

ENDLESHAM MEMORIES

34TH BOMB GROUP H



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Vice-Pres: Walter McAllister	(407) 857-3472
Recording Sec.: Vernon Ames	(716) 695-2637
Archivist: L. Douglas Underwood	(205) 281-1498
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Eli Baldea (Editor)	(219) 988-4607

OBSERVATIONS

Here we are again, trying to keep you entertained and informed with another issue of the newsletter. We do try our best and, hopefully, the format and contents are as you like it. At least, whatever feedback I get seems to substantiate that.

This is being written in mid-July and, here in the midwest, the weather is horrendous. Temperatures have been hovering between 90 and 100 degrees for the last two weeks and it has not rained for several weeks, so we are on the verge of a severe drought.

This issue is largely devoted to the upcoming reunion at Shreveport. It promises to be one of the best we've ever had. Barksdale Air force Base authorities have been most cooperative and our visit there should be most exciting. First of all, we will be the beneficiaries of a visit from the B-1 bomber. We will have time set aside exclusively for the 34th to inspect the plane and, personally having had that privilege, that is most exciting. Secondly, we will be dedicating our own memorial on their Memorial Walkway. Thirdly, we will have dinner Friday evening at the Officers' Club, being entertained by the 8th Air Force Band, which plays in the old Glenn Miller style, and we all must remember that so well. Also, P.O.W. medals will be presented in a military ceremony for those that are present.

The Saturday night banquet promises to be great. All in all, we think this will be the best ever. Those of you who are as yet undecided can rest assured that you will have an unforgettable experience. Just meeting with folks from your past is, in itself, an experience you shouldn't miss. But, with all the side attractions, it's an experience you had better not miss!! COME ON DOWN!!

Our "Then & Now" section has again come to life. I had written to those members whose pictures appeared in the new 34th B.G. book and asked for their pictures inasmuch as the book sold relatively poorly and our newsletter reaches well over 1000 members. The response was gratifying and I now have pictures for that section to last a couple of years.

In our "Address Changes" section you will see several "ADDRESS NOT KNOWN" inserts. This is because items mailed to their last known address have been returned marked "NO

FORWARDING ADDRESS" or "NOT AT THIS ADDRESS". We try to keep current on this but, without your help, it is difficult. Also, we are still receiving mail back marked "TEMPORARILY AWAY". Again, I repeat, we have two (2) mailing label discs for our computer. One covers the June and September issues and the other covers the December and March issues. If you winter at an address other than the one we have, "PLEASE LET US KNOW". It's no big problem to send your copy to the proper winter address unless your term away doesn't agree with our separation. ENOUGH SAID?

Rose and I are looking forward to seeing and meeting all of you at the Shreveport reunion. "BE THERE!!"

Eli Baldea
Editor

PRESIDENT'S REPORT -- AUGUST, 1989

This important development occurred as we went to press for the June issue and was too late to get into print. Vice President Everett Rose, who was to succeed to the Presidency in Shreveport, requested that the Board accept his resignation. I was devastated, yet felt that we must respect his wishes and, so, we accepted his resignation. The Board of Directors is indeed saddened by this resignation and are happy to report that Everett will maintain his membership.

The Executive Committee, with a prospective list of candidates, filled the vacancy with Walt McAllister. We feel very fortunate and pledge our support and full cooperation.

The Reunion Committee of Gerry Pine, Harold Rutka, Bob Wright and Lonnie Crook have a reunion program fit for a KING. Grab your QUEEN and swing into Shreveport!

On Wednesday and Thursday there will be early bird registration followed by golf, tennis, jogging, auction bidding, swimming, shopping, noshing, loafing, rendez-vousing, reminiscing and an early viewing of the B-1. Also, on Thursday at 0800 hours, the Board of Directors will be meeting in the Hospitality Room.

Friday morning will feature a "mini" phase of our Silent Auction headed up by June and Dana Schrupp. At 1300 hours we

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bus to Barksdale for a windshield tour, aircraft displays, cockpit inspections (ladies, be sure to wear flat shoes and slacks if you wish to climb up into the cockpit), a tour of the 8th Air Force Museum and dedication on the Memorial Walkway. After retreat we will proceed to the Officers' Club for dinner, presentations and music by the 8th Air Force Band.

Saturday, following breakfast, is our general membership meeting. Please remember our constitution calls for any new business to be submitted in writing to any Board member. Shopping, trips, auction bidding, horse-races, cocktail party; all precede our final Banquet and "under the gavel" AUCTION.

After Sunday breakfast...check the lobby for church services...don't forget to thank your reunion committee for a job well done...then FAREWELL until Seattle! Thank you for coming.

George J. Ritchie

President

P.S. I wish to thank all members for their cards, calls, and best wishes received during my recent illness...(I'm fine now!)



Robert T. Harrison



Kneeling L. to R.: J. O'Leary, H. Lamar, L. Babcock, H. Blagrove & L. Warner.

Standing L. to R.: W. Fager, R. Jones, J. Scholle, & E. Erwin.



Dear members of the 34th B.G. Assn.:

Our reunion at Shreveport is drawing near and it should be a good one. We should have a large crowd of all who have said they'd be there do come. As you can see in this issue, a good program is planned.

On our way to the B24 celebration at Ft. Worth, TX., we stopped off at Shreveport to meet with Vern and Millie Ames and Lonnie and Dorabel Crook, who are on our memorial committee for the memorial at Barksdale. We arrived at Shreveport on a Saturday and called Guy Gipson and his wife, Sena, who live there. They picked us up at the motel to take us out to dinner. They also gave us a tour of the air base, Bossier City, and Shreveport. We all must remember, when we are on the base, not to get on the wrong road. We happened to make a wrong turn and, as we approached an intersection, a Jeep with MP's came toward us. One got out of the Jeep holding a gun, that seemed longer than he was, and asked where we were going. When told that we were looking for the lake, he suggested we turn around and go back the way we had come. That young man didn't seem as old as our youngest grandson, but I guess we looked the same way when we were in the Service back in the '40s.

On Sunday we met Vern, Millie, Lonnie, and Dorabel at the 8th AF Museum, took a tour of the Museum, and selected a spot for the 34th B.G. Memorial on the Memorial Walk which has a good view of the planes that are parked there. Before leaving the museum, I presented some memorabilia I had collected to "Buck" Rigg, the director. He was very glad to get them and let us know that he would be very appreciative for any and all memorabilia our members could donate. Bring any you have to Shreveport and present them to "Buck" at the Museum.

On Monday, Vern, Millie, Hannah and I were invited to breakfast at Lonnie and Dorabel's, which we enjoyed very much. Need I say that Dorabel is a wonderful cook? After breakfast Lonnie, Vern and I made a trip to the stone mason to pick out a stone for the Memorial. It's beautiful and will look great when installed on the Memorial Walk.

At noon on Monday we started toward Ft. Worth and the B24 celebration. We stopped overnight about 60 miles from Dallas and started out again the next morning. A rainstorm started and it rained so hard we couldn't see the road so we stopped at a roadside restaurant for breakfast and had to stay there for over two hours. The lightning lit up the sky and struck several places nearby. When we thought the rain had slackened off we started out again, but, as we drove on, it came down in sheets. We could see where the water was lapping at the sides of the road bed. But, as we neared Ft. Worth, the rain stopped and then the sun came out as we went to our hotel room.

For the B24 reunion the exhibits were really great. I have not seen so many things for a GI at any one place since the war. The Exposition Hall was crowded and many were outside waiting to come in. With Vern's help, I set up a dinner for Saturday nite. This was no easy task for I had only received the names of the 39 attending a few days before leaving home. Everybody seemed to enjoy the dinner and comradeship while we were there.

Buster Thomas took VHS pictures, as we were introducing ourselves, when one man arose and said, "I am Howard Green". Buster about dropped his camera, for he and Howard

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FROM THE HANGAR OF RAY SUMMA

Continued from page 2

were on the same crew and had not seen each other since the war. Neither knew that the other lived in Texas. Needless to say, someone else had to take over the camera while Buster and Howard got reacquainted. It makes me feel good to know that I have brought so many crews together these last few years. If you can, get Buster to tell you the story about the debt of gratitude he owes Roy Tavasti and Bill Creer for the help they gave him at Mendlesham. It's a good one. Buster also donated the stone for the Memorial at Wright-Pat.

Sunday nite dinner at the Convention Center, which had been emptied of all exhibits, was attended by over 3500 people. At the banquet we met Ken and Renee Humphreys and their guests, Francis and Dorothea Rowley. Ken and Francis were on the same crew in the 4th Sqdn. and were on one of the planes shot down when that intruder hit four of our planes on June 7th, 1944.

I will say this for the Ramada Inn at Ft. Worth. We were treated very well. On the evening we arrived there was a cocktail party and a buffet dinner. Every morning we had a free breakfast buffet.

After leaving the reunion, we stopped, in Mississippi, to see Evelyn Breedlove, widow of Bill Breedlove, who passed on several years ago. Bill had been a Flight Chief in the 18th Sqdn. Evelyn had not been feeling very good, having just returned home from the hospital a few days before we arrived. Her daughter-in-law prepared a lovely lunch for us which we enjoyed very much. Hurry up and get well, Evelyn. The catfish in the pond are waiting to be caught. Evelyn loves to fish in the small lake Bill had built near the house before he passed on. She would like to hear from any of you who would care to write. Her address is RR. 5, Booneville, MS 38829. Come on, how about writing or sending a card to her. She will appreciate it.

Not long ago we received a most interesting letter from Molly Gardner, wife of Jesse Gardner of Bagley, IA. Her home during the war was Debenham, England and many of our boys made her parents' home their home away from home. I'm sure Eli will print it in this issue of MM.

The rain in Dallas followed us home and it rained for four days. Now, with all the rain I look down to see if I have webbed feet. The river and lakes are up so high and so muddy that we've not had a chance to go fishing.

Since coming home we have sent out 700 delinquent dues notices and, so far, have had answers from about 200. So, you see Hannah and I have been busy sending out cards and answering. Several have become LIFE MEMBERS and others have sent in their dues for 1990. We thank them very much. If you become a LIFE MEMBER you will not forget to send in your dues nor will you receive those delinquent notices from me. We wish everyone would become LIFE MEMBERS.

I have been asked when the dues are due. Our Fiscal Year starts Dec. 1st and ends Nov. 30th. This was done to aid me in getting the books ready for the Indiana income tax. Yes, we pay some Indiana tax, even though we are non-profit. Indiana makes us pay tax on anything we make or sell, except for donations or dues over \$1000.00. So you see dues are due from December on. Why not get them in early and help make my job easier?

Many of the June newsletters were not delivered due to address changes. The Postal Service will not send back the copy but just a slip of paper showing a change of address. This costs us \$.30 for the return and \$1.25 postage plus the cost of the newsletter to send out another one. If you move, or have a winter address, please notify Eli so he can change his address

labels. The Post Office will furnish change of address cards. Then our cost won't be so high.

After we left Ft. Worth, Vern and Millie Ames went on to Arizona to visit their daughter. On the way home they stopped here at the Summa residence for a visit. We enjoyed their visit very much. We are hoping they will stop in again sometime. Also not long ago, Dex and Beulah Jordan stopped by for a visit on their way home from a trip out west. We are hoping they, too, will stop by again. We do like company. If any of you are traveling close to Anderson on I-69, turn off and stop by for a visit. We are about 5 miles from I-69 and Indianapolis is just 30 miles away. The Wright-Pat. Museum is just 100 miles away.

We are hoping to see many of you at Shreveport, so do not disappoint us. As you know, we have the PX, so if you need caps or anything for the reunion, send for them and we will ship them to you. I still have a few of the new 34th B.G. books left, so order them from me and help the group make a little money. The books are \$50.00 each.



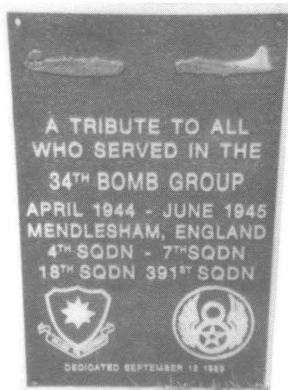
Michael Derenge

**Sit Down Now
and
Send In
Your Dues**

REUNION 89'

An Invitation

Your 34th Bomb Group (H)
and
The Eighth Air Force Museum
Barksdale Air Force Base
Cordially invites you to participate
in a dedication ceremony of your
memorial to your deceased at the
Memorial Walkway on Friday,
14 Sept. '89 at 1700 hours
Vern Ames - Chairman
Memorial Committee



HONOR ROLL

At the suggestion of Hal Province, for which we thank him very much, we will establish a new tradition at Friday night's banquet in Barksdale. That tradition being: The reading of the names of members who have passed away since we last met.

For this, our first reading, members may bring forward any name, or names, whom they wish to be included and read by the Chaplain at the invocation. Please include the name, squadron, and home town of each deceased. Give it, in writing, to any officer or board of directors member before the banquet.

Thank You,
George Ritchie

REUNION — NOSTALGIA FOR WAR?

by Mac MacFarland
from THE SWISS INTERNEE

Do we hold a nostalgia for war? No one seeks the separation from loved ones, the sacrifice, noise, boredom, loneliness of the killing and dying in war.

We who have been in a war seek a nostalgia not of war but of the unusual brotherhood shared therein. This does not exist under any other circumstance. We knew that we could count on the other fellow without question as they risked and often sacrificed for us, their brothers in uniform. We knew in ourselves we were willing to do for another. For the first time in our young lives we were great — truly great. Most crews, it is believed, developed this sense for survival and made us better than we had been before, better than we could ever be again. The bonds were forged in self discipline, nurtured in laughter and a casual air such that the depth of commitment was hidden. This made men of boys and made us perform beyond abilities.

Nostalgia is for the things the war made happen between diverse men making them become brothers. Forever afterwards, without knowing what we seek, we search for the greatness war brings out in others and ourselves.

If we could find these things in peace there would be no more war.

A woman wrote a note about why her husband desired to attend a reunion of his B-29 crew. "Watching the men at the reunion, I began to understand what makes them come back. It's not just the comradeship. It's the sense of continuity, the need to link past and present, to weave pieces of life into a connected pattern. There has to be a focal point, a central experience around which everything crystalizes. For some it is the Senior Prom, College graduation, or the Championship game. For these men it was the experience and time shared in an area and time of extreme danger."

NOTICE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, Sept. 14th, 0800 Hours

In The Hospitality Room



L. to R.: R. Jones, D. Gombert, J. Scholle & E. Erwin.

THANK YOU, BARKSDALE

On behalf of the membership of the 34th Bomb Group, I want to thank everyone at the base for their contribution in the preparation of a most memorable week-end.

A special mention to Colonel Joseph F. Mudd, Commander, 2nd Wing; Lt. General Ellie G. Shuler, Jr., Commander 8th Air Force; and Colonel Gary R. Hinkle, Commander 2nd Combat Support Group for the efficient and cooperative way they and their men received our support people and assisted in the development of our program.

To the 8th Air Force Museum and Memorial Walkway personnel, another "Thank You" for the reception and placement of our memorial. We appreciate the concern and insight of Curator "Buck" Riggs and want him to know how much we appreciate his cooperation and attention to detail.

May I remind our members that YOUR 8th Air Force Museum will be pleased to accept YOUR gifts of money and/or memorabilia....That's how it GROWS!!

Sincerely,
George Ritchie
President

THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE BAND BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, LOUISIANA

Friday evening, Sept. 15th, we will be entertained by the Mighty Eighth Air Force Band. The principals involved are Capt. Stephen T. Kimmons, Commander/Conductor; Sr. MSgt. Wesley E. Boyd, Supt.; TSgt. Patrick R. Fegan, 1st Sgt.; MSgt. Leroy Tatum Jr., Dir. of Operations; and TSgt. Robert S. Peck, NCOIC.

Personnel include: Trombones — TSgt. Bob Peck, SSgt. Joe Vasquez, A1C Tony Acosta, & A1C David W. Frost; Saxophones — SrA. Randy Dahl, A1C John B. Coyle, A1C Daryl Risinger, & Amn. Brian Doyle; Trumpets — MSgt. Leroy Tatum, SSgt. Dan Fullerton, SSgt. Hal Sterling, & Sgt. Dave Jarrett; Rhythm — MSgt. Tony Whack, SSgt. Dan Ciufo, & Sgt. Dan Johnson; Vocalists — SSgt. Brian Sivils & Amn. Kristi Engelbrecht; and Audio Engr. TSgt. Patrick Fegan. (SEE PHOTO)

One of 20 Air Force Bands worldwide, the Eighth Air Force

Band performs throughout northern Louisiana, Arkansas, and eastern Texas. In the tradition of the great Glenn Miller Band which was also associated with the Eighth Air Force during World War II, they perform music from the Big Band Era, as well as contemporary hits of today arranged in the Big Band jazz style.

WANTED

Your Memorabilia for display in the
8TH AIR FORCE MUSEUM

Barksdale A.F. Base

"Bring it to Shreveport"

THANK YOU!!

"BUCK" RIGGS - CURATOR



The Mighty Eighth Air Force Band

REUNION 89'

SUPER AUCTION — SILENT AUCTION

"A HALF AND HALF"

Because of your tremendous support of our past auctions, the Committee people (Dana & June Schrupp and Eli & Rose Baldea) have modified the format. Now it will be SUPER and SILENT!

On Wednesday and Thursday, Phase One of the Silent Auction will be on display in or near the hospitality room. Bid cards, instructions and directions will be on the scene. Bidding on Phase One will close Thursday at 8:00 p.m.

Phase Two will be on display Friday morning with the bidding closing at noon.

Phase Three will be held most of Saturday with bidding closing around cocktail time.

The SUPER AUCTION... "goods under the gavel... will be held following the Saturday night banquet. Merchandise for the SUPER AUCTION will be on display before and during the banquet.

Members, please be as generous in your gift selection for this reunion as you have in the past. Most of you will bring your gifts to the reunion, but, in the event it is not possible, please feel free to send them prior to 9/12/89 to:

34th Bomb Group Reunion
c/o Sheraton Pierremont Hotel
1419 E. 70th Street
Shreveport, LA. 71105

With your support we will make this auction another huge success. Thank you for being a part of it.

Your Auction Committee

"ANOTHER MAXIMUM EFFORT"

You've heard the words before... "THIS IS A MAXIMUM EFFORT". Now you are having another — at BARKSDALE!

Your own Ralph Bush contacted General John T. Chain, CINC SAC at Offutt A.F. Base, NE. As a result, the general ordered a B-1-B from the 46th Bombardment Sqdn. (SAC), Grand Forks A.F. Base, ND., commanded by Lt. Col. John P. Priecko, into Barksdale for YOUR inspection.

The 34th is privileged to have been selected to inspect this supersonic bomber at their reunion in Shreveport. It will be on display Thursday & Friday, Sept. 14 & 15, exclusively for your members. This is an unprecedented honor... a chance of a lifetime to "GET INTO THE COCKPIT."

So, get to a telephone... call in your reservations... MAKE BARKSDALE YOUR MAXIMUM EFFORT!! YOU'LL BE PROUD!

Thank You
Your B-1 Crew

SCHOLARSHIP

Our first scholarship winner is Laylene Rich Drennan, 1045 West Center, Proud, UT 84601. Relative/spouse is Val. J. McClennan, 1711 Lakeside Drive, Lakeworth, FL 33460



Front row, L. to R.: Gist, Jackowitz, Shanley, Schnittgrund, Smith, Cook, Metz, Wilson, Bannon.

Middle row, L. to R.: Martin, Brown, Glicksmann, Hammond, Tavasti, Fandel, Arteel, Wright, Burcham.

Back row, L. to R.: Messmer, Dilworth, Knudsen, Crook, Smith, Smythe, Rhodes.

B-24 Reunion Report

From Harold Rutka we have the following regarding the B-24 Reunion at Fort Worth, TX.:

The 50th Anniversary of the Liberator was a great success. Personnel from the following Air Forces; 5th, 8th, 10th, 13th, 15th, 20th and three units from the USN/PAC, England and Australia were in attendance.

The memorial service was impressive and the three fly-overs by the B-24s added to it. The sound of those piston engines sure brought back memories — some good and some bad. There were 3700 at the Reunion Banquet and 500 had to be turned away — just no place to seat them. Tex Beneke's Orchestra provided the kind of music that we could listen to without breaking our ear drums.

The 34th Attendees were:

Vern & Millie Ames
Rose Marie Anderson & Son
Alex & Betty Antanovich
Bud & Lucille Babcock
Tom & Blanche Cannock
William Creer
Leo Daniellian
Robert & Juanita Grway
Willis Griffis
Glenn & Kay Henry
Alf & Maye Johansen
Dexter & Beulah Jordan
Lindsey & Dee Lipscomb

Harold & Carol Logan
Joe & Kay Marks
Jack Nuding
William & Jacque Pedigo
Rich & Mabel Richards
Harold & Gen Rutka
William & Jean Schildman
Don Shee
Walter & Lois Sturdivan
Ray & Hannah Summa
Buster & Wilna Thomas
George C. Weddell

Don't Forget To Send Your Dues

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

WORKING COMMITTEE REPORTS

by George Ritchie

REUNION COMMITTEE— Soon Shreveport will be history. I hope everyone reading this report will be on hand to enjoy it. In case you haven't made reservations, it's never too late to join us...we will do our best to accommodate you. Seattle is taking shape. Our local contact, Bill Burnell, will have his attache case full of brochures showing popular tourist attractions in the great Northwest. Come and help make the plans for Seattle.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE— Through Vern Ames' able leadership and the cooperation of Mr. Chet Day of Mahopac, NY, Mr. Vito Sorrentino of Presbrey-Leland Monument Co., Valhalla, NY, and Mr. Richard D. Simmons of the Allen Monument Co. Shreveport, LA, the monument honoring the 34th BG deceased has been designed, constructed and placed at the Memorial Walkway for our dedication. A fitting ceremony has been planned and it is fitting that all of us attend. (See photo of plaque on page 4)

POW PRESENTATION COMMITTEE— Wally Brauks and Bill Creer will conduct the ceremony for our former Prisoner of War Medal presentation at the Friday night dinner. They wish to remind all former prisoners to bring their medals and contact them upon arrival at the hotel to assure participation in the ceremony.

DECORATION COMMITTEE— Dorabel Crook and Doris Brauks will see that there will be appropriate floral and bunting decorations at the Memorial dedication, the POW medal presentation and our banquet.

FINANCE COMMITTEE— Ray Summa and Bob Wright will report on their progress to bring the group finances under one unified system, per the recommendation of last year's audit committee.

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE— John Farley is heading up a Constitution review committee and will report their recommendations at Shreveport. Any member wishing input, or wanting to volunteer assistance, should contact John. He has developed a "kit" to simplify the task of review and making suggestions...when returned, all suggestions will be considered in his report.

CHAPLAIN SEARCH— Three qualified members have been contacted and, hopefully, we will have positive responses from them.

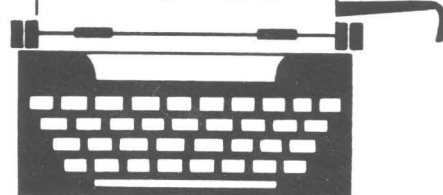
RETURN TO MENDLESHAM— Members of the group have shown interest in a return trip to England in 1990. As of this writing, two members have volunteered to secure the necessary information. More details will be available at Shreveport.

AUCTION COMMITTEE— The Schrupps and the Baldeas head up this year's auction. They have a detailed report in this issue. To be successful, they need a gift from everyone.



Not sure who these are. We believe Michael Derenge is 2nd from left kneeling.

Notes From Our Friends



WILLIAM G. SHOVE - San Diego, CA

I received the Mendlesham Memories and group roster yesterday and was happy to receive them. I want to report that there will be an observance of the 50th Anniversary of the B-24 in San Diego, Sept. 20th-24th, 1989. Anyone interested can contact the International B-24 Liberator Club, P.O. Box 481, San Diego, CA 92112.

It has been 44 years since I visited the St. Mary's Church in Mendlesham so I want to make a donation to them as soon as I can.

SAM WOLSTENCROFT - Westerly, RI

Sorry I haven't written sooner but I've been so crippled with arthritis I haven't been able to write or do very much. I've been doctoring with the VA since last November and they are just about to give up on me as they can find nothing wrong in the blood tests. I guess it's just old age and we have no cure for that.

While in Florida in February, I called Sidney Sugarman and had a nice talk with him. Last month I received a call from Morris D. Otto who was with the 34th at Westover. He stayed in and became a major and now works for civil service. I tried to talk him into coming to the reunion in Shreveport. Hope I'm able to make it but, do or die, I'll do my best! Hope to see you all there.

SEYMOUR ISAACS - Summit Park, UT

Was disappointed at the response for the 34th History Book. More than that, I was really bothered by the less than diligence and care in the use of material sent in by the 34th members.

My "Then and Now" story on page 99 was correctly printed. Now for the HOWEVERS! The photo on page 59 of the P-51 was part of our story. The photo on pages 2 and 3 was of our B-17 "Sugah". The insert, however, was not a member of our crew. The book is certainly handsome, but I wonder about the liberties taken with the contents.

I, for one, enjoy and certainly appreciate what you folks do, but I don't envy the work that must go along with it.

H. ARNOLD PRILLAMAN - Martinsville, VA

We were members of Lt. Eugene James' crew and finished our missions on March 20, 1945. We were on the Dresden mission when the 34th was first attacked in strength by German fighters and, along with two other B-17's, we once carried chaff in front over Berlin at 30,000 feet.

I am looking forward to the reunion at Shreveport and will try to bring some photos for Mendlesham Memories.

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Notes From Our Friends

Continued from page 7

RAYMOND J. KAISER - Alpena, MI

I was a radio operator on Giles Avriett's crew. On the last mission of B-24's from Mendlesham, we were flying J. C. Smith's "The Blind Robin" and were damaged by flak over Kiel, Germany. We landed in Sweden and, of course, we were interned there.

I have one 5 x 7 picture of the burial ceremonies of nine American airmen buried at the same time in Stockholm, Sweden. I have other pictures showing some of the other aircraft and their flak damage that landed in Sweden, which you are welcome to use.

GEORGE RITCHIE - Swansboro, NC

Son Tom got to Mendlesham. Two B-1's were in the British Air Show. They were the first B-1's to fly thru European airspace and were the hit of the show! They flew with Lanks, pits, and all the modern aircraft. Ian Hawkins and his son were at the show displaying and promoting the book and the museum.

Tom was excited about Mendlesham and the people. He said the air show was unbelievable, exciting, and overwhelming. He enjoyed the attention and the very courteous British people. He was very proud plus the feeling generated by Ian, his son, and the people from the museum went thru not only him but all the B-1 people.

Then, at Mendlesham, he really felt like he had been a part of the 34th since he knows the Baldeas, McAllisters, and has heard of the Summas and the rest. He ran all these names around during his visit. He and his wife are planning a vacation sometime this year and expect to go back to England and Mendlesham. (Editor's note: See photo)



Capt. Tom Ritchie at the 34th B.G.'s Mendlesham Memorial.

FRANK B. YATES - Guilford, CT

I have a suggestion for the Mendlesham Memories. There are several old WWII types I get into discussions with relative to WWII trivia. One subject that comes up most often is Air Force Commands and where they were located during WWII; such as...1st Air Force (East coast of USA), 8th Air Force (England), 2nd Air Force (West coast of USA), 15th Air Force (Africa & Italy), etc. If a world map could be printed in M.M. with the Army Air Force Commands located, it would provide facts to help settle many good arguments. At one time, years ago, I had such a map that was put out by the New York News as a centerfold, but, of course, I can't recall what I did with it. It would be even more complete if the numbered bomb groups were also listed. Now, ain't I a real nice guy requesting such a job by a real great volunteer bunch of guys?

I am always looking forward to receiving the M.M. — it is most interesting and I feel you people do a real fine job. I talk with people that were in other bomb groups in WWII and they are amazed that such up to date and interesting information is in the M.M. Their old units provide nothing or less than nothing. (Editor's Note: — If anyone has such a map we would be only too happy to include it in a future issue of M.M.)

WALTER STURDIVAN - Stockton, CO

I have asked Alex Antanovich to write his story for the MM. He was an evadee for 8 months, having been shot down on May 29, 1944. The rest of his crew were taken captive by the Germans and were released by advance Allied armies. We then came back to Mendlesham before being sent back to the U.S.

We had a good time at Ft. Worth attending the 50th ann. of the B-24. There were sure a lot of Liberator men there and it wasn't too safe to even mention the B-17. Personally, I felt real proud to have flown in both bombers, an experience not everyone had. As strange as it may seem, the first B-17's, earlier models, that were assigned to the British were flown by Coastal Command which was tantamount to being considered as unfit for further service. This, coming from a bunch of men who drove on the left side of the road and poured cream in their tea, I can understand.

WILLIAM E. CREER - Las Vegas, NV

Received my June copy of the MM. I have enjoyed reading it very much. The confession by Roy Tavasti and the little story by Vince Doran were my favorites. This statement is not to depreciate the other fine contributions. You fine folks are doing an outstanding job.

I attended the B-24 50th Anniversary Party in Ft. Worth. In my view it was well done. Bob Vickers deserves a lot of credit. The 34th was well represented. Understand some 40 members were in attendance. Ray and Hannah set up a hospitality room, which, as you can imagine, was well received. We also had an excellent Group dinner Saturday night (5/20/89). This gathering provided an opportunity to further embellish Group camaraderie.

DALE T. VAN LANDINGHAM - Crete, NE

In the May issue of the Legion Magazine I saw that the 34th Bomb Group is having a reunion in September at Shreveport, LA. I was in the 7th Sqdn. at Geiger Field, Spokane, WA, Euphrata, WA, and Blythe, CA (1942-43). I would very much like to attend this reunion. I am still in touch with an old buddy at St. Paul, MN and would like to see if I can meet some of the others again.

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Notes From Our Friends

Continued from page 8

WILLIS GRIFFIS - Vernon Hills, IL

Since there are a couple of weeks between the end of our reunion and the CAF Airshow in Harlingen, TX, I plan to do some research at the USAF Historical Center at Maxwell AF Base. I want to find out how far back I can trace the histories of the 34th Bomb Group and its squadrons.

If anyone remembers their aircraft number, let me know and I'll look it up and let you know what happened to it. In 1987 I wrote Maxwell asking about my old plane, "Set 'Em Up", A/C 42-94787, and they sent me the following: "Records indicate that it was transferred from the 8th AF to the 15th AF at Bari, Italy on an unknown date. Aircraft survived the war and was condemned to salvage by the 12th AF authorities in Italy in August, 1945." I hope to find out more.

ROY O. JONES - Atlanta, GA

Of E. E. Erwin's crew only Babcock, Fagar and I survive. Dirk Gombert also was on our crew but wasn't with us when we were shot down as a lead crew on August 7, 1944. The four of us, along with wives, were together for the first time at the Colorado Springs reunion and had a good time.

Flying with us on our last mission were LCol J.J. Eaton, Capt. "Red" Ackerman, & Lt. Herb Alden. Only 6 (of 11) survived that mission.

I haven't been to a reunion since Colorado Springs, but plan to be in Shreveport in September. Like most of us, I've had health problems but am doing better now. The "Golden Years" begin to turn green for some of us (Old age ain't for sissies). However, it beats most of the alternatives (cliches ad nauseum).

My apologies for this messy letter, but I'm not the man I used to be, and never was. Age and John Barleycorn have taken their toll. Nostalgia ain't what it used to be, either, and it's deja-vu all over again.

FRED L. SIMMONS - Ashville, NC

I want to thank the whole group's effort for putting on such a grand reunion at Virginia Beach. I really did have a great time. Sorry I'm not going to be able to make it to the reunion at Shreveport as my wife's health is getting worse. She had Parkinson's Disease and arthritis and is unable to get up and down by herself. I have to be here to help her. As yet we don't have outside help to do these things but we may have to be getting some outside help some day soon.

ROLAND R. BEACH - Santa Ana, CA

Somewhere in my albums I have a large photo of the headquarters personnel at Blyth just before we left for England. The identities of most of those shown have been lost. Its size is about 6" x 8" and would have to be blown up so the faces of the men can be carefully studied. If you think you can devote one full page for this picture I'll make an exerted effort to locate it and send it to you. (Editors Note: If the picture has good contrast so the enlargement will not be blurry, I'd be glad to print it.)

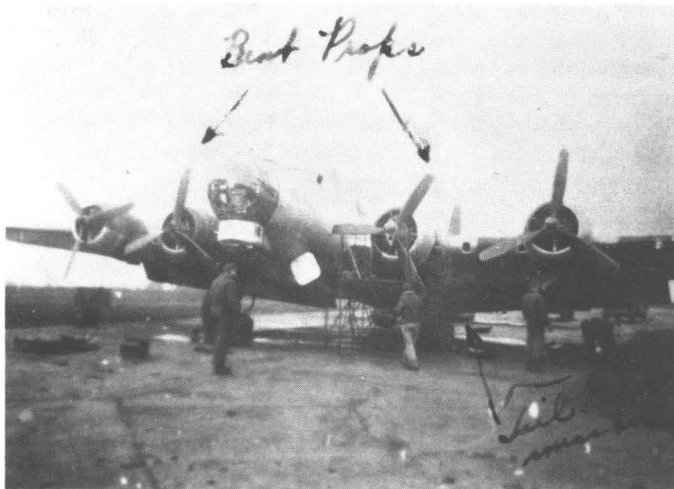
It's a pity that so many of the 34th's veterans didn't subscribe to the recent history book. I do complain that there was more about the flight crews and their missions than with the unglamorous ground hogs such as myself. The crews came and went, seldom associating with the folk who remained at Mendlesham all those fifteen months.

FREDERICK G. SCHOCH - Spokane, WA

We are enjoying beautiful spring weather here in the inland Northwest. The photo is in regard to the article on page 20 of the March, 1989 issue by Darrell Bulis regarding Byron Sheesley's B-17G accident. I've sent a copy on to Bulis with a note. (Editor's note: See photo following letter)

We are making plans for Shreveport in September. If you'll send me the information on the reunion, I'll see that it gets into the local papers around here.

Our local economy got a boost last week. Boeing Aircraft Co. broke ground for a large plant just north of Geiger Field and will be hiring 250 people in 1990.



Byron Sheesley's B17G after accident. Note bent props and smashed tail wheel.

BERNIE GARFINKEL - Redlands, CA

It was certainly very thoughtful of Ray to make the effort to look me up. One of these days he can tell me what triggered him to do it.

After returning to the U.S. and some milling around, I wound up back at Fort Worth in the 7th Bomb Wing in Oct. '46. Back on a B-29 crew. Later on we got B-36's and flew them 'til '53. Went to Guam, Westover, Beale, Mt. Home, and March AFB. then retired in '68. Worked for State of California 'til '85 and here I am!

I'm not much of a reunioner, but thanks for the invite. The only thing I know about B-24's is what they look like and that they were the boxes that B-17's were shipped in.

JOSEPH P. RAPISARDA - Richmond, VA

After reading Rose's column I do recall St. Mary's Church in Mendlesham. I don't know how to get in touch direct so I'm enclosing a donation check for St. Mary's which I'd appreciate your forwarding to the proper place.

WILLIAM "PETE" GRAY - Virginia Beach, VA

I have a drawer full of ribbons testifying that I'm one of the world's worst spellers. I started back in the 1st grade when I began spelling words like they sounded, such as WAR (strung between telephone poles), CHEER (what you sit on), HERRING (what Gramma is losing as she gets older.)

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Notes From Our Friends

Continued from page 9

CLEVELAND ROMERO JR. - Lafayette, LA

One night in the month of May, my wife was reading the bound book of the Mendlesham Memories that Ray Summa had bound for the auction at the Virginia Beach reunion. She was reading the April, 1983 issue when she came across the name and address of Ervin Hanken in the lost and found section. Hanken was one of the two survivors of the other B-17 that was shot down at the same time I was. I was the only survivor from our crew. Hanken and Clayton Erwin survived the other crew. I had been hit real bad and was unable to walk due to the hard parachute landing that had crushed my left leg. These two guys carried me when I needed help. The Germans took us to an underground flak battery where we met a P-51 fighter pilot by the name of Allen Packer from Marshalltown, Iowa, who had also been shot down that day. Those helgoland gunners were some of the German's best. We were downed on January 14, 1945. The last time I saw these two guys was in September, 1945 at Miama Beach.

I had tried the addresses they had given me in POW camp but was unsuccessful in getting any replies. When my wife found Hanken's name with a different address, I grabbed a tablet and pencil and wrote a short note to Hank at this new address. On Saturday, April 29th, 1989, I was on the patio with two of my boys and one of my sons-in-law preparing to boil 5 dozen fresh blue point crabs, when my son called me to the phone. I was really surprised and thrilled to hear Hank. He had received my note. We reminisced for a while. He reminded me that this day, April 29th, was the 44th anniversary of our liberation at Mooseburg by General Patton's army and a day that we will never forget. I was hoping that he would come to the reunion in Shreveport, but he said he could not make it this year.

JOHN G. MANGAN - Gloucester, MA.

I just want to tell you how much I enjoy Mendlesham Memories. Every one of the issues is interesting and full of good memories. When I paid my dues to Ray Summa last year I told him that I was surprised that so few copies of the new 34th Bomb Group History Book had been sold.

I was sorry to see Frankie L. Champion's name in the Taps column. He wrote and gave me some input on the B-24 which I was writing up at the time. With the 34th I was a radar mechanic working on the installation, maintenance and repair of the AN/APS-15A radar Bomb-nav. set installed in P.F.F. aircraft.

MILT BRAVEMAN - Harrisburg, PA

The large red letters on the cover of the 28 May issue of the Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine, "Raising a Fallen Flier" referred to "My Father, the Hero", the cover story by Tom Infield. The author chronicled his quest for his father's experiences as a ball turret gunner with the 390th B.G. at Framlingham. He attributed some problems of his father, who died before Tom really knew him, to the psychological trauma of combat.

His search brought him to Ian Hawkins and a visit to Framlingham's tower/museum. Of possible interest to MM is a tale Ian related about the local matron, who upon seeing a busload of 34th Bomb Group veterans, yelled out, "Lock up your bloody daughters. The Yanks are back!!" I've written Mr. Infield to thank him for the flattery.



34th Bomb Group Cryptographers

Front row: B. Goodnough, W. Jansen.

Back row: W.O. Brown, Lt. Woost, R. Caldwell.

FRED BERGLUND, Wahkon, MN

I visited my old Air Corps instructor pilot, A.C. Eggleston in Cameron, MO, just north of Kansas City. He was also in the 34th and I found his address in a recent 34th B.G. letter called "Mendlesham Memories". He is still flying charters and was a career Air Force pilot.

We reminisced about flying formation in the Grand Canyon in Mexico which was bending the rules a little. A.C. (as he's still known) told about a mission he flew with the famous 34th B.G. pilot who spun his B-17 in over the base **two days in a row**, bailed out his crew, and landed after pulling out of the spin with the help of his bombardier. I can remember seeing the guys in their parachutes going down by us as we climbed in turns over the base thru the pea-soup fog.

I've often wondered why Col. Creer didn't give those guys who stayed in the spinning B-17 and pulled out and saved the plane (two days in a row) a D.F.C.? Guess the wing was bent up cockeyed and the gear was damaged when the great ground crew pulled the poor B-17 out of the mud, (after a down-wind landing). If memory serves me, I think Col. Creer shipped the crew back to the states for a little more instrument flying training. Has anyone in the 34th B.G. ever heard from anyone on that crew who bailed out twice? I think they deserve a medal for flying with those pilots.

AL ISRAELSEN - Silver Spring, MD

I've enclosed an operations sheet for the 5th mission of the 34th on May 28, 1944 to Lutzendorf, Germany. The 34th led the 93rd Wing that day and the Deputy Wing Commander, Col. Bostrom, was the command pilot. He was the excitable type. Group Navigator, Jim Reed, and I remember that mission well! This sheet brought back lots of "memories" for me. Perhaps you could use it in an issue of MM. I think it would be of interest to pilots and navigators. Perhaps not to lots of others on the crews, or to the ground folks. (Editor's Note: We also have an operations sheet of the Aug. 13, 1944 mission received from "Pete" Gray which has not yet been published because of space. Each one takes up a whole page. Please write if you would enjoy seeing them and they will be included in a future issue.)

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Notes From Our Friends

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LOUIS J. TAMBURRO, Tarpon Springs, FL

One day last December, while walking, I'd bumped into Charles O'Hara and his wife, Elvira. On this particular day I was just starting my walk and met them close to my place. All I said was, "Boy, I can't get up in the morning and, back when I was younger, in World War II, I was up early every morning." Chuck asked me what outfit I was in and I told him the 34th after which he asked what squadron. When he said he was in the same outfit in the 18th squadron, WOW!!! You just can't believe the shock, and we've been close friends ever since.

Chuck said they can't make it to the reunion in Shreveport, but Terry and I will be there.

ROBERT S. HESS - Omaha, NE

I was surprised to see a picture of my old crew on page 5 of the March '89 issue of MM. Francis Bisher must have sent it. My memory must be better than his because I remember all of the names. Kneeling are James "Mo" Morelock, George Miller, Jerry Wade and Joe Baj. Standing are Bob Sweigart, Steve Shear, Cleveland Triplett, Bob Hess, Francis Bisher and John Towery. The picture was taken when we were in training at Alexandria, LA. Bob Sweigart and Joe Baj did not go to the 34th with us.

JOSEPH POLIQUIN - Sanford, ME

I want to thank you for the continued mailing of the news letters. I have thoroughly enjoyed reading them and was very impressed with the 1989 roster.

Adrienne and I are in Zephyrhills, FL from early November to late April. We live in a park called Palm View Gardens, which is an R.V. park.

BOB HASSETT - Houma, LA

We had a visit from Ralph Livsey late last year. He has a daughter down here. I enjoy the Mendlesham Memories very much. Every now and then a name or an incident will "pop up" that brings back memories.

I'm still working in oilfield sales and plan to continue as long as I feel O.K. Hope to see you in Shreveport. Cheers!!



Seymour Isaacs' plane "Sugah" was flak-crippled on a mission and escorted home by a P-51. This picture shows the crew with the P-51 pilot, Richard A. Peterson, when he visited the base at the request of the crew to give him thanks.

Standing L. to R.: Peveroff, Jones, Rabun, Oliver & Mason.

Kneeling L. to R.: Isaacs, Peterson, Muntzer, Platz & Hood.

At time of the picture, Pereira was still in the hospital and Brownmiller was away.

BERT OLIVER - Worcester, MA

Perhaps you are aware of the New England Escadrille Group which is restoring WWII warbirds. I am an early member and have worked on the Collings Foundation B-24 when it was in Stow, MA. A handful of us stripped her clean of wiring, tubing, armament, inst. panel, turrets, etc...Well do I know that plane!! He found it in the desert in India and it was filthy plus the sea voyage and salt spray added to its woes. I personally recruited over 70 original parts manufacturers for donations. Just thought you might be interested.

BETTY (BUD) SWICK - Ft. Lupton, CO

We have two new lovely litters of puppies which keeps us hopping. We also have an 8 month old male that we just started showing. He's burning up the show ring. His mother was the top winning Boston in the country in '86 and '87. Guess he's going to follow in his mother's footsteps.

Bud is doing quite well. He's ornery, but that's normal. He's going out to cut the grass, so I thought I'd take a minute to write to you.

LA VERN GASS - El Paso, TX

A couple of years ago it appeared I would never get together with any of my crew, so I asked you to drop my name from your mailing list. I was never more wrong as they have now begun to appear. I thank you for the latest roster. Maybe the enclosed check can get me back on the regular mailing list.

SIMON J. LUNA - San Antonio, TX

I've been plagued by diabetes and weak legs that prevent me from walking more than a block. But I get around some now and plan to see you and other acquaintances in Shreveport in September. I didn't get to meet many people of the 34th since I was at Mendlesham only 5 months. I was tail gunner in a B-17.

After WWII I joined the USAF Reserve. In Feb., 1949, I became a 2nd Lt. in the Army Reserve from which I retired as a LTCol. in 1972.

CALVIN DALCHER - Pekin, IL

I am so pleased to hear that the 34th is alive and well. I am, of course, proud to be a part of the past of it now and, especially, of the participation from December, 1944 to return of the group, flying back June 19, 1945. I was a member of Bob Tyson's crew, which we called "Tyson's Tramps". I hope to meet you all in Shreveport in September.

JOHN J. GOLDEN - Amherst, NY

I am looking forward to renewing old friendships. All of my original crew members are already members; Bice, Rowley, Dreher, Humphreys, Blackham, Forrister, Reschke, and Woeful. Three of our crew were killed over England during the invasion; Grabowski, Ersh, and Johnson. Thanks again for keeping me posted.

JOHN R. WOOTEN - Rialto, CA

When I was stationed in England one of my buddies always used my cigarettes as I never smoked them. He would buy them and sell them on the Black Market. He had quite a set-up as he used the same process from several of the boys. Also, he told the English girls that he was a talent scout for Hollywood movies. He sure got lots of photos of the most beautiful girls in all kinds of poses. I see his name appears in the latest roster.

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Notes From Our Friends

Continued from page 11

GEORGE C WEDDELL - Sacramento, CA.

Our crew was one of the close-knit ones in the 7th Squadron, having been through a lot of experiences together from Salt Lake City, Blythe, Lincoln, NE, Miami Beach, Puerto Rico, South America, Africa, and finally, Mendlesham, where most of us finished our 35th mission on the last flight of the B24s, before the group converted to B17s. We started having crew reunions in 1966 and have had them every 4-5 years ever since. We even went back to Mendlesham in 1981 for one of our reunions, with all of the crew members attending except one. Since then we have had one death in the crew; Tommy Parker, the bombardier.

I appreciate your efforts in editing the MM...I know what a demanding task that can be.

LORAIN STEDMAN - Suffolk, England

Thank you for the beautiful book. It is most interesting and much work and thought has gone into it. We also enjoy the Mendlesham Memories. It is good to read news about your get-togethers, etc. Our best wishes to the 34th B.G.(H.) We look forward to your next visit to Mendlesham.

WELLER W. FRANKLIN - Ft. Worth, TX

I was sent to the 34th about the middle of 1944 from 8th AF Headquarters to set up a lead crew briefing room, (Mickey — radar navigation and bombardment). When I got there I remember the Group Intelligence Officer called me in and asked me, "Do you know what you're supposed to do?" I said I did to which he replied, "Well, I don't, so get with it and if I can help let me know!". I was housed with the 4th Bomb Sqdn. The only person I remember was Capt. Frank Miller who I worked with. In February of '45 I returned to the States to teach in the Radar Intelligence Officers' School at Langley Field, VA.

Because of the brief association I naturally do not have the feeling of closeness that many of you have. I seldom ever went to the Officers' Club or sat at its bar. I can't even tell you what it looked like. I do remember sitting up some nights with crews who were about to fly their last missions. I also will remember the excitement around our 'standdown' (100th mission party) just before Christmas, 1944. That was a busy and wild Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

DON E. TUTTLE - San Jose, CA

I enjoyed reading Roy Tavasti's write-up on Giles Avriett. We called him the "Sheriff" — supposedly he had been a deputy sheriff in Texas. In our barracks, when not on a mission, he was usually the host of a good poker game on his bunk. He was a sharp poker player but he had a little competition from Jerome (Jerry) Boshiers. Many a time, after a game broke up, Jerry would come over to my bunk and wake me up to tell me he had put \$100, \$200 or more under my pillow and be sure to wire it to his wife. He would hold out so much for the next game. Sometimes I would let a few nights' winnings accumulate and keep the money in my foot locker until I could wire it to his wife. The one thing I always dreaded happened; one day Jerry didn't make it back from a mission. When I got back to the barracks and opened my foot locker, I was really relieved to find that Jerry hadn't given me any of his winnings since my last wire. After that, my sleep was only interrupted by a tap on the shoulder by a C.Q.



Standing L. to R.: H. Marm, F. Kramer, H. Sedowski, L. Harkleroad & J. Bailey.

Kneeling L. to R.: J. Gibson, D. Puffer, A. Glenn, & R. Mahaffey.

CHUCKLE FOR THE DAY

Submitted by Hanna Summa

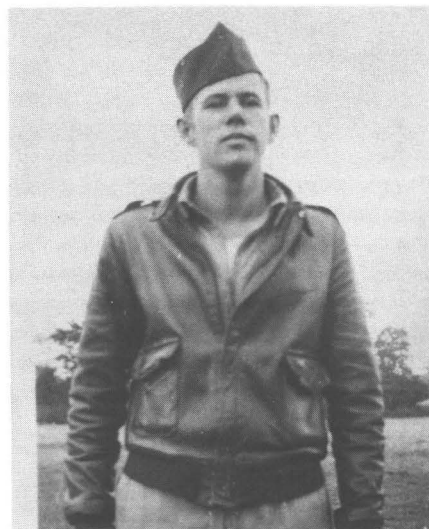
(Author Unknown)

REMEMBER, old folks are worth a fortune, with silver in their hair, gold in their teeth, stones in their kidneys, lead in feet, and gas in their stomachs.

I have become a little older since I saw you last and a few changes have come into my life since then. Frankly, I have become quite a frivolous old gal. I am seeing five getlemen every day.

As soon as I wake up, Will Power helps me get out of bed. Then I go to see John. Then Charlie Horse comes along, and when he is here he takes a lot of my time and attention. When he leaves Arthur Ritis show up and stays the rest of the day. He doesn't like to stay in one place very long, so he takes me from joint to joint. After such a busy day I'm really tired and glad to go to bed with Ben Gay. What a Life!

P.S. The Preacher came to call the other day. He said at my age I should be thinking about the hereafter. I told him, "Oh, I do all the time. No matter where I am, in the parlor, upstairs, in the kitchen, or down in the basement, I ask myself what am I here after?"



William Frick of Warren Kiley's crew.

NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

From George Ritchie we have the following:
Any serviceman who wishes a review of the awards he is entitled to, write a request to:

Department of the Air Force
HQ. Personnel Center
Randolph AF Base, TX. 78150-6001
Attn: Recog. & Spec. Prog. Divn.

Also, any New York State resident at the time of his military service or at time of application, request an "Application for Award", DMNA 1060-R (1 July '87) from:

Division of Military Affairs
330 Old Niskayuna Road
Latham, NY. 12110-2224
Attn: MNPA-AD

From Wally & Doris Brauks we learn that they have purchased 100 1/2" diameter P.O.W. lapel pins which they will have on hand at our reunion in Shreveport. If interested, look them up at the reunion.

Charles F. Metz writes the following:

The attached letter to Ann Landers regarding disgraceful conditions in VA hospitals so exorcised me that I immediately wrote to my three Congressmen. I urge all our members to flood Washington with their letters of protest. (See following copy of letter to Ann Landers)

Dear Ann: I know you care about our veterans because you asked your readers to remember them on Valentine's Day and more than a million and a half people responded. Please be their friend again.

Did you know that supplies are so short in many VA hospitals that the nurses are scrounging the little souvenir bars of soap and shampoo bottles from hotels to bring to VA patients? In one VA hospital in the south, the nurses were so frustrated by the refusal of the prosthetics department to supply wheelchair cushions that they raised \$25.00, bought a large foam mattress, borrowed an electric knife and cut the foam to make wheelchair cushions for their patients.

Another VA nurse reported that in her hospital it was impossible to give diabetic patients proper care because they did not have insulin syringes. This could be life-threatening.

At a congressional hearing last September, VA officials said they faced a \$600-million to \$1-billion shortfall in their budget for medical care. Yet we seem to have billions of dollars for the Defense Department. Does any of this make sense to you? (Editors Note: We concur with Charles and urge all our members to write their congressmen regarding this disgraceful condition.)

A Mr. Ben Griffin has an A-2 flight jacket with a 4th Bomb Sqdn. patch on the left breast and would like to have information about its original owner if anyone can help. Description: On the left breast is the squadron patch; a black widow on a yellow background. There appears to be a Roman-numeral X on the tail of the spider. Below the patch, in yellow, are the words "Didi-Dum-Dum-Dum-Didi". On the right breast, in yellow, are the words "The Ship Worrybird". On the back is a yellow B-17 with bombs beneath it, symbolizing missions flown.

Anyone with information can write to: Ben Griffin, 9701 Welwyn Lane, Charlotte, NC. 28210, or call collect to: (704)542-7705.

Jack E. Bolton of Wayne, IL. would like to know if anyone knows the whereabouts of Capt. Pal G. Howard from Kentucky. He was the Group Mess Officer and a fine fellow.

From the National Warplane museum we have the following:

The highlight of this year's 1941 "WINGS OF EAGLES" airshow will be the return of at least six (6) B-17 "Flying Fortresses" as well as a B-24 "Liberator" and an Avro Lancaster. In addition, over 75 vintage WWII aircraft will be featured.

From biplanes to jet fighters, helicopters to current military aircraft, the sky will be filled from early morning until late afternoon.

Confirmed dates for this event are August 19th and 20th. For further information write: the National Warplane Museum, P.O. Box 159, Geneseo, NY. 14454 or call (716) 243-0690.

For a book about the experience of Eighth Air Force life on both bomber and fighter bases, I seek diaries, frank recollections and vintage photos. The book will be based on verbal firsthand accounts and diary excerpts from both combat crews and ground personnel. Diaries and photos are welcome..(all will be returned). Write to: Dave Lande, 4455 West Fourth St., Appleton, WI. 54915.

From a Mr. A. Thibodeau we have the following:

I am a former Marine. I need help from anyone for my son, Kevin L. Thibodeau, who is 22 yrs. old. He went swimming in Lake Palourde on June 20th, 1988, dove into the water and broke his neck because it was too shallow. He is now a quadriplegic, being paralyzed from his neck to the bottom of his feet. He is completely indigent and I need help from anyone who can. I am a 100% service connected disabled veteran from Korea and cannot work. Please help me! If you can't send money, send him a letter or card. His morale is devastated. Write to: Kevin or Arthur Thibodeau, 1117 4th Street, Morgan City, LA. 70380.

We have received several letters recommending that we appeal to all of you to write President Bush supporting him on his stand regarding the flag burning issue. I'm not sure how anyone else feels about it but I'll never get over the feeling of pride I had when I saw Old Glory going up over the little town of Moosburg on the day we were liberated by Patton's armies. The flag was more than just a symbol then...It was a piece of the good old U.S.A. Come on, all...Let's support our flag. WRITE!!

Wally Brauks writes that several years ago he wanted to get information regarding his stay in the German P.O.W. camps. He wrote to Washington, DC. and received some information including records of German Air Force Commands. Anyone wishing to obtain information regarding their P.O.W. experience can write to: General Archives Division, National Archives and Records Service (GSA), Washington, DC. 20409.

Harold Rutka says PERMANENT NAME TAGS are still available. Send \$4.00 to Harold Rutka, 11 E. Artavia St., Duluth, MN. 55811 and your tag will be delivered to you at the Shreveport reunion or mailed to you after that.



ROSE'S CORNER

"When are you going to write your column so that I can get the Mendlesham Memories printed and mailed?", asked Eli. Well, I had the answer right here, sent to Ray Summa by Mollie (Jesse) Gardner and, I must say, it is a joy to read because this beautifully composed letter tells it like it was and as it is!

Our sincerest thanks, Molly, and may you be blessed with good health so that you may contribute more of your "memories" to our group.

THOUGHTS OF AN ENGLISH BRIDE

by Mollie (Jesse) Gardner

Life and time are moving along too fast and we are slowing down. Jesse, "Gabby" as they called him, still does some repair work on cars, tractors and plenty of lawn mowers at present. He takes his time and enjoys our quiet and peaceful one-horse town. Despite his war-time nick-name of Gabby, he is a quiet chap by nature.

We both have enjoyed the news of old Air Force buddies. It's worth the time to sit down and write a few letters. The return letters and the news letters from the group are a joy. Much has happened to us all. From the mail it looks as if we all are the hard working group of the war days. Most of the men were happy then, despite the hardships of it all, because everyone knew there might not have been a tomorrow.

The article by Vince Doran, in the June issue of M.M., was very good. Our house was home to the G.I.'s and English Tom-

mies alike. Mother was a seamstress and sewed many patches onto uniforms. Our one egg per person per week spread a long way. Mother mixed it, scrambled it, mixed with cheese and put on toast or plain old baked beans spread on toast; all was shared. Luckily I did not like egg, so that helped. Sunday a rare treat was a cream-like jello; only one spoonful per person. Jesse said it was so good he could have eaten the bowlful! That was not blooming likely, as they say.

The feelings between the Yanks and Tommies was not good as the Americans had so much more; more food, better beds, and the uniforms of the Englishmen were rough, hot wool, not to mention the difference in pay between what the Tommies got and what the Yanks got. Yet we all knew that if it hadn't been for the American men, there would have been NO ENGLAND.

My home village was Debenham, "Debenum" as the Suffolk say it, while the Yanks had a definite "Ham" on it. It's a town out of the back gate of the base, five miles away. I hope some may remember going there on their bikes to visit its 5 pubs; Red Lion and Cherry Tree were the popular ones.

I have received letters from Ex-G.I.'s who said they didn't go to the reunions because it sounded like all they did was drink there. I want to assure them that just is not so. I felt quite comfortable amongst the group and I'm a tee-totaler. One has to go to enjoy great fellowship amongst our old buddies.

I want to thank the many of you for the great effort you are putting out, making this a very special group which many of us enjoy being a small part of.

Dignity: A country's dignity is like a top hat; the more we tramp on it, the less impressive it becomes. Lest we forget, don't allow the passing of time to dim our thoughts about the "flag burning issue"! Write to your Congressmen, your Senators, and even the President!

See you all in Shreveport. Have a safe trip!

Rose

NEWLY FOUND

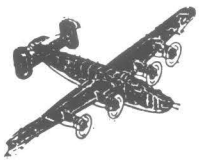
(As of 7/19/89)

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ORGN.	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
ACKERMAN	HARRY		7 CREEKMERE CT.	TROPHY CLUB	TX.	76262
CONNER	JOHN		24402 SMITH AVENUE	WEST LAKE,	OH.	44145
CURSI	ATILIO		24 BURCHELL AVE.	FREEDOM,	CA.	95019
DALCHER	CALVIN		P.O. BOX 753, #7 STARCEVICH CT.	PEKIN,	IL.	61554
DOBRIK	GEORGE		513 JAMES STREET	STREATER,	IL.	61364
GOLDEN	JOHN		4545 CHESTNUT RIDGE #206A	AMHERST,	NY.	14221
GRIMM	UDELL		181 WOODLAWN ST.	HINCKLEY,	IL.	60520
HAGEN	JOHN M.		721 E. LARPENTEUR AVE.	MAPLEWOOD,	MN.	55117
HAYES	MARVIN G.		3262 CLEVELAND AVE.	GAINESVILLE,	GA.	30503
HEIKKILA	HAROLD J.		409 GALLAGHER	ROSSCOMMON,	MI.	48653
HODIS	VINCENT C.		133B PIERCE ROAD	SEQUI,	WA.	98282
ICE	WILLIAM B.		RT. 3, BOX 312	WEST FRANKFORT,	IL.	62896
JOHNSON	DR. DONALD R.		602 E. GREEN STREET	CHAMPAIGN,	IL.	61620
LEE	JOSEPH W.		518 RIDGEDALE AVE.	RICHARDSON,	TX.	75080
MADDOX	WILFORD		#2 MEADOWBROOK	HANNIBAL,	MO.	63045
METZLER	JAMES		RT. #2, BOX 30	COLBY,	KS.	67701
NETH	CECIL		2313 ANTELOPE ROAD	FORT COLLINS,	CO.	80525
PALERMO	PHIL		187 NO. LOVEKIN	BLYTHE,	CA.	92225
PILLO	TONY	391	14833 - 438TH AVE. S.E.	NO. BEND,	WA.	98045
SPARKS	JAMES		#8 DAKOTA DRIVE	WAYNE,	NJ.	07040
TENNANT	CHARLES		3345 MORRISON LANE	WALLA WALLA,	WA.	99362
VAN LANDINGHAM	DALE T.	7	RT.2, BOX 148	CRETE,	NE.	68333
WILSON	HENRY	RADAR	108 MARIAN DRIVE	FT. THOMAS,	KY.	41075

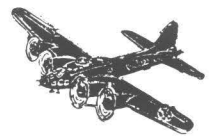
ADDRESS CHANGES

(As of 7/19/89)

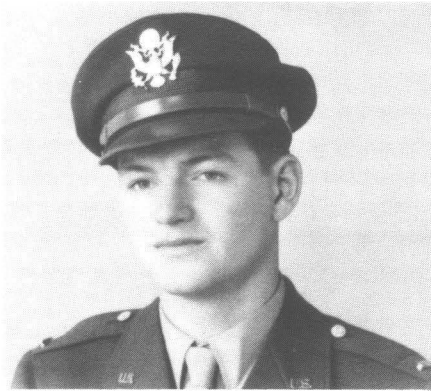
LAST NAME	ZIP	FIRST NAME	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE
ABRAHAM	87110	WILLIAM	1512 MESILLA ST. N.E.	ALBUQUERQUE,	NM.
ANDRINGA	56716	JOHN	P.O. BOX 21	CROOKSTON,	NM.
ANTHONY	79072	THOMAS, P.	1102 W. 11TH STREET	PLAINVIEW,	TX.
ASHLEY	27278	DAVID L.	122 E. SHORT ST. RT. #4	HILLSBOROUGH,	NC.
ASHWOOD	44107	NORMAN	2096 McKINLEY AVE.	LAKEWOOD,	OH.
BAUM		MRS. CLINTON	NO KNOWN ADDRESS		
BLACK	38079	WILLIAM B.	421 SO. COURT ST.	TIPTONVILLE,	TN.
BOULIANE	MEXICO	JEAN	AQUILES SERDAN #2	AJIJIC, JALISCO,	MX.
BRUNE	33566	RALPH B.	731 DON TAB WAY	PLANT CITY,	FL.
BRYANT	03106	ARNOLD M.	Zip Code Should Read:		
BURKE		GERALD	NO KNOWN ADDRESS		
CAITO	43230	ANTHONY	811 DARK STAR AVENUE	GAHANNA,	OH.
CARNAHAM		FRED W.	NO KNOWN ADDRESS		
CASEY		PERCY E.	NO KNOWN ADDRESS		
CASSELL	43201	ALBERT	2194 INDIANA AVE.	COLUMBUS	OH.
CLARK	01138	AMY	P.O. BOX 80215	SPRINGFIELD,	MA.
COHEN	12455	CECIL	BOX 16A, KINGSTON MTN. RD.	MARGARETSVILLE,	NY.
CROOM	38306	DEWIN H.	RT.5, BOX 896, LEXINGTON HWY.20E	JACKSON,	TN.
FARLEY	07044	JOHN	Zip Code Should Read		
FOURNIER	02877	LOUIS	P.O. BOX 49	SLOCUM,	RI.
FRANKLIN	76107	WELLER W.	170 N. BAILEY	FORT WORTH,	TX.
GAMBRILL	19063	STEWART	Zip Code Should Read		
GILLISPI	27249	HUGH W.	P.O. BOX 2408, 300 BROAD ST.	GIBSONVILLE,	NC.
GILREATH	35114	JAMES H.	132 CHESTNUT LANE	MAYLENE,	AL.
GIRSON	34685	JAMES L.	3565 FAIRWAY FOREST DR.	PALM HARBOR,	FL.
GOLDBERG		SID	NO KNOWN ADDRESS		
GOLDING	21014	ROBERT	955 SABLEWOOD RD. 'K	BELAIR,	MD.
HANSEN	80017	TIMOTHY	9748 S. IVORY CIRCLE	AURORA,	CO.
HASKELL	48657	ROBERT	4380 FRANKSHORE DR.	SANFORD,	MI.
HENSON		HAROLD L.	NO KNOWN ADDRESS		
HINKEL	87654	GEORGE	City Should Be:	SAN CRISTOBAL,	NM.
HOLCOMBE	30080	CHARLES	1230 KINGSVIEW DR. S.E.	SMYRNA,	GA.
HOLLOWELL	93446	JAMES L.	805 SNEAD	PASO ROBLES,	CA.
HOPPER	97701	JOHN A.	1314 N.E. 8TH STREET	BEND,	OR.
HUDECEK	72632	THOMAS J.	144 APPALASSO DR.	HOLIDAY ISLAND,	AR.
JONES	18353	WILLIAM T.	R.R. #3, BOX 3425	SAYLORSBURG,	PA.
KANTORAK	44107	JOHN	Zip Code Should Read		
KIEC	14206	STANLEY	60 REIMAN ST.	BUFFALO,	NY.
LAURIE		CYRIL	NO KNOWN ADDRESS		
LAYMAN	79342	WILLARD E.	BOX 836	LOOP,	TX.
MAHAFFEY	43610	ROBERT F.	2721 SCOTTWOOD AVENUE	TOLEDO,	OH.
MARJAMA	34619	ALVIN H.	Zip Code Should Read		
MERKLEY	84003	FLOYD R.	421 EAST 400 SOUTH	AMERICAN FORK,	UT.
MERMELSTEIN	44313	HERB M.	909 CARRIAGE WAY	AKRON,	OH.
MILLER	99123	CORDELL	P.O. BOX 606	ELECTRIC CITY,	WA.
NELSON	80517	HENRY B.	P.O. BOX 1335	ESTES PARK,	CO.
NEWTON	72211	THOMAS H.	11325 JAMESTOWN DR.	LITTLE ROCK,	AR.
PANCAKE	47150	CHARLES E.	922 GREENLEAF DRIVE	NEW ALBANY,	IN.
POLIQVIN	04073	JOSEPH N.	R.R. #2, BOX 1105	SANFORD,	ME.
RANKIN	17579	EARL W.	805 WHITE HORSE ROAD	STRASBURG,	PA.
REISS	08008	LEONARD	8302 BAY TERRACE	HARVEY CEDARS,	NJ.
REVETTI	44515	JOSEPH D.	6597 SO. TIMBERIDGE DR.	YOUNGSTOWN,	OH.
SCHAFANTI		DANTE	NO KNOWN ADDRESS		
SHOVE		WILLIAM G.	4906 LA CUENTA DRIVE	SAN DIEGO,	CA.
SMITH	92124	FRANK	P.O. BOX 1365	COLUMBIA,	SC.
SNOW	44124	WEBB C.	1609 CRESTWOOD	CLEVELAND,	OH.
STAFINAK	18218	JOHN	142 E. HIGH STREET	COALDALE,	PA.
STONEHAM	44883	ROBERT A.	1796 S. WINDFIELD DR.	TIFFIN,	OH.
STOUT		KENNETH	NO KNOWN ADDRESS		
SWANSON	97537	SAMUEL C.	6442 E. EVANS CREEK RD.	ROGUE RIVER,	OR.
TALLICHET	77050	ED	Zip Code Should Read		
TOMPKINS	39702	FRANK M.	RTE. 10, BOX 41	COLUMBUS,	MS.
TURNMIRE		LEE	NO KNOWN ADDRESS		
VAN KIRK	92083	CHARLES	1506 OAK HILL DR. #111	VISTA,	CA.
VRONZ	64068	JOHN M.	610 NO. SPRING ST.	LIBERTY,	MD.
WISSMAN		DON B.	NO KNOWN ADDRESS		
WOLSTENCROFT	02891	SAM	32 OLD POST ROAD	WESTERLY,	RI.
WRIGHT	45244	BURCH	P.O. BOX 44209	CINCINNATI,	OH.
YATES	28215	GRAEM M.	9516 GLENBROOK DR.	CHARLOTTE,	NC.
ZELICH		MRS. FRED	NO KNOWN ADDRESS		



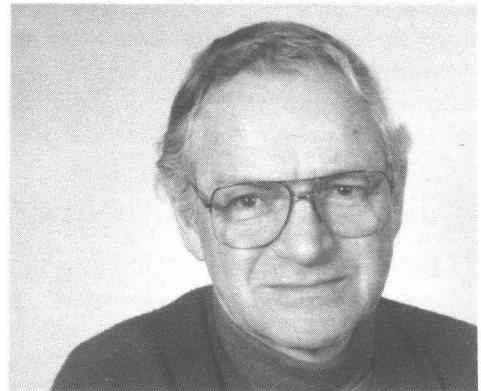
Then and Now



Arnold Bryant



1943



1988

Bill Creer



1938



1988

Fred Berglund

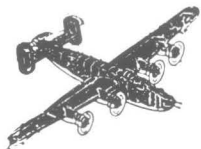


1945



1988

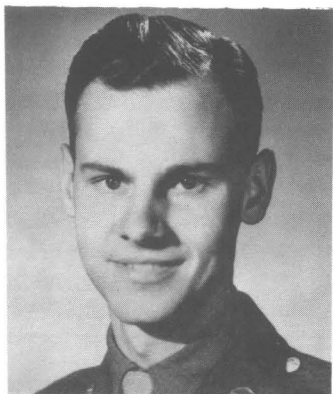




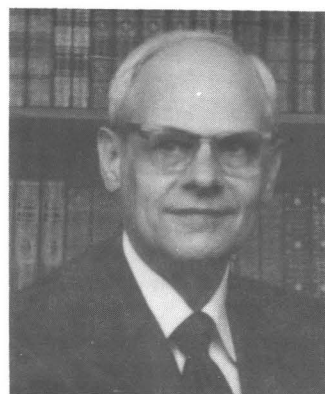
Then and Now



Homer Brown

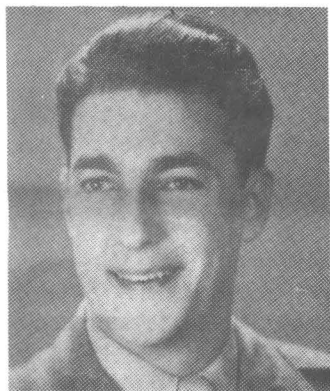


1944

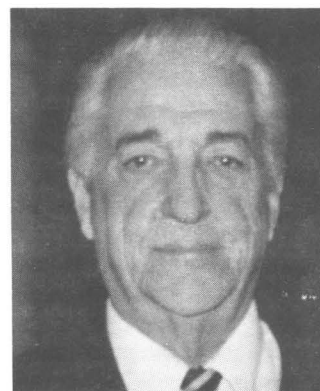


1988

Wally Brauks



1945



1988

Millie and Vern Ames



1946



1987



TAPS

(As of 7/19/89)



LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ORGN.	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
BEASLEY	ERNEST			LOVINGTON,	NM.	
CAROTHERS	REX W.D.		18750 LIVE OAK ROAD	RED BLUFF,	CA.	96080
DETERDING	LEO			PRAIRIE DU ROCHER,	IL.	
HENNIS	HOWARD			HOMER,	IL.	
KASKIEWICZ	RAYMOND			CHICAGO,	IL.	
KESTER	HUGH		DIED IN 1953, PENNSYLVANIA		PA	
PILLO	DOMENIC	7		SEATTLE	WA.	
ROHRBAUGH	GEORGE	18	164 TIMBERLINE DRIVE	BRENTWOOD,	NY.	11717
SAWYER	CLYDE	7	813 EDWIN DRIVE	VIRGINIA BEACH,	VA.	23464
SMETHILLS	JOHN J.	4	2153 SO. XAVIER ST.	DENVER,	CO.	80219
WOOD	JOHN R.		2842 PEMBROKE RD.	TOLEDO,	OH.	43606

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

(Total now 136)

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ORGN.	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
CORBIN	BOBBIE J.	4-391	BOX 535	GROOM,	TX.	79039
DWYER	HAROLD	391	1116 SUMMER	HASTINGS,	NE.	68901
JOHNSON	DR. DONALD R.		602 E. GREEN STREET	CHAMPAIGN,	IL.	61620
MUELLER	PAUL	4	4017 W. CHICAGO ST.	RAPID CITY,	SD.	57702
REED	DONALD E.	4	1093 MAIN STREET	NORWELL,	MA.	02061
SHULL	PAUL A.	391	8901 E. 52ND TERRACE	RAYTOWN,	MO.	64133
SUBJECT	PAUL	18	101 HARVEY STREET	GRASLAKE,	IL.	60030
THOMAS	HAROLD E.	7	RT. 6, BOX 432	AUSTIN,	TX.	78737
THOMAS	JAMES E.	18	1538 E. OAKDALE AVE.	TULARE,	CA.	93274
WHITAKER	FRED	18	813 S.E. WHIPOORWILL CT.	BARTLESVILLE,	OK.	74006

Memories

I REMEMBER

by Bill Fulton

We had been stationed along the East Coast from Dec. 7, 1941 until Oct. 1943, in the Army Air Force Anti-Submarine Command. The Navy did not have long range four engine planes or crews to do this work. We, in the Army Air Force, did this coastal patrol until we could check out Navy crews to do it. I arrived at Blythe in Nov., 1943 after a two week drive from Otis A.F. Base (Remember 35 mph and gasoline rationing). I was stopped twice for "speeding" in Connecticut and Oklahoma. I dropped Louise off in St. Louis.

I worked in the Turbo Supercharger shop on the flight line. Louise wanted to come out to Blythe so, sometime in mid-November, I met her in Los Angeles and spent a night or two. On our way back we stopped for a night in Palm Springs. Louise went job-hunting there and in Indio. She could have had a job in Indio but there was no place to live at the hospital.

We drove up to Prescott, AZ, and found a room in the Vendome Hotel. Louise found work at the hospital. I would have driven up to Prescott on my days off but it was a long trip at 35 mph. I then went job hunting for her at the Blythe Hospital. They didn't need nurses at the time, but they took her name in case an opening came up. A few days before Christmas they called and said they had a job for her. I drove up to Prescott on

Christmas Eve and spent the night at the Vendome. We drove down to Blythe on Christmas morning. On the road we again were stopped for "speeding" near Quartzite. We told the officer we were trying to get to the base for Christmas dinner and he let us go with a warning. Louise worked at the Blythe Hospital until I moved to England in April, 1944. She and Millie Baker drove back east, Louise to St. Louis and Millie to Poughkeepsie, NY.

As we look back on the memories of those times when we were young and carefree, we also think of the boys who did not make it back. The war years, in spite of the really bad times, were certainly the most exciting of my life. As I see it, at a young age, we hit the climax. Everything after that is anticlimatic. "We shot the last act in the first reel!"



REMEMBERING

by Edward H. Quinn

You may not believe it but I never once had the opportunity to visit the town of Mendlesham while I was stationed there. I certainly did take advantage of the frequent visits to London. Not too long ago, while reading a copy of MM, my mind dropped about forty-four years and I found a series of snapshots exploding before my eyes...the American Bar in London where we met Lady Cavendish (Sister of Fred Astaire and his first dance partner) and Billy Conn...the restaurant in London we often fre-

Memories

Continued from page 18

quented and devoured delicious steaks which turned out to be horse meat. The proprietor took care not to let us know the "source" of his wares until we visited him for the last time prior to returning stateside...Johnnie Walker Red Label for \$20.00 per fifth (5 pounds)...Having our personal laundry done for us by the local neighbors...Pre-mission confession and communion given by the local (Brit.) priest who helped service our group when our assigned padre was unavailable. He probably had never heard the likes of those confessions before or since...Home made ice cream (canned evaporated milk) made by our great cooks, especially for the combat crews...Running back and forth (braving pneumonia) for those fourth class showers in the winter...The mice sliding down the sides of the Nissen huts and having to store our goodies in metal boxes so the mice wouldn't feast on them...British hard candy rewards and Salvation Army hot cocoa plus a "shot" offered post mission and pre-interrogation (I wonder how many extra "kills" were reported during these briefings which were the results of those welcome favors)... "Oh, my aching back", Armed Forces "disc jockey" Broderick Crawford...Vertically positioned props at the entrance to orderly rooms indicating we were up again tomorrow...Those impossible midget belly stoves in each hut which kept at least two E.M. flying crews warm during those hard winter days/nights...Great two-wheeled bikes which were our only transportation, the cost of which was recovered when you resold them as soon as you received your stateside orders...We called them mattresses, the Brits called them biscuits...We trained in B-24s and converted to B-17s...Food drops over the Netherlands and cook's tours to the targets we hit for the non-flyers...We'd buy eggs from the farmers and take them to the Aero Club to be cooked to order, but didn't dare drink the unpasteurized milk from the farms...and, last but not least, the 100th mission party.

Unless I'm very much mistaken, I think the priorities of the majority of the combat crews was quite different than that of the support troops. If fortunate, the crew's major goal was to complete their missions and return home, whereas the supporters were reasonably sure that they would spend much more time with the group. Anticipating longer stays at a station usually fosters closer and expanding relationships and a desire to visit near and far interesting localities and settle in for the duration. Consequently, the crews remained fluid.



AN EVENTFUL CHRISTMAS

by Sidney Doppelt

On December 24, 1944, coming back from the mission to Frankfurt, a few other groups were weathered out at their bases and allowed priority landing at Mendlesham. We made many round trips to Cambridge and back, awaiting our designated turn to land. Our esteemed pilot, Jerry Murphy, the greatest, was patient, as always. Finally we were in line behind a B-17 shooting (out-of-gas) flares who were allowed to land. On our final approach the runway lights went out (they changed runways), and we had to get back in line again and fly the pattern until the next tower approval.

Upon finally landing, with little gas to spare, the sight on the field was something from a classic cartoon depicting what should not happen. Planes were off the runway, in the mud, many parked at odd angles near the hard stands and a scattering of ground personnel running in different directions to handle the "load".

Next, the scene at the mess halls to feed the unexpected

guests and the bedraggled Officer-of-the-day trying to find sleeping arrangements. Then on to the Officer's Club. The revelry continued with joyous holiday celebration for many hours. Flying personnel being rambunctious without much encouragement, the game of "cut the tie" proceeded, until someone snipped the Colonel's tie...at which time it was announced, "The bar is closed!"

Someone may recall that we could have been scheduled to attempt a mission the next day. If so, the planes were loaded by the overworked armament personnel...then the mission was scratched and they may have been obligated to unload the bombs. Anyway, the next day the guest planes did take off for their home bases. The extra mattresses were retrieved from the mess hall and other make-shift dormitories...and the Officer-of-the-day, we believe, asked that the bar open early so he, too, could find some relief.

An eventful Christmas Day — I can't remember how we fared at Frankfurt.



MORE VIGNETTES

from a letter to Vince Doran
by Milt Braveman

Your vignettes in Mendlesham Memories are priceless; not only delightful when read, but even more enjoyable in that they bring to the surface episodes that had been deeply recessed.

In the June '88 issue you recall your first night with the 391st. It easily could have been in a Nissen hut we shared. Since I spent the month of November '44 at the 482nd BG Mickey School, I can't claim involvement in the reception for your crew. I do know that other crews were greeted by practical jokers (including me) who simulated being "flak-happy". True, there were all too many poor souls whose nightmares and other symptoms of combat fatigue were only too real. Others, supposedly asymptomatic, chose to subject newcomers to what we would now consider a cruel initiation. I believed, until I saw your article, that you all realized, before long, that much of the carrying on was an act and that you, too, participated in the charade for newer crews. It was a way of blowing off steam (perhaps a symptom in itself). I apologize for my part in the indiscretion.

You reminisced, also, about the laundry boy, Davey Eistol (pronounced Dive-ee East-all) who was 10 to 12 years old. His mother was the laundress and identified different customers by sewing a colored thread to the hem of the items she laundered. I still see, in my mind's eye, an olive drab handkerchief with a faded red thread in a corner.

There was a period when Davey didn't come around. It was rumored that he'd been barred from the base for security reasons. It was feared that the stand-by crews, which had been briefed but not needed for a mission, would return to their quarters and discuss classified elements of the day's sortie while Davey was making his rounds.

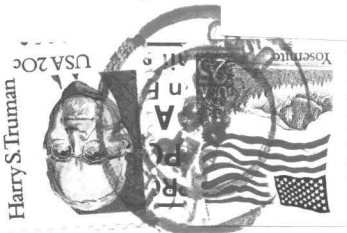
In May '85, when we visited Mendlesham, I spoke with one of the gracious ladies who helps care for the memorial. She knew the Eistols and told me that Davey had moved up the road, towards Norwich, and that his mother was still in Mendlesham. She assured me that she would tell them that they were fondly remembered.

In your December '87 article, "Eeenie, Meenie, Minie, Mo", you wondered to which combatant's prayers God responded...this was a classic, profound and often quoted.

In the June '87 MM, you lamented the lack of sanitary facilities in the B-17. I remember a Capt. Mower who I believe

Continued on page 20

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



Harry S. Truman



Memories

Continued from page 19

was the group maintenance officer or group engineer. 'Though he wasn't on flight status, he coveted an Air Medal. After carefully evaluating the performance records and qualifications of combat crews, he selected the most proficient with which to fly. The last of the 6 missions he flew with us was the 30 Dec. '44 trip to Kassel which coincidentally was the last my crew flew as a unit.

What does all this have to do with sanitary facilities? I learned early on that there were enough pressures on the bomb run without the additional strain on the urethral sphincter. I don't know if the system was original, but it worked...not for Capt. Mower...but for me!

Many of us considered the B-5 driftmeter to be useless at our flight altitudes. Far from it. Before we reached the IP*, I would roll a map into a tube, project the tube thru the hole on the starboard side of the nose provided for the driftmeter and I had, in effect, a relief tube which functioned well when held at the proper angle to the slipstream. What didn't pass thru the tube froze to the inside and quickly evaporated. Since Mower was aboard as an observer, he chose to position himself in the nose where I could point out the White Cliffs of Dover, the Zuider Zee, windmills, the canals around Bruges, barges on the Rhine, trains being strafed by "Little Friends", flak areas, and other attractions of interest on the different excursions. When he witnessed my routine as we approached the IP, he experienced an uncontrollable urge. I handed him the rolled map and invited him to use the facility. At this point, it became apparent that the countless hours of map study to which I'd been subjected were paying off. Capt. Mower just didn't have the experience with maps and, aim as he might, it all came back. His eyes vacillated between expressions of panic and frustration. Luckily, with the temperatures and humidity where they were, all residuals disappeared in a short time.

*I'll bet you though IP stood for Initial Point!

A FRIGHTENING EXPERIENCE

by Earl Parenteau

As many crews know, journey to the war took us on a long and, sometimes, boring flight to Mendlesham. But, all moments were not boring, and the instance I'm about to relate was quite frightening.

This leg of our flight took us from Fortaleza, Brazil to Dakar, West Africa. Time of take-off, as I recall, was around midnight, in order that we arrive at our destination during early daylight hours. Weather briefing warned us to be aware of thunderstorms over the South Atlantic. We were several hours or more into the flight...memory is vague as to actual time...when Capt. Emory Ralls, pilot, saw flashes of lightning in the distant sky. Since we could not climb above the storm nor return to Fortaleza (point of no return, etc.) Capt. Ralls decided to head for any break in the storm clouds. He and Lt. Westman, co-pilot, saw what appeared to be thin clouds in the distance and headed in that direction.

On entering this area we were immediately buffeted and tossed around violently. We dropped from 10,000 ft. to 8,000 ft. altitude in a matter of seconds. Sgt. Gable, engineer, and myself were sitting in the pilot's compartment, our backs against a bulkhead wall leading to the bomb bay. The two of us went flying headlong and landed on the instrument panel; anything loose flying around the cabin; and St. Elmo's Fire crackled within the interior of the cabin like a frightened snake. Meantime, both pilots were frantically using their skills to right this plummeting aircraft. This was eventually accomplished after a frightening few minutes. Capt. Ralls later told me that the plane's attitude was nose up, tail down, full power, and, yet, we were going down.

After all of us caught our breath...no doubt we held it for several minutes...we flew on to our destination without further ado. Probably other crew members may recall further details. If so, I wish they would elaborate on this flight.

We went on to fly 30 missions as a lead crew in the 18th Squadron. Fortunately none of our crew was injured (we lost our ball-turret gunner when he filled in on another crew). I vaguely recall that we were known as "The Milk Run Boys" — Well, so be it!