



391st B. Sqd. 18th B. Sqd.

VOLUME II NUMBER II

34TH. BOMB GROUP

7th B. Sqd. 4th B. Sqd.

June 1980

MENDLESHAM MEMORIES

Greetings Fellow Members of the 34th Bomb Group

Now that spring is here, I hope that everyone is feeling better. I guess that as we get older the winters seem to grow worse.

My wife and I had a few visitors this winter, from members of the 34th Bomb Group, also quite a few phone calls. I want to thank all who have visited my wife and I, also the ones who have called and sent letter of encouragement to me. There are times when I needed the encouragement.

Bob Hartwick from, Bellview Ohio, stopped by, one afternoon, to pay us a visit and to talk about the 34th Bomb Group. Bob was with the 7th Sqd, as a Ground Crew member. Bob had some pictures reproduced and sent me some copies, Thanks Bob, I will place them in my album, Come back someday for another visit.

Paul Buss and his wife Mary stopped by one afternoon for a visit, Paul and Mary are from Olney Ill. Paul was a Tail Gunner in the 391st Sqd. He told me a few interesting things that happened to him and his Crew while in the 34th. I had talked to him several times on the phone but had never met him until he came for a visit. Paul and Mary, we enjoyed your visit and remember, you are always welcome to pay us a visit, as are all of the rest of the 34th Bomb Group members.

Fellow members of the 34th, you will be happy to know that the Charter of the 34th Bomb Group has been written, accepted and incorporated in the State of Texas, thru the efforts of Malcolm Corum and Jack Blackham. Malcolm called me one evening and was real happy when he told me the Charter was done and had been incorporated in Texas. Now, he said, all we had to do is pay the lawyer. The Lawyer fee was \$350.00 (a Lawyer has to live to). Plus the cost of incorporation, which was taken care of by Malcolm. I want to report that the Lawyer has been paid thru the generous donations of the 90 people who have sent in or gave me money to be used for the purpose of paying for the charter and to keep our newsletter going out. Plus donations from two of the wives of our members, who have passed on, given in memory of their husbands. Mrs Frances Amerman, in memory of her husband Kenneth. Mrs Marian Rogers, in memory of her husband Basil "Buck" Rogers. I want to thank them for what they did as well as the rest who have sent in money.

Some of you may wonder what the cost is, for sending out a newsletter. Well, to break it down, the cost of the last newsletter, printing was \$100.00, the cost of the bulk mailing permit and application was \$70.00, for postage of 400 letters I sent out was about \$35.00. This was for one mailing, of course the bulk permit (application) is a one time item. These figures do not include the cost of the letters I have sent out trying to locate our former members and the cost of answering letters, I have received, from those who have not enclosed a stamped envelope. I have averaged sending out 100 letters a month since Jan 1st. A lot of these had stamped envelopes, which had been sent to me. Do you think it fair that we ask for the 90 members who have sent in donation to pay all the cost? That is why we must have a membership fee. I do not want to make anyone angry, but I thought you should know the cost of putting out a newsletter. All this has not includes the cost of paper and envelopes and coping of some information, to send to others, nor the longdistance calls which I pay for myself.

I have been getting a lot of calls from not only our members asking about the 34th B.G reunion, but from other Men from the other Bomb Groups of the 8th AF. wondering about the 8th A. F reunion. I have sent the names

Of the men from the other Bomb Groups to the 8th Air Force Clearing House. To you the members of the 34th B.G. We are to have a "Unit rendezvous" at the 8th A.F. reunion, which will be held in Orlando Fla. Oct 29th to Nov 2 1980. Our "Rendezvous" will be held on Friday afternoon and evening. The brochures for the reunion are inclosed in this letter. As soon as you know that you will attend the reunion, send in your reservation early. Something different will be tried this year. People from each Bomb Group who send in early will be assigned to one floor or if there are enough from one Bomb Group to fill one floor the rest of those who have sent in early will be assigned to the next floor. So if you want to be with your Bomb Group on the same or adjoining floor, send in those reservationd early. If we have 50 or more rooms reserved for our B.G, we will have a room to use as a hospitality room for our exclusive use only. If we have enough we will have our own banquet room for our use Friday nite at the Friday nite banquet. Talk to your friend and send in your reservations. The brochures tell of the events. Let us show th other Bomb Groups we are growing and that we care. We can make this the greatest reunion we have ever had. To those who arrive by plane, there should be transportation available to the Hotel, if not, there is a phone to call and transportation will be sent. To those who select to stay in campgrounds or in your campers, you should write to Ramblin Tours and ask them about the cost and what to do. Please send a stamped self addressed envelope to aid in answering your questions. Send in your reservations early if you want to be on the same floor as your Bomb Group. Late reservations will be assigned to what ever rooms are left. They may be in another wing of the Hotel. My wife and I will be there on Oct 29th.

My wife and I have just recently returned from a 3 week tour thru the East. Pa. Del. Maryland, Washington, D.C. Virginia and N.Carolina, where we mat several of the 34th Bomb Group members. We left here headed for the Dover Air Base and the Open House, also to visit Ruth and Henry Jurgans. On the way thru Columbus Ohio, I called Al Cassel. Al you sounded good over the phone. Remember? I told you some day while passing thru Columbus I would give you a call. I called some more of our men while I was passing thru Pa., but found no one at home. I had forgotten, not everyone had retired as I had. Upon reaching Reading, I called Jim Carpousis to see how he and his wife were. Jim was working so I called back and talked back to both Jim and Esther. They both sounded good over the phone and assured me they were both feeling good. Jim wanted us to come to his house for a visit but we were to tired from driving. Jim we will be back to Reading one of these days and will spend some time with you and your wife.

Reading is a nice town and for you women, who enjoy shopping, it is a wonderful place to shop, with outlet store every place. Some day my wife would like to go back there, to shop.

~~From Reading we went to Smyrna Del. to visit Henry and Ruth Jurgens,~~ We had been invited to spend a few day with them while waiting on the Open House. On Sat. Henry and I went to the Air Base to put up some posters about the 8th Air Force Clearing House and the 34th Bomb Group, Henry had the posters made, (Thanks Henry) We believe in advertising the 34th B.G. and the Historical Society where ever we are. Al DiNenno and his wife Olive from Pa. joined us at Henry's and we really had a good time.

Ed Lawler had called me before I had left home and wanted to know about the gettogether in Dover and he and his wife Rosemary had driven down to Dover to be at the Open House. Al and I went down to the Air Base early to meet anyone from the 34th B.G. at the hangar where "Shoo Shoo Baby" a B17 is being rebuilt. Here we met Ed Lawler and Rosemary. Pete Gray soon came into the Hangar and we all roamed around taking pictures. Henry and our wives soon showed up and we all moved to the Flight Line where the aerial show was beginning. I was snapping some pictures and thought I would have some good ones to show but found out later, my film had not wound on the spool and of course I had not taken any pictures. We had told Ed and Pete where to meet us after the show and how to get to Henry,s farm. The show featured the Air Force Thunderbirds and the Para- Gliders. Both were wonderful. There were on display several different airplane from large C5 transports to tankers and smaller transports.

After the Air Show we all went back to Smyrna to Henry and Ruth's for dinner. There were several of us. Henry and Ruth., Hannah and I, Ed Lawler and Rosemary from New York, "Pete" Gray from Virginia Beach. Al and Olive DiNenno from Pa. and Paul Teare and his friend Betty from Del. We spent the evening eating and talking. All Sqd. from the 34th were represented. Henry and I from the 18th, Al from the 391st Pete and Paul from the 7th and Ed from the 4th Sqd. Ed told me of some of the things which happened to him when he was in the 34th. He had not come home with us but had joined the 15th Air Force in Italy and while there had seen some of the B24s from the 34th in his Group in Italy. I want to thank all who were at Henry's that nite, for coming. I hope to see all of you in Florida.

We left Henry's on Monday and headed for Washington D.C. by the way of Baltimore where I tried to get in touch with our former Sqd. Clerk. Clarence E. Dick. I did get hold of one C.E. Dick but it was not the right one. This one knew the other one and told me that he had been transferred somewhere in Pa. Some of you men who live in Pa. look in your phone books and see if there is a Clarence E. Dick listed, if so call him and if he was a former member of the 18th Sqd., please tell him to get in touch with me. He may be able to give us some information that we need.

While in Washington, we were able to find some former members of the 34th B.G. One was Thomas Bond who flew CO Pilot for Carl Washburn. Tom told me that Carl was killed in Korea. Tom's address is on the new list.

While in Washington, my wife and I had lunch with our former Sgt/ Maj. of the 34th and his wife Velma. We met at the Officers Club at Bolling Field. I had found Len some time ago and had corresponded with him. He had said to look him up when I was in Washington. He had been there for sometime and had retired from the Pentagon some years back. Len had left England in Sept '44 to return to the states for reassignment. He would like to hear from some of his friend from the 34th, especially from Robert Gay, whose office was close to his at headquarters. My wife and I spent a very enjoyable afternoon with Len and his wife Velma. Thanks for the lunch and I hope you will be able to make the Orlando trip. You will see plenty of your old friends there.

On the way to Richmond Va., my wife and I stopped at Henry and Mary Lamberts for lunch. Hank was a Bombardier from the 391st Sqd. They live close to Spotsylvania Va. They have a beautiful place in the country. Hank told me of some of the experiences of his crew including the time they went down over the target in Germany. He was in the hospital in Germany and when he was removed to the Prison Camp Stalag Luft I at Barth on the Baltic. he was greeted by the 34th B.G. Operations Officer Lt Col Howard C. Burton who had been shot down just after Hank went down. He told me quite a few more interesting tales, maybe some day he will write of his experiences for us. Thanks for the lunch Henry and Mary. We hope to see you in Orlando. From Hank I found out more about our planes going down than I had from anyone else.

From Hank and Mary's, we went on into Richmond and met Grady and Edith Deatherage. I brought Grady up to date, on our organization, before we went out to the Meadowbrook Restaurant to meet some of the other 34th Members. Grady was recovering from a heart attack in Oct last year, but said he was feeling pretty good, except for being tired, He had just gotten home from Florida and had driven up to Richmond to be with some of the 34th B.G. whom he hadn't seen since the war. At the Restaurant we met Junius and Virginia Cobb the owners of the Restaurant. Junius was one of my mechanics in the 18th Sqd. He had decided to make cooking his career and had gone to school on it. He had owned and operated the restaurant for several years. We had just finished eating our dinner when in came F.A. Bristow and Tom Snelling and his wife Virginia. F.A. was with the 18th as a Crew Chief and Tom was with the Group. It was F.A.'s little brother who flew the P51 Mustang low over the field ever time he returned from a mission. We really had a time recalling the things which happened while we were in the 34th B.G. We even had company from one of the men from another unit of the 8th, who had known Cobb for sometime, he was interested in our tales. His name was

was Buck Cummins and his wife Doris. I do not remember which unit, he was with but they repaired the runways for the Air Force. Soon the restaurant closed and we had it all to ourselves. Grady played the tape he had recorded in England, when he interviewed, George and Joan Stedman, on whose land our Base was located. It was very interesting and we all had some comment to add to it. It was late as we bid goodnite to all and started for our motel, with Grady and Edith. Yes Junius we were talking and missed our turn as usual. It was alright tho, for we were able to see Richmond after dark while there was no traffic.

Next morning, my wife and I had breakfast with Grady and Edith and then had to travel on. Before we left Edith told us it was her birthday and that she and Grady were not headed home as yet.

After leaving Richmond my wife and I went to Atlantic Beach for a week to do some fishing and walk the Beach. Sat. soon rolled around and we left for Charlotte, where I had asked Dex Jordan to set up a meeting for some of the 34th B.G., who lived around N.C. Upon arriving in Charlotte I found that Dex had done a wonderful job. Most of the people checked in about the same time and soon were all in our room talking and reliving old times. Dex and Buelah Jordan, from Huntersville, Charles and Ann Pipes from Lenoir N.C. "Pete Gray from Virginia Beach, Va, Jim Watkins from Salisbury N.C. Alexander and Virginia Kovach from Southern Pines N.C., William O. and Ina Mae Hatley from Charlotte, Gene and Virginia Latham from Charlotte, Hugh Farrington also from Charlotte. Dex had a surprise for us, he announced that we were all going out to his home where his wife had dinner ready for us. This was indeed a surprise for we thought that we were to have dinner at the motel. Dex has a beautiful place just out side of Charlotte and the dinner was very delicious. His wife had a cake with the 34th emblem on and of course we took several pictures of it. It was real Southern Hospitality and I want to thank Dex and Buelah for all they did for us. After dinner we sat around and talked about the 34th Bomb Group and the things we did when we were part of that great Bomb Group. The hour grew late as we said good by and went back to our Motel. Some of us had breakfast together the next morning and with promises to meet once again, maybe, next year or at the reunion in Florida, we said goodbye and each one started home.

At this time I want to thank each one of you, whom we met on our journey, for the good times you showed us and for all the information you gave us. We do hope you all will be able to attend the reunion in Florida.

I do hope I have not bored you too much, with my story, of our trip to meet, members of the 34th B.G. I do have a couple of stories, which I will send out in one of the next issues of our newsletter. One from Steve Niatas about the crash of his plane and crew in the North Sea.

Some interesting fact about the 34th B.G.: Did you know that Gen. Curtis LeMay help organize the 7th Bomb Sqd at Langley Field and was Group Operation Officer of the 34th at one time. This was sent in by Malcolm Corum.

The 34th also has a claim to fame, We had the youngest flying Crew in the 8th Air Force. This quote from Roger Freeman's book the "Mighty Eighth": Page 229. Lt Novicki's Crew. Lt. Joseph Novicki P 21, Lt Calvin Olsen Co-P 20. F/O. Louis Fournier Nay. 20; T/Sgt. Donald Ford Togg. 19; T/Sgt Loren M. Pittman R.O 20; Byrd A. Guinn, S/Sgt, Gunner, 20; S/Sgt Peter H Corrigan, Gunner 19; S/Sgt Eugene Tremblay, Gunner, 19, T/Sgt Alvord Engineer, 20. All of these flew home except Alvord. Steve Niatas took his place as engineer. I have not been able to locate any of these men except Steve Niatas. This was sent to me by Al DiNanno.

Did you know the reason the 34th was one of the first to come home from the ETO? We were selected to the PTO by Gen Doolittle. The Atomic Bomb was dropped and we were de-activated.

I had a letter from Joe Edwards, who sent me the addresses of some of his crew. He also mentioned that he may have been the last 34th B.G. man to fly in a B 24. He was sent to England in 1975 to help bring home some B24s from England. They had to work on it for awhile but finally was ready to go. When they were ready to take off at Duxford, the Raf sent a Lancaster, Harvard. Spitfire, Sea Fury and other planes to escort them on the way over England. He has movies of the planes flying formation. They would be interesting to

see and to hear about. Maybe we can work some out to see it at the reunion. You might write the story for me and if our readers want to read it, I will put it in our newsletter. He also had an amusing tale about meeting Gen LeBailey one day. Thanks a lot Joe for the stories and keep those letters coming. He also told me that Carl Stahl died of a heart attack. I have heard from all of the ones whose names you sent but Roy White. I might add, I met Charles Pipes in Charlotte and he too had some interesting tales to tell. Joe called several of his crew one afternoon and told them about the 34th B.G. and the up coming reunion.

I had a letter and a phone call from Sam Bagilo on afternoon in answer to an inquiry I had sent him about whose plane it was that shot down a V2 rocket when coming home from a mission. Jack Blackham wanted to know. Sam did not remember but did send me some names and addresses of some of the men he had been in touch with. Sam asked me if I remembered the fellow with the 88keys painted on the back of his A2 jacket. I did remember for he was Lou DeSantis, who played with the band at Mendlesham. he said Lou had his own business now but still played for dances. The reason I remembered was George Ritche had sent me a letter saying that Lou had played for his daughter's wedding. Sam had visited Lou over Easter. Thanks for the information Sam.

If any of the rest of you know who it was, shot down the German V2. send it to me and I will inform Jack and it may be another claim to fame for the 34th.

Malcolm Corum and Jack Blackham from El Paso Texas have started an 8th Air Force historical Society, Texas Chapter, in Texas, so if any of you from Texas want to join it, write to Malcolm or Jack at the address shown in our membership list. Malcolm said he had about 50 at the meeting.

Thanks to all of you who sent pictures to John Woolnough. I had a letter from him thanking me for the interest we showed. The deadline was April 1st but did say he would still take good clean interesting pictures. Cecil Cohen our photographer gunner sent him quite a few, some in a cigar box that had not been opened for several years. This pleased John very much. Thanks Cecil. Maybe some day we will be able to put together a 34th Album of our own. We will be well represented in John Woolnough's new book. This is a good start to help the 34th B.G. become the Great Bomb Group it was at one time.

I have just recently received from Dorothy Schnittgrund, wife of Bob Schnittgrund, about the passing away of her husband, March 29, 1980. They had signed up for the English Tour for this Sept, but she had to cancel. Any of you who remember Bob, might like to send Dorothy a letter. Her address is on our membership list.

Many of you have asked if I have found Richard Long of the 18th Sqd. Yes I did find him but he had passed away in 1975. I had a letter from his mother. Richard Long was the electrician for the 18th and was liked by all.

I had a nice letter from Bill Cheek. Bill took my place at the meeting in Orlando about the reunion, he sent me a letter explaining some of the things I have told you in this letter, which you will not find in the brochure. Remember to send in your reservations early to be placed on the same floor as your Bomb Group.

Had a letter from Harold Rutka also a call. It looks as if the emblems will cost about \$3.50 if we have them made the same size and like the originals. Completely embroidered. We will have to go back for a quote on the 4 Sqd. emblem, because the one which was made originally is different than the Gov. specification. We will announce the price in the Sept letter and will try to have some at the reunion.

I have received a letter from Maj. Gen. William Creer one of the commanders of the 34th Bomb Group. He states he and his wife plan to attend the reunion, and that he is looking forward to seeing the 34th Bomb Group once again. His address is on the membership list.

As I sit here this Memorial day, my mind wanders back to those day several years ago, when the war was on and we were together in Service serving our country. My mind recall all those who gave their lives so that we might have Peace. It is sad to think that there is not the peace we fought for and

our friends died for. Let us remember all those , who gave their lives for us.

I would like to quote a statement written by Joan Saucedo of the Community Hospital, Anderson Ind; Today our Country stands at the cross roads never before encountered, Hostages in Iran, Russians in AfGanstan, refugees in Cambodia, defective nuclear devices and the list goes on and on forever. Our forefathers didnot bring forth this country to have half the world step on it. We are in many ways much like our ancestors. We have to learn to rebuild the confidence and pride that we took for granted all these years. We are slowly awakening to the fact that patriotism is something beautiful, not something to be laughed at. The days of flag burning are behind us, it is now the time for some good old flag waving, WE ARE AMERICANS!!! It is time now to take the motto IN GOD WE TRUST and turn it into a living reality. It is time to believe in our COUNTRY and in GOD.

There still is a lot of you out there I have not heard from. Let us hear from you. Remember we are trving to make the 34th Bomb Group once again the great Bomb Group it was once. We need the help of everone who was a former member. If you have any addresses which we do not have , send them in to me and contact them your self. Join us for the reunion in Orlando Fla.. Oct 29 to Nov 2 1980.

Your 34th Bomb Group Contact Man.

Ray Summa

WE WILL SEE YOU IN FLORIDA