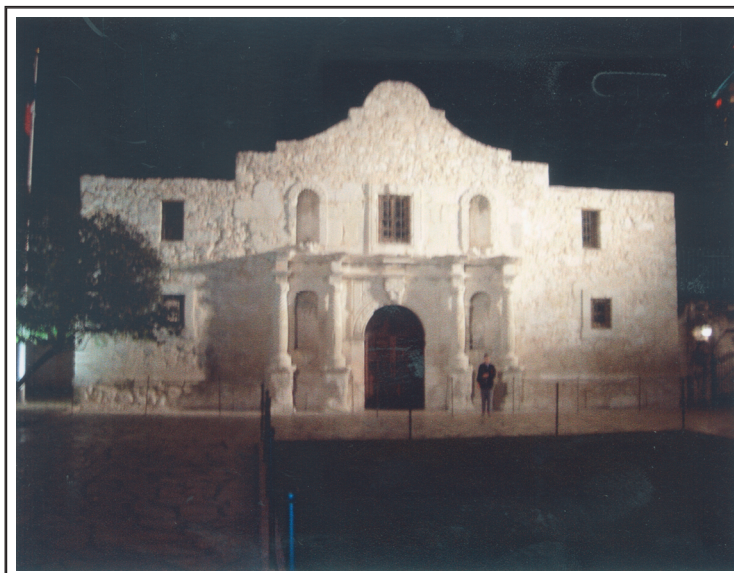
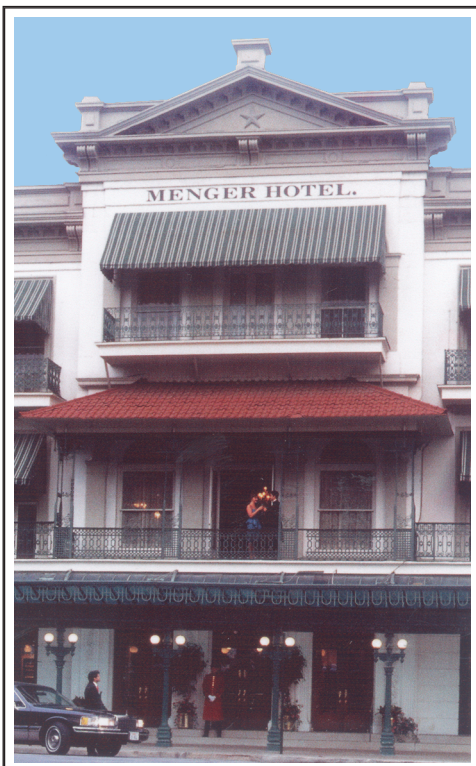


Hell's Angels Newsletter

303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

May, 2006



TWO OF SAN ANTONIO'S MOST FAMOUS LANDMARKS are at the heart of the 303rd Bomb Group's next reunion gathering. The hotel selected for the meeting is The Historic Menger, around the corner from The Historic Alamo. And both are only a block away from the famous River Walk's cruise boats and multitude of restaurants and sights to see.

If You Miss It, You'll Surely Regret It! **THE REUNION IN SAN ANTONIO WILL BE AN AFFAIR TO REMEMBER**

Everything has fallen into place to make the 303rd Bomb Group Association's 23rd reunion from September 12 to 16 in San Antonio a memorable occasion.

The Texas city is one of America's most popular, the hotel selected for the gathering is unique, and the location is ideal for convenient dining, sight seeing and shopping at the adjacent River Center Mall.

There are only two reunions left in the future of the 303rd Bomb Group Association—San Antonio in 2006 and Washington, DC in 2007—and then the curtain comes down.

Attendance at 303rd

reunions has declined from a high of 850 in Seattle in 1985 to a low of 165 in Dayton last year. The obvious reasons are the passing of many 303rd veterans and reduced mobility of others.

Veterans, family and associate members should treasure these last two opportunities to come together as a group. The final two reunions will, indeed, be affairs to remember.

Here's what's waiting for the 303rd in San Antonio:

The historic Menger Hotel was constructed in 1859, 23 years after the fall of The Alamo, as a two-story building in a prominent downtown lo-

cation, only 100 yards from The Alamo, itself. Almost 150 years of refinements have created a masterpiece of traditional elegance and atmosphere.

The hotel now boasts five stories, 316 rooms and many amenities. Over the years, it has housed such personalities as Theodore Roosevelt, Babe Ruth, Mae West, Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, Gutzon Borglum, Oscar Wilde and Sarah Bernhardt, just to name a few.

The high-ceiling Victorian lobby reflects remodeling in 1909, dominated by eight Corinthian

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303rd BGA honors Joint Analysis Center—page 4.

Supply Sergeant recalls 2nd home in England—pages 5, 6.

Sister's fond memories of beloved 359th gunner—page 7.

427th Co-pilot Cornyn's saga of life as a POW continues—pages 8, 9.

Open Forum attracts 13 letters—pages 17, 18.



303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.

Hell's Angels Newsletter

Editor—Eddie Deerfield

Vol. 30, No. 2 3552 Landmark Trail, Palm Harbor, FL 34684

May, 2006

The 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc. is a tax exempt organization under IRS Code 501(c)(19), chartered in 1977 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.

In anticipation of the dissolution of the Association at the end of 2007, membership status was frozen as of August 23, 2005 at the level each member held on that date. That level will be maintained for the life of the Association, with no additional dues being required. New members will continue to be accepted, with the payment of a one-time \$25.00 dues/registration fee valid for the life of the Association.

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Planning a trip to 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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Memphis Belle, a 91st Bomb Group B-17, flew its 25th combat mission on 19 May 1943. *Hell's Angels* of the 303rd Bomb Group flew its 25th six days earlier on 13 May 1943.

Over the years, legend has grown that *Memphis Belle* was the first to log 25 missions because it was the first 8th Air Force B-17 to return to the US to promote the war effort.

The *Belle's* crew, l-to-r, Engineer Harold Loch, Ball turret gunner Cecil Scott, Radio operator Robert Hanson, Co-pilot Jim Verinis, Pilot Robert Morgan, Navigator Charles Leighton, Tail gunner John Quinlan, Right waist gunner Tony Nastal, Bombardier Vince Evans and Left waist gunner Bill Winchell.



91st Bomb Group Seeks Recognition of *Hell's Angels* "first 25" at US Air Force Museum Display of B-17 *Memphis Belle*

The leader of the 91st Bomb Group Memorial Association is a man with a mission. His goal is to set history straight, crediting the 303rd's *Hell's Angels* as the first 8th Air Force B-17 to complete 25 combat missions, not the 91st's *Memphis Belle*. And he's also seeking special recognition of the first four American heavy bomb groups to launch raids against German targets—the 91st, 303rd, 305th and 306th.

Memphis Belle is undergoing full restoration at the National Museum of the US Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio. The B-17 is scheduled for display in 2008 as the centerpiece of the museum's World War II collection.

Edward C. Gates, President of the 91st BGMA, asked assurance in a message to the museum director, retired Major General Charles D. Metcalf, that history is correctly represented. The 91st is in the process of donating its archives to the museum.

He wrote, "If the aircraft is restored for public viewing we would also like to assure that the history is correctly represented. The 91st has ample reason to be proud of our history and we do not wish to claim things that are incorrect. Thus, we would be delighted if any plaque indicated that the *Belle* was filmed as one of the aircraft that completed 25 missions in the earliest days, but that the honor of being the first appears to belong to a B-17 (*Hell's Angels*) of the 303rd Bomb Group."

In a second message to Maj. Gen. Metcalf, Gates recommended that, "Would this not be a wonderful opportunity to credit the four groups that went over together—the 91st, 303rd, 305th and 306th—to form the nucleus of the 8th Air Force. We were once known as "The Four Horsemen" of the Eighth, back when that term

had real meaning beyond the sporting archives of Notre Dame."

Myths die hard, and when they flaw history everyone involved needs to work harder to set the record straight. The editor of the *Hell's Angels* Newsletter joined the President of the 91st Bomb Group Memorial Association in urging the Director of the National Museum of the US Air Force not to perpetuate the myth, to give credit where credit is due, and to recognize the combined aerial combat achievements of "The Four Horsemen" bomb groups in World War II.



MEMPHIS BELLE during renovation in Millington, Tennessee in 2003. It was moved to the USAF Museum in 2005.



COLONEL DARRYL J. REYES, new commander of the Joint Analysis Center at RAF Molesworth, proudly displays a Certificate of Appreciation awarded to the JAC by the 303rd Bomb Group Association. Col. Reyes has continued the tradition of his predecessors in preserving the history of the 303rd at the Molesworth base.

MILITARY MEN AND WOMEN OF JOINT ANALYSIS CENTER HONORED FOR WAGING WAR AGAINST TERRORISTS

Officer and enlisted personnel from all services of the American military based at RAF Molesworth, war time home of the 303rd Bomb Group, are conducting a different kind of war. Among their principal enemies are the shadowy and cowardly terrorist organizations. The weapons used by the US Joint Analysis Center are products of the latest technology to identify and locate these killers. While details are classified, it's safe to say that their actions in recent years have saved countless lives and led to the arrests of numerous terrorists.

It became clear soon after the arrival of Colonel Darryl J. Reyes, the new JAC commander, that the spirit of World War II's 303rd Bomb Group would continue to flourish at RAF-Molesworth side-by-side with our nation's best warriors combating the new enemy—international terrorism.

Col. Reyes recently wrote, "The first slide in every command brief that I pitch to VIPs depicts a picture of the fightin' 303rd and the monument that proudly stands at the entrance way. Every morning I come thru the gates at 0500 and drive past the monument. It is a sobering reminder to me, as a commander, soldier, and US citizen, of the tremendous courage your team displayed, and the incredible achievements you accom-

plished, as you fought a most horrific enemy and threat to our way of life.

"Over a half century later, I assure you that you would be most proud to see what our nation's best in uniform are doing every day, 24/7, in finding, identifying, and killing extremist terrorists who continue to threaten our society. The great troops and civilians of the JAC are at the tip of that spear and arm our theater commanders and national decision makers with that knowledge and fidelity to relentlessly take the fight globally, so we can keep them from harming our citizens back home."

The Certificate of Appreciation to the Joint Analysis Center, reads:

"The veterans of the 303rd Bombardment (H) Group, who served in the air and on the ground at Molesworth in combat against the German enemy during World War II, take great pleasure in extending our appreciation to the men and women of the Joint Analysis Center at Molesworth who continue to combat America's enemies. We who served more than a half-century ago salute you who serve today."

THE 303RD'S AIR CORPS SUPPLY TEAM, at ease on top of a bomb shelter.

Seated, l-to-r, Maurice Paulk, Leo Michalski, Dick Woolfe, Harry Guenther, Dan Mullaney and George Quailey.

Standing, Roland Lalumiere, Buford Gislard, Robert Quigley, Tommy Fennell, Henry Paeper, Leonard Butler, Albert Wagler, Ted Essock and Wayne Baker.



303rd Supply Sergeant Paulk Thinks Back Fondly To His Second Home in England

**By Maurice Paulk
Air Corps Supply
444th Air Depot**

This collection of thoughts was written at the request of our youngest son. It was written some 59-60 years after the fact. I was surprised that I remembered as much as I did. They would for no apparent reason intrude on my thoughts at the strangest times—during a conversation or in the middle of the night.

For example, about my second home in England away from base.

Northampton was my 6 hour and 48 hour pass town for probably a year. Then, I decided to go to Dudley, Worcestershire, just outside of Birmingham. Took more time to get there—Northampton to Birmingham, walk across town and take double decker bus #25 for Tipton and get off at Dudley.

The Bobbies (British constables) were real friendly and they let me stay at the Cop Shop for several months. The Bobbies always put me

up in the women's section as they said it was cleaner. They also brought in an extra blanket and mattress, about 3 inches thick.

One night about midnight the Chief Constable asked if I had sent any pictures home lately. I told him "no," but was going to. He immediately called the police photographer and took several poses of me. Two weeks later I picked up my "portraits" and mailed them home.

Several times I shared his midnight lunch with one of the Bobbies.

On my first trip to Dudley, Joe Clay, a tech supply sergeant in the 444th, and I were sitting in a milk bar having coffee (at least that's what they called it). A young fellow surrounded by about 4 girls and a male friend of his asked us to join them. We were the first Yanks that they had been able to talk to.

Made several friends that evening. Harold Parks, the Englishman, a couple months later invited me to supper and

to stay with his family. They treated me as one of their own. I left my guest quarters in the local police station.

Many is the time that I have eaten the only egg in Harold's house, drank the last glass of milk and was given the only piece of meat.

I tried to explain that we were well fed on base and please don't favor me. My words were to no avail.

So, I started taking rations with me but soon learned not to take canned sweet corn. "Mom" Parks insisted on putting sugar on it and serving it as a dessert.

It was then that I started to bring other canned goods along with Vienna sausages, and the family was quite pleased. Once or twice I was able to scrounge a couple of two-pound boxes of sugar.

I gave one to a school teacher I knew. She said "Oh no! That is as bad as using the black market." My reply was "Do as you wish. The box is on the table, I am not taking it back."

The next time I saw the lady, her daughter said, "Mummy made jam with it."

One Christmas, "Mom" Parks apologized for not having any brandy to flame the pudding. "It's quite dear, you know."

When I would arrive at their house around midnight the door was either unlocked or I knew the hiding place for the key. On a cold winter night there was a hot water bottle [ceramic] at the foot of the feather tick bed. Sometimes a hot brick wrapped in a towel.

On Sunday morning it was the family custom for "Mom" to serve the breakfast (porridge and tea) in bed. I was always served last—she left me the tea pot.

I had asked my mother back home for some popcorn and Crisco. On receiving, I took them to my second home in Dudley.

Harold looked at the unpopped kernels and remarked that it looked

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from 5)

just like maize. "We feed that to the 'orses," he said.

When we popped it, Harold got the most fun out of lifting the lid and watching the popcorn go flying all over the kitchen. "Oh! I've seen that, but it is always pink at the fairs."

The next time we were to pop corn, he invited three girls over to watch me pop it.

The date I am not sure of—probably 1943. Harold's sister came downstairs to the room where Harold and I were sitting in front of the fireplace eating popcorn.

She asked me if I would talk to some "high school" girls taking a military training class. I told her I would be glad to answer questions but I was a poor public speaker.

"What time do you want to go?" I asked. "You know how long it will take to get there. Just give me a holler."

"Very well," she said. "I'll knock you up at 7 o'clock." I repressed my laughter until she was out of the room. I was aware of the expression but to hear it used was a different story.

Harold, very straight faced, asked why the laughter. After my explanation he, too, had a

good laugh.

The next time Elsie asked me to talk with some people, she said "I'll be up and awaken you!" as her face turned a brilliant shade of red.

I got up late one morning and went down stairs. On the stove was a pan of hot water with a bowl of porridge keeping warm. After I ate I washed the dishes.

When Mrs. Parks came back from market, she was astounded-- "British men never do that!!!"

Went to market with her and bought her a dozen roses—"unheard of," she said.

She introduced me to a friend of hers on market day. Pulled up my pant leg and said "See! He wears short sox." I had them rolled down.

Hind sight is always better than foresight. In April of 1945 on the death of President Roosevelt, Mom Parks expressed her sympathy by saying what a terrible thing that such a good man as President Roosevelt had passed away.

My answer was "Yes, he was the best President that England ever had."

In these later years I have realized that to be a very rude and crude statement for me to make. Especially so af-

ter the wonderful treatment I had received from the Parks family. I suppose this was due to my not understanding the workings of the Lend Lease Act.

The only rough times I can recall was when a negro quartermaster outfit and a white engineer outfit moved into Dudley. Several brawls developed and a couple of pubs were torn up. That was when the people of Dudley started frowning instead of smiling at me when they met me on the street.

Prior to that, one would only see three or four GI's in town at a time, and hardly ever an MP. That changed.

I believe it was the first time I was on pass after the engineers and quartermaster moved in.

It was late at night and I was told the streets were off limits and to go around the area. I went a couple blocks out of my way and thought myself clear of the area but was stopped by a very excited guard.

He immediately called out for the Officer of the Day, who was a 2nd Lieutenant. In his questioning, he asked who I was, where I was going and why, what would I do tomorrow, and where was my outfit?

I politely told him that he, of all people, should know better than to ask that question. It must have shook him up for he told me to hurry and get off the streets.

He never asked me for ID or a pass--which was good because mine was only stamped for Northampton.

Harold left with a Palestinian Police unit two or three months before I left England, but I continued my visits until the 303rd shipped out for Africa.

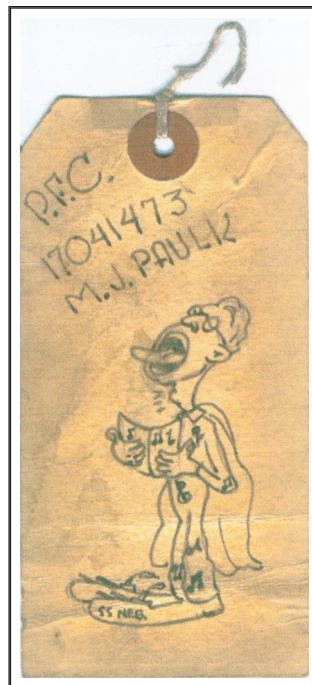
I came back to the base late from what would prove to be my last trip to Dudley. The first person I met was Captain Freedman. "Have a good time, Sergeant? Glad you're back."

The next person was M/Sgt. Tommy Fennell. "You dumb @\$%A. Where the hell have you been? We've been trying to get planes to take us out of here. It's a good thing for you they weren't available."

Two or three days later, on June 11, 1945, we took off for Casa Blanca.



PFC Maurice J. Paulk's War Department ID Card



.... and his duffle bag tag.

“I Can Almost Feel My Brother At My Elbow”—Alberta’s Memories

By Alberta Redhage Shephard
Gray Summit, Missouri

I read the *Hell's Angels Newsletter* as soon as it arrives. I look and enjoy every issue, which I keep in a binder. I can almost feel my brother, Staff Sergeant Louis Redhage, at my elbow!

As kids and adults, we were inseparable. When he was inducted into the service at the age of 18, things moved so quickly he didn't even have an opportunity to be in his high school class graduating picture. Telling him goodbye could be forever.

He did his training for Army, took a test, and ended up in the Air Corps. Now he was where he wanted to be.

On his last furlough before he left for Molesworth, we made a pact. He'd put the latest mission number he had finished where the date was on his letters. I wrote to him every day. When he returned home, he told me he knew my letter would be waiting for him after each mission and how much that meant to him. My prayer was answered.

A relative in St. Louis received the Post Dispatch daily and saved them for me. The bombing missions to Germany were described.

Louis left for England on Thanksgiving Day 1944 as a young man and returned to us an old man. His first mission was on December 24, 1944 and his 35th and last on April 5, 1945.

I am sure some of the World War II boys were having the same problems he had. He came home to his old bedroom, and I was awakened many nights in the next room by the sounds of his reliving the air fights over and over again. I would knock on his door and then go in at least twice a night to calm him down. The Air Corps sent him to a place in California to rest and recuperate.

I will always remember when he removed his silver wings and pinned them on my dark blue suit lapel, saying, “Bertie, you earned these.”

My beloved brother passed away on May 21, 1996.

Two years ago, I went to the Galveston Air Museum with Martha, his wife, and Joan, his daughter. We donated Louis's silver wings, uniform, parachute (which had shrapnel in it) and other of his personal artifacts.

I stood there for some time looking up at the B-17 *Thunderbird* like the one Louis had flown in on many of his missions. I'm sure I heard him say, “Thanks, Bertie. This is where the wings I gave you belong.”

FOLLOWING ARE NOTES FROM THE DIARY KEPT BY LOUIS H. REDHAGE, 359TH SQUADRON, WHO FLEW 35 MISSIONS AS BALL TURRET GUNNER, WAIST GUNNER AND TOGGLIER ON THE O'DONNELL CREW.

“*Thunderbird* had taken us over many a rough target. She caught fire on take-off once with a full bomb load. After we were airborne, the fire was extinguished. We made it to Germany alright, but on the way back the same engine caught fire.

“Several times, she came back on two or three engines. Once, the tail wheel was knocked out.

“Another time, a big piece of shrapnel came through

the side and ripped down the ball turret ammunition box. After we landed, I found the chunk of flak inside my flight bag imbedded in my parachute.

“Every day I made a mission, I wrote it on a bomb tag and hung it over my bunk. I didn't know it at the time, but back home Bertie was saving all the articles from newspapers pertaining to Allied bombings over Germany. When I returned home from overseas, I matched up the clippings with what I had written on the bomb tags, and put them in a scrap book.

“Each bomb had a tag attached to a cotter pin. After each mission, we had to turn in one tag for every bomb we carried. It was a court martial offense if the tags were not turned in. I guess if they weren't turned in, you were considered a Nazi sympathizer! I got my extra tags from a ground crew friend of mine.

“I guess my toughest mission was my 11th to Lutzkendorf on 9 February 1945. Intense and accurate ground fire. A 105mm shell went through our left wing, then exploded under the plane above us in the formation. I learned later that it seriously wounded the ball turret gunner on that B-17, a lad of Mexican origin, who lived in our Nissan hut. The last time I saw him in the base hospital, the doctors were still removing shrapnel.”



THE TOM O'DONNELL CREW OF THE 359TH SQUADRON thought it was celebrating the 100th mission of *Thunderbird* on 15 January 1945, but official records later determined it was the 93rd. Regardless, a good time was had by all. From l-to-r, Tail gunner George Hoffman, Waist gunner Lou Redhage, Bombardier Ray Crawford, Pilot Tom O'Donnell, Navigator Zavin Jardarian, Ball turret gunner Billy Gaumer and Co-pilot Tray Goulding. Kneeling, Radio operator Sol Portney and Engineer Norb Fischer.

Plan to Kill Guard and Escape Foiled; POW's Sent to Stalag 13D

John Cornyn's Story
(Continued from the last issue)

On first entering the Hauptman's headquarters, I immediately saw others from my crew—Navigator McMahon, Waist Gunner Cottle, Engineer Dyson and Bombardier Nazarian. I tried to give the impression that they were total strangers with, I felt, some success.

To my chagrin and irritation, after the Hauptman grew tired of his verbal abuse I was told to sit on a chair on the other side of the room. Nazarian spoke up with his usual subtleness "Hey, Tex, got any cigarettes?"

Having one package which I had placed in my flying jacket before taking off I gave him about half of them and told him in an undertone that I didn't know him.

I returned to my seat and about this time our tail gunner Hester was escorted through the door, searched and given a seat away from the rest of us.

After a short time during which I was wondering what had happened to the members of the crew that weren't there and about our own sorry appearance, the Hauptman spoke to me for some reason considering me the ranking officer. He said in broken English, gestures and illustrated German that we were forbidden to speak to each other on threat of being shot, and that we were to move out at that time to a truck waiting for us at the door.

We climbed into the truck and the guards threw in our chutes which had been found along with an envelope and package containing papers, escape kits, etc. which had been taken from us.

Two guards then climbed in the truck with us and two more got in the front seat. The two in the rear held a Burp gun and a Mauser machine pistol on us. On the way the guards, wearing assumed grins of the conquerors, tried to converse with us in doggerel French with little success and much confusion.

Several times in the confusion the guards caught members of the crew carrying on what seemed to them unnecessary conversation at which time they would with gestures and in barking German demand their silence.

We arrived in the evening and reported to a building that was either a barracks or some area or local headquarters where we were the center of much attention, mostly unfavorable. We were kept in what seemed to be a combination day room, mess hall, office and sleeping quarters until some German officer whose rank at that time I couldn't recognize found it convenient to come in and give sufficient orders as to our disposition.

We were removed to the basement where we were placed in a small room and questioned at some length by a young soldier who spoke only broken English. I was given a small English-German Military Guide which I used to the extent that I could understand the questions which were asked. To most of these questions I used the very convenient reply "Nicht Virschtay" meaning "I don't understand."

The German guards at each reply of "Nicht Virschtay" would immediately hold a huddle, barking and growling in their guttural German, telling each other that these Verdamt Amerikamschers were stupid.

After a while we were taken out of the building and



During World War II, Lt. John Cornyn was a 427th Squadron Co-pilot. He was a POW from January 13 to April 29, 1945. Educated as a pathologist, he served in the Air Force for 31 years, retiring as a colonel. He died in 1989.

marched a short but very tiring distance down the road and back again and then down the hill again winding around in the darkness until we finally came to the Lemberg POW Stockade.

We were then taken into the non-com's office and living quarters where we were lined up, given a summary search, perusal and questioning. We were each given a small bag of Zwiebach which in reality was rye flour mixed with concrete in small rectangular blocks. Then we were taken into the basement of the building and shown our bedding of straw pallets and one bed.

On this bed lay Brinkley who had parachuted into the center of Lemberg, removing several large limbs of someone's favorite apple tree and tearing the ligaments in his left ankle. We were left with one guard and immediately I examined Brinkley's ankle, questioning him concerning the missing crew members but he knew little about them. It was apparent he was in great pain.

Some of the crew members with me had managed to keep part of their escape kits and I requisitioned what aspirins and sedatives they held for Brinkley's use but these didn't seem to help much. About this time we learned that in the other room adjoining ours approximately sixty infantrymen were being held prisoners with one officer—a captain.

In the latrine or whenever possible we got in a few words with the dough boys. This took some time. We were tired and hungry.

We then began our plans for escape while huddling under a parachute we had kept. Bombardier Nazarian, Navigator McMahon and I began studying our maps and compasses (which hadn't been confiscated) to determine our relative position with the front line. After much whispering, we again hid the maps and compasses, watching the lone guard closely.

We began cutting the parachute shroud lines into three and four foot lengths for strangulation cords. About this time we gave the Infantry captain a compass, saw blade and map, and passed out the cords among the enlisted men.

It seemed as if the Germans realized what was going on for our guard doubled and sometimes trebled and



GALE MARRIED JOHN CORNYN IN 1946. She holds their son, John, now the U.S. Senator from Texas.

we had to give up our plans for escape that day.

After a night of poor rest on the straw ticking with only a parachute canopy for cover we awakened early wondering when we were going to get something to eat.

We made early contact with the Infantry captain and were informed that he had sawed nearly through the bars of a window in his section.

P47's started coming over bombing and strafing in and near the town. One of the planes let go with a 500 pounder about four blocks away. Windows broke, rocks and dirt flew and the walls shook and cracked.

The guards again doubled that evening and about ten p.m. we were told that we were to move. We took what belongings we had and marched out of the prison, each entertaining his own thoughts of our failure to try our escape.

We were taken by trucks to Lachen Soeverdorf and upon arriving there we reported to what looked like a small but well kept prison. Apparently we didn't belong there for we were sent with three guards about a mile and a half further to what seemed to be a old soldiers' home and barracks.

When we finally arrived we were ready to go to sleep and this time there were four beds and the rest of us slept on straw pallets. Our guards there were old men who outwardly seemed tired of war and being away from their home. They treated us in a more or less friendly manner giving a little special attention to Brinkley and giving us bandages for Dyson's eye which was beginning to look rather badly.

After a night of fair rest we were awakened next morning to receive what seemed to be a good meal consisting of a loaf of bread between us, a large water container full of barley soup and a small box of boiled potatoes. The potatoes tasted like apples and the soup seemed delicious. Before we were through eating, the guards came to move us again. We stuffed potatoes in our pocket, gulped what soup we could and carried the remaining bread with us.

A train finally transported us to Dulag Luft 1, the notorious interrogation center near Frankfurt on Main.

I was questioned immediately on arrival, refusing to give information other than my name, rank and serial

number. I was told I would have plenty of time to think it over, and then was assigned to my room.

During eight days at the Dulag Luft, Nazarian and McMahon were across the hall from me in separate rooms. We were not allowed to speak to each other. That night, we were shipped to Lulag Luft 2, controlled internally by American officers. Living conditions and meals were much better, but it lasted only two days.

Our next destination was Stalag Luft 13D, near Nurnberg. Our daily diet was 1/6th of a loaf of black bread and a cup of thin dirty soup. After a few days we began to worry not when the American army would reach us but if they would get there soon enough.

On February 19, 1945, I was operated on for appendicitis by a Serbian prisoner doctor, and was hospitalized for two weeks.

On April 4th, all the POW's at Stalag 13D began a forced march to Mooseberg. We arrived on the 12th. On the morning of the 29th, an infantry attack freed the camp and we all poured out into the open.



NAVIGATOR FRANKLIN MCMAHON was a replacement on the 427th crew that went down on 13 January 1945. He shared the experiences of John Cornyn in captivity.

McMahon drew this sketch at Stalag 13D where malnutrition and death faced the POW's. After the war, he was an artist-reporter, traveling the world to cover events ranging from The Vatican to Mission Control in Houston. He was the recipient of the Renaissance Prize of the Art Institute of Chicago. His work has been published widely, and his paintings are in the major collections of museums, universities, corporations and U.S. government institutions.

BACK TO THE FUTURE REUNION!

A LOOK AHEAD TO TO THE 14TH OF SEPTEMBER , 2006

7 AM to 9 AM

Group breakfast in the Grand Ballroom of The Menger Hotel.

The buffet will include a lavish spread of chilled fruit juices, assorted fruits in a watermelon basket, scrambled eggs, egg casserole, bacon strips, country ham with Red Eye gravy, sausage links, breakfast potatoes garnished with purple onions and sweet peppers, assorted cold cereals, 2% or skim milk, breakfast breads and pastries, fresh fruit preserves, butter, tea, regular or decaffeinated coffee.



10 AM to 12 Noon

Randolph Air Force Base.

A mission briefing in the base theater, followed by a guided "bus window" tour of the historic facility and a visit to static displays of various aircraft associated with the air base's training mission since World War II.

Land clearing began in 1928 and construction the following year, making the Texas site one of the oldest in the US Air Force. It was named after Captain William M. Randolph of Austin, TX, a pilot killed on take-off from Gorman Field, TX, in an AT-4 in 1928.





12 Noon to 1:30 PM Lunch in the International Room of the Officers' Club, located at the very center of Randolph Air Force Base. Choice of London Broil or Chicken Marsala with all the trimmings.



1:30 PM to 3:00 PM Memorial Service in Base Chapel Number 1. Unique program planned to include names of all military personnel who served in the 303rd Bomb Group at Molesworth.



A VERY SPECIAL THANKS

to First Lieutenant Elizabeth D'Angelo, Randolph AFB Deputy Chief, Community Relations, for arranging the Group's base orientation tour, and to the 303rd's Mary Ann and Sam Smith of Kerrville, TX, for providing transportation to the air base and good company along the way last February for Reunion Planners Eddie and Mary Lee Deerfield.



5:30 PM to 10:30 PM Optional event: Old-fashioned pit barbeque dinner at the only working cattle spread in the San Antonio area. Entertainment by a country band and Western rope and gun stunts. Even a hayride tour of the ranch.

REUNION, from 1

columns, under a leaded skylight, and replete with paintings and furnishings dating back to the middle nineteenth century.

The magnificent garden in the center of the hotel is another of its unique attributes. Its origins were in the 17th century when the ground was crossed by an *acequias* (irrigation canal) dug by Franciscan fathers. The flora that thrive in the garden include palms, loquats, mangoes, banana trees, oleanders and other semi-tropical vegetation. Until a half-century ago, alligators lived in a small pool in the garden. They had been given to The Menger in partial payment for a bill which a hotel patron was unable to pay in full.

The entrance to the world-famous Alamo is next door to the hotel. Admission is free, and docents are there to take visitors through the historic site where a small band of 189 defenders was wiped out in 1836 by a Mexican force of 1,800.

The San Antonio river winds by near the hotel, and tickets for a cruise through the heart of the downtown section are readily available. Each boat has a veteran guide who narrates the highlights of the area while the craft glides past restaurants, shops, hotels, churches and historical sites.

Also within a block of the hotel is the popular River-center Mall, where visitors can shop San Antonio style on the famous River Walk. There are 125 stores and restaurants, an IMAX and AMC theater and a Comedy Club.

Away from the downtown district, the 303rd BGA has arranged a full program at Randolph Air Force Base. Following the passage of the Air Corps Act of 1926, the new Army Air Corps embarked on a five-year expansion program that led to the construction of Randolph Field. In 1931, with 162 officers and 1,432 enlisted men, the base came into existence as the Air Corps Training Center, with its first pilot training class.

After a buffet breakfast for the 303rd at the Menger, buses will take the group to the air base for a lecture and sightseeing tour, lunch at the Officers Club and a memorial service in the main chapel. Tentative plans for the service include a scrolling on a DVD of the names of every 303rd person who served in the unit at Molesworth, against a musical background of *Adagio For Strings* by Samuel Barber. Surely an emotional experience.

Two optional events are planned:

An evening on the only working cattle ranch in the San Antonio area which hosts chuck wagon parties. The ranch has been in operation for over a hundred years, and has been designated as a "Heritage Ranch" by the State of Texas.

The event will include an old-fashioned pit barbeque dinner, ranch beans, potato salad, dinner rolls and all the fixing's, as well as beer, soft drinks, iced tea, and then pie and coffee around a camp fire. Entertainment will feature Texas swing and western music by a ranch band and fiddle player, along with cowboys performing rope and gun tricks. A hayride tour of the ranch will also be laid on. The per person cost is \$48.

The other option is a city tour called "The Best of San Antonio." It features a 1910 general store, an antique car collection, Spanish Mission Concepcion built in 1731 with paintings more than 200 years old still on the chapel walls, the San Antonio El Mercado Mexican Market for Dutch treat lunch, the San Fernando Cathedral, oldest in the United States, and La Villita, the original little village that became San Antonio. The cost is \$30.



A BRONZE STATUE OF COLONEL WILLIAM TRAVIS, commanding officer of the defenders of the Alamo, is stationed at the entrance to the Menger Hotel lobby. He's seen with Mary Lee Deerfield.



THE LUXURIOUS TROPICAL GARDEN of the Menger Hotel is another of the many features that make the hotel a truly unique resting place for guests.



MENGER HOTEL SALES MANAGER Stephanie Pheanis was a delight to work with in negotiating the 303rd BGA's contract with the hotel. She secured approval of a \$99 nightly rate.



THE GHOSTS THAT HAUNT THE MENDER

To get the latest information on the ghosts of The Menger Hotel, be sure to visit with long-time employee Ernesto Malacara. He can tell a string of ghost stories that would curl your hair. The hotel, built in 1859, is San Antonio's vault for vanquished spirits, with at least 32 different apparitions competing for sightings.

So who are these souls traipsing the halls at the oldest continually operating hotel west of the Mississippi? Aside from a multitude of bumps in the night, kitchen utensils that transport themselves, and the presence of people (with no bodies to accompany them), they're the following stories:

Maid, Sallie White, murdered by her husband and buried at hotel expense by the Menger, has been seen walking in the hotel corridors, especially at night for many years. She is clad in an old, long gray skirt with a bandana around her forehead and is generally carrying towels, which she never delivers.

Captain Richard King, founder of the King Ranch, appears now and then entering his room, the King Suite. He has been seen by many guests and employees of the hotel. The unusual thing is that he does not use the suite door; but goes directly through the wall. There was a door in the location where Captain King entered his suite many years ago.

A guest steps out of his shower and walks into the bedroom of the hotel. Standing by the bed is the figure of a man clad in a buckskin jacket and gray trousers. This apparition is speaking to someone in the room who cannot be seen. Buckskin asks the question "Are you gonna stay or are you gonna go?" three times.

A lady sits knitting in the original lobby of the Menger Hotel. She wears a dated blue dress and a beret with a tassel. Her glasses are small and metal framed. An employee asks "Are you comfortable...may I get you something?" The lady replies "no" in an unfriendly tone and disappears.

Why the Menger for these supernatural escapades? Built just steps from the battle of the Alamo and only 23 years after its bloody conclusion, the land lends itself to folklore. But, you can rest assured that these ghosts are harmless.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am pleased to report our Association's Representative in the UK (Robin Beeby) has agreed to assume the responsibilities of making sure the insurance payments that come due every five (5) years for our Monument located at the entrance to RAF Base, Molesworth are made. The Insurance Company in England has been notified that Robin is our Representative and he has agreed to monitor the Monument for any damage that may occur to it.

In the past five years, the Monument has experienced wind damage and the Insurance Company paid for repairing that damage. The insurance payment came due on Dec. 12, 2005, and has been extended till Dec. 12, 2010 by the payment of slightly over \$1,100, by our Treasurer. English Insurance laws limit coverage on stone monuments to no longer than a five year time period. Robin has agreed to make the next payment with money from an account, which will be held by Gary Moncur. The next payment comes due in Dec. 2010.

This will insure the monument for approximately 8 years after our Association has dissolved. Gary Moncur, our Webmaster, has agreed to monitor the money and will see that Robin receives the proper funding, when the next payment is due.

Knowing that both Former President Clinton and President George W. Bush have accumulated extensive collections of Challenge Coins, I sent a set of our coins to both men, on behalf of the Association. I have received a "Thank You Note" from President George W. Bush. The note is typed on official White House stationery, but it is signed, G. W. Bush, in handwritten black ink. The note thanks us for, "the kind gesture and thoughtfulness of sending him the coins." President Bush further wrote, "Our Nation is grateful for the courage, dedication, and sacrifice of our Veterans, by answering the call to duty, our men and women in uniform have helped secure our Nation".

The other challenge I made in Dayton to our Second Generation Members to begin forming a new Association seems to have fallen on deaf ears. I haven't received a single response. Isn't there one person who will step forward and take the reins of a new successor organization?

I have formed a committee of three to work with me in making programming arrangements for our final reunion in Washington D.C. This committee will work in tandem with Eddie Deerfield and Armed Forces Reunions to make the last gathering of our Association one that no one will want to miss. We are open to suggestions, and welcome input from the membership. Let me know, what you would like to see or do.

Bill Cox

FOUR MEN AND THEIR PILOT HUDDLE BETWEEN MISSIONS

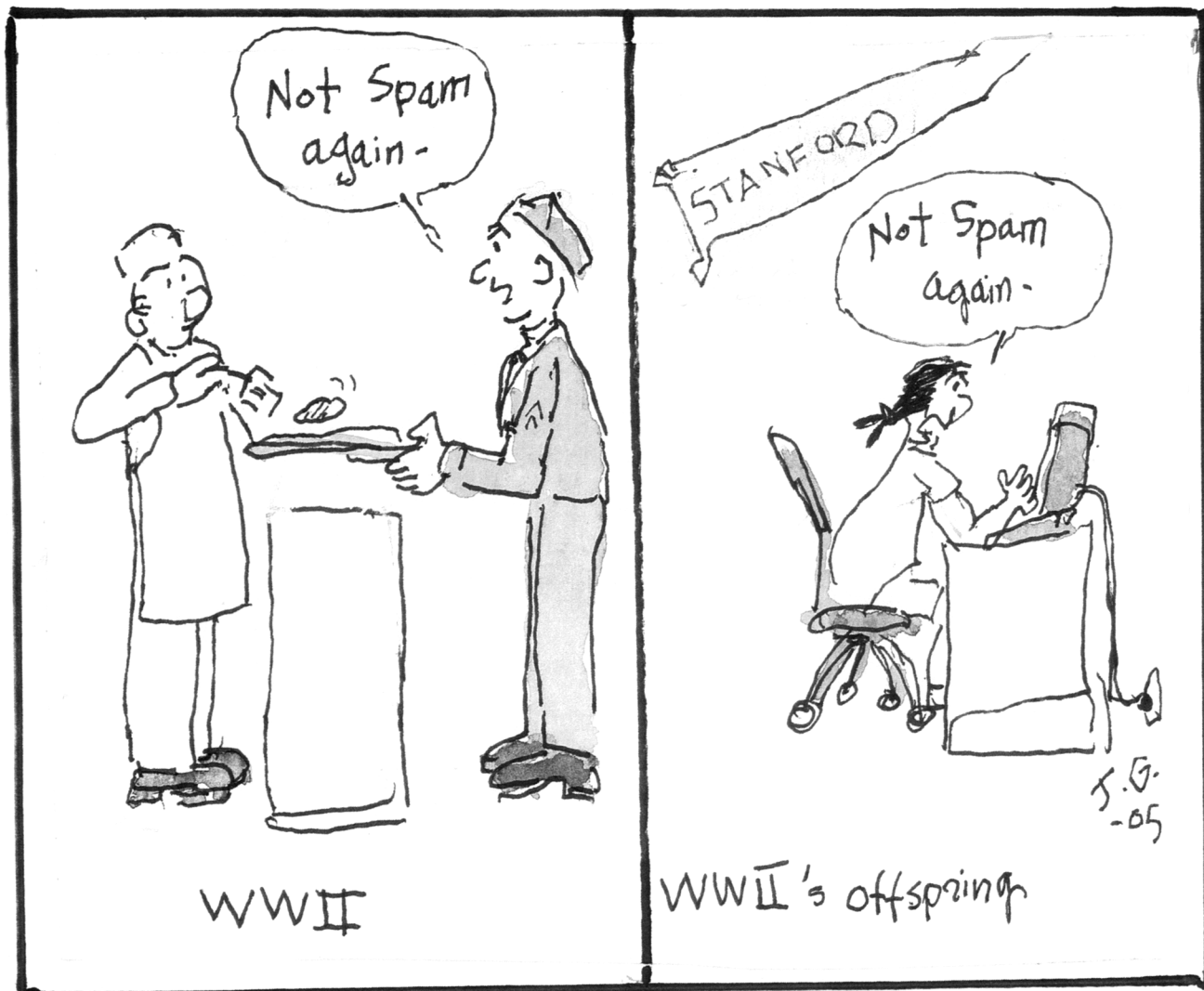
Pilot George Kyle is flanked by four of his 360th Squadron crew mates. On his right are Tail gunner Howard Delaney and Engineer Ernest Schieferstein. On his left are Waist gunner Bill Kaufman and Radio operator Joel Berly.

They survived a crash in the Cheviot Hills of Northumberland on 16 December 1944.



J. G. LOOKS AT THE WAY THINGS WERE AND THE WAY THINGS ARE

Jack Gardner, a frequent contributor to the *Hell's Angels Newsletter*, thinks back to the Spam served at Molesworth and the Spam served on computers today. Jack was an Armament Officer in the 427th Squadron.





HISTORIAN ARNOLD WRIGHT HONORED FOR BOOK INSPIRED BY 303RD POW'S RECORDS

(In a message to the Hell's Angels Newsletter, the Arkansas author wrote, "If it hadn't been for the ledgers kept by 2/Lt Ewell McCright of the 360th Squadron of the 303rd Bomb Group while a prisoner at Stalag Luft III, there wouldn't have been a scroll presentation." The following account is from the Arkansas Democrat Gazette)

Eleven years after finishing his book on the secret records of downed World War II airmen forced into German prisoner-of-war camps, Arnold Wright of Benton became the first person in Arkansas to receive an Air Force Scroll of Appreciation.

But, as Wright, 69, accepted the honor (presented by Major General Anthony F. Przybyslawski, Commander, Air Force Personnel Center) at a luncheon at the Little Rock Air Force Base, he claimed it for others as well. He said the award, the highest honor given by the Air Force to civilians, goes to "all veterans who allowed the citizens of this great nation to walk on soil that's free." Wright also commended the lengthy list of people who helped him as he wrote the book that earned him the scroll, "Behind The Wire: Stalag Luft III, South Compound."

It contains the information kept in four ledgers by Ewell McCright, a second lieutenant from Benton who was one of the almost 2,200 Army Air Corps members confined at the German prisoner-of-war camp in the 1940's.

McCright noted the wounds suffered by his fellow captives, where they were captured, and how and when they were tortured. It's assumed that if the Germans knew McCright was recording war crimes, he would have been killed.

Instead, the record survived as the camp was liberated in January, 1945. McCright eventually brought the ledgers back to the United States. He died in 1990, after willing the ledgers to Wright.

(The historian was nominated for the Scroll of Appreciation by the 303rd's Lew Lyle of Hot Springs, AR, and General A. P. Clark)

303RD BG PX GIFT CATALOG

DESCRIPTION	CIRCLE SIZE or CHOICE	PRICE	QTY	TOTAL
"The Molesworth Story" 303 BG History on CD-ROM. Info on all 303 missions and more.		\$10.00		
2005 303 BGA Membership Directory Latest edition (available ONLY to 303 BGA members)		\$15.00		
Challenge Coins - Set of 2. Designed by 303 BG President Bill Cox.		\$6.00		
Jacket, lined, Navy Blue 303 rd BG "Hell's Angels"	SM / MED X-LARGE	\$50.00		
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Rev. 3/6/2006

Molesworth Diary

"ORDINARY BOY" RISES TO NEW HEIGHTS

Early in 1942, the neighborhood boys, mostly 18, were confused but patriotic. Three of us took the Army Air Corps test and passed. My orders came through in February of 1943, and my life changed forever.

I had never even been in an airplane, even on the ground, but I was determined to win my wings as a pilot. This goal was realized a year later. With my new wife, I moved into an instructor position in advanced pilot training, and then into B-17 transition. In the fall of 1944, my crew and I flew a new B-17G across the Atlantic to England.

We were assigned to the 303rd Bomb Group. We flew our first mission to Frankfurt on November 5, 1944 and our 35th to Berlin on February 26, 1945. After 60 days of temporary duty in France ferrying damaged B-17's back to England, I returned to the U.S. and was separated from service on points in July, 1945.

In one form or another, I typified many of the pilots at Molesworth. It still amazes me that an ordinary boy could rise to such heights in such a short period of time, and become a combat veteran at age 21. And, as for the girl I married in 1944, we celebrated our 62nd anniversary last February.

John Stephen Proffitt, Jr.
359th Squadron Pilot

"I STILL SEE THE HORROR AND PITY IN HER FACE"

It was April 17, 1945, about 3:30 or 4:00 in the afternoon. We were to bomb Dresden, Germany. We carried incendiary cluster bombs to cause fires on exploding. We still had the full bomb load when our aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft shells, possibly 88mm or 105mm. We were at our altitude of about 28,000 feet. An engine on the right wing was damaged. The engineer bailed out through the front hatch. Then our B-17 had a direct hit under the bomb bay, detonating some of the incendiary bombs.

As I made my way toward the waist door, bleeding from a head wound, I saw the gunner trying to get out of the ball turret. I grabbed his parachute harness and pulled him up. I jumped from the burning bomber and came down on a plowed field. I had been shot twice, in the right arm and right thigh, while in the air. The impact of hitting the ground dislocated both of my shoulders. I could not see clearly because of the blood in my eyes. Needless to say, I was a mess.

We came down near Belina in Czechoslovakia. An elderly Czech woman reached me first, and applied a first aid bandage that had been strapped to my parachute harness. I can still see the horror and pity in her face to this day. Two German Luftwaffe officers disarmed me, and I was made prisoner. A Serbian POW doctor took

care of my wounds as best he could until we were liberated by the Russians.

Leslie L. Latz
427th Squadron Radio Operator

BAD WEATHER, EQUIPMENT LEAD TO DISASTER

On what was to be my third mission, December 16, 1944, we took off in very bad weather to attack a target in Ulm, Germany. This was the day the Battle of the Bulge began. After forming and heading out, we received a recall, and were to drop our bombs safely into the North Sea and land at an alternate base.

Due to the bad weather, an erroneous radio compass reading, failure of the "Gee," etc., we became lost. We had flown into the Cheviot Hills in Northern England in a blizzard, and crashed with a full bomb load. The tail gunner, waist gunner, ball turret gunner and I managed to get out from the burning bomber. Towards the end of the afternoon, a collie dog came out of the blizzard, followed by two men. We didn't know what had happened to the rest of the crew.

One of the men led us down the mountain to his home. As we arrived there, we heard the bombs exploding on the B-17. His daughter telephoned for help, and that night an RAF ambulance took us to their sick quarters. The pilot, co-pilot and engineer were already there. We learned later that the navigator and toggler were killed in the crash.

Joel A. Berly, Jr.
360th Squadron Radio Operator

MORALES MAKES "EXCELLENT" CRASH LANDING

Numerous memories come back to me from my tour of duty in England. I still have flashbacks in my dreams. We were in the original 303rd Bomb Group to fly to England. Our pilot was Lieutenant Carl Morales, later promoted to captain. The B-17 we crossed the Atlantic in was *Sky Wolf*.

One experience that comes to mind was on March 18, 1943 to Vegesack, Germany. We had our number one and number two engines shot out, holes in the left wing with fire running down the wing, and the left tire destroyed. Fortunately, the fire went out. We also had a bomb hanging in the bomb bay which I had to sway back and forth with my foot until it finally fell out.

As we left Germany, a fighter came at us. I got credit for shooting it down. We dumped equipment overboard to help save on gas, but did not have enough left to get to Molesworth. Our pilot, Carl Morales, did an excellent job in crash-landing our B-17 at an RAF base. We were aboard *Jersey Bounce* because our usual plane was being fixed up from damage on a previous mission.

Francis Hinds
358th Squadron Engineer

OPEN FORUM

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

303RD POW'S ARTIFACTS TO GO TO NEW MUSEUM

Thank you for reporting on Chet's prison camp project in the February issue of the 303rd publication. We just opened a new Air and Space Museum here in Tulsa. They are going to do some exhibits on temporary loan, so I'm going to participate with some of Chet's mementos of prison camp and his time spent in the service.

He spent a long, hard time getting where he wanted to be—a pilot and actually get overseas. But, he finally made it to the 358th Squadron. Although he became a prisoner of war on the November, 1944 mission to Osnabruck, he finally made it back. After our long and happy marriage, Chet died in January of last year.

Betsy Jameson
Tulsa, Oklahoma

DAUGHTER WANTS TO KNOW FATHER'S SQUADRON

I knew Dad's association with the 303rd Bomb Group was very important to him, because your newsletter was one of the few things on his coffee table at home, and the past issues were in his desk drawer. I knew he would want you to be notified of his passing—Major Willis A. Duffey died on August 27, 2005.

I am in process of going through some of his military records, but I'm not sure which squadron he was in. If your records have that information, I would be grateful to know.

Patricia Ganz
Fountain Valley, CA

(EDITOR'S NOTE—Patricia was informed that her father served in the 359th Squadron. His passing was noted in the *In Memoriam* column in the February 2006 issue.)

ENGLAND'S B-17 SALLY B TO KEEP ON FLYING

On page 16 of the February issue, you had news about *Sally B's* insurance problems grounding her now that England

is a member of the European Union. There's better news now—the aircraft can still fly, at least until September 30. This is great, because she flies as a memorial to the American airmen who flew in the World War II conflict. The insurance problem hasn't gone away, but we now have time to persuade the EU to change this stupid law (which puts the Flying Fortress in the same insurance category as commercial airliners.)

I was pleased to see the George Oxider coffee break picture on page 14. Having researched B-17 *Werewolf's* incredible landing near Dawlish in 1943, it has been a real pleasure to be in touch with two of the crew, the late Sam Maxwell and Fred Ziemer. In August of last year, I visited North Carolina intending to meet Sam. Sadly, I learned that he had passed away, but his wife and daughters were so very welcoming that I had a fantastic week.

I do hope that the 303rd Veterans Family Association will be a success and continue the memory of all that the 303rd Bomb Group achieved in the 1940's. It is still a real privilege for me to be an Associate Member.

And congratulations on your excellent magazine. It is always a very special read when it arrives here. I will certainly miss it in 2008.

Andy Jackson
B-17 *Sally B* Ground Crew
Epworth, Doncaster, England

POINTING OUT ERRORS IN PHOTO CAPTION

I was pleased to read the article in the February issue about the January 13, 1945 mission of *Big Red* since I was on that mission, but I would like to point out some errors.

First, the other crew on that mission consisted of Jack Rose, John Cornyn, William McMahon, John Nazarian, Flake Dyson, Joe Scaglione, Lynn Bradley, Clyde Cottle and

Lloyd Hester. I was identified as one of the individuals in the photo. I am not in the photo. Three of the men in the photo may have been crew members on other missions, but were not members of the crew on the January 13 mission.

Warren G. Yates
427th Intercept Operator

OK AT 82; FOUR OF CREW "STILL KICKING"

I enjoyed the February issue of the newsletter, especially Wes Loosemore's story in the Molesworth Diary. He is supposed to be putting together a mission-by-mission history. I keep encouraging him to finish it, but he, like the rest of us, can't find the time. Wes was our radio operator.

John Protzman died in the early part of last year. He was the bombardier on the Harry Jenkins crew. I was the navigator on that crew. That leaves four of us still kicking. I've been through heart problems with stents, among other things, but I'm still doing OK at 82.

Gordon B. Nute
359th Squadron Navigator

NATION NEEDS MORE LIKE FILM STAR DENZEL

Here's an item for your newsletter. The nation needs more of the likes of Denzel Washington. He and his family visited the troops at Brook Army

Medical Center in San Antonio recently. This is where soldiers who have been evacuated from Germany come to be hospitalized in the U.S., especially burn victims.

There are some buildings called "Fisher Houses," where families can stay for little or no charge while visiting their hospitalized soldiers. When Denzel Washington was told about these facilities, he asked what it would cost to build another "Fisher House." When told, he wrote a check to cover the full cost.

(Photo of his visit to the hospital at the bottom of this page.)

Bill Eisenhart
359th Squadron Pilot

IN PRAISE OF JOE VIEIRA, MASTER OF INGENUITY

When I was Operations Officer of the 359th Squadron, it was necessary one day to dash down to Flying Control Tower. Joe Vieira dutifully drove our Operations Jeep up to the door and, in pouring rain, we drove to Flying Control. While on the perimeter track, as it passed Wing Headquarters, I remarked to Joe that I do not think it proper that we have to ride in an open Jeep in such weather.

Only two days later,

(Continued on page 18)



MOVIE STAR DENZEL WASHINGTON is center of attention at the Brook Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas.

FORUM continued from 17

Murray Pearl, one of our Operations Clerks, told me to come outside and look at my new Operations Jeep.

And, there it stood, with a smiling Joe Vieira waiting to take me for a ride. It was entirely enclosed with Alclad, the aluminum which was used for airplane repairs. He had even made plastic sliding windows for the doors and the rear area. I do believe we had the very first enclosed Jeep at Molesworth.

It seemed that all you did with Joe Vieira was mention something, and it was done! Joe was one of the finest soldiers with whom I served. I learned a lot about soldiering from Joe.

I also had the pleasure of having dinner with his entire family at our 303rd Reunion in Washington, DC, in 1984. A fine family, and all so proud of their Joe!

Bill Heller
359th and 360th Sqdn Pilot

LEARNS SOMETHING NEW FROM PICTURE CAPTION

Thank you for the excellent job you did with the photo of my uncle and aunt, Acel and Gloria Livingston, in last February's newsletter, "Love Story With Tragic Ending." I also learned something new from the caption for the picture!

Randy Bond
West Jordan, Utah

BAM BAM KIA HONORED AT SERVICE IN ENGLAND

Many people were taken by surprise by the inclusion of the *Bam Bam* crew in our November memorial service in St. Michael's Parish Church in Great Gidding, near where six men on the B-17 died when the 358th Squadron aircraft crashed shortly after take-off from Molesworth. Since then, I have had many questions to answer and requests to see my research materials.

I am now on the scrounge for a piece of *Bam Bam* to mount and add to the memorial display in the church. I am well aware that such bits exist, but getting an owner to give one up is the difficult part. The current interest seems to

have added value to ownership.

Thank you for the story in the February issue of the Hell's Angels Newsletter, an obviously well produced and much appreciated publication.

Bruce H. Jordan
Great Gidding, England

RECALLS B-25 CRASH AT EMPIRE STATE BUILDING

Since the tragedy of 9/11/2001, I often ask my fellow World War II vets if they remember the Army Air Force bomber that crashed into the Empire State Building in downtown Manhattan on July 28, 1945. Many of them do recall the incident, but not the details. It was a B-25 medium bomber, and it crashed into the 79th floor.

I came across this "Google" account and thought our newsletter readers might also be interested.

On the foggy morning of Saturday, July 28, 1945, Lt. Col. William Smith was piloting a B-25 bomber to Newark Airport to pick up his commanding officer. Confronted by dense fog, Smith descended to gain visibility. He found himself in the middle of Manhattan, surrounded by skyscrapers. He tried to climb and twist away, but it was too late.

The ten-ton twin-engine B-25 smashed into the north side of the Empire State Building at 9:49 AM at the 79th floor level, into the offices of the War Relief Services of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. The plane's high octane fuel exploded, shooting flames down the side of the building and inside through hallways and stairwells all the way down to the 75th floor.

One of the engines and part of the landing gear hurtled across the 79th floor, through wall partitions and two fire walls, and out the south wall's windows to land on the roof of a 12-story building. The other engine flew into an elevator shaft and landed on elevator car. The car began to plummet, slowed somewhat by emergency devices. Miraculously, when help arrived, the two women in the car were still alive.

The crash of the B-25

bomber killed 14 people—the three crewmen and 11 office workers—and injured 26 others. The cost to repair the damage to the Empire State Building was one million dollars.

Don Johnston
360th Squadron Pilot

"I'M STILL ALIVE AND IN PRETTY GOOD HEALTH"

Just a short note to let you know I am still alive and in pretty good health. I was 85 years old last January. I live in West Virginia, about half way up a mountain, with my second wife, Rose. My first wife, Bernetta, died ten years ago after 47 years married. I found this one in Flint, Michigan, and married her.



Rose and Norwood

We go to Florida and stay in Okeechobee from October to April. When I get the newsletter, every one brings back old memories.

Norwood Borror
360th Sqdn Waist Gunner

SETS HIS SIGHTS TO FIND FAMILIES OF HIS CREW

I was not on the fateful mission of January 21, 1945 to Aschaffenburg when the whole Tasker crew was killed with the exception of Arthur Driver, the tail gunner, who bailed out and became a prisoner of war. I had been grounded as I had messed up. I don't know if it was design or destiny, but I'm still here.

I met Don Geng at the Savannah reunion, and he told me that by mistake he had been sent some of Arthur's personal belongings, but was unable to locate him. At the Dayton reun-

ion I mentioned this to Gary Moncur, and he helped me locate the Driver family. Unfortunately, when I reached his wife, Yvonne, she told me that Arthur had passed away about 12 years ago.

I now have set my sights on finding the families of the rest of the crew—Richard Tasker, Angelito Francis, Clyde Meadows, John McDonnell, William Toon, Bruce Hinershots, Paul Kapczynski, and Charles Van Ornum.

Ricky Reider
359th Ball Turret Gunner

BOOK BY WIFE TELLS INSPIRING 303RD STORY

"*The Journey*," by Jeanne Spencer is a "must read!" I endorse this review:

"You may have heard or read about the ordeal of Charles W. Spencer, a 303rd bombardier. It began on a mission to Bremen, Nov. 26, 1943. A 20mm shell shattered the Plexiglas nose, killing the navigator instantly and severely wounding Spencer. That's the ugly part of the story.

"Now read the inspiring side, told by Jeanne, his wife. She and Chuck had married three months before Pearl Harbor. They stayed together through hrs B-17 combat training until June, 1943 when his crew left for England. It was December 9 when the dreaded telegram came, merely stating that Chuck had been seriously wounded.

"This first-person account truly is a 'Journey'. Jeanne tells of their early lives together, the torturous months of waiting until she was reunited with Chuck at Valley Forge General Hospital in Phoenixville, PA. in April, 1944. She tells about the ordeal for both of them during the next two years and 52 more surgeries for Chuck, their life until Chuck's death in 1998.

"Throughout the journey of these two special people, you will be inspired by their love, dedication, perseverance and, above all, their positive outlook and wonderful accomplishments."

Wilbur "Bud" Klint
427th Squadron Pilot

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Please send any changes of address to the Treasurer, (see page 2 for address) or they can be sent to membership@303rdbg.com. The sad news of members passing can be sent to the Treasurer or taps@303rdbg.com.

In Memoriam

Augustus (Gus) Anderson	359 th	1/5/2006
Edward L. Bartkoski	359 th	12/09/2005
Charles J. Bruno	360 th	2005
M. C. "Buster" Compton	358 th	12/08/2004
Arthur J. Coyle	427 th	12/08/2005
Gordon C. Doctor	360 th	12/27/2005
Robert Gaspar	360 th	10/6/2005
Nicholas J. Goldschmidt	427 th /POW	1/28/2006
Charles L. Heathershaw	427 th	3/2/2006
James H. Hensley, Jr.	360 th /POW	12/27/2005
Robert L. Johnson	360 TH	1/9/2006
Vernelle V. Johnson	360 th	1/04/2006
Donald W. Keating	427 th	7/07/2005
Jack B. Kennedy	359 th	11/01/2005
Joseph W. Lowe	427 th	8/14/2005
Melvin R. Minick	358 th	8/19/2000
Orson E. Pacey	358 th	1/9/2006
Joseph Potts, Jr.	360 th	3/2005
Alan M. Prince	359 th	12/08/2005
Sylvester H. Rape	360 th	Unknown
Johannes Heinrich Reusink		1/11/2006
George W. Shope, Jr.	427 th	1/10/1006
Marion C. Steinheiser	360 th	5/31/2005
Charles R. Storer	427 th	1/21/2006
Everette Van Horn	359 th	1/6/2006
Gordon A. Winkler	360 th	1/17/2006

DONATIONS IN HONOR OF

Alleen Compton	For	M.C. "Buster" Compton
Betsy F. Jameson	For	Chet H. Jameson, Jr.
Faye Hensley	For	James H. Hensley, Jr.
Russell Klingensmith	For	John F. Newman
Clara C. Butler	For	Harold E. Butler
Eddie Deerfield	For	Dr. Robert L. Johnson
Ernest Schieferstein	For	George Kyle

DONATIONS

Ralph C. Brehl, Jr
Dr. Carl J. & Marguerite E. Fyler
Robert C. Benjna

NEW MEMBERS

Cindy Kunkel (Bob) P. O. Box 9866 Austin, TX 78766-0866
Phillip R. Stallings (Carol) 1919 NW 79th St. Kansas City, MO 64151-4838
Mark Hillborn, 234 River St. Apt. 3 Ontonagon, MI 49953-1643
William C. Ready (Lucille), 96 Pershing Ave. East Haven CT 06513-2725
Charles D. Vieira, 5201 75th St. North, St. Petersburg FL 33709
Julie Sukman, 215 Adams St #7D, Brooklyn NY 11201
Sally A. Schlie, 1001 N. 14th St., Manitowoc, WI 54220-3234
Delbert E. Foster (Carman) 7124 Dudley St., Lincoln, NE
James K. Richardson (Stephanie) 3632 Vineyard Ridge, Cincinnati OH 45241



The newsletter needs stories and pictures from our veterans. If your story or photo of your time in the 303rd Bomb Group at Molesworth has not been published in our newsletter, send it NOW to:

The Editor
Hell's Angels Newsletter
3552 Landmark Trail
Palm Harbor, FL 34684

YOU'LL NEVER GUESS!

These are 45 pounds of stone extracted as cores from the foundation of the original Molesworth main hangar, known as Hangar 84 or the J-Hangar.

They're destined to be cut into segments about the size of dominoes, encased in resin, authentically identified, and then beautifully boxed as a gift to 303rd Bomb Group veterans who served at the Molesworth air base during World War II.



THE EDITOR COMMENTS....

The front door bell rings. Tom, our mail man, is standing there, breathing hard, with a big box at his feet. "Where do you want this?" he asks. "It must weigh about 50 pounds." I open the door to the garage, and say, "I guess the best place is on my work bench." As he leaves, he says, "What have you got in there, Eddie—rocks?" I don't tell him that he guessed right. He would think I was just kidding around. Some day when Tom has more time and his back has stopped aching from lugging the box I'll tell him the whole story.

The return label is from an APO address for the Joint Analysis Center. For more than a month I've been expecting some chunks of World War II Molesworth from the JAC. I rip open the box, remove wads of bubble wrap, and there they are: two stone cores, almost six inches in diameter, one 11 inches in height weighing 25 pounds and other nine inches tall weighing 20 pounds. They were drilled out of the base of the main hangar at Molesworth where the 303rd Bomb Group's ailing B-17's, beaten up by flak, FW-190's and Me-110's, were brought back to health by maintenance crews after the gallant bombers returned to base with their air crews.

This particular story began in February of 2005. Jack Gardner, 427th Squadron Armament Officer, suggested that we gather some earth or gravel from old Molesworth as mementoes for our veterans. "Good idea," I countered, "but let's try instead for a piece of the old runway." I sent a letter to Colonel Richard Ayres, the commanding officer of the Joint Analysis Center at Molesworth. He responded, "We intend to support this, if at all possible." Months passed as a search was made for a surviving section of runway. There was a brief flurry of excitement when a four-foot square segment of asphalt was found in the grass. When dug up, it was only a few inches thick, definitely not part of a heavy bomber runway. Further research led to the conclusion that the original runways had been removed many years ago. By this time Colonel Ayres had gone on to a stateside command and was succeeded by Colonel Darryl Reyes. The new CO showed the same enthusiastic support of the 303rd's goal.

Finally, sections of the base of the original main hangar at Molesworth were extracted and shipped to me. Now, I need to locate a stone cutter willing and able to saw the cores into hundreds of pieces the size of dominoes, find a firm to imbed each piece in a block of acrylic with an authentication text, and then place it in a fancy box for presentation to veterans at 2007's farewell reunion. This mission doesn't shape up as a milk run—and no Purple Heart if one of the cores falls on my foot—but we've never been turned back from a target.

Eddie Deerfield

303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.
Hell's Angels Newsletter
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