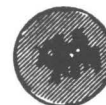


MENDLESHAM MEMORIES

34TH BOMB GROUP H

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391

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

* **OBSERVATIONS** *

Now that signs of spring are popping up everywhere, we're all looking forward to basking in the sun, starting our gardens and engaging in all the activities the spring and summer seasons bring with them. We, of the northern climes, especially, are waiting with bated breath. Let's face it, man was not made to endure the cold and snow which has been imposed upon us. Had we remained the hairy pre-historic man, we might have been more prepared bodily for the onslaught of sub-freezing temperatures and, not inches, but feet of snow we have had to put up with. However, hopefully, all of that is behind us for this year and, with a smile on our faces, we are opening our arms wide to greet the coming seasons.

Anticipations for the upcoming year are running high for Rose and me. First, on our trips to England, we were fortunate to form a very lovely friendship with a couple from Mendlesham, Freddie and Margaret Maundrell. They were most hospitable on our two visits there. Now we have been informed that he has retired and they are both coming to this country on a visit. Happily, we have learned that they will be able to spend some of their time here with us and we are looking forward to their visit with great pleasure. It will be most enjoyable showing them around this great midwest heartland and, Lord willing, maybe even spend some time in Florida with them. At this point the time element is not totally known so we really don't know how much time they can loiter here. However, we will put whatever time is available to good use.

Elsewhere in this issue you will find our first notice of the next reunion in King of Prussia, PA. next September. Those of you who have never attended one of our reunions owe it to yourselves to do everything possible to make it. You'll never regret it. The camaraderie itself is worth the trip. Everything else is a bonus. Let's face it. At our age, our years are numbered. The modern ways, although we have learned to live with them, are just not quite our cup of tea. We were brought up and lived our early adult lives in another era. It's most enjoyable to get together with people more in line with our own prime-time era and reminisce. Please be sure your current dues are paid because, at the last general meeting in Colorado

Springs, it was decided that only members in good standing can attend our functions. But, let's face it, if you can afford to come to a reunion, the \$7.50 annual dues are a drop in the bucket. Let's all bring our membership dues up to date and get together at King of Prussia this fall. You'll have a BALL!

Also in this issue you will find the notice of our impending trip back to England in May. If you haven't been there since the war, do yourselves a favor and go this time. The experience is heartwarming and the British people are most hospitable and generous.

May we take this opportunity to wish all the Irish and pseudo-Irish out there a Happy St. Patrick's Day and to all of you a Blessed Easter or Passover season, whatever your religious persuasion.

Eli Baldea
Editor

P.S. All paid members still may bring guests with them to the reunions.

President's Message

Hi, All:

I hope everyone has recouped from the holidays and from "Old Man Winter." Just think, it will only be a few short weeks until spring and then, our lovely summer season.

There are several events coming that will require your attention. The first is the 34th B.G. History Book. I am certain that every member whose address is valid has received the flyer explaining your part in writing the commemorative history, so don't forget; get your biographies in by the March 15, 1987 deadline. The second event is the return to Mendlesham, England from May 28th to June 5th, 1987. Let's get our deposits in early. Thirdly, don't forget our 34th B.G. reunion in King of Prussia, PA. from Sept. 9th to 13th, 1987. Let's make this a reunion which won't easily be forgotten. Have you thought about a member of your crew that you would like to locate. If you need help, contact me. I'll try.

Your President
Al DiNenno



Ray Summa...

Fellow members of the 34th B., Ass'n.

Guess it is that time again to write a little something for the newsletter.

First Hannah and I want to thank each one of you for the cards and letters we received at Christmas time. We read and reread each letter over and over. We do appreciate them very much. But do not wait until Christmas time to write, we appreciate your letters any time you want to write to us.

I want to apologize to the 391Sqd for the mistake in the application for making you the 381st. No insult was intended. I could blame it on the computer but I have no computer. I just hit the wrong key and in checking I guess I did not check the application close enough.

I also should have made it plainer that I have all the PX items named, except the jackets and shirts, Dana Schrupp orders and sends those out. So order your PX items from me and the shirts and jackets from Dana.

Hannah and I hope to have more new items for the PX at the reunion at King of Prussia as well as the ones we have already.

Those who are going to England the last of May, might like to order caps and jackets to wear. I have the caps here. It would be wise to order them, as soon as you know you are going. Dana can get the jackets. He has a few on hand now.

So far we have had 450 who have paid their 1987 dues, plus 43 who have LIFE MEMBERSHIP dues paid. Frankly, I am a little disappointed in the small amount who have paid their dues and the small amount who have taken LIFE MEMBERSHIP.

Most of you have read the treasurer's report which was in the Dec newsletter. The money we have left on hand mostly came from the Auction USA we have held at the reunion, also from the rebate from the 8th AF reunion over the years. We received \$1,200.00 from the 1985 Wichita reunion and \$230.00 from the 8th AF reunion at Hollywood, Fla.

Hannah and I have taken in more than \$2,000.00 at the PX on sales at our reunion, plus quite a bit from the sales here at home. Of course this has not been all profit for we have paid for the items we have sold. So you see we are not just operating on the dues but also on the sales of the PX items.

To those who are delinquent in your dues, as this letter goes out to everyone, it may be the last newsletter you will receive, for we must pare down our mailing list to those who are paid-up members. So get your dues in as soon as possible.

Remember also, it was decided at the reunion at Colorado Spgs. by a vote of all who were present that each one who attends the reunion must be a paid-up member.

I will not say too much about the reunion at King of Prussia Sept 10th-13th 1987 or the trip back to Mendlesham the last week of May. I am sure those who have charge will have something to say about those.

I do want to remind those of you who live in the East, of your promise to come to the 34th B.G. reunion if one was held in the Eastern part of the Country. Now is the time to honor that promise. I am sure each one who attends will have a great time seeing and meeting old friends that you have not seen for a long time. Come early and see some of the sights.

Hannah and I, God willing, will see you at the reunion at King of Prussia Pa. in Sept.

Ray L. Summa



Standing, L. to R. - Wally Felker, Phil Howard, Charlie Busacker, Dave Davidson, "Hack" Hackney. Kneeling, L. to R. - Walter Coupe, Tom Thompson, Gene Coombe, Paul Buss, Tony Habiger.

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

After reviewing the item in the previous newsletter and the brochure concerning our up-coming group history book, I belatedly realized that the wording used, — "you," "your military service," "your personal biography," etc. — might very well cause surviving family members to feel that they were being excluded from participating in the book project, simply because the husband or father had passed away.

Nothing could be farther from the interest and spirit of this project. Our start-up crew just got so involved in getting this thing going that no one of us saw the implication of the wording as presented.

Regrettably time is catching up with us. (At least 45 names have been reported to the TAPS list just in the preceding two years.) I'm sure many of those who have gone would have wanted to be included in the book. Those they left behind are invited to submit the biographical sketches with a WWII photo and one of the most recent available. Also other photos of 34 BG times and activities. And we hope that many would also like to buy the book. As noted in the brochure, it is a book largely for the children and grandchildren in years to come. Because the original deadline date is almost upon us, the Turner Publishing Company has graciously extended the deadline to June 15, 1987.

Walt McAllister
Chairman, Book Committee

Don't Forget Your Dues

Mail \$7.50 to:
Ray Summa
2910 Bittersweet Lane
Anderson, IN. 46011

REUNION, 1987

Members and friends of the 34th Bomb Group:

Our 1987 reunion will be held at the Valley Forge Hilton in King of Prussia, PA., from Sept. 10th thru Sept. 13th. Board of directors members, early birds, and golfers will sign in earlier.

On Wed., Sept. 9th, our golfers will leave the Hilton at 11:15 a.m. for the Oak Terrace Country Club at Ambler, PA. for a 1:00 p.m. tee-off time. Lunch will be served at the club with prices ranging from \$7.50 to \$9.50. For a round of golf and a cart, the fee is \$25.00. Anyone interested should contact Sam Laskin at 2947 Michele Drive, Morristown, PA. 19403.

On Thursday, Sept. 10th, the board of directors will meet and do their usual fine job of planning the future of the 34th, while their spouses and other early-birds do their own thing at shopping centers, tours, etc.

The program gets into full swing for all on Friday morning with breakfast, followed at 9:30 a.m. with a tour of Historic Philadelphia, which ends at 4:30 p.m. A buffet dinner will be served later that evening at the hotel. Please note that the tour is not included in your basic registration cost. You will have to pay American Heritage Landmark Tours separately for any tour you wish to go on. You'll find a registration form for this with the basic registration.

On Saturday, immediately following breakfast, our annual meeting will take place in the dining area. Following the business meeting, the entire afternoon will be available for your pleasure or choice. There are several historic tours which you will find listed elsewhere in this issue, shopping in a nearby

mall, visiting with old long-lost buddies, or trying to keep Harold Rutka hopping in the hospitality room. Saturday evening's banquet has been promised by the hotel management to be perfection on a platter.

On Sunday morning we'll have breakfast and bid our fond farewells 'til next year.

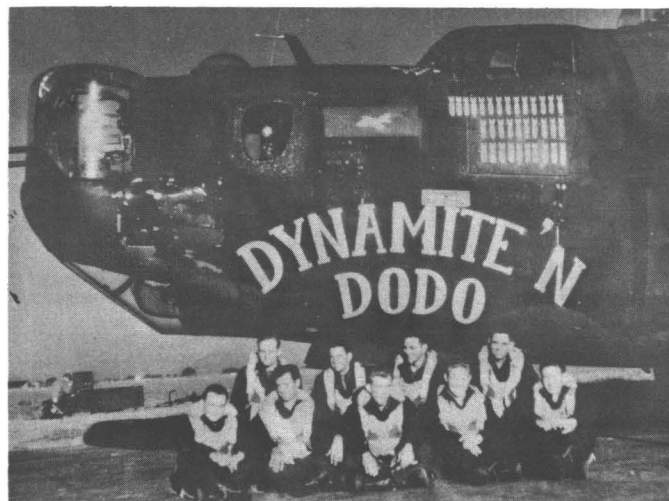
Elsewhere in this issue you will find a registration form for the reunion and for the food only. This form is to be sent to Robert Wright at the address shown. There is also a form from the Valley Forge Hilton for room reservations. Please complete the form and mail it directly to the hotel. As far as golf is concerned, please write to Sam Laskin at the address stated above. The historic tours are also to be handled directly with American Heritage Landmark Tours at the address shown in their section of this newsletter.

All this sounds a little like old G.I. days - where you had a form to fill out for everything, but, under the circumstances that prevail this year, this is the best your committee could shake up. There is a cut-off date of 15 August, 1987 for room reservations. After that date your request for rooms will be subject to space available, and group rates cannot be guaranteed. So get your reservations in early, then relax and plan a leisurely trip and good time in September.

Thanking you;
Your Reunion Committee
Gerald Pine, Chairman



Vic Lupei & Fred Miente - 1944



Back row, L. to R. - Deacon Scales, Tommy Hildebrand, Ziggy Gordon, "Doc" Wright. Front row, L. to R. - Bill Starks, Tom Devine, George Baldwin, "Cotton" Hudson, Delmont Jones.



Blythe, California - 1944



BOB BERGOLD - Punta Gorda, FL.

It was a pleasure meeting you and other members at the 8th AFHS reunion. We finally found a seat at the "Associates" table. Met a very interesting young fellow who, as an 8th AF buff knows more about the 8th than most of us.

The only members of my crew that I am still in touch with, Dave Ratcliff, Jim Kerr and Gordon Kreuger are all members of the 34th B.G. Assn. I plan to go to the reunion at King of Prussia and hope to get some of my old crew to go also.

BILL SCHMOLDT - Elgin, IL.

In the brochure for the 34th B.G. historical book was a picture of a B-24, Paper Doll. I was ground crew on that plane before we got the B-17. Heard that it was put into a museum. Any information about the whereabouts of the Paper Doll would be very much appreciated.

LES THOMPSON - Granite City, IL.

I invited Clarence Squires, our crew chief, to come to Granite City and spend the holidays with us. He told me he had a bad back and could only ride a few miles in a car. At that time he mentioned he had a stroke in March, 1986 that affected his face and taste.

I drove to Cainsville, MO. and visited with him for a few hours. I am happy to say that he is the picture of health. He weighs about 200 lbs. and is not fat. He appears to be able to take care of himself. It was great to "hanger fly" a little. Talked about the old "Tempest Turner", best 3-engine fort in the E.T.O., our crew, and the old outfit.



Back row, L. to R. - Hughey, Juris, Moran (dead), Ralls (dead), Wanfried, Westman, Meyers. Front row, L. To R. - Baker, Gabel, Kowalczyk, Parenteau, Zilinsky, Markas, Franklin.



Carl Stemen's crew

BILL BROWN - Stone Mountain, GA.

Sorry we couldn't get to the Colorado Springs reunion. From reading the newsletter it appears that everyone enjoyed it. In August we went out of town one Sunday night and our home was robbed. They emptied all the drawers and boxes and dumped everything on the floor. So you see, we were busy at the time of the reunion. Hope to be at the next one.

I did read in the MM about the upcoming "34th B.G. Assn. Historical & Pictorial Book." I do want a copy of it when ready. I hope I can also contribute to it. I know it will be for real.

JOSEPH MORRELL - Johnson City, NY.

I intended to go to the last reunion but I had a mild stroke. I couldn't write my name for a week, but after a month I was about normal. I do everything now and feel like nothing has happened. I take pills to keep my blood thinned out. I hope to be with you next September. I live about 3 hours drive from King of Prussia.

BILL HERSHENOW - Mountain View, CA.

Sorry I couldn't make the reunion at Colorado Springs. I had sent in my reservation but got called into surgery at the last possible moment. I had the surgery and am a little dingy but that will pass. Please give my best to my old friends of the 34th.

BOB KORF - San Bernardino, CA.

Was Bill Creer a Lt. Col. when we were at Mendlesham? I remember some Lt. Col. jumping all over me for flying P-38's from Wattisham but am not sure of the name.

Finally got my Super-Duty TransAm back together after six months of "scrambling" for special parts. Found the cylinder block in Indiana, had JE Pistons make the forged pistons, Donovan made the stainless steel valves, bought a camshaft from Crane, and now I have a decent car again! The new cars are all junk - although I do have an '86 Mustang GT which is good enough to go get groceries or for a picnic. "Saint" Joan Claybrook destroyed the American auto almost single-handedly — and the state of California finished the job!

BOB DEES - Torrance, CA.

Enjoyed reading the latest issue of the M.M., especially the items about the reunion. Very sorry that we were unable to make it. However, I look forward to making one soon.

I certainly concur with the idea of having the 34th reunion separate from an overall 8th AF or B-24 or B-17 get-together. I think a reunion should have time for lots of "bull" sessions of an informal sort.

FRANK DUKES - Palmyra, VA.

I am pleased to hear about the project for a 34th B.G. Assn. Historical and Pictorial Book. I hope that they will do it right even if it results in a more costly book. And will it differ from "The History of the Army Air Forces 34th BOMBARDMENT Group (H)" from the Battery Press? I would hope that it would be much more comprehensive and less "Gee Whiz!"

Incidentally, I wonder if any of our members are licensed amateur radio operators. Al Steiner, communications officer from the 4th Sqdn. used to be a ham but he has defected to computers. I got my ham ticket a couple of years ago and would very much enjoy chatting with other 34th alumni. My sign is KB4MUF.

JIM KENNY - Shoreham, NY.

Mary and I have attended the reunion in England last year and the recent one at Colorado Springs. We see no reason to criticize either of these affairs. We just admire the enthusiasm of the committee members and their wives. During my working days, I attended many conferences run by professionals. Many of these could take pointers from you.

JOSEPH D. CLARK - Winterville, NC.

I do remember Junius W. Cobb of Richmond, VA. I haven't seen him since 1945. Junius at that time had a beautiful head of red hair and was real worried about going bald. He probably is by now. He and I shared a tent on the flight line at Mendlesham. I don't know whether he remembers this or not.

NORMAN S. REED - Oak Bluffs, MA.

For what it's worth, I have written two books about the island of Martha's Vineyard: "A Place Fit Only For Refuse," dump picking on the island; and "A Place Where The Eelgrass Flows," tales of the Vineyard. All non-fiction. \$9.00 for each to cover postage and handling. Does this info. interest anyone?

HUGH HENDRIE - Borger, TX.

In the MM, I read the letter about the Chinese sheet metal man. I believe his nickname was Wong. He was an A-number-one sheetmetal man. I remember him saying once that the height of his ambition after the war was to get a job as a pimp at a Chinese W---house in New York. Excuse the language but those were his words. I've often wondered if he did.

RICHARD FECHKO - Garfield Hts., OH.

I was just released from the hospital after recovering from a slight stroke. It left me with no visible defects, thank goodness. I hope to see you all in King of Prussia. Will try to get all members from around Cleveland to attend.

LESTER BROOKSHIRE - Calhoun, GA.

In November, Mary Etta and I had a chance to visit my navigator, Charles B. Stutts and his wife Kathryn in Forest, Miss. They were very gracious hosts. It was a special thrill for me. We had not seen each other in 42 years. This was the first long trip I have made in years without a lot of discomfort and pain due to prostate trouble diagnosed as cancer. I am doing O.K. now.

JOHN MANGAN - Gloucester, MA.

We're not getting old; we're just like good wine — getting better with age. It took me 3½ years to get to the point where I could walk again after being struck by a car and having both legs broken — compound fractures in both legs. I am also working again after almost 4 years. Every morning when you get up say, "I can do it!" and you will.

CHARLES BILLMAN - Tonawanda, NY.

We had a great time at Colorado Springs and hope to see you all this coming year at King of Prussia. We got an additional surprise when we opened "Mendlesham Memories" and saw our picture with Fred and Ginny Munte. Thanks again for the good times.

WILLIAM NEEL - Decatur, GA.

Glad to learn about plans for a new historical and pictorial book. The brochure announcing plans for the book with photo and biographical sketch deadline date of 3-15-87 just arrived in the mail. I plan to comply with instructions and send \$45.00 for a copy of the book.

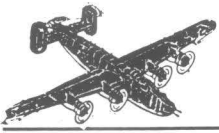
(Continued on Page 8)



Standing, L. to R. - Stanley Martin, Raymond Swan, Earl Colebank, William Robertson. Kneeling, L. to R. - Joe McCarrick, Jerry Becker, Ed Logan, P.T. Walker, Ned Piency, Andy Oschack.



Sgt. Walter Sturdivan at Blythe, CA. in "monkey" suit.



Then and Now



Darrell W. Bulis



1944



1986

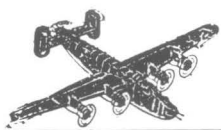
Eli & Rose Baldea



1946



1986



Then and Now



Paul Anderson & Bob Gradin



1944



1986

Ray & Hannah Summa



1943



1986

Notes From Our Friends

(Continued from Page 5)

KEITH ANDERSON - Everglades City, FL.

We are having record breaking heat here every day for this time of year. Water will have to cool down some before fishing is worth much. J.C. Smith, "Smitty," and I enjoyed some bass fishing at Lake Okeechobee last week. Also received my life-time membership card from Ray. Hope it lasts me a long time.

JOHN E. DONALDSON, JR. - Arlington, VA.

The 8th AFHS and this group are the only veteran's organizations that I belong to and am very pleased to be a member. Like many others, I had never heard of either organization until last winter when I heard of and joined the 8th AFHS. I have not seen any of my crew members' names on the roster; perhaps I can locate some of them and recruit them into this association.

JOHN R. GRIFFITH - Lansford, PA.

I am not feeling up to par after my stroke last year, shingles, and now a chronic mastoid condition. I hit the icy side of the hill last year (age 60) and have been sliding downward ever since. (Maybe some of Pete Gray's Va. moonshine would fix me up!)

JIM HARKLISS - Ft. Wayne, IN.

I just got out of the hospital. They had me in traction for two weeks — the old back problem again. But I'm O.K. now and exercising a little more. I just can't get to a reunion. If you see Ev. Rose, ask him about Fehrenbach. They were pretty good buddies.

BILL DEMPSEY - Boise, ID.

Wanted to remind you that I still have a copy of the 34th History (First edition - padded cover - fine condition) that I'd like to sell. It's not that I want to be "rid" of the 34th; it's just that, after 35 years of Air Force, I've got more histories, rosters, mementoes, etc. than I know what to do with! Besides, I've still got my "Short Snorter" and an E & E Map from the "Red-Tailed Bastards" we used to be know as!

HANK LAMBERT - Spotsylvania, VA.

While I was safely tucked away in the hospital, Mary took advantage of the situation and had walls knocked out and doors widened - supposedly for the purpose of making way for the wheelchair. But one can't help but wonder if she was looking for an excuse anyway. Believe me, I don't plan to go to a hospital again - who knows what she will do next time!



Standing, L. to R. - Wentz, Hohnstreiter, Ray, Dodson, Stallmach. Kneeling, L. to R. - Vinge, Jambor, Grzeskowiak, Johnson.

ROLLAND WHITED - Danville, CA.

What a great job you and your cohorts do in the Mendlesham Memories publication. Sorry I wasn't able to be with you in Colorado Springs. Had an Angioplasty procedure recently, but I'm doing great right now.

WES FRANKLIN - Des Moines, IA.

My planes flew 85 missions - and we never had one return because of poor maintenance, and never lost one man. One plane was junked at the emergency landing strip down the coast. There was a man on the wing of another plane at that strip as our plane was coming for a crash landing. He thought my plane was going to plow into his and jumped off the wing and broke his leg. Nobody else was hurt. This just might be a record. Would be nice to know.

GEORGE KLINE - Burnt Hills, NY.

Didn't we have a super time at our reunion? The committee did very well in making it a memorable occasion. We met friends that we had met at the last reunion, and made new friends again. That is very easy because we are such a great outfit, and have so much in common. The war was bad, but we made good our experiences. Wasn't the lunch at the Non-Com club great? And our dedication ceremonies brought back memories of what it was all about.



34th B.G. Gunnery School Instructors - Mendlesham

Mendlesham Memories is published four times a year by the 34th Bomb Group Association, Inc. March, June, September and December.

Editor: Eli Baldea
1595 Sunnyslope Drive
Crown Point, IN 46307

Editorials and stories are welcome and should be sent to the address above with new addresses, changes, and deletions.

England, 1987

Greetings:

The 34th BOMB GROUP is departing for ENGLAND on 28 MAY 1987, and arriving on 29 MAY 1987. You should all have received a flyer from TAMARAC TRAVEL, INC. on the trip. Any questions on the tour or travel arrangements can be answered by TAMARAC TRAVEL - their TOLL FREE number is: 1-800-228-9690. Check your PASSPORTS - now is a good time to apply for one if you do NOT have a current one.

There will be NO CENTRAL departure point; the plan is to assemble and leave HEATHROW AIRPORT at 09:30 A.M. - FRIDAY - 29 MAY 1987. We will be bused to the POST HOUSE in IPSWICH, the same place as our two previous reunions.

Saturday will be a trip to the old field area and the 34th Bomb Group Memorial, and the 390th Control Tower Museum at Framlingham. Saturday night - a banquet with the ladies of the British Legion as our guests. The ladies have been taking care of the memorial for us for the past 40 years. Sunday A.M. board buses for Mendlesham where those wishing to will attend services at the 900-year-old village church. Sunday afternoon will be the annual Memorial Service at Madingley, the American Cemetery. Madingley Cemetery consists of 3,811 grave sites, the wall of the missing where 5,125 are listed, (the great Mall and reflecting pools) leads to the Memorial. We will be involved in the Memorial Day services; customarily on the Sunday nearest the calendar Memorial Day. We will then check into the University Arms Hotel at Cambridge.

Monday A.M. there will be a walking tour of the university. The afternoon will be spent at the Duxford Imperial War Museum. Tuesday will be area tours. Wednesday a visit to Hendon Royal Air Force Museum and the surrounding area and then into London to the Metropole Hotel located near the Marble Arch and near Selfridges. Selfridges is a famous department store - offers less variety than Harrods, but just about everything and a little less expensive.

Friday will be the departure to home station or on to a continued European visit. There have been inquiries about the difference in price between the Friendship Holiday tour in August 1987 and the 34th Bomb Group tour in May 1987. The TAMARAC TOUR will be for the 34th Bomb Group members, families, and friends and will travel as a group. The Rambling Tours will serve many groups and will be quartered in either Norwich, Ipswich, or Cambridge. The possible units stated at Ipswich would be: 1 SAD, 95 BG, 94 BG, 385 BG, 390 BG, 357 FG, 493 BG, 479 FG, 447 BG, 493 BG, 486 BG, 353 FG, 356 FG, 55 FG, 56 FG - these are the groups I picked out of the Mighty Eighth book by Roger A. Freeman - some could possibly be assigned to Cambridge or Norwich. Write for the brochures and make your own decisions.

The following is a listing of previous and present tours and prices:

1983 - Rambling Tours - 6 Nights - \$508
1985 - TAMARAC TOURS - 7 Nights - \$549
1987 TAMARAC TOURS - 7 Nights - \$579
1987 - Rambling Tours - 6 Nights - \$349*

Note: *PRICES AS OF 2 JANUARY 1987 subject to change.

Gen and I will be looking forward to seeing you in England in May.

Harold C. Rutka



ROSE'S CORNER

Rambling Thought:

Starting this New Year, here is my plea,
Lord, make a better writer out of me!!

It is said that reading is one of the true pleasures of life because it annihilates time and space for us. I do hope that you all find a lot of pleasure reading the Mendlesham Memories.

Our mailbox was stuffed during the holidays with beautiful cards from many, many of you. We thank you for remembering us. I had asked you to send stories on how the two of you met and here's the first:

Kay met Milton Hansen at a wedding rehearsal for Milton's brother and Kay's sister. Kay and Milton were married eight years later! Terrific!! I'm hoping that more of you will write and let us know.

Bob and Esther Wright sent us a card from Maui. Must be nice to loll around in the sun right now! (Feb.) Beryl and Paul Anderson wrote to say that they stayed in Colorado after the reunion and found the grave site of Paul's grandfather. Visited relatives there, then on to Salt Lake City, the cleanest town in the U.S.A. Audrey Gibbs sent a short note in a very pretty card. Thank you, ladies, and don't stop now! Until the next issue, wear a smile; it doesn't cost a thing!

Rose Baldea

Notes From Here And There

Mr. Russell J. Zorn of 1561 Meadow Drive, Alden, NY, has asked our aid in getting information from crewmembers or others who can describe events leading up to specific events of the 34th B.G. They are:

1. B24 - Crash landed at Silchester, June 24, 1944
2. B24 - Crashed at Dungeness, June 22, 1944
3. B24 - Crashed/Burned at Hadlow, July 27, 1944
4. B24 - Plane crashed at Holt, Aug. 24, 1944 after crew bailed out.
5. B17 - Crash landed one mile from Ibstock, Oct. 2, 1944
6. B17 - Crash landed at Halesworth, Oct. 8, 1944

If you can furnish him any information on the above, contact him directly.

*See You All
At
King of Prussia
In September*

Lifetime Memberships

Vern Ames	Homer Brown	Robert Gradin	Dexter Jordan	Walter McAllister	Robert Steiner
Keith Anderson	Ralph Bush	Wm. "Pete" Gray	Warren Kiley	Robert Nendel	John Strona
Sam Baglio	Paul Buss	Charles Gregorski	Edwin King	Juan Perez	Ray Summa
Eli Baldea	Carroll Forister	Jack Hood	Emmet Klusmeyer	Arthur Poulos	Roy Tavasti
Cleo Baughman	William Garrison	Wayne Howarter	Ken Lockwood	Harold Province	Kenneth Ulam
John Blair	Robert Gay	Seymour Isaacs	James Martin	John Rosequist	Doug Underwood
Lloyd Boreen	George Gerlach	Marvin Jalving	Randy Martin	Donald Shee	Karl Wallace
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Webster, George, 11566 Sandpiper Way, Lake Wildwood, Penn. Valley, CA. 95946

Wissman, Don B., 1970 Autumn St., Titusville, FL. 32780-6001

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A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE WAR



by G.F. "MAC" KEECH

I read in one issue of "MM" that the 34th B.G. was the first unit to use Mendlesham as an air base. This is not quite the case as, when I was posted there to set up the station for you people, there was a Czechoslovakian squadron, the 134th Fighter Squadron. They were equipped with "Spitfires" and were preparing for the big operation in North Africa, code-named "Torch."

The wing commander in charge invited me to come to the runway one afternoon to see how he got his squadron quickly into the air. I was shocked to see six planes at each end of the runway, facing each other. They took off in threes towards three other planes coming in the other direction and had near misses all the time. As I watched what was going on my hair was standing on end, but the Wing C.O. was as cool as the proverbial cucumber!! It was a day of practically calm conditions. I asked him what would happen if there was a breeze blowing, and he replied "Ah, that is a different matter, but we manage somehow." I never heard how they managed in North Africa, but they were a good bunch of lads.

Also while I was there, I was sitting in one of the huts this crowd was using as an officer's mess. I heard voices outside the door. This went on for some time, so I eventually went out to see what was going on. There were four young officers from your B.G. advance party. I asked them why they stood in the passageway instead of coming inside the hut. One of them replied, "We couldn't come in when there was a four-star general sitting beside you." This four-star was a Czechoslovakian major of the ground staff.

* * * * *

by W. "PETE" GRAY

In Bob Springer's article, he mentions the Chinese kid who was a sheet metal worker over in the 18th Squadron. Now I never knew the kid but had heard about him just a year or so ago when a few of us from the 34th were having a little get-together down here in Richmond, Va. Grady Deatherage and myself were there from the 7th Sqd. along with Ray Summa, Francis Bristow, and Junius Cobb and several others from the 18th Sqd.

During the festivities someone mentioned the Chinese kid, named Wong, and recalled that he had taught some of them how to sing "Pistol Packin' Mama" in Chinese! But when they tried to recall how the words went, after some forty years, they had a hard time getting it all together.

Now picture, if you can, a half dozen or so gray-haired, bleary-eyed ex-G.I's, late at night in the back room of a restaurant in Richmond, Va. singing at the top of their lungs the Chinese version of "Pistol Packin' Mama!" The first time around they struggled through it, but the second time they were more sure of themselves and began to really cut loose. On the third try, they had the windows rattling! And when they had finished, they all let out a cheer; they were pleased and delighted with themselves and what they had just done!

Ray Summa told me later that he had tried to locate the Chinese kid, who was from San Francisco, but had to give it up. It seems there are between 5 and 10 thousand Wongs in the San Francisco phone book, enough to have a phone book of their own!



Tony Lauby & Ben LeBailey reminisce about the old days.

Taps

BALLESTEROS, ROBERT
New York, N.Y.

REYNOLDS, WILLIAM G.
W. Conshohocken, PA.

HOOVER, THOMAS J.
Shamokin, PA.

SCHAFER, GUSTAV
Nordman, ID.

KALCHTHLER, JOHN
Pittsburgh, PA.

SCHAFER, JAMES
Dale City, CA.

LOMBARD, MICHAEL
Watervliet, N.Y.

WILSON, CURTIS
Kershaw, N.C.

MOORE, ROBERT F.
Dallas, PA.

ZARFOSS, CLAIR H.
York, PA.

Memories

DARRELL BULIS, Early, TX.

On Dec. 5, 1944, we had not finished our combat training yet and were scheduled to go up to the "Wash" to bomb sea targets. Someone in the "Head Shed" goofed and set us up for the real thing. Lt. Sheesley asked the crew what we wanted to do and we decided to go for the real thing. So we kept our mouths shut and went to Berlin and did our job.

When we arrived back, there was a Colonel waiting for us and, boy, was he mad. "Where the hell have you been?" We said "Berlin." "But you are not combat qualified - Uh - but I guess you are now!" I believe we were the only crew that never bombed targets on the wash.

ROLAND HACKLER - Tulsa, OK.

John Kendricks and I (prop-shop mechanics) wanted to build a tandem bicycle. We got two single bike frames, cut the necessary parts from each and welded it all up into a tandem. To make the bike work, we needed three 48 tooth sprockets, a spindle to mount two of the sprockets and a rear-wheel sprocket to work as an idler gear to take up the slack out of the

(Continued on Page 12)

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



34th BOMB GROUP ASSN
 c/o RAY L. SUMMA
 1910 BITTERSWEET LANE
 ANDERSON, IN 46011

(Continued from Page 11)

long chain from the front pedals to the rear pedals.

We went to the bike shop in Debenham and told the owner what we needed and why. His comment was, "It simply can't be done." But we did. Our first ride was to the bike shop in Debenham. The owner asked, "Can I help you, Yank?" I said that I had a bit of a problem with my bike. He walked out with me, took one look at the bike, and went back into the shop muttering. We rode that bike all over until we wrecked it on V.E. Day.

WALTER FELKER - Orlando, FL.

Vince Doran's article in the last MM immediately attracted my attention. My ever diminishing memory recalls a similar - if not the same - incident.

On a truly dank, dark, and dismal February morning, our crew was scheduled to fly as deputy lead for the 391st Sqdn. The weather was absolutely abominable. We lined up for takeoff on the extreme right edge of the runway behind the lead, who was on our left side. Our technique was for me to line up, set my directional gyro, and literally make a "blind" takeoff. Our right-hand man, Phil Howard, would open his side window and try to maintain visual contact with the right-hand edge of the runway as a further aid to keeping us on the fog-obiterated strip.

The tower issued the takeoff signal and the lead aircraft immediately, totally vanished down the runway with "Old Dad" in hot pursuit! Somehow, our tail wheel had gotten over the right-hand edge of the runway. I honestly do not know if it was off before I started our takeoff roll or slipped off just as we started our acceleration. After moving along a little way, I felt the need to make a slight course correction to our right. Of course I could not, because the tail wheel was held firmly fixed along the runway edge as we had not quite attained the speed at which the tail wheel rose from the ground, and the rudder became effective for directional control. So there I was, putting an ever increasing pressure on the right rudder when we reached "tail-up" speed. Instantly the tail wheel popped above the edge of the runway and the full right rudder threw that old B-17 into the most abrupt and violent right hand turn that anyone had theretofore experienced in an aircraft of that size. We also came to a very abrupt and violent halt as our heavily laden aircraft hopelessly mired down in the winter muck. Naturally, our momentum was such that our nose dipped sharply down,

thrusting our tail gunner, Paul Buss, about thirty feet into the air and then slamming him (and the tail) back into the sloshy winter mud. Paul was born and reared on an Illinois farm, but I am certain that he never in his life felt any closer to the sod than he did at that exciting moment.

MILTON BRAVEMAN — Harrisburg, PA.

As I remember 25 Oct. '44. The 34th B.G. is to lead the 93rd Bomb Wing who is leading the 3rd Air Divn. and the division is leading the 8th Air Force. Our target: Oil processing and storage facilities along the south bank of the Elbe at Hamburg. Two crews, one piloted by Bowen, the other by Sheridan, are called out for a special briefing. I was the navigator on Jim Sheridan's crew. Instead of carrying conventional bombs, our bays are loaded with bombs filled with radar-confusing chaff.

Fifty miles before the IP point, our chaff-laden B-17s increase the indicated air speed to 180 knots (30 over the standard 150) and climb to be at 30,000 feet over the IP 3 minutes before the main body of bombers. With bomb bay doors open and heading directly at the target, we start a rapid descent and toggle our chaff bombs at 30 second intervals. As we approach the target, we can no longer see the bombers behind us through the solid black sky from the flak batteries clobbering the chaff which has set up a dense protective screen for the bombers.

We, depicted at the apex of the images on German radar screens, are taking a heavy pounding. Bowen has two engines damaged and starts dropping rapidly. We stay with him. Bowen's crew jettisons all movable items to lessen the weight. He has trouble feathering one of the two damaged engines. We are now too low to rendezvous with the group.

We reach the North Sea at 12,000 feet. The Frisian Islands are in the distance to our left. Jim asks for our position and calls, "Little Friend, Little Friend, we're at 9,000 feet, 70 miles west of Control Point C. We're alone and lonely." In what seems like seconds, 2 P-51s drop through the clouds and position themselves off our port wing. Can you imagine a more beautiful sight? Bowen is now able to maintain altitude with his lightened craft, but he relies on us to escort him back to England. Soon, we are in Gee box range and can pinpoint our positions until we hear the most welcomed "Hello Stiffstarch, this is Laurel G George, requesting landing instructions.

The following morning at the mess hall, Bowen's navigator (regrettably, I don't remember his name) thanks me for accompanying him home.