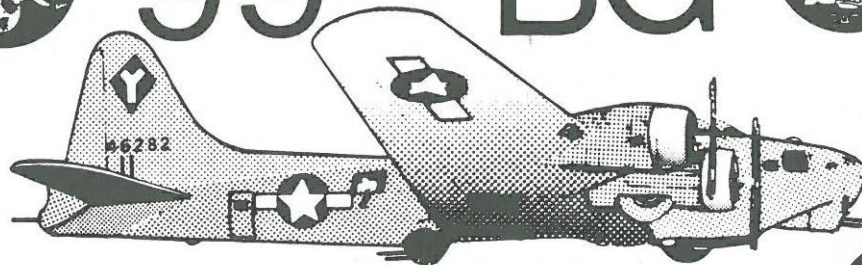




99th BG



B-17 FLYING FORTRESS
HqSq, 346th, 347th, 348th, 416th
395 COMBAT MISSIONS
1943 AFRICA - EUROPE 1945



THE 99th Bomb Group Historical Society

Newsletter

Vol. 6, No. 4.

Jul. 1986

SOCIETY OFFICERS

President, Joe Chance
Treasurer, Walter Butler
Chaplain, Harvey Jennings

VICE-PRESIDENT, Lew Boatwright
Historian, George F. Coen
Editor, George F. Coen

THE PRESIDENTS CORNER

We have not received any copy from either Joe or Lew, and it is now time to send this issue off to the printer and pack for the trip to Dayton. Last issue I had three claimants for the front page. Makes it a little hard to plan! So here goes with trivia. geo.



SHORT BURST FROM OUR MEMBERS

from ex-president Bernie Barr.

Allin Bragiel--I would like to join all the old buddies and friends of the 99th and the 416th at Dayton, but I had a slight stroke and will be unable to attend. Regards to all and my thoughts and prayers go your way at this Dayton reunion.

FRANK ENGLISH--Just received May the oneth Masterful Newsletter-a real darb, per usual. As I never could resist a bargain I want to take advantage of your "blurb" re your sending me 2 sets of your choice items,..PS- Note the # on the B-17 tail (on license) This is the plane that Warren Christianson flew home alone on 2 engines (both inboard) Aug 23, 1944. The rest of us bailed out over Yugoslavia & were back to duty on the 6th day. I flew out of the Gp. Photo Lab during my short stint as a photographer & it was just a coincidence that I was flying with my own Sq. that day.

JAMES PETERS--I am sorry to not be able to make it to Dayton for the Reunion. I know Jim Sopp and his group will do an excellent performance with the Reunion, and I truly miss the opportunity of attending. I will be sending a copy of several missions that I was fortunate to obtain from Bernie Katz (416). These are the mission briefings issued to Pilots and which I as engineer did not have, as I did not attend the pre-mission briefings...I regret not being in a position to attend the Reunion and Dedication of the Memorial. Have a good Reunion and we'll be thinking of you.

Russell Leksell--You fellows are doing a great job!!!

Jack Abrams--Thanks for your valuable efforts and time on behalf of the 99th Hist. Society. We all appreciate it.

Clarence Danielson--We are going to try and be at Dayton in June at least we are planning to so far.

Robert Mack--I am contracting for a house to be built in Destin, Florida this fall, and I hope to do some volunteer work for the Colorado Mtn Club in the San Isobel National Forest in August,....

ALVIN SUEMNICHT--Looking forward toward our first reunion, Have located some old crew members, some of whom will be there. Am writing letters urging them on..Thanks for all you and yours have done. I'm sure everyone loves you for it. Looking forward to meeting you and yours in Dayton.

Jerome Lesney--Unable to attend Dayton Reunion.

GEORGE ROMONTIO--See you in Dayton.

HAL TERRY--I recently ordered a 99th tag from you and my wife got all over me for not getting TWO !!! So here is another check for another tag. Kindest regards.

T. V. BURSON--Hope you are fine and enjoying good health. Send set of new LOGO. Hope you all have a nice time in Dayton. We hate to miss this one.

KATHERINE HACK--DON'T THINK OF IT AS BEING IN THE HOSPITAL FOR AN OPERATION--THINK OF IT AS BEING RECALLED TO THE FACTORY FOR ADJUSTMENT! (Schulz)...I am waiting to hear from Norris King, Dale Pratt, and Joe Carroll as to their finalized plans about the reunion. The son of one of the KIA on the "Sugarfoot" crew may be coming for one day,--I'm not sure about this. For as I mentioned I haven't heard of their final plans,-- they are calling each other on this....Haven't read any outstanding books lately..one recently read, very interesting and remembered was GODDESS by Anthony Summers... As for myself, I am still walking with one cane and am grateful, and I find laughter every now and then.....

BERNIE BARR-- An item in the last newsletter to the effect that Lt. Col. B. S. Barr was appointed Deputy Group Commander brought back many memories of that position and the actions of filling that job. One instance--one afternoon while visiting the flight line and looking at aircraft flight maintenance records, etc. The supervisor and I physically inspected some of the B-17's on the line. As I entered one of them I was completely amazed to see the complete tail section had been lined with wood which had once been 50 calibre storage and shipping boxes. for ammunition. I'm sure that I could visually see flack going into the wood and splinters flying in all directions and into the bodies of the gunners with disastrous results. After a few words of reprimand and accusations of stupidity the supervisor had the wood removed.

REMEMBER TO ORDER THE TAGS**THEY ARE VERY NICE AND DISPLAY THE 99th IN THE BEST LIGHT.

CARMEN F. CAPONE**-- Enclosed check for two sets (plates) and a cap. Remaining put in Fund.

Second check is for the Memorial Fund . Thanks ☺

ROY T. HORTON**-----My stay in the 416th was from Jan-Oct 1944...our missions were on "Rabid Rabbit"..Are you (Bernie) the Col that took over our squadron and the Deputy Group in the early summer of 1944? If so I flew many missions with you. I was the top turret gunner on Lt Clifford Brown's crew. We all stood in awe of you, because we heard that you had flown combat before and was a West Pointer. My friend from Montana flew as your Engineer. His name is Fredrickson,Our first mission with you was to the Balkins on a fairly easy mission. We figured that you would pick all of the milk runs, but found out that when you were leading us it would be some of the roughest. I recall once on a mission.. either your plane or the one next to you was hit in his fuel tanks. Fuel was streaming back three hundred feet behind the B-17 and we thought for sure he would explode.....Do you recall sending a five man crew to Bari, Italy for a secret mission to Poltava, Russia? That was my crew. We flew ammo and parts for P-38s.....We came back by way of Iran and Egypt and brought back 18 Fighter Pilots that had been down in enemy territory.....The toughest missions were the Ploesti raids. We were on five of them, the last on the 18th of Aug 1944. Another was Vienna on the 10th of Sep, The old Rabid Rabbit barely made it back from this one.... The newsletter is a delight to receive...hope to see everyone in Dayton.

Bernie B.---Yes Roy I was a Major and assumed command of the 416th in June '44 and my first mission was to Russia. Yes it was my plane that had a direct hit in the fuel tank under the number three engine--to our horror we saw fuel spilling over the top of the right wing right behind the exhaust stack--no time to do anything but feather the engine and thank God it worked and we did not explode...Yes I had flown 50 missions in Java, Australia, and New Guinea during 1942. No I was not a West Pointer but perhaps I was aloof, mean, nasty, demanding, you name it--but we got through in good shape. I was Deputy Group for a couple of months and Group Ops the rest of my tour to Jan 1945. Theodore J. Panek--- Send six sets of plates--six caps--Pay my 1986 dues-- any left over from this check put in 99th fund.



SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

The 99th Bomb Group Historical Society was formed October 16, 1980, at a meeting held in Amarillo, Texas, by 9 former members of this World War II Bomb Group. Today, four and one-half years later, this Group has gained a membership nearing 700 men. Basically, we had a desire to get reacquainted with those with whom we flew and to share our experiences with those we did not know at that time. Through our Historian, George Coen, this Society has become a very valid source of information and is used extensively by writers, and by relatives of some of our men who are no longer with us. A good example: my neighbor, Earl Merriweather, and I were visiting one evening and discovered that his cousin, Frank Hunter, was a pilot in my squadron. Frank had been shot down over Foggia, Italy when we were still located at Oud , just off of Tunis in North Africa. His B-17 caught fire over the target and exploded before Frank and his crew could bail out. Earl knew some of what had happened to his cousin but had the usual gaps that occur from a combat zone. Our Historian, George Coen, was able to supply Earl with a large amount of information regarding his cousin, including some eye-witness accounts, and even the first person account of Frank's engineer, who had been blown free of that plane and was the only survivor. Earl, of course, was most appreciative.

It is our desire to rebuild the TRUE HISTORY of what happened, through the eyes of those of us who were a part of those history-making events. Unfortunately, much in the way of misinformation was created during the war, for several reasons, and we hope to clear this up. There are many who, even to this day, do much to discredit what we did, or why we did what we had to, and so on. This is not new; 40 years ago, the Navy did a study on what the Air Forces accomplished in the European Theater and came to the conclusion that our bombs did little or no good since Germany had more airplanes at the end of the war than they had at the beginning. The Navy ignored the fact that we, the United States, likewise had more planes at the end of the war--LOTS more. This study also ignored the fact that many German aircraft could not get into the air because our bombs had cut their fuel supplies, ammunition supplies, parts supplies, and had also disrupted their communications. This, in addition to the fact that German pilots could not be trained rapidly enough to fill the needs of the Luftwaffe.

Recently, in a Federal Aviation Bulletin, an individual wrote an article which, at the very least, was in poor taste if not an out and out low-life attack on B-17 pilots in particular. This individual will surely hear from those in the 99th. These two examples are not serious because they don't effect a whole lot of people. The point being that it's not new, for those who wish, to attack and defame any certain given groups.

We are concerned by books and publications written in such a way as to make us, somehow, look like the "Bad Guys" and our enemies portrayed in such a manner as having been "misunderstood" and that now they are the "good guys." I refer to a book called "The Nazi Interrogator" written by Raymond Toliver. This is a biography, of sorts, about Hans Scharff, who was a Nazi Interrogator whose job was to interrogate Allied flyers who had the misfortune of finding it necessary to bail out over enemy territory. Mr. Scharff is now a US citizen, and I believe he lives in San Diego, California. At one point in this book, Toliver relates the experiences of a Luftwaffe pilot, (always referred to as tall, blond, handsome, young aristocrats) who told of his harrowing experiences with American B-17s, mentions fighting both Russian and British aircraft, and tells of how easy it was to shoot

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them down--relating even that he regarded it as "FUN"! His real problem was in taking a number of Luftwaffe aircraft in after 70 B-17s and pressing that attack with the knowledge that the B-17 was difficult to shoot down, and that they themselves would probably lose aircraft from the murderous fire power from the defending 50 calibre machine guns on those B-17s. I wish I'd known that 41 years ago. I might have had less concern for our position at that time. Toliver quotes Scharff; "I could never understand why American Pilots flying P-15s would attack 'civilian trains' or deliberately strafe a Luftwaffe pilot who had bailed out of his plane, while our pilots never did. They were all 'gentlemen and aristocrats'". This is a statement we feel very strongly about. This book does not mention any of the murderous things that Nazi Germany did, omitting the fact that Hitler's Nazi Germany killed a total of 11,000,000 people--from the Jews, to dissidents, to hostages. Just absolute brutal force, absolute brutal terror, and they eliminated many, many of their own people in Germany who were not inclined to agree with Hitler.

To counter statements made in this book by Toliver, let me relate to you a few things that are little known, but are all too true; and these, or items like them, really should be publicized.

ITEM 1. Bucky Egan, shot down over Germany in July, 1944. He was a pilot of a B-17 from the 100th Bomb Group in the 8th Air Force. After bailing out, he was repeatedly strafed by an ME 109, piloted by one of these "aristocrats", while he hung helplessly in his 'chute. Bucky Egan was severely wounded several times from these attacks. He did receive medical attention after he was captured, and he did survive the war.

ITEM 2. During the Battle of Britain, Luftwaffe pilots were instructed to strafe any British pilot that had bailed out over England, and the Luftwaffe did so, very effectively.

ITEM 3. On July 7, 1944, two B-17 Groups were over Austria at 24,000 feet when they were attacked by 65 to 70 ME 210s which pressed these attacks in waves of 8, launching rockets from just out of range of the defending 50 calibre machine guns on the B-17s. These rockets were effective enough to cause three B-17s to go down; one of which found it necessary to salvo his bombs to remain with the Group, only to go down over the target at Blechhammer, Germany later; the second fell from formation in a tight spiral and went all the way in, with no survivors; and the third crossed to its left behind the second Group of B-17s, on fire, with its crew of 10 bailing out only to have 1 ME 210 make repeated strafing attacks on them, hanging in their parachutes with gun fire clearly visible from the ME 210 during each attack. This is an eye-witness account. I know, because I was there and saw this happen.

These are "gentlemen"? These are "aristocrats"?

Item 4. Three 12 year old boys were returning home from a boys meeting, similar to Boy Scouts in this country. This incident occurred in 1942 on a street in Aberdeen, Scotland. As these boys were traveling down this street, an ME 109,, with one of these "gentlemen" flying it, came down that street at extremely low altitude, systematically strafing the citizens of this city. One of the three boys was wounded severely enough that one of his legs had to be amputated. The other two boys escaped without injury. This is also an eye-witness account. One of these survivors lives right here in Lander, Wyoming. His Name? Bill Shirriffs.

Unfortunately, Raymond Toliver is a very able writer and what he writes seems credible. People who read these books are inclined to believe what is written, and I must say, many of us have felt the "heat" from those who believe this stuff.

I wouldn't deny that our P-51s strafed "civilian" trains, but you should know what many of those trains were hauling. We had a related experience which involved only 3 B-17s. Our Bomb Group was slated for bombing a ball bearing plant at Brux, Checkloslavakia, but due to extenuating circumstances, 3 squadrons were force to salvo their bombs. Our squadron was the low squadron, and we still had our bombs. We did not go across the target. Captain Karns was the pilot of the plane I was on and he was not one to bring those bombs home, so they picked a target of opportunity. We bombed a marshalling yard with a train stopped in it, and this was located adjacent to a small city. Only 3 B-17s

Continued on p. 12

Dear George:

Hope you have fully recovered from the trip to Seattle. I have and am ready to go again. I think everyone had a super time.

George I was talking to a lady from Kansas, while in Seattle and mentioned that my pilot was from there and she asked his name. I said Herman Bauer. Her reply was I went to school with him. She said she would send me his address and she did send the address of his sister as soon as she got home. I immediately wrote and got a reply right back. This was the first paragraph.

Dear Mr Ives

I sincerely regret to inform you that 1st Lt Herman F. Bauer passed away Sept. 30 1984 after a long illness and is buried in the Nat'l Cemetery in Santa Fe. He was served by a wife and five children. His wife Vicki lives at 709 Gildersleeve, Santa Fe N.M. 87501

Herman was a member of the 416th Squadron during 1943-44. We flew many missions together on 507 & 883 Sweater Girl & Lady Luck.

We were very sorry to hear of the loss of one of our crew members and hope you can use this information.

I am also enclosing a check for the memorial.

Sincerely

Herman Ives

Dear Walter,

I am glad you found me, and I enjoy reading about the past history of the 99th Bomb Grp. In fact, so much so I want to order the back issues for previous years.

I flew on several missions with Gen Upthegrove and also Col Lauer, although I doubt either would remember me. I was only with the Group Headquarters and the 347th Squadron for eight or nine months. Col Lauer might remember chewing me out for flying without his permission when our Group did not lead the Wing.

I guess we all had our parts of the war we remember best.

I was very sad to find that none of my crew were members of the Historical Society. That is any member of my original crew in the 347th Squadron. (We flew on the plane and also named it The Band Penny before leaving the States.) What a great crew!! I wish I had kept in touch with them.

Enclosed is a check for \$35.00 which includes \$20.00 for back issues and \$15.00 for 1986 dues. I'll also send Bernie a separate check for a cap.

Again, I'm sorry for not knowing some of you better, but we were all pretty busy and I wasn't there all that long.

Thank You,
Robert L. McCain
17045 Wood Street
Hazel Crest, IL 60429

P.S. I'll see you all in Dayton, Ohio,

To The Men Who Flew With Walter Mucek:

My name is Brad Mucek. I am the youngest son of Walter Mucek, your Bombadier.

I asked Mr. Fabiniak to read this Letter to you on behalf of myself and my family.

Although my father can't be with you today, I am sure he is there in spirit. My father always spoke with pride of his plane and his fellow crew members. When I was growing up as a boy, my father would tell me stories about the war. He told me of the courage of America, but more importantly, of the courage of the men such as yourselves, who represented America.

He always told me how lucky he felt to have flown with some of the finest men America had to offer. I did not doubt him then, and I do not doubt him now.

On behalf of the generation which has grown free, thank you for your sacrifices, courage and honor. We shall never forget.

For myself, I leave you all with a wish of God's Peace for all of you.

For my Father, thank you for being the finest crew a Bombadier could ever have had the honor to serve with.

Thank you:

Brad Mucek

This is a copy of the letter sent to me, Victor "Fab" Fabiniak.

Victor "Fab" Fabiniak

Dear George-

Please forgive me for not recognizing your name! As a result of getting the back issues of the "Newsletters" I got in touch with Mitch by phone and asked who is George Coen? When he said Trigger Coen of the Henderson crew everything came clear! If you had signed your real name instead of that alias "George" I wouldn't have to write this apology. Thanks for the "Newsletters." They are great.

In one of them I saw that Art DePew had passed away and also finding that his son is an associate member I dropped Larry a short note. Art was my expert waist gunner.

Hope to get to Dayton in June--See you there!

Best Regards
Sid Buck

P.S. My copilot, Caleb N. Barker, also is deceased. He had remained in the service. I kept up with him via Xmas cards every year until his death, which I believe was in the early 70s.

Buck

Dear Walter;

... Sherwood Ruster . . . now lives in Mexico. His address is A.P.D.O. 259, Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico.

Sherwood was in the 347th Squadron and was shot down during one of his early missions-- the 3rd or 4th I think. We were sitting at adjoining tables at the El Dorado Restaurant in Puerto Vallarta last February and started talking a little. He said he was an ex-Eastern Airlines pilot and simply as a wisecrack I said "No doubt ex-99th bomb group too." He almost yelled "Come sit at this table!" We both had goose pimples when he said 347th squadron. . . . regards

Warren C. Christianson - 347th Squadron.
P.O. Box 798, Sitka Alaska, 99835



And now a word from one of our Littlefriends.

* * * * *
P-51D "SHIMMY IV" at the USAF Museum, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio

Several years ago I was contacted by the USAF Museum for information on the paint job I used on my P-51 in WW II - they were contemplating painting their P-51 in the same scheme. We exchanged several letters on the subject, during which I told them that I could probably provide them with a roster of several hundred P-51 pilots whose aircraft were more worthy of immortality.

For the most part, I was able to provide the details that they wanted and they did their usual splendid job of refurbishing the aircraft.

I flew most of my P-51 missions in a P-51B "SHIMMY III," but I flew my last several missions in this P-51D. My daughter's name is Shari and my wife's is Zimmy; the combination of their names resulted in "Shimmy."

* * *

Col. Chet Sluder
1025 Cuatro Cerros Tr. SE
Albuquerque, NM 87123

We will look for your plane at Dayton, Chet.

3-1-86

Dear Mr. Coen,

Thank you for sending me the 99th bomb Group News Letter. When I talked to you last Tuesday, I told you I was trying to find out information from your members on the following:

I would like to know if any of your members remember a S/Sgt Henry W. Blaha, No. 36325788. He was an Air Gunner who was shot down on December 29, 1944. Any information about him would be highly appreciated.

My next question is about the Russian Shuttle Raids. I am looking into the identification that was carried by your Group. This may be of an I.D. card or an American flag with Russian phrases. Also, any photos of crewmembers in Russia wearing any kind of American identification. (Like an American flag armband.)

I have enclosed a snap of part of my A.A.F collection. You can keep the photo.

As soon as I come up with a copy of the Poltava Affair by Infield I will be sending it along to you.

Sincerely

James G. Wilmot
Army Air Force Collector

Dear George,

Your request for information about the X missions places me in the uncomfortable position of relying on a few vivid memories and a lot of hazy recollections. I shall do my best although I am aware that these missions may well be another bastard child of the military that no one wants to own up to. Perhaps the fact that they did occur will aid in disposing of the myth that ours was a good war.

Apparently someone in the high command decided to test the Von Clausewitz theory that the outcome of future wars could be strongly influenced by completely destroying the morale of the opposing populace. It was to this purpose that the X missions, as we called them, were dedicated. Their primary function was to keep the civilian population in a state of turmoil and thereby reduce its ability to support the enemy war effort. The plan was to provide for round-the-clock bombing of occupied Europe by mounting single ship sorties in timed intervals, at night and during bad weather. These independent efforts, along with the normal large scale daylight operations would and did provide a twenty four hour harassment of noncombatants in Central Europe. Each of the contributing groups were required to provide a specific number of aircraft with trained crews who were dispatched at intervals sufficient to allow flexibility for independent operation. This latitude was necessary to compensate for delays caused by fighter attacks, flak avoidance and mechanical problems that would impinge on a tight schedule. Because the missions were flown at night and in bad weather the bombing was done by radar, or what we called "mickey"! No attempt was made at precision since this was not possible; however, the requirement was to deliver the bomb load to a specific section of a city - or target area. The bombs we carried were apparently standard ordnance with the exception of one piece that looked like a thick shiny aluminum tube with a blunt end and large fins. Obviously this was an incendiary device and most likely the forerunner of the type that was dropped on Japan later in the war. The entire load was timed to explode at random intervals and was so delicately booby-trapped that if the mission aborted we had to fly the entire load out and dump in into the Adriatic.

Our training for the X missions was minimal to say the least. Mine consisted of a few night flights and a briefing from an R.S.A.A.F. officer who flew "wimpys" on night missions. The South Africans were co-tenants of Sandfly Field and well versed in night flying. His briefing and the information it contained was perhaps the most valuable and pertinent I have ever received. He covered the attack procedures of the night interceptors and the necessary counter measures. In addition, he attempted to acquaint us with the other problems we would have to deal with during prolonged single ship night operation over enemy territory. This short dissertation was delivered prior to my first night mission and its value increased steadily as the night wore on. We were not permitted to carry waist gunners because the planners had decided that if we were attacked the fighters would only approach from the rear, therefore waist gunners would be useless. In addition, the briefing team indicated that we need not be concerned with fighter attacks since the Germans were not expecting high altitude aircraft and would not have an adequate interceptor to engage us. On that particular mission we were subjected to high altitude parallel flank attacks as well as fighters stalking us from the rear. I use the word stalk instead of attack because they were directed to our rear quadrant and once they located our exhaust flares, they would try to position themselves for a close-in belly shot. One such incident did occur and we were successful in shaking the attacker. Thereafter, when things were too quiet, we would automatically institute a series of evasive maneuvers which, if nothing else, were at least a psychological necessity. The flank attacks were more disconcerting and were most probably made by either Junkers or Heinkels with 2mm cannon mounted in turrets.

These were truly experimental missions and in order to exact the most efficiency they were tried in different format. One that I recall was a daylight bad weather sortie with a wingman. He was from another group and I rendezvoused with him over Sandfly Field so that we could conduct a two aircraft strike against Vienna, Austria. As far as I know, we were the only two Allied bombers in the vicinity of the city on that day. We delivered the bomb load but the rest of the mission did not turn out too well. The weather intensified and I lost my wingman in the target area due, in part, to German interference and because they

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ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Miller, Paul B., S/Sgt., 15053969, 348 Bomb Sq., 99 Bomb Gp
Born - 4 July, 1923
Home Address - Algoma, W. Va.
Peacetime Profession - School
MIA - 24 July 1944 RTD - 23 Oct 1944 Missions -38
2. Source was flying Ball position on mission to Turin on ship piloted by Lt Ernest.
3. Not at a prison camp.
4. About 10 min. before target over North Italy source heard pilot ask co-pilot to try to start No. 1 engine which had evidently broken an oil line and was wind-milling. It could not be feathered nor could the engine be started. Were pulling maximum power from other three engines when No. 3 engine caught on fire. Were given standby bail-out signal. Source came out of ball - put on chute and saw one man bail out. Source bailed out thru bomb-bays a minute later. His chute wouldn't open so he had to rip it out by hand. It seemed tied in the middle and consequently, although 4th man out of ship, he was first to land, his fall being broken by a tree which knocked source out. Awoke to see two members of crew coming towards him. They released source. Were then joined by T.G. (other two were waist gunners). Source had badly sprained left foot. All four went to an Italian house where source stayed 3 weeks and other three stayed in vicinity. When foot got better, decided to make way to front to go through lines. Worked down to the vicinity of the front traveling along mountain ridges and stopping at isolated farm houses for food. Tried to go through lines North of Lgh-rn but after going five days without food and among many Germans, backtracked into the hills and finally met a British Major, aiding English, Russian, and Italian Partisans, in the vicinity of Villa Minossa (20 Sep).

Were told by British Major that it was impossible to get through lines and were asked to join this group. They stayed with him until 15 Oct. During this time, they went on food-gathering, bridge-blowing, and other details. On 15 Oct, British Major started North so source and his three companions started for the lines. Reached lines and it took source 3 days to get through.

He was ahead of three other members of crew and doesn't know what happened to them. Made final escape through lines at 1030 hrs, morning of 19 Oct 44. Didn't know he was through lines and after laying flat for an hour, made way over two more ridges and noticed a Brazilian outpost but didn't recognize so finally saw an Italian youngster and then found out about Brazilians and was led to them by this Italian. source had gone down before the Brazilians entered fighting so had thought they were Jerries but couldn't figure it out because they seemed to be going in the wrong direction. From this Brazilian Hqs, he was finally sent to Florence and then to Bari.

APPENDIX B

Doesn't remember name of Italian family he lived with while foot was healing, but left them a letter of recognition telling all details of his stay.

APPENDIX C

Source is not sure of fate of other three members who were with him, but thinks they were captured while following him through the lines. Source saw a total of nine chutes and didn't see plane crash.

APPENDIX E

1. Maps no good, should show more detail - and only large cities and main roads that anyone would want to stay away from.
2. Money no good - won't take US money - afraid.
3. Chute wasn't packed right.

11 November 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Ernst, Harry R., 1st Lt, O-608396, 348th Sqdn, 99th S. Gp.

Born - 18 July 1918 Enlisted - 14 February 1942
 Home Address - 13005 Griffing Ave, Cleveland, Ohio
 Peacetime Profession - Commercial Artist
 MIA - 23 July 1944 RTD - 10 November 1944
 Missions - 33 Duty - Pilot

2. On 23rd July 1944, source was piloting a "B-17" on a mission to bomb a tank factory in the Milan area. About two hours from base, 14 miles north of Genoa, No. 1 engine developed a runaway prop and caught fire. The propeller would not feather. After a few minutes, No. 2 engine overheated and started throwing oil. The ship was losing altitude rapidly. So over the area, 40 miles N of Genoa, bombs were salvoed and the plane headed for base. Over the Adriatic, in the Genoa area, No. 1 engine caught fire. Source turned inland and over the Carrosio area (44° 40'N - 40° 43'E) ordered the crew to bail out. All chutes opened. Source who was last man out landed West of Carrosio, injuring his knee, and made straight for the woods. (Source had been fired at from Carrosio with small arms on his way down, so realized he had been spotted.) (Note interrogation by Capt Miller on technical details.)

3. Never in the hands of the enemy.

4. Source did not see what happened to the plane. While in the woods, source was contacted by an Italian peasant who collected food from a nearby village, and exchanged source's flying jacket for civilian clothes which he put over his own. Another civilian arrived and took source to a nearby village where he spent the night in a barn. On 24 July 1944, source and his Italian companion travelled by train to a house in Genoa, where source stayed for three weeks, never even going outside the house. While at Genoa, the Italian contacted other Italians (believed to be working with American Forces) who arranged another hiding place for source in Pedemonte. On about 14 August 1944, source cycled with his Italian helper from Genoa to the outskirts of Pedemonte (44° 30'N - 8° 55'E) where they left the cycles and walked to a hut in the mountains. Here source lived for about 6 to 7 weeks with an Italian family. By this time, source's helper had got into some trouble with the Fascists, so about 1st October 1944, he took source to a Partisan house in Pedemonte. From there, he was taken North by Partisans to the area of N. Antola (44° 36'N - 9° 10'E) where he joined a small Partisan band who gave him news of an American parachute troop in the area. Source travelled to the vicinity of Pradello (44° 46'N - 9° 30'E), reached middle October 1944. Contacted the American Paratroopers and also 1st Lt John W. Martin, 1st Lt Vincent J. Bracha, and 2nd Lt Curtis L. Willis. All American pilots of 12th Air Force. While with the Paratroopers, they obtained instructions on the radio to enable the airmen to escape. (Information came from 12th AF.) About 22nd October 1944, source, a British soldier (Pvt E. Joyce) and his three American companions travelled South to the area of Bardi (44° 36'N - 9° 43'E) where they contacted a South African Sgt working with a British escape organization. Here source and his party was joined by 2nd Lt J.N. Girling (USAAF), Petty Officer Joseph Cahalone (HMS Sub Sahib), and Capper Robert Bexley (Royal Engineers). At this point, Pvt Joyce decided he would not attempt to reach Allied lines himself and returned to the American Paratroopers near Pradello. Source and his companions, together with 1st Lt John W. Martin, 1st Lt Vincent J. Bracha, and 2nd Lt Curtis L. Willis, travelled along an arranged route as far as Aulla (44° 10'N - 10° 10'E)

reached 2/3 November 1944. From here, the official guide left and the party travelled from one Partisan group to another until they reached Roggio (44° 8'N - 10° 19'E) on morning 5 November 1944. Here they were joined by an American and Partisan patrol of about 15 men under American Lt McCory. The whole party climbed Mt Altissimo (44° 1'N - 10° 12'E) (7 Nov) with a shepherd as a guide, to the Giardino valley (where the shepherd left them). Thence to Rudsina (43° 58'N - 10° 15'E) reached morning 7 Nov 1944. Here they contacted the 92nd American Division. The American and Partisan patrol went to their headquarters at Forte Dei Marni. The remainder of the party travelled to Vareggio, where 12th Air Force personnel left them. The two British men went to Leghorn, where source left them, and came in to Bari.

APPENDIX B

14 Aug 44	Forsa (lawyer)	hid source in his hut in the hills.
to	Pedemonte	Provided food and accommodation.
1 Nov 44	N. Italy	
Mid Oct 44	Capt Wheeler - Paratrooper	US Paratroopers who put source and Lt
	Lt Smith	Girling in touch with Sgt Fick.
22 Oct 44	Sgt Barry Fick (S. African)	Passed source and companions on to
	"A" Force	Maj Lett (Indian Army)
	Costa	
	(Bardi Area)	
	Maj Olden (British)	
	Head Partisan Group	
4 Nov 44	Roggio	Gave source and party directions to
	N. Italy	shepherd who guided them.

APPENDIX C

1. More first aid kit - bandages or iodine - should be included in escape kits.
2. American and British currency is of greater value in Italy than the Lire. Lire is not necessary.
3. GI shoes with rubber soles should always be worn with thick wool socks. Large shoes are best.

APPENDIX D

1. All Alpini troops with German officers, in area La Spezia. The Alpini would escape, but are shot by Germans if they make an attempt to get away.
2. Reported only 1/2 to 1 full German division on the front La Spezia area.
3. Partisans all want ammunition. Reported 20-25 thousand Partisans between Genoa - La Spezia. All these areas controlled by Partisans.
4. Some Partisans are useless, but there are many who are excellent. The bad ones are those that have escaped from Germans on way to Germany and merely joined bands to obtain food. (Information from British officers with Partisans, American paratroopers, and Italian sources.)

Pvt E. Joyce (British) Ex-P/W
 Mrs E Joyce (Mother)
 145 Green Wryth Lane, Carshalton, Surrey

Last seen Bardi (44° 36'N - 9° 43'E) 22 Oct 44. Was returning to join American Paratroopers in the area. Not likely to attempt escape. Fit when last seen.

Capt Tresham D. Gregg (R.A.) (British) Es-P/W.
 Mrs D.R. Smith (Mother)
 C/o Cable & Wireless Ltd
 Electra House, Victoria Emb, London, S.W.I.

Last seen vicinity Bardi - 22 Oct 44. Was I/C a hand.

LAST REFLECTIONS ON A WAR, by Bernard B. Fall

If it works, it's obsolete.

p. 223

TWO BATTLEFRONTS
 by Hugh Baillie

And I heard General Omar Bradley at the Seventh Army front warn reporters not to proceed ahead of sappers removing mines lest they 'cease being of any value to your respective employers,' as he succinctly put it.

left the main formation because this target of opportunity was an elective thing. We suffered through some real hot and accurate flak before we could break away, but our bombs fell true and hit that train. That train blew up like dominos since it was an ammunition

train. Dirty trick on our part? I don't think so.

We are severely criticized, from many sources, for using the atomic bomb. We get this from many publications, magazines, newspapers, television and radio, all discrediting this country for that use to stop the war. We must keep in mind that the United States was called upon to free Europe from Hitler's grip. What is less known and certainly much less publicized, is that Great Britain was absolutely on her last legs. Hitler was so confident that he could take Great Britain subsequent to the "Battle of Britain" when he so desired, that he (Hitler) went ahead and attacked Russia. Russia, at that time, had poor, outmoded equipment and Hitler was able to make tremendous headway on his march through Russia. Two things happened: a terrible Russian winter hit that area, and the United States was forced into the war after Pearl Harbor. WE supplied Russia with ships; WE supplied Russia with aircraft; WE supplied Russia with tanks, with trucks, with ammunition, with food and clothing. WE supplied Great Britain with heavy guns, WE supplied Great Britain with ammunition, WE supplied Great Britain with airplanes, and many other items of war; but mainly WE supplied Great Britain and Europe with the US Navy, the US Army and the US Army Air Force. It was OUR equipment, OUR men, OUR planes, and OUR blood that won the war in Europe. Rest assured that without the United States of America, the European was absolutely LOST. In the South Pacific, each island we took claimed many, many casualties, almost invariably far more than estimated by the armed forces. When time drew close for the invasion of Japan (the invasion was slated for September 12th to the 15th 1945), the casualty estimates were for 1,000,000 American casualties and 3,000,000 Japanese casualties. When we were able to use the atomic bomb, the United States Government simply saved 1,000,000 American boys' lives along with the 3,000,000 Japanese. Lawrence Higby, a very good friend of mine, was slated for that initial landing, and he is one man who would not be here if we hadn't dropped those bombs. I don't believe we should fault that decision. On the contrary, I believe we can and should stand tall for what we, as a country, did in both theaters of operation. We won that World War II without any doubt. When someone attacks these accomplishments, then we should stand firm and SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT!

from Joe Kenney

Dear Readers:

Joe wrote this before the case of the United Nations Secretary-General surfaced. Seems that the covering-up of war crimes is a cottage industry these days, but Waldheim seems to be winning the prize. gfc



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The month of October proved to be just a bit better operationally as the group flew 16 missions, one better than the previous month of September. Three nonoperational days at the first of the month and the members of the 99th raring to go and on the fourth of the month, missions #270 and 271 were accomplished to the Munich West M/Y and the Perdenone RR and Bay Bridges in Germany and Italy, respectively as the 99th sent out two forces. Two more muddy, nasty and hence, standdown days preceeded the two missions 7th of October when a "Red" and a "Blue" force dropped on the Lobau Oil Storage depot at Vienna, Austria, and the Nove Zemky M/Y in Hungary, respectively. Another pair of uneventful non-op days ushered in the mission #274 on the 10th of the month to the Mestre M/Y in our own country (for the present) Italy. A recall occurred on the 11th so no mission was forthcoming. Entertainment for the week included the Benny Mereff "punsafire" which provided a number of laughs for the assembled GIs and officers. On the day when Columbus is reputed to have culminated his famous journey the 99th completed its 275th mission to a bivouac area near Bologna, Italy. Another pair of missions were flown on the 13th as two forces hit the Blechhammer South Oil Refineries, Germany, and the Flerisdorf Q/R at Vienna, Austria. As the planes and crews were flying the 275th mission to Blechhammer North Q/R on the 14th of October, the ground men were speculating on the day's football games being played in the "old country." Maximum maintenance on the aircraft was the order of the day for the ground men as a busy non-op Sunday took place. The Villach M/Y and RR Bridge in Austria and the Salsburg Munitions Dump in Germany felt the wrath of the 99th's bombs on the 16th of October on mission #279. Excitement occurred on the ground at the base as a P-38 went into a power dive and crashed nearby. Luckily the pilot bailed out and received only minor bruises. Number 280 was completed on the 17th to Blechhammer South Q/R. The next couple of days proved to be inactive as to flying but of course not as far as the mechanics and ground men were concerned and they worked endlessly on the veteran aircraft. Regensburg again was the target on the 20th as the bombs were dropped through the clouds. It took three days to get in the next mission but it was finally completed on the 23rd with the Pilsen A/W in Czechoslovakia as target number 262. With the 24th and 25th also standdown, the M/Y at Innsbruck, Austria was the 283rd mission on the 26th of October. After the mission for the 27th was cancelled, a very routine non-op day occurred and the next day found a day and a night mission being flown to the Klagenfurt A/C Factory, Austria, and the Munich M/Y in Germany as the respective targets.

Commanding General of the 5th Wing, Brigadier General Charles W. Lawrence, presented DFCs to several men of the group and to Colonel P. D. Glassford, our Deputy Commanding Officer, the Legion of Merit award.

Major Knepper of the 348th Squadron (Commanding Officer) was married on the 12th of October to an Army Nurse. Mrs. Knepper is the former Helen J. Brown and is stationed near Leghorn.

Italian unit #6 returned to the base to entertain the members, supplementing the usual movies, Bingo games, horseracing, poker and other more or less indoor activities.

On October 20th, the task for the day for the 416th Operations boys was that of creating a stove to spread a little heat and it certainly did spread, for it wasn't long before the building was in flames. All records were saved and all that occurred was the erection of a stone building for future operations.

Volleyball was the main source of Physical Training and a great many of the boys took advantage of it. Competition began on basketball and volleyball between our group and other units.

Work on the new hospital building progressed nicely and the building began to take shape with Italian laborers doing the heavy work.

There was a change in squadron commanding officers during October as Major Allan W. Schroeder replaced Lieutenant Colonel Robert R. Shaefer as commander of the 347th Bombardment Squadron. Major Charles Weeden of the same squadron assumed the duties of Executive Officer of the unit.

OPERATIONS
OCTOBER 1944

4 October 1944 -- Mission #270 -- Munich W. M/Y, Germany
 4 October 1944 -- Mission #271 -- Perdenone RR & Bay Bridges, Italy
 7 October 1944 -- Mission #272 -- Lobau Oil Storage Depot, Vienna, Austria
 7 October 1944 -- Mission #273 -- Nove Zanky M/Y, Hungary
 10 October 1944 -- Mission #274 -- Mestre M/Y, Italy
 12 October 1944 -- Mission #275 -- Bivouac Area, Bologna, Italy
 13 October 1944 -- Mission #276 -- Blechhammer South O/R, Germany
 13 October 1944 -- Mission #277 -- Flerisderf O/R, Vienna, Austria
 14 October 1944 -- Mission #278 -- Blechhammer North, O/R, Germany
 16 October 1944 -- Mission #279 -- Villach M/Y & RR JBr, Salsburg Mun/Dp., Ger.
 17 October 1944 -- Mission #280 -- Blechhammer South O/R, Germany
 20 October 1944 -- Mission #281 -- Regensburg Oil Storage, Germany
 23 October 1944 -- Mission #282 -- Pilsen A.W, Czechoslovakia
 26 October 1944 -- Mission #283 -- Innsbruck M/Y, Austria
 28 October 1944 -- Mission #284 -- Klagenfurt A/C Factory, Austria
 28 October 1944 -- Mission #285 -- Munich M/Y, Germany (Night Mission)

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 4 October 1944 - Plan "A - Force "A" Munich W. M/Y, Germany

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No fighters were observed.B. Flak: Over the target at a mean altitude of 26,000', this Group encountered heavy, intense and accurate flak of barrage and tracking type.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: 1158 - 26,000', 2 unidentified bombers, group ahead, seemed to explode in air over target, no chutes observed.

1215 - 26,000', 1 B-17 from Group ahead went into spin and crashed just west of Munich - 4 chutes seen.

1222 - 26,800', 3 B-17s going down - 2 going down in flames - 1 going down in spin - 5 chutes observed.

1227 - 25,000', after target, 1 P-51 going down thru clouds - appeared out of clouds.

III. CONCLUSION

A. Total Losses: None.B. Damaged: From flak - 8 a/c were slightly damaged by flak. One crewmember received slight flak wound.C. Victories: None.D. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report: None.PHILIP M. PHILIPS,
Major, Air Corps,
S-2, 99th Bomb Gp (H)

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 4 October 1944 - Plan "A: Force "B" - Perdenone RR & Hwy Bridges, Italy

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No fighters were seen.B. Flak: There was no flak at the target. Mean altitude over target was 19,200'.

III. CONCLUSION:

A. Total Losses: None.B. Damaged: None.C. Victories: None.D. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report: None.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT: (RED FORCE)

MISSION: 7 October 1944 - Lobau Oil Storage Depot, Vienna, Austria

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No fighters were observed.B. Flak: Over the target was heavy, moderate to intense, and accurate, of barrage and tracking type. Average altitude was 27,700 feet.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: 1351 - target - 1 P-51 tail shot away - no chute seen.

1347 - 27,000' over target 1 B-17 losing altitude.

1349 - 27,300' target area - 1 B-17 hit by flak - went down in flames - no

chutes.

III. CONCLUSION

A. Total Losses: None.B. Damaged: 8 a/c received minor flak damage - 2 fairly seriously wounded.C. Victories: None.D. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report: None.

PHILIP M. PHILIPS,

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 7 October 1944 - Nove Zamky M/Y, Hungary (Blue Force)

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No fighters were observed.B. Flak: None encountered over the target. Mean altitude over target was 22,700 feet.

III. CONCLUSION

A. Total Losses: NoneB. Damage: None.C. Victories: None.D. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report: None.

PHILIP M. PHILIPS

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 10 October 1944 - Mestre M/Y, Italy

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE:

A. Fighters: No enemy fighters were observed.B. Flak: This group encountered heavy, moderate, fairly accurate flak of barrage and tracking type over the target, at a mean altitude of 20,100 feet.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: Note: Marker beacon receiver light picked up signal at target and held it for 20 minutes.

III. CONCLUSIONS:

A. Total Losses: None.B. Damage: 10 A/C received minor flak damage, 1 A/C received major flak damage, 1 man received serious flak wound in arm.C. Victories: None.D. Corrections to telephone mission report: None.PHILIP M. PHILIPS
Major, Air Corps
S-2, 99th Bomb Group (H)

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 11 October 1944 - Vienna Gronach DepotI. ENEMY RESISTANCEFighters: No fighters or flak were encountered during the mission.II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

There was practically a solid undercast on the route out and return. As a result no observations were possible.

III. CONCLUSION

Because of unfavorable weather, this Group was unable to reach the target. All a/c returned safely to base, bringing back all bombs except 9 which were jettisoned in the Adriatic.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 12 October 1944 - Bivouac Area near Bologna, Italy

I. ENEMY RESISTANCEA. Fighters: at 1000 while flying at 20,400', in the vicinity of the target, 3 ME109s were observed under our formation. They made no attempt to attack and were being pursued by P-38s.B. Flak: Over the target, at a mean altitude of 20,000 feet, this group encountered heavy, moderate, accurate flak. Heavy, slight to moderate accurate flak was met over the front line area at several different places. Approximate locations indicated under observations.II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONSAir: 1135 - 8,600', unidentified a/c crashed and exploded on ground 43/55N, 12/54N, no chutes seen.

1045 - 20,900', 2 JU 5 observed taking off from A/D, Bologna, heading north.

III. CONCLUSIONA. Total Losses: None.B. Damage: 22 a/c received minor flak damage.C. Victories: None.D. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report: None.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 13 October 1944 - (Red Force) Blechhammer South Oil Refinery

I. ENEMY RESISTANCEA. Fighters: No enemy fighters were seen during the mission.B. Flak: Flak at the target was heavy, intense, fair to accurate, of barrage and tracking type. Mean altitude over target was 28,300 feet.II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONSSmoke Screens: There was the usual effective smoke screen over the primary target.Air: Black B-17 at target came up abeam of formation and dropped out and down when escort sighted it.III. CONCLUSIONA. Total Losses: NoneB. Damage: 11 a/c received minor flak damageC. Missing: 1 a/c last seen at 1113 - 49/12S, believed heading for emergency field.D. Victories: NoneE. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report: NonePHILIP M. PHILIPS
Major, Air Corps
S-2, 99th Bomb Gp (H)*These records are hard to read. The ink has run and faded. geo*

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 13 October 1944 - Florisdorf Oil Refinery, Vienna

I. ENEMY RESISTANCEA. Fighters: No fighters were observed during the mission.B. Flak: Over the target, at a mean altitude of 26,700 feet, this group encountered heavy, intense, accurate flak, of both barrage and tracking type. No flak was met en route.II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONSA. Smoke Screen: Effective smoke screen was reported over city of Bratislava.B. Air: 1132 hours, 26,500 feet - B-17 going down in flames at 48/15, 16/24, one chute seen.

1134 hours, 27,300 feet - over target, 1 B-17 of 463rd Group went down in flames, 2 chutes seen.

III. CONCLUSIONSA. Total Losses: NoneB. Damaged: 11 a/c received minor flak damage.C. Missing: 1 a/c in trouble, reported heading for Badin, Czechoslovakia.D. Victories: NoneE. Corrections to Telephone Mission Report: None

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 14 October 1944 - Blechhammer North Oil Refinery, Germany

I. ENEMY RESISTANCEA. Fighters: No enemy a/c were encountered by this Group. On the return to base, however, 5 ME109s were observed at 44/45W, 16/10E. These E/AC were seen to attack a B-24 flying on a heading of 210 degrees at 12,000 feet at 1345 hours. After shooting this a/c down the E/AC climbed to approximately 20,000 feet and trailed three of our a/c which were separated from the Group formation, back to the Adriatic without pressing any attacks.Flak: While flying at a mean altitude of 27,000 feet, this Group encountered intense, accurate, heavy flak over the target. Fourteen (14) of our aircraft suffered minor flak damage and one man was killed as the result of a flak wound.II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONSSmoke Screen: Smoke screen at the target was not effective. It appeared as though pots were just being lighted and apparently they had not time to light all pots.Air: 1230 - 4 B-24s straggling, heading 130 degrees, 49/35N, 17/12E.

1345 - 12,000', 1 B-24 shot down by 5 ME109s at 44/45N, 16/10E, heading 210 degrees. 3 chutes seen.

III. CONCLUSIONA. Total Losses: NoneB. Damage: 14 a/c received minor flak damage, 1 man (radio) killed by flak.C. Victories: NoneD. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report: None

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 16 October 1944 - Villach M/Y & RR Bridge, Salsburg Munitions Dump, Germany

I. ENEMY RESISTANCEA. Fighters: No enemy fighters were reported by this Group.B. Flak: Over Salsburg at a mean altitude of 25,000 feet, the flak encountered was heavy, moderate, to intense and accurate, both barrage and tracking. At Villach, flak was heavy, slight and accurate, of the tracking type. Average altitude over Villach was 22,500'. Flak was met at a number of points en route but was not effective.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Smoke Screen: Smoke screens were observed at Berchtesgaden - Salzburg and another town at 48/15N, 12/30E, unidentified.

Air: None.

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Total Losses: None
- B. Damage: 12 a/c received minor flak damage
- C. Victories: None
- D. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report: None

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 17 October 1944 - Blechhammer South Oil Refinery, Germany

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: Monitor reported enemy fighters in the Vienna area, but this Group observed no E/A at any time during the mission.

B. Flak: Flak over the target at a mean altitude of 27,500 feet was reported as heavy, slight and inaccurate. Flak of varying intensity and accuracy was encountered at a number of points along the route.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: 1207 - position unknown - 1 P-51 shot down - no chute seen.
1230 - 1 B-17 left formation, headed NW at 49/50N, 18/16E.

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Total Losses: None
- B. Damaged: 6 a/c received minor flak damage.
- C. Victories: None
- D. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report: None

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 20 October 1944 - Regensburg Oil Storage, Germany

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: While flying at an altitude of 21,000 feet, this group reported observing 9 a/c, which appeared to have the general outline of both Me 163 and Me 262, jet propelled fighters. Smoke or vapor trails were said to have been seen. These a/c were seen at 1130 hours at 46/50W, 11/40E, but were some distance away and did not attack.

B. Flak: While flying at a mean altitude of 24,500 feet, this group encountered slight, inaccurate, heavy flak of the tracking type at the target. Two a/c received minor flak damage.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: 1200 hours, 23,000 feet, 46/32, 17/20, Belzano, 1 B-17 of 465 BG exploded in air, no chutes observed.

1127 hours, 25,000 feet, 1 P38 down result of flak 46/47, 11/34

1132 hours, 25,000 feet, 1 unidentified S/E A/C went down, exploded 46/55, 11/40

1130 hours, 24,000 feet, unidentified A/C went down in flames at 44/50, 11/30.

Too far away to see if any chutes.

III. CONCLUSIONS

- A. Total Losses: None
- B. Damage: 2 a/c received minor flak damage.
- C. Victories: None
- D. Corrections to Telephone Mission Report: None

PHILIP M. PHILIPS
Major, Air Corps
S-2, 99th bomb Group (H)

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 26 October 1944 - Innsbruck M/Y, Austria

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: One enemy fighter, identity unknown, was seen in the vicinity of the target, just before reaching target. The E/A was approximately 800 yards above and 2000 yards out and made no attempt to attack. At 1050, en route to target, 4 a/c fighters were observed in the Udine area. They followed our a/c for a short time, remaining way back, never coming very close.

B. Flak: Our first a/c over the target, at an altitude of 29,000 feet, encountered no flak. The 2nd a/c over target, at altitude of 27,000 feet, met heavy, moderate to intense, accurate flak. No flak was encountered en route.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: None

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Total Losses: None
- B. Damage: None
- C. Victories: None
- D. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report: None

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 28 October 1944 - Klagenfurt A/C Factory, Austria

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No enemy a/c were observed on this mission.

B. Flak: While flying at an altitude of 25,000', one (1) a/c encountered slight, inaccurate, heavy flak at the target.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS: Due to complete undercast, no observations were made.

III. CONCLUSIONS

- A. Total Losses: None
- B. Damage: None
- C. Victories: None
- D. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report: None

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 28 October 1944 (Night Mission) Munich M/Y, Germany

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

No fighters were observed during the mission, nor was any flak encountered at the target or en route to and from.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

None

III. CONCLUSIONS

- A. Total Losses: None
- B. Damage: None
- C. Victories: None
- D. Corrections to Telephone Mission Report: None

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 29 October 1944 (Turn back) Munich M/Y

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No enemy aircraft were seen by this Group.

B. Flak: No flak was encountered by this Group.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS: Due to complete undercast, no observations were made.

III. CONCLUSIONS

- A. Total Losses: None
- B. Damage: None
- C. Victories: None

AN ADVANCED NORTH AMERICAN AIR BASE (99th Bomb Gp.), Oct 15, 1943 -

North Africa's ace aerial gunner has pumped his last .50 caliber shell at an enemy fighter from the waist of a Flying Fortress. He finished his required 50 combat missions with a record of 10 enemy planes destroyed, seven of them in 1 day.

This one-man air force is S/Sgt Benjamin F. Warmer, much-decorated 29-year-old San Franciscan who is also North Africa's biggest gunner. He is 6 feet, 275 pounds, one-time University of California football and boxing star, and personal bodyguard to Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr.

"It's a long grind," Warmer said after his 50th mission. He is being sent back to the states and has been recommended for commission as an officer.

The gunner, an expert marksman with any type of firearm, gave promise of deadly accuracy against enemy pursuit when he blasted down two messerschmitt 109s over Naples on May 30. Then on July 25, he made headlines by shooting down seven when his Fortress group raided the Gerbini Airdrome, Sicily, and was attacked by more than 100 German and Italian pursuits. He added his 10th victory Oct 1st on the first raid by North African-based Fortresses on a German target.

For his work over Gerbini, Warmer was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, had it pinned on his broad chest by Lt Gen Spaatz. He had already been decorated with the Air Medal and 20 Oak Leaf Clusters.

Warmer's aerial career was spectacular from the word go. On his first mission--May 3--he had to bail out over North Africa when his Fortress group got lost in ceiling zero weather. The gunner's chute hung on a cliff and when he cut himself loose, he dropped more than 30 feet, breaking five ribs.

Later on--after his success with Fortress machine guns--Warmer was found too valuable for continuous combat. He flew infrequently, in between conducting ground courses in gunnery for fledgelings.

Warmer was at his waist gun while his Fortress group was blasting targets in North Africa, Pantelleria, Sicily, Sardinia, France, and Italy. In his closing days, he saw the big Forts turn their attention from Italy to Germany and Greece.

He flew his last mission to Larissa Airdrome, Greece, an uneventful one for Warmer because no enemy pursuits were encountered.

* * * * * 26 May 1986

We are reliably informed by a reliable (usually) informant the USAAF has disappeared Ben Warmer and refuses to admit that he ever existed. We will keep looking for Ben, no matter what the War Department says. The scuttlebutt info is that he changed his name, went over to England for a second tour, and bought the farm there. geo. - sic transit -

FROM AN ADVANCED NORTH AMERICAN AIRBASE (99th Bomb Gp) - A tall, handsome, Flying Fortress pilot rose from a sick bed today and had pinned on his purple Army hospital robe a Distinguished Service Cross--one of that nation's top awards--for courageous actions while severely wounded aboard a B-17 which was virtually shot to pieces by enemy fighter planes over Messina, Sicily.

The pilot was 2nd Lt John W. Wylie, of RFD No. 4, Appola, Pa., and the man who pinned on the medal was Maj Gen James H. Doolittle. In separate ceremonies at Wylie's base, Gen Doolittle also presented the Silver Star to another member of the Fortress crew, S/Sgt Eugene L. Cantley, of Dry Creek, W. Va., a waist gunner who shot down one of the enemy fighters although badly wounded.

The 25-year-old Wylie was confined for a minor illness, but he was all too familiar with hospital beds. He spent two and a half months in one recuperating from wounds received when four 20mm shells exploded in the cockpit of his Fortress over Messina.

Wylie was co-pilot of the ship that day. It was one of a large formation of Fortresses which was met by a swarm of enemy pursuit just before it reached the target.

In the first attack, Wylie and five others of the 10-man crew, including Cantley, were injured. The co-pilot was hit in the arm and neck and bled heavily. Placed on the runway connecting the cockpit with the bombardier's compartment, Wylie steadfastly refused aid until other members of the crew had been cared for.

The rudder controls, elevator controls, engine instruments, oxygen, hydraulic and virtually every other system of Wylie's plane were disabled. But its bombs were dropped, two of the Jerry fighters were shot down, and it headed for North Africa. Two hundred and fifty miles away from the coast, it was attacked by 25 to 30 of Germany's fast ME 109s and FW 190s.

The gunners went into action again. Wylie rose painfully from his resting place and helped the top turret gunner by feeding him ammunition. It was for this courage that he was especially cited. His efforts were not in vain. The gunners brought down five more planes and the Fortress was crash-landed safely in North Africa.

Completely healed, Wylie was ready to carry on where he left off--at 14 missions.

Cantley was cited for remaining at his post despite severe wounds in the knee and back. He managed to destroy an enemy fighter before collapsing from pain and shock.

November 18, 1943

AN ADVANCED NORTH AFRICAN AIR BASE--Sergeant John O. Crenshaw, a Flying Fortress tail gunner of Route 3, Box 88A, Memphis, Tenn., today was officially credited with destroying a Focke Wulf 100 fighter plane in the skies over Istres Le Tube Airdrome, France, during the Fortress raid of November 16.

Describing his first victory, Crenshaw reported that the Focke Wulf wheeled in from 6 o'clock dead on the Fortress' tail.

"I started firing when he was out about 300 yards," the gunner said, "and continued firing until he was within 150 yards. He broke out in flames and went down in a dive."

The ball turret gunner on Crenshaw's plane saw the Focke Wulf crash in flames on the ground below.

November 30, 1943

ATTENTION: Salamanca, N.Y., Press
Little Valley, N.Y., Hub

FROM A 15th AIR FORCE BOMBER BASE--On his way back to the States is Technical Sergeant Alex Foriss, 24, of 19 Oak St., Salamanca, N.Y., a USAAF Flying Fortress radio operator-gunner who has completed his allotted 50 missions with the 15th U.S. Air Force.

Foriss began combat flying May 31, 1943, with a mission to Foggia and finished November 16 with a raid on Istres le Tube Airdrome in southern France. He has been awarded the Air Medal.

Born in Worcester, Mass., Foriss was graduated from Little Valley, N.Y., High School in 1938. He was employed as a furniture polisher for the Fancher Furniture Works of Salamanca before entering the army March 4, 1942. The gunner is married to Elizabeth Mary Foriss.

FROM A 15TH AIR FORCE BOMBER BASE--Wounded by enemy pursuit fire early in his combat career, Staff Sergeant John H. Fitch, 26-year-old USAAF Flying Fortress waist gunner of 432 Broadway, Carlisle, Ky., came back after a two month's convalescence to complete his allotted 50 missions with the 15th Air Force.

Now on his way back to the States, Fitch began combat flying April 5, 1943, with a raid on the Milo Airdrome at Trapani, Sicily. On his third mission, to Palermo, Sicily, he was wounded ("I lost the first round") but came back to fly 47 more. He has been awarded the Air Medal and Purple Heart.

Born at Maysville, Ky., Fitch attended Moorehead State Teachers College from 1935 to 1939, winning a letter in football, and was graduated from the University of Kentucky with a degree in agriculture in 1941. Unmarried, he was engaged in dairying at the Cranberry Young Farm, Youngstown, O., before entering the Army Sept. 23, 1942.

FROM A 15th AIR FORCE BOMBER BASE--Wounded by enemy pursuit fire early in his combat career, Staff Sergeant John H. Fitch, 26 year old USAAF Flying fortress waist gunner of 432 Broadway, Carlisle, Ky., came back after a two month's convalescence to complete his allotted 50 missions with the 15th Air Force.

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Dec. 20, 1943

An AAF Flying Fortress pilot and co-pilot take a look at the torn cowling of an engine that was knocked out by flak over Eleusis Airdrome in Greece. The flak, which burst under the bomb bay as the bombs were going away, also damaged another engine, tore more than 60 holes in the ship and grazed two crewmen. But those men brought the ship home. Left to right: Capt. R.R. Schaefer, pilot, Albuquerque, NM, and 1st Lt. Thomas J. Craig, co-pilot, 110 Burlington Ave., Paterson, NJ.

Dec. 20, 1943

Able to relax is this crew of an AAF Flying Fortress which got home safely from a raid on Eleusis Airdrome, Greece, after flak had riddled the Fort with more than 60 holes, knocked out one engine and damaged a second. (Note holes in nose of plane.) First row, left to right: Sgt. Tom Woodbury, gunner, 1715 Lagoon Ave., Minneapolis, Minn.; S/Sgt. M.F. Harvey, gunner, 863 W. Rural St., Indianapolis, Ind. Second row, left to right: T/Sgt. C.G. Langton, gunner, 1533 8th Ave., S. St. Cloud, Minn.; S/Sgt. H.B. Ward, gunner, Pinehurst, Wash.; Sgt. Ira C. Griswold, gunner, Clifton, Ariz.; Sgt. T.F. Hampton, gunner, Crestwood, Ky. Rear row, left to right: 2nd Lt. E.R. Jenkins, bombardier, 317 E. Bay St., Charleston, S.C.; 1st Lt. Thomas P. Craig, co-pilot, 110 Burlington Ave., Paterson, N.J.; Capt. R.R. Schaefer, pilot, Albuquerque, N.M.; 2nd Lt. William Amundsen, navigator, 428 23rd Ave. W., Duluth, Minn.



Gino Kunzle

c/o Sarfati
Via Zezio, 33
22100 Como - Italy

Dear Bernice, George, or whoever,

Thank you again for your kindness in mailing the newsletter to my address. The latest issue (Vol. 5, No. 2) was of particular interest to me, because it contained a most thrilling account written by Marion Dale Pratt about his last mission of October 1st, 1943 and his subsequent internment in Switzerland.

By the way, I was wondering if I could obtain from you a Xerox copy of the Squadron war diaries of the 416th and of the 347th in particular, plus possibly those of the 348th and 346th, for the October 1st, 1943 mission. A formation lay-out would also be of much interest to me: I know that general Upthegrove was leading, and that "Suygarfoot" (unconfirmed rumors state that this same A/C was also called "Roger The Lodger") was on the extreme left of the formation, but I would like to know the respective position of each plane within the formation.

But this, of course, is not the only item of interest. Another could be entitled: "A QUESTION OF MARKINGS."

As every good 99er probably knows, 99th BG planes in the very early days carried no group markings at all. Later, a very small block diamond was painted as a group marking on the top of the fin, above the serial number. Later still, the diamond grew larger and now appeared in outline only; at the same time, Roman numerals were added to distinguish the Squadrons: I=346th BS, II=347th BS, III=348th BS, and IV=416th BS. The color of the outlined diamond as well as that of the Roman numerals appears to have been painted white, although some sources stated that they were painted in yellow.

The above markings were those in use when the 99th was part of the 12th Air Force. Then the 99th was incorporated into the 5th Wing of the new 15th Air Force. This change was not reflected on markings until much later. Yet, all of the references published so far seem to ignore that the FIRST 5th Wing marking was NOT just a Y superimposed on the respective group markings (circle=2nd BG, triangle=97th BG, diamond=99th BG, square=301st BG), as was LATER done, BUT A BIG BLUE Y on a SQUARE WHITE BACKGROUND, as can be found in the War Diary of the 99th Headquarters for March 3, 1944 (Ref. Newsletter Vol. 5, No. 1, page 24). Gone was the diamond group insignia and gone were the Roman numerals indicating the Squadrons, the latter being overpainted with a BLUE 3 on a DISC (not square, as written in the diary) WHITE BACKGROUND as a GROUP marking; there was no Squadron designator left in the new markings system.

Cont. p. 23

cont. from p. 8

were not an experienced crew. Our missions were different in that we rarely got to see the other crews and we could not exchange vital information. Although the mission purpose was successful, in time I formed the opinion that the loss factor was quite high. I base this on the experience of several pilots I know who never got past their first mission, and because our tail gunner, "Stu" Studebaker, was shot down on a separate night sortie over Northern Italy. In retrospect, it would appear that the 12th and 15th Air Forces had programs to develop techniques that were later used in the Pacific and further down the road in Korea and Viet Nam. I should add that true to form, we did telegraph our punches. We did constantly drop leaflets to warn the populace of our intentions and urging evacuation and surrender.

In view of the circumstances, and considering the period of history in which we were operating, the X missions still have to be considered a departure from the norm. There was no previous experience for single ship, high altitude night raids; and no degree of training or briefing available at the time could condition us for what we would encounter on a prolonged night sortie over enemy territory replete with determined defenders. I have seen a lot of holiday celebrations with spectacular displays of fireworks and I did witness several rocket launches from the air near Cape Canaveral, including a magnificent night-shot through an overcast. To this day, I can safely say that I have never witnessed anything to compare to Vienna on that first night mission.

R.G. Mack
25th February 1986

41 Turtleback trail
Ponte Vedra Beach
Florida 32082
(904) 285-4566

George,

included are my dues plus--and a notice of a change of an address. This will most likely be temporary--I will update it as necessary. The newsletter is very popular and I can never keep any on hand. Keep up the good work.



continued from p. 22

This marking system evidently must have been unpopular among the groups, as the comments of the narrator of the Headquarters' War Diary seem to reflect, and was very short-lived indeed, as on April 21, 1944 (Ref. Newsletter Vol. 5, No. 2, page 24), the Group went back to its old familiar marking system, with the difference that the Y 5th Wing letter was now superimposed on a DIAMOND (block not just outline) WHITE BACKGROUND on camouflaged planes, whereas this was reversed on unpainted planes (that is: white Y on diamond black background).

The 99th BG is so closely associated with its diamond insignia, that a direct consequence is that no photo taken between March 3, and April 21, 1944, where the plane sports the Y on the square white background plus the 3 on the disc white background, is correctly captioned as a 99 BG plane. These photos are invariably captioned as planes belonging to the 301st Bg, which is wrong, because the 3 on white disc refers to the 3rd group of the Wing, not the 3rd Squadron of the Group, as was the case in the earlier and the later system used by the 97th Bg. A 301st BG plane should invariably carry a 4 in place of the 3, as the 301st was the 4th Group in the 5th Wing. The Squadrons within the 301st were later identified by an additional letter A, B, C, or D added close to the leading edge of the fin.

For your convenience, I enclose a number of Xerox copies showing photos of 99th BG planes taken during the odd markings period. They all stem from published references. Photo No. 1 shows the tail of the "Sweater Girl" with the Roman numeral IV denoting the 416th Squadron. No. 2 shows the same A/C with the old diamond outline not yet overpainted

with the Y on the square white background, but the Roman IV of the 416th BS has already disappeared below the 3 with the disc white background denoting the 99th BG. Photos No. 3 and No. 4 show two different aircraft with full 99th BG insignia of the odd markings period.

I hope that this little batch will help the unwary to correctly identify photos of planes belonging to the 99th BG, instead of invariably attributing them to the 301st Bg, and that this will not be considered as a too boring piece of reading.

With all best wishes to the 99th BG

Hi George:

Dropping this line to let you know that I am glad to be on your mailing list of the Newsletter.

I enjoyed all of the back issues and some of the items mentioned sure brought back some memories. I sure wish I had kept a list of names and addresses of the men I flew with. I remember Pulliam, Neff, and Novak. But, alas I don't know where they are from. Phil Carleton was killed in a crash when on a raid they had one engine knocked out and one crippled. The second engine gave out about 25 miles from base and they lost airspeed and altitude and the ship behind chewed off their tail. They crashed in the hills near Foggia.

Enclosed is a historical summary of the missions I flew. Use it if you can. Oh yes, I was in the 348th Bomb Squadron. I remained in service and retired in 1962. I presently work for Lockheed on the Cape and will retire again in about 6 months. I hope we can meet on some future reunions.

Thank You ALBERT A. FLEESE M/Sgt USAF Ret
1205 Thoreau St.
Titusville, Fla. 32780

Dear George:

I received all the newsletters for '80, '81, '83 and will look forward to the '82 set. Talk about bringing back memories! You fellows have done a wonderful job and I want you to know I sure appreciate it.

Dan Ives called two weeks ago and my wife and I talked to he and his wife for about one and a half hours. I had mailed him an application. He has sent it in and the four of us plan to attend the May reunion.

I also mailed Danielson an application but have not heard from him. In the July '81 newsletter you mailed to me this week I noticed a letter written by Roland P. Bigley, in which he stated, "He was shot down February 22, 1944." I have written to him and thought you might like a copy and supporting material pertaining to this raid on Regensburg, Germany. Our squadron ended up over the target with a right and left wingman. The right wing plane was shot down over the target, I feel it could have been him as this occurred on February 22, 1944.

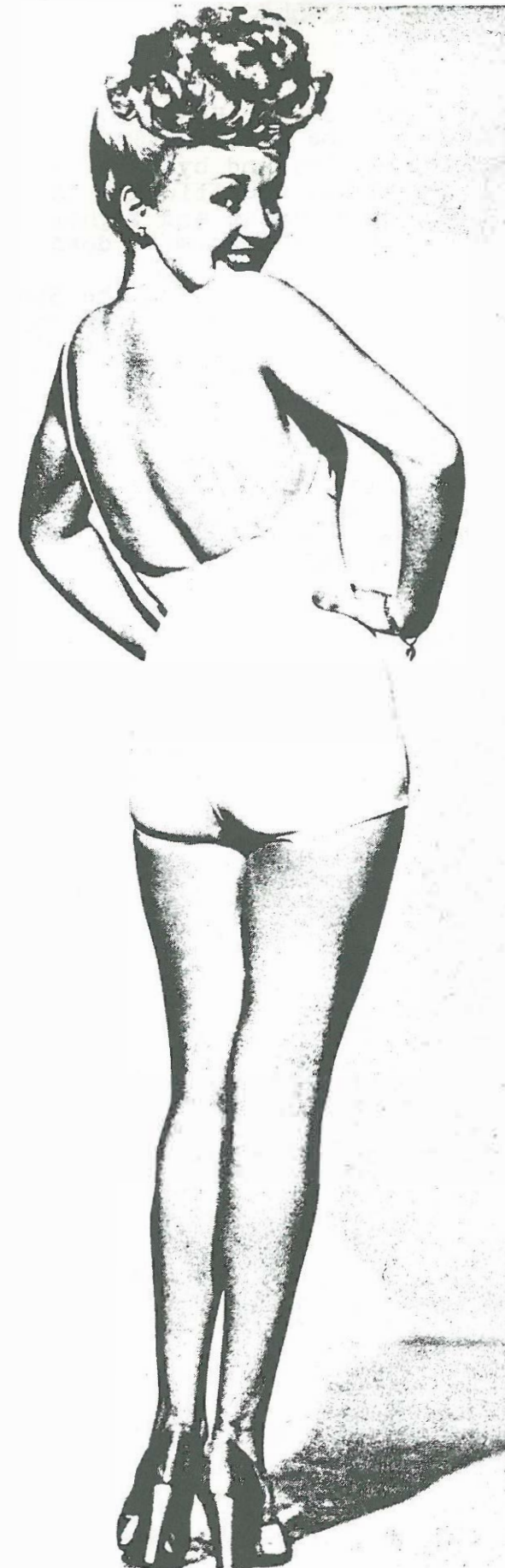
Also, I noticed in these letters that McDonald had died of cancer. Could this be Major David V. McDonald? If so, he was our pilot and Commanding Officer when I was first assigned to a crew. I might add, he was one of the greatest people I have met in my life.

Have you had any word on Major Bernam Shaw or Major John J. Morris? They were my pilots and C.O.'s of the 416th after Major Mac.

In checking the records, I find we flew on two missions together. My first was to Benevento on September 16, '43 and Viterbo on September 18th--the one you completed your 50th, so I'm sure you knew Major Mac. I might add, that on my first mission, the 99th B.G. was the last group, the 416th was the last squadron and you guessed it, I flew tail in the last ship on #244 "Widow-Maker" with Lt. Wilson as pilot. I was "tail-end-charley." Luckily we had no fighters. This was my first flight on a B-17. Would you believe when they asked us to unstow our guns to test fire, I had to stick my head behind the sheet of armour plate to see how to release them. I had never used an oxygen system, so when they told us to go on oxygen, I reached over and turned the red knob and had a constant breeze in my mask up there and back. As we left the plane, I overheard Lt. Wilson tell the crew chief to check the left bank of oxygen tanks as there must be a bad leak. I was ashamed to tell them the truth. They had me over Germany 9 months after I enlisted. No advanced training at all. Out of gunnery school and to Camp Patrick Henry in a hurry. It didn't take Ives and I long to learn. We were together for basic training, flew our first mission on the same plane, returned to the states and were finally split up at Miami Beach in July of '44. Sincerely,

Al Henke

It's time you fellows got some culture--so here it is! geo.



REMEMBER THIS WWII PINUP? Blond Betty Grabbe was everyone's "target for tonight."



"Oh, brother, gander those wicked-looking power turrets!"

THE BOMBARDIER'S LAMENT

Down a lonely road on a cold dark night,
A miserable beggar trudges into sight,
And the people whisper over their beers,
"There goes the last of the bombardiers."

"What is a bombardier?" No reply.
But the men grow silent and the women sigh,
As a deathlike silence fills the place
With the gaunt grey ghost of a long lost race.

Furtive glances from ceiling to floor
Til someone or something opens the door.
The bravest of hearts turn cold with fear,
For the thing at the door is a bombardier.

His hands are bony and his hair is thin.
His back is curved like an old bent pin.
His eyes are two rings of black,
And he vaguely mumbles, "Shack, shack, shack."

The ancient relic of the Second World War
Creeps across the room and slouches on the bar,
And in hollow tones from his sunken chest,
Demands a drink and only the best.

The people say nothing but watch in the glass,
As the beggar produces his bombardier's pass.
And with the glass to his lips they hear him say,
"Bomb bays open, bombs away!"

Then speaking a word he slouches through the door,
And the last of the bombardiers is seen no more.
But all through the years that phrase has stuck,
When you say, "Bombardier," you add, "Hard luck..."

ANONYMOUS

Contributed by Robert W. Jensen, former B-24 bombardier and prisoner of war. Reprinted from Museum Communique of Puma Air Museum, Tucson, Ariz.

QUOTES



TWELFTH AIR FORCE by Kenn C. Rust

NAAF flew some 3,000 sorties against airfields for HUSKY during the eight days preceding D-day (for Sicily). Some of the fields attacked were abandoned by Axis units, many were made unserviceable, and by D-day only two in Sicily - Sciacca and Trapani/Milo - were fully operational. Although the raids did not always force the enemy to come up and fight, they did so on occasion, and the Allies claimed 139 enemy planes shot down in the week before the invasion.

The most strongly contested of the attacks took place on the 5th of July. On that day, the 99th Bomb Group sent out 27 B-17s to destroy enemy fighters and installations on the south half of the main Gerbini, Sicily airfield. As the Group neared the target it was jumped by about one hundred Me 109s, FW 190s, and Me 202s, which made persistent and determined attacks on the bombers. Despite the attacks, the Group fought through and dropped 3,240 fragmentation bombs. The bursts covered the assigned target and destroyed twenty to twenty-eight fighters on the ground as well as severely damaging installations. In the air, when the 99th had finally fought its way clear, bomber gunners had claimed 38-1-11 enemy aircraft, but three Fortresses had been lost. p. 21

SAGA OF THE SUPERFORTRESS, Steve Birdsall, 1980
Doubleday & Co., 19.95

His (the Intelligence Officer's) report to the Group Commander also recommended that "advice such as a 360-degree turn over the target and a second bomb run being made not be given at briefings as it merely brings a laugh." p. 196

Some of the best nose artwork in the 313th Wing was painted by a Marine named Scott. . . Then around the end of February (1945) there came an order to remove all the artwork. The directive came from Washington and was the result of some war-weary B-29s taking their artwork back to the States. Apparently several women's religious groups protested violently to Arnold about the lewdness of the paintings. The reaction in the field was usually unhappy: the 499th requested on behalf of the crews that they be allowed to modify the paintings "to meet the approval of the Ladies' Aid Society," feeling that the "combat crews have a deep feeling toward their aircraft and combat and are not machines". The 73rd Wing appointed a board, composed of six people from the groups, to recommend "proper limitations" for aircraft insignia. BRIEF, the theater magazine, commented, "The war, it would seem, is being cleaned up, just like burlesque It marks the end of a great tradition and means the loss of one of the last personal touches in an already impersonal war Most of the bomber crews we know named their planes at first only because it was expected of them, but after a couple of rugged missions, the plane became as close to them as any one man in the crew and they would rather have parted with their wings than with their insigne . . ." (Lt. Carpi) p. 197

"... of the high-explosive bombs we let fly, 88 scored direct hits on these (Schweinfurt) factory buildings designated as prime targets, and 55 other bombs landed within the target area, wreaking extensive damage."

from "The Fall Of Fortresses" by Elmer Bendiner.

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TAPS

LEITMAN, ALEX Dear George; I was recently informed in a touching letter from his wife Freida that Alex Leitman, Birmingham, Ala. died Feb. 16, 1986 of cancer.

Alex was a radioman and part of our combat crew of the 348th Bomb Squadron. Our tour of duty began in November 1944 and lasted till the war ended. Sincerely yours
Bill Somers, 2809 N. 81st Way, Scottsdale AZ 85257

MYERS, THOMAS P. Dear George; This is to inform you of the passing of Thomas P. Myers around Thanksgiving 1985. He was a gunner on my crew and a member of the 416th Sqdn. I found out this information when I tried to locate my crew for the reunion. Roy T. Horton, 416th

BAUER, HERMAN F. ..passed away Sept. 30, 1984 after a long illness and is buried in the Nat'l Cemetery in Santa Fe. He was survived by his wife and five children. His wife, Vicki lives at 709 Gildersleeve Santa Fe NM 87501 Dan Ives, 416th

RE UNIONS

98BG July 14, 1986, Ramada Inn, Dayton OH
459BG Sep 27, 1986, Imperial House Motel, Dayton, OH
FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE, October, 1987, Colorado Springs CO.
Liberal Army Airfield Reunion, September 19, 1986, Liberal KS.

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