

Hell's Angels Newsletter

303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

FEBRUARY 1997

Help needed in locating all former 303rds

Lt. Robey honored by French officials



France, Sunday, May 19, 1996 - It was with much emotion that Jean Salon (l) Mayor of Le Cloître-Pleyben points out to Carolyn Van Stralen the place where her father Lt. Harry Robey, pilot of B-17 "Susfu" died on January 23, 1943 on a mission to bomb a target in Lorient, France. It was a most memorable day for Mrs Van Stralen who was born in June 1943, five months after her father had been murdered by a German pilot after bailing out of his burning plane. (see pg 13)



Remains of "Susfu" 50 years after the crash!



359th Brooklyn duo (l to r) Murray Pearl and Larry Lifshus.

We were united at Molesworth where are our comrades now?

What ever happened to the ground crew of "Hell's Angels," the first B-17 in the ETO to fly 25 combat missions?

On January 20, 1944, twelve men - six combat crewmen and six ground crew - and "Hell's Angels" took off for the U.S. under an archway of flares fired by members of the 303rd Bomb Group. The home-ward bound bomber departed Molesworth with hundreds of names scrawled in white paint all over the fuselage following a brief farewell ceremony.

The ground crew led by its chief; M/Sgt. Fabian Folmer of Mansfield, Ohio, included: T/Sgt. Edward A. West, Jr., Newport News, Virginia; S/Sgts. Kasmer Wegrzyn, Chicopee, Mass. and Ernest Touhey, Wichita, Kansas; Sgts. Wilson K. Fairchild, Southbridge, Mass and John R. Kosilla, North Tarrytown, N.Y.

The aircraft landed at New York City where it was welcomed by Mayor Fiorello H. La Guardia. From there the bond selling tour took them to Tinker AFB, Oklahoma City, OK. There are no records of what happened to the ground crew after welcoming ceremonies at the depot.

Association President Eddie Deerfield has launched a final all-out program to see if we can locate

friends and buddies that have been missing from our membership rolls since Molesworth was evacuated in June 1945.

Besides advertising in several publications, Eddie Deerfield is asking your support in contacting your local periodicals to see if they will publish your letter or a classified ad seeking to find your comrades requesting them to attend a 55th Anniversary Reunion in Pittsburgh, PA. in 1997.

Sometime, early in 1997 you will receive a personal invitation from President Deerfield asking for your support on this project. - a final all-out drive to find our missing WW II comrades.

Haven't you ever wondered what happened to fellows like Larry Lifshus and Murray Pearl from New York City, or the control tower duo of Bodie Fite and Harry McDaniel, or Texas pilot Billy Goolsby with whom we shared a Nissen hut at Molesworth. How about the loquacious navigator Charlie Young who was also recalled to active duty in August of 1949 to become a Navigation instructor at Ellington Field in 1950.

I'm sure most of you remember dozens of names and faces. All we need now are addresses to go along with them. ➔



303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

"HELLS ANGELS" NEWSLETTER

Editor: Hal Susskind

VOL. XIX, NO. 1 2602 Deerfoot Trail, Austin, TX 78704 February 1997

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

Because you are helping to perpetuate the history of the 303rd Bomb Group, your dues and/or donations to the 303rd Bomb Group Association are tax deductible.

The Association is open for membership to all persons assigned or attached to the 303rd Bomb Group, from its activation in 1942 in Boise, Idaho, throughout its war years at Molesworth Air Base in England to its deactivation in Casablanca in 1945. Spouses of 303rders may also become members. All other persons, interested in perpetuating the history of the 303rd Bomb Group and in furthering the aims of the Association, may apply for Associate status.

Membership years begin on the first day of January. In the future, the 303rd Bomb Group Newsletter will be sent only to paid up members. When you pay annual dues, the membership chairman will send you an updated membership card. Annual dues is \$10; \$15 for foreign addressees.

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Pittsburgh 1997 Reunion

Committee Chairman

(Sept. 4-8 1997)
Eddie Deerfield
Local Committeemen - Jack Gardner, (Chair), John Peters and Al Morton

Group Advisor

Lewis E. "Lew" Lyle

Chaplains:

Rom. Catholic:

Bishop Rene H. Gracida, 4126 Ocean Dr., Corpus Christi, TX 78411

Rev. Bernard Schumacher, Subiaco Abbey, Subiaco, AR 72865

Protestant:

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Rev. Everett A. Dasher, Rt. #4, Box 425, Saluda, SC 29138
(Wife's name: Helen)

Rev. Warren L. Hedrick, 14 March Drive, New Durham, NH 03855
(Wife's name: Alma)

Chaplains Emeritus: Merritt Slawson, Charles Spencer

Hell's Angels Forum

Your Chance to Sound Off!

Those golden A-2 jackets!

Reference newsletter, Nov. '96 - item "A-2 jackets worth their weight in gold!" by Ken Allen; it lists an A-2 with a Lt. C.J. Duros - that's Constantine J. Duros.

Connie was a good friend of mine from Chicago, Ill. Saw him at several of our reunions. He was very active in the reserve in Chicago. He retired as a bird colonel. Sad to write, he died about five years ago. Great newsletter, Hal. God willing we hope to be in Pittsburgh in 1997. Best regards.

Howard Frohman
2188 Blackmore Ct.
San Diego, CA 92109

Ed. Note: Where has Duros' jacket been for the last 50 years and how did it wind up Christie's?

Just received the Nov. '96 Newsletter. You're still putting out the best! And congratulations on joining the Exec. Committee as V/P of Administration But --don't ever stop being our Editor!

This issue was particularly interesting to me for several inputs.

First - on page three the picture at the top of the page of the lead crew; you and Lt. J.C. Dodson. Lt. Jasper C. Dodson was on the B-17 that we flew from Gander to Valley, Wales across the Atlantic in May of 1944. I presume this is the same man.

Next on page five under "A-2 jackets worth their weight in Gold," the Lt. C. J. Duros was our navigator on the Wiesbaden mission of 15. Aug. 1944.

And on page 17, John Burcham's article about the Wiesbaden mission interested me. I'm sending him a copy of my story on this mission - a detailed version. (*Hell's Angels Newsletter*, Oct. '91)

Keep up the good work!

Bill Crawford
2901 Woodgate Court, N.E.
Marietta, GA 30066

Did you change your address?

Thank you for the great *Hell's Angels Newsletter*. I read every line and look forward to each issue. The local postmaster did forward the most recent issue and that reminded me to send you our new address. Sure do not want to miss the next issue.

By the way - an item that might interest you. Do you watch the His-

tory Channel on Cable TV? Just last week I caught a program called "Ring of Steel!" A story of WW II bombing in Europe and the Pacific. The host in his closing remarks stated that the "last Eighth Air Force bombing mission was on April 16th!" How about the Group's 362nd mission on April 17 and the 363rd mission on April 20th and the last mission #364 on April 25th? I remember flying the last two missions quite clearly! I wonder how a correction could be made on that show? I know these programs get repeat showings quite often.

Thanks again Hal, for all your personal work for the rest of us.

Wayne O. Sproule
510 Achoma Drive
Heber Springs, AR 72543-7930

Here's my change of address. You have the best newsletter/magazine ever, keep up the good work.

Albert L. Farrah
9 Captains Way
Kittery Point, ME 03905

"The Thumper"

I greatly appreciate the copies of the August *Hell's Angels Newsletter* you sent. My brother and sisters were happy to have them. They, just as we all, are impressed with the quality of your paper. It is the most thoroughly read periodical that I receive. Everyone in the 303rd Association is indebted to you for your Herculean effort in editing and publishing such a fine newsletter and I once again thank you.

Under the picture on page seven of the August newsletter, the last sentence of the caption reads "It is possibly Lt. Fitzsimmons in the middle in the back row." That is indeed Kent.

Good luck and you take care of yourself, you do so much to keep the Association informed, I don't think it would function well without you.

Lee Fitzsimmons
22153 Lassen Drive
Palo Cedro, CA 96073-9714

Ed. Note: Thank you for the kind words. I just try to put into print the acts of heroism performed by Kent Fitzsimmons and other members of the 303rd on that eventful mission to Orient in January 1943. In March of this year a memorial was erected at Mears Ashby to honor those who were killed in the collision of two 303rd aircraft on 31

Sirs:

While I have looked forward to its arrival and taken pride in while always enjoying each issue, not so this time. To feature on the front page what is a stereo type White House letter and allege it is a salute from a man whom we all know resents if not detests the men who served is more like giving me the "finger" than a heartfelt salute.

The more so when it is placed above a real man like Maj. Gen. Lew Lyle. It requires a very naive person to consider it anything more than a public relations gesture. I can't help but wonder how many others like me felt it should have been on the back page or just filed away.

Sincerely,

Martin J. McGuire
24745 N. 117th St.
Scottsdale, AZ 85255

Dear Editor,

Clearly the 303rd Bomb Group Association's cup of accomplishments is running over in the last half of 1996! First, the organization's reunion briefly brought an element of patriotism to a city that is surely the broadest deepest cesspool existing in our national culture. The event must have caused great distress to many local citizens.

Then, topping that achievement by far, what should appear on the front page of the November newsletter but something labeled a "salute" from our nations glorious leader. What a disgusting sight! Any official of our organization having egregiously bad judgment to solicit such a message should have the good grace to resign his position immediately. I might add the mere printing of that message in our newsletter was at least as offensive.

Sincerely yours,

John I Jenkins
P.O. Box 1020
Alamogordo, NM 88311

March 1943. Lt. Fitzsimmons was killed in that accident while flying co-pilot in "Ooold Soljer."

I saw your articles in the August issue (page 7) and November issue (page 15) about two airplanes colliding on March 31, 1943.

I am Frederick Ziemer. I was T/Sgt. and Flight Engineer of "Yanke Doodle Dandy." Pilot was Lt. George Oxrider; Co-pilot, Lt. Hurlbert; Navigator, Lt. Grant; Bombardier, Lt. Steele, Radio Operator, Sgt. Everett Dasher; Tail gunner, Sgt. Sadler; Waist Gunner, Sgt. Maxwell; Ball Turret, Sgt. Smith and Waist Gunner, Sgt. Heaps. This was also the crew of "Werewolf."

We were flying in formation going through heavy clouds. Our position was "Tail End Charlie." I was standing behind Hurlbert watching the plane on our right ("Two Beauts"). They were a replacement crew.

We had been in the clouds for a long time - it seemed like that. At about 15,000 feet, I saw a wing come through the waist window of the plane on our right. -if I remember right - pushing a man out the window. I yelled at the pilot. He must have seen it at the same time and he pushed the wheel forward. We dove down and the two planes

went over the top of us. When we broke out of the clouds, the wreckage was already on the ground. We got back to our formation at the European coast.

Frederick B. Ziemer
201 Ashley Ave.
Bourbonnais, IL 60914-2051

Ed. Note: Sometimes the weather on a mission was rougher than the opposition. According to "Might in Flight" both waist gunners on "Two Beauts," Sgts Testoni and McGriffin, survived the accident. Is it possible that the waist gunner that Ziemer saw pushed out of the window was one of the survivors? Unfortunately Neither Testoni or McGriffin are members of the Association. Another reason for us to find all our missing members.

How old is old?

I have been concerned lately about how old we are getting. The only thing I have come up with, to do about it, is to write a poem. So far it hasn't helped with the age problem, but I do have a poem that I didn't have before. I guess it was inspired by the last Newsletter - I didn't get to the reunion this year. Believe me I don't like crude, corny poetry and I am not sure if this is-

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above that or not. I must admit I think it is not too bad - but doesn't everyone think that about his own efforts? Anyway, I will let you be the judge about whether it rates the Newsletter or not. I don't know if the guys I wrote about would resent being referred to as "old" - it doesn't bother me because I am. (80 next year).

Also if you print this, I am not too sure I want to be credited as the author. You might use "T/Sgt 444th." I can just picture some of my buddies wondering who that could be.

So, if you can use the poem, fine. If not, the waste basket can - and I will not be insulted.

You guys do a great job on the Newsletter. It is about the most interesting thing that shows up in the mailbox.

"T/Sgt. 444th"

P.S. Not until I was addressing the envelope did it occur to me that it was going to one of the men about whom the poem was written. That doesn't change anything, really, except that I would say that the sentiment of the last line of the poem is not just over-blown rhetoric. It is the way I feel.

It was a team effort!

Great newsletter this month, again. But some different with some real good experiences. Two of these I relate to real well. Eldon Audiss and his experiences with the Duchess. I was ground crew on the Duchess when he was flight crew. I remember well the Duchess' extended stay in the hangar in repair from the incident of which he spoke. I was also, on the scene when they took Mathis out of the plane, at the return of the mission on which he lost his life.

What Audiss didn't tell was that he and Pilot Squire T. O'Conner, after their combat tour, spent the balance of the war training combat pilots. He also has some good stories on that. Audiss, one of the 303rd's many great people.

I was also taken by the picture of the 444th Sub-Depots engine set-up team. Only, if you have been part of removing an engine from a plane and removing all of the accessories down to the bare engine. Then taking a new engine, bare, from the shipping box, then putting all of these accessories back on the new engine, in like manner, as they came off and putting it back on the plane; only if you have done this

can you realize the great work of these men. Once they got going, they always had the engine and for the correct position on the plane, on your pad when you needed it. Many a plane was ready for tomorrow's mission because they had the engine ready today. As my crew and I were recipients of this effort, as well as the whole of the 303rd, I think praises are in order for them. They were appreciated.

Jim Hicks
10172 US 41 South
Henderson, KY 42420

Ed. Note: It took a team effort of both flight crews and ground crews to defeat the Nazi war machine. Don't ever forget that!

"Molesworth Remembers"

Thank you and the men and women of RAF Molesworth for the fine print of Keith Hill's painting "Molesworth Remembers." It was a completely and totally unexpected surprise but one that is most appreciated. By copy of this letter I thank my colleagues in the 303rd for their help and support.

I should also like to thank corporate sponsors Betac Corporation, Vector Data Corporation, REMAX of Texas, and Science Applications International Corporation for their interest and financial help.

In thinking back 51 years since I departed Molesworth, I can only report that my tour of duty was probably like so many other crews. Some raids were classified as milkruns, a few that were quite hairy and the rest of my 32 missions most would describe as normal. Our crew was fortunate in that only one was seriously wounded - our ball turret gunner who made a partial recovery.

During the Persian Gulf War my son and I visited Molesworth but could not gain admittance as I had nothing with me to prove my wartime service at Molesworth. We also went to Alconbury but no officer could be located to authorize our entry to Molesworth. Perhaps another time.

Alexander W. Gray
1103 Iron Ridge Court
Herndon, VA 20170-3142

Ed. Note: I know that Abbott Smith and I'm sure many others in the 303rd have also written to Colonel Marcum and Colonel Evans expressing their thanks for the surprise gift.

AT A VETERANS REUNION

Can these old men have been the ones
Who crewed the seventeens?
Who manned the turrets, who manned the guns?
Are they? -- By any means?

Were they the pilots, the bombardiers,
Or did they navigate the sky?
Were they anxious, hiding fears,
Knowing well they soon might die?

Yes, these men that you see there
Really did these things.
They're older, yes, and less aware,
But oh! they once had wings.

Wait! They suddenly look younger now;
I see them as they were before.
The planes roar off, airborne somehow,
They carry bombs and men to war.

The planes come back, but not quite all.
Who knows what happened there?
Some saw comrades in their fall,
Some saw collisions in mid-air.

The vision fades, I look about.
We've gotten old again, I see.
We were so young, we had no doubt,
We felt that we would always be.

There's one more mission left to fly:
No one comes back, but then
We gather 'round and say goodbye
and we thank God we had these men!

"T/Sgt. 444th"

In Memoriam

I am sorry to inform you that my husband, Lt. J.A. Stavast passed away at home on Nov. 4, 1996, from a long illness of cancer. He was happy to receive recently the Distinguished Service Award from the 303rd Bomb Group. Unfortunately the print "Molesworth Remembers" arrived a few days late for him to see it.

He took a month off from his chemotherapy to go back to Davos and say goodbye to all the friends he made there while he was interned. He had been back many times to ski the Swiss Alps.

He was proud of the Air Force and his country and always had a lot of stories to tell about his escape from Switzerland with the aid of the French Underground.

Susan K Stavast
2 Charter Oak Rd.
Clementon, NJ 08021

S/Sgt. Robert C. Altizer, 76, of Eagle, Idaho, died on May 19, 1996

He was assigned as a "nose gunner" on a B-17 name "Holy Mackerel." His plane was shot down on a raid over Germany. He was the only survivor. He was captured by the Germans and after a lengthy stay in the hospital he was interned at Stalag 17B, northeast of Vienna, Austria. He spent three years as a POW. He was liberated in the Spring of 1945. He is survived by his wife Ardice, one son, two daughters, four grandchildren.

Ardice Altizer
3323 W. State
Eagle, ID 83616-4545

Ed. Note: According to "Might in Flight," Sgt. Altizer was shot down on April 4, 1943 on the Group's 28th mission to bomb the Renault Motor Works in Paris, France. There were three other survivors who also became POWs.

It is with sorrow I report the passing of James A. Drewry who died Nov. 29, 1996. Jim was a pilot in the 427th Sqdn. and completed 35 missions. His widow Bernice, ex-

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pressed a desire to remain an active member.

Quentin W. Hargrove
18 Bill Rogers Dr.
Texarkana, TX 75503

I have been reading some of the newsletters which you send out to members. I have completed Air Force and Navy years to retire as E-7, but have not been a member of your Association. I am in awe of one of your members: Major Lloyd L. Holdcroft, 538 So. 76th Ave., Tulsa, OK 74112

He was a senior pilot flying B-17, "Iza Vailable" referred to in your answer to Robert Heiliger in the November issue.

On April 18, 1944 his B-17 "The Road Back" was enroute from Molesworth and was hit by flak over the target Oranienburg (Berlin). He crash landed 10 miles north of Soltau. While evading the German soldiers, he was captured near Verden and after five days of travel was taken to Stalag Luft III. He set fire to his beloved aircraft to prevent the enemy from using the parts. He volunteered in excess of 10,000 hours of service in the VA clinic. He read extensively (having over 500 Aviation books in his library) and he loved the Mighty Eighth Air Force and the 303rd Hell's Angels.

I am his appointed Attorney-in-fact, while his estate is being probated. He passed away on 15. Sept. 1996 of a stroke. I am attempting to commemorate his service in some sort of museum in his honor. He is survived by a son, a brother and two cousins.

Jim Powell

This is to inform you that my husband, Joseph A. Bennett died Nov. 8, 1996. He was a life member of the 303rd. He was in the 427th Sqdn. He was a R/O on Lt. Simmons' crew and was shot down in "S for Sugar" on the infamous raid on Oschersleben on Jan. 11, 1944 when the 303rd lost 11 aircraft. He was a POW for 18 months.

Joe was so proud to be a member of the 303rd BG and the many ex-military organizations such as AVVETS, VFW, 8th AFHS and the American Ex-POW Association. We tried to attend as many reunions as possible and always enjoyed them.

Joe always looked forward to reading his "Hell's Angels Newsletter" and was so happy to receive his "Distinguished Service Award" Certificate. It is framed and hang-

ing on the wall.

Surviving are his wife Shirley, a son, a daughter and three grandchildren.

Shirley Bennett
91 Jackson Street
Keyport, NJ 07735-2011

That P-47 again!

There has been considerable interest in the P-47 that was at Molesworth and in my files I found the attached photograph. I have no idea about the date of the photo. After the war in Europe ended I was sent to Scotland and picked up a new B-17 from the depot and flew it to Bradley Field, Connecticut. Prior to our departure from Molesworth we were each given a packet of photographs. Also, some members of our Squadron (360th) acquired some additional photos from the photo lab and this photo was among them. I have several others that were taken prior to the time I came to Molesworth and most depict the B-17F model. We can meet sometime if you wish to include any of these in the newsletter.

Samuel W. Smith
P.O. Box 92stonewall, Texas
78671-0092

Ed. Note: Possibly Harry Gobrecht our Historian may have an interest in them.

What: Only four newsletters a year?

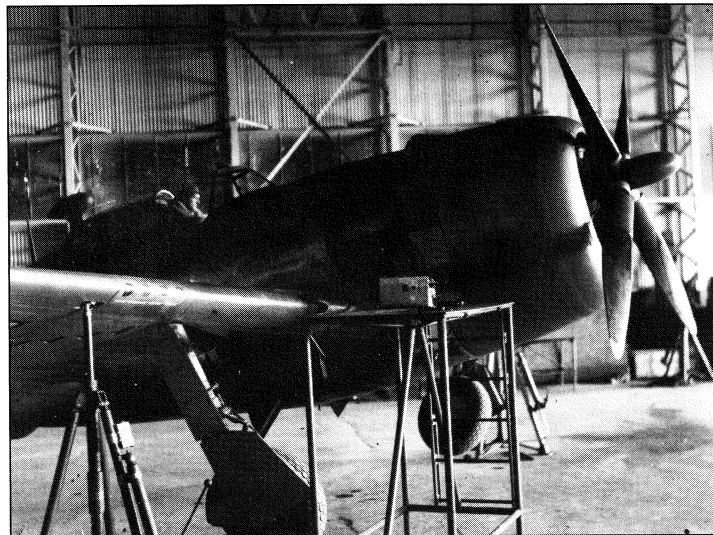
I am inquiring again as to why I do not receive but 3 or 4 copies of the newsletter a year. For 1996 - dues paid - about 4 copies, that was all. Now, 1997 dues paid, none - I realize it is only January, but no December issue, or no November 1996 and so on.

For any news, I need to call the only crew member left beside myself, R. Fogarty of Georgia. If there is something I can do at this end, please let me know.

I hear what happened more from my friends in Czech Republic, the NCAA, than I do the newsletter. Help! Help! It would be nice to receive a reply from you.

Leslie L. Latz
10890 SE 73rd Ct.
Bellevue, FL 34420-0324

Ed. Note: As I said in my reply to you, the 20 page August issue devoted the whole front page to your crew plus another page within the publication. I'm sorry you found the other 18 pages to be uninteresting.



As for putting out an additional 8 issues per year you will have to take that up with my replacement...

where it was found to have been damaged in transit. More later.

Information

News from the Czech Republic

The NCAA sent this year to R.T. Fogarty a small package as a Christmas present. Inside the package was a model of the "Earthquake McCoon" #43-37597. The photo is enclosed also a negative. The man on the photo is J. Holub who built the model.

On the base has been placed a part (small piece of metal) of the aircraft.

Paul Uhler
Prokopora 1244/23
Most 1
43401 Czech Republic

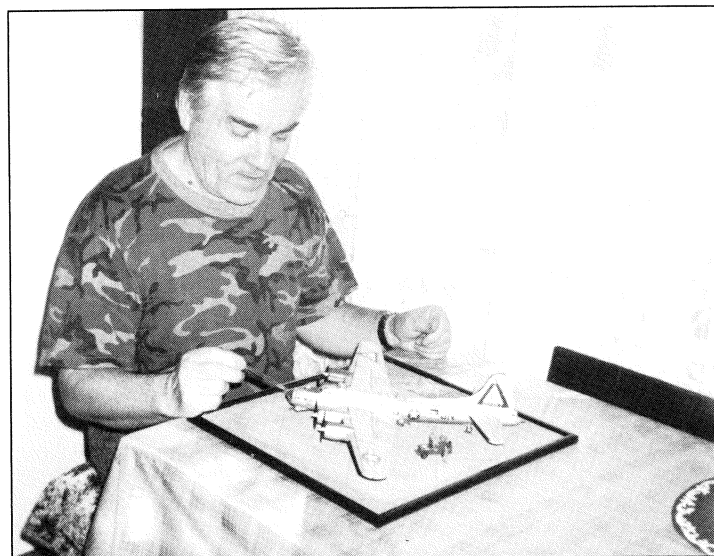
Ed. Note: Because of confusion in both postal systems the model was returned to the Czech Republic

I just read in our local newspaper that James C. Hensley a former 358th BS member passed away on 1/8/97. He was a POW during WW II. A design and mechanical engineer he worked for Boeing. He is survived by his wife Rosemary, 3 daughters, 2 sons and 10 grandchildren.

I also received information that Robert Sheets of Portland, OR has had a recent stroke. Word is that he cannot speak and has partial paralysis.

I thought you might want the above information so that friends of the above parties can be notified.

Jim Flanders #L1122
12619 SE McGillivray Blvd.
Vancouver, WA 98683



From the President

The last half of the 20th century has passed all too quickly since those Molesworth days in the early 1940's. While it's inspirational to see the youthful vigor and genuine warmth which 303rd ground and air veterans and their wives display at our annual reunions, the distressing fact is that we're old and getting older. This comes not as a remarkable revelation from on high, but rather as a prelude of things to come for the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association.

When the Directors meet in Pittsburgh for the reunion in September, 1997, they will need to face up for the first time to formulating plans for the phasing out of the Association as it is now constituted. Three members of the Board, all intelligent and thoughtful men, have approached me with the request that the issue be made part of the agenda for discussion. Their concern is reasonable and realistic.

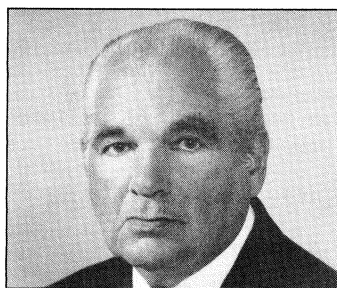
There are a multitude of options open to the Board of Directors, with a variety of shadings. For example, some say let's set a date, possibly the year 2010 or earlier, at which time a major portion of the funds in the Association treasury would be donated to the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum with the balance remaining for Associate Members to carry on and sustain the 303rd's traditions. In the middle ground, there are those who say let the end come when there are no more than a hundred 303rd veterans able to and interested in attending a reunion. At the other end of the spectrum, there are those who say let's do nothing and let the last two Molesworth veterans tap the treasury to drink a toast to each other, leaving the Associate Members to look out for the assets and the thereafter.

How do you think we should handle this? It's your Association. Write to me at 3552 Landmark Trail, Palm Harbor, FL 34684-5016. I can't answer all your letters, but I can promise that your feelings and ideas will be brought to the attention of the Board as a whole for consideration at the Pittsburgh reunion.

When I was elected at the San Francisco gathering last year, one of my pledges was to launch a campaign to search for the 303rd's "lost" ground and air veterans who never learned that we have an Association and annual reunions. We want to bring them in from the cold before time runs out.

The campaign is well underway. In February, ads are running in four

citizen, fraternal, and military publications with a total circulation of several million. They are: Retirement Life, The Rotarian, The Elks Magazine and the VFW Magazine. These publications were selected to fit into our very limited member search budget and, hopefully, to attract attention of "lost" comrades across a wide spectrum of interests. Other excellent periodicals didn't accept advertising or had much higher space rates. We had to pass on the AARP after learning that their rate for a two-inch square ad in a single issue was \$16,500. Our advertising and public relations budget for the entire campaign is \$5,000.



Hal Susskind, Vice President for Administration, has launched a series of "Letters to the Editors" of newspapers throughout the United States asking for help in locating veterans, many known by name, who lived in those parts of the country before eventually going on to Molesworth.

In March, every member of the Association will receive a Pittsburgh Reunion News Release and a pre-stamped envelope. All the member is asked to do is to address the envelope to his local daily or weekly newspaper and mail it. Since our membership is spread through every state in the Union, publication of the releases will bring the 303rd Bomb Group Association to attention of millions of readers.

We're also going onto the World Wide Web of the Internet with a long piece about the 303rd at Molesworth, sprinkled with key words and phrases to trigger responses to those wanting to know more about our history, Association and reunions.

Another of my term pledges is to explore ways to establish a computer data base for input of the details of the 303rd's illustrious history. Ed Gardner, as chairman of the data base survey committee, has held several meetings with a 379th Bomb Group software program specialist who developed a data base for his Group and recently the first

phase of inputting the data. Ed is convinced after long hours of discussion and observation of the program that it's ideally suited to the 303rd's needs and interests. The next step is to determine the costs and procedures for recording the information.

The third pledge was to support the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, which was opened last May. The 303rd's own Lew Lyle was the driving force behind this living memorial to all of us. The Board has under consideration a major contribution to the Heritage Museum, and will hear a specific proposal at the Pittsburgh meeting on how the donation would be utilized.

Everything is falling into place nicely for the Pittsburgh reunion, 4-8 September 1997. Highlights already include a memorial service in the majestic amphitheater of the Soldiers and Sailors Hall, a luncheon cruise with a rollicking Showboat Revue on Pittsburgh's three rivers, sightseeing tours with professional guides in a fleet of modern buses. Feature events still in the planning cycle include two evenings of stage and big screen entertainment in the hotel's auditorium. Best of all is the \$75 nightly rate at the gracious Westin William Penn hotel itself in downtown Pittsburgh, accredited as one of the city's historic landmarks. The Westin's Presidential Suite, largest in the hotel, has been reserved as the 303rd's Hospitality Centre.

Our thanks to Jack Gardner, chairman of the 303rd's local committee, and his associates in Pittsburgh, members John Peters and Al Morton, for their efforts behind the scenes to help make the 14th reunion of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association one of the best in our history.

Eddie Deerfield

Records Found

The Veterans Administration has discovered 10 million duplicates of 20th century military records thought to have been destroyed in a 1973 fire. If you were told that records you need were burned, you may want to write again: National Personnel Records, HGSA, 9700 Page Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63132..

Incidentally

by Hal Susskind

As you can see by the minutes of the Board Meeting on page 9 of this newsletter, the Board has authorized our Historian Harry Gobrecht to look into the possibility of publishing a second edition of "Might in Flight." Harry has recently let me read about 700 pages of the proposed second edition which is essentially the first edition with corrections. Although I have used the first edition quite extensively since its publication, this is the first time that I have sat down and read it through like a novel. That way you watch the fledgling bomb group with no combat experience take on the experienced Luftwaffe and hold their own against Hitler and Goering's finest. But all was not "wine and roses." We paid a tremendous price for victory. Total casualties, including POWs, MIAs and KIAs totaled 1,748.

Besides the fact that Harry Gobrecht did a tremendous job in assembling all this information, the copy provided quite a few interesting revelations.

We lost quite a few crews to mid-air collisions due to assembling or flying formation in bad weather. In most cases only one or two crewmen survived the catastrophe.

I was surprised at the number of deaths due to lack of oxygen caused by either equipment failure, or just improper procedures followed by the crews in not calling for periodic oxygen checks during the long flights at altitude. This added to the equipment shot out in combat accounted for the loss of quite a few 303rds.

The number of people who were killed in bailing out of their stricken aircraft also surprised me. The reasons were numerous; e.g. failure of the chute to work properly, jumped at too low an altitude, fear of jumping probably due to inadequate training and some of our comrades were killed by Luftwaffe pilots who shot at them while they dangled helplessly in their chutes.

Some other observations which I found interesting were: Lt. Gen. James H. Doolittle was promoted to General on June 12, 1945, while Lt. Gen. Ira Eaker, architect of the 8th Air Force was promoted to General April 26, 1985; photo on page 690 showing Generals Spaatz and Doolittle visiting the 303rd BG to "observe the set-up in a Bombardment Group." It was our Group's 349th Mission! "What took 'em so long?"

More in next issue.

Flying with the Hell's Angels!

Reflections on some of the experiences of Carl DuBose, pilot in the 427th Squadron of the 303rd Bomb Group (H).

I suppose we should have had a premonition of the excitement to come from flying combat by an event which occurred to us at the end of Phase Training at Pyote AFB, Texas. Our last flight was a "maximum effort" cross country from Pyote to North Texas, thence down to Victoria, my home today, and back to Pyote. Our planes were fueled so that we had to stay on course or run out of gasoline. We were doing well until we neared the base and were notified that a dust storm would prevent us from landing there and we were to proceed to Hobbs, Carswell, or Roswell, New Mexico. Hobbs was closest, but we couldn't see any lights so I elected to proceed to Lubbock, Texas to the AFB there. The gas tanks were dry and I had the crew standing by to bail out. We called Lubbock to have them turn on the lights and managed to land before we lost power. About a week later they allowed us to come home; rumors had it that a number of the aircraft were lost or ditched in the lake near Carswell AFB. Media in those days didn't report tragedies.

The excitement continued a few days later when we left Kearney, Nebraska with a brand new B-17, "Flying Fortress" which I was to fly to Europe. The route would be Kearney to Bangor, Maine thence to Newfoundland and across the Atlantic to Northern Ireland. The weather people told us that a cold front sitting over Iowa had holes in it and we could get through. It was a black night and I could see no holes but picked a place with the least lightning. Once inside of what must have been a tornado or a severed thunderstorm, mother nature took

complete control of our beautiful plane. We were thrown up, down, and sideways with the controls completely useless. After the thing finally threw us out we proceeded on with our trip to Bangor.

In Newfoundland they briefed us to fly at 15,000 feet at night so the navigator could do celestial navigation. We were to expect one small cold front which turned out to be a full blown one. The rubber boots could not keep the ice off our wings and we lost our pitot tube and the air speed indicator connected to it. I decided to descend using the artificial horizon and keep the power seting so that we wouldn't stall. At about 1,000 feet the ice melted and we broke out at 500 feet.

The fun and excitement wasn't over, though, because upon our arrival at Nutt's Corner, Ireland, the airfield was experiencing a severe rainstorm. We came in on the old radio beam and almost hit the runway before we saw it. At the time I thought, this flying business is going to be a bit more exciting than I had bargained for.

Many of the articles, letters and books published relate some of the tough times members of the group experienced in combat. But there were good times, too, and I would like to relate some of these. Those of us who flew missions after D-Day in 1944 (I started my tour on July 5) did not experience the massive fighter attacks of earlier missions. Although we were hit on occasion (Wiesbaden, where we lost the low squadron and our ball turret got one fighter) our major concern was flak, which was quite deadly at times. We counted over 150 holes in our plane once and came home with an



Molesworth team - (front row) Five members of Jigger Roocher ground crew with crew chief Jimmy Stewart holding ETOE. (middle row l to r) Bob Kidd, Jesse Jones, Don Kollmar and Barney Watson. (third row l to r) Danny Balint, Leo Laverty, Paul Sandhagen, Lou Droll and Carl DuBose.

88 mm hole in the right wing which went completely through without exploding. Had it lodged in there and the timer exploded it later, I would not be writing this. I came home with a coffee can full of flak picked up from the floor of the B-17. We also experienced German fighters flying out of gun range and firing rockets through the formation, though ineffectively. The sight of a German rocket ship buzzing by a P-51 had us wondering if the enemy's technology was surpassing ours.

But this is about the fun times and the humor that was there, too. My first experience of this sort came as we were taken out for a practice formation flight soon after arrival at Molesworth. The new crews were

assigned to the low elements of the group, of course, and taken for a ride over the North Sea. I suppose one of the tactics taken to assure we "kept it tight" was to fly very low over the waves. Although I was too busy watching the wing of the airplane I was flying on, the spray on the windshield told me there was very little, if any, clearance below; the ball turret gunner, Bob Kidd, swore the waves were hitting his turret.

There were times the group leader would take us through a thick deck of dark clouds in formation. *Vetigo* is your worst enemy here and it got to me a couple of times and I had to ask the co-pilot to take it until I could convince myself

(continued on pg. 12)

General Membership Meeting, August 25, 1996

San Francisco, California, August 25, 1996

The **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING** held in the ballroom of The Airport Marriott Hotel, was called to order at 0918 by President Ed Miller who asked Joanna Tressler, Widow's Representative, to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Ed mentioned that the minutes of the last general meeting had not yet been located since the untimely death of our former secretary, John Ladd. He lauded Ford Kelley on his dedication to the 303rd as our past president and wished him a full recovery from his recent illness. Mr. Miller spent several minutes praising the efforts of the past committee heads and other working volunteers; Eddie Deerfield, Harry Gobrecht, Hal Susskind, Carlton Smith, Bill Roche, Charlie Sykes, all the Squadron Representatives and others.

He mentioned the Distinguished Service Awards established by Ford Kelley and sent to 303rd veterans. Of all the questionnaires sent to all the members, only 529 have been returned. He urged members to get them in as soon as possible so that our records can be updated. There is a list of nearly ten thousand names of people who went through Molesworth.

Our greatest accomplishment of the year has been the memorial to lost 303rd veterans.

Mel McCoy is in the hospital recovering from angioplasty after a mild heart attack he suffered at the hotel. He is doing well and expects to attend the banquet. This news caused a big round of applause.

Statistics of this year's reunion were given by Eddie Deerfield. Of 542 registrants, 450 signed up for the harbor cruise, and 376 for the bus trips. Tributes were paid to the reunion committees and all their volunteers.

Jim Taylor and Jill Miller set up the banquet seating arrangements which were a great improvement over the "Oklahoma Land Rush" system at Boise. This, or a similar system will be used at all future banquets.

The 1997 reunion plans are well under way and after enquiring at Philadelphia and Boston, the final decision was to go to Pittsburgh. Eddie Deerfield said that the reunion there will be held from Thursday, September 4th through Monday September 8th at the Westin William Penn Hotel. A block of 300

rooms has been reserved and we must guarantee at least a 60% occupancy in order to avoid a penalty. The hotel is an old, refurbished hotel that will be pleasing to the attendees.

President Miller diverted from the schedule to go to new business. A letter was received from Bill Eisenhart who made a visit to Savannah to see about a reunion near the Heritage Museum. When possible, the reunions will be moved from region to region to give members a diversion and make it easier for some to travel. He asked that the board make the final decision and there was no dissent. Walt Ferrari will go to Savannah in a few weeks to start laying the groundwork for Savannah-98.

Bill Roche gave Ford Kelley's regrets that his health precluded his trip to San Francisco but said that he expects to be in Pittsburgh in 1997.

Hal Susskind reported that his 81st birthday is Saturday, August 31st. He claimed to have the best job in the 303rd Association and has had it ten years. Files are in nearly every room in his house, except the bed room which is clear so far. He received a letter from Andy Rooney of "60 Minutes" fame saying that our member who was flung from a B-17 without a parachute was a fiction. Hal reminded him that it was well documented, and is not the first such incident to be recorded. Hal also received a letter from President Clinton, congratulating us on our reunion in San Francisco.

Our Group Historian, Harry Gobrecht, had a busy year, Making 279 replies to queries, 195 phone calls for the same, and 529 replies to personal questionnaires. He is on the Board of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, and is a full time worker on all these projects. He reports that there are 39 memorials to the 303rd Bomb Group or their crews, worldwide. Five were added in the past year. Five copies of our history book, "Might in Flight" are available in England and one is in a book store in Tucson, AZ for \$175.00. Harry needs crew photos!

Bill Adams who did the wood carvings has recovered from a brain aneurism and has done 30 of these 303rd nose art carvings as therapy. Members were asked to send him a "thank you" note. A report was given on progress at the Heritage Museum in Savannah. It is the finest quality and also the 303rd

Memorial is the finest ever produced by the monument maker. The entrance Rotunda was named for Lew Lyle. All were urged to stop by.

Carlton Smith reported on membership, saying that we have 1856 active, of which 1329 are regular members, 238 are associate members and nine honorary. 1567 are dues paying. Carlton praised his kids, Dennis and Mary Ann for their dedicated service to the 303rd. They need the "Zip Plus Four" codes and are accepting dues.

Group Advisor, Lew Lyle reported on the museum and thanked the 303rd for its help. It is "One of the Premier Groups."

Squadron Reps reported no changes. The 444th and the Widows, no changes.

A departure from the regular order of business addressed the need to change the by-laws in order to give the Associate members voting privileges. Charlie Sykes is their representative and reported that 23 Associate members were in attendance.

(The By-Laws, Page 1, Article III states: Persons interested in the history, aims and goals of the association may become "associate" members with all the privileges of regular members, required to pay dues, but may not vote." The last four words will be deleted and replaced with the words --"and may vote."

The Past Presidents Advisory Committee has reviewed the proposed slate of officers for the next year. For President, Eddie Deerfield; V/P for Administration, Hal Susskind; V/P for Reunions, Walt Ferrari; Secretary, Richard R. Johnson and for Treasurer, Bill Roche. There being no nominations from the floor, nominations were closed and there were no dissenting votes from the membership. The slate was elected unanimously.

From the floor it was learned that Chuck Manning, with some of his crew, was on the afternoon flight of the B-17 that flew over the museum Grand Opening on May 13. New members of the 303rd were introduced from the floor and outgoing President Ed Miller again stated his appreciation for all the help in the past year. "The secret," he said, "is People, People, People!"

The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 PDT.

Respectfully submitted

**Richard R. Johnson,
Secretary**

Forum

Information wanted!

Researcher seeks information on B17 42-29524 "Meathound" and also details of any crew members who flew on this aircraft on any of her 25 missions between July 1943 to January 1944. Photos, dates, mission stories etc., in fact any assistance would be appreciated.

Information is also sought on the following airmen: Lt. John G. Leverton, Lt. Vance R. Colvin, and Sgts. Harry Romaniec, Eugene R. Stewart, William H. Fussen, Samuel L. Rowland, Fred Booth and Roman P. Kosinski. These airmen were believed to have come to the United Kingdom with Lt. Jack W. Watson in October 1943.

I would be pleased to hear from anyone in the 358th BS who knew them and also from the airmen's relatives and any assistance would be welcome.

I would like to correspond with any 358th Bomb Squadron crew members who flew on January 11, 1944 mission to Oscherleben as their assistance also would be of help to my research project.

**Michael B. Chevalier
24 Lucy Lane South
Stanway
Colchester Essex
CO3 5HE
England**

Correction!!

Re: letter by James W. Johnson in August 1996 issue, the Queen Mary did embark from New York Harbor on 9/5/42 and I went AWOL to view the Statue of Liberty. The 303rd was "Privileged: to work K.P. for the entire trip and I was to help serve one table of 20 men. But, when I reached the table the 1st Sgt., Francis X. Lyons, gave me the "honor" of serving alone the next seating.

The "correction" I wish to make, however, is: The Queen Mary did not dock in Gurruck, Scotland but rather "Greenock," Scotland on my 21st birthday, 9/11/42. A carbine and 5 rounds of ammo were my birthday presents.

We boarded a train and traveled all night and landed in the town of Thrapston. We piled in lorries for a nine mile trip to Molesworth where I stayed for 32 months, leaving in June 1945 for Casablanca.

**Cecil H. Allen
8705 Slater Drive
Overland Park, KS 66212-3861**

Ed. Note: I also went to Casa, but on my way to Dakar!!!

Board of Directors Meeting, August 27, 1996

Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of Tuesday, August 27, 1996, held at the Airport Marriott Hotel in San Francisco. Twenty members were present. The meeting was called to order by 0900 by President Eddie Deerfield who thanked Hal Susskind, V/P for Administration, for his assistance throughout the year.

The minutes of the board meeting of August 23 were approved with one minor correction in the wording of expense payments made to "committee heads" instead of naming the individual.

There was no "Old Business."

Unit Reports:

358th Squadron Representative, Walt Mayer, said that his unit discussed the museum at Savannah and the need to find new members for the 303rd. They also discussed the idea of a special tribute to the ground units. Eddie Deerfield suggested a special day at the next reunion might be considered and Mayer concurred.

359th Squadron Representative, Bill Eisenhart, said that their unit discussed the honoring of ground units, but said that it should be discussed at Pittsburgh. He said that individuals who found the greater number of members should be honored. He said that Don Torley had discovered the memorial plaque at the VA clinic in Boise. The sign at the entrance says, "The price of freedom is visible here." Bill said that he had enlisted the help of Major General Peck to help expand this idea and it is now being worked on in Florida. The idea for these memorial plaques was started by a young man in the Boy Scouts of America as he earned his Eagle Scout Merit Badge. This story will be mentioned in a future issue of our newsletter. There were kudos for our history book, "Might-in-Flight" and the possibility of a new printing.

360th Squadron Representative, Bill Heller, talked about the selling of marble plaques for the Museum in Savannah and urged their sale. He said that he would contact Harry Gobrecht on this matter. The unit discussed the honoring of the ground units and expressed no opinion except to say that we are one unit and know of no special needs. Many members told little adventure stories not generally known to the others. Bill said that they were very interesting. The members of the 360th Squadron unanimously agreed that Savannah in 1998 was their choice for a reunion if the

board so decided.

427th Squadron Representative, Vernon Stone, said that 45 members were in attendance and only four were ground personnel. The highlight of the meeting was to try to get more ground personnel to join and come to the reunions. Vern spent quite a bit of time on getting biographies of members for the historical record. He also introduced Dick Johnson as the new secretary to the 303rd, and mentioned that he was a 427th member. There were four Associates members at the 427th meeting and Vern reiterated that the Associates should have a vote on the board, in his view. The president noted that the Associates held a meeting and voted Charlie Sykes to be their spokesman. He will vote with the Board of Directors.

444th Support Unit spokesman, Mel McCoy was welcomed back from Saturday's angioplasty. Mel deferred the meeting to Carlton Smith who urged action on the questionnaires, especially from the ground crews. They didn't vote on a new representative and Mel agreed to continue that duty. Maurice Paulk will continue as associate.

Widow's Representative Joanna Tressler reported that the ladies should urge their children to join as Associate members even if they don't attend the reunions. One lady suggested that the wives and widows might team up as a single unit. After some discussion this idea was rejected and no action was taken.

Associate representative Charlie Sykes reported that 23 were in attendance and that only seven were at Boise, which is quite an improvement. There was quite a discussion about mission reports. He said that one set should be at Savannah as planned, and they agreed that one set should eventually be obtained, and retained by Associate members. One member said that in the future a special building could be built on his property to house that set of reports if need be. He suggested a "Locator Table" be set up at Pittsburgh and run by Associate members to help attendees find others at the reunion. He suggested that deposits might be made with an order for the "Might in Flight" book which could be reprinted in the minimum number at a given date, probably six months after the deposit. There are 238 members at this time which is 63 more than last year. Eventually the Associate membership will have to be separate from the regular membership for tax purposes. "We

look to you gentlemen for guidance."

At this point there was considerable discussion about the status of the mission reports at the Matthews home and the disposition of our copy machine. There was reluctance to move the reports at this time until further negotiations are made with the museum. It was emphasized that the reports must be negotiated in such a way that there is a clear understanding that they remain the property of the 303rd Bomb Group and that no charge will be made for our access. Harry Gobrecht said that there is no urgency to get the reports to the museum and that he is intrigued with the idea that the Associate members might acquire a set. At the moment, the museum does not have the staff to service the request for copies. Lew Lyle mentioned that there would always be some charge for copies regardless of where they were. Cost of paper, etc. It was generally agreed that the Heritage Museum was a proper repository for the reports and Bill Roche will continue with the negotiations. Bill also said that the research was the duty of the requestor and that the museum's only duty was to make them available and to safeguard them.

Dick Johnson mentioned that the original records are still available in the National Archives, but Lew said that it gives one a pain in the "nether regions" to get anything out of there, besides being expensive.

At this point there was a long discussion about our book, "Might in Flight." Harry Gobrecht said that he would talk to the Old Army Press about the possibility of a second edition and make a report to the board. There was then a lot of comment about updated copy; corrected copy; addendum correction, or a 2nd edition - "Might in Flight No. 2." Harry said that the big problem with a new edition is keeping track of records and that a lot of help would be needed - which he could find. "It's a tremendous amount of work."

Mel McCoy said that finding a list of ground crews is nearly impossible, and that the ones they do find cannot remember what plane they serviced or at which hard stand they worked. Lew Lyle said that he has looked all over for listings, and Maxwell Field is about the only place he could think of to find any more, except for the records center in St. Louis. Another problem was the age of most ground crew members who averaged five years older than air crews, and thus will be few-

er of them alive at this time.

Eddie Deerfield finally cut off debate on the book, saying that we had exhausted the subject and the final call will be Harry's responsibility. Harry said he would do it.

There was a brief discussion about Associate membership and that they should comprise two percent of the membership. (This has to do with our tax free status).

The president asked that committee chairmen continue in their present situations. He also mentioned that a change should be made in one committee and that another be created. Nominating committee chair, Malcom Magid, is retiring from that service, and Deerfield recommended that the four immediate past presidents assume that duty as a permanent, standing committee. The fourth would drop off each year as new Past Presidents take the chair. He asked for, and got a motion, and a second. It carried without further discussion. Bill Roche will be in contact with Ford Kelley to offer our encouragement for improvement in his health. Ford will be contacted by President Deerfield. (Unfortunately Ford Kelley died in October but at least he knew he was in our thoughts).

At this point there was a long discussion about data input, and it was voted to establish a computer database committee, with Eddie to name a chairman in the near future. The committee will have the sole responsibility to find suitable software and a practical way to input 303rd data. Malcolm will retire from the board, and started to leave the room as a joke. Eddie told him to sit down, that he could retire after the meeting.

Budget reports and requests. Hal Susskind needs a computer scanner to cut down his work load. It would cost at least \$500.00. His budget was increased to \$800.00 so that a better quality scanner could be purchased. It was decided that a color scanner would be bought. Awards budget was \$1,000 at Colorado Springs, but was reduced to \$350 at Walt Mayer's request. He found a cheaper source for plaques at Fairchild and can get them in two days at half the previous price. He would like them under the president's signature.

It was proposed that the PX budget be set at \$5,000. Carlton Smith said that he had all but 50 of the zip plus four for mailing out the newsletter. It will be necessary to have them all very soon in order to avoid postage penalties. Also, Carlton

says that Bar Code software will be needed soon, but no increase in his budget is needed at this time.

We need a new roster (directory) to incorporate changes and updates. The last directory was printed in 1995.

Ed Miller needs a software update for his computer directory so that he can find names and telephone numbers throughout the U.S. Cost is \$89.

Ed Gardner needs a color printer for reunion work. Cost \$350. This will be a separate entry under "computer equipment."

Eddie Deerfield proposed a major, new budget item to further advance one of his prime goals. This proposed \$5,000 budget, would be use exclusively in a well planned campaign to find and notify every person who ever served in the 303rd during its existence, and our desire to have them as members. Eddie asked for a motion and it was made and seconded to implement this new effort. The motion passed after a mention that some past members have no interest in joining the 303rd. Ed Miller suggested that material be sent to associates and widows in our search for new members. This project will be called "Member Search Campaign."

Ed Miller reported on the data base program and said that he believed that the program that we finally decide upon should represent the 303rd first, and then the 8th AF. There should be a separate room plus software. Once we approve a system, it will take at least a year to implement. We are unable to get input from Arlo Bartsch. Ed Miller suggested allocating \$1,000 for this program

Bill Roche said that all our accounts are in interest bearing instruments that are protected by the FDIC. The funds left over from Colorado Springs is in a checking account drawing two percent interest. This account and excess funds from San Francisco will be closed out at Pittsburgh and turned over to the treasurer. Liability premiums of \$1725.00 per year are up to date and will be continued in effect. CDs were allowed to mature and roll over in order to avoid a penalty. They will be adjusted for better rates at a later date.

The by-laws require a four year advance choice for reunion sites, and Carlton said that the most members are in California, with Texas second, and Florida third. There was considerable discussion on this point. Pittsburgh has been nailed down for 1997 and Savannah

in 1998. There were six votes for Texas in 1999 and four for Albuquerque, NM. It was decided that somewhere in Texas would be the site for the 1999 convention.

Under new business, Harry showed the lithograph by Keith Hill who wants to send it to every 303rd member. Postage will amount to \$5,000.00 and half is not yet acquired. The board approved an expenditure of \$2,500 for these mailings. Brian McGuire will find if there is a cheaper system. Harry also mentioned Bill Adams' carvings and asked for a motion to make him an honorary member. A letter to notify him will be sent.

There was a discussion about travel agents and memorial plaques at Molesworth with a short history of the 303rd. It was suggested that the plaque be set up at the site of our old control tower, but Dick said that this area was not accessible to the public. There was no final decision on this point.

Ed Miller discussed a mini-tour of Molesworth. Duxford's opening in 1997 would be our last chance for a mini-reunion where the 303rd could be featured. There should be some competitive bidding on any UK tour. Will a UK tour reduce the Pittsburgh attendance? Eddie Deerfield will ask travel agents for bids on a tour and report back.

Lew Lyle gave a report on video production to be used for promotional uses at the museum. Also in the next 6 or 8 months we need to be at the break even point in financial arrangements at the museum. They have reduced salaries and operating expenses. The 303rd Board of Directors will discuss a \$25,000 donation at the Pittsburgh reunion in 1997.

Chappie Slawson is in poor health and calls to him will be appreciated. His phone number is (210) 433-5655.

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted
Richard R. Johnson,
Secretary

FLASH

Lt. R. M. Wertz's crew has recently been authorized to wear the DFC for heroic action on the Feb. 16, 1945 mission. The award of the decoration was made possible because of positive action taken by E. J. Giering who secured all the necessary documentation and forwarded it through military channels. This is positive proof that earned decorations can be secured, even 50 years later. Details

DONATIONS/MEMORIALS

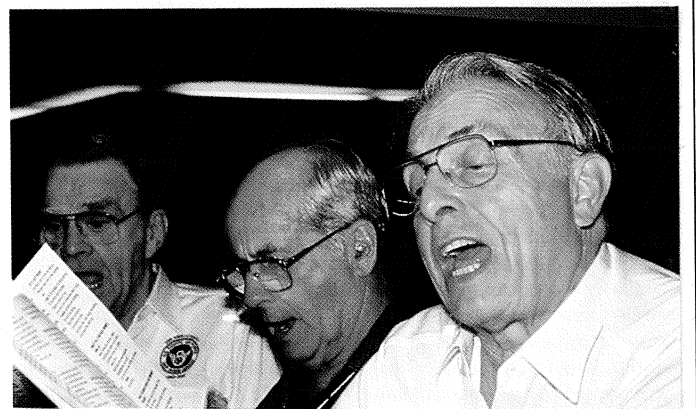
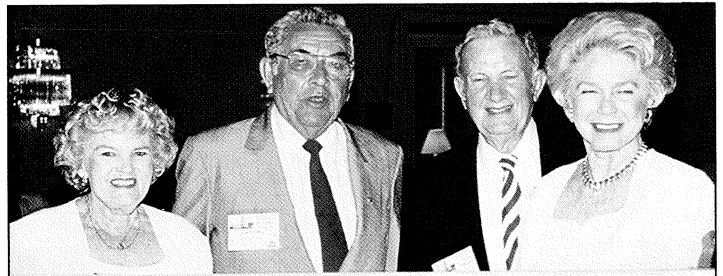
- Anonymous Memorial to John P. D. Nothstein (358)
- L:1530 James E. Aberdeen (358)
Widow Mrs Adeline Czarny Adams (427)
L614 Sibley M Andriessen (427)
L1245 Clifford O. Bachman (360)
Widow Mrs Doris M. Balkcom (358) -Memorial to Robert E. Balkcom
L615 Walter D. Beckwith (358)
A-125 Robert C. Bejna
L487 Joel A. Berly, Jr. (360)
L844 Robert F. Bishop (359)
L544 Robert W. Blythe, Jr. (360)
L1687 Robert C. Bogert (unk)
L658 Arthur J. Brown (359)
Widow Mrs Dorothy W. Brown (427) Memorial to Howard T. Brown
L298 Marvin W. Brown (358)
Widow Mrs Clara C. Butler (427) Memorial to Harold E. Butler
L497 Thelbert W. Butler (359)
L335 Robert C. Campbell (427)
L1564 Milbury C. Charlton (427)
L1901 Paul E. Chennault (unk) Donation to 8th AFHM
Widow Mrs Geraldine F. Chiles (427) Memorial to Al Chiles
H-03 Ray Cossey
Widow Mrs Eva Cozzo (360) Memorial to Lawrence Cozzo
L1304 Jack R. Craven (HDQ) - Two
L356 William C. Crawford (360) Donation to 8th AFHM
S178 Charles A. Dando (359) Memorial to Robert C. Rich
A-173 Leone Best Deckard
S1622 Eddie Deerfield (360) Memorial to Scott Deerfield
1989 Richard D. Dimick (unk)
L1271 Charles R. Doback, Sr. (358) Memorial to William Hembree
L1476 Frank Doherty
S015 Lee E. Dolan, Jr. (358) Two donations and a Memorial to J. Ford Kelley
L1986 Steve Dulick (359)
S993 Carl DuBose (427) Memorial to J. Ford Kelley
Widow Mrs Marjorie Dyer (360) Memorial to Norman L. Leach
S561 Philip D. Eisenwinter (427)
L1491 Raymond A. Espinoza (444) Donation and Memorial to Henry W. Kendall (358)
L942 Stewart W. Felkner (359)
L1772 William H. Ferguson (unk)
Widow Mrs Dorothy Friedland (427) Memorial to Lawrence Friedland
1104 Edward W. Gardner, Jr. (427)
1095 Billy A. Gaumer (359) Donation and Memorial to Lou Redhage.
S639 Harry D. Gobrecht (358) - Five
892 Lloyd E. Goff (360)
1766 Dick Green (358) Memorial to Robert Balkcom
L909 Bernard Greenberg (358)
L717 Charles R. Grice (427)
A-255 Mary Lou Gunson
L023 Lester C. Hansen (359)
L640 Maurice M. Hassett (358)
L1352 Charles L. Herman (427) Memorial to Eddie Brouard
1848 Kenneth G. Hilderbrand (358) Memorial to Claude Shaw
S1882 Raymond E. Hills (unk sqdn)
L1624 Robert E. Hoke (359) Memorials to "Stew" and John
Widow Rose Howlett (359) Memorial to Oscar Howlett
L480 Quentin Howard (359)
666 Melvin Howell (427) - Donation to 8th AFHM
Widow Mrs Jean Hullar (427) Memorial to Robert J. Hullar
Widow Mrs Rosa Jacobs (359) Memorial to Michael T Jacobs
1278 Wilfred B. Johnson (360) Donation to 8th AFHM
L792 Donald M. Johnson (360) - Three
L982 James D. Kelley (427)
LA-231 Virginia Kelley - Memorial to J. Ford Kelley
L-234 William M. Kelley and the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, Facilities Management Dept., Chapel Hill, NC - Memorial to J. Ford Kelley.
L1544 Horace S. Kenney, Jr., (427) Memorial to Morris Dimowitz
L1749 Charles E. Kerwin (427)

DONATIONS/MEMORIALS

Widow Mrs Sarah Kindig (427) - Memorial to Paul Kindig
 127 Monroe Klein (427) - Memorial to Albert C. Steele
 257 Russell A Knudson (360) - Donation to 8thAFHM
 11763 John R. Kosilla (358)
 Widow Mrs Tele Ladd (427) - Memorial to John M. Ladd
 L1869 William A Latshaw (358) - Donations to 303rd BGA and 8th AFHM
 L1953 Robert E. Lyda (427)
 L073 Charles O. Mainwaring (359)
 A-243 Maryan Malone
 L630 Robert S. McCall (427)
 L926 Jesse McLaughlin (427)
 S255 William S. McLeod (358) - Memorial to J. Ford Kelley
 Widow Mrs Alice E. Meyer (359) - Memorial to Fulton R. Meyer
 S681 Campbell Miller (358)
 L1401 Joseph R. Monyok (427)
 S1868 Joseph A. Murphy (358)
 L534 Harry E. Nale (427)
 S316 James W. O'Leary Sr., (427) - Two donations and Memorial to
 Stonewall Jackson Riley
 1328 Howard F. O'Neal (359)
 588 Thomas I. Peacock (360)
 L700 Rene G. Pilon (41)
 L1725 David W. Plewes (359)
 Widow Mrs Glenna E. Prussman (359) - Memorial to Henry Prussman
 Widow Mrs Margo Rahn (359) Memorial to Lehman Rahn
 Widow Mrs Martha Redhage (359) Memorial to Louis H. Redhage
 716 George K. Richter (427)
 L809 Milton S. Riley (359/360)
 Widow Mrs Norma Russell (444) - Donation to 8th AFHM; Memorials
 to Edwin C. Russell and John Casello
 Widow Mrs Nancy Ryan (359) - Memorial to Frank Ryan
 1657 Anthony J. Sacco (359)
 L570 Coleman Sanders (359)
 Widow Mrs Eileen E. Schmidt (427) - Memorial to Elmer J. Schmidt
 LA-41 Alberta Shephard - Two
 L1001 Orvis K. Silrum (427)
 S1147 Carlton M. Smith (HDQ)
 1865 Charles W. Smith (427) - Donation to 8th AFHM
 1632 Richard N., Snyder (360) Donation to 8th AFHM
 L1623 Thomas H. Struck (444)
 L1971 Raymond Tartaglia (unk)
 Widow Mrs Phyllis I. Vastine (359) - Donations to 303rd BGA & 8th
 AFHM: Memorial to Robert E. Vastine
 LA-202 Sylvia M. Vinyard
 S1092 Robert E. Wherry (360) Donations to 303rd BGA & 8th AFHM
 L1685 Paul J. Winkleman (427) - Donations and Memorials to Al Tom-
 linson and Al Steele
 L1876 C. Ramsay Younglove (360)
 L1790 Michael L. Zarelli (358)
 L1743 Kenneth T. Zetlmaier (427) - Donation to 8th AFHM



REUNION MEMORIES



Flying with the Hell's Angels

(continued from page 7)

we were not flying up-side down. Formation flying in thick, dark clouds is exciting, to say the least.

One of the sweetest times would occur when, after a difficult mission, we would fly in formation right on top of a thick deck of white, fluffy clouds. You get a feeling of exhilaration and speed at this time and 150 miles per hour feels like several hundred. When we finally dove through we never knew whether we would land in fog or rain. There was no landing system then, just some young ladies with radios placed ten miles apart to tell you which heading to take. I never could break through their Limey brogue to determine what they were saying.

We had excitement, unrelated to combat, that was humorous at times in spite of danger. Once in returning home over the North Sea and as the group was letting down on the way back to Molesworth, I started to "clear" my engines at a very low altitude. There was no power in the engines which I thought were idling. There was little time to lose, but fortunately we were in gliding distance to an emergency strip on the English coast. As we went through the landing check list as we coasted dead stick about 100 feet above the sand, I called for "automatic rich" and immediately No. 1 began to purr. The light came on in my head as we buzzed the strip with all four engines at full power. The co-pilot had failed to feel the little click which tells you the mixture is in "automatic lean" and had accidentally turned the engines off.

Munich (we went there twice in succession) was always a maximum effort insofar as gasoline consumption was concerned. It also involved a temptation -- Switzerland. I had to listen to at least a half-dozen good natured reasons why we should divert to the small neutral nation, but we continued over the Alps back to Molesworth. Then the real fun began. We lost power on one engine due to lack of fuel and I requested permission to land on the short runway. They had to tow us in - out of gas. After it was all over I realized that, at times these missions would be exciting all the way in.

Soon after arrival, since we were a new crew, I was assigned a tired old clunker F-model, with the old style superchargers. At altitude over Holland I realized that we could not control the engines -- the things would run away with the slightest adjustment. An admonition



(front row l to r) Carl DuBose, Lou Droll, Leo Laverty. (Back row l to r) Danny Balint, Jesse Jones, Bob Kidd, Don Kollmar and Barney Watson. Taken at debriefing room immediately after last mission. Note Watson had someone's scotch.

from the group leader for me to get in closer convinced me to abort - something I didn't want to do and never did again. After a beautiful landing with full gas and bomb load, the CO came out to the plane and admonished me for endangering the base by landing with a full bomb load. He was right, of course, but my momentary pride in the perfect landing was smashed.

We had one of the best bombardiers in the group, Paul Sandhagen, who had a top record in phase training and was targeted for lead. We took a "G" ship (radar) up for some practice bombing. On return, the co-pilot wanted to practice a landing, which I agreed to. As we were taxiing, I looked over to our right wing and realized that we would not clear an English worker's bus parked almost on the strip. Both of us hit the brakes at the same instant. Since the plane was very nose heavy from all the special equipment, it stood on its nose and smashed some very valuable equipment. It was my first and last experience of standing a Fortress on its nose with brakes. In the conference which ensued, I opened my mouth to say something, but you can imagine how far that would have gotten me. So, back to the "Tail End Charley."

We flew on 15 consecutive days. The weather was good and the Eighth AF was getting after it. There were times when I was dog-tired, but I always looked forward to the excitement of the next mission.

I never knew what Col. Lyle, Captain Sheets, or Col Stevens thought of me, but I knew that I was a good pilot, could fly good formation, and reacted well in emergen-

cies. When I was in error, I expected and usually received an admonition, but there was one occasion when I feared the worst, but not a word was said. About noon on an overcast day we were called out of the tea shop, airmen's barracks and club, to fly a mission. I do not recall a briefing, but was handed a sheet of paper which showed me leading a flight of six planes joining up with the neighboring 379th Group. I suppose the navigator and bombardier knew where we were going, but I didn't. It was hard to assemble a full crew and the ground crew was busy loading fuel, bombs and ammo, but we made the start engines flare by a few minutes. After climbing through a thick cloud deck, I began to circle, but was unable to locate the lead plane. We circled in ever-widening circles, but still no other planes or flares except our little group of six. I made a "command decision," we would proceed to the coast with our attached flight of planes and catch up with the rest of the formation, who surely must be ahead at this time. At the French coast, no one was in sight. Another decision, I must do something to get these people credit for a mission, so I requested bombardier Sandhagen to pick out a target. At this time he notified me that he had no bomb-sight. Remembering phase training, he said he could bomb "off his big toe" if we descended below 15,000 feet. We did and he clobbered the place, which was a German airfield in Northern France. At this time I was informed by the tail gunner, Barney Watson, that the entire 8th Air Force was behind us. The debriefing was the shortest ever after a mission and no one said anything.

You might say that this was the one time I led the Mighty Eighth on a mission.

Events seemed perilous at times, but after it was all over they became humorous. We approached the I.P. over Leipzig one clear day with the enemy fighters in the air when a jug blew on No. 1 engine. We could not feather soon enough, consequently we were stuck with a blazing engine with a windmilling prop which was throwing pieces of metal at me. The co-pilot felt we should leave the ship, but I decided to wait out the fire and try to limp on home. After the fire blew out, the prop continued to whirl which slowed us down, making it difficult to maintain altitude. I decided against trying to throw off the prop since it might damage the plane and I was right next to it. At 15,000 feet I asked Paul to find a target--we were going to get credit for this one. After bombing something, probably insignificant, we began the long perilous journey home alone below 15,000 feet and traveling slow. Suddenly, in what seemed to be open country, the entire sky turned black and the plane began to lurch from near misses. I had never seen flak so accurate and intense. You can't do much evasive action with a large airplane like the Fortress, but we turned it almost straight up on its wing and turned. Unbelievably, we flew into the clear. We felt relieved when, after landing and slowing down on the runway the errant propeller sped across the runway ahead of us. At de-briefing there was only one admonition to the crew and that was because when I asked the crew to lighten the load so that we would have fuel to get home they threw out everything, including their A-2 jackets.

There were some relaxing times and entertainment on the station. One group party that I can remember--the parachutes hanging from the ceiling of the hangar, the band, the open bar along with the imported females all combined to make for a wonderful time. The total population on Molesworth Station increased for a time--several days. By far the best party ever, was the one on me at the crew tent after our 35th. Our crew chief, Jimmy Stewart, had more wonderful food, including more meat and kegs of beer, than I had seen anywhere in England. Jimmy and his crew were top notch and I always knew "Jigger Rooche" was ready to fly. This

Flying with the Hell's Angels

(continued from page 12)

wonderful gentleman had been in Molesworth long enough to know the ropes and could get whatever we needed.

I still remember the week-end passes to London and Leeds. While experimenting with the wonderful acoustics of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, we looked out the window and saw a "Buzz-Bomb" flying directly at us at our height. It exploded a few blocks away. It never occurred to us to be afraid.

There was talk about this time of doing away with the "flak leaves," but we convinced the flight surgeon that we were indeed "flak happy" and sorely needed the rest. A wonderful week in Scotland resulted in a rejuvenated crew.

Some of the happiest times for us occurred when we would ride our bicycles through the English countryside. Each small village we rode through seemed to be more interesting than the last. Of course we were hoping to "discover" some English girls, but always had to settle for some warm beer at a quaint pub and maybe eat some fish and chips.

I flew my 35th mission on October 26, 1944, an eight hour haul to Munster, Germany. Although Don Kollmar, radio operator, was the only crew member to fly all thirty five with me, all the rest only missed one or two. Those who finished the day before and were "sweating us out" were Lou Droll, co-pilot; Leo Lavery navigator; and Barney Watson, tail gunner. Bob Kidd, ball-turret; Danny Balint, waist gunner; and Jesse Jones, engineer flew with us to Munster but had one or two to go. Paul Sandhagen, who was selected to fly lead bombardier, and had spent some time in Paris soon after we took over the city, was blown out of the nose of an aircraft soon after we left for home. He was several years older than the rest of us and was a wonderful friend as well as a top-notch bombardier. He is now buried in Europe.

We had sober moments when other crews we knew failed to come home, especially when the staff cleared out the officer's quarters next to ours one night after a mission. Especially traumatic was the time we witnessed the pilot and co-pilot of an adjoining plane trying desperately to escape a burning cockpit through the side windows. The trauma of these and other events will be with us always, but there were times when we actually enjoyed our tour with the 303rd. →

French plan future commemorations

Here's an account of the ceremonies which took place at Edern and Le Cloître-Pleyben, Finistère on Sunday, May 19, 1996 to pay tribute to Lt. Harry Robey, pilot of B-17 "Susfu" (427BS) who was killed on the Lorient mission of January 23, 1943. Harry Robey's daughter, Mrs Carolyn Van Stralen attended this commemoration, it was a most memorable day for her as you can imagine. Carolyn was born in June 1943, five months after her father had been murdered by a German pilot after he had bailed out from his burning plane.

Carolyn, my partner on the researches, Claude Helias, and I first went to Edern, the village where "Susfu" came down, to visit the crash site. We were met at the village by the Mayor Mr. Andre Angot and members of the local council for a small reception. "We are honored to welcome you in Edern," the Mayor said. "Your visit reminds us that fifty years ago young soldiers came from America to liberate us." We then walked to the local church to show Carolyn the place where bombardier Roy Moser's grave stood during the war. It was always well attended until Roy Moser's remains were taken to the U.S. Military Cemetery St. James, for reburial after World War II. At the crash site Carolyn was presented with bits and pieces from her father's Fort which I recently dug up (I have sent some to Charles Grice and Sebastian Vogel.) I have recovered small pieces from "Susfu" on each of my visits at the crash site.

We then drove to Le Cloître-Pleyben where a crowd of local people were waiting for us in front of the village hall. They all showed the greatest respect and sympathy to Carolyn. The Mayor Mr. Jean Salaun welcomed Carolyn with a wreath of flowers. In the crowded council room of the village hall decorated with a large Stars and Stripes, Mr. Salaun made a speech. He said that Harry Robey died for the freedom of France. He also outlined the bravery of the local people who risked their lives and the lives of their families to help the surviving members of the Robey crew (see *Hell's Angels Newsletter* of August 1944)

Translations were made for Carolyn by Mr. Gordon Carter, DFC and Bar, an RAF veteran who has retired in Brittany. The second part of the ceremony took place in the



Mayor Jean Salaun(2nd from Left) welcomes Carolyn Van Stralen to village hall at Le Cloître-Pleyben. Mr. Salaun said that her father Lt. Harry Robeydied for the freedom of France. He also outlined the bravery of the local people for helping the surviving members of the crew...

field where Harry Robey was found dead. A wreath of flowers with the words "in memory of Harry Robey" on a ribbon was laid by Carolyn and the mayor. This was followed by a minute of silence, it was a touching and poignant ceremony. Back at the village hall, a wine reception took place and gifts were presented to Carolyn by the mayor. A picture of the Robey crew and relics recovered from the crash site were on display.

More commemorations in honor of the Robey crew may take place at Le Cloître-Pleyben in the future. The mayor told me he is interested in an exhibition on the Lorient mission of January 23, 1943 and the Robey crew. Also my partner and I will try to have a monument or a memorial plaque erected there.

On the Robey crew, I don't know exactly what happened to waist gunner Sgt. T. H. Morrison. In the "Might in Flight" he is listed as captured (p.126) but he didn't land near LeCloître-Pleyben like Grice, Hannon, Levering, Hummel, Sulkofski, Vogel and McDermott. I suspect he bailed out before the rest of the crew but I don't know where he landed or how he was captured. I would like to get in contact with him if he is alive to have his story of the January 23, mission. If someone knows where he lives now or has a picture of him, please contact me.

I have another query concerning an anecdote from the book "Target Germany" which was published in

1943. The story is as follows: "When some misguided compay at home put out an advertisement showing an inane-looking bomber pilot grinning cheerfully and demanding, "Who's afraid of the new-Focke Wulff?" somebody pinned it on the bulletin board with the laconic note underneath, "sign here" the note said. Every combat officer in the Group signed; the Group Commander's name led all the rest. I would like to know at which Eighth Air Force Station this story took place and who got the idea to pin that ad with a "sign here" note on the bulletin board. Did it happen at Molesworth?

I would be most grateful if you could publish these two requests for help with my address and the account of the May 19 ceremonies in the next issue of your newsletter.

Francois Cadic
President
Conservatoire Aeronautique
de Cornouaille
54 Rue Louis Pasteur
29100 Douarnenez
France

Ed. Note: Francois would be interested in getting photos and information on the B-17 Susfu." His Association is doing research on the allied airmen shot down over Brittany during WW II. His project includes getting information on the missions and targets. He and his partner, Claude Helias have been working on this project since 1989.

USAF WORLD WAR II INFORMATION SOURCES

LOCATING LOST MILITARY PERSONNEL

Place your inquiry letter in a stamped sealed envelope with no return address. Place the name rank & serial number of the person you are seeking on the inner envelope. Place the sealed envelope into another envelope addressed to one of the following agencies. They will place their last known address on your sealed envelope and forward it to the individual you are seeking or return it to you if the individual is deceased.

NOTE: The privacy Act of 1974 prohibits the release of the home address to the seeker.

1. **LIFE INSURANCE DIVISION DEPT. OF VETERANS ADMINISTRATION (VAROIC)**

P.O. Box 8079, Philadelphia, PA 19101

Telephone: 1-800-669-8477

(Will forward your letter to the last known address of those who maintained their VA GI Life Insurance policy or advise you if the person has died.)

2. **HQ AFMPC WORLDWIDE LOCATOR - USAAF RETIREES**

HQ AFPC/RMIQL, 550 C St. West Ste 50,
Randolph Field, TX 78150-4752

(Will forward your letter to a living person who retired from the U.S. Air Force with retired pay)

REPLACING LOST MILITARY PERSONNEL & MEDICAL DOCUMENTS

National Personnel Records Center (NPRC)

NPRC/NCPMF-C

9700 Page Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63152-5100

Telephone: (314) 263-3901

Telephone or write the NPRC for standard Form 180 that will be mailed to you. Required are your rank or grade, name, serial number and dates of military service. A small fee may be charged.

NOTE: Some 1912-1964 record were destroyed in a in a 1973 but some duplicate records were recently found.

REPLACEMENT OF LOST OR DESTROYED MILITARY DECORATIONS AND/OR MEDALS

National Personnel Record Center (NPRC)

9700 Page Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

Telephone: (314) 263-3901

Will replace your lost military awards and or decorations and verify those that you might not have received. Submit your request on Standard Form 180 available from the NPRC

USAAF WWII FLIGHT RECORDS AND AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORTS

Department of the Air Force

Headquarters Air Force Safety Agency (IMB)

9700 Avenue G, Suite 236, Building 24499

Kirtland AFB, NM 87117-5671

Telephone: (505) 846-1174

NOTE: Records transferred from Norton AFB, CA during August 1993

BURIAL INFORMATION - INDIVIDUALS

KILLED IN ACTION DURING WORLD WAR II

The American Battle Monuments Commission

Casimir Pilaska Bldg., 20 Massachussets Ave., N.W.

Washington, DC 20324-0300

Telephone: (202) 761-0533

MISSING AIR CREW REPORTS (MACR'S)

ESCAPE & EVASION REPORTS (E&ER'S)

INTERNEE REPORTS (IR'S)

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster

General (Record Groups - MACR 92, E&ER 332, IR 332X)

Textual Records Branch (NNR2)

National Archives at College Park

8601 Adelphia Road, College Park, MD 20740-6001

Telephone: (301) 713-7250

MACR's, E&ER's & IR's are arranged by their assigned number with an alphabetical name index. Furnish, if known, the MACR, E&ER or IR number, individual name and serial number. For a small fee you will be mailed the MACR. E&E or IR report which includes the name of the lost crewmen, crew positions, aircraft serial number and known details of the aircraft loss. Report is issued on Microfiche only. Microfiche readers are available at many libraries.

USAAF WWII HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The following locations can furnish Group or Squadron information, histories and other data:

1. **ALBERT F. SIMPSON HISTORICAL RESEARCH CENTER**

United States Air Force, Maxwell AFB, AL 36112

Telephone: (205) 953-5723

(Maintain data on unit histories, awards, heraldry) Have 16mm Microfilm rolls on Groups & Squadrons that can be obtained by mail for a fee. Have many original documents, photos, etc. that can be reviewed and photographed on a light stand with your camera while you are visiting this facility.

2. **NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS**

Suitland Reference Branch (NNRR)

Washington National Records Center

4205 Suitland Road, Suitland, MD 20409

Telephone: (301) 457-7191

Must visit in person. No mail requests. Have Group and 8thAF Mission Reports and other information that can be copied for 25 cents per page on their machine. Allow time for delays.

PHOTOGRAPH SOURCES (By appointment)

Aircraft, crew, individual, event, etc. photos

USAF Museum, Research Division, Wright

Patterson AFB, OH 35433-6518.

Tel: (513) 255-3284.

National Air & Space Museum Library,

Washington, DC 20560. Tel: (202) 357-3133

USAF Historical Research Center, HQ

AFHRA/ISR, 600 Chenault Circle, Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6424 Tel: (205) 953-8834

Mighty 8thAF Heritage Museum, P.O. Box 1992 Savannah, GA 31402 Tel: 1-800-421-9428

Imperial War Museum, Lambreth Road, London, SE1 6HZ, UK. Tel from USA 011-44-1735-8922

Pittsburgh: an ideal place for the '97 reunion

(continued from page 20)

Therefore -- if we liked it --why not Pittsburgh?

In the fall of 1987, we came, we saw, we liked and, the following summer, we moved here.

The 303rd reunion hotel, the Westin William Penn, is located in the Golden Triangle, that part of downtown bounded by Grant Street (where the hotel is) and the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers.

A five day visit, studded with reunion activities, doesn't leave much time for sightseeing. Fortunately, it's easy to get around the downtown area where many of Pittsburgh's attractions are centered. Some are within easy walking distance. Others can be reached by using excellent public transportation that includes PAT buses, a light rail transit system known simply as the T and the Monongahela and Duquesne Inclines. During non-rush hours and weekends by showing your Medicare card, you can ride free.

For the big picture, begin by taking the Monongahela Incline to the top of Mt. Washington. You'll not only find the view breathtaking, but seeing the city from this vantage point will help orient you for other downtown excursions.

To get there, go to Steel Plaza T Station across Grant Street from the hotel. Take the T to Station Square, the next stop. Then, walk about 100 yards on the same side of the street to the incline station.

There are a number of good restaurants atop Mt. Washington. Some are pricey, so you might want to look at the menu first. If you feel ambitious, walk along Grandview Avenue, about a mile, to the Duquesne Incline where you can get a different panoramic view from the observation deck. Nearby is the reasonably priced Georgetowne Inn. Pasquarelli's, next to the Tin Angel, has excellent food at decent prices.

You can descend on the Duquesne Incline although back tracking to the Monongahela Incline is an easier return to the Station Square.

The Grand Concourse is an elegant restaurant at Station Square. Located in a former train depot, its barrel ceiling and majestic staircase are worth your look even if you don't eat there.

Station Square has a wide variety of eating places and shops in the two converted railroad warehouses

it occupies. The Gateway Clipper fleet of river boats docks close by.

Point State Park, where Pittsburgh's modern history began, is worth a visit. It's a 20 minute walk from the hotel. Or you can take the T from Steel Plaza to Gateway Center, the second stop, just a few blocks from the park.

In the mid-1700s, the French and British vied for the strategic point at the confluence of the three rivers because it controlled access to the Ohio Valley. The French built Fort Duquesne there, which they burned and fled in 1758 before 6,000 advancing British Troops. The Brits then built Fort Pitt on the site although nothing of the structure remains today. Pittsburgh was founded that same year and named after the British statesman William Pitt. For more historical information, visit Fort Pitt Museum and Blockhouse.

Leaving the museum, walk through Point State Park to the Monongahela, one of America's few north-flowing rivers, and stroll beside the river to the Point and its fountain. Here begins the Ohio River.

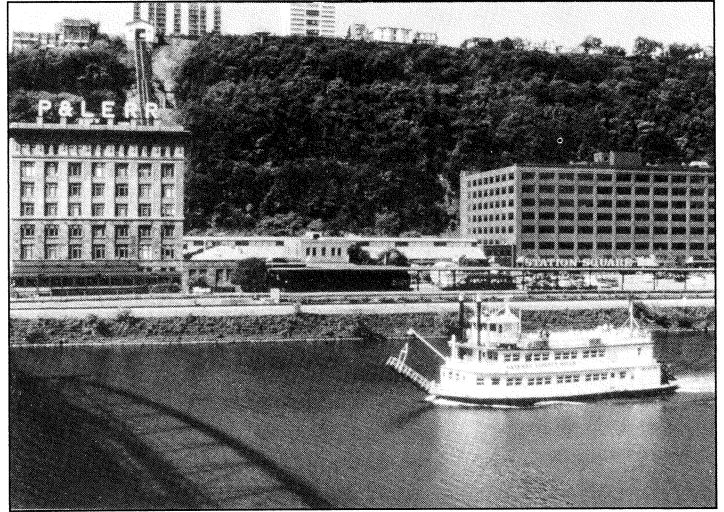
Locate a lost friend and bring him to the reunion

Turn right and you're walking along the Allegheny River. Across the river, you'll see the Carnegie Science Center and the World War II submarine, the USS Requin, to the left of Three Rivers Stadium, home of the Steelers and the Pirates. Just before coming to Fort Duquesne Bridge, turn right to head back to your starting point.

To get to these or other northside points of interest, take a bus or walk across the 6th or 7th Street bridges. There you will find Roberto Clemente Park; the National Aviary; the seven story Andy Warhol Museum, largest single-artist museum in the nation; Penn Brewery and Restaurant, and more..

About one mile east of the Westin William Penn is the Strip District, Pittsburgh's wholesale/retail center. Here, you will find blocks of fruit and vegetable stands, sidewalk food vendors, coffee houses, cafes and specialty shops that attract crowds daily (except Sunday).

Between the Strip District and the hotel is the Pittsburgh Regional History Center, which opened last spring in a six-story converted ice-house on Smallman Street. Exhibits



RIVERBOAT CRUISE SET FOR PITTSBURGH REUNION - One of the highlights of the reunion will be a luncheon cruise on Pittsburgh's three rivers, with a great "Showboat Revue" to entertain members. Pictured on the far side of the river is the city's historic Station Square, just a few minutes from the Westin William Penn.

describe Pittsburgh's development from the 1750s to the present. This comprehensive museum is so well done it won't let go of you, so allow at least two hours.

These downtown attractions are just some of the many Pittsburgh has to offer. Other areas you might want to visit include Oakland, a four-mile bus ride from downtown. Located here are the Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History; the University of Pittsburgh's 42-story Cathedral of Learning with its 21 Nationality Rooms, classrooms open to the public that are decorated to reflect the culture and customs of the countries they represent; Carnegie Mellon University; and Phipps Conservatory, featuring a splendid arboretum and seasonal

flower shows.

A little farther east in Point Breeze, also accessible by bus, is the Frick Art and Historical Center. It consists of: Clayton, the Victorian mansion of steel and coke tycoon Henry Clay Frick, which has conducted tours daily except Monday; the Frick Art Museum; and a recently remodeled Carriage Museum.

There's something for everyone in this diverse city, as the movie industry discovered long ago. More than 100 feature films and TV movies have been shot here, including such hits as "The Silence of the Lambs, Lorenzo's Oil and Bob Roberts."

"See you at the reunion."



William McLeod 303rd BGA (l) pounds in stake marking the location of the Molesworth flight tower, assisted by JAC's CPO D. Manning

My most unusual 303rd experience

Washington's birthday was no holiday!

Our flying position in the formation for the 22 February 1944 mission to Aschersleben, was tail-end Charlie. We had a bombbay full of propaganda leaflets and not bombs.

Enroute to the target we were hit with flak and fighters. We lost an engine and could not keep up with the formation. We dropped our load over Germany and tried to return home.

On the way back an Me-109 picked us up over The Netherlands and put a 20mm. in the waist. Some of the crew were wounded and two men bailed out. The rest of us crash landed near Utrecht. Bob Hannon, the radio operator, and I walked for days before we were able to get help and were able to make contact with the underground. Some of the many places I recall staying at were Magen, Breda, Oss, Erp, Heerlin and Liege. Some of the people we stayed with were Thea, Hara, Gerard, Antoinette Otten, Nicholas and Francois Semoine, Joe Smit and G. Sanges.

Joseph DeLuca (360th) Bomb. (Lt. Crook's crew)

Ed. Note: The 111th mission of the 303rd was quite diversified as well as being unusual and interesting. Harry Gobrecht in his book "Might in Flight" devoted 7 pages to this mission and did an excellent job in covering all aspects of it. We lost five aircraft, one to a mid air collision between "Hell's Angels II" and a 384th aircraft; Sgt. D.I. Miller was the lone survivor of the 303rd B-17. Four aircraft were lost to enemy fighters. Of the 41 crewmen: 18 were KIA, 17 became POWs and 6 evaded capture and returned to England some as much as eight months later. Two members of Lt. Crook's crew, Sgts. Breintebach and Hensely evaded capture for four months working with the Dutch Underground, before being captured at Liege, Belgium on June 24th.

The mission on 22 February was part of "Big Week, 20 -25 February" operations in which the 303rd flew to such targets as Leipzig, Diepholz, Aschersleben, Schwein-

furt and Stuttgart. S/Sgt. William T. Werner, Tail gunner on Lt. Estes' crew was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for heroic actions on the Aschersleben mission. I was fortunate enough to fly on four of the five missions. that week. as a navigator on Lt. Stoullil's crew. The mission to Aschersleben was my 13th.

Shanghaied to the 305th

Being assigned to lead crew (Lt. Charles E. Johnson crew) every member of our 427th crew was re-stationed to the 305th Bomb Group at Chelveston, England, where we would get an early morning wakeup to fly to Molesworth for briefing and then lead the 303rd on missions. Being called for a special night leaflet raid on July 20, 1944, the day of the assassination on Hitler, we were told we had 50 fighter aircraft for support for our three B-17s.

Records back up this odd mission because one P-51 was lost that night. Weather conditions were very poor. I flew tail position and could hardly see our two wingmen because of rain and fog. It was a most memorable mission.

Flying two raids on D-Day and seeing the invasion fleet from the air. The 303rd had a perfect hit on a railroad bridge near the beachhead.

Aircraft flown: "Flying Bison," "Miss Lace" and "Rosie O'Grady." I also took part in "operation Grapefruit" GB-1, glide bomb raid.

Note: Due to relocation to the 305th, it appears my serving records may have been transferred there. The 303rd "Might-in-Flight" has no record of me in it. But does list other members of my crew. Any help in tracing my records would be helpful. I have contacted the 305th Historical Association but no reply as yet.

Alfred Hollritt (427) Gunner

Ed. Note: Your story sounds very familiar and I empathize with you. Soon after our 17th mission to Lechfeld, on March 18, 1944 our crew was informed that since we had lead crew potential we were being sent to a newly organized PFF squadron pool with the 305th

Bomb Group based at Chelveston. In the wee hours of April 18 after a month of training, we were alerted to lead the 303rd Bomb Group on a mission to Oranienburg deep in Germany. We arrived at Molesworth with our radar equipped aircraft to lead on the mission but we were informed that we weren't qualified to lead. but with an insertion of personnel from the 303rd we flew the mission. On May 24 we flew as deputy lead to the commander of the 384th Bomb Group. on a mission to Oberpfaffenhofen. We got the hell shot out of us and the personnel 384th Group were awarded the Presidential Unit Citation. Our crew got zilch. On May 8, we led some outfit to Berlin; on May 13 we led the 379th to Stettin; on May 19 we led someone to Berlin and on May we went back to Berlin leading someone else. None of these are mentioned in the "Might-in-Flight book. I have an official record for my first 17 missions. I got nothing official for the next 24. So much for the record keeping of the 303rd, especially the 359th Squadron. Now you know why I said I empathize with you. But the name of the game in 1942-45 was to win the war and that is what we did.

Now is the time for us to set the records straight... I'd advise you to write for your flying records (Form 5s). The flying time you spent on missions will be marked with a C. For those wishing to check on their accomplishments during the war, a page showing all the places you can write to, to get various records, is carried in this issue.

In the control tower

I was assigned to the 303rd in September '43 as a Flying Control Officer having arrived in England a year earlier with an Observation-Photo Reconnaissance Squadron. After requisite training at an RAF School and on an RAF airfield in Flying Control procedures, I was commissioned and certified as a Flying Control Officer. My stay at Molesworth was for approximately a year when I was reassigned to 1st Division Headquarters to help in

Flying Control at Division level. Compared to combat crews who were putting their lives on the line almost daily, my experiences might appear almost uneventful, but I still had a deep satisfaction when I was able to assist pilots and crews to get back safely on the ground in spite of miserable weather much of the time. Aircraft were often crippled, running low on fuel, had seriously wounded crew members and needed priority in landing.

Several experiences at Molesworth remain indelibly etched in my memory. I saw the extensive damage to our aircraft after the October '43 Schweinfurt raid, with one 303rd B-17 lost and 15 others barely able to make it back, and learned that 60 B-17s of the 1st and 3rd Bomb Divisions did not make it back. After waiting in the tower with squadron and group personnel on 11 January '44, it became evident that a number of our aircraft were not going to make it back from the raid over Oschersleben. The grim news was that 11 of our aircraft did not return. One could feel the dark and somber mood that settled over the base for the next 24 hours.

I'll not forget the day when I was on duty in the control tower, 20 February '44. Some of our aircraft were already back from the mission to the Leipzig area when we were alerted to the fact that an aircraft from the 351st BG was trying to make a landing at Molesworth. The flight engineer, Sgt. Archie Mathies and Navigator, Lt. Walter Truemper were flying the plane because the co-pilot was dead and the pilot gravely wounded. They had been ordered by their CO to bale out with the rest of the crew but Mathies and Truemper wanted to try to land the aircraft because the pilot was still alive. When they tried to land at Molesworth they were getting instructions from another 351st aircraft trailing them. They had to pull up because they had gone the whole distance of the runway and were still about 15 feet in the air. We learned shortly after, that they had crashed when making an attempt to land at another field. Mathies and Truemper were awarded Medals of Honor posthumously.

Experiences were varied

I was on duty one night about 1900 hours when I received a call from the 455th Bomb Group, 2nd Division. One of their B-24s had landed at Molesworth earlier in the day and the aircraft was needed for a mission the next day. They wanted to send another B-24 with an extra crew to pick up the aircraft. They asked about our weather. It was marginal but we were open at the time. They decided to send an aircraft. Within about 35 minutes when they arrived over the field, the fog, which was now blanketing most of England had closed in over our station as well. They could not see our runway lights. They spotted our field when we shot rockets to penetrate above the ground fog. By this time there was no place to divert the aircraft as dense fog was now covering all of England. The aircraft kept circling as we had our Flying Control ground crew try every kind of flare and landing aid we had in arsenal. We finally tried magnesium flares which was the latest kind of aid that had been issued to us. That was a mistake because the light was so brilliant it diffused through all the molecules of fog. The pilot was making a rather steep descent and was blinded by the utter intensity of the light. I could see the aircraft in steep descent over the runway and told him to "Pull up, Pull up" which he did, just a few yards above the runway. We extinguished the magnesium flares. (Sodium lights were not yet being used, or at least were not available to us). Then, using nothing but the runway lights and fire pots to mark the end of the runway, the pilot made a very cautious approach and set the plane down safely. When he came to the tower to call his home base it turned out that he was Jimmy Stewart's roommate. We now had two B-24s at Molesworth which would not take part in the next day's mission.

On another occasion while making a physical inspection (in a jeep) of our main runway early one morning, and with limited visibility, I discovered a truck loaded with bombs at the intersection of our two main runways. The truck had a flat tire. The driver had not reported the incident to the tower, nor had he asked permission to cross the runway at night. I returned to the tower, put the field on "Red" until necessary repairs were made and the truck removed. I later "discussed" the incident with the motor-pool Officer and the driver of the truck. It turned out

that the driver's name was also "Johnson."

Another incident that is still quite clear in my memory was the occasion when two practice bombs hit our field one night while I was on duty. It happened - 6 July 1944 - two or three days before the visit of the King and Queen to Molesworth. In the tower we always monitored the frequency used by the RAF when they were executing their practice bombing runs at night. The bombing range was apparently 15 miles or so, northwest of our field. When the bombs were released the bombardier would transmit - "Number one bomb gone, Number two bomb gone." We were accustomed to hearing that almost every time we were on duty. On this occasion we had one of two of our aircraft doing some night flying and therefore had our runway lights on as well as our ID circle of lights directly in front of the tower. Seconds after I heard "Number one bomb gone," I heard an explosion and "Whoom." "Number two bomb gone," followed by another explosion and "Whoom." The first practice bomb had hit behind the tower and a little toward the main hangar. The second practice bomb went through the roof of the main hangar. The British bombardier had mistaken our ID lights in front of the tower as their night-bombing range. I immediately called the RAF Operations people and advised them of this rather serious "deviation from course" of their aircraft. They apologized and sent out someone to investigate the incident two days later (when the King and Queen and children were on the base). I should be thankful that that bombardier missed the tower by about 50 feet.

Once in a while when on duty some pilot would give us an extra thrill by buzzing the tower. One day while two P-51s came low across the field and buzzed the tower, they went around a second time and dropped even lower. This time they peeled off, lowered their gear and landed. The first plane had hit the deck with the tips of his props, which were bent back, and the air-scoop was flattened. The pilot had been slow-timing his engine. He came to the tower and called his CO and very meekly described his mishap. I never heard whether the pilot was disciplined or not, but that was a low buzz job. I was proud to share a year of my life with some of the most skilled and courageous pi-

lots and crews of the 8th Air Force. I had six or seven flights in B-17s, two to the continent in the last months of the war.

Robert L. Johnson
3rd Station Complement

Unusual is putting it mildly!

On March 10, 1945 while on a mission to Schwerte, I was in the high plane in the low squadron which put me next to the low man in the lead squadron - if my leader positioned himself right. For some unknown reason he flew in too close which put my right wing in the prop wash on the low man in the lead squadron so I had to continually be correcting that situation but on the bomb run my leader pulled in even more which put me just behind and below the low man in the lead squadron. About that time his trailing antenna started coming out, which is a lead ball on a steel cable, I didn't like the idea of the cable wrapping itself around one of my propellers as that lead ball was directly in front of me so I just dropped back as it came out. When it was about 100 feet out there was a burst of flak directly ahead but between the planes and the antenna was gone so I pulled back up in formation and we went on home. When we landed my engineer looked that plane up that was ahead of us in the formation to ask why he put the trailing antenna out on the bomb run and he said he didn't so they went out to the plane and looked and the antenna was gone! So who turned the switch "on" to push me back so I wouldn't be where I should have been when that flak came up and exploded? I call it Divine protection!

While returning from a mission - I don't remember which one - I was overcome with one of nature's urgent calls with no provisions on board for such emergencies. The only solution was the bomb bay! The toggler opened the bomb bay doors and I went back and straggled the narrow catwalk and hung on to the bomb rack and let nature take over and got relief! Where its destination was has never been determined!

Clyde Henning
Pilot (358)

Ed. Note: If that part of your anatomy had gotten frost bitten, would you have been eligible for a Purple Heart?

How fast is fast?

My most memorable experience as a member of the 360th Bomb Sqdn., happened on the mission to Hamburg on 20 March 1945. I was "toggler" on Lt. Larry S. Tyler's crew. We encountered heavy flak on the bomb run. Just as I said, "Bombs Away," Lt. Tyler started our turn away from the target, when B.J. Hamm, our co-pilot called out, "Me-210s at three o'clock." I looked out and saw the planes streaking ahead of us and said, "Those aren't 210s; they are Me-262s, the German jet fighter." They harassed us all the way out over the North Sea. They were awesome as we could not track them with our turret guns. They were too fast. "A scary mission."

Note: Throughout my WW II career, I never lost an aircraft recognition test. The night before the mission noted above, I had visited the Intelligence Office and saw pictures of Me-262s for the first time. I shall never forget that mission!

S/Sgt Leroy Faulkner (360)
Toggler

Note: Some of my dates are hazy. All of my enlisted records were destroyed by fire in St. Louis Records Depository. Wish I had sense to keep copies.

Ed. Note: Why not try again. Page 14 of this issue contains addresses where you can write for your various records.

Making one out of four!

I believe my greatest achievement was assembling a complete B-17 plane from four planes that had crashed; after completing the assembly, the officer asked me if I was ready to preflight it. My mind immediately focused on every connection of cables, bolts, screws, etc.. I replied, "I'm ready to go." The flight was a success."

An unusual experience: we were removing gasoline tanks from damaged airplanes and a lot of gasoline spilled on the floor and as I was removing the overflow tube, my foot slipped on the stepladder and I fell. I hit the floor in the gasoline, my trouble light broke creating a spark igniting the gasoline and I was on fire. I ran about 30 feet to a dry floor, fell down and began rolling.

Everyone ran out except Barnett. He helped put the fire out on me. I then asked him to grab a fire extinguisher and I took one. I said, "Let's

The unexpected experiences are the ones that you relive!!

fight it." We both worked until all the fire was extinguished. There were five B-17s in the hangar. Everyone asked me how it happened and why it did not explode. I could not explain it. I realized much later why it did not explode because I called on God. "Lord don't let it explode."

"It is written call upon me and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble. I will deliver and honor him. I will show you my salvation, (deliverance) Psalms 91: 15-16"

The B-17 bomber we assembled from parts of damaged planes (we called the boneyard) was originally camouflaged is described as follows; one wing was camouflaged, one silver wing, one half of fuselage was camouflaged and one half silver. The tail section was also mixed in color.

It was an outstanding plane in the sky and a very satisfying accomplishment. When on vacation in Washington, D.C. a few years ago, I saw a B-17 in the museum and I had great respect for it and a feeling I cannot explain.

The years I spent in Service for my country is a chapter of my life which is an experience that is gratifying to me. I have fond memories of the men who were cooperative and worked so diligently to accomplish our tasks.

Love you guys!!

**Lewis (Shorty) Maresh (444)
Repair Chief**

**Frankfurt, 29 January
1944**

My position was the right waist gun. The mission was Frankfurt, Germany on Jan. 29, 1944. Our pilot, Lt. James Fowler and co-pilot, Lt. Barney Rawlings were flying "G.I. Sheets," the same airplane we flew on our first mission to Emden on Dec. 11, 1943. This day we had problems with the No.2 engine supercharger, but agreed to continue the mission. Everything was fine until we got within sight of the target. We had to feather No.2 engine due to an oil problem. "G.I. Sheets" could not keep up with the group with 2 1/2 engines, so we became a straggler and a target for enemy fighters. The first wave of four Me 109s attacked us from the front. The bombs had been jettisoned. The fighters did a lot of damage even though the pilots took evasive action. This was my first experience with zero gravity. One shell went

through the nose plexiglass causing serious injury to the bombardier and navigator. The explosion had knocked out the oxygen system, the instrument vacuum system and damaged some headset communication. We dove for cloud cover which was about 5,000 feet. Utilizing cloud cover as much as possible allowed us to get back over Belgium. There the cloud cover ran out as we flew over a large FW 190 fighter base. They not only sent up fighters but fired on us with small arm weapons. The combat with fighters was futile. We lost most of our gunnery protection and was receiving extensive to our aircraft along with injuries to the crew. I had received several fragment wounds including one to the head that required a compress bandage to stop the bleeding. At this time the ball turret gunner took over my position. With the rudder control out and No 3 engine on fire, the pilot decided we had enough and sounded the warning bell. It had been approximately two hours since our first attack which made it about 1300 hours. The sounding of the warning bell apparently got my attention. I looked over the situation briefly and decided the airplane was going to crash. After jettisoning the waist door I jumped out. It was then that I realized how low we were. I estimated to be less than 400 feet. There were two quick jolts, one when the parachute opened and shortly thereafter when I hit the ground. Fortunately I landed, burying half my body in a soft spot of a grassy area I was the only one to bail out. Jim and Barney did a super job of crash landing the airplane in a small clearing a few kilometers from where I landed.

A Belgium patriot who happened to be in the area came to me and pointed to where I should hide. Later when it was dark, he took me into his home. I must have been a sorrowful sight. The women of the house gasped when they saw me. One of the women removed superficial shrapnel and cleaned the wounds. The next morning this Belgium friend put me under some hay in his one horse drawn wagon and took me to the first of eight places I stayed until liberated by the Americans, eight months and 6 days later. The hiding and running period is another story.

**Loren E. Zimmer (427)
Right Waist Gunner**

UPGRADE TO LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

L1389	Edward L. Bartkoski (359)
L1942	Theodore R. Beiser (427)
L166	John L. Berringer (359)
L118	Anthony J. Boland (358)
L959	Carville J. Brian (360)
L1901	Paul E. Chennault (unk)
L1183	Edward C. Davis (360)
L294	Frank S. Destito (359)
L552	H. M. Driver (360)
L540	Robert W. Featherstone (359)
L1772	William H. Ferguson (unk)
L1370	William A. Ferri (358)
L1535	Andrew T. Goettman (359)
L480	Quentin Howard (359)
L1098	Frank M. James (358)
L1656	Tom Keese (427)
L1763	John R. Kosilla (358) L1451 Pete Kowalk (359)
L1884	Stanley W. Lloyd (359)
L1616	Mondo F. Lombardi (unk)
L1953	Robert E. Lyda (427)
L1221	Donnell H. March (360)
L1545	Tom Mays (358)
L359	James P. Miller (358)
L534	Harry E. Nale (427)
L1963	Gordon B. Nute (359)
L1906	Humphrey P. O'Leary (1681)
L196	Bert J. Pandey (427)
L1627	Gerald G. Rasmussen (360)
L1638	Orin H. Schopplein (359)
L056	Herbert Shanker (359)
LA-202	Sylvia M. Vinyard
L1538	Werner G. Warmuth (427)
L1408	Rollin Wentz (360)
L1685	Paul J. Winkleman (427)
1876	C. Ramsay Younglove (360)
L1952	Eugene L. Zawacki (358)

Lorient on Jan. 23, 1943 was a very busy place!

Is it all right to ask for word from members of the 303rd who were with us in the period, April 1, 1942 until January 23, 1943? And more particularly, who were in the 359th BS during those months?

I joined the group at Boise straight from Navigator's School and was, for a time, on then Captain Eugene Romig's crew. Later I was with E.J., (Sandy) Sanderson, pilot; Dale Bowman, co-pilot; Sid Devers, flight engineer; Miles Jones, radio operator - and of course, six other fine young men as crew of the Green Hornet (one of the less exciting names). We were shot down on our eighth mission, to Lorient, France on January 23, 1943, along with four other crews from our 303rd Group. Our crew was in the 359th. We were among those who got our planes, if memory serves, new while we were at Battle Creek, MI., and flew the North Atlantic from Bangor, ME, to Newfoundland, to Scotland in October '42 as a group, taking off at midnight from Gander.

Sid Devers and I evaded capture together, going all the way to Gibraltar and then by ship to Glasgow before reaching London and finally Molesworth in March '43. Sid and I were evadees 16 and 17. Gil Showalter, navigator in the 360th I think, was Evadee No. 15.

**John W. Spence
1565 Vinton
Memphis, TN 38104-5031**

Ed. Note: I'm sure Francois Cadic who authored the story on page 13 of this issue and is also responsible for the excellent color photos on page one would like to hear from you. He is doing research on the allied airmen who were shot down over Brittany during World War II. A letter from Sandy Sanderson, giving his account of the mission appeared in the Forum section of the May 1995 newsletter. The bravery of the French citizens who risked their lives and the lives of their families to help the surviving members of our various 303rd BG crews is amazing. I propose we give some thought to erecting a plaque someplace in Brittany expressing our thanks.

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Over 60 percent of the 1997 dues payments have been received and we appreciate your prompt cooperation, but it is now time for another reminder. If you have a 96 encircled in red and a "Last Issue" note on your address label, your dues are due. Special Note: I am sending the address labels to Hal Susskind in late January so if you sent in your dues after that, disregard the label notation.

I am in the business of finding new members, not losing them, but that is what happens when our mail is returned marked "Moved - No forwarding Address." The member is transferred to the inactive roster with the NVA (No Valid Address) tag. I call the phone at the old address only to find it disconnected. The below listed were recently "lost" in this manner. If you are in touch with any of them and they are still interested in getting the Newsletters, please ask them to contact me with their new address.

Widow Mrs Ruth S. Anderson
LA-371 Dana C. Barnes
Widow Mrs Leah Anne Berger
A-356 Michael Considine
A-297 David J. Daniels
A-351 Jennifer Kornacher
Widow Mrs Mary McConaghy
Widow Mrs Kim Morgan
L-447 Sanford T. Smith, Jr.
Widow Mrs Nancy Walder

You will notice the name of Sylvia Vinyard in the lists below, both on the Upgrades and Donations. She has been one of our devoted Asso-

ciates for four years and a frequent donor. Her husband, Don, was stationed at Molesworth after the war and they returned for a visit in 1992. Her parents kept the Fox Pub just off the base and she was in the RAF. No doubt of her being a real 303rd family member.

In keeping with my practice of special recognition to large donations and memorials, I am pleased to announce that Mrs Norma Russell (444th) made a \$200 memorial to Eddy Russell and John Casello which will go to the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum.

In the May 1996 issue John Grocki (L1143) sent in a memorial to his pilot and co-pilot, Max Fountain and John Olson. The name Olson was misprinted as Olsoj and Grocki has requested a correction. So be it.

In the November '96 issue, Welton T. Mahan (#1987) was listed among the new members but his squadron designation was not printed. All you 358ers can welcome another comrade. Also, on the Donations/Memorials list I note that Harry Gobrecht and Ray Leal's squadrons were missing. For such long time members I'm sure you all know by now; Harry is in the 358th and Ray is in the 427th

The lists that follow are current as of 15 January 1997.

Carlton M. Smith
12700 Red Maple Circle #54
Sonora, CA 95370-5269
(209) 533-4033

NEW MEMBERS

1992 Dale H. Gordon, 7902 W Ludolph Rd., Edwards, IL 61528-9765 (359)
A-417 Jeff W Monyok, P.O. Box 856, Catlin, IL 61817-0856
A-418 Diane O'Leary-Bruns, 2291 Sorbur Way, Anchorage, AK 99508-4051
A-419 Richard F. O'Leary, 2301 E 52nd Ave, #17, Anchorage, AK 99507-1651
A-420 Olin W. Owen, 2006 8th St. NW, Ardmore, OK 73401-xxxx
LA-421 Alberta Redhage Shepherd, P.O. Box 233, Gray Summit, MO 63039-0233
A-422 Kevin W. Beckman, 3704 Nanz Ave., Louisville, KY 40207-3740
A-423 John R. Sivils, 196 Polwell Ln., Kettering, Northants, England NN15 6UD
A-424 Jackie G. Cline, 428 North Albert Pike, Fort Smith, AR 72903-1908
A-425 William C. Smith, 3505 Pleasant St., Ozark, AR 72949-9404
L1993 John E. Fletcher, 23 Chatuachee Crossing, Savannah, GA 31411-1602 (427)
A-426 Mrs Jennie Deffinger, 2001 Curtis Ave., Idaho Falls, ID 83402-xxxx
A-427 Michael S. Johnston, P.O. Box 867, Philmont, NY 12565-0867
1994 John M. Cregan, 2117 Highland Ave., McKeesport, PA 15132-1226 (359)
A-429 George Weidig, 724 Woodland Ave., Winchester, VA 22601-2825 (44 BG)
A-430 Norman O'Leary, 1215 Gore Blvd., Lawton, OK 73501-3695
L1995 Howard L. Abney, 602 Oakdale Dr. Gadsden, AL 35903-2926 (358)
A-431 James H. O'Leary, 178 Broadmoor Blvd., San Leandro, CA 94577-1850

Widow Mrs Toni Quailey, 1989 Oakmere Dr., Baldwin, NY 11510-2740 (444)
A-432 Dianna Young, 225 Lawson Rd., Eidson, TN 37731-xxxx
1996 Richard T. Fogarty, 726 Camp Perrin Rd., Lawrenceville, GA 30243-2505 (427)
L1997 Leonard C. Greig, Jr., 320 Wende Way, Glen Burnie, MD 21061-6286 (360)
A-433 Paul C. Shephard, 102 Tucker Hill Ln., Gray Summit, MO 63090-1213
A-434 Corey Smith, 5427 State Rd. A, Washington, MO 63090-5413
A-428 Kyle R. Krieg, PO Box 867, Philmont NY 12565-0867

ADDRESS CHANGES

S1630 Arvid Anderson, 2127 Luann Ln. Apt. 2, Madison, WI 53713-4542 (June - Oct. address only)
A-254 Stephen L. Atterbury, P.O. Box 984, St. Louis, MO 63188-0984
S284 Harold A. Belles, 612 Blue Heron, Knoxville, TN 78230-xxxx
A-93 Donald M. Berardino, 215 Meadow Dr., Murrysburg, PA 15668-9761
1712 Robert E. Black, 8620 N 65th Ave. Apt 101, Glendale, AZ 85302-4331
L1687 Robert C. Bogert, 1905 E Bay Ave., Newport Beach, CA 92661-1514
L1629 Richard Braden, 3680 Angelo Rd. NE, Corydon, IN 47112-7209
A-224 Bernice Capasso, 304 East St. #B, Grinnell, IA 50112-2556
Widow Mrs Doris Carlson, 1609 Adkins St. Apt 1, Eugene, OR 97401-5094
Widow Mrs Eva Cozzo, 16824 S Sunset Ridge Ct., Lockport, IL 60441-7675
L106 Oscar A. Deen, 300 Luman Rd Unit 75, Phoenix, OR 97535-9735
A-292 Greg N. Dortch, 379 Las Colinas Blvd E Apt 184, Irving, TX 78032-5545
A-139 James L. Droke, 6369 Hunters Place, Memphis, TN 38115-3452
L919 Richard Dubell, 6574 Apache Cir., Cincinnati, OH 45243-2402
1560 Flake S. Dyson, 136 Greenhouse Ln. Taylorsville, NC 28681-9004
L367 Albert L. Farrah, 9 Captain's Way, Kittery Point, ME 03905-5308
A-168 Thomas D. Gobrecht, 5451 Robin Ln., Yorba Linda, CA 92886-4933
Widow Mrs Alba Gray, 5785 W. Rochelle Ave. Apt. 105, Las Vegas, NV 89103-3465
Widow Mrs Virginia Harman, 22265 Gilmore Ranch Rd., Red Bluff, CA 96080-7804
L1212 Logan B. Hatch, 5614 Marco Rd., Salt Lake City, UT 84121-1071
1145 Lee Hinds, 20181 Hudson ST.#7, Burney, CA 96013-4262
666 Melvin Howell, 35 Knighton Dr., Bella Vista, AR 72715-5397
545 Bille E. Hudler, 14661 US Hwy 1 #55, Juno Beach, FL 33408-1113
223 Arthur E. Johnson, 200 Wyndemere Cir. Apt. W115, Wheaton, IL 60187-2431
L1301 James P. Johnson, 210 E. Crisler Ave., McAlester, OK 74501-3142
L1544 Horace S. Kenney, Jr., P.O. Box 1034, Marion, MA 02738-0999
L1671 R. A. Knight, 1009 Holland Dr., Garland, TX 75040-4227
Widow Mrs Alice Kowatch, 1570 S 1900 E, Salt Lake City, UT 84108-2678
L1280 Wayne E. Krouskup, 800 Blossom Hill Rd. #172, Los Gatos, CA 95032-3562
L1869 William Latshaw, 39 Parkridge Dr., Bryn Mawr, PA 19010-2258
LA-147 Frank M. Lydell, 640 El Pintado Rd., Danville, CA 94526-1439
Widow Mrs Viola M. Lynch, 1050 Marcus St., Port Charlotte, FL 33952-1779
A-179 Mary Maier, 141 Ginger Dale Dr., Glen Carbon, IL 62034-3505
128 Millard E. Mason, 8571 Kempster Ave., Fontana, CA 92335-3905
Widow Mrs Madge McDonald, 402 Redwood Dr., Wamego, KS 66547-1905
L559 Richard L. McGilvray, 400 S Elm St. # E18, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420-3744
LA-225 James C. Miller, 3956 Town Center Blvd #270, Orlando, FL 32837-6116
Widow Mrs Mary Louise Miller, 1937 Robert Hall Blvd #5314, Chesapeake, VA 23324-4312
L1948 Thomas H. Morrison, 816 Crossing Ct., Virginia Beach, VA 23455-6231
1834 John J. Nicastro, 8226 Dalebrook Rd., Independence, OH 44131-6600
L 799 Curtis M. Olsen, 1944 Empress Ct., Naples, FL 34110-1004
L1554 Hugh J. Parkhurst, 235 Blueberry Ln., Branford, CT 06405-5903
L329 Charles Prosser, P.O. Box 675, Hot Springs, MT 59845-0018
Widow Mrs Edna Quinn, 2611 Bayshore Blvd Apt. 1406, Tampa, FL 33629-7344
Widow Mrs Catherine Ratford, 65 Patricia Ave., Dunedin, FL 34698-8102
Widow Mrs Peggy L. Ririe, 1001 Carroll Pkwy Apt. 211, Frederick, MD 21701-4053
(continued on page 20)

A black and white photograph taken from an elevated position, looking down at a cable car as it descends a wooded hill. The cable car is a dark, rectangular box with large windows. In the background, the Allegheny River flows through the city of Pittsburgh. A prominent white arch bridge spans the river. The city skyline is visible in the distance, featuring numerous skyscrapers and buildings. The foreground is filled with dense trees and foliage.

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