



ENDLESHAM MEMORIES

34TH BOMB GROUP H

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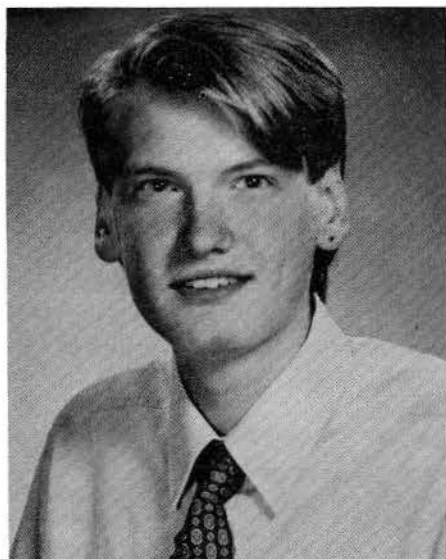
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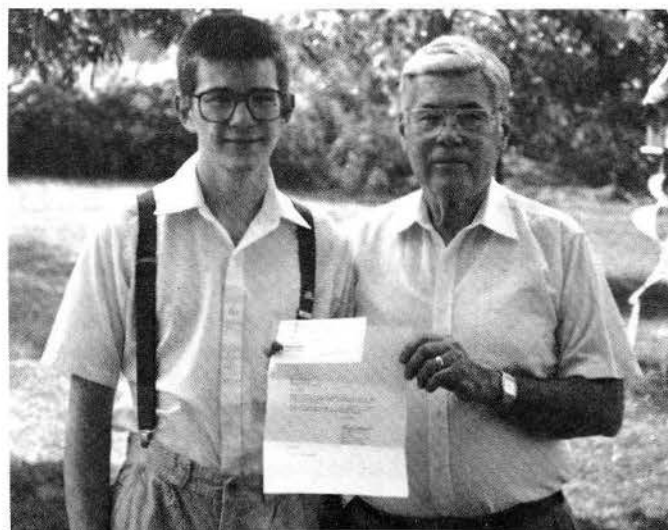
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1991 Scholarship Winners



Michael Goetz (1st Place)
Grandson of Wm. Dorrance



Kyle S. Davis (2nd Place)
with Grandad Ray Summa

REUNION '92 - SEPT. 14-17 - LAS VEGAS, N.V.

OBSERVATIONS

We're here in Florida for the winter and, from what we hear, up until now we could have stayed back home in Indiana. The weather back there has not been too bad so far - no snow and temperatures basically above freezing. However, at this writing in mid-January, we hear that they've had quite a bit of snow and the last two nights have had sub-zero temperatures. Here in Florida the cold snap has brought overnight temperatures down to the low 30's and that's bad enough.

Rose and I want to thank all of you that sent holiday greeting cards. We relish the many friendships we've made since taking over the newsletter editing more than seven years ago. It's enjoyable meeting you all at our reunions and we look forward to all our future reunions.

Speaking of reunions, let me just say it again. If you're physically and financially able and have not attended one, you don't know what you're missing. Of course, we are not as spry and agile as we were 50 years ago, but we do know how to have a good time. Also, renewing old friendships is very satisfying. So, if you can, plan on joining us in Las Vegas next September. Our June issue of Mendlesham Memories will have all the details.

I want to thank Ray Summa for handling the mailing of the newsletter for the March issue the last several years. This occurs because our mailing permits are in Indiana and, when I'm in Florida, there's no way I can handle it. THANKS, Ray!

That's enough from me for now. Just remember, this newsletter is only as good as you help me make it. Any comments, criticisms, photos or stories are all welcome. So, write to me with whatever you have. If we can use it we will.

Eli Baldea
Editor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The year of 1992 is now upon us and, with the annual tax returns, the paper work starts off with a vengeance. Just a year ago we were saying prayers and keeping a place in our hearts for the men and women of Desert Storm.

This past week has seen the release of information about "Top Secret" missions. It stated that the 8th Air Force, 2nd Wing at Barksdale AFB, had the honor of "First Over Target". The B-52 crews flew the longest mission the Air Force has ever launched. It was 35 hours and 14,000 miles, with four aerial refuelings. The seven aircraft with 35 Cruise missiles were all Boeing built.

We are preparing for the reunion in September at Las Vegas. The entertainment for the banquet will bring some hidden talent to our enjoyment.

Sincerely,
Fred Schoch



HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OF YOU

This year has to be better than '91. Altho so far in '92 I've spent a week in two different hospitals. The first of January the old ticker started acting up again so I was rushed to the emergency room at midnight. I stayed a couple of days at the Community Hospital in Anderson and was taken to St. Vincent's Hospital in Indianapolis where my cardiologist is. I went thru every test they could think of and they came up with my Hiatus Hernia causing my troubles. I'm at home now and getting along pretty good.

"Nuff" about me. Sure is H--- getting old.

In October Hannah and I went to the museum at Dayton to meet Dick Hirdes from France whom I had been corresponding with for several months. Dick was originally from Holland and was there when we dropped food to the Dutch people. He has since moved to France. Dick was in the Underground and helped the Jews escape from the Nazis. He comes to the States quite often and had asked us to meet him at the museum whenever he was coming over. He told us about his experiences and his life after he left Holland.

Thanks to all of you for the many Christmas cards and notes. We appreciate every one. Hope your holidays were joyful. Hannah's Xmas cactus bloomed at Halloween time so I got her a Poinsettia to help brighten up the house over the holidays.

So far it is the middle of January and our winter has not been too bad. Dark dreary days and a few snow flurries plus days with temperatures in the 30's and 40's. There has to be a sun up there someplace.

Do not forget that I still have a few "Lucky Bastard" pins for those who finished their missions. The cost is \$5.00.

Nothing exciting going on at this time and Hannah says, "Let's keep it that way!" So, all you 34th'ers have a great '92 and make plans to be at Las Vegas Sept. 14th-17th. These reunions get better every year, although Louisville will be hard to beat. It was great to see so many of you there.

THINK SPRING!!

Ray & Hannah Summa

MOVING?????

Don't jeopardize receiving your next copy of MEMDLESHAM MEMORIES by NOT telling us of your NEW ADDRESS! The Postal Service WON'T forward copies of MEMORIES! We need your NEW ADDRESS! Please advise HAL PROVINCE, 111 PROVINCE LANE, CARRIERE, MISS. 39426 of your NEW ADDRESS!

REUNION '92 - LAS VEGAS, NV. SEPT. 14-17, 1992

TO THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP OF THE 34TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

There isn't anything in any other city we have visited in our tour of reunions that can, or will, compare to Las Vegas, the city of perpetual motion. Things are the same at 3:00 a.m. as they were at 3:00 p.m. This being the way things are, some adjustments are required to stay on course and reach our objective.

We have been accustomed to a Thursday registration day and a Friday for touring. Saturday has, in the past, been our day of General Membership Business Meeting and a Grand Banquet evening. In order to conform to the way things are in our host city we must make a few alterations in our tried and true policy.

Now for the changes -- Monday, Sept. 14th will be

registration day and all meals will be on your own. On Tuesday, Sept. 15th, the 2nd day of our reunion, in other years we have provided bus service and toured places of general interest. This year, with our group meeting in the heart of show places, we have found it rather tough to take the general membership to any one place that would be satisfactory to all. Rather than follow tradition, everyone will be on their own with a whole day and evening to visit the city and its many sights. Please do not get so involved that you forget our Wednesday, Sept. 16th, breakfast followed by our annual general membership meeting. Then there's free time until the Banquet in the evening. On Thursday, Sept. 17th, it will be a farewell breakfast.

We of the committee sincerely hope you enjoy yourselves in Las Vegas and will be looking forward to 1993 in Little Rock, Arkansas.

The Reunion Committee
Gerald Pine
Harold Rutka
Robert Wright



RETURN TO ENGLAND - 1992

GREETINGS TO ALL

The 34th Bomb Group is departing for our ENGLAND REUNION - 13 MAY, 1992. We will join in the 50th ANNIVERSARY celebration of the EIGHTH AIR FORCE in ENGLAND. At previous reunions we have had a Memorial Service at the 34th Bomb Group Memorial, met with some of the area people, and enjoyed dinner with the wonderful women and men who have maintained the grounds at our Memorial. This year the people of the village would like to join with us in celebrating the 50th ANNIVERSARY of the EIGHTH AIR FORCE coming to England. TAMARAC TRAVEL has sent you all a brochure on the trip and can answer any questions you have on the trip. Call toll free: 1-800-228-9690.

The first thing to do is check your PASSPORT, or apply for one if you haven't had one previously. There will be no central departure point - the plan is to assemble at HEATHROW AIRPORT at 9:30 a.m., 14 May, 1992. We will depart for CAMBRIDGE - WHICH WILL BE OUR BASE OF OPERATIONS for five nights. We will visit MENDLESHAM - MEMORIAL - VILLAGE - PUBS - SERVICES at ST. MARY THE VIRGIN CHURCH - MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE AT MADDINGLY CEMETERY - 390TH CONTROL TOWER - visit DUXFORD AIR MUSEUM - HENDON ROYAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM. In London we will have a ONE-HALF DAY TOUR and a visit to the CHURCHILL CABINET WAR ROOMS. Shopping at Selfridges, Harrods, and the opportunity to visit other points of interest.

The following have signed up as of 20 January, 1992: BERNARDO, ALFRED AND DORIS; CONKLIN, CLAUDE AND GENEVIEVE; HANSON, AMBERS AND JEAN; HENRY,

GLENN AND KAY; HOLCOMB, VERBAL AND BETTY; JALVING, MARVIN AND LOIS; JONES, EDDIE AND IANTHIA; MARTIN, RANDALL AND SHIRLEY; RUTKA, HAROLD AND GENEVIEVE.

BRITISH PRIDE TOURS has cancelled its tour operations and will return to solely offering Group Tour Planning. Those of you who have planned on touring with them may want to come with us.

There is a seven day tour of D-DAY BEACHES and on up to PARIS for three days. This tour will only be offered if twenty-five persons sign up.

Genevieve and I will be looking forward to seeing all of you in ENGLAND in May!

HAROLD C. RUTKA
Reunion Coordinator, England, 1992



Don't Forget To Send In Your Dues

Mail \$7.50 to: Harold Province
111 Province Lane
Carriere, MS 39426





EDITH (BEN) ZELDES - Stafford Springs, CT.

Ben and I wish to thank you for the reunion photos. We appreciate your thoughtfulness in bringing back such happy activities and memories.

IMOGENE (CARL) FREYSINGER - Cable, OH.

I can't tell you how much Carl and I enjoyed the reunion! We look forward each year to the few days we spend with the 34th group.

H. ARNOLD PRILLAMAN - Martinsville, VA.

Thanks for sending the photo and thanks, also, for the job you do for the 34th.

LEE (SAM) BAGLIO - Exeter, PA.

We enjoyed the Louisville reunion and look forward to next year in Las Vegas, God willing. Sam had an operation on Nov. 11th for an incisional hernia. He is doing well at present, thank God!

WILLIAM E. CREER - Las Vegas, NV.

Received a copy of MM - fine issue. The reunion appeared to be a great success. We are well. Decided to blow a portion of the family inheritance and go on the Christmas Hawaiian Inter-Island Cruise. Looking forward to seeing you all at the L.V. reunion. If I can assist, let me know.



Nose art of "Asphodel" Fred Schoch's Ship.

MOLLIE (JESSE) GARDNER - Bagley, IA.

Thanks so much for the photo and the great time everyone had at the reunion. The photo was a great pick-me-up after a day's work at the plant. We make transmissions for Frigidaire washing machines. So keep buying those products, I need the work. Ha. Ha.

One of the G.I.'s who came to our wedding in England stopped in to see us for an hour recently. He was Lyle Rhein from Minn. and had been in the 7th Sqdn. with Jess. We saw him last in 1945. Hey! Tell me these guys aren't great! They're the best!

PAUL ANDERSON - Mesa, AZ.

We are here at our winter place. The weather has been very nice for the few days we've been here. We were delayed some in getting started down, waiting for results of my prostate biopsy. Then, after Thanksgiving, I got ill. I thought I had an infection from the biopsy but the doctor said I had Shingles. He then prescribed some very expensive pills and said we could come on down to Ariz. I'm still not feeling up to par yet by any means. We did skip the planned California part of our trip down. Hope to get over there some time this spring to visit Beryl's brother and sister and my aunt and uncle.

HAROLD RUTKA - Duluth, MN.

The Holiday season has kind of "sneaked up" on us again, but not as far as the snow is concerned. We have 58.9 inches of snow this season to date but are very thankful that 42 inches have melted.

We did not travel outside the country this year and we are very thankful that we decided to see Yugoslavia last year. We had planned to go back this year but, instead, watched on T.V. as a very beautiful country is being destroyed.

The 34th B.G. reunion at Louisville was like a family reunion. This year we were fortunate to have Peter and Sylvia Gaskin from England join us. They have helped to make our England trips a great success.

RANDALL MARTIN - Weymouth, MA.

As you know, Pete Gray has given up cigarettes (his own). However, he has not given up smoking O.P.'s (other people's). He has also given up drinking Bourbon (his own). The glass in his hand in the December M.M. is filled with my Scotch.

For some reason George and Marilyn Schmitt were asked to leave the hotel on Saturday morning. Rumor has it they had a wild party Friday night and disturbed the neighbors. George will have to let us know exactly what happened at our next get-together. Do not believe him if he tells you the hotel lost his reservation. However, it was good seeing them again, even though they missed the Saturday banquet.

DEXTER JORDAN - Huntersville, NC.

Beulah and I really appreciate receiving the pictures of the reunion. You see, we forgot our camera but a lot of friends did remember and sent us quite a few photos.

To Beulah and I it was one of the best reunions yet, thanks to all who worked to make it so good. Keep up the good work.

Notes From Our Friends

Continued from page 4

HENRY TOBIASON - Remer, MN.

Louisville was a great place for our reunion. There are so many places of interest to visit. Chuck and Jane Vankirk joined Audrey and I driving around. We visited the race track, Ft. Knox and the George Patton Museum. Then on to the Shaker settlement. They live a very simple life style, similar to the Amish people. I think the reunion committee made a good choice in picking Louisville, but don't they always do a great job?

I watched so many programs on T.V. about Pearl Harbor and couldn't help but think how it changed so many lives - the places we were stationed at, the good friends we made and the ones we lost. Without Pearl Harbor there wouldn't be a 34th B.G. reunion and think how sad that would be when you are already looking forward to the next one.

JOHN BLOCZYNSKI - Marshfield, WI.

As usual, we had a wonderful time at the reunion. It's just so nice to see all our old friends and we always meet some new ones, too. Louisville was such a beautiful, clean and interesting city. We enjoyed the stay there very much and are looking forward to Las Vegas in 1992.

PETER STAMPON - Gray, ME.

Thanks for sending me the picture taken at the group banquet in Louisville. It was nice to be able to see everyone again. If all goes well we hope to be in Las Vegas next year.

CHARLES VAN KIRK - Vista, CA.

Thank you very much for the pictures taken of Jane and I at the reunion. We sure had a good time in Louisville and hope to see everyone in Las Vegas next year.

ROY TAVASTI - Pismo Beach, CA.

I must agree that Louisville was one of the best reunions. You will, however, have to admit that the Galt House was somewhat of a "mad-house" with the 34th B.G., 7th Armored Div. and the Shriners all meeting at the same time.

Churchill Downs plus the Mint Juleps was almost the highlight of the trip until the last evening when we were trapped with a Shriners Dixie-land band and entertained by those talented characters for several hours.

Hope to make Las Vegas, but we're on a tight schedule because of a flying class reunion that's scheduled just two days after the 34th wraps up.

JAMES MARTIN - Santa Anna, TX.

We enjoyed the time spent at the reunion and appreciate your sending the pictures. We also appreciate the good work that you are doing with the "Memories".

MRS. ROBERT F. HENDRICKS - Cayucos, CA.

It is my very sad duty to advise you that my much loved husband died on 13 May, 1991. He got a lot of pleasure out of your publication.

EDWARD PENDOWSKI - Milwaukee, WI.

We're happy so many members of the 34th are able to get together. We don't take any long trips anymore. Both Ann and I are reasonably well except for aches and pains. We both have arthritis pretty bad but we try to do as much as we can.

EDDIE K. JONES, Norwood, NY.

We have made our reservations to go to England with the 34th B.G. in May. I'm hoping that some of my crew of the B-17 "SUGAH" will be going also. We haven't heard from any of them yet.

Continued on page 6



8th Air Force Members viewing "Memphis Belle" at Schenectady, NY.

Notes From Our Friends

Continued from page 5

MERLIN GOETSCHUIS - Dumont, NJ.

I'm surprised that you did not have the information on my brother, Dalton's, death. He and his crew were shot down over Mannheim, Germany in Oct., 1944. If you or anyone else has any information about Dalton or his crew I would appreciate hearing from you. I also served in the 8th A.F. in England and visited my brother while they were flying missions quite frequently.

RALPH BUSH - Springfield, IL.

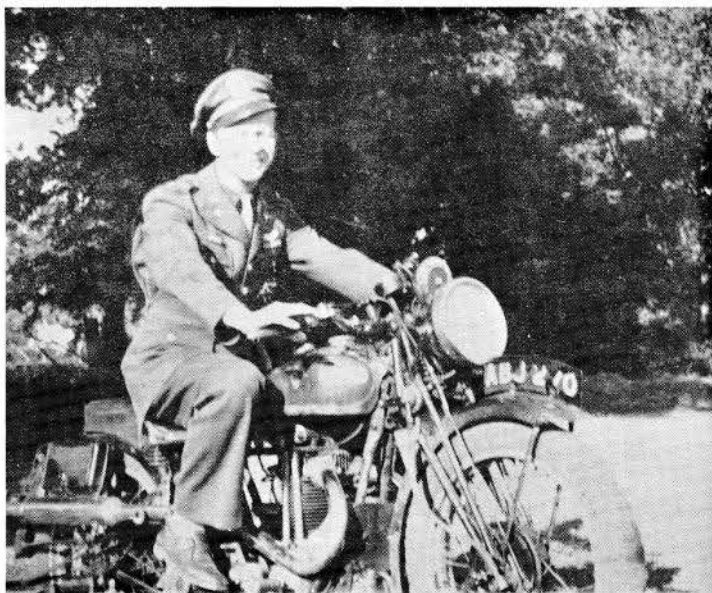
I visited Wally Jackson at the Illinois Veteran's Home in Quincy recently. He was the tail gunner on Gustafson's crew. He's in fairly good health and is living in nursing care quarters. He's well enough to move out. However, he has a good room mate and the unit is not overcrowded. Besides, Wally likes all the nurses. If anyone is in the Quincy area Wally would enjoy a visit, plus the Veteran's Home is an impressive place.

FRED BERGLUND - Englewood, FL.

What a great December M.M.! It was so interesting. Rose's column was a real contribution also. We like to brag about our grandchildren, too. Happy to hear that Wanda Pine is "doing great" after surgery on her finger. My wife, Hazel, survived two cataract surgeries in September and November, so we missed the fine reunion in Louisville. We hope to make the Las Vegas reunion.

FRANCES (DAN) WIMER - Richmond, VA.

The reunion sounded great according to the newsletter accounts. We hope someone used our meal and cruise tickets. Our brother-in-law, who was critically ill at the time of the reunion, died this month. We miss him.



Johnny Scholle



Paul N. Teare - 1945.

SAM TURNIPSEED - Aliceville, AL.

Greetings from Alabama. Sorry I could not make Louisville. Restricted due to eye surgery from June to October. Can report it was satisfactory.

RAYMOND J. LAPINE - Spokane, WA.

Just went thru the December issue of MM. Not one face or one name was familiar to me. Just too much transfer activity when the 34th was a training group putting out cadres every month (I think).

HELEN (LEONARD) BESS - Santa Maria, CA.

We are fine, well and happy! Had our 50th wedding anniversary on Oct. 25th. We are looking forward to the 1992 reunion. Enjoyed the 1991 one.

EVELYN (HAROLD) WILLIAMS - Lantana, FL.

We took the auto train for the first time when we came down to Florida (it runs from Lorton, VA. to Sanford, FL. and takes 16 hours leaving us only 190 miles to drive.)

Harold is doing well - his voice is almost back to normal and the doctors are watching his other artery which is still partially blocked.

We enjoyed a couple of days with Peter and Sylvia Gaskin. They are such a wonderful couple and we pray we can spend more time with them.

GORDON BREEDING - Alpena, MI.

We are all fine. Still hunting, fishing and building pole barns. Ed Bouty and his wife stopped in this summer and stayed a while. We all had a long talk of old times. Boy, he sure could not get over where we live, way back in the bush. I had to go and pick them up in Alpena.

GENE ATWATER - Cottonwood, AZ.

Hope to see everyone at Las Vegas next year. It's a half hour drive from here and I'm looking forward to this one as I've missed the last 3 or 4.

JOHN MORENO - Saint Helena, CA.

Thanks so much for sending me the photo from the dinner with my pilot and his wife. I'm looking forward to seeing you all in Las Vegas.

Notes From Our Friends

Continued from page 6

DONALD FILLMAN - Des Moines, IA.

The Louisville reunion was our first one but not our last, God willing. I did enjoy seeing and having breakfast with Omer Mongeon who flew with us on several missions when one of our gunners quit. We're looking forward to Sept. '92 at Las Vegas and hope to see Mongeon, Kiley, Salvesson and Paulnock there.

I called Jim Riley and he is not too well. He's in the Memorial Hospital in Danville, VA. He flew with us after another gunner just couldn't handle it and he finished with us.

ANTHONY FURLONG - Perkaspie, PA.

I am writing to inform you that my father, Fenton F. Furlong passed away Nov. 29, 1991. He was so proud to have served in the Army Air Corps. during the second world war. He was very excited a few years ago when he found that there was a 34th Bomb Group Assn. He always talked about when he served with the 34th.

I would really appreciate hearing from anyone who remembers him or if they have any pictures of him. Please write me at: Anthony Furlong, 319 So. 5th Street, Perkaspie, PA. 18944.

BRUCE SOTHERN - Mission, TX.

It's very comforting to know we have such dedicated people at the 34th B.G. controls. Each reunion, without a doubt, is better planned and attended each year. I always look forward to receiving the M.M. Thanks for a good job.

DOROTHY NOWELL PEAVEY - Boise, ID.

I am proud and deeply touched to be a lifetime honorary member of the 34th Bomb Group Assn.

It was after my husband's death in a B-29 training accident at Smoky Hill Air Base that I joined the American Red Cross. Luckily, I was assigned to the 34th at Mendlesham. Those few months there were, and will always be, a vital, memorable part of my life. Thank you very much.

SIDNEY DOPPELT - Milwaukee, WI.

We cannot adequately thank all of you for the continuing active efforts to keep alive the spirit and irreplaceable memories of the 34th B.G. Each issue of Mendlesham Memories stimulates more than a deep nostalgia of Dec., 1944 when I, as a navigator, was nearing the 30th mission and counting - finally finishing on Jan. 28, 1945.

With the pure grace of God, each landing from a mission was an exciting feeling of "coming home" and knowing that we would have the confident efforts of all the support personnel to maintain the B-17, load for the next mission and give us fliers the best help to make it for another "trip".

The pictures of the reunions are wonderful; how thrilling to see the beautiful faces of those of us who have survived and yet extend sympathy to the families of those no longer with us. From the latter chapter of Deuteronomy - "We are standing here this day", and gratefully so! Bless you all and continued thanks for being who you are.

JACK E. BOLTON - Wayne, IL.

Some proof reader did me a big disservice by listing my attendance at the reunion as MRS. It made for sad memories (she's been gone 11 years) and may make others presume I'm gone. (Editor's note: Sorry, Jack. We apologize, but these things do happen sometimes.)

GEORGE GRISHAM - New Bern, NC

I'm looking forward to receiving news about the people and activities of the 34th Bomb Group.

Our plane was decorated with our chosen design, "TONI SEVEN", a young movie starlet of that day, sitting atop big red dice showing seven. Also our plane showed that we flew three volunteer missions to Holland when their dams were ruptured and flooding took place - a terrible time for the Dutch since many did not have food.

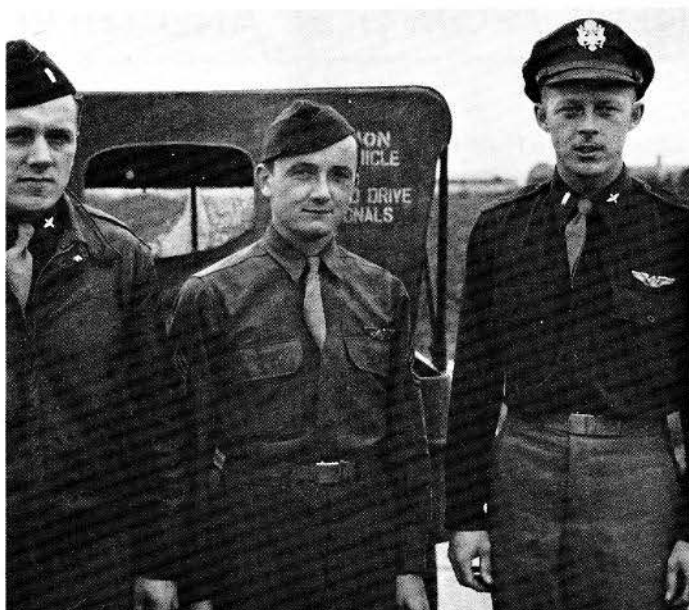
FRANCIS V. JACKOVICH - Port Jervis, NY.

Nothing could be nicer than bailing out over France and being rescued by the French Underground. In order to avoid capture downed flyers were put on French farms, a good place to hide. Talk about royal treatment - cheese, wine, and ooh-la-la-lots of ooh-la-la! Enough to make some flyers reluctant to return to England through the French Underground. Clark Gable couldn't have handled them all!

WILLIAM "PETE" GRAY - Virginia Beach, VA.

The reunion was especially fine for me as, just a few days before I left for Louisville, I was informed that I DID NOT have cancer of the prostate! For over a month I was totally convinced that I had it while they made test after test before being sure. That was, as you might expect, the longest month of my life.

At Louisville I did everything the doctors told me not to do - drank too much, ate stuff I wasn't even supposed to get close to. Even smoked a few cigarettes - quit smoking almost 30 years ago! That's the way it went for the 4 days I was there. I told the doc what I had done and he agreed that probably I hadn't hurt myself too much. But, he warned, I had to be a little more careful in the future. I'm back on the straight and narrow now.



John Gronouski with who??

Continued on page 8

Notes From Our Friends

Continued from page 7

PETER GASKIN - Essex, England

Could Sylvia and I, through the pages of the Mendlesham Memories, say thank you to the members of the 34th who made our short stay in Louisville so enjoyable, with special thanks to Harold and Gen Rutka, Gerald and Wanda Pine and Carl and Imogene Freysinger. Imogene's a lovely lady who spent so much time trying to locate us in Ohio. Little did you know that we were just down the road at Dayton. I just wish we had more time to spend at the reunion. I hope this will not be our first and last visit to the 34th reunion in your great country. We hope to meet many of you again at Cambridge in May, '92.

CAROL (LLOYD) ELLIOTT - Oklahoma City, OK.

Louisville was really fun! All of Lloyd's surviving crew of "The Flying Dutchman" were there - all three of them, Reid and Marie McCloskey, Ervin Hanken and Lloyd and Carol Elliott with son Larry. Lloyd and I had been to an antique auto convention in Penna. and still had the 1920 Dodge loaded on the trailer. Larry flew in from Okla. City and was especially looking for George Ritchie -- where were you, George? We also have a 1913 Cadillac and a 1914 Model T Ford roadster.

Just one suggestion about our up-coming reunions. It would be nice if each of the "first-time" people would wear a different colored name tag. We do this at the antique car meets and this kind of helps to guide the new ones. We use green tags -- but this is not to say they are "green-horns". It does work.



Bob Gay with ????

WALTER STURDIVAN - Stockton, CA.

"ITL". I still remember the call letters of the ground radio station we lead radio operators reported to when we flew a mission. It was a real comfort to know that all I had to do was touch that sending key and there would be a response in my head set at once. They never failed me and I was always surprised at the strength of the signal. Those men were there for weather, strike reports, recalls or any other need of communication.

On our mission to Kiel on Aug. 24, 1944, I heard distress calls as our men in trouble over the North Sea sent out S.O.S. messages, then fastened the key down for a "fix". I could visualize the planes hitting the water when the signal stopped. It was an eerie feeling in my mind's eye. I saw the planes settling in the water as the men clambered out for the yellow life rafts. At least that's what I was hoping for as I flew on for a flat-tire, hydraulic deficient, parachute-out-the-window landing at Mendlesham.

Are there any of these men among us? To me they are some of the un-sung heroes of the air war. I never met one face to face, but I'd sure like to shake their hands.

CHERI RAMBO - Greenwood, DE.

This letter is to inform you as to how my father, Paul Teare, is doing. He does not remember much or, if he does, it is very vaguely. Dad was diagnosed 10 or 12 years ago at Johns Hopkins Hospital as having Alzheimer's disease. He's doing exceptionally well considering the doctors told us that within two years he would not know who we were.

We five daughters take turns caring for him. We know this is not too good because it seems to confuse him more, but we all feel he is not bad enough to be sent to a nursing home or facility that takes care of these people. Two daughters live in Maryland, one in Colorado, one in Florida, where he is at present, and I live in Delaware, about 5 miles from his home. His health is fantastic but his mind is just diminishing slowly. We all rue the day when he forgets who we are, but we know it will come.

NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

The Selman Field Historical Society is looking for anyone of 1942-1945 vintage that was stationed at or went through navigational training at Selman Field, Monroe, La.

Any person with former ties to this field is cordially invited to join the association and renew old memories. The dues are \$10.00 annually, \$60.00 Life Membership and \$100.00 Charter Membership. If interested contact: Selman Field Historical Association, P.O. Box 14962, Monroe, LA. 71207-4962.

From Ed Lonergan we hear that he has accepted the job of "Golf Tournament Chairman" for our reunion at Las Vegas. He is in contact with Las Vegas organizations who will give him all the information needed which he will forward here to M.M. Perhaps by the June issue we will have more to report. The earlier we know how many will play the better off we'll be.

NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

Continued from page 8

From Mr. Jack D. Stovall, Jr. we have the following:

"WINGS OF COURAGE" is a story about the men who flew the B-26 on bombing missions from England into the flak and fighter filled skies of German Occupied France.

The reader will share with the crews the suspense and apprehension of many dangerous missions which the airmen flew before and after the awesome battles of D-Day during the summer of 1944.

It is a true story of courage, devotion, and duty that will take you back to the many fond memories of those days when you served your country during the difficult years of World War II.

Normally priced at \$12.95, the book is now available for \$10.95. Order from: Jack D. Stovall, Jr., 212 Rhonda Circle E., Cordova, TN 38018. Add \$2.00 for postage and handling.

Mildred Long, widow of Louis Long, is trying to locate the owner of the photograph of Louis that was in the Sept. '91 issue of MM. Will that person please contact her at: Mrs. Mildred Long, 21 N. Martin Lane, Norwood, PA. 19074. (Editor's note: After we have used a photo in MM, it is returned to its rightful owner and we then lose track of who furnished which pictures.)

There is a new book authored by Ian McLachlan titled "EIGHTH AIR FORCE BOMBER STORIES" now available. It includes never-before published photographs, captivating accounts of harrowing wartime incidents, extensive appendices on the aircraft and incidents and is excellent reading, very dramatic and packed with historic facts. The cost is \$34.95 plus \$4.50 shipping and handling. For more information contact Bill Krause or Linda Toftness at: Zenith Books, P.O. Box 2REV, Osceola, WI. 54020.

From James G. Young, an associate member, we have the following:

I have an extra original copy of the 34th B.G. History book published at war's end and WILL TRADE for any of these three original 34th B.G. Sqdn. patches in cloth only: 4th, 7th or 18th. Also, any A.F. cloth group or squadron patches for those who may have been in more than just the 34th. Contact me at:

James G. Young, 714 Broadway, McKees Rock, PA. 15136.

Don Fillman sends in the following:

For anyone interested, this is the address of the Source of Mission Reports in Washington D.C.:

Mr. George C. Chalon, General Archives Admin., National Archives & Records Service, Modern Military Field Branch, Military Archives Division, Washington, D.C. 20409.

He suggests you send in all the known information possible in order to know you will get the right data.

Wally Brauks sent in the following ad which appeared in AIR FORCE magazine over a year ago but previously went unnoticed:

Seeking photos, documents, and memorabilia of the 7th Bomb Squadron of the 34th Bomb Group, recently reactivated as the 7th Flying Training Squadron at Vance AFB, OK. Contact: Lt. Col. L. Haines, Commander, 7th FTS, Vance AFB, OK. 73705.

(Editor's note: Although some time has elapsed, I'm sure they'll still appreciate anything we send.)

Willis Griffis sent in the following:

HELP! If any of you pilots, engineers or crew chiefs remember the serial number of your B-24, please let me know. Even the last three or four numbers will help. I plan to visit the Air Force Research Center the end of May to continue research on our B-24's. Especially need B-24J numbers. Write me at:

Willis Griffis, 90 Commonwealth Ct. No. 2, Vernon Hills, IL. 60061.



Col. Wackwitz & "Paper Doll".



Then and Now



Dorothy and Jack Clarkson



1944



1991

Junior Craft

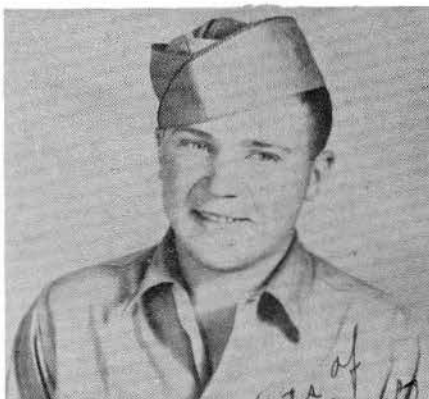


1944



1991

Russell E. Selby



1944



1988



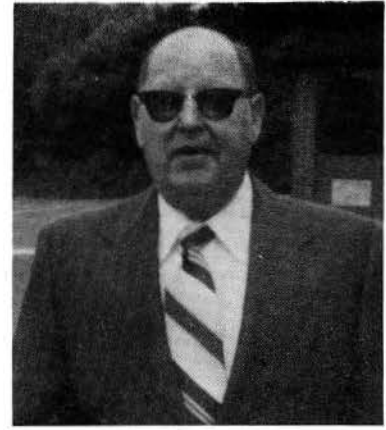
Then and Now



Fred L. Simmons



1942

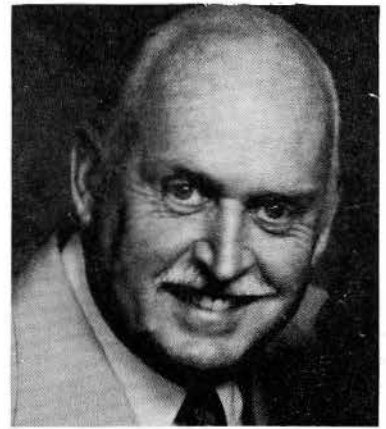


1986

Paul G. Tardiff



1941



1986

Roy E. Tavasti



1941



1989



ROSE'S CORNER

How wonderful and fulfilling it was to see you all in Louisville because we were rewarded with a lot of communication!

I'm especially grateful to the ladies who sent recipes for canning and freezing. There was a lot of interest about recipes as part of this column and I'm more than happy to agree. Later in my column you will find all the recipes I've received in the mail and I hope that you will try them and let me know how much you've enjoyed them.

I also found a very moving letter from Imogene Freysinger and want to share it with you. I'm positive that you'll have a smile on your face and a real feeling of pride once you've read it. Thank you, Imogene! This is the letter:

I woke up early this morning and went outside, on the farm in Ohio where I have lived most of my married life. A flock of wild geese were flying across the rising sun and two deer ran across an empty corn field. There was a nip in the air, and the trees in our woods were glowing with red and gold and purple colors. My roosters were crowing and the ducks were quacking, waiting to be fed. I could hear a tractor running and I smelled the perfume of the newly plowed ground. And I thought to myself, "What a wonderful land, this America of ours. How proud we are to live in this free country, and how grateful we are to all the 'Brave Young Men' who fought and died for it so we could be free to enjoy it. How wonderful it is, here in our later years, to meet all of the great men and women of the 34th Bomb Group and share a few days, visiting with them at the reunions. It means a lot to us and we look forward to it each year. God bless them all and keep them safe and well, till we meet again."

Love, Imogene Freysinger

Now for the recipes:

TWO STEP KENTUCKY BOURBON CHOCOLATE BALLS

1 stick butter 1 cup chopped pecans
1 box confectioners sugar 4 tbsp. bourbon

Mix ingredients very well and roll into balls the size of walnuts. Refrigerate overnight.

The next day melt 4 oz. semi-sweet chocolate chips and 4 oz. bitter chocolate bar. Quickly roll the balls in melted chocolate. Allow to cool and place in paper candy cups or in muffin tins. Refrigerate. Recipe makes about 36 balls. Enjoy!

Rose Baldea

FREEZER SLAW

Cut cabbage, green peppers and carrots for slaw. (onion if you like)

For one head of cabbage:

Use one tbsp. of salt, mixed with above and let set while you are mixing and cooking.

1 cup vinegar 1 tsp. celery seed
1/4 cup water 1 tsp. dry mustard
2 cups sugar

Combine these items in pan and boil one minute. Drain off the fluid formed by the salt in the slaw mixture. When cooked portion is cooled pour over slaw mixture and mix. Set in refrigerator for a day till all have mixed, then put in freezer bags and freeze.

Carol Elliott

SHAKER PICKLES

Slice 4 medium cucumbers and one whole onion and pack into 2 jars.

2 cups vinegar
2 cups sugar
1 tsp. tumeric
1-1/2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. mustard seed
1 tsp. celery seed

Mix all ingredients and pour over cucumbers and onions - half in each jar. Shake once a day for 5 days. Then they are ready to eat. Keep refrigerated.

Ruth Jurgens

FROZEN SLICED SWEET DILL PICKLES

4 cups sliced cucumbers (1/8" thick)
2 cups sliced onions (1/8" thick)
4 tsp. table salt
2 tbsp. water
3/4 to 1 cup sugar
1/2 cup cider vinegar
1 tsp. dried dill seed

Mix cucumbers, onions, salt and water in a bowl. Let stand about 2 hours. Drain but do not rinse.

Add sugar, vinegar and dill. Let stand, stirring occasionally until sugar dissolves completely and liquid covers the vegetables. Pack in glass or plastic containers leaving 1" headspace. Seal and freeze. Makes about 4 cups. Defrost in refrigerator or at room temperature.

Ruth Jurgens

CLARIFICATIONS

On page 7 of the December issue was a picture of John Fowler and an unknown young lady with crutches. From Marion Broadhurst and Dorothy Nowell Peavey, the two Red Cross ladies on whom we bestowed Honorary Membership, we have an identification. She is Lilla Bell, the RC lady prior to Dorothy Peavey at Mendlesham. The crutches are probably hers since she was involved in a bike accident and was shortly replaced by Dorothy Peavey. After the war Lilla married Jack Winstead, lived in Rocky Mount, NC. and died of pneumonia in 1989. We have added her to our TAPS list.

In the December issue, showing the attendees of the reunion at Louisville, Jack E. Bolton was incorrectly listed as Mrs. We must state that Jack (himself) attended. Sorry about that!

In the December issue the telephone numbers of the first six Board of Directors members listed were incorrect. The front page of this issue should have all the corrected phone numbers.

NEWLY FOUND

(As of 1/21/92)

<u>LAST NAME</u>	<u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>ORGN.</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>ZIP</u>
ANDERSON	LANCE D.	7 (A)	4139 NORWAY	GRAND PRAIRIE,	TX.	75052
BARNETT	RUSSELL		175 AMERICAN FLAGWAY	SONOMA,	CA.	96476
CLEMENS	JOHN D.	7	1361 MONTE TESORO DRIVE	COTTONWOOD,	AZ.	86326
EZELL	DALE		15453 EZELL ROAD	SILLOAM SPRINGS,	AR.	72761
FURLONG	ANTHONY	(A)	319 SO. 5TH STREET	PERKASIE,	PA.	19844
JOHNSON	JOSEPH D.	7	15 SOUTH STREET	SKOWHEGAN,	ME.	04976
LONEY	NORMAN N.		15430 WOODBROOK TRAIL	FT. WAYNE,	IN.	46845
PHELAN	THOMAS F.	7	122 WINNEBAGO STREET	WALLA WALLA,	WA.	99362
PROKOP	JAMES		84 FLICKER COURT	NAPERVILLE,	IL.	60565
WISCLAW	JOSEPH		11607 EWING AVENUE	CHICAGO,	IL.	60617

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

(As of 1/21/92 - total now 209)

<u>LAST NAME</u>	<u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>ORGN.</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>ZIP</u>
TURNMIRE	LEE	18	502 EAST EVERGREEN	SANTA MARIA,	CA.	93454

LOST SOULS - MOVED? - STRAYED?

(Mail returned when sent to these addresses - Need new addresses)

<u>LAST NAME</u>	<u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>ORGN.</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>ZIP</u>
BURKE	GERALD		508 SNEAD ROAD	FAIRFIELD GLADE,	TN.	38555
DAYE	PHILIP J.	7	60 E. 52ND PLACE	HIALEAH,	FL.	33013
FLORIE	DAVID	4	4331 CANTERBURY DRIVE	LA MESA,	CA.	92041
GOLDBERG	SID		BEACH DRIVE	MIAMI,	FL.	33141
GREEN	GERALD		1505 POWERS ST.	LEWISTON,	ID.	83501
HENSON	HAROLD	18	5614 SANTA MONICA DR.	TAMPA,	FL.	33615
HILLIS	LAYMAN M.	4	715 WOODTOP ROAD	WILMINGTON,	DE.	19804
KIESCHNICK	CLARENCE A.	391	P. O. BOX 407	THORNDIKE,	TX.	78752
LAURIE	CYRIL		3029 WHEATON WAY	BREMERTON,	WA.	98310
MILLER	CORDELL		P.O.BOX 606	ELECTRIC CITY,	WA.	99123
SCHAFANTI	DANTE		9810 ZELZAH #121	NORTHRIDGE,	CA.	91325
SWARTHOUT	ROBERT K.		1313 NICOLET PLACE	DETROIT,	MI.	48207

ADDRESS CHANGES

(As of 1/21/92)

<u>LAST NAME</u>	<u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>ORGN.</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>ZIP</u>
ANDERSON	JULIE	391	20 FISHERMAN RD.	FAIRHAVEN,	VA.	02719
BELL	DWIGHT	391	3006 50TH STREET	DES MOINES,	IA.	50310
BROWN	NED H.	391	Zip Code Should Read			32168
BUXTON	JAY A.	7	502 WELLINGTON HILLS	SALISBURY	NC	28144
ESLIN	HENRY C.	391	9538 SHASTA DRIVE	SUN CITY,	AZ.	85351
HILLIS	LAYMAN M.	4	MOVED - NEED NEW ADDRESS			
HINCHEE	RAYMOND D.	391 (LM)	202 TAYLOR AVENUE	SALEM,	VA.	24153
KIESCHNICK	CLARENCE A.	391	MOVED - NEED NEW ADDRESS			
LUHRSEN	AUGUST H.	GRP.	72700 BELAIR RD.	PALM DESERT,	CA.	92260
MINK	CLAYTON A.	7	219 COUNTY ROUTE 10	GERMANTOWN,	NY.	12526
PEDIGO	WILLIAM E.	18	Zip Code Should Read			76426
ROSCHER	PAUL E.	7	30 STURBRIDGE LANE	GREENSBORO,	NC.	27408
SAEGER	EARL	7	908 CHELSEA AVENUE	ERIE,	PA.	16505
SALVESON	LEON E.	18	P. O. BOX 1264	SUTHERLIN,	OR.	97479
SMITH	JAMES C.	7 (LM)	1829 S.E. 41ST ST. #11	CAPE CORAL,	FL.	33904
SOTHERN	BRUCE	7	3354 ULYSSES ST. N.E.	MINNEAPOLIS,	MN.	55418
THOMPSON	CLIFFORD A.	391	RR 5, BOX 310	LIVINGSTON,	TX.	77351
VICKERS	ROBERT	8AFHS	10501 LAGRIMA DE ORD RD. N.E.	ALBUQUERQUE,	NM.	87111
WILLIS	CLYDE	391 (LM)	3142 SPOKANE DRIVE	LAS VEGAS,	NV.	89121
WINGO	TRUMAN	18	1814 NORTH LA CANOA	GREEN VALLEY,	AZ.	85614
YOUNG	CHARLES	7	Zip Code Should Read			17701
ZIVNEY	RODNEY P. SR.	18	440 DAVIS CT. #402	SAN FRANCISCO,	CA.	94111



TAPS

(As of 1/21/92)

<u>LAST NAME</u>	<u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>ORGN.</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>ZIP</u>
ABRAHAM	WILLIAM	4	431 BECHTEL BLVD.	OCEAN SPRINGS,	MS.	39564
BELL	LILLA	RED CROSS	(MRS. JACK WINSTEAD)	ROCKY MOUNT,	NC.	
BUTLER	HENRY	7	12892 SAFFORD EAST	GARDEN GROVE,	CA.	92640
CLOUD	WILLIAM J.	7	RT. 6, BOX 332H	ANDERSON,	IN.	46011
DAVIDSON	RICHARD V.		341 SO. STEWART AVE.	LOMBARD,	IL.	60148
FURLONG	FENTON F.	GRP.	317 SOUTH 5TH STREET	PERKASIE,	PA.	18944
GILL	JAMES			PORTLAND,	OR.	
GREISS	DAVID H.	7				
GRZESKOWIAK	RAY E.	391	454 RONCROFF DRIVE	NORTH TONOWANDA,	NY.	14120
HENDRICKS	ROBERT F.	391	550 CHANEY AVENUE	CAYUCOS,	CA.	93430
LAULK	CHARLES		(Died in 1969)			
MULLINS	CHARLES			LEBANON,	KY.	
NOVICKI	JOSEPH I.	18	11006 S. THERESA CIR. #1-D	PALOS HILLS,	IL.	69465
RAVER	JACOB T.	7				
SNOW	WEBB C.	391	1609 CRESTWOOD ROAD	CLEVELAND,	OH.	44124
TERRY	JOHN P.	7 (LM)	600 W. GLADSTONE ST. SP.65	AZUSZ,	CA.	91702
ZARFOSS	CLAIR H.	7				

SPECIAL

From Mrs. Alvin (Julie) Anderson we have the following:

This is hard to write. We have made so many nice friends through the 34th Bomb Group at our reunion in Nashville and the trip to Mendlesham in 1990. Al had such a wonderful time. He even met the girl who used to pick up his laundry.

We had hoped to go to Louisville in September and back to England in 1992, but he passed away June 3, 1991 from lung cancer. I'm enclosing a poem Al wrote of his 30 missions. Perhaps you'd like to read it.

THOUGHTS ON 30 MISSIONS OVER GERMANY

By Alvin (Andy) Anderson

Memories of "Bombs Away"
And of the "Wild Blue Yonder"
That long ago "Yesterday"
Still fills my heart with wonder!

The thrill of mortal combat
With life right on the line
Is still so vivid to me that
It's like a heady wine!

The flak in vengeful vector
Comes up with savage thirst
And Death, that "Hooded Scepter"
Takes aim with early burst.

To live in Fame? Go down in Flame?
There never was a choice-
A deadly and exciting game
In which to have no voice!

Kismet, Destiny or Fate
A man might question all-
But "Lady Luck" will sit and wait
"She" makes the final call!

Thirsty missions have been flown
At last the tour is done-
I'm grateful to the "Gods Unknown"
That there weren't thirty one!



A LATE BULLETIN

We have just heard that Ben LeBailly has had a massive heart attack and a stroke. Our information is very scant and that's all we know. He is interned at the Whidbey Island Hospital at Coupeville, WA.

We recommend any cards be sent to his home at 789E N. Greenoch, Whidbey, ID, Oak Harbor, WA. 98277.



NOTE

At presstime we've received word that General Benjamin LeBailly has passed away. We will have more details in our next issue.

Memories

DOING IT RIGHT

by Fred Berglund

I have a neighbor here in Florida who belonged to the wrong bomb group! He is James L. Meyers and was a lead bombardier for the 445th B.G. of Tibenham, England. Their group bombed Kassel on the 27th of Sept., 1944. They "wandered off" the bomber stream due to the lead navigator's error. 100 FW-190's hit them, knocking down 25 (out of 35) B-24's on the first pass. 5 more crash landed in France and England. The remaining 5 ships reached home base in Tibenham badly damaged with one dead and 13 injured crewmen. The 445th B.G. gunners shot down 29 FW-190's so at least gave a good account of themselves. Jimmie Stewart, the movie actor, was their 703rd Sqdn. operations officer and, luckily, was not on that mission.

The above took place only a few weeks after Col. Creer took over command of the 34th in early Sept. The 34th hit Kassel on the 22nd of Sept. and 2nd of October. They did not make the mistake of wandering off course where there would be no friendly fighter protection.

If anyone wants a booklet about that ill fated mission they can write to: KMMA, Inc. P.O. Box 413, Birmingham, MI. 48012. The booklet gives a complete story of the battle from both the American and German pilots and crewmen and ground rescue units.

Continued on page 16



Lars Larson in front of "Tommy Thumper".

Memories

Continued from page 15

EXPERIENCES IN THE 34TH BOMB GROUP

by Willaim H. Fandel

On November 15, 1943 I, then a Major, was assigned to the 34th Combat Training School, Blythe Army Air Base, California. My last assignment was with the B-24 Standardization School as an instructor pilot. The B-24 Standardization School was disbanded as it had completed its mission of training B-24 instructor pilots and key flying personnel throughout the Training Command. With this background, I was appointed as supervisor of the B-24 Standardization Board at Blythe.

The purpose of the Board was to standardize crew and flying procedures for the Training School. The specific tasks were to check all crew instructors and spot check training crews in all aspects of the flight operation of the B-24 aircraft. The Board was made up of the following personnel: Major William H. Fandel, Supervisor; Captain Robert Wilcox, Pilot; Captain Marvin Zick, Navigator; 1st Lieutenant's Joseph Ray and Robert Richey, Pilots; August Lurchsen, Bombardier; T/Sgts Steve Jambor, Engineer Gunner and (unknown) Radio Operator, Gunner.

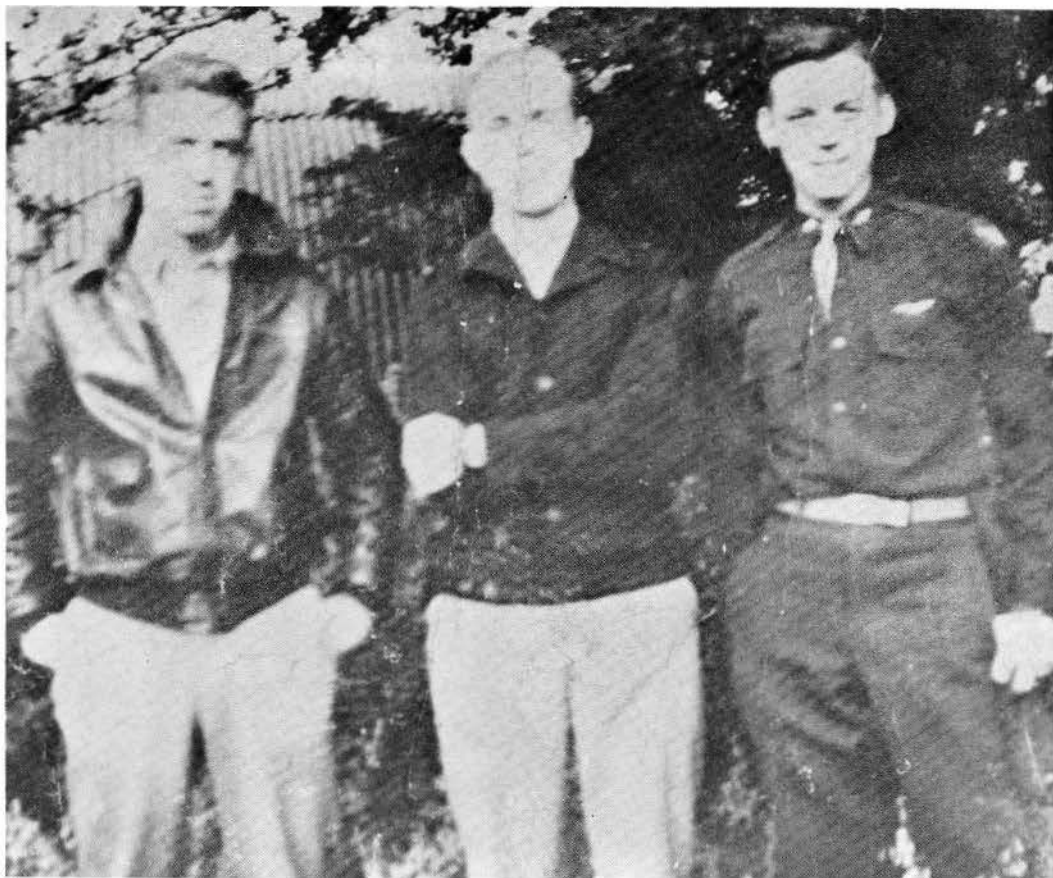
Shortly before Christmas 1943, an L-5 aircraft took off while I was flying in a B-24 with a training crew practicing emergency landings. Assuming the L-5 would leave the area, we continued our approach to make a simulated emergency landing. On final approach we located the L-5 making violent maneuvers around the Service Club where a large crowd had gathered outside. For safety reasons

we had to abandon our landing approach and go around. At this time we contacted the Control Tower to find out what was going on. All they could say was that the Base Commander Colonel Guy Hix had taken off on a mission. It looked like the L-5 was going to spin in but finally landed in the taxi strip close to the Club. After landing we learned that Colonel Hix was dressed as Santa and was in the process of delivering toys to all the kids attending a party at the Club. Some of the spectators claimed they thought the plane was going to crash and kill them all. One officer upon observing the aerial antics busied himself trying to hurry all the children into the Club. Lots of flying regulations were broken that day, giving way to some amusing remarks.

On January 18, 1944, I was reassigned to the re-activated 34th Bombardment Group (H) as Commander of the 391st Squadron. The next 2 1/2 months was spent organizing and training the personnel prior to overseas deployment. The Squadron Staff consisted of Captain Arteel, Executive; Captain Frank Crabtree, Operations; Captain Wood, Flight Surgeon; Captain Gus Schafer, Engineering; Lieutenant George Moore, Adjutant; Lieutenant Fred Brooks, Armament; W.O. Czlonka, Supply. We were fortunate to have a nucleus of flight leaders and crews with much experience. The Commanders of these crews were as follows: Captain's Joe Ray and John Blair, 1st Lieutenant's William Baker, Ray Isley, Oscar Hanson and Eldon Erwin.

During training, Crew #59 of the 391st Squadron had an incident on a mission that involved the bailout of the whole crew. The crew had been apprehensive as a result of this incident and we had to rebuild their confidence. I had become familiar with the crew so I elected to fly with them

Continued on page 17



L. to R.: William Lewis, George Gillespie, Herbert Klier.



John V. Fowler in 1944.

Memories

Continued from page 16

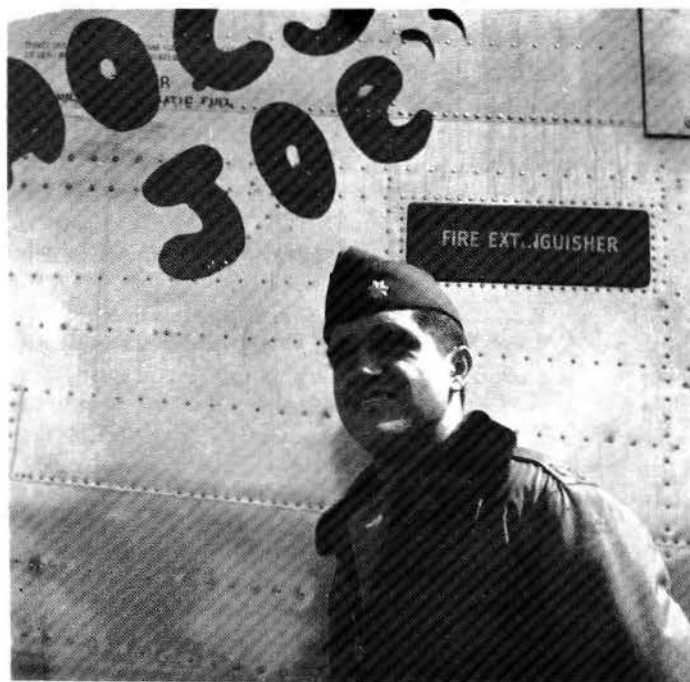
on our overseas deployment. The crew consisted of 2nd Lieutenant Charles Daniels, Pilot; 2nd Lieutenant William Bagus, Co-pilot; 2nd Lieutenant Morris Wender, Navigator; F/O Wilbert Terry, Bombardier; S/Sgt. Kenneth McLennon, Engineer; S/Sgt. Leonard Coletta, Radio Operator; Sgt.'s Charles Brannan, Henry Bennett and Edward Iverson as Gunners. This crew did an excellent job in rebuilding confidence and morale. Wender was an excellent navigator and performed particularly well on our Atlantic crossing. Bagus the co-pilot, was a quick learner and developed into a capable pilot. Later, after several combat missions, he was checked off as a 1st Pilot and assigned to a crew that needed an aircraft commander.

The 34th started leaving Blythe on the 31st of March, 1944 for Lincoln Army Air Base, Nebraska to pick up our new B-24 aircraft. Since I was Squadron Commander, I left with Daniel's crew on the 31st to assist the squadron crews as they arrived at Lincoln. On April 4th we left Lincoln, headed for Morrison Air Base in Florida, our jumping off stop for movement overseas. While there we received our sealed orders for our route and final destination. Leaving on April 6th, our first stop from the U.S. was British Guiana. After reaching 100 miles out we opened our sealed orders and found we were headed for the 8th Air Force, England assigned to Mendlesham, RAF Station as part of the 93rd Combat Wing, Third Air Division.

At the British Guiana Base, outside of Georgetown, we were briefed by a flight surgeon on the tropical diseases prevalent in South America and Africa, particularly the ones carried by mosquitos and flies. He cautioned us to follow preventive measures and directions. He also showed us some vivid photos and told us of the consequences of these diseases. Every one seemed very impressed and the advice paid off as we were to learn later.

From British Guiana our next stop was Fortaleza, Brazil on the 7th of April. During this flight we passed over the Equator. Since I was a member of the Equatorial Order, I baptized the crew into the Order during the passover. Spending the 8th and 9th of April at Fortaleza, we prepared for our trans-Atlantic flight. In the evening of the 10th, we left for Dakar on the continent of Africa. During the crossing we had to fly through the tropical front with thunderstorms, rough air and torrential rain I had experienced a similar tropical front on the Pacific side of South America located between Panama and Equador. I briefed the crew on what they could expect and the proper flying techniques to observe. We continued to fly through the front for sometime which indicated that we were flying parallel to the line of the front. I asked Wender the navigator to give us a 45 degree change in course to the left. After a short while, we came out into the clear in a star studded night. Wender then located our position by celestial means using the stars. We continued on and hit Dakar "on the nose" just after sunrise. Wender had done an excellent job of navigation.

We spent the 11th and 12th of April at Dakar. Our planes were guarded by local black soldiers who looked big and mean with rifles and fixed bayonets. During the second night we had a bomb scare and all crews were called out to inspect their aircraft for possible explosives thought to be planted by Nazi sympathizers in the local area. After



Bill Fandel & "Holy Joe"

our inspection we were allowed to take off after dawn for Marrakech Air Base in Morocco.

Marrakech Air Base was a hub of air activity with flights coming and going from and to all points with all types of aircraft, particularly B-29's. We had 3 days at Marrakech before we could get clearance for England. This was an excellent time to work on the aircraft for the final leg of the trip. Since Spain and Portugal were neutral countries in the conflict we had to fly around them over the Atlantic and land on the lower Coast of England.

We left Morocco on the 17th of April on our final leg to England. After flying around Portugal we "sweated out" the German fighters that were known to attack Allied aircraft off the coast of France. We landed at an RAF Station on the lower coast of England without incident. On the 18th we departed for Mendlesham RAF Station in East Anglia with an escort RAF Dakota (C-47) to show us the way. Trying to navigate in England was very difficult with the low visibility, weather and strange countryside. Also we did not have the proper navigation and radio aids available on board. This special equipment would come with Theater modification. Upon arrival in England I estimated that since leaving Blythe, California we had spent 57 hours in the air and traveled a distance of about 10,500 miles.

After assembling the whole group at Mendlesham we had to spend the next month getting our planes modified in increments at the Burtonwood Air Depot and training our crews for combat operations. Good formation flying was a must so we concentrated on this. Incidentally, the 34th Bomb Group was one of the few outfits that managed to get all 60 odd aircraft overseas without incident. This was a tribute to our experienced and well trained personnel both air and ground.

I flew my first combat mission with the 95th Bomb Group. This was a B-17 equipped group that had been previously commanded by our 93rd Combat Wing Commander, Colonel John Gerhart. On May the 4th we were headed for

Continued on page 18

Memories

Continued from page 17

a raid on Berlin but were recalled after 2 hours airborne due to bad weather over the target area. We went again on May 9th to hit a railroad marshaling yard at Laon, France which turned out to be a successful mission. I rode in the nose of one of the lead B-17's with B/Gen. Norris Harbold who later became the Deputy Commander of the 3rd Air Division.

While Commander of the 391st Squadron, I was concerned with morale and welfare of the Squadron personnel. I was relieved of most of the routine administration, but there was some paper work that had to be approved and signed. I also had the unpleasant task of writing letters to the families of our Squadron personnel that were killed, missing in action or wounded. I tried to keep contact with all the air crew members and attend pre-mission briefings. On many occasions I visited the maintenance personnel, particularly at night, when they were busily preparing the aircraft for the next mission. It was a very difficult task for these people trying to work at night with portable lighting, very little shelter and the damp cold English weather.

During time as Commander, I flew on 12 combat missions as Squadron and Group Leader. The 9th of May to Laon, France; 24th to Poix, France; 29th to Politz, Germany; 6th of June, D-Day, to Caen, France; 21st to Blangermont France; 27th to Beauvoir, France; July 12th to Bacque-Bille, France; 17th to Neuvy-Sur-Loire France; August 2nd to Foret de St. Saens, France; 13th to South of Rouen, France; 18th to Roye Ame, France; September 27th to Ludwigshafen, Germany. September 27, 1944 was my first mission in B-17's, going to Ludwigshafen.

During August 1944 we changed Group Commanders. Colonel Ernest Wackwitz was transferred out and Lt. Colonel William Creer came in as our new Commander. I had know Bill Creer while serving in Panama and Equador when we were assigned to the 6th Bomb Group in the early part of the War. We were fortunate to get his experience and ability.

Prior to October 1944, it was evident that the five B-24



Flying over the Seine River in France.

Groups of the 3rd Air Division were having difficulty flying with and coordinating with the B-17 Groups. This was primarily due to the 10 mph difference in cruising air speeds, the B-24 160 mph and the B-17 150 mph. As a consequence, the B-24's were diverted to other roles separately from the main strategic targets. The 34th Group had concentrated on what were called "NO BALL" missions, attacking the launch sites of the German V-1 (Buzz Bombs) located in occupied France. These pilot-less jet powered aircraft were launched to hit London causing considerable destruction and loss of life. During the period of August 24th to September 17, 1944, the 34th converted to B-17 aircraft. Both air and ground crews had to be retrained in the operation and maintenance of the B-17. The 34th was lucky to have a nucleus of B-17 trained pilots and ground maintenance personnel. This transition was accomplished with a minimum of problems and disruption.

During this period, bombardiers had to retrain from the Sperry Bombing System of the B-24 to the Norden equipment in the B-17. We also changed to the system of Lead Crew operations. The 4th Bomb Sqdn. was designated the Lead Crew Squadron and the most experienced and qualified crews were assembled from all Squadrons and reassigned to the 4th Squadron. Lead Crew Aircraft were equipped with special bombing radar equipment to enable us to bomb when the visibility was obscured. The equipment could also be used to verify the target area during visible conditions.

On the 6th of October, 1944 I was transferred to Headquarters 34th. Bomb Group as Group Operations Officer (S-3), taking the place of Lt. Colonel William Boyd who was being transferred to another group. Major Edmond "Bucky" Freeman came from outside the Group and took command of the 391st Squadron.

As Group S-3, I was involved in planning and executing the Group Air Mission. We kept current the status of all air crews in the Group as to training, combat ready, on pass, etc. Aircraft status was also available from the Squadrons. The center of operations was the Control Room where mission planning and preparation was done. For each combat mission the order was sent down from 8th Air Force Headquarters to 3rd Air Division, to 93rd Combat Wing then to the Group. From this the target, assembly, order of formation, number of aircraft, armament loads and many other details were passed down. Group Operations then alerted the Squadrons for "wake-up", breakfast, briefing times for selected crews, together with the aircraft and ordinance designated for the mission. Usually, all planning was done during the hours of darkness. Either I or the Group Air Executive would be in charge of the Operation and be present in the Control Room.

During this time, as Group Operations Officer, I flew Wing and Division lead on four combat missions: to Cologne, Germany on 27th; to Ludwigshafen on November 15th; to Giessen on December 4th and to Bischofsheim on January 13, 1945.

Two other events that took place during my tenure as Group S-3 were as follows: On November 3, 1944, I was awarded a temporary promotion to Lt. Colonel. On January 3, 1945, I went on 5 days TDY to Paris, France with Major Cecil Duke, our Group Intelligence Officer. We joined members of the 490th and 493rd Bomb Groups of the 93rd Combat Wing for bombardment evaluation. We visited some of the bombed areas on the outskirts of Paris.

Continued on page 19

Memories

Continued from page 18

The Bombardment Evaluation Board briefed us on the results of the Allied and 8th Air Force bombing during the German occupation of France. After the war a detailed Bombing Survey Report was published to evaluate the results.

On January 15, 1945, I was transferred to the position of Group Air Executive Officer as assistant to the Group Commander, Colonel Creer, for Group Air operations. I replaced Lt. Colonel Ben LeBailly who had been transferred to the 93rd Combat Wing as Chief of Staff for Colonel Gerhart, the Commander. Major Roy Tavasti, Commander of the 7th Squadron moved up to Group S-3. Ben LeBailly was sorely missed by the Group as he had been one of the mainstays since the Group was reactivated back at Blythe. After V-E Day he returned to the 34th Group as Commander when Colonel Creer was rotated on a special project.

My duties as Air Executive did not change much from Group S-3, still involved in planning missions, rotating with Roy Tavasti the Group S-3. In this capacity more time was available to monitor the overall Group operation and work with the Squadrons. During this time, I flew three combat missions as Wing and Division Lead; to Chemnitz, Germany on February 14th; Detteln, Germany on March 7th and Hanover on March 28th.

The 34th Group's last combat mission was flown on April 20, 1945, completing a total of 170. Just before V-E Day, which occurred on May 8th, the Group flew six food missions to Holland, one of which I was Group Leader. Hundreds of tons of military rations were dropped free fall on pre-designated areas during a "tongue in cheek" truce with the German military still there. We flew formation over the food targets at about 300 to 500 feet at 130 mph, posing as "sitting ducks" for the German anti-aircraft fire, but luckily there was none. For this mission the Group reverted to a crude type "Rube Golberg" bombing device worked out by some of our ingenious bombardiers. The Group practiced dropping food over a target in the center of our airfield to calculate possible results. It was thought there would not be much edible food left though later reports from the Dutch stated we saved many from starvation.

On V-E Day, the 8th of May, three of us were caught in a 3 day pass in Belfast, Ireland. Although we missed the big celebration at Mendlesham, there was plenty going on in Belfast. We waited some 3 extra days to be picked up by one of our "war weary" B-17's and return to the Base. On V-E Day all aircraft had been grounded until things had settled down.

After returning to the Base, about the 9th of May the Group was busily engaged in the post V-E Day mission of flying all the repatriated French POW's from the Linz, Austria area. A local operation was setup at the Linz Airfield with Roy Tavasti in charge. The Group flew six missions transporting the POW's to Paris. I flew as pilot on one of these missions, and packed 40 POW's in our B-17 using every available space. Wooden flooring had been placed in the bomb bays, the same that had been used for the food mission. It was a very sobering experience to see the POW situation and the war damage. Flying at relatively low altitude, bomb craters and destroyed buildings were always in sight.

In early June 1945 I received orders transferring me from



Nose Art of "The Near-Sighted Robin"

the 34th Bomb Group to "Project Honey", which I later learned was an assignment to the B-29 operation in the Pacific. Leaving the 34th and Mendlesham on June 7, 1945 and returning to the U.S. as passenger on a B-17. I traveled by troop train from the East Coast to San Antonio joining my wife and young son. After some much needed rest and relaxation, I reported to the Distribution Command, Lackland Air Base in San Antonio on July 2, 1945. While there, awaiting assignment, V-J Day arrived and I was subsequently dropped from "Project Honey" and assigned to the Western Flying Training Command at Santa Ana, California.

I had been assigned to the 34th Bomb Group from November 15, 1943 to June 7, 1945, a period of about a year and six months. This was one of the most fulfilling assignments of my military career, full of interest and challenge. I had been associated with a great number of very capable and dedicated people that made the 34th a top combat unit.

OLD FRIENDS

By William "Pete" Gray

George Ritchie's diary has a special meaning for me. This is because I knew George back at Blythe, CA. before he started the diary. He and I became acquainted in early 1944 when the 34th B.G. was preparing for overseas duty.

We had just received 64 new B-24's and were in the process of working the "bugs" out of them before leaving for the war zone. The one I was assigned to had Lt. Gerald Holmes as its pilot and George Ritchie as bombardier. Now, the only time I saw Holmes and his crew was when they came down to the plane for a practice mission. These missions lasted for several months during which time I got to know George quite well. I even flew a couple of these missions with him.

Then, in April of 1944, we separated - the flight crews flew the planes over the England while the ground crews went by boat. Shortly after our arrival at Mendlesham George was promoted to "lead" bombardier and was transferred to Lt. Walt McAllister's crew.

Strangely enough, I never saw George the whole time we were in England. It seems our paths just never cross-

Continued on page 20

HDD

163

18

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**34th Bomb. Group**

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

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Memories

Continued from page 19

ed. Holmes got a new bombardier and he and the rest of the original crew continued with their missions until running into some trouble on their 22nd one. By then I had completely lost track of George.

Many years later, (1980), the 8th AFHS was having a reunion in Orlando, FL. which I attended. When I arrived the hotel lobby was crowded with hundreds of AF veterans including many from the 34th. I remember trying to make my way through the crowd to reach the desk when I heard a peal of laughter that resounded across the room. Now it had been well over 30 years since I had heard that same laugh, but I recognized it immediately! Right then I knew that George Ritchie was somewhere in that room.

I stopped and stood quite still for a minute or so. Then I heard him laugh again, but this time I could tell from which side of the lobby the sound came from. I moved over to that area and waited for him to laugh again. I didn't have to wait very long, either, and this time I knew he was within a dozen feet of where I was standing. The crowd, however, so thick I couldn't make him out. I waited until he laughed one more time - then I had him! He was talking to a tall lean fellow (who I later found to be Walt McAllister) but I recognized him at once. He had put on a few pounds and his hair was almost white but, otherwise, he was just as I had last seen him - some 35 years before.

A DELIGHTFUL EXPERIENCE

by John R. Wooten

While stationed at Mendlesham I met two beautiful women who were with the Women's Land Army working on Jeeps. These two ladies picked me up in a Jeep. We went to Westminster Cathedral for mass. This was the first time I had ever been in a Catholic House of Worship. They showed me how to kneel and pay reverence.

Then they took me for a drive to see the Changing of the Guard. I noticed two men kept following us wherever we went. I confronted them and learned that the two ladies were Princess Elizabeth and her sister, Margaret. We had a sensational day. They returned me to the base and I never saw them again.

Page 20

We had pictures taken which I sent home to my mother and never saw them again, either.

THE WIZARD

by Bruce Sothern

The picture with the B-17 cowlings reminded me of a crew member. Roy Swyler was a millwright by trade and he could do many things. He was a wizard at fashioning special tools for certain jobs. Just turning those fasteners to the outside cut the time checking the engine sump from 20 min. to less than 10. He built a tire mounting and removing unit that could be pulled by a jeep and a flat tire did not stop a plane from its regularly scheduled flight.

He also made a frame and mounted a motorcycle engine on it. This became our engineering officer's (Capt. Bill Cole) scooter on which he rode around to the different hard stands. Jerry Dickman helped him whenever he needed welding to be done. Roy was the "old man" on my crew. He and Homer Schindler, 7th Sqdn. carpenter, were good friends. Both were about 40 which we thought "old men" at that time. Strange how our thinking changes as the years go by!



Gotta Haver was the only B-17 with outside fasteners on the engine cowling - Handiwork of Roy Swiler.