

# 99th Bomb Group



## B-17 FLYING FORTRESS

395 COMBAT MISSIONS  
1943 AFRICA - EUROPE 1945

### THE 99TH BOMB GROUP HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 12 No. 6

November 1, 1992

#### SOCIETY OFFICERS - 1992-1993

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#### PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At the 1991 Albuquerque Reunion the 99th Bomb Group Historical Society was invited to visit Rapid City and join in with the 99th Strategic Weapons Wing for our 1992 Reunion. It proved an excellent choice; the Rapid City Reunion exceeded all expectations with 348 members attending from 41 States. The reunion was hosted by Marion and Jean Larkin and Mike and Lettie Yarina. They and their many helpers deserve our gratitude and praise for making this reunion a memorable occasion.

On Tuesday evening, each Squadron was invited to a get-together which, in the case of the 346th, turned out to be an opportunity for each 99er to recount his wartime experiences. There was amazement at the number who were shot down and those who served time in POW camps. It was a unique and enlightening experience for those attending.

Wednesday, on our way to Deadwood, we made an interesting stop at a gold mine that has been operating since the Civil War period. Then we discovered how Deadwood has changed. Instead of the attraction of quiet historical streets, saloons, hotels and Mount Moriah where Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane are buried side by side; the new attraction is casino gambling. Even the ice-cream

parlor where one could enjoy an old-fashioned ice cream soda is now part of a casino. Wonder how Wild Bill would have reacted to those one armed bandits. The Circle B ranch was the next stop that evening where the 99ers enjoyed a chuckwagon meal followed by a talented western musical group who played and sang the type of cowboy music that we all remember. One particular number called for the lights to be turned off in the hall, unfortunately, the lights also went out in the restrooms where a few of our members happened to be at the time! As far as we know, everyone caught in that situation has recovered!

On Thursday, the group visited the Crazy Horse Mountain site to view the progress being made to shape this mountain into a memorial to a renowned native American. The group witnessed a blast which removed some of the mountain as part of the sculpting process. A short bus ride later, the sight of Mount Rushmore greeted the members. What an imposing monument to four of our noted Presidents! Later, a band serenaded the 99th visitors with many of the military numbers and melodies popular in the 30's and 40's. While awaiting the lighting ceremony which was quite a display, there was another display; the stars which were bright beyond belief in the clean, clear western sky.

The personnel at Ellsworth AFB and the new 99th were our hosts on Friday for a visit to the flight line, a tour of the Training Activity and a luncheon in the Officers Club. Each Squadron had a formal group picture taken with a B1 bomber in the background. Base personnel were available to answer questions as we observed the bombers, both parked and in touch-and-go landings by the B1 crews. It was truly an awesome visit. As we entered the Training Building, we were pleased to see that an increasing amount of B17 memorabilia is being displayed in the front lobby; testimony to their dedication to keeping the 99th history alive.

We were treated to a delicious luncheon at the Officers' Club which was opened by Chaplain Kenny who offered a prayer for all of the departed 99ers with special mention of General Upthegrove and President Harvey Jennings; both of whom died during the past year. An interesting presentation was given by Col. Hinson on the organization and functions of the various activities at Ellsworth. Cols. Hinson and Roberts and Capt. O'Neal were available to answer any questions. President Hopen then conducted a 99th BGHS business meeting where the new directors; Denzel Clark, Jim Smith and a second term, Jules Horowitz, were officially elected by the membership. Minor changes and additions to the Bylaws were also approved.

The Officers elected by the Board of Directors for 1992-1993  
 President-Roy H. Worthington  
 Vice President-Jim Smith  
 Secretary-Chris Christiansen  
 Treasurer-Walter Butler  
 Historian-George Coen  
 Chaplain-Joe Kenney

Your involvement and support will be truly appreciated.

Saturday night--everyone was sharply dressed for the banquet and the dance. Chaplain Kenney opened the evening with a prayer for the living and past members of the 99th. After a delightful meal, our host, Marion Larkin, introduced Col. Hinson who gave an interesting presentation which included a comparison of the B17, B52, and B1b. I remember the load-carrying capability; the B17 carried 12-500 lb.

units, the B52 carries 104-500 lb. units and the B1b carries 86-500 lb. units. The crew consisted of 10, 6 and 4 resp. Charlie Miller then presented a plaque to Mrs. Upthegrove which he fashioned with insignia, mementoes and a photo of our departed General. Carol Hinton saluted her uncle and our deceased President, Harvey Jennings and introduced Mrs. Harvey Jennings. Bernie Barr gave a preview of our 1993 reunion at Ontario, CA. Len Hopen introduced Joe and Maybelle Chance who were celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary, recognized the original 99ers who joined the group prior to going overseas, asked any ground crew attendees to accept the applause of the group, recognized the hospitality room volunteers and then introduced our newly elected President, Roy Worthington. Roy introduced those who will help him during the coming year. The Larkins and Yarinias gave some very attractive door prizes to the lucky ones. Then the music took us back to a danceable period when we looked at things in light of the exciting yet troublesome times of our youth. It was a truly enjoyable evening!

My sincere appreciation to those who helped make it a year and a reunion to remember

DON'T FORGET--WE CAN DO IT AGAIN NEXT YEAR AT ONTARIO!

Your Past President: Len Hopen

## THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

### GREETINGS:

Another very successful Reunion is behind us with the many memories remaining with us, the wonder of meeting, greeting and reminiscing with our many close friends. On a personal note, visiting with Al and Hazel Betcher attending their first reunion. Al and I flew many missions together, a very special friendship maintained all down the years.

How about that splendid day at Ellsworth Air Force Base? So much tremendous interest shared in aircraft, weaponry and in methods of training revealed, all of it sophisticated beyond comprehension. As Hosts for the day, the 99th Weapons Group, successors to our own very good name, gave us their very best.

We salute the Larkins and Yarinias for their diligent and successful efforts which by any standards made this one of the best Reunions.

Included from this Corner is the Memorial Service as presented at our fine Banquet.

Tonight we remember those who died in battle defending the freedoms we all fought for so long ago, and for those of our Group who lost their lives in several terrible accidents, each life given while serving this Nation throughout the War. We remember all those who have passed on since that time, but uppermost in our minds are those twenty-five men, now twenty-six as of yesterday, who passed away this past year. We remember the several wives of members who have likewise crossed that River into Eternity, within this Memorial.

This causes each of us to reflect deeply into those dreadful times as well as up into the present days, and for genuine and sincere sympathy for the families of the Bereaved.

A verse that seems to fit us here in Rapid City comes from Romans, Chapter 12; Verse 15: "REJOICE WITH THOSE WHO REJOICE; MOURN WITH THOSE WHO MOURN."

Let's enjoy the unique and close friendships we have with one another, close feelings through the great and incredible things we were called upon to perform, and we take pride in those great and impossible accomplishments, and in helping to end the War. We have a Brotherhood quite unlike anything any of us have experienced throughout our lives. So let's enjoy these late and tranquil days of summer we experience in these climes when field and forest are still in their summer green. Soon enough cold winds will blow bringing fall and colder weather followed all too soon by the bitter and long winter season. Kind of like the part of life we all share during this time of our lives, so let's "smell the Flowers" while we can as we revel in our great Association through this Reunion.

Would you join with me in Prayer, please. Our God and Father, we Praise You for these very special days as we Honor and Remember all of those who have gone on before us. We make special tonight in our thoughts Wife Betty and Family, of General Fay Upthegrove, our first Commanding Officer who held this Group in such high esteem, who was demanding in discipline but compassionate at heart. A man many of us feel was responsible for the survival of many of us who flew under his Command. And for Pauline, wife of Harvey Jennings, our last years President. Harvey was always on deck early along with Pauline to accomplish the many things necessary in any Reunion. We will miss both of these fine men.

Remembering those who are here, an appropriate verse seems to be from Psalms 133; Verse 1: "BEHOLD, HOW GOOD AND PLEASANT IT IS FOR BROTHERS

TO DWELL TOGETHER IN UNITY." All of this in the Name of our Lord and Saviour, Amen.

Let's begin making plans for the next Reunion lending our support to Bernie Barr, Reunion Chairman, to Roy Worthington, our President and important right now is consideration for submitting your name to either Julius Horowitz or Joe Chance for election to the Board of Directors for this Group. A verse from Chapter 6; Verse 8 goes like this: "THEN SAID I, HERE AM I; SEND ME." I'd like very much to see some of the same willingness in our own membership as Isaiah displayed in Biblical times.

Joe C. Kenney, Chaplain

Dear Mr Larkin

After a long period of anticipation, it was great to host the 99 BG Reunion at Ellsworth. We are proud of our heritage and it was satisfying to convey our sense of continuity as Air Combat Command moves forward to remain relevant and lethal in a new world order. Experienced many expressions of enthusiasm and enjoyment from our folks. Donna and I are especially grateful for being included in your luncheon and banquet plans. The atmosphere of shared unit esprit and chance to renew last years acquaintances was a privilage. Thank you for inviting us...best wishes to all.

Warm Regards

*Jim & Donna Roberts*

Page 4

Page 5

COL. ROBERT HINSON, Commander of the 99th Tactics and Training Wing, Ellsworth AFB South Dakota, made these remarks at our Rapid City Reunion Banquet.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the 99th Bomb Group, it is a real pleasure for me to be with you this evening, and after hearing some of your war stories, I stand in awe of your many accomplishments and I,m proud to be a member of the 99th history, everytime I review the 99th history I,m amazed at your early successes and the many locations you operated from - Gowen Field, Idaho, Walla Walla, Washington, Algeria, Italy , Fairchild AFB, Washington, Westover AFB, Massachusetts and Ellsworth AFB, South Dakota - Just to name a few. The 99th has participated in three Conflicts - World War II, Southeast Asia, and most recently Southwest Asia. The 99th missions have included such responsibilities as Long Range Strategic Bombardment, Reconnaissance, and Tactics Development Training and Testing. The instruments of these missions have included such aircraft as the B-17, RB-36, B-52, KC-135,s, and B-LB,s. Certainly we all can be very proud of the 99th motto - "AGGRESSORS BEWARE."

As you have witnessed during your visit here at Ellsworth, there have been many changes to take place not only with the 99th but with the Air Force structure in total. Those of you who flew and maintained the legendery B-17 flying fortress quickly recognize some of those simple changes characterized by the speed, combat range and weapons capacity of today's B-52 and B-1 aircraft. As simple comparison: The B-17 with its crew of 10 had a wing span- 103 ft., four 1000 horsepower engines, 40,000 lb. gross weight, cruising speed - 160 MPH/ 300 MPH top speed, bomb load - 6- 1600 lb. bombs & 2 - 4000lb bombs, or any combination to 24-100pound bombs and 8 to 11 -- 50 caliber machine guns, roughly 8,680 B-17G models and 3400 B-17F models were built at an average cost of roughly 350,000 dollars. By comparison our most modern bomber in service - The B-1B with its crew of 4 has a wing span of 137 feet at 15 degrees and 79 feet with its wings AFT at 67.5 degrees, aircraft weight - 470,000, four turbofan engines in the 30,000 pound thrust class per engine, a speed range in excess of machine and a weapons load capability of 84 - 500 lb conventional munitions. However, only 100 B-1,s were built at a cost of roughly 20 million dollars each. Quite a difference - but so is the threat, and as you all know aircraft and missions are built and formed to meet the challenge of the enemy threat.

Colonel Jim Roberts, my test group Commander, described for you yesterday the current mission of the 99th. We are the central point of tactics development and training for bomber aircraft. We are responsible for testing new systems that improve bomber aircrew combat capability providing them with that edge to defeat any threat. It goes without saying that we take our business very seriously - because this is still a seriously unstable world. Even with the fall of the Berlin Wall, and disintegration of the Warsaw Pact and Soviet Union -We still face potential adversaries who employ some of the most sophisticated weapons systems in the world. We must be prepared - we believe that your 99th professionals of today are making a difference in being prepared for that next conflict.

### THANKS FOR AN ENJOYABLE STAY

My wife and I spent the week of Sept. 1 in Rapid City attending the annual reunion of the 99th Bomb Group. I want to thank those who made our stay so enjoyable.

The personnel at Howard Johnson's Motel and all the local citizens we came in contact with were pleasant and helpful. Personnel at Ellsworth Air Force Base where we were guests for a tour and lunch, were very gracious. Most of all, I want to thank our hosts for the reunion, Mr. and Mrs. Marion Larkin, who worked many long months to provide an enjoyable get-together.

JIM HAGER  
1722 Newcastle  
Los Altos, Calif.



Ironically as I reviewed my 99th history I discovered that in 1944, a B-17 - one of which was named 2nd Patches - flown by the 346th Bomb Squadron flew missions out of Russia against rail installations in Hungary. Nearly 50 years later, two B-52 aircraft flew into the Soviet Union and parked on Soviet soil as a Peace gesture. This is only one of the many examples I could give you to describe the changes that have resulted in the restructuring of your Air Force today. As we trace our proud heritage, I believe we - the 99th - can be proud of the fact that in our own ways we have contributed to where we are today. There have indeed been many changes and will be many more in the next few years - the Air Force will continue to get smaller - proud professionals who wear this Air Force Blue will be asked to leave, aircraft will be retired and placed along side their predecessors in the bone yards of Davis Montham or in museums around the country, military budgets will be reduced and we will be asked to do more with less or at least to do things smarter with fewer bucks and people. Using a famous quote by an anonymous author-"We,ve come a long way baby" and we will see more in the future. Smarter people doing business with more sophisticated systems--faster and with more capability than we recognize even today.

Finally, a question I often ask myself, will the 99th be part of that progression of the future. At this point I can,t give you an unequivocal answer. The 99th has been activated and deactivated number of times in it,s history. I,m sure if the 99th Bomb Groups First Commander, General Upthegrove, were with us today he would quickly tell us that he,s proud of the contributions the 99th has made to preserving world peace and that our roots are deep with many proud memories and rewarding accomplishments. Today, we have a mission that continues to be a vital contributor to the combat readiness of our bomber forces. The 99th Tactics and Training Wing is a multi-faceted organization with people with a broad range of experiences, qualified to perform any number of assignments. We are proud to carry the name of the 99th and hope that we represent you in the fashion that you established for us in the very beginning.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it has been my distinct pleasure to be with you this evening. I hope your visit and reunion have been enjoyable and that you will come back to visit us again in the very near future. Thank you

We all thank Col HINSON for these remarks and to know that our 99th Bomb Group still exists and is in such esteem and occupies an important role in todays AIR FORCE. Thanks Col Hinson for your remarks and hospitality during our visit to your base. We also thank Col Jim ROBERTS for his excellent presentation at our Friday business luncheon.

At our business luncheon our president LEN HOPEN asked that we bring the history of the 99th up to date. The following gives a concise statement of our history.

## History of the 99th Tactics and Training Wing

The 99th Tactics and Training Wing traces its origins back to the 99th Bombardment Group activated on 1 June 1942. The 99th Bombardment Group went unmanned after activation until September 1942 when it transferred to Gowen Field, Ohio. A cadre out of the 29th Bombardment Group at Gowen provided the group with its initial manning. The 99th gained additional personnel and B-17 aircraft after moving to Walla Walla, Washington at the end of September 1942.

The unit trained with the newly acquired B-17's despite numerous moves and inclement weather. In February 1943, the air echelon flew to North Africa via the southern route, arriving in Algeria in late February. Meanwhile, the ground echelon moved to the east coast, sailing from the New York Port of Embarkation on 29 April 1943 aboard the USS Edmund B. Alexander. The ground echelon arrived in Algeria on 12 May, 1943 and joined the air echelon at Navarin, Algeria on 24 May 1943.

The 99th Bombardment Group entered combat as part of the Twelfth Air Force and flew its first mission on 31 March 1943 against the Villacidro Airdrome, Sardinia. The unit bombed such targets as airdromes, harbor facilities, shipping, railroads, viaducts, and bridges in Tunisia, Sicily, Pantelleria, and Italy until December 1943. The 99th received a Distinguished Unit Citation ((DUC) for performance on 5 July 1943 when the group helped neutralize fighter opposition prior to the invasion of Sicily by penetrating enemy defenses to bomb planes, hangars, fuel supplies, and ammunition dumps at Gerbini airfield.

The 99th transferred to Fifteenth Air Force in November 1943 and moved to an airfield near Foggia, Italy in December 1943. Crews of the 99th flew long-range missions to attack such strategic objectives as oil refineries, marshaling yards, aircraft factories, and steel plants in Italy, France, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Greece. The unit received its second DUC for withstanding seer fighter assault to bomb the vital aircraft factory and facilities at Weiner Neustadt on 23 April 1944.

The group led the first bombing-shuttle mission into Russia. The 99th bombed rail installations at Debreczen, Hungary on 2 June 1944, then landed at Poltava, Russia. Crews flew one mission from Poltava on 6 June 1944 and on 11 June 1944 returned to Italy, bombing Focsani Airdrome, Rumania en route. Other operations included assisting ground forces at Anzio and Cassino, February-March, 1944; and supporting the Allied Offensive in the Po Valley, April 1945. The group inactivated in Italy on 8 November 1945.

The unit activated and redesignated in the Reserve at Birmingham, Alabama as the 99th Bombardment Group (Very Heavy) on 29 May, 1947. The 99th Bombardment inactivated on 27 June 1949.

The unit activated as the 99th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing on 1 January 1953, replacing the 111th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington. The 99th performed global photographic, electronic, and visual day/night strategic reconnaissance, January 1953 - September 1956. as a primary

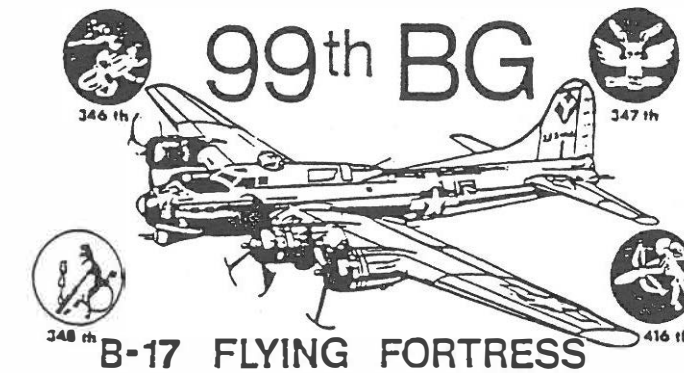
mission to late 1954 and thereafter as a secondary mission. From January 1955 to February 1956, one tactical squadron additionally had a FICON (Fighter Interceptor Carrier, Reconnaissance) mission in which GRB-36s tested carrying RF-84FS under the fuselage of bombers to extend the range of the interceptors. The wing was redesignated as the 99th Bombardment Wing (Heavy) on 1 October, 1955 and strategic bombardment became the wing's primary mission in late 1954, with RB-36s to August 1956 and B-52s from December 1956.

In January 1966, the wing became responsible for operating and maintaining Westover Air Force Base, Massachusetts. That same month it gained a KC-135 tanker squadron and added air-refueling to the wing's mission. The new squadron also operated EC-135s which performed a PACCS (Post Attack Command Control System) mission in support of Eighth Air Force until March 1970.

The wing loaned all tactical and maintenance and some other support resources to SAC forces in the Pacific Southeast Asia area for combat operations in the SEA conflict on several occasions beginning in 1967. During October 1967, April 1968, September 1968, March 1969, March - June 1970 and April 1972 - March 1974, most of the wing's tactical resources and large portions of its support resources were on loan to SAC organizations engaged in combat operations. During these periods, the reduced 99th Wing's primary mission was operation and maintenance of Westover Air Force Base. Wing personnel worked toward inactivation of the wing and phased-down of Westover AFB from April 1973 to March 1974. The 99th Bombardment Wing Inactivated at Westover AFB, Massachusetts on 31 March 1974.

Strategic Air Command activated the 99th Strategic weapons Wing on 10 August 1989. The wing was redesignated as the 99th Tactics and Training Wing on 1 September 1991. The wing joined the 28th Wing and 44th Missile Wing at Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota. The 99th brings with it a proud heritage of distinguished service and continues accomplishing a critical task: preparing aircrews to successfully counter defensive threats and deliver weapons at any altitude in a combat environment --a mission promising daily challenges for its men and women. The wing motto is "CAVE AT AGGRISOIRES - Let aggressors beware".

During the Persian Gulf War, 131 personnel (40% of the wing's assigned strength) deployed to CONUS and overseas locations in support of Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Wing tanker tacticians rapidly developed tactical employment Rules of Engagement for the Persian Gulf theater and briefed aircrews on tactics techniques. The 99th CAMS deployed the majority of its personnel to ensure the B-52 force was capable of delivering ordnance. The intelligence personnel debriefed aircrews and provided combat analysis. The 25th Flying Tactics Training Squadron and Bomber/Tanker Employment School personnel flew over 100 B-52 combat sorties over Iraq. This was the first war in which 99th Tactics and Training wing personnel participated and was, as Secretary of Defense Cheney declared, "the most successful air campaign in the history of the world".



Sept. 16, 1992

Dear Bernie;

At the Rapid City Reunion I had the privilege of speaking with Marle Smith and Walter Harbison. They have a unique story to tell here, their account set down verbatim as it was presented (written) by Marle D. Smith. Along with this is a briefed account of Harvey Jennings since he was involved directly with Walter Harbison's being shot down over Maribor, Yugoslavia.

From Marle Smith's account verbatim:

Our Crew, that of Lt. Homer McClanahan, has a story associated with it that I think might be of interest to you. All of the original ten men on the Crew which was formed at Alexandria, LA. were shot down but they took four bombers with them.

Our Copilot, Lt. Walter Harbison, was in the process of checking out as First Pilot on a mission to Maribor, Yugoslavia on November 7th, 1944 and was shot down. As I recall, we suffered considerable damage and had several losses that day. The mission had to be flown at a lower level because of weather. I remember meeting the crews as they were returning and the expressions on their faces made it clear that it had been a difficult mission. Lt. Harbison was the first of our crew to go down. Walter tells me the Engineer on that Crew that day was shot while in his chute and later died. As a result of this action Walter was required to testify at a "War Crimes Hearing."

I. Sgt. Marle D. Smith, was the second to be shot down. Mac had been chosen to be one of the lead Pilots and when he flew in a radar ship, my position, the ball turret, was taken by the radar and as a result I was falling behind the rest of the crew in missions. It meant a lot to me to go home with the rest of the crew so I asked the Operations Officer to schedule me on other crews as needed. As a result, I was flying with a new crew, Lt. Flak's, on December 26th, 1944 and was shot down over Blechhammer.

Most of the remainder of the crew were shot down on that infamous "Glassford Mission" of December 29th, 1944. Mac was flying lead for the 346th that day. Those going down from our regular crew were: Mac McClanahan; Navigator Harry Siesnick; Bombardier Calvin Essenberg; Engineer Sgt. James Jackson; Radio Operator Sgt. Gerard Paule and Waist Gunners Sgt. Eugene Orbin and Sgt. Arnold McKinney. That accounted for seven more.

The remaining member was the Tail Gunner, Sgt. Vernon Cole. He had been separated from our Crew while on our way over from the States. He became ill and was hospitalized in England and subsequently assigned to a B-24 Group in Italy. He was shot down and killed over Berlin on a mission in 1945.

Although all ten were shot down, only one was killed. Two, Mac and Orbin, were held by Italian Partisans. Lt. Harbison was a POW at Stalagluft 3, and the remaining six were POWs at Stalagluft 1 at Barth.

In connection with Marle D. Smith's account, is that of Harvey Jennings, who was shot down with Walter Harbison on the Maribor, Yugoslavia mission. This account was taken from the "Oral History of The Confederate Air Force Heritage Foundation" as told them by Harvey. This account follows as nearly as possible in narrative with specific parts verbatim from Harvey's words.

Harvey says: "I filled in on a crew where the only people I knew were the Pilot and Copilot. The Pilot's name was Lt. Delph, he was from Topeka, Kansas. The Copilot's name was Walt Harbison. He was from someplace down in Missouri."

"This was my 26th mission and we were going to Maribor, Yugoslavia. The flak was pretty heavy and everything, and it was supposed to be a milk run according to Colonel Bernie Barr. He was leading the Group."

"Another aircraft went down at the same time we did. The first hit started a fire in the bomb bay. The Pilot told the Engineer to check and see. The bomb bay doors were open, we were still on the bomb run but hadn't dropped our bombs yet. He notified us of the fire in the bomb bay saying there is fire and smoke and everything. And then, "POW!" we took another hit, that one just forward of my position in the tail. Suddenly, the bail out alarm buzzed."

Harvey had trouble getting out because the second hit had jammed his escape hatch. He then had to move around the tail wheel to the waist door to make good his escape. He got hung up on the tail wheel assembly and, through that, lost his shoes which he had tied on. The ball turret gunner offered some help and both left the plane. Harvey spoke of the silence of floating down and the visibility where he could see for such long distances. On his way down the Germans were shooting at him and:

Harvey says: "All of a sudden, 'ping!' I heard something go past my ear. I looked up and there was a hole in my chute. A couple of seconds later, 'ping!' Another shot by my ear and another hole in my chute, and then a third! Them people are shootin' at me, this ain't fun now! I'm losing air and falling faster than I normally would fall because of the holes."

He hit the ground hard and 'sort of' sprained his ankle. He spoke of what a lonesome feeling he had as he was taken prisoner, they speaking their language and not able to understand his. The Gestapo finally picked him up and transported him to what appeared to have been an old school house where he was then placed in large rooms. Soon the ball gunner came to join him. They were then taken to some jail in Maribor placing the two in a jail cell where the Pilot and Copilot were there with another gunner. The Navigator came in about two hours later. He'd been to the hospital where he had given a direct blood transfusion to the Engineer who had been shot coming down in his chute.

When they moved these crew members the Jailer took Harvey's flying boots. He fashioned foot coverage from strips of an old blanket in the cell and this gave him a great deal of trouble with frost bite and fatigue since it was cold and there was snow on the ground. They were marched to an area where they were placed on a train. When they arrived at Stuttgart, Germany where they were to change trains, they were taken through the train depot where citizens abused them. They finally arrived at Frankfurt, Germany where he underwent intensive interrogation. He was thrown into an 8'X8' cell in Solitary. He was hungry and tired and his feet cold and hurting. The only thing in that cell was a filthy lice ridden straw mattress. He simply laid down and went to sleep. He didn't care.

Harvey says: "Then the Germans would turn the heat off., and it got cold in that room in the latter part of November. Your teeth would chatter. Then they'd turn the heat up and run it up to 100 or 105 degrees; you'd start sweatin'. When you sweated, the doggone budbugs and cooties would bite you. That would last for fifteen or twenty minutes; then they'd turn the heat off. Then it

(Harvey Jennings account continued)

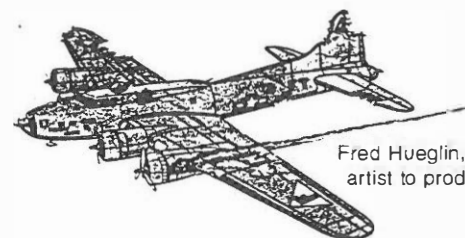
would get cold. Then somebody would open the door. Bang! You'd be taken out for interrogation. The guy who interrogated me went to school and graduated from the University of Boston. He spoke fluent English! He told me stuff about my family I didn't even know myself. He said; "Sergeant Jennings, do you know your brother is a Captain in the Infantry Division in Luxembourg with General Patton?" I didn't even know my brother was in Luxembourg. He was at that time. "Do you know that you have a brother that's stationed in the Infantry Cavalry Division at Fort Bliss, Texas out of El Paso?" I didn't know my brother was stationed there. He was at that time. "Do you know that you have a brother-in-law that's in the Navy that's on a ship at Midway?" I knew my brother-in-law was a Pharmacist's Mate, I knew he was in the Pacific, but I didn't know where at. But that Officer told me where I went to school, he told me things that I didn't even remember myself. It was amazing. Because my mother's maiden name was Wildermood, that's German; "Why are you fighting your own people?" He's telling me all these things that I don't even know myself. Of course I'm answering: Name, Rank and Serial Number! "You're no help!" Back to Solitary. Heat, then cold, heat, then cold. Bring you back again. Have an apple--big, juicy, beautiful apples. I wanted to reach over there and grab that thing in the worst way. "Have a banana." - - - "Sergeant Harvey Jennings, Air Force 19044419" - - - Back to the cooler. That went on for -- oh, you lose all track of time. I didn't even know whether it was daylight outside or whether it was dark. When you went into the room the lights were on but the shakes were pulled. When they finally saw they weren't going to get anything from me they finally gave me some clothing and shoes. It took some time for my feet to heal, but they put me in a barracks like the ones we had back in the States."

This is but just a portion of Harvey's experiences in the Service and as a POW and covers only his bail out over Maribor, Yugoslavia and what happened to him from that time through his capture and on through until the Germans were through with trying to force him to talk. His connection through Walter Harbison causes me to wonder how many interesting articles might be written if each of the survivors of Homer (Mac) McClanahan's crew would compose their experiences and send them in to come out in our bi-monthly bulletins.

For Harvey, his was a very rough period for him as it had to be for all of our men. But what I think of most is Harvey's stalwart posture, how everything they had done to make him talk, all they got was his Name, his Rank, and his Serial Number. That was Harvey, loyal and true even in the face of adversity right on through the end.

Sincerely;

Joe C. Kenney



Fred Hueglin, a past Society Director, commissioned an artist to produce this interesting rendition of the B-17's ruggedness.



**99th BGHS LADIES PLAN AHEAD**

Our ladies form a vital part of our organization and they have made some vital observations that we need to listen too. First start a ladies activity as a part of the Reunion. The note that I received stated let the good times roll-99'rs ladies some of the very best days are to come-have FUN TIMES with the 99th Ladies-A session of open discussion-tell your story emphasizing your happy days-set up a ladies session-all ladies please plan to participate- bring your snapshots-tell of your travels-kid stories-PLAY BRIDGE?Let us do our thing together. At our 99th BGHS Reunion in ONTARIO, C.A. Oct 26-31, 1993 we have reserved a special room for the ladies so please plan to be part of the activities. MORE INFO AS IT DEVELOPES...

Second A POSSIBLE COOKBOOK??? Yes several of the ladies think that there should be enough recipes within our 99th that it would be great to publish our own cookbook. Please write your favorite recipe out with all the instructions and mail to PAULINE JENNINGS at 2621 Las Casas, Rancho Cordova, CA, 95670.. Cost and publishing depend on your response. Do it today before it slips your mind. I might even send one to PAULINE.

Third-It was the ladies at RAPID CITY THAT DID THE REGISTRATIONS. Yes LARK LARKIN and MIKE YURINA were there in the background while JEAN LARKIN, LETTIE YARINA, BETTY UPERTHEGROVE, IDA PETERSON, PEG BELLINGS, YDORIS BARR, and others kept things moving along. So ladies as we move to ONTARIO, CA we still depend on you to keep us moving in the best direction. Please help DORIS and BERNIE AS THEY PLAN OUR Reunion for October 26 thru 31st, 1993 at the MARRIOTT HOTEL in ONTARIO. This date was selected so that we the 99th could have our reunion and any of our members who choose to join the 15th Air Force in their reunion could do so on Oct 30th thru Nov 3rd in Riverside, CA. Follow your 15th AF News letter for details. One trip equals two reunions if you choose.

**P. O. W.'s TAKE NOTICE**

If you were a prisoner of war and have not received your METAL write to Bernie Barr 7408 Vista Del Arroyo for an application Form to apply for the metal. Bernie lives in Albuquerque, NM 87109.

Plans are now underway for a mini-Reunion in Dayton, Ohio from April 28 through May 1, 1993. Same rules apply to attend this mini-reunion as applied to the Kansas City mini. You are welcome if you can't wait until October 1993 for a get-together, or you plan to go to this and the California Reunion in October 1993, or you can't go to California. 74% of those who came to K.C. last April went to Rapid City in September.

For more information write or call JIM SMITH, 9801 Richmond Drive, Kansas City, MO 64134. Phone 816-761-0588.

Yours truly,



RAY SCHWANBECK WAS THE LAST COMBAT COMMANDER OF THE 99TH BOMB GROUP IN 1945. As you see he still has an active interest in the combat groups that he flew with in WWII.

Jan. 4, '92


Dear Doris and Bernie:

Received your Greeting Card, (Thank you, and the same to you two too), and thanks for the info regarding the Ontario and Riverside meeting in Oct./Nov. of '93. That is what I call "planning ahead" for me, anyhow, as you may guess I have just about reached the point in time that I won't even buy green bananas any more. It was also noted that our Host at the Ontario gathering would be Doris and Bernie Barr. Therefore you may rest assured that Jo and Ray will make their presence known by showing up, God willing.

We do not intend to make the mini-reunion in Kansas City and as yet have made no plans to attend the Sept. reunion in Rapid City. However, we are in the process of making arrangements to attend the 19th Group reunion in Seattle August 13/15, along with one of those 7 day excursions from Vancouver to Alaska, if we can find one to coincide within a reasonable time before or after the Seattle reunion.

Hope you can make the "wing-ding" at Seattle for Boeing's 50th anniversary celebration of the B-29. Yes, I know I had very little or nothing to do with the B-29 and you probably didn't either. So what? The 19th Group finally ended up with B-29's. I don't recollect you-all attending any 19th Group reunions lately. Now's the time to try one.

SINCERELY,



Hi Ray! I can understand your interest in the 19th BG since you were in it in Albuquerque before going to the Philippines in 1941, flew combat against the Japs. Yes, I did fly the B-29 at Pratt, Kansas in 1945 and would have enjoyed the Boeing festivities, too many reunions at the same time period makes it hard to be at them all. 7th BG in Dayton 1st of September, same as 99th in Rapid City, which we enjoyed, and the 19th in Seattle. Looking forward to seeing you in Ontario...



99th BGHS POLICIES IN ADDITION TO THOSE IN THE BYLAWS

1. The bylaws state that new members proposed for the Board of Directors (BOD) be elected by the Membership at the annual Membership meeting.

2. The bylaws state that the Officers are elected by the new Board of Directors after the Membership Meeting.

To meet these requirements, a preliminary BOD meeting is held to transact regular business and to prepare a slate of candidates for the Board of Directors to be presented for election at the Membership meeting. The final BOD meeting is held following the Membership meeting to elect the Officers of the 99th BGHS and to complete any outstanding business remaining from the preliminary meeting.

The following policies have been submitted by the Advisory Committee (with some rewording by the President to conform to present bylaws) as an addendum to or clarification of the present bylaws and, in approved form, will be an attachment to the present bylaws.

A. A member being nominated to the BOD should attend the preliminary BOD meeting, in a non-voting capacity, to meet seated Directors and Officers and to affirm willingness to serve as a Director.

B. After election at the Membership meeting, the candidate immediately assumes the position of Director along with voting rights at the final BOD meeting.

C. A member who completes the normal four year term as a Director leaves the BOD at the end of the Reunion of his fourth year in office. This allows a departing Director to maintain a vote until Society business is completed by the BOD for that year.

D. A Director is expected to attend all BOD meetings during his term of office.

E. A Director vacates his office by death, by resignation accepted by the President, or by absence from two consecutive annual BOD meetings.

F. A Past President has all the rights and privileges of a Director at the BOD meetings which he attends.

G. ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER is the guideline for conducting the business and affairs of the 99th BGHS.

These policies were approved by the Board of Directors and Len Hopen, President of the 99th BGHS, presented them to the general membership meeting on Friday, September 4, 1992 at Ellsworth Air Force Base, SD. The membership approved these policies and they become an addendum to our By-Laws. Please correct your copy accordingly.

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION -1992 DUES - \$15.00**

NEWSLETTERS 1981-1991 \$10/yr.81\_82\_83\_84\_85\_86\_87\_88\_89\_90\_91\_Total\_\_\_\_\_

NAME\_\_\_\_\_ SQUADRON (or Assoc)\_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS\_\_\_\_\_ NEW\_\_\_\_\_ RENEWAL\_\_\_\_\_

CITY\_\_\_\_\_ STATE\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP\_\_\_\_\_ PHONE\_\_\_\_\_

Mail to Walter Butler, Treasurer, 8608 Bellehaven Place NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112. Make check payable to 99BGHS. The upper left corner of your address label shows the date to which you are paid up.

Please check your address label-If your label does not say 1992 you are not up to date with your dues. The 99th BGHS membership fees are due on the 1st of JANUARY each year. Please bring your membership up to date. Our 1993 dues are payable on the 1st of January 1993 and Walter Butler will be pleased to receive your payment now or by 1st of January 1993. These monies pay for the cost of publishing and mailing your newsletters. We who work to get the letter published do not receive any money for their efforts. PRAISE sometimes but not very often.. Please help your organization out by paying your membership on time.....

LEONARD SMITH 524 Brookwood Drive, OLYMPIA FIELDS, IL 60461 Phone 708-748-2087 has been appointed Chairman of the SITE Selection Committee to find a suitable location for our 1995 Reunion. If you can offer any advice or would like to host the reunion please contact Len. He would appreciate your help.

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN ONTARIO, CALIFORNIA IN OCTOBER 1993.

**TAPS • TAPS • TAPS • TAPS • TAPS**

REV. JOHN D. ST. JOHN I am enclosing a news story of our Catholic Chaplain who passed away on Wednesday. He was a good friend of our late General Uppie. Dick Dempsey.

CARL SCHEU I write this with tears in my eyes at the passing away of my beloved husband, Charles Scheu on August 27, 1992. He had our airline tickets and reservations all set in anticipation of attending the Rapid City reunion. Charlie was admitted to the hospital August 2 and was to have a gall bladder operation but much to our dismay it turned into a perforated ulcer and peritonitis spewed out into every organ. He was in the ICV at our local hospital and never regained consciousness. Our children & I were at his bedside morning noon and night and slowly watched his heart monitor go down to zero. Thank you all for the signed sympathy card, telephone calls and consideration, With love, Maureen Scheu and children ,Carl nd Charlene Scheu

Leroy L. Longenbach Sorry to inform you that one of our members, Leroy L. Longenbach, passed away. He was a waist gunner on our crew of the Lady Luck.. . . George Cepek.



**99TH BOMB GROUP HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Walter H. Butler, Treasurer  
8608 Bellehaven Place, N.E.  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87112

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**CHANGES OF ADDRESS**

**NOVEMBER 1992**

Fred Matvias	P.O.Box 187	Custer City	PA 16725
Richard E. Drain	3307 Glouster St.	Springfield	OH 45503
Ray Curry, c/o Lucido	454 No Hts.	Lowellville	OH 44436
Thomas E. Clark	27145.Cole Ct.	Highland CA	92346-3656
92376			
William R. Watkins Jr.	135 Blue Ridge Rd.	Fitzgerald	GA 31750
Joseph Joffrion	Rt. 5 Box 1702	Sulphur	LA 70663-9805

**Found**

1004 Earl Lewis	6036 Shirley Ave.	Tarzana	CA 91356
1005 Frank S. Straub	1001 E. Front St.	Berwick	PA 18603 347
1006 Charles L. Perkins	701 Shiloh #611	Tyler	TX 75703.

**REUNIONS**

1993

99TH BOMB GROUP, ONTARIO, CA - October 26 - Host Bernie Barr

15th Air Force, March Air Force Base, CA - October 30

1994

99TH BOMB GROUP, HAMPTON, VA

Host Bob Bacher, 692 North Abbie Road, Elyria, OH 44035