

Hell's Angels Newsletter

303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

November, 2006



SETTING UP FOR REGISTRATION at The Menger Hotel in San Antonio are Jean Cox and Mary Lee Deerfield.

CHUCK VIEIRA is President Designate of the new 303rd Association. He follows in the footsteps of his uncle, Joe Vieira, who helped establish the original 303rd BGA in 1975.



“Might In Flight Legacy Association” A Living Memorial to the 303rd Bomb Group’s Veterans

By Chuck Vieira
President Designate

It was my honor attending the San Antonio convention of the 303rd Bomb Group. I not only saw but felt the camaraderie among the members. There was a genuine appreciation for remembering their past, their present, and I witnessed heartfelt concern for their future group association. Every one I talked with was excited about the continuation of their association. I was humbled in the presence of these fine gentlemen.

I wish Rebecca Mitchell, our new secretary, and Rob Galbraith, our treasurer, could have witnessed and felt the happiness of the veterans.

In my first meeting of the fledgling legacy association, Rebecca, Rob and I had to ponder some difficult questions and concerns. One of the questions is what will be

the mission of the new association. We have a mission statement that is evolving and I am sure will change as we refine our mission directives over the next few weeks.

Below is the second draft of our current mission statement.

Draft Mission Statement for the new 303rd Bomb Group Association Charter—The Might in Flight Legacy Association.

□ Provide family and friends of former 303rd members with a support organization to perpetuate the memory of the 303rd Bomb Group, its members, missions, aircraft, and other historical items of interest, insuring an understanding of Might in Flight.

□ Proactively educate

members and family, historians, current and former military personnel, institutions of higher learning and other people interested in the history of the 303rd Bomb Group and its members.

□ Provide a foundation for the annual distribution of funds to be determined by the future board of directors to worthy causes in the name and memory of the men of the 303rd Bomb Group.

□ Perpetuate the memory of the men who defended their country in a time of peril and need, honoring the members both living and deceased of the 303rd Bomb Group.

□ Consider allowing airborne organizations after WWII to join our charter to perpetuate the legacy of the

Might in Flight organization whose gauntlet was so gallantly and unselfishly imbued by the 303rd Molesworth Team.

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

Editor--Eddie Deerfield

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The 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc. is a tax exempt organization under IRS Code 501(c)(19), chartered in 1977 in the State of Florida to perpetuate the history of the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) and to provide opportunities for 303rd veterans, families and friends to meet.

Because members are helping to perpetuate the history of the 303rd Bombardment Group (H), dues and/or donations to the Association are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Regular Members include persons assigned or attached to the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) from its 1942 activation in Boise, ID, through its war years at Molesworth, England, to its 1945 deactivation in Casablanca. Spouses, children, grandchildren and others related to regular members may become Family Members. Others interested in perpetuating the history of the 303rd and in furthering the aims of the Association may, with approval, become non-voting Associate Members.

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

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**For a visit to the highly rated Website of the
303rd Bomb Group (H) Association
please go online at: www.303rdBGA.com**

Planning a trip to RAF Molesworth?

Persons planning to visit the base should contact UK Representative Robin Beeby and advise him of travel plans. Mr. Beeby will make the appropriate contacts and arrange a visit to RAF Molesworth if the base security situation permits.

CHAPLAIN -- PROTESTANT

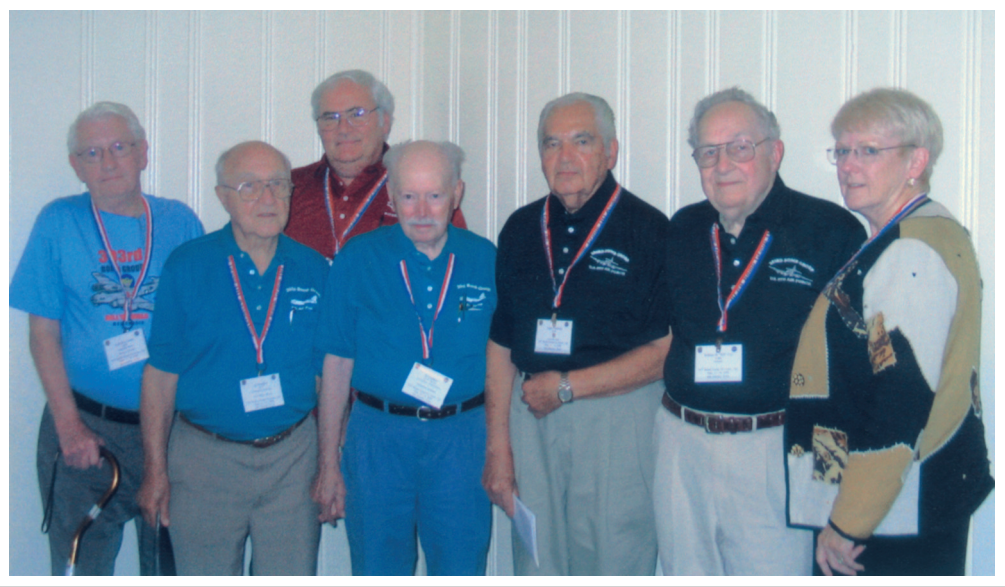
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THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE 303RD BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION elected in 2005 remained in place in 2006 to guide the organization in its final year. There were no other nominations from the floor at the General Meeting.

From the left, Secretary Harold "Red" Timm, Past Presidents Chairman Al Dussliere, Internet Operations Director Gary Montcur, VP Administration Ed Gardner, Newsletter Editor Eddie Deerfield, President Bill Cox and Treasurer Jean Cox.



THE OPERATION OF THE 303RD'S POST EXCHANGE at annual reunions has become one of the most popular features of the gatherings. For the last decade, the ordering, sale and display of merchandise has been the responsibility of family members Charlie and Vicki Sykes, seen in their accustomed locations behind the counters.

As the Association winds down, PX items will be sold at bargain prices, advertised in future newsletters.



San Antonio Reunion A Smash Hit ! (Photos on Pages 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13)

The 23rd gathering of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association in reunion proved to be among the most enjoyable in the history of the event. San Antonio was a cordial host city with something for everybody, and the historic Menger Hotel was an ideal home away from home for the 303rd's veterans and their family members. Not only was the nightly room rate granted to the Association remarkably low, but the hotel hosted a gracious cheese and refreshments reception to welcome 303rd BGA guests.

Attendance was 230, the largest since 2002 and an increase of 65 over last year's Dayton reunion which was the lowest ever. The numbers pale, however, when compared with Seattle in 1985 (850) and Colorado Springs in 1995 (708).

The San Antonio reunion was blessed with many program highlights, including an all-day visit to Randolph Air Force Base. There was an excellent briefing by a staff Major in the base auditorium, a

guided tour of the base by bus, a three-course lunch in the Officers Club, and a Memorial Service in the base chapel.

A showing at the hotel of the film *Target for Today*, which includes a pre-mission briefing at Molesworth and many scenes of 303rd B-17's in combat, was an emotional flashback to the war years. The film was preceded by a talk by Professor Vernon L. Williams of Abilene Christian University about the school's "East Anglia Air War Project."

The optional events were well attended. An evening barbeque at a ranch in Hondo, Texas, featured a country/western band, a cowboy who demonstrated a variety of rope and gun tricks, and as much food and drink as anyone wanted. The city tour was particularly pleasing to those who like to shop.

But, arguably, best of all was the farewell banquet with a rousing speech by US Senator John Cornyn and the performance of an *Andrews Sisters Revue*.

**The
Global
Hawk
Unmanned
Aerial
Vehicle**



**To Honor the World War II Achievements of 303rd Bomb Group
USAF CHANGES NAMES OF RECONNAISSANCE AND
GLOBAL HAWK TO 303RD AERONAUTICAL SYSTEMS**

On 14 July 2006, the Reconnaissance System Wing and the Global Hawk System Group of the US Air Force were officially renamed the 303rd Aeronautical Systems Wing and 303rd Aeronautical Systems Group in recognition of the heritage of the famed World War II bomb group. The order was signed by Lt. Gen. Roger A. Brady, Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower and Personnel, at USAF headquarters in Washington, DC.

In announcing the name change to his unit, Lt. Col. Charles J. Westgate III, Deputy Director of the former Global Hawk Systems Group, referred personnel to a document "that talks about the heritage of our new unit name." He attached a brief summary of the wartime history of the original 303rd Bombardment Group from its activation on 3 February 1942 to its inactivation on 25 July 1945.

Lt. Col. Westgate's unit is based at Wright Patterson AFB near Dayton, Ohio. He told the editor of the Hell's Angels Newsletter that the study of World War II was one of his hobbies, and that his father-in-law had been a B-17 gunner in the 306th Bomb Group at Thuleigh. He requested and received from the editor photos of the 303rd's squadron and group patches and other Might in Flight insignia for display in 303rd AESG briefings.

The Global Hawk Unmanned Aerial Vehicle provides Air Force and joint battlefield commanders

near real-time, high resolution intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance imagery. In the last year, the Global Hawk provided Air Force and joint war fighting commanders more than 15,000 of these images to support Operation Enduring Freedom, flying more than 50 missions and 1,000 combat hours.

Cruising at extremely high altitudes, Global Hawk can survey large geographic areas with pinpoint accuracy, to give military decision makers the most current information about enemy location, resources and personnel.

Once mission parameters are programmed into the Global Hawk's guidance systems, the UAV can autonomously taxi, take-off, fly, remain on targets capturing imagery, return and land. Ground-based operators monitor UAV health and status, and can change navigation and sensor plans by remote control during flight as necessary.

The aircraft has a wingspan of 116 feet and is 44 feet long. Compare this to the B-17's wingspan of 104 feet and length of 75 feet.

When fully fueled the Global Hawk weighs 25,600 pounds, and can range as far as 12,000 miles from its base at altitudes up to 65,000 feet, flying at speeds of 400 miles per hour. It can hover over an area of interest for 24 hours, using its sensors to record data even through clouds.



JEFF PINGEL, OWNER OF UNLIMITED IMAGES IN HUDSON, FLORIDA, displays one of the 100 walnut veneer plaques he donated to the 303rd Bomb Group Association for the mounting of irregular-shaped pieces from the floor of the original World II hangar at Molesworth.



JIM DECKER, OWNER OF DECKERMAN, INC. OF SPOKANE, WASHINGTON, holds one of the 65 gifts he donated to accommodate the uniform domino-sized pieces. The stone artifacts are encased in a clear resin block and mounted in a gold leaf box with blue velvet lining.

HISTORIC ARTIFACTS FROM MAIN HANGAR READY FOR PRESENTATION TO MOLESWORTH VETERANS

(Following report given by Eddie Deerfield at meeting of 303rd BGA Board of Directors on 12 September 2006)

The search for artifacts from Molesworth to present to our veterans as we disband next year as an Association began on April 10th of 2005. I contacted Colonel Ayres, the CO of the Joint Analysis Center, about locating a piece of the original runway. I would have it broken up and suitably mounted. Colonel Ayres said his command would be happy to cooperate. But, he was transferred and nothing happened for months.

Colonel Reyes took over the JAC and informed us that nothing was left of the old runway. His Executive Officer suggested they send us cores extracted from the original floor of the main B-17 hangar, which is now used as a warehouse at the base.

There's a company in Largo, Florida, named Cutting Edge Granite that makes marble counter and table tops. They did the main cutting for us. Iron rods running through the cores tore up a couple of their saw blades. They came up with 65 pieces about the size of dominoes and a bucket full of small scraps. And they refused to charge us for their work.

Mary Lee's brother, Jim Decker, is the owner of Deckerman, Incorporated, an import and export firm based in Spokane. I asked him if it was possible to have the 65 rectangular stone pieces imbedded in clear Lucite blocks—like the moon rocks—and placed in presentation boxes. He accomplished this and did not bill the Association for the manufacturing costs.

I bought a small wet tile saw from a local hardware store to cut the remaining scraps into usable pieces. I was able to make about 100 odd shaped pieces not suitable for the Lucite blocks but which could be mounted on wood plaques. Last Memorial Day, I was a guest on a local television program, and I described our project. The owner of a firm in Hudson, Florida, named "Unlimited Images" saw the program and offered to make a hundred plaques for us at no charge.

So, we're going to be able to present these mementoes of World War II Molesworth to 165 of our veterans. The Board and particularly the Executive Committee will have to decide how we do that for veterans attending the final reunion in Washington next year and, if possible, for veterans not able to attend.

LEGACY, from page 1

As the direction and goals for the 303rd Bomb Group legacy association formalized, we realized our new name would be a critical component to sustain the organization decades into the future. We realized the need to build upon the excellent framework provided us by the original 303rd Bomb Group Association.

At one of my first meetings at the reunion a member's wife asked what we will do at the conventions when the original members could not attend. She had no clue how much grief this particular issue has plagued me. My concern for maintaining the new membership while building the future membership has gripped much of my thinking.

Having witnessed war on my own terms in Vietnam, knowing the bonds you forge in battle and the sacrifice you endure, these questions troubled me. I have never been able to share the realities of my experiences in war or the bonds I have formed with my comrades in arms living and fallen. With this fact in mind, I realized the challenges to bring a new organization into being.

I realized our best way forward was to take these questions along with the 303rd's honorable history and build upon it. To use the 303rd's history as a spring board to further the understanding of our nation's needs, past and present. Remembering the accomplishments of all men forged in aerial battle for our country. Insuring that the deeds and sacrifices witnessed in these theaters are never forgotten.

While we can never replace the 303rd Bomb Group, we will build a new organization around their ideals and memory using family members and other new airborne organizations to foster, enhance if you will, the spirit, the ideals already immortalized by the 303rd

Bomb group.

Treasurer Designate Rob Galbraith won the \$100 prize for suggesting the name "Might In Flight Legacy Association." He refused to accept the prize, and has donated the money back to the treasury for other worthwhile causes.

It is in this spirit I am hoping members from the family association will step forward to aid us in our new committees. Please contact Rebecca Mitchell, 3170 Strolling Hills Road, Cameron Park, CA 95682. Telephone (530) 676-8255. Email: Straighttalk @ rebeccamitchell.com.

Four committees have their chairmen and assistant chairmen in place.

I want to thank the following individuals for coming forward to help this new operation to get started.

Membership Committee
Co-Chairmen:
Carol Sage and Jay Hardy

Assistant Chairman:
Donna Deerfield

Reunion Committee
Chairman: Barbara Ann Sage

Assistant Chairman:
Joseph Vieira

Historical and Educational
Chairman: Dennis Smith

Assistant Chairman:
Charlene Jaehne

Newsletter Committee
Chairman: John McCall

Assistant Chairman:
Molly Lehmann

These individuals bring a wealth of talent and enthusiasm with them. Their leadership will allow us to tackle these new organization growing pains with ease. I am honored to have been chosen to direct this wonderful group of people for this worthwhile undertaking.

May God bless all of us as we embark on this wonderful journey for these men



AS THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS GATHERED FOR THEIR FIRST MEETING AT THE 2006 REUNION, Charles "Chuck" Vieira, President Designate of the successor organization to the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, waited to make his report to the Board. He's sitting against the wall under the painting at the upper right of the photo.

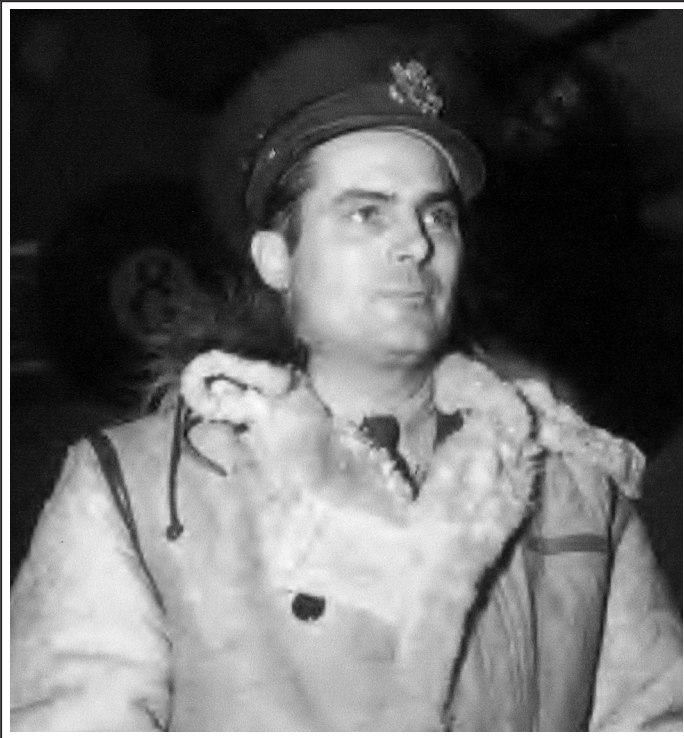
The meeting, chaired by President Bill Cox at the head of the table, also included reports by members of the Executive Committee, as well as elected squadron and family representatives and appointed Committee Chairmen.



AT THE BANQUET TO CLOSE OUT THE 2006 REUNION, Donna Deerfield, Assistant Chair of the new Membership Committee, sat with Vieira. She's the granddaughter of Eddie and Mary Lee Deerfield.

First hand witness to a notable event

PURPLE HEART FOR GENERAL TRAVIS



By Donald W. Stouilil
Pilot, 359th Squadron

In March of 1944, our 303rd Bomb Group crew was transferred from Molesworth to the 305th at Chelveston as part of a (PFF) Pathfinder Squadron. This meant we flew either lead or deputy lead in the 41st Combat Wing formation, with the Wing Air Commander occupying the co-pilot position in the lead aircraft.

On the 29 April 1944 mission to Berlin, we were to fly lead with General Robert F. Travis as Air Commander sitting next to me in the co-pilot seat. All went well en-route to the target and strike photos showed good results. However, on the way home things got a little exciting.

Near Magdeburg we encountered moderate but accurate flak, a burst of which punctured a hole in the windshield just above the instrument panel showering glass throughout the cockpit. Either a piece of flak or glass struck Travis just above the left temple. He immediately slumped forward motionless.

I thought "Damn, he's had it." A trickle of blood began to flow down his face but stopped halfway. Several minutes later, to my surprise and relief, he showed movement and regained full consciousness, so I called Sgt. George Green, the waist gunner, to come forward and tend to the General. After he dressed the



THE SHEEPSKIN JACKET FAVORED BY GENERAL TRAVIS was not the standard issue worn by the rest of the crew.

Sitting in the pilot's seat next to the General on the Berlin mission was Lieutenant Don Stouilil (middle man in back row). Rendering first aid to the General was Sergeant George Greene (second from left in front row). Crew navigator was Hal Susskind (first from left in back row).

wound, George covered it with a noticeable bandage.

I don't recall the conversation on the way home, but I remember the General was not too talkative. After we landed and pulled into the hardstand we were immediately met by a staff car. Travis then departed the aircraft and was recounting the incident to his staff members. He later was awarded the Purple Heart for the wound. That evening he paid a visit to the 359th Officers Club, evidently wishing to let it be known that even Generals are not impervious to the scars of battle.

To General Travis' everlasting credit, he never picked 'em easy. Whenever you walked into that briefing room and saw his name leading the group, you knew it was going to be a rough one.

Later, back in the States, I met Travis in the Officers Club at the Sioux City Air Base. I introduced myself and reminded him that it was my crew that got him the Purple Heart. He said he was grateful that I wasn't the one that got it -- otherwise he would have had to fly and land the aircraft. Not the easiest task from the right seat.

So, I would have to say that being a first hand witness to General Travis' earning the Purple Heart was my dubious claim to fame.

A Pictorial Travelogue Through the San Antonio Reunion

With Photo Credits to Gary Moncur, Michael and Laura Moncur,
Dick Johnson and Ralph Brehl

**AVID BRIDGE PLAYERS
CAN ALWAYS FIND TIME
FOR A ROUSING GAME!**

Joanna Tressler, lower left,
is partnered up with Carl
Dubose, while his wife,
Angele, in the striped shirt,
looks for grand slam hands
with Sue Lehmann.



358TH SQUADRON VETERAN AL QUEVEDO, on the right, was joined at the reunion by his daughter, Gina Wong, and her husband, Ray. The middle man is Al's 358th Squadron buddy, Sam Bass.



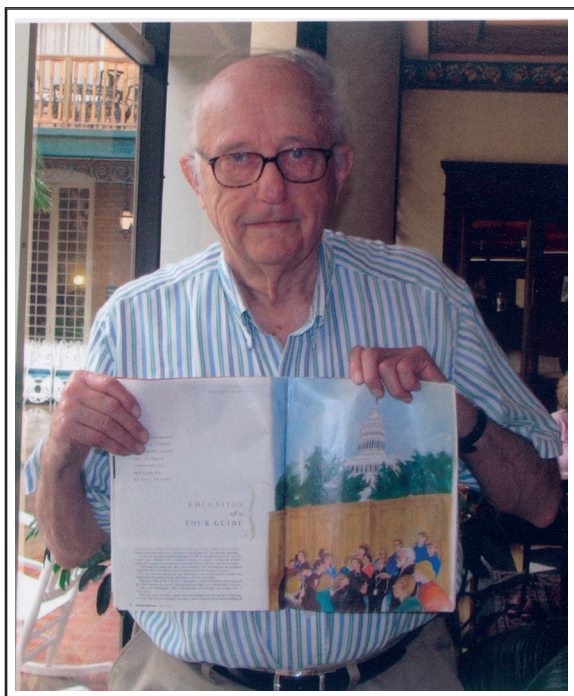
TWO MORE OLD TIMERS ENJOY REUNION CAMARADERIE. That's Cliff Fontaine of the 427th Squadron with an arm around Joe Gervais.



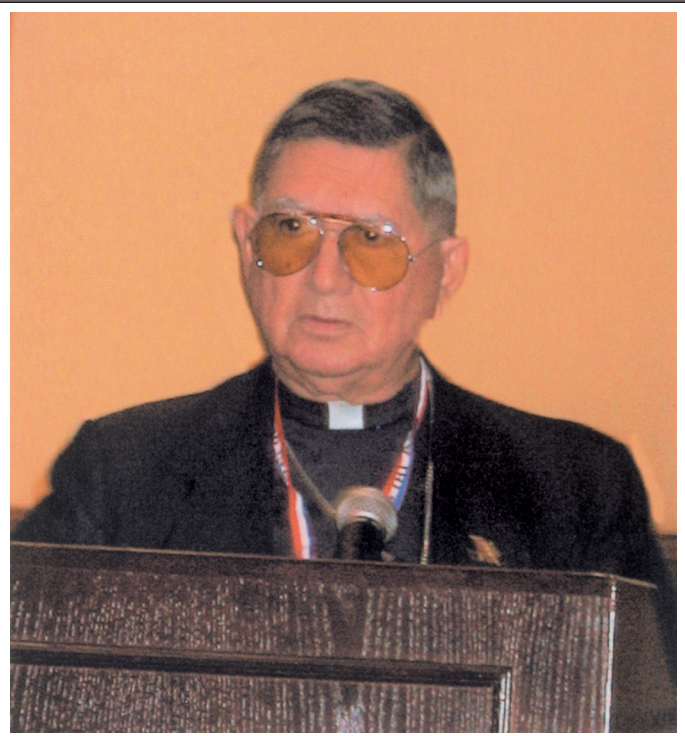
THE MONCUR FAMILY in a moment of relaxation on one of the Menger Hotel's tapestry-styled settees. The lovely lady in the middle is Kristen, with parents Gary and Susan.
TWO 427TH SQUADRON VETERANS who have attended many reunions over the years get together again in San Antonio. That's Ralph Page on the left, sharing a chuckle with Frank Neuner.



FRANKLIN MCMAHON, the 303rd's most famous professional artist, displays one of the sketches he did for the 27 August 2006 issue of the Washington Post Magazine. He illustrated the visit to the nation's capital by a group of students from St. Mary's School of Sterling, Illinois.
HAROLD "RED" TIMM, now silver-haired, listens as his daughter, Katherine, demonstrates her new digital camera. Katherine's husband, Dave Schaubert, is also an attentive listener.



A DAY AT RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE



THE DAY BEGAN WITH A BRIEFING at the base theater about the mission of the 12th Fighter Training Wing, continued with an hour-long tour of the base with guides on each of four buses, then lunch at the Officers Club (photo below).

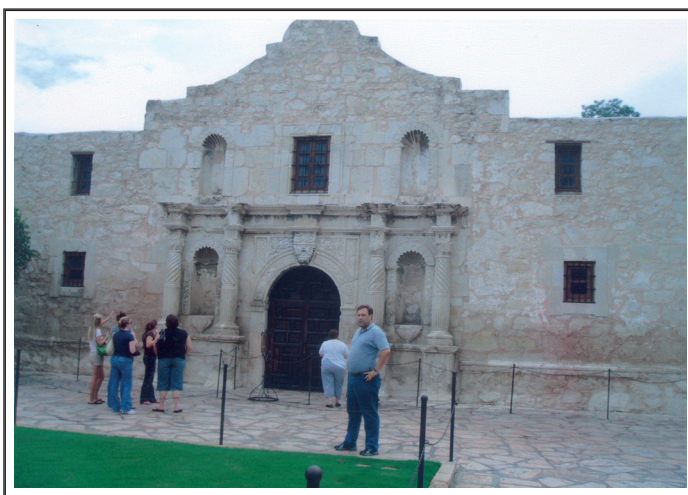
EMOTIONAL HIGHLIGHT OF THE DAY was the 303rd Bomb Group Memorial Service in the base chapel after lunch, opened with the posting of the colors. The Group was welcomed by Colonel Steven Sill, Wing Chaplain, and there were blessings by Pastor Majerus and Rabbi Ruffman. 359th Squadron veteran retired Bishop Rene Gracida had prepared a DVD screening of the names of all 303rd WWII veterans, but the presentation was plagued by equipment problems. The 303rd's Harold Timm, Edward Gardner and Albert Dussliere read the names of more than 100 members who have passed away since the last reunion in 2005. The final reading was followed by the sounding of Taps.





DR. VERNON L. WILLIAMS, PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AT ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY, came to the Menger Hotel to set up an impressive exhibit of several score 303rd Bomb Group photos in the Hospitality Room. Dr. Williams is the Director of the university's "East Anglia Air War Project." He explained the project to a reunion audience just prior to the showing of the film "Target for Today," and will submit an article on the subject for the next issue of the Hell's Angels Newsletter.

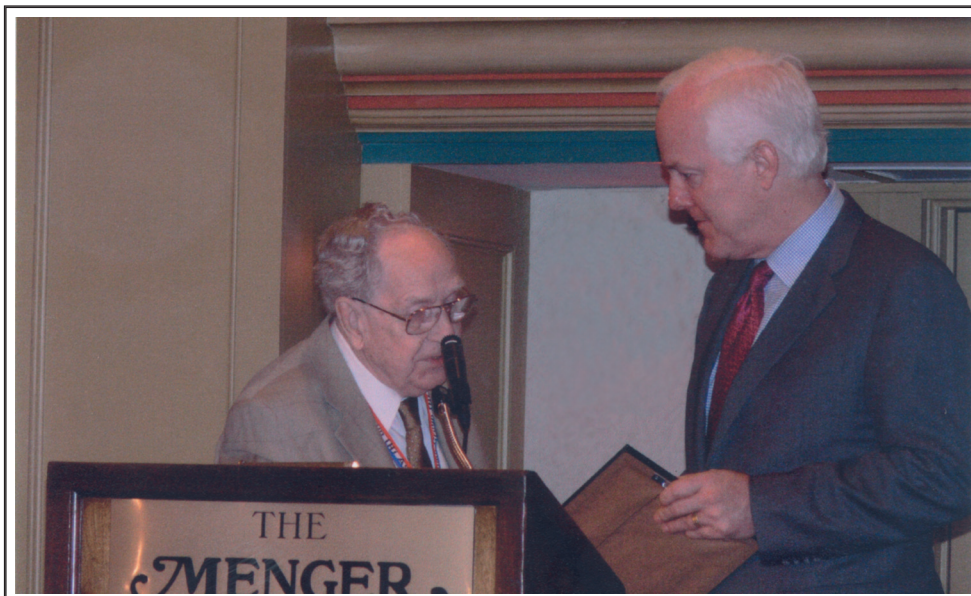
Dr. Williams said the "East Anglia Air War Project" has been based in the History Department of Abilene Christian University since the first scholarly oral interviews were recorded in England and the United States in 2003. The interviews are ongoing in both countries, and the non-profit project is funded by grants, individual donations and the sales of videos about the air war against Nazi Germany. The professor is producing a 58-minute VCR/DVD documentary featuring the 303rd Bomb Group Hell's Angels in the Battle for Europe, and is planning to write a book focusing on the sense of community between Americans in the 8th Air Force and British families living near US air bases.



A VISIT TO THE INTERNATIONALLY FAMOUS ALAMO, next door to the Menger Hotel, was a "must." The most frequent comment was, "I didn't know it was so small!" A walk through the main structure took a matter of minutes.



303RD VETERANS AND FAMILY MEMBERS were bussed out to a working ranch near Hondo, Texas, for an evening of barbeque food and drink. Entertainment was provided by a country/western band and a rope twirling cowboy.



UNITED STATES SENATOR JOHN CORNYN OF TEXAS, son of 303rd Bomb Group co-pilot John Cornyn Sr., was presented with a Certificate of Honorary Membership in the Association by President Bill Cox after his speech at the banquet. The senator spoke convincingly and passionately about America's war on terrorism and the urgent need to combat it on all fronts.

AFTER THE BANQUET, Senator Cornyn joined Reunion Manager Eddie Deerfield, the senator's wife, Sandy, his mother, Gale, and Mary Lee Deerfield for a photo. Gale's husband, a 427th Squadron co-pilot and former POW, died in 1989.

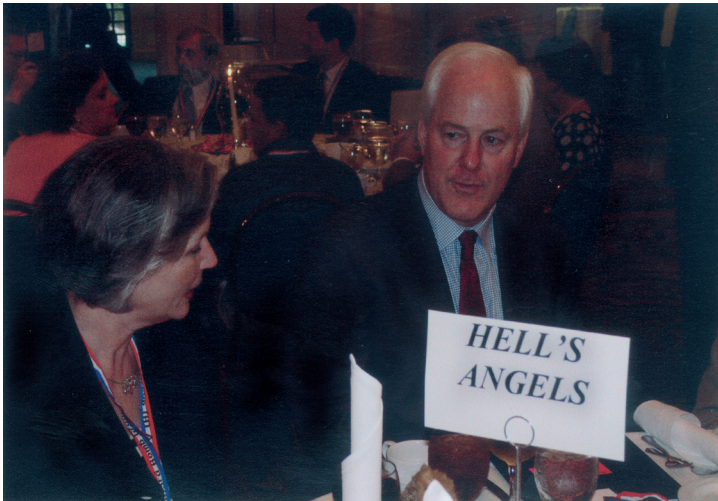
BANQUET!

Icing On The Reunion Cake



THE ANDREWS SISTERS REVUE, performed by Michelle Siro, Julie Derrington and Linda Siro, was a medley of the best-known rhythms of the famous World War II trio, with *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy* as a rousing finale. After the performance, the girls smothered Lee Faulkner with kisses. Smart man, wearing his original leather combat jacket to the banquet.

Famous 303rd B-17's as table names are a hit with banquet diners



ELIGIBLE RETIREES LOSING OUT BY NOT APPLYING FOR COMBAT-RELATED SPECIAL PAY

By Jim Tice
Army Times Staff Writer

Officials continue to be baffled as to why more eligible retirees have not applied for Combat-Related Special Compensation.

CRSC, a \$22 billion program endowed by Congress in 2002 for active and reserve retirees with disabilities related to combat or hazardous duties, has processed applications from only 90,000 of an estimated 600,000 eligible retirees.

Of the \$1 billion in payments paid to date, about \$628 million has gone to retired soldiers, according to Col. John Sackett, director of the program's Army component at the Human Resources Command.

With roughly \$21 billion remaining in the program, officials urge retirees who believe they are eligible to apply.

Unlike the Concurrent Retirement and Disability Payments program, an automatic entitlement from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service for any retiree with a Department of Veterans Affairs disability rating of 50 percent or higher, CRSC is an application-claim-based program.

Army officials suspect that some retirees have not applied because they believe they already are receiving CRSC compensation, when in fact they are receiving Concurrent Retirement and Disability pay, which not only is taxable, but generally has smaller payments.

For example, the monthly payment for a 50 percent rating under CRSC is \$663 tax-free, while the taxable monthly payment for CRDP is \$153.

Disabled retirees who are not certain which pay they receive should check their Defense Finance and Accounting pay stub. The law forbids retirees from receiving both CRSC and CRDP.

To qualify for CRSC, claimants must:

- . Be retired with at least 20 years of active or reserve service.
- . Receive retired pay offset by VA payments.
- . Have a disability rating of at least 10 percent.

Eligibility for CRSC requires a documented "combat-related" disability, which is a term that includes:

- . Disability resulting from conditions simulating war, such as a named exercise.
- . An injury incurred while performing hazardous service, such as flying, diving or parachute duty.
- . An injury caused by an instrument of war (combat vehicle, military weapon, etc.) A wound or injury caused by armed conflict (resulting in Purple Heart), and presumptive cases involving such conditions as exposure to Agent Orange or radiation.

Retirees who apply for CRSC should be prepared to document their claims with evidence showing that their disability is "combat-related" under the conditions described above.

For full details on CRSC: call toll-free at (866) 281- 3254. Soldiers can learn more on the Army's CRSC site on the Web.

From The President

Having just returned home from a very successful Reunion, I want to touch briefly on my gratitude to those that made it happen. First and foremost, Reunion Chairman Eddie Deerfield and his wife Mary Lee; Harold "Red" Timm and Lee Faulkner and their helpers in the Hospitality Room; Betty Kelley and Jill Miller for wrestling with the task of getting everyone seated for the Banquet, and last but not least, my wife, Jean.

I have addressed this subject before, but it seems it needs repeating. The 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association Board of Directors had to vote with their heads and not with their hearts in 2005 when they voted to dissolve the Association in 2007. The way our organization is set up requires a certain percentage of our members to be Veterans of the 303rd Bomb Group. With the recorded loss of over 100 a year, we are fast approaching the point when we cannot legally exist.

We had 230 people in San Antonio; only 80 were our World War II veterans. I think the numbers speak for themselves. It has become a matter of what is legal, not what we might want. In our hearts every member of The Board of Directors agrees with those that don't want to see the Association come to an end, but our heads had no choice. We have to deal with the legal ramifications of the aging members, myself included.

Having just written the above I will continue on the same subject: Taps is not a pleasant subject to write about, however, I do want to call this to your attention. The recording of each Veteran's demise is very important for the 303rd Bomb Group's record keeping and to our Webmaster, Gary Moncur. However, he does need your help in getting the information. You can inform him about any death of a 303rd Veteran, even if you think someone else will do it. It's better to get the information more than once, than not at all.

Although our Association will be dissolved after the 31st of December 2007, Gary Moncur will keep the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Website up and running. The difference will be a very slight change in the Website address. The "A" for our Association will no longer be there. The new address will be www.303rdBG.com. Gary Moncur has assured us he will continue manning the website until he is physically unable. At that time his son, Michael, will become the Webmaster and there is evidence of a next generation member waiting.

The 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc. may have to dissolve, but our history and our legacy will be kept alive for a very long time. Our history book "Might in Flight" and the Silver Anniversary Newsletter Collections are in Libraries all over the country, soon to be joined by a collection of the final 24 editions of our newsletter, which Eddie is putting together.

William (Bill) H. Cox



303rd Bomb Group Pin-ups

UPPER LEFT— High level meeting at Molesworth on 10 March 1944, the day after the first 8th Air Force bombing mission to Berlin. 303rd Bomb Group commander Col. Stevens (center) looks up at Maj. Gen. Grant while Maj. Gen. Kirk listens in. The 303rd flew 18 B-17's on the mission.

UPPER RIGHT—Comrades-in-arms are the 359th Squadron's 1st Lt. William Eisenhart and Capt. Thomas Quinn, pictured after the 22 May 1944 mission to Kiel, Germany. Tom flew as pilot with Bill as co-pilot.

LOWER LEFT—Four sergeants who flew combat missions on three different 360th Squadron crews. From l-to-r, Neil Fielder, engineer on the Baker crew; Felix Spoerri, radio operator on the Heller crew; Virgil Bowman, waist gunner on the Baker crew, and P. J. Davis, ball turret gunner on the Cogswell crew.

LOWER RIGHT—Mail call in the 358th Squadron. Everett Dasher of the Oxrider crew is in the right foreground.



Molesworth Diary

"IF IT WASN'T FOR YOU..."

I do not recall which mission we were on, but we had a stranger flying as waist gunner. Just before we entered the bomb run, the bombardier called for an oxygen check. The waist gunner did not answer. I looked back to the waist from the radio room and he was lying flat on his back. He had knocked his oxygen mask off while he was putting on his flak suit.

I rushed to his side as his lips were purple and I pushed a mask against his face and turned the valve wide open. As we were coming off the bomb run, his eyelids began to flutter. I got him back on his feet and made sure he was all right.

At the time, he never even said "thank you," but several days later he told me, "If it wasn't for you, I would have finished my missions several days earlier (the hard way)"

Ernest Tuescher
358th Squadron Radio Operator

WAS CABLE DAMAGE CAUSE OF NEAR-CRASH?

The first part of my story was told in the February 1998 issue of the Hell's Angels Newsletter. The story continues:

Our misadventures on the mission to Hamm, Germany, our primary target on September 19, 1944, were not over as we approached the English coast for an emergency landing at the 56th Fighter Group airfield. The landing was rough because the flap on our left wing had been badly damaged by anti-aircraft fire so we came in flaps up. Bob Akers and Les Gidding made a great landing.

As we were taxiing in, Don Saam, our ball turret gunner, called me on intercom to say there was a control cable hanging loose in the waist. I found that the cable had been damaged (by flak) near the wall and I had to pull the end out a couple feet in order to work on it. I got a piece of arming wire out of the bomb bay, planning make a temporary splice. But, when I tried to bend the wire, it was like steel and impossible to use for splicing. There had been no problem with that cable in landing, so I figured we would be okay for take-off.

We boarded the aircraft the next morning for the flight back to Molesworth. Akers advanced the throttles and we started on the take-off run. The pilot suddenly shouted to Giddings, "Get on that right rudder!" We staggered off the ground and assumed an attitude of right wing 10-degrees low

and left wing 10-degrees high. This seemed to be the only way the pilots could get the B-17 to fly in a straight line. I don't know how they did it, but they brought the aircraft down in one piece.

After three days of cogitation, I finally concluded that the control cable I had extended in the waist was still attached to the pulley, and when activated pulled full right on the rudder trim tab. This forced the rudder to the left, and caused the aircraft to swing to the left as we made our take-off run.

Herb Shanker
359th Squadron Engineer

WHY SAME SECOND RUN ON TARGET?

Our target on August 27, 1944 was a small German fighter base at Esbjerg in Denmark. We didn't drop our bombs on the first pass over the target. We did a 360-degree turn and came back on the same heading and same altitude for a second run. I can't understand why we didn't change the heading and the altitude. Those German gunners on the ground had to be foaming with joy. The B-17 ahead of us was hit in the middle by a flak burst, and broke in half. Some good men died right there. On our aircraft, the engineer was wounded.

Dale Schneider
360th Squadron Radio Operator

WORLD WAR II WAS UNIQUE IN HISTORY

Of our original crew of nine, one was killed in action, two were captured as prisoners of war, and two others suffered serious wounds. I was one of the lucky ones. With all our experiences we see that period now as the most remarkable time in our lives. We lived through a period unique in history.

The few times I was able to get a pass and go into a nearby English town, I do remember the children. The kids would run up to us and say, "Any gum, chum?" Most of us would use our ration cards to get what gum or candy we could and give it to the children. When I was in Belgium I saw people going through our garbage cans for something to eat. After seeing that, most of us took as much extra food as we could and saved it for those hungry people. These few incidents I experienced were nothing in comparison to the devastation, starvation and deprivation that many others saw while they were in foreign lands.

Al Dussliere
427th Squadron Waist & Tail Gunner

OPEN FORUM

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

THOUGHTS ABOUT GREATEST GENERATION

As I was driving home last night, after welcoming the 303rd Bomb Group reunion with my lighthearted comments at the Menger's Reception, I realized I didn't truly express the gratitude I personally feel about the sacrifice and service that the military personnel of the 303rd Bomb Group, as well as the other veterans of the World War II era, gave in order for this country to live in freedom.

It gives my "Baby Boomer" generation encouragement when we realize that, not only did the veterans of World War II fight Hitler and his army in Europe, but also the war in the Pacific at the same time, and they "stayed the course."

It allows the current and future generations to continue their quest toward fighting the newest form of tyranny - terrorism. Our current military men and women in uniform are proud to serve and recognize the need to "stay the course" and I have to believe it's partly because they inherited some of that "dogged determination" from what Tom Brokaw, the news commentator, has referred to as "the greatest generation that has lived."

Sincerely and with heartfelt thanks,

Stephanie Pheanis
The Menger Hotel

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF USAF TO CORRECT MYTH

I received the following response from Gen. Metcalf to my letter suggesting (among other things) that it would be nice if they could use the opportunity of the addition of the *Memphis Belle* to the WW II display to recognize all the "Four

Horsemen" (91st, 303rd, 305th and 306th Bomb Groups.)

He wrote, "I agree that displaying the story of the first four heavy bomb groups in the ETO (and correcting past myths) is certainly worthwhile. The best time to open such an exhibit would probably be with the rollout of the restored *Memphis Belle*. In the interim, donations, artifacts, original photographs and documents from these four groups would be most helpful."

He signed it "Charlie" and added a handwritten note "Good ideas that we will incorporate!" Looks like we have successfully laid the groundwork.

We plan to donate the 91st BG archives. It looks like the door is open, now, to contribution (for example) of photos of *Hell's Angel* and any documentation you have on the completion date of 25 missions, e.g., the Group or Squadron "Dailies," aircraft log book records, celebration photos, record of William Wyler visits (apparently he did take some footage at the 303rd). They are talking about four or more years before the *Belle* is restored.

Ed Gates
President, 91st BGMA
(Editor's Note—The reference by Gen. Metcalf to "correcting past myths" means assuring that *Hell's Angels* gets credit as the first B-17 in the ETO to complete 25 combat missions).

NEW AEROSPACE MUSEUM AT SPOKANE AIRPORT

As a 17-year old I worked on construction of Spokane's Galena Air Depot, which later became Fairchild Air Force Base. Eleven WWII heavy bomb groups were staged and trained at Geiger Field and

Fairchild AFB.

As I had early ties to Fairchild, I've been supportive of the Museum there. And when I could not raise interest in an air war museum in Walla Walla where four heavy bomb groups started, I have been delivering my large collection of air war photos, printed materials and memorabilia to the new Fairchild Museum.

The Museum is moving off base to an excellent location at the entrance to Spokane International Air Terminal. The site and plans have been approved, and groundbreaking underway. The new facility, now known as The Armed Forces and Aerospace Museum will be one of the finest in the world.

Don R. Hayes
B-17 Flying Fortress Asso.

HOPES CHILDREN RISE TO LEVEL OF 303RD UNCLE

My uncle, Harry Golland, a T/Sgt in the 303rd Bomb Group, passed away August 18, 2006. When asked by his daughter what he thought of World War II, he replied, "I thought I could win it all by myself." What spirit!

He lived a full and honorable life. His country and his family were very proud of him. He will be missed. I have three children. It is my hope they will rise to the character of that generation.

Michael Bryan
Laguna Beach, California

HAND SALUTE FROM RETIRED ENLISTED MEN

Congratulations on your reunion. I wish to thank each and every one of you for the sacrifice you have made to make this a safer and better world for all our fellow Americans and their families. I've "been there, done that" so I know

what you have gone through and what you have done for our country.

You have my respect and my admiration. Please accept this "hand salute" as a way military personnel pay respect to one another.

And permit me to propose a toast to those that paid the ultimate price for freedom and the American way of life. May we hold the candle of freedom high with pride and not let anyone take it away from us.

God bless America.
United we stand.

Leroy Riddell, President
Retired Enlisted Association

IT WAS QUEEN ELIZABETH, NOT MARY, IN PHOTO

Thank you for sending us a copy of the *Hell's Angels Newsletter* for August 2006. I'm glad we could help with the identification of Assistant Secretary of War for Air Robert Lovett.

Perhaps someone has already alerted you to the error concerning the name of the Queen in the picture on page 14. The caption should have identified the two royal ladies as Queen Elizabeth (not Queen Mary) and her daughter Princess Elizabeth.

The mother of Princess Elizabeth, now Queen Elizabeth II, was Queen Elizabeth, wife (consort) of King George VI. The Queen Mother Elizabeth, who died recently, survived her husband by over 50 years and became affectionately known to the British public and in American tabloids as "the Queen Mum"

Queen Mary was the grandmother of Princess Elizabeth, now the Queen of England. King George V and Queen Mary were the parents of King George VI.

Bob Parks
Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

**303RD BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
JULY 1, 2005 - JUNE 30, 2006**

OPENING BALANCE

NEWSLETTER ADVANCE MONEY	\$11,098.34
PX INVENTORY	\$9,439.26
TOTAL NON SPENDABLE ASSETS	\$20,537.60
AVAILABLE CASH ASSETS	\$159,812.87
TOTAL OPENING ASSETS	\$180,350.47

INCOME		
DUES	\$1,240.00	
DONATIONS	\$1,575.00	
SAN ANTONIO REUNION TO DATE	\$18,249.00	
PX SALES	\$7,149.00	
INTEREST	\$4,099.88	
DAYTON REUNION	\$326.62	

TOTAL INCOME \$32,639.50

EXPENSES	ADMINISTRATION	\$1,663.68
	MEMBERSHIP	\$83.01
	OFFICERS	\$1,182.67
	INSURANCE	\$398.00
	MOLESWORTH MONUMENT INS.	\$1,174.42
	RECOGNITION AWARDS	\$4,081.27
	MEMORIALS	\$177.01
	NEWSLETTER	\$27,883.17
	PX INVENTORY	\$4,069.69
	PX ADMINISTRATION	\$482.94
	SHIPMENT OF MISSION REPORTS	\$352.28
	WEBSITE FUTURE & PRESENT	\$11,562.12
	FLORIDA CORP. REGISTRATION	\$61.25
	2006 REUNION TO DATE	\$7,437.15
	MAILING FOR SUCCESSOR GRP.	\$199.10

TOTAL EXPENSES \$59,144.08

TOTAL AVAILABLE CASH ASSETS \$120,184.29

NEWSLETTER ADVANCE	\$11,215.17
REUNION RESERVE FOR EXPENSES	\$11,811.85
REUNION ADVANCE	\$2,903.93
PX INVENTORY	\$7,730.65
TOTAL NON SPENDABLE ASSETS	\$33,661.60
TOTAL ASSETS 6/30/06	\$153,845.89

BALANCE SHEET**CASH AND BANK ACCOUNTS**

BANK OF AMERICA CHECKING	\$14,769.22
BANK OF AMERICA SAVINGS	\$34,396.44
BANK OF AMERICA CD I	\$51,018.63
US SAVINGS BONDS	\$20,000.00
TOTAL CASH SPENDABLE ASSETS	\$120,184.29

OTHER ASSETS

PX INVENTORY	\$7,730.65
ADVANCED FOR NEWSLETTER	\$11,215.17
ADVANCED FOR REUNION	\$2,903.93
REUNION RESERVE FOR EXPENSES	\$11,811.85
TOTAL NON SPENDABLE ASSETS	\$33,661.60
TOTAL ASSETS	\$153,845.89

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

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

In Memoriam

Glenn N. Albright	427 th	9/01/99
Eugene F. Edwarda	358 th	6/22/06
Anthony Frankewich	360 th	6/06/06
Chaplain Warren K. Hume	444 A/D	6/05/06
Paul L. Kerr	427 th	1980
Howard M. Middleton	427 th	5/22/63
Oran T. O'Connor	358 th	8/9/06
Roger A. Prior	359 th	1981
Orvis Silrum	427 th	12/7/04
Jacob Strouse	358 TH	6/28/06
George E. Wright	358 th	4/15/84

DONATIONS IN HONOR OF

Mary J. Hemminger For Rev. Bob Johnson

NEW MEMBERS

John W. McCall, Jr., 3907 S. Monaco Pkwy., Denver CO 80237-2017 358th Family Member

John L. Cox (Ann) 4029 N.E. 59th Terr., Gladstone MO 64119-2206 358th Family Member

Giff Nickol, 927 Bergen Ct., Bel Air MD 21014-6909 Assoc. Member

Harold Benefield (Mabel) 508 Oak Hollow Ln., Fort Worth, TX 76112-1024 358th Family Member

Jason Benefield (Kim) 8800 Creed Trail, Fort Worth, TX 76118-7814 358th Member

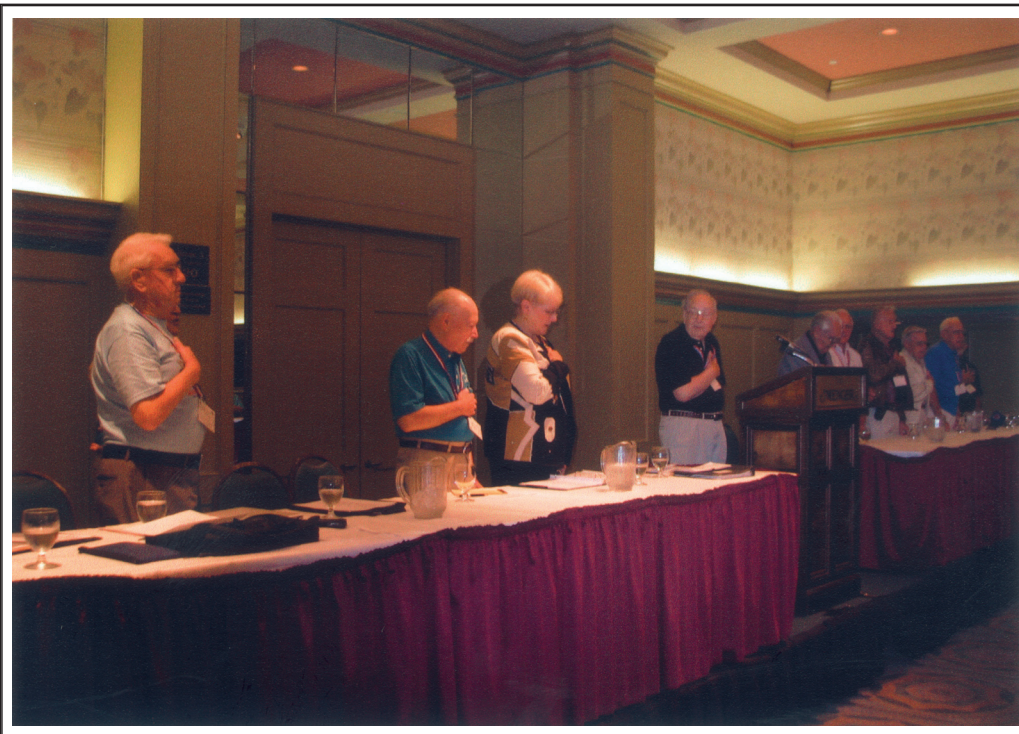
The Way Things Were



THE GENERAL MEETING of the 23rd Reunion of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association began with the Pledge of Allegiance. Standing at attention are members of the Board of Directors.

The meeting gave the Board and Association Committee Chairmen an opportunity to present their reports to the membership at the reunion and to answer questions.

Most of the questions were directed at Charles Vieira who came to the podium to speak about the proposed successor organization, The Might In Flight Legacy Association.



THE EDITOR COMMENTS....

One of the questions asked of Chuck Vieira, President Designate of the fledgling *Might In Flight Legacy Association* by family members at the reunion General Meeting was, "Who chose you?" His answer was diplomatic. I'll be more definitive. Not one, not a single family member, including those most active in the 303rd Bomb Group Association, came forward to volunteer to lead a successor organization. Quite the contrary. Some of those same family members were prophets of gloom and doom about prospects for a new Association.

Then, along comes Joe Vieira, a 359th Squadron combat veteran who was the driving force behind the formation of the present Association in 1975-76. He convinces his nephew, a Vietnam War veteran who was awarded the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross and Purple Heart, to step into the vacuum as he, himself, did 30 years ago. Chuck Vieira accepted the challenge. Treasurer Rob Galbraith and Secretary Rebecca Mitchell had already volunteered for their offices, so the three main positions were now filled.

There is a red flag, however—a passage in the new Mission Statement (see cover story) that surprised and alarmed members of the 303rd Board's Executive Committee and others, including this editor. Specifically, the reference to allowing airborne organizations after World War II to become part of the new organization's charter. Clearly, a legitimate successor to the 303rd Bomb Group Association should limit membership to 303rd BG veterans and their family members down through the generations. No harm in welcoming outsiders as non-voting Associate members, but not as chartered within the Articles of Incorporation. A true successor organization is obligated to maintain the integrity of the original 303rd Bomb Group. Awarding membership with voting rights to other military units diminishes that integrity. The passage should be eliminated.

Another question bandied about at the reunion was, "Why not keep going with the present Association?" Read President Bill Cox's column on page 14. Bill made the same point in the August issue. That's why the Board in 2005 voted to dissolve. When the curtain comes down at the reunion next year, the 303rd Bomb Group will go out with a trumpet fanfare and not just fade away with barely a whimper.

Eddie Deerfield

303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.
Hell's Angels Newsletter
Eddie Deerfield, Editor
3552 Landmark Trail
Palm Harbor, FL 34684-5016

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