



ENDLESSHAM MEMORIES



VOICE OF THE 34TH BOMB GROUP (H)



4TH SQUADRON



7TH SQUADRON



18TH SQUADRON



391ST SQUADRON

**They watched -
They waited -
They Prayed.**



Scholarship Application
In This Issue



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/index.html>

www.mighty8thmuseum.com

www.air-museum.org/b17.htm

http://www.jccc.net/~bgustaf/34th_Bomb

DEADLINE

All material and items for the June, 2007 issue of Mendlesham Memories should reach me on or before April 15, 2007. All copy will be going to the publisher on that date.

Jack Share, editor



DUES are DUE



2007 Dues, for those who pay annually, are due as of January 1st, 2007.

DUES ARE \$20.00 PAYABLE TO
34TH BGA.

Send Dues To:

Jack Steffen
6670 Powner Farm Dr.
Cincinnati, OH 45248
(513) 574-1171

**Your cooperation in getting your dues
paid now will guarantee your
continued membership in the 34th
Bomb Group Association. Thank You.**

Share - a thought...

Since all copy for the March 2007 issue of MM needs to be turned over to the publisher by the 15th of January, my contribution to that edition is being conceived in this second week of January. At this time I am not sure that we will have a report from the Reunion Committee in time for the printing due to the unfortunate accident that befell Harold Rutka, our committee chairman. As some of you know, Harold fell in his driveway recently and fractured the femur bone just below the hip socket. Genevieve has said that, after the bone was stabilized, he was released from the hospital and sent to a rehab facility where he will perhaps reside for sometime during his therapy sessions.

We are fortunate in that Harold and Gen, efficient as they are, have finalized plans for our hotel in Grand Rapids but, as I understand it, they are still negotiating with several tour companies regarding pricing and tour locations. Knowing Harold, I'm sure that all will be settled shortly and the reunion plans will go forward without a hitch. All pertinent information for the reunion will be included in the June issue of your newsletter, Mendlesham Memories.

For our working members, and those who plan on accompanying their parents to our September reunion in Grand Rapids, it is not too early to start making plans now. September will roll around pretty fast so scheduling your vacation times now will assure that the reunion dates, September 5th - 9th will be locked in. Us "old geezers" never get any vacation time so we don't have to worry.

It's amazing that very seldom do the remaining family members of our veterans want to have our newsletter, Mendlesham Memories, suspended after the veteran is gone. Although we hear of how WWII veterans never wanted to talk about their experiences it is clearly evident, even 60 plus years later, that the following family members are very proud of their mothers, fathers and other relatives participation in the war and the war effort. It seems to have had a continuing major impact on their lives through out the years. Hopefully, the servicemen and women serving in all past, present and future world wide conflicts are equally respected in years to come. Thank a serviceman/woman today. They deserve our support regardless of our political leanings.

Jack

LOOSE TRANSLATION

A little boy opened the big family Bible. He was fascinated as he fingered through the old pages. Suddenly, something fell out of the Bible. He picked up the object and looked at it. What he saw was an old leaf that had been pressed in between the pages. "Mama, look what I found!" the boy called out.

"What have you got there, dear?"

With astonishment in the young boy's voice, he answered, "I think it's Adam's."



Jack Share

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

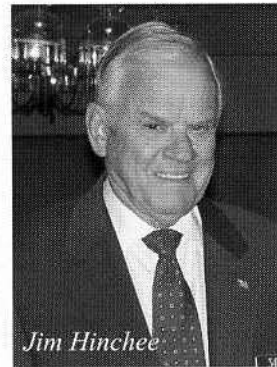
Here it is 2007. Christmas has come and gone. It will soon be time to go to Grand Rapids. How time flies. 2006 was a good year for us. Thankfully, we did stay healthy with just the normal aches and pains of old age.

It is sure nice to see how the young associates have added new life to the group. Kind of reminds me of the past years when the stairs were not so steep and the halls so long. Just thankful to keep going.

As usual, Jack is working hard on the March issue of Mendlesham Memories. What would we do without him and the newsletter? It is the lifeline of the 34th. We always look forward to getting the MM.

Sure hope everyone stays healthy and, the good Lord willing, we will see you all in Grand Rapids in September.

Jim Hinchee,
President, 34th BGA



Jim Hinchee

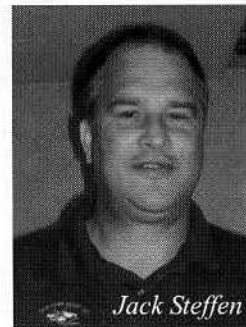
TREASURER'S REPORT

At the meeting in Rapid City, the annual dues amount for 2007 was set at \$20.00, the same as for 2006. There is no dues amount for the life members for 2007. I have already started receiving 2007 dues payments from many of you. Thank you for your prompt payments. Elsewhere in this issue is the address for sending your annual dues payment to me. Please make your check payable to the "34th Bomb Group Association".

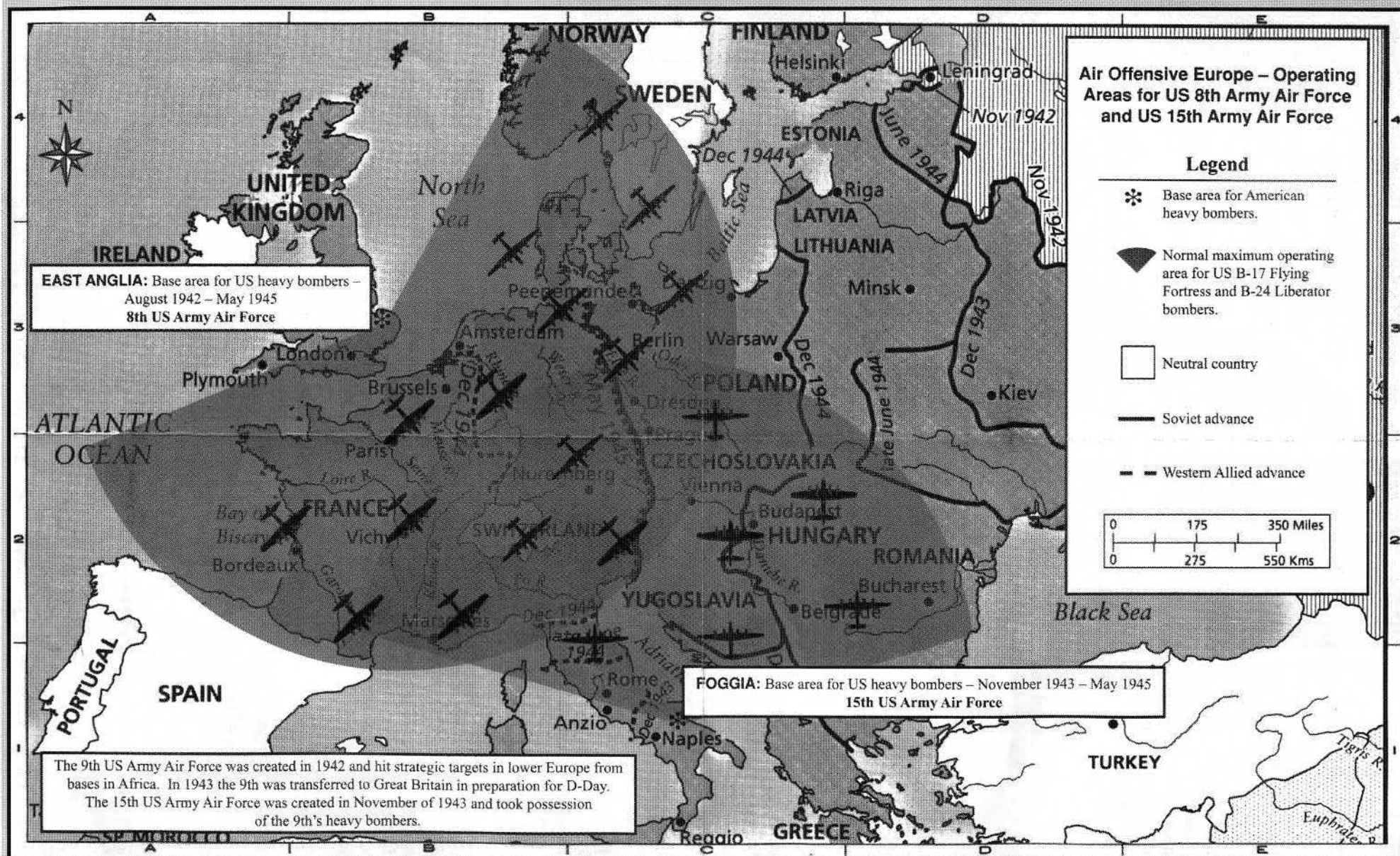
In addition to dues payments, we have received two other significant contributions to our treasury. First, thanks to a lot of hard work by both Ken and Kathleen Paxton, our PX continues to be a success. They always have many nice items for sale and are able to keep prices reasonable and generate a profit. Ken recently sent me a \$2500.00 check to deposit in the treasury. I hope that everyone appreciates the hard work that Ken and Kathleen perform on behalf of the group. Please stop in at the PX at our next reunion in Grand Rapids, Michigan and thank them personally. And, speaking of reunions, the Reunion Committee sent me a check for \$650.00 representing the attendee \$5.00 registration fee at the 2006 reunion in Rapid City. The Reunion Committee also does a consistently good job for our group. I hope many of you come to our final two reunions in 2007 and 2008 and thank them in person.

I reported in Rapid City that the group is in good financial condition. With 2007 dues payments rolling in, and the contributions from the PX and the Reunion Committee, our finances continue to look good. Thank you for your continuing support.

Jack Steffen,
Treasurer, 34th BGA



Jack Steffen



Request for Information on Former Member of the 34th Bomb Group

My wife's grandfather, PFC Joseph T. Cirolia, was a former member of the 34th Bomb Group during World War II stationed at Mendlesham, England. His Army serial number was 32971867 and his DD 214 states that he was a "duty soldier 590" with the 4th Bomb Squadron. Any information that you could provide on him, or links on the web, would be greatly appreciated

Also, please let me know how I might join your organization and receive your newsletter.

As you can see by my signature block, I am currently serving in the United States Army stationed at Fort Sheridan, Illinois. If any members were ever stationed here, they can certainly contact me for information about the old post.

Many thanks,

Robert K. Fischer
SSG, USA
PSNCO

Coml: 1-847-266-3204
Fax: 1-847-266-3191

WWII Control Towers in England

In the UK there is a website called "Control Towers" (www.contrower.co.uk) which provides information and photographs of the many US Air Force control towers that were, and some still are, in existence throughout England. A number of these that are still in existence are now being preserved as museums or even housing. As you can appreciate though, many of the original land marks have now been destroyed with the airfields returned to farmland. However, there has yet to be a "write-up" or photograph of the Control Tower at Mendlesham. Therefore, could I be so bold to ask that if anyone within the 34th Bomb Group may have such information/photos, would they be so kind to pass it along to me to help complete the website. Of the many World War II 8th Air Force bases, I believe that the site contains all of the airfields except four (4) with one of the missing being Mendlesham. Obviously, the tower is long gone, but there are remains of the airfield that still exist.

Through your newsletter, "Mendlesham Memories" I have learned that the 34th Bomb Group Association is planning their last sortie to Mendlesham next year. May I wish you every success with your plans and hope next year's trip will be a memorable one.

Many thanks for your help, **Barry Turner**
45 Goodwood Close
Ipswich, Suffolk
Ip1 6SY
England
e-mail: barry.turner1@ntlworld.com
(I live approximately 14 miles from Mendlesham.)



A typical wartime base; Nissen huts

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

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.

2007 Application for the 34th Bomb Group Ray Summa Scholarship Awards

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Name of Sponsor (paid-up 2007): _____ Squadron: _____

Address: _____

Age of applicant: _____ Grad. Date: _____ Best SAT/ACT Score: _____ GPA: _____

Will pursue Academic Major: _____

Colleges and Universities of interest to you: _____

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

Extracurricular 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, with dates): _____

(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: Copy of your 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 (your positioning the number of students in class).

Applications must be postmarked no later than July 10, 2007.

(Please include a self addressed post card if you wish acknowledgment of receipt of application).

Winners are expected to be announced at the 2007 34th Bomb Group Reunion in September.

Mail completed application to:

Scholarship Committee
c/o Ambers Hanson
1505 Chadwick Ln.
Auburn, AL 36832

PX Order Form

AUTO WINDOW STICKER - 2"X4" BLACK AND SILVER

VET: WWII US ARMY AIR CORPS\$4.00 EACH - OR - 3 FOR \$10.00

(NO SHIPPING CHARGES ON THIS ITEM)

REPRINT OF 34TH B.G. HISTORY BOOK, 1947 edition, EDWIN S. SMITH\$37.50ea.

PERMANENT NAME TAGS (First and last names & Sqdn. No)\$10.00ea.

LICENSE PLATE HOLDER (2 for \$5.00)\$3.00ea.

LICENSE PLATE - White with blue logo. Print same as several years ago.....\$10.00ea.

PATCHES - 34TH BOMB GROUP "VALOR TO VICTORY" \$5.00ea.

PATCHES - SQUADRON - 4th - 7th - 18th - 391st and Eighth Air Force.....\$5.00ea.

DECAL - VALOR TO VICTORY - 5" X 5"\$1.50ea.

BUMPER STICKER- 34TH B.G.- 3" X 12"\$1.50ea.

HAT PINS (FOR DECOR) B-24 - B-17 or POW \$3.50ea.

WINGS - (about 2") -PILOT - BOMBARDIER - NAVIGATOR - GUNNER OR FLIGHT ENGR\$4.00ea.

WINGS (about 1") \$3.00ea.

TIE TACK - 4TH - 7TH - 18TH - 391ST Sqdns and 8th Air Force.....\$ 4.00ea.

BALL POINT PEN (retractable) DK. BLUE W/GOLD LETTERS (34TH BG, 8TH AF) \$ 2.00ea.

VIDEO TAPE 58 mins. (" Start Your Engines + 50Years").....\$19.95ea.

MEN'S POLO SHIRT W/ POCKET AND 34TH B.G. Logo (Hunter Green & Cobblestone Biege)

M. LR. XLR. XXLR\$25.95ea.

MEN'S POLO SHIRT (White W/ Logo - no pocket) X Large only\$22.00ea.

CAP - ROYAL BLUE or NAVY w Patriotic flag on bill\$8.50ea.

NEW ITEM (First shown @ San Antonio Reunion:

WHITE T-SHIRT W/POCKET & LOGO OF BOTH B-17 & B-24 ON FRONT & BACK - Picture on back shows

our bright red rudder. Nice for warm weather & very colorfulAll Sizes \$12 each or 2 for \$22.00.

KEYRING - B-17, B-24 or 8th Air Force\$4.00ea.

KEYRING with leather back\$6.00ea.

BOLO TIE - B-17 OR B-24 or 8th Air Force\$6.00ea.

BOLO TIE with Mother of Pearl background\$10.00ea.

BELT BUCKLE "America's Heritage - The Right to Bear Arms"\$8.50ea.

SWEATSHIRT (good quality) colorful logo on front "PROUD TO BE A VETERAL" S, L, XL, OR XXL\$20.00ea.

- PLEASE CIRCLE ITEMS DESIRED -

AND INCLUDE YOUR TELEPHONE NUMBER WITH EACH ORDER

(sometimes needed for clarification)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ORDER

Please add

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

Send check or money order to:

34th B.G. PX

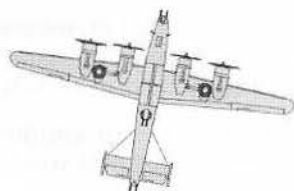
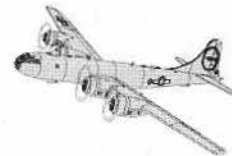
Ken Paxton

6402 E. 11th St.

Wichita, KS 67206

Tel: (316) 683-2900

e-mail: kenpaxton@sbcglobal.net



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

Back To The Future

(Blythe Army Air Base Revisited)

The 34th Bomb Group did much of their stateside training outside of the small agricultural town of Blythe, which is situated on the Colorado River that separates California and Arizona. Stuck in the middle of a sparsely populated area of the southwest, the War Department decided this would be an excellent location for a major training base. With lots of open, undeveloped area, and sunshine almost year-round, this provided an excellent training environment.

Construction of the base began, and the airfield was ready for use by the end of 1942. A cross-shaped runway provided a north-south and an east-west approach, while a NW-SE and a NE-SW runway provided more options. To the northeast and northwest of the runways were the ramps where the B-24's, B-17's and A-20's were tied down. Directly behind these ramps were the crew buildings for the 4th, 7th, 18th and 391st Bombardment Squadrons that comprised the 34th Bomb Group.

Just south of the runways, were other buildings including the post headquarters, post exchange, barracks for non-flight personnel, a theatre and a swimming pool.

The 34th occupied this field from mid December, 1942 through April, 1944. BAAB became home to thousands of men before being sent overseas to Mendlesham, England. No doubt many of the men stationed there have fond memories of Blythe, including and perhaps predominately, the heat!

Once the war ended, many of the buildings were eventually dismantled and the good wood and other materials were carted off for use elsewhere, while the rest went to the city dump. For years, many of the building's concrete foundations, stone-lined walkways, roads, runways and ramps were intact. Eventually, and unfortunately, most of this was destroyed when dozers cleared the area so farming could take over. Although the crops are now long gone, one can still see where the plowed rows of soil literally went around the airfield, wiping out the areas of BAAB's post buildings.

The main hanger was spared, as were a few other buildings, and is still in use today.

I have been interested in researching the WWII-era airfields of Arizona, as well as Blythe and Rice airfields (Rice is about 30 miles north of Blythe AAB) for many years now. I enjoy photographing and researching these old airfields as they are slowly being absorbed by the desert or development. I am in the process of writing a book about these airfields in the southwest as I feel they played such an important role, yet are virtually never spoken about. It is my way of honoring the men who served, as well as preserving the history of these bases.

A few months ago, I had the opportunity to pay 'an arm and a leg' for some photos of the 34th while stationed at Blythe. It is fascinating to look at the base over 60 years ago, and compare it to today. It is easy to look at the photos and wonder what it must have been like at Blythe AAB during the war years.

I also research aircraft crashes that occurred while these bases were in operation, and have personally visited about ten B-24 and B-17 crashes of the 34th BG in Arizona and California. As I am sure many of you recall, the 34th had many mishaps while at Blythe AAB, which unfortunately took many young lives.

One crash that really stands out to me is that of B-24E, serial number 42-64397, that crashed into the McCoy Mountains, 8

miles northwest of Blythe AAB on October 15, 1943. After take-off for a night-flight, the plane developed engine trouble, which prompted the pilot, Lt. Merrill Bernard to request permission to land on the east-west runway. Unfortunately, the darkness hid the lofty mountain peaks and the tower reported seeing a fireball on the mountainside. The crew was Lt. Merrill Bernard, F/O Dean Mulberger, Lt. Arthur Osburn, Lt. William Grace, and Sgt's Willis Thurmond, Louis Buess, Paul College, Ormond May, Howard Hazelwood and Paul Grimm.

When I first found this remote site about 8 years ago, I noticed that most of the larger parts had been taken away after the crash, but tons of smaller debris and a burn area remained. After taking some photos, I saw a small chain in the dirt. When I pulled it up, it was still attached to a dogtag; that of radio operator Lewis Buess. Also found was the 1942 Greencastle, PA high school class ring that belonged to flight engineer Paul College.

With research, I was able to track down Buess' 87 year old sister and return her brother's dogtag. I recall her telling me that it felt so warm in her hands.

Paul College's ring was returned to a family member and from what I understand, is on display in the local VFW building.

Another interesting crash was from 21 January 1944, when B-24 #42-99969 crashed after a night-time take-off. Although undetermined, investigators suspect that the pilot may have suffered from vertigo or disorientation in the night sky. Amazingly, two men survived the crash: gunners Elmer Stred and Lawrence Jorgensen. I have not been able to locate either man. The crew for this plane was Lt's Mark Russell, Carl Boland, Donald Brown, John Burford, and Sgt's Robert Lipesynski, Joseph Love, Elmer Stred, and Cpl Lawrence Jorgensen, and Pfc John Babkewics.

A number of years ago, I located a 34th B-24 that crashed about 30 miles south of Casa Grande, AZ, on January 30, 1944, after the crew bailed due to an engine fire. I was fortunate enough to locate and interview two crewmen, Sgt Kenneth McLennan and Pfc Elmer Wiley. They both shared their thoughts and recollections of that day and also enjoyed reading the crash report and viewing photos of the crash site I had mailed. That crew was Lt's Charles Daniels, Williams Bagus, Morris Wender, Wilbert Terry, Sgt's Kenneth McLennan, Leonard Coletta, Edward Iverson, John Malpede, Charles Brannan, and Pfc Elmer Wiley.

I am still searching for a few other 34th BG crashes that still elude me, including the January 25, 1944 mishap that occurred 4 miles north of Quartzsite, AZ. The crew was Lt's Donald Harris, George Thomas, Harry Brennan and Sgt's John Dzaich, Elwood Wolf, John Corbett, Woodrow Marlow and James Marasa.

Eventually, it is my goal to build a small monument at the Blythe airport honoring the over 120 young men who died stateside and never had the opportunity to serve at Mendlesham.

If any members have any photos, stories or information on your time at Blythe or on plane crashes that you would like to share for my book, please let me know.

Trey Brandt
4340 N. 23rd Pl
Phoenix, AZ 85016
(602) 952-2646
TreyB@cox.net

Recognize Anyone?
Blythe AAB - Circa 1943



Major Ward Laying Down the Law to Adjutant 2nd Lt. Murphy



Circa 1943 - Note The 7th Squadron. Insignia On The Wall

Liberator 42-7422 over Blythe AAB
Circa 1943



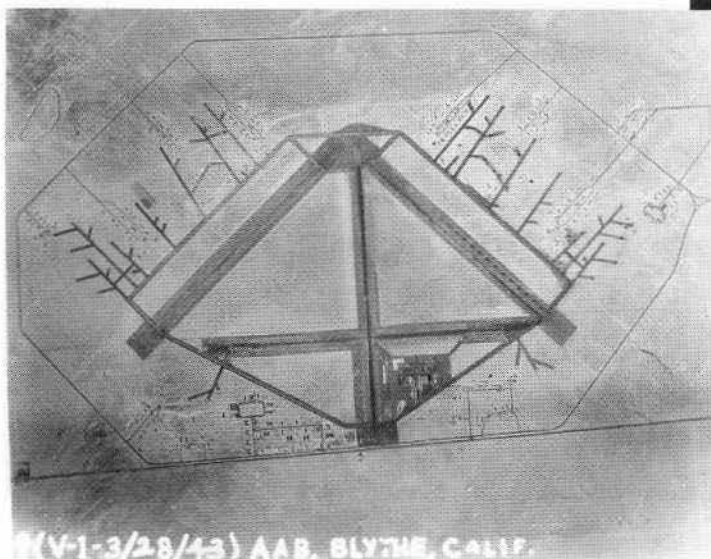
B-24 #41-28473
Carol Robbins - Circa 1943

Crash of Liberator # 42-7099 July 1943
½ Mile South of BAAB

Crew: Pilot - Stanley Obarski; CP - Victor Swenson;
Nav - Erwin Smith; Bomb - John Connor;
Radio - Tyra Thornell & Joseph Graves;
Eng - Guy Lee
Gunners - Howard Ely, Joseph Hinebaugh,
& Richard Wolf.



G-3-160F-34BG)(7-24-43-1845)



(V-1-3/28/43) AAB, BLYTHE, CALIF.



Main Hangar

Searching for Stanley

By Kay Dwyer Hughes

WESTERN UNION

Mrs. Ellen J. DWYER

The Secretary of War desires me to express his deep regret that your son, Second Lieutenant Stanley N. Dwyer has been reported missing in action since ten May over Austria - stop - If further details or other information are received you will be promptly notified. Dunlop, acting the Adjutant General.

Like thousands of families, during World War II, this telegram was received by Lt. Stanley Dwyer's mother and father in what must have been a most anxious and emotional time. Stanley Dwyer, age 27, was the pilot of a B-17 named "Pete's Playhouse" flying out of Foggia, Italy with the 15th Air Force. Also, like many other families, the Dwyers were most eager to learn the fate of their son by corresponding with military personnel and all the crew of the aircraft. Through their investigation, they learned that the plane was shot down on May 10th, 1944 on a mission over Wiener Neustadt, Austria and that five of the crew had bailed out and were interned as POW's. The other five crewmen perished in the crash - three of the five's bodies were found near the crash site and were buried by local villagers. The remaining two crewmen, one of whom was Lt. Dwyer, remained as missing in action.

After the war, as the survivors were released from the German POW camps, they contacted Lt. Dwyer's parents with what information they had on that fateful day but could shed no light on Lt. Dwyer's fate. Reason, of course, told them what must have happened. However, there remained that glimmer of hope, that by some miracle, Stanley had survived. Over the next 60 years, correspondence about the mission dwindled and daily life continued with memories easing the heartache, but there was always the unanswered questions. Mr. and Mrs. Dwyer left this world yearning for closure and a chance to bring their son's remains home to the United States.

Also, at this same time, another son of the Dwyer's, Harold E. Dwyer, age 19, was in advanced pilot's training at Ft. Sumter, New Mexico on schedule to receive his wings in August, 1944. He was eventually assigned to the 34th Bomb Group with the Eighth Air Force stationed at Mendlesham airbase in England.

After decades of silence, the last eight years of personal research rekindled the effort to get answers and learn more about the May 10, 1944 mission and Stanley's life. Enter JPAC (JOINT POW/MIA ACCOUNTING COMMAND) located at Hickham Air Force Base in Honolulu, Hawaii, whose responsibilities are accounting for missing servicemen from this country's previous wars. Their motto is "You Are Not Forgotten". The numbers of MIA's is staggering - 78,000 missing from WWII. Eighteen teams travel worldwide, working in many environments, often in perilous conditions to fulfill their missions.

On August 2, 2006 an 18 member team made up of servicemen from the Army, Air Force and Marines, with one civilian forensic anthropologist, Dr. Jay Silverstein, arrived in Austria to excavate the 1944 B-17 crash site looking for remains and a possible closure to the fate of Lt. Stanley Dwyer. Accompanying the team with, "front row seats", were Stanley's brother Harold, wife Darlene, their daughter, Kay Hughes,

husband Rick and their two college age children, Melissa and Nathan. For the next 45 days the team meticulously examined every ounce, every speck of dirt in five by five meter grids marking the crash site focusing on finding a piece of air craft wreckage, life support material and the ever so precious human bone fragment or tooth.



EXCAVATING THE CRASH SITE

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of this mission was the secondary explosion from a bomb or bombs after the plane crashed. In the days immediately after the crash, the Germans hauled off the large pieces of wreckage and the local villagers buried the three dead crewmen found near or at the crash site. After that it appeared that not much evidence was left behind.



AIRCRAFT WRECKAGE

Searching for Stanley

Continued from Page 10

Unique to this excavation, were the eyewitnesses that came to the site to share their stories of May 10, 1944. Not only was this information helpful to the JPAC team, but for the family the information clarified some of their questions about the final moments of the flight of "Pete's Playhouse". From talking to one man who saw the crash as a 13 year old boy standing near his farmhouse, the plane had to turn to miss his neighbor's house, so they know the plane was under control minutes before it crashed. By going to the crash site, they were able to put most of the story together.

Being at the crash site also gave them the opportunity to erect a memorial stone. On Sunday, August 27th, a memorial dedication was held at the site with about 45 people attending. The JPAC team, the family and local people were there to pay their respects to the fallen crew in a moving ceremony which closed with the playing of taps.



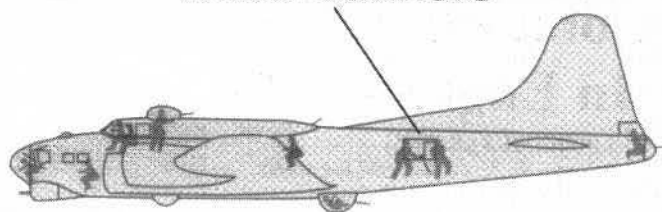
MEMORIAL STONE

Unfortunately, the team didn't find human remains on this mission but JPAC will be returning to the area for another recovery mission in the future. The family did leave with a sense of hope, because during the first week of the mission a 1916 silver dime was found in the crater where a 500 pound bomb detonated after the crash. Of the ten members of the crew aboard the aircraft only one was born in 1916, and that was Lt. Dwyer. His family is confident that he was carrying that dime, possible as a good luck charm, on the day his aircraft went down. The team also found various pieces of life support from the aircraft and other personal effects from the crew.

"I'm a little disappointed that we weren't able to find human remains and have a definitive answer for the family," said Dr. Silverstein, "but we definitely know we're in the right area and it will only be a matter of time before we're able to bring our boys home."

ED: Kay Hughes and her father, Harold E. Dwyer, are both members of the 34th Bomb Group Association.

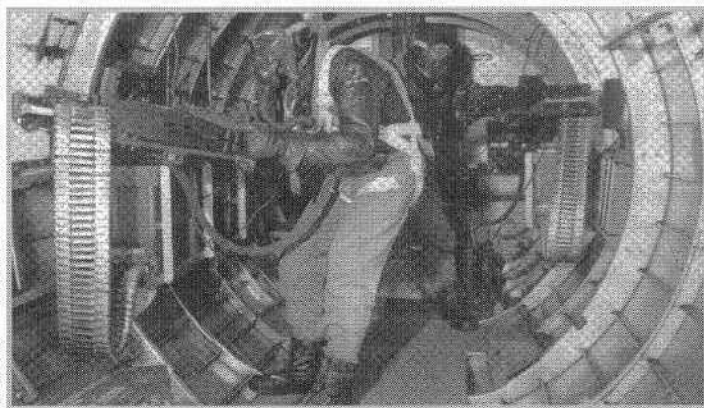
Waist Gunners



The waist windows of the Fortress provided excellent defense stations; however, great skill or good luck was required to obtain strikes on an enemy fighter hurtling past. The waist guns were an important defense feature of the B-17 formations, combining the open lateral areas with a gauntlet of massed firepower.

The waist gunners had flak helmets, flak suits and an armor plate contoured to the curve of the fuselage below the windows as their only protection from the flak and bullets. Standing at their guns, their bodies filled a larger target area than was the case for the rest of the crew, who were sitting or kneeling.

B-17's carried two waist gunners; each protected his respective side of the aircraft. Waist gunners incurred the largest number of casualties of all the Fortress crew positions. Early waist gunner positions were directly across from each other, often causing the gunners to bump into one another and getting entangled in each other's oxygen lines. Later, the positions were staggered, giving the gunners greater mobility. On early B-17's, waist window coverings were on slide rails and had to be opened before combat so the guns could be swung out from their stowed positions.



Improvements introduced on the B-17G mounted the guns to the inner frame of the windows and were enclosed with a permanent Plexiglas covering, which meant the gunners didn't have to stand in the freezing slipstream, as in earlier models.

This presentation is part of a living History created by the Arizona Wing of the Commemorative Air Force, Mesa, Arizona. The last crew position (tail) will be presented in a future issue. Special thanks to the CAF and the Sentimental Journey.

REUNITED

(via Mendlesham Memories)

Regretfully, I must inform you of my husband, Charles R. Meyer's passing in his 85th year. Several years ago a Mendlesham Memories arrived with a photograph taken at the previous reunion. One in a group turned out to be Charles' navigator in the 391st squadron. They had not seen each other, or been in touch, for some 60 years. He located Harry, by phone, who was now living in Daly City, CA. They, finally, made a personal contact at the following reunion and for the next two, three in all. Charles nicknamed Harry "Fearless Fosdick" from the Dick Tracy comics. It was "Mendlesham Memories" that brought them together. Many thanks.

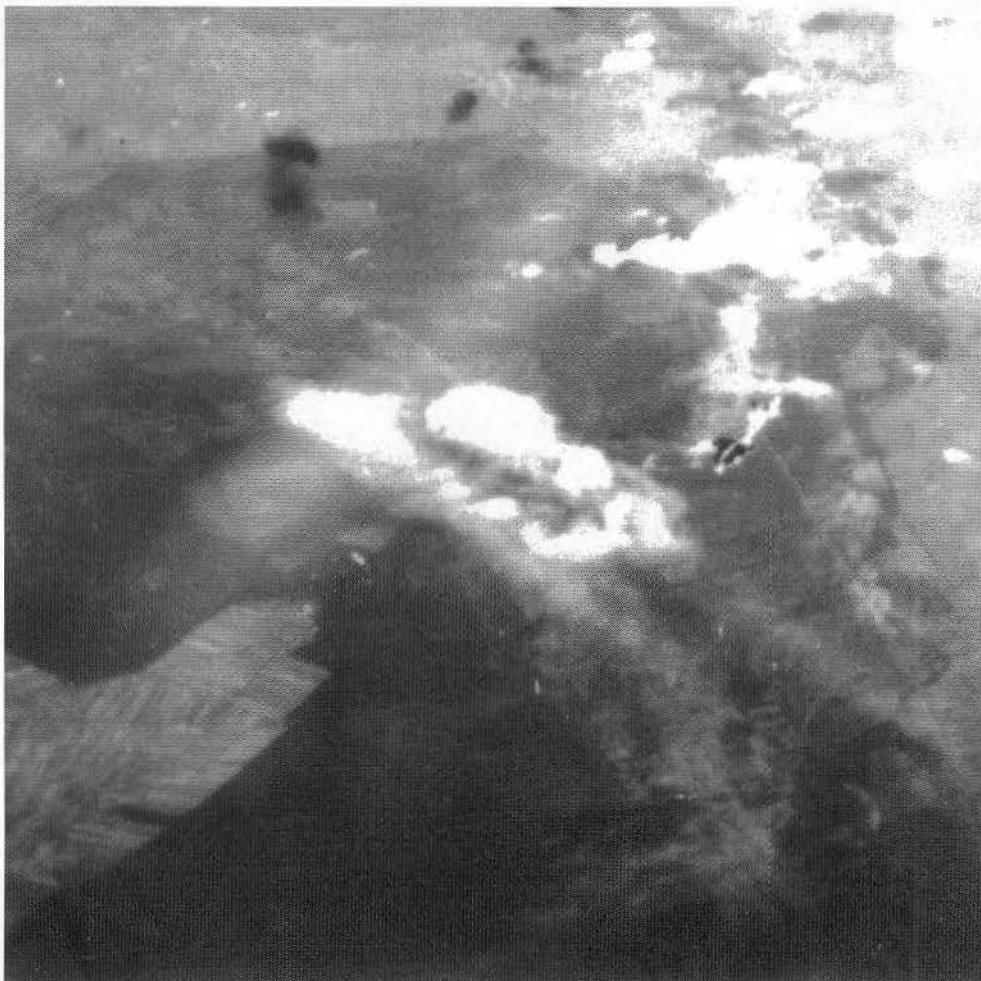
The photograph is one of the Charles Meyer's B-17 crew. In the crew photo, Charles is on the left, top row. His navigator, Harry Curusis, is the second from the right, top row. Unfortunately, I can not identify any of the others.



Going Down

This 62 year old snap-shot from a cheap camera shows a 34th Group B-17 going down in flames. Expert opinion believes that the swirling cloud-like smoke (or fire) shown to the right and below the plane is the result of another plane going down. Notice the swirling cloud (or smoke) to the left of the plane continues down with the possible loss of another. Notice, also, far below the plane there is an object that could be a plane that might be responsible for the swirling action. It is, to say the least, and interesting photo. It was taken by one of my crew mates on the Capt. Russell Lindstrom crew on a mission over Germany.

Walter Sturdivan
18th Squadron
34th Bomb Group



FRIENDS' WRITE

AC EGGLESTON - CLOVENDALE, CA

In June 1945, following the end of WWII, crew #38-34 flying B-17G S/N 42-102523 departed Mendlesham Airdrome with a crew of 10 and 10 passengers for the return trip to the United States, landing at Bradley Field, Connecticut.

In January 1958 to Dec. 1961, I returned to the UK flying a B-66 with the 47th Bomb Wing at Sculthorpe. During this period I flew down to Mendlesham to observe what remained - unusable runway, a few handstands and a few vacant building pads.

We lost our navigator, Norman Ashwood of Cleveland, OH in 1955. Carl Travernicht Jr, Bernard Peczkowski and I attended his funeral.

WARREN E MORRISON - WASHINGTON, DC

I'm not sure how up to date I am on annual dues, so I'm enclosing \$60.00 - backwards and forwards, perhaps.

The illustration of the equipment worn by bomber crews on high altitude missions in winter of 1944-45 brought back some cold, cold memories!!

ROBERT SCHROEDER - AMERICAN FALL, ID

Enclosed is \$80.00 for me and my families 34th Bomb Group Association annual dues for '07.

We appreciate your finally getting our addresses straightened out so we all get our Mendlesham Memories.

LLOYD & CAROLELLIOT - OKLAHOMACITY

We were honored to represent the 34th Bomb Group at the Memorial service for Dr. William Alston at Checotah, OK on Friday October 20, 2006. Dr. Alston, Jr., age 93, served as flight surgeon with the 34th Bomb Group at Mendlesham in 1944-45. After the war he established a practice in general surgery and served in several hospitals in the Tulsa, OK area.

EARL ZESCH - ARROWHEAD, CA

Dolores and I vacationed in Hawaii, October 28th to November 9th to celebrate our 60th wedding anniversary. We were accompanied by one of our two daughters, her husband, five of our nine grandchildren and six of our seven great grandchildren. Also, accompanying us was my sister from Georgia. Needless to say, all had a wonderful time!

BIRGIT LONERGAN - FT MYERS, FL

What a wonderful picture on the cover of the Dec. MM. Still recognize a few faces. I am already making plans to join you in Grand Rapids.

BERNIE FARLEY - WEST CALDWELL, NJ

A different sort of holiday for me this year, After 50+ years, I am closing on my house in Verona, NJ on 12/14/06 and moving to a retirement community. I have a very nice apartment. God Bless our 3 for their help with my packing and moving.

SYLVIA & "BUB" LUMMIS - MENDLESHAM, ENG

Its that time of year to be sending cards and best wishes to our friends. We hope you are all well. We understand from our copy of Mendlesham Memories that some of you might visit us in June 2007. We do hope this is right and look forward to seeing you or as many who are well enough to travel.

On November 13th we celebrated our annual "Remembrance Sunday" at the parish church of St. Mary The Virgin at Mendlesham. Although this is principally a remembrance of the First and Second World Wars, we also call to mind the many thousands of people who die every year in conflicts around the world in our own day and ask God to strengthen the resolve of all who work for peace. It was a very moving time for every one and I hope it made people *think*.

VIRGILINE & "CHIP" SPENCER - CARSONVILLE, MI

\$10.00 check for 2007 dues enclosed (*Ed.- dues have been increased to \$20.00*).

When Chip and I met I was 15 he 18. I knew he was going in the service. I asked him if he was married and he said, "No, it will be a cold day before I marry." And do you know, we were married on December 4, 1945 - a day with a record low temperature!!

NANCY & BOB HAM - RAMSEUR, NC

Enclosed find check for 2007 dues. We probably will not attend the Grand Rapids reunion - too far. But will try for the last one in 2008 - if it's within driving distance.

DWIGHT KELLEY - BURDEN, KS

2007 dues enclosed. Sorry that I am unable to attend the reunions as I don't do much driving alone anymore. Maybe if the last reunion is in the middle of the country I will be able to attend. We are all getting older and not as active as we were in the good old days, but time passes on. I think that there are still 5 of our crew still living. I still e-mail to one of our past crew member's son who lives in South Carolina. His mother had a crew plaque put on the memorial at the 8th Air Force Historical Museum in Savannah. Have a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

GINA FISCHER - LAKEMOOR, IL

My husband, Robert Fischer, has been e-mailing you regarding my grandfather, Joseph Cirolia.

I am sending a check for \$20.00 to become an associate member of the 34th Bomb Group Association.

FRIENDS WRITE - *Continued*

REGINA GIVEN - SILVER STAR, MT

Enclosed check is for 2007 dues for myself, Ganel, Wade, and Rick Given.

I am so sorry I missed the '06 reunion but a young Given member was married on the same week-end and it was very important for the family to attend. But, I am writing down the date for the '07 reunion and would sure like to meet everyone. I am very sorry that my husband, Dick, and I never attended one but he just didn't care to. Maybe he thought it would bring out too many memories. If several from his crew had attended I believe he would have enjoyed a visit with them.

Is there any indication that the new associate officers and members might think twice about carrying on for awhile, if so I would be happy to be a working member since all my life I have been an organizer. I would like to keep the organization going.

RITA FITZGERALD - FORSYTH, MT

Please find enclosed check for \$20.00 for 2007 dues for my mother Mrs. Francis Schmidt. She wishes to receive the Mendlesham Memories even after my father passed away.

BASIL GAUMER - GREENVILLE, IL

I am enclosing my check for 2007 dues to the Mendlesham Memories.

I was an Ordnance Man in the 18th Sqd. And by job was loading bombs onto the aircraft and putting the fuses in them. Here, sometime ago, I saw on the news about someone trying to put a bomb into a plane and thought how awful that a man would do such a thing. Then it hit me like a ton of bricks, I was putting them on for a different reason.

REID McCLOSKEY - CARLSBAD, NM

Thanks for calling me to confirm my dues status. My check is enclosed. Your response and you acceptance of the treasurer's job is appreciated.

This morning I had a special telephone call fro Lloyd Elliot, Oklahoma City. He was tail gunner on the original "Flying Dutchmen" crew, Clair Zarfoss, pilot.

Lloyd and I are the only survivors. A wonderful group of men.

FLORENCE KILEY - SAN DIEGO, CA

As a life member, I'm just not sure how often I should send extra dues. I'm enclosing a check for \$50.00.

My husband's B-17 "Feather Merchant", was shot down on Oct. 7, 1944 with a heavy loss of life. He was taken prisoner and spent the rest of the war in a POW camp in Barth, Germany.

WALTER STURDIVAN - STOCKTON, CA

I received the Dec. Mendlesham Memories and , boy, what a flash of color. A first class issue, and a lot of information. The Rapid City reunion was wonderful and the Reunion Committee deserves a lot of credit.

So, the next reunion is at Grand Rapids, Michigan. That seems like a good location since most of the American people live East of the Mississippi River. Lois and I hope to make the meeting.

The record of the 34th Bomb Group will live on long after our last reunion. Activated on Jan. 15th, 1941, the group was the oldest AAF organization to serve in the Eighth Air Force. Usually, not remembered, is the fact that although we didn't arrive early in the air war, we served during the time that the most bombs were dropped and the most sophisticated weapons were used against us.

BASIL MAUK - DENISON, TX

Here's check for the next two years. Use the rest wherever needed.

By the way, my nephew looked up my WWII records and found my serial number to read 18005200 and it should be 18005700. Is there some way you can correct the error? I do not have a computer nor the knowledge to do so.

I would like to take this time to thank all of you for a wonderful job you do putting out the MM. I enjoy it very much.

CHARLES METZ - PATCHOGUE, NY

Enclosed find my 2007 dues for continued membership in the 34 BGA.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

MOVING?

IF YOU ARE MOVING SOON, BEFORE THE NEXT MENDLESHAM MEMORIES IS DUE, OR IF THERE IS SOME MISTAKE IN YOUR NAME OR ADDRESS, PLEASE ENTER THE CORRECT INFORMATION, CUT THIS OUT AND SEND TO: JACK SHARE, 22 S. AVONLEA CIRCLE, THE WOODLANDS, TEXAS 77382.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State & Zip _____

Mailing labels are printed on Feb. 1, May. 1, Aug. 1 and Nov. 1 for the March, June, September & December issues.

Change of Address - SEPT '06 (2)

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ORG	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
BERGOLD	ROBERT	18LM	10184 SUMAC RUN	LITTLETON	CO	80125
BROWNE	WILLIAM J	18LM	143 SHAFER RD	CORAOPOLIS	PA	15108
CAMPBELL	MRS MARY	4LM	140 TER HEUN DR Rm215	FALMOUTH	MA	02540
FARLEY	BERNADETTE	18LMA	CRANES MILL - APT#18	WEST CALDWELL	NJ	07006
JAMES	ERNET H	4/18	5958 MADISON	TAYLOR	MI	48180
MARTIN	RANDALL R	7LM	302 LINDEN PONDS WAY UNIT 512	HINGHAM	MA	02043
POLIVKA	JOHN G SR	7	10719 NE 143 RD PL	BOTHELL	WA	98011
SMITH	JAMES C	7LM	4917 RAVENSWOOD DR APT.708	SAN ANTONIO	TX	78227
TURNER	BARRY	A	45 GOODWOOD CLOSE	IPSWITCH, SUFFLOK	IP1 6SY	UK
WELCH	SEAN	A	21 WATERFORD CLOSE	HEATH CHARNOCK, NR.		
				CHORLEY, LANCASTER	PR6 9JQ	UK
WESTMAN	CARL B	18LM	6187 TYLER LN	FERNDAL	WA	98248
WILLIS	LYNN	391LM	19985 JAGUAR TR	BLOOMFIELD	IOWA	52537
WITHAM	HAROLD G	18LM	2950 TURKEYFOOT RD APT 218	EDGEWOOD	KY	41017

Taps

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ORG	DOD	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
MYERS	CHARLES R	391LM		25 RUE GRAND VALLEE	NEWPORT BEACH	CA	92660
MUELLER	PAUL L	4LM	12/06/06	4017 W CHICAGO ST	RAPID CITY	SD	57702
SCHMIDT	FRANCIS C	7LM	10/28/06	BOX 421	FORSYTH	MT	59327
WITHAM	HAROLD G	18LM	12/11/06	3393 CITRUS LN	CINCINNATI	OH	45239



He the pear-ly gates will o - pen,

New Associate Members

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ORG	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
FISCHER	GINA	A	633 ARBOR CICLE	LAKEMOOR	IL	60051

60th
Wedding Anniversary

Congratulations To
 Earl and Dolores Zesch - Lake Arrowhead, CA
 July, 19th. 2006



It was built with 24 tons of scrap steel from the World Trade Center.

It is the fifth in a new class of warship - designed for missions that include special operations against terrorists. It will carry a crew of 360 sailors and 700 combat-ready Marines to be delivered ashore by helicopters and assault craft.

Steel from the World Trade Center was melted down in a foundry in Amite, LA to cast the ship's bow section. When it was poured into the molds on Sept. 9, 2003, "those big rough steelworkers treated it with ▶

USS NEW YORK



▶ total reverence," recalled Navy Capt. Kevin Wensing, who was there. "It was a spiritual moment for everybody there."

Junior Chavers, foundry operations manager, said that when the trade center steel first arrived, he touched it with his hand and the "hair on my neck stood up." "It had a big meaning to it for all of us," he said. "They knocked us down. They can't keep us down. We're going to be back."

The ship's motto? "Never Forget"



Jack Share
22 South Avonlea Circle
The Woodlands, TX 77382
(936)273-3561

From the collection of:

Joseph K Marks

Pilot, 4th Sq., Crew No. 12, April - Aug 1944

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34th Bomb Group

