



99BG NEWSLETTER — Jan. '81

PROGRESS REPORT 6 Dec. 1980

We are off to an excellent start, with more than 20 members and new men coming in at a rate of about 20 per month.
 Membership cards are to be ready for distribution with the January Newsletter.
 We have mailed newsletters to everybody on the mailing list and have begun a search for those whose letters are returned.
 The April Reunion in Albuquerque in ON and we will have a schedule for you in February.

REUNIONS

April 11, 1981	Albuquerque, NM	o/o G.F.Goen
July 1981	Rapid City SD	
Oct. 1981	Harlingen Texas	Tentative.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Lady Be Good, Dennis E. McClendon, John Day Press.
 Out of print. Enjoyable, especially for navigators.
 Nazi Interrogator, Raymond F. Toliver, Zebra Books.
 Haven't read this one yet. It just came out, and the reason it is on this list is that Hanns Scharff, the ex-interrogator, is living in California and is, I believe, a member of the 8thAFHS.

LETTERS

Dear George
 Just received your list of the 99th. Thanks.
 It's the first I've heard of the Oct. 18 gathering (too late for that).
 I'd like to know more about Albuquerque in April.
 I was in the 347th Squadron from February 1943 to August.
 Had a full page from the Rome Raid, July 19, 1943, but lost it. The writer flew with us.
 Keep up the good work.
 Thanks and regards
 Jack Abrams

Hiya George
 Very surprised to hear from you after all these years. Hoping you and your family are doing OK. Visited Cepek and E.K.Young a few years ago.
 If you intend to have a reunion, we will be very glad to be there. Have gone through your city many times on vacation. Had I known you lived there would have visited.
 Happy Holidays to you and yours,
 "Seguine" & family (L.L.Longenbach)

Dear George,

One of the first things I read when I got my DAV magazine is the "Reunions, etc.," section. I almost had a fit when I saw the 99th mentioned! Can you please tell me more about said reunion? Also, do you have a roster of names by any chance from our old outfit?

I am a Life Member of the DAV (Ch. 46, Whittier), a Life Member of B-17 Combat Crewmen (card enclosed), & am also a member of the Royal Canadian Legion (San Gabriel Valley, Post 167, West Covina, CA). The B-17 outfit is international in scope with most members from the 8th AF. There are, however, three of us from the 347th Sq., as well as several from the 2nd, 97th, & 463rd Groups. As you will remember we were all part of the 5th Wing (2nd, 97th, 301st, 99th, 463rd, & 483rd.). Anyhow, to make a long story shorter, I came to the 99th (347th) in Nov. of 1942, at Sioux City, Iowa. I was in Squadron Operations. I'll not repeat everything because if you are an old-timer, also, this would be redundant. Suffice to say that I was 'down on the line' in Algeria, Tunisia, & most of the time at Tortorella (Foggia) Italy.

I had always wanted to fly combat & flew my first mission on July 16, 1944 to Vienna, Austria. I flew as a Combat Aerial Photographer / Gunner, in the radio room. Anyhow, George, I flew 33 missions & on the 32nd we got shot to hell (flak) going by & over Vienna again. Maybe you remember this one. All of us bailed over Yugoslavia (Aug. 23, 1944), except the pilot. (I was the last to go)- I didn't know the pilot got back up in the cockpit (co-pilot's seat), & couldn't see him because of the bulkhead. Warren Christiansen (?) 1st Lt., brought our plane home, alone (No.1 prop& front of engine torn off, No. 4 feathered, No. 3 was on fire but down to just smoking). An 88 went up thru the horizontal and vertical stabilizers, tearing large holes, & a tire was flat. A waist gunner and myself lost our oxygen and we came in over Vienna at 12,500, down from 26,800 to keep us alive. The pilot got the DSC.

Tito's Partisans got us, and we were only gone for a week. I flew one more mission to Munich (Sept. 12, 1944), but both my heated gloves short-circuited and I was grounded, and went back to Sq. Tech Supply. When the 99th was sent home, four of us were transferred to Hdqtrs., 15th AF, Bari, to take care of their planes, then we were to go to Munich (with our B-17's), Army of Occupation. However, I had too many points and was sent home.

Enough of me, George. I would like to hear from you & your history with the good old 99th. Whatever expense is involved, let me know and I'll reimburse you right away!

My best to you and yours, and I hope to hear from you soon. Thanks in advance. By the way, I'll inform my other friends from the 347th also.

Best regards

Frank English

Dear Frank;

It sure was good to get your letter and it was also good to talk to you on the phone. It is a constant source of pride to have been part of the 99th.

I was in the original Group at Boise. Finished my 50 missions on Sep. 18 1943 and returned home on the Empress of Scotland. So your experiences in 1944 are really new and interesting to me. Things changed so fast that it must have been a different war by then. I am sure the rest of the gang will enjoy hearing from you as much as I did, and we hope to see you soon at one of the reunions.

George

Dear Sir:

I read a notice in the Sept. V.F.W. Magazine of a possible Reunion of the 99th BG

I flew 31 sorties as a ball gunner with the 347th sqdr. from Dec. 44 to April 45.

I am enclosing a paper of an organization to which I belong. There are a few of the 99th who are members. Maybe you would like to send a notice to them. Please send me info.

Michael J. Haffran

Dear Mike;

I have enjoyed hearing from you Boosters of the B-17 Crewman's club. We did not start early enough advertising the Amarillo Reunion, and we got notices into only three publications, but the April event should be noted in at least nine service magazines.

Meanwhile, the paper you sent is my model and inspiration for this News-letter.

many thanks

* * * George

Sept. 22 '80
Murdo, S.D.

Dear George-

Received your welcome letter today, glad to hear some one is working on a reunion.

One of my crew members lives in Pampa, Texas, so will try and get him to take in the reunion there and see what is going on. His name is Hank Parks- maybe you can send him a 99'er letter. How about a reunion in Harlingen Texas as a suggestion? I am a Colonel in the Ghost Squadron and we have a show every Oct. With a reunion we could get special recognition & believe it is the best show in the USA. Or Rapid City S. Dak. has a lot to offer with B-52 bombers Ellsworth AFB, Mt. Rushmore, etc. It was a B-17 base in 41 when I was flying. Lots of us were trained there. My crew had a reunion there several years ago. Just a couple of suggestions.

Am enclosing the 347th insignia.

If I can be of further help let me know.

Thank you for your prompt response.

Col. T.M.Iversen, CAF.

Compadres;

As most of you know, Truele Iversen died about a month after this was written.

By then we had converted the 347th Insignia into artwork and had taken both of Truels' excellent suggestions. We also had a fine reunion with Hank Parks.

I will always regret that I did not get to meet Truels.

GFC

Dear George,

I am sending you a copy of the roster that I have from 1944. I hope this will help in locating more of the men from our unit.

Please keep me posted about any reunions that may be held in the future, I can be reached at the address below.

Lester Hamann
2434 Melville Way
San Jose, CA 95130

Good luck!

Sincerely

Lester

(Phone 408 379-1980)

Thank you, Lester. When I have developed a system for locating the fellows from old lists, we will try to find those who haven't turned up. Meanwhile we are maintaining a Master List of every name, and these will all go on there.

* * *

Dear George:

Thanks for sending me the latest progress report on your efforts in regards to the possibility of having a 99th B.G. Association. As I said before, I have often wondered what the devil happened to all of the guys that put their

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time in with the 99th. I see most of the other groups have formed some sort of an association and have managed to keep in touch pretty regular. I'll try to feed you any names and addresses that I manage to dig up of former members from the 99th. I can't guarantee if they are all current addresses but I'll do my best.

Best of luck

Ralph Kræner

Thank you, Ralph. We have started tracking down all of the thirteen names you sent and expect to find most of them in time. And thanks for the stamps.

* * *

Dear George

I want to thank you for your letter and the names of some of the members of the 99th.

The people whom I was thinking of are already listed on your roster. I never get to many of their meetings because of my work schedule.

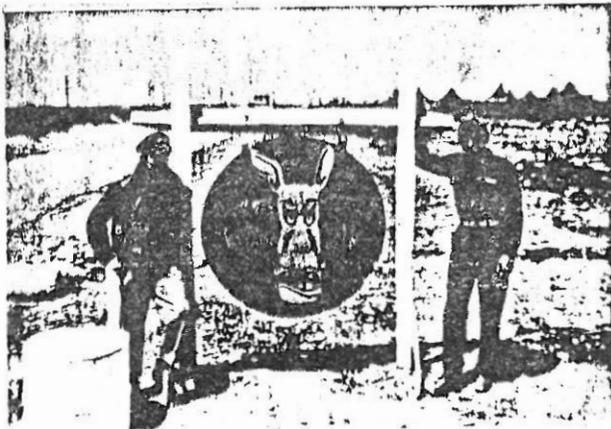
I did see two other names, John A. Plummer who was Operations Officer of the 347th and O.H. Peltzer who I flew with several times.

I am enclosing a picture of the 347th Sq. insignia. I do not know if this is the official one or not. It was placed in front of our squadron offices. The officers pictured are Lt. Brown, Navigator, left side, and Lt. Beucelier right side. Brown was from Denver and Beucelier was from Vermont.

I hope to attend your reunion in the Fall and will try and find names.

Sincerely

Michael J. Heffran



Dear Mr. Coen,

In response to the reunion of the 99th Bomb Group in Amarillo Texas, please send more info.

I was in the 99th BG in Foggia, Italy, Headquarters Group in 1945. I have lost connection since returning to civil life. I am retired and live in Melbourne Florida. I would greatly appreciate any other info you can supply.

Yours truly

Walt Fletcher

Dear Walt;

Our policy of four reunions per year year should surely result in a Florida meeting before too long. Thanks for your support and the names you sent.

DUES FOR 1981 WILL BE FIVE DOLLARS. NOTE YOUR SQUADRON IN YOUR LETTER.