

99th Bomb Group Historical Society

B-17 FLYING FORTRESS

HqSq, 346th, 347th, 348th, 416th

2011 Newsletter

Volume 1

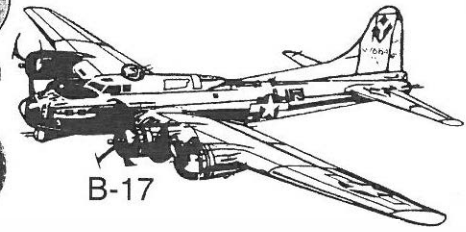
February



346th



348th



B-17



347th



416th

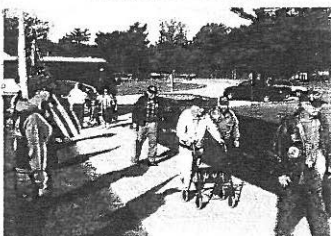
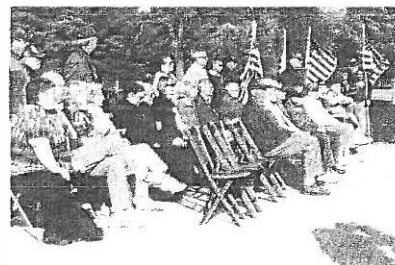
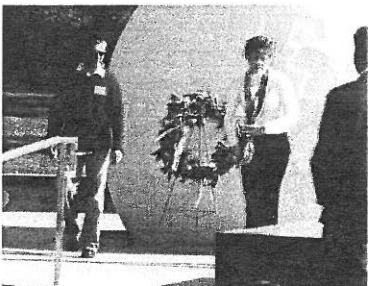
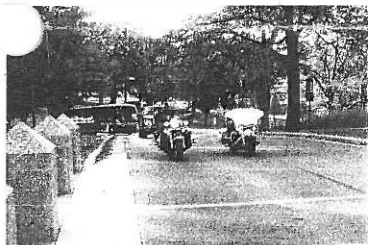
2010 Reunion Highlights

The 2010 99th BGHS reunion was held October 20th through the 22nd in Springfield, Illinois. During the reunion we visited numerous sites related to President Abraham Lincoln including the museum and his tomb.

The food was good, we learned how to make Springfield's famous "Horse Shoe Sandwich", the weather was great and the time spent together was fantastic. With a Cold Stone Creamery just around the corner from our hotel life was good!

Friday, 21 Sept 2011 was especially surprising for the Veterans. The Illinois Patriot Guard Riders met us at the hotel and escorted us to Lincoln's Tomb where we toured the tomb. The guard lined our exit from the bus. From there we went to the WWII Memorial in the Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield. Upon our arrival at the memorial we were honored by the Patriot Guard as we walked to the viewing area of the memorial. The Springfield VFW Post was our Color Guard for the ceremony. Our speaker was Jerry Lambert from the Springfield TV station. He is a Veteran and has a son who served in Iraq.

Perk Chumley presented a memorial wreath to his grandchildren, Mindy Olson and Mike Woods, saying, "we must pass the torch to the next generation" at that point Mindy and Mike placed the wreath at the memorial and Taps were played by Brenda Sullivan, Mindy's best friend. After the ceremony we went to the VFW Post for lunch.



The banquet was held on Friday evening. We were treated to the sounds of the music from the WWII era played by Jacksonville's own Tim Chipman. The speaker for the evening was Representative Jim Watson who is also a Veteran and currently on active duty.

2011 DUES REMINDER

If you are not a Life-Member of the 99th BGHS, your \$30 - 2011 dues were due in January. Please remit to: 99th BGHS, % Jerry Buckingham, 20 Flathead Drive, Cherokee Village, AR 72529

Items From Our Members

First Mission on the Danube - Rex A. Carnes

Reference the 99th Bomb Group-December 18, 1944 Clark crew 416th Bomb Squadron, 99th Bomb Group makes their first mission to Bleckheimer, Odertal, Germany. This target has also been identified by the Czech name van Eyck, as it was in occupied Poland. It is identified on the map as Gliwice and is about 60K east of Krakow. Our aircraft for the day is identified as 110. The original altitude was 31 K feet and after three 360's over the target because of heavy overcast it was necessary to Bomb by Radar because of the overcast of the target. 110 was tail end Charlie in the 416th Squadron element.

We encountered a flight of four FW-190's coming on the tail of the formation. At the same time as the FW's peeled off we were hit by 105mm white flak on the left wing. We had to salvo our bombs and they were momentarily hung up. We literally bounced from about 100 feet below the formation to above the formation when they finally dropped. Our Ball Turret Ginner Harry Austin was badly hit by flak in his leg and it was necessary to remove him from the Ball. We lost two engines on the starboard wing and orders were given to lighten the aircraft as much as possible. Guns and everything with any weight were thrown out. We now are headed for the Russian Lines. The pilot is able to restart one engine after about 25 minutes, so now we fly on three and cross the Russian Lines which at that time is a line on Budapest, Hungary. We cross the Russian line and then encounter three Russian Yaks who also fire on us. We then fly out about 5 K from a small town called JAKABSZALAS HUNGARY. This is about 16K from Kecskemet. We met the Russian Major who shot us down later that evening.

After about a week we are escorted by a Russian Under Lieutenant overland by truck, flat car train, and train compartment thru Hungary in the dead of winter to Zagreb Hungary where we boarded a tug that towed two huge flat barges that must have had thousands of refugee's down the Danube to Belgrade Yugoslavia. Several weeks in Belgrade and we celebrated New Year's Eve dancing the Serbian National Dance. We are put up by the Embassy in Belgrade until we were finally repatriated back to Italy. After a week at Isle of Capri we returned to complete the war in Europe.

A Message From Our 99th BGHS President

To the Members of the 99th BGHS:

To those who attended the reunion in Springfield, IL last October I hope you all had a good time. Perk Chumley's daughter Linda and the two grandchildren did an outstanding job. Who could forget the Biker's flag corridor of American flags on Friday, October 22nd.

I hope you all had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

I have contacted eight or nine members to host the 2011 reunion but received no volunteer. Gary Staffo talked to a host for the 98th BGVA and so did I. Enclosed in this newsletter is a letter from him to me inviting us to his reunion in Shreveport, LA from October 17th to 20th. They are recognizing all those veterans that were in Africa and Italy who did raids on Ploesti. As you can see by the last paragraph in his letter the complete information will be sent to me about May 1, 2011. At that time another newsletter will be sent to all 99th BGHS members to send in their reservation. I hope this meets with your approval. If you have any questions call me (Jim LaVey) at 410-252-5688.

Hope to see you all in Shreveport in October.

Jim LaVey, President 99th BGHS



98th Bomb Group/Wing Veterans Association



Col. Bill Seals, USAF Ret.
President

Jim LaVey
2414 Gridwood Road
Timonium MD 21093

January 11, 2011

Dear Jim,

Good talking to you last night. As you know, the 98th BG/BW Veterans Association is hosting the "Ploesti Raiders" at its reunion this fall. The reunion is dedicated to all of those who were involved in any of the raids on Ploesti. This includes anyone who was assigned to one of the 21 bomb groups on the date the group flew a mission to Ploesti. It matters not whether you were an aircrew member, or on KP that date, you are a "Ploesti Raider."

We are in the process of planning some special programs to highlight both the "Tidal Wave" mission and the 19 or 20 missions that were flown from April to August 1944. For example, Major Robert Sternfels who was the pilot of "The Sandman" on the low level raid, and is the author of a book on the mission, will do a presentation, followed by a question and answer period. The other programs are being planned as seminars in order to encourage every one's participation.

We are open to any ideas anyone may have on what we can do to recognize the bravery and sacrifice of those involved in the missions, and would like to hear from them. Any memorabilia they would like to bring will also be most welcome.

The reunion will be held at Shreveport Louisiana from the 17th to the 21st of October. As we discussed, we anticipate that the registration form will be available about May and I will send you a supply of them at that time.

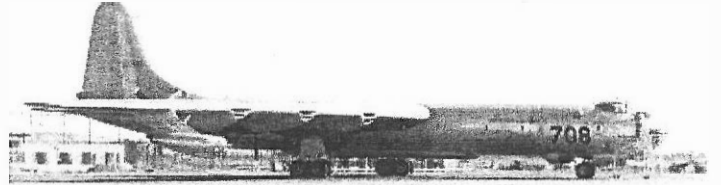
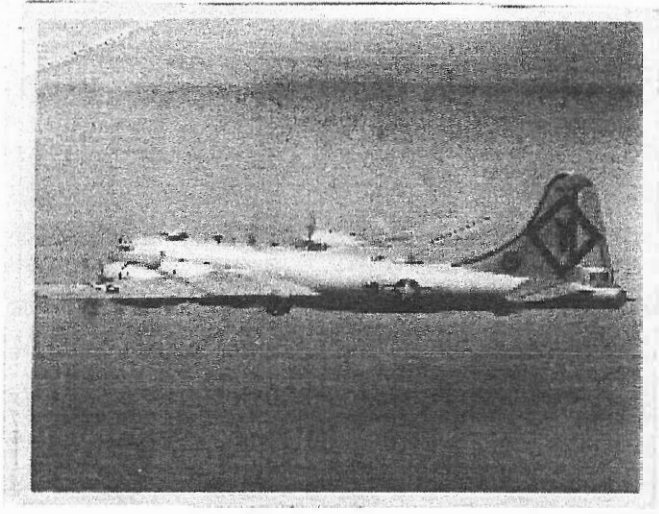
I'm looking forward to meeting you.

Warmest Regards,

Bill Seals

PHOTOS I HAVE COME ACROSS

This month's photos are one's I have come across in looking for more info on the history of the 99th. The first photo on the left is one I got off ebay, and looks like a B-29 in 99th BG markings. It even has a 15th AF emblem on the tail. It is actually a plane from the 98th BG which flew B-29's post war for a period of time using a diamond-Y tail symbol. Although part of the 99th Strat Recon Wing did fly RB-29s for a period post WWII, I have not found a photo I can tie to the group. The second photo I pulled off the internet. It shows an RB-36 that the 99th Strat Recon Wing did fly. It's too bad they did not reinstate the use of the diamond-Y on the later planes the 99th SRW flew.



Goleta Air & Space Museum
Courtesy Fairchild Air Force Base Heritage Museum

B-29 from the 98th BG displaying the diamond-Y symbol RB-36 flown by the 99th Stat Recon Wing.
they were assigned for the period from 1947 to 1948.



99th Bomb Group Historical Society

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