



ENDLESHAM MEMORIES



VOICE OF THE 34TH BOMB GROUP (H)



4TH SQUADRON



7TH SQUADRON



18TH SQUADRON



391ST SQUADRON

CONGRATULATIONS

TO THE



RECIPIENTS

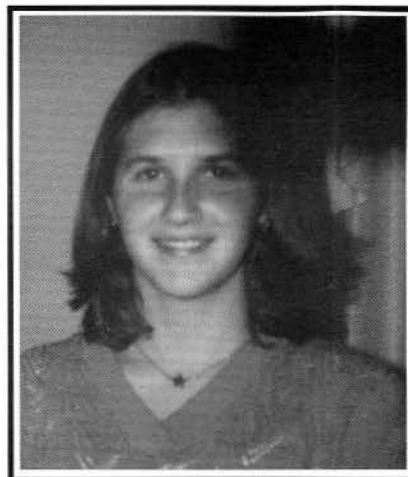
OF THE YEAR 2000



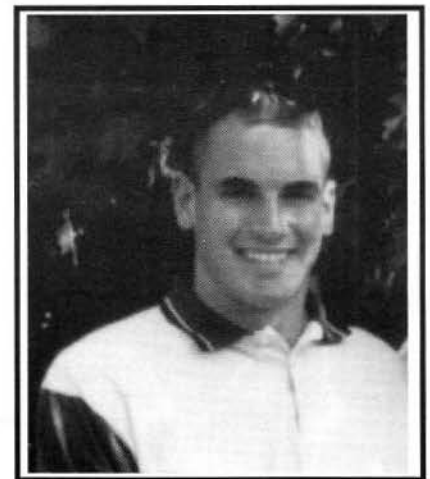
SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS



2ND PLACE
ANNE MARTIN



1ST PLACE
LINDSEY A. STARK



3RD PLACE
ANDREW MILLS

MENDLESHAM MEMORIES

Newsletter of
The 34th Bomb Group Association, Inc.
www.excel-tech.com/34th/

This newsletter is published four times a
Year (March, June, September, December).
All material for publication is welcome and
should be sent to:

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Other web sites of interest:

<http://members.tripod.com/VALORtoVICTORY>
www.mighty8thmuseum.com
www.air-museum.org/b17.htm
http://www.jccc.net/~bgustaf/34th_Bomb

DEADLINE

All material and items for the June issue of
Mendlesham Memories should reach me on or
before April 20th 2001. That is the date our final
copy will go to the printer.

Jack Share, editor

share— a thought.

Although the newsletter will not be delivered until March 2001, this column is being written shortly after Christmas with the spirit of the holiday still very much alive. I'm taking this opportunity to thank all of you

for the many cards, phone calls and e-mails Marian and I received, wishing us well, during the holiday season. Our thoughts and prayers were with each and every member of the 34th Bomb Group Association through out the holiday season. Please accept our heartfelt wishes for a happy, prosperous, and above all, a healthy New Year.

This being our annual scholastic issue I would like to congratulate the recipients of this years scholarship awards and also for all those that participated.

This scholarship program, and our youth, are very important to the members of the 34th bomb group. The scholarship committee would like to see more participation in the program, thus making their decisions even more challenging. Regardless of who wins the awards you are all very special to us as we look for you to be the future leaders of this great country and hope our contribution, however small, helps somewhat in the pursuit of your education and attainment of your life goals.

The application form for those wishing to participate in the 2001 scholarship awards program is located in this issue. Clip it or copy it but please fill it out and send it in along with your essays.

From all indications, and from the member input we have been receiving, the reunion in Savannah in September will be one of our most successful. The reunion committee never stops working on the details to make the activities interesting for all. I realize we never know what our circumstances will be in September, but it is not too early to at least be thinking of attending. With the Eighth Air Force Historical Museum as a prime source of interest to us all, we should make every effort to be there. Reunion details will be forthcoming in the June issue.

With all the wild winter weather the whole country has been experiencing I can only hope that when this publication is printed in March the worse will be behind us. In the meantime – think SPRING.

Jack Share, Editor

Late word has been received on the passing of MILLIE AMES on or about January, 20th. Her many friends in the 34th BGA extend our heartfelt sympathy to her husband Vern and the family.



PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Buffalo, NY reunion was a rewarding experience for me. Everyone that attended - and it was a large turnout – had a good time. We socialized, attended meetings, enjoyed breakfasts and dinners together and, best of all, experienced the enjoyable and breathtaking excursion to Niagara Falls.

Bob Gay, the featured speaker at the gala banquet, did an excellent job relaying several of his experiences at Mendlesham, as ground executive officer. Bob, please write an article, for the newsletter, about your days with the 34th bomb group, for all our members to read and enjoy.

Bruce Sothern, filling in for our Anarchist, Wally Brauks, presented an inspiring poem and John Doronski led us in singing "The Army Air Corps" anthem. I never knew the words to the third verse but one part hit home, "If you'd live to be a gray-haired wonder – Keep the nose out of the blue," How true and appropriate!

For your interest, and to keep the membership informed, the Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting as well as the general meeting were detailed in the December issue.

In closing, I would like to give a big thanks to my good friend and neighbor, Val Barrett who edited and e-mailed all my letters for the newsletter. God bless you Val, without your help I could not have done it.

Thanks to all the many people who continue to keep our organization going and let us give our new President, Claude Gibbs, a big welcome and wish him well in 2001.

Please join us in Savannah, Georgia next September.

God Bless you all.

Norm Mayer 20-20

Moving???

If you are moving, send your new address to:

Hal Province
153 North Hill Dr.
Carriere, MS 39426

Mailing lists are given to printer on the first day of
February, May, August and November
for the
March, June, September and December issues

TREASURER'S REPORT

Hi Mendlesham survivors!
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR! NEW
CENTURY! AND NEW
MILLENNIUM! As of one second
past midnight on January 1st,
2001 we became members of an
exclusive group! We became
some of the relatively few people
who have lived in two millennia!



It's a rather exclusive club, it's membership restricted
to those who lived through December 31st, 2000 and
us. And there won't be any new members until
January 1st 2001!

(Thanks to Dick Stouffer for pointing this out to me)!

I have high hopes that you had a very
wonderful HOLIDAY SEASON and attained all of your
expectations! For a bunch of survivors I think we are
doing quite well! Unfortunately, there were some of
our bunch who didn't make it and we mourn them as
we do each time we read the TAPS list in Mendlesham
Memories. But as General Creer said, "We're on the
right side of the Grass!"

As usual, it will seem like ages until the next
reunion in Savannah, Georgia, September 5-9, 2001.
And, as usual, the time will quickly pass and we'll
wonder where the time has gone. The days and weeks
have been flying by these past few years, now is the
time to start planning on your September trip to
Savannah.

I didn't get many changes of address or
telephone numbers or e-mail addresses. I hope that
the 2001 roster is accurate.

May the year 2001 hold for you and yours
abundant HEALTH, PEACE, HAPPINESS AND
PROSPERITY!

Take care and may GOD BLESS!

Hal Province

**Thought
for today:**

*"Forgetfulness is a
form of freedom"*

- Khalil Gibran,
American poet and
artist (1883 - 1931)

REUNION COMMITTEE REPORT

Our 17th annual reunion of the 34th Bomb
Group(H) will be held September 5 - 8 at the Hilton
Savannah De Soto hotel. This will be an opportunity
for those that have not visited the Eighth Air Force
Heritage Museum to attend our reunion and visit the
museum.

Savannah is served by the following airlines:
Air Tran, Continental Express, Delta, United Express
and US Airways. Those that wish to drive will travel to
the intersection of I-95 and I-16. Further travel
instructions will be forthcoming in the June issue of
Mendlesham Memories.

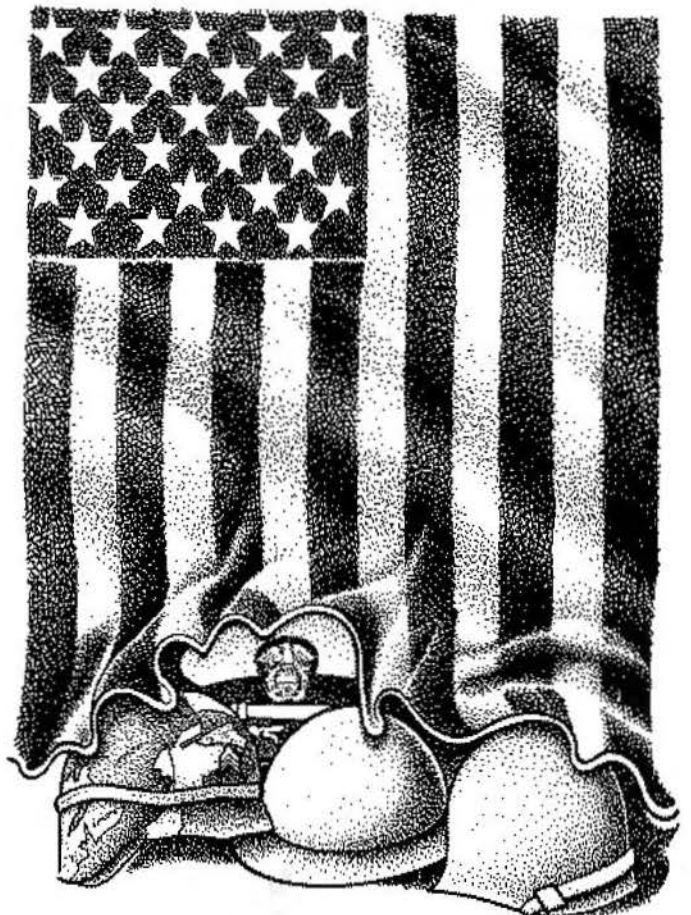
Savannah is a historical city founded as
England's 13th colony in 1773. The settlement
prospered as a crossroad of trade with England
exporting tobacco and cotton.

Guided walking tours, carriage rides, and
trolley tours are convenient to the hotel.

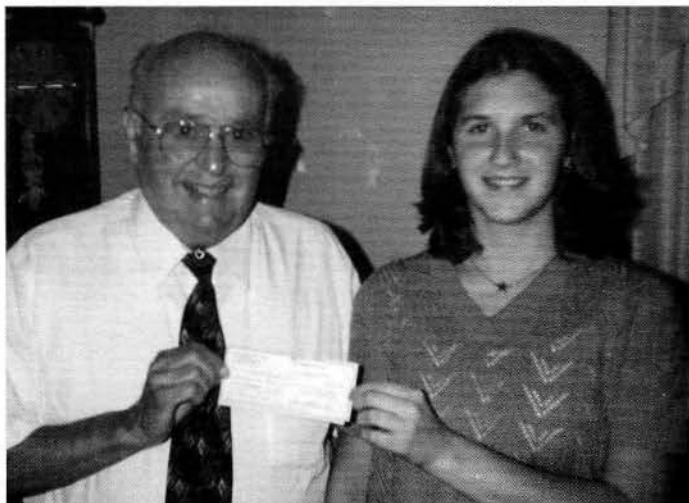
The June issue of Mendlesham Memories will
have the registration form, hotel reservation form and
more information on the reunion.

THE REUNION COMMITTEE

Harold Rutka
Robert Wright
Bruce Sothern



SCHOLARSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS



LINDSEY STARK - 1st place winner with grandfather BEN BUCKLEY

From Lindsey Stark - Thank you for choosing me as the recipient of the \$1000 Ray Summa, 34th Bomb Group Scholarship award. The enclosed picture is of my grandfather, Ben Buckley, presenting me with the check representing the award. I am grateful for my grandfather's sponsorship and to your association for selecting me for this award. It is a real honor to have been chosen as one of this year's scholarship recipients. I take my education very seriously and am extremely grateful to receive this financial assistance. Entering the University of Wisconsin - Madison this fall, I look forward to the challenging and exciting opportunities that my college experience will provide. Thank you again for selecting me for this award, I am truly honored.



Why I Wish to Pursue a College Degree (Lindsey Stark's Award Winning Essay)

Through the last couple of years I have grown to love the Spanish language and would like to share my enthusiasm by teaching it to others. I plan to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison and earn my teaching degree. I have a strong desire to teach the Spanish language to others so they too, may experience life in another culture. As a teacher, I look forward to the responsibility of making sure my students learn the language correctly. I believe that teachers can have a significant influence on their students and feel that I could be a very positive role model for my students. My patient, sensitive, caring personality are desirable traits for the teaching profession.

These are the reasons why I wish to pursue a college degree. I am willing to work hard to invest in my future and I know it will be worth the time and energy. Pursuing a college degree is something that I have thought about since I was a child in elementary school. It seemed like the day would never come, but now it's here. I am excited to embark on the journey

that will lead me to my teaching degree. I know that a college degree is the key to my life as a teacher.

Besides assisting me in realizing my dream of becoming a teacher, pursuing a college education has many other things to offer. Not only will I be learning a plethora of things inside the classroom, everyday college life will be a great learning experience. I will be meeting all types of people while pursuing my college education. I know I will learn many of life's lessons through my companionship with these people. From my peers, I will continually learn more about myself. This is part of what pursuing a college education is all about.

I wish to earn a college degree because I will fulfill my dream of becoming a Spanish teacher and in the process, learn so much about the world and my place in it. I will form my own opinions and views on a variety of issues. Above all, a college degree will allow me to soar to endless heights in the future.



ANNE MARTIN - 2nd place winner with grandfather RANDALL MARTIN

From Grandpa & Grandma Martin - Thank you and the committee for the Ray Summa scholarship award to our granddaughter, Anne Martin. You made a great choice. Anne is a wonderful girl and destined to contribute to our World.



ANDREW MILLS - 3rd place winner with grandfather MARVIN JALVING

From Andrew Mills - I was excited to receive the letter announcing my selection as a Ray Summa 34th Bomb Group recipient. My grandpa was excited to learn I had won also. It is greatly appreciated as I receive my bills for the first semester. I am now in my sixth week at Grand Valley State University. I am taking classes toward an engineering degree and with a schedule of eighteen hours, I have been extremely busy. I am also involved with the university's electric boat team, which designs and builds boats which we race in competition with other schools.

I am enjoying my time at school and hope to graduate in spring of 2004. Thank you for selecting me as one of your scholarship recipients.

From Bob Gross, West Hartford, CT:

You might be interested to know my grandson, Alex Wisner-Gross, first place recipient of the 34th bomb group 1999 scholarship award, is now considered to be the most outstanding student at MIT and has been recommended for the Barry Goldwater scholarship that is awarded to a little over a hundred students in the country for their junior and senior years. These scholarships are funded by Congress each year and are considered one of the premier awards any college student could receive. We are proud of him.

The Ray Summa - 34th Bomb Group Association Scholarship Awards have been presented annually since 1989 and more than \$19,000.00 has been awarded in scholarships to children of veterans of the 34th Bomb Group.



The Ray L. Summa, 34th Bomb Group Association Scholarship Fund to be awarded annually to the relative of a member of the 34th Bomb Group Association. The amount to be awarded shall be \$1000.00 for the first place winner, \$750.00 for the second place winner and \$500.00 for the third place winner.

CRITERIA TO QUALIFY FOR THE 34TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP AWARD IS AS FOLLOWS:

1. Applicant must be the relative of a paid-up member of the 34th Bomb Group Association.
2. Applicant must have maintained a 3.0 grade point average on a 4 - point scale during his/her senior high school year.
3. Applicant must attend a 2 or 4 year accredited college as a full-time student and maintain a 2.5 grade point average on a 4 - point scale.
4. Applicant may also be a college student continuing education and have a 2.5 grade point average on a 4 - point scale.

**2000 Application for the 34th Bomb Group Ray Summa
Scholarship Awards**

Name: _____ Phone () _____ - _____

Address: _____

Name of Sponsor (paid-up 2000) _____ Squadron _____

Address: _____

Age of applicant: _____ Graduation date _____ Best SAT/ACT score _____

Will pursue Academic Major: _____

Colleges and Universities of interest to you: _____

Summary of academic achievements (e.g. scholarships, awards, honor society) _____

Extra-curricular activities: _____

Community activities you have participated in: _____

Hobbies and Special interests: _____

List any non-government funded jobs which you have held: (Full or part time) _____

(Use additional sheets as needed)

Applications must include and are not complete until the following
additional materials have been included and attached:

- 1: All available & most recent high school or college transcript (including current grades).
- 2: Latest ACT/SAT test scores.
- 3: An essay on "Why I wish to pursue a College Degree" in 500 words or less.
- 4: Standing in your graduating class (usually on the transcript).

Applications must be postmarked no later than July 10, 2001. (We suggest you include a self addressed post card if you wish acknowledgment of receipt application).

Mail completed applications to:

**Scholarship Committee,
c/o Hal Province
153 North Hill Drive,
CARRIER, MS 39426**

PX ORDER FORM

REPRINT OF 34 TH B.G. HISTORY BOOK, 1947 edition, EDWIN S. SMITH.....	\$37.50ea.
LATEST 34 TH B.G. HISTORY BOOK, 1999 edition.....	\$49.95ea.
PERMANENT NAME TAGS (First and last names & Sqdn. No).....	\$ 7.00ea.
LICENSE PLATE (34 th Bomb Group).....	\$ 4.00ea.
LICENSE PLATE HOLDER (2 for \$5.00).....	\$ 3.00ea.
PATCHES – 8 TH AIR FORCE OR 34 TH BOMB GROUP.....	\$ 5.00ea.
PATCHES – 8 TH AIR FORCE (Gold & Silver Bullion Thread).....	\$ 9.95ea.
PATCHES – SQUADRON – 4 th – 7 th – 18 th – 391 st	\$ 5.00ea.
DECAL – VALOR TO VICTORY – 5" X 5".....	\$ 1.50ea.
BUMPER STICKER – 34 TH B.G. – 3" X 12".....	\$ 1.50ea.
BELT BUCKLES – 34 TH B.G. (VALOR TO VICTORY) OR B-17.....	\$ 8.50ea.
BOLO TIES – 8 TH AIR FORCE – 34 TH B. G. – B-17 – B-24.....	\$ 6.00ea.
KEY RINGS – 8 TH AIR FORCE – B-17 – B-24.....	\$ 4.00ea.
HAT PINS (FOR DECOR) B-24 – B-17 or POW.....	\$ 3.50ea.
VALOR TO VICTORY (LADY'S STICK PIN).....	\$ 3.50ea.
WINGS – 2 1/2" – PILOT – BOMBARDIER – NAVIGATOR – GUNNER.....	\$ 4.00ea.
WINGS – 2" CREW.....	\$ 4.00ea.
WINGS – 1" – PILOT – BOMBARDIER – NAVIGATOR – ENG – GUNNER.....	\$ 3.50ea.
TIE TACK – 8 TH A.F. – 4 TH – 7 TH – 18 TH – 391 ST SQDNS.....	\$ 4.00ea.
BALL PEN (retractable) W/REPLACEABLE CARTRIDGE, DK. BLUE W/GOLD LETTERS (34 TH BOMB GROUP, 8 TH AIR FORCE) AND GOLD TRIM.....	\$ 1.49ea.
TOTE BAG – CANVAS – 34 TH B.G. DESIGN.....	\$ 6.00ea.
CAPS – SOLID ROYAL BLUE (New 34 th B.G. Design).....	\$ 7.00ea.
CAPS – 34 TH B.G. (Mesh back).....	\$ 6.00ea.
CAPS – 50 TH ANNIVERSARY – 8 TH A.F (Royal Blue).....	\$ 5.00ea.
V.C.R. TAPE 58 mins. (" Start Your Engines + 50 Years").....	\$27.95ea.
MEN'S POLO SHIRT W/ POCKET AND 34 TH B.G. EMBLEM (Hunter Green – beautiful) Large or X Large.....	\$24.50ea.
MEN'S POLO SHIRT (Cobblestone beige) W/34 TH B.G. EMBLEM and LOGO – (no pocket) Med. or XX Large.....	\$24.50ea.
MEN'S POLO SHIRT (White W/ Emblem – no pocket) Large or XX Large.....	\$27.00ea.
LADIES POLO SHIRT (White W/ Emblem – no pocket) Large or XX Large.....	\$27.00ea.
JACKET – ROYAL BLUE (W/Emblem) – Med. – Large – X Large.....	\$39.00ea.
SPORTS BAG - WHITE – W/Emblem.....	\$10.00ea.
NEW!! WRIST WATCH – 34 TH B.G. Face W/Alarm.....	\$27.95ea.
RUBBER STAMPS (3 B-17'S IN FORMATION).....	\$ 7.95ea.
BOOK " Prescription For Nutritional Healing".....	\$19.95ea.

PLEASE CIRCLE ITEMS DESIRED
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ORDER

Please add \$.3.50 postage for orders under \$20.00 and \$4.50 postage for orders over &20.00

Send check or money order to:

**34th B.G. PX
Ken Paxton
6402 E. 11th St.
Wichita, KS 67206
Tel: (316) 683 – 2900**

Continue sending in your orders!!! These items make wonderful gifts!!

Thanks for your support of the 34th BGA. We wish all of you good health and much happiness!

BUFFALO REUNION ATTENDEES

Bailey & Ruth Adams
 Donald F. Allen
 Vern & Millie Ames
 Alex & Martha Antanovich
 Joseph and Charlotte Ardo
 & guests Ron, Bob, Jo Ann & Lisa
 Clarence & Rita Arand
 Charles Attridge
 Bud & Lucille Babcock
 Thomas & Madeline Belleau
 Bob & Barbara Bell
 E. Robert & Marjorie Bichowsky
 John & Marge Bloczynski
 & guest Jane Wroblewski
 Paul A. Bourquin
 W. J. Browne & guest, Pegi Johns
 James A. Clemens
 Junius & Virginia Cobb & guest, Betty Graves
 Louis & Mini Cohen
 Dave Cole
 Claude & Genny Conklin
 Charles & Lorraine Conway
 Anthony & Mary Coutros & guest, Lucille Worst
 Harry Crawford
 John & Esther Demko
 Marcus & Curt Dieterle
 Lawton & Joan Dooley
 John Doronsky & guest, Beverly Stearns
 Harold & Darlene Dwyer
 John J. Feda
 Gary L. Ferrell
 Herman & Nancy Fieber
 Dale & Esther Frank
 Joel Friedman
 Basil & Lorene Gaumer
 Claude & Audrey Gibbs
 & guests, Beverly & Charles Puffer
 Jacob & Sylvia Greenspan
 Michael Torre & guest Michael Gregory
 Willis Griffis
 Walter & Dorothy Grimes
 Carolyn Guertin
 Mary Hagner & guest, Bernard Cizel
 Herbert & Doris Hall
 Robert & Nancy Ham
 Ambers & Jean Hanson
 Lorraine Hartwick & Heinz Kath
 Hymen & Ruth Chauson
 Pop & Tootie Hetherington
 Charles & Eileen Herget, Jr.

Verbal & Betty Holcomb
 Lloyd & Marla Inman
 AL & Agnes Israelsen
 Mike & Margie Jacobbausk
 Dexter & Beulah Jordan
 William & Eileen Kaufman
 Dwight L. Kellog
 Betty Lampey & guest, Lynn Bachouros
 Lindsey & Dee Lipscomb
 Ralph Lundeen
 Joseph & Kay Marks
 James F. Martin
 Norman Mayer & guests, Marci Campbell.
 Lois Johnson & Bernie Powers
 Paul & Twyla Meeder
 Clayton & Helen & Pamela Mink
 Charles & Dorothy Morgan
 Fred & Ginny Muent
 Edward & Phyllis Munk
 John & Liz Noe
 Ken & Kathleen Paxton
 Hal & Janice Province
 Bennett & Miriam Richmond
 & guest, Thelma Warfield
 George & June Ritchie
 Everett & Margo Rose
 Harold & Gen Rutka
 Gordon & Doris Ryan
 Charles & Rose Sakal
 Verne & Juanita Santas
 Kal & Evelyn Schonthal
 Robert & Jennie Schroeder
 & guest, Ronda Ranstrom
 Jack & Marian Share
 Robert & Betty Simpson
 Ronald & Martha Simpson
 Frank & Alda Sivret
 James Smith
 Jack & Linda Steffen
 Carl & Peg Stemen
 Jim & Stella Stivender
 Walter & Lois Sturdivan
 James & Kay Stuthers
 Henry & Audrey Tobiason
 W. Hal & Ruby Thorpe
 Jim Troup
 Vito Violante & guests, Dianne Christensen,
 Chuck McIntyre
 Frederick & Blanche Voss
 Fred & Rachel Waltz
 Sam & Peggy Wolstencroft
 Joseph & Marilyn Wong
 Benson & Margaret Workman
 Robert & Esther Wright
 Benjamin & Edith Zeldes

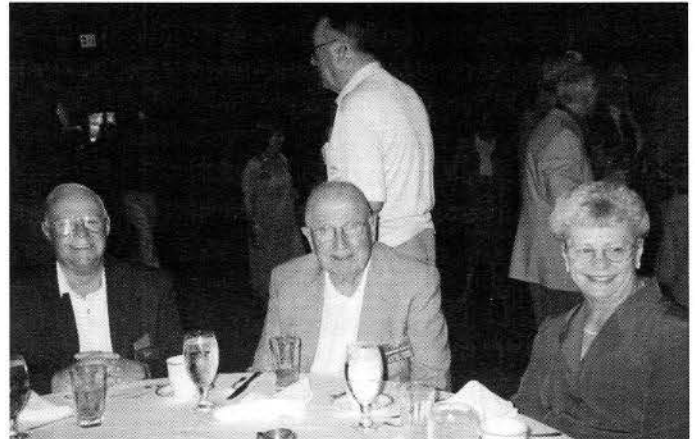
LATE RETURNS from the **BUFFALO REUNION**

(Poem read by Bruce Sothern at reunion)

I've never made a fortune
and it's probably too late now,
But I don't worry about that much,
I'm happy anyhow.
And as I go along life's way,
I'm reaping better than I sowed.
I'm drinking from my saucer,
'cause my cup has overflowed.
Haven't got a lot of riches,
and sometimes the going's tough.
But I've got loving ones around me,
and that makes me rich enough.
I thank God for his blessings,
and the mercies he has bestowed.
I'm drinking from my saucer,
'cause my cup has overflowed.
Oh, remember times when things went wrong,
my faith wore somewhat thin.
But all at once the dark clouds broke,
and sun seeped through again.
So Lord, help me not to gripe,
about the tough rows that I have hoed.
I'm drinking from my saucer,
'cause my cup has overflowed.
If God gives me strength and courage,
when the way grows steep and rough.
I'll not ask for other blessings,
I'm already blessed enough.
And may I never be too busy,
to help others bear their loads.
Then I'll keep drinking from my saucer,
'cause my cup has overflowed.



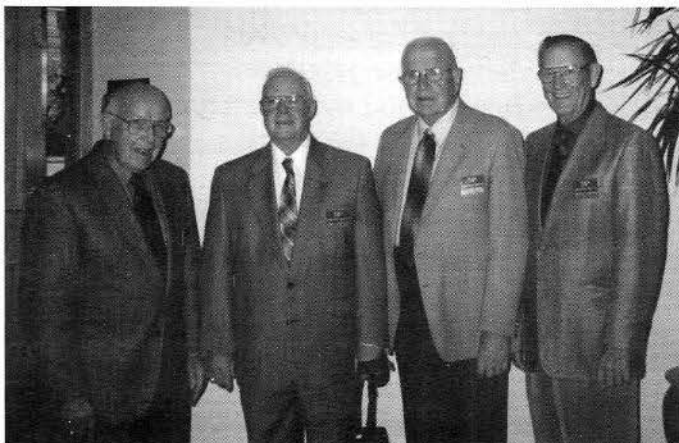
Barb & Bob Bell



Bob Bell, Jack & Liz Noe

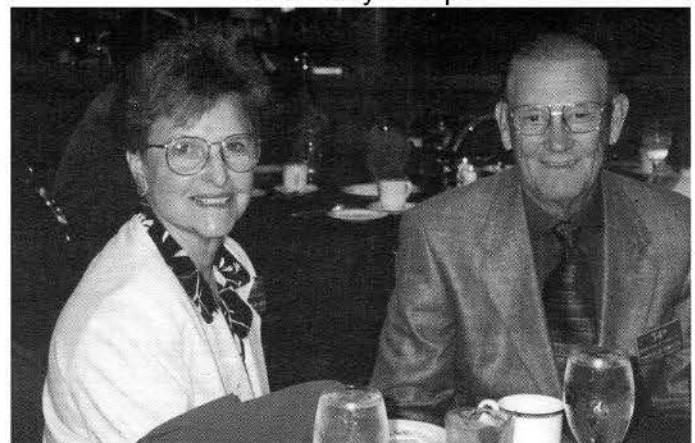


Hal & Ruby Thorpe



Harold Dwyer Crew

L to R Hal Thorpe, Bob Bell, Jack Noe, Harold Dwyer



Darlene & Harold Dwyer

AN OLD MISTRESS CAME TO TOWN

By Joel Friedman – 7th Sqd.

She had not changed, still trim, built for service, and with that ever beckoning look that silently, excitingly said, "Come fly with me." I had not seen her in 30 years. Then there she was, literally sitting on my doorstep. Her lovers were legion; stock brokers, lawyers, ribbon clerks, raw youth – I actually knew of several movie actors who shared her favors. Yet, there was no jealousy. If we would chance to meet, only her virtues were extolled. Her vices, if she had any, were never mentioned. This lady, and she was that, did not treat all her lovers alike. There were those of us who walked away smiling. There were some that she hurt, yet, I feel sure that if they could testify they would still speak of her with respect.

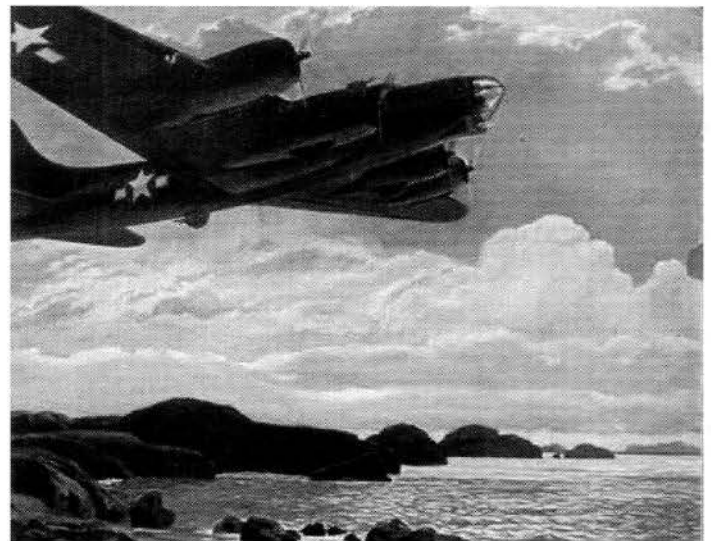
Who was she? What was she? To answer that, I'll have to take this testament out of the realm of a misspent youth to just another airplane story. This mistress, my mistress of yesteryear, was an ancient B-17 that proudly came to town, bedding down on the ramp a few yards from my office on the air base. The "17" was owned by the Confederate Air Force, a private organization dedicated to the restoration of World War II aircraft. As I had been a B-17 crew member during the war, the local Confederate Air Force representative asked me to be a member of an honorary B-17 crew selected from those who lived in the area. I jumped at the opportunity.

Looking at the proud Queen sitting on the ramp, Hollywood type flashbacks ran through my thoughts; old songs such as "Sentimental Journey" and "I'll Be Seeing You". War Bonds and Ration Stamps, crowded trains, girls with wedgie shoes and pompadour hairdos holding hands or arm in arm with uniformed youth. Yes, this old love of mine brought back memories; bustling air bases on the western plains, hidden airdromes nestled in the green English countryside, blacked out London with its air raid sirens orchestrated with the drone of night raiders and the crumb of bond along the Thames. I had to fight off the nostalgia for it happened so long ago that I could not recall what was real or what was imagination.

They gathered us, this honorary crew, ten men from bombardier to tail gunner. We swapped our stories and tall tales, trying for just a few short moments to recapture our adventurous youth. We were posed and photographed in front of the B-17. The ten of us stood just a little taller than usual in front of the crowd that had gathered to watch. Several days after the

ceremony, I received a photograph of the crew. I looked at each one and remembered their stories. Some had been shot down, some wounded, some had ended up POWs, some of us came through relatively unscathed; all were better men because of it. Then I understood, it wasn't the airplane alone that held me awestruck through all the years. It was the men who flew, as I flew, it was the men and women who designed and built this sturdy plane. It was everyone from those that maintained it and patched it up to those that supplied the parts, fed, clothed and rendered all types of support to everyone involved. Be it an airplane or computer, inanimate objects just can't tick properly unless we are a bit dedicated, have some belief in what we are doing and can work with each other.

So good bye old gal, All that is left is a photograph on a wall, a model on someone's desk, a very small piece of airplane history. Thanks for the final "affair". I once again was reminded of what it was all about; PEOPLE.



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(for those who pay annually)

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MAN OF THE CENTURY

From B-17 Combat Crewman & Wingmen Newsletter, PO Box 1102, Simi Valley, CA 93062

Assistant Editor's Note: TIME Magazine named the "American G.I." as the most influential man of the century. General Colin Powell, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, wrote the introduction to the award. In the interest of brevity I have selected excerpts from General Powell's brilliant speech for our members who might

not have had the opportunity of reading it elsewhere. - Ken Wright, RAF Bomber Command veteran.

As Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I referred to the men and women of the Armed Forces as "GI's". It got me into trouble with some of my colleagues at the time. Several years earlier, the Army had officially excised the term as an unfavourable characterization derived from the designation "government issue". Sailors and Marines wanted to be known as Sailors and Marines. Airmen, not withstanding their origins as a rib of the Army, wished to be called Airmen. Collectively, they were blandly referred to as "service members". I persisted in using GI's and found I was in good company. Newspapers and television shows used it all the time. The most famous and successful government education program was known as the "GI Bill" and it still used that title for a newer generation of veterans. When added the most common boy's name to it, you got GI Joe.

GI is a World War Two term that two generations later continues to conjure up the warmest and proudest memories of a noble war that pitted pure good against pure evil, and good triumphed. The victors in that war were the American GI's, the Willies' and the Joes', the farmer from Iowa and the steelworker from Pittsburgh who stepped off a landing craft into the hell of Omaha Beach. The GI was the wisecracking kid Marine from Brooklyn who clawed his way up a deadly hill on a Pacific Island. He was the black fighter pilot escorting white bomber pilots over Italy and Germany, proving that skin color had nothing to do with skill or courage.

For most GI's, World War II was the adventure of their lifetime. Nothing they would ever do in the future would match their experiences as the warriors of democracy, waving the world from it own insanity. You can still see them in every Fourth of July color guard, their gait faltering, but forever proud.

Their forebearers went by other names: Doughboys, Yanks, Buffalo soldiers, Johnny Reb, Rough Riders, but GI will be forever lodged in the

consciousness of our nation to apply to them all. The GI carried the value system of the American people. The GI's were the surest guarantee of America's commitment.

The 20th Century can be called many things, but it was most certainly a century of war. The American GI helped defeat fascism and communism.

In this century, hundreds of thousands of GIs died to bring to the beginning of the 21st century the victory of democracy as the ascendant political system on the face of the earth. The GIs were willing to travel far away to give their lives, if necessary, to secure the rights and the freedom of others. Only a nation such as ours based on a firm moral foundation, could make such a request of its citizens.

The GI wanted nothing more than to get the job done and then return home safely. All they asked for in repayment from those they freed was the opportunity to help them become part of the world of democracy and just enough land to bury their fallen comrades, beneath simple white crosses and Stars of David.

The volunteer GIs of today stand watch in Korea, the Persian Gulf, Europe and the dangerous terrain of the Balkans. We must never see them as mere hirelings, off in a corner of our society. They are our best, and we owe them our full support and our sincerest thanks.

As this century closes, we look back to identify the great leaders and personalities of the past 100 years. We do so in a world still troubled, but full of promise. That promise was gained by the young men and women of America who fought and died for freedom.

Near the top of any listing, the most important people of the 20th Century must stand, in singular honor, the American GI.

General Colin Powell

ED: Copied from the 390th Bomb Group's newsletter "FRAMLINGHAM TIMES"



A VIEW FROM THE GROUND

(FRANCE – 1944)

by Dorice (Mrs. R.) Lindsey,
708 Misty Pine Dr. Venice, FL 34292

I was 14, a young girl, living in the town of Chatou, about 10 kms from Paris, France. One day, during one of the frequent air raids, our eyes were, as usual, riveted toward the sky. Our excitement reached a crescendo when we saw the group of Flying Fortress bombers heading our way. They had set their sights on the Villacoublay airfield, factories, and railway centers close to us. We had been under German occupation for 4 long years and looked forward to being "liberated" from the enemy.

Across the street from our home was an R&R home for the dreaded SS troops who had been wounded on the Russian front. My father had already been arrested by the Gestapo and spent 8 months in a prison near Fresnes (Paris area). Now we'd been told he was in a concentration camp named Buchenwald. He was only rarely allowed to write us in German. We knew he was alive, but had no idea Buchenwald was one of the extermination camps. The Germans across the street told us he was in a "work camp" and was being well treated.

(The reasons for his arrest; 1-a German General was found dead floating down the Seine River, 2-documents had been stolen from German offices in Paris where my father worked as a interior decorator, 3-treason against the "Great Reich".)

He came home but weighed only 80 pounds, a living skeleton, and would spend months in bed after his return (but that's another story). After the war and his liberation he was made Commander of the Legion of Honor for his services to the Allies. And because his theft of "the plans of the Luftwaffe" which were forwarded to the Allies, they credit him with having saved the lives of many of the Allied pilots. My father had unlimited access to the German occupied airfields in order to make "blackout curtains" for all the windows of the Luftwaffe barracks. He was thus able to count the planes and gather information for the Allies. He always said he did it because it was his duty and he never wanted any credit for it. We begged him to write his story, which he finally did a few years before he died in 1986. He called it "I Stole The Plans of the Luftwaffe", by Jaques Barroux.

During an air raid, instead of seeking cover, we would run outside to our garden and look for the planes to arrive. It would not take long to spot them for they had long white contrails behind them. Then the German anti-aircraft fire would begin. We watched in horror as one plane was hit that day, and a wing broke off and slowly circled down to earth. Men jumped

in parachutes from their plane before it crashed; however some of their chutes did not open. Our hearts just broke as we witnessed these sights. I am still haunted by these scenes even today. I remember seeing two bodies plunge to the ground without chutes opened. I saw one airman coming down in his chute and watched in horror as the Germans machine-gunned him. His head tipped down all of a sudden. We knew he was gone. Another parachuted to safety on an island across the Seine from us. He was so close we could watch him wrap up his chute and hide it about 50 yards from us, then disappeared.

All of a sudden the Germans from across the street rang our doorbell and wanted to borrow our boat, a small sailboat, to go to the island to find the airman from one of the B-17's shot down. We told them this was impossible for it was a sailboat, it would take a long time to get it ready, and there were not oars for these boats. Disgusted, they left, but could realize for themselves that the boat would not be of much use to them. Then they noticed our motorboat on blocks in our garden. We explained to them that the motor had no gas anyway. The Germans had blocked it to prevent French people from going onto the island to try to rescue airmen. They went over but never found him.

Continued on page 14



Later that night our doorbell rang. Our town's Assistant Mayor greeted Mother. He knew my mother was American and wanted to know if she could come and speak to that airman. The Germans across the street watched our every move so she, being alone with two girls, (my sister and me), offered money and food instead. She would not leave us alone at night, as tempted as she was to see her first American soldier. The French underground's men had crossed the river at night, found the airman, a pilot, and brought him back in a row boat at the far end of the island. They took him to the Town Hall, unbeknown to the Germans. How we would love to know who he was. We were told he was sent back to England, via Spain, a few weeks later. He had landed on the island of Chatou, about ten kilometers from Paris, directly in front of our house.

A few months later, in August 1944, we heard loud rattling noises coming from the street. I ran outside the gate to see what the commotion was, it was German tanks retreating toward Germany. They were going home, just 3 months after D-Day at Normandie. As I opened the gate to get a better look they immediately pointed their machine guns at me. You never saw a 14 year old close a gate so fast! The next day we found out that these same German troops had murdered 18 Frenchmen, making them dig their own graves, then shot them and poured water into the graves to drown those who were not quite dead yet. There is a memorial to the 18 at that spot in Chatou.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all crewmembers of our Air Forces who did for us the unthinkable: risk their lives and give their lives to liberate us from that Nazi oppression so long ago. It was not in vain.

Dorice Barroux Lindsey

P.S. I have lived in the United States since 1951. My mother died 4 years ago at the age of 93 and my father, a true French hero, died in 1986. Anyone, especially if knowing the crew of the B-17 that crashed near our home, may contact me at:

E-mails: doricelind@aol.com (from Sept. 22 to April 28), or dorice@telusplanet.net (from April 28 to Sept. 22).



**Buzz
Bomb
Patrol**

Ritchie
Carlson
McKeon
Rogers



A GOLF STORY

A man goes into the confessional. "Forgive me Father, for I have sinned."

"What is your sin, my son?" the priest asks.

"Well," the man starts, "I used some horrible language this week and feel absolutely terrible."

"When did you use this awful language?" asks the priest.

"Well, I was golfing and hit an incredible drive that looked like it was going to go over 280 yards, but it struck a phone line that was hanging over the fairway and fell straight down to the ground after going only 100 yards."

"Is that when you swore?"

"No, Father," says the man. "After that, a squirrel ran out of the bushes, grabbed my ball in his mouth and began to run away."

"Is THAT when you swore?" asks the Father again.

"Well, no," says the man. "You see, as the squirrel was running, an eagle came down out of the sky, grabbed the squirrel in his talons and began to fly away!"

"Is THAT when you swore?" asks the amazed Priest.

"No, not yet," the man replied. "As the eagle carried the squirrel away in his claws, it flew over a bit of forest near the green and the squirrel dropped the ball."

"Did you swear THEN?" asked the impatient Priest.

"No, because as the ball fell, it struck a tree, bounced through some bushes, careened off a big rock, and rolled through a sand trap onto the green and stopped six inches from the hole."

Silence filled the confessional until the Priest sighed and said, "You missed the putt, didn't you?"

WHEW, CLOSE CALL II

A story in the December, 2000 issue of Mendlesham Memories by Bruce Bleeker, describing his hectic flight home after the war, brought this response from the navigator on that flight, F/O Edward J. Gronkowski.

The trip home was pretty much like Bruce wrote it. I was the navigator on Kelly's plane. We lost an engine as we were about to reach Iceland. Then the radio and electrical system went crazy. We had to be over 10,000 feet because the mountains were that high. After flying around for a spell, a hole in the clouds allowed us to get down to ocean level. We spotted a three or four mast schooner below us and the logic was that if we had to ditch we could get to the ship. Fortunately, that didn't happen. Kelly buzzed the land but the base could not be seen because of camouflage. As we looked for the base, I spotted a plane that appeared to be in landing mode and I told Kelly to "get on it's tail." This proved to be a good call as it did lead us to the field and a safe landing. Later folks told us that while attending a movie, they heard us buzzing the field and had to hit the floor several times because we were so low.

Before leaving England, fifty-four crews were briefed that the weather was clear all the way to Greenland. So far we were the only plane to have landed. We waited in the briefing room for orders to go out on a rescue mission, the consensus being that the other fifty-three planes were lost, as none had yet reported in. If a plane had to ditch in that area, survivors would only last about seven minutes because of the water temperature. Shortly after assembling, we were informed that a plane did report in; eventually all fifty-three had landed on Greenland from Bluie West to

Bluie West 10, which was located on the Northern end of the land mass.

Our plane was not flyable so the V.I.P. Snowball was our transportation home. We landed in Miles Standish AFB, Connecticut.



D.F.C. AWARD

Leonard Adrignola was a 4th squadron tail gunner on B-24's and B-17's. After flying 26 missions, he was hospitalized for a week with pneumonia. He was about to be released when someone in the ward came down with chicken pox. As a result Lenny was quarantined for an additional 21 days.

In the meantime his crew went on to finish their 30 missions and were sent back to the states. Lenny was released from the hospital and was sent back with them.

The problem was that all the crew received their D.F.C.'s after their 28th mission and since Lenny had only 26 he didn't qualify.

After 50 years had passed and Lenny was about to undergo a quadruple heart bypass surgery he confided in his brother that the only regret in his life was that he never receive the D.F.C.

His family spent the next six years learning about the award and launched a battle of their own to get it for their father. Finally, after one failed attempt, his pilot Alf Johanson, wrote a letter to the Air Force in his behalf and the wait for Lenny's award was over and the D.F.C. was his.



Barracks Gang

Grezelak, Averette, Rogers, Rogers, Nichols,
Bacaus, McKeon



TROUBLE ON TAKEOFF

By Fred Bergland – 7th squadron

It was a black early morning at the 34th bomb group airdrome at Mendlesham, England that April day in 1945 and the great war in Europe was drawing to a close. Our crew hopped on a truck around 4am for a ride to the mess hall where we were served eggs and spam. Only combat crews got real eggs. After breakfast we went to the briefing room where our bombing targets in Germany were revealed. Some of us then paid a visit to the Chaplains for a brief prayer. From there we were driven to the flight line to check our B-17 bombers for the mission that day.

As I climbed a tall ladder to check the #2 engine, which our hard working crew chief had labored on all night, the quiet black night was shattered by exploding machine gun bullets whizzing in front of me. Our bombardier had charged his guns with a bandoleer of 50 caliber shells and accidentally hit the firing trigger. When I came out of shock, I climbed into the nose hatch of our B-17 "Misbehavin Raven" to chew out our red-faced bombardier.

We started the 4 engines and started taxiing behind several other B-17's to the take off runway. We were behind an unnamed B-17 whose engines were gunned into full power for takeoff and disappeared into the fog and a pitch-black void. Moments later, there was a giant flash and a terrific explosion. The preceding B-17 had apparently lifted off and crashed back down to earth before reaching the critical 120-mph take off speed. His 1000 lb. bombs had exploded along with several thousand gallons of high-octane gasoline. We watched in horror for a few minutes when the tower called and said, "Continue take off". Obeying orders, we took off, slowly climbing over the fire and wreckage.

We flew our mission – somewhere over Germany – and returned. When we landed, we heard the details. Only 2 of the 5 1000lb. bombs had detonated. I found a small round blood spattered window from the radio room of the doomed B-17, near our barracks. To this day we never knew whose plane blew up. There was no funeral, no flags, no taps. Nine men simply disappeared into oblivion.



FRED BERGLAND - ENGLEWOOD, FL

We leave for Florida and our condo on a golf course in 2 weeks. We love it here and there! We'll see Bob Wright in Florida soon. He lives nearby. He called when they printed a nice story about the 8th and a Florida writer wrote a good story.

I had a preacher friend along and showed him some B-17's and B24's, (we had a few good war stories too).

Hope the reunion is near Florida in 2001. I will sure be there.

Ed: Fred sent an article from the Minnesota Star Tribune newspaper telling of the problems the Minnesota Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society had in getting a proclamation declaring the week of Oct. 8 to 14 Mighty Eighth Air Force Week in Minnesota. Seems, the current governor, Ventura was reluctant to sign it so the state legislature passed a bill requiring all governors to sign the proclamation for the next 100 years. The governor dutifully signed it.

The week of Oct. 8 to 14 was chosen because those seven days in 1943 were the most horrific the Eighth faced in World War II. In that week alone, more than 170 Eighth Air Force bombers were shot down over Germany.

Fred suspects a few of our 34th members from Minnesota were instrumental in pushing the bill through the state legislature.

VIRGILINE & JAMES "CHIP" SPENCER - CARSONVILLE, MI

Found this poem which my husband had written while stationed in Mendlesham, England. We get a Christmas card every year from Sy Tulol in Florida and Bob Filip in Illinois. We went to Chips aunts 100 birthday party.

Enjoy the newsletter, think it is a good idea to have WWII veterans bring their children to the reunions, they may find it interesting.

continued on page 17

AERIAL GUNNER

They call him the aerial gunner, his hopes
they say are dim

And his life is said
To hang by a thread
That is long, weak, and slim.

For he loves his home and he loves his land
He gambles his neck and limb
And wagers his life
In a cloud land strife
In the game with the reaper grim.

His mount is a roaring dragon
That flashes across the sky
To take the dare in the enemy's sky
To shoot him down or die.

He is a knight of the upper air
And death his eternal foe
Rides the tail, with as eerie wail
Wherever his steed may go.

You have to give him credit
For the job he does so well
For he brings her home
Though his steed may roam
To the very jaws of Hell.

He wears no bars and he wears no stars
For Sergeant is his rank
But I've heard them tell he fights like Hell
And is proud of the title Yank.

There are others there in the upper air
And we can't detract their fame
For they make a crew
And the job they do
Regardless of who, is the same.

But this is a song to the gunner
The hero who goes unsung
Though the enemy knows
His deadly blows
And the funeral knells he's rung.

T-Sgt. Chip Spencer
Carsonville, MI

DON SHEE - DOWNERS GROVE, IL

Referring to the Mission #64 story on page 4 of MM (Dec. 2000), it appears that the date of September 17, 1945 is incorrect. If my memory still serves me properly, the war in Europe was over on that date. In fact, WWII was completely over before that date. I

didn't make it to Mendlesham for the 34th BG's 1st B17 mission but I was still there for the last one in April '45.

Other than the above typo, it's another great issue. Thanks for all your efforts.

Ed: Just wanted to see if anyone is reading the newsletter - yeah, right.

JANE ANN FELKER - ORLANDO, FL

This is to inform you that my husband of 52 years, Colonel (Ret) Walter J. Felker, Jr. passed away on December 7th, 2000. He was a life member of the 34th Bomb Group Association. His health has been very poor for several years.

Colonel Felker was in a number of airborne outfits during his 30 years of service. The 34th bomb group and his former crew, that he was in touch with these past few years, were his favorite.

VERNE SANTAS - DUNEDIN, FL

The December issue of Mendlesham Memories is enjoyable, as they all are. Your efforts are greatly appreciated by all association members. It is good to see so many photos of the Buffalo reunion in this last issue. I did notice that my name was missing from the photo on page 16 of Bob Wright, Harold Rutka and myself on trip to Niagara Falls.

Hope to see you at Savannah.

ROLAND GEIGER - ST. WENDEL GERMANY

Salu, folks,
I just talked to my good friend Helga Radau, city archivist at Barth, Germany, the site of former Stalag Luft I where some of you experienced German hospitality in WW2 (bad joke).

She told me there will be another reunion, like the one last year in April, in September this year. It will be the weekend Saturday, Sept. 8th and Sunday, Sept 9th. Everyone interested is invited to come to Barth. A program will be created within the coming months. One special guest will be a former Russian soldier who was a member of the occupation troops.

If you are interested in going to Barth, please, contact Helga by way of her e-mail helga.radau@web.de And in case you come or don't - please, tell everyone with the slightest chance they might be interested about this event in September. CU at Barth.

BYRDA. GUINN, JR - SHERMAN, TX

Did not wish to miss a single Mendlesham Memories! So I'm sending in my change of address. Thanks, so much, for your concern.

DEXTER & BUELAH JORDAN - HUNTERSVILLE, NC

Thanks for the great job your are doing with the MM. We always look forward to the next issue and the next reunion. Thanks to all who work so hard on them. We especially enjoy Notes from Friends.

J.C. Smith and his crew were assigned to my plane "The Near Sighted Robin" when we went to England. Eight of the crew are still able to attend the reunion and they always include us in their plans.

"Sweet Seventeen" was my last plane and James F. Martin's crew gave me a hard time but at least we are on speaking terms.

Thanks to friends like the above, and many others, with the long nights and many hours of work, I finished the tour with no mechanical failures credited to me.

A note to all our friends, our address has not changed but some are not getting the street number correct. The only reason we get your cards and letters is that the employees in the post office know us personally and check the errors and send them on to our address - which is:

11401 Asbury Chapel Rd.
Hunterville, NC 28078
Phone - (704) 875-2266

BORAH LIPSKY - WANTAGH, LONG ISLAND, NY

The New York State assembly recently passed a bill called "Operation Recognition" that will give high school diplomas to WWII veterans who left school in the '30's and '40's before they graduated to serve in the armed forces, thus enabling them to finish high school. Although these veterans may not have met the high school requirements needed to graduate they have earned the credits through real life experiences that students in the classrooms could never duplicate.

"Operation Recognition" is limited to WWII veterans because veterans of more recent wars still have time to go back to school.

So, after sixty years and at the age of 80, I have just received my high school diploma.

Ed: Congratulations, Borah, what a wonderful achievement. Borah's advise to the senior social studies class, " Stay in school and graduate, it is important for your future."

JAMES B. MEEHAN - VENICE, FL

I've received a letter from Philip Reinders asking for information on Mission #64, September 17th, 1944. It was a few years ago! I did write a few things down about every mission I flew on. I sent you a copy some years ago. In the September MM an article said we dropped our bombs sometime after 11:00 AM. My diary says, "Bombs away" at 10:32.

ED MUNK - SCOTIA, NY

We enjoyed the reunion last fall. It was a very congenial group. We'll try to make the reunion this fall.

CARL NICHOLS - FRESNO, CA

Did enjoy the last newsletter - I see some of us have left.

No hope to make the reunion this year.

JOHN STIVENDER - GADSDEN, AL

Really enjoyed the Buffalo reunion. Four of our five living crew members were there along with wives. We hope all 5 will be in Savannah. We have memories of that city since we left Hunter AFB in a new B-17 in early September 1944.

LESTER THOMPSON - GRANITE CITY, IL

As a boy I delivered newspapers.

As a young man I helped deliver bombs to Hitler and food to Holland.

Now, as an old man, I am delivering flowers and having a ball. Everyone smiles when they see flowers.

Happy New Year.

WALTER STURDIVAN - STOCKTON, CA

What a joy to see the picture of the old WINDMILL in London, sent in by Dale Granger, on page 34 of the December Mendlesham Memories. If you look carefully you can see on the sign in front of the old picture: WINDMILL. 14TH YEAR. NOW OPEN DAILY FROM 12 PM. CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCES. WE NEVER CLOSE. (I assume that the latter means during the London blitz).

I remember the WINDMILL well. Three of my crew members and myself were ejected from the theater after trying to get into the act with our loud interruptions. We escaped into the men's room and left hurriedly. Unfortunately, we were nabbed by the MPs about a block away.

Saved from the guard house when we were rescued by one of our navigators, Lt. Myron Levi, who just happened to be passing by. We were sent back to Mendlesham at once. When the report came in to the 18th squadron, our punishment was severe. The commander made us report to the Orderly Room each morning for two weeks and sign in about 7AM. That was pretty harsh treatment for airmen who usually slept until about noon, unless flying a mission.

BOB GROSS - WEST HARTFORD, CT

Cynthia couldn't understand why the Museum wasn't being used for all events, as their hall is large enough to accommodate all of the 34th - bad decision in our minds. However, God willing we will be in Savannah.

Again, the best for a New Year to you and yours.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ORG	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
BASS	RUBIN	391LM	320 E SHORE RD APT 25C	GREAT NECK	NY	11023
CROOK	LONNIE, H	GRP	600 E. FLOURNOY LUCAS RD	SHREVEPORT	LA	71115
DE HAAN	HELEN	7LM	749 S 30TH ST APT 320	GRAND FORKS	ND	58201
GUINN	BYRD, JR	18	P.O. BOX 321	SHERMAN	TX	75091
MEHLING	GEORGE, W	18	4107 CALLAWAY DR	NICEVILLE	FL	32578
WEBSTER	GEORGE, C	7	3578 ALDERWOOD DR	MEDFORD	OR	97504

TAPS

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ORG	DOD	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
PALMER	KENNETH, W	4	01/00	2046 STEBBINS RD	JEFFERSONVILLE	VT	05464
FELKER	WALTER, J	391LM	12/07/00	4329 N. LAKE ORLANDO PKY	ORLANDO	FL	32808
SEELHURST	ALEXANDER, M	391	09/20/99	705 APPLE ST	FREDERICKSBURG	TX	78624
UNWIN	JOHN, J	391	?	12731 N FOREST CANYON	PARKER	CO	80138

*"As we go on we remember
all the good times we had together
and as our lives change, come whatever.
We will still be friends forever".*

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
LEASON	FAUN	17033 BUTTE CRK APT 402	HOUSTON	TX	77090
GOODROE	PATTI	4516 ROBIN AVE	ALBUQUERQUE	NM	87110

NEWLY FOUND MEMBERS

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ORG	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
BOLDUC	NORMAN	4	2552 W. GREENLEAF AVE	ANAHEIM	CA	92801
JOUBERT	ARCADE	18	511 KENYON AVE	PAWTUCKET	RI	28661

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ORG	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
PEDIGO	WILLIAM	18	611 VIKING CT	BRIDGEPORT	TX	76426
FREDETTE	RAYMOND, H	7	8351 WAGON WHEEL RD	ALEXANDRIA	VA	22309



MEMORIAL DAY POEM

IN THE SHADOW OF A TREE I SIT
AND LISTEN TO THE SPEAKER TALK OF MY FALLEN COMRADES
AND THE PRICE THEY PAID FOR OUR LIBERTY.
BUT THE WORDS DO NOT INTEREST ME AS I CLOSE MY EYES.
FOR I REMEMBER ALL TOO WELL WHAT MY BROTHERS GAVE, FOR ME,
FAR AWAY IN A DISTANT LAND.
WE FOUGHT THE ENEMY, WHEN WE WERE BOYS, AND NOT YET MEN.
WE WERE SENT TO FIGHT FOR FREEDOM,
BUT FOR WHOM I COULD NEVER UNDERSTAND.
SO I SIT AND LISTEN TO THE SPEAKER
BUT I HEAR NO SOUND
ONLY THE DISTANT WAIL OF A TRUMPET
FOR MY BROTHERS NOT YET FOUND.
IN THE BREEZE, THE FLAG WAVES GENTLY
THIS WILL ALWAYS BE THE ONLY SOUND
I WILL EVER HEAR ON MEMORIAL DAY
FOR IT REMINDS ME OF MY BROTHERS
AND IT IS THE TRUE SOUND OF LIBERTY.
IN THE SHADOW OF A TREE I SIT
AND LISTEN TO THE FLAG AS IT TALKS TO ME.

PAUL J. ALFARO

Jack Share
22 So. Avonlea Cir.,
The Woodlands, TX 77382
(936) 273-3561

34th Bomb. Group



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