

Hell's Angels Newsletter

303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

November, 2003

President Appoints Susskind As New 303rd Historian BOARD DELAYS DECISION ON TRANSFER OF ARCHIVES TO HERITAGE MUSEUM

Gobrecht Resigns; His Second Archives Proposal Put On Hold

The Board of Directors of the 303rd Bomb Group Association, meeting in Portland, Oregon at the annual reunion August 7-11, 2003, decided to delay action on proposals by former Historian Harry D. Gobrecht to transfer the 303rd's archives to the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum "within the next six months."

Gobrecht had resigned abruptly on 18 July 2003. President Walter J. Ferrari promptly named Harold "Hal" Susskind, the Editor Emeritus of the Hell's Angels Newsletter, as the Association's new Historian.

The Board was in general agreement that the Museum would be a suitable repository for the huge collection of 303rd Bomb Group documents, photos, maps and other artifacts collected and catalogued by the Historian over a span of 12 years, but questioned the urgency in surrendering the archives.

It decided that Gobrecht's second proposal of 30 April 2003, which sharply modified his plan submitted five weeks earlier, also required further study.

The timing of a transfer was of paramount concern, with opinions ranging from making the move "sometime in 2005" to "not until we dissolve the Association." The Board felt that the membership should continue to have immediate and direct access to the archives. It ques-

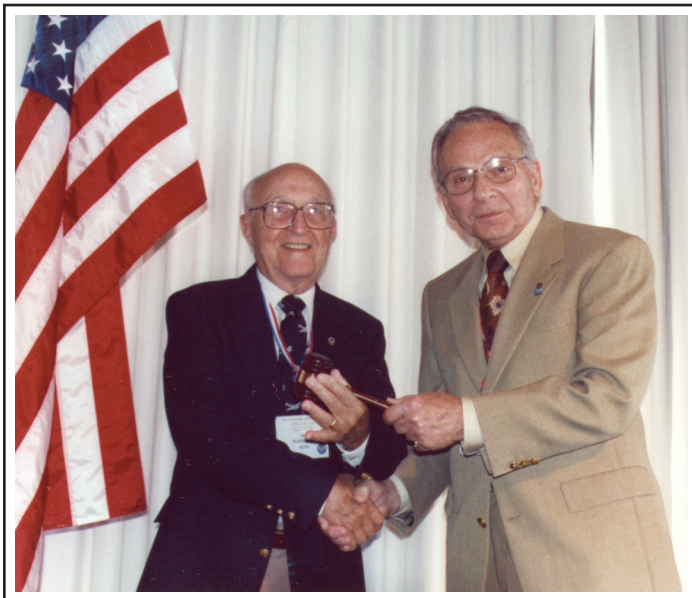
tioned the ability of the Heritage Museum library staff, which serves all of the Eighth Air Force units, to provide such a service expeditiously on demand.

The Board also felt that clarification was needed to answer the many other questions raised by the latest proposal, which sought a sizeable cash grant from the 303rd BGA's treasury.

In the front page story in the August 2003 issue of the Hell's Angels Newsletter, Gobrecht's first proposal of 24 March 2003 to turn over all of the 303rd Bomb Group's historical records to the Heritage Museum carried a price tag estimated by him at \$25,000 to \$50,000. He explained that this sum from the 303rd's treasury would cover packaging and shipping the archives from his home in California to the Museum in Georgia, and would also purchase for the museum an array of audio-visual equipment.

In return for this donation of equipment, the Historian said he had asked the museum to name a room in the library complex in honor of the 303rd Bomb Group.

In his second proposal, Gobrecht sharply reduced his estimate of costs, and dropped any reference to a room at the library recognizing the 303rd if it approved the grant of equipment. He asked for \$2,500 for packaging and shipping and \$15,000 for the purchase of



PASSING OF THE GAVEL — Newly elected President Al Dussliere (on the left) accepts the gavel of office from Walt Ferrari, who moved on to the position of Chairman of the Board's Past Presidents Committee.

audio-visual equipment.

In recent years, while Harry Gobrecht served as the 303rd BGA's historian, he has also been a member of the Board of Directors of The Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum.

He said the \$15,000 donation to the museum from the 303rd's treasury would buy a microfilm reader and printer, a microfiche reader and printer, a computer, scanner, printers, television set with VCR player and high-powered lights.

The former Historian's assertion that he planned to ship the archives to the museum within the next six months and would pay for

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303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.

Hell's Angels Newsletter

Editor--Eddie Deerfield

VOL XXVI, No. 4 3552 Landmark Trail, Palm Harbor, FL 34684 November, 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 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*, 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.

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For a visit to the highly
rated Website of the
303rd Bomb Group
Association, go
online at:

www.303rdBGA.com

Planning a trip to England and RAF Molesworth?

Persons planning to visit the base should 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

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303rd's Memorial Service in Portland

A Unique Affair To Remember



Lewis "Mel" Schulstad



Mary Lee Deerfield



Brittney McCoy



Lore White

Ever since the Memorial Service at the first official reunion of the 303rd Bomb Group Association in 1975 in Orlando, FL, the affairs have consisted of recitations of personal experiences, readings and eulogies delivered almost exclusively by the veterans of Molesworth. This year, Mel Schulstad, who organized the Memorial Service for the reunion in Portland, invited only family members of the veterans to address the gathering. His unique approach proved to be an outstanding success.

The program opened with the presentation of the colors followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag. After the invocation by Bishop Rene H. Gracida, Schulstad introduced the first of eight speakers, Mary Lee Deerfield, wife of 360th Squadron veteran Eddie Deerfield. She recited Rachel Frith's famous poem on the deeper meaning of air corps reunions.

Next on the program, Kathy Johnson, daughter of the 358th Squadron's Walter J. Mayer, reminisced about the many reunions she has attended and about the warm friendships they have generated.

She was followed by Donna Roth, who was accompanied to the podium by her husband, 360th Squadron veteran Charles

L. Roth. Mrs. Roth's emotional speech blended with the remarks of those who preceded her.

Mary Eisenhart, wife of the 359th's William E. Eisenhart, was scheduled to speak next, but illness prevented them from attending the reunion. Instead, Mel's son Jon M. Schulstad read Mary's recollections of life at Molesworth during the war. Mary had been stationed there as a nurse.

Next, Brittney McCoy, the 12-year-old granddaughter of the late Melvin T. McCoy of the 303rd's 444th Air Depot, gave a moving talk about her loving relationship with her grandfather.

Lore White, wife of Van R. White of the 358th Squadron, spoke next, and was followed on the program by Gary L. Moncur, son of the late Vern L. Moncur of the 359th. Lore and Gary each gave touching speeches in keeping with the occasion.

Dennis S. Smith, son of the late Carlton Smith of the 303rd HQ Intelligence Section, read the names of comrades who have passed away since the reunion in 2002.

Reverend Robert L. Johnson closed with the benediction.

DFC FOR 360TH SQUADRON'S TOM HARDIN 58 YEARS AFTER MISSION TO STERKRADE

303rd BGA WWII Awards Chairman Bill Cox Guides Him In Procedures

Tom Hardin, a retired USAF major, describes his 29th mission, an attack on the synthetic oil plant at Starkrade, Germany, as the worst of his career total of 35 missions. It was flown on 22 January 1945. On 8 August 2003, more than a half century later, that mission earned him a belated award of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

At a ceremony at a Veterans of Foreign Wars Post in Spring Hill, FL, Hardin's heroism was cited by Congresswoman Ginny Brown-Waite who read the DFC citation and said, "It is my honor to present this to Major Hardin for his selfless duty."

1st Lt. Thomas H. Hardin, Jr., a 360th Squadron pilot, was at the controls when flak knocked out one of the B-17's four engines during an intense and accurate barrage in the target area. Faced with the choice of ordering the crew to bail out to possible death or imprisonment at the hands of the Germans, the pilot chose to try to nurse the bomber back to England.

No enemy fighter opposition had been encountered, so Hardin dropped out of formation. "The normal cruising speed of a B-17 is 150 miles per hour," he said. "I cut it back to 120 MPH, and we limped home. It was kind of spooky, but we had to do it." Safely on the ground at Molesworth, the crew counted more than 200 flak holes in the aircraft.

The DFC Citation read, "Lieutenant Thomas H. Hardin, Jr., distinguished himself by heroism while participating in aerial flight as a B-17 pilot, 8th Air Force, 303rd Bomb Group, 360th Bomb Squadron, Royal Air Force Molesworth, United Kingdom, on 22 January 1945. On that date, Lieutenant Hardin and his crew lead a formation in extremely intense and accurate anti-aircraft fire. His number one engine was knocked out, and the propeller would not feather. Lieutenant Hardin's first concern was the safety of his crew, so he ordered the crew to prepare to bail out. In addition to the problems with the number one engine, oil and fuel was leaking from the number two and four engines. Lieutenant Hardin's hope was to save his crew from becoming prisoners of war. He was able to control his seriously damaged aircraft and cross the English Channel to his home base. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Lieutenant Hardin reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Army Air Corps."

In accepting the award, Hardin thanked the Congresswoman, and commented, "I had a great crew who flew most of their missions with me, and a dedicated ground crew who kept our B-17 flying despite serious battle damage. The 303rd Bomb Group's maintenance crews often worked around the clock in miserably cold conditions."

He joked to the veterans of foreign wars in the audience, "I wore the uniform I'm wearing today when I retired from the Air Force in 1962, 41 years ago. Eat your hearts out!"

William H. Cox, the 303rd Bomb Group Association's treasurer, also chairs the World War II Awards Committee. He was instrumental in guiding Hardin through the procedures in applying for the award.

Bill explained, "I did what I do for anyone who contacts me for help. Based on what I learned in the process of getting the DFC for Rufus Grisham, I put together a set of step by step instructions for the men to follow if they wish to pursue being awarded the DFC."

"Tom had already written a detailed letter about the



READING OF THE DFC CITATION at the award ceremony honoring Maj. Thomas H. Hardin, Jr. was rendered by Florida Congresswoman Ginny Brown-Waite. The medal was pinned on by Hardin's wife, Mae Belle.

events and their impact on him and his aircraft. It was a very well written story of the problems he faced and dealt with. He also furnished me with the names of two potential witnesses from his surviving crew members.

"I instructed him to contact his Squadron C.O or the next in line of command for agreement to endorse the recommendation. I advised him that the recommendation needed to be addressed to his Congressman or Congresswoman.

"I advised him of the documents that would need to be included or attached. First, a statement signed by himself, agreeing to be recommended for the DFC. Then, the recommendation itself, along with a written Citation that would be ready for a dignitary to read when the medal was presented. In addition, he should include two witness statements if possible. Also, he was to include other related documents pertaining to the act to be recognized, to list these items as attachments to the basic Letter of Recommendation.

"I also advised him to prepare the chain of command Endorsements for the Letter of Recommendation. The names, ranks, titles and current addresses of the men whose endorsements would enhance the recommendation.

"I explained to him why the Congresswoman's approval was necessary to lift the constraints which are placed on submitting award recommendations that were not previously eligible due to time limits. This being required by Law.

"Finally, I advised him to be patient as a Board of Officers would meet and make recommendation of approval or disapproval. This Board is not in session at all times."



Bishop Rene Henry Gracida

The Wondrous Life of Catholic Bishop Gracida, A 303rd B-17 Tail Gunner

Sergeant Rene H. Gracida was tail gunner on the William M. Beasley crew in the 359th Squadron. The crew arrived at Molesworth on 30 January 1945, and he flew 32 missions until the war ended a few months later. Sgt Gracida was honorably discharged in 1945. In 1951, he entered a monastery. In 1958 he was ordained a priest. In 1997, he retired as Bishop of the Diocese of Corpus Christi, Texas.

His passage from the front rank of air combat against the Nazi enemy in World War II to the front rank of the Catholic Church is an inspiring story. There were times when he took more flak on the ground as a man of the cloth than he took in the air over Germany.

In retirement, Bishop Emeritus Gracida owns and operates a 240-acre ranch near Mathis, TX. He herds cattle, mends fences and works the fields of the ranch he calls *Rancho Milagro*.

"Milagro, because it's a miracle that I can run it," he jokes.

Gracida enrolled in a short course in Beef Science at Texas A & M, then bought six steers from the county sheriff, found a piece of land he liked, and went to work.

His ranch has grown from 80 acres, and is home to 75 cattle, some goats, chickens, a cat and a dog. He describes with pride his retirement career as a cowboy, calling it "good exercise physically and mentally."

On his 80th birthday last June, he granted an interview to Venessa Santos-Garza of the Corpus Christi Caller Times. Following are excerpts from the story as published in the

Caller Times:

* * *

His passion, his life and his career could, at times, be described as controversial.

Gracida was Bishop of the Diocese of Corpus Christi from May 1983 to April 1997. During his tenure he made national news for a boycott against the makers of Pepsi, and international news for being the first to issue a decree of excommunication to workers at an abortion clinic.

He took clear stances on capital punishment and was sued numerous times.

But, he was hailed by many for his aggressive leadership, credited with the expansion of Catholic Communications, the distribution of millions of dollars as head of the John and Marie Stella Kenedy Foundation and the establishment of adult pastoral education.

Monsignor Michael Heras said. "In every year of his episcopacy, from Madonna's 'Like A Prayer' video to the pro-life situation, this man has been very clear about his beliefs. Is he controversial? Absolutely, but so was Jesus."

Gracida was born in New Orleans in 1923, and he was reared in Texas City and Houston. He was



B-17 TAIL GUNNER RENE GRACIDA is standing on the far right in this 359th Squadron crew picture. From left to right are Jack Terrill, radio operator; Richard Rich, Copilot; Thomas Harrigfeld, waist gunner; David Thomas, ball turret; Jacob Gornto, engineer; Harry Welsh, navigator, and Rene Gracida. Kneeling in front is Pilot William Beasley. Bombardier George Mabary is not seen—he was taking the picture.

raised in church, serving as an altar boy for many years and has vivid memories of long Latin masses and a fascination with liturgy.

But that didn't make his path into ministry clear cut. There were many distractions, he said, like high school.

"I was busy with the usual high school activities like dating and having a good time," Gracida smiled. "You know, the business of growing up."

In the early 1940's, he entered Rice Institute, but by 1943 he was in World War II in the Army Air Forces. The war, he said, had a huge impact on him spiritually.

"I think," he said, "that's when the questioning began."

Gracida returned home to finish school and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in architecture from the University of Houston. But, he was restless.

In 1951, at the age of 28, he entered the monastery at St. Vincent Basilica in Latrobe, PA. He describes that time in his life as a "period of real tension."

"My mother, quite honestly, was not happy, but supportive. My family and especially my friends...well, they thought I was crazy."

Gracida said, "Yet, when I arrived at St. Vincent a great peace came over me and it has never left me—that conviction has never left me. I knew I was doing the right thing."

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BISHOP EMERITUS RENE HENRY GRACIDA WAS INVITED TO ACCOMPANY TEXAS GOVERNOR RICK PERRY on a flight from Austin to Galveston where the governor made a speech at the Lone Star Flight Museum last March. Later, the party flew over the Galveston area for more than an hour aboard the Museum's air-worthy B-17 *Thunderbird*. The governor's father was a tail gunner in another B-17 Bomb Group during the war. Gracida described it as "a great experience." He and the governor's father took turns in the tail position. In the photo, Bishop Gracida is second from the left, in the red shirt. At his right shoulder is grey-haired Texas football coaching legend Darrel Royal. Governor Perry is to the right of Coach Royal. Standing at the far right is the governor's father.

GRACIDA from 5

He was ordained at age 35. He was appointed Bishop of Miami, FL in 1971 and of Pensacola/Tallahassee, FL in 1975. He was installed as the head of the Diocese of Corpus Christi in 1983.

His career and his life have not been without challenges.

Gracida said when he was chosen as Bishop in 1971, his biggest obstacle was finding a way to instill a spark of religious fervor in people who he felt were drowning in a world of material values.

"Now, we see the flock wandering around, just indifferent. They don't care about making a place for religion in their lives," said Gracida. "We aren't losing

them to other churches. They simply don't care. And then we have what I call Smorgasbord Christians who just pick and choose what's easy."

The years have brought their fair share of triumphs, he said, like convincing top executives at PepsiCo to stop airing a commercial featuring pop music star Madonna and her song "Like A Prayer," and doing things that he said were sacrilegious on a church altar.

Gracida got the attention of Pepsi and the national media with his Diocese-wide boycott of all the corporation's products, including Frito-Lay, and pulled all of their vending machines from Diocese buildings. He said he never expected it to go that far.

"I wrote to the area

distributor and asked him to pull it (the Madonna commercial), but I didn't get a response. I got so upset I called for all Catholics in the Diocese of Corpus Christi not to purchase any PepsiCo products," he said.

"Almost immediately, I got a call from the Texas distributor, then the corporate office in New York called and asked what it would take to call it off. I thought they would stop airing it here, but instead they pulled it nationwide."

He said he thinks he did the rest of the country a favor without intending to.

"When you throw a pebble in the middle of a pond it makes little ripples that work their way out," he said. "Eventually they reach the shore and little by little they change the world around them."

Some would argue that Gracida throws only boulders.

In 1996, he was the first in the United States to issue decrees of excommunication—two to abortion clinic workers and another to a local abortion clinic doctor.

The move made him an icon in the eyes of pro-life supporters, attracted the spotlight of international media, and made him a leper among fellow bishops.

Gracida lives by many mantras and keeps a quote by author Edmund Burke close to his heart.

"Evil exists in the world because good men fail to act," he said. "When dealing with evils like capital punishment or abortion you have to speak out. It's in taking a stand against those evils that I became controversial."



427th SQUADRON BALL TURRET GUNNER WARD W. KIRKPATRICK DIDN'T LIVE LONG ENOUGH to test the survey that said his position was "the safest" in combat on a B-17. Kirkpatrick and his entire crew were killed in action when their bomber crashed in the North Sea under enemy fighter attack on 15 May 1943 on a mission against air and naval installations in the Heligoland Islands.

SURVEY OF 8TH AF COMBAT CASUALTIES IN 1944 SHOWS BALL TURRET AS "SAFEST"

(The following article is published with permission of the Air Force Times. It appeared originally in the Times on November 24, 1962)

WASHINGTON—Safest position in U.S. World War II heavy bombers was apparently the ball turret gunner's. Worst slot, from a casualty point of view, was the bombardier's.

These conclusions can be drawn from a detailed analysis of aircrew casualties in the Eighth Air Force over a three-month period in 1944. The statistics have been reported in "Wound Ballistics," a new Army Medical Department publication edited by Maj. James C. Beyer.

A total of 1,117 air battle casualties were tabulated. They covered heavy bombardment groups of the Eighth Air Force flying B-17's and B-24's. There were 110 men killed and

1,007 wounded during the period. These statistics do not include crews of planes which were shot down or did not return to their bases in Britain.

The overall casualty figures (killed and wounded) show bombardiers with 196 or a rate of 17.6 percent. There were more waist gunner casualties (233), but many of the big bombers had two waist gunners so the 20.9 percent figure must be reduced substantially.

Tail gunners killed and

wounded totaled 140 for a 12.5 percent rate, and navigators suffered 136 overall casualties for a percentage of 12.2.

There were 95 radio operators killed or wounded. The percentage was 8.5. Ninety-four top turret gunners were casualties (8.4 percent). Pilot casualty total was 83, for a 7.4 percent rate, and co-pilots suffered 74 casualties for a 6.5 percentage. Only 66 ball turret gunners were killed or wounded, for a 5.9 rate.

If fatalities only are considered, the statistics look like this: (Once again, the waist gunner percentage should be discounted somewhat because of the presence of a second waist gunner in many bombers.)

Position	KIA	%
Waist gunners	21	19.0
Tail Gunner	19	17.3
Bombardier	18	16.3
Navigator	13	11.8
Top turret gunner	10	9.1
Pilot	8	7.3
Radio operator	8	7.3
Ball turret gunner	7	6.4
Co-pilot	6	5.5

A frequency distribution of battle casualties by type of bomber showed that the "risk" of becoming a casualty was about two-thirds greater to B-17 crews than it was to men in the B-24's.



IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM LIBRARY AT DUXFORD, ENGLAND PRESENTED WITH SET OF THE HELL'S ANGELS NEWSLETTER SILVER ANNIVERSARY BOOKS—Robin Beeby, the 303rd Bomb Group Association's representative in the UK, made the presentation to Linda Mason, who accepted them on behalf of Director Ted Inman in the museum's Eighth Air Force Hangar. The dramatic background was the beautifully preserved B-17 *Mary Alice*. Ms. Mason told Robin and his wife, Sue, who accompanied him to the museum, that the books would go into the library's archives for pleasure reading, reference and research by visitors. She said she was looking forward to enjoying the books herself.

303rd's Newsletter Book Presentations To 40 Institutions Nearing Completion

Presentations of the 303rd Bomb Group Association's highly praised *Hell's Angels Newsletter Silver Anniversary Collection, A World War II Retrospective* have been made to the libraries of 36 prestigious universities, US Air Force bases, museums and communities, including the Library of Congress. It's anticipated that the remaining four presentations will be made by the end of the year. The index has been cited as a unique and valuable guide for general reading and research.

Recommendations for recipients came from the Association's Board of Directors, Committee Chairmen and the general membership. They totaled 16 universities, 12 USAF bases, nine museums, two communities and the Library of Congress. In most instances, the actual presentations on behalf of the Association were made by members living in the area of the receiving institution.

The two-volume set of books were published in May, 2002. Five-hundred sets were printed, with 40 designated as gifts to the various libraries. The remaining 460 sets were available for sale. Most were sold within the first few months, and the rest are now completely sold out.

A second printing is not planned.

Following are the names and locations of the libraries and the presenters. The four among the 40 yet to make the presentation are marked by an asterisk *.

Universities (16)

University of California at Los Angeles (Humphrey O'Leary)
 University of Florida (Betty Kelley)
 University of Idaho (Jack Rencher) *
 University of Illinois (Al Dussliere)
 University of Michigan (Fred Reichel)
 University of New Mexico (Van White)
 University of Oklahoma (Maurice Hackler & Don Keating)
 University of Oregon (Kermit Stevens) *
 University of South Carolina (Walt Ferrari)
 University of Texas (Hal Susskind) *
 University of Utah (Gary Moncur)
 University of Vermont (Dick Bowler)
 University of Washington (Mel Schulstad) *
 Boise State University (Jack Rencher)
 Louisiana State University (Kenneth Clarke)
 Northwestern University (Eddie Deerfield)

(Continued on page 9)

BOOKS from 8

US Air Force Bases (12)

USAF Academy, CO (Harold Timm, Leroy Faulkner) (Two sets)
Andrews Air Force Base, MD (Eddie Deerfield)
Fairchild Air Force Base, WA (Walt Mayer)
MacDill Air Force Base, FL (Bill Eisenhart)
March Air Reserve Base, CA (Harry Gobrecht)
Maxwell Air Force Base, AL (Tom Richardson, Clyde Bradley)
Nellis Air Force Base, NV (Bill Heller)
Randolph Air Force Base, TX (Marthe Curry)
Sheppard Air Force Base, TX (Bud Klint)
Travis Air Force Base, CA (Dennis Smith)
Wright-Patterson Field, OH (Dick Dubell)

Museums (9)

8th AF Heritage Museum, GA (Eddie Deerfield)
Aerospace Education Center, AR (Lew Lyle)
Aerospace Museum Library, CA (Harry Gobrecht)
D-Day Museum, LA (Kenneth Clarke)
Duxford Museum, England (Robin Beeby)
Gen. George C. Marshall Museum, VA (Eddie Deerfield)
Commemorative Air Force Museum, TX (Frank DeCicco)
Museum of Valor, CA (Bill McLeod)
Palm Springs Air Museum, CA (Richard Smith)

National and Community Libraries (3)

Degenstein Library, PA (Joanna Tressler)
Topeka & Shawnee County Library (Carl Fyler)
US Library of Congress (Eddie Deerfield)

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING PORTLAND, OREGON REUNION, 11 August 2003

President Walt Ferrari opened the meeting at 0930 hours, with Fred Reichel giving the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Al Dussliere.

President Ferrari announced the resignations of Harry Gobrecht as Historian and the resignation of Ed Miller as 360th Squadron Representative. Walt assured the members that these positions will be filled quickly to provide the continuity so well accomplished in the past.

Vice President for Reunions Walt Mayer reported that the 303rd's reunion in 2004 will be held in Savannah, Georgia at the Hyatt Hotel 25 to 30 August. The 8th Air Force Heritage Museum will be re-visited. He introduced Ted Dey, an owner and representative of Armed Forces Reunions, the organization that will make arrangements for the reunion.

Editor Eddie Deerfield said the Hell's Angels Newsletter is not a typical house organ, church bulletin or shopping cart handout. He said it's a news magazine with the editorial philosophy of keeping the membership informed as the voice of the Association's president and Board, and is not the voice of any one individual or lobby group. His statement was greeted by applause.

The Squadron representatives announced the results of elections at their meetings. (The names of the representatives and their alternates or appointed assistants are listed on page 2 of this newsletter).

World War II Awards Committee Chairman Bill Cox reported that his efforts to seek DFC awards for 303rd Bomb Group veterans has been successful in two instances (Rufus Grisham and Tom Hardin) and that he was confident that two others would receive the award in the near future. He said he has assisted 38 individuals, but several have dropped out because of delays and lack of acknowledgement in the reviewing process.

Internet Operations Director Gary Moncur reported continued increases of visits to the 303rd's web site and its links. He declared that it was the finest of its kind, and encourages use by the younger generation to learn about the history, ethics and character of the bomb group's role in World War II.

Past Presidents Committee Chairman Jack Rencher presented the slate of seven officers for election to the Board of Directors as its Executive Committee in the 2003-2004 term. The slate was approved unanimously by the membership. (The names are listed on page 2. Walt Mayer, whose name was on the original slate, withdrew and he was replaced by his daughter, Kathy Johnson).

By-Laws Committee Chairman Bill McLeod presented the Board's recommendation to change the language which called for projecting the location of reunion sites four years in advance. He said two year forecasts were more realistic and desirable. The motion carried, authorizing him to revise the by-law.

Membership Chairman Dennis Smith reported declines in membership due to death of veterans and lagging interest by family members.

PX Administrator Charlie Sykes reported steady and successful sales of merchandise stocked by him and his wife, Vicki. He said the "hottest" item was a light cold weather jacket.

The meeting closed with remarks by outgoing President Walt Ferrari, who thanked members of the Board for their help, confidence and understanding of his tenure in the office, and a well-phrased and enthusiastic acceptance speech by incoming President Al Dussliere. The meeting adjourned at 1120 hours.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Bowler, Jr., Secretary



THE WINNERS! From the left, Dennis and Marriane Smith, Charlie and Vicki Sykes, Kathy Johnson and Walt Mayer.

SIX HONORED AT PORTLAND REUNION; ATTENDANCE LOW

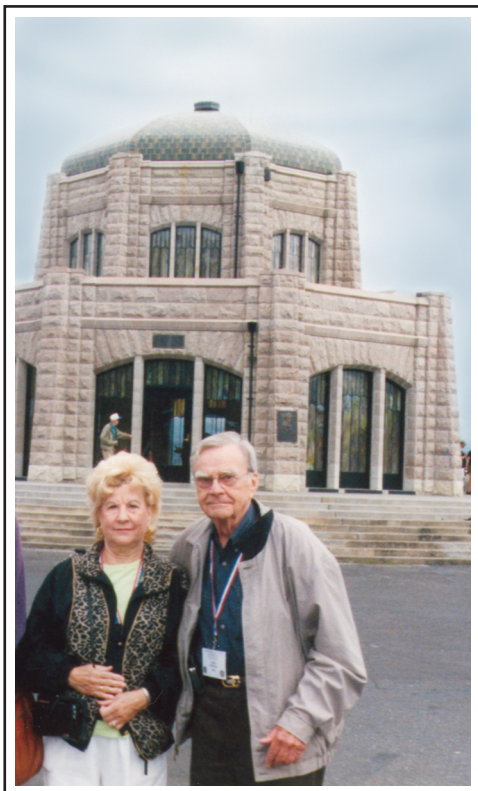
The 303rd Bomb Group Association's annual reunion, this year from 7 to 11 August at the Doubletree Hotel in Portland, OR, was a joyous occasion, as is always the case when the veterans of Molesworth and their families and friends meet. The gathering, however, brought out the smallest attendance at a city in the U.S. in 28 years. There were 167 in Orlando, FL at the Association's first reunion in 1975. The official count for 2003 was 238, 50 less than the next lowest attendance of 288 in San Diego, CA in 1981.

Among the highlights of the reunion, aside from an array of enjoyable tours, was the memorial service described on page 3, the award ceremony at the farewell banquet for volunteer services rendered to the Association, and a Hospitality Centre that bustled with activity throughout the days and evenings.

The honorees were Dennis and Marriane Smith for membership services, Charlie and Vicki Sykes for managing the Post Exchange, Kathy Johnson and Walt Mayer for overseeing reunion activities.



MULTNOMAH FALLS IN THE COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE — Enjoying the scenery are (l-to-r) Al Dussliere, Ed Gardner, Lorene Dussliere and Bob Umberger.



THE CROWN POINT VISTA HOUSE ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER — The location afforded Larry Pierson and Donna Coe a stunning view of the river and a look at the historic Vista House, a gorge landmark since it was built in 1918.



THE MOST POPULAR PLACE TO BE AT MOST HOURS OF THE DAY AND NIGHT — Al Oswald and Frank Neuner wet their whistles in the Hospitality Centre of the 303rd Bomb Group Association at the Doubletree Hotel. In the background, always ready to serve, are popular volunteer bartenders Bill Beasley and John Ford.



LUNCH AT THE HOOD RIVER INN IN THE DINING ROOM OVERLOOKING THE RIVER — Preparing to begin the garden salad first course are Walt and Ruth Ferrari, on the right, and daughter Christine Ferrari Dunn and her husband, Arthur.

CRUISING THE WILLAMETTE RIVER ON "THE PORTLAND SPIRIT" — Five of the 303rd Bomb Group Association's finest enjoy a two-hour luncheon cruise on the 130-foot yacht. The men, from left to right are James Force, Graham Gould, Don Geng and Roger Bates, all of the 359th Squadron. That's Roger's wife, Barbara.



DRINKING A TOAST TO THE BOMB GROUP THAT "ADOPTED" HER is Carolyn Guertin, on the left, accompanied by her sister, Florence Blank. The opportunity came during a wine tasting stop in the Willamette Valley. Carolyn's husband, Donald, flew as a pilot with the 34th Bomb Group. He died in 1993. She was among eight members of the 34th that attended the 303rd's reunion at Molesworth in 2000. When the Hell's Angels learned of her situation, they invited her to make the 303rd her second home. Carolyn and her sister have attended every 303rd BGA reunion since then.

UNDER THE NOSE OF THE B-17 ON DISPLAY AT THE EVERGREEN AVIATION MUSEUM are Angele and Carl Dubose. The museum's other most famous aircraft is Howard Hughes' massive eight-engine flying boat, The Spruce Goose.





Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum Will Be Debt Free By January 2004

C. J. Roberts, President and CEO of The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, in a letter to friends of the museum, announced that the institution will be free of debt by January of 2004.

"On March 18, 2003 the voters of Chatham County approved a continuation of a special sales tax referendum that levies a one percent tax on all taxable purchases," he wrote. "This 'Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax,' or SPLOST as it is known locally, will be used to fund various Chatham County projects including bridges, roads and drainage, as well as numerous building and expansion projects conducted by local non-profit organizations. Our museum is one of those non-profits that will greatly benefit from the SPLOST initiative."

Roberts explained, "As most of you are aware, the museum was built with funds from the sale of revenue bonds. Funds collected through the SPLOST will retire the outstanding balance on those bonds, making the museum debt free! This is positive for the museum as it puts us solidly on the path to permanence."

While the museum is on the verge of freedom from the revenue bond debt, it will continue to need the financial support of donors. Roberts said, "The retirement of the bond debt leaves our museum healthier than ever, but our day-to-day challenges continue. Like so many museums across the country, a significant portion of our annual operating budget is funded through the generosity of our donors."

The Summer 2003 issue of *The Mighty Eighth News* reported a number of significant accomplishments as the museum celebrated its seventh anniversary, recording 115,000 visitors in the previous year.

The museum, which is located in Pooler, GA just north of Savannah, was designated as an official State of Georgia center for character education. With this recognition came an

announcement by Governor Sonny Perdue that The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum would also serve as a pilot program for other museums throughout the state.

Over 12,000 students tour the museum annually, and that number is on the rise according to Director of Education, Debbie Dannel. "On our student tours we constantly use stories and historical events that illustrate various character traits." These include the stories of ordinary men and women who gave extraordinary service to their country in maintaining and flying 8th AF aircraft in such conflicts as World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Michael E. Telzrow, Director of Research and Interpretation, said that after several months of intense evaluation, selected staff members of his department have embarked upon an ambitious renovation project, responding to visitor demands and a professional desire to update the interpretive and aesthetic aspects of the museum's exhibits.

"One of the primary objectives," he said, "was to create a space that would provide the visitor with a better sense of the origin and organizational nature of the Eighth Air Force. In order to achieve this goal, it was necessary to completely rethink the existing layouts of the *Prelude To War*, *Battle of Britain*, *Darkest Hour* and *The First Two Years* galleries.

"It was determined that by shifting these exhibits from their original locations to adjacent exhibit areas one could create a space better suited to presenting the origin Eighth Air Force than the present configuration. Added benefits of this strategy include the ability to bolster the renovated exhibits with additional artifacts, lighting, props, graphics, labels."

He concluded, "As we move into the future we will continue to look at creative ways to enhance the visitor experience through exhibit evaluation that will ultimately set the stage for a comprehensive treatment of the Eighth Air Force's illustrious 60-year history."

8-4



APPEAL FOR MISSING COMBAT CREW PHOTOS

There were 553 Air Combat Crews assigned to the 303rd Bomb Group at Molesworth between 1942 and 1945. Our 303rd BGA website (www.303rdBGA.com) is searching for photos of each crew. We currently have photographs of 466 Air Crews and are urgently seeking photos of the missing 87 crews listed below. If you have any of these crew photos, or information about them, please contact us via email at: crews@303rdBGA.com, or mail a copy of the photo to: Gary Moncur, Director of Internet Operations, 4483 Palmer Drive, West Valley City, UT 84120-5052. Your photo will be placed on our internet website, then returned to you or sent on to our archives as you direct. Thank you for your help in preserving this priceless history of the 303rd Bomb Group (H).

Donald C. Aageson
Charles R. Allen
Mitchell T. Arcy
Silas B. Ashwell
Arley L. Atwell
Charles W. Austin
Eugene L. Baker
John C. Barker
A. F. Bilek
C. C. Bliss
George H. Blossom
Harold S. Bolsover
Raymond A. Boulter
Joe E. Bradbury
Frederick L. Breyer
Amedeo E. Capuano
Burt J. Cardwell
John W. Carothers
Arthur G. Carpenter, Jr.
Alexander J. Catich
Richard L. Clemenson
Bernard J. Clifford

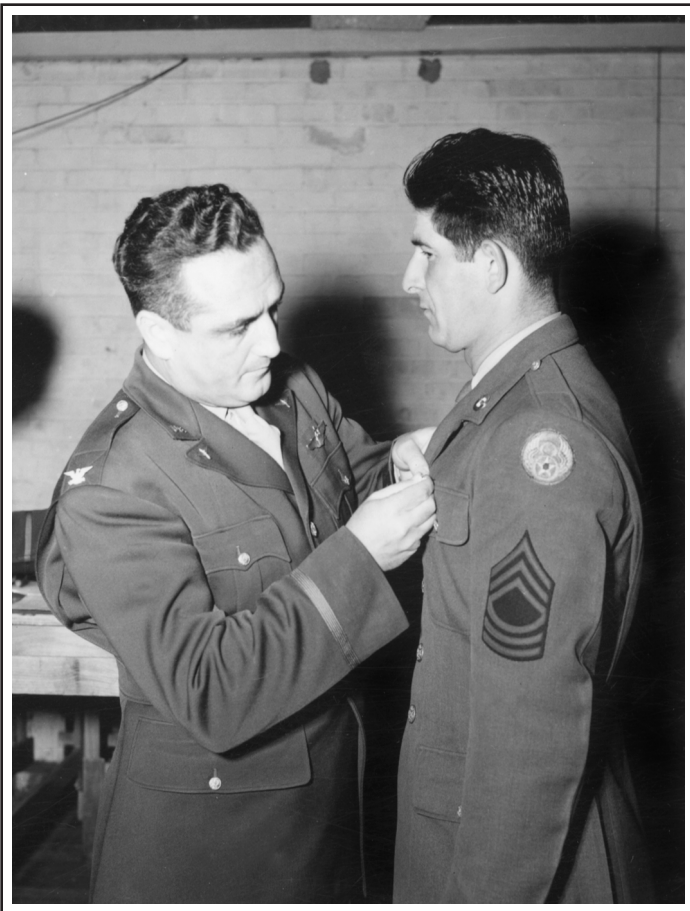
Malcolm F. Damon
Robert W. Davis
Richard D. Duffield
James R. Dunn
Oliver T. Eisenhart
Aubrey L. Emerson
Harold C. Farthing
William R. Flesh
Clarence M. Fountain
Carl A. Fredrickson
Edmund W. Gaines
John W. Gallagher, Jr.
Cecil J. Gates
Glenn H. Gillespie
Glenn F. Hagenbach
Rolland M. Haines
William R. Hartigan
Dale C. Headlee
Grover C. Henderson
Donald I. Hewitt
David F. Hicks
Alfred M. Holmes

Victor L. Howard
Anthony C. Jannuzzo
Robert A. Kennard
John C. Kielman
William P. Lay
Franklin Leve
Roman M. Ley
Andrew L. Lux
John A. Matheson
John McConnell
Henry W. McCullough
Leo B. McGrath
William C. McKimmie
Fred E. Mitchell
Noel N. Newell
Curtis M. Olsen
Chester N. Oranges
Robert C. Peterson
Robert L. Phelps, Jr.
Stanley E. Pursel
Lauren H. Quillen
George K. Richter

Gilbert T. Savage
Frederick W. Sawyer
Harry A. Schwaebe
Charles F. Scott, Jr.
Earl A. Shaeffer
Thomas L. Simmons
Allen R. Sims
Marshall L. Smith
Jack E. Stocks
John W. Struermer
James R. Taullin
John A. Thompson
Joseph E. Trojan
Walter W. Troppman
John W. Tulloss
Samuel L. Tyler
James A. Wall
Ralph E. Whitcomb
Gerald A. White
Garland M. Whitlock
Orville C. Witt



MASTER SERGEANT WILLIAM C. WOODMAN



MASTER SERGEANT CARINO J. COLANCECCO

303rd's Pin-up Men of The Month

303RD BOMB GROUP COMMANDER COLONEL KERMIT D. STEVENS PRESENTS THE LEGION OF MERIT AWARD TO THREE CREW CHIEFS FOR KEEPING THEIR B-17'S FLYING ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY ———

This edition's pin-up men were truly pinned in July 1944 when Colonel Stevens fastened the medal on their uniforms. The presentations were made "for exceptional meritorious conduct in maintaining B-17's at maximum operating efficiency." The period cited was from 15 November 1942 to 27 October 1943, and the squadron was the 358th.

Molesworth Base boasted the most outstanding ground crews in any bomb group in the Eighth Air Force. The skills of the maintenance personnel enabled the 303rd to record 364 combat missions, the greatest number of any heavy bombardment unit in the European Theater of Operations during World War II.

MASTER SERGEANT EVERETT W. EMERY



Molesworth Diary

GIVES UP HIS "LUCKY PENNY" TOO SOON

There was a buddy of mine who had completed his combat tour and was waiting to go back to the States. He had carried a "lucky penny" in his shoes on every mission. Since he was through with combat and I still had missions to fly, he gave me the penny to bring me luck. Because of some snafu in Operations, he was awakened one morning and told he was scheduled to fly a mission. He argued for a while, but he wasn't excused and went on the "extra" mission. His B-17 was flying on our right wing, in clear sight of our crew. His plane got hit by a direct burst of flak and blew up right before our eyes. No chutes were seen.

I finished my missions. The 'lucky penny' was good for me, but my buddy lost his luck. Very sad.

Robert Blythe
360th Sqdn Bombardier

TAKING POT SHOTS AT CYCLIST ON ROOF

I had flown only 12 missions by the time the war in Europe ended. On V-E Day, all of us were restricted to base. To celebrate, Headquarters provided kegs of beer between each Quonset hut and plenty of snacks. We were laying around in our hut that day, when there was a report that someone was riding a bicycle on the roof. Joe Czwonka, who we looked up to because he was on his second combat tour and knew the ropes, grabbed his .45 caliber pistol and fired into the ceiling. Thankfully, there were no hits on any riders.

Joe was great at leading us greenhorns in raids on the mess hall pantry. We would come back with bread, cheese, canned fruit and other good things. We would store them in an air raid shelter next to our hut. Then, Joe would shape a coat hanger as a support over our coal stove so we could heat or toast the stuff.

Donald O. Campen, Jr.
427th Sqdn Togglier

"CREW TRIED TO GET ME MEDAL OF HONOR"

I was shot down on my 13th mission on the B-17 *Sky Wolf* over Oschersleben, Germany on January 11, 1944. I became a prisoner of war, and was on a train for several days headed for Stalag 17-B at Krems, Austria. Around the first of April, 1945, the Germans abandoned the camp and started all the POW's on a forced march. It was rough, really cold in the wind, rain and snow. We had very little clothes. I heard that we walked about 600 miles before the American Army rescued us. I have often wondered how any of us made it.

My worst single mission, though, was to Bremen, Germany on November 26, 1943. The crew gave me credit for our plane being able to make it back that day. They tried awfully hard to get me the Congressional Medal of Honor, but I was given the Silver Star instead. I thought about checking into it after the war, but I know that somebody who was there has to put me

in for it and there have to be witnesses. I doubt that any of my old crew is still alive, so I guess I'll just forget it.

Grover C. Mullins
358th Sqdn Engineer

NOVICE CAMERAMAN GETS DOSE OF REALITY

On my 27th mission, I flew with a brand new crew on their very first mission. The bombardier had an 8-millimeter motion picture camera, and was filming everything in sight from the B-17's nose. As we crossed the French coast, we encountered a few bursts of flak. He was using his camera when a burst hit pretty close. The plane was jolted by the concussion. He looked at me in utter horror. "They're shooting at us," he said in disbelief. With that, he put down the camera, and grabbed his flak suit and steel helmet. He was quiet the rest of the mission, while I was thinking, "Welcome to reality."

Gordon F. Smith, Jr.
359th Sqdn Navigator

TRAILING BLACK SMOKE, LOSING ALTITUDE

My most vivid recollection is our crew's third mission, a flight to Merseberg, Germany with Pilot Roger Kuykendall and Copilot Loy Norris at the controls. We were flying in the "tail end Charlie" position when our B-17 received a direct flak burst in the number three engine. Oil pressure was lost before the prop could be feathered. It was windmilling, out of synch with the other propellers. From my point of view, the wings looked as if they were flapping like birds.

Norris told us to prepare to bail out. Those of us to the rear of the bomb bay assembled at the waist door. I stayed on interphone to receive instructions. Black smoke was trailing from the number three engine right past the waist door, and we were losing altitude.

The pilots were attempting to freeze the engine since it couldn't be feathered, and, fortunately, this did finally happen.

We were no longer in formation, had dropped to about 10,000 feet, and were all alone. The top turret gunner reported two fighter aircraft approaching and we thought at first they were German ME-109's. But, when they came within range we saw that they were our own P-51's, and they escorted us until we were out of danger from enemy aircraft.

We were late getting back to Molesworth, and we ground-looped on landing due to a tire blown out by flak. But, we were back!

Intelligence had us listed at the post-mission briefing as "gone down" after other crews in the formation described the smoke pouring from our right wing. We had the greatest admiration for our pilots Kuykendall and Norris for their skills in bringing us back.

Forrest E. Barton
360th Sqdn Radio Operator

this expense himself if the 303rd Board of Directors refused to approve it aroused concern among Board members that he planned to send the material to the Heritage Museum without receiving authority from the Board.

To allay these fears, the Association's new president, Al Dussliere, instructed Harry Gobrecht, "With a copy of this message to you I will assure the Board members that you will not ship the archive material anywhere without proper authorization by the Board."

At the time this edition of the newsletter went to press, the 303rd's Board of Directors had agreed to the following steps:

1. President Dussliere should contact Heritage Museum CEO C. J. Roberts and advise him that the Board of Directors of the 303rd BGA has not authorized the transfer of the archives of our organization to the Museum at this time.

2. Since we are going to be in Savannah next August for our reunion, we should request a meeting at that time with the President of The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, its Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the 303rd BGA's Executive Committee. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss openly our wishes and concerns on the subject of the archives.

3. We should request information from the Heritage Museum on how many Bomb Groups or other units have given their entire archives to the Museum. Which Groups or units are these?

4. Determine if Harry Gobrecht will agree to continue as caretaker of the archives pending the meeting with officers of the Heritage Museum. If not, they would be shipped to the new Historian or another member who would assume responsibility for their care until a final decision is reached on their disposition.

Gobrecht's premature resignation effective 18 July 2003 came after a series of failures by him to win approval for actions he initiated. In June, he sought to remove the editor of the Hell's Angels Newsletter, replacing him with an editor of Gobrecht's own choice. The Historian leveled a number of charges, and was aided in his campaign by Edgar "Ed" Miller and Jack Rencher.

Incumbent President Ferrari found no justification for the allegations, but presented Gobrecht's petition to the 303rd's Executive Committee. The Committee ruled five to one against removing the editor on the grounds that there was no valid reason to support such an action (the lone opposition vote was Rencher's).

Gobrecht then countered by proposing a series of amendments to the by-laws of the Association which would have so severely hampered the editor that he could no longer function effectively in serving the membership.

Eddie Deerfield, the newsletter editor, called the amendments "a futile self-serving maneuver." He issued a statement, "What Mr. Gobrecht might perceive as unfavorable to him will be seen by others as legitimate, objective, factual and appropriate. Does the editor, for example, refrain from publishing the facts about a major expenditure of funds from the 303rd BGA treasury because the sponsors might be offended by the disclosure of those facts?"

The amendments proposed by Gobrecht were summarily dismissed at the first Board meeting in Portland.

Edgar "Ed" Miller resigned as 360th Squadron Representative on 25 July after his charge sheet was repudiated by Deerfield in a point-by-point letter to the Board.

Although both were welcome, neither Gobrecht nor Miller appeared before the Board to justify their conduct by proving their allegations.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to work with the excellent officers you have just elected and all of you to guide the course of the greatest Military Association in the world, the 303rd Bomb Group of the 8th Air Force.

We worked and fought together those many years ago and now we will continue in the same spirit of cooperation to perpetuate the history we established. The continued help and assistance you have provided in the past is still needed and will be appreciated now and in the future.

I wish to share with you a portion of a letter I received recently from an Internet correspondent a young man who lives in Luxembourg, in Europe. He wrote, "I find it quite remarkable that the relatively short period, those few months that you and any other service men passed over here in Europe or in Asia, have influenced you so much and have left such deep imprints and memories."

My answer to him was, "You had to live it to know it."

We had a great reunion in Portland and wish that all of you could have been there with us. Everything was well planned, the accommodations were excellent, the tours interesting and most of all the closeness of all was prevalent there as it was those many years ago in Molesworth.

Many items of business were discussed and taken care of at the number of meetings necessary for an organization such as ours. One most important discussion concerned the future of the archives, which have been collected over a period of many years. Harry Gobrecht, our Historian for more than ten years, has expanded immensely on the material that was provided to him by former holders of the office. We cannot thank him enough for the efforts he has unselfishly given to the preservation of these most cherished items.

For many years it has been proposed that the archives be placed in the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum as a part of our history. The question still to be decided is the timing of when that should take place. It is our hope that decision will be made in the near future.

I want to express my heartfelt thanks and admiration to all that have served us so well in the past and especially during the just finished year. The dedication and efforts toward making us what we are will always be an inspiration to me.

If we are to continue as a vibrant organization we need to hear from those of you who are willing to serve as an elected or appointed officer. Make this information known to me or any of your officers. We are ready to follow the path you provide for us.

We need your stories, pictures, memorabilia or whatever you may wish to provide to our new Historian, Harold "Hal" Susskind; to the Editor of the Hell's Angels Newsletter, Eddie Deerfield, or to Gary Moncur, Director of Internet Operations.

We must consider what the future of our organization is. We need your thoughts, ideas, suggestions and support so your officers will know the course you want to chart.

There is no doubt that we are the greatest World War Two Army Air Corps Association there is. Lets work together to keep it that way.

Albert L. Dussliere

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

HIS "LITTLE BIRD" BETTER THAN A LATRINE RUMOR

A little bird tells me you recently had to see off a challenge to your editorship of the Hell's Angels Newsletter. I sincerely hope you have survived as, under your stewardship, the publication has, in my humble opinion, gone from strength-to-strength. It is, unquestionably, the best of its type, and I get to see dozens of other Groups' efforts during my frequent visits to the USAAF 1st Air Division Memorial Library here in Norwich, England.

Keep up the good work and remember the old saying: "You can't please all of the people all of the time." Even Jesus couldn't manage that miracle!

Ray Cossey
Former 303rd Bomb Group Representative in the UK

"HOLLYWOOD'S MEMPHIS BELLE MOVIE STUPID"

I want to say something about 358th Squadron Crew Chief A. D. Tilley's comment on the Molesworth Diary page in the August 2003 issue. He was absolutely right. The Hollywood "Memphis Belle" movie was stupid. It contained many errors. The main one, it seemed to me, was the crew member complaining about how scared he was to go on each mission and trying to get out of going.

The other movie about the Memphis Belle was true to life as it was done under then auspices of the USAAF.

Jack W. Johnson
358th Sqdn Tail Gunner

ANOTHER MISSING CREW PHOTO FOR ARCHIVES

In the August 2003 issue, I see you need a photo of our crew. It pleases me to be able to give back a bit. The pilot was Philip Owen Benham. I personally flew 30 missions.

In a recent issue of the newsletter I saw that our engineer and top turret gunner Cornelius Van Drunen had passed away. Of course, we called him

"Corney." He never minded it in the least. We had a good crew, both in the air and on the ground.

I read the Hell's Angels Newsletter cover to cover and look it over many times. I have every copy I have ever received.

Robert E. Bonenberger
358th Sqdn Waist Gunner
(EDITOR'S NOTE—SEE CREW PHOTO BELOW)

303RD LICENSE PLATE A WINNER IN PUBLIC'S EYE

A while back, I purchased my 303rd Bomb Group "Hell's Angels" license plate from our PX. Coming out of a store where I picked up my morning paper, a fellow was standing in front of my car reading the plate. Told me he loves seeing anything about the 8th Air Force whenever he gets the chance. Talked to me for about 10 minutes. Insisted he shake my hand before I left. When home, I started telling my wife the story, and I choked up. And I hate to see a grown man cry.

On a trip through North Carolina, I was pumping gas when the fellow next to me in a pick-up saw the plate and asked me all kinds of questions, like were you in the 8th and did you ever get hit? The next day, in South

Carolina, my wife and I pulled off Interstate 95 at a Rest Stop. We were headed for the restrooms when a fellow yells out to me, "Where were you stationed?" I said, "Molesworth." He shouted back where he had been stationed but by that time we were at the restroom doors.

Anyway, I just wanted to let everyone know—it pays to advertise!

John William Psota
358th Sqdn Togglier

USAF ACADEMY PLEASED TO HAVE NEWSLETTER

On behalf of the Superintendent, Lt Gen John W. Rosa, and the men and women of the United States Air Force Academy, I am pleased to accept the Association's newsletter of November 2002 (reporting the presentation of a set of Hell's Angels Newsletter books to the Academy). I apologize for the tardiness of my reply, but must admit that the guys in the photo on the back page are handsome dudes.

Seriously, we at the Academy are so grateful for Harold Timm's and Lee Faulkner's visit and for their wonderful presentation. We are honored that the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association would consider us as a re-

pository for their very significant history. Unit and mission histories as well as original primary source documents are always of special interest to cadets, faculty and visiting scholars. It is through the keen interest of veterans associations such as the 303rd that the Air Force Academy has been able to acquire some of its most treasured acquisitions.

Edward Alderman Scott
USAF Libraries Director

303RD CD PRESENTED TO AIR FORCE JUNIOR ROTC



Our Naugatuck, Connecticut High School has had a Junior ROTC program for the past nine years. I read in the Hell's Angels Newsletter that Gary Moncur had some extra "Might In Flight" CD's for free. I called him and received the CD and presented it to Captain Michael Grunwald at their Awards Presentation Banquet. My wife and I were invited as special guests, along with other veterans. The captain was very pleased to show the CD to his members and praised the whole concept of the "Hell's Angels" Association.

I bought the two-volume set of the Hell's Angels Newsletter Silver Anniversary Collection. Plenty of good reading about our 303rd.

Charles R. Doback, Sr.
358th Sqdn Waist Gunner



MISSING 358TH CREW PHOTO—Standing, l-to-r, Copilot Telesphor Lojewski, Pilot Philip Benham, Navigator Willard Hamm and Bombardier James McCamy. Kneeling, Engineer Cornelius Van Drunen, Radio Operator Reginald Downs, Tail Gunner Lenoir Dellinger, Right Waist Gunner Robert Garcia, Ball Turret Gunner Reginald Hill and Left Waist Gunner Robert Bonenberger.

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

The reunion at Portland was wonderful and everyone there had a great time. Even though the turnout was small, the comradery was wonderful.

There were people like John and Julia Soltero, who were inactive members of the association and attended the reunion after reading an article in the 8th Air Force newsletter, then became active members again. Fred Reichel signed up one of his sons (Thomas) as a new family member and Larry Pierson signed up Dick Spicer (a friend) as a new Associate member. Cliff Fontaine from the 427th signed up his daughter and her husband as Family Life Members.

Comments that I have received about the 2003 Membership Roster, are that the printing was too small. For the next roster, I'm planning on doing it in the format of a phone directory, "WITH LARGER PRINT". Going to this format, the association will only need to supplement pages as needed and one copy will serve everyone's needs.

Dennis Smith
Membership/Roster

IN MEMORIAM

Frank Bartholomy	358 th	4/12/98
William L Clyatt Jr.	427 th	June 2003
Arthur Dritz	359 th	1/13/98
James E Jeter, Jr.	359 th	8/30/03
Anton D Krank	358 th	5/27/03
Yale Lasker	359 th	5/25/97
John A Lorence	202 nd FIN	4/18/03
John W McCall	358 th	2002
James E McCormick	427 th	8/19/02
Cecil J See	359 th	6/6/03

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Salvador Chavez, 360th, 4628 SE 35th St., Del City, OK 73115-3516, (405) 677-1683, spouse Mary
 Harry G Frechter, 427th
 Edward W Gardner Jr., 427th
 Norman D Hammel, 360th
 Wayne Humphries (358th), 533 East 1200 North, Shelley, ID 83274-5018, Wayne was one of the four lucky men to survive the crash of "Bam Bam"
 Ralph A. Lucier, 2148 Cascade Drive, Jackson, MI 49203-3812, (517) 782-6226
 Charles A Mollmann (359th), 5764 Lauderdale Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45239, Charles has found the association after being listed as one of the missing
 Nicholas A Pepe, 360th
 Melvin Schwartz, (427th), 37 Bermuda Lake Drive, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418-4584, (561) 627-4714, spouse Phyllis
 John Soltero, 427th

James M Sutherland (360th), 1338 Edwards Road, Cincinnati, OH 45208-2714, (513) 321-8748, spouse Betty, James duty tour with the 360th was from March – May 1945. He is also one of the some 4,000 names of the missing comrades.

Johnnie R Wilson (359th), 548 Three Notch Road, Collins, MS 39428-6060, (601) 765-1445, spouse Peggy

NEW FAMILY MEMBERS

Richard Bartholomy, 5735 State Route 88, Kinsman, OH 44428-9742, (330) 772-5404, spouse Erma, (son of Frank Bartholomy)

James L Brunton, 799 Spring Hill School Road, Collins, MS 39428-4061, (601) 765-4070

Christine Ferrari-Dunn, 15 Lindron Ave., Smithtown, NY 11787-1631, (631) 360-1961, spouse Arthur

Dawn Higgins, 238A Thompson Place, Huntington Station, NY 11746-3310, (631) 673-6418, spouse Danny, (Dawn's father is Clifford F Fontaine from the 427th)

John G Lorence, 17621 East Northville Trail, Northville, MI 48167-3272, (248) 347-1682, spouse Nancy, (John's father was Staff Sgt. John A Lorence of the 202nd Finance Section)

Daniel W Lewis, 5333 Clover Meadow Drive, Murray, UT. 84126-4406, spouse Dyann, (son of William E Lewis)

Charles G Mabie, 112 Mirror Land N.W., Winter Haven, FL 33881-1316, (863) 294-5369, spouse Evelyn, (Charles's brother was 2nd Lt. Milton G Mabie of the 358th BS)

Robb M Paulk, 606 S. Madison, Box 381, Tilden, NE 68781-0381, (402) 368-5691, spouse Mayie, (son of Maurice J Paulk)

Thomas A Reichel, 51688 U.S. 31 North, South Bend, IN 46637 (son of Fred E Reichel)

Spc. Kate R Streifling, 143rd Trans Command, 32nd Trans Grp, 409th TC, APO-AE 09366, granddaughter of James W O'Leary Sr. (427th)

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Dick Spicer, 1009 South 26th Street, South Bend, IN. 46615-1717, (574) 288-6908

BENEFACTOR PROGRAM

Tom Devanny
 Edward W Gardner Jr. (427th)
 Bernard W Rawlings (427th)
 Charles W Smith
 James B Taylor (360th)

IN MEMORY OF DONATIONS

Art & Penny Bauer, in memory of Edward G Cooper (427th)
 Donald O "Spec" Campen Jr., in memory of Milton J Szymanski (427th)

303RD BG PX GIFT CATALOG

DESCRIPTION	CIRCLE YOUR SIZE AND / OR CHOICE	PRICE	QTY	TOTAL
"Might In Flight" T-Shirt. White. Design on front of shirt.	LARGE ONLY	\$5.00		
B-17 T-Shirt: Beige Hanes Heavyweight Tee. Design on shirt back	SMALL / MEDIUM	\$5.00		
Men's 303 rd BG "Hells Angels" Tee shirts, Navy Blue	MEDIUM / LARGE / X-LARGE	\$10.00		
Women's 303 rd BG "Hells Angels", Navy Blue	MEDIUM / LARGE / X-LARGE	\$10.00		
Kid's 303 rd BG "Hells Angels" Tee shirts, Navy Blue	MED 10-12 / LG 14-16	\$10.00		
Men's Golf Shirt, White - w/Embroidered "8th AF/303rd BG"	SMALL / MEDIUM / LARGE / X-LARGE	\$20.00		
Men's Golf Shirt, Blue - w/Embroidered "8th Air Force/303rd BG"	SMALL / MEDIUM / LARGE / X-LARGE	\$20.00		
Men's Golf Shirt, Red - Silk screened B-17 & 303 rd Bomb Group	SMALL / MEDIUM / LARGE / X-LARGE / 2X	\$20.00		
Jacket with pockets, 303 rd BG "Hells Angels" - Navy Blue, lined	SMALL / MEDIUM / LARGE / X-LARGE	\$50.00		
Baseball Cap, Embroidered with the Triangle C insignia	ADJUSTABLE — Khaki Only	\$9.00		
Baseball caps, Blue Embroidered with Might in Flight	ADJUSTABLE — Blue Only	\$9.00		
Bucket Hats, Embroidered "8th Air Force/303rd BG"	SIZE: M-L / LG-XL - COLOR: Blue Denim / Khaki	\$12.00		
Patch - 4 inch Fully Embroidered with Squadron insignia	Circle Squadron: 358 / 360	\$20.00		
Patch - 3 inch Embroidered with Squadron insignia	Circle Squadron: 358 / 359 / 360 / 427	\$5.00		
Patch - 3 inch Embroidered	Circle choice: "Might in Flight" / 8th AF	\$5.00		
Decal - "Might in Flight" insignia	Circle choice: Interior / Exterior	\$2.00		
Bumper Sticker - 8th AF/303rd BG, Triangle "C"		\$2.00		
License Plate - metal	B17F (olive drab) / B17G (silver)	\$8.00		
Replica Wings — Circle choice: Pilot / Navigator / Bombardier / Flight Engineer / Air Crew / Gunner		\$3.00		
Lapel Pin - Cloisonné Circle choice: "Might in Flight" / 303 rd BG Life Member / Squadron - 358 / 359 / 360 / 427		\$3.00		
Golf Ball Markers-Cloisonné-8th Air Force & 303rd Bomb Group		\$3.00		
B17 Hat pins		\$3.00		
B-17 Belt Buckle		\$5.00		
Tote Bag - Heavy Canvas w/8th Air Force / 303rd BG insignia		\$8.00		
Hand Towel - Embroidered with 8th AF/303rd BG		\$5.00		
Book - "Airfield Focus"		\$2.00		
Books - "Flying with Hell's Angels" by 303 rd BG member Sam Fleming		\$6.00		
Book - "Half a Wing, Three Engines and a Prayer" by Brian O'Neill		\$20.00		
Book - "303 rd Bombardment Group" by Brian O'Neill		\$20.00		
Book - "Staying Alive" by 303 rd BG member Carl Fyler		\$22.00		
CD - 303rd BGA "The Molesworth Story"		\$15.00		
2003 Membership Directory		\$10.00		

Please allow 2 weeks for delivery Please type or print clearly If you have any questions about your order or PX stock, please contact: Charlie Sykes at (602) 993-8015 or E-Mail: PX@303rdBGA.com MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO 303RD Bomb Group Association Mail with ORDER FORM to: Charlie Sykes / 303rd PX Administrator P.O. Box 33474 Phoenix, Arizona 85067-3474	TOTAL COST of Items Ordered		\$
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	City, State, Zip _____		
	Phone _____	E-Mail _____	

Rev. 9/12/2003

If you prefer not to tear this page from the newsletter, please make a copy of the form and mail it to the PX with your order. For photos of merchandise, visit the PX page on the 303rd BGA web site at: www.303rdbga.com



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

RICHARD M. DALEY
MAYOR

September 9, 2003

Dear Mr. *Eddie* Deerfield:

It was a pleasure to meet you recently at the Gallery 37 Closing Ceremony.

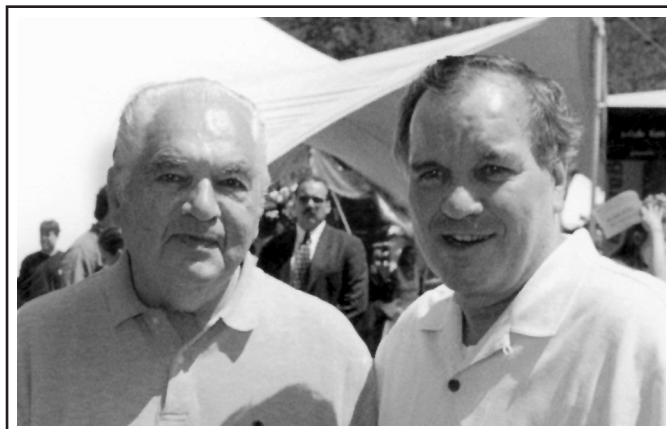
Gallery 37 allows our young people the opportunity to explore their interests and develop new skills. As they work alongside professional artists, our students learn from the personal experiences of others and form lasting and positive friendships. I am delighted you were able to attend the closing ceremony for this important initiative.

I thought you might enjoy the attached proclamation honoring the U.S. Eighth Air Force. Please accept the enclosed copy of *Chicago: Then and Now* along with my best wishes for much continued success in your endeavors.

Sincerely,

Richard M. Daley
Mayor

Mr. Eddie Deerfield
Editor
Hell's Angels Newsletter
U.S. Eight Air Force
303rd Bomb Group (H) Association
3552 Landmark Trail
Palm Harbor, Florida 34684-5016



Newsletter Editor Eddie Deerfield, on the left, and Mayor of Chicago Richard M. Daley at the Gallery 37 closing ceremony.

THE EDITOR COMMENTS

Chicago, my favorite city, celebrated Mighty Eighth Air Force Week from October 8 through 14, 2003. The goal was to encourage all Chicagoans to be aware of the contributions of Eighth Air Force veterans to the defense of our nation. Mayor Richard M. Daley's proclamation recognized the 8th AF as the largest military unit in World War II, never turned back by the enemy, with 26,000 killed in action and 28,000 prisoners of war.

My wife, Mary Lee, and I met the mayor while we were in Chicago last August to celebrate my 80th birthday with family and friends. I was raised in Chicago, attended Von Humboldt Grammar School, Tuley High School and Northwestern University in suburban Evanston, and was a reporter for the Chicago Times and a news editor for WGN-TV.

The occasion in downtown Chicago was the closing ceremony of Gallery 37, an award winning job training program in the arts for young people ages 14 to 21. The ceremony was inspiring, with music, song and dance by the apprentice artists.

There's a saying about never going back—you won't find things as you fondly remember them, and you'll be sadly disappointed. I left Chicago in 1966 for a career as a Public Affairs diplomat in the US Foreign Service, and was abroad for more than 20 years. Although we returned to the Chicago area from time to time, it was not until the visit last August that we went downtown, to the heart of the city.

Yes, some things have changed. "Ye Olde Cellar," our favorite downtown watering hole, is long gone. The "Italian Village" restaurant no longer has twinkling stars in the ceiling. But, the vibrant spirit of the city is still a presence, an electricity you can feel. And that's what made this walk down memory lane an affair to remember, and not in the least disappointing.

Eddie Deerfield

303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.
Hell's Angels Newsletter
Eddie Deerfield, Editor
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PALM HARBOR, FL.
PERMIT NUMBER 303