



ENDLESHAM MEMORIES

34TH BOMB GROUP H

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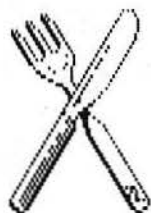
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REUNION '92 Las Vegas, NV



We Want You! Sept. 14-17, '92



OBSERVATIONS

Back home again - in Indiana. The phrase makes me want to sing the whole song. However, the homecoming hasn't been all that great. We got home the third week of March and it's now the third week of April. Since we arrived I can count on the fingers of one hand the decent-weather days we've had. Our first day it snowed more than 4 inches and, a week later, it snowed again. In between, and since, it has been mostly cloudy, windy, rainy, and miserably below normal temperatures for the time period. Oh well, I suppose we'll eventually get true spring weather.

Again I want to thank Ray Summa for handling the mailing of the March issue. He and Hannah are sure handy-dandy people to have around. Thanks y'all.

There is one item I'd like to bring up. Many of you write to either Ray Summa or Hal Province with items you'd like to see printed in Mendlesham Memories. This is all well and good because it does get forwarded to me. However, if you'll look on the address side of this issue, and all issues, you'll find my address shown. I guess some of you don't see it. I recently had an old-time member (name withheld) call me to ask for my address. Please, if you have something for the M.M., send it directly to me and save someone the time and trouble of forwarding it.

In this issue is all the information and forms you'll need for our upcoming reunion at Las Vegas on Sept. 14-17, 1992. Come on y-all!! Let's all get there and join old friends, make new ones and have a grand old time. If you've not attended before, TRY IT - YOU'LL LIKE IT!!! Many of us try not to miss a single reunion because we do enjoy them so much.

This issue, as directed by the voting membership, is being mailed to all names on our roster, whether paid up or not. Hopefully, this will instill some interest in non-members to become active members. You non-members, please think positively about becoming active. We're all getting older and the time will come when we won't be able to enjoy the camaraderie of this fine group.

Thanks to all who have written kind words of encouragement on my handling of the newsletter. It's nice

to hear, now and then, from someone who thinks you're doing a good job. We do try hard but, as I've said so many times before, without your help the newsletter just cannot be what you have a right to expect. So, keep me supplied with stories and pictures which would be of interest to the whole group.

Enough for now. Rose and I are looking forward to seeing all of you in Las Vegas.

Eli Baldea
Editor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fellow members of the 34th Bomb Group:

While visiting Hawaii in April we spent time at Bellows A.F.S. This Air Force facility was named for an Aero Observer of WWI who was killed while flying over the fields of Flanders in France. Bellows also had a place in history during WWII, as it was an auxiliary field for fighters of the P-40 type. That fateful day, nearly 51 years ago, two young pilots rose to the occasion of the assault on the island. They were met by the invading aircraft and died as they tried to get airborne. Meanwhile, on the beach, a miniature sub floundered ashore, disabled, and Bellows airmen took the first prisoners of war.

We can all recall our first memories of WWII and remember what this event cost in numbers of lives. Let us now be thankful for every day that we have and not forget those who gave their all.

While in Seattle I spoke with Gen. LeBailly's family. They are planning a memorial service for him on July 6th at Pocatello, Idaho. His ashes will be interred with the family plot there.

In this issue of Mendlesham Memories will be our 34th B.G. call to our reunion at Las Vegas. I hope all will consider this a time of comradeship and plan to attend.

We have a very sharp group on the Reunion Committee and they pride themselves on details to make us all feel welcome. I would like to see a lot of members who, for the first time, come and join us for fun and fellowship. We hope everyone will have a nice summer and hope to see you all in Las Vegas.

Regards,
Fred Schoch

Mendlesham Memories

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

Editor Eli Baldea
2576 Brookwood Drive
Crown Point, IN 46307

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



Top row l. to r.: J.C. Smith, Jim Troup, Bobb Pacholski, Clayton Mink, Don Morrison. Bottom row l. to r.: Herb Hall, Ed Hiltner, Ben Workman, Vic Lupei. Not shown: Fred Muentz.



Ray Summa...

Hello, Fellow members of the 34th Bomb Group.

It is time again to write my column for the newsletter. I hope this winter has treated you all well and, now that spring is here and summer is approaching, you are well and happy.

On March 17th, St. Patrick's Day, Dale and Margie Finley met Hannah and me at Murphy's Restaurant in Indianapolis to celebrate the holiday. We had a wonderful time listening to the accordion player playing and singing old Irish songs and sang along with the music. We listened also to the bagpipers. We do this every year and have a good time. Some of you in the Indianapolis area should meet us there next year. You will enjoy it.

Dale and Margie also came to Anderson later on this spring for a visit. We took a trip to Grissom AFB to see the Museum and static display of planes. We were told there would be an open house at Grissom on August 22nd and 23rd, 1992, and that one can enter and see the planes stationed there as well as the Museum and static display of old planes on the museum grounds.

From Grissom we went to the Circus Hall of Fame at Peru, but were disappointed it had not yet opened for the summer showing. It will not open until June when they will have an old fashioned circus at the circus grounds. This will be something to see. At one time five circuses wintered at Peru but now there are none. The circuses are on the road at this time playing at indoor arenas in various cities.

I see where they are having a contest to see which of Elvis' pictures to use on a stamp. Here they are, honoring someone who had nothing to do with the government. We asked them to make a B-17 stamp and were told there would be one out for the 50th anniversary of the war. Looks as if they have forgotten.

Are you saving your quarters to play the slots in Las Vegas when you attend the 34th B.G. reunion? Or, are you one who will not be going? Hope many of you are planning to meet us there in Las Vegas, Sept. 14th-17th. We are hoping this will be another great one.



Rear l. to r.: Layman & Thomas. Middle l. to r.: Antanovich, Sims & Koch. Front l. to r.: Boyle, Hansen, Zimolmen & Szaras.

FROM THE TREASURER'S DESK

After fighting FORM 1040, I can now concentrate on the 34th Bomb Group Association and the forthcoming issue of MM.

MEMBERSHIP: 1992 paid-up membership is about 900 members of which 223 are Life Members. The response of the membership taking Life Membership has been rather good in my opinion. The original objective of placing the LM dues in a CD and using the interest in the general fund has suffered as a result of the decline of interest rates. Most of you are aware of the decline and there is little reason to recite that.

STATUS OF MEMBERSHIP: Response has been generally good to our including the Current Year of Membership on mailing labels. If you find a mistake, please let me know about it. I update two sets when I get your check and have been known to err on occasion.

MENDLESHAM MEMORIES: There seemed to be an excessive number of FORM 3547D's returned from the Postal Service following the mailing of the MARCH issue of Mendlesham Memories. And, for the greater part, they came from addressees who were 'Temporarily Away'. In each issue we ask you to advise me of your address in case you are going to be away from your regular residence so that you will not forfeit the current issue of MM. In the past, Ray has attempted to replace the lost copies of MM for you who were 'Temporarily Away' but, in the future, this practice will have to stop. The cost of the replacement is becoming prohibitive. Each issue mailed to one on our mailing list costs approximately \$1.15 which includes postage. When it is not delivered, we ask for an address correction for which we are charged \$0.35 by the U.S. Postal Service. When Ray sends out the replacement copy it adds another \$1.10 for the issue and an additional \$1.65 for First Class postage because this mailing cannot be done at third class rates. The cost for each non-delivered but replaced issue of MM costs the 34th BGA a total of \$4.25. So, if you are going to be away from your regular address during March, June, September and December, YOU decide if it's worth the \$0.19 for a postcard to Hal Province in order to get the MEMORIES. And remember this, I print the labels ONE MONTH IN ADVANCE of the mailing.

LAS VEGAS REUNION: We're now less than 5 months away from our Annual Gathering and I hope you're making plans to attend. The south-western states have a good chance of outnumbering the rest of the country at the reunion. Let's see how many can answer the call. Till then, CHEERS.

Harold Province

Don't Forget To Send In Your Dues

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

★★★★★ REUNION '92 - LAS VEGAS, NV. ★★★★★

SEPT. 14-17, 1992

TO ALL 34THers:

Las Vegas, here we come!!! Yes, before we know it reunion time will be upon us. President Fred Schoch has put together an interesting program for us on banquet night. He, along with some help from General Bill Creer and the reunion committee, has also made arrangements at Nellis Air Force Base to visit the famous Thunderbirds home base...the home hangar...the training areas, and various other things that make this group of high-performance men and machines tick. Lunch will be at the N.C.O. club in chow line fashion. This all sounds great but there is a catch. The people who put this program on for us can only handle 45 people on this tour. The way it will be decided who will make up this crew of 45 will be by taking the first 45 people that register with Bob Wright. There will be, on your 34th registration form, a space to mark if you desire to go on this tour. Please include the tour fee. A refund will be made to those that have paid the tour fee but were not included in the first 45 registrants.

Monday, 14 Sept., will be registration day. Our team

of Esther, Gen and Wanda will be at the registration table to do their usual outstanding job. Bob will be there to pick up the overload. Gerald and Harold will also be on hand to assist anyone that needs assistance.

Tuesday, 15 Sept., will be breakfast as usual. At 1100 hours the "LUCKY" 45 will board a bus for the Thunderbird display. The rest of us will be free to do as we so desire. Lunch and dinner will be on your own.

Wednesday, 16 Sept., will be breakfast as usual. Immediately after breakfast, in the same room, the annual BUSINESS MEETING will take place. Lunch will be on your own. The cash bar will open at 1800 hours with the BANQUET at 1900 hours. After the banquet President Schoch will present his program. He tells us this, "I'm only president of this great outfit once, so we'll make it a good one!"

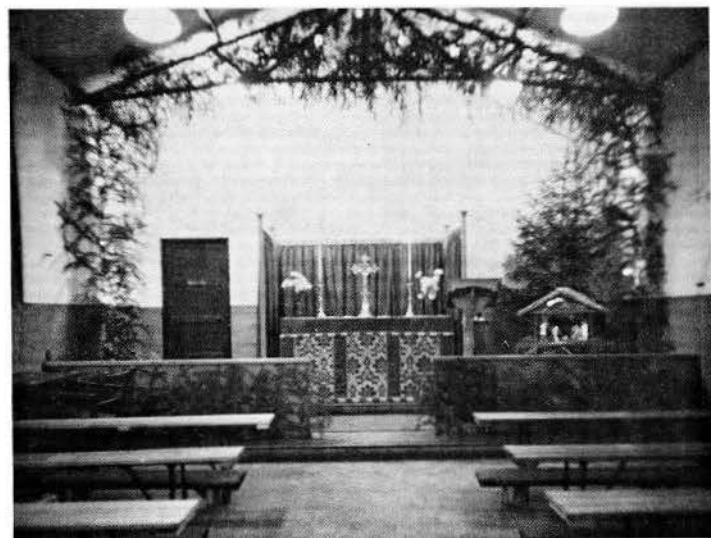
Thursday, 17 Sept., we'll have our farewell breakfast, and see y'all in Little Rock in '93.

The Reunion Committee
Gerald Pine
Harold Rutka
Robert Wright



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!



8th Air Force 34th Bomb Group Chapel Mendlesham, England, Christmas 1944.

8TH AFHS 50TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION, ENGLAND, 1992

On May 13th our 34th B.G. members departed for England to participate in the memorials and festivities commemorating the 50th anniversary of the 8th's entry into the European theater of war in WWII. Many activities were planned for the period of May 14th to May 22nd. Harold Rutka will give us a report of what went on for our September issue, along with a lot of photographs.

Those who had signed up for the trip as of March 20, 1992 were:

Bernardo, Alfred and Doris; Conklin, Claude and Genevieve; Connolly, Patrick and Breeda; Hanson, Ambers and Jean; Henry, Glenn and Kay; Holcomb, Verbal and Betty; Jalving, Marvin and Lois; Jones, Eddie and Ianthia; Lampey, Bob and Betty; Marchitto, Geraldine; Marks, Daniel; Martin, Elizabeth; Martin, Randy and Shirley; Nesbitt, Harris and Edith; Rutka, Harold and Genevieve; Wilke, Joan.

Although we went to press with this issue on April 24th, this is the latest list we have of the participants of the England trip. We'll give a complete list of participants in our September issue along with photographs.

Harold Rutka also reminds us that the 8th AFHS will be having a 50th Anniversary, "A Time For Remembrance", reunion at the Galt House in Louisville, KY. on Oct. 6th to the 11th. Harold and Gen Rutka will have a room available to meet in and all 34th'ers are welcome. Check the Locator Board for the room number. Those of you who missed the 34th Reunion in Louisville have the opportunity to join us with the 8th AFHS reunion. Read the March, 1992, issue of Mendlesham Memories about the 34th B.G. Louisville reunion to see what a great time was had by all.



GEORGE KLINE - Burnt Hills, NY.

We have a growing 8th AF area veteran's group called "Capitol Region 8th AF Veterans Group" in the Albany, Troy, Schenectady area that was started up by a 34th associate member, Dave Dynan. He has deep interest in the 34th as his veteran uncle died during our days in England. He contacted a bunch of area 8th veterans and formed the group. We have 120 members, last count, and we meet the first Saturday of every month at the Schenectady Air Museum. Not bad for an organization not yet a year old.

Margaret and I regret we won't be able to join everyone in Las Vegas this September. We were able to join a tour from Albany to Anchorage, Alaska (air), then cruise the inside straits to Vancouver. This has been a long-time dream trip for us. It is a radio sponsored trip at very good rates. So, June 10th through 17th we will be spending our Vegas money. But we do intend to be in Little Rock next year, God willing.

LA RUE (JAMES) MILLER - Alexander City, AL.

Thanks for the beautiful cards and your kind words of sympathy. James had a great time seeing everyone at the Louisville reunion.. Remember me in your prayers and stay in touch.

DEXTER JORDAN - Huntersville, NC.

The death of James M. Miller, Feb. 23, 1992, was a great loss for Beulah and myself. We had become close friends of the family.

James went with the 34th to England as a mechanic on "The Near Sighted Robin". He was a good soldier, mechanic, barber and friend. Anytime we were called out for a mission he was willing to go, even if he had just come off of the line. This was too good to last. The Officers Club heard he was a good barber and took him from us. I am sure he made many friends there also. James died at the age of 76.

Continued on page 6

VAL J. McCELLAN - Lake Worth, FL.

I was both surprised and happy to see the picture of "Purty Chili" in the Memories for December, 1991. This was the same picture I had put up carefully so I would remember where it was and now I can't find it.

We were given a new B-17G on January 10, 1945 and briefed to bomb Cologne with six 1000 pound AP's at a temperature of 53 degrees below zero centigrade. This plane had the new plexiglass waist windows, which certainly reduced the cold in that area. The Bombadier, Lee Sacherman, would give the regular oxygen checks and the response from Harold Griffin, the tail gunner, was always "It's purty chilly". The temperature was later reported at 67 degrees below centigrade. We had heard that phrase, "It's purty chilly" all day so, when we landed, decided to name the plane that. I'm not sure the actress named Chilly Williams was ever mentioned. In fact, I'm not sure I had ever heard of her then.

After our last mission on March 17, 1945, the crew of Wm. Wilcox took over the plane. They flew nineteen missions and two food drops and then returned the plane to the States. "Purty Chili" was parked at Kingman, AZ. and later made into scrap metal.



Standing l. to r.: J. Sparks D. Kessel, H. Haase, W. Oravec, R. Kashishian, & R. Hanson. Kneeling l. to r.: C. Brown, R. Ehlers & E. Tigges.

Notes From Our Friends

Continued from page 5

CHARLES F. METZ - Islip Terrace, NY.

I have often wondered how a Board of Directors like ours, drawn from guys all over the country, manage to work together with the kind of coordination they obviously have to produce such a fine organization and such a beautiful newsletter. This deserves mention in our newsletter.

ROY O. JONES - Atlanta, GA.

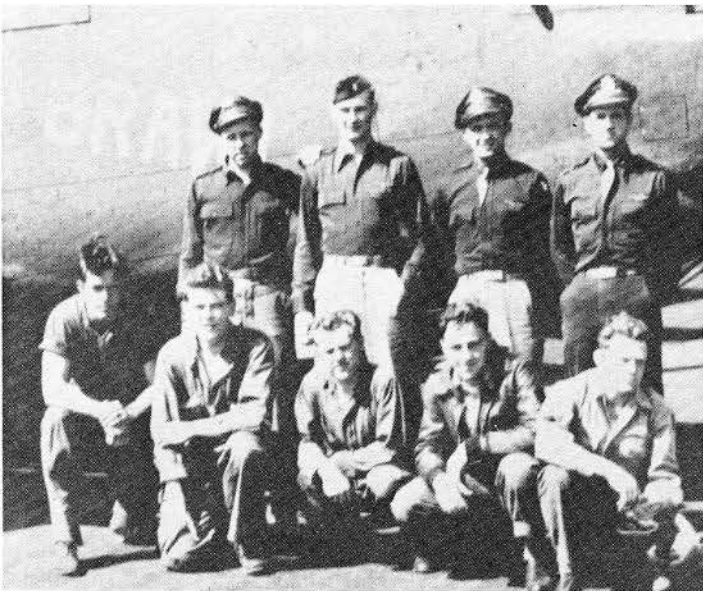
I thoroughly enjoyed the recent M.M.! I planned to go to Louisville, not a bad drive from Atlanta. Unfortunately for me, my arthritis crippled me for a long while and I had to cancel my plans.

If able to travel a day or two before the Las Vegas reunion I may fly up since I have a retired USAF pilot brother-in-law there. If I become crippled while there he'd have to take me in.

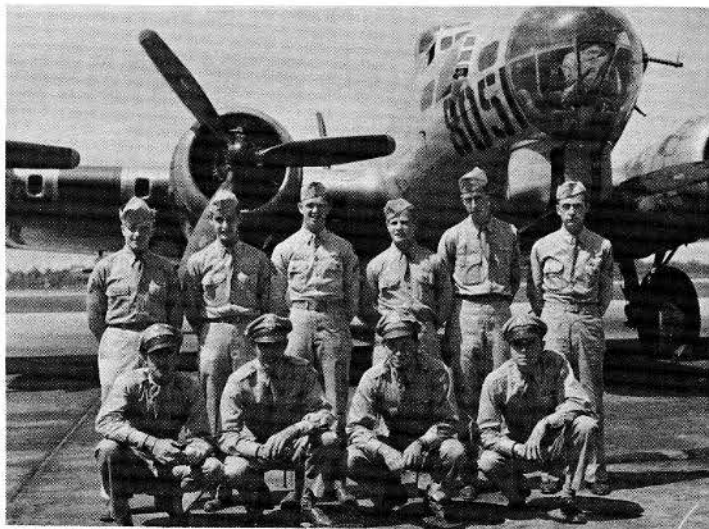
BASIL L. GAUMER - Greenville, IL.

I learned of the 34th B.G. Assn. last Sept. I received much pleasure out of the Sept. and Dec. issues of Mendlesham Memories and the Roster List.

I had never wanted to fly and my M/Sgt. knew it. But, when the food missions came along, he talked me into going along on one mission. I will always be grateful to him for it. I saw the Dutch mills and the people on the ground waving sheets at us. Of course, when the crew found out it was my first flight, they had to give me an initiation. They buzzed the ground a couple of times, went up a few thousand feet and then into a steep dive. I took it all in stride until they pulled out of the dive. Then I let out a yell. They all got their laughs and we went home.



Crew of Belle of the Brawl, Crew 51 18th Sqdn. back row: J.L. Bartels, Walter Baskin, Russ Paulnock, Barseth. Front row: J.L. Edwards, Don Fillman, All Woolcott, Jim Riley, Jim McCarthy.



Standing: Flight crew, (names unavailable) Kneeling, l. to r.: Jones, Bartz, Friedlander & Lauritzen.

LESTER E. THOMPSON SR. - Granite City, IL.

When I left Mendlesham I had the "Lucky Bastard" poem in beautiful print. I looked for it years later and couldn't find it. Then it appeared in one of MM's issues. A lady friend made me a copy on a computer. It is now framed and placed in a place of honor in my den.

The last two lines said it all, "Go home to your wine, your women and jive - You're a lucky bastard to be alive." How true!

JACK TERRY - Azusa, CA.

SURPRISE!

When I found my name listed in MM, page 14, TAPS, it triggered a variety of emotions, not all instantly, but sequentially. Since then I have considered a variety of phrases to include here and, I'm sure, later I could pick a different selection. There is no way I would try to compete with or emulate Mark Twain's famous response to such a situation.

I have no idea of just what significant results could come from it. I shall send a copy of this letter with a note to the 8th AFHS and leave the manner in which you note the correction in your hands. (Editor's note: See Clarifications column.)

LOUISE (ANTHONY) LAUBY - Prosser, WA.

We really just can't realize that Gen. LeBailly is gone. He was such a delightful man - we lost our dearest friend and we will miss him forever. We always enjoyed his stay here with us on his trips to and from Idaho. He and Margaret were always so hospitable on our visits to their home. We are so thankful for the 10 years of friendship we enjoyed with them and will always cherish the happy memories. We do keep in touch with Margaret and two sons who live in the Seattle area.

LILY (HAL) CAROTHERS - Milton, FL.

Just a note to let you know that my beloved Hal suffered a massive heart attack yesterday, March 23, 1992, and died at 6:55 a.m. We had planned on making the Little Rock reunion next year, but that is not to be.

Notes From Our Friends

Continued from page 6

CLARA (FRED) SCHOCH - Spokane, WA.

We attended Gen. LeBailly's memorial service at Oak Harbor. The service was held at St. Augustine Catholic Church, a beautiful church which sits on a hill overlooking the town and harbor of Puget Sound. The chapel was decorated with several bouquets of spring flowers. The folded American flag lay on the left corner of the altar. To the right of this was a table which held his jet pilot helmet and folded flying suit. Next to this was a portrait of the general.

His son, Steve, then gave a very nice eulogy. Then Rev. Ashwell gave a fitting tribute and highlights of the past 20 years of Ben's involvement with community and church. The vocalist sang the Air Force Hymn after which the Honor Guard assembled in the courtyard next to the chapel. They rendered the 3-gun salute, followed by the bugler with "Taps". The sergeant in charge then presented the American flag to Mrs. LeBailly.

The service concluded with a reception and buffet in the parish hall. A table in the hall held a display of memorabilia of his past life in the Air Force.

JAMES A. Loisel - Danbury, WI.

We're all getting a little older and the Mendlesham Memories is the greatest - so much news and information. Just wanted you to know I'm still on my toes at 75, looking forward to the next issues.

ROBERT WRIGHT - South Bend, IN.

Visited the Ballantyne's in Feb. at Wauchula, FL. Had a great time. We saw all his hunting trophies and took a tour of his orange groves. The weather has been lousy since I got home, but that's April.



L. to r.: Roy & Mildred Ballantyne & Esther and Bob Wright.

OLIVER BOLDUC - Chaplin, CT.

I wish, somehow, I could make some of the reunions but it seems I just get so wrapped up with our boys' businesses which need a hand so often. Also, the church here has so few who will give of their time to help with needs and visits.

I look at the many pictures of those who do attend these reunions and find I don't know many so I wonder where I'll ever fit in. We are eyeing the 1993 Little Rock reunion as the headquarters of Heifer Project International is there and we are supporters. The program supplies food producing animals to needy people and programs worldwide as well as here in the U.S.

A.J.Z. FIRESTONE - Hampton, VA.

I can't tell you how excited I was to receive "Mendlesham Memories". For years I have been trying to make contact with some of my buddies and crew of the "Knockout Dropper" of the 4th Sqdn. I'm glad I was found.

Looking through the roster I was saddened to find that my pilot, Jim Sain, had passed away. I did find my co-pilot, Don Stufflebeam, and called him. After 47 years Don and I had a long conversation, with my being brought up to date regarding the other crew members. I am planning to attend the reunion in Las Vegas and am looking forward to sharing some of the old times with the guys.

JOHN V. FOWLER - Brooklyn, NY.

I've been out on disability for seven years and I'm still around. Another round of antibiotics which cost me \$113.00. Either I make it to heaven or to the poorhouse.

It's now a question of whether I'll make it out to Las Vegas. Two weeks ago, at Madison Square Garden, someone smashed into me and sent me over three rows of seats. I thought the damage was nominal but now I find out I need major surgery on my left knee. The possibility exists I might become a cripple for life.

God bless you and the men who work so tirelessly to put out Mendlesham Memories. It's a job well done. And God bless all, that we may make it to Las Vegas.

WILLIAM "PETE" GRAY - Virginia Beach, VA.

Just before the last reunion I was told I had prostate cancer. About 2 weeks later, after some more tests, they found the first diagnosis wrong and I didn't have any cancer at all. And....it's been 7 years since the open heart surgery and, so far, everything looks quite rosy.

The Doc says I just might live to be 100 if I don't get shot in some drunken brawl. Haven't given much thought to the '92 reunion yet. I would like to see Las Vegas but, as of right now, don't know.

BETTY (TOM) PATRICK - Terre Haute, IN.

Tom is alive and pretty well. He's a very intelligent and a very kind person. I just have to do all the bill paying, banking and correspondence. Tom is kind of an overseer (not boss), one of those "Lucky Ba.....s".

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Notes From Our Friends

Continued from page 7

MICHAEL DERENGE - Port Charlotte, FL.

A lot of things have gone wrong with us. In June, 1990, I had a quintuplet heart by-pass operation. In September, 1990, I had an aneurism in my stomach area. Between the two operations my wife had a breakdown and was hospitalized for 14 days. I don't have to tell you how the medical bills can drain a person. It seems like every doctor who walked down the hall sent us a bill. Even after insurance and Medicare we are still paying. And, to top it all off, our daughter in Atlanta had a pre-mature baby boy on March 2nd, weight 1 lb. 13 oz. He was due in June. He's doing fine so far. So we have been burning up the road between Port Charlotte and Atlanta and will be doing so until the baby is safe. His name is William Michael Cross, named after my father and son.

ARTHUR PODOREFSKY - Teaneck, NJ.

I recently joined the 8th AFHS and came across Ray Summa's name as 34th B.G. contact. I was an engineering clerk in the 18th Bomb Sqdn. and remember a crew chief named Summa. Is it the same individual? If so, he would be the first member of the 34th B.G. that I have run across since my discharge in 1945. (Editor's note: Ray has since been in touch with Arthur.)



Col. Wackwitz with ???



Crew of Toni-7, l. to r.: Highfill, James, Harrison, Muccino, Miller, Grisham & Gill Lane with back to camera.

NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

We've received an interesting letter recently:

I am a member of the Royal Australian Air Force and am researching the history and role of the units of the 8th A.F. in WW2. I would very much like to obtain information on the 34th B.G.'s activities during the war. Anything at all would be O.K. Also, if possible, I would like to correspond with members of the 34th regarding their war service. My research is purely personal and any information received would remain strictly confidential. Please write to: Mark Wyllie, 1 Lewis Court, Sunshine, Victoria, Australia, 3020.

From Al DiNenno we have the information that on December 8, 1991, the people who trained and served at Buckingham and Page Army airfields were honored with the dedication of a memorial in Centennial Park at Ft. Myers, FL. According to Al, we probably have quite a few of our 34th B.G. gunners who trained at Buckingham. About 200 people attended. The monument was unveiled by Virginia Spivey, the wife of Maj. Gen. Delmar T. Spivey who was commanding officer at Buckingham Field.

We have been informed that a new book by Ian McLachlan is now available. The title is "Eighth Air Force Bomber Stories". It includes eye-witness accounts from American airmen and British civilians of the perils of war. Also included are previously unpublished photographs. We are told this book is available in all good bookstores for \$31.95 or you can order it for \$36.45 (incl. p&p) from: Zenith Books, P.O. Box 1, Osceola, WI. 54020.

NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

Continued from page 8

From Mr. Peter D. Woodford of England we have the following:

For the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Eighth Air Force, "The Mighty Eighth", Royal Worcester, Ltd. is manufacturing a commemorative plate in finest bone china. The plate will be 8-1 1/4" in diameter with the 8th A.F. shoulder patch symbol in the center with the American and British flags behind and the words "The Mighty Eighth" below. Five aircraft, the P-38, P-47, P-51, B-17 and the B-24 surround this. The outer edge lists all of the U.S. Eighth Air Force units active in the European theater during WWII. At the very bottom it shows a handshake between Britain and the U.S. with the dates 1942 and 1992 shown. Unfortunately, the information reaches us too late to include their pictorial insert in this issue. However, if interested you may write to:

P.D. Woodford, Sandalwood, The Street, Horham, Eye, Suffolk IP21 5DX.

From the 8th A.F. PX we have the following:

A new VCR video tape "START ENGINES...PLUS 50 YEARS" has now been produced and is available for sale. This is the 8th Air Force's Anniversary Commemorative Documentary that you shouldn't miss. It is a 58-1/2 minute video which will bring back many memories. This video has been welcomed into the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library and the Harry S. Truman Library. Both institutions are planning special events around the episode.

The price is \$42.95 (\$39.95 plus \$2.50 shipping and handling). You can send your check or money order for this video to:

8th A.F. PX
65 Beddington Lane
Strasburg, PA. 17579

(Editor's note: I've seen the video and it's one no WWII 8th Air Force veteran should miss.)

CLARIFICATIONS

In the Dec., 1991 issue we printed a photo of John Fowler and ??? on page 7. In the March issue we identified the young lady as Lilla Bell, the Red Cross lady. Now we find that our identification of John Fowler in that photo is incorrect. The young airman is, in fact, Hilary P. Lodermeier. Sorry about that!

On page 5 of the September issue we printed a photo of six young men in front of a barracks and asked for identification. We've learned that they were all a part of Lt. Scherckenback's crew. Front, L. to R.: Laulk, Austin and Loiselle. Rear, L. to R.: Lowenthal, Lodermeier and Stoutsenberger. Also, on page 9 of that issue, the ball turret gunner shown is Hilary Lodermeier.

On page 7 of the March issue we printed a photo of John Gronouski with who?? We've received the information from Roy Jones that one of the other two men is Edwin S. Smith. He didn't say which one. We understand Edwin S. Smith put together the original 34th B.G. history book. From Lonnie Crook, we believe he is the one on the right. The other man we still have not identified.

On page 14 of the March issue in the "TAPS" section, based upon information received, we included John P. "Jack" Terry's name. As you'll note in the "NOTES FROM OUR FRIENDS" section, he is alive and well and not "Deceased". Sorry, Jack. These things do sometimes happen.

From Charles Dulan of Fairfax, VA. we have the information that the young man with Bob Gay on page 8 of the March issue is, in fact, Marty Massaro of the 1446 Ordnance, Supply & Maintenance Company of which Chuck Dulan, himself, was one of nine in the armament section of Base Ordnance.

SPECIAL HONORED REMEMBRANCE

by Barbara Hartman

In 1984, when my husband Ralph lost his leg due to a blood clot, and while in Sunnyview Rehab Hospital at Schenectady for therapy, he was asked if he would like to participate in the Windham Handicap Ski program. Being determined to stay active and not wallow in self pity, Ralph entered the program. The first winter he learned to ski on one leg with outriggers. Following that Ralph trained to become an instructor of other handicapped people. He also, along with Gwen Allard, director, and Bonnie Seligson, a handicapped skier, lobbied for funds at the state capitol.

In March of 1990 representatives of Norstar Bank, Volunteers of the Handicap Program and Ski Windham organization developed the first handicap ski competition. Ralph was present for the March 10, 1990 competition, dying in April of 1990. The race, named the Hartman Cup in his honor, has continued in '91 and '92. T.V. coverage of this event is sponsored by local channel 10. There are many volunteer instructors along with Gwen Allard, director, who made this and many other handicap events at Ski Windham possible. There are also many new sponsors in 1992. 1992 also saw 78 competitors race in the Hartman Cup.



Then and Now



Jenny & Junius Cobb



1944

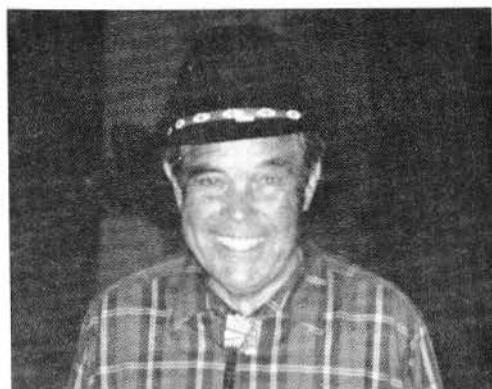


1991

Eugene B. LeBailly



1944



1990

James Miller



1945



1989



ROSE'S CORNER

At this time of the year the robins have returned and seedlings are pushing their way through the ground and we're all looking forward to the daffodils, tulips and the many beauties of spring. We're finished with the difficulties of shoveling snow, driving on icy roads, trying to keep warm while starting up our cars and, the most difficult, getting our Federal Income Tax in the mail by April 15th. A great rule to follow is that it is better to give than to deceive! (This would be a great slogan for the IRS to display.)

I haven't had too much contact since our last issue so I will share my favorite Foolproof Cocoa Pie recipe which you will be proud to serve family and friends.

FOOLPROOF COCOA PIE

1 (9") baked pie shell
 1/2 cup cocoa
 1/3 cup cornstarch
 1 1/4 cups sugar
 1/4 tsp. salt
 3 cups milk
 3 tbsp. butter
 1 1/2 tsp. vanilla

In a saucepan combine cocoa, sugar, salt and cornstarch. Gradually blend milk into dry ingredient mixture. Stir until very smooth.

Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until filling boils. Add butter and cook one (1) minute.

Remove from heat and add vanilla. Stir. Pour into pie shell and allow to cool.

Refrigerate for four (4) hours. When serving, spread with Cool Whip or real whipped cream. Then ENJOY!

Until the next time, may you have enough determination to make each day a better one. See you in Las Vegas, Good Lord willing.

With boundless love,
 Rose

REUNION '92
 Las Vegas, NV



Sept. 14-17, '92

SPECIAL

PAINTING DONATED TO 8TH A.F. MUSEUM

Submitted by Lonnie Crook

Our B-17 painting is now in place (on loan) in the 8th Air Force Museum at Barksdale AFB and looks great. I'll review the actions that have taken place here since the project started. Cleveland Romero brought the painting home with him from the reunion. On the 26th of December I visited Lafayette and picked it up. Buck Rigg and I looked over the brochure of frames provided by Carl Nichols and selected one. We told him our choice and, in due time, he sent the frame to me (knocked down in 4 pieces). Buck arranged to have the frame assembled and the painting mounted by a pro. It was then hung in a prominent place in the museum where many people have viewed it and marveled at the detail and the beauty of the painting.

The April 10, 1992 Observer, the Barksdale weekly newspaper, highlighted the presentation of the painting. I'm sure the membership of the 34th B.G. would be very proud if they could see it and the museum is very happy to have it.

Carl Nichols deserves a lot of recognition for this. I understand he obtained the painting from the artist, Michael Rasmussen. He presented the idea to the membership and provided and shipped to us, postpaid, the beautiful frame. In short, he was the Daddy of the entire project.

For those wishing to visit the museum, it is closed on Monday and Tuesday. It is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Along with the museum there is a static display of aircraft.

This has been a fun activity for me. When passing through Shreveport, give us a call. My phone is (318) 861-6065.



34th B.G. representative, Lonnie Crook, presents the full color painting of 34th B.G. B-17's flying into combat.

ADDRESS CHANGES

(As of 4/23/92)

<u>LAST NAME</u>	<u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>ORGN.</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>ZIP</u>
COLES	IRA S. JR.	7	P.O. BOX 515020	ST. LOUIS,	MO.	63151
DOOLEY	LAWTON ED	391(LM)	8715 FLINT FALLS DR.	DALLAS,	TX.	75243
GARDNER	MARVIN	18 (LM)	1200 LAKEWAY DR. #5A	AUSTIN,	TX.	78734
HEASTY	CLARENCE N.	391	RT. 2, BOX 72	SPARTA,	WI.	54656
HILDEBRAND	THOMAS H.	4	1000 LIVE OAK DR., S.W.	ORANGEBURG,	SC.	29115
JONES	DAVID P.	391	8200 KERN AVE. #C-206	GILROY,	CA.	95020
LAUB	JOSEPH		2267 DEBLIN DR.	CINCINNATI,	OH.	45239
LeBAILLY	MRS. MARGARET	GRP (A)	P. O. BOX 1467	OAK HARBOR,	WA.	98277
MAY	OTTO	391	11130 THORNBERRY DRIVE	SPRING HILL,	FL.	34608
METYK	ZENON	7	1358 WINSTON RD.	SO. EUCLID,	OH.	44121
RATHBUN	EDGAR H.	7	1358 WINSTON ROAD	SOUTH EUCLID,	OH.	44121
ROBINSON	RUSSELL E.	18 (LM)	838 SILVER OAK AVE.	LADY LAKE,	FL.	32159
SALEK	LA VERN	4	703 S.W. 2ND AVE.	ALEDO,	IL.	61231
SMITH	CHARLES	7	3854 YORK ST.	ROCHESTER HILLS,	MI.	48309
SMITH	DREN E.	391	10115 DREW TERRACE	ST. LOUIS,	MO.	63126
SPRINGER	ROBERT H.	18	5711 W. AVENUE M #244	LANCASTER,	CA.	93536
ULAM	KENNETH	7 (LM)	2515 W. LINCOLN AVE. #37	ANAHEIM,	CA.	92801
WILLIAMS	PAT	18	P.O. BOX 480	MATADOR,	TX.	79244
WRIGHT	WILLIAM L.	4	P. O. BOX 906	NEW SMYRNA BEACH,	FL.	32070

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

(Total 224 as of 4/23/92)

<u>LAST NAME</u>	<u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>ORGN.</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>ZIP</u>
ALBERT	EUGENE J.	391	BOX 145	ROLLINS,	MT.	59931
CAMPBELL	THOMAS J.	4	3421 80TH STREET	JACKSON HEIGHTS,	NY.	11372
CLARKSON	JOHN G.	391	459 MALL BLVD. #25	SAVANNAH,	GA.	31406
DOPPELT	SIDNEY	7	6909 NORTH LAKE DRIVE	MILWAUKEE,	WI.	53217
GROSS	ROBERT H.	7	34 IRONWOOD ROAD	WEST HARTFORD,	CT.	06117
HACKLER	ROLAND J.	475SD	3616 SO. 82ND AVENUE EAST	TULSA,	OK.	74145
HALL	HERBERT B.	7	P. O. BOX 96	SCOTTSDALE,	MI.	49454
HEMINGWAY	ROBERT D.	18	55 WEST CENTER	ALPINE,	UT.	84003
HOWARD	PAL	18	P.O. BOX 199	BENTON,	KY.	42025
HYMAN	NORMAN H.	18	6040 NORTH LAKE DRIVE	WHITEFISH BAY,	WI.	53217
JENNINGS	WILLIAM O.	4	4419 NORTH 19TH DRIVE	PHOENIX,	AZ.	85015
JETTON	RAY L.	18	3514 EAST ADMIRAL COURT	TULSA,	OK.	74115
LODERMEIER	HILARY P.	18	3323 ELKHORN BLVD.	NORTH HIGHLANDS,	CA.	95660
MEREDITH	HAROLD L.	4	421 GRANT STREET	SATELLITE BEACH,	FL.	32937
REID	ROY L.	18	7020 E. 2ND. STREET	TULSA,	OK.	74145



TAPS

(As of 4/23/92)

<u>LAST NAME</u>	<u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>ORGN.</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>ZIP</u>
CAROTHERS	HAROLD	18	5724 SUNFLOWER AVE.	MILTON,	FL.	32570
DREHER	WILMER J.	4	195 NO. 11TH STREET	BREESE,	IL.	62230
GRAHAM	ALAN A.	18	11456 BENTON STREET	LOMA LINDA,	CA.	92354
HALLGREN	KENNETH R.	18	26338 KILTARTON ST.	FARMINGTON HILLS,	MI.	48334
KING	EDWIN L.	7	22514 DABNEY MANOR	KATY,	TX.	77449
MILLER	JAS MELVIN	7	PO BOX 6 206 S CENTRAL ST	ALEXANDER CITY,	AL.	35010
MUELLER	RAYMOND	391	647 NO. JEFFERSON ST.	RICHLAND CENTER,	WI.	53581
OLSON	EDGAR G.	GRP.	RTE.1, BOX 46, COTTAGE B	MULBERRY,	IN.	46058
SAMPSON	FRED F.	18	35 ALLMAN PLACE	HEW HARTFORD,	NH.	13413
TYSON	ROBERT W.	391	824 9TH AVENUE	WILMINGTON,	DE.	19808

NEWLY FOUND

(As of 4/23/92)

<u>LAST NAME</u>	<u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>ORGN.</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>ZIP</u>
ATKIN	WILLARD S.	391	P.O.BOX 184	FRAZIER PARK	CA.	93225
DALEY	MIKE P.		2305 WHISPERING CT.	FORT WORTH,	TX.	76133
FIRESTONE	A.J.Z.	4	5 TEMPLEWOOD DR.	HAMPTON,	VA.	23366
GOLDEN	LEONARD W. JR.	4	10957 OAK STREET	POSTAGE,	OH.	43451
HOFF	HENRY		R.R. 1, BOX 94	ARLINGTON,	SD.	57212
JANSKY	ROBERT J.	18	221 WEST ROYAL LANE	BLOOMINGDALE,	IL.	60108
MEEDER	PAUL R.		R.R. 2, BOX 902	CHICORA,	PA.	16025
PAULNOCK	RUSSELL		13151 CUMBRA VISTA	LOS ALTO HILLS,	CA.	94022
PODOREFSKY	ARTHUR	18	1205 EMERSON AVE.	TEANECK,	NJ.	07666
PRENTICE	GEORGE R.		517 QUAIL RUN ROAD	SANGER,	TX.	76266
RHODES	KENNETH J.		2830 BELLVUE AVENUE	BETTENDORF,	IA.	52722
WILSON	HOMER P.		R.#2, BOX 15	POPLAR BLUFF,	MO.	63901

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 WOODTUP 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	NORTHBRIDGE,	CA.	91325
SWARTHOUT	ROBERT K.		1313 NICOLET PLACE	DETROIT,	MI.	48207

OBITUARY

EUGENE B. LeBAILLY

Eugene B. LeBailly died Feb. 17, 1992 at his home in Oak Harbor, WA. of a heart attack. He was born Jan. 29, 1915, in Shoshone, ID. to Thomas and Jean LeBailly. He graduated high school in 1932, attended Idaho State U. and graduated from U. of Calif. at Berkely in 1939 with a BS degree. That same year he attended US Army Air Corps. flight training schools at Randolph and Kelly Fields. He earned his pilot's wings and a commission as 2nd Lt. in March, 1940. He married Margaret Blair in May of 1940.

He served with the 1st B.G. at Trinidad when WWII began and transferred to Ecuador and Peru where he flew heavy bombers on sea-search missions. In Feb., 1943 he was made commander of the 7th B.G. and in early 1944 went with the 34th B.G. to England for combat duty with the 8th A.F. He later became group commander.

After WWII Gen. LeBailly commanded bases at Boise, ID. and Walla Walla, WA. and a Reserve Trng. Ctr. at Offutt Field, Neb. He graduated from Air Command and Staff School in June, 1948 and was assigned to Hdqtrs., U.S.A.F. and, later, to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Washington, DC.

In 1952 Gen LeBailly flew 50 combat missions in Korea in B-26 Night Intruder bombers as commander of the 3rd Bomb. Wing. In 1953 he moved into the Far East A.F. Hdqtrs, in Japan and was in charge of American-Japanese Planning Group. He eventually became Chief of the A.F. Section of the Military Assistance Advisory Goup in Japan. In 1955 he became Chief of Information Service for Hdqtrs. Tactical Air Command at Langley AF Base, VA. After three years he became Deputy Director of the Office of Information under the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force in Washington.

From Aug. 1961 to Jan. 1964 Gen. LeBailly was commander of both the U.S. Forces Azores and the 1605th Air Base Wing in Portugal, then became Director of Information for the U.S. Air Force until 1964 when he was chosen as commander of the 16th A.F. in Spain. In 1970 he assumed duties as chairman of the Inter-American Defense Board in Washington, D.C., which is affiliated with the O.A.S.

Gen. LeBailly retired from the A.F. in 1973 with 34 years and 3 months of service. He is survived by his wife, Margaret, two sons, three grandchildren and one sister.

Memories

WAS IT YESTERDAY?

by Mrs. Jean Root

In 1944 my name was Jean Saunders, I was 15 years old and I lived in Debenham. I left school and started to work on D-Day, 6th of June. Was I grown up at last? No! According to my parents I was still too young to go to the Base dances and meet all those glamorous American servicemen, or so my diary notes bluntly on June 22nd. However, most of them pedalled laconically into Debenham streets and, so, inevitably, my girl friends and

I were "chatted up" by these cycling Romeos. But, at 15, we all had to be home very early and, as I remember it, a group of inanely giggling girls on the roadside with a possibly bored group of young men was as far as it got.

On Sunday, July 2nd, I was walking alone and I met another lone figure. His name was Junius Cobb. He had bright red hair and was known as "Red". My mother and father obviously thought I was safer at home or out with him than loose on Debenham's wild streets. After all, he called them "Sir" and M-am" which impressed them greatly. They were, indeed, soon fond of him and he had long discussions on the state of the war with my father.

Red and I were good friends and, beside visiting, we went out for the restricted entertainments of the day. We went to the Fair and he won a collection of small prizes at the shooting gallery. I was very impressed with his skills. The fact that he had already lost two fingers in a prewar hunting accident coloured my view not one jot. We ate fish and chips, walked around Framlingham Castle and went to a cafe but they had run out of food. He took me to the 'drome' and we got caught, alone, inside a Liberator during a prolonged thunderstorm! We went to the cinema and to Stowmarket swimming pool, even though I couldn't swim. We both played Hawaiian guitar (probably badly). I had tea at the Aero Club and, once, even had ice cream and pineapple chunks, (probably my first since 1939).

He finally rang on the 1st of August, 1945, to say he

Continued on page 15



Two 391st Sqdn. men with knife-throwing act.
Anybody recognize them?

Memories

Continued from page 14

was returning to the States and we parted, as we had always been, the best of friends. We wrote intermittently for 11 years, both marrying, and we exchanged photos of our first children. My first marriage failed and I remarried and, as I know now, his did also and he remarried to Jenny.

My life was full with family, with catching up on war-lost education and, eventually, training for teaching. My children left home, my husband died, and, 3 years ago, I retired. I have always been a hoarder, I throw little away. I opened a box and there was his last letter dated 1957. I said to myself, "I wonder what has happened to him?" Spontaneously I wrote him a note. On the envelope I wrote "Mr. American Postman - this was the address in 1957. Help". The letter found him and we have written ever since.

On September 2nd, 1991, I landed at Richmond airport to be met by Jenny and Junie. I would like to report that, as in old black and white films, we ran through the sunset into each other's arms. But it was not so. I strode purposefully from the plane straight through the luggage carousel and, then, waited at the exit while he was checking with the authorities to see if I had actually been on board. We did eventually find each other.

It took his lovely, generous wife, Jenny, and I at least 5 minutes to decide we liked each other and that we both had the same stupid sense of humor. And Junie seemed so familiar that the phone call could have been last week, not 46 years ago.

I had a lovely, lovely time. Jenny and I screeched with laughter because of our similar sense of humor while Junie watched us both with a tolerant dry smile. Junie remains for me my interesting and knowledgeable friend, amusing companion, and attractive man. Nothing more - nothing less. It was never a romance in the true sense of the word, but our fondness has stood the test of time...it is called true friendship.



Back row standing: Charles F. Norton, Billie D. Ezell, Albert J. Migliorelli, Philip F. Sheridan. Front row kneeling: Frankie L. Champion, Guatemazie Garcia, Eugene J. Toth, Richard H. McCauley, Warren E. Thrum.

REMINISCENCES

by Vince Doran

ANYONE FOR BISCUITS?

A fiendish German mind designed the British military mattress. Visualize the American GI mattress cut into thirds. That was the British mattress; the segments were called biscuits. Each man was issued three of them. You lay them on the bunk springs and make up the bed normally with sheets and blankets. It looks just fine. You ease into bed slowly and carefully so as not to separate the biscuits.

It might work if, after you get into bed, you had someone push the biscuits together again and you did not move a muscle all night. The problem with that plan is that your sleeping body moves as it will. As it moves, while you are sleeping, so do the biscuits. They separate and your body develops two cold zones; one under your knees and the other under the middle of your back.

You awaken, wiggle the biscuits together, and go back to sleep. The biscuits separate and you awaken again. This can go on all night long and you do not waken refreshed in the morning. The British must have figured a way to keep them together, otherwise they would have lost the war right there. You can't fight if you can't get a good night's sleep once in a while.

I did not sleep on British bases long enough to learn the trick of keeping them together, but when I got back to Mendlesham I never bitched about our own thin mattresses again.

OH, THE PAIN!

Part way through the bombing missions someone told me that I should always be wearing the back pack parachute. In the event of an explosion all I would have to do is dive out a hole, pull the ripcord and all would be well. Whereas, if I were wearing a harness I would have to hunt around for my chute, snap it on, then dive. But where would I be if the chute had gone out with the explosion? That seemed to be good reasoning so I began wearing the back pack. Our plane never blew up so I did not get to test the theory. I did get to test the back pack and I want to say it was the invention of the Devil. I don't mean I jumped with it; I'm talking about how uncomfortable it was to wear eight hours at a time. It was so hard and unbending my back had to conform to the chute's flat shape. My back stiffened up to where I had to be helped into the plane and into my seat on the last few missions.

When I could not straighten up anymore I went to the squadron first aid station for a massage. It seemed to do some good for the moment. After the third successive night of massaging the first aid man got tired of it, went into the next room and quietly called the hospital to send an ambulance. I had been hearing in those days and, before he could hang up, I had grabbed my clothes and was gone into the winter night, never to return. Since he did not have my name there was no way of finding me.

It would not have done any good to put me in the hospital anyway. Our crew would have dragged me out so we could continue flying together. Not that they loved me so much, but, rather, if we stayed together we could finish at 33 missions rather than the regular tour of 35.

IGNORANCE?

I had to be the most ignorant airman in the 8th AF. It was all the fault of that intelligence officer who briefed us shortly after arriving in England. He said that German

Continued on page 16

Page 15

From the collection of:

Al Israelsen

Pilot, First Crew No. 1, 4th Sq. Feb - Nov 1944



Eli Baldea
2576 Brookwood Drive
Crown Point, Indiana 46307
(219) 988-4607

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Memories

Continued from page 15

intelligence had almost all the information we had, and that it was stored in air intelligence headquarters at Nuremburg. Even the records of most U.S. airmen. He said if you were captured you would be brought to Nuremburg for interrogation and for checking against their records. He said if they suspected you had information they wanted, and you had it, they had ways to get it out of you. He said the best thing was not to know anymore than what was absolutely necessary to do your job. I believed every word he said.

1. I went out of my way to learn nothing new.
2. I avoided learning names of group officers on our base.
3. I avoided learning names of nearly all personnel everywhere.
4. I knew nothing but the most elementary radio communication.
5. I did not know the locations of other groups.
6. I knew nothing about our Wing or Division organizations.
7. I did not visit any other military installations except when we were diverted by bad weather.

One time we flew near Wing Headquarters. Someone was going to point out the building to me. I said, "Don't show me. I don't want to know." He didn't. I also never tried to identify any military installation in England from the air.

We had a secret war library on the base in a Quonset hut. Only airmen were allowed in. I went once and stood in the doorway to see what I could see from there. There were the usual pictures of German fighter planes and German uniforms on the walls. There were a lot of books, maps, etc. on the tables and shelves. They probably held all the information in the world about the German military and about the 8th AF. I figured there was nothing in there that would help me drive a B-17. I didn't go in and I never went back.

Today, when I talk to an old 8th AF man, since I can recall so little, I suspect he thinks I was never there.

AN EXPERIENCE

by H. Arnold Prillaman

The mission to Dresden on Mar. 2nd, 1945 was my 20th and stands out in my memory for several reasons. It was the longest to date - 9 hrs. & 50 minutes. It was the first time we had been attacked in strength by enemy fighters. A good friend of mine, John Frey on Capt. Richardson's crew, was killed.

I was in the left waist position on Lt. Eugene James' crew. Our tail gunner is John Funk. Our 7th Sqdn. was flying the low position. Lt. Sheesley's plane was on our left. We were about an hour from target when John Funk came over the intercom, "unfriendly fighters back here!" Sheesley's ball turret gunner started firing to the rear but I couldn't see his target. Some of our gunners started firing. The spent brass from the planes above started raining down on us. I thought they were enemy hits until I realized we couldn't still be flying with that many hits. Bill Crook, our radio operator, comes back, takes the right waist gun and fires about a hundred rounds. I stand there and sweat because I can't see a damned thing.

Then, all of a sudden, there he is...not over 200 yds. out, an ME-109 in a vertical dive, his back to me. Those black crosses on top of his wings were unmistakable. I started to swing the gun around. Then I notice why his nose is pointed to the ground and not at us. A P-51 is right on his tail. The P-51 fires, the 109 rolls and I see no hits. The P-51 duplicates the 109's maneuver and fires two more bursts as they descend. The German maneuvers and the P-51 duplicates but I see no hits. They disappear into the undercast.

That was the last P-51 I saw for 15 or 20 minutes but the Germans stayed and continued the attack, but none at my position. We bombed the target and came back to England. Today it is all just memories, some pleasant, mostly unpleasant. Others on our crew not already mentioned were Bill Burnell, Gordon Spilker, Fred Schoch, Tom Wright and John Ashburn. We completed our tour of duty with a mission to Hamburg on March 20th, 1945.

