

Hell's Angels Newsletter

303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

May, 2007



THE PLACE TO BE ON THE NIGHT of Sunday, September 23, is in the Commonwealth Ballroom of the Sheraton National Hotel where Doc Scantlin and his Imperial Palms orchestra will present a colorful 1940's floor show and play music for dancing at the 303rd Bomb Group's gala farewell banquet.

ALL-STAR LINEUP LIKELY AT FINAL REUNION OF THE 303RD

As this issue of the Hell's Angels Newsletter went to press, four men who have had major impacts on world events are likely to recognize the 303rd Bomb Group's heroics in World War II by speaking at the farewell reunion.

President George W. Bush, Commander-in-Chief of the US Armed Forces, has been invited to address the 303rd at the Group's final Memorial Service. It will take place on the Plaza of the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC. on the morning of Saturday 22 September.

Senator John Cornyn of Texas, son of 427th Squadron co-pilot John "Tex" Cornyn, wrote to President Bush, lauding the 303rd Bomb

Group and urging him to give the invitation his "strongest consideration." (See letter on page 5.)

2d Lt. Cornyn became a prisoner of war when the Jack Rose crew bailed out of a burning B-17 on the Mannheim mission of 13 January 1945. After the war, he served in the Air Force for 31 years, retiring as a Colonel. The senator's father died in March, 1989, suffering a heart attack on his ranch in Hondo, Texas.

The 2007 reunion's farewell banquet is planned for the evening of Sunday 23 September. Three special guests have been invited:

Walter Cronkite, the former CBS Evening News anchorman who was once named in a

major poll as the "most trusted figure" in American public life. In 1939, Cronkite joined United Press to cover World War II. He flew with air crews on bombing missions over Germany, went ashore on D-Day and parachuted with the 101st Airborne.

The newsman flew two missions with the 303rd and was frequently at Molesworth to report as crews returned from missions. In his book "A Reporter's Life," the eminent journalist recalled the combat death of a 303rd pilot and the tears shed by the crew.

Referring to the pilot, Cronkite wrote, "We had spent many evenings together at various London pubs. His plane was

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303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.

Hell's Angels Newsletter

Editor--Eddie Deerfield

Vol. 31, No. 2 3552 Landmark Trail, Palm Harbor, FL 34684 May, 2007

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 -- CATHOLIC

Bishop Rene H. Gracida, P. O. Box 217, Tynan, TX 78391-0217

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REUNION GUESTS OF HONOR—BUSH, CRONKITE, PICKERING AND MOSELEY (Continued from page 1)

hit by a single machine gun bullet. It pierced the windshield — and his heart. With my heart heavy, I wrote the story. I called it 'Nine Crying Boys and a Flying Fort.' Nine crying boys and a war correspondent who thought he was too tough to cry."

The pilot was Donald E. Stockton of the 427th Squadron, on the mission to Kiel, Germany 14 May 1943.

Thomas R. Pickering, former US Ambassador to the United Nations, Under Secretary for Political Affairs in the Department of State, Senior Vice President for International Relations at Boeing and a member of the aircraft firm's Executive Council.

He was on active duty in the U.S. Navy from 1956–1959, and later served in the Naval Reserve to the grade of Lieutenant Commander.

His four decade career in Foreign Service included ambassadorships in Russia, India, Israel, El Salvador, Nigeria and Jordan. Earlier in his career he was assigned to the American Embassy in Tanzania and later as Special Assistant to Secretaries of State William Rogers and Henry Kissinger.

Currently, Ambassador Pickering is affiliated with the International Crisis Group.

General T. Michael Moseley, Chief of Staff of the US Air Force. As Chief, he serves as the senior Air Force officer responsible for the organization, training and equipage of more than 710,000 active duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian forces serving in the United States and overseas.

As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Moseley and other service chiefs function as military advisers to the Secretary of Defense, National Security Council and the President.

He commanded the 9th Air Force and US Central Command Air Forces while serving as Combined Forces Air Component Commander for operations Southern Watch, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. He is rated as a Command Pilot, with more than 2,800 hours in T-37, T-38, AT-38 and F-15 aircraft.

General Moseley was promoted to four star rank on 1 October 2003.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Following is the tentative program schedule for the 303rd Bomb Group Association's 2007 reunion.

DATES: Thursday, September 20 through Sunday, September 23.

PLACE: Sheraton National Hotel, 900 South Orme Street, Arlington, Virginia. Call 1-888-627-8210 to make reservations. Ask for the 303rd Bomb Group special rate of \$109 plus tax nightly. The hotel will cut off reservations at this rate after August 28.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

Members register on arrival at hotel. Armed Forces Reunions will staff registration table in lobby. Board of Directors meet at 9 AM. Hospitality Room and PX start operating in afternoon. Welcome Reception from 5 PM to 7 PM.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Optional events—Capital city highlights and monuments tour, visit to the Smithsonian's new Steven V. Udvar-Hazy air and space center, theatrical performance in evening at the Kennedy Center.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

Group breakfast at hotel. Memorial Service from 10 AM to 12 noon on the Plaza of the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC. Lunch at the Club at Andrews Air Force Base. A briefing by Base officers and a tour of the famous military facility. At 8 PM in the hotel, enactment of a mock mission briefing following by a showing of *Command Decision*, the World War II air combat film starring Clark Gable.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

Worship services at hotel. Group breakfast at hotel. Individual squadron and family member meetings 9:30 AM to 10:15 AM. General meeting 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM. Board of Directors meet at 1:30 PM. Social hour and cash bar in ballroom foyer 5 PM to 6 PM. Dinner and program 6 PM to 9 PM. Floorshow by Doc Scantlin and his orchestra 9 PM to 10 PM, followed by dancing.

(NOTE—The 2007 Reunion Registration Packet was scheduled to be mailed late in April. Members who haven't received the packet by the end of May should contact the Membership Chair at the address shown on page 2 of this newsletter. Make your own hotel reservations by calling 1-888-627-8210 without delay.)

THE VIEW IN THE PHOTO is looking north from the 7th floor of the Sheraton National Hotel. Visible are the spires of the new USAF Memorial and the Washington Monument. The dome of the capitol building is on the far horizon in the center. See more reunion photos on page 4.

SPECIAL SCREENING OF 1948 FILM "COMMAND DECISION" PLANNED FOR 2007 REUNION

Veterans and family members who attended the 2004 reunion in Savannah recall with pleasure the special showing of "12 O-Clock High." As an encore, the 2007 reunion will feature a showing of "Command Decision."

The movie stars Clark Gable as an Air Force Brigadier General who makes the decision to order B-17 and B-24 bombers deep into Germany without fighter escort to attack on separate missions three factory sites manufacturing the new German jet fighter.

In real life, Gable did serve in the US 8th Air Force, flying several of his missions as a gunner and photographer in 303rd Bomb Group B-17's. In the photo below, he's with 359th Squadron pilot William Calhoun after they returned from a mission to Antwerp, Belgium 4 May 1943.



From The President

One of the biggest decisions we have to make as we bring our Association to a close is the disposal of any remaining assets. To that end I'm laying out the legal requirements for our Dissolution. Our assets are dedicated to an exempt purpose as stated in the "Articles of Incorporation of 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc." and filed with the Florida Secretary of State on April 19, 1977.

Article Eleven-Dissolution, spells out the requirements which we must follow and the article reads as follows: "Upon the dissolution or other termination of the Corporation, no part of the property of the Corporation or any of the proceeds shall be distributed to or inure to the benefit of any of the members of the Corporation, but all such property and proceeds subject to the discharge of valid obligation of the Corporation, and to the applicable provisions of the non-profit Corporation law, under Chapter 617, Florida statutes, shall be distributed as directed by the members of the Corporation among one or more corporations, trust, community chest funds or foundations organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary or educational purposes....."

Organizations that our assets can go to:

- A. Federal Government
- B. State Government
- C. Local Government
- D. Local Government operated for Public Purpose
- E. A Veteran's Organization with similar purpose as our Bomb Group, as long as their Articles of Incorporation have in it the following statement "No part of its net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons."
- F. Museum
- G. Education Organization
- H. Private School
- I. Other Section 501 (c) (3) Organizations as listed in IRS Publication 557, page 24, i.e. Scholarships, Hospital, Clinic, Home for the Aged, etc.

I'm asking each of you to send your recommendations as to where you would like the remaining assets of our Association to go, assuming there are any, to your Squadron Representative. You'll find his name on the inside front cover of our Newsletter. Please send your recommendations by July 15 and include the full legal name and address of the Organization so they can be contacted for their tax status.

Keep in mind that we will have to verify the qualifications of the recommended recipients. Any organization we consider, including our 2nd generation "Might in Flight Legacy Association", will not be eligible for the funds unless they can provide proof of being a 501 (c) (3) organization.

I'm asking each Squadron Representative to tabulate your recommended nominations and forward them to me. I will then combine the nominations in order of their popularity and present them to the Board of Directors.

At the General Meeting in Washington, the top five nominations will be presented to the voting members in attendance for the final ballot vote.

William H. (Bill) Cox

JOHN CORNYN
TEXAS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4305

February 9, 2007

The Honorable George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On September 22, 2007, the veterans of the 303rd Bomb Group, 8th Air Force will hold their final Memorial Service at the World War II Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, DC. The crewmembers and families of the 303rd Bomb Group have been meeting regularly at reunions since the end of the war, but given their advancing ages, they have decided to make their 2007 meeting their final one. Fittingly, they are going to hold their last "Memorial Service" at the World War II Memorial and they would be honored if you could appear briefly before the group.

A formal invitation for you to speak at the 303rd Bomb Group's final meeting was sent to the White House Military Office on March 28, 2006 from the President of the Bomb Group's Association, Colonel William H. Cox, USAF-Ret. I respectfully ask that you give the invitation your strongest consideration. I had the honor of being the keynote speaker at the 303rd Bomb Group's Reunion Banquet this past September in San Antonio. It was an experience that I will remember for the rest of my life as I listened to these members of America's "Greatest Generation" recall their experiences as B-17 bomber crewmen flying daylight missions over Nazi Germany from 1942 until the war's end in 1945. These recollections were particularly poignant and heartwarming for me because my late father, then 2LT John Cornyn, flew 26 missions in the 303rd until he was shot down on January 13, 1945. You will never meet a group more patriotic and inspiring than the crews and families of the 303rd – I urge you to attend their final meeting if your schedule will allow.

I thank you for your steadfast and unwavering leadership of our Nation during this challenging time of global war. I strongly encourage you to attend the last meeting of the members of the 303rd Bomb Group, ordinary Americans and their families who answered America's call to duty when global war threatened our freedom over sixty years ago.

Sincerely,



JOHN CORNYN
United States Senator

JC:pgo



PRESIDENT FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT PRESENTED THE MEDAL OF HONOR TO T/SGT FORREST L. VOSLER in a White House ceremony on August 31, 1944. Vosler, nicknamed "Woody," was a 358th Squadron radio operator. He was honored for his heroics on the 303rd Bomb Group mission to Bremen, Germany on 20 December 1943. Witnessing the ceremony in the Oval Office was Under Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson.

File photo courtesy of Rochester (NY) Democrat & Chronicle

MEMORIAL PARK TO HONOR "WOODY" VOSLER, 303rd BOMB GROUP MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT

The village of Livonia, New York, where Forrest "Woody" Vosler lived, is creating a memorial park to honor its Congressional Medal of Honor winner.

Village Mayor Calvin A. Lathan, the driving force behind the community's effort to recognize the heroism of the 303rd Bomb Group airman, explained, "It is clear that Woody is one of a very few Air Force veterans to be awarded the Medal of Honor and is the only Livonia resident to be so honored. This memorial to him is long overdue."

Construction of The Forrest L. Vosler Veterans Memorial Park began last year, and the park will be formally dedicated on June 16th. The memorial will also serve to recognize all military veterans who are part of the Livonia community. Lathan described the facility as "an intimate pocket park, a sort of private nest where someone can sit and contemplate."

A fund-raising campaign with a goal of \$90,000

made the project possible. The Executive Committee of the 303rd Bomb Group Association approved a grant of \$1,000 toward the park construction.

The mayor of the small community in upstate New York said, "Woody, as his friends called him, was a 1941 graduate of Livonia High School. There are classmates still living in our community who have fond memories of Woody. Their written memories will be part of our Memorial Park in a kiosk at the entrance. His high school sweetheart, who was present when FDR presented him with the Medal of Honor, still lives here."

Vosler died in 1992 at the age of 68 after suffering a heart attack. Ray Connell, who was president of the 1941 senior class, had this to say, "Woody was our classmate and a kid we hung out with. He didn't socialize with any particular group. You might see him exchanging words with the Latin Club or taking part in a

friendly game of 'push and shove' or helping a group of girls working on a hand drawn map of Livingston County. He was welcome everywhere, a very popular classmate.

"Woody was attentive to his high school lessons, and if any of his friends got bogged down with a problem, he would steer them in the right direction. Except for an occasional lapse into mischief, like one Halloween when he helped a bunch of senior high school boys move a farmer's manure spreader onto the roof of the high school. All was forgiven when they returned it, unbroken, to its owner.

"When old friends from yesteryear meet somewhere and recall the days of their youth, invariably Woody's name comes up and is the highlight of the conversation. We will never forget him."

The citation which accompanied the presentation of the Congressional Medal of Honor to T/Sgt. Forrest L. Vosler read:

For conspicuous gallantry in action against the enemy above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a radio operator-air gunner on a heavy bombardment aircraft in a mission over Bremen, Germany, on 20 December 1943. After bombing the target, the aircraft in which T/Sgt. Vosler was serving was severely damaged by antiaircraft fire, forced out of formation, and immediately subjected to repeated vicious attacks by enemy fighters. Early in the engagement a 20-mm. cannon shell exploded in the radio compartment, painfully wounding T/Sgt. Vosler in the legs and thighs. At about the same time a direct hit on the tail of the ship seriously wounded the tail gunner and rendered the tail guns inoperative. Realizing the great need for firepower in protecting the vulnerable tail of the ship, T/Sgt. Vosler, with grim determination, kept up a steady stream of deadly fire. Shortly thereafter another 20-mm. enemy shell exploded, wounding T/Sgt. Vosler in the chest and about the face. Pieces of metal lodged in both eyes, impairing his vision to such an extent that he could only distinguish blurred shapes. Displaying remarkable tenacity and courage, he kept firing his guns and declined to take first-aid treatment. The radio equipment had been rendered inoperative during the battle, and when the pilot announced that he would have to ditch, although unable to see and working entirely by touch, T/Sgt. Vosler finally got the set operating and sent out distress signals despite several lapses into unconsciousness. When the ship ditched, T/Sgt. Vosler managed to get out on the wing by himself and hold the wounded tail gunner from slipping off until the other crewmembers could help them into the dinghy. T/Sgt. Vosler's actions on this occasion were an inspiration to all serving with him. The extraordinary courage, coolness, and skill he displayed in the face of great odds when handicapped by injuries that would have incapacitated the average crewmember were outstanding.

The wounded tail gunner was George Buske who survived the war and months in military hospitals while undergoing numerous operations. He passed away several years ago.



THE FORREST L. VOSLER NCO ACADEMY OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

A distinguished military training center for US Air Force non-commissioned officers is named for T/Sgt. Forrest L. Vosler, the 303rd Bomb Group's most illustrious enlisted airman, who was awarded the Medal of Honor for heroism on the mission to Bremen, Germany on 20 December 1943. "Woody" Vosler, who died in February 1992 at the age of 68, would have been proud to know that the Academy carries on his belief in and support of strong education and training programs for enlisted men and women.

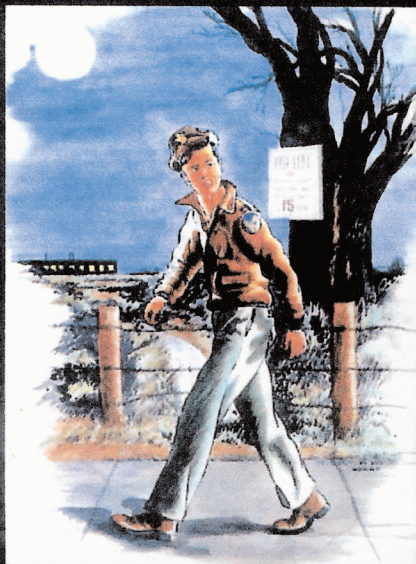
In this September 1992 photo, Lt. Gen. Thomas S. Moorman, Jr., Vice Commander of the USAF Space Command, joined widow Virginia Vosler in a ribbon-cutting ceremony dedicating the facility at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado. She died less than a year later.

Plans are well underway for a gala dedication ceremony on Saturday June 16. Mayor Lathan said, "We have been in touch with two local American Legion posts. They have been very supportive and will be part of the dedication. We have contacted Gary Beikrich, a Vietnam MOH recipient as a Special Forces medic. He's the chaplain for the MOH Society and knew Woody through their reunions. The widow and family of George Buske will be in attendance, and Bill Simpkins, the last living member of the original 303rd Bomb Group's *Jersey Bounce* crew, is planning on attending. Woody's family and friends in the Livonia community will make this an even more special day."

When the Hanscom Air Force Base band was unable to attend due to a schedule conflict, the 98th Division military band stepped into the breach and will play at the ceremony. When the manager of the Genesee Air Museum heard about the planned dedication of The Forrest L. Vosler Veterans Memorial Park he offered to arrange a "fly over" by a B-17.

In addition to the new memorial park in Livonia and the NCO academy of the US Air Force in Colorado, there's Vosler Avenue at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Alaska, Vosler Street at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois and the Vosler Academic Development Center at Keesler Air Force base in Mississippi. Each a fitting tribute to an airman who helped make the 303rd Bomb Group truly outstanding in the US Eighth Air Force.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A 303RD COMBAT AIRMAN



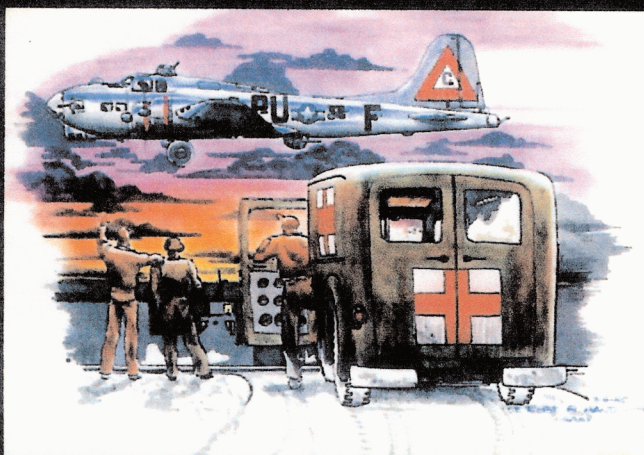
4 AM BREAKFAST HIKE



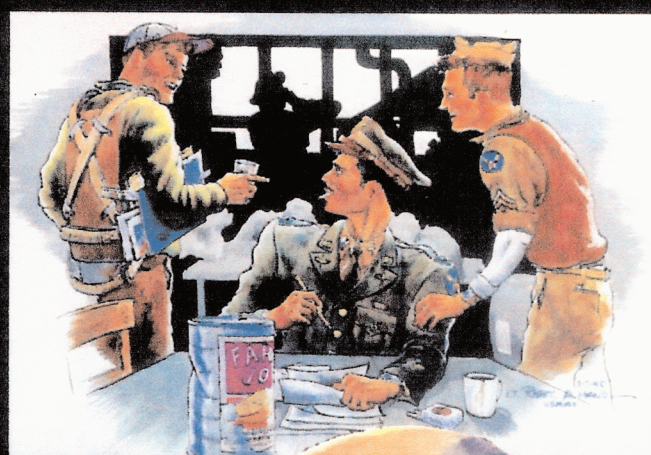
SUITING UP FOR THE MISSION



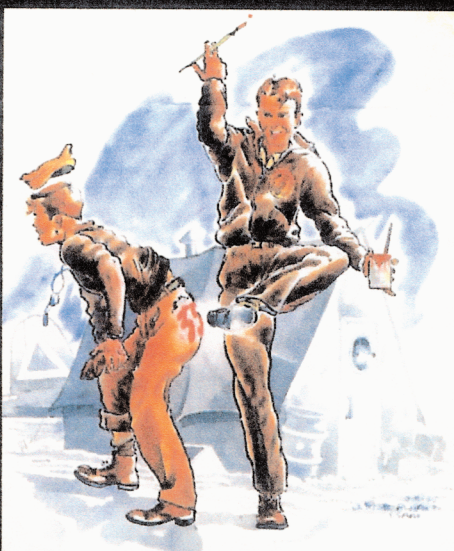
FULL ATTENTION TO BRIEFING



THE FORTRESSES DEPART



INTERROGATION



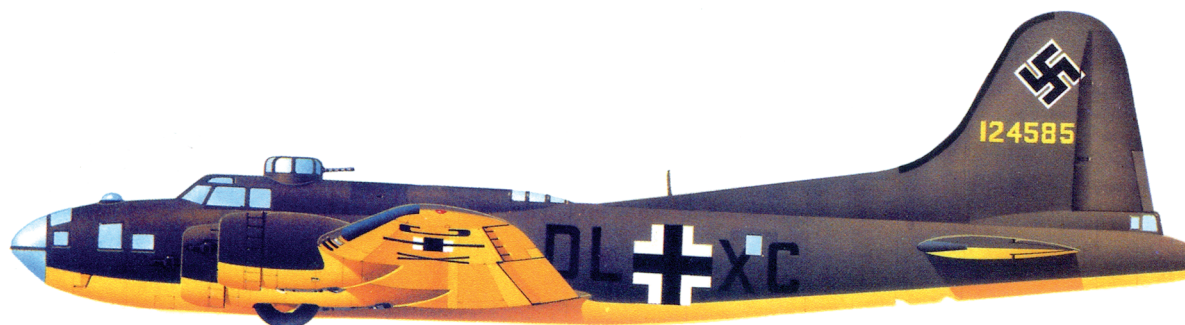
THE 'RED 35' CEREMONY

THESE COLOR SKETCHES were created by artist Robert A. "Bob" Hand, while off duty from missions with the 303rd Bomb Group. They were drawn with black India ink on watercolor paper using watersoluble color pencils. The Sketches are dated Feb. and Mar., 1945.

Robert A. "Bob" Hand, Sr.
USAF (Ret.)



HIGH ALTITUDE HEADGEAR



SICKENING SIGHT—B-17 WITH NAZI SWASTIKA IN PLACE OF TRIANGLE C

Dark Day in 303rd Bomb Group History as B-17 *Wulfe Hound* Captured by Germany

By any reasonable measurement, the 303rd Bomb Group's mission to bomb railroad marshalling yards at Rouen, France on 12 December 1942 was SNAFU. It was only the Group's sixth mission out of an eventual 364, and Murphy's Law kicked in. It seemed like everything that could go wrong did go wrong.

The battle plan called for 21 B-17's from the 303rd. Two aborted soon after take-off. Six others aborted enroute to the target and came back early. There were turret and gun failures, oxygen problems, an engine failure, gas leaks—you name it. The primary target had been Romilly-sur-Seine, but it was clouded over and Rouen became the alternate on the way home. Three of the remaining B-17's couldn't locate the target and returned with their bomb loads. Only seven of the original force of 21 aircraft actually bombed the Rouen site.

The formation was under heavy attack by an estimated 40 FW-190's and Me-109's after crossing the

French coast on the way in. The German pilots knocked Capt. William Frost's *One O'clock Jump* into a flat spin. The crew bailed out; two crew members were KIA. Lt. Paul Flickenger's *Wulfe Hound* left the formation for cloud cover while under attack. He descended to about 500 feet and, according to reports, said he decided to land the plane because it was no longer airworthy and if the engines quit "we were dead."

The entire crew was still aboard, eight of them in crash positions in the radio room. Flickenger and the co-pilot made a perfect wheels-up landing on a French farm, with the ball turret's guns pointing downward. They tried to do as much damage to the plane as possible before running for nearby woods. Four became POW's, six evaded capture.

Wulfe Hound was repaired by the Germans and became their weapon in the war against America.

GERMAN TROOPS GATHER AROUND WHAT WAS ONCE THE 360TH SQUADRON'S B-17 WULFE HOUND. It was captured by the enemy after it landed in France with relatively minor damage early in the air war. It was used initially to train German pilots and flak batteries in developing tactics to bring down B-17's, and later on secret Luftwaffe missions.



A New Meaning to "Keep 'Em Flying"

SCATTERS DAD'S ASHES

ABOARD TOURING B-17!

By Todd Hollritt



AL HOLLRITT ABOARD YANKEE LADY on his last visit to the air show in Reading, Pennsylvania, before he passed away. It was the wish of the 427th Squadron ball turret gunner to continue flying after he died. His son, Todd, made certain that his wish was granted.

My dad, Alfred K. Hollritt, was a ball turret and waist gunner in the 427th Squadron of the 303rd Bomb Group. He died on May 21, 2005.

Dad always attended the World War II weekend air show in Reading, Pennsylvania. He could always be found around the B-17G *Yankee Lady* (operated by the Yankee Air Force) in his old flight jacket, telling stories and giving impromptu tours.

He always joked, "When I pass away, make an ash out of me and spread me around." I always kidded him back, "I'm going to place you in the bomber and let you fly around." He would smile and I could see the sparkle in his eyes whenever I said that.

Two weeks after his passing, the air show returned to Reading. I arrived with some of Dad's ashes in a small container, planning to leave a little inside while the aircraft was on display on the ground.

Then I heard an announcement on the loud speaker, "We have one seat available for the B-17 flight at 12 o'clock." I ran to the hangar to sign up so Dad and I would fly that day on a "last ride" together.

When the crew chief on the flight heard that Dad had been a ball turret gunner, he opened the bomb bay doors and said, "Enjoy this. Here's your dad's view."

After the B-17 landed, I climbed out, but Dad stayed aboard close to his beloved ball turret and in a few other places.

It still gives me goose bumps, all the things that happened that day.

In the months following our flight, Dad was aboard the *Yankee Lady* as it led a formation of B-17's in the "Thunder Over Michigan" air show, flew over Washington, DC for the US Air Force Memorial dedication ceremony, made numerous appearances all over the northeast, and even went on to Canada to appear in a movie titled "Closing the Ring" about a gunner on a B-17 that crashes in England during World War II.

So, there's Dad, still adding some very memorable hours to his log book. Like the poster says, "Keep 'Em Flying."



Near the end, after Dad suffered kidney failure and was moved from the assisted care home to the hospital, there was a telephone call from his navigator. They hadn't talked to each other in more than five years.

His first words were, "Is this Todd? This is Al Pero, your dad's navigator, calling from Illinois. How's your father?" I told him what had happened, and that his call was a very welcome "perfect timing." He said, "Just tell your dad I was asking about him. Make sure he gets the word." He was hoping to see Dad at the reunion in Dayton that year.

The next day I was with Dad and told him about the call. As weak as my father was, he turned to me with clarity and said, "Oh, that's wonderful to hear from Pero. You know, he was the best, a lead navigator."

I couldn't help but think Dad knew his course was being charted once again by a trusted friend and crew-mate. That visit to the hospital, seeing Dad's reaction to the call from his former navigator, was as special as you can imagine.

You had to see him as he reflected on fond memories going back more than sixty years as if they were yesterday.



S/SGT ALFRED HOLLRITT is in the front row, second from the left. Navigator 1st Lt. Aloysius Pero is standing, third from the left. To Pero's right is Pilot Charles Johnson.

JOHN McKERNON was five years old in 1940 when a ME-109 flew over his church in Alton during the Battle of Britain.

He was wearing his father's Hampshire Regiment cap at the time, and recalls that his uncle, 17 years old, shot pellets at the enemy fighter with an air rifle.

The Messerschmitt machine-gunned the street, but no one was hurt.



AN ENGLISH LAD'S LIFE IN THE 1940'S — ATTACKING ME-109'S WITH AN AIR RIFLE

By "John" G. A. V. McKernon
(Special to the Hell's Angels Newsletter)

I was five years old during my school summer holiday in August, 1940, at the time of the Battle of Britain. I spent time with my Uncle Sandy, 17 years old, my father's youngest brother. He had an air rifle and I carried extra pellets for him.

I was wearing my dad's regimental cap and was outside with my uncle who had his gun when an ME-109 came in low over our house. Sandy shot his air rifle at the 109 and I quickly gave him another pellet, but by then the plane had flown off. It fired on the street near us, but no one got hurt.

Uncle Sandy went into the Hampshire Regiment the next year. He was with Monty's Eighth Army in North Africa when he was wounded in a battle. He was only 18, but was invalided out of the service.

I still have a French soldier's cap my father found west of Dunkirk in 1940 when he was with the British Expeditionary Force that lost 64,000 killed or wounded. He gave me a German military belt, two 20-mark notes and some early Roman coins that he found while fighting in Italy. These and other artifacts from my father meant a lot to me.

One night a German bomber dropped an incendiary on my school. The bomb came through the roof, hit the top of the piano, bounced to the back of the classroom and burned the floor and some chairs before the Fire Brigade put it out. Another night, soon after we heard the sirens and went to the air raid shelter, a bomb destroyed four houses two streets away and five people were killed.

Two JU-88's were shot down and crashed just outside Alton town. The pilot of a HE-111 bomber bailed out before his plane crashed, and he was captured. His parachute was in a shop window in town to be raf-

fled off for six pence a ticket.

We also had "doodlebugs"—the German flying bombs—come over now and again. One came right over our shelter, and I ran out and looked up at it. It just missed hitting the church steeple.

We had only Canadian soldiers around our town. I have some bits of a DC-3 that crashed behind our rail station. The Canadian pilot bailed out and was OK.

I will never forget the kindness of the Canadian soldiers. They gave me gum, cigarettes and small change to go to the one movie house in our town.

One soldier asked my grandmother if he could take me for a meal at the YMCA in the town. He said to my Gran, "That kid looks very thin." I had only one bit of bread and jam for tea at five o'clock.

Around March of 1944, a few American G.I.'s came into Alton for a drink in the pubs. I know now that they were based at Alresford with the 47th Infantry Division and were training for the D-Day invasion.

After D-Day, we had a Canadian hospital in the town and also a prisoner of war camp with mostly Germans.

After the war ended in May, 1945, the German prisoners were allowed to come into town, go to the movies and even to the Saturday night dance. They mixed with the British, American and Canadian soldiers.

One of my aunts who had been in London came home and stayed with us. Later, she met one of the German prisoners and married him. They lived with us for a year and then got a house of their own.

His name was Helmut and he was a leather craftsman before he was called up. He was sent to the Russian front and was wounded during the tank battle at Kursk. Later in the war, he got to the American lines and surrendered.

It was so sad to think that everyone was killing each other, and then in our town after the war they went to the movies together.



JOHN McKERNON'S HOME TOWN IN ENGLAND CELEBRATED "ALTON IN THE FORTIES" last June with a gala step back to a time when World War II vehicles and military personnel were everywhere to be seen. There was 1940's music in the Square, and High Street was packed with military vehicles and equipment, including a Bofers anti-aircraft gun to protect the town from enemy aircraft. Scores of people turned out in World War II uniforms, some representing an American infantry unit stationed at nearby Alresford in 1943-45.

BELOW: John McKernon, now 72, is flanked by re-enactors dressed as General George S. Patton on his right and an American MP on his left.



End of the Line for Two of the 303rd's Finest



S/SGT JIMMY WARREN OF 359TH SQUADRON COMMUNICATIONS was a happy camper atop the B-17G *Duchess' Daughter* in the early summer of 1944. Then, on July 6, as the aircraft landed after a mission to attack V-bomb installations in France, the co-pilot accidentally flipped the landing gear switch to the up position. The plane went belly down and skidded to an ignominious ending. It was her 43rd mission.



ANOTHER 359TH SQUADRON B-17, CAT-O-NINE TAILS, was abandoned in mid-air as the crew bailed out when the pilot was unable to find the Molesworth base in dense fog. The B-17, returning from the Schweinfurt mission on October 14, 1943, had suffered heavy battle damage and was almost out of fuel. It crashed about 10 miles south of Molesworth, after a combat record of 32 missions. There were no injuries to the crew or anyone on the ground.

303RD BG POST EXCHANGE ORDER FORM

SALE! SALE!! SALE!!!

FEATURED ITEMS	COST EACH	QTY	TOTAL
"The Molesworth Story" 303 RD BG History on CD-ROM Information on all 303 rd missions, photos and much more	\$3.00 \$5.00		
2005 303 rd BGA Membership Directory (available ONLY to 303 rd BGA members)	\$5.00 \$10.00		
Challenge Coins – Set of 2. Designed by 303 rd BG President Bill Cox.	\$5.00 \$0.00		

DESCRIPTION ** Check your size and / or choice **	COST EACH	QTY	TOTAL
Men's Golf Shirt, w/Embroidered "8 th Air Force/303 rd BG" SMALL ONLY	\$10.00 \$15.00		
Men's Golf Shirt, Black with Silk screen B-17 & 303 rd Bomb Group SMALL ONLY	\$10.00 \$15.00		
Women's T-Shirt Light Blue with B-17 on front <input type="checkbox"/> MEDIUM <input type="checkbox"/> LARGE (They run very small)	\$5.00 \$10.00		
Men's T-Shirt Light Blue with B-17 on front LARGE ONLY	\$5.00 \$10.00		
Decal – "Might in Flight" insignia <input type="checkbox"/> Interior #_____ <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior #_____	\$1.00 \$2.00		
Patch – 3 inch Embroidered with Squadron insignia Check your choice & how many you want next to each patch <input type="checkbox"/> 358 #_____ <input type="checkbox"/> 359 #_____ <input type="checkbox"/> 360 #_____ <input type="checkbox"/> 427 #_____	\$1.00 \$2.00		
Patch – 3 inch Embroidered Might in Flight or 8 th AF logo - 8 th Air Force	\$1.00 \$2.00		
Patch – American Flag	\$1.00		
Lapel Pin - 360th Squadron only	\$1.00 \$2.00		
Replica Wings - Check your choice & how many you want next to each wing <input type="checkbox"/> Navigator #_____ <input type="checkbox"/> Bombardier #_____	\$3.00		
License Plate Bracket	\$1.00 \$2.00		
Book – "Staying Alive" by 303 rd BG member Carl Fyler	\$22.00		
Book – "Last Raid" by 303 rd BG member Bob Hand	\$20.00		

<p>PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHECK (US Dollars only) PAYABLE TO: 303RD Bomb Group Association ▲▲▲▲▲▲▲</p> <p>COPY this ORDER FORM and mail with your CHECK to: Charlie Sykes 303rd PX Administrator P.O. Box 33474 Phoenix, Arizona 85067-3474 **Please allow 2 weeks for delivery** If you have questions about your order or PX stock, please contact Charlie at (602) 993-8015 or E-Mail: PX@303rdBG.com</p>	TOTAL COST of Items Ordered \$	
	USA SHIPPING (Add to ALL orders)	\$4.00
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	<p>(Please print clearly or type) Order Date: _____</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>City, State, Zip, Country: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Email: _____</p>	

Revised 3/8/2007



303rd Bomb Group Pin-ups

ABOVE—Four men and their dog take a break under 427th Squadron B-17G *Miss Lace*. L-to-R, Crew Chief Rorex Lacewell, Mechanic Matthew Demski, Mascot Recon, Refueling Operator Arnold Siegel and Mechanic Darrel Blanchard.

BELOW LEFT—Pilot Donald Stockton was at the controls of the 427th's B-17F *Joe Btfspik* when it lost most of its tail on the St. Nazaire mission 16 February 1943. Standing above him is Navigator Hubert Miller who flew the mission on the 358th's *Sky Wolf*. **BELOW RIGHT**—360th Tail Gunner Harold "Red" Timm points to one of the approximately 200 flak holes in *Iza Available* after the mission to attack robot bomb sites at Watten, France on 27 August 1943.



Molesworth Diary

TURN OFF THAT LIGHT, OR ELSE!

Returning to Molesworth from a three-day pass to London, I noticed a hole the size of a quarter in the roof of our barracks. It was just above the light bulb nearest the rear door. When I asked someone about how the hole got there, he said it happened two nights earlier.

It seems that Dick Duffield, one of our pilots, had turned off the light bulb near his bunk when he went to bed, anticipating an early call for a mission. One of the navigators came into the barracks from the Officers Club bar, a happy drunk, and turned the light on. He took his time getting ready for bed and was just generally piddling away the time. Duffield had yelled at him to turn off the light, but the navigator ignored him. So, the pilot, who didn't want to have to get out of bed, reached for his .45 automatic pistol and fired at the light bulb while lying flat on his back. He missed, and the bullet went through the ceiling.

At the instant Duffield fired, the Squadron Adjutant was coming in the rear door. The explosion startled him so that he fell back into a snow drift outside the door. Later, he had a few choice words to say to the pilot, as did others in the barracks who felt there should have been an easier way to turn off a light bulb.

Maurice G. Hackler
Bombardier, 360th Squadron

REMEMBERING HEROYA AND SCHWEINFURT

We went to Heroya, Norway on July 24, 1943 to hit German factories. The flak was light, but getting on the mark when we crossed the target for the third time. We suffered some damage just after we dropped our bombs, and lost an engine. With about a thousand miles to go to get back to base, we threw everything in the plane that would move into the drink. Jack Timken, our pilot, cut the speed back to just above stalling, so slow. Air-Sea Rescue was following our course over the North Sea. As we reached sight of England, we were ready to ditch when the pilot saw an RAF field. He touched down and let the B-17 roll down the runway. When it reached the end, the remaining three engines died for lack of fuel.

And then there was Schweinfurt, Germany and the ball-bearing factory three weeks later on August 17th. When the map was uncovered at briefing, there were all kinds of reactions (including moans and groans). There was quite a wait because of bad weather until we finally got the green flare. We had a P-47 escort up to the Ruhr and then they left and we were on our own. Because we had taken off late, German fighter planes had time to attack earlier bomber formations, refuel, and then come up after us. Never saw such an affair—all kinds of German fighters everywhere. I think the 303rd was about the last Group over the target. The

German fighters came in from all angles. All of us gunners were firing furiously and got three of them. We finally got back to the Ruhr Valley where the P-47's picked us up. Now, what a show—airplanes of all kinds flaming out of the sky. That was the last mission for pilot Timken and one more for me to go.

George R. Redhead
Waist Gunner, 358th Squadron

MEMORIES OF 16 MONTHS AS A POW

My plane went down on the Bremen mission of 20 December 1943. The pilot was Alexander Alex and the B-17 was *Santa Anna*. The co-pilot was killed. The rest of us were taken prisoner, including three badly wounded crew members. After being moved from one location to another and being interrogated constantly, we arrived at Barth on the Baltic Sea, and spent the night on a railroad siding.

The morning of December 28, guards and dogs arrived to escort us to camp. After the usual routine search we were issued clothing, permitted a bath for the first time in a week, and were deloused. After these formalities, we were issued a metal pan, a big mug, knife, fork, spoon, two blankets, one sheet, one mattress cover and one pillow case. We were shown to a desolate-looking room with seven double-deck wooden bunks, with so-called mattresses filled with excelsior. Those of us assigned to these quarters soon had things straightened up and the stove in working order.

We settled down to a routine that remained unchanged day after day. We had church services, some classes and a library. There was very little work to do except to get coal for the stove and pick up our weekly Red Cross rations. I shall be eternally grateful to the Red Cross.

There were few things worth buying on the exchange system. The basis of the system was cigarettes, one cigarette being worth one point. We exchanged food and other personal possessions for cigarettes. The weekly ration was 50 cigarettes, and since I don't smoke I could build up my supply. I exchanged 500 cigarettes for a sterling silver Parker 51 pen and pencil set. That was about \$6 in cigarettes for a \$20 set!

The routine fell apart as American and Russian ground forces penetrated deeper and deeper into Germany. The food supply was erratic and the flow of Red Cross parcels dried up. There were days when we didn't even have potatoes to eat or clean water to drink.

Then, on April 30, 1945, the German guards fled. Two days later, the Russians arrived, threw open the gates to the compound, and told us to go where we pleased. We took their advice. What a day!

Nicholas Schmidt, Jr.
Navigator, 427th Squadron

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

"IF I HAD NAVIGATED, NO PH FOR TRAVIS?"

In the November 2006 issue, the cutline under the Stoullil crew picture credits me with being the navigator on the mission to Berlin in which Gen. Robert Travis became a "woundee." Not so!

When our PFF crew arrived at Molesworth from Chelveston that morning I was informed by someone on the 303rd BG staff that I would not be the navigator. I was being replaced by two navigators of the 427th Squadron. I was given a choice of sitting it out or flying as observer. Since it was a mission to Berlin and I had flown with my crew for the last 16 missions, I chose to fly.

I was a "standee observer" in the nose section on that mission, against the bulkhead in front of where Gen. Travis was sitting in the co-pilot's position. Even though it was a PFF aircraft with a seasoned "Mickey" operator, there was very little interphone traffic between him and the lead navigator on the way to the target. You could see Berlin with its wall of black flak while quite some distance away.

After "bombs away," possibly because of traffic in the area, we came off the target slightly off course. Soon the interphone traffic from the Mickey operator picked up considerably as we wandered into heavy flak areas. It was joined by juicy comments from our original co-pilot who was flying as tail gunner. It wasn't too long before Gen. Travis was hit and required first aid assistance from our waist gun-

ner, George Greene, who decided that since it was a high ranking officer that was hit, he deserved the biggest bandage in the kit.

In the article, Pilot Don Stoullil said he didn't remember any remarks made by the General on the way back to base. Unless I was dreaming, I do remember Travis saying, "If we don't do something pretty soon, we are going to be the only bomb group left in Germany."

The thought that has kept me perplexed for 62 years is this—if I had been the navigator on that mission, would Gen. Travis have been wounded and received the Purple Heart? If not, Don Stoullil would have lost what he said was his "dubious claim to fame."

**Harold A. "Hal" Susskind
359th Squadron Navigator**

EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO COGSWELL LETTERS

The letters in the February 2007 issue from Robert Cogswell to his family during World War II brought tears to my eyes. I was one of thousands of young women (18 at that time) who built the B-17's. Every time I finished riveting and later inspecting the spars built in my department, we spoke of the wings that would keep the planes aloft and of the men flying them.

The B-17 was my life till July, 1945. Americans were united in such a memorable way—I am grateful to have been a part of that era. I have never had an opportunity to thank you men, and I'd like to do so now.

**Milka Bamond
St. Petersburg, Florida**

"BOB COGSWELL WAS STAR OF THE ISSUE"

Once again, a super newsletter. And the story about Bob Cogswell, who was my friend, was the star of the issue. Except for our own crews, the officers did not consort with the enlisted men. It was the nature of the day. And yet, in our biggest war, it is too bad it was not more like today. I only have one man left from my crew—waist and ball turret gunner Leo Lanier.

I am on Dialysis. I do want to attend the last big hurrah in Arlington, so I spoke to my renal care people. They tell me they could arrange for me to have the sessions at a hospital in the Washington DC area. So, I shall come to the last reunion if the treatments can be set up and my health at that time allows it.

**William "Bill" Heller
360th Squadron Pilot**

A TRIBUTE TO HEROISM AND TRUE SACRIFICE

I teach a third grade class at Sunset Hills Elementary School in Tarpon Springs, Florida. I had the pleasure of taking my class to visit the two WWII airplanes at the Clearwater airport. I

am writing to extend a thank you to Eddie Deerfield. Mr. Deerfield came onto our bus and talked with my students about what it was like to fly on the B-17 and fight for our country. The students were fascinated with the details of his experiences. Thanks for helping all of us not to forget what true sacrifice and heroism is all about.

**John Margoulis
Tarpon Springs, Florida**

"NAM" VET TO ATTEND REUNION WITH DAD

Thanks to reading many issues of the Hell's Angels Newsletter, my son is flying in from San Jose, CA to attend the next reunion and learn more about the 303rd. We're making sure the volumes of the newsletter book are where he can find them at my death.

**Abbott Smith
427th Squadron Bombardier**

427th SQUADRON—CLASS OF 1977

I thought our readers might be interested in seeing our 427th Squadron in a family photo made at the 1977 303rd Bomb Group reunion in Colorado Springs.

Thirty years ago!
**Morris B. Sjoberg
427th Bomb Sight Maint.**



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

Clifford O. Bachman	360 th	10/17/2006
Edwin B. Barry	1114 QM	1/5/2007
Grover P. Bates	427 th	Unknown
Rollin J. Bender	358 th	April 2004
John C. Bennett	358 th	2/27/2001
Robert Boardman	358 th	1/29/2005
Wiley A. Buckner	444A/D	12/8/2006
Edward K. Carter	359 th	1/10/2007
Raymond H. Charron	359 th	1/28/2006
Keith W. Clapp	427 th	11/27/2005
William J. Cline	359 th	1/3/2007
George E. Copeland	358 th	5/4/2003
Donald W. Corrigan	359 th	8/14/2004
Robert F. Coughlin	360 th	May 1996
Lester H Dawson	359 th	Unknown
John Edward Fletcher	427 th	Dec. 2002
Delbert E. Foster	359 th	9/16/2006
Ennis B. Free, Jr.	360 th	11/18/2005
Carlyle A. Frost	360 th	3/11/2005
Frank O. Garrett	427 th	7/19/2002
Edward M. Gates	358 th	1/29/2005
Stanley Gurka, Jr.	359 th	6/20/2003
Harley L. Hansen	427 th	5/26/2006
Quentin Hargrove	HDQ	1/21/2007
Paul F. Heitman	444A/D	1976
Robert W. Hoffman	358 th	August 1998
Hacj A. Howes	359 th	12/17/2006
Robert B. Hoyt	359 th	11/27/1996
Jon B. Kreager	359 th	Jan. 2004
Robert W. Krohn	427 th	12/20/2006
Guy A. Lance	360 th	1/11/2007
Bernard J. Larkworthy	358 th	4/23/2002
Joseph Levesque	358 th	Feb. 2005
Herbert Levy	358 th	10/3/2005
Lloyd I. Long	427 th	May 2006
Guy H. McClung	360 th	5/21/2001
James B. McDowell, Jr.	359 th	Unknown
Jack McGuffin	360 th	3/20/2006
James L. McIntyre	444 A/D	3/31/2001
Raymond C. Meyers	358 th	1/9/2004
Stephen H. Mudge, Jr.	427 th	1/27/2007
William T. Mummery	358 th	3/4/2007
Norbert O. Noah	427 th	12/9/2006
James R. Paullin	358 th	Sept. 2004
George P. Pike	358 th	2/21/2004
David W. Plewes, Jr.	359 th	Nov. 2001
William C. Ready	358 th	2/16/2007
Robert L. Redmond	360 th	August 1999
Jack A. Reedy	360 th	2/2/1972
Ralph A. Roseland	358 th	1/5/2007
Joseph M. Ross, Jr.	427 th	July 2003
Charles D. Rowsell	360 th	2/24/1994
Harry H. Schulz	358 th	4/16/2001
Robert Scott	359 th	Unknown
Evan R. Soule	358 th	4/21/2006
James P. Spencer	358 th	9/12/2001

Willard W. Stephen	359 th	8/14/2006
Neal J. Svare	444 A/D	1/30/2007
Robert J. Theisen	358 th	June 2002
Grady B. Ward	359 th	11/23/2006
John Williams	360 th	11/23/2006
Claud Wilson, Jr.	358 th	1/2/2004
Raymond E. York	427 th	April 1999
Michael Louis Zarelli	358 th	2/27/2007

DONATIONS IN HONOR OF

The Estate of Charles S. Schmeltzer in Memory of Dave Rogan
and Don Gamble
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Ernest G. Schieferstein in Memory of Howard Delaney 360th
Michael Zarelli in Memory of Marguerite A. Zarelli
Helen C. Brooke in Memory of Curtis Brooke
Anna M. Ryan in Memory of Francis J. Ryan
Irving Birken in Honor of Nafius's Crew
Ernest Schieferstein in Memory of Howard Delaney

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David Peterson Olander Family Foundation

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Dale Rockwood (Carol) 30 Fruit St., Byfield, MA 01922-
1415 Friend
George Hoidra (Betsy), 6504 Old Sandy Spring Rd.,
Laurel MD 20707-2954 (301) 953-2813 Friend
James W. O'Leary, Jr. (Misty), 3509 Buffalo Grass Ln.,
Castle Rock, CO 80109 (303) 688-6631 Family 427th
Nancy Nowell (Brad) 4236 N. Bloomington Ave.,
Arlington Hts, IL 60004 (907) 276-0107 Family 427th
Kathleen O'Leary, 1035 Isaaca, Walla Walla, WA 99362
(509) 527-5745 Family 427th
Bill Humphreys, 219 Bolt Hill Rd., Elliot, ME 03903 (603)
494-2284 Friend
Brad Branch, 75 Spur Rd., Dover, NH 03820 (603) 494-
2284 Friend
Charlayne Fliege, (Stewart), 12115 San Vicente #409, Los
Angeles CA 90049-4935 (310) 210-3509 Family 360th
Andrew E. Snyder (Marisol), 345 Timber Ln, Grasonville,
MD 21638-1264, (410) 972-2451 Friend
Richard L. Clark (Ruth), 132 Rayna St. Hurley, NYT
12443-5222 (845) 338-3790 Family 358th
John M. Joerg, Jr. (Karen) 69 Oakcrest Dr. Dover DE
19901 (302) 697-7925 Friend
David R. Harbarger (Ellen) 2031 Baxterly Ave.,
Lakewood OH 44107-6027 (216) 615-4822 Family 358th
Marin F. Enis, 1405 Dogwood Drive, West Lawn, PA
19609-1011, (610) 678-2997 Friend
Terry Sullens (Karen) 14227 46th Ave. S. E., Snohomish,
WA 98296 (425) 337-2074 Family 427th



STUDENTS OF THE GULF MIDDLE SCHOOL IN NEW PORT RICHEY, FLORIDA, gather around newsletter editor Eddie Deerfield after he briefed them about air combat in World War II and led them through the B-17G *Nine-O-Nine* at the Clearwater/St. Petersburg airport. More than 200 students from area schools attended the 2007 air show.

THE EDITOR COMMENTS....

Far too often these days I get letters from 303rd Bomb Group family members informing me that yet another of our Molesworth veterans has passed away. One such letter came recently from Bert Roseland of Longview, Texas. His father, Ralph, a veteran of 32 missions as B-17 gunner and toggler on the 358th Squadron's Charles Davis crew had died.

The son wrote, "Burial services at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery were superb. I am convinced that every student taking civics classes needs to attend one of these services. Our country's history, our flag and the veterans who served are more acknowledged than anything I have ever seen before." He added that he hoped to initiate "whatever is necessary" to make that a reality.

Over the years, the *Hell's Angels Newsletter* has published stories about 303rd Bomb Group veterans who visited grammar and high schools in their communities to talk about World War II and how the air war helped defeat Nazi Germany's goal of world domination. I have had the pleasure of briefing hundreds of students each year at an annual air show in the Tampa Bay area (see photo at top) which brought in *Nine-O-Nine*, operated by the Collings Foundation, one of the few remaining airworthy Flying Fortresses.

I never know for sure if I'm getting through to the young people, so I was pleased to hear from three teachers after the February 2007 air show. They wrote, jointly, "Thank you so much for everything you taught us on our short visit. The students asked us once again to thank you for the great trip through the plane. They're still talking about it." I wrote back, "My thanks are due to the three of you for giving me the opportunity to address your young people. There are not too many of us left to tell first hand about World War II. Such personal encounters become increasingly rare and, consequently, all the more meaningful."

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a walk through a B-17 is worth a thousand pictures of B-17's. Who could ask for a better teaching tool?

Eddie Deerfield

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