



THE

99th Bomb Group Historical Society

Newsletter

Vol. 6 No. 1

Jan. 1 1986

SOCIETY OFFICERS

PRESIDENT, Joe Chance
TREASURER, Walter Butler
CHAPLAIN, Harvey Jennings

VICE-PRESIDENT, Lew Boatwright
HISTORIAN, George F. Coen
EDITOR, George F. Coen

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

GREETINGS TO ALL 99 ers:

At this time of the year, there always seems to be a sort of letdown, somehow, for 99th business. The 1985 Reunion is over and the 1986 Reunion in Dayton is still far enough away not to be on the front burner of everyone's mind. Except, of course, for Jim Sopp (Dayton Chairman) and his committee. They are having regular meetings, one of which I have attended, and everything is in great shape. The 99th Memorial Committee members have been in constant contact with each other and Chairman Sopp has kept one informed through copies of Committee Proceedings and telephone conversations. We hope to have news for you on the final selection soon.

I have been particularly busy because we sold our southern Michigan residence ourselves and have been in the tiresome process of driving back and forth (250 miles each way), packing valuables to transport up here in the north, by car, to Old Mission, Michigan, and just packing in general for the movers. Moving is a traumatic experience for everyone, I guess, especially for old 99thers!

I would like to take this opportunity to say one thing that has not been emphasized in the Newsletter in the past. This was brought to my attention in Seattle. The 99th Bomb Group Historical Society is a Bomb Group Society, made up of both flight and ground personnel, each of equal importance in my mind. So, for those of you who served the 99th, in either category, please write to George Coen with any anecdotes or personal experiences you may have had, or hear about, whether on ground or in flight.

I hope this holiday season and the coming year are happy and healthy for all of you!

Sincerely,
Joe Chance
P.O. Box 59
Old Mission, Michigan 49673
1-616-223-7448

DAYTON REUNION INFORMATION

A happy 1986 to all of you from all of us on the Dayton Reunion Committee. And with this greeting we urge you to mark your calendars to join us in Dayton, June 27-29, 1986.

Headquarters Hotel

We will use the Dayton Marriott located at 1414 South Patterson Blvd. The Dayton Marriott is a beautiful new hotel conveniently located just off of I-75 in a scenic part of Dayton. During June in Southern Ohio, the trees and flowers are in full bloom and this will help create a relaxed atmosphere for our reunion. For the members of the 99th who are still athletes there is an indoor-outdoor swimming pool, a whirlpool and joggers can run on the bike path along the Great Miami River.

Hotel Reservations

The March and May issues of our Newsletter will have a printed copy of the Marriott Reservation Form. Cut out this form and mail it with the requested information directly to the Marriott. This identifies you as a member of the 99th Bomb Group U.S. and entitles you to the special room rate. The Dayton Marriott is discounting their rates \$38.00 to us. Our room rate is \$55.00 plus 12% sales tax. Please note that the 99th is not making the room reservations for you. The Dayton Marriott has blocked off the following number of rooms for our use.

Day	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Mon.
Date	6/25	6/26	6/27	6/28	6/29	6/30
Rooms	(0)	(50)	200	200	25	(0)

Our Headquarters is a very popular commercial hotel and during the business week they are usually filled to capacity. Unfortunately, they cannot grant us reunion rates for Tuesday or Wednesday nights and they anticipate having only (50) rooms available for our use on Thursday night at reunion rates.

If you plan on arriving earlier in the week and wish to stay at the Marriott at commercial rates, we would suggest that you contact them to see if they have any available rooms. The rooms that are blocked off for our members are reserved on a first come and first served basis... So be sure to get your reservations in as soon as possible after you get the March newsletter.

Registration Form

The 99th Bomb Group registration form will also appear in the March and May newsletters. This form is to be completed and returned with your check to:

Ernest Gentit
P.O. Box 398
Bryan, Ohio 43506
Tel # (419) 636-3959

Ernest is our contact for all Dayton Reunion information.

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Each member will be assessed a \$20.00 registration fee and an additional \$10.00 will be charged for a wife or guest. Each additional guest family will be assessed the same amount. This fee covers the printed programs, postage, hospitality suite, name tags, envelopes and other incidentals. There will be a separate price schedule for the meals, banquet and other activities, which you may wish to take part of on a voluntary basis. For those not staying at the Marriott, advanced registration is still required. Indicate on the registration form that you are staying elsewhere.

Airport to Marriott Transportation

For those who plan to fly to Dayton, the Marriott is located about twenty minutes from the Airport. Airport Limo Service is available at \$6.00 per person one way. The Airport Limo Service Office is located adjacent to the Baggage Claim area at the Airport. The telephone number is 893-7171. Limos leave the airport about every forty minutes for the Marriott.

We present this meagre installment of the War Diary just to show our good intentions. Note that it is a back number which we somehow skipped. We continue to do our damndest. geo

MISSION REPORT

1. UNIT: 99th Bomb Group. TIME: 1330 DATE: 15 February 1944
 2. 39 OFF TO Bomb Monastery at Cassino, Italy
 3. 1 EARLY 38 sorties.
 4. 38 OVER TARGET AT: 0930 HOURS, AT: 18,000 FEET.
 5. 35 DROPPED ON TGT: 104 TONS 500 LB 2P BOMBS .1x.01 FUSES
 6. 3 OTHERS Returned bombs to base.
10. MAH FLAK AT TARGET: Heavy and light, moderate and fairly accurate as to deflection, accurate as to range.
 14. RESULTS. ESCORT GAVE TIME AND PLACE OF RENDEZVOUS AND DEPARTURE FROM BOMBERS:
Bombs hit in smoke which covered the target. A few hits were observed slightly to the NW of target. The target area appeared to be well covered.

HEADQUARTERS
NINETY-NINTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ARMY AIR FORCES
Office of the Intelligence Officer

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 15 February, 1944 -- MONASTARY AT CASSINO, ITALY.

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE:

- A. Fighters: None.
- B. Flak: In the target area, the 99th Bomb Group experienced moderate heavy flak of the tracking type.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS:

- A. Land: (All observations from 17,000' - 19,000')
 - 0926 The A/D at 41° 30' N - 13° 44' E was worst
 - 0927 4 convoys totalling 100 motor trucks were seen at 41° 30' N - 13° 44' E heading east toward Cassino.
 - 0930 Heavy artillery fire observed coming from a point 5 miles N of Cassino

MISSION REPORT

1. UNIT: Notary GROUP. TIME: DATE 17-2-44
 2. 39 OFF TO: Repair shops and vehicular concentrations near Lake Albano.
 3. C EARLY. 33 SORTIES. #164 crashlanded before target.
6. 1 OTHERS: Crash landed before reaching target.
 7. 3-5 E/A SEEN: ___ identified. No attacks.
 Target area.

14. RESULTS. ESCORT GAVE TIME AND PLACE OF RENDEZVOUS AND DEPARTURE FROM BOMBERS
 Ships believed hit.
 Large fire _____ with thick black smoke.
 _____ to south of target on road.
 Area smoke covered.

MISSION REPORT

1. UNIT: Notary GROUP. TIME: 1506 DATE: 22 February 1944
 2. 21 OFF TO: Zagreb JA/D, Yugoslavia
 3. 3 EARLY 18 SORTIES
 4. 18 _____ 1052 _____ 21,500
 5. 18 _____ 54 _____ 500 _____ .1 nose .025 tail

0. Slight, inaccurate, light. _____ From hillside N of target.

4. RESULTS. ESCORT GAVE TIME AND PLACE OF RENDEZVOUS AND DEPARTURE FROM BOMBERS
 Weather prevented approach to primary target so Zagreb A/D was bombed as a target of opportunity. Bombs scattered over a wide area with hits in the dispersal areas, east of hangars then held 10-20 a/c. Some fires were started and it is believed 4 T/E a/c were hit. There was considerable snow on the ground which made observation difficult.

HEADQUARTERS

NINETY-NINTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ARMY AIR FORCES
 Office of the Intelligence Officer

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 22 February, 1944 - ZAGREB A/D, YUGOSLAVIA

ENEMY RESISTANCE:

- A. Fighters: None
 B. Flak: Over the target area the Group observed a few bursts of light, inaccurate flak which appeared to come from a hill just south of Zagreb. None of our aircraft were hit.

As the Group passed over Sibenick harbor on the return, a few effectual bursts of light flak were seen to burst below and at some distance from the formation.

SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS:

- A. Communications: Seven or eight trains were observed in the marshalling yards at Zagreb and one 50 to 70 car train was observed leaving the yards in a southeasterly direction.

B. Flak Positions: Some flak was observed coming from a hill south of Zagreb, Yugoslavia and from the harbor at Sibenick, Yugoslavia.

C. Smoke Screen: None.

99th Bomb Group Historical Society
 Membership Register

Membership directory has been removed for privacy.

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I am writing a book about the American planes that landed or crashed in neutral Switzerland during World War II.

I would be most interested to get in touch with former internees as well as to obtain pictures of interned planes and aircrews here in Switzerland. Personal reports about the missions and the time spent interned would prove most valuable to my research.

I am looking forward to hearing from airmen who were interned in my country during the war. Please write to me at the address below.

HANS-HEIRI STAPFER, BERGSTRASSE 35, CH-8810 Horgen/ZH, SWITZERLAND

From the AIR FORCE Magazine for August 1985 we print the following:

I am a veteran of the Eighth Air Force. I am seeking contact with B-24 and B-17 crewmen who were forced down in Switzerland during the period 1943-1945.

I am seeking information about units, crews, aircraft serial numbers, and specifics regarding crashes and forced landings. Please contact me at the address below.

Forest S. Clark, 220 Fairmount Ave., S. Plainfield NJ 07080



PRESS RELEASE
FROM: 99th Bomb Group
THRU: 5th Wing (US)
November 9, 1943

By S/Sgt. William Brink Jr.

ATTENTION: McCook Daily Gazette (Neb.)
Omaha, Neb., World Herald

AN ADVANCED NORTH AFRICAN AIR BASE--A one-time civilian flying instructor who became an ace Flying Fortress pilot and squadron commander, Major C.I. (Click) Aspegren, 32, of 210 West 3rd St., McCook, Neb., is on his way home from North Africa after completing his allotted 50 bombing missions.

In his Fortress, "Spirit of McCook," Aspegren ranged far and wide with the North African air armada in heaping destruction on targets in Pantelleria, Sicily, Sardinia, Italy, southern France, Austria and Greece. He began combat flying March 19, 1943, with an attack on an enemy convoy in the Mediterranean, and finished up October 31 over a target in southern France.

The flyer commented after his 50th mission: "The enemy was tough and the air opposition has always been aggressive and concentrated when it was there. Our planes have proved the ability to give and take and have earned a healthy respect on the part of the enemy."

Early in his combat career Aspegren demonstrated flying ability which earned him the post of squadron operations officer. Later he became commanding officer of his squadron and his firm belief in training and air discipline welded his flyers into a hard-hitting, precision instrument.

The Nebraskan was known among those who flew with him as "the man who never turns back" from a mission because of minor mechanical troubles. Once he pulled out of formation over Messina, Sicily, when flak disabled one engine and hit other. He pulled out to protect another ship in his element which had been crippled. Together the two planes limped back to North Africa, only to be attacked by a swarm of enemy fighters near the coast. Aspegren's evasive tactics saved both planes and enabled the gunners to blast down seven Jerry pursuit planes.

Aspegren participated in the historic Fortress raid on Rome and many times was entrusted with directing his entire Fortress group in battle as lead pilot. He has been awarded the Air Medal and nine Oak Leaf Clusters.

Aspegren, who cherishes a desire to fly the B-29, world's greatest bomber, is a flying enthusiast with many years experience. He was an instructor at Great Bend, Kan., before being commissioned an officer in the Air Forces May 29, 1942.

The major looked forward to a reunion with his wife, Muriel, who lives at 309 Lakeside Ave., Seattle, Wash. Concerning his future he said: "After a rest, it's up to the War Department, and what they say is fine with me."



ESCAPE STATEMENT

- 1. King, Raymond H., S/Sgt., 13134668, 99th Bomb Group, 347 Sq.

Home address: 1027 Newton Ave., Lawrence Park, Erie, PA
Age: 23
Interr: 26 Jul 44
Duty: Armorer-Gunner
Missions: 43

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U.S. Army

- 1. Baker, Ray W., T/Sgt., 16018999, 99th Bomb group, 347 Sq.

Home address: RR #4, Carlenville, Ill.
Age: 29
Interr: 26 Jul 44
Duty: Engineer-Gunner

2. 15 March - A/D in Udine Area. B-17. Direct flak hit in tail of ship. Left stabilizer and beyond tail wheel ship was entirely shot up. Ship went into large circling glide down, not losing altitude too rapidly. Baker opened up bomb bays and bailed on order from co-pilot. Baker turned on A5 before he left. King followed Baker out bomb bay (could not open waist windows.) Nine chutes were seen to open. Tailed turret gunner received direct hit on his position and did not get out. Landed in area of 4555-1352.

3. Sgt. Baker had strained back from jump and landed on his back doing further injury. He was joined by King almost immediately and by a New Zealand escapee who took them to a hiding place where they remained hidden until that night. The New Zealander brought in two other New Zealanders who took King and Baker to a farmhouse where Baker remained in bed for a month. A doctor was brought in to care for him.

A New Zealander took King to another nearby town, Reverado, where he remained. Both remained in the area from 15 March until 13 July.

About 11 July a band of Partisans (1/2 Yugoslav and 1/2 Italian) contacted Baker and King through a New Zealander staying at the Gigante home. Were told that they could be taken into mountains near Trieste. Baker's uniform dyed a dark blue and King in an Italian sailor uniform. Had dog tags for identification. Started off on the afternoon of 13 July on bicycles.

Passed through Ruda and stayed all night. Got food there. Next town was Ranchi. Were very close to Geritzen, passed around outskirts, thence to Loque, where a British Mission was contacted. Had left bicycles near Ranchi. Traveled with four New Zealanders all way, guided by Partisans.

Remained on day (15 July) at Br. Mission to rest. Received underwear, socks and shoes. Were given passes by Br. Mission to cross into Yugoslavia. Crossed river in small groups and then reformed in Yugoslavia. Traveled to S. Pistre (Italy) and thence into Yugoslavia at 1500 24 July. Had a meal and slept about two hours. Went to A/D, a new field. First A/C landed 21st. Evacuated at 12; 3 G-47s landed, unloaded and took off for Bari. Two ships of wounded Partisans and other had 5 Americans and four New Zealanders and two Englishmen. Landed Bari about 0300 25 July.

Sgt. King was carrying a letter from an English Officer at the British Mission. Letter is possess now of Escape Office.

APPENDIX B

Gigante, Eugenio Province Udine, town of Torsa, family of six. Also sheltering a New Zealander for 10 months. Left chit with this man (Baker).

Bartolucie Family in town of Roverado of 21 people. Brought food and provided sleeping quarters and other favors. Del Sette family in Roverado also helped. Chit left with them. These people fed Baker and King better than their own families were fed.

Town of Rivienano Stayed in fields and were helped by two women who fed them (King and Baker); Gabello, Sarah and Mercedes, no first name known. Left chit here. Also a Catholic Sister, Sister Gabriel, speaks English, helped through others.

Dominic Dominica One fascist family threatened to reveal their presence.

APPENDIX C

Sgt. Baker turned over a map of Monfalcone showing SS Troops Sqs. Map obtained from Partisan. Much detail including all A/A; 6 batteries along RR opposite station. Built east from station.

No civ in Monfalcone; entirely occupied.

At Bertoli A/D, there is an underground dispersal area in form of circle which would quickly be converted into a strong ground defense position.

A new Macchi 205 may be manufactured and somewhere up north in general area.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP 1986 DUES \$15

1981-1985 Newsletters, \$5 per year. 81 82 83 84 85

NAME _____ SQUADRON _____

ADDRESS _____ NEW _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ RENEWAL _____

NEWS, DUES & VIEWS

Past President Bernie Barr recently gave the welcoming speech to the 483rd Bomb Group Reunion at the Marriott Hotel here in Albuquerque. Bernie had some previous practice; he gave the welcoming speech in Italy in 1944 to the 483rd.

We have been asked to explain how a combat tour predicated on 100% casualties can have any survivors. Here's how:

The pivotal point is the half-way mark, at which point there will have been 50% casualties. This result, for a 50-mission tour assumes an average survival rate of .97265 per mission, with 2.735% casualties per mission. In mathematical terms, $.97265^{50}$ equals 0.50. Since $.97265^{50}$ equals 0.06247, we find that 6.247% of the men will survive a combat tour predicated on 100% casualties, about one out of sixteen. Not very attractive odds, but not suicidal. gfe

A number of our Gentle Readers have asked what we meant by our reference in the November Newsletter to the book "The Hiroshima Pilot" by William Bradford Huie.

The story is as follows:

The 'Hiroshima Pilot', Claude Eatherly, according to several European editors was virtually a prisoner of the military in a mental ward. He was supposedly consumed by remorse over his dropping of the Hiroshima A-bomb to such an extent that he sent his pension checks to the orphans of Hiroshima.

Mr. Huie began his investigation with the idea that the story might very well be true. First Mr. Huie checked the records for the details of the DFC which had supposedly been awarded to Major Eatherly. The official records showed no such award, and of course Huie knew that pensions are not forced upon veterans but must be applied for. His curiosity piqued, Mr. Huie picked up the phone and called Eatherly and arranged to meet him. Eatherly's true story is contained in the book "The Hiroshima Pilot".

Yes, I know that General Tibbetts was really the pilot of the Enola Gay, but several million well-meaning people do not know it. Major Eatherly was the pilot of the weather ship. Incidentally, Claude Eatherly tried out for a part in a proposed movie to be made in Mexico by the aforesaid Europeans, but he was turned down for the part of - - - Claude Eatherly. Apparently he just wasn't the type to play himself in a movie 'based on the life of Claude Eatherly'.

Now here's the real kicker. When Claude Eatherly died about two years ago the editors of our local paper printed his obituary, not from real life but from the script of the movie in which Eatherly was not going to be allowed to act the part of Eatherly.

Comrades, we are watching eagerly to see what our editors will come up with on their next Guilt Day, Feb. 13th, the anniversary of the bombing of Dresden.

georgef. coen

99th Bomb Gp Historical Society
 Walter H. Butler - Treasurer
 8608 Bellehaven Pl. N.E.
 Albuquerque, New Mexico 87112



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1986

Jan. 86

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Jan. 1, 1986

Our primary purpose is to act as a Clearinghouse to put former members of the 99th Bombardment Group in touch with one another.

Our secondary purpose is to sponsor rallies or reunions for the members of the 99th BGHS.

The Society is a non-profit organization. All dues and donations unless specifically otherwise assigned by the contributor are to be used to locate 99ers and to publish the newsletter.

Change of Address

John W. Brinser
 Vincent E. Shank
 Rex Carnes
 Horace M. Wade
 Thomas P. O'Reilly
 Everett R. Lovering
 O.W. Shelnutt

CO 80634
 NV 89120
 CO 80501
 AZ 85718
 Beach VA 23155
 CA 95078

FOUND

626 G.F. Ruegg-Stoecklin
 627 Dr. Frank H. Pearce
 628 Melvin E. Keller
 629 Leland Campbell
 630 Austin Bisbing
 631 James P. Bland
 632 Theodore Sharp
 633 Milton Ross
 634 Charles D. Boggs
 635 Charles Bigbee
 636 George Ureke
 637 Lynn R. Coil

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 VA 22041 348
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