

VOLUME VIII

NUMBER 4

DECEMBER 1986

ENDLESHAM EMORIES

34TH BOMB GROUP H



OFFICERS

President: Al DiNenno (215) 265-1879
Vice Pres.: Ed Lawler (212) 642-3863
Secretary: Dana Schrupp (406) 587-4133
Archivist: Doug Underwood (205) 281-1498
Past Pres.: James F. Martin (915) 348-3046
Unit Contact: Ray Summa (317) 644-6027

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Miguel Lopez (512) 487-2413
Randall Martin (617) 749-9327
Walter McAllister (305) 857-3472
Vernon Ames (716) 695-2637
Eli Baldea (219) 988-4607
George Ritchie (919) 393-8806
Sam Baglio (717) 654-0205

SEASON'S GREETINGS — SEASON'S GREETINGS — SEASON'S GREETINGS — SEASON'S GREETINGS

OBSERVATIONS

Well, the reunions are over and we're all back preparing ourselves and our homes for the winter season. For those of us up north, it is with anticipation of the cold and snow. Some of us look forward to it with great eagerness, awaiting the invigorating briskness of the chilly weather and all of the delightful glory of nice, white, clean snow and all of the snow-related activities that follow. Others, like me, dread the bone-marrow-freezing temperatures and the G-- D-- snow and ice that has to be cleaned off the driveways and sidewalks and makes every trip in your car a challenge. Well, someday I'll spend my winters in the south and let others take up my share of the winter battles.

The Colorado Springs reunion was attended by more than 300 and turned out to be a good one. The Air Force Academy is special and should be seen by everyone, especially air-oriented people. It is magnificent and the bright, sunny, and almost cherubic faces of our A.F. Cadets, both male and female, bring a joy into our lives just because they're there. These young people are not just intelligent but most courteous and an inspiration to see.

The reunion went well and most of the comments I heard were of a positive nature. Certainly we had a few negative remarks made, mostly regarding the Saturday night banquet being held in a large tent on the hotel grounds. It is true that most of us were surprised by the fact that our banquet would not be held indoors but, after some wheeling and dealing by our reunion committee, outdoor carpeting was placed on the ground in walking areas and the major problem was solved. The meal was excellent and the program was delightful. All in all, a fine time was had by all who attended. Elsewhere in this issue you will find a report from the reunion committee regarding Colorado Springs and future reunions.

Rose and I also attended the 8th AFHS reunion in Hollywood, Fla. and the organization paled by comparison to our group reu-

nion. Again, elsewhere in this issue you will find a report on that event by one of our attendees.

Our next two reunion locations were decided upon at the meeting in Colorado Springs; King of Prussia, PA. in 1987, and Virginia Beach, VA. in 1988. Both sites sound most promising. Those of you who have not attended a reunion before or have missed going to the last few should start planning now for September, 1987. If you'll just put out a little effort to be friendly, I can assure you that you'll enjoy it immensely. Rose and I (and I'm sure all of the officers and the board want to be included) are looking forward to meeting each and every one of you.

From all of the officers, board of directors, members, Rose and I, may we wish you all a most happy and healthy Holiday Season and a very prosperous New Year!

Eli Baldea
Editor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The 1986 Colorado Springs reunion is now history. I am sure everyone had an enjoyable time. I want to personally thank the 1986 "Reunion Committee" for a job well done. I would also like to thank all of you for the confidence you have shown in me to steer the 34th Bomb Group Assn. for the coming year.

Al DiNenno

PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Notes from the past:

The term "Past President" seems so much more relaxing

than "President." Those of you who did not make the reunion in Colorado Springs missed a good happening. There were problems, to be sure, but they were all solved in a satisfactory manner.

To try to list everyone to whom I owe thanks for their help, handi-work and dedication, would be futile, but to the reunion committee, past officers, directors and so many others, I can only say "Many Thanks."

Our organization has made tremendous growth in a very short time due to the work of many people. I know you will continue that cooperation with our new crew and help President DiNenno make 1987 an even better year.

Again, thanks to all for your help and support.

Jim Martin



Fellow members of the 34th B.G.:

Well, another reunion of the 34th B.G. has come and gone as well as the 8th A.F. reunion and now we are preparing for our next reunion at King of Prussia, PA. I would like to thank each of you who attended the reunion at Colorado Springs and also the mini-reunion of the 34th B.G. at the 8th AFHS reunion in Hollywood, FL. There was a good attendance at the Colorado reunion and also at the Hollywood reunion. Several attended both reunions. It was good to see all of you there, especially those attending for the first time. We are glad you came and hope to see you all next year.

At our Board of Directors meeting in Colorado Springs, at the request of many of you, it was decided to establish a Life Membership. The Life Membership in the 34th B.G. Assn. was set at \$100.00, but the annual membership remains the same, \$7.50 per year. Life Membership was set at \$100.00 to assure that all expenses will be met in future years. As you know, the cost of printing and postage has gone up over the years and will continue to do so in the future. We have been sending letters to the widows of those who have passed on and will continue to do so as long as they want to receive the newsletter. Now is the time to sign up for the Life Membership. This will keep you from forgetting to send in your dues each year. The money has been invested in a Savings Account to draw interest until needed. As of today we have 16 Life Members.

We do have several new items in the PX. Look on the back of your membership blank and you will see the items we have to offer. The money from the sales of these items and the auctions we have had over the years, have kept the 34th B.G. solvent and able to meet all expenses. These items make good Christmas presents, so why not order some for your children and your wives? Also you wives might want to order some of them for your husbands.

Since this issue of the Mendlesham Memories will be a large one, I will cut my message to all of you short. As this is the December issue, and as Hannah and I will not be seeing many of you before Christmas - We wish all of you a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS and A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR. GOD BLESS EACH OF YOU.

Hannah and Ray Summa



Air Force Academy Chapel - Colorado Springs, CO.

NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

According to a poll conducted in July, 48 percent of those surveyed said defense spending should be kept at present levels, while 27 percent want it increased. Twenty-two percent said defense spending should be cut.

Of those who wanted defense spending increased, 18 percent would finance it through higher taxes, 31 percent through cuts in social programs, 7 percent through higher budget deficits, and 37 percent in some other manner.

The poll revealed overwhelming support for the president's Strategic Defense Initiative, with 81 percent favoring continuing research and development of a system to destroy incoming nuclear missiles before they reach their targets. And, if such a system could be developed, 78 percent favor its deployment.

* * * * *

Note to Jack Blackham - According to information received from Hawley Hudson, it was their top turret gunner, George Baldwin, who shot down the "buzz bomb."

* * * * *

It has come to our attention that a 50th Anniversary Celebration and Reunion for the B-24 Liberator will be held in Fort Worth, Texas during 19-21 May, 1989. We have been advised that an early interest poll is now underway to determine the possible expectations for this event. Ray Summa has in his possession a Unit Survey form which he is to fill out and return to them soon. I'm sure some of you will be asked of your interest in this affair in the near future so he can give the organizers a reasonable idea of our collective response. Please give Ray your fullest cooperation.

Don't Forget Your Dues
Mail \$7.50 to:
Ray Summa
2910 Bittersweet Lane
Anderson, IN. 46011

REUNION '86 COLORADO SPRINGS

ANNUAL MEETING Colorado Springs, CO.

Sept. 13, 1986

1. TREASURER'S REPORT:

Operating Fund:

On Hand Oct. '85	\$ 3901.00
Income	11219.24
Expenses	7375.26

Balance on Hand 4 Sept. '86 \$7744.98

Reunion Fund, 4 Sept. '86 6136.09

Memorial Fund 7542.98

Me. Fund in England (Lloyds Bank) 1360 Pounds

2. AUDIT REPORT: Randall Martin reported books are in order. Accepted by membership.

3. REUNION COMMITTEE of Gerald Pine, Bob Wright, Harold Rutka, Tom King, Dana Schrupp, Roy Bone, Rev. Fred Brooks, and Bill Creer all thanked for their splendid efforts.

4. It was decided that the 34th will have representation at all 8th AFHS annual meetings. At last count we had 22 committed to attend their reunion at Hollywood, FL, in October.

5. Life membership in the 34th BG Assn. will be \$100.00. Anyone interested is to contact Ray Summa.

6. Annual reunion sites for the upcoming years were decided on as follows:

1987 - King of Prussia, Penna.

1988 - Virginia Beach, VA.

1989 - Fort Worth, TX. (Tentative - there is to be a B-24 anniversary in April)

It was decided that we would plan on reunion sites at least two years in advance because that is what it takes to get a decent arrangement.

7. It was agreed to have a historical and pictorial book on the 34th B.G. published. No money - No Risk to the 34th B.G. Assn. Will take one year to 18 months for completion. Finished hard-backed book will cost \$45.00. An overlook committee consisting of Walt McAllister as chairman, Chet Gavrych, Doug Underwood, Eli Baldea, and George Ritchie will be

responsible to oversee the publishing. Pictures or stories are to be sent to:

Mark A. Thompson

P.O. Box 3101

Paducah, KY. 42001

All pictures will be returned to senders.

8. The nominating committee of Ralph Bush, Ed Lawler, and Vern Ames submitted its slate of officers for the following year:

President - Al DiNenno

Vice Pres. - Ed Lawler

Secretary - Dana Schrupp

Directors:

'87 - Miguel Lopez

'87 - Randall Martin

'87 - Walt McAllister

'88 - Vernon Ames

'88 - Eli Baldea (To fill unexpired term of Ed Lawler)

'89 - George Ritchie

'89 - Sam Baglio

The membership approved the slate as submitted.

9. It was motioned and passed that a policy be put into practice of having to be a paid-up member to receive the benefits of the Assn. This includes attendance at reunions. If you can afford the required funds needed to attend a reunion, you surely can afford the \$7.50 per year dues.

10. Harold Rutka gave a report regarding a possible trip to England in May, 1987. More about that in our next issue.

11. Hal Province was complimented on his outstanding performance with the computer for the roster and the mailing labels.

12. It was brought up that we could possibly have the names, addresses and phone numbers of the officers and directors on the newsletter masthead. If you will refer to the first page of this issue, you will see that we have shown names and telephone numbers. If you wish to write, just look up the address in the rosters you've received.

13. The Reunion Committee for 1987 is Al DiNenno, Gerald Pine, Bob Wright, Sam Baglio, Henry Jurgen, Sam Laskin, Joe Bono, Bud Moats and Harold Rutka.

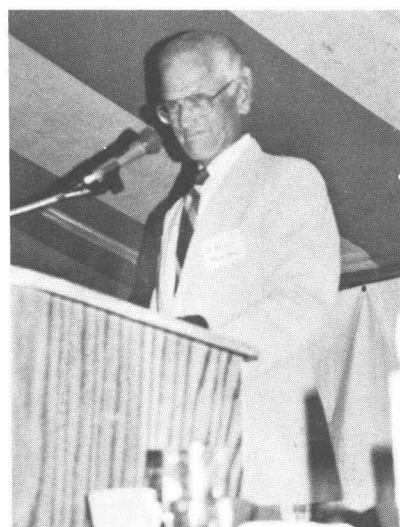
14. Meeting adjourned.



Frank Crabtree, speaker



Bill Creer, speaker



Buck Freeman, speaker

THE COLORADO SPRINGS REUNION -

A FOLLOW-UP BY THE REUNION COMMITTEE

It is good that the membership has seen fit to allow more time on the clock for planning a reunion. When you walk into a hotel we must negotiate. This takes hours and sometimes days before we can finalize, and get a foundation, for building a reunion on. We knew at the end of the negotiations in Colorado Springs that there was a tent in our future. We were promised reasonable environment and attitudes, all of which we received.

We had a tad of pessimism by a few non-believers in the firm optimistic belief of the reunion committee. We had a few investigative persons that, as human nature will provide, lost faith in their committee and plunged into uncharted waters thoughtlessly and ran aground. I don't hope to sound too nautical but want to put things into their proper perspective. We must have a trained, responsible, crew in control of this 34th B.G. craft or we will get shot down. We hope to use all evasive tactics available in our negotiations to avoid flak from any source. If and when there are any comments (I call this input), pro or con, regarding reunion activities and proceedings that are intended to be beneficial to the well-being of the 34th B.G., we would very much appreciate this input being given directly to the committee. We thereby can learn and act more

efficiently on making a better reunion for all.

However, each and every area has its own operating procedures from prices to service. We demand the best we can get for our affordable budget. If we do not receive this we enter into negotiations with the first part of our motto (VALOR) and have shown the latter part (VICTORY) making again this choice of words VALID.

After the Colorado Springs reunion, I am personally proud of the 34th B.G. for their attendance and actions in each operation and activity. If you recall, 1900 plus years ago we had a fellow born into this world in rather adverse conditions. Now why should we in our elevated esteem complain about a weather-proof tent with a very fine program and prime rib of beef to top it all off?

I am very appreciative of the support that the true member has given their reunion committee. I know that the best will come of these gatherings and, years from now, we will look back and hold our heads up high in a social atmosphere as we have in combat conditions.

Gerald Pine, Chairman



Charles and Isabelle Billman and Fred and Ginny Muentz



Dexter and Beulah Jordan and Keith Anderson



Al DiNunno, our newly elected president



Past President Jim Martin



Bob Gay, our M.C. at the banquet



Capt. Sig Nelson of the Air Force Academy, our guest speaker

ATTENDANCE AT COLORADO SPRINGS

Kenas Akers
Eugene Albert
Donald Allen
Charles Alling
Vern & Millie Ames
Keith Anderson & Friend
Paul & Beryl Anderson
John Andringa
Ralph & Mary Applegate
Emil & Betty Armstrong
John & Frances Ashburn
Charles & Evalyn Attridge
Gene & Jene Atwater
L.W. & Lucille Babcock
Sam & Lee Baglio
Eli & Rose Baldea
Charles & Roberta Barclay
Cleo & Freddie Baughman
Leonard & Helen Bess
Steve & Emily Bialas
Charles & Isabelle Billman
John & Marge Bloczynski
Roy Bone
Lloyd & Bobbie Boreen
Richard & Sally Boyle
Wallace & Doris Brauks
Milton & Elaine Braveman
Rev. Fred & Mardell Brooks
Raymond & Harriet Brown
William Brown
Glen & Daisy Brydge & Guests
Ben & Mary Buckley
William & Loretta Burnell
Ralph & Marge Bush
Henry & Bonnie Butler
Tom & Blanche Cannock
Ralph & Ellen Casey
Robert & Virginia Cole
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Crabtree
Bill & Vivian Creer
Harold & Marilyn Crisp

Leo & Mel Danielian
Lou & Anne DeSantis
Robert & Shirley DesLauriers
Robert & Jeannette Desjardins
Al DiNenno & Guest
Lawton & Jo Dooley
Vince & Jean Doran
Joseph & Eileen Drahnak
Donald Dwelley
Joseph & Verna Edwards
Williard & Roxie Fagar
Leonard & Mary Fix
Carroll & Sylvia Forister
Wesley & Phyllis Franklin
Edmund Freeman
Jesse & Molly Gardner
Chester Gavryck
Robert & Phyllis Gay
Henry & Jo Gehle
Claude & Audrey Gibbs
Donald & Shirley Gibbs
Dirk & Dorothy Gombert
William & Marge Gombos
Robert & Ginny Gradin
William "Pete" Gray
Charles & Jennie Gregorski
Willis Griffis
Bryant & Myrtis Grimes
Tony & Joan Habiger
John & Rose Hann
Milton & Kathryn Hansen
Ambers & Jean Hanson
Robert & Lorraine Hartwick
Glenn & Kay Henry
John & Billie Hohnstrieter
Verbal & Betty Holcomb
Gerald & Alta Holmes
Wayne & LaVerne Howarter
Al & Agnes Israelsen
Mike & Margie Jacobbausk
Marvin & Lois Jalving

Eugene & Helen James
Richard & Darlene Johnson
Roy C. Jones
Wyatt & Lavonne Jones
Dexter & Beulah Jordan
Henry & Ruth Jurgens
James & Mary Kenny
Warren & Florence Kiley
Edwin & Mary King
Tom King
George & Margaret Kline
Ed Lawler & Guest
Williard & Norma Layman
William & Billie Logan
Edward & Birgh Loneragan
Miguel & Laura Lopez & Guests
Earl & Helen Maciel
Bill & Betty Mahon
Joseph & Kay Marks
James & Betty Martin
Randall Martin
Irvin & Germaine Mason
Walter & Ruby McAllister
Val & Maxine McClellan
Rodrick & Kris McColl
William & Erma McDannold
Myron & Dorise McDermott
Charles & Dorothy Morgan & Guests
Robert & Angie Morton
Paul & Hazel Mueller
Fred & Ginny Muenta
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Nendell
C.L. & Christine Nichols
Robert & Lee Noehren
Everett & Alma Olson
William Orton
Raymond & Beulah Palmer
Harold & Norma Parrish
Arthur & Marge Paulmann
Ken & Kathleen Paxton
Juan & Mattie Perez

Gerald & Wanda Pine
Harry & Georgia Prillman
Harold & Jan Province & Guest
Fred & Jeanne Repoff
George & June Ritchie
Leroy & Doris Robinson
Cleveland & Henrietta Romero
Everett & Peggy Rose
Harold & Gen. Rutka
Leon & Jeanne Salverson
Fred & Alene Sauermilch & Guests
Francis & Edith Schmidt
Fred & Clara Schoch
Paul & Betty Schommer
Dana & June Schrupp
Robert & Laura Schwartz
Jack & Marian Share
Ronald & Martha Simpson
Franklin & Alda Sivret
Charles & Carrie Smith
John S. Smith
Bruce & Muggs Sothorn
Robert Springer
Walter Sturdivan
Ray & Hannah Summa
Marvin & Avis Syverson
Eugene Tigges & Guest
Carl & Margaret Trauernicht
William & Phyllis Van Buskirk
John M. Vronz
Ernie & Martha Waite
Oral & Marge Walker
George & Shirley Webster
Clyde & Linda Willis
Sam & Arlene Wolstencroft
Burch & Mary Lou Wright
Burris & Delois Wright
Robert & Esther Wright
Tom & Louise Wright
Frank & Charlene Zukaitis



Board Meeting - Colorado Springs, 1986



Hospitality Room - Colorado Springs - Harold Rutka and Gerry Pine holding court

Gala Banquet Colorado Springs Reunion

September 20, 1986



Passing of the gavel from Past President Jim Martin to our new President, Al DiNenno



Milton and Kathryn Hanson and Paul and Beryl Anderson



Jeanne and Fred Repoff and Hazel and Paul Mueller



George and Margaret Kline and Samuel and Peggy Wolstencroft



Emil and Betty Armstrong and Marilyn and Harold Crisp



Verb and Betty Holcomb and John and Rose Hann

Gala Banquet Colorado Springs Reunion

September 20, 1986



Glen and Kay Henry and Wayne and LaVerne Howarter



Mac and Doris McDermott and Bill and Erma McDannold



Jo and Henry Gehle and Richard and Darlene Johnson



Betty and Bill Mahon and Carl and Margaret Trauernicht



Joan and Tony Habiger and Laura and Miguel Lopez



Charles and Evalyn Attridge and Helen and Leonard Bess.

Gala Banquet Colorado Springs Reunion

September 20, 1986



Norma and Harold Parrish and Jeanne and Leon Salveson



Willard and Norma Layman and Ken and Kathleen Paxton



Bruce and Muggs Sothern and Alda and Frank Sivret



Billie Logan, Fred and Ginny Muenta and Bill Logan



All attending presidents - left to right, Bob Wright, Harold Rutka, Al DiNenno, Jim Martin and Gerald Pine



Randy Martin's Crew - Standing, Bob Desjardins, Randy Martin, Shirley Gibbs, Don Gibbs. Sitting, Jeannette Desjardins, Marvin and Lois Jalving, Shirley and George Webster



8th AFHS REUNION HOLLYWOOD FLORIDA

A Report by a 34th Attendee

The 8th AFHS Reunion in Hollywood, FL., Oct. 15-19, drew large attendance as usual, (over 2,000). The 34th was represented by a small contingent of 31, several of whom had not been able to make it to our Colorado Springs reunion in September. We had our own small rendezvous room and a separate dining room for a very pleasant Friday night dinner, although some dissatisfaction was expressed at the Rock Cornish hen served.

At the general membership meeting on Saturday, we received a most interesting briefing on the 8th AF "Living Memorial" to be established on the grounds of the Air Force Museum at Dayton, Ohio. More will be written about this in the next issue of Mendlesham Memories.

The Air War Symposium "The Ploesti Raid" was interesting and informative, particularly with several of the principal leaders and participants on hand to provide the color commentary and recount the play by play.

The Hollywood reunion also provided some less than favorable impressions and I'm sure the host hotel lost all chance of any return visits by a fair number of highly displeased guests.

I felt, and I heard several other expressed opinions, that the organization and management of some activities was disappointing. A prime example was the gala banquet on Saturday night. There was no available advance information as to assigned table locations. As the 2000 plus would-be diners waited in the access hallways to enter the dining area, all doorways were kept locked until somebody's appointed time. The doors opened and guests streamed in, looking for some indication of where they were supposed to sit. Cards identifying assigned groups were on the individual tables. We were not late, somewhere in the middle, but by the time we made it through the door, the lights were suddenly dimmed and a movie projector was started. It may have been a fine show, but many will never know because half the crowd were still pouring in, looking for some sign leading to their proper destination - a table sign, a familiar voice or face, or a frantic signal from one of their scouts across the room. In short, the timing on this phase was atrocious.

With the preliminary activities over, dinner started arriving. Our table was being totally ignored as numerous servers passed us in all directions. We know that there is supposed to be a planned and orderly progression of business in these things so we waited - and waited - and waited. As it became apparent that we might not eat until breakfast, I managed to snag one of the passing troops whose attire suggested his being in a supervisory capacity. I said that we needed some service. His reply, a biting question, just short of a snarl, was "What's wrong with the service?" This - from a supervisor who could see our bare table with untouched place settings when every other table in sight was already settling in with coffee and dessert - made me wonder why the hotel had not provided him with a white cane. He was then clearly informed of our problem and disappeared without a word. A few minutes later someone arrived and started spooning some veggies onto our nice clean plates. A few minutes more and --- etc. In any case, by the time we were serv-

ed, the food was, if not cold, quite cool.

The serving, or non-serving, of the dinner, was, of course, the sole responsibility of the hotel staff. As for the hotel itself, I was disappointed in other ways. We had an uncontrollable shower, a non-functioning refrigerator of unknown vintage, a bed equipped with constantly travelling mattress pad and sheets that bunched up in uncomfortable blobs and somehow eluded every effort to rearrange them. As I waited to check out, along with approximately forty people in four lines, I listened to the comments and gripes being traded by practically everyone of them, regarding poor conditions of rooms, excessively musty odors, deteriorating plumbing, unbearable residual effects from fumigation, etc. One complaint was from a man whose suite still had no air conditioning after four days of promises and another from a man who had to move twice in that time. Others voiced annoyance at the negative attitudes, and even arrogance, of some of the hotel employees.

All this is not pointed at the volunteers who worked to make the reunion a success, but to point out the problems that seem inevitable to arise when the size of the crowd becomes unwieldy; when the weight of sheer numbers overcomes the efforts of the organizing committee. It has proved to be far easier to find a hotel that can provide adequately for the needs and desires of a group-sized reunion as opposed to the requirements for two to three thousand. I am convinced that this is a major reason that many groups prefer to hold their own separate reunions. At Colorado Springs, I talked to members of four other 8th AF groups who seemed happy with the more manageable sizes of their separate reunions, and the much greater opportunities to spend the whole time with their own people.

I'm sure we all appreciate the benefits of having started our early reunions under the wing of the 8th AF reunions, and the help they provided us in the early years of our association. I'm certainly not against joining with the 8th in the reunions, but I think too many groups at a time tend to muddy up the soup.

ATTENDANCE AT 8AFHS REUNION HOLLYWOOD, FLA.



Vernon & Millie Ames
Eli & Rose Baldea
Bob & Olive Bergold
Dudley Casler
Bill & Betty Cheek
Leo & Mel Danielian
Robert & Frances Deloye
Walter & Jane Ann Felker
Walter Jackson
James & Esther Langdon
Ed Lawler
Dan & Gerry Marks
Walter & Ruby McAllister
Bob & Ginny Pacholski
Ray & Hannah Summa
Harold & Evelyn Williams
Daniel & Frances Wimer



8th A.F.H.S. Reunion Hollywood, Florida

October 15 - 19, 1986



Ray and Hannah Summa, Dudley Casler, and Harold and Evelyn Williams



Dan and Frances Wimer, Bill and Betty Cheek, and Leo Danielian



Mildred and Vern Ames, Olive and Bob Bergold



Dan and Gerry Marks, Ginny and Bob Pacholski



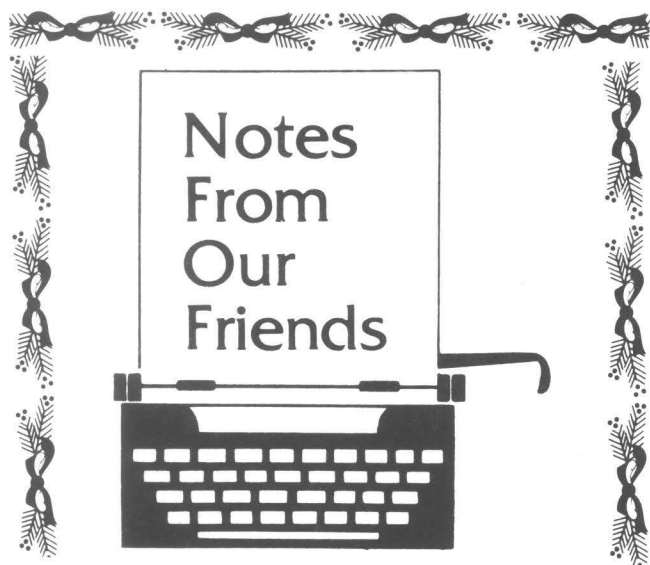
Wally Jackson, Walter and Ruby McAllister, Ed Lawler



Eli and Rose Baldea



Jane Ann and Walter Felker



ROY JONES - Atlanta, GA.

For Warren Kiley in response to his letter in the June issue of M.M. I remember the B-24 trip (12 hours) across from Fortaleza to Dakar quite well, and I resent Warren's skepticism re the rumor that one of the monkeys made lead bombardier in the 391st Sqdn. I did it and I'm here to prove it. It's true I didn't last long as a lead, but you can bet your bananas I made it. Even got "Best Bombing of the Week" once.

ED LONERGAN - St. Louis, MO.

We returned to St. Louis from Florida about mid-April and have been watching the lousy Cardinals and playing a little golf ever since. My golf is poor but better than Cardinal baseball. Also have taken a couple of trips around the Midwest. I will write a letter to all of the crew you have found and, hopefully, we can all get together at a reunion.

ED McLAUGHLIN - East Hartford, CT.

I will not be able to make this reunion. We plan to be in Germany at that time visiting my daughter, her husband and our grandchildren. He has taken over where we left off, and is with the 1st Armored Division. Hopefully, the GOOD LORD willing, I will attend the next one.

WALTER SHORE, JR. - Jocotepec, Jalisco, Mexico

You fellows are certainly doing some fine work. My wife and I look forward to each issue of the newsletter with all the happenings to the members. Sure envy those that can make the reunions. Know a big time is had by all that can attend. The peso is going down again and inflation is going up. Interest rates on time deposits are bringing in 8.7% now but that hardly permits one to stay even. Tourist business hasn't picked up as anticipated and more people are being laid off of work. Minimum wage round here is down to \$3.00 per day but part time help is still hard to find.

ROY TAVASTI - Pismo Beach, CA.

Kate and I could not attend the Colorado Springs reunion. I had been committed to attend the bi-annual get-together of my Flying Cadet Class of 40-H being held in Seattle this year. To my surprise and dismay, both sessions were scheduled for the identical dates.

Aside from a little traveling, I've been staying out of trouble salmon fishing. We have had a rather spectacular run of fish this season after a 5-6 year drought caused by the "El Nino" phenomenon. I dropped one of these critters off at Creer's during the Las Vegas AFA Convention so Bill can verify that this isn't just another fish story.

VERLE GRIMME - Tipton, IN.

I'm still trying to find the original members of the 1942-43 18th Bomb Sqdn. and the members of SQD. X Cadre. Thought I would have more time to myself after I retired in February but am working harder and kept busier than I ever have been. Would have liked to go to Colorado Springs but didn't think I could stand the trip. But will be thinking of you and wishing we could have been there.

BOB KORF - San Bernardino, CA.

In July, Mona and I returned from 3 weeks in England where we received the "Red Carpet Treatment." Patrick Taylor made sure that we had a truly great vacation! Probably the most impressive thing was the 390th B.G. Museum so ably run by Tony Kerrison and Dave Hudson. It and the American Cemetery brought tears to our eyes. Flight Lt. Vernon Wilkes arranged an invitation to a RAF reunion at Wattisham. This was especially interesting as I had managed to get about 54 hours on P-38's at Wattisham (No Combat).

Patrick Taylor received an invitation to a Garden Party at Chatsworth for Princess Diana. We were also invited. Mona loved it!

FRANK B. YATES - Guilford, CT.

The New Haven Register on Sept. 9th carried a story about the passing-away of Hewitt T. Wheelless at age 72. He had been with the 34th Bomb Group for several months after he returned from the Pacific. He was one of our first heroes in WW II. He was a most unassuming type of person and was very much embarrassed by all the acclaim he received. He was known as "Shorty Wheelless." He was a most regular type and a truly nice guy.

TOM KING - Colorado Springs, CO.

A funny thing happened on the golf course during our reunion. A certain Texan out of the 391st, while playing in a "scramble" as part of Erv. Rose's team #4, placed his ball on the fairway and, taking a mighty swing, shanked the ball far into the right "ruff." His head hanging down, very embarrassed, he opened his eyes and saw a golf tee on the ground in the place where his ball had just been. He exclaimed to his fellow 34th B.G. team members in a quaking voice "My God, there's a tee down there!" The three partners, having seen their fellow teammate tee up his ball, all nodded their heads and muttered "Uh-huh, there sure is, but how in H--- did you manage to shank that ball?" We have all been sworn to secrecy and we can only reveal that his initials are J.E. (I have your hat, J.E., and I'll be sending it to you soon.)

JOHN A. GRONOUSKI - Austin, TX. (Letter rec'd 9-5-86)

It is with very real regret that I must tell you at this late date that a business schedule conflict prevents me from attending the reunion at Colorado Springs and, therefore, to speak at the Saturday night banquet. I have tried during the past week to change the weekend business meeting without success. The tax case in which I am an expert witness begins next week and it is deemed essential that briefing sessions be held on the weekend.

I hope you will convey to those attending my deep regrets and wishes that they have a successful and convivial meeting that I had hoped to enjoy.

VERNON AMES - Tonawanda, NY.

We sure had a great time at Colorado Springs. I saw my co-pilot for the first time in 41 years. Our navigator was also there.

GEORGE H. KLINE - Burnt Hills, NY.

Once again we had a very nice time at the reunion. The committee picked a superb spot. And the program was well planned. The memorial services and plaque were heart-warming and very fitting in memory of the fellows we left behind.

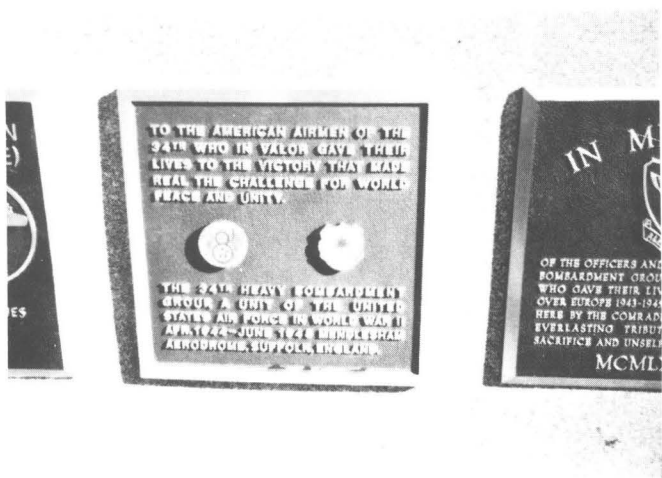
Naturally, problems did pop up, but did you ever go somewhere where everything was perfect? I hope our committee rolled with the punches some irate women were verbally giving them. Really gals, could you have done better? Well done and many thanks, guys, for a memorable time.

GEORGE RITCHIE - Swansboro, NC.

We are now settled here and closed out of N.Y. state. Got our N.C. license plates today. Golfing, ocean swimming, boating and fishing are great. The weather CAVU. Neighbors and friends are very helpful. We are here to stay and satisfied that we made a fine choice.



Rev. Fred Brooks with wife Mardell and Rose Baldea at plaque dedication



Plaque dedicated at Colorado Springs, Saturday, Sept. 13, 1986



ROSE'S CORNER

Dear Ladies of the 34th:

Wasn't it beautiful in Colorado Springs? The planning committee did a great job with the reunion, especially our entertainment at the banquet. Weren't the Times Square Singers terrific?!! We found ourselves singing along with the Broadway show tunes.

Eli and I were very happy to meet so many of you and hope that we will say "hello" again next year in Pennsylvania. They tell us that King of Prussia is surrounded by shopping centers full of outlet stores, so, Beulah, Margaret, Ginny, Beryl, Audrey, & Muggs, "let's do it again!" It was fun shopping at the Citadel Mall.

To all of you of the 34th, you are very prolific! I asked the question, "How many children do you have?" and found that the average number is 2.5. It makes me feel good that we are passing along our love for the 34th to so many. I also found that most of you were not married before or during the war.

To all of you who promised to write, I'm still waiting! I know that the Holidays are coming up and we will be busy, but take a few minutes to tell how you met "Mr. Right."

May love and the joy of giving surround you this Holiday Season and throughout the year.

Love,
Rose

REUNION — 1987

Plans have now been finalized as to the dates and location of our 1987 reunion. As stated elsewhere, we will meet in King of Prussia, PA. The time period will be Sept. 10th to Sept. 13th, 1987 with a couple of days earlier planned for golfers, etc. Our headquarters will be the Valley Forge Hilton at a group rate of \$65.00 plus tax, double occupancy.

Future issues of the Mendlesham Memories will contain more information as to schedules, sight-seeing, shopping, gambling, etc. as well as reservation forms. Keep an eye out for them and start planning now for a weekend you won't easily forget. You'll not regret either the time or money spent.

Merry Christmas





A group of 34th'ers enjoying our outing at the Flying W Ranch

34th B.G. ASSN. HISTORICAL & PICTORIAL BOOK

Dear Member:

At the recent convention in Colorado, the Board of Directors approved to work with Turner Publishing Company, the leading WW II Association History Publisher, on publishing a new 34th Bomb Group Association Historical and Pictorial Book. The book will be a large "coffee-table" 9" x 12" limited edition publication.

Being mailed to you shortly will be a brochure explaining in detail how you may participate in this worthwhile project. You don't have to purchase a book to be included, although I imagine most of you will want to order a book to pass down to the children or grandchildren.

THE BOOK WILL CONTAIN history of 34th Bomb Group Association, short-stories by members, biographies of hundreds of men and women who were associated with the 34th Bomb Group, and any special interest stories as they relate to the Group.

The 34th Bomb Group book will be individually designed for the organization. There will not be another book like it.. The books will become collectors' items of WW II memorabilia. Lets all get behind the book project to perpetuate the 34th Bomb Group Association History. The more books sold the thicker the book will be to record the history in this unique publication.

Sincerely,
Alfred DiNenno,
President

NEW MEMBERS

ANDRINGA, JOHN
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WACKER, CHARLES (HDQ)
234 Muskingum Dr.
Gahanna, OH. 43230



1986 California license plate being sported on the automobile of Roy and Kate Tavasti



TAPS

BEASLEY, ERNEST
Lovington, NM.

LAMBERT, HARRY G.
Troy, MI.

BEAVER, JOSEPH
Hartsville, SC.

LATLIN, CLIFF
18th Sqdn.

CHAFFEE, RUSH L. "SPUD"
Modesto, CA.

McLAUGHLIN, RICHARD M.
Spring Valley, CA.

COLE, DAVID C.
Elmira, NY.

PIGNELLI, ANDREW
Kissimmee, FL.

DODSON, EDWARD H.
Sumner, TX.

SMITH, GEORGE A.
Kingsport, TN.

EIDE, GEORGE
Minnewaukan, ND.

SPHER, LLOYD DON
4th Sqdn.

HADEN, ROBERT A.
Pueblo, CO.

WIGGINS, ROBERT
Rolla, MO.

ADDRESS CHANGES OR CORRECTIONS

(Changes Underlined)

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91108
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VANNATER, EARL, 4997 Williams St., Harrison, MI. 48635
WOLSTENCROFT, SAM JR., Post Road, Westerly, RI. 02891
WRIGHT, BUCK, 1851 San Clemente, Fairfield, CA.
94533-4021



Lt. Col. Drue L. DeBerry speaking
at dedication of our plaque.



Bill Creer, our main speaker at the unveiling of our
plaque at the Air Force Academy



Unit Chaplain, Rev. Fred Brooks offering the invocation

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE WAR



Submitted by: Vince Doran

There is some unfinished business I have to tell you about. On one of those dark, snowy mornings in January or February we prepared to take off on a long, hard mission. For some reason, our plane was the last to roll onto the taxiway on our side of the field. We were at the tail end of a long line of planes. Because of darkness and poor visibility, one of the planes near the front of the line went off the taxiway, sunk a wheel in the soft ground, and could not get back on. Here we were, about half of the Group, stopped cold for several minutes. The planes on the other side of the field continued to take off. In those days I had the layout of the taxiways and runways fixed in my memory. I figured out how to get moving again. I leaped into the breach by calling the tower (STIFFSTARCH), and told him to have everyone make a 180 degree turn and follow me because I knew the way. STIFFSTARCH said do it. With pennants flying and bugles blowing, and without regard for personal danger, I boldly led the mighty fleet of warbirds in a dashing charge around the tarmac in pitch dark, through the maze of taxiways and runways, to the takeoff point. We gallantly took off into the wild blue (darrkk blue) in a blaze of glory, caught up with the rest of the Group waiting for us above the cloud cover, and arrived at the rendezvous only a few minutes late. We made up the time by cutting across the doglegs, and took our proper place in the bomber stream at exactly the appointed minute. A magnificent performance. It was my finest hour. I glowed with pride and accomplishment at my part in it.

All day long, except for the twelve minute bomb run, and a few minutes after the drop, I dreamed of the reception that would be waiting for me when we got back in the afternoon. I would be met at the plane and hoisted onto the shoulders of an admiring and cheering throng, and carried to the Commander who would be waiting with his staff with heartfelt words of praise and commendation. I had prepared a modest and humble speech in response, giving most of the credit to my valiant comrades. But the reception party was not waiting when we taxied to the hardstand. They were a little late. I waited until everyone had left, but still they didn't show. Well, no matter, it would be better to have the reception at REPORTING AND DEBRIEFING where the whole Group was already collected. The Commander wasn't there either; he must have had urgent war business to keep him away. They would be waiting in the club after supper to surprise me. But there was hardly anyone there when I arrived; a notice had been posted that there was a mission next day, and the bar had been closed.

I waited every day for a call, but you know how it is in war-time. People get caught up in pressing matters; new ones each day. I finished my missions and was getting ready to come home when the call finally came. I was so excited and elated. I polished my leather and brass, put on my best uniform, and marched proudly into Headquarters. I was finally going to get the recognition due me. But it was only PERSONAL EQUIPMENT; they wanted me to pay \$12.00 for a pair of issue sunglasses, that I lost or traded, before they would sign off the clearance for me to leave the base.

The years have passed, but I am not discouraged. Some day they will remember.

(Editor's Note) - We, too, think it is high time this oversight be corrected. As soon as we received this moving story, we forwarded it on to General Bill Creer. Here is his reply.

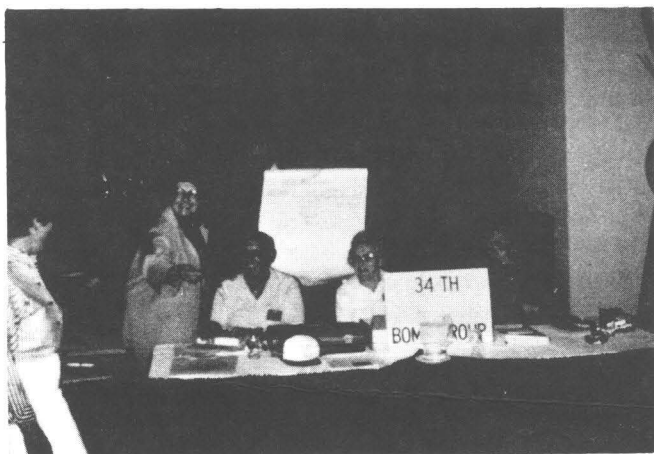
warded it on to General Bill Creer. Here is his reply.

Vince Doran's "moving story" is outstanding. As a matter of fact, just the kind of performance you would expect from those handsome, young, intuitive, intelligent, and motivated men of the WWII 34th Bomb Group. BUT, let me make it perfectly clear - this performance is certainly worthy of proper recognition. I am truly hurt to learn we goofed. However, as Yogi Berra put it: "It ain't over 'til it's over."

This likely was our February 17, 1945 mission to Frankfurt. That day I was in the lead, so we were well into the "darrk blue" when this commendable performance took place. For reasons unknown, the staff failed to bring this important happening to my attention on return. Maybe it was because General Gerhart had called me to his headquarters to discuss the award of the DFC for our sterling mission accomplishments that day.

So, let's get on with it. Approval of awards, at this late date, does not come easy. For substantiation, we would need several eye witnesses, on site, confirming reports of this fine performance. Send your account of the event to Eli post haste. We'll go from there.

Bill Creer



Reception desk with Bob and Esther Wright and Wanda Pine on the job. Clarion Hotel, Colorado Springs



Marie Holmes, Audrey Gibbs, Claude Gibbs, and Gerald Holmes



From the collection of:
Al Israelsen
Pilot, First Crew No. 1, 4th Sq. Feb - Nov 1944

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c/o Eli Baldea
34th Bomb Group Assn.

MEMORIES

Submitted by "Pete" Gray

The following, written by Ernie Pyle, is an account of the action in the St. Lo area of France on July 25, 1944, six weeks after D-Day.

"And then a new sound gradually droned into our ears. The sound was deep, and all encompassing, with no notes in it - just a gigantic faraway surge of doom! It was the heavies!

They came from directly behind us, and at first they were mere dots in the sky. You could see clots of them against the far heavens, too tiny to count them individually. They came on with terrible slowness. They came in flights of 12, three flights to a group. And in the groups, stretched out against the sky, they came in "families" of about 70 planes each.

Maybe these giant waves were two miles apart, maybe they were ten miles. I don't know - but I do know they came in constant procession, and I thought it would never end!

What the Germans must have thought is beyond comprehension. Their march across the sky was slow and steady. I've never known a storm, or a machine, or any resolve of Man, that had about it the aura of such ghastly relentlessness! You have the feeling that even if God appeared beseechingly before them in the sky, with palms up to persuade them back, they would not have had within them the power to turn from their irresistible course!

The Germans began to shoot heavy, high ack-ack. Great black puffs of it, by the score, spackled the sky until it was hard to distinguish the smoke puffs from the planes.

The formation never varies, but moves on as if nothing had happened. Nothing deviates them! They stalk on slowly, with the dreadful pall of sound, as though they were seeing only something at a great distance and nothing existed in between!"

RANDOM MEMORIES OF MENDLESHAM

Submitted by Robert Springer

drizzle, and fighting prop wash immediately after breaking ground. Feeling like a damned turtle - only able to move my arms and legs when in the pilot's seat with all of my flight clothing on plus a Mae West, parachute, flak armour, steel helmet, and oxygen mask. In addition to all that being connected to the aircraft with oxygen hose, electrical wire to my heated suit, earphone and microphone cords, and seat belts.

Breaking out on top of the overcast in forming up and seeing all of the various colored flares being fired by all of the bomb groups to guide their own aircraft. It looked like the Fourth of July over East Anglia. Frost and freezing fog - ice crystals up to one half inch in length on bicycle spokes. Frost forming on the inside of the cockpit windows during letdown over England.

Returning to the hardstand after a mission and being greeted by a Chinese kid with the question "Any holes, Sir?" He was a sheet metal repairman with a Jeep and trailer mounted air compressor. Imagine his dismay one day when we told him we stopped counting at over one hundred and fifty.

Three day passes to London - What a great way for a 21 year old to grow up (or old). Cold - Trying to keep our Nissen hut warm. The best we were able to do was to keep the frost confined to the far inside corners of the barracks. We had clustered our beds at one end around the stove.

V-1 "Buzz Bombs" flying over and near our base. One overflew the 18th Sqdn. area at very low altitude and some idiot was shooting at it with his .45. Fortunately he didn't hit it or we might have lost the entire area.

Briefing and sitting in the aircraft until the mission was scrubbed due to weather for so many days during the Battle of the Bulge. We finally got off on a mission on the 24th of December. Mersburg, Hamburg, Berlin, Nurnburg, Hannover, the Ruhr, the long one to Scheinemunde on the Baltic - these and many other missions, big and small, the bad ones and the milk runs.

Returning from my last mission on 21 March, a milk run. A chance to sack in after an extremely busy flying schedule, eleven missions in 21 days, the last four days in a row. Departing Mendlesham on April 2nd and heading for the States.