17 electrical power to the 12-volt battery. If the assembled glide bomb unit was properly released, the gyro controlled electric servo motors would adjust the twin rudders to return and maintain the "grapefruit" in the selected pre-release flight direction.

In mid October 1943, directly after the 78th mission of the 303rd BG on its second bombing of Schweinfurt, Germany, a number of new flight crews called the "Iseman Group" arrived in England. They had had extensive training in the use of glide bombs on practice targets off the Florida coast. These crews flew 8th Air Force replacement B-17's from the States to three bases and started their regular combat assignments. The 303rd, the 379th and the 384th were the only 8th Air Force Bomb Groups to receive glide bomb equipment and participate in the use of this type of weapon.

In late October and early November, after the glide bombs had been assembled and readied for use, a few practice missions with a limited number of glide bomb releases were flown from Molesworth to North Sea practice bomb sites for the further training of other 303rd bombardiers. As time passed, the Special Weapons Section patiently waited for the "grapefruit" glide bombs to be used against their primary targets, French coastal German submarine pens.

When nothing happened by the middle of January 1944, some of us who had been originally attached to the 303rd, decided to end the idleness and boredom of every day reporting to the bomb dump by returning to squadron ground support duties. Bigley was assigned to the Knockout Dropper and remained as one of its ground crew members through its 75th retirement mission while I worked on a number of different 359th planes including Black Diamond Express, Thunderbird and Eight Ball Mark II.

Months continued to pass with no word of plans for a possible use of the assembled "grapefruit" weapons. By early 1944 the Germans had transferred their main U-boat operational bases to Norway or back to Germany as Allied air power continued to gain superiority in the skies over the coastal areas of France. The relocation of German submarine bases nullified the



**GLIDE BOMBS STORED AT MOLESWORTH—Three members of the Special Weapons Section, (l-to-r) Jim Fisher, Clarence Balder and Bob Brassil, stand next to the unique weapons. Visible are bomb noses and wings.**

original plans for glide bomb usage on French Atlantic coastal targets and left the assembled glide bombs to continue to sit on cradles at the 303rd bomb dump site. A change from the original glide bomb targets was indicated by the issuance of a March 14, 1944 "Grapefruit" mission field order, but it was canceled before the identity of the target was known.

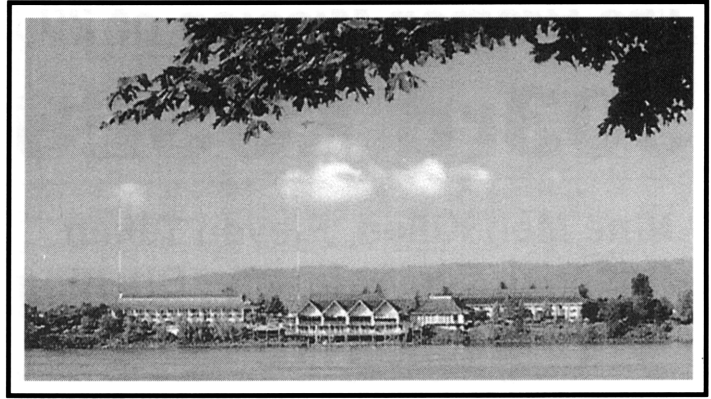
In late April 1944 all Molesworth members of the Special Weapons Section were suddenly reassembled for the arming and pre-flight testing of the gyro controlled mechanisms for a mission to the mainland German city of Cologne. That mission on April 26, 1944 was recalled without glide bomb release because of inclement weather over the target area.

A second glide bomb mission to Cologne was scheduled and flown on May 28, 1944, less than ten days before the Allied D-Day invasion. Fifty-eight planes from the 303rd, 379th and 384th were scheduled to fly the "grapefruit" mission. Nineteen of those planes were supplied by the 303rd Bomb Group. It was the Group's 162nd combat participation. In other words, 84 combat missions were flown from Molesworth after the arrival of the Iseman Group. Most of the original Iseman Group Florida-trained bomber crews had, by this time, completed their mission quotas or had been lost in combat.

Little, if any, prior training was provided for the majority of the May 28, 1944 combat mission crews, nor were meaningful attempts made to improve critical release conditions for the glide bomb units, resulting in a higher than expected "spinout" or drop out performance. Although over 1,300 8th Air Force aircraft flew missions to the Cologne/Rhine River area on that day, the selection of the city of Cologne as a glide bomb target for the small task force of 58 B-17's was never explained.

Approximately 35 "grapefruit" or 32% of the total 109-bomb load units released at 20,000 feet were reported to have traveled about 20 miles and to have hit within the Cologne city limits. The release of glide bombs, some far distance from the city, and their unexpected late arrival at the Cologne target area, must have had a devastating effect on German civilian morale. I have often wondered if the long delayed and one-time use of the glide bomb weapon on a German city was at least some retaliation for the destructive German "Buzz Bomb" attacks on England that began in December of 1943 and grew to over 8,000 launches before finally being stopped by the Allied invasion forces in June and July of 1944.





**THE UNIQUE VAULTED ENTRANCE TO THE DOUBLETREE HOTEL AND THE VIEW FROM ACROSS THE COLUMBIA RIVER IN PORTLAND.**

Every guest's stay begins with a welcoming chocolate chip cookie, a symbol of the hotel chain's service familiar to those who have lodged at other Doubletree locations.

## PORTLAND ON OREGON'S COLUMBIA RIVER SITE OF NEXT 303RD BOMB GROUP REUNION

**By Walter J. Mayer  
Vice President for Reunions**

Start planning now to attend the reunion in Portland, Oregon, August 7th to 11th, 2003!

We are excited to report that the Doubletree Hotel, with its outstanding facilities on the Columbia River, will be host to our group. Situated west of I-5, at the south end of the Interstate bridge, the Doubletree Hotel puts you close to everything from downtown Portland to the Oregon coast.

Perched on the scenic Columbia River, 352 spacious guest rooms, including eight suites, deliver all the amenities of a first class hotel. There's a large ballroom and ample meeting rooms to fit our reunion schedule, as well as a swimming pool, hot tub and boardwalk deck overlooking the river and the surrounding mountains.

The hotel will provide complimentary transportation to shuttle guests to and from the Portland International Airport.

There are several restaurants on the hotel premises—a bar and grill, sports bar and coffee garden. In the area near the hotel, there are many fast food places and better restaurants.

Also Jantzen Beach Super Center, featuring 65 retail and specialty shops and restaurants, including a 1921 era carousel in the food court. Bring the grandchildren!

Portland is known for its progressive, friendly ways, and the city offers many attractions. Washington Park,

with its 130 acres, is the site of many of the city's favorite attractions—the Oregon Zoo, the Japanese Gardens, the World Forestry Center, the Children's Museum, the Hoyt Arboretum, the Vietnam Memorial and the International Rose Test Garden.

The rose garden is world renowned and features more than 9,000 plants on a spectacular four-and one-half acre terraced hillside. In August, the roses will be in full bloom, which explains why Portland is known as "The City of Roses."

Getting around the city is relatively easy. The Tri-Met bus system has an extensive system of lines covering the city and suburbs. There's also a light rail system and new street car facilities.

Cruises into the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area or along the Willamette River are always popular for visitors.

There's also a mile and a half walking or cycling trail offering a great view of the city skyline.

The 303rd Bomb Group Association will have its own hospitality suite where friends can gather and share memories, and the popular PX will be open for business daily.

There are numerous small sitting areas in and around the hotel's lobby area for lounging and social visiting.

We look forward to gathering with the 303rd family in August, 2003, in Portland, Oregon. Hope to see you there!

## The Bremen Mission of 20 December 1943

# 303rd LOSES THREE B-17's

### Nine Men Killed, Eleven Taken Prisoner, Ten Safe After Ditching

By Nicholas Schmidt

This is my story of one of those lost B-17's—*Santa Anna*—and our 427th Squadron crew with pilot Alexander Alex. Another 303rd crew, led by pilot F. Leve, also went down near the target—Bremen, Germany. The third B-17 ditched in the North Sea and the crew was rescued.

My last name when I served at Molesworth was Goldschmidt. My father changed the family name to Schmidt legally when he learned I was going to England, but I didn't know this until I returned home in 1945.

In the wee small hours of the morning of December 20, 1943, the light suddenly flashed on in our room and the clerk woke us with, "You have a mission, sirs."

At the briefing we gazed anxiously at the huge detailed map of Europe that covered almost the whole front wall. "It's practically the same old run, men," said the Intelligence Officer as he fastened an overlay on the map. "Bremen is the target for today; your route is that shown on the overlay. You will join the Wing at and depart from the coast flasher."

After a separate briefing for navigators, I rushed down to the equipment room to pick up my parachute and winter flying gear. The rest of the crew was, as always, already at the plane. I was more than disgusted when, after pulling on the flying boots and strapping on my Mae West, I discovered that Al Farrah, the bombardier, had taken my parachute harness.

At the plane, Al was unconcernedly inspecting his guns with the parachute harness hanging loosely from his shoulders. He hadn't even checked it for size. He even seemed annoyed when I told him about it. I exchanged with him and then asked where the "chute" was. "It's up in the nose," he answered. I made my way up to the nose and found the parachute. To my dismay, it was

of a type that couldn't even be attached to my harness.

It was nearly time to start engines. I had never needed a parachute in all my flying before and I was almost tempted to let it go that morning. However, acting on impulse, I dropped down out of the plane, flagged a passing truck and told the driver to race like hell back to my equipment room.

I grabbed a properly rigged chute and, after another roaring ride in a 2-1/2 ton truck, I was back in the plane at my position in the nose just a few seconds before engine time.

We joined the Wing over an undercast, set out our course and began climbing to the assigned altitude. Then through a small rift in the clouds I could see the English coast. After marking the time I called: "Navigator to crew, we are leaving the English coast. Put on your flak suits in 20 minutes."

Underneath us, the clouds were breaking up and soon we had perfect visibility although we had been told at the briefing that there would be 10/10 coverage. The visibility was still perfect when we turned into our target run. I got a thrill when I looked ahead, seeing the bomb bays of hundreds of planes open outward.

A second later I looked again and got a totally different kind of thrill. A great wall of black smoke splurged with countless dull red flashes of exploding anti-aircraft shells was directly ahead of us and at our altitude. Bombs were dropping like rain from hundreds of planes. Al was hitting the toggle switch as fast as he could.



**THE ALEX CREW BAILED OUT NEAR BREMEN on 20 December 1943 after heavy accurate flak and repeated attacks by enemy fighter planes disabled their B-17, *Santa Anna*. The aircraft had been "borrowed" from the 360th Squadron by the 427th crew. Co-pilot Jackman was killed in the action. Crewmembers Newcomb, Brown and Hall were so badly wounded that they were repatriated by the Germans after becoming prisoners of war. In the crew photo, from left to right, standing, Pilot Alexander Alex, Co-pilot Robert McCall (L. E. Jackman was his replacement on the mission), Navigator Nick Goldschmidt and Bombardier Al Farrah. Kneeling are Engineer Joe Adamczyk, Left Waist Gunner Bob Newcomb, Ball Turret Gunner H. P. Micheles, Right Waist Gunner Harold Brown, Radio Operator W. R. McCarron and Tail Gunner S. G. Hall. The photo was made at Topeka AFB in 1943 in front of a B-24.**

Our B-17 was bucking and bouncing. I was thrown roughly about. Smoke and flames from the flak surrounded us. Ahead the other planes were dipping and diving through the smoke like frightened minnows in a stream.

The squadron leader's plane made a sudden turn to the left. We followed swiftly. Another new burst of flak appeared straight ahead. The lead plane made a queer slip down and left. It was too late for us; we couldn't follow fast enough. Straight into the explosion we went. The plane shuddered violently. We were hit but still going on. The formation was gone. We were alone.

An ME-210 was coming straight in, its cannons blazing. Another enemy fighter plane was lining up, getting ready to come in. There was a "whoom" behind me that

hurt my ears. Al pointed in back of me. I looked quickly around. Directly over my navigation table where I was crouched only a moment before was a large hole. A 20mm canon shell had passed behind me with only a fraction of an inch to spare.

A staccato of heavy explosions told me that our ammunition was exploding. Something flung me back into a corner. I couldn't see. My face felt like a million needles had gone through it.

Slowly my eyes opened. Al was staggering around in front of me, his head down, his hands over his eyes. He pulled his hands away. Blood was running down over his oxygen mask. I thought of my own face and quickly raised a gloved hand. It came away red with blood, dripping from my face down my own jacket.

Thank God for those flak suits. I think they saved



both our lives.

Al made a sudden dive for one of the emergency oxygen bottles and masks. I thought of my own oxygen from the plane's central system, but it seemed OK.

Again I was flung back into my desk. The plane was starting to spin. I recognized the motion and reached for my chute. "My God!" I thought, "What if I hadn't gone back after the thing?" I was relieved to see that it was apparently not damaged. I had half expected to find it in ribbons, but it had been on a narrow shelf over my desk.

I could hardly move while the plane was spinning. But, suddenly, I was free again. Three swift jerks and my flak suit was off and I had that precious parachute in my hands. Quickly I fastened the left snap. My hands were shaking. I couldn't snap the second clip to the ring on my harness. "Would it hold with one ring?"

I took a new grip on the fastener and tried again. I looked up. Al had his "chute" on and was staring at me with wide eyes. "What the hell is the matter with him?" I wondered. Then, the snap caught and my chute was on securely.

I ripped off my oxygen mask and reached for the emergency mask and bottle. The altimeter said 22,000 feet but I thought it was too much trouble to put on the other mask now. I turned about and sat down to slide out the small door to the escape hatch. Blood was dripping down across the doorway from the cockpit above. I remember wondering what was going on up there.

I looked around. Al was crouched behind me, motioning for me to bail out. I looked toward the hatch to the cockpit. Molten fire was dripping through like a small waterfall. Later I found out it was the engineer's "Mae West" life jacket burning and that the co-pilot was dead.

Fumbling, I reached for the emergency release handle on the escape hatch. Even then I remembered how I had always wanted to pull one of those attractive red handles marked "Emergency only."

I pulled hard. Nothing happened! The handle had come out about three inches. I pulled again and again. Still

nothing. Then I remembered the next move and kicked hard at the hatch door. The door miraculously disappeared. Somewhere, 22,000 feet below, through some thin clouds, was the green and brown of the earth.

I swung my legs out; the wind clutched at them viciously. Turning, I looked at Al. He was sitting in the little low door, blood dripping on him, staring at me and waiting for me to move out of his way. Placing my hands on the edge of the hatch on both sides of me I shoved off.

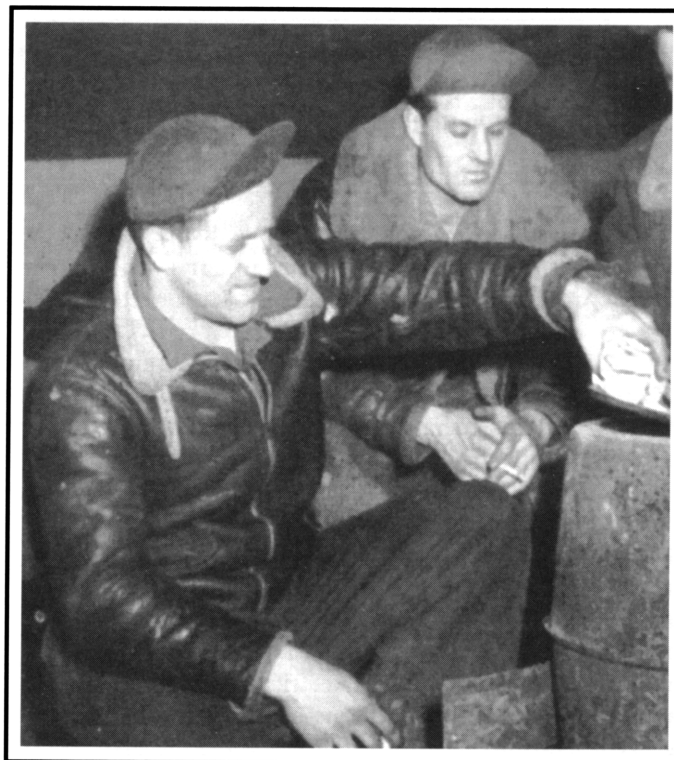
I had often wondered, when and if the time ever came, would I have the nerve to make a jump. Sometimes I doubted it. When the time did come, I was happy to get away from the blood, gunpowder smell and smoke of the burning plane. Not for a moment did I fear that the chute wouldn't open.

My last thought before leaving the plane was what the intelligence officers told us about making a delayed jump. They had said a delayed jump would help us in escaping the Germans, so I decided not to pull the ripcord for as long as possible.

My first impression was a feeling of wind and cold and then extreme stillness. The wind clutched at my clothes and turned me over and over. I reached for the rip cord handle and held it tightly. Rapidly I did some calculations. My fall would be about 22,000 feet or about 4 miles. Falling speed would rapidly slow down to about 135 M.P.H. or about 2 miles a minute. That would give me about two whole minutes or a 120 slow count before hitting ground. I figured that when I could make out people plainly moving about on the ground I would pull the ripcord.

I was falling with head and shoulders down, staring into the sky. My eyes watered freely from the wind. Twisting my shoulders, I could spin around long enough to get a quick glimpse of the ground. When I did so, the wind would catch in my helmet and go screaming past my ears. My eyes would blur and then I would be on my back again.

Again and again I twisted over trying to keep my eyes on the ground. The thin clouds were now drawing near; a few more seconds and I was through them. The



**THE ALEX CREW'S RADIO OPERATOR W. R. MCCARRON AND WAIST GUNNER BOB NEWCOMB (on the right) huddle around the stove in their 427th Squadron Nissen hut. Both became prisoners of war on the Bremen mission. Newcomb was so badly wounded that the Germans repatriated him.**

ground below was bright in the sunshine. Still in a free fall, I could see the earth slowly getting closer as I neared the surface. I caught the glimpse of a small village. I fell a few more seconds, twisting over again. Yes, now I could see the people. Now was the time.

I jerked hard on the handle. Almost immediately a splotch of white flashed past my face, then a long white ribbon streamed past. Suddenly things went black. I could hear the air leaving my lungs in a long a-a-a-a. My head was flung back and I felt I was overdoing a back bend. Then I was swinging in a gentle arc under a huge white umbrella.

The cords above me were twisting. I put up my hands and twisted in the opposite direction so I could look down. I had a quick impression of trees, a field and a fence. The ground was rushing up. I was drifting backwards. I couldn't turn. Then the ground hit me an awful wallop. I was on my back, the chute slowly collapsed, a great white covering of silk on the ground.

I scrambled to my feet, at once fumbling with my har-

ness. I was dazed and it seemed very hard to take off the harness. My head cleared and I looked around. Some people were coming across a wide field from the village, waving their arms. I had landed near a fence, a road on the other side. A man was going along the road on a bicycle. I gathered up the chute as they approached.

Some boys about 16 or 17 in brown uniforms and swastika's on their arms came over and indicated they wished to search me.

By the time they had searched me thoroughly, two soldiers wearing the Luftwaffe insignia had arrived and escorted me into the nearby village. For a few minutes I was left in a rough dugout air-raid shelter and then brought into the local guard office. A group of townspeople stood excitedly around, pointing to my blood caked face and sheep lined flying boots. A few of the women lovingly fingered the white silk of the parachute that had been carried with us into town.

I had officially arrived in Germany and would remain as a prisoner of war for the next 16 months.

# ORIGIN OF "TAPS" AND MEANING OF THE FLAG FOLDING CEREMONY

The haunting melody of "Taps" is likely to cause a lump in our throats and bring tears in our eyes. Here's the story of its humble beginnings.

In 1862 during the Civil War, Union Army Captain Robert Ellicombe was with his men near Harrison's Landing, Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land.

During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moans of a soldier who was severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention. Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward the encampment. When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered the man was a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead. The Captain lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the dead soldier....it was his own son. The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, he enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission to give his son a full military burial despite his enemy status. His request was only partially granted. The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a dirge for his son at the funeral. The request was denied since the soldier was a Confederate, but out of respect for the father, the authorities said he could have one musician. The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of his dead son's uniform. The wish was granted and the haunting melody which we now know as "Taps", played at military funerals, was born.

There are three verses to this melody. Listen to the familiar notes in your mind as you read the verses.

*Day is done; gone the sun, from the lakes, from the hills, from the sky. All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.*

*Fading light, dims the sight, and a star, gems the sky, gleaming bright, from afar, drawing nigh, falls the night.*

*Thanks and praise, for our days, neath the sun, neath the stars, neath the sky. As we go, this we know, God is nigh.*

Honor guards pay meticulous attention to correctly folding the American flag 13 times. There's a meaning to each and every fold.

The 1st fold of our flag is a symbol of life.

The 2nd fold is a symbol of our belief in eternal life.

The 3rd fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veterans departing our ranks who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.

The 4th fold represents our weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in time of war for His divine guidance.

The 5th fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our Country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but it is still our country, right or wrong.

The 6th fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The 7th fold is a tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

The 8th fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day.

The 9th fold is a tribute to womanhood, and mothers. for it has been through their faith, their love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great has been molded.

The 10th fold is a tribute to the father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since they were first born.

The 11th fold represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies in the Hebrews' eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The 12th fold represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in the Christians' eyes, God the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

The 13th fold, or when the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost reminding us of our nation's motto, "In God We Trust."

(After the flag is folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington, and the sailors and marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, followed ever after by their shipmates and comrades in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving the rights, privileges and freedoms we enjoy today.)



# Hell's Angels Newsletter Collection Chronicles Lives of World War II Veterans

By Katie Blair  
Staff Writer, Maxwell/Gunter Dispatch

*"No powdered eggs were served for breakfast on the morning of a mission, only farm fresh eggs, served hot. Those breakfasts were anticipated with mixed emotions, much like a condemned man served his last meal."*

This is just one of many personal recollections that have been captured in the Hell's Angels Newsletter Silver Anniversary Collection—A World War II Retrospective.

The newsletter was named after the nickname given to one of the group's B-17 bombers.

The collection, which contains the entire run of the 8th Air Force, 303rd Bomb Group Association newsletters between 1976 and 2001, was recently presented to the Air University Library at Maxwell Air Force Base by two of the group's representatives, Thomas Richardson and retired Col. Clyde Bradley.

"We were one of the first combat groups to go overseas. What is contained in the newsletters is the story of our lives," said Bradley, who was shot down over Berlin, Germany, on his last scheduled mission and held as a prisoner of war from 1944-1945. "We presented the library with this collection because we feel that it will be advantageous to the students who come through the Air University."

"This donation represents a primary historical resource," said Dr. Shirley Laseter, director of the AU Library. "It is accessible to students and future generations. The collection is beautifully bound and includes an index. There is also continuity to the information. All of this makes the volumes very useful to researchers."

"We just felt that many of the stories needed to be shared," said Richardson, who was one of the youngest pilots of the group to crash behind Russian lines. "It made perfect sense to donate this collection to the Air University Library since it is the center of Air Force training. It is a pleasure for us to leave this to the Air University."

Laseter said the 303rd Bomb Group Association continues to collect, publish and distribute information on some of the most formative events of the lives of bomb group crewmembers who flew missions out of Royal Air Force Station Molesworth, England.



**ARTIST'S VIEW OF THE WORLD WAR II memorial arch and pillars, with the Washington Monument in the distance.**

## WWII Memorial Inaugural Scheduled for May 2004

World War II veterans are about a year away from seeing completion of their war memorial on the National Mall in Washington, DC.

The American Battle Monuments Commission announced the memorial will be dedicated on May 29, 2004.

"We really want to create what we call World War II week in Washington, DC.," said Mike Conley of the commission. "This could be one of the last great gatherings of World War II veterans in this country."

The commission says that of the 16-million citizens who served in uniform in World War II, fewer than four million are expected to be alive when the memorial is dedicated, noting that veterans from that era are dying at a rate of 1,100 a day.

The 7.4 acre site is between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. The white stone memorial will feature 56 17-foot-high pillars, two four-story arches and a sunken plaza with a pool. On the floor of the arches will be the World War II Victory Medal surrounded by the words "Victory on Land, Victory at Sea, Victory in the Air." A registry will contain the names of veterans and others who helped in the war effort.

Construction began in September 2001 and is expected to end in March 2004. Conley said the commission chose the May date for the dedication because of the Memorial Day weekend and the prospect of nicer weather than in March. The commission hopes to organize several days of events honoring the WWII veterans.

(Source: The Associated Press)



# A TIME OF GIVING!

## *Veterans and Family Angels Newsletter Book*



### UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Albert and Lorene Dussliere visited the campus of the University of Illinois in Champaign/Urbana to present the two-volume Silver Anniversary Collection of the Hell's Angels Newsletter. The books were accepted by Mary Stuart, head of the History and Philosophy Library at the university.

Al was a 427th Squadron B-17 waist gunner at Molesworth.

### RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE

The library at Randolph Air Force Base near San Antonio, Texas, received the books from Marthe Curry, widow of Judge Peter Michael Curry who served as an Intelligence Officer with the 303rd at Molesworth. The set was presented to Head Librarian David L. Ince. He told Mrs. Curry that he was most impressed by the styling and especially the index which will allow research by students and other interested parties.



### NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE

Accepting the Hell's Angels Newsletter Collection at Nellis Air Force Base outside Las Vegas, Nevada, were (l-to-r) Lt. Col. Lee Wyatt of Base Data Services and Col. Marvin Smoot, commander of the Mission Support Group. The books were presented by Bill Heller, a 360th Squadron pilot, and his wife, Ruth.

After leafing through the two volumes, the base officers told the Hellers that the books would give readers a much clearer view of aerial operations in World War II.

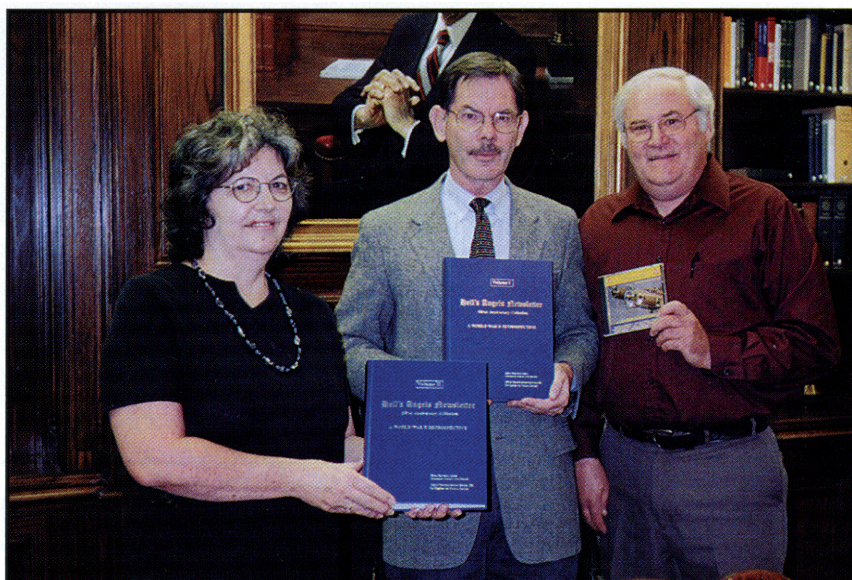


## ***Members Across the Nation Make Presentations of Hell's Angels on Behalf of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association***

### **UNIVERSITY OF UTAH**

Susan and Gary Moncur presented the Hell's Angels Newsletter books to Walter Jones (center), Assistant Head of Special Collections at the J. Willard Marriott Library of the University of Utah, Salt Lake City. The Moncurs also presented *The Molesworth Story* CD-ROM.

Gary is the son of the late Vern L. Moncur, a 359th Squadron pilot. He serves as the 303rd Bomb Group Association's Director of Internet Operations.



### **PALM SPRINGS AIR MUSEUM**

An airworthy B-17 is the background for the books presentation at the Palm Springs Air Museum in California. The 303rd Bomb Group Association was represented by Betty and Richard "Spider" Smith. On the right, accepting for the museum, is Dave Thompson, head of the library.

"Spider" was a 360th Squadron pilot.

### **UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO**

Lore and Van White described their visit to the campus of the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque to make the books presentation as "a very rewarding experience." They are standing to the right and left of Linda Lewis, the Director of Collection Management and Resource Acquisitions for the university library. The Whites said the librarians "were extremely appreciative, as well they should be."

Van was an Operations Specialist in 303rd Bomb Group headquarters.





**A WORKING LUNCH FOR MEMBERS OF THE 303RD BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS as officers and committee chairmen convene on 7 October 2002 at the reunion in Branson, Missouri.**



# Minutes of the Board and Membership Meetings at the 2002 Branson Reunion

**Following are summaries of the minutes of two meetings of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association's Board of Directors and the General Membership Meeting at the 2002 reunion in Branson, Missouri. Copies of the full minutes are available on request from The Secretary.**

## BOARD MEETING 4 OCTOBER 2002

President Jack Rencher expressed appreciation to the officers and committees that worked with him during the past year.

Lew Lyle, Group Advisor, submitted information on activities at the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum in Pooler, GA. The restored B-47 was dedicated with special recognition to the 303rd Bomb Group--the Red Triangle C is on the tail of the aircraft. He provided information about an education project the Museum is engaged in to enable high school teachers to instruct classes about the 8th Air Force in World War II.

Charlie Sykes said the PX ad in the Newsletter resulted in three-week sales of \$1,800 compared with normal sales of \$200 to \$300 per month.

Walt Ferrari, Vice President Administration, told of plans for the 2003 reunion in Portland, OR in the Double Tree Hotel Aug. 7 to Aug. 12. The Hell's Angels Newsletter will carry the announcements. Members interested in attending can request information. This would reduce the cost of mailings to the entire membership--a saving of \$500 to \$700.

John Ford, Vice President for Reunions, commented on the Branson reunion, giving an attendance figure of 347.

Bill Roche, Treasurer, reported that assets of the Association are \$145,739. The use of credit cards was brought up and discussed. Ed Miller moved the Treasurer continue the present procedure of handling funds and be authorized to employ help as needed. The motion died for lack of a second (when the Treasurer declared he didn't need help).

Frank DeCicco provided copies of the audit. Bill Roche moved and Fred Reichel seconded the Audit Report be accepted as presented. Motion carried. A copy of the audit is on file.

358th Sqdn. Representative Van White had no report. 359th Sqdn. Roger Bates read a report from Hal Susskind, which included information mailed to members about the reunion. 360th Sqdn. Ed Miller had no report. 427th Sqdn. Fred Reichel read his report. Reichel will nominate Ed Gardner at the squadron meeting for the position of squadron representative. Headquarters and 444th Henry Johansen had no report. Widow's Representative Joanna Tressler suggested that when planning

future reunions the availability of prompt medical assistance be a priority. Family Representative Lance Stoner, no report.

Historian Harry Gobrecht reported on activities he has been involved in. He mentioned a new book about the 303rd by Brian O'Neill, and noted that the 303rd Bomb Group Association now has five members on the Board of Trustees of the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum. He moved for approval of the expenditure of \$1,500 to purchase a bench for the Museum. Motion carried. Ed Miller commented that Gobrecht has answered many requests for information from families of comrades.

The Historian presented the Webmaster report. Approximately 70,000 hits are registered each month. A discussion of the CD-ROM ensued. A third edition is not planned.

Newsletter Editor Eddie Deerfield reported on the Silver Anniversary Book Project. 500 sets were published with 360 sold in advance, another 100 purchased by the Association for PX sales and 40 for presentations. The Association provided \$8,500 over a two year period as "seed money" to finance the project. Col. Kermit Stevens donated an additional \$6,000. Deerfield presented a check for \$19,832 to the Treasurer to close the book account (a net gain of \$11,332). Sales by the PX of the remaining sets will return an estimated additional \$2,000 in profit.

Ed Miller moved with a second by Bill Roche that Eddie Deerfield research locations for the sets to be donated.

Membership Chairman Dennis Smith presented the Status Report. There are 1,908 Active Members and 1,023 Inactive. Eddie Deerfield advised that the category "Friends" be corrected to "Associate Members."

Past Presidents Committee Chairman, Dick Johnson, presented the following nominations for 2003: Walter J. Ferrari for President, Albert L. Dussliere for Vice President Administration, Richard Bowler, Jr. for Secretary, William J. Roche for Treasurer and Walter J. Mayer for Vice President Reunions.

Awards for outstanding service to the 303rd BG Association were named by the committee as follows: Might In Flight awards: Walter J.

Ferrari, John W. Ford, Jack P. Rencher, James B. Taylor.

Special Presidential Heritage Awards: Gary L. Moncur, Eddie Deerfield, Edgar C. (Ed) Miller, Harry D. Gobrecht.

Names selected to be engraved on our Service Recognition Monument at the Heritage Museum: Carl L. DuBose, Jr. Albert L. Dussliere, Walter J. Ferrari, John W. Ford, Brian S. McGuire and Dennis S. Smith

Ed Miller reported on the Missing Comrades project. He plans to resubmit 1,600 names to various VA facilities. Fred Reichel moved with a second by Harry Gobrecht that additional funds in the amount of \$300 to \$500 be approved to carry on the project. Motion passed.

By-Laws and Parliamentary Chairman Bill McLeod presented a number of suggested changes. Eddie Deerfield seconded his motion that the changes be presented to the membership at the General Meeting. Motion carried.

#### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING 7 OCTOBER 2002

President Rencher introduced John Ford, Vice President Reunions. The membership responded enthusiastically when asked if they were having fun. The President expressed appreciation to the members for their loyalty and assistance during the past year.

Walt Ferrari, Vice President Administration, announced that next year's reunion will be held in Portland, OR, August 7 to 11, 2003, at the Double Tree Hotel on the Columbia River.

Bill Roche, Treasurer reported assets as of September 30, 2002 of \$145,739.78. This total includes \$20,362 checking account, \$45,000 CD, \$70,000 Money Market Funds and PX Inventory of \$9,500. He reported income of \$63,415 with expenditures of \$48,574. A motion was made and seconded to accept the report of the Treasurer. The motion was approved.

Frank DeCicco presented the Audit Report. A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the Audit Report as presented.

Van White, 358th Representative, announced his Squadron had the most members in attendance. He was re-elected as Squadron Representative and Ken Clarke elected Alternate.

359th Alternate Representative Roger Bates reported in the absence of Hal Susskind. Squadron elected officers are Hal Susskind, Representative, and Roger Bates Alternate.

Ed Miller, Squadron Representative of the 360th Squadron, advised there are 47 from his Squadron at the reunion. John A. Coyne was elected Alternate Representative.

Fred Reichel, Representative for the 427th, is retiring as Squadron Representative and Ed Gardner was elected the new Representative. Reichel was elected Alternate Representative.

Henry Johansen, Headquarter & Supporting Units--444th Sub Depot, reported he is the Representative and Maurice J. Paulk is Alternate.

Widow Representative Joanna Tressler advised that 11 widows are in attendance. She asked everyone who knows a widow of a 303rd veteran to encourage her to attend the reunion.

Harry Gobrecht, Historian, reported on the increasing number of requests for information he receives by e-mail, with the majority of requests coming from grandchildren. He told of the many contacts he has been involved in during the past year, a new book by Brian O'Neill about the 303rd Bomb Group, and the dedication of the restored B-47 at the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum with our Triangle C on the tail. Ben Smith, member of the 303rd, donated \$5,000 for a stained glass window in the new chapel at the Museum. Col. Kermit Stevens donated \$6,000 to the Museum.

Hell's Angels Newsletter Editor Eddie Deerfield thanked the members for their stories and photos. He commented that the hallmark of former editor Hal Susskind's philosophy for the Hell's Angels Newsletter was that the editor should remain independent, resisting the pressures that spring up in an organization, relying on the facts to keep readers in-

formed. Deerfield said he respected that philosophy and had been guided by it in his four years as editor. He reported on the publication of the "Hell's Angels Newsletter Silver Edition" books. Five-hundred sets were published. Forty of the two volume sets were reserved for donation to libraries at military bases, universities, museums, research institutions and communities.

Gary Moncur, Director of Internet Operations, said the web site was visited by 1,000 people each day who downloaded approximately 3,000 pages. He commented that this remarkable exposure for a military web site made the 303rd's the best.

Dennis Smith, Membership Chairman, advised we have 1,910 Active Members. Included are 1,192 Veteran Members, 315 Widows, 306 Family Members, 78 Associate Members, 11 Honorary and 8 Editors.

PX Coordinators Charlie and Vicki Sykes were recognized for the outstanding job they are doing in providing various items for sale.

Ed Miller, Ways and Means Committee, said the Benefactor Program which has provided the organization with financial assistance will be continued. He said he took approximately 23 months to produce the first CD, "Fly With Hell's Angels". Gary Moncur then spent six months correcting errors and adding information to produce the Second Edition, "The Molesworth Story". It is estimated that a profit of \$24,000 could be realized if all of the CD's are sold. Miller suggested that free copies of the CD be given to schools as teaching tools. Members wishing to participate in this program can request a copy of the CD.

William McLeod, By-Laws Committee, read proposed changes in the By-Laws. They were concerned mainly with formal recognition of the web page and with reaffirmation of voting privileges for family members. The changes were approved by acclamation.

Dick Johnson, Chairman of the Past President's Committee, presented nominations of the officers who will make up the Executive Committee. They are President Walter J. Ferrari, VP Admin Albert L. Dussliere, Secretary Richard Bowler, Jr., Treasurer William J. Roche, VP Reunions Walter J. Mayer, Newsletter Editor Eddie Deerfield and Past Presidents Committee Chairman Jack Rencher. There were no nominations from the floor and all were elected unanimously.

Walt Mayer complimented Ground Support Personnel and commended them for the outstanding job they did to keep the planes and crews in the air. He asked these members to stand. They were warmly applauded.

#### BOARD MEETING 7 OCTOBER 2002

The meeting was opened by Walt Ferrari, President. Our next reunion will be held in Portland, Oregon, Aug. 7 to 11, 2003.

Treasurer Bill Roche stated that the check from Eddie Deerfield in the amount of \$19,862 from the Newsletter Book Project brought the balance in the treasury up to \$165,601.78. He presented a preliminary estimate of income and expenses (budget worksheet) for 2002-2003.

Eddie Deerfield reported that the costs of publishing and mailing the newsletter had gone up in the last fiscal year. He recommended increasing the number of color photos in each issue if budget permitted, and authorization to use up to \$2,000 to repair and improve his computer, printer, copier and scanner as needed for work on the newsletter. A motion was made, seconded and approved to authorize the newsletter budget.

Discussion concerning the Benefactor Program resulted in authorization of funds for the program. A motion was made, seconded and carried.

A motion to budget for the purchase of new PX sale items and a larger marketable inventory was made, seconded and approved.

Ed Miller proposed authorization of \$4,000 for Gary Moncur to upgrade his computer and accessories needed for work on the Web site. The equipment will remain in his custody as long as he remains Director of Internet Operations. This was approved and added to the current operating budget for the web site.

(MINUTES continued on page 16)





## 303rd's Pin-up Men of The Month

**ABOVE — WHEN YOU'RE USED TO RIDING A B-17 under attack, a bucking bronco is a breeze. Four members of the 359th Squadron's Bill Beasley crew take a break from combat. From left to right are Henry Gracida, Jack Terrill, Jacob Gornto and Tom Harringfeld.**



**LEFT — WAIST GUNNER ED HARMON checks the sights on his cal .50 machine gun before a mission. He was in the 427th Squadron.**

**BELOW LEFT — THREE GROUND TROOPS prepare the 427th Squadron's *Betty Jane* for combat. The men, left to right, are Louis Hirth, crew chief; Fred Randall, aircraft mechanic and Mel Flinner, armorer.**



**BELOW — A CLASSIC STUDIO PORTRAIT made in 1943 while on leave in England. In front of the lens were the 360th Squadron's Arthur Stoy, Supply NCO, and Harry O'Lena, aircraft mechanic.**



# Molesworth Diary

## FOND MEMORIES OF "THE DIRTY DUCK"

After a combat mission, interrogation, chow and shower, some thirsty crew members would head for The White Swan pub in Thrapston, a mile down the road. The pub was nicknamed "The Dirty Duck" because of its grimy white paint and general rundown condition. Mr. and Mrs. George Thacher, an elderly couple, were the proprietors. The pub must have been built in the early 1800's—outside toilet, low slung ceilings with heavy beams. The floors slanted in different directions, which meant we had to do some careful balancing when carrying drinks.

If our landing approach after a mission took us over Thrapston, we could see the Thachers down below, wearing their customary white aprons and waving. They had a son flying coastal patrol in the RAF. Mrs. Thacher often spoke of him and wanted us to meet him, but we never had the opportunity. The pub had a most restful atmosphere that gave us airmen a feeling of relaxation. It wasn't exactly home, but the day's combat action and losses would melt away. And there were always "Joan's," "Elizabeth's" and "Ann's" around to help us retain our sanity. The Thachers were good to us, and put up with much of our asinine actions. One Sunday they invited our crew to dinner—fresh-killed rabbit, potatoes, greens and coffee, topped off with a meringue pie.

God bless them and, by now, rest their souls.

**James F. Donnelly**  
427th Squadron Waist Gunner

## RAF PLANE CRASHES AT MOLESWORTH

Some time in early 1943, I heard a report that a RAF plane was about to make an emergency landing at our base. I was near our squadron engineering hut as the plane circled the field. When it came down it was on a direct line to a B-17 being loaded with 500-lb bombs. In attempting to miss the bomber, the RAF pilot swerved his aircraft and it collided with a GMC truck and burst into flame. I was about a hundred feet away, and ran over to the crash site to try to help. At about the same time I reached the site, another soldier ran up with a fire extinguisher. We both looked, but could do nothing to save the two persons aboard the RAF plane. The base Fire Rescue Squad arrived, and we left the scene.

Over the years I often wondered who the man with the fire extinguisher was. Then, 55 years later, I attended a meeting of the Wisconsin Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. One of the speakers was introduced as Robert Heiliger, a former master sergeant and crew chief in the 360th Squadron of the 303rd Bomb Group. I went up to him later to say "hello" and to tell him that I was also a 303rd Bomb Group veteran. We got to talking, and I mentioned the crash of the RAF

plane in 1943 and said I had often wondered who the other person was with the fire extinguisher. To my surprise, Bob said, "That was me who tried to assist.!" After more than half a century, I had my answer.

**Jack J. Smith**  
360th Squadron Intelligence Section

## 55-YEAR OLD WAIST GUNNER ON FREEMAN CREW!

Robert Glenn Martin was trained as a pilot—in World War One! I don't know if he ever flew combat in that war, but he emerged again as a 55-year-old waist gunner on our Clyde Freeman crew. We didn't call him "Pappy" or "Bob," just "Glenn."

He always spoke of how strongly he had wanted to be associated with the air corps in World War Two. He enlisted after he was assured that if he could pass the flight physical he would be "air force." He was assigned to our crew as a waist gunner.

Glenn flew his first mission with us on September 5, 1944 to Ludwigshafen, Germany. In the next five weeks, we hit Ludwigshafen again, Merseburg, Osnabruck, Dresden, Schweinfurt, Wesseling and three missions to Cologne. After the October 11 raid on Wesseling, Glenn was unable to continue on combat duty. His nervous system spun out of control, and he said he could not stand the pressure of another mission. He was assigned to ground duty. He was the "tying rod" of our crew and we hated to see him go, but we knew his decision was in the crew's best interests and we admired him for his courage.

**Glenn R. Canning**  
358th Squadron Co-Pilot

## NAVIGATOR GOOFS AS SUBSTITUTE CO-PILOT

On our 35th and last mission on 24 December 1944, we supported our troops in the Battle of the Bulge. Fog completely covered the battlefield. Flying at 7,000 feet, we dropped bombs some distance ahead of flares shot from the ground by our soldiers to guide us to the enemy. On our way home, we found Molesworth also "socked in." We landed instead at an American base near the east coast of England. Except for Don Trainor, our radio operator; Laurie Campbell, our co-pilot, and I, the rest of the crew returned to Molesworth by truck that evening. We three were elected to fly our plane, *Old Black Magic*, back to base the next morning, with Laurie as pilot and me as co-pilot.

Problem was, I was not too familiar with the co-pilot's job. When Laurie told me to pump fuel to the number three engine, I pumped too much and the engine caught fire. We three jumped out of the B-17, and, with the help of a ground crew, managed to put the fire out. I had learned my lesson, and we flew back safely to Molesworth later that Christmas Day.

**Andrew Goettman**  
359th Squadron Navigator



**PERSONNEL OF THE 1199TH MILITARY POLICE COMPANY** stand at attention for an arms inspection at Molesworth on 30 March 1944, the same month in which the unit was organized and assigned as a ground support element of the 303rd Bomb Group. A half-century later, the Group's monument at the 8th AF Heritage Museum mistakenly listed the unit as the 1119th.

## MONUMENT ERROR from page 1

The project went into limbo until the newsletter received Akers' second appeal, some three years later. In his 30 October 2002 letter, he wrote, "I'm not perfect and I know everybody (sic) makes mistakes, but that plaque will be there after I'm dead and gone and I want the 1199th to be remembered with the other ground support troops."

The newsletter editor telephoned Jim Fogarty at the Depue Monument Company. Fogarty said and later confirmed by letter that "We are determining how the bronze plaque can be removed without damage to the memorial." He apologized for the delay in resolving the problem, and wrote, "We will find a solution and we will remove the plaque."

He added, "If the Military Police Company number alone can be corrected from 1119th to 1199th at the foundry you are in a price range of \$700 to \$900 including freight. If this cannot be done flawlessly, replacing the plaque with a new one would put it in a price range of \$3,700 to \$3,800."

The editor, who sits on the 303rd Bomb Group Association's seven-man Executive Committee, conveyed this information to the committee members. The vote to proceed with the project was unanimous.

Association President Walter Ferrari reflected the mood of the committee when he said, "The cost is not to stand in the way of making the correction." Outgoing president Jack Rencher voted "yes" on "whatever it takes to correct the monument."

At the time this edition of the newsletter went to the printer in late December, the bronze plaque had been removed from the marble and returned to the foundry in Pittsburgh. It was scheduled to be restored to the monument by the end of January, with the corrected listing of 1199th Military Police Company.

(See "The Editor Comments" on page 20)

## Bits and Pieces

A stained glass window showing the 303rd Bomb Group B-17 *Knockout Dropper* has been installed in the Memorial Chapel at the 8th AF Heritage Museum. It was donated by Ben Smith, former 360th Squadron radio operator.

The 8th AF Historical Society will hold its 2003 reunion from October 14 to 19 at the Sheraton Hotel in Colorado Springs, CO.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am catching up on reading the Hell's Angels Newsletter Silver Anniversary Collection volumes. It's amazing to find how much time you can spend doing this and how quickly the time goes by while reading the articles. They hold your attention better than most fiction or nonfiction books.

We are fortunate to have had the great editors—Al Martel, Harry Jenkins, Bud Klint, Hal Susskind and Eddie Deerfield—who put the newsletters together, published them and so preserved the heritage of the 303rd Bomb Group. We will never be able to properly thank them and their families for the time and effort it took to publish each issue.

The articles stir up feelings of sadness as you read about the people and their untimely deaths. Were we, the survivors, better men than they? Speaking for myself the answer is NO. Luckier, yes, but certainly not better. They died while protecting our right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness that we and everyone in America enjoy. Unfortunately, too many Americans take these rights for granted and don't acknowledge the sacrifice made by those men. Now that the clouds of war are again appearing on the horizon it is mandatory that all Americans recognize and acknowledge the efforts of the members of our Armed Forces before their names are put on markers in a cemetery.

As you read the articles and look at the pictures in the Hell's Angels Newsletter books, you can't help but realize what a fabulous group of young men were members of the 303rd Bomb Group. There is a pretty good group of young, in spirit, anyway, men now leading our Association who are trying to keep this spirit alive as we move into the 21st Century.

This leads me to comment on our next reunion, to be held in Portland, Oregon in August of 2003. Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. has been contracted to handle the details of the reunion. The Association's liaison with them is another young in spirit member, Walt Mayer. While it will be difficult to match John Ford's efforts at the Branson reunion I'm sure Walt will give it the old college try.

I wish you a healthy, happy 2003. God willing, may we all meet next August in Portland.

Walt Ferrari

## MINUTES OF MEETINGS (from page 13)

Family and Associate Members representative Lance Stoner reported that Brian O'Neill was elected Alternate Representative.

Ed Miller proposed that the Association supply copies of the 303rd's CD-ROM to high school libraries across the country free of charge, with a new "Education Program" budget to cover the cost of handling and mailing. It was approved.

Bill Roche made a motion that the revised 2002-2003 budget be adopted. The motion was seconded by Ed Gardner and passed.

Jack Rencher introduced William H. Cox who discussed the matter of military recognition and awards, which he felt were due many of the members of the 303<sup>rd</sup>. A lengthy discussion followed, culminating in a motion by Harry Gobrecht that Cox be named 303<sup>rd</sup> WW II Awards Committee Chairman. The motion passed.

Bill McLeod proposed a revision in the By-Laws to change budget forecast timing from four years to one year. He will propose the change for approval at the 2003 General Membership meeting.

Walt Mayer initiated a discussion about creating a "Sunshine Committee" to identify members, widows and family members for messages of condolence, get well wishes, congratulations from the president. Walt Ferrari approved the suggestion as "commendable" and told Mayer to proceed.



# 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**

## HELP OFFERED TO 303RD VETS SEEKING DFC AWARDS

I have been given the title of "World War 2 Awards Officer" by Association President Walter Ferrari. I ask all combat air crew members in our 303rd Bomb Group who completed 30 or 35 missions after June 6, 1944, and did not receive a Distinguished Flying Cross to get in touch with me. I want to try to help you take the right steps to correct this grievous wrong. I was successful in doing this for Rufus Grisham, a 358th Squadron pilot.

I believe the June 6th cut-off date by 8th Air Force generals was arbitrary and denied the award to many who met the requirement of "extraordinary achievement." Can anyone say "You guys had it easy" after the D-Day invasion? I believe in Eddie Deerfield's remarks, "Any one mission over enemy territory before or after the land invasion could have been a crew's fatal mission."

I didn't get a DFC until the Korean War. I was a Captain then, flying RB-29s out of Japan. It was a photo-mapping mission on 02 October 1950 that took over 10 hours, of which 6 hours was flying over North Korea without any fighter escort. It was not an easy mission! There is no dodging flak when flying a photo line for mapping. Almost all the lines were over 100 miles long.

Lt Gen George E. Stratemeyer, Commander of All Pacific Air Forces, was interested in getting new maps for our ground forces (and with a push from Gen MacArthur), because the Army had only maps which were approximately 50 years old. Plus Gen Mac was about to push forward from the 38th Parallel, on to the Yalu River.

Write to me. I have all the facts on how dangerous air combat was for our crews after June 6, 1944. I'll do what I can to help you receive what you earned in the war against the Nazi enemy.

**Bill Cox, Colonel (USAF-Ret)**  
441 Sandstone Drive  
Vacaville, CA 95688

## ANOTHER VOICE ON 30-35 MISSION DFC STANDARDS

On reading the article in the November newsletter, I feel obliged to get my two cents in. When the Fink crew arrived at Molesworth we learned that mission requirements had been raised to 35, but understood that those who finished their tours would have earned the coveted DFC. But after we buzzed the tower at Molesworth in happy exhilaration to have met the challenge of "35," the DFC was a "no show." It should have been there as a token not only of good fortune but of courage, loyalty and determination.

**Robert Hand, Capt (USAF, Ret)**  
360th Squadron Navigator

## HERITAGE MUSEUM LAUDS NEWSLETTER COVERAGE

The November "Hell's Angels Newsletter" was delightful! Pages 4 and 13 held extra special interest. The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum thanks you for the coverage you provided on the Chapel and Oral History Program. We strive daily to spread word about our mission and dedication. The 303rd Bomb Group newsletter reinforces our organization.

**Krista Pierce**  
Marketing & Membership

## USAF ACADEMY PLEASED WITH BOOK DONATION

On behalf of the Superintendent, Lt Gen John R. Dallager, I am pleased to accept the 303rd Bomb Group Association's book donation, *Hell's Angels Newsletter Silver Anniversary Collection: A World War II Retrospective*.

Please tell your members that this book will be part of the Air Force Academy libraries' Special Collections Branch where it will be available for in-house use by cadets, faculty, other Air Force personnel and research scholars.

There is no way I can tell you how pleased we are to receive this collection of newsletters. We promise to be good stewards of this treasured acquisition.

If you could notify us where we could purchase a second set, we would add that to the general circulating collection.

**Dr. Edward Alderman Scott**  
Director, USAFA Libraries

**(Editor' Note—The 303rd BGA has provided a second set to the Academy at no charge)**

## JOURNAL EDITOR OFFERS PRAISE FOR NEWSLETTER

It was really a pleasure to see the November 2002 issue of the Hell's Angels Newsletter. It was passed to me by John Naland, the president of the American Foreign Service Association. What an excellent little publication! It reflects beautifully the energy, activity and solidarity of the 303rd Bomb Group veterans. The December issue of our national publication will include details of your Association's silver anniversary newsletter books about aerial combat operations during the Second World War.

**Susan Maitra**  
Foreign Service Journal

## REMEMBERING WILLIAM J. NEFF, ENGINEERING

Bill Neff was the Engineering Officer for the 359th and then for the Group. He died in his sleep last September in Delray Beach, FL at the age of 83. He was a good man and I had the privilege of knowing him and his wife, Maxine, for many years.

Bill was an innovator in developing modern aircraft maintenance and engineering systems and procedures. At Molesworth, he developed new ways to maximize the effectiveness of maintenance to keep our B-17's flying.

After the war, he joined Trans World Airlines and stayed with the firm for 37 years, spearheading the integration of new generations of aircraft into TWA's system, from the Lockheed Constellation in the piston era to the jet-powered Boeing 747.

May he rest in peace.

**Quentin Hargrove**  
Group Engineering Officer

## DEATH CLAIMS 2ND CREW MEMBER IN SIX MONTHS

Gale F. Muchmore passed away last October. He was the ball turret gunner on our *Old Black Magic* crew. His death is the second loss of a crew member in the last six months. Richard Dimick, our tail gunner, died last May. The reunion in Oklahoma City was the last time we were all together.

Gale was the youngest man on the crew, and was admired for his marksmanship and attention to duty. He was known as "Snake" to his buddies, but I never heard why.

We will miss him.

**Louis Grandwilliams**  
359th Squadron Pilot

## IN MEMORY OF A GOOD FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR

I was saddened by the death last November of George Hoyt, my good friend and neighbor for the last 14 years. I always enjoyed talking with him about his experiences during his service as a radio operator and gunner in the 303rd Bomb Group. On the afternoon of the day he died, as I was out in my backyard, three Air Force jets in formation flew directly over George's home. I feel sure it was a coincidence, but it seemed like they were saying goodbye to one of their own.

**Ellis Keeler**  
Lilburn, Georgia

## MORE COMMENTS ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER BOOKS

At the rate I read, I may have a year or more of fantastic reading. What a wonderful memorial to all of us and our families.

**Bill Dallas**  
427th Squadron Pilot

I started reading from the first page of Volume I and am learning much I didn't know. I will pass this on to my grandchildren and it will be a written record never lost in our future generations' memory. We are indebted to the 303rd Bomb Group Association for making it so.

**Jud Watson**  
360th Squadron Ball Turret

## **FROM THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN**

February is here and the new year is beginning. As I write this, it is still December so I have to guess what the next few months are going to be like. There may or may not be snow in some areas of the country. As you read this issue of the newsletter, it may or may not be raining outside. Did I get at least 50% of my prediction correct?

Both my wife Marriane and I hope that your holiday was joyful and that the new year will bring you good health, wealth and happiness.

While at the Branson reunion, I was asked to read the names of those that had passed away. I still have a vivid memory of my father "Smitty" reading the names of the fallen veterans at the San Francisco reunion. When I had to stand there and read off the names, I only hoped that my voice would not break down during the reading.

Some of the names that I read at the memorial service were given to me at the last minute and have not been printed in the newsletter. I will now add their names into print. I'm also listing the names of the veterans that have passed away and were never listed in the newsletter.

This portion of the newsletter was needed in the hands of Eddie Deerfield (our outstanding editor) by the 7<sup>th</sup> of December. Why does that day and month ring a bell?

Anyway, I know that Walt Ferrari's 2003 "fund raising" letter has been sent out, I received my copy, and that it will take some time between December and January for our treasurer, Bill Roche, to receive all checks and pass the information on to me.

So please do not think that if you made a donation to the association during those two months, that it was not received or that your support of the 303<sup>rd</sup> BGA is not welcomed. It is all just a matter of timing. If your donation is not acknowledged in this issue of the newsletter, it will be in the May or August or November issue.

Back to that December 7<sup>th</sup> date, was that the day Chicago burned or was it the San Francisco earthquake?

**Dennis Smith  
Membership/Roster Chairman**

**NOTE – Please provide information or report errors on pages 18 and 19 to the Membership Chairman, NOT to the Newsletter Editor. Dennis Smith can be reached at 142 Vista Drive, Sonoma, CA 95476, telephone (707) 938-0634, email Da1smith@pacbell.net.**

## **IN MEMORIAM**

Wesley C Abbott	360 <sup>th</sup>	3/8/96
George D Abbott	359 <sup>th</sup>	1/12/68
Howard L Abney	358 <sup>th</sup>	8/20/02
Jessie P Adair	1681 Ord	3/18/95
Joseph Adamczyk	427 <sup>th</sup>	12/29/97
John C Alexander	358 <sup>th</sup>	11/18/75
Charles G Allen	359 <sup>th</sup>	unknown
Francis D Andersen	359 <sup>th</sup>	5/21/96
David M Anderson Jr.	360 <sup>th</sup>	12/24/86
Karl B Arundale	358 <sup>th</sup>	2/12/02
James H Austin	360 <sup>th</sup>	12/13/63
Irl E Baldwin	358 <sup>th</sup>	unknown
Gordon E Bale	359 <sup>th</sup>	unknown
Leonard L Banks	444 A/D	2/16/63
Lovell A Bannowsky Jr.	358 <sup>th</sup>	11/11/91
Frederick W Barnes	359 <sup>th</sup>	6/3/97
Thompson M Blalock	1681 Ord	3/24/85
Samuel B Blanchard	359 <sup>th</sup>	7/22/60
Charles J Bonn	360 <sup>th</sup>	4/19/97
Patrick H Brabant	359 <sup>th</sup>	?/?/54
John G Brauchle	360 <sup>th</sup>	1/1/02
Horace J Brooks Jr.	1114 QM	7/19/81
William F Brown Jr.	359 <sup>th</sup>	7/21/91
Robert P Brud	360 <sup>th</sup>	7/10/97
David M Burley	360 <sup>th</sup>	10/15/67
Arthur L Burnham Sr.	359 <sup>th</sup>	4/2/02
Byron K Butt	427 <sup>th</sup>	11/10/60
Frederick N Calnon	427 <sup>th</sup>	3/15/90
Michael J Canale	358 <sup>th</sup>	unknown
Norman M Clark	358 <sup>th</sup>	11/22/02
James E Cooney	303 <sup>rd</sup>	8/27/72
Edward G Cooper	427 <sup>th</sup>	11/19/02
Billy A Cunningham	359 <sup>th</sup>	unknown
Parido E Del Core	360 <sup>th</sup>	7/20/02
Glenn J Denning	358 <sup>th</sup>	2/26/02
Richard D Dimick	359 <sup>th</sup>	5/8/02
Francis R Ebbighausen	358 <sup>th</sup>	5/28/84
Harold W Gunn	358 <sup>th</sup>	unknown
Charles M Hall	358 <sup>th</sup>	?/?/71
Marvin Heckendorf	358 <sup>th</sup>	unknown
Robert E Hoke	359 <sup>th</sup>	11/17/02
Arthur E Johnson	360 <sup>th</sup>	11/8/02
Bob Laubhan	358 <sup>th</sup>	unknown
Floyd E Moeller	358 <sup>th</sup>	unknown
Gale F Muchmore	359 <sup>th</sup>	10/26/02
William J Neff	303 <sup>rd</sup>	09/20/02
Herman B Scheibman	359 <sup>th</sup>	unknown
Hector F. Vitale	360 <sup>th</sup>	04/2002

## NEW SUPER LIFE MEMBERS

Harold J Bach 359<sup>th</sup>  
Robert W Morris 360<sup>th</sup>  
Ralph Peters 359<sup>th</sup>

## NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Richard M Albright 360<sup>th</sup>  
Joseph R Ganshert 358<sup>th</sup>  
Tom Eckblad (427<sup>th</sup> Knedler family)

## NEW FAMILY MEMBERS

Robert G Hanley, ( son of Bernard A Hanley, 359<sup>th</sup> Bombardier) 547 E. Nottingham, San Antonio, TX 78209-3435, (210) 824-4058, spouse Kristina

## DONATIONS

Arthur Akers (1199 MP)  
George W Ashworth (427<sup>th</sup>)  
John R Bitter (427<sup>th</sup>)  
Arthur Bluethenthal (427<sup>th</sup>)  
Dale H Carlson (359<sup>th</sup>)  
Earl B Douglass Jr. (358<sup>th</sup>)  
Ira Friedman (427<sup>th</sup>)  
Harry D Gobrecht (358<sup>th</sup>)  
Edward F Goggin (360<sup>th</sup>)  
Norman D Hammel (360<sup>th</sup>)  
Mrs. Shirley Henn (358<sup>th</sup> Widow)  
Zaven Jardarian (359<sup>th</sup>)

Warren E Mauger (359<sup>th</sup>)  
Donald F McGarry (427<sup>th</sup> Family)  
William S McLeod Jr. (358<sup>th</sup>)  
Robert W Morris (360<sup>th</sup>)  
Grover C Mullins (358<sup>th</sup>)  
Jack W O'Neil (358<sup>th</sup>)  
Hugh J Parkhurst (427<sup>th</sup>)  
Ralph Peters (359<sup>th</sup>)  
Alan M Prince (359<sup>th</sup>)  
William J Roche (360<sup>th</sup>)  
Joseph W Savoy (360<sup>th</sup>)  
Harold Scheer (360<sup>th</sup>)  
John R Sivils (Associate)  
Benjamin Starr (358<sup>th</sup>)

## "IN MEMORY OF" DONATIONS

Curtis O Brooke, in memory of William T Hambree (358<sup>th</sup>) S-4 Maintenance & Engineering

Eddie Deerfield, in memory of Robert W Cogswell (360<sup>th</sup>) Pilot and Paul J Davis (360<sup>th</sup>) Tail Gunner

Clifford F Fontaine (427<sup>th</sup>) in memory of his wife, Priscilla, who passed away November 1, 2002

Darrell D Gust, in memory of John V Lemmon (358<sup>th</sup>) Pilot

James W O'Leary, Sr., (427<sup>th</sup>) in memory of his wife, Barbara, who passed away October 4, 2002

Iris & Maurice Rowe, in memory of Eugene C Blum (358<sup>th</sup>) Bombardier

### 303<sup>RD</sup> BG PX MAIL ORDER FORM

ITEM - CIRCLE SIZE OR CHOICE	COST EA.	Qty	TOTAL	ITEM - CIRCLE SIZE OR CHOICE	COST EA.	Qty	TOTAL
License Plate-metal: olive B-17F / silver B-17G	\$8.00			Might in Flight Tee - LARGE ONLY	\$10.00		
License Plate Bracket w/303rd BG "Hell's Angels"	\$2.00			B-17 Tee - SM / MED	\$10.00		
Lapel pin: 358/ 359/ 360/ 427/ Mt in Flight	\$3.00			<b>TOTAL COST of Items Ordered \$</b>			
Patch-3 in: 358/ 359/ 360/ 427/ Mt in Flight	\$5.00			<b>SHIPPING &amp; HANDLING (Add to ALL orders) \$4.00</b>			
Baseball Cap: BLUE Mt in Flight/KHAKI Triangle C	\$9.00			<b>ADD FOR OVERSEAS SHIPPING &amp; HANDLING ONLY \$10.00</b>			
Men's Golf Shirt WHT/BLUE S / M / L / XL	\$20.00			<b>TOTAL AMOUNT DUE \$</b>			
<b>MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO 303<sup>RD</sup> Bomb Group Association</b> <b>Copy or cut out this</b> <b>ORDER FORM and mail to:</b> Charlie Sykes / 303rd PX Administrator P.O. Box 33474 Phoenix, Arizona 85067-3474				Name _____ Date _____ Address _____ City, State, Zip _____ Phone _____ E-Mail _____			

Rev. 12/5/2002

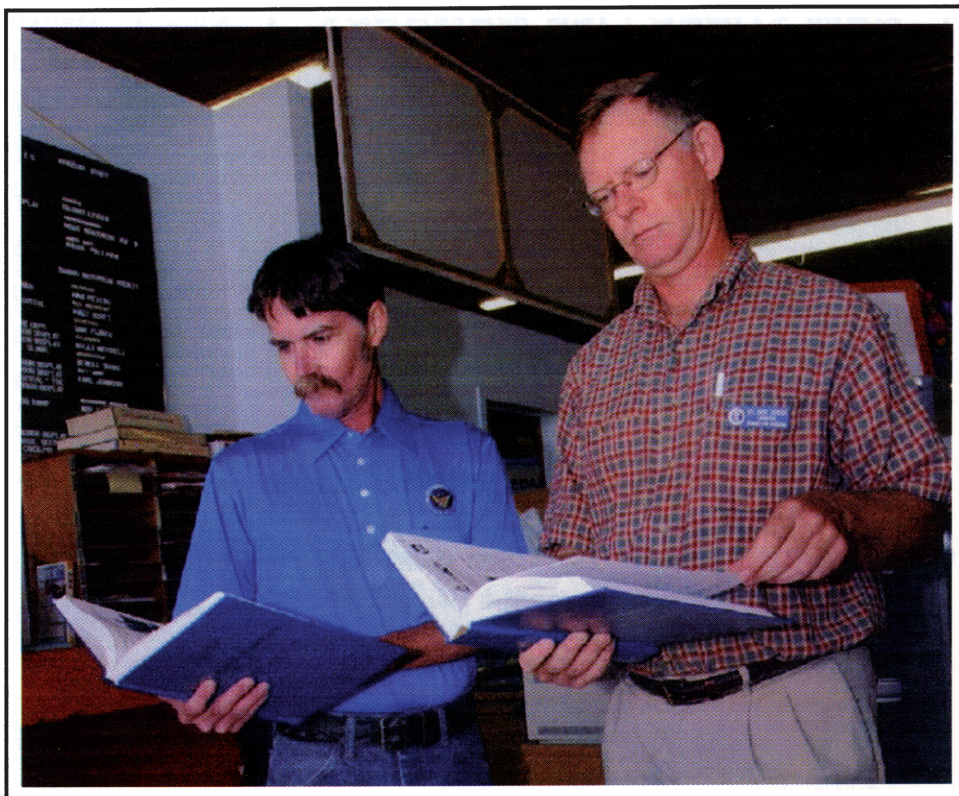


**THE JIMMY DOOLITTLE AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM AT TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE in California was the recipient of a set of the 303rd Bomb Group Association's Hell's Angels Newsletter books.**

The presentation was made by Dennis Smith, on the left, the Association's Membership Chairman. His late father, Molesworth veteran Carlton Smith, was the former membership chairman.

The two-volume set was received by Museum Curator Dr. Gary Leiser, who was pleased to learn that there are numerous references in the books to both General Travis and General Doolittle.

(More presentation photos on pages 10 and 11)



## THE EDITOR COMMENTS....

About 50 men served in the 1199th Military Police Company in the 303rd Bomb Group family at Molesworth. Their most important duty was to protect the B-17 bombers of the four squadrons between missions. They patrolled the perimeter of the base, manned the entry gates, stood guard outside the mission briefing building and also enforced traffic regulations.

Four of those MP's are currently listed as active members of the 303rd Bomb Group Association. They're Art Akers, Lloyd Hanks, Paul Harmon and Rudy Rendon. According to Association records, 30 of the men in the original MP complement have passed away and the whereabouts of another 19 are not known.

I flew my 30th and last mission as a 360th Squadron radio operator on May 11, 1944. With the Allied invasion of France less than a month away, I was given a temporary duty assignment as Sergeant of the Guard at Molesworth. I was 18 when I enlisted in 1942 and had never owned a car. One of the MP's taught me how to drive since I needed a jeep to make the rounds. I worked with the MP's until August in guarding our B-17's, and then was reassigned to the US for training on B-29's.

I didn't know Art Akers at that time. Our first contact was when he wrote to me in 1999 saying he had seen a picture in the Hell's Angels Newsletter of the Group's monument at the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum, and the MP company was shown on the bronze plaque as the 1119th instead of the 1199th. He asked if anything could be done to correct the error. I informed the Association's Board of Directors and the Board approved making the correction. Although there was some discussion at the time about possible damage to the marble in removing the bronze plaque, I lost track of events and assumed the correction was made eventually. It wasn't until I heard from Art Akers again in 2002 that I learned nothing had been done to make the change.

The story beginning on the cover of this issue brings the reader up to date. Harry Gobrecht, the Association's historian, credits me with "persevering" to have the repair finally made. I don't deserve the accolade. I blame myself for not staying on top of the situation from the beginning. I should have persevered much harder much earlier.

**Eddie Deerfield**

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