

ENDLESHAM MEMORIES

34TH BOMB GROUP H

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**Don't Forget
Our 34th B.G.
Ray L. Summa
Scholarships
Application
Blanks Are
Inside**

OBSERVATIONS

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

Here we are, in Florida, enjoying temperatures and other weather conditions far better than we would be experiencing back home in Indiana. Along with that, we're very pleased with events here.

On Dec. 17th, with almost nine years of going to night classes after a full day's work, our son, Michael, has received his B.A. degree, Cum Laude, from the University of Central Florida in Orlando. He's worked long and hard to reach that day and both Rose and I are extremely proud of the accomplishment. He is now the fourth of our six children to graduate from college. How about that?

We've also had a beautiful Christmas celebration with Michael and our daughter, Lauren with her husband, Robert, along with others that have family connections. It was quite a festive family affair and we were happy to be there. However, I must say, all of our grandchildren are up north, back in Indiana, and we did miss experiencing that glow which is evident in children when opening their gifts from "SANTA CLAUS". We had it with our own children and, on several occasions, with our grandchildren. Oh, well, that's part of being a grandparent, I guess.

Now for 34th B.G. business. In our December issue we published photographs from the reunion at St. Paul. Some were our own but most were sent in by attendees. We tried to make sure that at least one photo of everyone there was included in the issue. However, since we do not have an official photographer for these affairs, we've had to rely on photographs being mailed in by those in attendance. Unfortunately, these photographs did not cover all who were there. If you were one who attended and did not see your photo in the Dec. issue, we apologize. However, we cannot print what we do not have.

For all future reunion participants, please remember - we rely on personal photographs for our coverage of the event. We do not have an official photographer so we do rely on each of you to send in photos. Of course, we will not, and cannot, use all of them but it does give us the possibility of showing all, or most of those in attendance. We do, immediately, identify the sender and guarantee the return of the photographs after the issue is put to rest. More we cannot promise.

We also want to mention, again, that we hope all of our "First-timers" at St. Paul enjoyed it as much as we did. Rose and I, as well as many other "old-timers", tried to greet any and all we met. It was a beautiful reunion and most of us, if not all, enjoyed it immensely, as usual. It's so nice to meet again with people in one's own age bracket who had some kind of a similar background.

We also want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who sent us Christmas cards. Please understand that there's no way, other than through the newsletter, to wish you all our best wishes for the holiday season. Especially to those of you who sent us your best wishes, Thanks A Lot!!

In this issue you will find the forms for the Scholarship applicants. Those of you who have bright grandchildren

should go out of your way to see that they get them.

Please remember that our June issue goes to press on April 21st, and all material for that issue should reach me no later than that date. Remember, also, that the June issue goes to all on our roster, whether membership dues are paid or not. So, if you'd like to make sure someone, not a paid member, sees your message, see that your material is in on time.

Our June issue, also, will have more information and the required forms for the Huntsville reunion. Watch for them and "USE THEM"! We look forward to seeing you all there.

That's enough for this issue. Please think seriously about joining us in Huntsville. It looks like a quite interesting place and the company you will keep will be the "BEST!!"

Eli Baldea
President and Editor

PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

To all members and friends:

Another year has come and gone, and we are already thinking of this year's reunion in Alabama. Time passes very fast and we don't always complete what we had planned. For example, that was how I missed last December's newsletter, as I sent it in too late.

First of all, I would like to thank all of the officers, the reunion committee, and chairmen of all committees for making the reunion in St. Paul such a great success. They do all the work and the President sits back and twiddles his thumbs.

I guess everyone that went to the Mall of America enjoyed themselves, especially the ladies. It was quite an experience to see so much under one roof. Hopefully, we will see as many members, or more, if possible, in Huntsville, Alabama.

Just an added note to Paul Shull. I have received the Squadron pins - 4th - 7th - 18th and 391st. I will send them on to you as soon as I hear from you. So, if you want any of your pins, contact Paul for the price and quantity.

At this time I would like to thank the group for the attache case and the plaques - especially the one I get to keep. My wife, Peggy, also wants to thank the group for the beautiful plate. She received it in November and is very proud of it. I guess you know we will treasure them always.

Thanks again to each and everyone for all the assistance in making St. Paul a big success and we hope to see you all in Alabama.

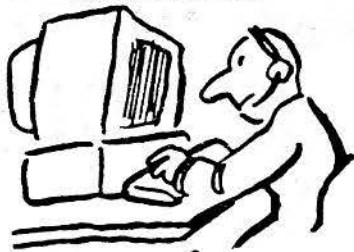
Sam Wolstencroft

DEADLINE

Any material or items to be inserted in the June issue of Mendlesham Memories should reach me on or before April 21, 1995. That is the date our final copy will be presented to the printers.

Eli Baldea, Editor

FROM THE CORRESPONDING SECRETARY AND TREASURER'S COMPUTER



GREETINGS to all in this NEW YEAR! Jan and I have appreciated the many cards that you have sent along with your 1995 dues. I trust that all of you made it through the HOLIDAY SEASON and are enjoying 1995.

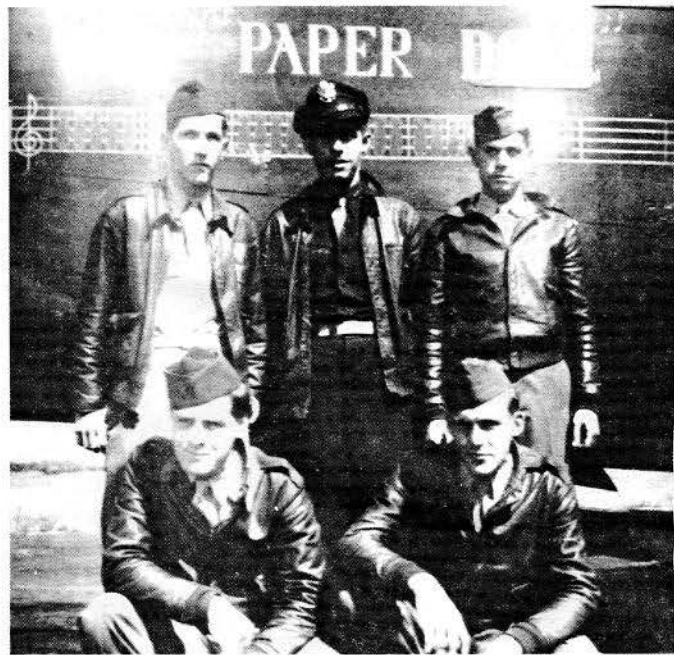
It seems totally unreal but within a few months it will be 50 years since we pulled out of Mendlesham and returned to the U.S. This year will be a continuation of celebrations in that it will be the 50th Anniversary of VE Day and, also, the 50th Anniversary of the Food Drop-pings in Holland. I hope to be in England once again on May 8th, following the celebrations in Holland in late April.

And there is another anniversary to be celebrated! Eli Baldea has finished his tenth year as editor of MENDLESHAM MEMORIES! I'm certain that none of us (except Rose and Hannah Summa) realize what it takes to edit and publish our quarterly publication. We are exceedingly fortunate to have a guy who spends as much time as it takes to put out a top-notch newsletter like MENDLESHAM MEMORIES! I'm certain that Rose, and Hannah when Ray was editor, shared a large amount of the burden of the publication. I've not seen a newsletter that can compare with ours and I know that many of you feel as I do - we've got a great editor-wife combination! May the two of you have another great 10 years.

We've got another hard worker in the 34th BGA. So that all will know, in case they don't already, Harold C. Rutka was elected Vice-president of the 8th Air Force Historical Society! Harold was elected to the BOD of the 8th AFHS a couple of years back, took on the added task of Reunion Chairman for them and was elected vice-president at San Diego at the last reunion. "WAY TO GO, HAROLD!!

For those New-Founds or others who may not know, all of the men who served in the 34th BG while in Mendlesham are eligible for membership in the 8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY. Last year the reunion was in San Diego and the 1995 reunion will be in Saint Louis. If you can't attend the 34th BGA reunion it may be possible to make the 8th AFHS reunion. And for the New-Founds or anyone else who hasn't joined or heard of the 8th AFHS, if you'll write me I'll send you an application to join. Additionally, there are many local STATE chapters of the 8th AFHS who would be only too happy to send you an application for membership.

My thanks to you who have remitted the additional \$2.50 for years previously paid for dues. I've added a minus sign to the address label for those who still are behind in their dues. And, speaking of dues, etc., I'm in agreement with Eli - we wonder if some of you really read



"PAPER DOLL" Crew after 35 missions. Standing: L.to R.: W. Havron, D. Tuttle & L. Chatoian. Kneeling: G. Henry & C. Pell.

the MM. Eli gets checks for membership and I get articles for MM.

Not too many have taken our item regarding the RAY SUMMA SCHOLARSHIP FUND to heart. The BOD suggested that people other than those who attend the annual reunions might want to help support the SCHOLARSHIP FUND. Until this year the SUMMA SCHOLARSHIP FUND has been entirely supported by \$5.00 per person being added to the registration fee for the reunion. The BOD believes that all of the membership should have the opportunity to support the fund. With the advancing age of our membership it may be that we will have to support the SCHOLARSHIP FUND by such contributions. Wallace Green, John Janes, Herbert Roy, Laurence Sherman and Joe Wong have contributed to the fund and we sincerely thank them for their contributions.

And, speaking of the scholarship fund, Cleveland Romero tells me that the 1995 application should be in this issue. Please encourage your children and/or your grandchildren to enter and make certain they submit ALL the information requested. Cleveland, John Janes and I really have to split hairs in determining the first and second place winners. Thank goodness we have Gloria Janes, a retired English school teacher, to help us in evaluating the essay portion.

Have you noticed the NEWLY FOUND list? I recently sent out about 2300 letters looking for more lost sheep (or old goats, as some have replied). Some have been found who were members of the 34th at Westover or Pendleton but were sent in cadres to form other Bomb Groups. I've encouraged them to join the 34th BGA but I also realize they may not feel a comradeship to the 34th BGA and, so, may decline to join us. Also, I've received letters from those who were members of the 34th in Mendlesham and

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FROM THE TREASURER'S COMPUTER

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are enthused to find, even after 50 years, that the 34th is ALIVE and growing! And, sadly, I've also received letters from those who are survivors of men who served in the 34th. I thank those of you who have sent me additional sources of names of men who were in the 34th at Blythe or Mendlesham. I'm about out of names to look for and will welcome any additional source of names.

And, speaking of the NEWLY FOUND list, have you also noticed the LIFE MEMBERS who have sent the LIFE MEMBERSHIP dues? The number of LIFE MEMBERS is approaching one-third of our annual membership! I appreciate those who join as LIFE MEMBERS since it means that I don't have to send out yearly membership cards! But, to you who send in yearly dues, I really do appreciate it when you do as the reminder suggests - include a self-addressed envelope.

Cheers to all and MAY GOD ABUNDANTLY BLESS!!

Harold "Hal" Province

8TH A.F.H.S. ANNUAL REUNION

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society's 20th Annual Reunion was held in San Diego - 6th to 11th of October, 1994. The 34th B.G. was represented by Dan Oberg with daughter, Marilie Bomberger, Robert Springer with son, David S. Springer, William L. Paterson, Jack & Nelly Terry and Harold & Genevieve Rutka. We had a total of 1274 in attendance and, from what attendees reported, they were well satisfied at the reunion.

The 21st annual 8th Air Force Historical Society reunion will be held at the Adams Mark Hotel in St. Louis, MO. - 6th to 10th of September, 1995. Those of you who haven't attended an 8th AFHS reunion in the past 10 years might like to attend this one and then go on to the 34th B.G. reunion at Huntsville, Alabama. We will be looking for you at both reunions in September, 1995.

Harold C. Rutka
Vice President, 8th AFHS



7th Sqdn. Sign with Jerry Kincaid on the right. (other unknown).



ROSE'S CORNER

Hello, out there!

We haven't heard from you ladies for quite awhile. Please write! Well, I believe that I may have hit upon an idea that all of you can take advantage of and you will write. Your info will appear in my column and the results can make you happy! Here are my thoughts:

1. I'm a cookbook and doll collector.

2. Are you a collector of any kind? Please write and let everyone know. There are lots of collectors in all of our more than 1,000 readers and here is a way to let them know if you have a similar interest.

I will print your name and what you collect. Thereby, whoever wants to get in touch with you may do so by using our yearly roster and this will further our network and friendships. This can develop into many exchanges of ideas and material. You may have something to sell or to find what you are looking for. Wouldn't this be wonderful? I began collecting cookbooks during wartime and dolls a short time later. We have six children, so it was easy to collect a variety of dolls.

I do hope you will send lists and I'll try to include them in our next issue which will go to press on April 21st. Anything received after that date will go into our September issue. So, Hurry!

As I had promised, here is one of the two recipes sent in by Muggs Sothern, one of our most loyal, delightful members. This is "Crazy Cake" and looks like a very good moist cake. Here goes:

CRAZY CAKE

3 cups sifted flour (all purpose)	1/3 cup cocoa
2 cups sugar	3/4 cup salad oil
2 tsp. baking soda	2 tbsp. vinegar (white)
1 tsp. salt	1 tsp. vanilla
	2 cups water

Sift dry ingredients into ungreased 9"x13" pan. Make 3 wells in dry ingredients. Carefully pour oil in one, vinegar in one and vanilla in the third one. Pour the water over all. Blend thoroughly with fork but DO NOT BEAT.

Bake in a 350 degree oven for 35 to 40 minutes. Cool and sprinkle with powdered sugar. Muggs says that you can make a 9"x9" cake by cutting the ingredients in half.

The chicken recipe will be in our next issue. Thanks, Muggs!

To keep happy, give much, sing often and always pray.

Belated Valentines greetings from us to you!



HELEN WACK - Canfield, OH.

I always look forward to the 34th newsletters and thank you so much for sending them to me. I live with my youngest son, Chris, and family since my husband, John, died and have three grandchildren here who keep bugging me to send you this photo which was among John's war mementos. It is of one of his friends, I think called "Rocky". Maybe if you print it in some future issue someone might just recognize him. I seem to recall that Rocky and John lived in the same quonset hut. Anyway, the picture doesn't mean much to me since John is departed but maybe someone will recognize him.



"Rocky"

ALICE (KENNETH) CHEZEM - Freeport, IL.

It is most likely my fault you never heard from Kenneth. He has been awfully sick the last four years and totally dependent on me. For the last 1-1/2 years he was in a nursing home and passed away 'on' April 10, 1994.

He is greatly missed by his family yet I know he has a special place in heaven. The rest of you "young" men of the 34th will be treated in the same manner. I want to thank you all for the sacrifices you gave to the American people so we can be a free country.

PERCY CASEY - Austin, TX.

I was in two bomb groups, the 34th and a B29 bomb group. It's hard to handle two bomb groups from one coast to the other. I do enjoy hearing from the 34th. In the past I have not seen the names of anyone I know but I will keep on looking. Thanks for keeping me on the mailing list.

GEORGE PERRY - Emporium, PA.

I was sure glad to hear from you. I had written to some of the fellows I knew overseas but I never heard from them. I had a lot of sickness - it seems one thing after another. Sure hoping to God that we have good luck. I want to pay my dues and thank you a lot. God bless you all.

ROBERT COLE - South Bend, IN.

I have just received information regarding our co-pilot, James R. Hanrihan, who died on Oct. 18, 1944. He was a member of Elmer Autry's crew in the 7th Sqdn. He attended several reunions but missed St. Paul because he and Joy were in Hawaii celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. Jim will be sorely missed by everyone and we will keep Jim, Joy and family in our prayers.

GORDON BREEDING - Alpena, MI.

I read Eli's story in MM and decided to look up my flight record. I found that we flew that day, Oct. 17, 1944. This was the 79th mission of the group.

My first mission was to Mondesir, France on May 23rd and my last one was to Hanover, Germany on Dec. 15th. Our first ship, the "Dugan Wagon" was lost on July 24th, 1944.

Virginia L. Bisher - Ozark, MO.

I'm sending this note to tell you that Francis Brooks Bisher passed away on Tuesday, Nov. 29, 1994. He has had leukemia since 1988. He became ill and had an operation for a gall stone - then he began to have organ

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***Don't Forget
To Send Your Dues***

**Mail \$10.00 To: Harold Province
111 Province Lane
Carriere, MS 39426**

NOTES FROM OUR FRIENDS

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failures. He loved to hunt and fish and was deer hunting when he became ill and had to go to the hospital. He had two sons, Stan and Steve, by his first wife.

CLEVELAND ROMERO - Lafayette, LA.

With this note I am enclosing the scholarship forms for the next issue. Personally, I am recovering slowing from the last heart by-pass surgery. I'm being slowed down with a real bad cold.

EDWARD G. BERRY - Benton, AR.

We plan to attend the reunion in Huntsville along with Gerald Holmes, Kivett Ivey and Claude Gibbs along with all the respective wives. Our son, Bob, also hopes to attend.

ELDON L. MUNNIS - Federal Way, WA.

Sorry I couldn't go to the St. Paul reunion but I had an eye retina detach and the doctor wouldn't let me fly. Hope to get to the next one in '95. It might interest you to know that I qualified as a B-24 pilot before I started training in B-29's. Lots of fun. Thanks for all your work.

WILLARD STELLING - Ottawa, IL.

Hope everyone has a good year. It was nice to hear from all of our crew members last Christmas - John Beyer's crew. One member has passed on.

ROBERT P. PATTERSON - New York, NY.

I visited Mendlesham in August of 1994 and, after some difficulty, found the group's monument which revived some memories and was a little emotional. I could not find the pub in Ipswich which was referred to as "The Buncher" back in 1944, and where we used to sing "Ragtime Country Joe" and "Knees Up Mother Brown". Best regards and God Bless.

MAURY ANDERSON - Plymouth, MN.

It was a wonderful experience at the 34th Bomb Group's reunion in St. Paul and renew some acquaintances. My wife and I both enjoyed it. Our pilot of "Old Crow", Luke Richardson, and our flight engineer, Don Benscoter and his wife were there also. Don and I hadn't seen Luke for almost 50 years since this was the first reunion any of

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B-17 on Mission

us had attended. Luke and the Benscoters stayed with us since we live in a suburb of the Twin Cities. We had a chance to show them around our green and clean cities and countryside.

R. SCOTT SCHUETZ - Lovettsville, VA.

My father, Robert C. Schuetz, flew as engineer on Jim Sheridan's crew on which Milt Braveman was navigator. Dad passed over in 1991. When asked about it he used to love to talk about the 8th AAF. He was a great guy. I have no memories of not hearing about the men and machines of the mighty 8th.

He was diagnosed with MS about age 30. By the time he died he was pretty well ravaged physically, but not mentally. He showed everyone he came in contact with the meaning of esprit de corps. He, of course, learned and was infused with this as a young man while in the Air Corps. He carried it, used it and exhibited it to his grave.

His best friend, Bob Jones, ended his eulogy at Arlington Cemetery by saying, "Well, Robert, I guess you never knew that your last mission would be your toughest one".

EUGENE J. LETALIEN - Vacaville, CA.

Sorry for the delay in sending in my dues. I pulled tours with both the 91st and 96th bomb groups and retired after 29-1/2 years, still on flight status. I've had a few hurdles to overcome but presently doing well!

DAVID L. TOMACCIO - Jenkintown, PA.

Thanks for taking the effort to seek me out. I have to work on my memory to bring back those "Mendlesham Days" which were not so many for me as for others in the group. Nevertheless, I feel I was fortunate to have shared

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in those long ago events and to have come through to this day in good health and in our great country.

MERLE E. WILSON - Independence, KS.

I still have a lot of thoughts of the good old 34th. I was in the 7th Sqdn. and still keep in contact with Wes Franklin, Henry Jurgens and Steve Bialas. I was transferred to the 486th bomb Group for the build-up for the ETO. I have hopes of attending one of your future reunions.

GORDON BREEDING - Alpena, MI.

Walter Sturdivan and his wife, Lois, stopped by to see us in Sept. They sure enjoyed themselves. They saw some nice sights here in Michigan. Walter and I sure talked over old times. I wish we had more time to show them our state.

RALPH BUSH - Springfield, IL.

Sorry we missed St. Paul but we enjoyed England and France instead. Hope to see you all in Huntsville.



Partial crew of "CAPT. JOHN SILVER" Kneeling L. to R.: Reedy Sears & Robt. Smith. Standing L. to R.: Walt McAllister, Richard Whited & Eli Baldea.

ROY TAVASTI - Pismo Beach, CA.

Kate and I both regret missing the St. Paul reunion but we ran into a schedule conflict with my flying class get-together at Dayton. Unfortunately, the same problem is facing us with respect to the '95 Huntsville reunion. Our oldest granddaughter is getting married and Kate seems to think the wedding has priority over the 34th. Enough said! So now we are setting our sights on '96!

CARL FREYSINGER - Cable, OH.

Thanks again for all the work you do so all the rest of us can enjoy ourselves. The reunion has become the "Highlight" of our lives. How wonderful it is to see all the ones that have become so dear to us.

HARRY McMILLION - Norfolk, VA.

I don't know whether to offer you congratulations or condolences. I am sure that with the new job as president and also editor of MM, you will be quite busy.

Carrie and I both got a kick from the first paragraph of "Rose's Corner". Rose, you'll have to tell Eli that when one is separated from the Service or retires, one is supposed to give up authority and not require others to stand at attention or salute.

Noticed from MM that quite a good turnout was on hand for the reunion. It seems that it is not in the cards for me to attend, for every time I make plans it seems something pops up and I can't make it.

HERB ROY - Marco Island, FL.

Please note in MM that James M. Glass, pilot, passed away on Dec. 20, 1994. The nurse on his floor at the hospital told me that he had the picture of the crew by our plane with him and showed it to everyone. By that time he had sorted out those things which he deemed important in his life. We are glad that he thought of us as he has always been in our thoughts for 50 years.

DON BENSCOTER - Lapwai, ID.

I enjoyed the last issue and appreciate your using the photographs we sent you. Anderson and Richardson will be surprised to see that they made print. Best wishes to all for the New Year.

BOB GAY - Paso Robles, CA.

The picture on the back page of the December issue was taken shortly after Bill Creer assumed command. As his adjutant, it was my duty to arrange various functions for

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NOTES FROM OUR FRIENDS

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him to meet as many of the officers and men as possible in order to build morale and show what the new commander was like. Just minutes after I met him, in the wee hours of the morning, I knew he was just what we needed. We have remained good friends and do talk and visit regularly.

MARGE ("MARIA" = inside joke) BLOCZYNSKI - Marshfield, WI.

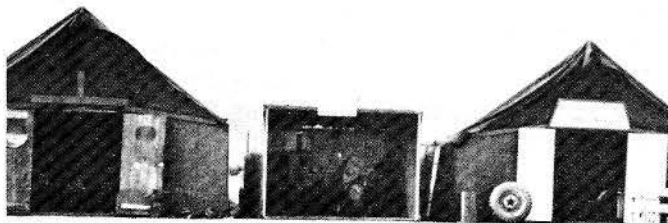
We enjoyed the reunion in St. Paul very much. Always so nice to see all the old friends and make new ones. It is wonderful that so many more people are getting into the 34th B.G. Assn. As usual, everyone involved with getting it together did a magnificent job and deserve a big "Thank You".

We had some sadness after the reunion. John's youngest brother, Tom, died very unexpectedly of a heart attack on Sept. 30th. It was a big shock to all of us as he was only 57 years old. They live only one block from our house. With faith and prayers we will see each other through the holidays.

WILLIAM E. CREER - Las Vegas, NV.

Another year and another chance. Particularly you fine folks in the President's chair. Congratulations! And carry on smartly. Vivienne joins me in sending our very best wishes to all for the holidays and the COMING YEAR! Sorry we could not make the reunion this year. We were committed to attend a University of San Diego Parent Orientation for our granddaughter, Dede.

I appreciated the MM. The pictures of attendants were very interesting. However, regarding the picture on the back page, I am a classmate of "Wackwitz" and that doesn't look like Wackwitz to me. (Editors note: See our "Clarifications" section in this issue and Bob Gay's letter above. Sorry about that!)



The maintenance area - Center tent had a generator which had to have oil changed while running. It would not start if shut off.

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JOE WONG - Alameda, CA.

Congratulations to you as president of the Assn. for '95, the Chinese calendar year of the Boar. January 31st is Chinese New Year. "Gung Hay Fat Choy" to everyone.

Marilyn and I really enjoyed ourselves at St. Paul. What a beautiful city. Meeting the first timers brought back fond memories of our first time, in '93 at Little Rock.

CARL O. NICHOLS - Fresno, CA.

I am sorry we were unable to attend the last reunion. It sounds like all had a wonderful time.

Just after the 8th AF reunion in San Diego we had Roger Freeman here in Fresno to sign his new book "The Mighty Eight". I was so surprised to hear Roger tell of events that went on in the group. He is really a historian of the 8th AF.

We hope to make the next reunion.

BASIL GAUMER - Greenville, IL.

We had a great time in St. Paul. Little Rock was our first one and my wife wasn't caring about going. We went to St. Paul so the other day I said that I guess we wouldn't go to Huntsville as we have been there and my wife said, "What do you mean - we're not going?" So I guess, if we stay well, we will see you in Huntsville. "HA".

C. EDWARD HAYES - Salisbury, MD.

I enjoy reading the Mendlesham Memories. It brings back some old memories. The last meeting I attended was with the 8th AF reunion in Ohio. At my age I'm still keeping busy, involved in too much. Not many of us left from our original B17 crew. I still keep in touch with those left.

BILLIE ROUTH - Bethany, MO.

Just a note about Clarence Squires. He has had another stroke and Dr. says his brain is dying. He can't remember what he's eaten but remembers all his buddies from Mendlesham. I read it to him when it comes and he enjoys hearing from the men. He wanted me to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. His address is: Crestview Home, Box 430, Bethany, MO. 64424.

CHARLES EVANS - Sacramento, CA.

I enjoyed my first reunion at Little Rock. What are the chances of a reunion somewhere on the west coast?

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JOY HANRIHAN - Auburn, CA.

I'm so sorry to have to tell you at this time of year that I lost my Jim. We were in Hawaii and he was snorkeling with friends when he had a heart attack and drowned. We were there celebrating our 50th anniversary. It happened Oct. 18, 1994.

We had 50 wonderful years. I hope you will continue to send me the Mendlesham Memories. I would love to be able to still come to the reunions.

YVONNE HUDECEK - Eureka Springs, AR.

We found out Tom has Alzheimers so this will probably be our last year of membership. We so enjoyed our first experience meeting the group members at Little Rock and planned on attending this past year's reunion but it wasn't possible. Keep up the good work. I will be looking forward to the news editions you put out during the years. Thanks.

SANFORD C. COLE - Simsboro, LA.

Enclosed are my membership dues. I was a top turret gunner on H. Vick's crew in the 7th Sqdn. I do intend to be present at the next reunion.

PAUL MILLS - So. Windsor, CT.

I was glad to hear from you. I didn't know the assn.

existed. Yes, I was one of the first to get into the 34th, 18th Sqdn., early in 1941 at Westover, MA. I would like very much to hear more from you.

JOHN E. REILLY - Ocean City, MD.

I have every intention of attending the next reunion at Huntsville. Perhaps I will get to see a lot of my old friends.

LUKE RICHARDSON - Tampa, FL.

I certainly enjoyed the reunion. It was one of the highlights of my life. I only wish I had found out about it several years before. My engineer, Don Benscoter, and radio operator, Andy Anderson, were also there. I hadn't seen either of them in 49-1/2 years. I had, however, talked with them on the phone at Xmas each year.

Hope to see everyone at Huntsville. That's getting on our playing field.

WILLIAM SHELTON - Cambridge, MA.

I have enjoyed reading Mendlesham Memories over the years but I would like to terminate my subscription at this time. I guess I prefer to remember us as we were - rather than as we are!

Continued on page 10



The B-24 "HELLS BELLE"

NOTES FROM OUR FRIENDS

Continued from page 9

BOB SIMPSON - El Cerrito, CA.

Sorry to be so slow. A few health problems in '94 (80 yrs. old in Feb. '95) I was an old man in the Group, nearly 27 yrs. old going into flying school in Nov., 1941. You guys are catching up on me.

JOSEPH R. DuFRESNE - Parker, FL.

I was in the 34th B.G. when it was formed in 1941 at Westover AFB. In Jan., '42 I was transferred to a new group, the 303rd B.G., at Boise, ID. The unit went to England and was stationed at Molesworth. I retired from the Air Force in 1963 as a captain.

I am a life member of the 303rd B.G. Assn. I would like to correspond with whoever is looking for a DuFresne.

HOLLIE A. WILKES - Biloxi, MS.

I was among the original members of the 34th B.G. when it was spun out of the 2nd. B.G. and located at Westover AFB. I was Sqd. Cpl. of Guard for the 7th Sqdn. on 7 Dec. '41. Our available combat aircraft on that day was one PT-17 and one B18A! Our Sqdn. Commander was Capt. Curtis LeMay with a back-up of Capt. Sutherland.

I joined the cadre of the 449th B.G. at Tucson and ended up in the first B-24 group assigned to the 15th A.F. in Dec. '43. We have an active group association and meet every 18 months.

PAUL SHULL - Raytown, MO.

The 1994 34th B.G. reunion at St. Paul is over and, as usual, the convention committee did a super job. Not only was the PX a nice room close to the registration area, but also around the pool. Such a great spot! We appreciated all the good help carrying in the merchandise to the PX room. Also, a big, big thanks to Beryl and Paul Anderson for spending time each day helping us! Our success was all due to good help and the members' support. Wally Brauks and Doris also spent time helping, giving us lunch and coffee breaks. A big thanks to them also! All in all - it was a good convention and we are looking forward to Huntsville in 1995.

OLIVER BOLDUC - Chaplin, CT.

I haven't seen any articles pertaining to the work done by the 34th flying into Austria to assist in flying slave laborers back to their home lands. I feel those involved should write of what took place, what they observed there, etc. I was one who did go, saw the long lines of laborers



Crew #60, Front L. to R.: R. Turpin, M. Phillips, B. Corbin & J. Clemens. Rear L. to R.: W. Scott, L. Underwood, L. Wright, J. Blair & A. Turtanich.

who came to be flown home, the destruction of homes, businesses, streets, etc. There are stories to be told. Someone, who is a better writer than I, should write about it.

HENLEY L. DAVENPORT - Newberry, SC.

Yes, indeed, I am one of the "Old Goats" that took overseas training with the reactivated 34th at Blythe, California - later stationed at Mendlesham, England and, subsequently, interned in Sweden. I am curious as to how you got my name and current address.

CHESTER R. CASEY - Houston, TX.

I am the man you have been looking for the last fourteen years. I did serve with the 34th B.G. in Mendlesham, England.

JOE W. SANDERS - Plainview, TX.

Yes, I was a member of the 34th Bomb Group in Westover and Pendleton air bases. I was transferred to Ecuador in Feb., 1943. Thanks for the information as I have wondered about the group.

ROBERT SHEETZ - Cedar Rapids, IA.

I am a former member of the 34th B.G. at Mendlesham. I'm pleased to hear of your assn. I've had no previous information regarding it.

Continued on page 11

NOTES FROM OUR FRIENDS

Continued from page 10

GERARD E. NADEAU - Punta Gorda, FL.

I am the man you are looking for. I did serve with the 34th B.G. at Langley Field, VA. in 1940. I did not go overseas because I was discharged in 1943 on disability.

When I was in Little Rock last year, just before your reunion there, I happened to read my son-in-law's Air Force magazine and saw your notice about it. I wanted to attend but my plans had to change because my daughter (a doctor) was moving to Louisville, KY. at that same time and I had to help them move. I am very much interested in attending your 1995 reunion at Huntsville, AL. and hope to be hearing from you again soon.

DAVID F. GOULD - Newtown, PA.

I am very likely the David Gould your letter asked about. I only say very likely because I was never in Mendlesham, England and I don't remember the 34th Bomb Group, as such. However, I did find in an old file a Pay and Allowance Account for me from the 34th Bomb Group and I was in England for just about a year from D-Day. I was in the 36th Bomb Squadron at Alconbury, near Huntingdon but this is fairly far from Mendlesham.

ROBERT HESS - Omaha, NE.

I'm saddened to inform you of the loss of two of my crew members, both of whom were members of the 34th Bomb Group Assn. They both passed away in November, 1994. They were James N. (Mo) Morlock and Francis B. Bisher.

DEXTER JORDAN - Huntersville, NC.

Beulah and I enjoyed the St. Paul reunion very much. I left Willow Run factory as crew chief on a B-24 and went through modification center at St. Paul so I was glad to be back after 51 years.

We had a very good holiday season and hope everyone did. We appreciate all the cards and pictures we received. It was great to hear from so many of you. Now we are looking forward to Huntsville.

LEONARD L. WALTER - Tucson, AZ.

I received your letter the other day and am writing to inform you that I was a member of the 34th B.G. I completed my tour in England flying 26 missions in B-17's and was discharged in 1945 as a 1st Lt. Bombardier.



The ground crew living tents with lights and radios in every one.

CLARIFICATIONS

We have been informed by Bob Gay that the names shown under the picture on the back page of the December issue were incorrect. They should have read L. to R.: Bob Gay, Maj. William Heath, Col. William Creer and Red Cross Director, Tommy Thompson.

We must apologize but we print what we get. Whoever sent in the photograph identified the third person as Col. Wackwitz. We do not profess to be able to identify everybody in all pictures so we do rely on those who send in the photographs.

Bob Gay also mentions that Bill Heath was a veteran of World War I and the oldest man on the base. Shortly after that picture was taken Heath returned to the U.S. and died in 1946.

Joseph Bei writes to tell us that he was one of the trumpet players in the photo on page 23 of the December issue. His face is half hidden by the sax man in front of him. To his right (left as you look at the picture) is the lead trumpet, a medic called Lee. That's all he can remember.

Dexter Jordan also writes that the pianist shown in that photo is Paul N. Teare whose last known address was in Greenwood, DE. He'd appreciate any update on Paul.

Don't Forget To Send In Your Dues

Mail \$10.00 to: Harold Province
111 Province Lane
Carriere, MS 39426

NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

From the EIGHTH AIR FORCE MUSEUM VOLUNTEER ASSN., INC. we have the following:

The 8th Air Force Museum, Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, established in 1979 and dedicated to preserve and present the Air Force's Bombardment heritage, is expanding its facility to cover this vast history and we ask for your help in making it happen.

To make this expansion happen we are raising funds to renovate the facility that the 8th Air Force Museum will expand its displays and archives into. Those individuals that donate \$25.00 or more will be enrolled in the 8th Air Force Museum Friendship program which entitles the friend to 20% off any gift shop purchase (excluding the hand-carved mahogany desk top models). Those individuals donating \$1,000.00 or more will be placed on the museum's Benefactor Board.

Those interested in being a friend of the 8th Air Force Museum, please contact: Ms. Lee Birchfield, Friends of the 8th Air Force Museum, P.O. Box 10, Barksdale AFB, LA. 71110.

A Mr. Roger W. Armstrong has written a book "U.S.A. THE HARD WAY", an autobiography of a B-17 crew member. It is the story of the author's training, flying missions over Germany, being shot down and captured by the Germans and incarceration in a prison camp. It is a softbound book, 8-1/2"x5-1/2" and the price is \$16.00. Anyone interested can write to: Roger W. Armstrong, 9641 Skylark Blvd., Garden Grove, CA. 92641-2631.

We have recently been informed that two of our group's couples have recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversaries. They are:

Wayne & La Verne Howarter who celebrated on October 17, 1994.

Harold & Genevieve Rutka who celebrated on November 14, 1994.

CONGRATULATIONS TO BOTH COUPLES!!

MOVING ?????

If you are moving, or have moved, get your change of address in so that you won't miss the next issue of **Mendiesham Memories**. Mailing labels are printed about Feb. 1, May 1, Aug. 1, and Nov. 1 for the March, June, September and December issues. Send your change of address to:

HAL PROVINCE
111 PROVINCE LANE
CARRIERE, MS. 39426

before the labels are printed to ensure the correct arrival of the MEMORIES!!



Standing L. to R.: Goy, Heikkila, Dotson, Bennadict, Gallardo & Becker. Kneeling L. to R.: Valiando, Millard, Scharmen & Friedman.

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF WORLD WAR II COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE would like stories from individuals of their experiences during WWII. They have an 18 page questionnaire on which you can detail your experiences. It is titled "ARMY SERVICE EXPERIENCES QUESTIONNAIRE" Keep in mind that, during WWII, we were a part of the army. If you're interested in passing on your story write to:

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF WORLD II
COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE
1213 Jefferson Davis Highway
Crystal Gateway Four, Suite 702-D
Crystal City, VA. 22202-4303

and ask them to send you their questionnaire.

From Lonnie Crook we hear that the 8th Air Force Museum at Barksdale Air Force Base will soon be expanded from 3,000 sq. ft. to 20,000 sq. ft. as a result of a \$50,000.00 grant from the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau. When finished, the Barksdale Museum will present the history of aerial bombardment, which has been influential in deciding the outcomes of wars from World War I to the Persian Gulf.

Lonnie also makes mention that our B-17 painting is still on display, there on loan for an indefinite period of time since March of 1992. The agreement with the base must be kept on hand if ever we want to reclaim the picture, for any reason.

ADDRESS CHANGES

(As of 1-27-95)

<u>LAST NAME</u>	<u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>ORGN.</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>ZIPCD</u>
ARMSTRONG	EMIL R.	7	1333 SOUTH QUAIL RUN	WATKINS,	CO.	80127
BERRY	BOB	7A	604 MILLER COVE	BENTON,	AR.	72013
BROFFT	KATHRYN	7	444 ANDERSON FERRY RD. APT. 6	CINCINNATI,	OH.	45238
CHAMBERS	JAMES A.	391	22 WYNNE DRIVE	ASHEVILLE,	NC.	28806
DE ROCCO	CLEMENT J.	7	12450 POCONO PLACE	APPLE VALLEY,	CA.	92308
FRANKLIN	WESLEY	18	7851 HARBACH BLVD.	CLIVE,	IA.	50325
GARFINKEL	BERNARD	391	P. O. BOX 668	DONA ANA,	NM.	88032
GRAHAM	ALAN A.	18	P. O. BOX 99	BRYN MAWR,	CA.	92318
GREEN	GERALD O.		4046 LAPWAT ROAD	LEWISTON,	ID.	83501
HOLLOWELL	JAMES S.	7LM	1725 GENESED ROAD	PASO ROBLES,	CA.	93446
ICE	WILLIAM B. JR.	4	1663 GARRETT'S PRAIRIE RD	WEST FRANKFORT,	IL.	62896
MARTIN	REX HUGH	18 LM	6121 PENINSULA POINT DR.	ATHENS,	TX.	75751
MOORE	BETTY	A	100 ROCKIN J ROAD	MAIDEN,	NC.	28650
MORRELL	EILEEN	4A	3400 N.ALMA SCHOOL RD.APT.2008	CHANDLER,	AZ.	85224
NICHOLS	CLARENCE L.	7	7447 FARM 9 SOUTH	WASKOM,	TX.	75692
ONESCHAK	WILLIAM F.	4	8454 TRAPPERS COURT	FISHERS,	IN.	46038
POULUS	ARTHUR	391LM	71 SPRING ROAD	NAHANT,	MA.	01908
RAGAN	ROGER L.	7A	165 STATE STREET	MEDINA,	NY.	14103
REAGAN	WILLIAM N. JR.	4	1853 SAN PABLO DRIVE	SAN MARCOS,	CA.	92069
TROUP	JAMES H.	7	2800 KELLER DR. APT. 300	TUSTIN,	CA.	92680
WRIGHT	THOMAS B.		717 MURPHYSBORO LAKE RD.	MURPHYSBORO,	IL.	62966

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

(311 As of 1-23-95)

<u>LAST NAME</u>	<u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>ORGN.</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>ZIPCD</u>
BERGOLD	ROBERT W.	18	2725 MAYAGUANA COURT	PUNTA GORDA,	FL.	33950
BERNARDO	ALFRED	18	1608 BRIDGE STREET	NEW CUMBERLAND,	PA.	17070
BRYANT	ARNOLD M.	4	22 MONROE DRIVE	HOOKSETT,	NH.	03106
DAVIS	ROBERT B.	7	P. O. BOX 2044	HUNTSVILLE,	AL.	35804
DOMINO	JOSEPH F.	7	1336 TUNNEL ROAD	PERKASIE,	PA.	18944
INGROUILLE	ROBERT L.	391	4731 4TH STREET	KENOSHA,	WI.	53144
JACKSON	KENNETH G.	7	6609 CHERRY DRIVE	KNOXVILLE,	TN.	37939
LOWER	LAMAR	18	439 DIVISION STREET	UNION CITY,	MI.	49094
MACIEL	EARL J.	391	59 LIVERPOOL STREET	WARWICK,	RI.	02886
McKAY	ROBERT E.	391A	2518 EAST NORWAY LAKE ROAD	LAPEER,	MI.	48446
MEEDER	PAUL R.	7	246 CENTER DRIVE	CHICORA,	PA.	16025
REPOFF	FREDERICK A.	4	298 SCRANTON STREET	AURORA,	CO.	80011
THORPE	W. HAL	391	644 EAST 1950 SOUTH	BOUNTIFUL,	UT.	84010
WIRTHLIN	GERALDINE S.	A	480 SOUTH 200 WEST NO. 17	SAINT GEORGE,	UT.	84770

NEWLY FOUND

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ORGN.	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIPCD
ANDREWS	LLOYD R.	W	65 QUEETS STREET	STEILACOOM,	WA.	98388
AXLEY	JOHN L.		1008 W. SANDY RIDGE ROAD	MONROE,	NC.	28112
BARR	GLEN D.	4	104 E. WOODSTOCK STREET	NEWCASTLE,	WY.	82701
BICHOWSKY	E. ROBERT	7	4431 CARLIN PLACE	LA MESA,	CA.	91941
BROWN	GEORGE W.	391	182 EAST VAN BUREN	WINSLOW,	AR.	72959
CASEY	CHESTER R.		1425 MURRAY BAY DRIVE	HOUSTON,	TX.	77080
CIARLELLI	JOHN H.	W	1105 WESAT WOODS ROAD	HAMDEN,	CT.	06518
DAVENPORT	HENLEY L.		3123 PRISCILLA STREET	NEWBERRY,	SC.	29108
DRAKE	ERNEST E.	W	5801 LEWOOD DRIVE	AUSTIN,	TX.	78745
DUBE	RENE A.	HQB-W	421 TYLER	McALLEN,	TX.	78503
DUBOFSKY	BERNARD	W	4230 93RD AVENUE S.E.	MERCER ISLAND,	WA.	98040
DUFRESNE	JOSEPH R.	W	1130 LOFTIN STREET	PARKER,	FL.	32404
EVANS	REESE G. SR	4	53 STOWBRIDGE AVE. P.O.BOX 241	MT. TABOR,	NJ.	07878
GOULD	DAVID F.		8 TALL OAKS LANE	NEWTOWN,	PA.	18940
GREENSPAN	JACOB	HQB-W	14 MANET CIRCLE	CHESTNUT HILL,	MA.	02167
MAINVILLE	NANCY	7A	320 DIXON STREET	KAUKAUNA,	WI.	54123
MILLIGAN	FRANCIS S.	493	ONE EDENDALE DRIVE	LINCOLN,	RI.	02865
MILLS	PAUL A.	18-W	322 SLATER STREET	SOUTH WINDSOR,	CT.	06074
MADEAU	GERARD E.	4-W	660 COMO COURT	PUNTA GORDA,	FL.	33950
SANDERS	JOE W.	W	306 S.E. 6TH STREET	PLAINVIEW,	TX.	79072
SHEETZ	ROBERT	7 & 4	1317 HERTZ DRIVE S.E.	CEDAR RAPIDS,	IA.	52403
WALEZAK	BEN J.	4BS & 306-W	885 GONZAGA LANE	FLORISSANT,	MO.	63031
WALTER	LEONARD L.		5462 W. FLYING CIRCLE STREET	TUCSON,	AZ.	86713
WILKES	HOLLIE A.	7-W	424 COVE DRIVE	BILOXI,	MS.	39531
WILKIE	EVERETT C.	34CCTS	3401 TIMMONS LANE NO. 31	HOUSTON,	TX.	77027



TAPS

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIPCD	DIED
BISHER	FRANCIS B.	4	288 N. TANGLEWOOD DRIVE	OZARK,	MO.	65721 11-29-94
BREWI	ALBERT		390 JACKSON AVENUE	MINEOLA,	NY.	11501 1993
BRUNS	CADWALLER C.			CHARLOTTE,	NY.	1984
BURTON	EUGENE G.	4				
CHEZEM	KENNETH J.	18	34 ARCADE COURT	FREEPORT,	IL	61023 4-10-94
FUELLING	RICHARD	7LM	227 BRIARWOOD LANE	DECATUR,	IN.	46733 3-27-94
GLASS	JAMES M.	4	4055 TOWNSHIP ROAD	COLLEGEVILLE,	PA.	19426 12-28-94
HANRIHAN	JAMES R.	7	6261 BARBARA LANE	AUBURN,	CA.	95602
HOLTZ	MONROE T.	18	66791 BALK ROAD	STURGIS,	MI.	49091 12-05-94
HUDSON	WILLIAM	7	(KILLED IN ACTION)(KIA)			9-22-44
JENKINS	HARRY J.		7876 CAMINO HUERTA	SAN DIEGO,	CA.	92212 12-21-93
KIEC	STANLEY	391	60 REIMAN STREET	BUFFALO,	NY.	14206 11-25-92
LAWRENCE	LEONARD L. SR.			PRAIRIEBURG,	IA.	4-09-63
MORLOCK	JAMES	7LM	46 KENNEDY DRIVE	FAIRLESS HILLS,	PA.	19030 NOV. '94
PALMER	JAY	7	(KIA)			9-22-44
POTSBY	RALPH		262 SCOTLAND ROAD	NORWICH,	CT.	06360 FEB. '74
ROBERTS	CHARLES	7	(KIA)			9-22-44
SHAW	AVON D.	7	3515 92ND STREET	LUBBOCK,	TX.	79423 1-03-95
TANTES	JOSEPH H.		1133 GOLFVIEW PLACE	COLUMBUS,	OH.	43119 8-17-92
WALSH	HOMER P.		R2. BOX 15	POPLAR BLUFF,	MO.	63901
WETHERBEE	OWEN L.		24436 HANOVER STREET	DEARBORN HEIGHTS,	MI.	48125 7-11-88

SALUTE TO THE 34TH BOMB GROUP

by Gertrude Martin
(Jim Martin's Mother)

I saw them as they walked the paths
By the ivy-covered walls;
And I smiled at their dear faces
As they entered the hallowed halls.

They came from the town and country
Ready to face the world.
How could they know that soon they
Would see the battle flags unfurled.

They laughed at life on the campus green
Where no bonds of duty led.
They were just barely turned eighteen;
Their dreams still lay ahead.

But when they heard the desperate cry,
"Pearl Harbor is no more",
They laid their books and pens aside
And marched away to war.

I smiled through my tears as my own dear son
Walked through the door alone.
"Don't cry", he said, "I must do my part
And I'll soon be coming home.

Then I saw them not as boys but men.
Their fun and games were over.
They turned their planes and lifted their wings
Toward the pure white cliffs of Dover.

Through the darkest days and sleepless nights
Those brave young airmen flew.
God answered our prayers and he led the flight
As they climbed up into the blue.

They fought for country, God and home
When they answered freedom's call
The enemy was at the door -
The flag must never fall.

Those bomber squadrons gave their best.
We thank you for them, Oh, God;
And for those who sleep in a foreign land
Deep beneath the sod.

Our own dear son came home at last.
God forbid such wars hereafter!
Then the hallowed halls will echo again
With the sounds of soft young laughter.

WHEN??

by M.A. Wegener, 8 July, 1944

When will our hearts be gay again?
When will we comprehend
The agony of the present day?
I'm asking you, my friend.

When will we sleep serene again?
When will the bombings cease?
Against the blackout of the night
Our souls are far from ease.

How long ere yet must this go on?
Is there a day of peace
To which we all can look as one,
And find much joy and rest?

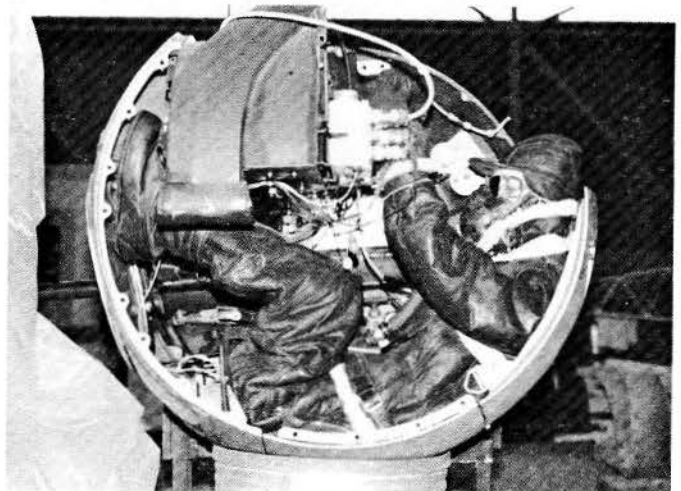
I'm asking you - pray tell me this -
Will wars forever end?
Or do we look without much hope
To years of peace - and then -

Another war perhaps will come,
Too soon, too soon, indeed!
Our sons who yet are infants small
Will learn what we have feared.

We're fighting now so this won't be.
We know our cause is just.
Our aims, our purposes are one,
With God's help we'll succeed.

We'll crush the force of evil men.
We'll make the scoundrels pay.
They'll fall in sad dejection
Before the Allied fray.

That time is soon; that day is near.
Our forces move in splendor.
With Great Jehovah on our side
We'll make the foe surrender!



Ball Turret Gunner's position on display



Then and Now



GLENN MILLARD



1944



1994

LOUIS FOURNIER



1944



1993

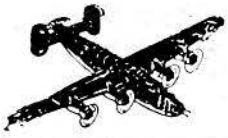
RICHARD H. EDWARDS



1943



1993



Then and Now



FREDERICK SCHOCH



1945



1990

RUSSELL S. PAULNOCK

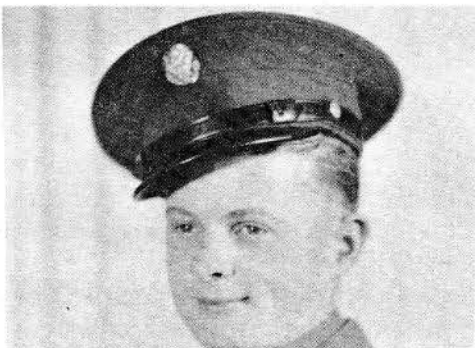


1944

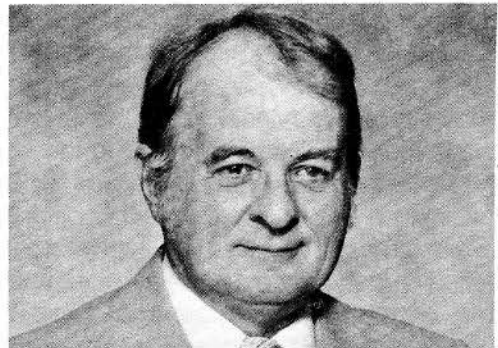


1994

BILL YOTHMENT



1944



1994



INTRODUCTION TO OPERATIONS

by John T. Lyons

We arrived in the ETO via the north Atlantic route, Goose Bay, Labrador, Greenland and Iceland, landing at Valley, Wales ATC Base. We ferried over a brand new unpainted B-17G with the guns still crated. Our next stop was an RAF base west of London where we were to receive pre-combat training on the "way it was" by Eighth Air Force veterans who had survived their tour of duty.

Buzz bombs, jets and rocket planes? We thought our instructors were a bunch of flak happy screwballs giving us the left handed monkey wrench routine. At first we didn't actually believe them. They acted a bit on the weird side which we subsequently learned to understand as we achieved as many missions as they had.

Bovington was a permanent RAF facility and Beatty Hall was where we were quartered. The structures were one-storied brick barracks with air raid shelters between barracks. These shelters were half underground and half above ground. The first night, after four air raid alarms and dashes to the shelter, we stayed in the barracks and continued to sleep.

The next morning we attended classes in temporary one-story wooden buildings. We were introduced to flak aprons and flak helmets by a veteran instructor who lectured from a desk in front of the classroom. The air raid siren didn't phase our instructor at all as he continued to lecture. When the jeep horn sounded, probably indicating imminent danger, all hell broke loose! There was an explosion and the building swayed. The instructor dismissed the class while in a mid-air dive under the desk accompanied by several flak suits. We departed every way possible - window, doors, etc. Looking up, we were introduced to our first buzzbomb about seventy-five feet overhead being chased by a fighter. The initial buzzbomb had exploded in a nearby field decapitating, we hoped, many brussel sprouts. We then came to the horrifying realization that they were not joking about the jets and rocket fighters.

We were getting a little leery of these lectures introducing us to the way it was in combat over Europe. The next day we were in the same classroom with a Bombardier lecturing on bombs. We got only as far as incendiaries. The instructor dropped a small one to see if it was live. It was!! Sparks showered everywhere! We exited the classroom faster than we did the day before, but not before I acquired three pinhead incendiary burns through the trouser leg of my pants.

M.M. Page 18

While we could not get to London because of the buzzbombs, we could visit Whatford, the western terminus of the London Underground System. In the Whatford park we met London children who had been evacuated to the country for safety from London bombings. The children would ask if we were flying "Ops" (missions). We were having a difficult time surviving Bovington, but survive we did to become the first B-17 to join the 34th Bomb Group.

THE "GOTTA HAVER" STORY

by John Doronsky

This is a brief story about our crew and plane, "Gotta Haver". Paul Roescher, our pilot, wrote to June Haver in Hollywood and asked for a sexy picture. She mailed us a large photo and our crew chief, Bruce Sothern, attached it to the nose with big red letters beneath "GOTTA HAVER".

We flew 30 very exciting missions that the movie "Memphis Belle" couldn't hold a candle to. We were shot at from the ground and air on every mission, crash landed in England and spent two weeks in the "Flak Shack" at Southport, England. Bruce told me at our Las Vegas reunion that he and the ground crew spent many hours patching up holes and replacing wings and engines on our aircraft after each mission.

The mission I most vividly recall was when we had two engines shot out forcing us to leave the protective bomber squadron. We ejected all of our guns and heavy ammo to lighten the plane. We had no radio equipment to contact England and had to rely on our navigator to "shoot the stars" in order to get us back. We lost our third engine over France and limped over the channel losing altitude rapidly. We made it back to a fighter base and crash landed.

On our 30th mission over Stendahl, Germany, we were hit by flak on our bombing run. The plane was burning badly and Paul ordered everyone to jump. I was captured by the SS and put into a jail near Stendahl. After about seven days I escaped with about ten other airmen. Paul Roescher was one of them and he was badly burned about the face. The only medication given him was to wrap toilet paper around his entire face and head.

We made it back to the U.S. lines and eventually returned to the States. While I was in England I played in the band called "The Jive Bombers". We played at the enlisted's and Officer's dances in Mendlesham and other nearby bomber bases.

Although it has been 50 years since we flew I feel like it was just yesterday with an experience I will never forget.

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MEMORIES

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"TEX" RIFE - 1944

by "Pete Gray"

"Tex" Rife was one of the technicians down on the 7th Sqdn.'s flight line - an instrument specialist. He was rather small of stature with sandy hair and a perpetual grin on a somewhat scraggly face. However, he seemed to have a rather arrogant attitude about him and was just a bit intolerant of the other mechanics, much the way an older brother would act towards his kid sister. Some said all Texans were like that. It seemed to be just a part of their nature. Others blamed this attitude on the fact that he was "regular army" - in other words, a career soldier.

Now all regular army soldiers seemed to look down on these war-time "draftees" as if they were intruders in what they considered to be their own little private domain - someone to be endured for the well-known "duration and six months", but no more. This was brought home to us every payday when, according to Army regulations, all regular army personnel were paid "first". The war-time "draftees" had to wait and then follow in alphabetical order.

And, so, when this notable day arrived, "Tex" would stand back until we "draftees" finished shuffling around trying to find our proper place in line. Then he would step

up and take his position in front of everyone else. And, once he received his money, he would immediately make his way back to the barracks. There he would set up several foot lockers and blankets in one corner in preparation for the inevitable payday crap game. This seemed to be a tradition with those in the regular army but the civilian soldiers almost ignored the custom. Now "Tex" was not only a career soldier - he was also a career gambler. He often said he would rather shoot craps than eat and frequently did. And he almost always won.

However, on our last payday at Blythe, California, before the 34th left for overseas movement, the usual game took a slightly different turn. This time a "G.I." from the Anti-Aircraft unit stationed some six miles down the road, joined in the game. He was part Indian and needed no introduction to the game. And - he was no amateur.

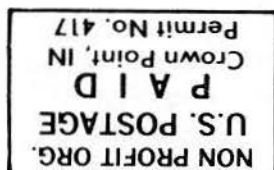
The game went on into the night while most of us slept quite undisturbed by the muffled voices of the participants down at the end of the barracks. Once in a while, though, the stillness would be broken by a profane exclamation as some made, or failed to make, a point! The Indian proved to be more than a match for "Tex" and the others in the game. When they broke up at dawn he had won all their money, including even their small change. "Tex" was quite embarrassed by this turn of events and for several days afterwards, went around muttering under his breath, "That damned half-breed must have been cheating".

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Ken Jackson

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



MEMORIES

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The 34th left about a week later and, after a long train ride across the country, we arrived at Boston, Mass., our POE. Our stay there, however, was quite short - in a few days we were marching up the gangplank of this large, sinister looking, troop ship. But once aboard, "Tex" managed to borrow \$10.00 and immediately got a crap game started in one corner of the large room we were assigned as sleeping quarters.

Once the game began it never stopped. It went on continuously, night and day, for almost nine days! It only ended when we docked at Liverpool, England.

But this time the result was different. The Indian, of course, didn't make the trip and "Tex" was back up to his usual form. He proved to be almost unbeatable and many gave up trying to recover their losses. As we prepared to disembark from the ship "Tex" repaid his \$10.00 loan and began making inquiries as to how he could send his winnings home.

They came to over \$1,000.00!



CREW OF THE "OLE-TIMER". Front L. to R.: G. Kotun, P. Mann, W. Chestnut & P. Connolly. Rear L. to R.: J. Bobrowicz, J. Davis, K. Janowski, E. Dayton & R. Benson.