



THE 99th BOMBARDMENT GROUP HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 3, NUMBER ³ 7, MAY 20, 1983
PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY-----BY BERNIE BARR (this time)

SOCIETY OFFICERS:

PRES: Bernice Barr
VP: Michael Yarina

SEC: Joe Kenney
TRES: George Coen

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER-----

We decided to hold up this newsletter until after our Annual Spring Meeting so that news of the event could be included. Our first Group Commander Gen. Fay Upthegrove could not be with us this time, but he sent these words of greeting to the attendees and all members:

"Greetings to all 99ers and wives. To members prior to 1944 I send my love. To all those who came after I salute you for keeping the 99th a leader in the ETO. I survived my Aorta Aneurism operation OK and my health is back to normal. May you have a rewarding reunion with old friends and comrades, and don't tell too many lies, and enjoy the NM sunshine. God Bless."

Gen. Upthegrove

We really had a great turnout, with over 120 members, spouses, and guests attending. Many of our members decided to arrive a day early, but the Albuquerque Gang was right on their toes and opened the Hospitality Room Thursday PM to extend greetings. Friday was filled with arrivals, registration, getting settled, greeting old friends, and meeting each other. That evening everyone relaxed-- drank their favorite beverage, ate snacks, and had a great time together in the hospitality room. Saturday the ladies made a touring visit to and had lunch in the Old Town section of Albuquerque. Our membership attended the annual meeting and luncheon in the Winrock Motel.

The membership elected Lewellyn (Lew) Boatwright and James (Jim) Flex to the board of directors. After a presentation by Jim Flex, the membership selected Houston, Texas as the Annual Spring Meeting and Reunion site for Spring 1984. Jim will work out all the details and these will be included in future newsletters as they develop. Also, since the 15th Air Force is having it's Anniversary Meeting at March AFB, California this fall, the group voted not to have a special; meeting of our own, but those who could and desired to should plan to meet in California Nov. 10-13. The membership discussed

the pros and cons of pushing for and holding two meetings a year. After the discussion, the vote was in favor of holding one annual meeting in the spring of the year and make every effort to get each member to attend.

The Board of Directors met, and in addition to other business items, elected the following as officers for this year:

President----- Bernice Barr
Vice President- Lewellyn Boatwright
Secretary----- Joe Kenney
Treasurer----- George Coen

Directors are: Joe Chance, Rex Greathouse, Hank Parks, and Mike Yarina. For personal reasons Richard Bradfute and Tom Gamm resigned from the Board of Directors.

Saturday afternoon many of us toured Kirtland AFB and the National Atomic Museum, while the others relaxed and rested up for the evening event. This included cocktails, prime roast rib of beef, and dancing to the music of the ISLETA POOR BOYS.

Sunday morning everyone took it easy-coffee or what have you in the hospitality room, followed at noon by a champagne brunch. This was just a good time to visit together. Goodbyes and farewells were said in the afternoon, each saying how much fun this get together had been.

It was such a pleasure for those of us from Albuquerque to have been your host, and we enjoyed this as much as you. We did miss those who did not come this year, but hope to see you next year in Houston.

Thanks to the Albuquerque Gang for a great event.

The Albuquerque Gang,
Barr, Boatwright, Butler, Carnes, Coen, Gamm,
Henry, and McClow

Special thanks to Harvey (Wallbanger) Jennings for keeping the liquid assets flowing in our hospitality room. Harvey also contributed a 99th BG cap which was auctioned off for \$30 to help finance the reunion operations. Thanks again, Harvey- You did great! Thanks also to Eugene Agnew (not Spiro) for bringing a model of a B-17 that he had made. He had it auctioned off and contributed the \$40 to our general fund. Jim Peters and Wayne Snyder, both members of the Arizona Wing of the Confederate Air Force, showed a 30 minute film- THE CAF STORY. Art Knipp showed video tapes of previous meetings. Thanks to each of you. And thanks to Paul Elizondo for helpful special services.

Our thanks also to the WINROCK MOTEL for their assistance and fine service. The lunch on Saturday and Sunday Brunch were very well served. If you come through Albuquerque you too will find the motel a great place to stay.

Ernest and Dorothy Wrentmore wired their special greetings and best wishes for a great reunion. B.C. Rogers had also hoped that he could attend but could not--he sent pictures of previous meetings and a generous

contribution to the reunion fund. Thanks a million to each.

Olan Mills photographers were present taking shots to record for the reunion memory book. I understand that it may take about six months to complete the reunion book and details will be in future newsletters on how to order. If you want a special picture included send it with details to Bernie Barr ASAP.

As with every meeting people make comments- here are a few random comments from our attendees:

"Business brief & to the point. Weather & friendliness- Super. General planning & arrangements-Well done" Edgar F. Jenkins.

"Great time last two years. Will see you all in Texas next year" James L. Smith.

"SUPER_See you in Houston-I hope" Mike Mazu

"Good comments on everything. Hospitality Room Excellent. Well organized reunion-Looking forward to the next one" Paul L. Spear.

"Suggest early brunch-10AM for example to accommodate those who might leave early" Russell T. Jacobs.

"Had a very good time-enjoyed it and am looking forward to the next one. Very well organized" Paul Peterson.

"The reunion was exceptionally well planned. Thanks to all of you. I think the 1985 reunion should probably be in Seattle" Joe Chance.

"Would have been nice to have had a chaplain at the Banquet to give thanks for the fine dinner & for us being home" Morris L. Bennor.

"The 99ers responsible for the planning and execution of this reunion have done an outstanding job in every respect. I hope Houston can do as well-I will assist. Possibly larger names on tags" Jerry Barton.

"My first one and enjoyed every bit of it. Wish I'd known about them sooner! Met quite a few old faces but would like to see more. If I last long enough I'll attend more" Harold Luther.

It would have been impossible to include all the comments we received, but these will give the idea that it is great to see old friend and meet new ones. So please join us next spring in Houston, Texas.

Your Friend, Bernie Barr

We are listing the names of all who attended so you will know who came. Note that this is not a male event-we had a great number of the fairer sex attending. Please add your name to the list in Houston-84. Jim Flex and his crew will put on a great event.

Agnew, Eugene & Mary
Barr, Bernie & Doris
Barton, Terry & Ruby
Bennor, Morris & Jean
Bickner, Charles & Ruth
Bilharz, Charles & Marion
Black, D.R.
Boatwright, L.T. & Margaret
Bulkeley, P.G.
Burson, Taylor & Betty
Butler, Walter & Christeen
Carnes, Rex & Florence

Jones, Ben & Winna
Kellstrom, Ken & Florence
Kenney, Joe & Maudie
Kirby, Elvin, Ruth, Jim, Dan
Klukas, Walter & Olga
Knipp, Art
Luedeman, Harvey & Hazel
Luther, Harold & Jean
Manchester, Russ & Bertha
Mazu, Mike
McClow, Mike & Helga
Moore, John

Chance, Joseph
 Coen, George & Martha
 Dahl, Donald
 Dahl, Eldon
 Dixon, Wilbur & Frances
 Duncan, Noble & Helen
 Dunn, Max
 Dunn, Sam
 Elizondo, Paul
 English, Frank
 Flex, James & Mary
 Gamm, Thomas & Gloria
 Greathouse, Rex & Edith
 Hager, James & Christine
 Hayes, James & Bilijean
 Henry, John & Helen
 Holt, William & Boo
 Hunt, Thomas & Jeanne
 Imrie, Robert
 Jackson, Edward
 Jacobs, Russell & Muriel
 Jenkins, Edgar & Velma
 Jennings, Harvey & Pauline
 Joffrion, Joseph & Ella
 Diane Deprie & Marilyn Habitz

Morat, John & Lillian
 O'Neill, Walter
 Parks, Henry
 Peters, James & Nancy
 Peterson, Paul & Ida
 Porter, Paul & Faith
 Roarty, Clark & Margaret
 Schauler, Vincent
 Schneider, Walt & Mary
 Schroeder, Al & Evelyn
 Schwanbeck, Ray & Jo Beverly
 Silvis, Earl & Jean
 Smith, James & Marjorie
 Snyder, Wayne, Maybelle, Wayne
 Sopp, D.J.
 Sparrow, J.W. & Boots
 Spears, Paul
 Thorssen, Donald
 Trapuzzano, John
 Upchurch, Joseph & Patricia
 Warner, L.B. & Mary Lou
 Mike & Sharon Jones
 Willis, Joe
 Yarina, Mike
 Bradfute, Richard & Lovilla

FROM OUR SECRETARY-----

Dear Bernie,

I mailed letters to all of the directors yesterday and enclose a copy for your file.

I like your suggestion regarding a letter to our Group from each Director covering the more current events. Now if I can just get some of my thoughts down on paper.

It is my considered opinion that the 99th Bomb Group Historical Society has a tremendous potential in so many areas. I'm thinking particularly of information for relatives of those who did not get back from the war, or for information that many of our members would be most certainly grateful to be able to obtain. (I am very curious about a number of our Squadron Members who went down, for instance.) Where our last Newsletter indicates we have a membership of close to 400 with over 150 other known individuals who are most certainly prospects I would say that this is success far beyond what I believed possible in this short amount of time. I wonder if we might give some thought to acquiring a Chaplain, we must have someone in the Group who is either a Clergyman or could at least handle a position such as that. On a personal basis I feel this might have some good qualities, possibly for writing letters of condolence to the families of those we list under "TAPS" in each Newsletter. I believe the bigger our Group gets the more of these we may be faced with. Or for whatever else a Chaplain might be able to help with. (Just a thought, Bernie, that might help us.)

When this began at that small meeting in Amarillo in October of 1980 I am not sure at all of what I expected other than meeting a few men I had known and flown with. What I found was a splendid group of men that I seemed to have a great deal in common with, a literal commraderie I had not counted

on at all. This is what the 99th should capitalize on.
 Sincerely;
 Joe Kenney

Joe, we must have a chaplain or others who are qualified to assist us. Members, we are asking for volunteers so please let Bernie Barr know if you would like to help with Joe's idea.

FROM OUR TREASURER-----

Gentle Readers;

If any of you would like extra copies of the Newsletter we can mail one year's Newsletters to any address for \$5. We must have a zip code for the mailing.

Those of you who have sent in donations may apply the donations to extra subscriptions if you so desire.

Membership	Progress Report	10Feb83
373 Members	Finances	
140 Prospects	Balance 1Nov82	\$1128.02
	Supplies	288.48
	2 Newsletters	709.04
	Dues and Donations	2360.00
	Balance, 10 Feb83	\$2490.50

HISTORICAL RESEARCH-- We have ordered four Squadron microfilm records from the Albert Simpson Museum at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. The Group Records microfilm which we obtained last year is far from complete, but it does have many items of interest. A fire in the Records Section some years ago resulted in extensive loss and water damage, so we do not know what remains for the historical record.

DONATIONS-- Our thanks to the many members who sent generous donations in addition to their dues. We expect as a result to begin publication of a history of the 99th, subject of course to Board approval. So thanks to Agnew, Book, Burson, Butler, Sam Dunn, Frank English, Goodale, Hampton, Heffran, Hobbs, Hunt, Jackson, George Jacobi, Kem, Kramer, Lesch, Livolsi, Peters, Plummer, Raftery, Redline, Shirlds, Charles Steffens, Al Wertz, and a large number of others whom I cannot identify from the record. Thanks, fellows.

PROPOSED LIFE MEMBERSHIPS-- After due investigation, we find that we cannot recommend any Life Membership schemes. There are two reasons for this. First, Life Memberships would propel us into the investment world with all its pitfalls, especially inflation. Second, these Ninety-Niners do not obey the laws of the American Experience Mortality Tables. Having defeated the Law of Averages by surviving a combat tour calculated on 100 percent casualties, they go on unashamedly surviving. We see them on the dance floor when the aforesaid Law would put them in wheelchairs, and we despair of figuring the odds for this bunch. gfc

STRAGGLERS-- We have received inquiries about names which were listed back in 1980 and have since disappeared from the roster. Well, the initial roster contained all the addresses which we had received to that date. In January 1981 we began to send out our little one-sheet news to all, and we quickly found that many of the addresses were incorrect. By May 1981 we had settled on a policy of placing on the roster only the names of active members. Since some fellows never did check in, they are no longer on the roster, and we

have turned the pictures of their planes to the wall. We are conducting one last campaign by means of the Newsletter to get these stragglers to join the fun, and then we will have to concentrate on other duties. Each straggler will receive a Final Notice in his Newsletter before we discontinue sending it. We do retain a Master List of all names and addresses (mostly of 1944 vintage) and can furnish the addresses of such seldom-seen gents as Henderson, Fiegenbaum, and Tony Lutkus, all of the 416th.

URGENT-- From time to time we get inquiries as to whether Bernice Barr, our present President, is a Red Cross Girl. These inquiries always come from far away and from those who have never met Bernie nor seen his picture. We trust that Bernie's account in the March Newsletter of his take off under fire in 1942 in the Phillipines has served to answer the question. Bernie made a tour with the 19th Bomb Group during the dark days of retreat to Australia. He survived to fly a second tour with the 99th. At a later date Bernie became C.O. of Kirtland Field, right here in Albuquerque. Robert Wood gave me Bernie's address quite early in the game, and I dropped by his house, and we've been friends ever since. Bernie also survived to retire from the Air Force.

We have assembled a Master List of former 99BG members, a roster of planes by number, and a roster of planes by name. At some date in the far future we expect to list the many pictures which we have received, and to make the best of them available to all. The Albert F. Simpson Historical Museum is the Society's legal heir, and the Museum suggests that all photos contributed have the donor's name and some pertinent identifying data in soft pencil on the back. We expect to republish all rosters except the Master List as they grow and become out-dated. Corrections will be welcomed. For instance the orders sending the Mayflower (original crews) Group to Africa assigned 42-29478 to Max E. Davis. The orders also assigned the same plane to William C. Davis. Wasn't it a little crowded, Max? gfc

THE SEARCH-- Thanks to all for the many lists of names and addresses. No matter that the addresses are for 1945 or even earlier. We process them at the Albuquerque Public Library, which has a large set of Telephone books. If we find the 99er we send him a newsletter. Failing that, we send out postcards to people of the same last name asking their help, and we do find about one out of ten. It sometimes happens that the Library does not have the necessary telephone directory, and we are stymied. In order to improve our score we are going to begin listing these Stragglers as "Lost" in hope that some member who lives nearer can locate them. Our search usually requires several months (the Treasurer has a fondness for Mexico and is not always at home), but we do keep pressing bravely forward, so send in those old addresses and don't expect an acknowledgement. gfc

Col. Raymond Schwanbeck flew a combat tour with the 19th Bomb Gp in the Phillipines, Java, Australia, New Guinea etc. I had known him there, and on the day that I left the 99th in Italy to return to the USA, Ray reported in to become the last commander of the 99th up to the day of inactivation. Here are some observations that came to his mind these many years later:

Dear Bernie;

No excuses for not having gotten around to this sooner. After your phone call last month, I pondered for some time as to just what might be appropriate in response to your request. And I am still Pondering. It has been right 38 years now since we abandoned camp at Tortorella. A lot can be forgotten in that time, and as you and I can attest to, ones memory

certainly does not improve with age. So back to the closet, old suit cases, foot lockers and manilla envelopes to retrieve what may be left of ones 201. I find that after a few moves and many spring cleanings, (come to think of it, it is going on 21 years now that I have lived at my present address), my old 201 file has been somewhat depleted to nonexistent. To fill up the rest of this page, I will resort to a thumbnail sketch of how and when I became a member of the 99th, how I left it, and to make things a little more boresome, might add a little career history.

Spent my first two years of active duty in the Air Corps with the 2nd Bomb Gp at Langley Field. In 1937, I transferred to the 19th Bomb Gp at March Field, Calif. and was a member of the 19th until Oct. of 1942 at which time the 19th was relieved from its combat duties in the South Pacific and returned to the States.

Upon my return to the States, I was assigned to the 30th Bomb Gp at March Field, where I was given quarters on the base, complete with a maids room and a colored maid to go with it. An assignment like this was too good to last. In April of '43 the 30th Bomb Gp received its overseas orders and I was transferred to Training Command. My first job with the Training Command was at Roswell, NM as the Asst. Training Director, and later the Air Inspector. In February '44 I was assigned to HQ 38th Flying Training Wing at Kirtland Field, as the Training Inspector of the Bombardier and Navigation schools. Moved to Albuquerque. The wife and I had three kids by now, the youngest was born in January in Roswell. We lived at 3828 Mesa Verde Dr. Then on or about Oct. 1 I received orders to MTO Hq. 15th Air Force.

Arrived in Naples Italy October 19, 1944 and via the way of Foggia I was assigned to the 463rd Bomb Gp. as Deputy CO. Sandy McGregor was the CO, and prior to McGregor, the 463rd was commanded by Frank Kurtz. Stayed with the 463rd until December 31st, when I was moved to the 99th Bomb Gp. at Tortorella to replace Ford Lauer as C.O.

Ford Lauer departed Italy for the States some two or three weeks before I arrived on the scene, so while in Italy I never personally contacted Ford, although I knew him fairly well as we were in the same outfit (2nd Bomb Gp) at Langley Field back in '35 and '36. However during the absence of a CO it appeared that the 99th was being run very well by Gp staff officers and the Squadron CO's. When I reported, Major Sarosy was the adjutant and I can't for the life of me remember the names of the other staff officers.

After perusing some old flight records I see that I flew 7 missions with the 463rd, and 14 with the 99th. As you might know it was sort of an unwritten policy that the Group CO fly when their Group was leading the Wing Mission. I see that the last combat mission I flew was on the 24th of April and it was the Groups mission No. 393 It was to Drauburg wherever that may be and it must have been a relatively short one as it only took 6 hours and 10 minutes. I do not recall how many more missions the Gp flew or even when the Jerrys capitulated. A month or so later we were all elated that the war was over and we would be on our way home soon. Then came the needle that punctured the balloon. The 99th and another Gp would stay in Italy as occupational, what ever that meant. A bitter pill to swallow as there was no indication as to how long the occupation would last.

After the surrender I recall that the next four months were very dull and that the wing had all the B-17 Group ferry or fly about 50 percent of their B-17's, only the newer ones, to Frankfort Germany where they were put on blocks for storage. This left the old clunkers or those about ready for an engine change to return to the States and their graveyard. The why or wherefore of such an operation I have never been told, maybe it was an economy move, and some genius thought it would be cheaper to leave some of

our planes there rather than fly them to the States and put them in mothballs.

On October 6 1945 orders were issued by Hdqts.5th Bomb Gp transferring the remaining personnel of the 99th Bomb Gp to the 515th Air Sv Gp (Napels) for transshipment to the US under the "White Project." The Group still had several B-17's, a dozen or so, in commission and these were used for our transportation. Some of the aircrafts returned to Grenier Field in New Hampshire and others to Morrison Field in Florida. I returned as a passenger in B-17G #44-6932. Its pilot was Henry Sigafoose, copilot Louis Luri, navigator Oliver Holmquist and Sgt. Phillips the engineer, and 7 others. We departed Naples on or about 10/Oct. and via Marrakech, Dakar, Natal, and Georgetown we arrived at Morrison Field, West Palm Beach, Fl. on October 16th. Needless to say from that point we scattered in all directions and on the 18th I was given a train ticket to El Paso, Texas where I met my wife, as she had been residing in Albuquerque.

I believe I can honestly say that the arrival and two day stay at Morrison Field was the last contact I had with any of the personnel of the 99th until 1980 when I received an invite to the reunion in Albuquerque. This letter sort of reminds me of a bull session. You know-- the more you talk, the more you recall stuff to talk about and the thing never ends until someone calls a halt, and this is about as good a place as any to do just that.

I retired from the USAF in August of '61, relaxed for 9 months and then went to work for the State of Arizona and stayed with them for 10 years. Since retiring I have been to several reunions of the 19th Bomb Gp. and will be leaving next week for Reno for their regional reunion, and I hope to see you all on Friday the 13th of May that is.

Sincerely, Ray Schwanbeck

Thanks Ray for your very interesting and informational letter. We do appreciate your support of our organization and were happy that you were able to join us this year.

---TAPS---

Members of the 99th Historical Society extend our sympathy to the families and friends of our members who have passed away.

My husband, Loren A. Delp, died in July 1978 of cancer. I would be interested in knowing the whereabouts of his crew. So if possible I would like to receive the newsletter. Mrs. Carole W. Delp, 620 Vesper. Topeka, Kansas 66606.

William H. Lorenz of 3833 213th St., Bayside, NY 11361 died 6/27/80 of cancer. Frank Healy, a friend.

Harry Goose had a heart attack the afternoon of New Year's Eve. Was in intensive care 6 days and in the hospital 8. Came home on the evening of Jan 28th. About 11:30 Dorothy heard him gasping for breath (in his chair). Ambulance came quickly but they couldn't save him. At least he didn't linger. Memorial Service held at United Church Of Christ, Watertown, SD on Jan 31st.

Dorothy Goose has gone through Harry's papers and has compiled the following account of her husbands activities with the 99th Bomb Group. Harry was in charge of the 347th Tech Supply.

Frank- Harry's longhand was not always the easiest to read, but I think I've been able to figure out most of the words if they make sense to me. Maybe you will understand some that I don't. This seems to be just a little

reminiscing on Harry's part and I thought you might like to read it.

Narrative History: 99th Bomb Group (H) USAAF- 347th Bomb Squadron
Covering the period of Activation, WWII, when the Group was temporarily assigned to satellite AF Bases at Mitchell, SD & Watertown, SD. Time Coverage: early January 1943 - late February 1943

The Squadron moved into Watertown by rail. Watertown in the '40's was served by 4 railroads and the center of town looked like a railroad. All that has changed, the tracks are gone, and one railroad struggles to keep operating. I mention the railroads because the squadron personnel left Watertown en masse - a leave - with our regrouping to be Tinker Field, OCAB (Oklahoma AB). My first glimpse of Watertown was downhill. Cpl. Isadore Green of Sq. Supply and myself brought a 6 x 6 from Sioux City after turning in a Cletrac to the Base Supply. From the hill there was no sign of the snow and the cold. The cold came, and the snow came; and so ensued the campaign of Watertown. Our barrack area was new construction and consisted of a frame building covered with tar paper and batten strips erected on a concrete slab. Central heating consisted of 3 cast iron army issue chuck (?) stoves in which we burned hard coal - fireman was a detail job. Plumbing was centralized - in a latrine-shower building - and the long walk was part of the job. Mess hall was large enough to accommodate both squadrons and served as an assembly place. One program I remember was a PR effort and the local Chamber of Commerce representative expressed the community's patriotic support of our efforts and extended an invitation when "it" was all over - to return and enjoy the community blessings of Watertown, and which incidentally, owned its own Municipal Utility Plant. The G.I. response was almost embarrassing, for most of the men, many from the South, were not enthusiastic about coming back to 30 degrees below zero temperatures- not necessarily the fault of the Chamber of Commerce. At that we were better off than many of the townspeople. From somewhere came permission to use our heavy flight and ground crew clothing in an effort to beat the cold - and it did.

A note of explanation should be given as to the squadron's status. We were packed for overseas service. Our equipment boxed for overseas shipment was stored in the field hangar. There were no aircraft assigned to the field which was listed as a Satellite Base for Sioux City Air Base and coordinated with the Home Defense Command. A courier service consisting of a CAP Piper Cub was the closest we came to being part of the Air Corps. Rumors had it that our Combat Crews and Combat AC, B-17's were already overseas, but because of transportation problems, we were on hold and had to be out of the way to allow for movement through the Training Command.

Typical Day: breakfast, morning formation, generally hiking or marching on the runway which had been extended and expanded from the original local airport facilities. A headquarters building complete with tower had been added to expedite the Air Force takeover. Afternoons: sometimes formations or individual hikes for the base was surrounded by farmland and the shore of Lake Kampeska. Evenings: On the town if you could wangle a pass. Taxi service a 6 x 6 which made two stops, the USO for the enlisted men and the Lincoln Hotel for the officers. The Lincoln Hotel "died" about 10 years ago and a bank now occupies the corner. As G.I.'s we enjoyed the small town hospitality, two theaters, a USO, a number of churches, and Kirwan's Corner! This oasis for lonely hearts and dry throats was a family merchandising - soda fountain - bottle liquor store - a place to sit down and enjoy whatever. Some inclined to over indulge came away somewhat worse for the

wear. The cold ride home in the back of a 6 x 6 generally cooled things down to normal before arrival at the base, some two miles from Kirwan's.

For the celebrants failing to make the pick-up time for G.I. transportation, Reany's Garage was a blessing - taxi service to the Base. I recall four of us hired a cab to take us some 40 miles south of Watertown to the small town of Arlington, SD on the mainline of the Chicago Northwestern, with the intent of better rail connections to get the most time from our passes. Two decided to wait at Arlington, two of us returned to wait it out at Watertown. A fateful question for me, and my wife Dorothy. Would I have seen her again had I made connections at Arlington, for upon my return what better way to pass some extra time than with a girl. So I made a call on Dorothy, my USO girl, and I left her with a promise to write, a correspondence we continued until our marriage while on furlough in August of '45.

One of the poignant memories was that of a four legged G.I. of the St. Bernard clan belonging to the Armament Chief, Tiny Allen, named Barney. Tiny obtained the "pup", so called, for when we left Watertown, standing on his hind legs, he was taller than most of us, and almost as tall as Tiny, probably one of the largest men in the squadron. Snow, previously mentioned, was a gift from heaven for the St. Bernard-he delighted in it. Upon leaving Watertown, I believe Tiny was persuaded to put the dog up for adoption. Major medical problems, including dentistry, were handled at Mitchell. An almost daily ambulance trip was made for those needing care.

Frank, I forgot to put in Harry's obituary that he was a member of Codington County Post 17 American Legion. He was not a very active member because he spent most of his time doing things of a social service nature through the church and service agencies in the city. He was a compassionate man and always found people who needed a cheery word or a chore to be done - and he had the know-how and tools to do most anything. Since we saw you in Albuquerque, he fixed up a Ford Econoline Van for traveling and intended to spend quite a bit of this winter in Texas and Florida, but we kept putting off departure. I believe we must have been guided by an unseen hand, and I am most grateful that his attack did not happen many miles from home. We only used the van for one trip - back to New York State to see the rest of the Goose family. Did I tell you earlier that two weeks after his death a letter came from a Richard (Dick) Dempsey? He says his name was left out of the 99th letter by error as he is a paid up member. Dorothy Goose.

The 97th Bomb Group will hold its third reunion at the HENRY VIII MOTEL, at St. Louis, MO. September 16th & 17th 1983. Contact: Clarence Hammes, 15 Avilla Heights, South Alexandria, Arkansas 72002.

I would like to hear from anyone who recalls Sgt. Slavomir Nepil of the 346th. Does anyone remember his being treated for frozen feet? Helen Nepil, 2639C Sunrise Village Dr., Orange Park, Fl. 32173.

Let us hear from you! We need material for the Newsletter!

LOST

Bernard DiPlacido
Donald E. Hatch
Frederick D. Koehne
Isaac Havens

Isidore Green
A. Lyman
Robert L. Marvelli
Edward J. OBrien
Lowell H. Stauffer
Ellsworth Swingen
Harold M. Wright
A.G. Zachik
Grady N. Allen
Arthur Bassin
Donald Bouchard
Wm. Briggs
Russell H. Hanson
Flip Corcoran
Wm. J. Crisp
John Adams
George R. Aurand
John W. Bailey, Jr.
Gordon C. Bennett
Eugene N. Blocker
Albert C. Bostian
James A. Coffin c/o Marion Kinkaid Oxford
Allie D. Davis
Leonard DeLauder

FOUND

374 Edward P. May
375 Hovey S. Dabney
376 Walter E. Schildt
377 John S. Finnegan
378 R.E. Ream
379 James H. Whitmore
380 Noble Duncan
381 Robert H. Hayes

382 John R. Repka
383 C.O. Anderson
384 Wm. J. Brinker
385 W. A. Clark
386 Robert F. Ruth
387 Franklin Heggness
388 Carol Rizzo
389 Chester M. Chastain
390 Walter F. O'Neill
391 Harold O. Luther

392 John H. Herr, Jr
393 James H. Hayes
394 J.J. Sanborn
395 Ralph D. Lider
396 Elvin E. Kirby
397 Gustaf Chili
398 Ted Brewer

A recent notice in the Albuquerque Journal's Action Line brought us two new members from the Albuquerque area, and of course we got the addresses of their crew. And that is how we got Harlan Hill to the Muskegon Reunion where we garnered the following:

From Page 5 of the Grand Haven, Michigan, Tribune for July 31, 1971.

Relive 1945 War Experiences
WAR PRISONER AIRMEN REUNITED
BY Fred Vanden Brand

It was much more interesting than watching an exciting World War II movie on television.

I just sat and listened as two World War II buddies reminisced about having to bail out behind enemy lines in Northern Italy after their bomber caught fire.

They spent three months evading the Germans in the mountains of Italy before being captured and placed in a prisoner of war camp for six months.

Harlan Hill, 16533 130th Ave., Nunica, and John H. Henry of Mountain Lake Park, Md., haven't seen each other since they were liberated from the POW camp in April of 1945 until last year when the Hills visited Henry and his wife in Maryland. Henry and his wife returned the visit this week.

The two former Air Force sergeants took an airplane ride Thursday. Hill received his flying license under the G.I. Bill in 1947 and belongs to a flying club in Nunica and operates a Piper J 4 1939 Model.

The pair could clearly recall the last time they flew together.

They attended gunnery school at Ft. Meyers, Fla., and were assigned to the same bombing crew in 1943. Each was assigned to the 15th Air Force, 348 Bombing Squadron, and sent across the Atlantic to a base at Foggia, Italy.

Hill, an employee of the Bastian Blessing Co. here, and Henry, a power company employee in Maryland, recall July 24, 1944 when their 10-man bombing crew was sent on what was called a "milk run".

This was a term given to what is considered a reasonably safe mission.

"We were being sent into Northern Italy to bomb a tank repair depot," Hill stated.

Sgt. Hill was the tail gunner and Henry was the flight engineer.

They were manning the "Flying Fortress B-17" when it developed engine trouble. At first everything seemed under control, but minutes later an oil line ruptured and the plane burst into flames.

Hill, Henry, and Eddie Maseieh, the radio operator, found themselves somewhere in the Alp Mountains of Northern Italy. They parachuted safely. They lived off the land for three months and were helped by the "Partisan", the Italian underground in Northern Italy.

"We knew we had to head south to get back with our forces," Henry stated.

The two men state that they traveled 300 miles the way a crow flies through the mountains during the four months they evaded the Germans.

"Shortly after we bailed out we hit the ground near the town of Genoa, Italy and were walking along a dirt road when we heard a noise," Henry stated.

"We took cover in a ditch and watched as two German soldiers went by with a horse and surrey."

Several times during the four months they had to take cover to avoid being spotted by the German patrols.

"Our survival kits included some pep pills. These kept us going the first few days," Hill said.

The kits also each contained \$50. "We used this money to buy food from the Italian families that belonged to the "Partisan" group," Hill stated.

The men lived two weeks in a sod shack they built alongside a mountain. Children from a partisan family brought them food. They would get homemade bread and lamb meat that they would pay the family for. Most of the time they were short of food. "We went days without eating," Henry stated.

One week they lived in a peach orchard, and both men remember cleaning out some Italian's tomato patch.

"We were really hungry when we came across that tomato patch. The tomatoes were still kind of green, but we ate loads of them and took more with us," Henry stated.

They spent several days at various partisan camps. "We were sleeping in this partisan camp one night when I heard gunfire," Hill said. "I asked a Partisan what was happening," Hill said.

"We were surrounded by Germans," the Italian said. "What do you want us to do?" Hill asked. "Everybody for themselves," the Italian said.

Hill, Henry, and the radio operator managed to escape.

The men knew they were nearing friendly forces when they came under fire from a German unit. "We took cover, but were forced to surrender," Hill said.

Later the men found out they were only about 50 feet away from Allied forces and safety. "I would have run for it if I had known that," Hill said.

The men were taken prisoner and taken before a German colonel who was accompanied by an interpreter.

"They tried to get as much information as they could from us. We just told them our name, rank and serial number," Henry said.

The men clearly remember when the German colonel told them to give him all their belongings.

"If they found out that we had been living with the Partisans they would have killed us," Hill said.

Maseieh was emptying his pocket of belongings to give to the German when he came across a Partisan identification paper.

"You could see the sick look come across Maseieh's face," Hill said.

Hill and Henry both stated that Maseieh was very smart and especially at this point.

"The German didn't see him with the paper. Maseieh asked the German if he could have some tobacco to roll some cigarettes. The German obliged and the three of us rolled cigarettes out of strips from the Partisan identification paper," Hill said.

Then began the long trip to a German POW camp. First they were marched down to a river where both men thought they were going to be shot.

"They kept warning us if we tried anything they would shoot us," Hill stated.

They were made to march over a partly demolished bridge over a river with their hands over their heads.

"It was really a scary walk with the bridge being unsteady and walking with our hands over our heads," Henry remembers.

They tried working out a deal with a German officer who could speak English. "We told him that if he lead us to the Americans we would set him up real good," Hill said. The man felt he was ready to go along with them, but then the unit was joined by more Germans and the plan had to be abandoned.

"We were forced to accept being placed on a starvation diet. The

closest we came to being killed was from civilians who hated Americans because of the bombings.

"Once a woman in the German army aimed a pistol at us, but a German officer overpowered her and took it away," Henry said.

The prisoners of war were the first taken to Stalag Luft III where 20,000 Americans and 5,000 British soldiers were being held captive.

The Russian front moving in and on Jan. 21, 1945 the prisoners were moved out.

"I can remember that day!" Henry said. "It was 20 degrees below zero. We traveled four days and four nights and one week by boxcar to our new prison."

Hill recalled one night they were in a boxcar and could hear the town being bombed by the Allied forces.

They were taken to a prison camp in Nuremburg. It was early Spring and the Germans knew they were losing the war.

The prisoners were then moved to Mooseberg in Southern Germany. The men would daily use cloth to print POW on the ground to let the Allied forces know where they were. It was at Mooseberg when General Patton and the 14th Armored Division moved in and liberated the prisoners.

"I remember seeing General Patton riding in on top of a tank," Hill said. "What a welcome sight that was!"

Both remember there was only a little skirmish before the Germans gave up and surrendered the camp.

"General Patton was wearing his famous pearl-handled .45's!" Hill stated.

Hill and Henry had each lost about 35 pounds while being held prisoner. They were placed on separate ships. Henry was hospitalized for about five months and Hill arrived in the United States on June 1, 1945.

"We were treated pretty good except for the food. I remember being given some pea soup on the first day of being a prisoner. There were little black things one of the few peas in the soup and I discovered they were worms! I pushed them aside!" Henry said.

"A prisoner that was there for a long time told me that is how you tell how long someone had been a prisoner. If they pushed the worn infested peas aside they hadn't been here too long. If they counted to see how many worms there were they had been here awhile," the veteran prisoner said.

They ate much rice during the time they were evading the Germans in the mountains.

"I don't like rice to this day!" Hill said. "I can eat rice, but don't give me any peas!" Henry commented.

Both men have mementos of their days in the service, including their time in the prison camps. They also have copies of the telegrams sent to their families informing them the men were missing in action.

"The first our families were notified we were being held prisoner was after our names were released on a propaganda broadcast by "Axis Sally"," Henry said.

Hill has a lot of his belongings, thanks to his brother Tom who was stationed nearby in Italy with the medical corps and rounded up his belongings after Hill didn't return from the mission.

The men hadn't seen each other until last year when the Hills were vacationing and driving through Morgantown, W. Va., where Henry was originally from. A few phone calls later and the men got together.

They have been unable to locate Maseieh who was from Arizona.

One thing is for sure, When the two former sergeants get together they always have plenty to talk about!

(John Henry now lives in Albuquerque and may have something to say regarding this)

MAJ. GEN. FAY R. UPTHEGROVE, U.S.A.F., RET.
684 EAST MAIN STREET
BRADFORD, PENNSYLVANIA 16701

Monday 25 April

Dear George:

Yours of the 23rd in today's mail and real glad to hear from you and find you are back on the old stamping grounds.

Evidently the Bandidos in old Mexico didn't discover you or were real friendly maybe having seen you around the premises before. I still hear from Frank now and then

and Bernie Barr and a couple from Wrentmore who ran afoul

of a stroke and other complications which knocked him out

of the may reunion and his plans to come East to Cleveland

and Bradford afterwards. He seems to be on the mend now but

is pretty weak and has frequent dizzy spells. As for me I'm

in the pink again and only need to exercise normal care.

My dacron tube from the breastbone to the groin with branches

to the legs seem to be working fine and I can drive and do

yard work, painting, gardening etc as of yore. The Docs

have turned me loose and all systems are Go I'm just not as

rugged as I'd like but close.

I learned a new word from your letter, Cadastral. which I

looked up in the dictionary to make sure.

The first two weeks of March here were almost springlike

and since the 15th have turned rainy and nasty so that

we have been unable to work in the yard, do outside painting

and other chores we planned to do. Hired some painters to do

needed work inside and a man to help me erect a new shed

for the pool as the old one rusted out and started to blow

apart. Our very best wishes to you and all the rest at the

coming bash in May and I will be waiting to get the reunion

letter. Take care and bless you all.

CHEERS!

Gen Uppie

P.O. Box 761
Gonzales, Texas
78629

Dear Captain Coen:

I was referred to you by Colonel T. H. Heller of Anchorage because of your connection with the 99th Bombardment Group Historical Society.

I am trying to contact someone who knew Lt. J. Mitchel Allemand. He was my best chum through high school in Houston.

In January, 1946, I returned from the ETO and was discharged from the USAAF just before Mitchel's body was returned from overseas and reinterred in Houston. His mother and father were never able to discuss their son in any way. There is no family left know and I would like very much to know more of Mitchel while he was in the service.

The only clue that I have is on Mitchel's grave marker and that is: "346 AAF" and the dates of his birth and death, which are: "June 4, 1922" and "Jan. 12, 1944".

Colonel Heller suggested that this may refer to the 346th Squadron which was attached to the 99th Group. If his assumption is correct, I would be very grateful for any information you could give me.

There are many retired veterans in this area, most from the Air Force. I often have occasion to travel through the southern part of Texas, from San Antonio on down. If you have anyone for me to try to locate, or visit in one of the many veteran's hospitals in this area, I would be pleased to do so. I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sam Forbes

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