



# THE 99th Bomb Group Historical Society



Vol. 10 No. 4

Newsletter

Jul. 1 1990

SOCIETY OFFICERS, 1990-1991

Same as for 1989-1990

PRESIDENT - BILL SMALLWOOD  
TREASURER - WALTER BUTLER  
SECRETARY - H.E. CHRISTIANSEN

VICE-PRESIDENT - FRED HUEGLIN  
HISTORIAN - GEORGE F. COEN  
EDITOR - GEORGE F. COEN



## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Wasn't that a great reunion at Huntsville in April! Chris Christiansen tells me there were 330 of us at the Saturday night banquet. And he had thought of including Bernie Barr's name among recipients for door prizes. That was the way we arranged to have Bernie come up to the podium; instead of a door prize he received his plaque-and showed his surprise, as did his wife, Doris.

Talk about activities, there were plenty to go around, for all tastes. I thought the Space Museum went over well-so much to see. And the ladies' luncheon was an innovation. As usual, the Hospitality Suite was standing room only, thanks to Harvey, Bob and Rex. Finally, I was pleased to be able to read at the banquet the message from the 99th Bomb Wing in South Dakota about our new relationship with them, something that Mike Yarina had learned.

For those of you who couldn't make the reunion a list of the new Board of Directors appears in this Newsletter. We are thirteen in number now, coming from all parts of the U.S.

Thanks again, Chris and Sue, for a fine reunion.

*Bill S.*

(This is being written on May 28, Memorial Day. I'm sure each of us has special memories and thoughts of buddies gone by.)



99th B G H S  
Officers and Directors 1990

Removed for privacy.



ROSTER OF THE 1990 REUNION AT HUNTSVILLE ALABAMA

- |                         |                       |                         |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 347 Ackerman, Eldon     | 416 Burnette, Frank   | 347 Dorman, Simon       |
| 347 Ackerman, Shirly    | 416 Burnette, Gayle   | 348 Downey, Charles     |
| 347 Adams, Aubyn        | 416 Burns, Virginia   | 348 Downey, Mary        |
| 347 Adams, Brewster     | 416 Burns, William    | 347 Dubbert, Gus        |
| 347 Agnell, Eloise      | 347 Burrill???        | 99 Duffy, Robert        |
| 347 Agnell, Julius      | 347 Burrill, ???      | 347 Dunn, Max           |
| 416 Amundson, ???       | 347 Burrill, Donald   | 416 Dunn, Sam           |
| 416 Amundson, ???       | 347 Burrill, Gerry    | 416 Emmick, Leonard     |
| 416 Amundson, Dorothy   | 416 Bush, Wallace     | 416 Emmick, Mary Jane   |
| 416 Amundson, Steve     | 416 Butler, Christine | 347 English, Frank      |
| 416 Anderson, ???       | 416 Butler, Walter    | 346 Estes, Leon         |
| 416 Anderson, ???       | 347 Calvin, Betty     | 346 Evans, Clarence     |
| 416 Anderson, Esther    | 347 Calvin, William   | 346 Evans, Polly        |
| 416 Anderson, Marcellus | 347 Campbell, Edith   | 416 Eyer, Catherine     |
| 347 Averill, Lloyd      | 347 Campbell, R.K.    | 416 Eyer, Charles       |
| 347 Averill, Ruth       | 347 Carlock, John     | 346 Fabiniak, Victor    |
| 416 Bacher, Billie      | 416 Carnes, Rex       | 348 Fletcher, Gordon    |
| 416 Bacher, Robert      | 416 Caser, Rosa       | 348 Fletcher, Jeannette |
| 347 Ball, Ernest        | 347 Cepparulo, Armand | 347 Gaetner, Bettie     |
| 347 Ball, Jeannette     | 347 Cepparulo, Edmond | 347 Gaertner, Tom       |
| 347 Bankhead, Herbert   | 347 Cepparulo, Joe    | 347 Gault, Thomas       |
| 347 Bankhead, Patricia  | 347 Cepparulo, Kathie | 347 Gault, Virginia     |

99 Barr, Bernice  
99 Barr, Doris  
416 Barton, Ruby  
416 Barton, Terry  
347 Beers, Claire  
347 Beers, D.C.  
346 Bell, Luciann  
346 Bell, Vincent  
346 Bigbee, Charles  
346 Bigbee, Gladys  
346 Bilharz, Charles  
416 Black, D.R.  
416 Black, Dixie  
416 Blackmon, Dee  
416 Blackmon, Dolores  
348 Blankenheim, Leona  
348 Blankenheim, Norbert  
347 Bohls, Leon  
346 Booth, DeAlton  
348 Brandt, George  
348 Brandt, Mary Anne  
346 Brown, Bea  
346 Brown, Howard  
347 Brown, Dorothy  
347 Brown, Lloyd  
416 Browning, James  
416 Browning, Phyllis  
347 Bruno, James  
416 Buck, Mary Lou  
416 Buck, Sidney  
416 Buckeley, Alice  
416 Bulkeley, Peter

416 Hornung, Norine  
416 Hornung, Roy  
348 Horowitz, Anita  
348 Horowitz, Jules  
416 Horton, Bobbye  
416 Horton, Roy  
346 Hueglin, Fred  
348 Hyle, Alice  
348 Hyle, Richard  
416 Ives, Daniel  
416 Ives, Jean  
416 Jenkins, Irene  
416 Jenkins, Willie B.  
346 Jennings, Harvey  
346 Jennings, Pauline  
99 Jones, Ben

347 Cepparulo, Margaret  
347 Cepparulo, Mary  
346 Chance, Joseph  
346 Chance, Mabelle  
416 Chandler, Donald  
416 Chandler, Marie  
348 Chapman, Charles  
348 Chapman, Mary Kay  
346 Christiansen, Chris  
346 Christiansen, Sue  
347 Chumley, Ernest  
347 Chumley, Frances  
346 Church, Mary  
346 Church, William  
348 Collier, Jean  
348 Collier, N.D.  
416 Conciglio, Gene A.  
346 Corbin, Harold  
346 Corbin, Kathryn  
347 Crawford, Russell  
347 Crawford, Victor  
346 Crider, Margie  
346 Crider, Paul  
347 D'Agostino, Alex  
416 Darnell, Marushka  
416 Darnell, Orville  
347 Davis, Betty Jean  
347 Davis, Irvin  
347 Deemer, Bernadette  
347 Demick, Dominic  
347 Demick, Dorothy  
347 Dempsey, Richard  
347 Dempsey, Virginia

348 Maseeh, Dolores  
348 Maseeh, Ed  
416 Mazu, Mike  
416 McAtee, Gertyrude  
416 McAtee, Harvey  
346 McComb, Richard  
347 McDonnold, Jim  
416 McKinney, Martha  
416 McKinney, Ross  
348 Messel, Forrest  
348 Messel, Wilma  
348 Meux, Dot  
348 Meux, Bill  
416 Mitchell, Carl  
347 Mitchell, Chester  
347 Mitchell, Margaret

416 Graham, Herschel  
416 Graham, Pat  
346 Greathouse, Edith  
346 Greathouse, Rex  
416 Gremillion, Bernice  
416 Gremillion, Odelle  
347 Grizzell, Beth  
347 Grizzell, James  
99 Hack, Katherine  
348 Hatch, Donald  
348 Hatch, Dorothy  
347 Hayes, B.J.  
347 Hayes, James  
346 Headley, Caroline  
346 Headley, Conrad  
346 Heller, Eloise  
346 Heller, Robert  
416 Henderson, Inez  
416 Henderson, William  
416 Henke, Al  
416 Henke, Mary  
99 Henke, Betty  
99 Henke, Harold  
348 Hill, Beatrice  
348 Hill, Harlan  
99 Hinton, Pauline  
347 Holdsambeck, Herb  
347 Holdsambeck, Mary  
347 Holt, Bill  
347 Holt, Boo  
346 Hopen, Leonard  
346 Hopen, Mercedes

416 Silvis, Earl  
416 Silvis, Jean  
347 Simon, Doris  
347 Simon, Kenneth  
348 Slater, Robert A.  
348 Slater, Ropbert S.  
346 Smallwood, Bill  
348 Smith, James  
348 Smith, Leonard  
346 Smith, Virginia  
416 Sparrow, Boots  
416 Sparrow, J.W.  
346 Stafford, Louis  
346 Stephens, James  
416 Stigsen, Lorraine  
416 Stigsen, Thorvald

346 Jones, Charles  
99 Jones, Winna  
346 Juszczuk, Grace  
346 Juszczuk, Walter  
346 Kalish, Betty  
346 Kalish, John  
348 Kaschinska, Clare  
348 Kaschinska, Eleanore  
347 Kaufman, Grance  
347 Kaufman, Norman  
416 Kellerman, Joseph  
416 Kellerman, Ruth  
346 Kellstrom, Florence  
346 Kellstrom, Kenneth  
416 Kidwiler, Betty  
416 Kidwiler, William  
416 Klukas, ???  
416 Klukas, Olga  
416 Klukas, Walter  
347 Knipp, Art  
347 Kuhn, Dean  
347 Kuhn, Ollie  
347 LzVey, Jim  
347 LaVey, Rose  
346 Lawhorn, Don  
346 Lawhorn, Nita  
348 Leavanway, Jill  
348 Leavanway, Russ  
348 Link, Edith  
348 Link, Lyle  
416 Lippolt, Anna  
416 Lippolt, Burford  
348 Magee, Morton  
348 Magee, Virgina  
346 Marlow, Ed  
346 Marlow, Marguerite  
416 Martin, Eleanor  
416 Martin, Wilbur

347 Moore, Edward  
346 Morat, John  
346 Moser, Robert  
416 Murphree, Maurice  
416 Murphree, Pearl  
347 O'connell, Joanne  
347 O'connell, John  
348 Pedersen, Betty  
348 Pedersen, Henry  
347 Pedersen, Fran  
348 Peters, James  
348 Peters, Nancy  
416 Peterson, Idad  
416 Peterson, Paul  
416 Reese, Curtis  
346 Reigert, Arlene  
346 Reigert, Dwight  
347 Repka, Betty  
347 Repka, John  
416 Rhodes, Charles  
416 Rhodes, Donna  
347 Rockey, Betty  
347 Rockey, Joseph  
346 Romontio, George  
346 Romontio, Mary Ann  
416 Scheu, Charles  
416 Scheu, Marion  
416 Schroder, Edith  
416 Schroder, Elton  
99 Schroeder, Al  
99 Schroeder, Evelyn  
347 Shaw, Bill  
347 Shaw, Vi  
416 Shelnutt, O.W.  
348 Sheroian, Harry  
348 Sheroian, Margaret  
347 Sholtis, Jeanne  
347 Sholtis, Joseph

348 Stoehr, Al  
348 Stoehr, Dorothy  
346 Suemnicht, Alvin  
416 Swingen, Ellsworth  
416 Swingen, Marjorie  
416 Taormina, Grace  
416 Taormina, Sam  
346 Tennesen???  
346 Tennesen, George  
346 Terrel, Austin  
346 Terrel, Betty  
416 Thistlewood, John  
416 Thorssen, Donald  
347 Toth, John  
348 Trapuzzano, John  
348 Trapuzzano, Lee  
346 Troy, Fred  
346 Walker, Gloria  
346 Walker, Louis  
348 Wamser, Betty  
348 Wamser, Don  
347 Warneck, Joseph  
347 Warneck, Mary  
347 Warner, David  
347 Warner, L.B.  
347 Warner, Larry  
416 White, Bob  
416 White, Peggy  
348 Whitmore, Ethel  
348 Whitmore, Warren  
347 Wilde, Robert  
347 Williams, Marcus  
347 Williams, Marguerite  
416 Willis, Richard  
346 Wilson, Carl  
346 Wilson, Helen  
99 Wiseman, Paul  
346 Worthington, Kathleen  
346 Worthington, Roy  
  
346 Worthington, Roy III  
348 Yarina, Lettie  
348 Yarina, Michael  
347 Zeiss, Mary (Warneck)



## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

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### GREETINGS:

Contributions from our Membership in the May 1, 1990 Bulletin again reflect the high quality of interesting accounts and information our Members are willing to share. Bill Smallwood's well written experiences as a P.O.W. along with his priceless copy of THE NEWS, that "clandestine" publication relating accurate information to the inmates of his Prison Camp, and then we see Bob Bacher's three part communication sharing his own life threatening experience, his eye witness account of that needless disaster over Bleckhammer, his graphic description of chow in the 347th, and his hilarious rendition of Tex's attempt at bulldogging that pig, all of it great. (We do need to consider the substantial problems our Cooks faced with the procurement of those rations, most of which were canned, dehydrated or otherwise preserved. We were surprisingly well fed in spite of all those problems.)

Al Schroeder's moving account regarding his logical changing of places with Lt. Corely for a lead ship check out on Col. Headrick's plane is sufficient enough to give anyone under similar circumstances a lifetime for reflection. Three members of that crew flying with Col. Headrick were friends. They were Francis Presser, Tail Gunner who survived, Ed Ergle, Radio and Marshall Kohler, Waist Gunner, both of whom went down with the plane. Kohler lived in our tent. At that particular time Charlie Kuntz, Merco Krajcar, Harold Kringle and I were leaving for the Isle of Capri when Marshall Kohler came to me and told me that when we returned he would not be there, that he would be shot down and would not survive. I don't recall what I said then but his prophetic statement has a way of surfacing from time to time causing pause for serious thought.

These accounts along with excellent and helpful information from John O'Connell and Dick Drain, other interesting letters and notes, War Diaries and Press Releases all add up to success. While we have 'Good Old George' to rely upon, let's recognize the very substantial efforts of Bernie Barr, Lew Boatwright and Walter Butler, all of whom have given of themselves, especially during the past number of months for the continuing success of our Bulletin.

All of this should encourage those of you who have experiences to report to do so. These contributions are vital and we do seek them out. Your sharing will be most interesting reading and it will go into the archives of the 99th for future generations.

The Huntsville Reunion headed by H. E. (Chris) Christiansen was obviously the great success we knew it would be. I am most grateful for all the information and letters we received from six of those who were able to attend. Our hope and Prayers are that we will be on board for our next reunion at Albuquerque, May 1-5, 1991.

Although the following verse is specifically relative to the living God, it seems to fit us and expresses very well the consideration, cooperation, and the helping and sharing with one another along with the good work and devoted care. From 1st Timothy, Chapter 6; Verse 18: "INSTRUCT THEM TO DO GOOD, TO BE RICH IN GOOD WORKS, TO BE GENEROUS AND READY TO SHARE." If you think about this, it'll work well for all.

  
Joe C. Kenney, Chaplain



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## Letters

Hello George:

May 30

It was great seeing you so healthy at our today's lunch. When you did not show up at our Huntsville Reunion a lot of our members showed a great deal of concern and would ask me in a hushed voice "Really tell me how George is doing?" I would tell them that you were doing fine, feeling better, and no doubt outlive us all. So show them and do it. As I said before we had a very fine REUNION everyone enjoyed themselves spent a lot of time in the HOSPITALITY ROOM, tours to space center was a special occasion with Doris enjoying a walk in the Space Ship mockup. The movie of the space flights were terrific. All enhanced by a good barbeque dinner. At our business luncheon the membership elected four new Directors to the Board; Rex A. Carnes, Leonard Holpin, Harvey Jennings and Roy H. Worthington. The Board voted to reelect the current Officers to serve another year. Art Knipp agreed that he would see if he could have squadron insignia pins made up and have at our next Reunion here in Albuquerque. so that our members could buy them if they so desire. Good luck Art and thanks. Doris said that SUE CHRISTIANSEN put on one of the most delightful Luncheons that she ever attended. THANKS TO SUE AND CHRIS FOR A GREAT MEETING.

Apparently there is an effort to form separate Squadron meetings. I think this is wrong and will tend to splinter our 99th BGHS into small efforts and destroy what you have spent so many years building up. Bill MUEX made the suggestion that at our annual reunions some time should be allocated for individual squadrons to have some joint activity and become better acquainted with each other. I agreed and made an announcement that we do that in 1991-the group applauded so they must think it is a good thing to do. So we will work on it.

George the nicest surprise came at our Banquet--Bill Smallwood was asking members to come forward and receive a presento. My name was called and with a surprised look I walked to the platform. Bill said would you please come up here and straighten something out for us. Knowing nothing was wrong that I could fix I went onto the platform where he presented me with a beautiful plaque very similar to yours which you received in Fort Lauderdale. It is beautiful and I appreciate it very much. During WWII I did fly combat missions with three different Bomb Groups--each of these Groups have reunions and since I feel a closer tie to the 99th it is the one I try to support we have a close feeling of togetherness, no strangers, no rank just good fun and friendship. If some of our members have never attended our reunions-it is not too late to join us. SO LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AND THEM HERE IN ALBUQUERQUE NEXT MAY 1-MAY 5.

Your friend,



PS-As you know I type with two fingers.

*Thank you, one and all, for letters and phone calls.  
I am enjoying the extra years which medical science is giving me.*

*Salud geo.*

Wayne W. Snyder  
Manor 998 Leisure World  
Mesa, Arizona 85206  
602-985-4781

Dear George:

I have been reading your Jan 90 issue of the Historical Society newsletter. I refer to a letter to you from "Dick" about serial #s and assignment of aircraft to various squadrons.

Could you furnish me with "Dick's" name and address so I can contact him in regard to "Patches." Our crew was assigned Patches in the spring of 1944. I was the pilot and in the 346th. We flew her on several missions. I am speaking specifically of the first Patches, which was a Douglas-built aircraft and I recall she was heavy and used every foot of the runway to clear the railroad. None of the pilots' records show the serial #s of anything we flew.

"Patches" demise was on takeoff when a pilot not used to her reluctance to leave the ground panicked and may have attempted to abort. Anyway, they cleared the railroad but bellied in on the other side. My navigator was in the nose which broke off, but was not hurt. I do not know who the rest of the crew was.

I was in Seattle when Boeing opened their museum and they had a model of 2nd Patches, which carried a serial # of 238201. I cannot be certain that the # for 2nd Patches is correct, but would assume they probably had the right number. I was given that model by Boeing when they learned I had flown the first Patches.

I have been a member of the Society for a number of years and recall having met you at an Albuquerque reunion.

A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Sincerely  
Wayne W. Snyder

Dear Wayne;

We met at a Phoenix meeting back about 19-ought-84 when I was down there on the Hooker Dam.

I goofed in not printing the address of our plane expert. He

Dick Drain  
Box 664  
Westcliffe CO 81252

It was good to hear from you.

salud y pesetas  
george

13 August, 1989

Hi George,

Patches #1 was an "F". I don't remember the serial No. Al Jones crewed this ship in Africa and Italy.

Emmett Oehlert was co-pilot for William R. Wrigley on 029, my ship. I don't remember the rest of the serial No. Its name was "Roger the Loger."

A new B-17 group with "G" came in and stayed a day or two at our field. They were very unhappy when they left for their new field.

029 and "F" was traded for a new "G" 064, no name. For a week or ten days I had two B-17s.

Emmett Oehlert became first pilot, Al Jones was flight engineer on Patches #1. It made two missions a day to Cassino, Monastery for about a week or ten days with two 1000 lbs bombs. The rest of the bomb load was 500 lbs.

Patches II 201 was a "G." All I know about it was Robert O Warren was the crew chief and it ended up north end of the runway against the railroad tracks.

Sincerely,  
ReXL Greathouse

10apr90

Dear Sir;

I am happy to participate in your offer to recall events in the 99th.

On our way home to the 99th (Somebody stole our jeep during an inspection.) we raised our thumbs and yelled "99th". A truck stopped and we got aboard. It being late we immediately went to sleep.

We were rudely awakened by "All off for the 99th". It was the 99th Fighter Squadron. We sheepishly went back to hitch-hiking our way to "the real 99th". We finally arrived after going back to Foggia and starting over.  
sincerely Edward E. Geoffroy

Yes, Edward, on my first attempt to locate 99ers back in 1980 I received only one response, and that one was from the 99th Fighter way out in the Pacific.  
geo

Feb 7, 1990

Gentlemen:

I do not know who I should address this letter: I saw in the last 99th Newsletter, page 8, of you wanting information on several B-17. I was pilot of Flack Dodger (229467). Our crew formed when the 99th was formed and we flew together all 50 missions. Our first mission was March 31 to Villacidro, Sardinia and our last one was Aug 31 to Piza, Italy. My flight engineer was Mike Yarina.

Our tail gunner was Ted Panek and wrote a letter to the society and was in Vol. 7 No. 6 of Nov 1, 1987 pages 36 and 37. We had to lay over a few days in Puerto Rico as we lost an engine just after takeoff and had to have it replaced.

I got into B29 after Africa. The Newsletters are interesting and I have all of them. Would like to know what happened to Flack Dodger.

Edgar Roberts

# War Diary

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UNIT HISTORY OF THE 346TH SQUADRON, 99TH BOMBARDMENT GP (H)

September, 1943 to January, 1944 Inclusive

## A. ADMINISTRATION

### Change of Station:

Organization moved its base of operation from Oudan #1, Kohammedi, Tunisia, to Tortorella Field, Foggia, Italy. Part of the ground echelon departed on December 3, 11, and 13, 1943 and arrived on or about the 14th and 22nd of December. They traveled by water and convoy. The air echelon and part of the ground departed on 13 December and arrived the same day.

### Organizational Strength, Increase or Decrease:

September 1943: 61 officers and 320 enlisted men. Net decrease, 16 officers and 42 enlisted men as against figures for August, 1943.

October 1943: 75 officers and 365 enlisted men. net decrease of officers, one; net increase of enlisted personnel is four.

November 1943: 74 officers and 369 enlisted men. Net decrease of officers, one; net increase of enlisted personnel is four.

December 1943: 75 officers and 373 enlisted men. Net increase in officers is one; net increase of enlisted men is four.

January 1944: 81 officers and 379 enlisted men. Net increase for officers is six; net increase for enlisted men is four. [sic]

### Changes in Office: Commanding Officer.

Major Leon L. Lowry relieved from duty as Commanding Officer on September 30, 1943 and succeeded by Capt. Cleo L. Aspergren. Major Aspergren, relieved as Commanding Officer on 10 November 1943 and succeeded by Major Richard E. Evans. Major Richard E. Evans relieved as Commanding Officer on January, 1944 and succeeded by Major William Headrick.

## B. BATTLES

See attached sheets.

## C. CASUALTIES Missing In Action

6 October, 1943 in a raid over Mestre, Italy.

2nd Lt. Thomas R. Carver, 2nd Lt. Rudolph E. Kenchl, F/O Carlton O. Alderson and F/O Otis S. Lee. T/Sgt Victor G. Dickerson, S/Sgt Leonard A. Farley. S/Sgt Harry L. Cunningham, T/Sgt Ralph E. Karmer and S/Sgt Willie C. Jones reported missing in action are now prisoners of war according to memorandum dated 21 January, 1944.

10 November, 1943, in a raid over Bolzano, Italy. 2nd Lt. Jerry M. Wickliffe, 2nd Lt. Reid A. Ellsworth, 2nd Lt. Fred J. Isert, and 2nd Lt. Clifford R. Dewitt. T/Sgt Stanley J. Prochaska, S/Sgt Joseph T. Arlinghous, Sgt. John A. Chestnut, Sgt. Robert J. Hogan, Sgt. Raymond S. Kuzniarek and Sgt Charles Pinkard.

19 December, 1943 in a raid over Innsbruck, Austria. 2nd Lt. Arthur Simpson, S/Sgt Richard A. Thorne, and Pfc William N. Smith.

11 December, 1944 in a raid over Piraeus, Greece. 1st Lt. Joseph M. Donahue, 1st Lt. Thomas L. Lilly, 1st Lt Barnard M. Raftery and 1st Lt. Eldred A. Schroeder. T/Sgt John E. Briggs, T/Sgt. Sidney S. Sherris, S/Sgt Samuel W. Ritter, Sgt. Verne E. Trinoskey, Cpl Lawrence R. Branz and Pvt. James C. Douglas.

### Killed in Action:

S/Sgt Frank D. Gillis was killed in action while on a bombing mission over LeTube Airdrome, France on 16 November 1943. Killed as a result of fighter action.

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T/Sgt Samuel J. Burns was killed while on a bombing mission over Innsbruck, Austria, 19 December, 1943. Believed to be hit by 20mm gun fire of fighter plane.

### Wounded in Action:

2nd Lt. Marvin Charak, Bombardier, 2 October, 1943. 1st Lt. Howard Kreyenbuhl, 19 December, 1943. Sergeant Lapp, 19 December, 1943.

The following reported missing in action on 19 December 1943 later turned up as survivors and returned to Allied territory: Lt. H. Jacks, Lt. Eder, Lt. Rayson, T/Sgt Tremble, S/Sgts L.W. Lawson and Bradbury. Sgt. J.W. Scott, Lt. Jefferson Wauguespack, Lt. Theodore Janicki, Lt. David Zuckerman, and Sgt Colbert on 30 January, 1944.

## D. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

### Soldiers Medal:

Oak Leaf Cluster to Soldiers Medal awarded to Sgt. Cowart 5 October 1943; Captain Edward T. Kusterer and Capt. Edgar C. Hughes, on January 9 1944.

### Legion of Merit:

M/Sgt Donald R. Ross, 9 January 1944; Sgt. Daniel Bailey, 9 January 1944.

### Distinguished Flying Cross:

T/Sgt Clarence Hall, 23 November 1943  
T/Sgt Jame O'Brien, 23 November 1943  
1st Lt. James Crooks, 17 January 1944  
1st Lt. Charles Bliss, 17 January 1944

### Silver Star:

S/Sgt Eugene Cantley, 5 October 1943  
1st Lt. Lee Kirkendall, 27 October 1943

### Distinguished Service Cross

2nd Lt. John W. Wylie, 27 October 1943.



## BATTLES OF THE 346TH BOMB SQUADRON

9-2-43: 12 B-17Fs took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing mission at 0700 o'clock. Target: Bologna M/Y. Plane 344 back early. 6 e/a encountered, but did not attack. Flak slight, moderate, accurate. Target area well covered, and observation excellent. No planes damaged and no casualties. 11 planes landed safety at 1400 o'clock.

9-4-43: 7 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing raid at 1330 o'clock. Target: Capodichina airdrome, Naples. No early returns. Mission unsuccessful, and Group did not drop bombs due to heavy overcast. Flak, slight, moderate, accurate. No e/a encountered. No damage to planes, and no casualties. 7 planes landed safely at 1900 o'clock.

9-5-43: 11 B-17Fs took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing mission at 1010 o'clock. Target: Viterbo airdrome. Plane 513 returned early. Mission unsuccessful, Group did not drop bombs. Field overcast with haze and clouds. 10 planes landed safely at 1630 o'clock.

9-6-43: 10 B-17Fs took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing mission at 1015 o'clock. Target: Pomigliano airdrome. Mission unsuccessful, no bombs dropped. No e/a sighted, no damage to planes and no casualties. Flak, light, moderate, accurate. 10 planes landed safely at 1650 o'clock.

9-7-43: 11 B-17Fs took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing mission at 0830. Plane 416 returned early. Target: Foggia. Target area well covered. 12-15 e/a seen, no damage to planes and one casualty. S/Sgt Thomas G. Duzenack, 37350848, lightly wounded and lacerated in left scapula. Flak, heavy, intense, accurate. 10 planes landed safely at 1430 o'clock.

9-8-43: 12 B-17Fs took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing raid at 0930 o'clock. Target: Frascati City. Planes 526, 416 back early. Target area well covered, many direct hits on buildings, etc. Flak heavy, moderate, accurate. 4 e/a encountered. No damage to planes and no casualties. 10 planes landed safely at 1430 o'clock.

9-9-43: 10 B-17Fs took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing raid at 0630 o'clock. Target: Capua Bridges. Planes 129, 416 returned early. Target area well covered, bridges hit, some e/a hit and seen turning. No e/a encountered and no damage to planes and no casualties. Flak, light, moderate, inaccurate. 8 planes landed safely at 1145 o'clock.

9-10-43: 9 B-17Fs took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing raid at 0710 o'clock. Target: Isernia Bridges and Crossroads. Target area well covered. Bridges destroyed and junction hit. No flak and no e/a encountered. No damage to planes and no casualties. 9 planes landed safely at 1300 o'clock.

9-12-43: 11 B-17Fs took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing raid at 0920 o'clock. Target: Frosinone airdrome. Plane 513 returned early. Target area well covered. Flak, heavy, moderate, accurate. No e/a encountered. No damage to planes and no casualties. 10 planes landed safely at 1430 o'clock.

9-14-43: Two missions this date. 10 B-17Fs took off from Oudna No. 1 at 0600 o'clock on a bombing mission \_\_\_\_\_ ILLEGIBLE \_\_\_\_\_

9-16-43: 11 B-17Fs took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing mission at \_\_\_45 o'clock. Target: Benevento railroads, etc. Results of raid uncertain, but target ~~believed hit~~. No e/a seen. Flak heavy, accurate, no aircraft casualties and no casualties. Target area well covered. All planes landed safely at \_\_\_\_\_.

9-18-43: 10 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing mission at 1015. Target: Butetbo airdrome. Planes 470, 405 returned early. No e/a seen, no flak. Target area well covered, 8 planes landed safely at 1615 o'clock.

9-25-43: 10 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing mission at 0650 o'clock. Target: Bologna M/Y. Plane 416 returned early. Target area and almost all of flight overcast with clouds. Target area fairly well covered. 6 to 8 e/a encountered, none hit, no damage to planes and no casualties. Some flak, heavy, accurate. 9 planes landed safely at 1430 o'clock.

9-28-43: 10 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing mission at 0830 o'clock. Target: Bologna M/Y. Planes 343, 491 returned early. Solid overcast all the way up Italy and on Italian coast prevented Squadron from seeing target, and planes turned back at Leghorn, without dropping bomb. No e/a seen, some flak near coast-line. 8 planes landed safely at 1500 o'clock.

10-1-43: 6 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing mission at 0800 o'clock. Target: Messerschmidt factory near Augusberg, Ger. Plane 383 back early. 16 e/a seen, and they attacked. Some flak, heavy, moderate, fairly accurate. Target area overcast and no bombs were dropped. Plane 491 had emergency landing in Sicily. 2nd Lt. Crooks was pilot. Condition of plane and crew unknown as radio contact was lost before plane landed. 4 planes landed safely at Oudna at 1700.

10-2-43: Nonoperational day. 2nd Lt. Crooks, with all of crew except Lt. Charak reported for duty from emergency landing in Sicily. 2nd Lt. Charak seriously wounded \_\_\_\_\_ severely lacerated left arm and right thigh and leg.

10-4-43: 2 missions today. 1st mission: 7 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing mission at 0725 o'clock. Target: Balzano Highway and Railroad bridges. Target area well covered, and bridges probably destroyed. No e/a encountered. Some flak, heavy and slight, fairly accurate. Plane 383 hit by flak. 7 planes landed safely at 1425 o'clock. 2nd mission: 4 B-17s took off from Oudna at app. 0815. Target: Pisa M/Y. Plane 513 back early. Target area well covered. M/Y hit and direct hits on rolling stock etc. No e/a seen and no flak.

10-5-43: 10 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing at 0800 o'clock. Target: Bologna M/Y. Target area well covered and many direct hits scored, including roundhouse, rolling stock, buildings, etc. No e/a encountered. Some flak, moderate, light, inaccurate. Plane 526, piloted by Lt. Fennessey landed for gas at Cagliari on return run. 9 planes landed safely at 1530. Plane 526 landed safely at 1730.

10-6-43: 6 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing mission at 0730 o'clock. Target: Mistre M/Y. Very many e/a encountered, and fierce attacks. Some flak, heavy, moderate, very accurate. Target hit directly and area well covered. Tracks, rolling stock, buildings, etc., all hit. Mission successful. 2 planes with crews [MIA?] at app. 1245 o'clock. Planes 474 and 416 were attacked by fighters and hit by flak, and following personnel are reported MIA: 2nd Lt. Carner, Thomas A. 0-728174; Crooks, James H., 0-737370; Devine, George \_\_\_\_, 0-679384; Evans, George \_\_\_\_, 0-741977; Menchl, Rudolph \_\_\_\_, 0-801079; Rafferty, Leonard M., 0-801146; F/Os Alderson, Carlton O., T-60870; Lee, Otis S., T-60145; T/Sgts Demott, William C., 31138222; Dickerson, Victor G., 16051349; Grant, William \_\_\_\_, 14104216; Kramer, Ralph E., 32078424; S/Sgts. Berkey, Rei R., 17086369; Cunningham, Harry L., 37384700; Farley, Leonard \_\_\_\_, 12138223; Jones, Willie \_\_\_\_, 34337128; Laverick, Raymond (NMI), 13030543; Ledgerwood, Joe (NMI), 15332419; Ritter, George \_\_\_\_, 39250770; Sgt. Boswell, James C., \_\_\_\_\_. 4 planes landed safely at 1610 o'clock.

10-9-43: Two missions today. 1st mission: 4 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing mission at 0730. Target: Salonica airdrome, Greece. No early returns. Target area well covered, and direct hits scored on airdrome. Flak very heavy, moderate, inaccurate. No e/a seen, no damage to planes and no casualties. 4 planes landed safely at 1700. 2nd mission: 5 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1 at 0800. Target: Larissa airdrome, Greece. Results of raid very good, target area well covered and many planes apparently damaged. No e/a seen, and no damage to planes and no casualties. 5 planes landed safely 1800.

10-10-43: 5 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1, with Tokyo tanks, on a bombing mission at 0715. Target: Tatoi airdrome, Greece. No early returns. Target area well covered, and area surrounding airdrome successfully hit. Some 25 to 30 e/a seen and they attacked. 2 \_\_\_\_\_ destroyed by this Squadron. Sight damage to planes and no casualties. Flak very heavy and very accurate. 5 planes landed safely at app. 1630.

10-21-43: 10 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing mission at app. 0600. Target: Ferni railroad bridges. Target area well covered, altho hits on target were probables only. Some flak, altho this Squadron was not hit. 3 or 4 e/a seen, but no e/a attacked, and no damage to planes or personnel. 10 planes landed safely at 1300. Plane 513 took off at app. 0430 to scout weather in Northern Italy, Capt. Evans pilot. No e/a and no flak. Plane landed safely app. 0900. This was called "weather mission 1" for Group.

\*10-24-43: 10 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1 on a secret mission, destination unknown. 10 planes took off from Taranto, Italy on a bombing mission at app. 1245. Target: Wiener Nuestadter, Austria. Raid unsuccessful. Large proportion of planes did not drop bombs. Cloudy overcast. Flak, light, moderate, inaccurate. No e/a seen. no damage to planes and no casualties. Planes landed at Taranto and proceeded to home base at Oudna No. 1, Tunisia, arriving at app. 1410, 25 Oct 43.

10-29-43: 10 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing raid at about 0800. Target: Turin Ball Bearing Factory. Heavy overcast and bad weather obscured target and secondary target, the Marshalling Yards at Genoa were bombed. Flak was heavy, moderate and inaccurate. One e/a observed but no pass was made. Mission successful. All our planes returned to base about 1600. One of our planes returned early because of engine trouble. Two stopped at Decimomanu, Sardinia on the way home to refuel. No mishaps.

10-30-43: 10 B-17s took off from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing raid over Turin. Object, M/Y and ball bearing factory. Take off at 0825. A/C 526 and 343 returned early. One because of sickness of two gunners, and the other, oil trouble. Mission not accomplished owing to complete, solid undercast. Alternate target could not be reached. 477 jettisoned bombs into sea and all returned to base about 1616, except 407, which stopped to refuel at Sardinia. Bomb load 12 x 500. No mishaps.

10-31-43: Five B-17s (Tokyos) took off from Oudna No. 1, about 0930 on a bombing mission. Target: R.R. viaduct at Antheor, France. A/C participating: 129, 313, 343, 383, and 405. Mission accomplished and target believed destroyed. No flak, no enemy fighters. Three A/C returned at 1540. No. 405 had trouble with an engine which caught fire. It was escorted to Sardinia by 313. 405 left in Sardinia with three crew members to guard it. 313 returned at about 1730. Weather ship took off at about 0405, piloted by Lt. Notebaert. Returned safely. No mishaps other than stated.

\*11-2-43: Five B-17s with Tokyos took off from Oudna No. 1 at about 0715 on a bombing mission. Target: Wiener Neustadter, Germany. A/C 313, 343, 383, 129, and 918 participated. However, 918 circled field and landed immediately when leak in gas tank was discovered. 343 returned early when it was learned, while en route, that ball turret oxygen supply line had been severed. Target reached at 1228 and well hit by 6 x 1000s. Flak: Heavy, intense and accurate. 35 to 40 Me 109s and Fw 190s over target engaged formation and B-24s, also on same mission. Concerning our planes, no mishaps. 383 landed at Foggia, to return to Oudna #1, next day. 313 and 129 landed at Ponte Olivo, Sicily, to return to base next day.

11-6-43: 3 B-17s and 4 B-17s took off jointly at about 0850 from Oudna #1 on a bombing mission. Target: Three to bomb railroad bridge 5 miles North of Orbetello, Italy, and four to bomb railroad bridge South of Orbetello on the Fiora River. Formation took off together and split near target and after bombing, joined and returned safely to base at about 1415. Mission accomplished tho no direct hits on bridges were observed. Tracks and approaches were hit. Near misses near bridge. Bomb load was 6 x 1000 and bombing altitude was 3000 feet. No flak, no fighters, no mishaps.

11-8-43: 12 B-17s took off at about 0917 from Oudna #1 on a bombing mission. Target: Turin ball bearing factory. A/C 856 and 026 returned early. Mission accomplished and target believed destroyed by excellent concentration of hits. A/Cs 343, 383, 918, 129, and 313 returned at 1820. A/C 526, 513 landed at Alghero to refuel and returned in evening. 407 turned back 20 minutes from target and returned at 1846. 477 landed at Decimomanu to return to base 11-9-43. 026 landed at Alghero, to return tomorrow. Bomb load: 12 x 500. No flak. 6 Me 109s around target but no hostile action taken. All but three dropped bombs, on target.

11-10-43: 9 B-17s took off at about 0710 fro Oudna #1 on a bombing mission. Target: Marshalling Yards at Bolzano, Italy. A/C 129, 513 and 407 reached target, bombed and returned at 1600, in stagger style. A/C 918 returned at 1346 because of mechanical difficulties, 856 returned at 1015, 526 returned at 1532, 026 at 1655. 477 also an early return. Aircraft 061, piloted by Lt. Wickliffe has not been seen or heard of. Missing this day. Bomb load: 12 x 500. Flak: Heavy, intense and accurate. About 15-25 enemy fighters over the target, mostly Me 109s and some FW 190s. No casualties or mishaps as a result of flak or fighter other than the unaccounted absence of 061. Raid considered successful.

11-16-43: 6 B-17s took off at about 0845 from Oudna #1 on a bombing mission. Target: Le Tube Airdrome, France. 026, 407, 477, 513, 526, 856 all hit the target. Mission successful and fair results obtained. Bomb load: 12 x 500. Flak: Heavy, intense and accurate. 10 to 15 enemy fighters attacked the formation. Me-109s and FW 190s. Our gunners claimed two destroyed. S/Sgt Gillis killed in action by fighter fire. S/Sgt. Brennam wounded. Both were gunners in 477. Our planes returned at about 1610.

11-18-43: 6 B-17s took off at about 0640 from Oudna #1 on a bombing mission. Target: Athens Eleusis A/D. 418, 526, 407, 513, 477, 856 all hit the target. Mission successful and good results. Bomb load: Frags, 24 x 120. Flak: heavy, intense and accurate. A few Me 109s and FW 190S seen, but were engaged by our P-38s. En route home, Fortresses stopped at San Panerazio, Italy at about 1320 to refuel and landed safely at home base around 1725. No casualties.

11-22-43: 10 B-17s took of at about 1000 from Oudna No. 1 on a bombing mission. Target: Dock yards and facilities at Toulon, France. Participating A/Cs: 026, 223, 338, 396, 407, 418, 513, 526, 775, and 856. Planes flew to tip of Corsica, then west for 1\_\_ miles, climbed to 27,500 feet in attempt to circle the solid undercast. Unsuccessful in that they returned with bomb load about 1515. \_\_\_\_\_ in the air for five hours and \_\_\_ minutes it was not a credited mission. There were no mishaps.

11-24-43: 9 B-17s took off at about 0855 from Oudna #1 on a bombing mission. Target: Docks and yards at Toulon, France. Participating a/c: 513, 223, 338, 026, 526, 856, 418, 398, and 407. Last mentioned returned early after coming within 20 minutes of the target. Planes returned at about 1540 while some refueled at Decimomanu, Sardinia. No mishaps. Flak: heavy and slight. Four Fw 190s engaged by P-38s. Bombs: 12 x 500. Mission successful.

11-27-43: The following a/c took off from Oudna #1 at about 0855 on a bombing mission. 513, 526, 470, 396, 477, 775, 026, 418, 223, 407, 338, 856. Target: Grizzano M/Yds and bridge, Italy. Bomb load: 12 x 500. Results poor. Our formation was off to the right of axis of attack and could not turn back for another run as succeeding formation cut us off and scattered our formation. Bombs salvoed in hills and adjacent territory. A/C 513 returned early. No mishaps. No fighters. No flak over target. Flak thrown from Elba, Degnom and Bologna. Landing at base at approximately 1600.

11-29-43: The following a/c took off from Oudna at about 0805 on a bombing mission: 526, 390, 223, 338, 477, 026, 407, 775, 513, and 418. Target: Fiano Romano A/D, Italy. Bomb load: 24 x 120 (Frag). Bombing not possible owing to complete overcast around target area. No flak or fighters. All planes returned safely to base around 1600. No mishaps.



12-1-43: The following a/c took off from Oudna #1 at about 0905 on a bombing mission: 513, 775, 526, 526, 407, 856, 470, 223, 418, 398, 026, 477, and 338. Target: Aero Engine Works at Turin, Italy. Mission very successful. Bomb load: 12 x 500. Flak, heavy, moderate, and accurate. About 8 Me 109s were observed over the target and these were engaged by our P-38s. Planes stopped at a staging area to refuel and returned safely at the base. 470 and 418 were early returns. No mishaps.

12-6-43: The following a/c took off from Oudna No. 1 at about 0955 on a bombing mission: 338, 477, 856, 418, 470, 407, 396, 523, 513, 223, and 775. Target: Grizzano M/Yds, Italy. Owing to bad weather, mission was not accomplished and planes landed at Foggia #2 for the night. Unloaded bombs at this base and returned to Oudna the following morning. Early returns were 338, 470, and 407. Those landing at Foggia were credited with a mission.

12-8-43: Seven a/c took off from Oudna #1 at about 0945 on a bombing mission: 026, 338, 407, 418, 470, 513, and 775. Target: Shipping and port facilities at San Stefano, Italy. Bomb load: 12 x 500. Altitude 3500 feet. Mission very successful. No flak, no fighters. Return at about 1600.

12-14-43: Nine B-17s: 418, 470, 477, 856, 223, 026, 396, 513, and 528 took off from Foggia #2 on a bombing mission. Target: Eleusis A/D, Greece. Off at 0723, return at about 1600. Bomb load: 12 x 500. Bad weather caused planes to scatter and many targets were hit, including Athens A/D, docks at Piraeus and A/D at Thasani. Flak was heavy and moderate. A few Me 109s were observed and made \_\_\_\_\_. No mishaps. Mission fairly successful altho assigned target not hit well.

12-16-43: A/C 223, 026, 396, 613, 526, 470, 856, 418, and 338 took off at 1000 from Foggia #2 on a bombing mission to hit \_\_\_\_\_ at Padua, Italy. Bomb load: 12 x 500. Mission fairly successful. Flak, both heavy and light, was slight. No fighters, no mishaps. Planes returned at about 1440.

12-19-43: Ten B-17s took off on a bombing mission; A/C 477, 470, 026, 526, 418, 470, 338, 513, 396, and 223. Target: Augsburg, Germany. Takeoff 0910. Landed 1435. Bomb load 12 x 500. Owing to heavy overcast, formation could not reach target and, finding hole near Innsbruck, marshalling yards were bombed. Flak: heavy, moderate and accurate as to altitude and not as to deflection. Thirty Me 109s and Fw 190s seen. Attacked vigorously. Eight E/AC claimed shot down by our squadron. Missing in action: B-17 223. Results of mission not known.

12-20-43: Six [?] B-17s took off on a bombing mission. 396, 513, 856, 470, 026. Takeoff at \_\_\_\_\_, return at 1545. Target: Eleusis A/D, Greece. Bomb load 12 x 500. Flak: heavy, intense, and accurate. About \_\_\_ fighters encountered. Me 109s. No mishaps. Mission fairly successful.

12-25-43: Ten B-17s took off on a bombing mission at 0920 from Foggia #2. A/C: 262, 407, 513, 526, 775, 396, 856, 447, 470, and 338. Target: Udine M/Yds, Italy. 263 and 407 were early returns. The formation returned to its base at 1400 with full bomb load as bad weather precluded any bombing operation. No flak, fighters or casualties.

12-28-43: A/C 396, 856, 526, 263, 470, 477, 026, 775, and 407 took off at 0940 from Foggia #2 to bomb marshalling yards of Rimini. Target of Verona, which was the primary target and hence not bombed because of heavy undercast. 407 returned early. Bomb load: 12 x 500. Formation returned at 1410. No flak, no fighters, and bombing results were bad.

12-29-43: A/C 513, 326, 470, 775, 396, 856, 477, and 026 took off from Foggia #2 to bomb Reggio, Italy. Takeoff about 1028. Target obscured by clouds and Ferrara M/Y were raided. Return at 1540. No flak, no fighters, and results good. Bomb load 12 x 500.

12-30-43: A/C 775, 526, 470, 396, 477, 856, 338, 407, and 026 took off from Foggia #2 to bomb Verona, Italy. Takeoff about 1010. Bomb load 12 x 500. Formation returned at 1435. Owing to undercast, Verona could not be seen and hence the alternate target of Rimini was hit. Results good. About 7 fighters seen between Rimini and Ferraro and were engaged by our escort of P-38s. No flak.

1-3-44: A/C 775, 026, 470, 396, 477, 263, 338, 407, and 856 took off from Foggia #2 to bomb Villa Perosa, Italy. Important ball bearing factory. Takeoff at 0805. Bomb load 6 x 1000. Mission successful. Planes returned at 1517. Flak encountered was heavy, intense and accurate. Four or five enemy Me 109s in target area. One P-38 shot down. No mishaps for any of our crews.

1-4-44: A/C 856, 470, 263, 775, 396, 526, 477, and 026 took off from Foggia #2 at 0835 on a bombing mission. Target: Business district of Sofia, Bulgaria. Bomb load 12 x 500. A/c 856, 470 returned early. Bombs were not dropped because of heavy undercast. All but 263 and 026 returned at about 1500. A/C 026 returned at 1655 after landing at Foggia Main, for gas. A/C 263 developed oxygen trouble and left formation at 1300. As it dropped altitude to benefit one of crew, it dropped its bombs on a bridge, Scutari, Yugoslavia.

1-7-44: Nine B-17s took off on a bombing mission. Target: Weiner Neustadt, Germany. Takeoff at 0735. Participating: 396, 470, 477, 026, 338, 526, 263, 775, and 407. Nos 396, 477, 263, and 775 returned early and en route home 775 bombed Split Harbor, Yugoslavia at 16,000 feet. Bombs fell on small merchant vessels. Bomb load carried: 12 x 500. Others did not hit target or alternates because of weather and returned at 1228. No flak or fighters.

1-8-44: A/C 407 and 470 took off with Group [?] to bomb Reggio Emilia M/E plants and M/Yds. 407 flew with 348th Sq and 470 with 416th. Bomb load: 12 x 500. Takeoff 1107, landing: 1530. No flak or fighters. Results fairly successful. Factories, yards and runway of airdrome hit.

1-9-44: Seven B-17Fs, No. 396, 477, 479, 513, 470, 407, and 526 took off from Tortorella, (Foggia #2), Italy to bomb Fiume, Italy. They took off from Tortorella, with a bomb load of 12 x 500 at 0918, but could not hit this primary target as it was closed in by a solid undercast. The alternate, Pola Harbor, Italy was bombed and successfully hit. No fighters altho both light and heavy flak was thrown by enemy. No casualties as all our ships returned safely at about 1239.

1-10-44: Ten B-17s, No. 479, 470, 513, 396, 477, 026, 526, 338, 263, and 775 took off from Tortorella Field at about 0930 with a bomb load of 12 x 500 to bomb the city of Sofia, Bulgaria. Bombs were dropped in the target tho poor visibility rendered a complete check on results not possible. Flak was heavy, moderate and accurate as to altitude. Some 15 Me 109s and Fw 190s were encountered and our gunners claimed two. Planes returned safely at about 1513.

1-11-44: Seven B-17s, Nos., 477, 526, 479, 775, 513, 407, and 470 took off from Tortorella Field at about 0950 with a bomb load of 12 x 500 to bomb the Harbor Basin of Piraeus, Greece. #477 returned at about 1510 when a heavy cloud formation disrupted the formation and compelled them to return as best as they could. #470 piloted by Lt. Donahue, and while flying in the heavy weather, collided with a P-38. Neither plane nor crew returned. Three members were seen to fall out at about the time of impact. One was on fire.

1-13-44: Nine B-17s, Nos., 775, 479, 026, 407, 526, 396, 436, 263, and 338 took off from Tortorella Field with a bomb load of 12 x 500 at about 0905 to bomb Guidonia A/D, Italy. Target time was 1208 and return at about 1330. About 15 enemy fighters observed and accurate as to altitude. Results fairly successful as structures and installations as well as field was well hit.

1-14-44: Ten of our B-17s, Nos. 436, 396, 856, 479, 263, 513, 775, 526, 338, and 026 took off from Tortorella Field with a frag bomb load (24 x 120) at about 0905 to bomb Mostar A/D, Yugoslavia. #856 returned early when an oxygen leak forced it to turn back some six minutes from the IP. It landed at 1237. Other A/C returned at about 1320. Flak was heavy, moderate and accurate. A few of our Fortresses received flak holes. No fighters. Mission fairly successful. Our bombs dropped thru the smoke left by preceding bomb groups. No mishaps.

1-15-44: Seven of our B-17s, Nos. 396, 479, 026, 775, 263, 436, and 858 took off from Tortorella Field with a bomb load of 6 x 100 at 0900 to bomb the Luccine Viaduct, Italy. Owing to weather, the secondary target was hit; Arezzo M/Yds. A/C 338 returned early owing to fact that bombs fell thru the bomb bay doors while en route. A/C 396 and 479 did not drop on Arezzo. As bombs hung while over the target, each salvoed on a different railroad bridge nearby. no direct hit observed, Bombing of Arezzo fairly successful. No flak or fighters. No mishaps to any of the crew.

1-16-44: Nine of our B-17s, Nos. 479, 396, 856, 438, 263, 572, 086, 407, and 775 took off from Tortorella Field at 1001 to bomb Villaorba A/D, Italy. Bomb load: 12 x 500. At 1259, 856 returned early. Squadron returned at 1521. No flak over target and results were fairly successful. Some fighters observed to attack a B-24 Squadron over the target area. No casualties or damage to any of our men.

1-17-44: Ten of our B-17s, Nos. 479, 396, 338, 436, 856, 026, 086, 407, 775, and 263 (which flew with the 348th Sqd.) took off from tortorella Field with a bomb load of 12 x 500 at about 1900 to bomb the Prato M/Y of Italy. #407 returned early. No flak, no fighters. Results fairly good.

1-18-44: Nine of our B-17s, Nos. 479, 338, 396, 436, 026, 418, 775, 856, 263 took off with a bomb load of 12 x 500 from Tortorella Field at about 1030 to bomb Poggibonsi M/Yds, Italy. They returned safely at about 1425. No flak, no fighters, and mission fairly successful.

1-19-44: Eight of our B-17s, Nos. 086, 775, 491, 338, 396, 026, 263, and 856 took off with a frag bomb load from Tortorella Field at about 0944 to bomb the A/D of Centocelle, near Rome. They returned at about 1405. No flak, no fighters, and no mishaps. Scattered hits over the entire target area.

1-20-44: Nine [?] of our B-17s, Nos. 086, 479, 026, 456, 396, 263, 418, and 775 took off from tortorella Field with frag bombs at about 1005 to bomb Ciampino Airdrome near Rome. No flak, no fighters, and mission fair in results. Return at about 1416.

1-21-44: Eight of our B-17s, Nos. 775, 263, 418, 086, 856, 479, 407, and 026 took off from Tortorella Field with a bomb load of 12 x 500 at about 1000 to bomb Pontessieve bridge and marshalling yards. Owing to fact that the primary target was closed in by undercast, the Rimini yards were again hit. Pattern of bombs began and hit the bridge just outside of town and ran the length of the yards. Some 6 to 8 Me 109s were encountered and tho they made some attacks at elements of our formation, no mishaps were had. One enemy fighter was claimed destroyed by one of our gunners. No flak. Return at about 1450.

1-22-44: Nine of our B-17s, Nos. 479, 436, 062, 263, 775, 418, 407, 856, and 086 took off from Tortorella Field at about 1036 with a bomb load of 12 x 500 to bomb Pontedera marshalling yards. Mission was fairly successful. No flak, no fighters, no mishaps. formation returned about 1600.

1-23-44: Ten of our B-17s, Nos. 086, 572, 479, 436, 396, 775, 026, 418, 856, 683 took off from Tortorella Field at about 1000 hours with a bomb load of 12 x 500 to bomb the A/D of Poggibonsi, Italy. No bombing possible owing to heavy undercast over the target area. Planes returned with bomb load at about 1600.

1-24-44: Nine of our B-17s, Nos. 683, 479, 436, 086, 572, 775, 396, 026, and 856 took off from Tortorella Field at 0945 with a bomb load of 12 x 500 to bomb Sofia, Bulgaria. Bad weather impeded the bombing of the target and as the overcast was widespread, the A/C returned. Five returned at about 1646 to this base. No. 775 landed at the 301st Bomb Group. The remaining, 396, 026, and 856 landed at Bari. Returned to base next day. No mishap, no flak or fighters. Some bombs were returned and other jettisoned into the sea or over mountains.

1-27-44: Seven of our B-17s, Nos. 479, 407, 583, 436, 513, 775, and 026 took off at about 0700 with a bomb load of 12 x 500 from Tortorella, to bomb Salon de Provence A/D, France. Flak was heavy, intense and accurate, for one of our gunners, radio engineer Sgt. Lapp, was injured. He was flown to Capodicchino Airdrome, Naples, by Lt. Crooks, for immediate medical attention. Many enemy fighters were engaged but were taken on by our P-38 escort. Our gunners claimed three destroyed. Planes returned at about 1540. Mission fairly successful.

1-28-44: Nine of our B-17s, Nos. 436, 479, 086, 683, 418, 572, 407, 526, and 477 took off at about 0810 from Tortorella with a frag bomb load to raid Aviano A/D, Italy. Flak was heavy, intense, and accurate as many of our planes came back with flak holes. Some fighters were observed, Me 109s, but were engaged by fighter escort. Planes returned at 1330. Results of bombing were good.

1-29-44: Ten of our B-17s, Nos. 479, 436, 856, 683, 572, 477, 418, 026, 086, 775 took off from Tortorella with a frag bomb load at 0845 to raid Certaldo A/D, Italy. An undercast closed in on the target and bombing was not possible. Planes returned with bombs at 1310. No mishap, altho some flak came thru the clouds from around Arezzo.

1-30-44: Nine of our B-17s, 479, 477, 775, 026, 086, 572, 683, 407, and 431 took off from Tortorella at about 0900 with frag bombs to raid the enemy A/D of Maniago, Italy. Results of bombing were good. Flak was encountered which was fairly accurate. About 30 Me 109s and Fw 190s attacked the Fortresses. 683 was hit by a 20mm shell and four members of the crew were injured. The aircraft was piloted by Lt. Kline and taken to Foggia Main, where th injured were received for immediate medical attention. Planes returned at about 1455. Mission successful.

1-31-44: Nine of our B-17s, 436, 479, 775, 477, 572, 407, 856, 086, and 026 took off from Tortorella with 6 x 1000 at about 0904 to bomb Udine A/D, Italy. Flak was heavy, intense and accurate. Some fighters seen but did not engage our formation. Bombing excellent. Return at about 1455.

THREE HUNDRED FORTY SIXTH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON  
NINETY NINTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ARMY AIR FORCES  
Office of the Operations Officer  
(LOADING LIST)

APO 520  
5 July 1943

SUBJECT: Combat Crews on Today's Mission.  
TO: Commanding Officer, 99th Bombardment Group (H) AAF.

B-17F #313 Crew #8  
P Upthegrove, F.R. Colonel  
CP Jackson, Malden M. 2nd Lt.  
N Chaffin, Floyd E. 1st Lt.  
B Bernich, Oswald L. 1st Lt.  
TT Dammer, William C. T/Sgt.  
WG Crawford, Alvin B. T/Sgt.  
R Schauler, Vincent A. T/Sgt.  
BT Berrelles, Jose A. S/Sgt.  
WG Foriss, Alex (NMI) Sgt.  
TG Youngblood, Guy A. S/Sgt.

B-17F #0129 Crew #1  
P Lippmann, Fritz A. 1st Lt.  
CP Fovinoi, Frank J. 2nd Lt.  
N Bankston, Ingrum W. 1st Lt.  
B Anderson, John M. 2nd Lt.  
TT Duncan, Noble Jr., S/Sgt.  
WG Joyce, Robert E. S/Sgt.  
R Battiato, Sam (NMI) T/Sgt.  
BT Royse, Gene W. S/Sgt.  
WG Todd, John S. S/Sgt.  
TG Pocius, Peter P. S/Sgt.

B-17F #3129 Crew #3  
P Ebbers, Howard W. 2nd Lt.  
CP Vernon, Warren H. 2nd Lt.  
N Auchterlonie, Roy H. 2nd Lt.  
B Benson, Roger E. 2nd Lt.  
TT Carpenter, Donald F. Sgt.  
WG Kawozynski, Thomas J. S/Sgt.  
R Pietras, Edward J. S/Sgt.  
BT Bodnar, Edward J. S/Sgt.  
WG Heidel, Frank T. Sgt.  
TG Bridges, Billy B. S/Sgt.

B-17F #344 Crew 39  
P Hugo, James R. 1st Lt.  
CP Laakman, Henry E. 2nd Lt.  
N Burchinai, Robert L. 2nd Lt.  
B Lilly, Thomas L. 2nd Lt.  
TT Briggs, John E. T/Sgt.  
WG Bates, Harold J. S/Sgt.

B-17F #512 Crew #7  
P Bliss, Charles R. 1st Lt.  
CP Larkin, Marion J. 2nd Lt.  
N Bansiak, Chester F. 2nd Lt.  
B Belvin, William W. 2nd Lt.  
TT Delano, Edward J. T/Sgt.  
WG Hamilton, Emmett F. S/Sgt.  
R Cannellos, Robert F. T/Sgt.  
BT Arter, William J. S/Sgt.  
WG Cresser, Francis G. Sgt.  
TG Haid, Theodore R. S/Sgt.

B-17F #526 Crew #4  
P Aspergren, Cleo I. Captain  
CP Fennessy, J.D. 2nd Lt.  
N Billingsley, Emerson T. 2nd Lt.  
B Garrett, Thomas H. 2nd Lt.  
TT Turkington, Russell T. T/Sgt.  
WG Taylor, Herbert W. S/Sgt.  
R Protto, Floyd E. T/Sgt.  
BT Weber, Harry A. Sgt.  
WG Garner, Edgar C. S/Sgt.  
TG Dare, Paul C. T/Sgt.  
F Satterlee, N.E. Sgt.

B-17F #477 Crew #37  
P Mehew, Bill R. 2nd Lt.  
CP Danielecki, Benjamin S. 2nd Lt.  
N Digiovanni, Anthony J. 2nd Lt.  
B Schneider, Robert L. 2nd Lt.  
TT Williams, Herbert K. T/Sgt.  
WG Brennan, J.R. S/Sgt.  
R Harris, J.E. T/Sgt.  
BT Gyler, Emanuel (NMI) S/Sgt.  
WG Gillis, F.D., Jr. S/Sgt.  
TG Dusenack, T.G. S/Sgt.

R Sherris, Sidney S. S/Sgt.  
BT Trinosky, Verne E. S/Sgt.  
WG Compton, Sam R. S/Sgt.  
TG Wallace, David Sgt.

For the Squadron Commander:

/s/ CLEO I. ASPERGREN  
/t/ CLEO I. ASPERGREN  
Operations Officer

A TRUE COPY  
Certified by

JOHN A. SAROSY  
Captain, Air Corps  
Adjutant

THREE HUNDRED FORTY SIXTH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON  
Ninety Ninth Bombardment Group (H) Army Air Forces  
Office of the Intelligence Officer

4 Jan 1945

SUBJECT: Events of General Historical Interest  
TO: S-2, 99th Bomb Gp (H)

1. Following are two historical events which occurred in this squadron in the month of December.

Aircraft 232055, after flying ninety nine (99) consecutive bombing missions without a turn back because of mechanical failure, flew its last mission on 26 December, when it landed on the Island of Vis with three engines out.

Assigned to this squadron on March 29, it compiled 1021 flying of which 860 were combat hours. The first mission was to Steyr, Germany on April 3, when the group attacked the Ball Bearing Works.

Colonel Lauer flew it as lead ship on the first shuttle raid to Russia.

It was transferred from the squadron on 28 December.

On 26 Dec, a Christmas party, sponsored by Staff Sergeant Louis S. Libutti, of the 346th Squadron, and priests of the St. Michael church in Foggia was held in the St. Michael Church.

Sergeant Libutti, a welfare worker before entering the army, has worked for the last month collecting seven large boxes of candy for the occasion. Approximately seven hundred children were given presents which were given out by Chaplain Whitlock and Captains Masters and Warren. Thirty members of the 346th Squadron also attended the party.

WALTER H. JOHNSON,  
Capt, A.C  
S-2, 346th Sqdn.

# LETTERS



May 27, 1990

22

31 Parkland Road  
Mona Vale 2103  
Sydney, Australia

Dear George:

It was interesting to read John O'Connell's letter in the May Newsletter, regarding the "missing" 99th Group mission folders.

Over the past few months I've been corresponding with Wally Bush, Dick Drain and others regarding 229472 Sweater Girl. Dick has established that Sweater Girl flew her last mission on May 14, 1944, to Piacenza with the Gaeth crew. Apparently she flew a total of 111.

Since the mission folders for the 99th's first 100 missions are not available in the archives, Sweater Girl's earlier days are not easily documented. This aircraft was exceptional in many ways, and I'd like to put together a complete record of her career.

It seems that many 99th members completed missions in this plane - for instance, Al Henke flew in her on October 4, 1943 (with Lieutenant Trentadue) and on January 7, 1944 (with Captain Shaw).

I'd like to hear from anyone who flew in Sweater Girl at any time. Just the bare details will do - the date of the mission, position flown, name of pilot. Of course any further details will be warmly welcomed.

Sincerely,

Steve Birdsall

23

August 8, 1989

Dear George,

You will recall that on Page 8 of the March 1, 1989 Newsletter from the 99th BGHS, there is a reference by you to my comments about "the night Murphy told us not to fly." Then, in a later edition, Terry Barton referred to "the elusive Andy Collins," and seemed to echo your suggestion about my writing the story.

In truth, the story should have been written a long time ago, because to me the airmanship displayed in that situation by Dan MacDonald and Terry Barton was exceptional. (I am well aware of the outstanding work done by some of our other pilots that night, and I certainly don't mean to detract in any way from their exploits. But since I was very close to what Mac and Terry accomplished, I feel very grateful for the opportunity to write about it.)

In order to describe what happened, it will be necessary for me to discuss my role to some extent; what I said and what I did. This is not to describe any heroics on my part, because my role was simply to do very basic Dead Reckoning Navigation, and to supply the cockpit whatever information I might develop that would aid the two pilots in saving the lives of ten men and preserving the good condition of the aircraft. The information might have been helpful, but what was significant was the manner in which they used it. (Naturally, the whole crew behaved professionally in making preparation for a wheels-up landing, and every one of them deserves a compliment for their cool performance.) But the real accolades go to Mac and Terry, for I honestly don't know to this day how they could have made such a plus out of a very minus situation.

(United Air Lines' DC-10 accident at Sioux City--and we all remember Sioux City--recently demonstrated once again what skill and professionalism in the cockpit can do to avert total disaster. "The night Murphy said not to fly" was a like example, in the case of 229482.)

Speaking of 229482, you will recall that Bob Goad had regarded (justifiably) that aircraft as his. I remember talking with him the day or so after the mission and asking him what his thoughts were that night with regard to where his crew and aircraft were, and how they were all doing. He said something to the effect that--"Hell, I hoped that if you guys couldn't save the airplane, you had the good fortune of bailing out successfully before running out of gas."

Back to the mission:

On the late afternoon of the briefing, weather was very marginal in the entire area. Murph said very candidly in the weather briefing that it was a **very large** "if." However, we all knew the mission was a "go," and as we were leaving the briefing tent en route to the line, I asked Murph again what to expect. Now, I don't want to suggest that I can remember verbatim what he said; after all, forty-six years is a long time for a 72-year-old memory. But the sense of what he said to me was **not** to expect the whole group, if any of it, to get back to our home base. In other words, he saw deployment to other fields, which of course is what happened.

The take-off, forming, and climb out were all routine, as was the flight to the target area. I don't remember how long we were in the target area before the decision was made to return to base because of impossible bombing conditions, weather-wise, in the target area. Nor do I recall the point in the return trip at which the various aircraft commanders were advised to pursue safe-landing plans at the most advantageous location suggesting itself, aircraft by aircraft.

Given the "every one on his own" option, it was not too long before Mac and Terry opted for Biskroi as the primary alternate to Michael Tower (home base), which was completely socked in.

The new problem, however, was fast-approaching darkness. Another complication was that there were parallel mountain ranges running East to West between our position in the Tunis-Brigerte latitudes and Biskroi to the South. Even if there were no cloud cover, we couldn't see the ground because of fading light. Nor could we get safely close to the ground to explore any openings in the undercast because of the two major changes in elevation on our route to Biskroi. In order to overcome this disadvantage, there were two points on the trip at which I suggested circling descents (before the first range, then circling climbs, then between the ranges) to see if we could possibly see anything that would offer a safe landing opportunity before getting into the Biskroi area.

(If I recall correctly, Terry told me later that one of his questionable thrills on that night was in being asked to accomplish the two circling descents and climb-outs!!! But he and Mac brought them off beautifully; if they had not, we could well have ended up on the side of a peak.)

After trying the "look sees" we proceeded en route to Biskroi. Since I was on interphone all the time and not on the communications channel, I don't know when the cockpit was made aware of the sand storm at Biskroi, or how they were made aware of it. When we got there, it was obvious that we could not attempt a landing. Since time was running out, a decision was made to fly five minutes more on an SSE heading and attempt a wheels-up landing on the desert.

Preparations were made. All crew members except the cockpit crew were posted in the radio room. Mac had indicated to me that when touch-down was imminent, he would signal by pressing his mike switch, at which point I would advise the crew to huddle for the landing.

It was dark. The only lights outside the aircraft were the landing lights; no help on the ground. I believe Mac made two passes, during both of which we could hear sand blowing against the outside of the fuselage, so close were we to the ground.

On the third pass, I received the landing signal; I whistled, and we all braced awaiting touch down. The landing was so smooth, I didn't know we were on the ground until I heard, unbelievably, the screech of brakes. We could not believe what had been accomplished--wheels-down on the Sahara at night with no lights except aircraft landing lights!!

(By the way, before you publish this (if you elect to do so), it might be very desirable to send a draft to Terry. His recollection would be better than mine, and of course he was really one of two gentlemen who made it happen.)

After the engines were shut down, the aircraft was greeted, as we were, by a group of desert dwellers, who offered us live chickens and posted themselves as aircraft guards (complete with their own rifles)!! Interesting.

We slept in the aircraft. At early morning, we discovered that the landing had been accomplished in about 1500 feet of roll area, with pock-marked terrain which had to be "sneaked through" by the cockpit crew during the roll. Another kudo for the pilots!

The bombs, incidentally, were still on the aircraft. Fuel was low, take-off area was limited, but the good old Queen lifted like a kite under maximum power conditions, and we flew to Biskroi, on a reciprocal of our previous night's heading, for five minutes. All was clear, we landed, and one RON, and returned to Michael the second day.

It is obvious, of course, that when recounting this type of experience, the writer might be well inclined to glamorize the event. I have honestly tried to guard against this, because I know that none of the crew needs more than the knowledge that two men applied their skill and resourcefulness to the solution of a potentially critical situation, to the benefit of ten individuals, the preservation of their safety, and the safe return of a very important piece of equipment. Many kudos were earned all over the world in WW II by members of our armed services; some were officially recognized, and very rightly so. I am not suggesting DFCs, DSCs, or other recognition for Mac and Terry, though that would be certainly appropriate, in my opinion. What I am saying is that I will always remember that what those two men did that night made a monumental difference in my life, and I am grateful to them.

In closing, George, on a personal note, I may have occasion to visit ABQ in early September. If I do, I will let you know so that we may get together, at least for lunch or dinner.

Warmest regards to you and Martha.

Andy Collins

Mr. George Coen  
2907 Aliso Dr. NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87111

29 Sept 1989  
Glendale, AZ 85306

Dear Sir:

I am a retired Marine working with the CAF in Mesa, AZ. I am well acquainted with Jim Peters, an old 99th crew member.

This is in reference to an article from your Mar 1, '89 issue concerning a letter from Cy Stidal about the "Yellowstone Park" B-17. The 12 Dec 88 issue of Air Force Times contained a National Park Service press release and AP photo which stated that the tail number was 42-30260 and that the plane went down 23 May 43, killing 10 men. Hopefully this will help in answering some of the questions concerning this aircraft and may help jog some memories.

I am a B-17 history nut interested in tracking tail numbers and names.

Sincerely,

George L. Wyatt

Nov 15, 1989

Dear 99th,

I received the Nov copy of your Newsletter, and enjoyed reading it very much. I appreciate your sending it to me. I'll take it to CAF Headquarters, and put it with the others.

I've received requests from a couple of your members for information about taping their oral histories--but I've yet to receive any tapes!

I sincerely hope you've been able to locate someone to continue the history collecting I began when you all were here last winter. I have information available to help interviewers, and will be more than glad to send it.

Thanks again for the Newsletter,

Margaret Cawood

P.O. Box 2641 Riverside, California 92516 Phone: 714/683-4953

## John Szabo

Researcher of  
Kingman Army Air Field  
and  
WWII Aircraft Scrapping Operation  
Kingman, Arizona

13 March 1990

Dear George,

Just received the 99th newsletter for March and was delighted to see that Steve Birdsall has helped with a couple more pieces to my Kingman Army Air Field puzzle (I'm putting a book together that will cover it's Wartime flexible gunnery training school plus the infamous post-war aircraft graveyard).

He listed one aircraft from each of the 99's squadrons as having upper turret radar sighting (I am also restoring a B-17 upper turret & it's having radar is news to me!) and I'd like to announce that at least two of these planes ended their days at the Kingman, Arizona storage depot (the term 'storage' is used loosely).

The enclosed photo shows two Aircraft Load Adjusters, one bearing the tail number 44-6694 and the other 44-6696. These, along with others in my collection were removed from the ships before that nasty metal blade did it's worst.

If anyone out there has a photo of either ship, or information on the APG-5 Upper Turret Sighting Radar, I'd be very happy to hear from you! KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.....

Plugging away in Riverside,

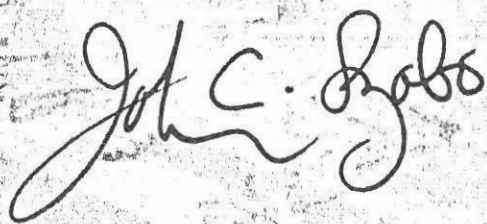


Photo by William T. Larkins, February 8, 1947—Kingman

Air War Is A Tough Grind

CANTON OHIO  
1943

## Local Youth Flies With Army's 'Fighting 99th' Bombing Outfit

Flying over unfriendly seas, jagged mountains and scorching deserts under the constant, nerve-racking strain of watching flight formation, searching for flak batteries and enemy fighters, and always watching the weather—the "Fighting 99th" has successfully and bravely carried out 50 bombing missions.

First Lt. James Flex, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Flex of 1424 4th st NE, navigator on one of the Flying Fortresses in this outfit in Africa, has much to remember, as he recalls the missions which took him to Bizerte, Sardinia, Palermo, Marsala, Genoa, Leghorn, Naples and other targets nearer Rome. He'll remember Messina because he shot a Messerschmidt down there, and Casablanca, Oran, Algiers and Constantine are also more than spots on a map to him now.

The Air Medal with five oak leaf clusters that he wears is the reward for those 50 flights he made. He and the other members of the combat crew have piled up 292 hours of flying over 44,886 miles.

Of course, all of the 99th's Fortresses didn't come out unharmed. Flak damaged 107 planes and enemy fighters managed to put holes in 31 of them. But, this group, like many others, started operations under the severe handicap of having the flight and ground crews separated when they first went into action. The flight personnel came back to the field in the evening after a day's flying to do their own mechanical work. Without a complete staff, and with dust permeating every working part of the engines, maintenance became a real problem.

Typical of their adventurous expeditions was the bombing mission of May 3, when only three planes returned to their home base after bombing Bizerte. Weather, the implacable enemy of all flying men, had scattered the rest of the group. Men parachuted to earth; crash landings were made in the sea and in the mountains. One crew was forced to land with a full load of bombs with an engine on fire. They managed to get out of the airplanes, dashed about 200 yards behind a sand dune and escaped unharmed when the bombs exploded

Seven men were lost in the sea in the anxious two days that followed, and many tales of dogged determination to save airplanes and crew were collected as these airmen wended their way down rugged mountainsides on mules and camels after making parachute landings in the darkness.

But their courage was not unrewarded, as the 585 Air Medals and oak leaf clusters, and seven Purple Hearts worn by members of the group, easily prove. And the high command has issued six special commendations to this group, which has been in operation every day since July 3.

Lt. Flex enlisted in Dec. 1941, and the "Fighting 99th" came into existence Sept. 25, 1942. It passed from the paper stage of its existence to various training centers in the United States and then overseas. At the end of 50 missions, the group lists 42 men missing in action, four killed and 21 wounded, or 67 casualties in all.

8 July 1943

Page 2

LT. COL. RAINEY NEW C.O. OF OLDEST

GROUP IN THE AIR FORCE

Lt. Col. Leroy A. Rainey, San Antonio, Texas, who was recently awarded the Purple Heart for leading four members of his crew of eleven to safety when they were forced to make a water landing off the coast of North Africa during the final week of the Tunisian campaign, has led his first mission over Sardinia as new commanding officer of the oldest heavy bombardment group in the USAAF.

Formerly executive and operations officer of another Flying Fortress group, Col. Rainey is a senior pilot with 2500 hours of airline time, and was recently given command of a group which was the first American heavy bombardment unit to bomb Germany from England, and later the first to harass the Axis in the Tunisian campaign.

A former student at St. Mary's University, the University of Texas and Baylor Dental College, Col. Rainey holds the Air Medal with four Oak Leaf clusters for flying 25 combat missions for a total of 130 combat hours.

Retiring commanding officer of the group is Col. Stanley J. Donovan, Portland, Maine.



## NEWS, DUES & VIEWS

### NOW HEAR THIS

The 99th is now flying B1-Bs. At first your editor misread the model to be B-18s, a dreadful thought indeed. Some of you flyboys must remember the old Digby!  
geo

We have just revised our annual Instructions In Case We Are Taken Hostage. Since a 72-year-old engineer has a life expectancy about one fourth that of a 19-year-old, we are leaving instructions that our heirs insist on a four-to-one trade, four engineers for one terrorist. Logic is logic. Of course we ain't goin' anyway!

### A STORY OF MY FATHER'S PIOUS YOUTH

Back in Columbus Ohio at the turn of the century the Coens and the Rickenbackers were neighbors. The Rickenbackers' boy Eddie was about my father's age, and my uncles will get into this story.

At Halloween my grandfather Coen took great pains to send his boys early to bed. There was an old Dutchman, not further identified, who had a lovely picture window which reached clear down to the porch floor. Early in the evening there was heard the rumble of a small boulder rolling across the porch floor, followed by the crash of shattering glass. The Dutchman at once rushed over to the Coens. My grandfather was puzzled, but he knew better than to argue without checking, so grandpa and the Dutchman went upstairs, and there were the Coen boys under the covers. But grandpa lowered the covers, glancing also at the tree outside the window, and there was nothing to do but rout the fully clad Coens out to go survey the damages. The Dutchman's porch was indeed covered with shards of glass, but the picture window was undamaged. It seems that a pane of glass had been dropped onto the rolling rock. Grandpa had some trouble keeping a straight face.

My uncle Harry B. Coen worked for Rick at Eastern for ten years or so after retirement from General Motors.



## QUOTES



### THE BATTLE OF THE REICHSWALD

BALLANTINE BOOKS, Peter Elstob

But the pause in the assault which followed the Arnhem operation during which the Scheldt was cleared and the port of Antwerp opened, went on and the Germans were granted valuable time, just as Hitler had confidently predicted. They used it well; control was regained of the uncontrolled retreat and firm defence lines were established; the economy was moved into total war - surprisingly for the first time - and record arms production achieved; a great manpower comb-out took able-bodied men out of non-fighting jobs and turned them into hastily trained infantry, the Volksgenadiers. They were replaced by the lame, the sick, and the deaf, some of whom were even formed into second line troops, and by these means part of Germany's staggering losses were replaced.  
p. 25

G.I. by Lee Kennett

. . . the Paul Hamilton [was] lost off Algiers on Apr. 20, 1944. The Paul Hamilton was a Liberty ship headed for Italy with a special demolitions team aboard. It was attacked, as were other ships in its convoy, by six German torpedo planes. There was a thunderous explosion; the Paul Hamilton vanished under an enormous geyser of smoke and water that-incredibly-brought down the Dornier 217 that had torpedoed the Hamilton. The 504 G.I.s on the Hamilton were all lost, as was the entire crew. p.118

Among the most desirable [souvenir] items in the Pacific were the personal battle flags, which Japanese soldiers carried or wore wrapped around them, bearing such inscriptions as "fight bravely" and "we are invincible." Supply was limited, the demand great, and the prices sufficiently high to bring counterfeiters into the market. The bogus flags were made from parachute silk; the counterfeiters, ignorant of the Japanese language, simply copied any inscriptions they could find, including those on abandoned packing crates. Consequently, the bogus battle flags bore inscriptions such as "inflammable" and "this end up." p.120

American military engineers in Australia succeeded in naming an airstrip they built LACKA NOOKIE, having assured the Australian authorities that this was an old Indian name much revered in the United States. p.12  
The Army was ill prepared for the wide-spread consummate theivery it encountered in North Africa, and it paid a high price for its negligence. Graves Registration units reported that recently buried corpses were unearthed and robbed; surveying parties claimed their range poles were stolen the moment they turned their backs (the poles made excellent shepherd's staffs). One surveyor said he had just lined up his transit on a marker flag three thousand yards away when the figure of an Arab suddenly appeared in his field of vision; the next moment both Arab and flag had vanished. During the North African landings, when truck drivers were scarce, beach authorities engaged native drivers, who were given loaded trucks and directions for delivery. In many cases they were never seen again. . . . A soldier wrote from Algeria: "I was offered 1000 francs for a G.I. mattress cover. I believe that the cost to us was \$1.60 when they were issued." (The covers were in demand by Arabs, who cut neck and armholes and wore them.)

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John Roche recalled how two of his buddies replenished their supply of "trade goods" from an Army depot: "Walt had affixed a 'US' brass button to the front of his helmet liner and Buck had his staff sergeant's stripes painted on his. When they approached a supply depot, the guard, and others after him, thought Walt was a major, so gave him all he asked for." p.200-201

#### THE POWERS THAT BE by David Halberstam

The job [in 1940] was huge., America was still very much asleep, it took comfort from the shelter of two great oceans; industry was just coming off the Depression years and beginning to prosper and was in no rush to convert to wartime needs; business was not filled with visionaries. In the late summer of 1941, for example, Graham and Joseph Rauh, then a colleague and later to be known as one of the most influential liberal lawyers in Washington, were working on a study of airplane production. It was at a time when Roosevelt was talking about clouds of American planes. Graham and Rauh checked the production figures, which were still secret, and they found that Roosevelt's prediction was somewhat excessive. America had in fact produced only one four-engined plane in the month of August. Some cloud. They passed this information along to Wayne Coy, their superior, with a note that something ought to be done about it, and Coy soon after received an angry note from Harry Hopkins saying that this was sloppy legwork, there were many more planes on the way. To which Coy added his own note, chastising his young troubleshooters and demanding more accurate research. So they decided to go by and see Robert Nathan, who produced the statistics, telling him that he had cost them dearly with their boss. Nathan looked at his charts for a long time and finally said, "Yes, there's been a serious mistake." Graham turned to Rauh and said, "We've done it this time, there's our ass." "Yes," said Nathan, "there was no bomber produced in August." So they went back, reinforced now, stronger than ever, and pushed Coy to push Hopkins and keep the pressure on.

#### Black night, White Snow, by Harrison E. Salisbury

Whether orders were sent by Moscow to the Yalta Soviet in the first days of April [1918] to execute the Romanovs has not been established. But a pattern and an attitude was beginning to take shape and it cast an ominous shadow ahead. Red terror was now not just a flamboyant phrase. It was a fact and the time was soon to come, as A. D. Naglovsky recalled, when during a meeting of the Soviet of People's Commissars Lenin passed a note to Dzerzhinsky: "How many hardened counterrevolutionaries have we in prison?" Dzerzhinsky passed the note back with the notation: "Around 1,500." Lenin read it, frowned, marked an "X" beside Dzerzhinsky's answer, and returned the slip. The discussion (about railroad affairs) went on.

Dzerzhinsky quietly rose and left the room. Only the next day did it emerge that he had given an order for the 1,500 to be shot. But as Lenin's secretary Fotiyeva explained to Naglovsky, this was not Lenin's intention. He hadn't wanted the 1,500 shot. It was simply his ordinary custom to make a check mark to indicate he had read a reply. Dzerzhinsky had misinterpreted the "X". p. 566

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## Change of Address

Edward E. Geoffroy

Ocean Breeze Ave. Marathon

FL 33000



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

1990 \*\*\*\*\* 347  
J.D. Grizzell  
Rt. 4 Box 270 A  
Paris, TN 38242

Jul. 1990



# FOUND

945 James F. Browning  
946 Robert W. White  
947 Forrest L. Messel  
948 Robert F. Murray  
949 Charles A. Crump  
950 William H. Watkins

AR	72023	416
AL	35950	
MO	63139	348
NJ	08540	
AZ	85051	347
		23185