

Hell's Angels Newsletter

303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

May, 2005



WILBUR AND ORVILLE WRIGHT AND THEIR FLYER—The world's first mass-produced airplane.

NEXT 303RD REUNION IN DAYTON, NATION'S FIRST HOME OF FLIGHT

By **Walter J. Ferrari**
V. P. for Reunions

Welcome to Dayton, the birthplace of aviation, for the 303rd Bomb Group Association's 22nd reunion. It will begin on Tuesday, August 23 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel and end on Saturday.

Dayton is famous for the Wright Brothers, and rightfully so. After all, they did design and build the first controllable powered airplane. They had to teach themselves how to fly it. Not too many of us could do either of those things today, much less in the era in which they did it.

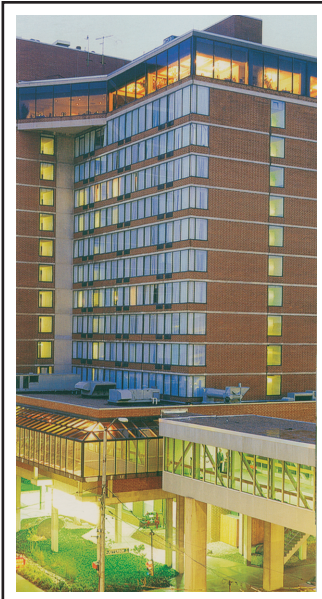
However, there is a lot more to Dayton which we will try to introduce to you during our reunion there.

Dayton has a proud tradition as an innovative and progressive community. Dayton has something for everyone from world-class museums, outstanding arts and cultural offerings, varied

sports and recreational activities, to numerous shopping and dining alternatives.

Part of Dayton's uniqueness is that all these big city amenities are packaged with Midwestern charm and affordability.

While much applause is directed toward the Wright



THE CROWNE PLAZA

Brothers, Dayton has other home town heroes. Paul Laurence Dunbar, who lived in Dayton and was a friend of the Wright Brothers, was the first African-American writer to gain national and international recognition.

Another Dayton writer was the late great Erma Bombeck, a widely popular humorist and critic of all things domestic.

There were other Dayton "greats" who turned out more than words, such as Charles F. Kettering who spurred the development of the automobile by creating the automatic transmission, safety glass and the first electric starter. He served as Director of Research for General Motors. He also later co-founded the Sloan-Kettering Institute of Cancer Research in New York City.

On Tuesday August 23, we have set up a city tour which leaves the hotel at

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303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.

Hell's Angels Newsletter

Editor—Eddie Deerfield

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The 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc., a tax exempt organization under IRS Code 501(c)(19), founded in 1975, is chartered in the State of Florida to perpetuate the history of the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) and to provide opportunities for 303rd veterans, families and friends to meet.

Because members are helping to perpetuate the history of the 303rd Bombardment Group (H), dues and/or donations to the Association are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. 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 and others related to regular members may become Family Members. Others 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 year begins on January 1. The *Hell's Angels Newsletter*, published quarterly, is sent to members whose dues payments are current. Annual dues are \$25 in the US and \$30 for foreign addresses. 303rd veterans are life members at age 78. A family member's life membership is \$100. Associate members may become life members for \$150. Veterans and family members have voting rights.

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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.

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TWO HONORED BY JAC WITH AWARDS NAMED FOR 303RD'S SMITH AND CURRY



THE JOINT ANALYSIS CENTER AT RAF-MOLESWORTH presented the Carlton Smith and Peter Curry Awards to two members of the command on March 9, 2005. Honored were USAF TSgt Tyrone M. Baker in the photo on the left and Mr. Aquilino Diaz III in the photo on the right. The awards were presented by JAC Commander USAF Col. Richard Ayres. Smith and Curry were in the 303rd Bomb Group Intelligence Section at Molesworth during World War II. Both have passed away.

The Peter Curry Award recognizes outstanding support by an enlisted member of the JAC to the US European Command. The 2004 winner was Technical Sergeant Tyrone M. Baker, non-commissioned officer in charge of the Theater Systems Operations Center. He led a team of 10 military and 11 civilian contractor personnel in intelligence mission duties.

Following is the text of the award citation:

"Technical Sergeant Tyrone M. Baker, United States Air Force, distinguished himself by exceptionally meritorious achievement as the Theater Systems Operations Center Noncommissioned Officer in Charge, Intelligence Technology Division, Directorate of Support from 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2004. During this period, Technical Sergeant Baker has directly contributed to the intelligence support mission by improving the Theater Systems Operations Center (TSOC) operating efficiency and infusing his team with superior customer service values. He reduced repair delays for critical network systems by eighty percent and implemented quality control and assurance methods. Technically astute and committed to the mission, TSgt Baker deployed twice in support of real-world and exercise operations providing critical intelligence services to US and NATO commands. These achievements demonstrate his commitment to excellence and devotion to duty. TSgt Baker has significantly improved the Joint Analysis Centers' intelligence support mission and the overall US European Command combat readiness in the global war on terrorism."

TSgt Baker was also recognized for his off-duty time, volunteering for two Maddingly Cemetery Retreat ceremonies and serving as coach for three youth sports teams — two basketball and one baseball. He's also active in a local Boy Scout organization, donating countless weekends to area children.

The Carlton Smith Award recognizes an Officer or Civilian Intelligence Professional who provided exceptional support to the US European Command. The 2004 winner was Department of Army civilian Aquilino Diaz III.

Following is the text of the award citation:

"Mr. Aquilino Diaz III, Department of Defense Civilian, distinguished himself by exceptionally meritorious achievement as Deputy Chief, Geospatial-Intelligence Division, Joint Analysis Center, United States European Command from 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2004. For nine months of this period he masterfully led the Geospatial-Intelligence Division (DOI) during the incumbent Division Chief's absence. He streamlined exploitation requirements and reorganized DOI into regional focus areas to best support the Theater's emergent intelligence problem sets. Mr. Diaz's visionary leadership and relentless drive were crucial in laying the foundation for an Advanced Geospatial-Intelligence cell at the JAC. He aggressively pursued and secured \$380K in funding and implemented the procurement of three full suites of equipment, software, manpower and the training essential to the successful execution of this new USEUCOM J-2 directed mission. His high-impact leadership in the creative use of existing imagery applications, commercial satellite imagery, development of new dissemination procedures and multi-INT fusion set new standards in geospatial-intelligence support to the warfighter. The distinctive accomplishments of Mr. Aquilino Diaz III have been in keeping with the finest traditions of the United States Civil Service and the Department of Defense, and have contributed significantly to successful accomplishment of the mission of the United States European Command's Joint Analysis Center."

Mr. Diaz serves as Assistant Scout Leader for the largest cub scout pack in East Anglia.

“I didn’t know if I would want to go...60 years later”

303rd Vet on First B-17 Flight Since Combat Bail Out in 1945

On George Emerson’s 16th mission, he survived a combat crash which took the lives of the other eight men on his 427th Squadron crew. The target was a synthetic oil manufacturing plant at Lutzkendorf, Germany, and the date was 9 February 1945.

Emerson was flying in his usual tail gunner position on R. J. Barrat’s crew. Just a few minutes before “bombs away,” he felt a tremendous impact. Another B-17, *Pogue-Ma-Hone*, piloted by the 427th’s A. K. Nemer, had been hit by flak, and collided with Barrat’s aircraft. Its right wing ripped off the tail section with Emerson in it.

“I was thrown about so wildly that I believe I was semi-conscious,” he later recalled. “I had my parachute hooked to only one of the two rings on my harness so it wouldn’t interfere with handling the tail guns.

“I remember falling through a hole, probably where the tail was severed from the aircraft. When I recovered consciousness some time later, the parachute was open, still hooked to one ring, but I don’t remember pulling the rip cord. I was taken prisoner soon after landing.”

The other eight men on the Barrat crew were killed, and there were only four survivors on the Nemer crew.

Sixty years later, Emerson attended an air show in Sydney on Vancouver Island, Canada. *Sentimental Journey*, a B-17G owned by the Commemorative Air Force, was on display. He struck up a conversation with the pilot and co-pilot, and told them that he had flown 16 missions on a B-17G during World War II.

The pilot was a Southwest Airlines veteran and the co-pilot was retired from the Aviation Section of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Most of his 27 years in the air was on “bush” type aircraft where he had flown Beavers, Otters and Twin Otters as well as Cessna Citations and Beechcraft 200’s.

They said the bomber was flying the next day to Abbotsford, Canada, and invited Emerson to come aboard for the flight.

The invitation surprised the former tail gunner. It would be his first time in the air on a Flying Fortress since that nightmare mission in 1945 that he miraculously survived while the other eight men on his crew were killed in action.

“I didn’t know if I’d want to go,” he said. “I had second and third thoughts.” Finally, almost reluctantly, he accepted the invitation.

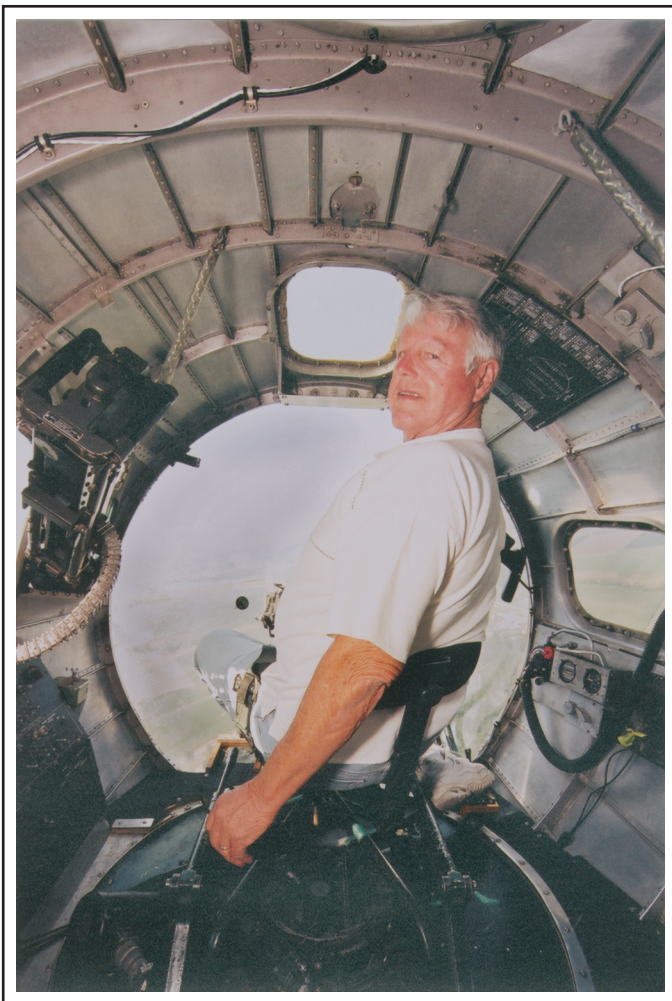
“The next morning at about 11 o’clock we were roaring down the runway headed for Abbotsford. Aboard besides the



427th SQUADRON TAIL GUNNER GEORGE EMERSON was the only survivor on his nine-man crew when another B-17 collided with and ripped the tail section off his aircraft on the Lutzkendorf mission 9 February 1945. He fell out of the tail, managed to pull his rip cord and parachute down to become a prisoner of war.

pilot and co-pilot were two other crew members and six passengers including myself. We were allowed to move freely around the plane while in flight. I spent time in the waist position and the radio room, and then moved into the nose for the last portion of the trip.

“An editor for Canadian Aviator magazine was in the bombardier’s position. He moved back to the navigator’s position to let me move forward in the nose. After we landed, he was especially interested in my story and took lots of notes and some pictures. His story is on the next page.”



REAL LIFE TAIL GUNNER BECOMES MAKE BELIEVE BOMBARDIER—George Emerson had the best view on the B-17 *Sentimental Journey* as it came in for a landing at Abbotsford, Canada. It was his first flight on the World War II bomber since he survived a crash that killed the rest of his crew on a combat mission in 1945.

A VETERAN'S SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

An editorial by Garth Eichel, of Canadian Aviator. Published with his permission in the Hell's Angels Newsletter.

Sometimes, being the editor of a flying magazine has its perks.

Recently, I was invited along on a flight from Victoria to Abbotsford, B.C. in a Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress, *Sentimental Journey*, flown by the Arizona Wing of the Commemorative Air Force. Naturally, I jumped at the opportunity.

On the day of the flight, I find *Sentimental Journey* at the B.C. Aviation Museum where she's parked on a small hummock in front of the hangar, her polished aluminum shimmering in the morning sun. I realize how the elegant beauty of this airplane belies its brutal war-fighting purpose.

There's nothing beautiful about the interior though;

it is cramped and utilitarian. The six other passengers aboard and I have to crawl through the confined fuselage to get to our seats.

I am sitting next to one of the .50 calibre waist guns and while the crew runs through its pre-start checklist, an older passenger seated nearby mentions that he flew in B-17's during the Second World War.

But before I can catch the story the starter on the number three engine begins its high-pitched whine, turning over the three-bladed prop. After four revolutions the engine catches, barking and growling. Plumes of white exhaust belch forth, obscuring the starboard side of the aircraft. More smoke billows around the airplane as the number 4, 1 and 2 engines light in succession.

With pre-taxi checks complete, the captain advances all four throttles and the B-17 heaves itself forward through the grass, lurching up and down, side to side. Outside, grass and dandelions are flattened by propwash and I imagine what it must have been like 60 years ago setting out on a mission. My thoughts turn to the vet sitting up forward.

My reverie is interrupted by the take-off. When the four Wright R-1820-97 Cyclone radial engines come up to full power the acceleration is startling. Soon we are wheels up and enroute. Like everyone else, I start crawling from one part of the airplane to another in a state of sensory overload.

Prior to descent, I crawl into the forward compartment to find the seat in the nose bubble vacant. I strap in for a memorable landing. Moments later, the gentleman I had overheard crawls in to join me. He is about to sit in the navigator's seat behind me, but I give up my seat. Surely he had earned the view.

After landing, the old vet turned up his hearing aids and introduced himself as George Emerson.

George, it turns out, had been a 19-year-old tail gunner in the U.S. Army Air Corps 8th Air Force, with the 303rd Bomber Group, based in Molesworth, England.

On February 9, 1945, George's 16th mission was an oil refinery at Lutzendorf, Germany. At 25,000 feet, five minutes prior to drop, another B-17 in his formation was hit by flak and went out of control. It crashed into his airplane, cutting the fuselage in half. George fell out of the tail section as it tumbled to earth. His was the only chute to open.

I asked George what it was like to fly in a B-17 for the first time since then. Not surprisingly, his response was rather emotional.

"I didn't know if I'd want to go. I had second and third thoughts," he said. "When we took off, I was a little sentimental at first—I had to hold back the tears. But I'm glad I did this. It was a wonderful flight."

It certainly was, George.



MATHIAS J. KREMER, now age 88, was 27 in the summer of 1943 as he enjoyed a final home leave before flying to England as the ball turret gunner on pilot Roy Sanders' crew. On the infamous "Black Thursday" mission of 14 October 1943 to Schweinfurt, Germany, the Sanders crew on *Joan of Ark* was shot down by an enemy fighter. Kremer was wounded in the action, bailed out, and his leg was amputated in a POW hospital.

"A 20mm Shell Went Through My Elbow Into My Leg. Everything In The Ball Turret Was Bloody"

Matt Kremer's nephew writes about his uncle's time in World War II, after lengthy interviews and personal research. It's a story well told.

By Arthur D. Tobkin

The second bombing mission to the German city of Schweinfurt would be forever known as "Black Thursday" for the combat aircrews and supporting ground personnel of the 1st and 3rd Air Divisions, flying from sixteen airbases in England. Of the 291 bombers that were dispatched on October 14, 1943, 26 aircraft turned back to England due to mechanical or equipment problems. Thirty six bombers were shot down on the way to Schweinfurt, and an additional 24 bombers were lost after leaving Schweinfurt.

This is dedicated to those aircrews and ground personnel, and is dedicated especially to my Uncle, S/Sgt Mathias J. Kremer, Ball Turret Gunner, 358th Bomb Squadron, 303rd Bomb Group, 1st Air Division, flying from the air base at Molesworth, England.

Schweinfurt was the manufacturing site of approximately 40% of the ball bearing production for the Third Reich. The Allied Forces had flown the first mission to Schweinfurt on August 17, 1943. Of the 306 bombers that reached Schweinfurt and a second target at Regensburg, Germany, 60 aircraft were lost, along with approximately 600 aircrew men. The 8th Air Force was aware that they could not continue to experience the nearly 20% loss ratio of the Schweinfurt/Regensburg raid. However, the 8th Air Force was also fully aware of the importance of reducing the Schweinfurt production of bearings for the Third Reich.

When my Uncle Matt sat in the Briefing Room, in the

early hours of October 14, 1943, there was a lot of apprehension when the black curtain on the wall was pulled back and the length of black yarn led to and ended at Schweinfurt.

Matt and his crew were awakened at 0400; briefing was at 0600. It was a dreary morning with fog and a slight mist, typical of Molesworth. The fog was getting thicker and many felt that the mission would be scrubbed, but by mid-morning 291 bombers were poised for take off at Air Bases scattered throughout England. The planes were loaded with an extra five hundred pounds of bombs on wing racks, so take off and climb out to the Assembly Area was difficult. After Assembly, the heavily loaded bombers proceeded eastward toward mainland Europe, on two separate flight paths, being escorted by approximately one hundred P-47 Thunderbolts.

The escort fighters encountered the first enemy planes over Walcheren Island. At approximately 1330 hours, the fighters, with limited fuel, turned back toward England. Uncle Matt's plane, *Joan of Ark*, was near the German border. The first German fighter attacks came from eastern Belgium and continued onward to the target.

In my Uncle Matt's own words, "*When our escort turned around to go back, the German planes came at us. They lined up out of reach of our guns. Then, ten or fifteen at a time, they would come in to attack us. I was in the ball turret. My intercom was shot out in about the second attack, so I was on my own down there. I had no idea what the crew on top was doing or what was happening in the plane. It was really lonesome in the turret, without the chatter from the rest of the crew. The Germans kept up a steady attack. When one group finished with us, another group was waiting to take over from there. This was happening along with the*

anti-aircraft shells from the ground that were exploding around us. I saw plane after plane shot down. There were so many I lost count. Finally, after we had been in the air for about five or six hours, we spotted the target at Schweinfurt. We dropped our load of bombs on the target and were heading back to our base at Molesworth."

As Joan of Ark was turning toward England, it was hit by cannon fire from a German ME-210. The cannon shell impacted the B-17 in the tail of the aircraft, and the tail gunner, S/Sgt Alfred E. Cockrum, and the right waist gunner, Sgt Martin V. Caril, were killed instantly. The cannon shell also caused the rudder and the horizontal stabilizer to jam and the aircraft was unable to continue its' turn back toward England. Matt's plane was forced to drop out of the protective formation of bombers.

As my Uncle Matt related to me, "Now the pilot couldn't keep up with the formation, and we fell behind. That was when the Germans really came after us from all sides – left, right, top and bottom. I was firing at a plane coming in at me and it started to go down in smoke. I followed it with my turret to make sure I had gotten it. That is when a twenty millimeter shell came in behind me and went through my elbow and into my leg. Everything in the turret was bloody!

"I turned in my turret seat so that I could climb up into the waist section of the plane with my right arm and leg. As soon as I got my eyes level with the floor of the plane, I realized that everyone was parachuting out. In the process of climbing out of the turret I had to remove my oxygen mask and we were at 26,000 feet altitude, so I needed to get out fast. I had to put on my parachute with just one hand, since my left hand was useless. I almost had it on when I was hit in the back with shrapnel from a shell. It knocked me down and I had to start over with getting the chute on my back. By now, all four engines were on fire and I knew they could blow up any time. I finally got my chute on and headed for the door. Just as I got to the door, I felt the plane start to nose dive. I jumped, and dropped about twelve to fifteen thousand feet before I opened my chute. While I was falling, a German kept circling me in a little fighter plane. When I opened my parachute, he saluted and left. By that time, I knew he had reported about where I would land."

My Uncle Matt's plane went down near Bamberg, Germany, approximately 30 miles southeast of Schweinfurt. When Matt landed on the ground, he crawled toward a road. A German farmer was going by with a wagon and a team of oxen. Matt crawled into the wagon and was joined a short time later by two German soldiers.

My Uncle Matt had grown up in a household where German was spoken daily by his parents. Therefore, he could understand the German language. He told me that, "When we got to town, they took me from the wagon and helped me to the aid station. Nearby, were about twenty German civilians in the street with guns and pitch-forks. I heard one of them say in German, 'We should shoot the S. O. B. in the back.' The two German soldiers turned around, pulled their side-arms, and cleared the street. Then these two put me in the aid station and left me there. A little later, the pilot from my crew was brought in and the people giving first aid let us talk for about a minute. Then they took the pilot away. I lay there on the slab until after dark. That evening they hauled me to a nearby hospital where a German nurse gave me an injection of something."

Matt remained in the Bamberg area for about a week. The German medical personnel put casts on his arm and leg, but did not clean or attend to his wounds. He was then moved to a former French hospital in Ludwigsburg, Germany, which is just north of Stuttgart. Here he was placed under the care of another prisoner, a Polish doctor by the name of Dr. Zenowski. The Doctor examined Matt, shook his head and told the or-



THE ROY SANDERS CREW gathers under the B-17 *Hell's Angels* for the traditional crew photo. In back, from left to right, are bombardier Philip A. Peed, radio operator James G. Trest, right waist gunner Martin V. Caril, ball turret gunner Mathias J. Kremer, tail gunner Alfred E. Cockrum and left waist gunner Riker K. Smith. In front, co-pilot Henry F. Nogash, navigator F. M. Peacock, pilot Roy C. Sanders and engineer Joseph A. Rosek.

Caril and Cockrum were killed on the Schweinfurt raid of 14 October 1943 and the rest of the crew, with the exception of Peacock who didn't fly the mission, became prisoners of the Germans.

derly to put him "somewhere". The next morning, Doctor Zenowski, surprised that Matt was still alive, did a more thorough examination. He had to remove the casts on Matt's left arm and leg, clean the wounds, remove additional shrapnel, re-break his arm and install casts.

In Matt's own words, "About two weeks after I got to the hospital, my leg started to hurt real bad. Doctor Zenowski announced that he had to take off my leg, because it was gangrenous. He promptly took me to surgery at 0800 and at 0814 I woke up in my bed. The doctor explained that he had to work real fast because he couldn't give me much ether, since he was afraid the ether would kill me.

"I was at this hospital for another month and then was scheduled to be moved to an American prisoner hospital at Meinagan, Germany. The day I was discharged, Dr. Zenowski looked at me for the last time and said, 'Matt, when they brought you in, I wouldn't have given two cents for your chances. But something kept you going.' I said to him, 'I told my wife I'd be back and I couldn't lie to her. Anyhow, I didn't want to be buried in Germany.'"

During the summer of 1944, Matt was informed that he was to be among the prisoners to be freed in an arrangement made through the Red Cross. He was to be part of an exchange of badly wounded prisoners. He was put on a train to Stockholm, Sweden; then aboard the M. S. Gripsholm. He arrived in New York City approximately one year after he was shot down over Germany. At the Percy Jones Hospital in Battle Creek, Michigan, Matt was re-united with his wife and son. During his stay at Battle Creek he was outfitted with a prosthetic for his left leg. He was honorably discharged on Valentine's Day, 1945.

My Uncle Matt and Aunt Gerry went on to raise nine children. Aunt Gerry passed away in 1993 after 51 years of marriage. Matt retired from the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs and presently resides in Roseville, MN.

Death At Age 84 Takes John Shoup, First 359th Squadron Bombardier To Reach The 25 Mission Goal In Combat

A SON'S TENDER TRIBUTE

The following eulogy was delivered by Mark Shoup at services for his father, John Shoup, 303rd Bomb Group bombardier, who passed away on December 22, 2004, of peumonitis in Pratt, Kansas at the age of 84.

"It's a good life though often rich with hardship." These words are spoken by the character Gus McCrae in Larry McMurtry's novel, *Lonesome Dove*, as he refuses to let a cynical, drunken doctor remove the gangrenous leg that threatens Gus' life. Lord knows, my father had his share of hardship, but he loved life far too much to waste a minute on self-pity. Old "Arthur," osteo-arthritis, paid his first of many visits to Dad in his early 20s, eventually leading to five knee surgeries, including three knee replacements.

I was 15 when Dad had his first heart attack. He was only 42. The ambulance came in the middle of the night, and as mothers want to protect their children, Mom did not wake me until morning. But a mother's wings—no matter how strong—cannot be 'ever-present. The next day as I was watching over Dad's bed in the over-crowded hospital's hallway, he had another attack. He could have easily been taken then, but God had other plans. Some 15 years later, he had another heart attack, this time resulting in the miracle of bypass surgery. And again some 15 years later, Dad collapsed on the trap range.

I got the call from Larry Skelton. "How bad is it?" I asked. "I don't know, Mark," Larry honestly said. "It doesn't look too good to me." Later, Dad would say to me, "I thought I was going to meet my maker, but he didn't come." In reality, only the Lord knew Dad's heart.

Dad would suffer—and conquer—other ailments, including a detached retina, prostate cancer, and a plethora of aches and pains I can only imagine. Ironically, his heart was the last to go. Sometimes, it can be difficult to distinguish the physical from the spiritual, the clinical from the courageous, but you see, my father just had a huge heart. He refused to let his suffering define him.



"AN EXPRESSION OF MY FATHER, JOHN SHOUP'S, LOVE FOR THE OUTDOORS was his rose garden. He loved to raise roses, especially red roses much like those my sister Betsy so beautifully arranged for his casket."

So what exactly did define John Shoup? He was a complex, unassuming, highly intelligent man. He had many interests, but three great loves: family, country, and the outdoors. Let me begin with country. My father was a hero. Yes, because he was my father, and I was convinced at a very young age that he could whip Rocky Marciano. But few who knew him well know that he was a war hero of the first order. In 1941, he signed on to battle one of the greatest evils the world has ever faced, and by November of 1942, he found himself aboard one of the first B-17's to fly high-altitude daylight bombing raids over Germany, without benefit of fighter support. He was an officer, a bombardier. Of the 36 officers in his squadron, only eight returned alive.

During his years of service—which included more than 30 years of active duty and National Guard—he received many decorations, from the routine to the truly heroic: the WW II Victory Medal, the 10-Year Medal With 20-year Hour Glass, the American Theater of Operations Medal, the European Theater of Operations Medal with Battle Star, the Air Medal with three Oak leaf Clusters, and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

This latter—the nation's fourth-highest combat decoration—like all the rest, had always been a mystery to my family. Dad never talked about combat much, and never about things he did. It was not until the occasion of my parents' 50th wedding anniversary that this mystery unraveled. My sisters, Carol and Betsy, wrote all my parents' friends, past and present, requesting stories about Mom and Dad. Here's what Dad's Operations Officer H. D. Kalhoefer wrote:

"Sorry I don't have any pictures to send you, but as John's operations officer in WWII, I can tell you a story about John that might be of interest to you. On a mission over

Europe, flying at 25,000 feet, a 500-pound bomb that was supposed to have been dropped on a target got hung up in the bomb rack. John, without any regard to his own safety, climbed back to the bomb bay without a parachute or a mask because there was no oxygen outlet in the bomb bay, and temperatures at 50 degrees below zero. John stayed and worked until he finally released the bomb. As you know, John could have frozen all or any part of his body, or he could have become unconscious due to lack of oxygen. Through John's effort, he saved his own plane and crew, and many others of us on the raid."

Years later, I asked Dad about the Distinguished Flying Cross. We were out by our barn, and he just turned and hobbled back to the house with his cane, grumbling. "I just got that thing for hanging around long enough. I always thought they gave out too damn many medals anyway." My friend Wayne Doyle, himself a retired Marine LTC, has since assured me that you don't get the DFC "just for hanging around."

Throughout his life, Dad was intensely patriotic, but as most of you know, he loved the outdoors. He taught me to shoot as soon as I could hold a .22, and when I was eight, he bought me my first shotgun. He looked forward to the opening of dove season as if it were a national holiday, and nothing gave him more pleasure than sitting in a duck blind with his old buddy Noel Sprier. One evening in the early 1980s I was living in Wichita when I received a call from Dad (which was unusual in itself because Dad could have easily lived without a telephone). "I just shot the biggest buck in Pawnee County!" he pronounced. And at that time, it may well have been. From doves to ducks to deer, Dad loved it all. And a good camping trip, complete with lines set along the Arkansas River, was a thing to be savored.

Another expression of my father's love for the outdoors was his rose garden. He loved to raise roses, especially red roses much like those my sister Betsy has so beautifully arranged for his casket. The most aromatic were favorites, as well, but when he could no longer garden, he hired someone to keep the weeds out and showed family members how to care for them in the growing season.

All this bring me to something elemental about Dad's character: like McMurtry's Gus McCrae, Dad was always looking for the good behind the hardship. As he aged, the list of activities his arthritis-racked body allowed him diminished. When he could no longer hunt, he started shooting at the Kinsley Gun Club. He learned the intricacies of reloading—both shotgun and rifle—and avidly enjoyed the shooting sports for many years. He loved to shoot, but one day his body struck that love off the list. He still went to the range regularly and pulled for those who could shoot, enjoying the camaraderie of men who shared common interests. As the apostle Paul said, "perseverance produces character, and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us because God has poured his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit."

Somehow, Dad knew that hope does not disappoint. Time has its way, however, and one day his body struck the shooting range from his list of loves. Always a voracious reader, Dad's active mind helped him pour through history, literature, and genealogy. And these things he could discuss with the greatest of his loves, my mother, Maxine, and the family she bore him. Dad loved to talk because he loved people and was interested in them and the stories they had to tell. Never have I met a man so little tied up in himself when it came to relating to others, and perhaps that's what made him



JACK ROLLER AND HIS 359TH SQUADRON CREW— They flew their first mission on 18 November 1942 and last mission on 25 June 1943, and all survived. Considering the heavy losses of B-17 crews in those early days of the air war, this was almost a miracle. Front row, l-to-r, Navigator Walter Henson, Co-pilot William Cline, Bombardier John Shoup and Pilot Jack Roller. Back row, Tail Gunner Arthur Burnham, Waist Gunners John Gonsalves and Frank Ketron, Radio Operator Lemuel Williams and Engineer Joseph Marcelonis. Ball Turret Gunner John Beringer is not pictured.

a successful hardware merchant for more than four decades.

In the last years, and especially the last months, it was family that sustained Dad more than anything else. His eyes would light up when his wife, children, or grandchildren walked into the room. Even when he could barely hobble from his bedroom to the kitchen, family could bring a smile to his face. It was only in this last month, when his body struck the gift of conversation—speech—from his list of loves, that he finally decided to let go of his rich life. He had charmed every girl in the nursing home, even though his body was savaged by age and disease. But he could no longer speak.

About a week before Dad died, my wife, Rose, and my sons were visiting him. Rose was combing his hair, and Dad kept trying to say something. Rose and the boys leaned over and tried to understand, guessing this and that, and finally Dad just started smiling and laughing silently, and then the boys started laughing, and soon the whole room was filled with giggles. He loved to laugh. He was a walking library of humorous sayings and limericks, and he loved the stories the hardware salesmen brought to the store and passed them on to family and friends. Not all may be told in polite company, but he enjoyed ones like this: "How many lawyers does it take to grease a combine?" "Only one if you run him through real slow." I hope Dad's lawyer friends take that one in stride.

This is just a brief glimpse of the complex man who was, who is, John Shoup: family man, outdoorsman, hero. He enjoyed life, loved his family, and accepted the Lord without fanfare. Some 20 years ago, I had an epiphany in my father's rose garden one unusually warm fall day. Most men have such a glimpse, a premonition of the time—however distant—when the torch will be passed.

Looking back through a hazy glass.....



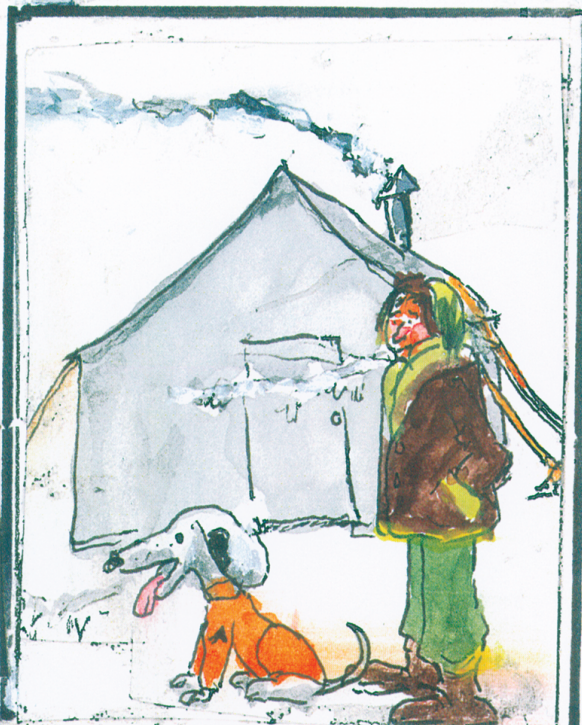
SOME MOLESWORTH MEMORIES by Jack Gardner 427th sg.

FACTOID

When we were there,
Molesworth was in
Huntingdonshire. Now
it's in Cambridgeshire.
Tectonic shift?



PLAY BALL - Softball it was whenever schedules and weather cooperated. The late Col. Kermit Stevens, who played a mean third base, encouraged his team with yells of "Drop your tailgate!"



THE 'ACCIDENTAL' TOURIST - Recon was one of several canine stowaways that held the rank of squadron mascot.



PUB CRAWL
The nearest off-base pub was affectionately dubbed the "Dirty Duck" by GI's.

Show me the
way to (hic)
Go home.



THE WAY IT WAS - At a dinner meeting in the early 1960s, Walter Cronkite, who flew several missions with the 303rd as a U.P. correspondent, said

he had recently been at Molesworth and it had reverted to a potato patch. (Do they still grow potatoes at RAF Molesworth?)



FLIGHT LINE CHOW LINE-
Base workers from Northern Ireland (and GIs) too) que up to buy food from a catering truck. Baked beans on fried bread and a hot mug of tea hit the spot on a chilly morning.

A GOOD EGG - Bob Hope traveled extensively during WWII, regaling troops at overseas bases including Molestown with his humor.



TAKE A BREAK-
Buses took us to nearby cities for dancing and other recreation.



Figure if I can still fit in my World War II uniform, I can still fly a DC-3.



3 GIRLS in a JEEP - Another USO-sponsored group - Kay Francis, Martha Raye and Carol Landis - raised morale at our and many other U.S. bases.



J.G.
05

Boeing B-17G "Flying Fortress"
USAF Museum



THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE US AIR FORCE AND CARILLON HISTORICAL PARK are on the Dayton reunion tour schedule. The B-17G *Shoo Shoo Shoo Baby* is an exhibit at the museum. The cabin is among the complex of 23 historical buildings in the park.

DAYTON REUNION from page 1

1:00 PM. The tour will take us to an original bicycle shop where the Wright Brothers repaired bikes and experimented with making an airplane.

You will also see a restored 1880's building which houses flight memorabilia and shows a film presentation of the first flight. The tour is narrated and you will hear about the Wright Brothers, Charles Kettering and those who made Dayton an international name.

On Wednesday August 24 we have set up a tour to the National Museum of the US Air Force. You can start out in the morning and see the Presidential airplanes (Air Force Ones). There will be a break for lunch which will be on your own on the second floor, with elevator available. Free wheel chairs are also available for anyone who needs one. The Imax Theatre is also available at this time.

At 1:00 PM we have a Heritage Tour set up, taking about 2 1/2 hours. You can do as much of this as you want to do and feel you can do. Bus times to and from the museum are being worked on as well as the costs. All that will be in the brochure you will receive.

Also on the city tour: Woodland Cemetery, final resting place of the Wright Family; Hawthorne Hill (curbside view of the Wright Family mansion); the new Performing Arts Center; drive past the Packard Museum containing elegant automobiles. The only place you will get off the bus (if you want to) is the Wright Cycle Shop. We are trying to make the tours as friendly as possible to you.

During the course of working on the reunion I was contacted by Steve McColaugh. Steve is the head of the local Dayton Area Plastic Modelers. They are part of the International Plastic Modelers Society.

Steve and his friends have made models of the following 303rd BG airplanes: *Knock Out Dropper*, *Hells Angels*, *War Bride*, *Yankee Doodle Dandy* and *Hunga Dunga*. They are working on the following airplanes and hope to complete them by our reunion time and will bring all they have completed to the hotel: *The Duchess*, *Pappy*, *Red Ass*, *the Eight Ball II*, *Miss Lace*, *Thumper Again*, *Joe Btfsplk II*, *S for Sugar*, *Fast Worker II*, *Miss*



Bea Haven, *Shooting Star*, *Jersey Bounce*, *Bad Check*, *Luscious Lady* and *Dark Horse*.

We have asked Steve and his friends to make a presentation of their models, how they make them and why they picked 303rd BG airplanes. They will be at the hotel after dinner on Friday August 26. We hope there will be good attendance at this presentation.

On the afternoon of August 26 we have organized a tour of Carillon Historical Park. Leave the Hotel at 10:00 AM, return at 2:00 PM.

On Thursday evening we have set up a visit to La Comedie Dinner Theatre. The dinner is a buffet and the show is "Beauty and the Beast." During the day on Thursday we'll have our Squadron and general meetings.

The Crowne Plaza is located in the heart of downtown Dayton. Within walking distance you will find restaurants, entertainment, shopping and the historic Oregon District. It is minutes away from The Victoria Theatre, the Benjamin and Marian Schuster Performing Arts Center, The Dayton Art Institute, Carillon Park and The Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and Museum.

Other advantages include a complimentary shuttle service between the hotel and the airport, free local phone calls, a coffee brewer in every room, free USA Today newspapers, an on-site fitness facility. There's also no charge to guests for parking in a secure and covered area, with unlimited in-and-out privileges.

The room rate is \$89.00, plus applicable taxes.

The 303rd BGA registration desk in the Crowne Plaza Hotel will be manned by ladies from the Dayton Convention and Visitors Bureau, so our own 303rd ladies will not have to volunteer their time as so often has happened in the past.

(The reunion brochure was scheduled to be mailed to all members early in April. If you haven't received yours by mid-May, get in touch with Walt Ferrari, the Vice President for Reunions. His contact information can be found on page 2 of this newsletter.)

Heritage Museum Logs In Archives Donation As Property of 303rd Bomb Group Association

Ownership Claim by Former 303rd Historian Not Recognized

A dispute between the 303rd Bomb Group Association and its former historian over ownership of the archival collection donated last October to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum has been resolved.

The historian, Harry D. Gobrecht, in an email message to the Association's Executive Committee had declared "I have legal advice that almost all of the 303rd BG (H) archive collection is my personal property, not that of the 303rd BGA, although I have always referred to the entire collection as the 303rd BG (H) Archive Collection."

Michael E. Telzrow, the Heritage Museum's Director of Research and Interpretation, advised the Association's Executive Committee on January 3, 2005, "Rest assured that the collection is listed in our index and records as the '303rd Bombardment Group (H) Association Archives Collection.' Mr. Gobrecht is not listed as the former owner, nor sole donor of the collection. He signed the deed of gift on behalf of the 303rd Bomb Group Association. There is no confusion about this point on our end."

The dispute was triggered by an article in the December 2004 issue of "8th AF News," published by the 8th AF Historical Society. It said, "He (Gobrecht) has donated his extensive collection to the Heritage Museum for future use by researchers, historians, educators and 8th AF families. This Harry D. Gobrecht/303rd Bomb Group special collection has been donated in its entirety to the Heritage Museum archival collections, along with funding from the Gobrecht family for technology to make the material readily available."

303rd BGA past presidents committee chairman Albert L. Dussliere wrote to "8th AF News" editor Walter E. Brown informing him, "At no time did our organization authorize the naming of our archives and collection in his name." Incumbent 303rd BGA Historian Harold A. Susskind wrote to W. C. Rawson, president of the 8th AF Historical Society, in support of Dussliere's statement. Neither of the 303rd BGA's representatives received a reply.

In further action by the 303rd BGA to safeguard the future of the bomb group's collection, the Executive Committee proposed that the archives be transferred to the National Museum of the US Air Force in the event the Heritage Museum, a privately funded institution, ceased operations. Telzrow confirmed that this would be "no problem" and that "The National Museum of the USAF will be designated as the recipient." He said a confirmation letter would follow.

Formal collecting of the 303rd Bomb Group's archives began in 1987 when its Board authorized \$5,000 to record the Group's 364 mission reports held by the National Archives in Suitland, MD. The Association continued to fund the project until its completion some five years later. Those mission reports, about a hundred thousand pages, became by far the single most important part of the 303rd's archival collection and the basis for the book "Might In Flight" and the CD "The Molesworth Story."

Credit for the task of recording those reports on behalf of the 303rd BGA go to past leaders of the Association. They included Al Lehmann, George Stallings, Ralph Adams, Gus Nadell, Robert Evans, Toy Tingley and David Matthews.



THE MIGHTY 8TH AIR FORCE HERITAGE MUSEUM—
The 303rd Bomb Group Association's archives, collected over a span of several decades, were donated in October 2004 to the museum in Pooler, GA.



THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE US AIR FORCE—
If the Heritage Museum, a privately-funded institution, should in the future be unable to continue operations, the 303rd BGA's archives would be transferred to the USAF's national museum in Dayton, OH.

Telzrow, in assuring the 303rd BGA that the donation of the archival collection detailed in a 23-page index had been credited to the Association, added, "You will be pleased to know that the collection has already received some attention from researchers. In particular, the mission reports have proven to be of great interest. Our new research center, funded solely by Mr. Gobrecht, will insure that researchers have the best access to the 303rd collection for years to come."

The center, which will serve all the museum's collections, not only the 303rd's, was named by the Heritage Museum in honor of the Gobrecht Family. Gobrecht has been a member of the Museum's Board of Directors for many years.



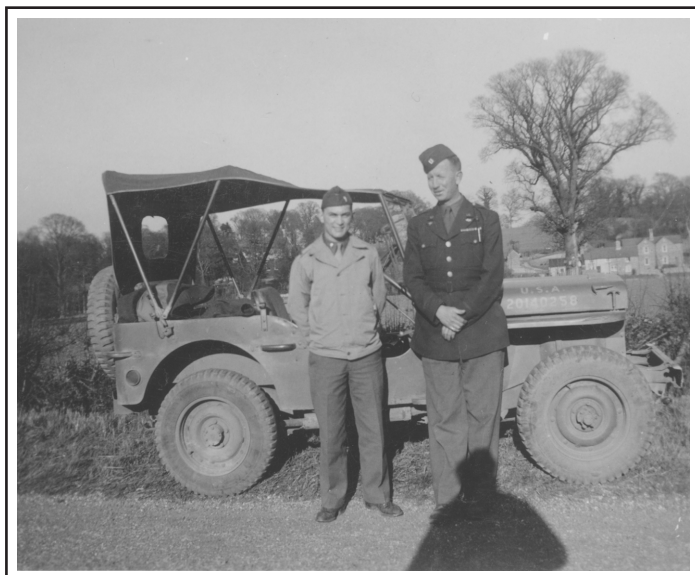
303rd Pin-ups

UPPER LEFT— One of the 303rd Bomb Group's proud pilots, Ercil F. Eyster of the 359th Squadron, in his proper place on the B-17.

UPPER RIGHT—"Here's how you hold the glove, Bob." Billy Southworth, 427th pilot, whose father managed the world champion St. Louis Cardinals, gives Bob Hope some pointers on the national pastime.

LOWER LEFT—Lt. Robert P. Livingston, Group Statistical Control Officer, and Maj. Hoyt S. Baker, Group Defense Officer, on a reconnaissance mission outside the air base.

LOWER RIGHT—Time out for a snapshot next to the 303rd's best known B-17, *Hell's Angels*. From left to right are 359th Squadron radio and radar maintenance specialists Don Corrigan, Art Middleton and Sam Rosenfield.



Molesworth Diary

RUSSIANS LET THEM BURY DEAD CREWMATES

On February 9, 1945, we were to bomb an oil refinery in Lutzendorf, Germany along with about a thousand other planes. On the bomb run, we were hit by flak and thrown into the prop wash of a B-17 in front of us, causing our right wing to kick up. It cut the whole tail section off another B-17, and only one man got out of that plane.

The collision knocked out two engines on our right wing. We fell from 32,000 feet to about 10,000 feet. With two engines out, with oil and gas all over the wing, our pilot on *Pogue-Ma-Hone*, A. K. Nemer, decided we could not get back to England. He asked me for a heading to fly to the nearest Russian lines. We were in heavy cloud cover, which saved us from German fighter plane attacks, but we were picking up ice on our wings and losing altitude. After an hour of flying, throwing out our machine guns, ammunition and anything to lighten the aircraft, we reached the front where the Russians and Germans were still fighting.

We kept losing altitude, and the pilot then gave the order to bail out. Four of us did, but as we were floating down, our B-17 made a 180 degree turn and attempted to land. It exploded the instant it touched the ground. The four men who stayed with the plane were killed. The tail gunner had bailed out with us, but his chute didn't open.

The Russians picked us up and agreed to let us bury our five dead crewmates. They were buried in Poland, near a town named Jarocin. I heard many years later that the townspeople had built a memorial to our crew in appreciation of what we had done.

Harry H. Schultz
Navigator, 427th Squadron

BABY, IT WAS REALLY, REALLY COLD UP THERE

We were at 28,000 feet over enemy territory. The outside air temperature gauge showed minus 60 degrees Fahrenheit, colder than I have ever experienced in my life. The heaters in the B-17 are in the full "On" position, but they have no effect that anybody could detect. The fuselage is not pressurized; the waist gun windows and radio room hatch are wide open and soon the bomb bay doors will open.

The crew does not dare touch anything metal with their bare hands, so we wear two sets of gloves. The inner glove is nylon and the outer is wool. To be able to operate switches and small controls and even the four throttle rods in the cockpit, both us pilots have cut off the ends of the fingers of the outer gloves. We flew the airplane in 15-minute shifts so the one not doing the flying could sit on his hands to warm them up. We pity the guys in the rear—the waist gunners and the radio operator, who had to remain standing at their guns with a lot of that below-60 degree air rushing in at our 155-mile an hour airspeed. The tail gunner and the ball turret gunner

are not directly exposed to the wind, but they're cramped in frigid and uncomfortable positions for hours at a time.

There are relief tubes in the B-17, in case anyone really has to pee. I mean really has to. The tube for the pilots is in the front of the bomb bay. To use it, we would have to unplug our electric heat suits and radio connections, take off our flak suits, disconnect the oxygen mask and plug it into a portable tank with about a three-minute supply, open the access door to the bomb bay, stand on a narrow catwalk, open up several layers of clothing, and then pee into a little funnel. All the while the aircraft is bobbing around in formation.

I don't think anybody used the relief tubes at altitude.

William F. Miller
359th Squadron Pilot

B-17 NOT FAST ENOUGH? MAKE IT THE LEAD SHIP!

I arrived at Molesworth in September of 1942, crossing the Atlantic Ocean from New York on the *Queen Mary* after training at mechanics school at Rantoul, Illinois. I left Molesworth for good in May of 1945, heading for Casablanca on a B-17 after the 303rd Bomb Group ended operations.

There was an aircraft in my squadron that seemed to be jinxed. No one was able to get it across the English Channel on a bombing mission. It kept aborting. After some time, the plane was assigned to my ground crew. Still no luck. We installed new engines and superchargers. It went on a mission, and after it returned the pilot complained that he couldn't keep up with the formation. The squadron operations officer came out to the pad, and we talked things over. He said, "Okay, we'll make a lead ship out of it." No problems after that.

I'm proud to have crewed *Neva*, *The Silver Lady*. She flew 123 missions without any major damage.

Albert Curtis Fox
358th Squadron Crew Chief

"CLOSEST I EVER CAME TO MID-AIR COLLISION"

Three combat missions will stand out in my memory for all time:

Mission 27, 31 March 1943 to Rotterdam—The Group had assembled below broken clouds and was in good formation. The Group leader decided to take us up through the clouds while still in formation. We had to go on instruments. We could not see the other planes. Suddenly we broke out, and I saw a B-17 going down to our left with one wing gone. We broke through more clouds, and I saw a second B-17 going down. We could see the two planes crashing below us. That mission was the closest I have ever been to being in a mid-air collision. The crew of one of the two bombers that went down was the same one I had flown to England with from the U.S.

(Continued on page 16)

It was a very sad experience.

Mission 151, 11 May 1944 to Saarbrücken—From the IP to the target visibility was horrible and the target could not be seen. I was in the low Group. The lead Group commander, not being able to see the target, decided to make a 360-degree turn and make a second run at the same altitude and route. We were sitting ducks for the German ack-ack. Capt. Long in *Bow-Ur-Neck Stevens* received a direct hit and went down. The flak was hitting my B-17, but, luckily, we received no mortal wounds. When we returned to base there were more than a hundred flak holes in the aircraft.

Mission 164, 29 May 1944 to Posen, Poland—The mission was rather uneventful, but while returning home over the Baltic Sea a German FW-190 came up and flew formation with us without firing a shot. When we turned our top turret guns on the fighter, it flew off. We often wondered why the Jerry never fired at us.

Walter K. Shayler
360th Pilot and Squadron Commander

MISSION TO NORWAY GAVE HIM NIGHTMARES

On July 24, 1943, my pilot, Dave Rogan, led our squadron on a mission to bomb the I. G. Farben aluminum factory at Heroya, Norway. Our first run over the target was obscured by smoke from bombs dropped by the B-17's that had preceded us. This required a second run over the target. Anti-aircraft fire appeared to me to very dense and extremely accurate. I can still recall seeing the explosions at close range and nearly feel them make the aircraft bounce.

This is the only mission I have ever had any dreams or nightmares about, and what keeps recurring in the dream is Lt. Rogan requesting emergency manifold pressure. On landing, we discovered that a projectile had gone through the right wing, narrowly missing the main spar. There were 49 holes in the aircraft. Our pilot concluded his Mission Report by recommending, "I don't think we should go in at the low altitude of 15,000 feet again because of the accuracy of flak at that altitude."

Fifty years later, George Stallings and others were copying all the 303rd Bomb Group mission reports for our archives. I was serving as treasurer of our Association at the time, and provided funds for the continuation of the project. George learned of my special interest in the Heroya mission, and he gave me copies of that report.

In 1991, I took the reports with me to Norway, and had them placed in museums in the Heroya area. A radio talk show host asked me to make a tape of my recollections of that day in 1943. It was incorporated into a half-hour program aired on July 24, 1993. I was provided with a tape of the entire program in the Norwegian language. My goal was to have it translated into English and then make a copy available for the 303rd Bomb Group archives.

Charles S. Schmeltzer
358th Squadron Waist Gunner

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our Board of Directors Executive Committee recently voted to publish a new updated Membership Directory which should be ready for purchase sometime in April 2005. It will be similar to our older 2003 Directory but will contain larger print on all pages. The new 2005 Directory is dedicated to all of our veteran 303rd comrades who lost their lives during WW II, including those who passed away since, in addition to recognition of all the units that comprised the 303rd Bomb Group at Molesworth, U K.

The membership cost of the new directory is expected to be \$15.00 and can be ordered from our PX when available. Those of you having access to a computer may bring up our Website (www.303rdBGA.com), click on PX and print out the two page order form. Follow all order instructions. To all of you who already paid for a new Directory via our previous benefactor program, your new Directory will automatically be sent when ready.

For those who do not have access to a computer, please contact the PX Administrator listed on the inside front cover of the newsletter requesting same with your name and address, and an order form will be sent to you immediately.

At this point in time the progress involving my research in "where do we go from here?" has been inching along with responses from a poll of members who frequent our reunions of the past only to find weak support from our younger membership to carry on with the merit of organizational activity. The basic origin of our Association was founded years ago with the premise to foster and nurture the good will and companionship of all living 303rd veterans and their families.

What a magnificent Association it has become. And it has come to a time when we, the older and few remaining 303rd veterans, find it more difficult to access reunion travel and take on unwelcome personal handicaps that will consume both time and, for most, resources of continued health.

Over the many years of our Association's existence, through all our reunions whether you were able to attend or not, the single most valuable asset that kept our association alive and vibrant was and is our Hells Angels Newsletter. I believe it will continue and not come to an end until our Association dissolves without ever retreating in virtue.

Our monumental history will be retrievable by our generations of children to adults time and again by way of two major sources: the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum in Pooler, Georgia, and our current Website that will continue to operate and be accessible for years to follow.

We do not know exactly when our Association will pass on but you may be assured it will be properly planned and its details will be provided to you in advance.

In the next issue of the Newsletter I will comment on matters of interest to our membership of how not to forget.

Richard Bowler, Jr.

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

NOT OFFENDED BY TONE OF FUNDRAISING LETTER

Referring to your editorial in the February 2005 issue, you should know that I was not the least bit offended by the letter about donations to sustain the newsletter. It is necessary to remind people that there must be funds to continue the letter. You should also know that the Hell's Angels Newsletter is exceptionally good, combining historical reminders with other things of general interest. Without this publication, much would have been lost of the personal nature of combat. And the centerfold on the Tomb of the Unknowns revealed new information for me.

The letter is presented in quality and style. I do not have any other military newsletters with which to make a comparison, but I cannot picture any other WW2 organization doing any better.

Charles M. Webster
358th Squadron Bombardier

COMMENT ON THE DEATH OF COL. KERMIT STEVENS

The excellently written remembrance of our esteemed and revered former Group Commander, Kermit Stevens, was a welcome section of our February newsletter. My wife, Ruth, and I visited Kermit on 7 November 2004. He died two weeks later. His daughter, Mary, was with us. We spent over an hour with him discussing the days at Mulesworth. Kermit recalled many instances he shared with so many of our 303rd veterans.

Though Kermit was in a "nursing home" in a sense, he had his own room in a small unit, could walk from room to room, and was attended when needed. It is a tribute to our former leader that at age 96 he was lucid to the end.

Bill Heller
360th Squadron Pilot and CO

STEVENS DAUGHTER CALLS IT "VERY FITTING TRIBUTE"

I just received my copy of the February issue

of the Hell's Angels Newsletter. My sister had told me there would be an article on my dad, Kermit Stevens. Your presentation made a very fitting tribute. I know the 303rd was very close to Dad's heart.

Mary Stevens Porter
Redwood City, CA

APPRECIATES CREDIT TO FRENCH UNDERGROUND

Thank you for a superb job of editing my updated Walter Hargrove story in the February 2005 issue. It is wonderful to see credit given to some of the French families who helped my father escape safely. You deftly cut out the less essential parts and bridged the highlights to make a well crafted story. I enjoyed every article and look forward to the next issue.

James L. Hargrove
Associate Professor
University of Georgia

ANOTHER SALUTE FOR THE LATE BILL CRAWFORD

I would like to add to the item about Bill Crawford in the February issue. Bill passed away December 9, 2004, his wife Dorothy having preceded him about two months earlier. When he was interred in Cheatham Hill Cemetery in Marietta, Georgia, he was honored with a full military funeral and the special honor of a "missing man" flyover of fellow pilots in PT-17's.

His co-pilot in 303rd Bomb Group B-17's, Doug Kidd, was not physically able to attend the funeral. He sent his regards, and mentioned some memories. Including those of red-hot flak going across his and Bill's B-17 nose over Wiesbaden, Germany in 1944.

Bill Lamore
Marietta, Georgia

ARKANSAS NEWSPAPER WELCOMES CORRECTION

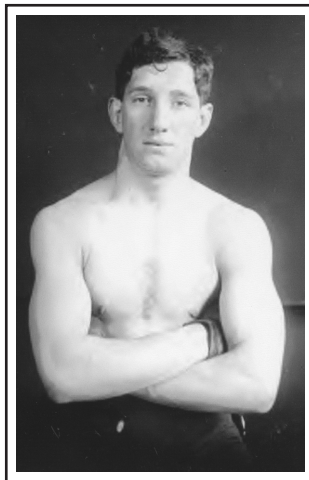
I just received your February newsletter and it is very impressive work. Thanks for including me on the mailing list (cover story on LOM award to Ewell Ross McCright). AND thank you

for helping me clarify the status of Ewell McCright and the Legion of Merit medal. You were exceptionally kind to look up the information that helped set the record straight.

Mary Hargrove
Associate Editor
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

NAVIGATOR'S FATHER WAS PROFESSIONAL BOXER

I just discovered pictures of my dad taken in 1908 and published in the Chicago Daily News. My father was a boxer, and his professional fighting name was "Young Otto."



He fought some bouts in Chicago, and was billed as "The Knockout Wonder."

Hal Susskind
Editor Emeritus
Hell's Angels Newsletter

SURGEON WHO SAVED WOUNDED 303RD AIRMAN

(The following message was sent to the granddaughter of George Buske by the surgeon who helped save him at the 65th General Hospital in England after Buske was severely wounded on the 20 December 1943 mission to Bremen, Germany. It is reprinted with permission)

Dear Valerie:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding knowledge of your grandfather's passing. Yes, word had reached me about his death.

I hope you will convey to your grandmother and your parents my sense of personal loss when I learned of George's passing. To me he represented one of America's unsung heroes of World War II, not only for what he did, but also for his courageous will-to-live that overcame some of the most terrible wounds that many of us had ever seen.

I am reminded of an inscription that I once saw on an old sarcophagus in a British cathedral that could be written equally as well of George: "HIS LIFE IS DESERVING OF MORE MEMORIAL MONUMENT. STUDY TO BE LIKE HIM."

Valerie, how very proud you must be to be his granddaughter!

Ivan W. Brown, Jr., M.D.
Lakeland, FL

LYLE NAMED "WARBIRD OF YEAR" IN SOUTH CAROLINA

I don't know if you are aware of the award Lew Lyle got from the organization "Warbirds of South Carolina." According to their periodical, *Southern Aviator*, he was selected as the 2004 "Warbird of the Year." Lew was honored at a banquet, where it was noted that he became a pilot in 1941, and, as a member of the Eighth Air Force, flew more than 70 combat missions over Europe. The article said he retired from the military in 1967 as a major general with more than 7,000 flying hours and many awards for valor and service.

Dick Johnson
Pilot, 427th Squadron

MASTER PLAN BY REUNION "FIRST TIMER" TO MEET ALL

Arriving a day early for the reunion in Savannah last August, my first one, I noticed that members who had attended for years flocked fervently together. I decided that if I wanted to be accepted, I better introduce myself to as many as possible. So, I stood by the bar in the 303rd Hospitality Room, and as persons came up for drinks I offered my

(Continued on page 18)

FORUM from 17

hand and introduced myself, exchanged information and made fully descriptive notes on my master roster by the names of members attending. I approached spouses and others who did not come to the bar, and did likewise. I gathered more new members at the Welcome Reception and continued for days as late arrivals appeared until I met each and everyone attending.

My gracious thanks to all for a grand, greatly enjoyed, informative event. I urge all reading this to plan now to attend the reunion in Dayton, Ohio.

Donald O. "Spec" Campen
427th Squadron Togglier

DID YOU ENTER SERVICE WHILE UNDER LEGAL AGE?

The Veterans of Underage Military Service is a non-profit organization of 1,500 members who entered the service while under the legal minimum age for enlistment. They served in all military branches.

We estimate that from three to five per cent of all those who served during World War II and the Korean War were underage when they enlisted. We hope to reach as many of them as possible who have not yet heard of our organization.

Your help in this endeavor will be greatly appreciated. Most are now in their golden years and time is fleeting. Contact:

Major Roger Thorpe, USAF (Ret), 6616 East Buss Road, Clinton, WI 53525

THE "SHORT SNORTER" BACK IN THE NEWS

Some time ago, there was a discussion on the 303rd web about "short snorters" and the like, which had me searching my personal archives and stash of assorted memorabilia...and lo and behold, I came up with my own tattered "short snorter" (Pictured below). It

may not be a record length, but the solitary silver certificate has a treasury of namesakes inscribed thereon.

I was able to make out the names of Sidney Kallet, Harry Subkowsky, Martin Dee, Marvin Fink, Walter Dennis, Clifford Muth, Mike McCarty, Lewis Harrison, Arnold Mosell and Robert App. Several more signatures on the front and back are unreadable. Must have been a party going on for someone hitting the big "35" while signing on.

Bob Hand
360th Squadron Bombardier

303rd BOMB GROUP SIGNS ON CARS GET ATTENTION

Several months ago, I purchased a 303rd Bomb Group license plate and bumper sticker from the PX for my car. I had another plate stolen years ago, so I made a holder for it and installed it in the rear window. The 303rd plate and the sticker show very well to all behind me on the road.

One day, a truck on I-70 got behind me and blew its horn. I thought he was trying to pass. He went around me, and indicated he saw my Hell's Angels plate. We exchanged "high 5's," and he was off. Sorta wished he had stopped.

Another time, a man and a woman followed me home, pulled up in my drive behind me, and we had a fine talk about World War II and the war in the air. They live two miles from me. One time I came back to the car and found a note about the 303rd under my wiper blade. He, too, lives nearby and we have visited each other.

I read the February newsletter today, and will read it many times before passing it on to a friend, the Chief of Police in my township. He has a young son who reads everything he can get his hands on about what he calls "the big war."

Robert E. Bonenberger
358th Squadron Waist Gunner

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP/ROSTER CHAIRMAN—
THIS SECTION AND PAGE 19 INCLUDE THE
IN MEMORIAM LISTING AND AS MANY NAMES
AS SPACE PERMITS OF THOSE WHO DONATED
TO THE 303RD BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION
SINCE THE LAST LISTING PUBLISHED IN THE
ISSUE OF AUGUST 2004—DENNIS SMITH

In Memoriam

Richard M Albright	360 th	12/12/04
Joel A Berly Jr	360 th	10/8/03
Neldon R Bishop	359 th	1/23/05
Everett D Boone	360 th	8/18/03
Walter D Caldwell	427 th	7/7/00
Joseph R Cappucci	359 th	1/17/05
R B Crout	427 th	2/15/00
Donald J Dinwiddie	427 th	2/19/05
George P Dreblow	360 th	1/14/04
Robert E Edmunds	360 th	1/3/05
William E Hanna	444 th	4/30/01
Frederick L House	360 th	1/30/05
Chet H Jameson Jr	358 th	1/22/05
Kenneth K Klimback	358 th	12/30/04
Joe T Kunkel	358 th	10/11/00
Calvin L Lance	427 th	5/23/03
Willard W Maas	444 th	8/28/04
Sam Maxwell	358 th	12/22/04
Arthur R Mehlhoff	360 th	2/7/05
Isreal Millner	360 th	3/1/01
Walter T Niemann	444 th	1/30/05
Donald W O'Hearn	427 th	2/20/05
Albert J Orth	358 th	2/9/03
Leslie C Pratt	358 th	Date not known
Norman W Putnet	358 th	1/18/05
Clifford G Rabun	358 th	10/29/03
Edward J Sexton	359 th	Date not known
Claude W Sherwin Jr	358 th	2/12/05
John R Shoup Jr	359 th	12/22/04
John A Sole	360 th	4/30/04
Leonard V Sorese	427 th	12/23/00
Everett E Strahan	358 th	3/21/04
Bernard M Weinandt	360 th	9/5/02
Franklin F York	358 th	11/17/04
Fred F Wilson	360 th	2/16/05
Michael L Zarelli	358 th	11/7/02

DONATIONS (GENERAL)

A G Oswald 427th, Abbott M Smith 427th, Al Dussliere 427th, Alan E Frey 360th, Albert A Foster 359th, Albert Simon 359th, Albert B Skarsten 427th, Alexander U Gray 359th, Aloysius R Pero 427th, Alphonse B Serwa 360th, Angela R Hewitt 358th Family, Anthony J Boland 358th, Anthony J Sacco 359th, Anthony Zelnio 359th, Arthur Bluethenthal 427th, Arthur J Brown 427th, Arthur Lorentz 359th, Arthur R Mehlhoff 360th, Arvid Anderson 358th, Bernard Greenberg 358th, Bert J Pandey 427th, Bill Albertson 359th Family, Bill J Clem 360th, Bill Milligan 358th, Bill Sears 427th, Blaine E Thomas 427th, Bob Lyda 427th, Bobbie B Reese 359th, Bruce Arnold 359th, Bruce B Hamilton 358th, C Royce Dixon Friend, Campbell Miller 358th, Carl Booka 360th, Carl DuBose Jr 427th, Carl J Fyler 360th, Carl K Shunar 427th, Carl V Nielsen 359th, Carlyle A Frost 360th, Carville J Brian 360th, Cecil H Allen 359th, Charles F Coe 358th, Charles O Mainwaring 359th, Charles R Doback Sr 358th, Charles R Terry 359th, Charles S Klanian 360th, Charles W Smith 427th, Chester N Oranges 427th, Christ M Christoff 358th, Clarence L Counsell 360th, Claude W Sherwin 358th, Clayton C David 358th, Cleveland W Whitten Jr 360th, Curtis O Brooke 358th, Dale Carlson 359th,



Dallice Mills 359th Family, Daniel Townsley Friend, Daryl W Davis 359th, Dave McKenzie 427th Family, David Bacon 359th, David Peterson 1114th QM, Deane L Barnes 427th, Debra Joy Lange 358th Family, Dell St. Julien 360th, Donald E Vanlier 358th, Donald F Geng 359th, Donna Quinney Hendel 358th Family, E R Barkman 360th, Earnest A Fischer 427th, Edgar C "Ed" Miller 360th, Edward K Carter 359th, Edward Praplaski 359th, Edwin G Lamme 427th, Eldon Audiss 359th, Ellis D Mowery 359th, Elwood A Griffith 358th, Emerson H Shields 360th, Ervin Hilborn 427th, Everett H Thorton 358th, Family of Clair Bonslett O'Brien, Francis "Frank" A Stellato 360th, Frank Kulesa 360th, Frank Linton Farmer 358th, Frank P Weil 359th, Frank X Neuner 427th, Franklin C Hall 359th, Frederick Ziemer 358th, Gary Manning Friend, George A Torrey 360th, George E McCutcheon 358th, George E Sabine 427th, George Frechter 427th, George W Ashworth 427th, George W Pearson Jr 427th, Gordon A Ballagh 360th, Graham Gould 359th, Grover C Mullins 358th, Guy A Lance 360th, H Ronald Welsh 358th Family, Harold A Belles 359th, Harold A Susskind 359th, Harold C Reid 360th, Harold J Bach 359th, Harold J Hall 360th, Harold L Scott 360th, Harry D Gobrecht 358th, Harry H Heller 359th, Harry Payne 360th, Helen Kirk 427th Family, Henry "Hank" Means 427th, Herbert Levy 358th, Herbert Shanker 359th, Horace S Kenney Jr 427th, Howard F O'Neal 359th, Howard Ness 427th, Ira Friedman 427th, J Andersen "Andy" Berby III 360th Family, J D Dorsett Jr 358th, J John Mills 358th, J R Simts Friend, Jack B Kennedy 359th, Jack L Lester 360th, Jack Silver 358th, Jacob "Jack" A Strahs 359th, James "Jim" W O'Leary Sr 427th, James A Davis 359th Family, James A Harwick 358th, James A Hickey 359th, James C Miller 360th Family, James D Mickle 359th, James E Moss Jr 427th, James G Force 359th, James L Brown 358th, James L Hargrove 358th Family, James M Pierce 358th, James M Sutherland 360th, James S Hardy 360th Family, James T Elovich 358th, Jane Wahl 427th Family, Janice Haymond 358th Family, Jeanne Horstick 358th Family, Joe R Gray 427th, John A Thurmon 427th, John C Schwolow 359th, John E Pacheco 427th, John E Phillips 427th, John F Reed 358th, John J Stenger Jr 359th, John J VanGeyten 360th, John L Cathey 358th, John N Dinsmore 427th Family, John R Bitter 427th, John Scott 360th, John V Jones 358th, John W Ford 359th, John W Parker 359th, John W Psota 358th, John Zabelicky 427th, Jon L Peacock 427th Family, Jonathan S Swift 358th, Joseph "Joe" Bresharrian 358th, Joseph A Blinbury Sr 358th, Joseph R Monyk 427th, Joseph R Schneider 427th, Joseph Scaglione 427th, Joseph Vieira 359th, Joseph V Leach 358th, Keith E Day 358th, Kenneth Clarke 358th, Kermit L Walters 427th, Lenell Farrell 427th Family, Leonard T Modlinski 358th, Leroy Faulkner 360th, Leroy P Christenson 359th, Lewis E Lyle 360th, Louis C Jurgensen 360th, Louis M Christen 427th, Loyd Tanner 427th, Lucius E Arnold 3rd Station, Marlow Jones 360th, Marvin S Boyce 358th, Mary J Hemminger 360th Family, Matt C Hemming 358th, Maurice K Selberg 360th, Maury Hassett 358th, Max R Bartholomew 427th, Maynard F Pitcher 359th, Mel Schulstad 303rd, Merrill M Stiver 360th, Melvin A Durst 427th, Melvin Brown 358th, Michael A Vargas 427th, Michael C Uher Friend, Michele "Brabant" Roberts 359th Family, Milbury C Charlton 427th, Milton B Abernathy 358th, Milton I Jobe 358th, Morris B Sjoberg 427th, Moulton Webber 359th, Mrs Adeline Czarny Adams 427th Widow, Mrs Arlys Olson 358th Widow, Mrs Aua J "Nita" Giddings 359th Widow, Mrs Betty Holmberg 360th Widow, Mrs Betty L Craig 358th Widow, Mrs Betty S Wade 358th Widow, Mrs Carolyn Baldwin 358th Widow, Mrs Clara C Butler 427th Widow, Mrs Corlis Girman 359th Widow, Mrs Elaine Wagner 358th Widow, Mrs Elizabeth "Betty" C Kelly 360th Widow, Mrs Ella S Hight 360th Widow, Mrs Elma Cooper 427th Widow, Mrs Everett Dasher 358th Widow, Mrs Geraldine W Torley 359th Widow, Mrs Gertrude Bourque 360th Widow, Mrs Glenna E Prussman 359th Widow, Mrs Gloria D Hendry 358th Widow, Mrs Grace C Sachau 358th Widow, Mrs Hazel Louise Tupper 359th Widow, Mrs Helen S Dasher 358th Widow, Mrs Irene B Wor-

thington 359th Widow, Mrs Jean Conver 427th Widow, Mrs Kathleen M Williams 358th Widow, Mrs Loveaugn P Long 360th Widow, Mrs Margaret Rahn 359th Widow, Mrs Margaret Yunglove 360th Widow, Mrs Margurite L Zarelli 358th Widow, Mrs Mary Norris 360th Widow, Mrs Norma Russell 444th Sub Depot Widow, Mrs Roxana Quiggle 359th Widow, Mrs Sally Maresh 444th Sub Depot Widow, Mrs Virginia Wentz 359th Widow, Norbert M Philson 358th, Norman Jacobsen 303rd, Norwood Borror 360th, O Z Rowe 358th, Oliver B Larson 358th, Orphus Smith Jr, 427th, Orvis K Silrum 427th, Otis "Monte" White 359th, Owen A Knutzen 359th, Paul A Tognetti 359th, Paul Hershner 358th, Paul O Harmon 1199th MP, Peter Fuczka 360th, Peter L M Packard 358th, Phil Olander 358th, Philip G Fleming 360th, Ralph E Page 427th, Ralph Peters 359th, Ray E Derr 358th, Raymond E Holland 358th, Raymond N Calenberg 358th, Raymond Tartaglia 359th, Richard A Young Friend, Richard F Fogarty 427th, Richard G Scharch 358th, Richard Green 358th, Richard H Wentworth 427th, Richard L Smith 360th, Richard M Albright 360th, Robert "Bob" Phillips 358th, Robert A Rettinhouse 359th, Robert B Lubbers 427th, Robert B Smith 360th, Robert Bogert 360th, Robert C Bejina Friend, Robert C Umberger Sr 359th, Robert D Brassil 359th, Robert D Stewart 427th, Robert Defeis 360th, Robert E Edmunds 360th, Robert F Determan 358th Family, Robert H Hitchcock 427th, Robert Hiebeler 360th Family, Robert H Lenhard 427th, Robert J Hively 358th Family, Robert N Stauffer 359th, Robert W Krohn 427th, Robert W McCorkle 358th, Roy D Harvey 360th, Roy L Tayler 359th, Roy Vincent Woldord 360th, Rudy T Rendon 1199th MP, Rufus W Grisham 358th, Sam P Fleming 360th, Samuel W Smith 360th, Sheldon A Stafford 358th, Sibley M Andriesen 427th, Stacia Humphries Hernden 358th Family, Stanley Davidsen 358th, Stanley J Backiel 358th, Steve Dulick 359th, Steve McColaugh Friend, Thomas D Lardie 360th, Thomas E Hatton 359th, Thomas E Zenick 360th, Thomas F Miller 358th, Thomas J Quinn 359th, Thomas L Moore 359th, Val E Thompson 359th, Van R White 358th, Vickie Sharp 427th Family, Vincent J DeNisi 444th Sub Depot, Walter E Sloan, 358th, Walter Mayer 358th, Walter Swanson 360th, Warren Mauger 359th, Wayne Humphries 358th, Wayne O Sprouhe 358th, Wellington "Mac" Mikulski 359th, Wesley G Loosemore 359th, William Beasley 359th, William C "Curley" Byerly 358th, William Denison 427th, William E Meleski 358th, William E Olson 427th, William F Goudy 359th, William F Kentsbeer 358th, William Ferri 358th, William H Bruns Jr 359th, William H Gast 358th, William Heller 360th, William I Kever 358th, William J Dallas 427th, William J Yepes 360th, William R Byers 427th, William Roche 360th, Zaven Jardarian 359th.

DONATIONS (IN HONOR OF)

Andrew Claster for Stanley Claster, Anthony J Cecchini for Chick's Crew, Arthur J Brown for Paul Winkleman, Ben Starr for Gloria Starr, Bill Albertson, Bill Latshaw for Leo Lanier Jr, Bill Sears for Gerry Campbell, Brian McGuire for Gene Girman, Charles R Doback Sr for Donald DeCamp & Bill Hembree, Charles S Schmeltzer for the Rogan/Gamble Crew, Cindy "Tracy" Adams for Michael J Canale, Curtis O Brooke for W T Hembree, Dave Tooley for Robert C A Carlson, Denise Neal for Dennis E Forman Jr, Donald H Foulk for James Aberdeen, Edgar C "Ed" Miller for Clarence V Walenta, Edward E Ross for Richard Waggoner, Edward Kalkbrenner for Carl Kalkbrenner, Edwin Barry for Henry Pratton, Erwin G Lamme for Al Martel, Ernest G Schieferstein for Joel Berly, Eugene R Prieto for Roaul R Prieto, Eugene Rubin for Robert Rubin, Frederick Ziemer for Everett Dasher, Gary Manning for Harold R Manning, George Milman for Jerome Milman, Gilbert Travis for Tom Struck, Harold R Timm for Robert Cogswell Crew, Howard E Norris Jr for Col Howard E Norris, Eddie Deerfield for Kermit Stevens, Humphrey O'Leary for Cyrus Galley.

(THE LISTING WILL CONTINUE IN THE NEXT ISSUE)



AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR, in a box car built to carry eight horses or 40 men, is one of the many realistic exhibits in the World War II display area of the National Museum of the USAF. The museum is at Wright-Patterson AFB in Dayton, Ohio, next reunion destination for the 303rd Bomb Group.

THE EDITOR COMMENTS....

For a World War II aerial combat veteran, there's nothing like climbing aboard a B-17 in the 21st Century to make you feel your age. From 1942 to 1945, we used to grab the top of the waist section opening or nose entryway, hoist up, curl legs, and propel ourselves into the aircraft with the ease of acrobats. These days, not a hope.

There was a World War II air show last February at the St. Petersburg/Clearwater Florida Airport. One of the planes that flew in was the B-17G *Nine-O-Nine* owned by the Collings Foundation. I had been invited to brief a class of students before they walked through the Flying Fortress. Entry for visitors was up a short ladder into the waist and exit down a longer ladder from the nose. I had a momentary thought of hoisting myself into the waist to show the kids how it was done. I'm glad I decided against it. I had a helluva time just getting my legs to bend enough to climb the short ladder. And then all those contortions weaving around the ball turret and its strut, through the radio room onto the bomb bay catwalk that seemed one-half inch wide, and a crawl around the base of the top turret to drop into the nose. And then the final embarrassment—two 10-year-old kids waiting at the bottom of the nose ladder to help me down.

Pinellas County TV Channel 18 covered the air show, and worked the news segment into a three-minute documentary with stock footage of aerial combat, 50-caliber machine guns chattering away at incoming enemy fighters and bombs dropping. The reporter asked me to sit in my radio room, and talk about my missions. As the camera filmed, I told about climbing up through the radio room hatch onto a wing and swimming to a dinghy after our B-17 crashed in the North Sea, and about leaping out the waist door at 8,000 feet to parachute down from a burning B-17. I wonder if the reporter believed me, having seen my present short supply of mobility. Mercifully, the camera crew didn't film me climbing up and down those ladders.

Eddie Deerfield

303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.
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