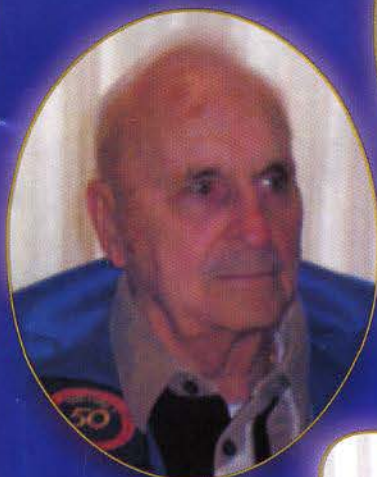




ENDLESSHAM MEMORIES



VOICE OF THE 34TH BOMB GROUP (H)



Harold Rutka



Bob Wright



Genevieve Rutka



Esther Wright

A Tribute



to the Retiring Reunion Committee for 24 Years of Organizing
the Annual Reunions for the Members of the 34th Bomb Group Association



4TH SQUADRON



7TH SQUADRON



18TH SQUADRON



391ST SQUADRON

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

www.jccc.net/~bgustaf/34th_Bomb

DEADLINE

All material and items for the March, 2008 issue of Mendlesham Memories should reach me on or before January 15, 2008. All copy will be going to the publisher on that date.

Jack Share, editor

DUES are DUE



2008 Dues,
for those who pay annually,
are due as of **January 1st 2008**



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 and the delivery of your Mendlesham Memories. Thank you.

Share - a thought...

The end of an era? Maybe - maybe not. It is true that the 34th Bomb Group Association that was formed 24 years ago by a group of veterans of the 34th Bomb Group, 8th Air Force has become precariously thinned in ranks due to the fact that our aging years have caught up with us.

Fortunately, in the last few years we were foresighted enough to face reality and decided if this organization was to continue the leadership would have to come from our offspring and those interested in our history for a variety reasons.

At the recent 24th reunion of the Association in Grand Rapids, MI, the first ever associate member was elected president along with several others who have accepted various positions within the organization.

Does this mean that the organization is alive and well? We would like to think so but at this stage we are not sure whether the interest of this influx of new blood will be on going or fall apart as the original members become even less involved. We would like to think that now that there has been a bond established between our newer members that some form of organization might still exist and that the remaining originals will give all the encouragement and assistance possible, even moral support would help,

Whatever the future holds, I think I speak for entire membership when I say it has been a terrific ride and, because this association was formed, the trials and tribulations of the 34th Bomb Group along with the many relationships established will be remembered and on going for many years to come.

Jack

Jack Share



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As the first Second Generation President, it is quite an honor to be asked to lead the 34th Bomb Group Association through its 25th and final year. There is a lot of work to be done during the next twelve months as we wind everything down, and I am looking forward to the challenges that lay ahead.

I hope that everyone enjoyed the reunion in Grand Rapids. Sonia and I had a wonderful time. In addition to bringing my mother with us, this year we had a new addition to our party, my 12 year old nephew Brian. It was great introducing another generation to the "Greatest Generation."

It was sad to hear of the retirement of the members of the Reunion Committee. Harold and Genevieve Rutka, Bob and Esther Wright, and Bruce Sothern have done such a tremendous job organizing the reunions. I want to personally thank them for all of their hard work these past many years. As a member of the new Reunion Committee, I know that we have some large shoes to fill, but we will do our best to make the last reunion something special.

As we approach the holiday season, Sonia and I want to wish everyone good health and much happiness for the upcoming year. We look forward to seeing you all in 2008.

David Fieber,
President



PASSING THE GAVEL

After 24 years of existence, the 34th Bomb Group Association has run out of veterans who are ready, willing and/or able to head the organization. For the last several years the younger generation members have gradually taken over important positions in order to keep it solvent. At the Grand Rapids reunion the first non-veteran associate member took over the reins of the office.

David Fieber was unanimously elected president. David has been an important member of the 34th for sometime, holding many offices. David's father, Herman, was a valuable, long time member until his death a few years ago. Mother, Nancy and other family members still attend the reunions with David and wife, Sonia, who is also a valuable member of the association serving as our recording secretary.

Our appreciation to our immediate past, and last, veteran president, Jim Hinchee. Jim's tenure as president saw the immergence of the younger associate members as the lifeblood of the organization. Without their help the 34th Bomb Group Association was destined for immediate extinction.



Congratulations, Jim, and thanks for your dedication and service to the organization.

Past President's Message

The reunion was great. The new associate members are really taking a real interest in the group. To me this gives things a better outlook for the future. They have the group in their interests and will do a good job. They sure were a great help to me.

The turn out was good considering we are getting older and losing members each year. We still have a lot of workers such as, Bruce, Jim Martin and Jack Share and others. Thanks to them the organization keeps going.

The new associates told me that they have found a web site that gives them a lot of information on reunions. They will do a good job.

Thanks to everyone that helped me thru the year. It was a great experience and I learned a lot. Thanks to everyone.

Jim Hinchee,
Past President



TREASURER'S REPORT

It was great seeing so many of you in Grand Rapids. The reunion committee did another fantastic job of planning the reunion and providing the opportunity for the group to get together.

At the reunion, the annual dues amount for 2008 was set at \$20.00 the same as 2007, no additional amount for life members. Elsewhere in this issue is my address where dues should be sent. Please make your check payable to the "34th Bomb Group Association".

Besides dues, we receive two other significant contributions to our treasury. First, thanks to the hard work of Ken and Kathleen Paxton, our PX continues to be successful providing the treasury with a check for \$2500.00 The Reunion Committee provided me with a check for \$650.00 representing the \$5 per registrant at the Grand Rapids reunion.

Our treasury consists of two funds, a General Fund and a Scholarship Fund. At the beginning of the year there was \$10,681.87 in the Scholarship Fund. During the year we received \$200.00 in donations and awarded \$2750.00 ending the year with a balance of \$8,131.87. We have ample funds in the fund to pay the 2007 scholarships, which were recently awarded, and also for the 2008 awards.

Revenues and expenses for the General Fund follows:

General Fund Balance July 31, 2006 - \$12,324.45

Revenues:

Member Dues & Contributions	\$4,265.50
Reunion Committee	650.00
P/X	2,500.00
Interest/Change in investment Value	879.10
Total Revenues	\$8294.60

Expenses:

Mendlesham Memories	\$11,212.56
Speaker - 2006 reunion	300.00
Web site maintenance	150.00
Total Expenses	\$11,632.56

General Fund Balance July 31, 2007 \$8986.49

At the Grand Rapids reunion, I provided the board with detailed projections of our estimated revenues and expenses through calendar year 2008, when the 34th Bomb Group Association currently plans to cease operations. With the 2008 annual dues payments and our other sources of revenue, we project that we will have enough cash to conduct our business through 2008.

Thanks for your ongoing support..

Jack Steffen, Treasurer



THE (NEW) AIRMAN'S CREED

I am an American Airman.
I am a warrior.
I have answered my nation's call.
I am an American Airman.
My mission is to fly, fight, and win.
I am faithful to a proud heritage,
A tradition of honor,
And a legacy of valor.
I am an American Airman.
Guardian of freedom and justice.



Reunion Committee Report:

As Many of you already know, after 24 years of dedicated service, members of the Reunion Committee announced that they are unable to continue planning reunions for the 34th Bomb Group Association, primarily for health related reasons. On behalf of the entire 34th Bomb Group Association, we want to extend sincere thanks to Harold and Genevieve Rutka, Bob and Esther Wright, and Bruce Sothern for their many years of hard work and successful reunion planning.

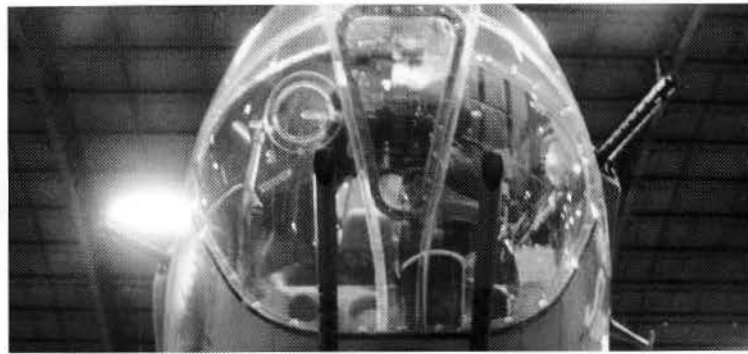
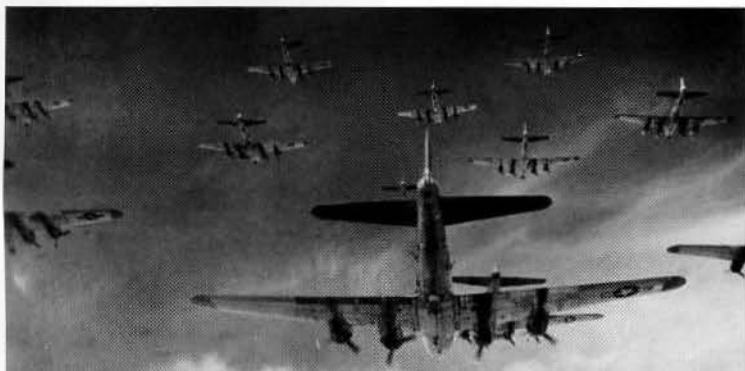
Most of you are probably aware of the group's decision two years ago to have a 25th and final reunion in 2008. In order to pursue that goal, several of the "next generation" members of the group agreed to form a new Reunion Committee to attempt to plan that reunion. David Fieber, Scott Mackey, Bonnie Zylstra and Jack Steffen are the 2008 Reunion Committee. In light of our inexperience, we have decided to work with Armed Forces Reunions Inc., an organization that specializes in planning reunions for veterans' groups. They have planned over 1500 military reunions in over 80 cities nationwide.

When the 34th Bomb Group Association decided to have a 25th and final reunion, it was talked about as a "Big Blast", a fitting final celebration of the efforts of the 34th Bomb Group. We are currently looking at having the final reunion in the Washington, D.C. area. Washington, D.C. offers a large variety of political, historical and military sites. In particular, there are sites that specifically celebrate the efforts of our veterans, including the World War II Memorial and the Air Force Memorial. It is an appropriate location for the final celebration of this great group.

We have done some preliminary research, and have learned that nice and reasonable priced accommodations are available outside downtown, in areas such as Arlington, Virginia. For those traveling to the reunion by air, most cities have reasonably priced and convenient flights to Washington, D.C. Many of our members drive to the reunions, so convenient parking accommodations are important. We are mindful of the need to try to make the arrangements as convenient as possible. Our goal is to provide our veterans, and all of our group members, with a memorable 25th reunion.

We do not yet have firm dates or a firm location for the 2008 reunion. Preliminarily, we are looking at September 3 - 7, 2008.

We are trying to get things rolling, and wanted to update the group on our progress. **But we want to stress that everything is preliminary at this point, and subject to change.** Please watch the next issue of Mendlesham Memories for further developments.



Write It Down - for Posterity

Carol Elliot

We recently attended a family reunion and one of our group had researched Civil War records and found that our great grandfather was indeed at Appomatox with Robert E. Lee and he always said that he held Traveler's (Lee's horse) reins during the surrender.

It is now time for each of our families, be it a wife, sister, child, grandchild to interview their 34th Bomb Group members and put the history down on paper. Just think how pleased that family would be once this has been done for each to get a copy at Christmas, birthday, Memorial Day, Armed Forces Day. Maybe this could be worked into a real family reunion or party honoring the veteran. May even throw in some chicken, potato salad and baked beans!!

A good format:

- ☐ Name
- ☐ Date of birth
- ☐ Parents name, brothers, sisters
- ☐ Short history of life before WWII
- ☐ Marriage
- ☐ Children, grandchildren, great grandchildren

Also:

- ☐ Date of entry into military service with short history.
- ☐ Story of training
- ☐ Arrival in England or where else they may served.
- ☐ Name of plane, Crew members, including crew chief or someone else that had a place in their life.

Now, come on veterans! This is special. We need this information. A short story of missions or anything that was their part in defending this great country and the United Kingdom.

- ☐ Number of missions, when they ended and the return to the U.S.
- ☐ Discharge information.

This would be quite a story and each family member deserves to have a copy of this history about a wonderful veteran who fought for us.

God Bless America and each of us.

Carol Elliot

PX Order Form

AUTO WINDOW STICKER - 2"X4" BLACK AND SILVER

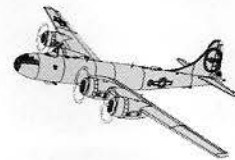
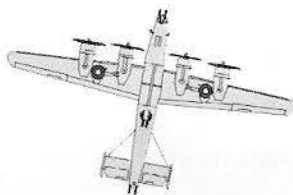
VET: WWII US ARMY AIR CORPS \$4.00 EACH - OR - 3 FOR \$10.00
(NO SHIPPING CHARGES ON THIS ITEM)

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 - 8TH AIR FORCE \$3.50ea.
PATCHES - SQUADRON - 7TH - 18TH - 391ST \$5.00ea.
DECAL - VALOR TO VICTORY - 5" X 5" 2 for \$1.50ea.
BUMPER STICKER - 34TH B.G. - 3" X 12" 2 for \$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 Sqnds and 8th Air Force \$3.50ea.
MEN'S POLO SHIRT w/ POCKET AND 34TH B.G. Logo (Hunter Green & Cobble) XL, XXL \$25.95ea.
MEN'S POLO SHIRT w/ POCKET AND 34TH Logo (Royal Blue) M, L, XL, XXL \$22.00ea.
CAP - ROYAL BLUE or NAVY w Patriotic flag on bill \$8.50ea.
BOLO TIE - B-24 or 8TH Air Force \$6.00ea.
BOLO TIE with Mother of Pearl background behind B-24 \$6.00ea.
BELT BUCKLE "America's Heritage - The Right to Bear Arms" \$6.00ea.
PIN - VALOR TO VICTORY \$5.00ea.
BOOKLET - MENDLESHAM REVISITED, by our English school students and teacher, Gordon Leathers \$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



PX REPORT

Our Grand Rapids reunion was colorful accommodations were perfect and it was a great reunion.

Bernie Farley (Jack Farley's widow) and her family decided to give Jack's collection of WWII books and videos to the 34th for disposal. We had a silent auction in the PX and ended with \$401.00. We are very grateful and appreciative of this gift to the 34th.

Sales at Grand Rapids, at full retail, would have brought in \$1858.25. However, with everything being discounted we realized a profit of \$1092.02. With the proceeds from the Farley gift, total sales were \$1493.02. We appreciate your support of the PX and ask you to remember these items make wonderful gifts. Some items on this order form are discounted but remember they will be much more heavily discounted at our last reunion next September.

Ken

RAY L. SUMMA SCHOLARSHIPS

CONGRATULATIONS:

The scholarship committee announced the following winners of the 2007 scholarship recipients at the recent reunion of the 34th Bomb Group Association in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

1st Place - Erin Lindsey Duffy - Medway, MA - \$1000.00 – Sponsor – Bernadette Farley

2nd Place - Rebecca Mills - Coopersville, MI - \$ 750.00 – Sponsor – Marvin Jalving

3rd Place - Nicholas A. Ritter - Marshall, MN - \$500.00 – Sponsor – John Feda

Scholarship Committee Report:

We had a great time at the Grand Rapids reunion but missed seeing some of our old friends. We can't find adequate words to say thanks to the Reunion Committee for the great work they have done over the years, or express our appreciation for the younger men and women who have stepped forward to help us our next year.

We are also very pleased to have "Thank You Notes" from the three 2007 scholarship recipients. I think all of our 34th Bomb Group Association members would be interested in reading them.

The Scholarship Committee:

Ambers Hanson, Chairman

John Feda

Raymond "Jim" Hinchee

1ST PLACE

From Erin Duffy: *It is an honor to be the recipient of the Ray Summa Scholarship award, thank you so much for your generosity. Unfortunately, your annual reunion in Grand Rapids takes place the first week of classes at Wellesley, so I will be unable to attend. Thank you, again, for supporting my education, it means so much to my family and me. The 34th Bomb Group Association has been a very important part of my grandparents, and our entire family's lives, and your recognition and financial support in an incredible honor.*

2ND PLACE



REBECCA MILLS & GRANDPA, MARVIN JALVING

From Rebecca Mills: *Thank you for the scholarship you awarded me. As I head off to college tomorrow, I will find the money very useful for books and art supplies needed for my classes. Enclosed is a photo of my grand-father and me as he hands me the check. Again, thank you.*

3RD PLACE

From Nicholas Ritter: *Thank you for \$500 scholarship award for my college finances. I have spent the summer working road construction in order to give me exposure to my future career as a Civil Engineer and am looking forward to school starting.*

I appreciate the generosity of your organization in helping kids, such as myself, further our education. your generosity will help me reach my goal of one day becoming a Civil Engineer.

It says a lot about an organization that has already made many sacrifices for its country when they continue to be such great supporters of the future of America by providing scholarships to help students.

Thank you, very much, for your help with my transition into college life. I truly appreciate your financial support.

34th Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.
Minutes of the Board of Director's Meeting
Grand Rapids, Michigan
September 6, 2007

The meeting was called to order September 6, 2007, at 1400 hours at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids, Michigan, by President Raymond "Jim" Hinchee. President Hinchee led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Chaplain James Martin gave the invocation.

President Hinchee asked for a roll call. Present were: President Jim Hinchee, 1st Vice President and Recording Secretary David Fieber, 2nd Vice President Charles Siragusa, Treasurer and Corresponding Secretary Jack Steffen, Past President Kivett Ivey, Chaplain James Martin, PX Manager Ken Paxton, Mendlesham Memories Editor Jack Share, Board Members Scott Mackey, Oral Walker, Clayton Mink, and Bonnie Zylstra. Reunion Committee members Harold Rutka, Bob Wright, and Bruce Sothern were also present. Absent were Board Members Craig Cournoia and Emmett Forrester.

Charles Siragusa made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2006, Board of Members meeting held in Rapid City, South Dakota. The motion was seconded by Jack Share, and passed unanimously.

Jack Steffen presented the Treasurer's Report. The fiscal report, as of July 31, 2007, shows the cash on hand one year ago as \$23,006.32. It is currently \$17,118.36. The General Fund began the year with \$12,344.45 and as of July 31, 2007, the balance is \$8,986.49. The Scholarship Fund began the year at \$10,681.87 and as of July 31, 2007, the balance is \$8,131.87. Jack also presented a projection of costs through 2008. He had spoken with several members, including Ken Paxton (regarding the PX), Jack Share (regarding the Mendlesham Memories), and the Reunion Committee and the projected General Fund balance as of 12/31/2008 is \$2,176.00. The projected Scholarship Fund balance as of 12/31/08 is \$3,631.00. Although those numbers are only projections, Jack is reasonably confident that we will end up with plenty of money to continue business through the final year. Bruce Sothern made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and it was seconded by Kivett Ivey and passed unanimously. Jack Share spoke about what a wonderful job Jack has done with the Report. Jack Steffen made a motion that the Dues would remain at \$20 a year for Annual members and 0- for the Life members. The motion was seconded by James Martin and passed unanimously. A complete copy of the report is filed with the minutes of this meeting. A motion to approve the report was made by James Martin and seconded by Kivett Ivey. The motion passed unanimously.

Ken Paxton presented the PX report. The financial report shows that the beginning bank balance as of 8/31/06 was \$1,608.13. The bank balance as of 8/31/07 is \$1,227.58. Ken said that the purchases in the last year were down about 33% from the prior year. He said that no new purchases are planned and that he is beginning to mark down items 10% to 50% in an effort to close out the remaining inventory by the time the group finishes in 2008. Jim Martin made a motion to accept the PX report and it was seconded by Clayton Mink and passed unanimously.

Bruce Sothern presented the report of the Nominating Committee. He said that protocol is that the First Vice President normally moves up to the position of President, but that several members had asked him why we don't nominate one of the actual Veterans from the 34th Bomb Group to be President. Bruce indicated that it is not always an easy thing to do, to find a vet that wants to do it, and that the 2nd Generation members are doing a great job and he does not see any problem with following the existing protocol. He was open to any suggestion and said that by the time of the General Meeting he and Jim Martin would hopefully come up with some names for some of the vacant positions.

Harold Rutka presented the report of the Reunion Committee. He spoke of how the committee had worked hard and worked together the past years, but the 2007 reunion was going to be his last year. Bob Wright also indicated that he was going to have to step down too. The group recognized the Reunion Committee for all of their hard work.

Ambers Hanson presented the report of the Scholarship Committee. He thanked Jim Hinchee, Bruce Sothern, and John Fede for all of their hard work in helping out with the nominating process. He was pleased to announce that in 2007 there were 13 applicants, which was quite an increase from the prior year. The following scholarships were awarded: \$1,000 to Erin Duffy, sponsored by Bernadette Farley; \$750 to Rebecca Mills, sponsored by Marvin Javeling, and \$500 to Nicholas Ritter, sponsored by John Fede. Ambers said that Jack Share had already received responses from two of the winners, Erin Duffy and Rebecca Mills, expressing their appreciation. Ambers spoke about the quality of all of the applicants. Jack Steffen made a motion to accept the report and it was seconded by Charles Siragusa. It passed unanimously.

Jack Share presented the report on the Mendlesham Memories. He mentioned that some members have complained about the length of time it takes for them to receive their issues, but that he has no control over the way the Post Office delivers them. He also mentioned that Michelle, our publisher, is very appreciative of the business we give her and she has even stated that she would take over the Mendlesham Memories if Jack could no longer handle it. Jack said that he will continue putting the Mendlesham Memories together through the last remaining year. He said that after the September 2007 issue there will be four more issues. The number of pages has been reduced from 16 to 12 and that has reduced the cost significantly. There have not been a lot of submissions from the members, mainly due to the fact that everyone has already told their story, but he should have enough material to fill 12 pages each issue. Jim Hinchee commented on what a terrific job Jack does and everyone applauded his great work. Jack Steffen made a motion to accept the report and it was seconded by Jim Martin and passed unanimously.

Jim asked for volunteers for the nominating committee. Ambers Hanson said that he and Bruce Sothern would remain on the nominating committee and he also invited Jim Hinchee to join them. Although John Fede was not present at the meeting, Ambers politely volunteered John's services for the committee.

The next item of discussion was the 34th Bomb Group website. It is presently maintained by Susan Ferrell and the group gives her \$120 per year to pay for the site. Kivett Ivey indicated that he has sent Susan several e-mails regarding the site, but that she hasn't removed any of them. Jack Steffen said that it does not appear that she has updated the site at all in the last year. One of the concerns is that if the group does not want to fund the site then it will just disappear. Jim Martin commented that he has been contacted by several people that have accessed the site and it would be a shame if it just went away. Several options were discussed, including the possibility of downloading the material. Charles Siragusa brought up the question if the group is even going to have another reunion in 2008? He said that if we decide to "deactivate" the group then there are several issues that need to be discussed, including what will happen to the website and who would pay for it? Scott Mackey suggested that someone contact the 8th Air Force and see if they might have someone that can take over the website. It was suggested that when Jack Steffen sends Susan the \$120 for the upcoming year, he should send a letter and try and get an answer from her on just what her future plans are and then a decision can be made. Charles Siragusa made a motion to accept this plan and it was seconded by Kivett Ivey and passed unanimously.

Ken Paxton told the group that he had received a call from Bernadette Farley, widow of Jack Farley, and that she was donating Jack's collection of books and videos to the 34th Bomb Group. One of the books is to be given away, via a drawing, at the Saturday night banquet. Ken suggested that the other items be auctioned off during the Saturday night banquet, if time permits. Harold Rutka informed the group that the banquet room is only reserved for two hours and that there would not be time for an auction. Clayton Mink suggested holding a silent auction and it was decided that would be held in the PX.

Jim Martin again brought up the question, "Is there going to be a reunion next year?" Jack Steffen mentioned that he had heard from several people who had said that they were not going to be at the 2007 reunion, but they were looking forward to the last reunion in 2008. Jack volunteered to be on the new Reunion Committee and he was quickly joined by David Fieber, Bonnie Zylstra, and Scott Mackey. Jack Steffen said that it had been decided two years ago to have three more reunions, the last being in 2008, and that we would be willing to try and put something together for 2008. There was a brief discussion about possible sites for the final reunion, including Kansas City, Savannah, and Washington D.C. Kivett Ivey made a motion that the new Reunion Committee will decide on the location and it was seconded by Ambers Hanson. The motion passed unanimously. Jack Share commented that information regarding the 2008 reunion must be published in the March issue of the Mendlesham Memories.

Jim Hinchee asked if anyone had any other new business. Charles Siragusa asked what was going to happen to any money left over after next year. Ambers suggested that all of the money be put into one "pot." Jack Steffen questioned if people who donated to the scholarship fund might be upset if that money did not end up going to a scholarship. Instead going to the General Fund. Ambers did not think anyone would have a problem with that. Kivett Ivey suggested that some of the extra money could be used to defray some of the costs of the 2008 reunion. Another suggestion was to donate any left over money to the 8th Air Force Museum. A motion was made by Ambers Hanson that leftover money be put together and that the Board would decide what to do with any leftover money next year. It was seconded by Jack Share and passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 1600 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

David Fieber
Recording Secretary

34th Bomb Group (H) Association
Minutes of the General Membership Meeting
Grand Rapids, Michigan
September 8, 2007

The meeting was called to order September 8, 2007, at 0900 hours at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids, Michigan, by President Raymond "Jim" Hinchee. President Hinchee led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Chaplain James Martin gave the invocation.

Charles Siragusa made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2006, General Membership meeting held in Rapid City, South Dakota. The motion was seconded by Jack Share and passed unanimously.

Jack Steffen presented the Treasurer's Report. The fiscal report, as of 7/31/07 shows the cash on hand one year ago as \$23,006.32 and it is currently \$17,118.36. Jack said that he had spoken to the group members, including Ken Paxton (regarding the PX), Jack Share (regarding the Mendlesham Memories), and the Reunion Committee and the consensus is that we are financially solvent and there are plenty of funds to carry the group forward through our last year. Jack made a motion that the Dues would remain at \$20 a year for Annual members and 0- for the Life members. The motion was seconded by James Martin and passed unanimously. The Audit Committee reported that everything was correct with the Treasurer's Report. A complete copy of the report is filed with the minutes of this meeting. A motion to approve the report was made by James Martin and seconded by Kivett Ivey. The motion passed unanimously.

Ken Paxton presented the PX report. The financial report shows that the beginning bank balance as of 8/31/06 was \$1,608.13. The bank balance as of 8/31/07 is \$1,227.58. Ken said that no new purchases are planned and that he is beginning to mark down items 10% to 50% in an effort to close out the remaining inventory. As an example, Ken presented a sweatshirt that has been marked down 25%. Ken also mentioned that he had recently received a call from Bernadette Farley, widow of Jack Farley, and that they were donating a large collection of books and videos. He said that the items would be sold via silent auction and that members could visit the PX to bid on the items. Ken also displayed a book of stories on the 34th Bomb Group that was compiled in 1998 by Eli Baldea. Ken announced that the book would be given away in a drawing at the Saturday night banquet. Bruce Sothern commented on what a wonderful job Ken and Kathleen have done with the PX. Bruce made a motion to accept the PX report and it was seconded by Carroll Forrester.

Bob Wright presented the report of the Reunion Committee. There were 137 people registered for the 2007 reunion, including one group of 11 and another of 7. Bob announced that he and Harold Rutka were retiring from the reunion committee and that they were turning it over to the 2nd generation. James Martin asked how many veterans were at the reunion and Bob estimated that there were about 55. President Hinchee commented on just how much work the Reunion Committee does and they received a nice round of applause from the room.

Bruce Sothern presented the Nominating Committee report. The committee replaced the two outgoing Board members, Scott Mackey and Oral Walker, with Kay Hughes and Harry Pearlman. Bruce announced that Jack Steffen would remain as Treasurer and that Sonia Fieber would be the Recording Secretary. Scott Mackey was presented as the 2nd Vice President, with Charles Siragusa moving up to 1st Vice President. David Fieber was presented as the nomination for the incoming president. Bruce singled out Jack Share for his wonderful contributions with the Mendlesham Memories. Nominations were requested from the floor, but none were received. Bruce called for a vote on the nominations and they passed unanimously. Bruce also spoke about working with Bob Wright and Harold Rutka on the Reunion Committee and that this would be his last year also. President Hinchee thanked Bruce for all his hard work.

The Mendlesham Memories report was presented by Jack Share. Jack mentioned how hard it would be to replace Bob Wright and Harold Rutka and that he had considered stepping down, but had decided to stay on for one more year, which would be about 5 more issues. Jack mentioned a phone call he had received from a woman, Regina Givens, in Montana. Her father was a member of the 34th and through the newsletter they all have remained close to the organization. Jack read a nice note from their daughter and said it was because of notes like that that he was reluctant to give up being the editor of the Mendlesham Memories. Jack mentioned that the number of pages in each issue has been reduced from 16 to 12, mainly due to the reduction of submissions he receives for each issue. Jack talked about the length of time it takes for some of the members to receive the Mendlesham Memories, but that is due to the post office and the way they deliver third class mail. Jack Steffen thanked Jack and Michelle, the Mendlesham Memories publisher, for all of their hard work. Jack Share mentioned how much Michelle enjoys working on the issues and that she has told him that if he couldn't continue on with the newsletter then she would be happy to take over. Jack Steffen made a motion to accept the Mendlesham Memories report and it was seconded by James Martin and passed unanimously.

Harry Crawford's son spoke to the group about his two children that have received scholarships from the 34th Bomb Group. His daughter, Amy Crawford, graduated from Cornell University and went to work for Smithsonian Magazine. She has just begun attending Columbia Journalism School. His son also graduated from Cornell and is now working on the campaign for Barack Obama. He thanked the group for the scholarships and all the help that was given to his children.

Jack Steffen gave a brief talk about the future finances of the organization and repeated that he believes there are sufficient finances to get the group through its last year. Jack informed the members about the state of the group's website. Susan Ferrell is maintaining the website and that we have been sending her \$120 each year for the cost of the site. Jack informed everyone that the Board had decided to pay the \$120 this year, but that he would try and contact Susan and see if she would be willing to give us ownership of the website or at least a copy of the information that we could turn over to the 8th Air Force. Jack Steffen made a motion to accept this proposal and it was seconded by James Martin. It passed unanimously.

President Hinchee asked if anyone had any old or new business. Jack Steffen took the opportunity to thank Harold Rutka, Bob Wright, and Bruce Sothern for all their hard work on the Reunion Committee. Bruce mentioned that Genevieve Rutka and Esther Wright have graciously backed up their spouses. Jack also talked about how the group had decided a few years ago to stop after 25 reunions. With the announcement that the present Reunion Committee is retiring, Jack announced that he had volunteered, along with David Fieber, Bonnie Zylstra, and Scott Mackey, to try and put something together for the last reunion in 2008. The new Reunion Committee is short on experience, but they are willing to work hard to try to put something together for the group's final reunion. The Committee has had one short meeting and three locations are being discussed: Kansas City, Savannah, and Washington D.C. Jack asked if anyone has any other suggestions for locations that they please talk to any of the members of the group.

Jack Share spoke about the family who went overseas to look for a member of their family that disappeared in Austria in World War II. He then introduced some members of the family that were in attendance at the meeting: Harold Dwyer and his daughter, Kay Hughes, and her husband Rick. Harold spoke about the military organization, JPAC, which searches for members of the military that are listed as missing. This was their second trip to the crash site, looking for the remains of his brother, the plane's pilot, and the engineer of the plane. Although they did not find any remains, they did find some artifacts from the plane.

President Hinchee adjourned the meeting at approximately 1015 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

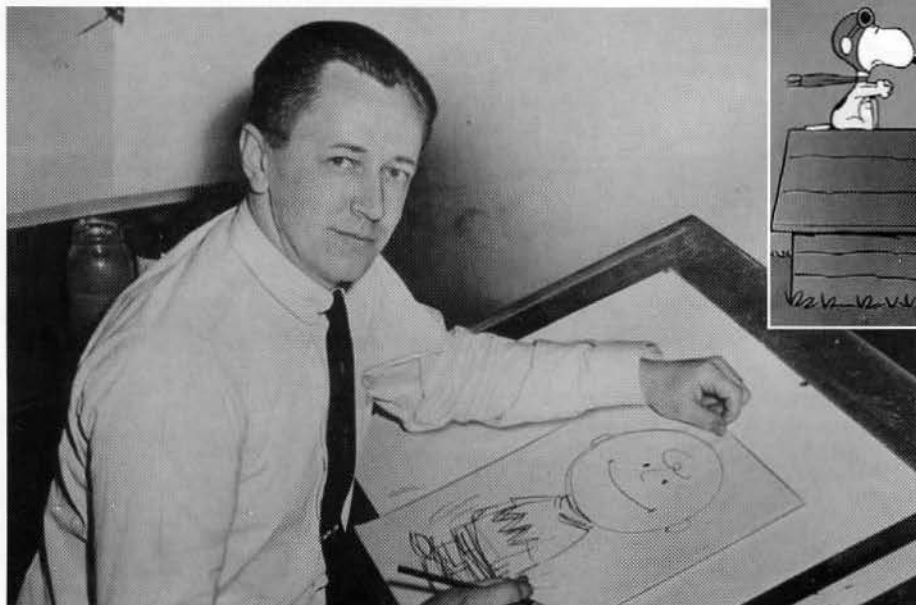
David Fieber
Recording Secretary

34TH BOMB GROUP'S PAST REUNIONS

YEAR	CITY	PRESIDENT-ELECT	ATTENDEES
1978	WASHINGTON, DC		
1979	PHOENIX, AZ	JAMES CARPOULIS	
1980	ORLANDO, FL	GRADY DETHERIDGE	
1981	ST PAUL, MN	MALCOLM CORUM	
1982	CINCINNATI, OH	ROBERT WRIGHT	
1983	HOUSTON, TX	GERRY PINE	
1984	NASHVILLE, TN	HAROLD RUTKA	
1985	WICHITA, KS	JAMES MARTIN	
*1986	COLORADO SPRGS, CO	AL DiNENNO	306
1987	KING OF PRUSSIA, PA	ED LAWLER	276
1988	VIRGINIA BEACH, VA	GEORGE RITCHIE	318
1989	SHREVEPORT, LA	WALT McALLISTER	292
1990	SEATTLE, WA	WALLY BRAUKS	249
1991	LOUISVILLE, KY	FRED SCHOCH	398
1992	LAS VEGA, NV	BRUCE SOTHERN	376
1993	LITTLE ROCK, AR	SAM WOLSTENCROFT	351
1994	ST PAUL, MN	ELI BALDEA	308
1995	HUNTSVILLE, AL	AMBERS HANSON	350
1996	RALEIGH, NC	RAY PALMER	325
1997	OMAHA, NE	ALLEN ISRAELSEN	224
1998	BOISE, ID	JOHN DORONSKY	209
1999	DES MOINES, IA	NORM MAYER	188
2000	BUFFALO, NY	CLAUDE GIBBS	202
2001	SAVANNAH, GA	WAYNE HOWARTER	276
2002	SALT LAKE CITY, UT	FRED WALTZ	177
2003	SAN ANTONIO, TX	JACK SHARE	182
2004	DAYTON, OH	JOHN FEDA	197
2005	ALBUQUERQUE, NM	KIVETT IVEY	167
2006	RAPID CITY, SD	RAYMOND HINCHEE	130
2007	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	DAVID FIEBER**	134

* Prior to 1986 the 34th had mini-reunion with the 8th Air Force Historical Society.
At the 1985 reunion in Wichita, Kansas it was decided that we should go on our own.

** First next generation member to be elected president.



CHARLES SCHULTZ

Nov 26, 1922 - Feb. 12, 2000

Charles Schulz served in the US Army in World War II, fighting on the continent in the European Theater. After the war he printed his first PEANUTS comic strip on October 2nd, 1950. A favorite subject was the beagle dog Snoopy. Every year on June 6th, he drew a special Peanuts strip recognizing the servicemen who landed with the invasion forces on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day, 1944.



"IT WAS THE HEAVIES"

By Ernie Pyle

Pulitzer Prize Journalist of World War II

NORMANDY, June 1944. — Our front lines were marked by long strips of colored cloth laid on the ground, and with colored smoke to guide our airmen during the mass bombing that preceded our breakout from the German ring that held us to the Normandy beachhead.

Dive bombers hit it just right. We stood in the barnyard of a French farm and watched them barrel nearly straight down out of the sky. They were bombing about half a mile ahead of where we stood.

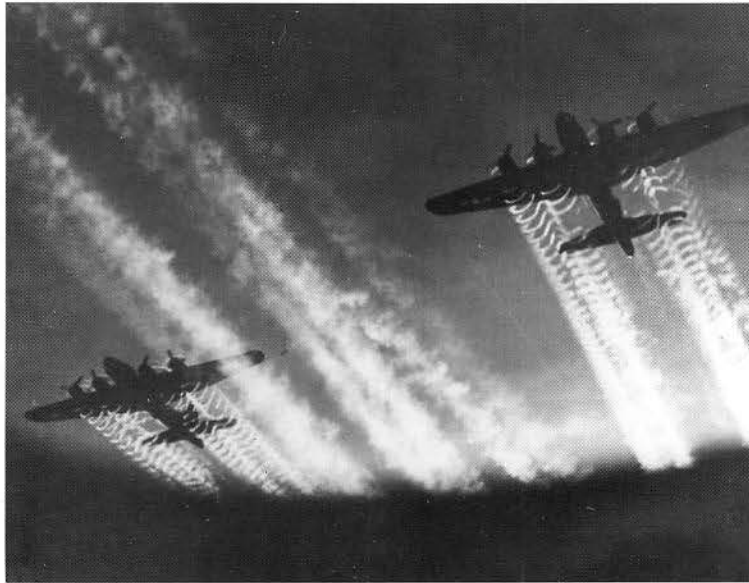
They came in groups, diving from every direction, perfectly timed, one right after another. Everywhere you looked separate groups of planes were on the way down, or on the way back up, or slanted over for a dive, or circling, circling, circling over our heads, waiting for their turn.

The air was full of sharp and distinct sounds of cracking bombs and the heavy rips of the planes' machine guns and the splitting screams of diving wings. It was all fast and furious, but yet distinct, as in a musical show in which you could distinguish throaty tunes and words.

And then a new sound gradually droned into our ears, a sound gradually droned into our ears, a sound deep and all encompassing with no notes in it — just a gigantic faraway surge of doomlike sound. It was the heavies. They came from directly behind us. At first they were the merest dots in the sky. You could see clots of them against the far heavens, too tiny to count individually. They came on with a terrible slowness.

They came in flights of 12, three flights to a group and in groups stretched out across the sky. They came in "families" of about 70 planes each.

Maybe these gigantic waves were two miles apart, maybe they were 10 miles, I don't know. But I do know they came in a constant procession and I thought it would never end. What the Germans must have thought is beyond comprehension.



Their march across the sky was slow and studied. I've never known a storm, or a machine, or any resolve of man that had about it the aura of such a ghastly relentlessness. You had the feeling that even had God appeared beseechingly before them in the sky with palms outward to persuade them back they would not have had within them the power to turn from their irresistible course.

I stood with a little group of men, ranging from colonels to privates, back of the stone farmhouse. Slit trenches were all around the edges of the farmyard and a dugout with a tin roof was nearby. But we were so fascinated by the spectacle overhead that it never occurred to us that we might need the foxholes.

The first huge flight passed directly over our farmyard and others followed. We spread our feet and leaned far back trying to look straight up, until our steel helmets fell off. We'd cup our fingers around our eyes like field glasses for a clearer view.

And then the bombs came. They began ahead of us as the crackly of popcorn and almost instantly swelled into a monstrous fury of noise that seemed surely to destroy all the world ahead of us.

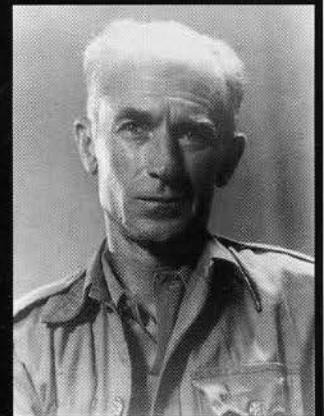
From then on for an hour and a half that had in it the agonies of centuries, the bombs came down. A wall of smoke and dust erected by them grew high in the sky. It filtered along the ground back through our own orchards. It sifted around us and into our noses. The bright day grew slowly dark from it.

By now everything was an indescribable cauldron of sounds. Individual noises did not exist. The thundering of the motors in the sky and the roar of bombs ahead filled all the space for noise on earth. Our own heavy artillery was crashing all around us, yet we could hardly hear it.

Continued on page 9

ERNIE PYLE

ERNIE PYLE wrote the fascinating story about the 8th Air Force bombing raid near St. Lo that opened the way for the Allied ground forces to move on to continue their offensive following D-Day. The 398th was a part of this action, which was called "Cobra."



Reunion Attendees

Ruth Bailey
Marcia Adams
Lawrence & Lucille Babcock
Chris Collier
Claude & Genevieve Conklin
Harry Crawford & 10 guests
Harold & Darlene Dwyer
John & Betty Mae Feda
David, Sonia, Nancy & Brian Fieber
Robert J Filip
Dale & Margie Finley
Carroll Forister & 6 guests
Dale & Esther Frank
George & Debra Garbisco
Claude & Audrey Gibbs & Beverly Puffer
& Betty Miller
Willis Griffis & Ed Morrison
Carolyn Guertin
Hebert & Doris Hall & Tom & Cindy Hooper
Ambers & Jean Hanson
Glen Henry
Charles & Eileen Herget
Bill & Tootie Hetherington
Raymond & Dickie Hinchee
Rick & Kay Hughes
Lloyd & Marla Inman
Kivett Ivey & 3 friends
Mike & Marjie Jacobbausk
Marvin Jalving
Lois Johnson
Betty Lampey
Birgit Lonergan
Eric & Scott Mackey

Joe & Kay Marks
Terry Baker & Kate Kuettel
James F. Martin
Norman Mayer
Fred & Ginny Muent
Boyd P. Niederlander
Ken & Kathleen, Keith & Richard Paxton
Ralph & Bernice Peterson
Floyd & Miriam Richmond
Harold & Genevieve Rutka
Richard & Winnie Schroeder
Robert & Jennie Schroeder
Jack & Marian Share
Don & Bonnie Shee
Paul & Pauline Shull
Charles & Henrietta Siragu
J.C. Smith
Bruce & Greg Sothern
James & Virginia Spencer
Jack & Linda Steffen
Walter Sturdivan
Orel Walker & Thera Good
Joseph & Marilyn Wong
Benson, Paul & Pam Workman
Robert H. & Esther Wright
Charles & Robert Yockey
Benjamin & Edith Zeldes
Bonnie Zyslsta

52 Veterans

82 Associates and guests

134 Total registrants

"It Was The Heavies" - Continued from page 8

The Germans began to shoot heavy, high ack-ack. Great black puffs of it by the score speckled the sky until it was hard to distinguish smoke puffs from planes.

And then someone shouted that one of the planes was smoking. Yes, we could all see it. A long, faint line of black smoke stretched straight for a mile behind one of them.

And as we watched there was a gigantic sweep of flame over the plane. From nose to tail it disappeared in flame, and it slanted slowly down and banked around the sky in great wide curves, this way and that way, as rhythmically and gracefully as in a slow motion waltz.

Then suddenly it seemed to change its mind and it swept upward, steeper and steeper and even slower until finally it seem poised motionless on its own black pillar of smoke. And then just as slowly it turned over and dived for the earth - a golden spearhead on the straight black shaft of its own creation - and it

disappeared behind the treetops.

But before it was done there were more cries of, "there's another one smoking and there's a third one now."

Chutes came out of some of the planes. Out of some came no chutes at all. One of white silk caught on the tail of a plane. Men with binoculars could see him fighting to get loose until flames swept over him, and then a tiny black dot fell through space, all alone.

And all that time the great flat ceiling of the sky was roofed by all the others that didn't go down, plowing their way forward as if there were no turmoil in the world.

Nothing deviated them by the slightest. They stalked on, slowly and with a dreadful pall of sound, as though they were seeing only something at a great distance and nothing existed in between. God, how you admired those men up there and sickened for the ones who fell.



34th Bomb Group



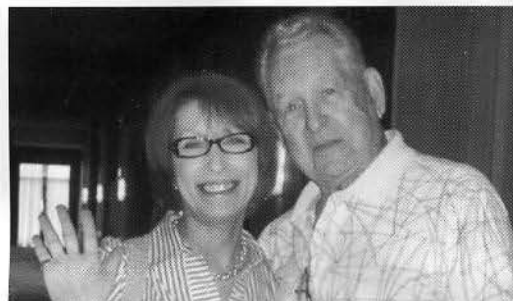


Reunion Photos 2007





34th Bomb Group





Reunion Photos





Reunion Photos



FRIENDS WRITE

FRANK McCULLOUGH - ALLENTOWN, PA

Enclosed are my dues for 2007 and 2008. My wife and I really enjoy receiving MM and read it from cover to cover. This past June the B-17G, "Lady Victory", was at the Reading, PA Air Show and my daughter Debra and 12 year old grandson, David, had the opportunity of a lifetime by taking a ride on this historic plane, similar to the one I was a flight engineer on in WWII when we flew 34 missions over Germany before the war ended.

Thanks for all you do!

DALE CANNON - WAUSAU, WI

Made it another year. Thanks for what you do.

BIRGIT LONERGAN - FT. MYERS, FL

The MM came today and even though the news is old I enjoy reading it. There will be a big hole in my life when it doesn't come anymore. I had sworn I would attend at least one more reunion and I am so happy I attended the one in Grand Rapids. What a joy to see so many familiar faces and I am eagerly looking forward to next year, even if it will be the end.

ROBERT SCHROEDER - AMERICAN FALLS, ID

Thanks for the copy of the Sept. Mendlesham Memories. Now if we could just get the rest of them as soon. (Ed: Wish we could guarantee that)

We enjoyed the reunion. Did miss a few of the ones we usually saw every year.

Hope the next one can be in the middle of the country. Talked to quite a few members and they had the same hopes.

FRED BERGLUND - TITUSVILLE, FL

"For all you've done, for all you do. A special thanks from me to you".

Thank you for all you have done for us. We appreciate it very much.

SHAROL RASBERRY - WICHITA, KS

Enclosed is my check for \$60 because I don't believe I have paid last year's dues. If I'm wrong, please just use the money to help with postage, etc.

My father, Allen J. Barta, was a B-17 pilot in the 4th squadron. Sadly, he passed away in August, 2004. We recently discovered his war diary and other memorabilia and this has kindled a real interest on our parts to learn more about his war experiences. I really enjoy your Mendlesham Memories. You are doing a wonderful job of keeping this history alive.

RIC FOX - AUSTIN, IN

I regret to inform you my father, Robert B Fox flew his last mission June 27, 2007. He was 87.

He and I attended a few reunions together and enjoyed meeting many of you and hearing the great stories. You people are a great and noble generation. Thank you for all your sacrifices. You are the reason we don't speak German in this country.

IRV LEVY - PHOENIX, AZ

The enclosed check is sent in memory of the members whose names have appeared in the TAPS section. Some of the names are familiar to me. I am a life member but I want to help the 34th keep up the group and sending Mendlesham Memories. I enjoy the issues and commend the people who make it up. A great job.

BRIAN FIEBER - BAKERSFIELD CA

I went to the 24th reunion of the 34th Bomb Group Association this year in Grand Rapids, Michigan and had an outstanding time. The tour of the city was great and I enjoyed the tour of Meijer Gardens. Talking to all the veterans and hearing their stories was amazing. It was interesting to meet real people who were in the war and fought for our freedom. You hear about these stories all the time but you never actually meet the people who are in the stories. When I went to the reunion I got to meet Jack Share and Harold Dwyer and others who took the time to tell me their stories. I hope I can come again and bring some more family with me.

ED: Brian is 12 years old and a fine young man.

WALTER STURDIVAN - STOCKTON, CA

Our number is dwindling but devotion is getting stronger. What a great reunion we had at Grand Rapids. I'd like to go next year and bring Lois with me. Perhaps we will have enough "gas" for one more "mission". We'll see.

KIVETTIVEY - LaGRANGE, NC

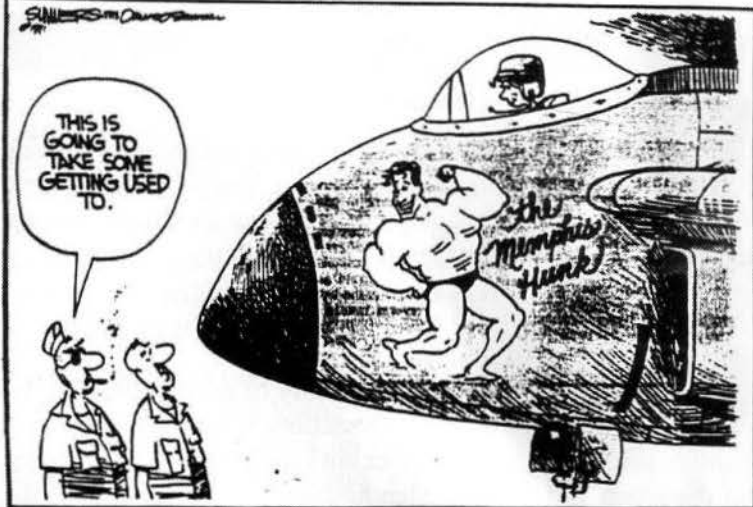
I think this years reunion was an outstanding success. The hotel was nice, the tour was nice and meeting old friends once again was outstanding. The resignation of the reunion committee was disheartening but I can understand why - we aren't what we were yesteryear! Over the years they have done an outstanding job and I wish to thank them for it/ Their hard work has certainly paid off for the group as a whole.

I wish the new president and the reunion committee success in the coming year. The countdown on the last reunion is on - the Lord willing I hope to be there next year wherever it may be.

REID McCLOSKEY - CARLSBAD, NM

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$20.00 for '08 dues.

Your work on behalf of the 34th Bomb Group Association as well as that of the other officers is much appreciated.



From Georgia "Tall Tails" Newsletter

The Life That I Have Leo Marks

*The life that I have
Is all that I have
And the life that I have
Is yours*

*The love that I have
Of the life that I have
Is yours and yours and yours.*

*A sleep I shall have
A rest I shall have
Yet death will be but a pause
For the peace of my years
In the long green grass
Will be yours and yours and yours.*

Facts & Figures from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

World War II
(1941-45)

Total service members
16,112,566

Battle deaths
291,557

Other deaths in service
(non-theater)
113,842

Non-mortal woundings
671,846

Living veterans, Sept. 2006
3,242,000

Estimated number of living U.S. veterans of World War II

9/30/06.....	3,242,000
9/30/07.....	2,889,000
9/30/08.....	2,551,000
9/30/09.....	2,230,000
9/30/10.....	1,929,000
9/30/11.....	1,849,000
9/30/12.....	1,393,000
9/30/13.....	1,161,000
9/30/14.....	954,000
9/30/15.....	773,000
9/30/16.....	616,000
9/30/17.....	484,000
9/30/18.....	373,000
9/20/19.....	283,000
9/30/20.....	210,000
9/30/21.....	158,000

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

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ORG	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
PARENTEAU	EARL C	18	32 WHITNEY CIRCLE	AUBURN	MA	01501
WRIGHT	JOHN H	18	1700 OCEAN DR #402	VERO BEACH	FL	32963

TAPS

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ORG	DOD	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
BERGOLD	ROBERT W	18LM		10184 SUMAC RUN	LITTLETON	CO	80125
BURNELL	WILLIAM T	7LM	10/09/07				
CARTER	DOROTHY	7ALM	07/03/07	1226 E KIRWIN APT D1	SALINA	KS	67401
COBB	JUNIUS W		10/19/07	1276 BELLE ISLE RD	UNION HALL	VA	24176
FOX	ROBERT B	7LM	06/27/07	3292 N TERRY RD	AUSTIN	IN	47102
JORGENSEN	GEORGE H	18	08/15/07	325 EMBASSY CIRCLE	WILMINGTON	NC	28412
SCHILDMAN	W WALLACE	7	10/27/07	30 OGDEN RD	JACKSONVILLE	IL	62650
SIMMONS	SHERWOOD L		01/25/06	PO BOX 313	PENNFIELD	NY	14526
STEVENS	WILLIAM F	18LM	12/22/06	202 EAGLE AVE	GRAVOIS MILLS	MO	65037

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ORG	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
CARTER	ROBERT	7ALM	2106 SUSAN COURT	WINFIELD	KS	67156
FIEBER	BRIAN	18A	267 MT SHADOW RD	WOFFORD HEIGHTS	CA	93285
FORISTER	EMMETT, C	4A	26909 E, 227TH ST	PLEASANT HILL	MO	64080
SCHWAB	VIVIENNE, F	4A	1323 GREEN ELM DR	FENTON	MO	63028
STRACK	PATRICK		18 CARRIAGE WAY	BALLSTON SPA	NY	12020

TO THE RAY L. SUMMA SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In Memory Of
ALL 34TH MEMBERS WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY

Donor
IRV LEVY

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

ROBERT AND ESTHER WRIGHT – SOUTH BEND, IN
60TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY – OCTOBER 11, 2007

WAYNE AND LAVERNE HOWARTER – WELDA, KS
63RD WEDDING ANNIVERSARY – OCTOBER 17, 2007

GENEVIEVE AND HAROLD RUTKA – DULUTH MN
63RD WEDDING ANNIVERSARY – OCTOBER 14, 2007



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

34th Bomb Group



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U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
G3 Direct

From the collection of:
Joseph K Marks
Pilot, 4th Squadron, Crew #12, April - Aug 1944