



THE 99th Bomb Group Historical Society



VOLUME 2, NUMBER 4 OF THE NEWSLETTER OF THE 99TH BOMB GROUP
HISTORICAL SOCIETY July 1, 1982
Published bi-monthly, Editors, Frank English and George Coen

SOCIETY OFFICERS

President Bernice Barr
Vice-President Michael Yarina
Secretary Joe Kenney
Treasurer George Coen

Compadres;

Our new President, Bernie Barr, requests that anybody who has any ideas or suggestions concerning the Society will drop him a line and give him the word. Bernie will be at Muskegon, but right now he is recovering from minor surgery at home. Write him at 7413 Vista del Arroyo NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109.

Mike Yarina is not available for comment, having gone to the Great Oahe Fishing Derby. Lettie says that no further operations were necessary, that Mike has retired the crutches upon which we saw him in April, and that he uses his cane only part-time. Good for you, Mike.

See you in Muskegon.

The following account pertains to Frank English, our newly elected Vice-President in charge of Newsletter. We are forcing Frank to reprint the article before he takes office, because it is just too good to miss.

George

From the Nov. 1981 issue of B-17 Combat Crewmen & Wingmen
P.O. Box 482, Southgate, CA 90280

This month we honor Frank English. He had some very unusual experiences while with the 99th BG, which was located in the Mediterranean Theater as one of the six B-17 Groups of the 15th Air Force. Frank flew as a photographer-gunner and has a great collection of photographs in his own album. If you have worked with him at Chino in our B-17 effort, you may have looked at his album.

Frank was born in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada. He came to Los Angeles in 1929 to live with an aunt and her four married children due to the death of his own parents. He lived and went to Los Angeles schools for his first twenty years. He had always wanted to be a printer, so he became one, through apprenticeship to journeyman, and at the same shop, before, during, and after the war for twenty years. In the during part he joined the California State Guard, right after Pearl Harbor, when the National Guard was placed into the Regular Army. He received infantry training and first became a company scout. Then was promoted to Corporal and made a squad leader. He was then stationed at the Armory in downtown Los Angeles but went to the Mojave Desert, and surrounding hills on weekends to train.

At that time we were expecting the Japanese to attack and invade the area, and all they had at that time was one 30-cal. machine gun on the roof of the Armory. The rifles they had were WWI vintage 303's. He and another squad leader finally were issued Thompson submachine guns. They had a squadron of P-38's at the old Grand Central Airport in Glendale, and another at Losita (which is Torrance airport, now), and one squadron at Mines Field (that is LAX, now). There was also a squadron of P-25's (Boeing 'Passshooters') at March Field. A few artillery pieces were on the coast, and that was it. Frank says, "thank goodness, no invasion!"...

He had registered for the draft, of course, and having always been an aviation nut, he longed to get into the Army Air Corps. So he says he bugged the draft board every week until they finally put him in the Air "Corpses." He then was sent to Camp Kearns, Utah, where he was supposed to enter radio school, but he ended up as an honor student in Military Correspondence. He did not mention his duty with the Guard, and in Nov. 1942, he was sent to Sioux City and joined the 347th B. Sq. of the 99th B. Gp. (H). He was first in Operations and helped schedule the flight crews during their training. But being of devious nature, he soon became good friends with the Sq. Tech Supply Sgt. who assured Frank that he would request his for Tech Supply when they got overseas. He was right, but in a slightly different way. Headquarters decided to form an Engineering, Tech Supply, and Armament Section, down on the line, and he was chosen from his Sq. This existed through Algeria, Tunisia, and Italy. This was up until he was flying his 35 missions out of Tortorella as a combat photographer/gunner. They disbanded his old job when he started flying, July 16, 1944, to Sept. 12, 1944.

His first mission, to Vienna, ironically was the same target he went to on his 32nd mission, where their plane was badly plastered. (We will get into this episode later.) In between those two missions he had some pleasant forays, 3 times over Ploesti, 2 times over Munich, plus the invasion of southern France, northern Italy, Poland, Hungary, etc.

But in regard to Vienna, and his bail out, he says we ordinarily could turn on the IP (Initial Point, for those who choose not to remember). On this day, however, Aug. 23, 1944, the flak, heavy, intense, and accurate, nailed us in a box barrage near the IP. No. 1 prop governor cables were cut and the prop started windmilling, the oil pressure dropping to zero, and could not be feathered. No. 4 was hit and had to be feathered. No. 3 caught fire and 2 shells burst simultaneously on both sides of the radio room, missing the radio operator, and Frank, but sacking a stove out of the radio room. An 88 shell also went through

the horizontal stabilizer and up through the vertical fin, on the left-hand side. It tofs a hole, jagged holes, but fortunately was a dud, and did not explode. The oxygen lines between the waist gunners and the radio room were cut and Frank, and a waist gunner became unconscious. When they came to, they had portable oxygen bottles attached to their oxygen masks.

They had started over Vienna at 28,600 ft, but the pilot dropped down to 12,500 to keep them alive. The pilot made his bomb run and Frank got his photos before leaving the target. After that, they headed south, into Yugoslavia. The navigator said that if they could make it 60 miles, they could bail out with a good chance of being picked up by Tito's Partisans.

The main door had been ejected and everyone passed Frank on their way out. He was on his way to the door from the radio room when all of a sudden the plane abruptly went up on its tail, dropped, then went into a shallow nose-down spin. Frank thought that the pilot had gone out the front hatch. What he did not know at the time was that the difficulty the plane was going through was caused by a propeller flying off (No. 1), and just missing one of the crew that had bailed out. (On their way out of Yugoslavia later, they were shown the prop, one blade buried in the ground, looking like a "Y.")

I'm a little ahead of the story. Frank was finally able to crawl to the door on his hands, and knees, and look out. He had already looked forward and saw the left seat empty, so naturally he assumed the pilot had already bailed out. He looked out No. 4 feathered, and No. 3 turning slowly, and asking, not to mention the nose-down attitude. *(and here)*

The plane was over mountains, but the B-17 had stopped spinning. So, keeping low, he rolled out the doorway, counted to ten, then pulled the ripcord and waited, but nothing happened. So, he thought of opening the flap and pulling the chute out by hand. But he thought maybe he had not pulled the ripcord hard enough the 1st time, so he really gave it a yank; so hard that it flew out of his hand. (He had wanted to keep it as a souvenir.) But the chute did open and he was floating toward the earth. He says he was so close to a mountain that he could plainly see, and hear, a 10-year old girl standing in a small clearing, waving and yelling at him.

Some of the crews that were going home, and watched the whole incident from other B-17's told him later that he fell over 7,000 ft before his chute opened.

After about an hour's walk, he set up with the rest of the crew, all but the pilot. They were surrounded by Germans, so they took off from a farmer's house about midnight. The next morning they had to take cover in brush twice, to hide from a Jerry Stuka, then a ME 110. From that time on, they travelled only at night. They actually crawled up mountains on their hands and knees because they were so steep. About 3 in the morning of the 5th night, they made their way to a secret farmhouse where they found a British Major, his radio operator, and a first-aid man. He radioed back to Bari, Italy.

The next night, about midnight, a C-47 landed in a farmer's field; no runway, just a plowed field. (The Partisans took rags, put them in cans, and made a flare path by pouring gasoline on the rags. In came the C-47, 2 Russian pilots stepped out in breeches, boots, leather jackets, helmets, and goggles.)

They loaded 10 wounded Partisans aboard, then 10 crew members climbed in. They had to hold the stretchers down on the floor of the plane. There were no chutes, rafts, or any other equipment in the plane, including no seats of any kind, just the bare, metal floor. Frank said he was plenty scared. But they took off and made it back to Bari, Italy, where they were all hospitalized for a checkup. In the morning (Aug. 29), 6th, and same day, they had an extensive intelligence debriefing, then were flown back to Tortorella, and duty. They were sent to rest camp for a week; Frank then flew on more mission to Munich. Both heated suit gloves aborted out leaving large blisters on the back of both hands. The Sq. Doc put an ointment on them and they healed without scars, but that was the end of Frank's flying career.

He then went back to his Sq. Tech Supply. Soon the war was over, and all but Frank, and 3 others (347th), went home. They were transferred to Bari, to take care of planes there. When their aircraft were to be flown to a field outside of Munich, they were to go as part of the Army of Occupation. However, after about 6 weeks, an order came through that allowed all men with 85 points, or over, to be returned to the States. Frank had earned 124 points by then so he was flown to Naples, then boarded a Liberty ship which eventually delivered them to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, from whence they had sailed in early 1943.

Oh, about the plane, ole #282, that he bailed out of. He found out later that the pilot, who was ready to bail out, had put the plane on auto-pilot, and then the prop flew off. He figured he could fly her home to base, which he did. Besides all the damage described, he landed with a flat tire from flak, and the ball turret still had the guns pointing down, which tore up some metal runway pretty good (the gun barrels weren't in the best of health, either!). He heard the pilot was put in for the Congressional Medal of Honor, but was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross instead. The Service Sq. practically rebuilt the plane, but she would not fly properly in combat. She was then stripped of all armament and assigned to a General as his private plane--to no avail--still flew out of wack. So, it was finally junked, but as can be seen, she really took a beating before giving up the ghost!

Frank came home in Sept. 1945, after 28 months overseas. He went back to work as a printer in the same shop until the end of 1946, when he went back into the Army Air Corps (Air Transport Command) as an Aircraft Supply Technician. He ended up at Hansa Air Field, Tokyo, Japan. He stayed a year and then was out for good on a Medical Discharge.

He came back to Los Angeles and worked again in his original print shop until Nov. 1958. During this time, Frank married in Jan. 1950, to Reita; he lost her just 2 1/2 years ago to inoperable cancer. His son, Brian, and he spend lots of time together and enjoy dining out.

Frank went to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in 1966 and later became Sr. Asst. Editor/Technical Proofreader. He is still on long-term Leave of Absence from JPL due to disability. Frank says his years at JPL were very rewarding, having worked on the different programs there, such as the Surveyors, before men landed on the moon, as well as the Mariners, Vikings, Landers, and especially, the Voyager Project.

Among some of Frank's accomplishments are; he is a Master Printer (Hand Compositor), Printing Industries of America, belongs to the famous Caterpillar Club, Life Member of the B-17 Combat Crewmen & Wingmen, Life Member of the Disabled American Veterans, 1st Vice Cdr of San Gabriel Valley Post 167, of the Royal Canadian Legion, member Air Force Sgt.'s Assoc., Air Force Assoc., and handles much of the mail for his own 99th Bomb Group Historical Society.

He was also an original member of the 15th AF, and a member of the 12th AF in North Africa, and was with the 15th AF in Tunisia, on Nov. 1, 1943, when it was formed. He is our own Group Operations Officer at this time. We are glad to have him as a member of our group, and as one of the Officers. We thank you, Frank, for all you do for our organization...

And now, from the 99th, in addition to the foregoing: Frank has been recently elected Vice-President for Newsletter for our 99th BGHS, in addition to all that he has been doing for the Society in the past.

Thanks, Frank, and best wishes---gfc

Dear George,

I'll make this brief by saying many thanks to you for all your work on this Newsletter, the 'Hyaterical Society'--in general, and lastly, for wanting to inflict upon the members, the sad story of my life. (I'll get even!) (FHE)

BRIEFING

The briefing officer said today
Only 400 fighters can get in our way
But this number is not sensational,
Only operational

The guys who fly the other two
Have got the mumps, or maybe the flu
As to the flak, there isn't much
Only 88s and such

Of 500 guns the recons spied
Just 492 are occupied
The men who man the other eight
Have stepped outside to urinate

So these eight guns will be missing
If those guys ars still out pissing
But forget the flak; they can't get us
Cause Stormy says there's a 10/10 status

I hope the Doc don't ground me yet,
I still have several more to get
But I beg you, Doc, on banded knees
After fifty missions, Please!

The Sheaves of Htawgsaw

High above the Himalayas during the second World War, two pilots of a crippled Allied transport lost their lives helping the two other crewmen to escape. One of the survivors, remembering the events which followed, reflects on the guiding hand of providence amidst the turmoil of war.

THE MEN OF KOHIMA stood fast against the Japanese onslaught for 16 days and nights. When finally relieved and the enemy repulsed, many of these heroic defenders lay dead. Most had not known the glory they achieved. The bridgehead to India had been held and the country saved from invasion. In Kohima Cemetery we find this inscription:

*When you go home,
tell them of us and say,
"For their tomorrow
We lost our today."*

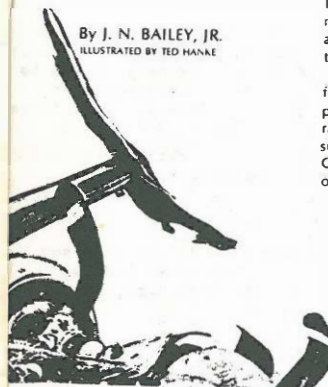
These words burn within my heart as I recall an experience in that same war and one which began near Kohima at the U. S. Air Base of Jorhat.

It was World War II and we were flying the "hump"--those towering peaks of the Himalayas which separate India from China and over which supplies had to be flown to keep China in the war. I was radio operator on a big C87 transport.

As we lumbered down the runway that night, the engines strained while we gained altitude and set course for Kunming. Our pilot, Flight Officer William J. Montgomery, remarked that the ship waddled around like a sick alligator. Evidently it lacked lateral stability due to the heavy load. Over the first ridge of the hump we picked up a little light ice, but this could be expected. There was not the slightest turbulence.

Yet in about 20 minutes we began to lose speed and altitude. Our engineer, Private First Class J. W. Tharp, came to my position and pointed his flashlight out the window. We were picking up clear ice rapidly. A thick coating covered the wing. Tharp immediately went forward to notify the pilot, who gave the engines more power, trying to climb above the icing. With this, number 4 engine ran away and it was shut down. The plane began to tilt from side to side. Mont-

By J. N. BAILEY, JR.
ILLUSTRATED BY TED HANKE



gomery tried to bring back the engine. It started but ran away again and then quit. Over we went on one wing, stalled out and fell into a flat spin.

"Put on your chutes. You haven't much time," Montgomery shouted.

Lieutenant Albert A. Arline, our copilot, managed to escape first. He let go the upper hatch and disappeared in the darkness. I tried to put on my parachute, but I was all thumbs. Each time I stood up, the forces in the plunging plane pinned me to the floor. I was unable to get into my harness. Finally in desperation, I threw the chute into my seat, sat on it and was able to fasten the straps.

My friend, Tharp, was there as I climbed for the open hatch. I urged him to hurry but he seemed unperturbed. In an almost calm and reassuring voice he said, "Go ahead." There wasn't a second to lose. Our pilot was still up front fighting with the controls, buying us precious time.

I reached the hatch and got my head outside. The sight of the reeling ship terrified me, and the slipstream took away my breath. I pulled up, trying to get loose from the plane, fighting the forces inside that kept holding me back. I pulled again and again but couldn't free myself. I panicked when the realization came that I would surely die in the crash.

Then, suddenly, I felt a hand clasp under each foot, a strong boost and I was falling free. Tharp had pushed me out! My parachute opened just as the diving transport screamed past, and I followed the navigation lights as they spun uncontrollably downward. The crash made a tremendous explosion and for a time it looked as if I would drift into the fire. I passed over a mountain ridge, however, and continued my descent.

Trees broke my fall and I landed, hanging from their tops. A monsoon rain began to drench the mountains. Huddling in my flying clothes, I listened while intermittent lightning illuminated the sky and thunder echoed across the valleys. These sounds of nature reminded me of God's presence, and I needed his comfort, for I was down in a most remote wilderness.

Dawn broke with the jungle coming alive. Birds and monkeys played in the giant trees. The scenery was mag-

nificent. I had landed on a high mountain near enough the foot to be among tropical growth. Looking up, I could see the more barren parts with ledges and sheer drops of hundreds of feet. I lowered myself from my perch and opened the jungle pack. My legs trembled from fear and shock as I put on the leggings it provided.

Getting down that mountain was an exhausting task. Fallen trees, entwined with thick jungle vegetation, blocked my way, and it was hours before I reached a clearing. Nearby I found a path which led to some abandoned huts. I was encouraged; at least it showed human habitation. Also there was a stream. I took a drink, ate some of my emergency rations and continued down the path.

The scantily clad native appeared out of nowhere. He carried a huge knife which bore Chinese characteristics, but he could have been a Burmese headhunter. I used sign language to try to communicate. He seemed to understand but remained serious. He pulled awkwardly with my hand and motioned for me to follow. As we moved over the next hill, I wondered where he was taking me. I tried to assure myself that the Japanese were much further south.

We reached a village about dusk. Upon entering, we passed a knoll with a clearing on top. In the center of the clearing was a wooden pole. Some kind of meat had been placed



around the pole and insects were swarming in abundance. It was then I recognized the scene. This was a sacrificial altar and they were animists. My heart sank at the thought of what this could mean.

Jang Bhiri Rai's first words were, "Are you injured?" He had noticed my weakened condition and was concerned Jang was headman and could speak broken English. My fears of the moments before were relieved. This was the village of Htagaw, Burma, about 10 miles from the Chinese border. The natives were Kachins and were working for the Allies. They

were responsible for reporting plane crashes and trying to aid any downed flyers. Of seven crashes in their area, I was the first survivor. This made Jang Bhiri Rai very happy. He quartered me in one of his huts and fed me a meal of rice and tea. I was soon asleep and resting after the day's ordeal.

The next day we organized a search party. Runners reported that other natives had found the injured Arline about 18 miles from Htagaw. We were being brought to us on a stretcher. They also found the crash and the remains of Tharp and Montgomery. We placed two large wooden crosses on their graves near the plane. That night we went out on the trail to meet Al Arline. He had also experienced difficulty in bailing out. When he jumped, his shoulder grazed a tailboom and he was knocked out. Regaining consciousness in time to see the crash, he thought of being "suspended in some awful dream." When he hit the ground, he blacked out again.

Our reunion was a time of thanksgiving and meditation. "God has been good to us," we agreed, thinking also of the two crew members who didn't make it. Without their courageous actions, neither of us would have remained alive. Montgomery had stayed at the controls, keeping the plane upright, enabling us to escape. Tharp had remained behind to push me free. There were no words to express our humble feelings.

We had retired for the night in my hut when we heard the singing. The music came from a small group and sounded familiar, but the Burmese words were difficult for us. "Jan ja ti mung hkai mu . . ." They continued to sing and presently Arline recognized the melody of the chorus.

"They're singing 'Bringing in the Sheaves,'" he exclaimed. We listened, translating the next verse: "Going forth with weeping, sowing for the Master, / Tho' the loss sustained our spirit often grieves; / When our weeping's over, He will bid us welcome, / We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves."

"Saints preserve us," Arline said. "There are Christians up here." He was right. A very small band had been converted by missionaries shortly before the war. Hearing the hymn, we felt now we would make it for sure!

The next day we laid out signal

panels from our chutes, used green wood for smoke and took advantage of a mirror. It wasn't too long before another transport passed high above. It circled for a few minutes taking bearings, then came down very close. The pilot waved. He had a smile on his face a mile wide.

On the following day two B-25s from the search and rescue unit in Assam, India, circled us, dropping supplies and a walkie-talkie. We advised them of our intentions to try to walk out to Myitkyina, Burma, with the help of natives, but they ordered us to stay put until they returned, warning that there was talk of scouting and looting in the territory by Chinese bandits. No planes showed up



for a few days because of bad weather. But on the 12th of June, despite more rough conditions, another B-25 came to check on us. They told us an American ground rescue party headed by technical sergeant Robert J. Meehan was on the way in from Tengchung, China, to get us out. And on the 14th the rescue party arrived.

We allowed the copilot a few days rest before tackling the trip back. It had turned out that his leg was only badly bruised, not broken. As we awaited his recovery, we celebrated my 22nd birthday on June 18th.

The next day we left Htagaw. Jang accompanied us to the edge of the jungle. As he stood there with his natives and waved goodbye, I noticed a tear in one of his eyes. Tears were in both of mine, for we had grown to be close friends and would probably never see each other again.

After the war Al Arline went home to Louisiana and opened a crop-dusting service. I had intended to visit him but waited too long. He was killed in 1951 when his plane crashed and burned near Shreveport. He died doing what he loved most: flying.

I corresponded often with the headman, Jang, and we exchanged souvenirs. I was in the process of trying to get him into the U. S. for a visit when news came of his death. He

spent his last days living in Assam but had wished to go back into north Burma. This was now impossible. His beloved Kachin tribespeople had been dispossessed and persecuted again, this time by the Chinese Communists. Today most of the Kachins are Christians, but they are fighting for their faith, freedom and survival. Their villages have been burned and they are hiding out in the jungles. Even the Bibles which they have learned to love so much have to be smuggled into them over the remote mountain trails.

The summer sun beamed through the windows of Park View United Methodist Church in Cookeville, Tennessee. I sat with my family in the congregation listening to the choir sing "Amazing Grace." The third verse filled the sanctuary: "Thro' many dangers, toils and snares, / I have already come, / 'Tis grace hath bro't me safe thus far, / And grace will lead me home." Shortly afterwards Brother Fred Johnson began his discourse on John 15:13: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." It was all I needed! Unknown to those around me I was transposed in time and place. My thoughts drifted back many years and I was listening once again to another sermon, the one I had heard and experienced near the roof of the world.

I decided to pay my last respects to my friends Tharp and Montgomery. In 1949 their remains had been transferred from the China-Burma-India theatre to the U. S. and now rest in Fort Smith National Cemetery, Arkansas. I traveled there and located the grave. Only one small headstone marked the place. The inscription read:

William J. Montgomery
Flight Officer
J. W. Tharp
Private First Class
Air Corps
June 6, 1945

As I knelt and examined their common resting place, I thought how inadequate the memorial was. I wished for a great monument, instead, with words engraved in solid gold, "For your tomorrow, we lost our today."

Then I remembered the other part of the Kohima inscription: "When you go home tell them of us . . ." I felt I was commissioned to write their story.

July 1975 CHRISTIAN HERALD (Finito!)

Fellow members,
The preceding story, by Jap Bailey (a former 410ther), and one of our members, in my estimation, is one of the true classics to come out of WWII. All I can think of at this time, Jap, is--"There but for the Grace of God, go I." For the record, through George Coen, who did all the corresponding, we wish to thank Jap for this distinguished article and giving his OK. Also, Pawlet D. Loomer, Pres., and last but not least, Mark R. Schmidt, Editorial Intern of the CHRISTIAN HERALD Magazine. Thank you all, gentlemen!

frank english

July 1975 CHRISTIAN HERALD

(Contd on Page 5)

99th(B) BG, 346th B. Sq.--Need to contact Willie C. Jones, and Harry Cunningham, others remembering that I was shot down near Verona, Italy (Oct. 6, 1943); treated in a Verona hospital, interrogated at Dulag Luft in Germany, moved to Stalag 17-B, in Krems, Austria, or anyone who recalls that I suffered from frozen feet and had many problems with my legs, arms, shoulders and back during winter of 1943-44.--Ralph E. Kramer, 22 S. Gateway, Toms River, N.J. 08753.

99ers, the clippings were enclosed in a letter from our good member, Theodore Heller, from Alaska. His letter is here, and is very interesting. Thanks, Ted! Note that I retyped the Ralph Kramer clipping as it was too small a type face to reduce. (Ralph, & the Greek Hellenic WWII Medal info - fha.)

H1 Ralph,

Hope you are OK and that the said clipping brought results. We see that you took your licks, also. By the way, for what it's worth, two of my buddies were at Krems, but I am sure not at the same time. One is John Hurd, and the other, Ralph Tomok. Do those names ring a bell?

frank e.

99th Bomb Group (B)
You are cordially invited to
attend the 99th Bomb Group's
100th mission celebration at
Oudna No 1 airbase on
November 4
at 1530 hrs



(Remember!)

1943

Box 1537 Star Route A
Anchorage, Alaska 99507
13 September 1981

President George Coen
99th Bomb Gp. Historical Society
2908 Aliso Drive, Northeast
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87110

Dear George,

I missed the last reunion because of an "eleventh hour" change of plans; however, I'll make a maximum effort to catch the next one.

Attached is an interesting clipping from the August 1981 VFW magazine. Maybe one or more of our members know's Ralph Kramer and can help him. I certainly hope so. I've also included an article from the 20 July Air Force Times describing Greece's "new" WW II medal. Many of the 99th people are eligible for this award and should contact the Greek Embassy.

George, I've misplaced my copy of the 99th membership roster, but am sure that I saw the name Scheu listed and believe that he's from "upstate" New York. If it's the Scheu I remember, he was a master sergeant in the 416th and ground crew chief for "Flak Happy." I remember taking a can of beer with me on my last mission, (Belgrade), and although the can expanded and looked like a football, it didn't blow up nor did I let it freeze. When we landed, I drank half of it and gave the rest to Scheu. So much for fond memories!

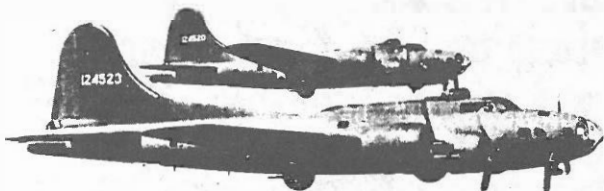
*(The Greek Hellenic Medal
clipping, & the Ralph Kramer
retyped item in this July
Newsletter are from Ted.)*
(the)

Most cordially,

Ted Heller
Theodore J. Heller

Dear Ted,

I'll take over for George in answering your 'jim dandy' letter. As noted elsewhere in this Newsletter (and I use the word loosely, now that I have been 'shoved' into George's old spot), a lot of members will be mere than jarred when they see your clipping in reference to the Greek Medal. For what it's worth, I made a Xerox copy of my Discharge papers, and along with a note of explanation as to where I heard about this, sent same to the Military Attache, etc., in Washington, D.C. Thanks for the info! As regards Ralph Kramer, we all hope he has heard from some persons re his problems. I brought that clipping up (in here somewhere). Yes, good old Charley Scheu is one and the same you remember in the 416th. I used to get around pretty good in my 6x6 at times, so am sure I knew him although at this time, can't place his handsome face. We'll all get together one of these days soon, and scare each other--how does that sound? By the way, Ted, the beer can bit will go over good! Those were the days! How about coming to the Muskegon reunion in Oct.-or the next year's Albuquerque get together, at least? We do have fun, lying about how we won the war. It was nice hearing from you--take care. In Comradeship--frank english



2800 S. Ocean Blvd. 8-A
Boca Raton, Fla., 33432

View 17 (?) 1981

Dear George, Frank, or Whoever,

Since a series of untimely distractions that unfortunately took precedence kept me from both the Albuquerque and Rapid City reunions, I'll try to at least touch base with my 1982 dues (enclosed) and announce my firm intentions to make it to the next reunion no matter what. Joe Chance called me after this year's Albuquerque bash and by now probably has given up on me after missing the next one too, but I'm going to be there if the creek doesn't rise. Make that even if it does rise!

The several letters you have printed referring to a Major Sheaffer at the 347th have piqued my curiosity because of the similarity of that name and mine and since I was a major and C.O. of the 347th from October, 1944, through January of 1945. While there, I did room with Doc Newman. I can't find any old orders or anything to give a hint as to who I replaced as C.O. (Major Sheaffer?), but I came back to the 99th from 5th Wing Headquarters after flying a desk down there for some months while waiting (unsuccessfully) for an assignment to the fighter command. Just wanted to get even after feeling like a duck in a shooting gallery for the first 50, which I flew as C.O. of the 346th during the first half of 1944.

Enough of those old war stories---I just wanted to report that if it was only a confusion of names, I sure didn't make general! Not even bird colonel after a year and a half of Korean recall service. I guess I must have been one of the rankest light colonels around by the time they suggested maybe I should retire account of being so over age in grade!

Anyhow, if any of the old 347th combat crews of late 1944 vintage are around, they may remember me as that mean old s.o.b. who got them all out with shovels and picks any time they weren't on a mission to try to build up some raised walkways around the squadron area and rise up out of that swamp. Since I got about as muddy as they did in the process, they really took it well, and it was always good for some laughs, a few blisters, and some kind of a boost to the morale. A couple of old Form 5 pages from that time indicate that Chas. Katzenmeyer and later John Plummer were squadron operations officers at that time.

I finished up my 99th service and 19 second tour missions at group headquarters as Deputy Group C.O. until return stateside in June 1945. Thirty-three years as an airline pilot, first in Dallas, then flying to South America from Florida for Braniff International, bring me up to date and back to what I started to do---express my appreciation for the great job you all do with the news letter. It dredges up a bunch of great memories and I'm surely looking forward to the next get together.

My best to you all,



Bill Schweder

Dear Al,

You wouldn't remember me, but I can place you when you were in the 347th. Not to mention the 346th. I rambled around pretty much in my 6x6 most of the time (in Hdqtrs Tech Supply, then after 33 missions as a Photographer/Gunner, spent the rest of the war in the 347th Tech Supply). In other words, I kept hidden in broad daylight! As regards Maj. Sheaffer (spelling?), I know he was in the 347th. My memory is pretty fuzzy now so I don't remember what he looked like. However, I'm looking at a letter in the July 1981 Newsletter from a Bill Shaw (347th) who says he was there from Jan. thru Aug. 1944, and that Maj. Sheaffer was our C.O. Other members reading this reply to you may be able to shed more light on this interesting matter, myself included. Suffice to say Al, your letter regarding your career is one of the most entertaining, and interesting ones we have had the pleasure to read (as I'm sure all members will agree). Your positive thinking, as regards our upcoming April reunion in Albuquerque is great. We are really looking forward to seeing you. By the way, Katzenmeyer, and Plummer are familiar names, also. If not mistaken, I was flying tail turret (coming home) on a mission watching Maj. K. nurse his B-17 along on 2 engines. I'm not sure if it was 1,2, or 3,4. I do know 2 were dead on one side. He made it too! They tried to drop the ball turret, but the wrench was missing! Boy, was he mad! I'll knock this off, with all our best to you, hoping to see you in New Mexico, soon!

Sincerely,
frank e.

Dear George,

Flann send me one of the 15th AF books. I didn't know such books were available. Also credit my check for 1982 dues.

Are there any other books, films, records, or mementos available? If so, where can they be ordered from? Does anyone sell the squadron emblems? I would like a 416th.

I received a letter from Ing. Gaffarelli Alessandro in Italy and sent him some info, but as yet have not had a reply.

Yours,
Jap Bailey, Jr.

Dear Jap,

Firstly, as Billy Graham would say, let me tell you how much I enjoyed your story of your trials and tribulations that we reprinted from Christian Herald Magazine. Not forgetting also, that you were, and are one of us. You sure did have your share of danger in a short period of time! Glad you made it.

We appreciate your '82 dues also, by the way!

In regard to your questions, Jap, for starters there is the '15th Air Force Story,'—if this is the case George told you about. I just went into one of my 'Fibber McGee' dresser drawers and came up with 4 gems I'm sure you (and some other 99ers) would enjoy, if you haven't gotten them already. Here goes—

Flying Portraits by Thane Collicson (the story of the Boeing Bomber), 1943, Charles Scribner's Sons (Publisher), New York
Flying Portraits by Edward Jablonski (the illustrated biography of the B-17's and the men who flew them), 1965, Doubleday & Co., Inc., Garden City, New York
Portraits in the Sky by Peter M. Bowers (a detailed account of the B-17 from beginning to end with pictures, personal combat accounts—you name it), first edition, 1976, published by Sentry Books Inc., 10718 White Oak Ave., Granada Hills, CA 91344

B-17 Portraits at War by Roger A. Freeman (presenting the aircraft as it was seen by those operating, and maintaining same, with pictures, accounts, etc.), 1977, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York

There are others of course—your friendly bookstore would know. One other I would put on my required reading list is a paperback by Martia Caidin, named Black Thursday (the story of the 2 Schweinfurt ball bearing plant raids by the 8th AF). If you, and our other buddies have not read this account, believe me, you will not regret it. Caidin is a fantastic writer, and he makes one feel they are actually there, in combat! We lost 60 planes on the 1st raid, and 60 on the 2nd, not to leave out about 1200 men who were either killed, missing, or became POW's!

As for films, I have seen B-17 ads, in the past, for sale in several Aviation Magazines; that goes for certain other items such as B-17 belt buckles. I have two, myself, both B-17G's. I also have one with Air Crew Wings. Squadron Emblems, to my knowledge, Jap, are nonexistent, unless some of our members are proxy to such goings on(?)

In signing off, several of us have heard from Mr. Gaffarelli, and like you, have tried to steer him in his hunt for contacts. I have personally gotten information from different sources, and was informed that this same info was being sent to Alessandro. In fact, he recently sent me a beautiful illustrated book of Rome, which I deeply appreciate. Ah Beeserveir for now. I trust you have been helped in some small way.

Best regards,
frank english

1908 11th St. SW
Great Falls, MT 59404
Dec. 18, 1981

99th Bomb Group Historical Society
2908 Alise Dr. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110

Dear Sir:

I was a member of the 346th Bomb Squadron, 99th Bomb Group from August 1944, to April 1945.

I am attempting to locate an individual who was also a member of the 346th, and was shot down in the fall of 1944. His last name is Harblason, believe his first name was Walter. He was co-pilot on a crew whose pilot was named McClendon, McClanahan, or something such as that. If you have his full name, serial number, address, etc., I would be most appreciative if you would forward the information.

Sincerely,
Richard J. Moffe ← McSee

Dear Richard,

First, welcome aboard! Need I say it would be nice to meet you at our upcoming reunion in Muskegon, Mich. in Oct., or at least in Albuquerque in 1983.

I believe George answered your letter, but as I couldn't find anything in back newsletters, and time has flown by, thought some of our colleagues out there might have an answer to your inquiry. How about this fellow? I'm at a loss, personally, Richard, I'm sorry to say. We are gathering in more 'sheaves' all the time, as you know, so do not despair. Help will arrive, I'm sure! In the meantime, it was nice hearing from you, and we send our best wishes.

Cordially,
Frank English

December 13, 1981

Dear Tom & George,

I recently sent in my dues for 1982, and as I have not written lately decided to add this note.

We have acquired a top turret for "Sentimental Journey" and the present schedule calls for installation about March 1982. As we know George, we have previously discussed what we want to do with the full restoration, and this about completes the items we need for that goal. I would like very much to get enough members of the 99th to join the C.A.F. to enable us to form a full crew from the 99th to man the old girl for one of the reunions.

I'm not sure if you are aware of this news item, but Wayne Snyder, the pilot from the 346th, was with Sentimental Journey in Seattle this past summer, and one of the Boeing people had made a model of "2nd Patches" which was the aircraft that Wayne flew between Feb 1944 and Feb 1945. When one of our people mentioned it to the person, he presented Wayne with the model.

If you have not seen a copy of the January, 1982, please obtain one, as it features 4 B-17's at Oshkosh last summer. (Air Classics). We are very proud of "Sentimental Journey". We also have obtained a B-25 through a donation which has been assigned to the Arizona Wing, and which we will restore also. In addition, we have a total of three P-51's in the area belonging to Arizona Wing C.A.F. members, and it makes a stir when at least two show up at local airshows, along with one AT-6 (AZ WING) and one AT-6 privately owned by a AZ Wing member..also two Spitfires privately owned at Carefree, Arizona, a few miles north of Scottsdale. We can put on a pretty good show if everthing gets together. We also have an ME 109 undergoing restoration which also belongs to the C.A.F. Az Wing. In addition to all this, we have the Champlin Fighter Museum in the area, located at Falcon field, which features WW I and WW II fighter aircraft. I will mail under separate cover a copy of the newsletter and brochure for the fighter museum. The interesting thing about the fighter museum is that all the aircraft are maintained in flyable condition. He has several WW I aircraft powered by Rotary engines.

I wonder if any one can furnish me with the various colors of the 348th insignia, or if someone could loan me a patch; we have two artists in the Arizona Wing who could duplicate it and I could return the patch or drawing. Wayne Snyder has his for the 346th and Dave Steffans has his for the 347th. I would like very much to get one for the 348th.

George, did you ever get a copy of Mediterranean Sweep? If you did not, let me know and I will loan you mine. I sent copies of the news letter to my crew and so far the pilot is the only one who has mentioned that he knew of the reunion.

We have a lot of fun working the airshows with any number of people who were former members of the USAAP, some of them with tears in their eyes introducing themselves. I think we sometimes should organize a 5th Wing unit here in Phoenix. So far, I have a neighbor down the street from me who was a pilot in the 463rd, the Police chief of Tempe, AZ was a P/E in the 463rd, and a tail gunner from the 301st is working at Deer Valley airport. When I worked at West Coast Airlines prior to the merger which formed AirWest later Hughes Airwest, and most recently Republic Airlines, my immediate supervisor was a pilot from the 483rd.

The most prevalent comment we get has been "I didn't realize the aircraft was so small inside." We like to ask the question... "How would you like to trust this aircraft to a bunch of 18-20 year old kids.???" The look on most peoples' faces would invoke quite a few laughs !!

Enough rambling for now. Again I will send the newsletter under separate cover on the fighter museum.

Sincerely and in friendship,

James S. Peters (JSP)
JAMES S. PETERS
348th Flt Engineer



HEADQUARTERS
NINETY-NINTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ARMY AIR FORCES
Office of the Intelligence Officer

23 July 1943
by S/Sgt. William Brink Jr.

PRESS RELEASE

NORTH AFRICA, July 22--Staff Sergeant James E. Purnell (7136 Churchland St.) Pittsburgh, Pa. sat tailor-fashion on a hospital bed tonight, gazed at his bandaged hands, and told how he shot down a ME 109 after its murderous fire had all but torn his hands from his machine gun grips.

Twenty-year-old Jimmy Purnell was smiling only a few hours after returning from a raid in a Flying Fortress--a sturdy ship in which he has operated the top turret on 34 missions. Despite torn hands and the shock of a 9.7 mm. explosive shell smashing his turret, Jimmy brought down the ME 109 and fought off three others for 20 minutes before getting first aid. Here's how Jimmy tells the story:

"It was two minutes before 'bombs away!' when this ME 109 came in high at 2:30 o'clock. I started firing and was swinging the turret to catch him going away.

"Golly, his wing was lit up like a Christmas tree from firing 20 mm. shells and 9.7's. I could see the 20's ripping up the wing and then a 9.7 hit the turret. The turret was filled with smoke and I could smell powder through my oxygen mask. My hands went numb and almost slipped off of the grips, but I kept firing. Then the 109 got away and the tail gunner interphoned that he saw the plane go down and the pilot bail out.

Jimmy grinned. "I was scared as hell," he said, "when I saw the blood on my hands. But I figured I might as well stick." He did stick. To the 200 rounds of ammunition he had fired he added another 200 at three other enemy fighters. These were fired from one gun, because the cartridge belt on the other was tangled and his hands were too numb to straighten it out.

His hands were also too numb to work the interphone switch so he could tell his mates he was wounded.

"I waited till after the pursuit was gone and then went down and tapped the pilot on the shoulder and showed him my hands." Only then did he receive first aid.

At the hospital doctors found ragged holes in the back of each hand where metal splinters from the turret had ploughed. The doctors promised him he'd be out in a week to see more action.

But Jimmy wasn't very excited about his exploit.

"What tickles me," he grinned, "is that the 109 was my first plane shot down."

VERNON E. FAIRBANKS, Capt. Air Corps, S-2, 99th Bomb

1032 Marien Ave.
Highland Park, IL 60035
Aug. 1981

George: (re: Sgt. Titus),

As regards the July 1981 Newsletter, I must relate the following:

I was also assigned to the 99th, as you know, 346th Sq., and the narrative of Sgt. Ken Titus as related to Major Fairbanks is all too true to my knowledge. The raid took place on August 25, 1943, from our base outside Tunis (Oudna) to Marshalling Yards at Poggia, Italy.

There were 39 ships in our Group; we had 7 turn backs. We are in the 1st Element, and are hit by by about 25 or 30 ME109's. There were about 5 or 6 ME 109's shot down that day. There was as flak over target area because of the fighters. We were carrying frag bombs and other heavy bombs that day; we incurred no injuries, although we did see planes hit and chutes flying.

If Sgt. Titus is still around, tell him I was also on that mission.

Enclosed you will find a picture of my crew, I am the one black dot.

You have another name on the Roster also, Anthony Twella, double black dot, radio man on our crew.

Have a good one

Marvin Charak

According to my Log Book, the mission took 6 hours, 30 minutes, which was my log time.

Dear Marvin,
Sure did enjoy reading your welcome letter. Just re-read the account of Sgt. Titus' bail out, and his trials, and tribulations. He sure did have the old intestinal fortitude, right? Have no idea, myself, the whereabouts of that man; maybe some of our membership does, however--how about this, Gang? Like Ben Warner, and a lot of others, he should not be forgotten! (Yourself included, Marvin!)--That must have been some mission, all in all.

By the way, the name Anthony Twella doesn't ring a bell with me. Went through the few Rosters I have, but didn't see his name. Where did I miss the boat? It was good hearing from you again, Marv. Take care, and hope to see you at Muskogon later on this year--OK?

Yours truly,
Frank English

Raid On Rome By Raymond Clapper

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS, North Africa (By Wireless)--Many heavy bombers had been over Rome when we got there. As we turned in from the sea to run down from the north, we could see on our right rolling clouds of smoke being blown from a target--the work of the bombers ahead of us.

Ten minutes later, our group of Flying Fortresses was rushing down the bomb run over the same target. Because of the controversy that might easily develop over this air attack on Rome, I made it my special business to watch as closely as I could. I was in the nose of the plane with the bombardier.

Particularly, I watched from my right hand window, for on that side lay the Vatican, just across the winding Tiber. Actually it was three to four miles away. We could not possibly have hit it without making a special detour to do so.

No accident could have caused bombs to drop even near the Vatican. Several churches, especially marked on the pilot's charts, also were out my right window and all were clear.

I emphasize this because Axis propagandists easily can distort facts about this raid. Several newspaper correspondents were invited to accompany the mission so they might give independent testimony.

Enemy Fighters Scoot for Safety

The impressive thing about the raid on Rome was the pitiful opposition encountered. This parade of Allied bombers, heavies and mediums with escorting P-38s, was making bomb runs over the heart of Rome for hours in, you might say, a triumphal procession. Whatever Mussolini may have been doing at the time, he must have recognized this Allied parade of devastating air power as an omen of doom.

We saw only two enemy fighters in the air. It was just after our bombs were dropped. Our bombardier and navigator swung their machine guns at them and there was a terrific din for a few seconds in our nose compartment, but neither fighter was looking for anything except a safe place to the rear. They made no passes at us, just beat it like small boys running past through a gauntlet.

Then we saw flak. I had been hearing about flak for a long time, but this was a poor specimen, so our crew told me. It was set too far ahead or broke too low. Our crew said it was not good aiming or fuse setting.

That was all there was to the enemy opposition. The whole Allied show, carefully arranged over a period of months, went clicking off on schedule.



We were back over our field 15 minutes ahead of our estimated time of arrival, fixed when we left hours earlier.

Crews Warned About 'Must Not's'

Our Fortress had bombs to drop at the extreme right hand corner of the railroad yards. For days, the Air Force Command had been working out bomb charts. All crews were given a map and enlarged air photographs, with the Vatican and other religious institutions marked out. The Vatican had a large white line drawn around it. Each of several such locations had a warning in large letters: "Must on no account be damaged."

At briefing, the crews were told not to drop bombs if there was any doubt or if the target was obscured to the slightest degree by clouds of smoke. The Command had been conscious of its responsibility in this matter, it considered Rome a military target because it was a bottleneck for rail traffic from Germany through Brenner Pass to Southern Italy and Sicily.

The railroad tracks were congested, making a good target. Furthermore, they were on the opposite side of the city from the Vatican and historic monuments. Even so, there was much anxiety lest some enthusiastic pilots get out of hand. At the briefing of our crew, Col. Fay R. Updegrave, leader of our group, said: "I don't want any individual bombings today."

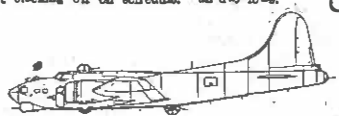
I wore an oxygen mask about two hours during the active part of the trip. No particular strain was evident around the plane until the climb for bombing altitude started.

Then the crew adjusted their parachutes and oxygen masks. The bombardier settles down to an intense study of his bombing chart, because he must recognize the aiming point as it comes up in his bombsight. All crew members scan the sky everywhere, looking for enemy fighters. The machine guns are unstrapped, ready for use.

Over Before He Knew It

As far as I was concerned, the most tension was just as we started down the bomb run, but when we were over the target, and also in the flak, so much was happening that suddenly I realized it was all over and everything was all right.

As soon as we were out of the enemy area, an amazing quiet settled over the ship. Our co-pilot, Col. R. H. Smith of Nashville, asked the waist gunner on the interphone how his watermelons were that the Colonel had placed in the ship for cooling. The melons were nicely chilled, but when the Colonel cut them, back at the field, they had spoiled inside, which was the only bad luck in our Fortress group all day long. (GEN. U.)



FORTRESS GROUP BATTING 333 AGAINST AXIS PLANES

Enemy aircraft not looking for trouble should steer of one Flying Fortress Group which has had an almost .333 batting average for the past week. Last Monday this Group shot down 35 out of 100 Axis planes over Gerbini; Yesterday, in supporting the invasion of Sicily, the Fortress sharpshooters bagged six out of twenty in a twenty minute running fight after bombing Catania. The claims were as follows:

ME 210 each; S/Sgt Emmett F. Hamilton, Prairieville, La.; T/Sgt Michael Yarrina, Homestead, Pa.

ME 109 each; S/Sgt George P. Harris, Lacona, Mo.; T/Sgt E. A. Harper, Wood River, Ill.; Sgt T. E. Gaertner, Sharon City, Ohio; Sgt. Henry E. West, Hodges, Alabama.

From another Group, a claim of an ME 2001 by T/Sgt James F. Conway, Attica, N. Y. (99th)

4 1/2 TIMES 20 JULY
Greece to Offer
War II Medal 1951

WASHINGTON -- The Secretary of Defense has accepted an offer from the government of Greece to give qualified individuals the Hellenic Republic Second World War commemorative medal.

Eligible for the medal are U.S. armed forces veterans and retirees who served in the following Greek campaigns or flew over Greece during them: (1) air combat, European-African-Middle Eastern Theater from Dec. 7, 1941, through Sept. 2, 1945, and/or (2) the air offensive, Europe, from July 4, 1942, through June 5, 1944.

Persons who believe they may qualify should write to the Military Attache, Embassy of Greece, 2228 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008. Copies of documents proving eligibility should be enclosed.

A record of the award should be entered in the individuals' DD Form 214, the Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center, Randolph AFB, Tex., says.

Gen. U.

11

WED 28th, 1982

r.O. Box 24272
West Los Angeles, CA 90024
Nov. 4, 1981

Dear George Coen,

I received your 99th Hist. Soc. Nov. 1 Newsletter today. Yesterday I sent in my 'renewal dues' for 1982.

Anyhow, I read it, 'aten to sters'-I double-read the enclosed Members Boater-looking for my name included. I did not see my name--so I decided to check up! Have I been overlooked or returned to the Reg. Army Infantry? Where I spent one 'hitch' in the 2nd Inf. Reg. (RA), later in the 5th Inf. Reg. (RA) in the Panama Canal Zone prior to War 2 in 1940-41. I then reenlisted into the Army Air Corps, Jan. 1942.

I spotted 4 or 5 names on the Boater from our own 416th Sq. The barber (Leroy Garvie) the short, stocky guy--I think he flew on the 'Bad Penny' with 'Seguine' Longenbach (peker shark) and maybe a Bernie Brown, ball turret gunner, who flew one or two with us on the 'Ramblin' Raider.' I remember Wally Klukas and his camera.

George, I also came back on the 'Empress of Scotland' renamed from the Japa 'Empress of Japan'-I believe.

On my escape near Potenza, after being shot down Aug. 25th, 1943, leaving our Foggia bomb target. When we joined up (2 of us) with a Limey commando patrol and later the British 8th Army at Taranto, Italia! Ah me!

The 'Empress of Scotland' hospital ship left Casablanca for Newport News, VA, I believe.

I contacted a little malaria at the Marrakech Air Base, leaving our 99th B.G. base in Tunisia.

Remember, we first went to Bothurat(?), Casablanca to Marrakech, then Oran (peker games, whew), then to Navarin, Algeria w/o our ground crew.

Our 416th had the 2 best, efficient fellows as the Line Chief (Reese?) and his shorter ase't (his buddy).

They deserved the 'DSC' for the great job they did, keeping our fine B-17 ships repaired and flying.

Hell, I still recall cranking our own 100% octane into our planes and loading bombs of various size, plus taking turns guarding our planes from the thieving Arabs, or potential saboteurs! Yep, yep.

However, to this date, I've growled because the 'commissioned' college crew members didn't lift their 'fraternal' arms to help the enlisted crew members--until our most-welcomed ground crews arrived by sea.

As a '2 hitch' infantryman, I figured so what! ha George. Do you recall how we would circle Orance Hill, named after our 416th C.O., and when we 'helped lift' our ships over a hill on takeoffs!!

Did you fly the night of the invasion of Sicily? I kinda eyed those 'enemy searchlights' though heard no flak. That was our first night raid. We did not drop any bombs--only a 'radar deflection' mission. We had no problems up there. The Navy kinda got trigger-happy and hurt Gen. Gavin's 82nd Airborne.

"War is created by elements of chance and the unpredictable human error."

(Gen. Patton quoting Hannibal)

George, I wish and pray for all of you fine, unsung 99th B. Gp.(H) veterans with good health and a pleasant life, even in today's turmoils.

Please don't forget this former scrapper on your Roster.

Am also enclosing a little for stamps and will frequently do so again.

God Bless and protect our U.S.A. and all of you and future good fighting Americans.

Always Your Friend (and a 100%
Loyal Polish American)
Carl M. Micciak

P.S. We enjoyed the 'cathouses' in Casablanca, Marrakech. Not in Oran, Constantine. We had 'fun' near Bone, Tunisie, et al, when based there. Never more than \$2, or 100 francs. Quote CMM.

Dear Carl,

I'm sure you have taken your finger off the panic button long before now, in reference to your name not being on the Roster! As you are no doubt aware, it is on two that I just eyed, for the record. You can now cast aside ye old Security Blanket, OK?

For those of you not familiar with Carl's triumphant bailout, and safe return, I refer you to the Jan. 1, 1982 Newsletter, and the Press Release Article. I'm glad it wasn't me, Carl!

Your letter covered a multitude of sins and sure brought back some fond, and not so fond memories of those bygone days from the States, Algeria, Tunisia, and good old Italy--not to mention back to the States, again, at least for the majority of us.

Your remarks, I know to me, and I'm reasonably sure, to other 99ers who were there at, or near the beginning, the middle, and the end, will trigger some varying degrees of diversified comprehension as to their own involvement in the 99th during their stint.

By the way, Carl, no offense, but all of us in each Sq. thought our Line Chiefs were the best, and they all were, right? 'Espres de Cerpse,' and all that! Without further ado, I shall now close my big mouth (or typewriter, as the case may be), and go to bed. I'm tired just from typing--but of course I was born tired. Like they say, Carl, when I think of 'werk' I lie down until the feeling passes! For now, Hasty Lumbago and other brilliant remarks that will fit.

Warmest Regards ~ frank english

12

Dear Gen. D'Heere,

I'll kill 2 birds with 400 rocks, as they say, by answering your letter to George (and the one you kindly sent me), at the same time. I, too, stayed over an extra day, but not because of the weather.

Remember the Air Force Sgt.'s bath next door to us? Well, as you know, I'm a member. Instead of going down to 'Old Town' that night for dinner with all you 'young kids,' I got involved with the 2 Chief SSG's from Kirtland who were in charge of putting that Convention together--Larry Lane, and Al Martinez. The update was that I spent quite a few hours that Monday at Kirtland with a Major Ortiz, and CMSGT. Alan Woods at the Air Guard part. Major Ortiz gave me at least 10 of his personal pictures, not to mention patches, brochures, and Lord knows what else. I really had a ball.

Sorry to hear about the layover of 5 hours in Pittsburgh--that's a real crime when you were so close to home. Thanks for the kind remarks, re the reunion. (Thanks to Tom Gann, and Bernie Barri) Take care--we'll write soon. (Gfc, fro)

Dear George--

My wife called me early Mon morning and gave me the weather report, tornadoes from Texas to Ga and bad all up the east coast. So Sgt Wachlerle wanted me to stay with them and I laid over and we went out and got my tickets related to Tue. He drove me out to the Pueblo and showed me a lot more of Albuquerque and Kirtland. And we relived a lot of our hunting escapades in Germany etc.

The flights Tue were all nice and I reached home on schedule, the only bad part was the 5 hour layover in Pittsburgh.

I want to thank you and all the gang for a most pleasant time at the reunion. I just wish I were younger and could have talked to everyone. But I saw most of the originals and had some bull sessions, especially on Sunday.. I hope your work goes well and I just might make the Michigan one in October as I want to trailer out to Tulsa so my wife can visit her sister and other kin.

Take care,

Uppie



1223 Lexington Sq.
Corsicana, TX 75110
May 13, 1982

Dear Frank,

Here is the photo I promised to send to you.

The reunion was just great!

I wish that more of the originals knew about the organization.

Best wishes,
Ben Jones (Hdqtrs)

Dear Ben,

You sure were prompt with the picture, and the enclosed note, Ben! Many thanks for both. You sure hit the nail on the head in reference to our last month's Liar Club, in good old Albuquerque.

Couldn't agree with you more re 'the originals,'--the Good Lord only knows George has contacted many, and is still working on this bit. It is quite frustrating, Ben, to remember old 99ers names, but not where they reside, or sometimes get a name, and address (or several), and then find out they no longer live there, not even in the same state. Not to mention finding out, in some cases, that a person is deceased, which has, and is happening as you know.

By the same token, the shoe fits the other foot, also. What a delight it is to get a former member on the phone, and talk, or get an answer to a letter. More often than not, this person comes up with another potential 'victim,' so it works both ways. I feel, and I'm sure you do also, that we need to contact all former members, as the 99th had a lot of good men, coming and going, from beginning to end--that's what made us so great! We were the best you know! Ben, in closing, one request, if I may be so bold. I would appreciate it, whatever the cost, if you would be kind enough to send Gen. 'Uppie' and Russ Jacobs a copy of the dandy picture you very kindly sent me. Just name your price--I'm good for them. Thanks a lot! Sure did enjoy seeing you all, and all going well, will see you in Muskegon, Mich., this coming Oct. (8,9, I think).

Sincerely,
frank english

13

To Earl A. Silvis; 7540 Old Channel Trail, Montague Mich. 49437
PRE-REGISTRATION NOTICE

Dear Earl;

I am planning to come to the 99th Bombardment Group Reunion in Muskegon on October 6-8, 1982. There will be _____ of us. I understand that there will be a Ladies' program and that I will receive a detailed schedule later.

So count me in. _____

FOUND

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|----------|
| 314 Howard J. Blum | 1810 Major Dr. (Heathbrooke) | Golden Valley | MN 55422 |
| 315 Edward J. Litwalk | 142 M St. | Johnstown | PA 15906 |
| 316 Robert K. Braungart | Rt. 2, Box 98 | Syracuse | IN 46567 |
| 317 Wm. C. McCarley | 5186 Longmeadow Dr. | Memphis | TN 38134 |
| 318 Maurice Murphree | 1506 Fell Ave. NE | Huntsville | AL 35811 |
| 319 J.O.Grizzell | 15 Mohican Cove East | Sardinia | OH 45171 |
| | Lake Waynoka | Peyton | CO 80831 |
| 320 John L. Moore | 8110 Curtis Rd. | Somers Point | NJ 08241 |
| 321 Robert E. Blackman | 30 E. Dawes Ave. | Granada Hills | CA 91344 |
| 322 Larry Stusser | 10357 Debra | Livingston | NJ 07039 |
| 323 Ted Panek | 16 Livingston Ave. | Glendale | CA 91207 |
| 324 Russ Jacobs | 1421 Greenbriar Rd. | Elyria | OH 44035 |
| 325 Robert J. Bacher | 692 N. Abbe Rd. | Riverton | RI 02878 |
| 326 Russ Manchester | 2698 Main Rd. | Taylor | TX 76574 |
| 327 L.G.Bohls | 1801 Kimbro | Bellevue | NE 68005 |
| 328 Paul F. Porter | 1703 Freeman Dr. | Albuquerque | NM 87114 |
| 329 W.H. Butler | 8608 Bellehaven Pl. | Eldorado | IL 62930 |
| 330 George R. Eadie | 1500 Roosevelt Ave. | Cocoa Beach | FL 32931 |
| 331 Mack E. Baker | 226 June Dr. | Maskell | TX 79521 |
| 332 Taylor V. Burson | Box 49, Star Rt. | Pleasant Hill | CA 94521 |
| 333 John Ziebarth | #110, 391 Taylor Blvd, | Middletown | NY 10940 |
| 334 Morris Borenstein | 189 Highland Ave. | Atlantic | IA 50021 |
| 335 Charles Edward Miller | 11 Cass Ave. | Glendale | AZ 85308 |
| 336 W.A.Griffith | 7300 N. 51st Ave. | Los Altos | CA 94022 |
| 337 Bill R. Mehew | 607 Milverton Rd. | Platteville | WI 53818 |
| 338 Donald E. Manuell | RT. 2 | | |

REUNION NOTES

- | | | | |
|---------|--------------------------------|------------------------|-------|
| Ex-POWs | July, 1982 | Colorado Springs | CO |
| 451 BG | Aug. 7, 1982 | Colorado Springs | CO |
| 17 BG | Sep. 9, 1982 | Reno | NV |
| 23G | Sep. 17, 1982 | Hampton | VA |
| 97 BG | Sep. 16, 1982 | St. Louis | MO |
| 99th BG | Oct. 6-8, 1982 | Muskegon | Mich. |
| | contact Earl A. Silvis, | 7540 Old Channel Trail | |
| | Ph. (616) 894-4601 | Montague, MI 49437 | |
| 99BG | May 1983 | Albuquerque | NM |
| Boeing- | 50th anniversary of B-17, 1985 | | WA |

PROGRESS REPORT

Membership, June 26
338 Members
210 Prospects

Thanks to the 237 members who have sent in dues for 1982. Receipt will be acknowledged by the number 1982 in the upper right hand corner of your address label. Thanks also to Lesch, Baker, Butler, Jake Merritt and General Upthegrove for generous contributions in addition.

FLASH

Our copy of the 99th records turns out to contain assorted press releases, pictures, target charts, mission reports, and the 993G War Diary.

We are in the process of evaluating the film and planning how to make use of the material therein.

George

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP 1982 Membership, \$10 _____
1981 Newsletters, Optional, \$5 _____
NAME _____ Squadron _____ New _____
ADDRESS _____ Renewal _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ j182

BOOK REVIEW

The B-17 Flying Fortress by Steve Birdsall, 1979, \$5.95
Published by Aero Publishers, 329 West Aviation Road, Fallbrook, CA 92028

This 28-page booklet is an excellent buy. The pictures are clear and pertinent; the text is first-rate and covers the career of the B-17 from the prototype to the filming of "The War Lover".

Included is a fine picture of "Bugs", otherwise known as 229526. The last 26 pages consist of the B-17 Training Manual, which contains instructions for all the crew, one by one.

George

TAPS

Harry Kluber

Dear 99er:

I received your postcard concerning the newsletter for Harry Kluber, who is my brother. I'm sorry to report he passed away several years ago.

Nathan Kluber
2901 N. Springfield
Chicago IL 60618

We are sorry to hear it.

401 Mortimer Dr., #307
Bedford OH 44146

Dear Mr. George Coen,

Yes, I know Leo F. Lillis, he was my brother. He died at Westover Field Mass. a few months after he returned from overseas in North Africa. He was buried in Cleveland with an Honor Guard with some of his buddies from his outfit, the 99th Bomb Group. If there is something I can help with, I will gladly help all I can.

I wish all of you members of the 99th Group only the best of luck.

Sincerely
John G. Lillis

We are sorry to hear it.

1 Crosswell St.
Albany NY 12206
June 2, 1982

Dear Mr. Coen;

On June 14, 1970 my husband, Robert M. Hackel, died at the age of 47. Bob had told many stories, not only to me but to our three children, of the great guys in the 99th Bomb Squadron.

Mr. Coen, would it be possible for us to receive the newsletter? We would appreciate it so very much.

Thank you for remembering Bob; he would have been so proud,

Sincerely
Joan D. Hackel

*Dear Joan:
We are sending you a year's
Newsletter, with compliments of the 99th,
in memory of Bob. From his buddies
by George*

THE 99TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP HISTORICAL SOCIETY
2908 ALISO DRIVE NE
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87110

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Albuquerque, N.M.

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