



VOLUME VI

NUMBER III

SEPTEMBER 1984

# MENDLESHAM MEMORIES

## 34TH BOMB GROUP H



Fellow members of the 34th B.G.:

Time is drawing near for the reunion of the 34th Bomb Group in Nashville, TN and some of you may not receive this letter until after the reunion. To those, who will not be attending, you will be missing a real good time, for this is the first reunion of the 34th Bomb Group by itself. To those of you who are attending, we appreciate your coming and know you will have a good time, sight seeing and especially meeting your old friends, friends who you have not seen for many years. Most of you will wonder, how much the others have changed but think back, so have you.

### Gerry's Jottings

It happened, on my way to get a second cup of coffee this morning. I had a phone call from Mr. Ray Summa, and in his eagerness to inform me that it was again time to get another Mendlesham Memories, he "slyly" mentioned the fact that he would appreciate any contribution I could or would give him for his quarterly task. He also stated that it would be smashing to have it in his hand by Friday. THIS FRIDAY. (Gerry did not read my last letter to him very closely). Ray wants the newsletter composed, printed, mailed, and received before reunion time of 13 - 16th September. Deadline and ultimatums are old stuff to me as Wanda issues these every so often. Never-the-less Ray I will see if I can whip up something for the pressman to work on, and the 34th to read. By now my second cup is cold.

Vice President Harold Rutka, also Chief of registration, informs me that he had been under worked on his job. He was more than concerned, he was down-right worried. This concern brought the reminder letter, or special edition between #2 - #3 of the Mendlesham Memories. We on the Committee are with highest hopes that the registration, increases in numbers, so we can show ourselves that we are an organization with the same spirit, we proudly displayed 40 years ago.

We had 400 tickets for the afternoon performance of the Grand Ol' Opry for September 15. The unsold or unrequested tickets had to be returned 30 days prior to performance date in order to protect the finances of the 34th B.G. and also give the Opry a chance to sell to someone else. On 13th August, V.P. Rutka returns the unasked portion by 24 hour guaranteed mail. Reservation for the reunion is general, without the Opry, were still in order and available.

Now, do not be totally dismayed and give up. There are umpteen other things of interest to see in Nashville, and the tour people will be on hand to take you to any of these. This will be my fourth visit to Nashville and the first time to see the Opry. Don't forget, we are getting together to hash over days of yore and let our minds wander back in some cases even as far as basic training days.

Mary Lee, our lady at the hotel, tells me that all is ready for the grand time. Dottie, our food lady, has a very good menu prepared and waiting. Southern cooking is always good and Dottie says the best originates in her kitchen. A good meal and a fine room makes our reunion a pleasant yearly occurrence.

Bob Wright, the other committeeman, has had a busy summer. In between the job of arranging the hospitality room and all name tags, he has under gone knee surgery to rebuild an inoperative joint. He is getting along fine, and will be at his station carrying on his assigned duties with his usual efficiency.

George Ritchie and Dana Schrupp have the golf course groomed for championship competition. I am in hopes that Father Fred will be on hand to keep us all in due bounds and in touch with Diety. (Father Fred regrets, he will not be at the reunion in Nashville. He must be where a Doctor is readily available, due to the stroke he had). Ray is getting things together. He told me that the trunk of his auto is already full and that is just with Hannah's stuff.

I'm looking forward to this reunion to reacquaint the old friendships and meet all the first timers.

As the Bobby says, "Straight on Mate, you can't miss."  
Respectively

Gerald Pine 34th, President 34th B.G.

Just a few lines to say something about our trip thru NC, a few of you may be wondering about it. We have been home now for two months but the trip is not forgotten for we had a wonderful time doing nothing much but a little fishing and walking the beaches. In Ashville, NC where we stopped the first night, I called some of the men from Ashville but found some of you out for the evening. We did get hold of Wiley Moore, who told me Everett Coats had passed away, just recently. Everett was on the same crew as Wiley and was a P.O.W. with Wiley after they were shot down. Wiley says he will not make the reunion this year. He will be going to Europe with a group who took one of the bridges after Wiley's crew had bombed the Germans.

At Atlantic Beach where we stayed, we were visited by Tom Hildebrand, I felt that I knew Tom pretty well, having been corresponding with his these last couple of years. When a new name appeared on the roster from the Carolinas, you can bet Tom was the one who found them. Sorry you were not able to stay very long with us Tom. Maybe we will know a little ahead of time, when we are in Carolina again and we can gather some of the 34th B.G. and have a Mini Reunion. We are looking forward to seeing you at Nashville.

We visited Bill and Milly Jones at their home in Swansboro, NC, just a few miles from where we stayed. Had a wonderful time with them, Bill sent me the pictures of his crew, which appeared in the newsletter last month. Bill says he will be at the reunion. How about you Millie?

Do you mind, if I plug the NC State a little? Especially the coast and outer banks. They are beautiful and we have always enjoyed our visit to NC. If you plan to go there, make plans to see the lost Colony at Manteo, for it is real special. This year was the first time we have seen it.

Traveling up the coast from NY, we stopped in Norfolk, VA and took the Harbor Cruise. The Harbor has been renovated in most parts and is very interesting. While in Norfolk, I called "Pete" Gray and he was able to get hold of Harry McMillion and Clyde "Tom" Sawyer, and they came to our motel for a gab fest about the 34th B.G. It was a real nice evening and I was told a few things about the 34th, which I had not heard. Many of you may not know but as the 18th Sqd. planes were

running up their engines to take off for home, a man with a dog under his coat, came running out to one of the planes and climbed aboard. It was Harry McMillion. It seemed as if one of the officers wanted to take his dog home but regulations would not permit it, so Harry was given the job of smuggling the dog aboard. Yes, Harry made the plane with the dog and saw it thru, back to the states and finally on his way home, was able to ship the dog to his master. Harry, who was the dogs master? Let me hear from the Master. Have you a picture of the dog?

Clyde Sawyer, when he visited us at Norfolk said he would like to find his Navigator Joseph Trapani, with whom he had lost contact all these years. As you know Sawyer's address from the back of the history was in CA. Joe's address was from PA. Now Joe lives in San Diego, CA and Clyde lives in VA Beach, VA, Joe's address will be on the master list.

I am purposely keeping this issue short for we have a Master List to send out, with the newsletter. It is being put on the computer by Hal Province of Slidel, LA. All mistakes you can blame on me, for Hal is printing what I tell him to. You all know I can't type without making a mistake. Take a good look at the list, for you will find quite a few new names on the list. There will be some mistaken addresses for a lot of you have moved, changed Z.C. or added apt numbers to your addresses and have not informed me. Look good and if your address is not correct, send me a correction and I will make corrections in the Dec. letter. If it was not for Hal's help with the computer, the list would not have been ready for the Sept. newsletter. Thanks to you Hal, I hope I have corrected most of the mistakes.

Remember the letter I printed from Randall Martain to his crew, in the June newsletter? Well here is "Pete" Gray's answer to Randall. "Pete" was Randall's crew chief. Note how he demoted Randall from Colonel to Sergeant.

**Dear Lt. Col. Martin:**

In your last communication, to the crew of "Ol Buddy" — which Ray Summa, surprisingly enough, printed in the June issue of The Mendlesham Memories — you made several derogative remarks concerning the well known beverage — Bourbon Whiskey. Now Bourbon Whiskey is well known all over the states, as the pride of the South. (Respectfully spelled with a Capitol "B"!!!)

And **Major Martin** — you had the audacity to refer to it — I quote "Paint Thinner" — now this is very unkindly of you to say that about the most historical product of the "Old South", it dates back before the Pilgrims got lost and wound up on Plymouth Rock in Mass. As my old Grandpappy would have said, anybody who would make a remark like that, would not know beans when the bag is open.

It reminds me of an incident that took place in one of the cemeteries near Richmond, VA many years ago. An old man and a young boy were leaving the cemetery and the boy noticed a head stone which proclaimed, "Here lies the remains of Thomas Gate a Yankee from Mass. — an honest man"

"Grandaddy, the boy said, "there must be two men buried in the grave."

"Now then you, **Captain Martin**, you would have to admit, the 9 year old boy showed considerable native intelligence, unlike you as a dyed in wool Yankee, who spent most of a lifetime eating Cod Fish and beans, who drinks like he inherited a distillery."

The whiskey you refer to is the kind we export to Yankees and other immigrants, it has been refined and diluted to make it more palatable to your Northerners, whose taste buds can't, won't appreciate a real thing. "The good stuff we keep for ourselves, it is often referred to as "Swamp Dew" — "Gator Sweat" or "Monkey Rum" — is so strong that one drink would leave you tongue tied and would probably make your hair fall out. It is often used as Battery Acid. Two drinks of the stuff, **Lieutenant**, and you'd be lit up like a lantern and after 3 drinks, you'd be holding a fish under water to drown it!

But I won't go on, was writing to you about a church with just one door, down at the Smokey Ordianary VA, when I got your notice, and felt I had to reply to it. Will get back to the Church later.

Anyway, **Sergeant**, we will take this matter up when we get to Nashville in September, I am sure there is plenty of Bourbon there!

What will Randall's reply to Pete's letter be? Read it in the next issue of "The Mendlesham Memories"

I have received several letters from our members of the 34th B.G. who have sent me a story. I have some space so I will publish a few.

**Stanely Kowalsczyk**, of Emery Rall's crew writes: Ralls never aborted (thanks to an A 1 ground crew). We came back to the base, alone, twice after being hit over the target. The last time two hours late, (the base was locked up for the night), when we got back to the base. A few red flares got the base active again. When we taxied in, we found out we had been given up, for the last messages they got from us, was we were going down over the target. Captain Ralls has a tough job getting us out of the Lead Formation after we were hit, without hitting any other plane. Thank God, out Deputy leads on each wing were on the ball, also the lower element just below us. They gave us room to clear, it was a long ride, our Engineer said over 12 hours. The mission was Mersburg, Germany Nov. 30th 1944, which was one of the roughest. This was the same mission of which Jim Hanson asked about, when his Uncle, Oscar Hanson went down. It was after we were hit that Hanson went down. One of our planes was called "Madam Shoo Shoo" from the comic strip, "Terry and the Pirates". Her picture was painted on the nose, under the Pilot's and Co-Pilots window, but had to be covered over with Armor Plate to protect the two pilots from Flak.

**From Giles Avriett:**

I to will never forget the night of June 7th 1944. The 7th Sqd. was not flying that mission, (we usually had the hardest targets) but had flown earlier. My crew was playing poker when we heard the birds returning, just about dark; I got my money and stepped outside just as a 210 (maybe a 410) came over us at about 100 ft. an started shooting up at the formation getting ready to peel off. One bird, already afire, crashed into the Personal Equipment Building. One caught fire and pulled up as the crew bailed out. We heard at the time, some civilians were killed in the crash. The guy flying my plane (Runyan?) got down to about 50 feet from the ground and hauled a \_\_\_\_\_ for over 100 miles. He must have pulled 55 in. on my engines, the whole pane was covered with oil, when he brought it back the next day. My Ball Gunner Friedal, salvaged a .45 from the P.E. and replaced the burned plastic handles with carved plexiglass. He may still have the gun today.

I noticed someone said the B24 flew with "solid but sluggish dignity", BAZZFOGG!!" The B24 could go farther and 10 miles faster than a B17 — it had better engines — it could and did haul more bombs than the B17, I agree, it did not fly too good over 24,000 ft. but the only place we needed the 24,000 ft. was over Mersburg and why not let the B17 have that. They wanted all the glory —

Please tell me about the guy named Tymcyszhn, was he a gunner in the 7th? (Yes). One day we played Volly-ball and the next day he was gone. Glad to hear he made it.

**From Henry Shanley:**

I joined the group at Spokane in 1942 and stayed in it, I was assigned to the Group Hdq. S. 3. In this time many came and went, some voluntarily and some otherwise. Some of the frustrating times was the change over from B17s to B24s and then overseas from B24s to B17s especially the time in England when we had a B24 and were assigned to a B17 wing. It was back to the drawing board for a few weeks for training on B17.

A brief travelogue of the 34th, as I recall it. From Spokane, to Geiger Field, to Ephrata WA, about one month there, too much rail, snow and too cold. Then to Blythe, remaining there for a year or so and then to Salinas, CA while our runways were being repaired. Remember the Yugoslavians at Blythe? The Pilots were Corporals and the Gunners were Captains.



From Paul Sims:

Hi Ray.

Thank you for your card and letter and the update on the reunion. My wife and I are planning to attend and will arrive Thursday afternoon. We are looking forward to meeting you and the rest of 34th B.G. I was on Art Hansen's crew and the plane was a B24 J. Last four members on the rudder was 8840. The name was LONI, however it was not painted on the side at the time we went down. There was an Ace of Diamonds painted on the Nose under the Gun turret. I am sending you this info because I think Francis Bristo (F.A.) was our crew chief, if so, I hope he will be attending the reunion.

I have no addresses of my crew but in looking thru the things the War Dept. sent my mother I found the old addresses of the crew.

While I was living in NJ in '47, I was able to contact Art Hansen, my Pilot. He had visited a couple more of the crew, Steve Kock and George Boyle, but since then have lost contact with them.

I will see you in Nashville \_\_\_\_\_.

Paul is the only one of the Art Hansen's crew I have found but as he has sent me the old addresses, I will keep looking.



Can any of you identify this plane as one of the 34th B.G.? Do any of you remember it? It is identified as a 7th Sqd. plane and had a yellow band around the nose also black and yellow stripe on the tail just aft of the rear stabilizer. Who was the crew chief and who remembers flying it? This picture is from a book B17s in action. The picture with several others was sent to me by John Blair. Pilot from the 391st.

You will note, we have a few of the Sub Depot men on the list and we appreciate them joining us. Any Base Personnel, who were stationed with us are eligible to join the 34th B.G. Ass'n. If any of you have addresses of anyone from the Sub Depot, M.P.s, please send the addresses to me or if you have a friend from one of the Base Personnel and have the city where they lived. This would help a great deal.

We had a couple of visitors this summer, Hal and Jan Province from Slidel, LA stopped by on their way home for a short visit, sorry you could not stay longer and see some of our scenery here in Indiana. But we knew after being gone quite a while from home you were anxious to get home.

Lonnie and Dorable Crook stopped by to see Hannah and I one afternoon. They were on their way home back to Shreveport, LA from a reunion at South Bend, IN. Upon their return home Lonnie sent me the

speech of Col. Gabreski, which Gabreski made at the Houston reunion last year.

Received a call from Gen. Bill Creer, who I reported would not be at the reunion in Nashville. Bill says he finds that he can not make it this year due to other commitments. He is trying to retire and asks if anyone knows of a buyer for a shopping center in Las Vegas, let him know. It is the same one he offered to mortgage so we could pay off the Mendlesham Memorial. We will miss you at the reunion Bill. See you on the trip back to Mendlesham in 1985.

Just received a gift for the Auction USA, from John and Lenora Wooten of 60 Lilac Ave., Rialto, CA. John, it looked so good I was tempted to buy it and not take it to the reunion. But one look from my wife and I had to change my mind. (Guess she thought it was too fat-tening). We'll see at the Auction. John was a crew chief with the 391 and he has a message for all of you who knew him. He wants all of you to write. He says he and Lenora can not be at the reunion this year, and asks all of you to have a good time and remember him.

Had a letter from Ralph and Mary Applegate. Ralph has written all the Medics to see if they will come to the reunion at Nashville. He has some confirmation on some of them. Good luck Ralph, we will see you at Nashville.

The most wasted day of all is one when you have not laughed.

Cheers,

*Ray & Hannah Summa*

Ray and Hannah Summa



1944-1984 \_\_\_\_\_  
100th MISSION \_\_\_\_\_  
ANNIVERSARY \_\_\_\_\_



There will be a special 34th B.G. cancellation stamp on all letters going out to the Hyatt Regency Hotel Post Office on Friday September 14th, to honor the 34th B.G., so please everyone send mail even if it is to yourself.

#### Those planning on attending reunion:

Boyson, John and Florence  
Gibson, James  
Gibbs, Don and Shirley  
Ryan, Dick  
Jalving, Marvin and Lois  
Province, Hal and Jan  
Jackson, Wally  
Perry, Harry Willie  
Rohrbaugh, George and Lillian  
Bice, Robert and Zelma  
Carothers, Harold and Lilly  
Lester, Raymond and Mary Ruth  
Reed, John and Margaret  
Simpson, Robert and Betty  
Thompson, Ray and Valerie  
Zapach, Michael and Mary Ann  
Billman, Charles and Isabelle  
Anderson, Alvin and Julie  
Hann, John and Rose  
Anderson, Keith  
Scherr, Fred, withdrawn wife ill

DiNemmo, Al  
Pratt, Bob and Arline  
Deal, Marquis Lloyd  
Friedel, James and Margaiel  
Danielian, Leo and Melene  
Krystof, Joe and Fran  
Willis, Clyde and Terry  
Elliott, Lloyd and Carol  
Baumgardner, Don and Vera  
Klumsmeier, Emmett and Loretta  
Blair, John and Mary  
Windsor, Dick  
Blair, Jim  
Adams, Bailey, Ruth and Marcia  
Sims, Paul and Frances  
Ferlich, William and Ruth  
Gradin, Bob and Ginny  
Rogers, Rog and Margo  
Reed, Jim and Martha  
Marciel, Earl and Helen  
Schonthaler, Kal and Evelyn

Share, Jack and Marian  
Hohnstreiter, John and Billie  
Brown, Ray and Harriett  
Stivender, Jim and Stella  
Turner, Charlie and Toots  
Hartman, Merle  
Schroeder, Robert and Jennie  
Anderson, Paul and Beryl  
Nichols, Carl  
Nichols, Bran and Bea  
Ivey, Kivett and Lucille  
Lawler, Edward  
Brauks, Wallace and Doris  
Odom, Jack and Beatrice  
Walker, Oral and Marjorie  
Barclay, Charles and Roberta  
Simmons, Fred  
Humphreys, Kan and Renee  
Campbell, Bob and Liz  
Wright, Doc and Dottie  
Sudderth, Clyde and Betty

Loiselle, James and Brenice  
Swan, Ray and Grace  
Habiger, Tony and Joan  
Habiger, John and Lelia  
Baer, Bob  
Strong, Earl  
McSpadden, Allen and Mabel  
Davis, Robert and Zoe  
Prillaman, Arnold and Zoe  
Applegate, Ralph and Mary  
Baugham, Cleo and Freddie  
Sivrett, Frank and Alda  
Beckham, Jennings Blake  
Webster, George and Shirley  
Lopez, Mr. and Mrs. Mike  
Meehan, Bernie and Margo  
Lopez, Leonard and Adrianna  
Mikes son and daughter-in-law  
Braeger, Bob and Deanna  
Weaver, Charley and Betty  
Tavasti, Rose and Kate

Jergens, Henry and Ruth  
Wolstencraft, Samuel and Arlene  
Peterman, Mr. and Mrs. Clarence C.  
Parrish, Harold and Norma  
Gibbs, Claude and Audrey  
Baglio, Samuel and Lydia  
DeHaan, Ben and Helen  
Koenig, Al and Marcy  
Crook, Lonnie and Dorabel  
Pontius, Robert and Dora  
Kline, George and Margaret  
Cannon, Dale and Janet  
Scherr, Fred and Ada  
Schmidt, Francis and Edith  
Slade, Jim and Marion  
Babcock, Bud and Lucille  
Ryals, Marvin and Helen  
Kaiser, Raymond and Alice



Address Correction Requested

SEPTEMBER 13 - 16, 1984  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

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**34th Bomb. Group**

REUNION

**34th Bomb Group Assn.**  
c/o Ray L. Summa  
2910 Bittersweet Lane  
Anderson, IN 46011

From the collection of:

Joseph K Marks

Pilot, 4th Squadron, Crew #12, April - Aug 1944

Non Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
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## NEW MEMBERS

Blair, James N Assoc  
Rt Box 4  
Camdenton, MO 65020

Windsor, Richard N Assoc  
P.O. Box 205 5th AF  
Oasge Beach, MO 65065

Milliken, George  
P.O. Box 8413  
45 Fessenden St  
Portland, Maine 04104

Trapani, Joseph 4 18  
17581 Matial Dr  
San Diego, CA 92127

Palmiter, Randall  
5839 Lyman Dr  
Battle Creek, MI 49017

Mixon, J H  
P.O. Box 685  
Hamilton, AL 33570

Waite, Ernie  
1108 S 4th St  
Alhambra, CA 91801

Bryde, Gleen M  
Rt #1 Box 205 A  
Pound, VA 14279

Stemen, Carl B  
317 Highland Blvd  
Bremen, OH 43107

Schmid Alois "Buck"  
1953 Sheffield Ave No  
Chicago, IL 60614

## CHANGES

Abraham William  
Gulf Oaks Condo Unit 8

Donlon William  
41 Brinkwood Rd  
Brookville, MD 20833

## TAPS

Mrs Olive DiNenno Wife of Al DiNenno  
King of Prussia, PA

Mrs Viri Grimme Wife of Viri Grimme Tipton, IN  
Oren P Hopkins Goltry, OK

**34TH BOMB GROUP**

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H D Q.

