



346th



349th

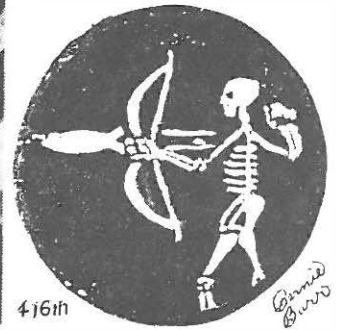


Colonel F. J. Lauer



347th

99TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)



416th

Bernie Barr

THE 99th BOMB GROUP HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 15, No. 4

NOVEMBER 1995

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A friend of mine and I spent a delightful day at the Whiteman Air Force Base Open House at near by Knob Noster, MO. We were treated to an up close look at the B-2 followed by a fly by. Very impressive. The 99th was well represented. I saw Chuck Downey on the way out and I knew Art Knipp was there although I did not see him.

When you read this note Fall will be in full swing, the mini reunion at Omaha will be history and plans for the San Diego BIG ONE will be in this issue. Call, write, and encourage your friends and crew members, both ground and air, to attend. Let's make this reunion as big or bigger than St. Louis !

Word from Dick Drain indicates the 99th history book is at full throttle. He needs your input, pictures, etc. See page 15 of the August newsletter for more information. Also Bernie always needs new material and pictures for the newsletter.

Best wishes to all for the coming holidays and may God continue to bless our United States of America.

Jim

1995-1996 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

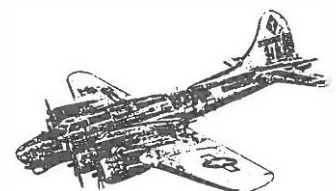
President: Jim Smith; Vice President: Fran Grantz; Secretary: Chris Christiansen

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Editor: Bernie Barr; Directors: Robert Bacher, Denzel Clark, Joe D. Greeley,

Julius Horowitz, Art Knipp, Don Lawhorn, Al Schroeder, Leonard Smith, and

Frank Pearce





THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



The card had come Wednesday afternoon. It was a beautiful Thanksgiving card, one of Hallmark quality! The thoughtful lines, concluded with a greeting: "Happy Thanksgiving, Fran. Enjoy a wonderful day with your family!" The card was signed "Larry". I was very impressed with the thought of receiving the card from my optometrist and fellow Rotarian. Larry was a good friend! I picked up the phone to thank him for his thoughtfulness. His response to me was:

"Thanksgiving is the most beautiful time of the year. You know I don't celebrate Christmas, and besides, Thanksgiving gives me the chance to say 'thank you' and do it from the heart!"

Larry's last name was Fiegenbaum, perhaps you'll understand why his greeting was so special to me, and why now I revere the memory of that moment!

WHAT IS IT THAT MAKES THANKSGIVING SO SPECIAL?

Here is a holiday that commemorates no hero; celebrates no battlefield. No lobby is behind it; no group, or sect or party. Christmas can't dim it, nor July 4th steal its glory. And all Americans love it with a quiet and intense affection that is reserved for no other day of the year.

Thanksgiving is an affirmation. It is our testimony to a deeply held conviction - the conviction that these things we call free and decent and American didn't just happen to us! We did not get them because we were wiser, or more clever, or even luckier! This conviction is the sum of many beliefs and experiences. The belief in the dignity of every human being; the belief in a real right and wrong; the belief in decency and honesty and integrity; the belief in a responsibility, under God, to our fellow man, wherever that person may be. Thanksgiving is our affirmation to the Providence of God for His blessings and guidance and watch-care!

375 years ago, a handful of folks left Europe's shore in two small boats. We called them "the Pilgrims"! A brave bunch they were! Leaving their homes in England because of religious persecution, they found safety in Holland. But soon the tides began rising as the Dutch and Spanish began arming for war. "This is no Zion!", they said. And they looked to the west, envisioning there the realization of their hopes - a new nation under God! There they could live in their own place! These valiant arrived on our eastern shores. No bands! no landing docks with waiting dignitaries! No banners! None of that!! All they saw was wilderness...rocks, trees, water...desolate lonely landscape! These were the brave!! They didn't know the worst was ahead! Before they could get settled in, the harsh winter of 1620 was upon them. Disease and starvation began to take their toll. And before spring 1621, over one-half of their number lie buried in the rocky soil of the rugged Plymouth colony coast!

"Twas the year of the famine in Plymouth of old, The ice and snow from the thatched roofs had rolled.

Through the warm purple skies steered the geese o'er the seas, And the woodpeckers tapped in the clocks of the trees:

The boughs on the slopes to the south winds lay bare, And dreaming of summer the buds swelled in air.

The pale Pilgrims welcomed each reddening morn; There were left for rations but Five Kernels of Corn.

Five Kernels of Corn! Five Kernels of Corn! But to Bradford a feast were Five Kernels of Corn!"

THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER [continued]

With spring 1621 came help...the weather, the ground, the seeds and the Indians who helped. The story of the first Thanksgiving is riveted in our minds, for here were people with a compelling vision; with confident faith in God; and with overwhelming courage! Thanksgiving is rooted deep in the soul. The words of Moses from Deuteronomy:

"For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land of brooks, pools, gushing springs, valleys, and hills; it is a land of wheat and barley, of grape vines, fig trees pomegranates, olives, and honey; it is a land where food is plentiful, and nothing is lacking; it is a land where iron is as common as stone, and copper is abundant in the hills. When you have eaten your fill, bless the Lord your God for the good land he has given you."

The Pilgrims in early America learned lessons that come to us again across the years: Thanksgiving is a Season of the Soul, even when it means "Only Five Kernels of Corn!" Today these are lessons, 375 years later, we do well to copy!

"He gave you water from the rock! He fed you with manna in the wilderness so that you would become humble and so that your trust in him would grow, and he could do you good. He did it so that you would never feel that it was your own power and might that made you wealthy. Always remember that it is the Lord your God who gives you power to become rich, and he does it to fulfill his promise to your ancestors".

My brothers and sisters of the 99th: enjoy a wonderful Thanksgiving and Holiday Season! God bless you and yours! Receive my love and greetings!



Cordially

Francis W. Grantz 

NEWS, NOTES AND LETTERS

Dear Bernie:

The August 1995 Newsletter on Page 21 has a photo in the upper right hand corner entitled "Our Home Away From Home" and a request to respond if any one recognized these folks.

The photograph shows members of Roy Worthington's crew (346th) taken after extensive remodeling of the tent which blew down during a fierce wind and rainstorm. The members from left to right are Milton Ferber, waist gunner now living in Ft. Myers, FL. then Stanley Staats, tail gunner (dec), (Letart, WV,) next Harry Maronpot, waist gunner (Ft. Myers, FL) then Len Hopen, radio (Lancaster, PA) and difficult to see on the far right is Al Suemnicht, engineer (dec) (Belleville, IL). The photo was taken by Harry Card, ball turret gunner, (dec) (Pana IL).

Some of the improvements made to the tent are readily discernible. Note the moat which now surrounds the tent with the mud removed neatly stacked directly under the canvas for further waterproofing. The tent opening flap has been replaced with a wooden door and a piece of runway matting not only served as a walkway but a shuffling gait would remove most of the mud from the underside of the shoes. While the intent of the photo was to display the tent

improvements, the people who made the changes felt they deserved a little credit also.

The outside appearance was rivaled only by the furnishings inside the tent. Six army cots complete with mattresses (let's be honest—they were really pads), mattress covers, and army blankets. A pillow had to be furnished by the guests. The tents had no light, heat, toilet facilities or running water but the ingenuity of the GI had to be reckoned with. Milton Ferber served as the procurement officer with connections in his hometown, the Bronx NY. He obtained some red votive lamps with replacement candles which made the place look churchy but visibility was much improved. He also received a regular care package with all sorts of deli goodies, some of which were new to the predominantly Midwestern crew but always welcome. Al Suemnicht learned that a tank of 100 Octane gasoline with a connected hose which dripped gasoline into a pan placed on a rock could be lit and would provide heat and additional light. The heat was so welcome that no one mentioned the fact that we could have been lifted off the ground without benefit of Roy and the B17. Later, electrical lines were strung to the tents and we had our first experience with Italian electricity. The 15 cycle current caused a visible flickering that made reading very difficult but it easily replaced the votive lights.

The toilet facilities could only be described as "barely" adequate. The early morning gathering place was the latrine tent. Your steel helmet served as your washbasin and bathtub. Hot water was available for bathing and shaving. The latrines were not of the porcelain variety and took a little bit of "getting used to". To avoid the long trip to the latrine tent as much as possible, there were pipes driven into the wheatfield ground in the "streets" which separated the rows of tents and these served as urinals. Privacy would normally not be a problem except that the nice Italian ladies were always in the area picking up or delivering laundry. Even with utmost caution, one could still be interrupted by their sudden appearance. We soon discovered that we were more concerned than they were.

Being out in an open field, we soon learned that we were not the only living creatures around. Harry Maronpot claimed that one mouse was so intelligent that he was able to read labels. The mouse ate only the Hershey bars but wouldn't touch the K-Ration chocolate. Other unwanted visitors were the little lizards. It was a rude awakening to have one of those scratchy little animals crawl up your body to warm themselves. Snakes were not a major problem.

Since there were no phones, the wake-up call was usually at a very early hour and consisted of someone sticking his head into the tent and yelling your name at the top of his voice. This, of course, really pleased the guys who did not have to fly that day. Then it was off to the latrine tent, down to the messhall manned by Italian citizens who were charged with developing new ways to make powdered potatoes, powdered eggs, powdered milk and powdered coffee taste like a breakfast. Success did not come easily if at all.

Despite the difficulties of living and flying combat, having a crew that was blessed with good leadership, a concern for each other

and a trust that each could be relied upon to fulfill his responsibilities made the task bearable while we were doing it and memorable when we finished.

Len Hopen

Dear Bernie

The photo on the back page of the August newsletter of the Staff Sgt. getting the DFC was me. I was awarded this for NOVISAP, YUGOSLAVIA mission 18 Sept. 1944 flying as an NCO bombardier. From the citation—" Sergeant LaVay was severely wounded by a piece of flak in the chest. Despite the seriousness of his wound and the shock he suffered from it, he gallantly remained in his position, refusing aid from any member of the crew until he dropped his bombs in the assigned target area, aiding immeasurably to the grave damage inflicted on enemy installations. This courageous action, conspicuous gallantry, and unfailing devotion to duty displayed by Sergeant LaVay in his determination to fulfill his mission with complete disregard for his own personal welfare, together with his outstanding combat record has reflected great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of The United States of America." Hope this has been of some help. Will see you next year and Baltimore looks good for 1997.

Yours in the 99th.

s/ Jim Lavay

Dick Dempsey wrote to identify Jim LaVay and say that he had a pacemaker installed on 7/14/95 with a stay of three days in the hospital and is feeling good again. He does not expect to be at next years reunion but wishes everyone the BEST.

We do hope that Jim LaVay continues to do well with his new pacemaker and feels well enough to make it to San Diego in May '96. We promise a good relaxing time! Hosts Paul Shanks & Roy Worthington.

OTBF— This past June I went to Alaska with Rosie and another couple. We went to Anchorage, 2 nites, Denali Natl Park 1 nite, Fairbanks 2 nites then a 7 day cruise down to Vancouver with several stops along the way. To top off a terrific trip we had a great bonus, Ted and Mary Pat Heller live in Anchorage and during our last reunion we arranged to meet. We spent a very lovely afternoon with them, they really put themselves out for us, most gracious hosts. I always knew that we had quality people in the 99th. Rosie and I just spent a week at an Elderhostel in the Orlando area, it was most enjoyable.

Capt. Ed O'Neil, who was the PR officer during the B52 visit in Albuquerque, and then again in Rapid City called me this morning. He and I became quite friendly during those two meetings. When I visited Las Vegas, we spent time together. At the moment he is still in LV as an aide to a General, the Air Force is sending him to school which will enable him to get a PhD degree. In November he will be transferred to Maxwell Field, AL. where he will teach various leadership courses. He asked me to send his regards to the 99BG people. We will continue to be in touch with each other. /

s/Jules Horowitz

July 19, 1995

Dear Bernie:

As promised here are the pictures of the book "Sad Sack"

I am sorry I have not sent them sooner but with my knee surgery I am still hopping along some and it has taken several times to get all of these copied.

Maybe you can find some of them that you can get to use in the Newsletter and get a chuckle out of.

Tex and I are now getting ready for a trip to the New England area. In the fall, so I am sure the scenery will be very pretty.

We have been trying to keep cool. Since the midwest is really having a heat wave this year. Worse than usual.

Looking forward to next year and seeing everyone.

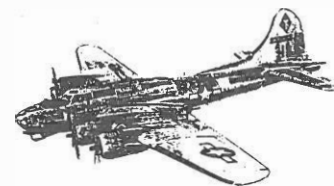
Doris we missed you this year.

Again let me say I am sorry that these are later, but with some complications I am doing much better and after all this "ole" ag is catching up with us all faster than we would like.

See you next year, the Good Lord Willing

Sincerely,

Tex and Lou Morton
St. James, Missouri 65559



SPECIAL THANKS TO TEX & LOU FOR THEIR GREAT EFFORT AND THOUGHTFULNESS. These will be published from time to time as ROY finds space in our newsletter. Each one will bring back memories of the good ole days or the years of our youth. THANKS AGAIN

(Tex & Lou - Paul S. & Roy W., hosts for San Diego, hope to see you with your 'new' knee.)

Here are a few comments from members--If you have any send them to us.

The issue that came in August was a dandy! I very much appreciate the work you have and are doing for the 99th BGHS, and especially the noteworthy articles, diaries, and memorabilia in each issue.

I am in receipt of the latest copy of the newsletter, and I must say that each issue gets better and better, you fellows are doing a great job.

Bernie-With all due respect to the fine job you are doing. You must remember that most of us are over 70, I am 75, had 5 lasers in both eyes and we can not read small print. Even with glasses. You have a tendency to fill up the newsletter with crap. I was in the 347th from Feb 43-12/1/43. I am not impressed with the diary, for one thing they lie-We did not have Bread, butter, sweet potatoes & raisen pie. we never saw bread for 6 months-drive 75 miles to get a meal.

Keep up the good work with thw newsletters.

JOSEPH SHOLTIS writes that he and the waist gunner from JACK GARDNER'S crew are working on a story about PATCHES and will send it in when completed.

ROBERT WOODS writes that he is very active supporting Air Force activities. He has attended a conference in San Diego in support of worker relations. He was also invited and attended the Air Force celebration of VJ DAY sponsored by the Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

MEMBERS: Please check and account for your crew members and friends. Our Feb 1995 newsletter had a roster of all known 99th assigned men. If you do not see the name of someone that you know that should be on the roster of LOST or TAPS send name and address to me (DON WAMSER 8318 Belding Road Rockford, MI 49341. Changes of present members send to WALTER BUTLER. Thanks for your help. New roster or changes to February Roster will be published in Feb issue 1997. THANKS: s/Don Wamser

VIC FABINIAC writes that all is not well here in Vermilion with the wife. She has been in the hospital since early July. Also he received an EMU EGG SHELL & FEATHERS from Leon Estes.

We will have to ask Leon to explain what he is doing with EMUs.

BEST TO VIC.

GEORGE WELSH is managing an organization called THE INTERNATIONAL B-24 LIBERATOR CLUB to preserve the history of the B-24 Liberator. If you would like to join contact George Welsh, Manager, International B-24 Liberator Club. 15817 Bernardo Center Drive, Suite 102, Box 124, San Diego, CA 92127-2322. Tel/Fax: 619/679-1957.

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE TYPE YOUR LETTERS AND OTHER INFORMATION YOU WANT PUBLISHED IN YOUR NEWSLETTER. HAND WRITTEN MATERIAL CANNOT BE EASILY READ AND GENERALLY CANNOT BE SUCCESSFULLY PRINTED. WE NEED A SOLID BLACK IMAGE TO PRINT SUCCESSFULLY.

The News-Messenger, Fremont, Ohio,

GOLF

Bud Kaufman, 77, shoots '1-under' 76

By BOB MARKER
Sports Editor

Young golfers can only dream of it, but shooting their age for 18 holes can be reality for older golfers.

Just ask Norman "Bud" Kaufman, 77, of Fremont.

In 1991, the long-time member of Fremont Country Club matched his age with a 73. Last week, he beat his age by a stroke with a 76.

"Shooting my age? No, it's not

a goal," Kaufman said, "but I wanted to do it again."

He also has come close since shooting the 76 on July 18 carding a 79.



KAUFMAN

Bud says and, Bud Kaufman



The Russian government is awarding medals to those who flew the shuttle mission. All members of the 99th Bomb Group who flew this mission are eligible. To apply for the *50th Anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War* medal, veterans should send a typewritten request to:

Embassy of Russia
 Attn: Office of Public Affairs
 2650 Wisconsin Ave. NW
 Washington DC 20007

The following information must be submitted with the request:

1. The veteran's full name, current mailing address, date of birth and telephone number at which he can be reached.
2. A full copy of the veteran's discharge papers or other proof of his service in the *Frantic* operation.
3. The dates and a brief description of the operation in which the veteran served and what he did personally.

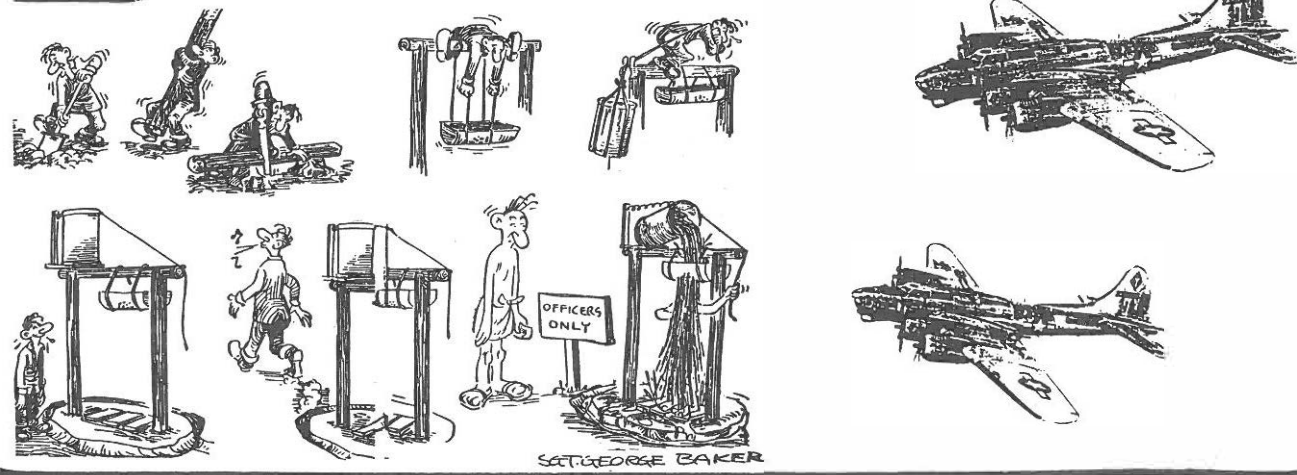
The Embassy will also accept applications along with appropriate documentation from the next of kin of deceased veterans. In case of a veteran's serious medical condition, if a certification of condition by a doctor is supplied, it will be given priority.

The expected time for processing is officially 6-8 months. While the medals are being awarded at no cost to the recipient, it would be appreciated if each applicant would enclose with their application a check or money order for \$4.00 payable to the Embassy of Russia to help defray the cost of postage in mailing out hundreds of medals. The medals will also come with a Russian award document with the veteran's name on it. If any additional information is required, please call 202-298-5769.

[The above excerpted from Vol 95, Number 3 of the 8th AF News]

Note: If anyone in the 99th who flew this mission needs a copy of the load list for the shuttle [this list would be partial proof of participation] to document their participation please send an SASE, legal envelope please, to Dick Drain, 99th BG Historian, 1642 Falmouth Avenue, Springfield OH 45503. Also please inform me what squadron you were in.

THE SHOWER



REPORT FROM YOUR 99th SITE COMMITTEE

Back in May of this year, during our reunion in St. Louis, it was announced that our '96 reunion would take place in Tucson Arizona... a lovely spot with many attractions for our members. Your Site Committee had done a lot of leg work before settling on Tucson. We were successful in booking an excellent all suite hotel and very favorable dates, that were considered to be the high season. Our program was presented to our Board of Directors and unanimously approved.

Now the old adage - - - "Best laid plans often go astray."

Subsequent to our reunion in St. Louis and Board approval of Tucson, we proceeded to firm up a contract. It so happens that following our negotiations, there was a change in management and ownership of the hotel. They would not honor the previous commitments for our reunion dates, nor our hospitality arrangements. Net result - - we cancel, and in our considered opinion, for the better.

The Convention Bureau of San Diego, California was most anxious to host our reunion and no less than 10 top hotels offered plans. So, get ready for a grand time in San Diego:

- ~ Imagine having our reunion in the city with the best year-round climate in the nation.
- ~ Imagine our reunion in a city with a great Military history.
- ~ Imagine having lunch on one of our Super Air Craft Carriers.
- ~ Imagine a trip to the best zoo in the world, as well as Sea World.

This is just starters for all the interesting things to expect from your '96 Host, Roy Worthington and his assistants. See Roy's announcement in this newsletter.

Your Site Committee



NEIL E. TORSSSELL ADDS HIS STORY OF THE GERBINI RAID OF JULY 5, 1943.

GERBINI AIRDROM MISSION, July 5, 1943

Sgt. Neil E. Torsssell, Photographer, 11th crew member, Plane # 229485
348th Sq.

Coming in on the target I was in the Camera Well, Sgt. Fleming was firing the gun in the Radio Room as we were under heavy attack. While in the Camera Well you don't realize how much is going on. You hear the heavy battle noise but you do not realize how serious it really is.

Coming off the target I got out of the Well and saw all kinds of bullet holes in the sides of the Radio Room. Many of the control cables were hanging loose. Sgt. Fleming pointed out the left window, and in the painted star was a shell hole that a man could have jumped through. He then pointed to the oxygen line which showed zero. As I reached for a walk around bottle it blew up just before I placed my hands on it. I received some shrapnel wounds from the bottle explosion which turned out to be minor. Sgt. Espisto crawled out of the Ball Turret as it was on fire with fire all around it and he was all shot up

We got word to bail out. I had help getting into my chute and Fleming, HUCKABEE & I went into the Bomb Bay on the catwalk. The Bomb Bay doors were open. we looked at each other, they pointed at me and I bailed out. When the chute opened with a jolt I was worrying about the chute spilling me as I was rocking back and forth. The rocking settled down and I saw a fighter plane circling around near me, but he was a gentleman and did not fire on me. I saw one B-17 crash in a ball of fire. I didn't know if this was ours or not. I landed near a farm house and was taken inside. Soon the Carabinieri arrived and I was taken in a truck to a city jail. The Carabinieri gave me a fresh lemon to eat or do as I pleased with. I was interrogated by an Italian officer who made me take everything out of my pockets. but I reached over and put the items back in my pockets. HE DID A LOT OF RANTING & RAVING, and when it was over I was taken to a city jail and given some kind of a pasta meal.

Later in the afternoon when all the Americans had been rounded up, we were put on a bus and taken to another town. I think there was one guard for each prisoner. At first I was put in a cell with two of our crew. Later I was placed in a cell with a so called South African fighter pilot. The trouble was that the KRAUT WAS DRIPPING OUT OF HIS MOUTH. The so called bed was just a bunch of boards. The latrine was a small wooden bucket. We were let out of the cell twice a day to walk around an enclosed courtyard. Also to get our meals. We were there three or four days. At night there were raid by our aircraft on the town or a base nearby.

From there we were put on a bus. Again, there was one guard for each prisoner. We wandered through the foothills until we came to the coast. Along the coast road we got caught in a hit and run raid. The guards beat us out of the bus to take cover. Near Catania we stopped a couple of miles outside the city to watch a daylight raid on the city. After the raid we went through the city and met some Moble 88's on tracks moving out. By evening we arrived at Straits of Messina and got caught in another raid while waiting at the Ferry Docks. We crossed the Straits and landed at Reggio di Calabria. There we got on a train which took us to Rome. We were put on a bus and taken to a small concentration camp. We could see the Vatican from our location.

This camp probably had been a private Villa at one time. We were met by a couple of British soldiers in good clean British dress (?). They were telling us of all the glory of the good things that were in store for us. The camp was surrounded by three rows of barb wire. One was supposed to be electrified. My cell was in the basement of the building. Just a hard tile floor, no bed, no blanket, not pot. We were let out twice a day for exercise and food. We were also photographed there.

In a few days we were again moved. At the railroad station we were put on a train and taken to another small camp which I think was northwest of Rome. Not quite sure of the direction. This was another Villa type building. This time Sgt. Withrow and I were put in a nice room with two beds, mattress, pillows, blankets. Almost like a hotel. We discovered the room was bugged. In about three days we were removed from the plush rooms and placed in a loft with twenty or so others. There we had straw ticks or mattress covers on the floor. After a few more days we were taken back to Rome. In Rome the officers and enlisted men were separated. We were placed on a train at a Rome substation. We later found out that our group had done an excellent job on the main Rome station. We crossed Italy to the Port of St. George on the east coast. Then we took an electric interurban train inland to Servigliano where there was a large POW camp, Camp 59. At this camp I was issued British Battle dress pants, Italian shirt and jacket, canteen, basic personal items, and eating utensils. The bunks were double deck and bed bug infested. Once a week we took our bed frames apart to kill the bugs.

On September 15, 1943 we had a mass break from the camp and we all headed for the hills. I roamed the hills until June 29, 1944 when I got back into allied controlled territory.

I got back to the 99th at Foggia and was promoted to T/Sgt. and given orders to return to the States. I flew all the way back.

Respectfully
Neil E. Torsssell

205 Linden St. S. E.
Sleepy Eye, Mn 56085
Aug. 1, 1995

THE PROPOSITION



SGT GEORGE BAKER

Dear Bernie,

Despite the weather, the meeting in St. Louis was a great reunion. The only mistake I made was to bring along my lap top computer. The fellows kept me busy going through the 99th data base looking for information. I got pretty hoarse but have now fully recovered and am ready to get to work on the 99th Bomb Group History.

Turner called and when I told them the board had approved publication, they said they would be sending the contract to Walter for signature.

I desperately need pictures for the book. I am requesting the loan of those that you have and if you could ask Roy to send what he has so I can make copies of them. Turner informed me that pictures sell books, the more pictures they have the more books they sell.

Also request that you include an article in the next Newsletter requesting pictures and stories. Emphasize that the pictures will be copied and returned if requested to do so. All stories will be edited for spelling but the content will not be changed. The quicker I get the pictures and stories, the quicker the book will be published. And if anyone has any good shots of the memorials at the USAF Academy and the USAF Museum, I would like those also. Please advise them to send all items to my address.

I have found an artist who will do the color work for the cover for FREE. I would like to do the squadron patches but need patches for the 347th and 348th Squadrons. Those units remained on active duty and the patches were changed. I have data on the 346th and 416th which are listed in the official book on Combat Squadrons of the Air Force. The patches will be in color so I need to know what was on the patch and what the colors are.

Turner will probably ask you to also ask our members to submit biographical data. I believe the contract will include something to this effect.

I have my committee ready and I am very anxious to get this thing published. I just need the cooperation of our members. So I hope they all pitch in and make this effort a big success.

keep in touch,

Dick Drain
99th BG Historian
3307 Gloucester Street
Springfield OH 45503
513-399-6681



L. to R.-Len & Virginia Smith, Bernie Barr, Carolyn & Fred Troy enjoy the festivities of the Banquet during the St. Louis reunion.

99th to close, critical mission will continue

by Maj. Joe Mecador
28th Bomb Wing Public Affairs Officer

Four...three...two...the number of Ellsworth wings counts down to one when the 99th Wing furls its flag at an inactivation ceremony Monday. No stranger to inactivations, this ceremony will close the six-year Ellsworth incarnation of a long, rich and colorful organizational life.

The 99th Wing began as the 99th Bombardment Group June 1, 1942, at Gowen Field, Ohio. Air operations moved to Algeria February 1943. While based there the unit consistently distinguished itself while flying bombing missions against targets in Italy, Sardinia and Sicily.

December 1943 brought a basing change as the wing moved to an airfield near Foggia, Italy. From there, 99th aircrew missions expanded to include targets throughout Europe.

Victory in Europe put the 99th out of business for the first time when the unit inactivated in Italy Nov. 8, 1945. The 99th phoenix next arose as the Reserve 99th Bomb Group (Very Heavy), based in Birmingham, Ala., May 29, 1947. This group inactivated June 27, 1949.

Jan. 1, 1953, brought the 99th's next incarnation as the 99th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, based at Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash. Although the years brought several evolutions in name, equipment, mission, and a move to Westover AFB in 1966, the organization operated continuously until a second inactivation closed the doors March 13, 1974.

Life number four began at Ellsworth August 10, 1989, with the activation of the 99th Strategic Weapons Wing. Major Air Force reorganizations and more name changes never changed this new 99th's critical mission — creating bomber employment tactics and training aircrews in their use, developing test plans and conducting tests as new weapons were brought on-line, and operating a number of electronic bombing ranges where the training, tactics and weapons combined to show their teeth under simulated combat conditions.

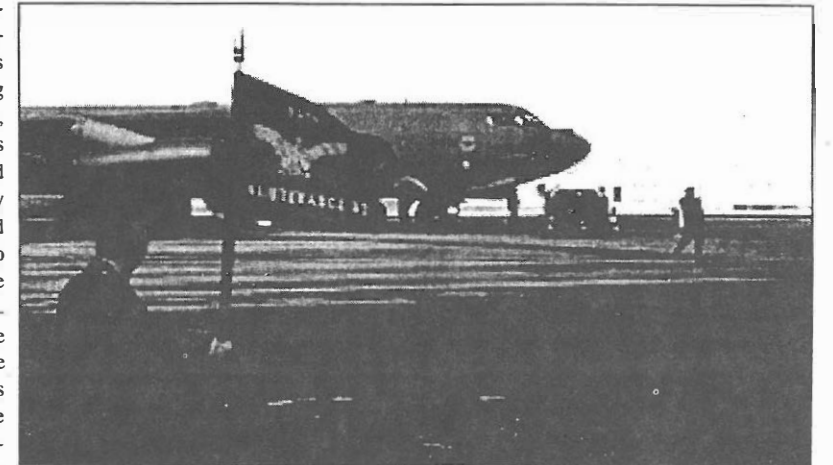
Without realistic and workable strategies for penetrating hostile air space, putting bombs on target, and returning safely home — and crews trained to exploit those strategies — bombers are more expensive ramp ornaments than effective weapon systems. As the Air Force "Top Gun" school for bomber crews the 99th honed this lethal edge for the nation's bomber force.

Desert Storm showed just how effective a bomber force could be, and gave 135 99th planners and aircrew members the opportunity to prove their expertise during 130 combat missions over Iraq and Kuwait.

"The important point is that all these functions will continue — but under new or different wings," said Col. Neal D. Coyle, 99th Wing commander. "The test mission has been incorporated into new 57th Wing detachments here and at Barksdale AFB, La.

"The Joint Employment Tactics School has moved intact to Nellis AFB, Nev., to become part of the Red Flag operation. Tactics manuals will be written along with others at the 57th Test Group.

"Finally, our range operations have transferred to the 554th Range Squadron at Nellis and are also in the midst of a conversion to civilian contract operation. Management functions will be maintained by the 554th and the operating detachment that will remain at Ellsworth."



file photo
The 99th Wing furls its flag at Ellsworth Monday in an inactivation ceremony scheduled for 1 p.m. in the circle in front of its headquarters building.

The 99th has much to be proud of, according to Coyle, and not just because of the mission. Veterans at local VA hospitals, for example, will no doubt miss the regular visits from groups of 99th members.

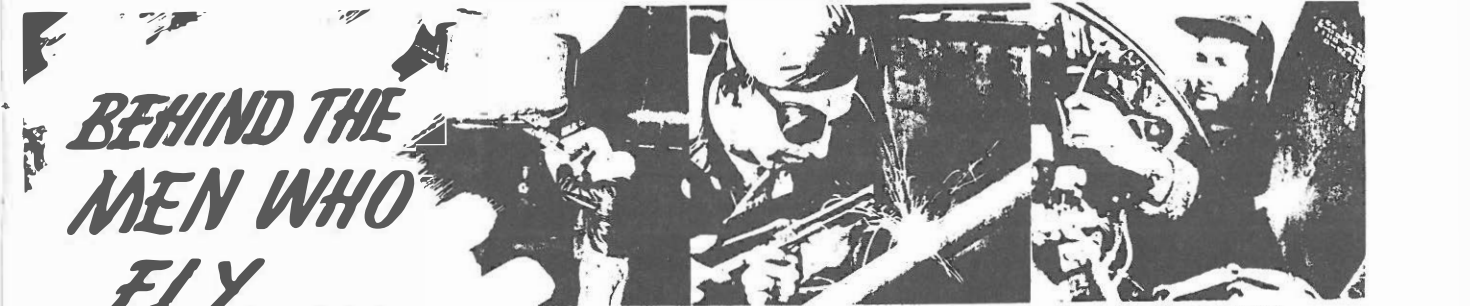
"We'll miss Ellsworth and its people, and all our friends in the community" he said. "Together, we've accomplished a lot"

While some may count the 99th Wing down, local retired businessman M.J. Larkin will tell you never to count them out. He should know. He's an original member of the 99th Bomb Group flying raids on Italy out of Algeria, and he'll be there Monday — still going strong.

"The 99th has proven to be a tough old bird," he said. "It looked like the end for us several times, but we always bounce back."

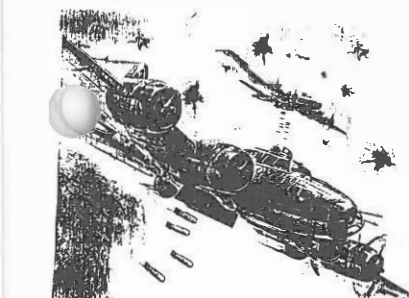
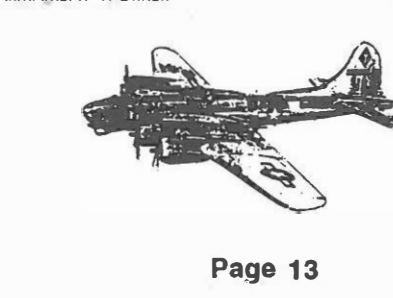

And he's already right.
The 99th Air Base Wing, new host unit at Nellis, will activate Oct. 1.

BEHIND THE MEN WHO FLY.....



ARMAMENT WORKER WELDER ENGINE MECHANIC

99TH BOMB GROUP

Gentlemen:

I was especially interested to read the two stories "The Oran Training Base" and "Gerbini Airdrome Mission" from the James Bruno book. I piloted the Yankee Doodle in 50 missions out of North Africa, and thought you might be interested in a story which ran in a local newspaper on June 30, 1988, after a reunion of our Crew 12 at our home, as well as the article in "Island Living" on August 3, 1994. I wish I had the pictures, but I don't have the latter and am hesitant to let go of the original crew photo.

Keep up the good work with the newsletter. I always look forward to receiving it.

Sincerely,


Dean W. Shields

"The supplies were all coded, so we couldn't tell what we were getting," Shields said. "Once we got back to base at Navarin, Algeria, and found we had picked up hundreds of cases of fruit salad. Another time we ended up with an entire field kitchen."

There were other frustrations that went with the territory.

"I had spent eight months learning to operate that sophisticated radio equipment, and we were ordered on radio silence," said Shivey. "I was never permitted to use the radio under any circumstances."

Although the Yankee Doodle was hit numerous times in battle, none of the crew was hurt.

The group was given the Presidential Unit Citation on July 5th, 1943. The Yankee Doodle was credited with shooting down 17 fighters during its 50 missions.

In April 1943, the crew was cited for a bombing raid over Trapani, Sicily, that damaged some 80 Ju52s and Ju88s on the ground. Maj. Gen. James Doolittle said he had never seen such perfect bombing.

On July 19th, 1943, the Yankee Doodle took part in the first bombing raid on Rome. It was ticklish business, because the target was the railroad yards, which were not far from St. Maria Maggiore Cathedral and St. Johns Lateran Cathedral.

"To hit either of these, and of course the Vatican, was a court-martial offense," said Cozine.

"And to further complicate matters, Gen. Eisenhower sent B-25s over Rome the day before the raid, dropping leaflets telling the civilians to get out of the area, for the Americans were going to bomb the rail yards the next day,"

he added.

When the Yankee Doodle and other flying fortresses came in on their bombing raid, there were between 200 and 300 anti-aircraft guns trained on them.

During the bombing run the bombardier was not only responsible for dropping the 500-pound bombs on target, he operated a camera and the pictures he took had to show that only the target was damaged.

"But we proved we could hit what we were supposed to hit from five miles up," Cozine said. "Some fighters came up, but they didn't do much. Let Rome burn, we said!"

On April 4th, 1943, the Yankee Doodle and 17 other flying fortresses were accredited with sinking 10 ships and two submarines, as well as destroying the docks at Naples.

Eight months after arriving in Algiers, Crew 12 had achieved its 50 missions, and the Yankee Doodle was turned over to others.

Of the original 10-man crew of the Yankee Doodle, three were unable to make it to the reunion and two others could not be located.

But the five who came spent the weekend reliving their flight plans, looking at photographs of their bombing missions the Department of Defense allowed them to keep, and reexperiencing their niche in history.

"I never talked to anyone else who flew on her after us," said Shields. "But it's kind of hard to believe that the Yankee Doodle would be reissued, like a pair of shoes. There's just that personal thing about it."



THE CREW OF THE FLYING FORTRESS, "YANKEE DOODLE" — members of the "Yankee Doodle" crew in North Africa in September, 1943. The five crewmen who met recently at Bent Tree include Almus W. Shivey, Kennett, Mo., radio operator, top row second from left; Sam Crisler, Alpharetta, Ga., waist gunner, fourth from left; James E. Richardson, Providence, R.I., tail gunner, front row left; Dean Shields, Bent Tree, pilot, fourth from left; and Arthur Cozine, Boise, Idaho, bombardier.



AS THEY MET NEARLY 45 YEARS LATER — The five crew members as they looked nearly 45 years later at the reunion at Bent Tree, left to right: Cozine, the bombardier; Shields, the pilot; Richardson, tail gunner; Shivey, the radio operator and Crisler, waist gunner.

Off Main Street

By: JACK STILLMAN

The Yankee Doodle's crew carved their niche in history

In 1943 the crew of the Yankee Doodle measured time by bombing missions, for 50 missions was their passport home. Their base was in North Africa, but their home away from home was a flying fortress, a B-17 bomber that helped these men carve a niche in history and help hasten the end of World War II.

A few days ago five members of the venerable crew gathered at the home of Dean and Susie Shields in Bent Tree for a reunion, for Shields was their pilot. This was Crew No. 12 of the 347th Bomb Squadron, 99th Bomb Group, 12 Air Force.

For them, the Yankee Doodle was more than just a bomber. They pampered her, fussed over her, patched her up with masking tape to repair the enemy's marks, and griped when a mission was cancelled, for any such occurrence would cut into their 50 missions. When Crew No. 12 got the Yankee Doodle, it was brand new. It had only eight hours on the engines.

"Check it out," they were told at Boise, Idaho, where they took command of their charge.

"We went over it like no crew ever went over a plane, said Shields. "Of 32 crews in training, there were only three planes for us to train in, and this one was ours. It belonged to us. We took care of it, because we knew we had to.

Those 50 missions were our ticket back home."

Besides Shields, others who gathered for the reunion included Arthur Cozine of Boise, bombardier; James E. Richardson of Providence, R.I., tail gunner; Almus W. Shivey, Kennett, Mo., radio operator; and Sam Crisler, Alpharetta, Ga., waist gunner.

At 17, Richardson was the youngest member of the crew.

For three months after taking the Yankee Doodle to North Africa, they had no ground crew, so they had to maintain their own plane.

Often they would return from a mission with shrapnel holes in the fuselage. Sometimes there were bigger holes, where 20 mm shells had passed through the plane.

"We were on the flight line preparing to take off once when someone on the flight line signaled us to return," Shields recalled. "We pulled back and found a gas leak in the wing. We pulled out an unexploded 20 mm shell."

Cozine recalls some of their makeshift patching. "We found that masking tape and shellac worked pretty well," he said. "The German submarines were so efficient that for three months we had practically no supplies, including food."

To get food they would drive a truck to the docks at Oran, where quartermaster supplies were stored.

"PANCAKE TENT"

I was a B-17 pilot in the 347th Sq. of the 99th BG from Oct. '44 to May '45. My tent mates were Les Hansen, Doris Beers and Tommy Thompson. About Jan. '45 our homemade stove (which was a marvel) that had been welded together for me by the engineers began to smoke up our tent. The stove was composed of an oxygen bottle, a bomb fin and had a 5 gallon has can water heater hooked up to a 50 gallon barrel of water outside the tent. Next to this was a 50 gallon 130 octane gasoline supply. To keep the water from boiling away we had a piece of armor steel from a wrecked B-17 which we would slide in or out between the stove and water tank when we wanted hot water to wash or shave. A 10 foot length of 4 inch diameter steel or iron pipe serving as a chimney became so clogged with carbon the smoke wouldn't go up and out of the tent. I turned the stove off and let it cool. Then I stuck a flare pistol up the pipe from inside the stove and pulled the trigger. This cleaned the pipe and we all sat back on our cots marveling at our ingenuity. Someone looked up as a piece of red hot charcoal fell on the tent floor. We all then looked up to see about 100 plus small glowing holes growing in size. After they burned about the size of a dime the hot coal would drop thru into the tent. We were kept busy for awhile stomping hot coals and getting them off our clothes and beds. My tent mates said to me - "Ok Monty, you've played hell, what'cha gonna do?" I said "No problem, I'll go to supply and get a new tent!" Our supply sergeant said - "We don't have a new or old tent." I then asked for some tent pieces and tar. He had lots of tar but no tent material. Well, after eating our mess hall pancakes many times and knowing you needed a fork and serrated blade knife to cut then to bite size I headed for the mess hall. The mess sergeant made me 100 plus silver dollar size pancakes cooked well done. With the help of my tent mates we spread tar on each pancake and laying on the tent we started at the top covering each hole with a tar coated pancake as we worked our way down each of the four sides of the tent. With much snow, rains, winds, and hot sun we never had a leak. In May of '45 when I left it was still all together. I've told this story hundreds of times and it is one of my favorite memories of WW II.

Walt M

Walt Montgomery, Captain, USAFR, 02059106, Class-44E, Waco, TX
Huntingdon, TN 38344 • 1-901-986-8328

NEW MEMBERS

LAWRENCE M. FREIWALD, 57083 HWY 445, Husser, LA 70442 99th Headquarters
ALAN J. LEVINE, 138-21 77th Avenue, Kew Gardens Hills, New York 11367 Associate

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

ERNEST K. GENTIT, 1908 East High Street, Bryan, OH 43506-9802
LELAND CAMPBELL, 2367-1 Green Acres Road, Fayetteville, AR 72703

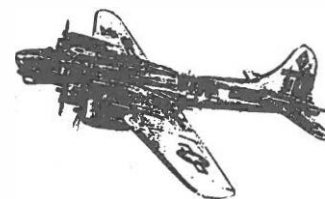
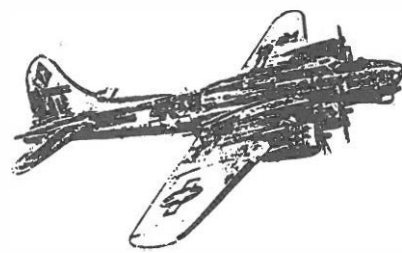
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FRANK P. DUNNINGTON

MATTHEW MILLER

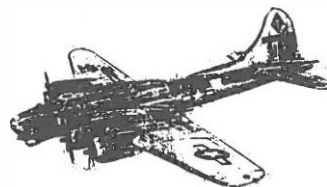
THORVALD (STICKY) STIGSEN

WILLIAM JAMES WALKER



I'M FINE

There's nothing whatever the matter with me.
I'm just as healthy as I can be,
I have arthritis in both my knees
And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.
My pulse is weak and my blood is thin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.
I think my liver is out of whack
And a terrible pain is in my back,
My hearing is poor, my sight is dim,
Most everything seems to be out of trim,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.
I have arch supports for both my feet.
Or I wouldn't be able to go on the street.
Sleeplessness I have night after night,
And in the morning I'm just a sight,
My memory is failing, my head's in a spin,
I'm peacefully living on aspirin.
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in
The moral is, as this tale we unfold,
That for you and me who are growing old,
It's better to say, 'I'm fine' with a grin
Than to let them know the shape we're in.



Hanalei Hotel

San Diego's Hawaiian Paradise

FACT SHEET

THE HOTEL

Multi-Million dollar renovation completed in Summer 1994
402 spacious and comfortable rooms offer private balconies with pool or golf course views
14 One and Two Bedroom Suites
Spacious lobby with friendly and professional staff to serve you
Conveniently located in Mission Valley (Hotel Circle) with easy access to Airport, Old Town, Sea World, Jack Murphy Stadium, Zoo, Balboa Park, Beaches and other San Diego attractions
Walking distance to Fashion Valley Mall featuring over 140 Specialty Shops, Restaurants and Theaters
Old Town Trolley boarding directly in front of the Hotel
All major credit cards accepted
Meeting/Banquet facilities for up to 560 people (800 people for casual receptions)
Toll-Free Direct Line to our Reservations Dept: (800)882-0858

AMENITIES

Complimentary Shuttle to and from Mission and Fashion Valley Shopping Centers and Old Town
Complimentary Parking
AT&T Language Line Service
Large Heated outdoor Pool & Spa
Coin Operated Laundry Facilities
Tours to all Attractions Available
Gift Shop
Room Service
Valet Service
Concierge (Summer)
Two Restaurants and Lounge

ESTABLISHED ROOM RATE (DOUBLE OR SINGLE) FOR 99TH BGHS '96 REUNION IS \$74.04 (tax included)

THE ROOMS

Choice of King or Queen/Queen Bedded Rooms • 4 First Floor Handicapped Rooms Available
Connecting Rooms Available
ADA Equipped Rooms
Non-Smoking Rooms
12 Spacious Suites with balconies or Lanai and mini-refrigerators
Cable TV
AM/FM Radio, Alarm Clock
Direct Dial Telephone with Message alert

DINING AT THE HAWAII PARADISE

Peacock Cafe
Islands Restaurant & Lounge

Serving Breakfast and Lunch
Polynesian, American, and Pacific Rim Cuisine

1996 San Diego, CA Reunion Information

Our reunion is planned for May 14 (Tuesday Registration & Evening Mai Tai Reception) until May 19 (Sunday Getaway Breakfast), 1996.

Our living accommodations will be at the Hanalei (Han-a-lay) Hotel. A fact sheet for the Hanalei will be found in this issue along with hotel registration information.

Our hospitality room will be our registration point and headquarters during our stay. The room is very spacious with a good bar set up and it is very convenient to the swimming pool area for outdoor lounging and/or swimming.

You will find your personal accommodations very comfortable and your hosts encourage you to book your required accommodations by toll free phone or mail no later than the second week in April 1996. If you use the toll free phone number make it clear you are attending the 99th BG Historical Society reunion.

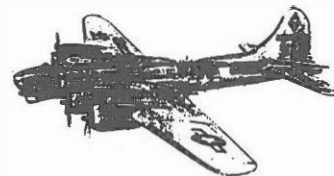
San Diego is a beautiful city with so many interesting attractions it is difficult to choose what to offer our members in the time available.

We have in the planning stage (thanks to Paul Shank [346th Sq.] a long time San Diego high school chemistry professor & tourist consultant); 1) a comprehensive tour of the modern and old Tijuana, Mexico, complete with leisurely stops for margaritas and lobster (or other) dinner; 2) a tour of an interesting U.S. Navy ship & our membership business meeting luncheon at a Navy club; 3) personally conducted San Diego tours by Paul Shank (15 passengers maximum) with a tour on Wednesday and Saturday; 4) San Diego Wild Animal Park visit; 5) a sunset time beach party with hot dogs, hamburgers, potato salad, baked beans, beer/soft drinks, etc.; 6) a hotel complimentary pool side Mai Tai reception with entertainment; 7) Anheuser-Busch Sea World, the San Diego world class Zoo, the San Diego Aerospace Museum, San Diego Old Town, & the Fashion Valley Mall shopping area are only minutes away by bus & trolley which can be boarded in front of our hotel. Self planned trips to these interesting points can be made for discount fares and admissions; & 8) our usual Saturday night banquet with dance music.

Our February newsletter will have the finalized agenda and prices for our May 14 - 19, 1996 reunion.

On page 32 of this issue find a Registration/Information Form for the Hanalei Hotel. File in a safe spot for use when the time comes.

The previous page contains more facts about the Hanalei that may be of use.



NEWS, NOTES AND LETTERS

Dear Bernie,

While reviewing the manuscript containing my life in the 99th, I have been unable to find anything that I would consider exciting, or very interesting, to your readers. If you decide to print anything, I will assume that Dick Drain will see it in the Newsletter, and then decide if he will use anything for the History. I do have some snapshots, some of which he may use, and will forward them to him. If nothing is used I will not be offended. The following has been gleaned with some discretion:

It was no secret that Camp Kilmer was a preparation base for overseas duty. Like many others, I had mixed emotions. Then, about a week after our arrival at the base, my good wife, Mary, arrived in New Brunswick, not far from the camp. With the help of the local U.S.O., she found a very kind family (the Clarks) to stay with. Renting a spare bedroom out to visiting wives of servicemen was one way the Clarks could contribute to the war effort, plus augmenting their income a little. Helen McIlvain, the wife of Jack (a member of the 416th Squadron's armament section,) also stayed at the Clarks' home. We became good friends with Helen and Jack, and were glad to find out their home was in Aliquippa, Pa., about 30 miles North of the Pittsburgh area where we lived. After a happy week with Mary, sadly I said, "Good by" at the New Brunswick train station.

About 5 A.M., on April 29, 1943 (I think), the "S.S. Edmund B. Alexander" troop ship left Staten Island Harbor, bound for ? I don't know how many hundreds of us were on the ship, but the lack of enough bunks made it necessary for the men to sleep in two shifts. To my dismay, I was one picked to sleep(?) during the day. And, unfortunately, my biological clock refused to cooperate, so I tried catching up on sleep at night, either on a secluded place on deck, or on an empty stairway. It was rough going for a couple days, and some men got seasick. This happened one day when I was standing at the galley counter eating; a poor guy next to me started to lose his lunch. Somehow, I managed to finish. The food was fair; I remember eating so many hard-boiled eggs that it was necessary to see the medic about a laxative.

I guess we were about two thirds across the Atlantic when the ship slowed down to a snail's pace - engine trouble. The Edmund B. Alexander was just one of a large convoy which included several destroyers. Suddenly, with the exception of two destroyers, the rest of the ships took off without us! Thus, we were sitting ducks, limping along in an ocean infested with German submarines. At least, this thought prevailed among most of the men, no doubt. Well, the two destroyers gave some moral support, along with many prayers. As divine providence may have had it, we arrived, safely, at Gibraltar, where the engines were repaired. Another unusual experience was my time spent in the brig of the ship. During the "cruise", Special Orders needed to be typed, covering the transfer and, with such crowded conditions, Sergeant Major Freiwald and probably the Adjutant arranged for me to use one of the brigs as a temporary office. As far as I know, I was the only one on the ship who spent part of the time in jail.

Our arrival at Oran, North Africa was uneventful, then we were trucked to La Senia, where we set up pup tents and latrines. What a God-forsaken desert! At least it looked that way to me. My tent partner was Bob Smith, a tough but kind-hearted man in his forties from Kansas City, Kansas. We spent much of our time arguing; I can't remember about what. One day he said to me, "You just remind me of my kid brother, Tom." In the meantime, since March 31, 1943, the Air Echelon had been flying about 35 B-17's on bombing missions out of Navarin, Algeria. Unless I have missed something in the 99th Newsletters, those heroes have never received any citations for doing what seemed an almost impossible job. During two months,

without any ground personnel to help, the flight crews managed to keep operating - repairing planes, loading bombs, standing guard, preparing meals, and a lot more; all this plus flying 21 bombing missions over Italy, Sicily, and Sardinia. Our airplane mechanics, also unsung heroes, did a superb job throughout the war. If they had not, many more lives and planes would have been lost.

After ten days of sleeping in pup-tents, eating "C" rations and "K" rations, and trying to work in our large tent-office (while being plagued by hot winds and small twisters) we departed by train for Navarin, Algeria, North Africa. It was a shock not to be boarding an ordinary troop-train. Actually, this was a freight train, and we were the freight. The box-cars, about 1/3 the size of those in the United States, were painted on the outside with the words: "HUIT CHEVAUX OU QUARANTE HOMMES". Translation: "EIGHT HORSES OR FORTY MEN". In order to feed the troops, several box-cars were used as mess kitchens. Occasionally, the train made relief stops and, fortunately, the desert plains revealed no civilians to interfere with our privacy. About eight to ten hours later, on May 26, 1943, we arrived at Navarin. The Air and Ground Echelons were finally reunited!

Headquarters operations on the ground consisted of S-1 (Personnel), S-2 (Intelligence), S-3 (Operations), and S-4 (Maintenance). Working conditions were good; also, the thick, masonry walls helped to keep the place cool in the summer. One day, the Sergeant-Major announced that a one or two star General would be visiting Headquarters, and asked me to be on the alert, and to announce "ATTENTION" the minute the General came through the doorway. By the time I saw him, I was a bit nervous, shouting "ATTENTION" at the top of my voice; I have been told many times that my normal voice is too soft spoken. For a while, that day, I took some kidding, even by Lt. Colonel Hampton, Executive Officer. Evidently a few jumped out of their seats, startled.

Before leaving North Africa I'd like to share a few more thoughts of that unique and mysterious country:

La Senia (Algeria): Although we arrived here in mid May, 1943, and it was situated not far from the Mediterranean Sea, this vast desert was HOT! The only shelter from the sun was our tents, but they were hot also. We wore our plastic helmets until evening, and there were no building in which to get relief. But, we did have the luxury of having our own barber - Bill Haley, whose primary duty was to assist the Mess Sergeant in Headquarters Mess Hall. Bill gave a pretty good haircut, having been in that business while in civilian life. Latrines were out in the open, but privacy was not that important. Seldom did we see Arab civilians, especially of the female gender. It was part of the Arab culture for women to remain hidden.

Oran (Algeria): This town was a strange mix of electric trolley, horse-drawn carts and carriages, modern theaters and department stores, ancient looking outdoor meat-markets selling mainly goat meat or lamb and, of course, souvenir stands. Oran was a city crowded with French civilians and French soldiers, Arabs, and American servicemen. I think this general area was where I came down with a miserable case of dysentery, and was sent by HQ's doctor to a nearby mobile tent hospital. After a day or two, the medics had reduced my 104 temperature, and sent me back to my job. No doubt, in my mind, the plague-like flies were the culprits. All it took was one fly on our food; so, most of the time, we were "en garde." Constantine, Algeria, was much like Oran, only on a larger scale. Both cities had their "Quartier Arabe" (Arab Section), where life remained according to ancient Arab culture - a life more mysterious than that within the city's business section.

Tunis (Capital of Tunisia): I think the most interesting part of this city was the Kasbah, the primary Arab Quarter. Good wife, Mary, saved my letter, written on November 24, 1943, which more clearly describes that section. The greater part of this letter follows;

"Some of us had a big afternoon today. We went by truck, to town, then we walked through the Kasbah which is the ancient Arab section of Tunis. Our Special Service officer made special arrangements with the Red Cross, and about 15 of us in Headquarters signed up to go. Chaplain Whitlock was along, also a Red Cross man, 2 interpreters, and 2 M.P.'s, 1 M.P. at the front of us as we walked through and the other at the rear, to make sure nobody straggled off. It took over 2 hours for us to go through, and was very interesting. I wish you could have been along to see all the quaint sights. Also, I wish I could even describe it all to you but it's impossible. But I will try as best as I can. We parked the truck outside the entrance of the Kasbah and began walking through the "streets" which are only about 12 feet wide from building to building. We brushed past all types of characters (Arab and French). As we went deeper within the section we saw more Arabs and less French. Man, all the varieties of smells - most of them disagreeable. We passed many shops in which were sold silver jewelry (bracelets, rings, and brooches), leather goods (shoes, purses, and belts), brass and copper vases, etc. No ring or bracelet is sold for less than 700 francs (\$14.00), and they aren't worth half that much. These people think of 1,000 francs (\$20.00) like we value \$5.00. In other words, inflation is really in effect over here. I bought you a silver brooch which is crudely hand-made - a scorpion and some other design carved out of silver. I also bought a few things for our house - a copper ash tray with carved design on it and the word, "Tunis" inscribed in silver in Arabic language; also a couple cute little pictures of - well you will be surprised at the pictures when you receive all this stuff. I'll try to send it all tomorrow in one package (the brooch, ash tray, and pictures). They didn't rob me for them either, so don't you worry about my paying a lot for them. The brooch may be too crude to wear, but I thought it was a pretty nice souvenir. Also, you may want to get better frames for the pictures. I thought these were kind of cute and quaint. Well, getting back to the tour, we saw workers finishing off lots of red fezzes which are worn by the Mohammedans. These workers just sit there, constantly brushing the wool with some kind of weed like cat-o-nine-tails. We also saw the men working the looms, and weaving carpets."

"All these shopkeepers can be bartered with, but they don't come down much in price, and usually want cigarettes or gum thrown in. All the people over here are crazy about American cigarettes and chewing gum. Well, that's the most part of what I saw today. It's all a good education to see so many interesting sights." *End of letter.*

The narrow alley-like streets had many intersections, twists, and turns. So, without our M.P. guide, it would have been easy to get lost - not a very pleasant thought. Consequently, we were glad to get back to the business district of Tunis. The town is laid out to resemble a typical French city, with French traffic policemen, French shops of all kinds, theaters, French cars, and many French civilians. I was pleased to discover just how much of my high-school French I remembered. The government is housed within a large, modern looking, white building. This "Palace" was home to the leader (Arab Bey), and his many wives. I suppose that he ruled over both the Arabs and the French citizens of Tunis. I was surprised to see so many French uniformed guards standing outside the building. I recall someone pointing out part of a second floor where our Group Officers' Club was located, and it was rumored that the Club had been formed by Lt. Col. Hampton, Group Executive Officer at that time. To clarify, the location was in the business district, not in the Palace.

Hamam Lif (Tunisia): The Fifteenth Air Force Rest Camp, near the shores of the Mediterranean, was plush, compared to an overseas Air Force base. I'm not certain

how long my stay there lasted; probably it was a long week-end. There were many villas, used for sleeping quarters, along with some impressive looking, large and well-structured buildings. The two-story Club House resembled a small airport terminal - - a large, white masonry structure. And, centered upon the roof, was a framework resembling a control tower. The Club had tall columns and outdoor balconies both in front and back. Inside, if my memory is correct, there were ping-pong tables, pool tables, a snack-bar, and comfortable upholstered chairs. Outside, there were folding canvas chairs, horseshoe courts, but I don't recall any swimming pool. Geez, Stout, what do you want? The mess hall was a large, two-story building, grey-colored, but ornately decorated outside with masonry and iron statues and scrolls. This "country club" was completely surrounded by large, beautiful trees and a very high wall. And, at the entrance, were two tall concrete pillars, either side of a huge ornamental iron gate. A very nice beach, overlooking the Mediterranean, was within walking distance. I am sure that hundreds of Fifteenth Air Force personnel had the opportunity to stay here, both during, and after, the war (Army of Occupation). Fortunately for me, several snapshots have helped to refresh my memory.

Thanks to the U. S. O. (United Service Organization), many celebrities came overseas to entertain the troops in North Africa. The only ones I can remember are Adolph Menjou and Anna Lee - both popular film stars, going back to long before the war.

ITALY

Group Headquarters personnel worked in the office Monday through Saturday. S-1 (Personnel and Administration) was made up, during my tour of duty, of Commanding Officer Colonel Faye Upthegrove, Executive Officer Lt. Colonel William Hampton, Adjutant Major John Sarosy, Sergeant Major Larry Freiwald, and his assistant, Technical Sergeant Frank Freer. Technical Sergeant Bob Smith was in charge of the morning report and other associated duties. Smitty had been a statistician with Southern Railways in Kansas; it was amazing how he could make a typewriter smoke just using the two-finger method. Corporal Andy Mollo took care of running copies from stencils on the mimeograph machine, and Sergeant Dick Koch was in charge of the many file records. Staff Sergeant Frank Medici's duties included making up the Headquarters enlisted men's payroll, along with typing any letters administrative officers deemed necessary. I took care of typing on stencils Special Orders which applied to promotions or transfers. Sergeants Freiwald or Freer would give me in advance the pertinent Army Regulation which authorized the transaction, after approval by the administrative staff. Another job I had for a while was preparing the civilians' payroll. After our arrival, certain improvements or repairs had to be taken care of, so Sergeants Freiwald or Freer made the proper contacts, made the arrangements, and I did the rest after the work was completed. Wages were based upon how much skill was required. If I remember correctly, laborers were the lowest paid: 50¢ per hour; bricklayers, electricians, carpenters, etc., were paid between 75¢ and \$1.75 per hour.

Our first overseas Christmas (1943) was enhanced by the receipt of Christmas packages from loved ones and friends back home. In addition to this morale booster, we were treated to a very special turkey dinner with all the trimmings, thanks to Jesse Spry (our Mess Sergeant) and his capable cooks. To top off Christmas day, we were entertained in the town of Foggia by Ella Logan, then a popular Scottish singer; this was sponsored by the U.S.O.

Staff Sergeant Jimmy Crater, a very proficient draftsman who worked in S-3 (Operations) and I became very good friends. A little story, aside; Jim started a correspondence with my cousin, Ruth, in Pittsburgh. Sometime in 1947 or 1948, Jim moved from Grand Rapids to our town, and began dating Ruth; it didn't take him

long to find a good job as Draftsman with Mesta Machine Company. Unfortunately, the courtship did not pan out, and they both later married different people. About five years later, I experienced seeing the sad deterioration of that small, but magnanimous gentleman's death from ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease). A great loss.

Compared to the lives of flight crew personnel, or any who worked on the line, mine was (in my opinion) rated quite low on the "Contribution to the War Effort" scale. Although combat crews could look forward to being shipped back to the states after fifty missions, they had to face unbelievable hardships and dangers each day of operation. And, I am humbled, to be honest about it.

I would like to recommend a very interesting book, "Disaster at Bari", by Glen B. Infield. Although it is out of print, and I had to have our local library make a computerized search for it, I think it was worth waiting for. It explains how the air bases in southern Italy escaped any bombing by the Nazis. In a few words: during a meeting of top Nazi Generals, including those in the Luftwaffe, they were discussing how the greatest amount of damage could be inflicted against the Allied Forces in Italy. The Luftwaffe Generals, of course, insisted the most effective way would be to bomb air bases in southern Italy. But, the top ranking General decided on bombing the Bari Harbor. As a result, on Dec. 2, 1943, when the harbor was jammed with Allied ships, JU-88's devastated them with a surprise attack. Seventeen ships were totally destroyed, and eight others were badly damaged. Thus, a large amount of supplies, including 100 octane gasoline, were destroyed; these supplies were destined for use by Allied air bases in southern Italy

The author, Glen B. Infield, is a retired officer from the Navy. And, on the basis of so many authentic sounding details, I concluded that he spent a great amount of time doing research. Countless names of people interviewed, both military and civilian, are mentioned. I even noted the name of an American naval officer who later became a Judge in my home town of Pittsburgh.

Bernie, I hope you don't mind the informality, also that this finds you doing well.

Best wishes,
Milt.
 MILTON STOUT

SHOE



**UNIT HISTORY OF THE 416TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
MONTH OF MARCH, 1944**

A. ADMINISTRATION:

No changes in organization or station.

Strength	Mar 1	Mar 31	Loss or Gain
Officers	69	79	Gain 10
Enlisted Men	364	372	Gain 8
			Total Gain 18

Changes in office. Major John J. Morris succeeded Captain Burnham E. Shaw Jr. as Squadron Commander on March 4, 1944. Captain George E. Andrews was designated Air Inspector on March 9, 1944. 1st Lt Lloyd D. Gross was designated Personnel Equipment Officer on March 9, 1944. 1st Lt Rufus E. Sizemore was designated Administrative Inspector on March 9, 1944. 1st Lt Joseph P. Leach succeeded 1st Lt Orville F. Elden as Flight Commander of Flight "A" on March 16, 1944. 1st Lt Claude R. Scott succeeded 1st Lt Kirtland H. Wilson as Flight Commander of Flight "B" on March 16, 1944. 2nd Lt _____ (NMI) Eydenberg Jr succeeded 1st Lt Joseph P. Leach as Flight Commander of Flight "C" on March 16, 1944. 1st Lt Lloyd D. Gross succeeded 1st Lt Claude R. Scott as Flight Commander of Flight "D" on March 16, 1944. 1st Lt Orville F. Eiden succeeded Capt George E. Andrews as Operations Officer on March 16, 1944. 1st Lt Charles K. Carroll succeeded 1st Lt Hugh E. Fleet as Assistant Operations Officer on March 16, 1944. 1st Lt. Joseph M. Jeffries succeeded Captain Edward T. Allard Jr. as Squadron Bombardier on March 16, 1944. 1st Lt Howard L. Boumann succeeded 1st Lt William A. Carlson as Squadron Navigator on March 16, 1944.

B. BATTLES:

The Squadron completed twelve (12) combat missions during twelve (12) operational days in March 1944, with the loss of one (1) aircraft; ten (10) men are missing in action. A number of missions were scheduled but were canceled due to adverse weather conditions. Operational missions for the month of March, 1944, are as follows:

Mar 2, 1944. 149th Squadron mission, directed at enemy personnel on the Anzio, Italy, beachhead. 8 of our A/C, led by Capt Burnham E. Shaw, Squadron C.O., participated. The A/C were loaded with frag bombs, but no bombs were dropped. Flak was heavy, moderate and accurate; one of our A/C was damaged. No enemy A/C were encountered and all of our A/C returned safely.

Mar 3, 1944. 150th Squadron mission. Today's target was Litterie marshaling yards at Rome, Italy. The target was well covered with very good bombing pattern. 3 enemy A/C were seen, but none were encountered; flak was slight. 9 of our A/c took off and all went over the target and returned safely. Capt Shaw led the Squadron today on his fiftieth mission; Lt William R. Sickinger, pilot, also completed 50 today.

Mar 7, 1944. 151st Squadron mission to Toulon, France, with Maj John J. Morris leading the Squadron. No bombs were dropped due to bad weather conditions. 7 of our A/C took off and 5 returned to the base today; the remaining 2 landing to refuel.

Mar 28, 1944. 158th Squadron mission. Target: Verona, Italy, marshaling yards. 8 A/C, led by Maj Morris, dropped 500# bombs on the target at 1159 hours. The assigned target area was well hit; fires, explosions and heavy black smoke were observed around the shop in NW part of yards. 3 A/C dropped short of target. 10 to 15 E/AC were seen and 5 to 6 were encountered. E/AC made one pass, loosed rockets and broke away when attacked by B-47s. Flak was heavy, intense, tracking and accurate. 8 B-17s were holed with no losses and no injuries. T/Sgts Hastings and McKinney completed 50 missions today.

Mar 29, 1944. 159th Squadron mission. Target: Turin, Italy, marshaling yards. The Squadron was led by Maj Morris; 8 A/C took off, 8 were over target and 8 returned to base. 500# bombs were dropped and visual results show good coverage of assigned area. 4 E/AC were seen and 1 was encountered. 2 of our A/C were damaged by 20mm shells.

Mar 30, 1944. 160th Squadron mission. Target: Sofia, Bulgaria. The Squadron was led by Maj Morris, who was flying as co-pilot in the Pathfinder ship. 500# bombs were dropped with numerous hits in the town; several fires were seen. 10 to 15 ME 109s were encountered. 1 of our A/C was slightly damaged.

C. CASUALTIES:

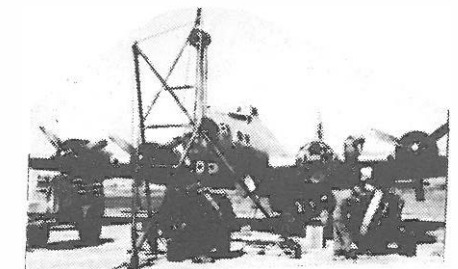
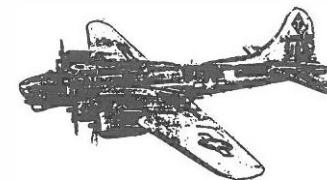
The following officers and enlisted men are listed as missing in action, after failing to return from the abortive mission of March 4, 1944:

2nd Lt Fordyce C. Chamberlin	0-802684
2nd Lt Andrew L. Christensen	0-691235
2nd Lt Charles R. Fo	0-811610
2nd Lt Henry R. Winston	0-688371
T/Sgt Charles W. Risen	19062351
T/Sgt Ralph V. Wheatley	18021039
S/Sgt Joseph F. Beard	39280703
S/Sgt Edwin W. Brindley	18162815
S/Sgt Donald (NMI) Fisher	19171083
Sgt Homer J. Ackelson	37336115

D. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

6 March 1944, an award presentation was held at Group Headquarters and 60 men of this squadron received Air Medals. During the month General Orders were issued, awarding Oak Leaf Clusters to the Air Medal to all combat crew members who had completed at least ten combat missions, with an additional cluster for each additional five missions, or for each enemy aircraft destroyed in action by the gunners.

captain George E. Andrews received the Distinguished Flying Cross, 15 march 1944, General Order #145, Fifteenth Air Force Headquarters. For extraordinary achievement in aerial combat as Group and Squadron Leader. Captain Andrews, as lead pilot in the Group, led the Group formation on a raid to Fiume, Italy, on 24 February 1944. His skill in face of adverse weather conditions, resulted in the Group obtaining superior results on this raid against an important oil refinery.



Lt. William A. Carlson received the Distinguished Flying Cross, 15 March 1944, General Order #145, Fifteenth Air Force Headquarters. For extraordinary achievement as the lead Group and Squadron Navigator on numerous combat missions against the enemy. On many occasions, his skill and professional ability have resulted in the Group's successful completion of combat missions. For superior performance of duties as the Lead Navigator of the Group.

M/Sgt J.M. Tepie, Corporal John N. McIlvain, and Corporal _____ R. Vendre, received the soldiers medal, General Orders #118, Fifteenth Air Force, 10 March 1944. For heroism at great risk of life on 29 December 1943. When an allied bomber, fully loaded with bombs, crashed on takeoff, the above named men, rushed to the crash, burning aircraft and assisted three of the crew members to safety before the bombs in the aircraft exploded.

S/Sgt Floyd L. Laxson, received the Silver Star for Gallantry in Action. General Order #88, Hq 15th Air Force, 1 March 1944. October 21, 1943, while on a combat raid over Termini, Italy, Sgt Laxson was wounded when a 20mm shell exploded in his tail gun position. In spite of severe wounds, and without oxygen, Sgt Laxson returned to his position and shot down one of the attacking aircraft, and then remained at his position until the bomb run was finished.

Captain Edward T. Allard received the Distinguished flying Cross for extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial combat. Captain Allard, as the Lead Bombardier of the Group and Squadron, has demonstrated superior skill and ability, and his knowledge and proficiency has resulted in great destruction to enemy installations. On 24 February 1944, Captain Allard's excellence resulted in great damage to an oil refinery at Fiume, Italy, and the success of this devastating raid was in a great part due to the skill of the Lead group Bombardier, Capt Allard. D.F.C received 15 March 1944, General Order #144, 15th A.F.

WAR DIARY OF THE 416TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
MONTH OF MARCH, 1944

Mar 1 -- Today was nonoperational, the scheduled mission being canceled after briefing. Lt Herman Bauer and his crew returned to the base today after a week at rest camp on the Isle of Capri. Quite a bit of construction work is still going on around the squadron area; the medics are building a frame for their tent, and the orderly room is setting up a frame to enlarge their place of business.

Mar 2 -- Today was a very nice spring day, and the Squadron successfully completed another combat mission. We were astounded, to say the least, when we went through the chow line this evening and were handed a quart bottle of beer, absolutely free. No kidding, it was just like the beer we used to get back home, and it was really enjoyed by all. It's just possible that the movie we saw tonight was new ten years ago, but we have our doubts.

Mar 3 -- Our C.O., Capt Burnham E. Shaw, finished his tour of combat duty today, by successfully completing his fiftieth mission. " " _____ and his crew of pill rollers moved into their new dispensary, next to the S-2 offices, today. Our planes participated in a successful raid on the Rome rail road yards today.

Mar 4 -- The officers' club opened this evening with a party; music was furnished by the 99th Group Orchestra and refreshments were served. 'Twas quite an enjoyable affair. Lt Ferdyce C. Chamberlin and crew are missing from today's abortive mission. Lt Chamberlin was piloting a B-17 attached to the 301st Bomb Group and has not been heard from since taking off.

Mar 5 -- Major John J. Morris has been named commanding officer, replacing Captain Burnham E. Shaw. Today was nonoperational and was a very quiet Sunday here on the base.

Mar 6 -- Most of the squadron attended the presentation of awards at Group Headquarters this morning; sixty of our men were awarded the Air Medal and three the Purple Heart. Today's mission was canceled due to extremely bad weather.

Mar 7 -- Today's mission was to Toulon, France. The weather here was very nice and the day was quiet with very little happening. We had a red alert in the evening, but nothing happened.

Mar 8 -- This was rather a sad day, on account of we had to start drilling again this morning; there is much wailing and moaning among the men. Otherwise, it was a very nice day, but was nonoperational.

Mar 9 -- We had a red alert at 0450 hours this morning, which, in our opinion, is a hell-of-a-time for any one to pull an air raid; but since we didn't get bombed, guess it's O.K. The day was nonoperational, with only routine duties to keep us busy.

Mar 10 -- It rained all day today and there's absolutely nothing to report.

Mar 11 -- The 99th Bomb Group won the Foggia area basketball championship by defeating an Engineer's team by a score of 43 - 22. Lt Cartmill and Sgt Milawakus of the 416th Squadron, starred for the 99th's team. The day was very nice and was operational.

Mar 12 -- Capt Shaw, our former C.O. left for the United States today. The entire Squadron was placed under quarantine today as a result of a case of diphtheria in the Squadron. Rain! Rain! and more Rain!

Mar 13 -- The quarantine was lifted today. Another nonoperational day.

Mar 14 -- We were again placed under quarantine today, this time for a period to last for ten days. The 99th Bomb Group's basketball team copped the 15th Air Force championship; Lt Cartmill, Sgt Milawakus, and Cpl Cavaliere of the 416th taking part in the team's victory. There was a terrific wind storm today that threatened to blow our tents away, but luckily they managed to stay up. We received a warning that the Germans intended to drop a few bombs on us tonight and every one is busy cleaning out the old fox hole. Had lots of mail today, which always helps.

Mar 15 -- We received four new crews today, to be attached to the squadron. The day was operational, and completing fifty missions today were: Capt G.E. Andrews, Squadron Bombardier; and Lt Wm. Carlsen, Squadron Navigator. Sgt Arnold Eydenberg returned to the Squadron today, after over a month in the hospital as a result of injuries received when an RAF Wellington exploded near the Squadron area. We did have a red alert last night, but no air raid, thank goodness.

Mar 16 -- Today's mission was canceled due to bad weather. We had a show in the Day Room this afternoon, the Squadron not being allowed to attend the regular show at Group on account of the quarantine.

Mar 17 -- Today was operational, with a raid to Vienna, Austria. It was a rather quiet, routine day here in camp.

Mar 18 -- Quite a few of the fellows are tossing around baseballs, getting in condition for the opening of the "season." The day was operational.

Mar 19 -- The Squadron participated in an operational mission today; other wise, it was a very quiet and routine day.

Mar 20 -- Today's operations consisted of a practice mission. Sgt Kich returned to the Squadron today, after quite a long stay in the hospital.

Mar 21 -- Spring is now officially here, and today was quite a nice spring day. The day was nonoperational and rather quiet here. The fellows are getting a bit restless and bored with the quarantine still in effect.

Mar 22 -- The day was operational, with the planes coming back quite late in the afternoon. Our generator is out of order, so supply is having quite a time keeping the fellows supplied with candles. "Red" Caldwell came in with lots of mail for us this evening.

Mar 23 -- Today was a rather miserable day here, but was operational in spite of the bad weather. We had another show in the day Room this afternoon.

Mar 24 -- At last, our quarantine has been lifted and there was quite a large number of men taking advantage of the fact and spending the day in town. Today's mission was canceled. John Garfield was the feature attraction of a stage show at Group this evening; the show was very good and was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

Mar 25 -- Today was a rainy, nonoperational day. The only highlight of the day was the serving of coffee and doughnuts by the Red Cross in the mess hall this evening.

Mar 26 -- Today was windy and cold and was nonoperational. We are beginning to have our doubts about the arrival of spring.

Mar 27 -- The day was nonoperational and was very cold and windy. We received another new crew in the Squadron today.

Mar 28 -- Today was a routine operational day. It's still rather cold around here.

Mar 29 -- Today was operational and was a very nice day here. We received another new crew in the Squadron and twelve other new crews of another bomb group to be attached temporarily. With all of the new men here, the mess hall is rapidly becoming very crowded at meal time.

Mar 30 -- Today was a very nice spring day and the Squadron participated in a successful bombing mission. Our ground crews are kept very busy taking care of the additional twelve new planes.

1944 Mar 31 -- Today was pay day and consequently there was quite a lot of money changing hands over the card tables. The combat crews were kept busy today test flying the new ships. Today marks the first anniversary of the Squadron's combat flying -- it was one year ago today that the boys made their first mission. Here's hoping that it will all be over before we have a chance to celebrate a second anniversary.

WAR DIARY OF THE 416TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
MONTH OF APRIL, 1944

Apr 1, 1944 Today was nonoperational and was a very windy day here in camp. The mess hall is really crowded now with all the new crews here now. Had a movie at Group this evening.

Apr 2, 1944 It was a very nice day here and the squadron participated on an operational mission. The softball season was opened this afternoon when the boys from S-2, S-3 and the Medics defeated a team from S-1 and S-4 by a score of 13 to 10. Only casualty suffered was when Corporal Tommy O'Shea caught one in the face, resulting in a broken nose. The squadron lost two planes on today's mission. Lt. Moffitt and crew, and Lt. Klansnic flying pilot with Lt. Carroll's crew.

Apr 3, 1944 Today was operational with a mission to Budapest. The weather was nice here, and outside of being PX day nothing of interest occurred.

Apr 4, 1944 The day was operational, otherwise it was just a routine day.

Apr 5, 1944 We had a USO Camp show in the afternoon, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all the fellows that attended. Today was operational, with the planes returning quite late.

Apr 6, 1944 Today was a very nice day, but was nonoperational. Lt. Hector MacPherson returned to the outfit today, after spending three months in the States. The Red Cross served coffee and doughnuts to everyone at the mess hall this afternoon.

Apr 7, 1944 The Italian construction gang is busy with an addition to the Officer's Mess; with all the new men the place is rather overcrowded at the present. Today was very nice and was operational. We had to attend a movie and lecture on malaria control this afternoon, and we understand that malaria is quite prevalent in this area.

Apr 8, 1944 Today was a routine, nonoperational day, with the only item of interest being USO show in the afternoon. Life is getting damned monotonous around here!

Apr 9, 1944 We had a red alert this morning at 0230 hours - a hell of a time to wake people up and then not drop any bombs. Disgusting, "ain't" it? But we are happy. No mission today - no nothing!

Apr 10, 1944 At last we don't have to take baths out of helmets any more. Today our shower room was opened, with running hot and cold water. Orchids to our "Doc," Capt J.F. Hattenbach, for his tireless efforts in getting the shower, and to Sgt F.D. Clark for taking care of the pipe-fitting. Today was a rainy, nonoperational day.

Apr 11, 1944 Today was a routine, nonop day. The squadron ran a practice mission today. 'Twas a very quiet day with nothing to do - not even any mail today.

Apr 12, 1944 The weather was nice today and we managed to get in another operational mission. The place is still very crowded with the 840th Bomb Sqdn. still around.

Apr 13, 1944 Today was quite nice, and was operational. We now have the Chaplain and the Group dentist living in our squadron area. We received a combat crew from the 8th Air Force in England today, on exchange of crews.

Apr 14, 1944 The day was nonoperational. About the only activity around here today was the softball game in the evening.

Apr 15, 1944 A very nice day here, and also was operational. It was a rather quiet day here in camp.

Apr 16, 1944 The days are getting much longer now, and we are able to get in two softball games nearly every evening after chow. Today was operational.

Apr 17, 1944 Spring fever seems to be quite prevalent in these parts about this time of year - no one seems to be interested in doing anything. Today was opening day for the combat area softball league. In the opening game Lt. Musgrove's crew (Musgrove's Maulers) defeated Lt. Eydenberg's crew (Eydenberg's Eyties). Maj. Weeden and Capt Baldwin umpired. For the first time in nearly a year, we had a chance to find out what a Coca Cola tastes like. There was one Coke for each man at chow this evening, and it was really a treat.

Apr 18, 1944 The combat crews had a chance to rest today, after a rather long time of steady flying. The squadron softball league is getting well under way, with two more games being played today. The officers celebrated the opening of the new bar tonight with a party. There were 7 women and 70 officers present, but despite the shortage of women, it was still a good party. There was plenty of beer and cake, in addition to the regular wine list. The 99th Bomb Group Orchestra furnished music for the occasion.

Apr 19, 1944 Today was nonoperational and rather quiet here. Three more games were played in the softball league.

Apr 20, 1944 The day was operational, but was rather quiet around the area.

Apr 21, 1944 Life is becoming quite dull - not even any mail these days. The day was nonop.

Apr 22, 1944 The 840th Squadron moved to their new base today; the place looks practically deserted, but it is quite a relief to have the place to ourselves again.

Apr 23, 1944 The day was operational, with the boys getting back rather late. Consequently, there were no ball games this evening.

Apr 24, 1944 Today was operational, with a mission to Ploesti, Rumania. Lt. Schmaltz and crew were lost over the target. Routine day in camp.

Apr 25, 1944 Today was operational. Otherwise, all was quiet, with nothing to report.

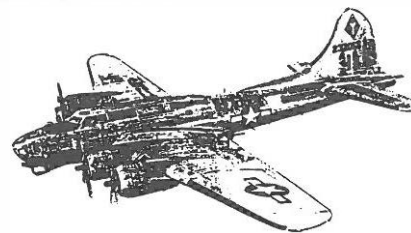
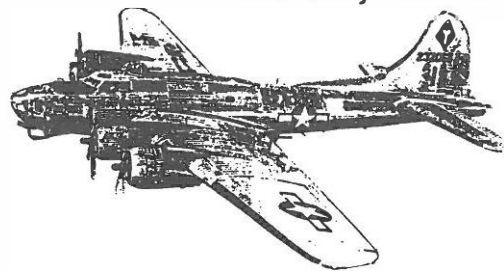
Apr 26, 1944 The day was rather cold and it rained all day. Most of the fellows spent the day in "the sack." Some of the braver lads "bucked the elements" and attended the movie at Group in the evening.

Apr 27, 1944 Another day of rain, and the area is literally a sea of mud. Brings back unpleasant memories of December, with all the rain, wind and cold. A bunch of the fellows left for the States this morning.

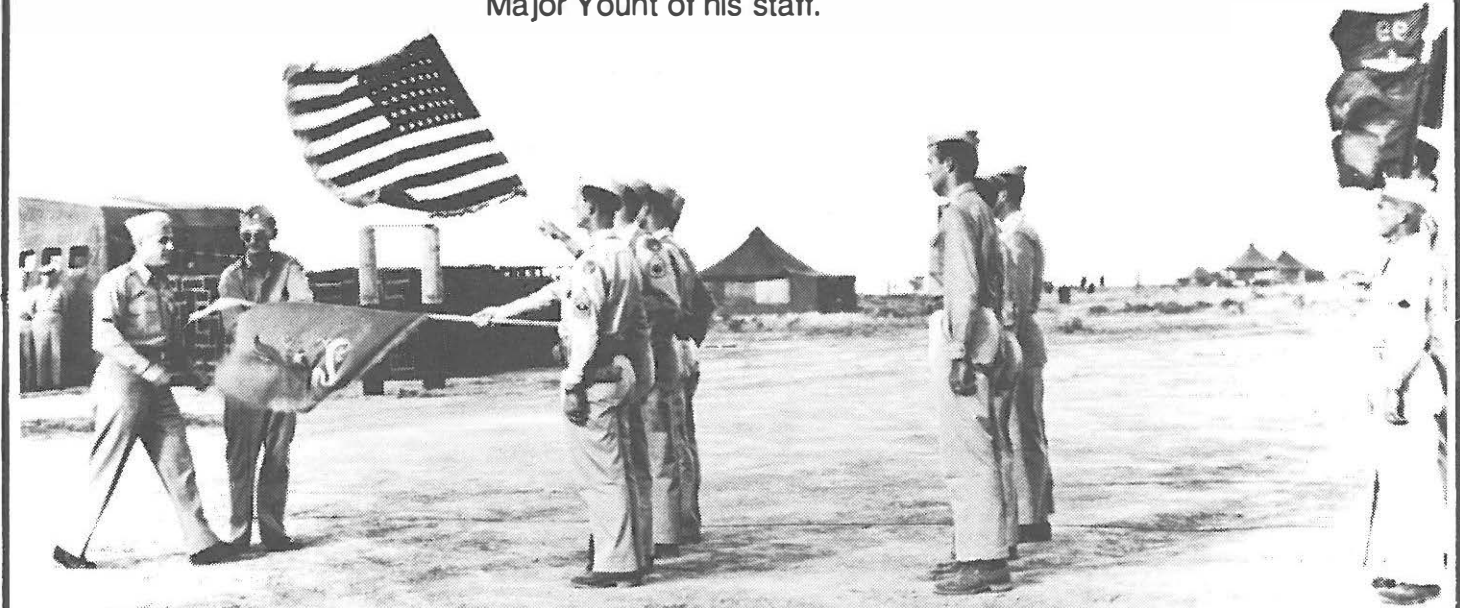
Apr 28, 1944 After a long string of nonop days, we finally got in another mission today. We had a big Bingo game in the EM Club this evening, with cash prizes going to the winners. Sgt. Samiak was the heavy winner of the evening.

Apr 29, 1944 Today the ground echelon celebrated the completion of one year overseas with a big party in the EM Mess Hall. It was strictly a stag affair, and the boys had quite a time with plenty of beer, wine, Coca Cola, sandwiches, ice cream and cake. Quite a combination, but most of the boys stayed fairly sober. We are NOT looking forward to another such occasion. The 346th Squadron handed our softball team their first defeat of the season. We wuz robbed!

Apr 30, 1944 Today was operational, but rather a miserable day down here on the ground, was windy and cold. Pay day and the end of another month.



15th Army Air Force in Italy - As the colors of the 99th Bombardment Group of the 15th AAF Flying Fortress Unit are lowered to be decorated with the Blue Ribbon of a Distinguished Unit, Major General Nathan F. Twining, Commanding General of the 15th AAF approaches to do the honors assisted by Major Yount of his staff.



SEE LT. MULLIS, SPECIAL SERVICES OFFICER & ATHLETIC DIRECTOR, FOR SPORTS EQUIPMENT.

CAPT. 'DOC' HUGHES ENCOURAGES DAILY EXERCISE FOR GOOD HEALTH.



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RESERVATION REQUEST

GROUP NAME: 99th Bomb Group - Historical Society

DATE(S) OF FUNCTION: May 14 - 19, 1995

FULL NAME: _____

ROOMMATE'S NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

CREDIT CARD TYPE: _____

CREDIT CARD NUMBER: _____ EXP DATE: _____

ARRIVAL DATE: _____ DEPARTURE DATE: _____

NUMBER OF PEOPLE: _____ NUMBER OF ROOMS: _____

RATES PER ROOM: SINGLE: \$67.00 per room, per night, plus city occupancy tax

DOUBLE: \$67.00 per room, per night, plus city occupancy tax

1 KING BED: _____ 2 QUEEN BEDS: _____

SMOKING: _____ NON-SMOKING: _____

GROUP RATES ARE AVAILABLE 3 DAYS PRIOR TO AND 3 DAYS AFTER EVENT.

ALOHA!

YOUR RESERVATION REQUEST ACCOMPANYING A FIRST NIGHTS DEPOSIT OR A CREDIT CARD GUARANTEE MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN 4/12/96 TO ENSURE ACCOMMODATIONS. ALL UNSOLD ROOMS WILL BE RETURNED TO OUR INVENTORY AND SOLD AT OUR REGULAR RATES. PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH. THANKYOU.

CHECK IN TIME IS 4:00PM. CHECK OUT TIME IS 12:00 NOON.

ROOM DEPOSITS ARE REFUNDABLE IF RESERVATION IS CANCELLED 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF ARRIVAL DATES. PLEASE CALL IF YOU NEED ANY FURTHER INFORMATION. WE LOOK FORWARD TO MAKING YOUR STAY AT THE HANAIE HOTEL, SAN DIEGO'S HAWAIIAN PARADISE A MEMORABLE ONE.

MAHALO!



15th Army Air Force in Italy - Standing before his group during the recent presentation of the Distinguished Unit award is Major John A. Sarosy, Executive Officer of the 99th Bombardment Group (H).



15th Army Air Force in Italy - Leading the 99th Bombardment Group in review at the Flying Fortress Field in Italy after presentation of the Distinguished Unit Award, cited by the President of the United States, is the 15th AAF Military Band.

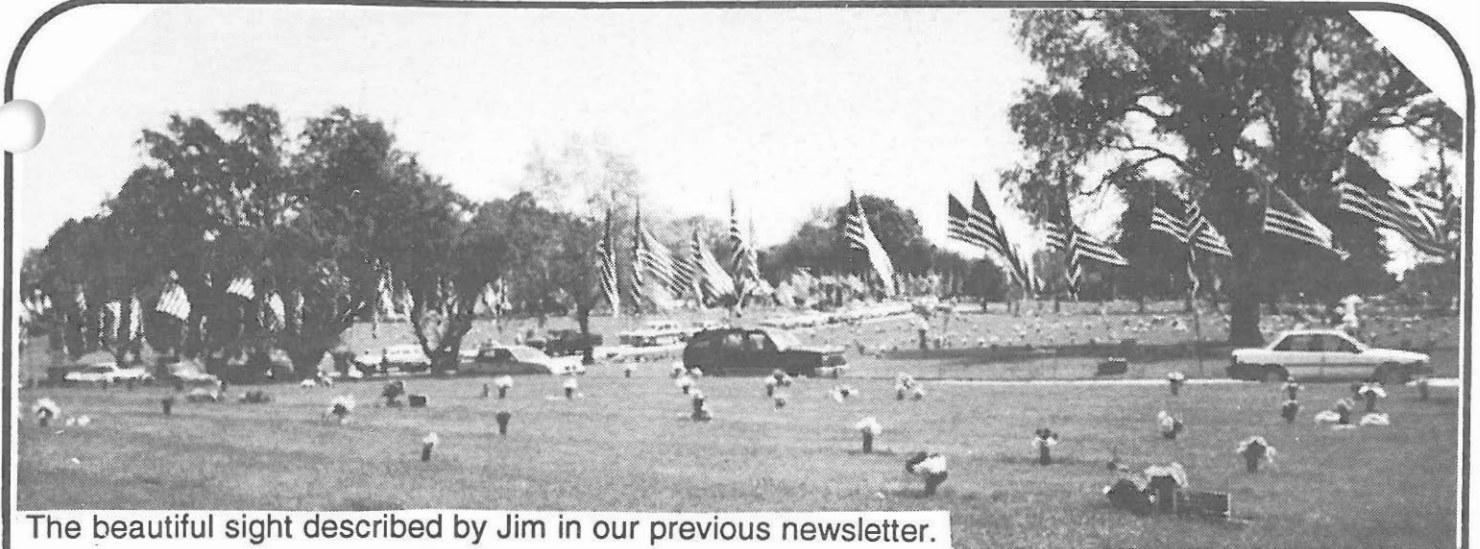
15th Army Air Force in Italy - Led by the colors bearing the newly received Blue Streamer, token of a Cited Distinguished Unit, the 99th Bombardment Group passes in review at their Italian base.



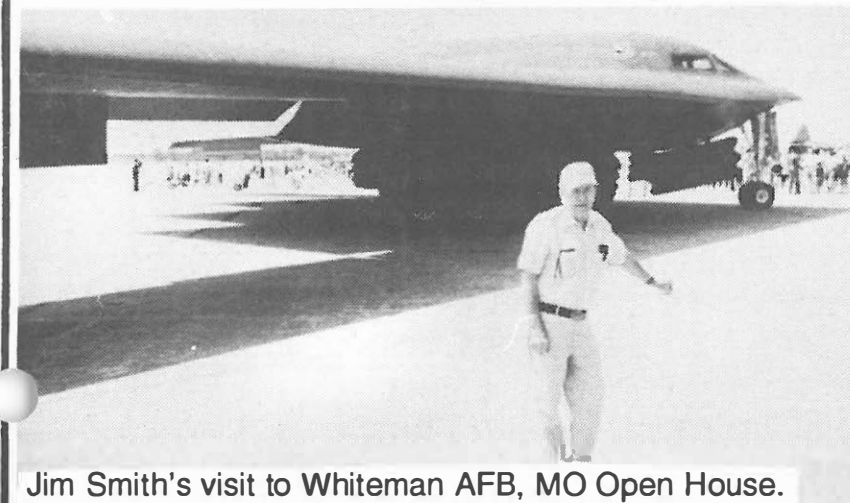
Bernie Barr recommends an upcoming TV program on ESPN - December 4, '95 at 10 p.m. mountain. The program features the Kodak Albuquerque International Balloon Festival.



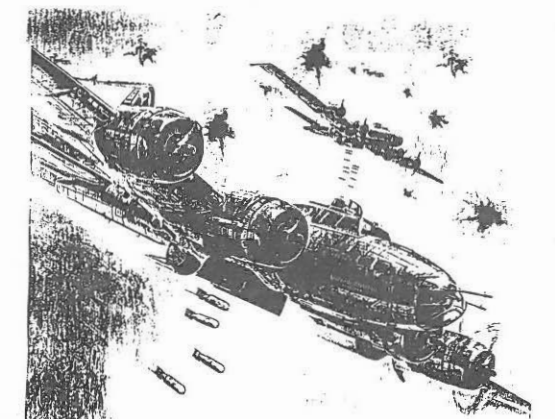
416 ENGINEERING



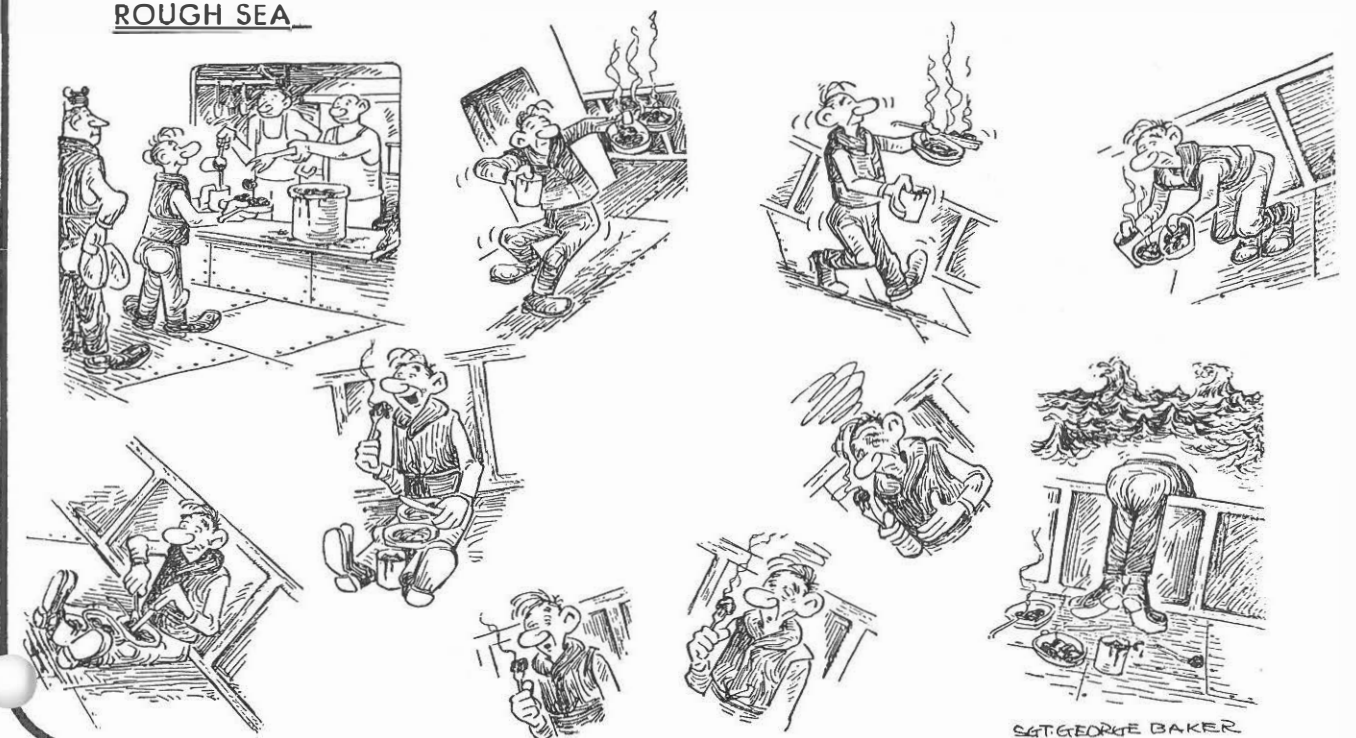
The beautiful sight described by Jim in our previous newsletter.



Jim Smith's visit to Whiteman AFB, MO Open House.



ROUGH SEA



99th Bomb Group Historical Society
Walter H. Butler, Treasurer
8608 Bellehaven Place, N.E.
Albuquerque, NM 87112

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FINAL NOTICE FOR MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 1996

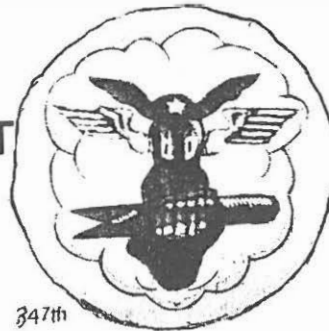
PLEASE NOTE & ACT NOW!

THIS IS THE LAST NEWSLETTER YOU WILL RECEIVE UNLESS THE DATE ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL SHOWS THE YEAR 1996 OR LATER. YOUR 1996 DUES MUST BE PAID BY JANUARY 1, 1996. MAILING LABELS FOR THE 1996 NEWSLETTERS WILL BE PREPARED ON JANUARY 2, 1996. IF YOUR 1996 OR LATER DUES ARE NOT RECEIVED BEFORE 1/2/96 NO MAILING LABEL FOR YOUR NAME WILL BE PREPARED. A LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP IS \$150.00. YOU MAY PAY \$15.00 PER YEAR FOR AS MANY YEARS IN ADVANCE AS YOU LIKE. MAKE CHECKSPAYABLE TO 99TH BGHS & MAIL TO WALTER BUTLER, TREASURER, 8608 BELLEHAVEN PLACE, ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87112



346th

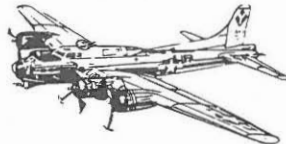
**99TH
BOMBARDMENT
GROUP (H)**



347th



349th



B-17 FLYING FORTRESS
395 COMBAT MISSIONS
1942 AFRICA - EUROPE 1945



416th

