

## 303rd BG (H) Combat Mission No. 132

9 April 1944

Target: Focke-Wolf Aircraft Factory & Airdrome,  
Marienburg, Germany

Crews Dispatched: 40

Crews Lost: Lt. McGarry, Jr., 6 KIA, 4 wounded

Length of Mission: 11 hours, 38 minutes

Bomb Load: 10 x 500 lb M64 G.P. bombs

Bombing Altitude: A - 15,000 ft; B - 17,000 ft

Ammo Fired: 21,940 rounds

**F**orty scheduled B-17s were airborne. *Spirit of Flak Wolf*, 427BS, piloted by 1Lt. John J. **McGarry, Jr.**, crashed shortly after take-off, about 2 1/2 miles from the end of the runway. Because of its heavy gas and bomb load, it could not gain sufficient altitude and hit a tree while taking off. Its tail part of the stabilizer tore off. Still unable to gain altitude and hard to control, it hit another tree and crashed to the ground, catching fire one mile south of Winwick on the **Montgomery** farm. Lt. **McGarry**, 2Lt. Willie C. **Cotham**, 1Lt. Robert W. **Halligan**, 1Lt. Kenneth D. **Foe**, T/Sgt. Henry J. **Grace** and T/Sgt. Stephen **Stuphar** were killed in the crash. All of these men, except Lt. **McGarry**, are buried in Cambridge American Cemetery, England. S/Sgt. Ira **Friedman**, S/Sgt. Ervin **Hilborn**, S/Sgt. Michael A. **Vargas** and S/Sgt. Walter A. **Kowalonek** are believed to have been thrown from the aircraft during the crash landing. They were seriously, but not critically, injured with burns and contusions.



1Lt John J. McGarry

Eight other aircraft returned early:

#42-38204 (*No Name*), 360BS-H (**Williams**). Assembled with 92BG.

Returned when BG turned back.

#42-107048 (*No Name*), 360BS-M (**Eisele**) - No. 2 engine trouble.

#42-31669 *Shoo Shoo Baby*, 358BS-J (**Viets**) - Runaway propeller.

#42-31739 *Pugnacious Peter*, 358BS-P (**Maxey**) - Short of fuel.

#42-97622 *Paper Dollie*, 358BS-K (**Gorman**) - Short of fuel.

#42-39785 *Thru Hel'en Hiwater*, 358BS-H (**Ferguson**) - Assembled with 91BG.

Returned when BG turned back.

#42-31224 *Hell in the Heavens*, 358BS-F (**Snyder**) - Lost formation.

#42-3158 *Max*, 427BS-Y (**Harrison**) - Lost formation.

When restricted visibility at Molesworth at take-off made formation assembly difficult, two B-17s joined other Groups. Due to solid cloud cover over the North Sea, four B-17s had to abort. On the bomb run, however, the target could be seen clearly.

Thirty-one aircraft of the two 303rd BG(H) formations dropped 300 M64 500-lb. G.P. bombs from 15,000 (303BG-A) and 17,000 (303BG-B) feet. Aircraft encountered meager and inaccurate flak at Kapellen, Eckenforde, Marienburg, and at the target. Three B-17s sustained minor battle damage and one man was injured. Enemy air opposition was weak

– only five to ten enemy aircraft were spotted over the Danish peninsula and in the target area. They made only a few passes at Group aircraft. One aircraft sustained major battle damage. Friendly fighter support was good and as briefed. Chaff had no noticeable effect on the anti-aircraft gunfire.

The mission lasted 11 hours, 38 minutes – the longest yet flown by the 303rd BG(H). Several aircraft landed at alternate airdromes to refuel before returning to Molesworth. General **Travis** and Lt. Col. **Lyle** reported that the mission was an outstanding success. Gen. **Travis** recounted:

The roughest part of the trip was getting together. There was a series of thunderstorms, one after another. When we sighted the enemy coast the weather cleared and it was beautiful from there on to the target and out. We had a little flak going into the Danish coast and I fully expected the German fighters to start after us. Why they didn't, I can't understand, because the weather was so good. We could see the target for miles and our bomb run was perfect. As we turned off the target we could see our bombs land in the target and, I can assure you, our bombing was some better than the first time we went there. We saw each unit follow in and kick it up some more. The first wave flattened it and the rest of the bombs stirred up what was left and stomped it into the ground. It was really beautiful. Coming back, there were a few enemy fighters at the Danish coast, but they didn't come after us. Flak at the target was meager and we didn't suffer any heavy damage from it.

Lt. Robert J. **Lynch** (360BS) made a wheels up landing in #42-31754, 427BS-L, at RAF Southrup. He was low on gas and engine was feathered.

Lt. Col. **Lyle** said, "Today was one of the very few times that I was able to see the target bombed. It was a real picture to see. The smoke and fire just piled up as each unit's bombs landed right into it. It was undoubtedly one of the best of the 32 I have been on."

Maj. **Shayler** was enthusiastic. "Once we got together, it was a beautiful trip," he said. "My Group followed the lead Group over the target and we dumped our bombs right in the middle, on top of theirs. It was as fine a bombing job as I have ever seen."

S/Sgt. Paul M. **Gibbs**, ball turret gunner, said, "We got a couple of hangars and some barracks with our bombs. And then the Group behind us came along and got everything that was left. It was perfect--I watched the bombs from one Squadron walk right through one of the hangars." S/Sgt. T.W. **Lawson**, waist gunner on Fortress *Ole George*, commented on the lack of enemy fighters: "We saw a lot of airfields in Germany, but there wasn't a plane on them. I guess the Jerries put everything into the air that could fly, so the P-51s wouldn't strafe them. They weren't attacking though. The only two I saw were getting out of the community in a hurry."

## From the Journal of Vern L. Moncur, 359th BS Pilot

MISSION #27

Date: April 9, 1944

Target: Marienburg, East Prussia

This was a unique mission in a couple of ways: (1) It was the longest flight we ever made; and (2) This was the only time we ever carried leaflets or "nickels," form of propaganda. We were in the air a little over twelve hours and had to fly through some pretty rough weather right at the start of the trip. We never saw a German fighter, and didn't get any flak until over Denmark on the way home. Then, for a few minutes, it was really a hot ride. Our plane received no serious damage, though we did get a few holes. Nine Fortresses were shot down over Denmark in about nine or ten minutes. We came back the last 150 miles over the North Sea at 400 feet altitude in order to get under the weather. We flew through snow and rain squalls all the time. But as we came farther across England, the weather improved and was all right at the base.

This ride finished the tour of combat for Lt Brooks and S/Sgt Hein. Lt. Cunningham had finished up his tour on the mission before this one, so I had another co-pilot with me, Lt Victor Gorecki. There was no serious battle damage to the plane and no injury to the crew.



This is a copy of the leaflets dropped from "Thunderbird" over Marienburg, East Prussia on April 9, 1944. The leaflets were carried in large bundles which were held together by metal bands. On these bands was an aneroid barometer. The barometer would change as the pressure increased as the bundles fell toward earth. At about 5000 feet, the barometer would break, allowing the bundles to loosen and the leaflets to flutter to the ground individually.

### LITERAL TRANSLATION:

**(Top)** On February 18, 1943, a few weeks after the catastrophe of Stalingrad, Dr. Goebbels put the question to a mass meeting at the Berlin Sportpalast:

**(Large Type)** "DO YOU WANT TOTAL WAR?"

An enthusiastic YES was the answer of the Nazi meeting. Today Germany knows what total war means, better than Goebbels and his yes-shouters foresaw. The total war, wanted by the Nazis, will be continued with ever increasing weight and effectiveness, until Germany capitulates unconditionally.

**(Beneath Picture)** THE GERMAN PEOPLE MUST CHOOSE FOR THEMSELVES:

EITHER continuation of the total Nazi-war until final destruction of German man-power and industry.

**(In The Arrow)** OR:



## Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point - Group A

		<u>Lyle-R. Travis</u> 875		
	<u>Jones</u> 423		<u>Headlee</u> 885	
		<u>Flesh</u> 020		
	<u>Estes</u> 051		<u>Melton</u> 027	
	<u>Goolsby</u> 483		<u>Litman</u> 574	
<u>Savage</u> 807		<u>Moser</u> 213	<u>Viets</u> 669	<u>Hall</u> 002
	<u>Hanselman</u> 177		<u>Gorman</u> 622	
<u>Edwards</u> 386		<u>McManus</u> 405	<u>Maxey</u> 739	<u>Snyder</u> 224
	<u>Moncur</u> 050		<u>Ferguson</u> 9785	

Eight (8) Aircraft aborted this mission:

Lt. Williams in 204, Lt. Eisele in 048, Lt. Viets in 669, Lt. Maxey in 739,  
Lt. Gorman in 622, Lt. Ferguson in 9785, Lt. Snyder in 224, Lt. Harrison in 158



**B-17G *Buzz Blonde* #42-39875 (427BS) GN-S**  
**41st CBW-A Lead (427BS) - Pilot B/Gen R.F. Travis / CoPilot LtCol L.E. Lyle**  
 (Back L-R) 2Lt D.E. Kendall (TG-O), B/Gen R.F. Travis (P),  
 LtCol L.E. Lyle (CP), 1Lt G.T. Orvis (B), 1Lt I.M. Iverson (N), 1Lt E.Z. Randall (N)  
 (Front L-R) S/Sgt J.B. Price (RWG), S/Sgt J.R. Chancellor (BTG),  
 S/Sgt A.G. Benevento (R), T/Sgt W.T. Sparks (E), S/Sgt C.W. Winters (LWG)

## Aircraft Formation at Assembly Point - Group B

	<u>Brinkley-Shayler</u> 260		
<u>O'Beirne</u> 187		<u>Johnston</u> 254	
	<u>Lynch</u> 754		
<u>Williams</u> 204		<u>Stevens</u> 340	
<u>McGarry</u> 616		<u>Long-W. Travis</u> 841	
<u>Holdcroft</u> 552	<u>Wood</u> 200	<u>Glass</u> 546	<u>Eisele</u> 048
	<u>Worthley</u> 583		<u>Young</u> 830
<u>Hofmann</u> 037	<u>Ames</u> 7875	<u>Seddon</u> 154	<u>Eisenhart</u> 183
	<u>Harrison</u> 158		<u>Moreau</u> 060



**B-17G Bow-Ur-Neck Stevens #42-97260 (360BS) PU-Q**  
**41st CBW-B Lead (360BS) - Pilot Capt P.C. Brinkley / CoPilot Maj W.K. Shayler**  
 (Back L-R) 1Lt James P. Zwyer (B), 1Lt George M. Carroll (N),  
 Maj Walter K. Shayler (CP), Capt Pharis C. Brinkley (P)  
 (Front - not in order) T/Sgt Arthur J. Worthington (E), T/Sgt Richard N. Snyder (R),  
 S/Sgt Harold C. Reid (BTG), S/Sgt Guy A. Lance (LWG),  
 S/Sgt Charles R. Ferguson (RWG), S/Sgt William E. Rein (TG)

## 358th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

### **B-17G #42-37875 *Empress of D Street***

P Ames, Walter J., Jr., 2Lt  
 CP Howell, Ernest F., 2Lt  
 NAV Williams, Grover C., 2Lt  
 BOM Heitman, Alfred V., Sgt  
 ENG West, Jerome H., Sgt  
 RWG Stafford, Sheldon A., Sgt  
 RO Lesser, Edward R., Sgt  
 LWG Stone, Robert L., Jr., Sgt  
 TG MacFarland, Kendall H., S/Sgt  
 BT Ruppel, Edward, S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-39785 *Thru Hel'en Hiwater***

P Ferguson, Wendell Z., 2Lt  
 CP Moody, James D., 2Lt  
 NAV Brown, James F., 2Lt  
 BOM Schmid, Ralph D., 2Lt  
 ENG Matthews, David R., Sgt  
 LWG Smithson, Clyde E., Sgt  
 RO Phillips, Robert B., S/Sgt  
 RWG Rogers, Thomas J., Sgt  
 TG Brooks, Richard S., Sgt  
 BT Rhodes, Kenneth G., Sgt  
 (Abortive)

### **B-17G #42-31583 *Clover Leaf***

P Worthley, Joe R., 1Lt  
 CP Miller, Campbell, 2Lt  
 NAV Williams, Jack N., 2Lt  
 BOM Morrison, James P., 2Lt  
 ENG Haggerty, Jerome J., T/Sgt  
 RWG Delaney, Jessie L., S/Sgt  
 RO Rumpf, Charles W., T/Sgt  
 BT Vodicka, Leonard R., Sgt  
 TG Hunt, John L., S/Sgt  
 LWG Chaddick, Neal T., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-32037 *(No Name)***

P Hofmann, Raymond, 2Lt  
 CP Brothers, Calvin S., 2Lt  
 NAV Levy, Herbert E., 2Lt  
 BOM Feinman, Milton, 2Lt  
 ENG Blakeney, William R., Jr., S/Sgt  
 BT Crenshaw, Ollie G., Sgt  
 RO Berman, Seymour, S/Sgt  
 RWG Miller, David I., Sgt  
 LWG Bahr, John W., Sgt  
 TG Hendin, Bernard J., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31060 *Poque Ma Hone***

P Moreau, Joseph A., 2Lt  
 CP Hudson, Hendric S., 2Lt  
 NAV Kelly, William T., 2Lt  
 BOM Larson, Albert W., 2Lt  
 ENG Rossman, Carl H., Sgt  
 RWG Tate, Royce G., Sgt  
 RO Lowe, Gareth W., Sgt  
 LWG Tomasini, Michael, Sgt  
 TG Fox, Howard E., Sgt  
 BT Ross, Ben A., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31574 *Ole George***

P Litman, Arnold S., 1Lt  
 CP Putiri, John C., 2Lt  
 NAV Mikulich, Louis F., 2Lt  
 BOM Wilson, Claud, Jr., 2Lt  
 ENG Smith, George A., S/Sgt  
 TG Castillo, Buenaventura L., S/Sgt  
 RO Ebbighausen, Francis R., T/Sgt  
 BT Gibbs, Paul M., Sgt  
 RWG Lawson, Tracy W., S/Sgt  
 LWG Miller, Victor R., S/Sgt

#### KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

CREW POSITIONS		RESULTS OF MISSION	
CMP - Command Pilot	TOG - Toggler	VI - Voice Interpreter	DOW - Died of wounds
P - Pilot	BT - Ball Turret Operator	OBS - Observer	EVD - Evaded the enemy
CP - Co-Pilot	TT - Top Turret Operator	PAS - Passenger	INT - Interned in neu cntry
NAV - Navigator	TG - Tail Gunner	PHO - Photographer	REP - Repatriated
ANV - Ass't. Navigator	NG - Nose Gunner		RES - Rescued
MNV - Mickey Navigator	RG - Radio Gunner		ESC - Escaped
ENG - Engineer	WG - Waist Gunner		BO - Bailed out
BOM - Bombardier	LWG - Left Waist Gunner		DCH - Ditched
RO - Radio Operator	RWG - Right Waist Gunner		CR-L - Crashed on land
	GUN - Gunner		CR-S - Crashed at sea



## 358th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

### **B-17G #42-107002 *Mairzy Doats***

P	Hall, Charls M., 2Lt
CP	Stewart, Paul C., 2Lt
NAV	Moller, Robert C., 2Lt
BOM	Manze, Dario J., F/O
ENG	Coe, Thomas E., Jr., S/Sgt
RWG	Cast, James L., Sgt
RO	Jones, Drackart L., Sgt
TG	Cadlolo, Raymond E., Sgt
BT	Jasinski, Joseph T., Sgt
LWG	Barteau, Edward L., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-97622 *Paper Dollie***

P	Gorman, Quentin J., 1Lt
CP	Vaughn, Clifford F., 2Lt
NAV	Binder, Carroll, Jr., 2Lt
BOM	Israelson, Elmer P., 2Lt
ENG	McArthur, Robert G., S/Sgt
BT	Hickey, Thomas P., Sgt
RO	Balzano, Christopher, S/Sgt
LWG	Gamon, Edward J., Sgt
TG	Loveland, William H., Sgt
RWG	Daniel, Herbert A., Sgt

(Abortive)

### **B-17G #42-31669 *Shoo Shoo Baby***

P	Viets, John B., 2Lt
CP	Bennett, John C., 2Lt
NAV	Heibert, David C., F/O
BOM	Rodgers, Burton, 2Lt
ENG	Robinson, Frank E., S/Sgt
LWG	Madarchik, Michael, Sgt
RO	York, Franklin F., S/Sgt
RWG	Rademacher, Don J., Sgt
TG	Ferrell, William R., Sgt
BT	Holland, Ambrose J., Sgt

(Abortive Sortie)

### **B-17G #42-38154 (No Name)**

P	Seddon, John R., 2Lt
CP	Heaps, Ralph H., 2Lt
NAV	Fitzpatrick, George M., 2Lt
BOM	Meldrich, Walter A., 2Lt
ENG	Rogers, Edward E., S/Sgt
LWG	Nemchick, John, Sgt
RO	Hess, John C., S/Sgt
RWG	Holcomb, I.L., Sgt
TG	Mummery, William T., Sgt
BT	Maloney, Donald F., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31224 *Hell in the Heavens***

P	Snyder, Robert W., 2Lt
CP	McClure, Thomas R., 1Lt
NAV	Brady, Joseph E., 2Lt
BOM	Stavast, James A., 2Lt
ENG	Swift, Herbert E., S/Sgt
LWG	Kent, Amos, Sgt
RO	Frazee, Francis L., Sgt
RWG	Senheiser, George A., Sgt
TG	Casey, Lawrence, Sgt
BT	Duncan, George T., Sgt

(Abortive)

### **B-17G #42-31739 *Pugnacious Peter***

P	Maxey, Frank, 2Lt
CP	Knight, R.A., 2Lt
NAV	Shamban, Marcus F., 2Lt
BOM	Spatt, Arnold I., 2Lt
ENG	Gonsalves, John D., S/Sgt
LWG	Johnston, Wendell B., Sgt
RO	Rabun, Clifford G., Sgt
BT	Swain, Norman F., Pvt
TG	Angelo, George L., S/Sgt
RWG	Hodgins, Robert A., Sgt

(Abortive)



## 359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

### **B-17G #42-38050 *Thunderbird***

P	Moncur, Vern L., 1Lt
CP	Gorecki, Victor T., 2Lt
NAV	Brooks, James, 2Lt
BOM	Chang, David K.S., 2Lt
ENG	Rosier, Robert L., S/Sgt
RO	Andrus, James S., S/Sgt
BT	Hein, Walter E., S/Sgt
RWG	Baer, Richard K., S/Sgt
LWG	Dickman, Thomas J., S/Sgt
TG	Wike, Leonard L., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31830 *Marie***

P	Young, Elmer W., 1Lt
CP	Cunningham, Robert L., 2Lt
NAV	Schoner, George R., 2Lt
BOM	Trawicki, George J., 2Lt
ENG	Steele, John C., T/Sgt
RO	Dulick, Steve, T/Sgt
BT	Lebeck, Richard H., S/Sgt
RWG	Rohaly, Andy, S/Sgt
LWG	Withrow, John W., S/Sgt
TG	Stapleton, Bill, S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31183 *Bad Penny***

P	Eisenhart, William E., 1Lt
CP	Fackler, David E., 2Lt
NAV	Hogan, Paul G., 2Lt
TOG	Rawlings, Loren F., 2Lt
ENG	Mayhugh, John C., S/Sgt
RO	Montgomery, Robert E., S/Sgt
BT	Manchester, Robert A., S/Sgt
TG	Robb, Charles W., S/Sgt
RWG	Rettinhouse, Robert A., S/Sgt
LWG	Robichaud, Joseph E., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31177 *Lonesome Polecat***

P	Hanselman, Charles F., 1Lt
CP	Calwell, Lucien B., 2Lt
NAV	Carey, William D., 2Lt
BOM	Livermore, William D., 2Lt
ENG	Fouss, Howard E., T/Sgt
LWG	Jaouen, Robert F., T/Sgt
RO	Zitzler, George A., T/Sgt
LWG	Armstrong, Keith N., S/Sgt
BT	Williams, Walter S., S/Sgt
TG	Tybuszewski, Mitchel J., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-39807 *Nero***

P	Savage, John N., 1Lt
CP	Marsh, Richard K., 2Lt
NAV	Walsh, Myles J., 2Lt
BOM	Joyce, John D., 2Lt
ENG	Davis, Eugene B., S/Sgt
RO	Minks, George A., S/Sgt
BT	Munson, James E., S/Sgt
TG	Moessner, Raymond J., S/Sgt
LWG	Rogers, Warren G., Sgt
RWG	Dean, Raymond N., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31386 *Sky Duster***

P	Edwards, Kenneth C., 1Lt
CP	Peterson, Edwin V., 2Lt
NAV	Sanders, Coleman, 2Lt
BOM	Corbin, Frederick A., F/O
ENG	Johnson, Kenneth V., S/Sgt
RO	Kennedy, Herbert W., S/Sgt
BT	Guzman, Abel G., Sgt
LWG	Champagne, Adam, S/Sgt
TG	Kowalk, Francis H., S/Sgt
RWG	Abernathy, Fay S., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31483 *Bonnie B***

P	Goolsby, Billy M., 1Lt
CP	Sassone, Joseph C., 2Lt
NAV	Klingensmith, Russell, 1Lt
BOM	Ulbricht, Walter E., 1Lt
ENG	Bumgarner, Donald, T/Sgt
RO	Greenhalgh, Chester, T/Sgt
LWG	Rothrock, Harry J., S/Sgt
BT	Chraniuk, William, S/Sgt
RWG	Cueto, Frank Z., S/Sgt
TG	Strobel, Walter A., S/Sgt
PAS	Barrett, Jesse M., Maj

### **B-17G #42-31213 *Pistol Packin' Mama***

P	Moser, Clinton A., 2Lt.
CP	Lux, Andrew L., 2Lt
NAV	Andreasen, Rolf W., 2Lt
BOM	Campbell, Frank P., 2Lt
ENG	Mays, Pearl E., S/Sgt
RO	Zionkoski, John T., S/Sgt
BT	Parrish, Vernon, Sgt
TG	Seelock, Joseph J., Sgt
TT	Duffey, Willis A., Sgt
LWG	Raines, Donald E., Sgt

## 359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

### **B-17G #42-31405 Wallaroo MK II**

---

P	McManus, Henry, 2Lt
CP	Rice, Charles M., 2Lt
NAV	Carroll, Charles P., 2Lt
BOM	Cecot, Chester R., 2Lt
ENG	Row, Robert A., T/Sgt
RO	Colburn, Robert P., T/Sgt
RWG	Doezema, Albert, S/Sgt
LWG	Jewett, William B., S/Sgt
BT	Davies, John W., S/Sgt
TG	Cowles, Clifton G., S/Sgt



*Precision Bombing of Marienburg, Germany*

## 360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

### **B-17G #42-31754 (No Name)**

P	Lynch, Robert J., 2Lt
CP	Cecchini, Anthony J., 2Lt
NAV	Sbrolla, Emilio M., 2Lt
BOM	Merz, Dick W., 2Lt
ENG	Roszell, Thomas M., Sgt
RO	Schuler, Frank H., Sgt
BT	Chudej, Josef R., Sgt
TG	Krogh, Kenneth R., Sgt
LWG	Schoonmaker, Elwood, Jr., Sgt
RWG	Pleasanton, Kenneth H., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-97187 Miss Umbriago**

P	O'Beirne, Nelson B., 2Lt
CP	Duffield, Richard B., 2Lt
NAV	Shipp, Gene K., 2Lt
BOM	Dello Buono, Thomas J., 2Lt
ENG	Henselman, Miles A., S/Sgt
RO	Rose, William A., S/Sgt
BT	Faraone, Sam S., Sgt
TG	Studt, Allo L., Sgt
RWG	Rogers, Winford E., Sgt
LWG	Cammack, Francis C., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-97552 The Road Back**

P	Holdcroft, Lloyd L., 1Lt
CP	Bradley, Clyde W., Jr., 2Lt
NAV	Pace, Charles M., 2Lt
BOM	O'Donnell, John J., 2Lt
ENG	DeMarco, John A., S/Sgt
RWG	Hustus, Walter L., Sgt
RO	Francis, Walter G., S/Sgt
LWG	Slusser, Walter C., S/Sgt
BT	Kern, Lloyd F., Sgt
TG	Krumholz, Robert A., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-37841 Banshee**

P	Long, John A., 1Lt
CP	Travis, W.L., Col
NAV	Munroe, Linton S., 1Lt
BOM	Finley, Robert A., 2Lt
ENG	Wilson, Clarence G., T/Sgt
RWG	Ledley, Albert J., S/Sgt
RO	Jennings, Ralph T., T/Sgt
LWG	Henson, Mace, S/Sgt
TG	Orlando, Anthony T., S/Sgt
BT	Logan, Frank C., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-97546 Idaliza**

P	Glass, Henry F., 1Lt
CP	McMahan, Eugene A. 2Lt
NAV	Pepe, Nicholas A., 2Lt
BOM	Robrock, Paul A., 2Lt
ENG	Carbillano, Dominick J., Sgt
LWG	Stellato, Francis A., S/Sgt
RO	Miller, Gordon R., T/Sgt
RWG	Patrone, Frank, S/Sgt
BT	Michael, David O., S/Sgt
TG	Roberts, James E., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31340 Miss Liberty**

P	Stevens, Joseph E., 2Lt
CP	Ellsworth, Paul R., 2Lt
NAV	Fleming, Samuel P., 2Lt
BOM	Cottrell, John W., 1Lt
ENG	Brewster, John L., T/Sgt
RO	Villasenor, Oscar S/Sgt
BT	Schultz, Melvin E., S/Sgt
TG	Edwards, Marvin R., Sgt
RWG	Fitko, Marion F., S/Sgt
LWG	Cole, Edgar C., S/Sgt

## 360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

### **B-17G #42-97260 *Bow-Ur-Neck Stevens***

P	Brinkley, Pharis C., Capt
CP	Shayler, Walter K., Maj
NAV	Carroll, George M., 1Lt
BOM	Zwayer, James P., 1Lt
ENG	Worthington, Arthur J., T/Sgt
LWG	Lance, Guy A., S/Sgt
RO	Snyder, Richard N., T/Sgt
RWG	Ferguson, Charles R., S/Sgt
BT	Reid, Harold C., S/Sgt
TG	Rein, William E., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-107048 *(No Name)***

P	Eisele, Roy, 2Lt
CP	Girard, Louis F., 2Lt
NAV	Schenker, Murray, 2Lt
BOM	Gladstone, Melvin, 2Lt
ENG	Cowley, Louis M., S/Sgt
RWG	Bell, Richard L., Sgt
RO	Millard, Ralph, S/Sgt
LWG	Butler, Raymond, S/Sgt
BT	Longoria, Efrain, Sgt
TG	Vallee, Edward J., S/Sgt

(Abortive)

### **B-17G #42-97254 *Iza Vailable Too***

P	Johnston, Donald M., 2Lt
CP	Heussler, Robert W., 2Lt
NAV	Schultz, Milo R., 2Lt
BOM	Davis, Paul J., S/Sgt
ENG	Barnum, Abraham E., M/Sgt
RO	Treece, Charles E., S/Sgt
BT	Pesetsky, Paul W., Sgt
TG	Nestok, Frank, Sgt
RWG	Smith, Herbert L., Sgt
LWG	Turner, Kenzie H., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-38204 *(No Name)***

P	Williams, John T., 2Lt
CP	Coats, Niel, 2Lt
NAV	Fazio, Joseph J., 2Lt
BOM	Grunseth, Roald J., 2Lt
ENG	Schwenke, Howard A., S/Sgt
RO	Barber, Stewart, L., S/Sgt
BT	Whitten, Cleveland W., Sgt
TG	Ott, John E., Sgt
RWG	Northam, James W., Sgt
LWG	Mitchell, John B., Sgt

(Abortive)

## 427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

### **B-17G #42-38051 *My Yorkshire Dream***

P	Estes, Shirley W., Lt
CP	Byers, Ballard T., Lt
NAV	Shemwell, John T., 2Lt
BOM	Minter, Thomas W., Lt
TT	Price, Jack J., S/Sgt
BT	Teno, James R., S/Sgt
RO	Wagner, Wayne, S/Sgt
TG	Ross, Samuel C., S/Sgt
RWG	Silrum, Orvis K., Sgt
LWG	Ford, Thomas P., Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31423 *Jigger Rooche***

P	Jones, Wilbur H., 2Lt
CP	Wallace, Walstein W., 2Lt
NAV	Skarsten, Albert B., 2Lt
BOM	Kennedy, William J., 2Lt
TT	Duerr, William P., S/Sgt
BT	Calnon, Frederick N., S/Sgt
RO	Kosher, Albert J., Sgt
TG	LaFrenier, James E., S/Sgt
LWG	Thompson, Frederick A., Sgt
RWG	Fontaine, Clifford F., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-31200 *Old Crow***

P	Wood, Vere A., 1Lt
CP	Knutson, Wilmer A., 2Lt
NAV	Pinnette, William S., 2Lt
BOM	Landry, Robert J., 2Lt
TT	Tevis, John E., S/Sgt
BT	Grant, Thomas V., S/Sgt
RO	Brooks, Winnie R., T/Sgt
LWG	Heathershaw, Charles L., S/Sgt
TG	Musashe, Michael, S/Sgt
RWG	Doyle, Edward J., S/Sgt

### **B-17F #42-3158 *Max***

P	Harrison, Emmittes S., Jr., 1Lt
CP	Bastean, Stephen B., 2Lt
NAV	Kurnik, Walter F., 2Lt
BOM	Biedanski, Edmund J., 2Lt
ENG	Rombach, Joseph H., T/Sgt
BT	Dye, James W., S/Sgt
RO	Volmer, Lawrence O., T/Sgt
TG	Hoff, Henry, S/Sgt
LWG	Campbell, Kenneth H., S/Sgt
RWG	Hawk, Kenneth L., S/Sgt
(Abortive)	

### **B-17G #42-38020 *V-Packet***

P	Flesh, William R., 1Lt
CP	O'Hare, Phil W., 2Lt
NAV	Peacock, Lawrence A., 1Lt
BOM	Umphress, F.E., Jr., 2Lt
TT	Souder, Lee F., Jr., Sgt
RO	Paul, Samuel D., S/Sgt
BT	McMahan, Bonnar P., S/Sgt
TG	McLaughlin, Jesse W., S/Sgt
LWG	Kossin, Jack, S/Sgt
RWG	Rider, Wilbert, Sgt

### **B-17G #42-39885 *Sweet Rose O'Grady***

P	Headlee, Dale C., 2Lt
CP	Fogerson, Joseph E., F/O
NAV	Schweitzer, Jerome D., 2Lt
BOM	Handley, Donald J., 2Lt
ENG	Klunk, James A., S/Sgt
BT	Almanzor, Berton F., S/Sgt
RO	Moberg, Chester H., S/Sgt
TG	Bell, Alton R., S/Sgt
LWG	Wilson, Robert J., S/Sgt
RWG	Kyle, Clarence, S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-32027 *Betty Jane***

P	Melton, James H., 2Lt
CP	Belknap, Robert W., 2Lt
NAV	Frechter, Harry G., 2Lt
BOM	Clapp, Keith W., 2Lt
TT	Weed, Lowrey A., Jr., T/Sgt
BT	Moore, John J., Jr., S/Sgt
RO	Stoberl, Donald L., S/Sgt
TG	Anderson, Ralph R., Sgt
LWG	LaPlante, Willard R., Sgt
RWG	Miller, Norman L., S/Sgt

### **B-17G #42-39875 *Buzz Blonde***

P	Travis, Robert F., Bgen
CP	Lyle, Lewis, LtCol
NAV	Iverson, Ingvald M., 1Lt
NAV	Randall, Everett Z., 1Lt
BOM	Orvis, George T., Jr., 1Lt
TT	Sparks, Willie T., T/Sgt
BT	Chancellor, John R., S/Sgt
RO	Benevento, Andrew G., S/Sgt
TG	Kendall, Dallas E., 2Lt
RWG	Price, John B., S/Sgt
LWG	Winters, Craig W., S/Sgt

## 427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists - Cont'd.

### **B-17G #42-31616 *Spirit of Flak Wolf* CR-L**

P	McGarry, John J., Jr., 1Lt	KIA
CP	Cotham, Willie C., 1Lt	KIA
NAV	Halligan, Robert W., 1Lt	KIA
BOM	Foe, Kenneth D., 2Lt	KIA
ENG	Grace, Henry J., T/Sgt	KIA
BT	Friedman, Ira, S/Sgt	WIA
RO	Stuphar, Stephen, S/Sgt	KIA
TG	Kowalonek, Walter A., Sgt	WIA
LWG	Vargas, Michael A., S/Sgt	WIA
RWG	Hilborn, Ervin, S/Sgt	WIA



### **JOHN J. MCGARRY CREW - 427th BS**

**(crew assigned 427BS: 16 Nov 1943)**

(Back L-R) S/Sgt Ira Friedman (BT-WIA), T/Sgt Henry J. Grace (E-KIA),  
S/Sgt Walter A. Kowalonek (TG-WIA), S/Sgt Ervin Hilborn (LWG-WIA),  
Sgt Edgar S. Brown (RWG), Sgt Elmer A. Wilson (R)  
(Front L-R) 1Lt Robert W. Halligan (N-KIA), 2Lt Willie C. Cotham. (CP-KIA),  
1Lt Kenneth D. Foe (B-KIA), 1Lt John J. McGarry (P-KIA)

Substitute crewmen:

Sgt Stephan Stuphar (R-KIA) for Wilson — S/Sgt Michael A. Vargas (RWG-WIA) for Brown

## **FLYING THE NORTH ATLANTIC**

**From the book entitled "25 Milk Runs"**

**by Richard R. "Dick" Johnson**

We took this brand new B-17, with the radio call letters, "KTEX Mike," which we immediately corrupted into "Kotex Mike," and headed north, behind crews 13, 14 and 15. Alexander's crew, #15, had my best buddy, Horace W. Peppard as its co-pilot. Taking off every thirty minutes, eight bombers left Hunter Field to take the northern route to Europe, across the North Atlantic.

After heading north from Hunter Field on April 6th, we found that we had a brisk tail wind, so we did a lot of sight seeing on the way up the coast. We flew a circle around Norfolk, Virginia, and I was able to pick out my home there. We then flew to Washington, D.C. and flew around the Capitol Building and the Washington Monument, staying at about one thousand feet. We soon found ourselves over New York City and decided to fly around the Statue of Liberty. We were still ahead of schedule, so I suggested to Beiser that we fly around the Empire State Building. Staying at a thousand feet, we flew rather close to the tallest building on Earth at that time. Unfortunately, my suggestion got us in a little hot water. Evidently someone with binoculars could look down and read our tail number as we flew below their level. When we got to England a letter of reprimand was waiting for Beiser. Evidently the authorities in New York were overly sensitive since Yankee Stadium had been recently buzzed by three B-17s during the World Series. These three B-17s eventually found their way to the Group that we would be assigned to. Beiser never held it against me for getting him into this minor bit of trouble.

After six hours we arrived at our destination of Grenier Field, Manchester, New Hampshire, where we spent the night while our plane was refueled and serviced. We spent an extra night and took off on the eighth of April, headed to the town of Happy Valley, Labrador. Our field of departure there was Goose Bay. We arrived at about noon and the ground crews got busy servicing the plane. We were scheduled to take off in the early hours after midnight the next day, April ninth, headed for Keflavik, near the capitol city of Reykjavik, Iceland. We went to bed early because of this accelerated schedule. We found that bad weather was expected.

As it turned out, the weather was very bad when we were routed out of bed. It was snowing pretty hard, but the operations people said that the flights were on as scheduled since the runway was cleared. We were to take off at thirty minute intervals, go to eleven thousand feet and remain at that altitude for the entire trip.

Crew thirteen took off first and disappeared almost at once. Crew fourteen waited thirty minutes and did the same. Crew fifteen, the one that I had been originally assigned to fly with, started engines and taxied into the take off position. After their allotted thirty minutes they took off into the snow storm and disappeared just as the others had.

We started engines and taxied into position only to be signaled by an Aldis lamp to return to the hard stand. There we found that Crew fifteen carrying my good friend, Aubrey Alexander, with my best buddy, Horace W. Peppard, had crashed just after take off, killing all on board, including the great-grandson of Jim Bowie. Needless to say, we were all pretty shaken up. The inspectors went through our plane with a fine tooth comb, checking to see if sabotage was maybe the cause.

Nothing was found, and we carefully checked the wheel wells to see if some saboteur might have planted a bomb that would explode when the wheels were retracted. We found no hint of trouble, so we taxied back to the take off end of the runway without topping off our gas tanks. By



this time the snow was falling more heavily than ever and we decided to do a three-man take off. Beiser would handle the controls and watch the directional gyro while I watched the white stripe down the runway, and Pappy calling off the air speeds. We made it off after an interminable take off roll, being loaded to the gills with gasoline for our eleven hour flight.

Immediately after take off the snow was so heavy that we could barely see the wing tips, and looking straight ahead was like looking into the big end of a white funnel.

We were never to see any sign of the crash site of crew 15 because of the snow, so we flew on to our assigned altitude of eleven thousand feet and stayed there for the entire trip. We found it comforting that the de-icer boots had not been removed from our aircraft, as the snow was just wet enough to form rhyne ice on the wing leading edges. Once in a while we shined a light to see if the ice was a problem, and when it was, we exercised the de-icer boots. These boots consisted of three flat tubes along the entire wing span. When ice formed on the wings, we inflated the center tube and then the two outer tubes, which cracked the ice off and into the slip stream. We also had a bit of trouble with rhyne ice forming on the propellers. We could eliminate this with alcohol de-icer fluid which we could spray from the propeller hub and down each of the three blades. When bits of ice stopped hitting the fuselage we knew the props were clear.

After about six hours into the flight it started to get daylight, and the snow abated a small bit and we could see the wing tips pretty good. But now we started worrying about our position. We had picked up the leg of the four course range out of Iceland, but it was a hundred miles wide at this distance. We knew the wind had been from the northeast, but Gepner couldn't give us a precise fix, because he couldn't see the sun. We knew that we couldn't drift a hundred miles off course without the danger of running out of gas, but to climb above the clouds would use even more gas, so we elected to fly the extra hundred miles if necessary rather than risk an almost certain gas depletion in going to a higher altitude. We flew the entire trip on autopilot, since it could maintain altitude and heading, needing only small corrections with a knob to control elevators, and one for aileron and rudder. Letting "George" do it made it a lot easier on the pilot and co-pilot. Lt. Gepner gave us periodic course corrections so that we would fly a Great Circle Route.

While we were discussing the fuel dilemma, the sun suddenly appeared behind a heavy haze of snow. Lt. Gepner immediately grabbed his sextant and stuck his head up in the astro-dome in front of the cockpit. Beiser and I could see him clicking away on the tape. The sun went behind the overcast almost instantly, but Lt. Gepner soon reported that he thought that he had gotten some decent fixes and that he thought we were about fifteen miles south of course as he had planned. He gave us a course correction which we immediately took, knowing that to follow the range leg at that deviation would take us in an immense curve before reaching the narrow part of the radio signal.

After eleven hours and five minutes, we found the "cone of silence" of the radio station that we were following, and thus knew that we had found the field we were looking for. We had not yet started our let down from the eleven thousand feet, since we had an estimated thirty minutes of fuel left.. We were just about ready to go out to sea a few miles to let down, when suddenly we found a hole in the clouds that was about a mile in diameter, and we could see snow on some mountains. We immediately let down through this opening in a tight descending spiral at minimum air speed, being lightly loaded at this point. We shortly found ourselves in the clear under the clouds which were about four thousand feet above the ground. This is when we started celebrating Easter Sunday, April 9, 1944, which was that day.

Snow was piled twenty feet deep along both sides of the runway and as we approached for landing, we found that we had a fifty miles per hour head wind. This made our touch-down speed of less than forty miles per hour instead of our usual eighty to eighty-five miles per hour. This was fine until we got to the end of the runway and Beiser instructed me to unlock the tail wheel so he could turn off the runway. As soon as I unlocked the tail wheel, Beiser made a left turn onto the taxi-way and had to use a lot of left brake and right engine to keep the nose from turning into the wind which was now fifty miles per hour from the right. We had only gone a few dozen feet when the wind driving against the huge dorsal fin of the B-17 caused the tail wheel pin to shear. This gave us even less control over our desired direction, and almost full left brake and right engine throttle was required to get us to the downwind part of the taxi-way. B-17s always taxied on the two outboard engines. At this point it became fairly easy. Just hold the yoke forward and stand on the brakes to keep from going too fast. We shut down in the hard stand just before noon on Easter Sunday.

The base maintenance officer and our own crew replaced the tail wheel pin that evening after we all went sight-seeing in the capitol city of Reykjavik.

Iceland didn't have the shortages that one saw in the States. The shop windows had all kind of goods that were being rationed at home. Many sidewalks in the town were lined with fish heads a couple of feet deep with paths cut through at doorways. This was their method of refrigerating these fish heads which would be removed before they thawed. I think they were processed into fish oil that was used as a vehicle for paint making as well as many other uses.

That night was my first experience with the Aurora Borealis. It was so cold that I could only stay outside a few minutes at a time, but it was so fascinating that I made many trips out to look. I got hollered at by the guys playing cards for letting in the cold air. These Northern Lights looked as if you were standing at the base of a stage looking up at the bottom edge of the curtain, which was slowly changing color and moving ever so gracefully as if in a fairy light show. The color at the bottom edge of the "curtain" was very bright with the color slowly diminishing as one looked higher, until directly overhead it couldn't be seen at all. The colors undulated from red to green and back again, in a slow waltz across the northern sky.

The next morning, our aircraft having been serviced, we took off for Prestwick, Scotland. We had expected more B-17s to have gone with us, but two others of our group of eight never made it to Iceland. We later learned that one had tried to go above the storm and ran out of fuel as a result. They had come back down and just before running completely out of gas, had ditched alongside a tanker ship. Unfortunately the water was so cold that most were lost to hyperthermia before they could be picked up. This was in the same area of the North Atlantic that had claimed the Titanic, right to this very day, thirty-two years earlier. It was reported that death came in less than twenty minutes to some.

The other lost B-17 had decided to go below the weather when it got daylight, expecting to make an emergency landing on Greenland. They never made it, having to ditch when their fuel ran out. All of these men were lost. Their May Day transmission was the only clue to their position. April 9th was not a good date for that area.

Our flight to Prestwick was uneventful, as the weather got gotten a little better. We were so proud of "our" brand new Flying Fortress that we thought would be ours to fly all our combat missions in just like the "Memphis Belle." No such luck. On April 22, 1944, our plane, "Kotex Mike" with the tail number, 42-102392, built at Boeing's main plant in Seattle, was taken away from us and assigned to the 91st Bomb Group. It started flying combat missions right away and was shot

down on its 7th mission on May first, two weeks before we even flew our first mission. That plane, which had been re-named "Cool Papa," received a direct flak burst in the nose and went down in flames with only two survivors. When they took the plane from us we had such short notice that we even left some of our gear on board, including our parachutes, binoculars, and a few personal items that we eventually got back.

For three weeks we dallied at Prestwick, going to school to learn all the latest aircraft recognition. They eagerly showed us pictures of the German Me-262 Jet and the Me-162 Komet, rocket plane. We had seen them all at MacDill Field a couple of months earlier. They schooled us in radar technology, and LORAN, which is an acronym for Long Range Navigation. PFF, or Pathfinder was the British Radar which we often used for bombing through clouds. American airmen called it "Mickey," as in Mouse.

The last week of April found us on a bus headed for the Bomb Group to which we had been assigned. It was the famous 303rd Bomb Group known as "Hell's Angels." As we drove past the little village of Molesworth and turned onto the base which was a little over a mile from that village, we were greeted with some strange sights. There were so many B-17s that they couldn't be easily counted. The 427th Squadron to which we had been assigned was on the base near a runway, while the other three squadrons were a little farther away. As we approached the barrack area of the 427th, some wag had hung a neatly done sign on the first billet area. The sign read, "Girls who visit on a weekend must be off the base by Tuesday." I have tried to find someone who might have a picture of this sign, but to no avail. I don't even know who the artist was.

At last we were at our Base and ready to go into Combat.