

Waddy  
Willie

# THE 99TH BOMB GROUP HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



WORLD  
WAR II



Squadron



Squadron

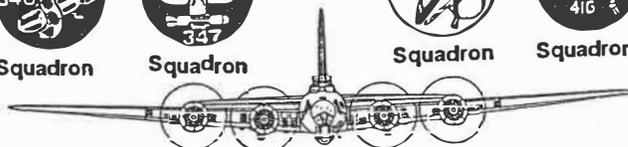
B-17 Flying  
Fortresses



Squadron



Squadron



The Group Flew B-17 Flying Fortresses  
For A Total Of 395 Combat Missions From  
North Africa & Italy To Bomb European  
Targets During 1943 & 1945.

THOMAS P. O'REILLY  
1st Lt. 346th B.S.



John A. Plummer, 347th  
Operations Officer &  
Group lead pilot.

VOL 21 NO. 4

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER 2001

Please notice that enclosed is all the information concerning our annual meeting in Nashville in April. Walt Montgomery has put together a good package with some time for site seeing on your own. As indicated please send your reservations in to Bob and Edith Johnson as soon as possible.

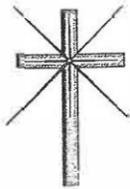
Also enclosed is information concerning our recognition as a tax exempt organization. This took place in 1981 and things may have changed somewhat since then. Some of the fellows that were in the 99th Bomb Group after WW 2 have indicated an interest in joining our organization.

Bob Bacher our Site Committee Chairman is looking into the possibility next annual gathering taking place in New Orleans Louisiana.

Denzel(Arkie) Clark has agreed to serve as Chairman of our Nominating Committee. Some present Directors with terms expiring and others will be voted on at our annual meeting in April.

Look forward to seeing a lot of you in Nashville in April 16-20 2002.

Best Regards  
Don Lawhorn



## THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



Each day I have the chance to experience a life filled with freedoms. I thought that these freedoms would always be available to me. I took for granted that they were there for me; I never tried to evaluate the process of how these freedoms became available to me or what price I might have to pay in the future for them.

The price that I must pay is to respect the freedoms that I have and to abide by the responsibilities that these freedoms come with. I may have to risk my life like so many thousands of men and women have done in foreign wars. They took a risk in fighting for our country and in the end were willing to sacrifice their lives in the name of freedom. The sacrifice that I must make is leading my life to conform to the laws of our country.

Many times I thought that complete and total freedom would be wonderful. No rules to follow, no laws to govern my life. I would never again have to obey a speed limit or worry about being out past a city's curfew.

As I pondered this idea of complete freedom, I thought about the trouble that this concept could cause. If every person would have complete freedom, this country would end up in total disarray. Then I realized that the only way that this pandemonium could be prevented is to have laws to govern our freedom. When this idea came to me, I determined my price of freedom.

Paying this price for freedom enables me to live my life freely and enjoyably. If I ever choose to disobey laws for example, speeding, robbery or underage drinking my freedom could be restricted or even taken away.

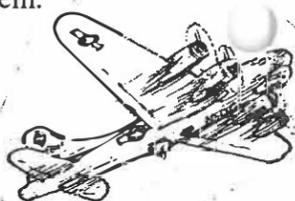
In turn I have the responsibility to speak out against injustices that take away or limit our freedom. I must make my voice heard through out the country on how important freedom is. The voice of democracy speaks to us through the laws that govern our actions as citizens of a free country. At times my single voice cannot be heard, but if we all speak together our voices united can act as one, spreading the message of freedom. This voice can be heard by voting, getting involved in groups that support freedom and following the laws set up by our government.

I feel so honored that we live in the country that we do. Following the laws that have been set-up by our government allows us the right to live as we please. People from Cuba or other dictator or communist enforced countries have had their freedom limited to almost none at all. They do not have the joy of going out each day and living life to its fullest potential the way that I do. No wonder these people are constantly trying to break away and come to America, the land of freedom and opportunity.

Many people my age still seek to be rebellious and defy the authority they are under. They feel it is their life and they should be able to do what they please. But what they do not realize is that they may loose their freedom because of their rebellious actions.

I should not forget about the men and women who gave their lives to secure my freedom. I share the price of freedom with them. These men and women respected their call to the armed forces, a decision they made because of draft or by volunteering. They could have fled the country to escape time in the service, but they decided to fight for the freedom we all have. When I become of age, I will sign my draft card, and should the need arise, emulate these heroes, and be willing to fight for and serve my country.

As I continued to ponder the topic "what price freedom" I think that my price is somewhat ironic. The paradox of freedom usually gives me the idea of no boundaries or limitations, but my price for freedom is staying within the rules and respecting them.



What price freedom? To respect our existing laws and freedoms is an honorable price to pay for freedom. So often I forget to respect the little things. By little things, I mean the rights that we take for granted on a day-to-day basis. Freedom is one of those concepts that we take for granted. The respect that we should give the laws that assure our freedom may not always suit our wants at a given time, but it secures our freedom so that we can analyze every part of our lives and see if we, if I am truly willing to risk my freedom being taken away from me. Freedom is not missed until it is too late to get it back or the price is too great to pay.

I am not willing to ever lose my freedom. I will nurture it so that it becomes more immense in size and strength in the years to come. The greatness of this freedom will only come by paying the price, my price of freedom.

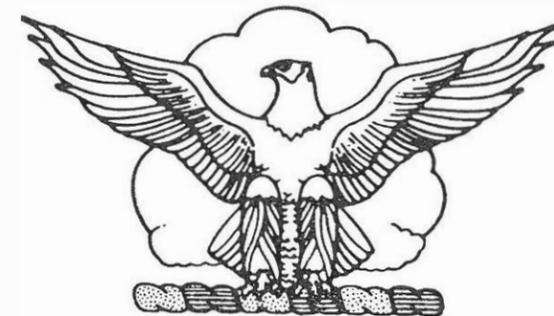
Adam Casey  
Sophomore Geibel Catholic High School  
11/1/00



The young man that wrote this article about freedom is an exceptional person. The most intelligent, respectful and level-headed one I've ever met. This article was his entry in the Pennsylvania VFW Essay Contest about what "Freedom means". It gives me a great feeling that we have him and many others who are a credit to our country.

We are now in the midst of what we had to do in W.W.II, GO TO WAR. We now have a more sinister enemy-terrorist. Our reaction can't be what we did then. These people are vicious and must be brought to justice. We have to pray for our men and woman who will put their lives in jeopardy. But we will persevere-No doubt about it. We went and bombed them into submission then, but this will not be the case in this war. Cool heads will be needed. I would bet money that some of us would go now, even at our ages. I pay that our group will never forget what crackpots did and can do.

Harry J. Slesnick, D. D. S.  
20254 PIERCE RD.  
SARATOGA, CA 95070  
TELEPHONE (408) 867-0623



August 13, 2001

99<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group Historical Society  
Walter Butler, Treasurer  
8608 Bellehaven Place, NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87112

Dear Walter:

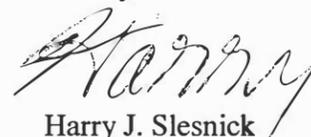
Mac McClanahan died July 23, 2001.

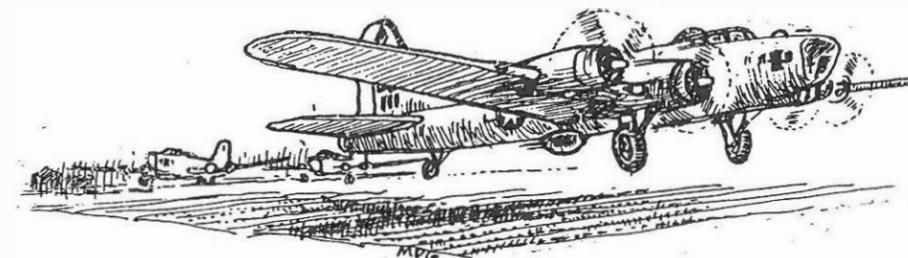
Mac was the first pilot on most of my 35 1/2 missions, and was the pilot leading the 346<sup>th</sup> squadron on the infamous Innsbruck mission on December 29, 1944. The navigator of the group lead plane had been hit and was down. The group lead commander, new to our group, apparently took over the navigator duties, changed course, and headed over known anti-aircraft batteries. We immediately received two direct hits causing fires in the number 2 engine and in the bomb bay.

This is where Mac proved to be, as I always knew that he would be, in an emergency situation. He was completely unflappable, carrying out emergency procedures with calm efficiency. He gave proper notification, pulled out of the formation, jettisoned the bombs, and headed for Switzerland. The aluminum at the left wing root was peeling back, and the fire was extending unabated. Mac gave the signal to bail out. Mac attached an oxygen bottle and went toward the back of the plane to be sure that everyone was out. One of the crew apparently had feared to jump. Mac motioned him to jump. He did then get out. Now Mac jumped.

In my mind Mac McClanahan was the prototypical combat pilot. He was the very essence of a competent courageous type of man into whose hands the crew could give their lives with utmost confidence.

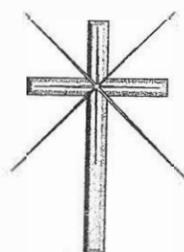
Incidentally, speaking of a courageous competent pilot, and a remarkable man, my hat is off to you Bernie. You are a helluva guy. What a lifetime of accomplishment.

  
Harry J. Slesnick



I hope this letter helps many who are feeling lousy, and know that we are praying for them. I, personally, celebrate Mass every morning and offer it up for our comrades who have died or for the sick and for their families.

I am looking forward to our next Reunion and hope we have a good turnout. See you then and may God shower his blessings on all of you, especially the sick.



God Bless All of You,



Father Mike Bucci

Life is but a stopping place  
A pause in what is to be,  
A resting place along the road  
To sweet eternity.  
We all have different journeys,  
different paths along the way.  
We all were meant to learn some things  
But never meant to stay.  
Our destination is a place  
Far greater than we know.  
For some the journey is quicker,  
For some the journey is slow.  
And when the journey finally ends  
We'll claim a great reward,  
And find an everlasting peace  
Together with the Lord.

## IN MEMORIAM

OSCAR E. COLLINGS  
HOMER McCLANAHAN  
JIM L. SMITH  
LOUIS E. WALKER

Chadron Ne.  
Sept. 24, 2001

Dear Bernie,

It is with heavy heart that I must report to you that Homer McClanahan, Pilot of our Crew, passed away on July 23, 2001. I was very fond of Mac. He was a little older than the rest of the Crew (26 I believe) and was like a Father to me (20). I most appreciated him for his calmness under pressure. He was pilot of one of planes lost by the 346th Squadron on the infamous mission of December 29<sup>th</sup> 1944. We were in touch by mail ever since the war. We only got to know each other when we started going to the 99<sup>th</sup> Reunions and I will forever be thankful.

I proceeded to notify the other crewmembers with whom I could contact. The first one was James Jackson. I reached his wife who told me that James had just passed away a few days earlier on August 6<sup>th</sup>. I don't believe James was a member of the 99<sup>th</sup> Historical Society.

We, Laurine and I, have not attended any of the Reunions since San Diego. My health is just not up to it. We really miss these occasions.

I would appreciate it if the appropriate notice would be published in the Newsletter.

Enclosed find a check in memory of these dear friends. (With MARLE concurrence the check was destroyed. We have no fund for this.)  
With Best Wishes to All and especially to You Bernie

Marle and Laurine Smith (346<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron)

*Marle D. Smith*

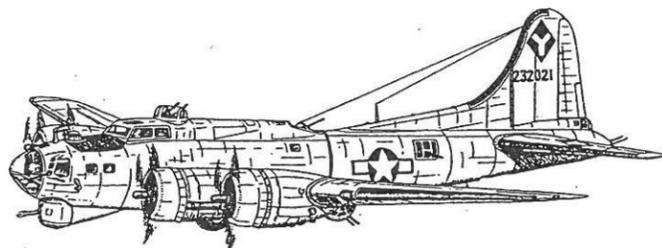
NEW MEMBERS

Dr. ROGER MONTGOMERY 1901 Deleware Dr. Vincennes, IN 77591 Assoc.

BEN MONTGOMERY 1095 Saddle Dr. York, SC 29745 Assoc.

CINDY STEA 488 Ridgeview Dr, Mt Juliet, TN 37112 Assoc.

LARRYC HASTINGS 9576 Cherry Laurel Cove Germantown, TN 38139 Assoc.



September 19th, 2001

Chris Kelly  
1109 Leavenworth Street  
San Francisco, CA. 94109  
janchris@pacbell.net



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

Dear Mr. Butler:

I was directed to you by TSgt Ronald Carillo at the 99<sup>th</sup> ABW at Nellis AFB. He informed me that you produce the newsletter that goes out to former members of the 99<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group.

My uncle, Jim Hager, was captain of B-17 #229480 ("Cotton-eyed Joe") in the 347<sup>th</sup> squadron of the 99<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group. He flew 50 missions over Italy and its environs. He won the Silver Star for valor before rotating stateside for instructor school. He enjoyed a 30-year plus career as an airline pilot, retired, and now lives in California.

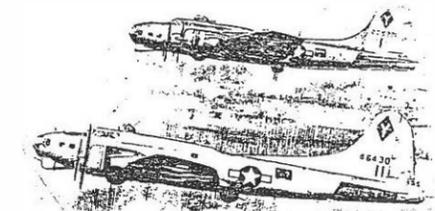
I am working on a family history project that includes his time in the USAAF. I am interested in acquiring any photos of his plane or her crew. I am also curious about acquiring a squadron/bomb group patch, if either exist.

Many thanks for reading this, and for any assistance you can provide.

Sincerely,

*Chris Kelly*

-Chris Kelly



If you can provide information to please write to him Chris.

PAUL M. PETERSON  
2060 LEROY AVENUE  
KINGMAN, ARIZONA 86401

August 17, 2001

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



Dear Sir:

We received your quarterly today. Some of us feel left out. We were never in the 15th Air Force, we were in the 12th. The first crews organized in Boise, Idaho, October 1, 1942, were originally supposed to go to England. Orders were changed and we went to Navarin, Algeria and then to Oudna, Tunisia where we bombed Foggio, Messina, and Gerbini, Sicily, which was a hot spot for the German Air Force.

We spent three months maintaining, loading, and fueling planes - and guarding them from the Germans and Arabs until the ground crews arrived. We flew 50 missions out of Africa before it was changed to the 15th Air Force at Foggio.

When I got home, I volunteered for England and flew 32 missions out of Nuthampstead, England. We flew over German cities including Cologne, Merseburg, Frankfurt, and Berlin, and were shot down over Belgium. Paul Spears also volunteered for England, and served in the Bloody Hundredth.

I know there are some who flew more than 82 missions. For my part, I received the Air Medal with 15 Oak Leaf Clusters, and 6 or more Bronze Stars. I must say I was lucky because most were shot down, and those who survived were placed in prisoner of war camps.

It would be interesting to know how many of the original 99th 12th Air Force that was formed in Boise, Idaho are still left.

Sincerely,

*Paul M. Peterson / jr*  
Paul M. Peterson

To 99th members--If you was in the select group that PAUL described please contact PAUL with your information. As the EDITOR of the newsletter I have tried not to place one Air Force over the other. I have put information in the letter as I received it. Please note the Letter Head of this issue it contains the 12th Air Force.

Bernie

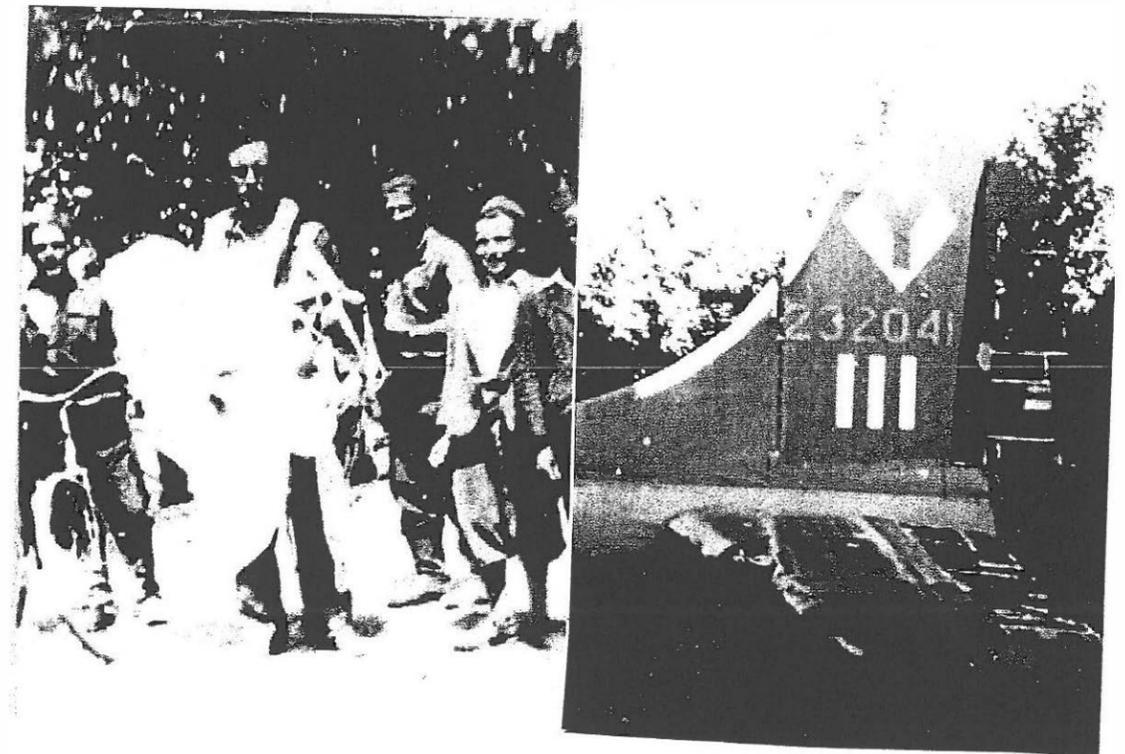
5 October 2001

Dear Bernie

I recently received some pictures from a friend in Hungary about the loss of 232041. I finally made contact with the pilot, Harry O. Reuse (the name is pronounced Roose). One picture shows Harry still holding his chute just after being captured. The other shows the tail section of 232041. I sent these pictures and asked him to verify his picture. He said that was indeed him.

I am enclosing a copy of the letter he sent me and two of the pictures I received from Hungary, The story and pix should make a nice item for the NL.

Regards,  
*Dick Drain*  
Dick Drain



Sept. 28, 2001

Dear Dick,

I want to thank you so much for sending me the pictures of the "B-17" that I was so unlucky to lose. Yes, the plane was 232041.

On July 2, 1944, we were on our 14<sup>th</sup> mission out of Foggia, Italy, to Vienna. We were instructed not to drop bombs unless we could see the target. Because of clouds we had to make a second run over the target and I was hit by flak on that run. On the way to the alternate target I could not keep up with the others because one engine was out.

At that time, I told the crew to bail out. I put the plane on autopilot and got out myself. We were picked up near Pecs, Hungary and held in army barracks for a few days, and then transferred to the city jail in Budapest. We were held by SS troops there and received very rough treatment for a couple of weeks before being transferred to the Stalag Luft at Sagan.

On January 28, 1945, the Russians were coming in from the east so the prisoners were all herded out at 2:00 AM on a march across Germany. On April 13<sup>th</sup>, we arrived at Moosburg and on the 29<sup>th</sup> (my birthday) we were liberated by the U.S. Army.

Once again I want to thank you so much for sending the pictures. The pictures, and writing this note brings back so many memories.

Sincerely,

H. O. Reuse

MAX E. DAVIS

100 SOUTH TREMAIN STREET #G-1  
MOUNT DORA, FLORIDA 32757-6052  
PH 352-383-1300 FAX 352-383-8193

May 29, 2001



Bernie Barr  
7408 Vista Del Arroyo  
Albuquerque, NM 87109

Dear Mr. Barr:

During a recent office cleaning project I came across some of my WWII records and a copy of a long a past 99<sup>th</sup> BG newsletter. I did a web search and found the 99<sup>th</sup> BG web site. Your name and address, along with that of Mr. Walter Butler, were listed on an Information Link.

I would like to receive a membership application to the 99<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Society. I may have some back ground that might prove interesting to the organization.

I was in the original organizational cadre during the Boise, Idaho and Walla Walla, Washington days when Col. Uptegrove and Lt. Col. Rainey were the first Group and Deputy Group Commanders. I started out was a Flight Leader in the 348<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron when Major Warren Whitmore was the original Squadron Commander. I ended my tour as Squadron Commander along about the time of the move to Italy and as I was finishing my 50 missions.

Sgt. Ben Warmer was the right waist gunner on my crew for our 50 missions. Also, it was our B17 that had the mid-air collision with the Earl Davis' B17 enroute to Belem, Brazil for an RON as we were headed overseas to Africa. I have some pictures of that event showing my missing vertical tail assembly and Earl's accordion style left wing tip as we flew over the Amazon River jungle enroute to Belem.

Attached are some photo copies of few snap shots that I have retrieved from my some of my "stuff".

Looking forward to hearing from you. Thanks a bunch.

*Max Davis*

August 3, 2001



Mr. Bernie Barr,

I am writing you at the suggestion of Richard Drain who has recently been very helpful in my search for Air Force veterans who might remember and/or who flew with Rodney Lane Jackson during his service in the Fifteenth Air Force, 99<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group and the 347<sup>th</sup> Squadron. Rodney completed his fifty missions between March and August of 1944.

I am hoping you will be able to place the following ad in the next issue of your organization's official publication:

Family looking for any 15th AF veteran who who knew of or flew with Tech Sgt Rodney Lane Jackson, originally of Riverside, CA. Radio operator/gunner. Have firm info he flew in B-17G Rita Ann and Earthquake McGoon et al. If you can help, please contact Shirley L. Humphrey, 4439 Altadena Avenue, San Diego, CA 1-619-582-2218

Please call or write if there is any other thing I can do to help this project along. It will mean everything to Rodney's family to make a successful contact. Your help is very gratefully appreciated, and I would like very much to have a copy of the issue in which the ad appears if that is not asking too much. It will be placed in the book which is being prepared for the family as information is gathered.

Sincerely,

If you know or have information on Tech Sgt Jackson please call or write to Shirley. Thanks .

Please contact Mrs DELORES WILSON-409 So. Edmunds-Mitchel, S.D. 57301 ph 1-605-996-3518 if you knew her 1st husband LEON PIATEK a gunner on Bad Penny of 416th Sq.. Thanks

07/12/01

Bernie Barr, Colonel USAF (Ret)  
7408 Vista del Arroyo  
Albuquerque, NM 87109

Dear Bernie:

The past four to five months have not been the greatest in my eighty two years. I'm not complaining, however. I've had a healthy life, all in all. . . The recent past has found me in the hospital for short stays for carotid artery operations and congenital heart failure. I have been on oxygen at home for several weeks, but recently was able to discontinue its use for supplemental breathing. For the last 10 days I feel like I'm getting back to a reasonable healthy life style.

I'm sorry for the delay I caused in the newsletter production. I kept thinking each day I was going to get at it and reluctant to admit I should get some help. You were very wise to find a replacement when you did.

In any event I enjoyed the years I produced our newsletter and miss it now that I'm feeling better. I don't believe it would be wise for me to get back in the act for the future. Things can be too uncertain day to day.

Bernie, I'm sending you a package with a bunch of stuff that might be usable. I've marked some of the stuff I've used before. I just hated to pitch anything until you had a chance to review it.

I hope this finds you and yours in good health and spirit.

Sincerely,

#### DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS ?

retired Lt. Col. THEODORE J. HELLER 11741 Rainbow Ave. Anchorage, AK 99516-1924 has recommed to his Senator FRANK H. MURKOWSKI that all combat crewmen be awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. On May 14, 2001 Sen Senator Murkowski wrote to the Air Force Legistive Office suggesting that this be done. As presidence TED cited that the 8th Air Force crew members we awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross upon completion of their combat tour.als including the awarding of the Bronz Star to all WWII combat infantrymen. Similarly, Veterans of the Bataan Death March were eligible for the Bronzw Star. Alsoa Prisoner of War Metal was authorized andveterans of war status was awarded to the Merchant Of Marines with Theater decorations Ted Heller has asked that if you agree and support his request that you write to your Congressmen and Senator stating your support. Ted's phone is 1-907-345-0847

News letter sent  
Aug 6

JULY 21, 2001

MR. BERNIE BARR,

YOUR NAME HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME AS A POSSIBLE CONTACT PERSON AS BEING KNOWLEDGEABLE OF THE 99TH BOMB GROUP OF 15TH AAF. I WAS A RADIO-OPERATOR GUNNER ON A B-17 IN THE 99TH BOMB GROUP, FROM MARCH 21ST, 1944 UNTIL SEPTEMBER 3RD, 1944 AND COMPLETING CREDIT FOR 51 COMBAT MISSIONS OVER GERMANY, AUSTRIA, N. ITALY, RUMANIA, SOUTHERN FRANCE AND THE BALKANS AREA. I WAS ALSO ON THE FIRST SHUTTLE MISSION FROM GOGGIA, ITALY TO POLTAVA, (UKRAINE) RUSSIA FROM JUNE 2ND TO JUNE 12, 1944, BOMBING TARGETS IN HUNGARY ON THE WAY IN AND TARGETS IN RUMANIA ON THE WAY BACK TO FOGGIA.

I HAVE HAD NO CONTACTS WITH THE 99TH BOMB GROUP SINCE BEING DISCHARGED IN JULY 1945. I HAVE LOST ALL CONTACT WITH ANY MEMBERS OF MY CREW AS FOLLOWS;

- CAPT. FRANK HEGGENESS- FARGO, N.DAK
- LT. BILL YOUNG SPRINGFIELD, ILL.
- LT. KENNITH FUNK PA.
- LT. ART GROESCH CHICAGO, ILL
- T/SGT CARROL MOORE MASS.
- S/SGT CHARLES SANCHILLI, IRVINGTON, N.J.
- S/SGT BILL MCCRARY MISSOURI
- S/SGT. DICK WESTPHAL SO. DAK
- S/SGT. RAYMOND MURRAY, WATERTOWN, N.Y.
- I AM T/SGT CHARLIE M. FLOWE(-FORMERLY NO. CAR.)

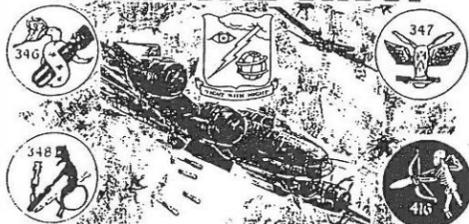
I WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION YOU MIGHT HAVE ON THE 99TH B.G OR THE 483RD, THE 463RD, THE 97TH, THE 2ND, THE 301ST, WHICH WERE ALL IN THE 5TH WING OF THE 15TH ARMY AIR FORCE AND ALL B-17 OUTFITS THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR REPLY. LET ME KNOW IF YOU OR ANY OF YOUR FAMILY WERE IN THESE OUTFITS.

*Charlie M. Flowe*  
YOURS VERY TRULY

CHARLIE M. FLOWE  
3086 F SPRING HILL PKWY  
SMYRNA, GA. 30080

THANKING YOU IN ADVANCE, I AM

### 99TH BOMB GROUP



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## Relive 1945 Experiences

# War Prisoner Airmen Reunited



## Fly Again After 27 Years

Harlan R. Hill, left, 16533 130th Ave., Nunica, and John H. Henry, of Mountain Lake Park, Md., had to bail out in German territory the last time they flew together. They were later captured.

The two took a peaceful ride this week with Hill at the controls. They are shown looking over a Nazi Youth Group armband that Hill took home with him. (Tribune Photo.)

By FRED VANDEN BRAND  
It was much more interesting than watching an exciting World War II movie on television.

I just sat and listened as two World War II buddies reminisced about having to bail out behind enemy lines in Northern Italy after their bomber caught fire.

THEY SPENT three months evading the Germans in the mountains of Italy before being captured and placed in a prisoner of war camp for six months.

Harlan R. Hill, 16533 130th Ave., Nunica and John H. Henry, of Mountain Lake Park, Md., hadn't seen each other since they were liberated from the POW camp in April of 1945 until last year when the Hills visited Henry and his wife in Maryland.

Henry and his wife returned the visit this week.

THE TWO former Air Force sergeants took an airplane ride Thursday. Hill received his flying license under the G.I. Bill in 1947 and belongs to a flying club in Nunica and operates a Piper J-4, 1939 model.

The pair could clearly recall the last time they flew together.

They attended gunnery school at Ft. Myers, Fla., and were assigned to the same bombing crew in 1943. Each was assigned to the 15th Air Force, 348 Bombing Squadron and sent across the Atlantic to an base at Foggia, Italy.

Hill, an employee of the Bastian Blessing Co. here, and Henry, a power company employee in Maryland, recall July 24, 1944 when their 10-man bombing crew was sent on what was called a "milk run".

This was a term given to what is considered a reasonably safe mission.

"We were being sent into Northern Italy to bomb a tank repair depot," Hill stated.

Sgt. Hill was the tail gunner and Henry was the flight engineer.

THEY WERE manning the "Flying Fortress B-17" when it developed engine trouble.

"At first everything seemed under control, but minutes later an oil line ruptured and the plane burst into flames.

Hill, Henry and Eddie Maseleh, the radio operator, found themselves somewhere in the Alp Mountains of Northern Italy. They parachuted safely.

They lived off the land for three months and were helped by the "Partisan" the Italian underground in Northern Italy.

"We knew we had to head south to get back with our forces," Henry stated.

The two men state they traveled 300 miles the way a crow flies through the mountains during the four months they evaded the Germans.

"Shortly after we bailed out we hit the ground near the town of Genoa, Italy and were walking along a dirt road when we heard a noise," Henry stated.

"We took cover in a ditch and watched as two German soldiers went by with a horse and surrey."

SEVERAL TIMES during the four months they had to take cover to avoid being spotted by German patrols.

"Our survival kits include some pep pills. These kept us going the first few days," Hill said.

The kits also each contained \$50. "We used this money to buy food from the Italian families that belonged to the 'partisan' group," Hill stated.

THE MEN lived two weeks in a sod shack they built alongside a mountain. Children from a Partisan family brought them food.

15

They would get homemade bread and lamb meat that they could pay the family for.

Most of the time however, they were short of food. "We went days without eating," Henry stated.

One week they lived in a each orchard and both men remember cleaning out some Italian's tomato patch.

"We were really hungry when we came across that tomato patch. The tomatoes were still kind of green, but we ate loads of them and took more with us," Henry stated.

They spent several days at various Partisan camps. "We were sleeping in this Partisan camp one night when I heard gunfire!" Hill said.

"I asked a Partisan what was happening?" Hill said.

"We are surrounded by Germans," the Italian said. "What do you want us to do?" Hill asked. Everybody for themselves!" the Italian said.

Hill, Henry and the radio operator managed to escape.

THE MEN knew they were wearing friendly forces when they came under fire from a German unit. "We took cover, it were forced to surrender," Hill said.

Later the men found out they were only about 50 feet away from Allied forces and safety. "I would have ran for it if I had known that!" Hill said.

The men were taken prisoner and taken before a German Colonel who was accompanied by an interpreter.

"They tried to get as much information as they could from us. We just told them our name, rank and serial number," Henry said.

The men clearly remember when the German Colonel told them to give him all their belongings.

"If they found out we had been living with the Partisans they would have killed us!" Hill said.

Maseieh was emptying his pockets of belongings to give to the German when he came across a Partisan identification paper.

"You could see the sick look come across Maseieh's face," Hill said.

Hill and Henry both stated Maseieh was very smart and especially at this point.

"The German didn't see him with the paper. Maseieh asked the German if he could have some tobacco to roll some cigarettes. The German obliged and the three of us rolled cigarettes out of strips from the Partisan identification paper!" Hill said.

THEN BEGAN the long trip to a German POW camp.

First they were marched down to a river where both men thought they were going to be shot.

"They kept warning us if we tried anything they would shoot us!" Hill stated.

They were made to march over a partly demolished bridge over a river with their hands above their heads.

"It was really a scary walk with the bridge being unsteady and walking with our hands above our heads!" Henry remembers.

THEY TRIED working out a deal with a German officer who could speak English. "We told him that if he led us to the Americans we would set him up real good," Hill said. The men felt he was ready to go along with them, but then the unit was joined by more Germans and the plan had to be abandoned.

"We were forced to accept being placed on a starvation diet. The closest we came to being killed was from civilians who hated Americans because of the bombings.

"Once a woman in the German army aimed a pistol at us, but a German officer overpowered her and took it away," Henry said.

The prisoners of war were first taken to Stalag Luft III where 20,000 Americans and 5,000 British soldiers were being held captive.

The Russian front began moving in and on Jan. 21, 1945 the prisoners were moved out.

"I can remember that day!" Henry said. "It was 20 degrees below zero. We traveled four days and four nights and one

week by boxcar to our new prison."

Hill recalled one night they were in a boxcar and could hear the town being bombed by Allied forces.

THEY WERE TAKEN to a prison camp in Nurnberg. It was early Spring and the Germans knew they were losing the war.

The prisoners were then moved to Mooseburg in Southern Germany.

The men daily would use cloth to print POW on the ground to let the Allied forces know where they were.

It was at Mooseburg when General Patton and the 14th Armored Division moved in and liberated the prisoners.

"I remember seeing General Patton riding in on top of a tank," Hill said. "What a welcome sight that was!"

Both remember there was only a little skirmish before the Germans gave up and surrendered the camp.

"General Patton was wearing his famous pearl handled 45s!" Hill stated.

HILL AND HENRY had each lost about 35 pounds while being held prisoner. They were placed on separate ships. Henry was hospitalized for about five months and Hill arrived in the States on June 1, 1945.

"We were treated good except for the food. I remember being given some pea soup the first day of being a prisoner.

There were little black things on the few peas in the soup and I discovered they were worms! I pushed them aside!" Henry said.

"A prisoner that was there for a long time told me that is how you tell how long someone had been a prisoner. If they pushed the worm infested peas aside they hadn't been here too long. If they counted to see how many worms there were they had been here awhile," the veteran prisoner said.

They ate much rice during the time they were evading the Germans in the mountains.

"I don't like rice to this day!" Hill said. "I can eat rice, but don't give me any peas!" Henry commented.

BOTH MEN have mementoes of their days in the service, including their time in the prison camps. They also have copies of telegrams sent to their families informing them the men were missing in action.

"The first our families were notified we were being held prisoner was after our names were released on a propaganda broadcast by 'Axis Sally,'" Henry said.

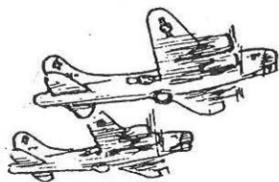
Hill has a lot of his belongings, thanks to his brother Tom who was stationed nearby in Italy with the medical corps and rounded up his belongings after Hill didn't return from that mission.

The men hadn't seen each other until last year when the Hills were vacationing and driving through Morgantown, W. Va., where Henry was originally from.

A few telephone calls and the two men got together.

They have been unable to locate Maseieh who was from Arizona.

One thing is for sure, when the two former sergeants get together they always have plenty to talk about!



BERNIE, I won't call you Dear because I hardly know ye, and even if I did know ye, I would not call you Dear because I'm not that kind of guy.

Anyhow, the letter from Tom O'Reilly in the latest issue prompts me to write an adjunct to his letter.

I was squadron bombardier for Al Schroeder on both the mission to Belgrad when LTC Headrick was shot down, and the shuttle mission to Poltava.

At the Albuquerque reunion, Al Schroeder and I could not agree on the details of Col Headrick's being shot down. And this is nuts, because both he and I were intently watching the lead plane. Me to drop my bombs, and he to fly formation. My diary says that the right wing was hit at the root, and my fifty-seven year old memory remembers seeing the right wing fluttering off to the right, and the rest of the plane going into a roll to the left. Al says the left wing was shot off, and he is probably correct. Is there anyone who can shed any light on this?

As I remember it, we were flying above a solid undercast, and had been cruising around looking for a suitable target. When we took the lead there suddenly appeared before us a big round hole in the undercast. We were nearly at the point of no return so just dumped the bombs right into Belgrad without aiming. I have searched in vain thru all my souvenirs and mementos for a newspaper clipping from about forty years ago about that mission. The story said that we killed four thousand Belgraders that day. I wish I could find it so that I could enclose a copy, but no luck.

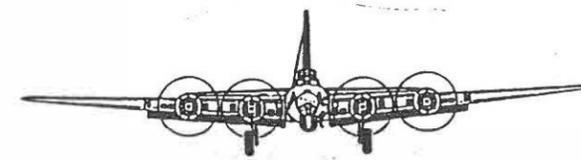
On the shuttle mission to Poltava, we did indeed take over group lead. Actually, we were Wing lead. I claim to be the first member of the wing to step on Russian soil, since as soon as our plane parked, I jumped out the nose hatch just so I could claim that dubious honor.

A few issues ago, you printed my letter about my experience with the 49th Bomb Squadron in 1932. If anyone is curious, the Air Force has no records as to who the members of the squadron were at that time. The only name that cropped up was that of a General Olds.

Incidentally, if anyone still has his old A-2 Jacket, be advised that they are very valuable. I have been offered \$1500 for mine.

Blue skies and green lights to everybody.

DeAlton T. Booth (Buzz)  
106 Peck Street  
Buffalo, N Y 14212



Internal Revenue Service

Department of the Treasury

District Director

1100 Commerce St., Dallas, Texas 75242

99th Bombardment Group Historical Society  
2908 Aliso Drive NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87110

Person to Contact: EO Technical Assistor  
Telephone Number: (214) 767-2728  
Refer Reply to: EE:EO:7215:713:JH  
Date: AUG 16 1982

Internal Revenue Code: Section 501(c)(19)  
Accounting Period Ends: December 31

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99th Bombardment Group Historical Society

You are not required to file Federal income tax returns so long as you retain an exempt status, unless you are subject to the tax on unrelated business income imposed by section 511 of the Code, in which event you are required to file Form 990-T. In this letter we are not determining whether any of your present or proposed activities are unrelated trade or business as defined in section 513 of the Code.

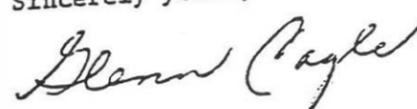
You are required to File Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, only if your gross receipts each year are normally more than \$10,000. If a return is required, it must be filed by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your annual accounting period. The law imposes a penalty of \$10 a day, to a maximum of \$5,000, for the failure to file the return on time.

Unless specifically excepted, you are liable for taxes under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (Social Security taxes) on remuneration of \$50 or more to each of your employees during a calendar quarter, and, unless excepted, you are also liable for tax under the Federal Unemployment Tax Act on remuneration of \$50 or more to each of your employees during a calendar quarter if, during the current or preceding calendar year, you have one or more employees at any time in each of 20 calendar weeks or pay wages of \$1,500 or more in any calendar quarter. If you have any questions about excise, employment, or other Federal taxes, please address them to this office.

If you have any further questions, please contact the person whose name and telephone number are shown at the beginning of this letter.

This is a determination letter.

Sincerely yours,



Glenn Cagle  
District Director

PLEASE READ! This is the information that Don Lawhorn referred to in his President Column. These are the restrictions placed on the 99th BGHS to grant the society tax free status. If we do not follow these guide lines we will lose the tax free status.

99th Bombardment Group Historical Society

Attachment

5. Section 501(c) (19) of the Code requires that 75% of your members must be war veterans and that 90% of the remaining 25% must be veterans, cadets or spouses. This, only 2.5% of your total membership may consist of individuals who are not in the above veteran groups.

Your By-Laws provide for associate members without any requirement that they fall within one of the veteran groups. Please amend your By-Laws to require them to fall in one of the veterans groups or to be less than 2.5% of your total membership.

6. Indicate the number you have in the associate membership group by the following:

- A. War Veterans;
- B. Veterans, cadets, spouses, active duty military;
- C. Those who are none of the above.

7. Since you indicated that you may form chapters, you may wish to apply for a group ruling for yourself and your chapters. If you have one or more chapters already formed, you should submit information required in the enclosed Revenue Procedure 80-27 to request a group ruling.

THE 99TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP HISTORICAL SOCIETY



WALT MONTGOMERY 55 NORTHWOOD HUNTINGDON TN 38344 731-986 8328 FAX 2861 EMAIL [wrmnc@iswt.com](mailto:wrmnc@iswt.com)

TO: Our 99<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group Historical Society Friends

FROM: Mary Belle & Walt Montgomery and Edith & Bob Johnson  
Your Four Co-Hosts

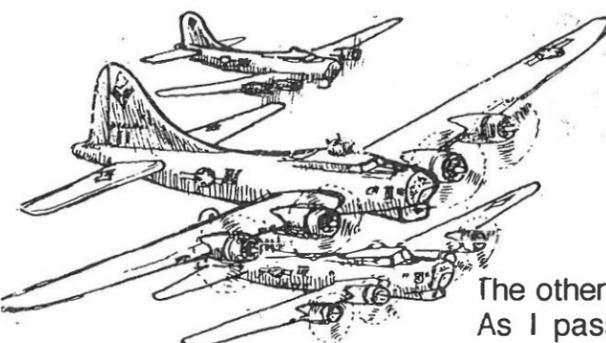
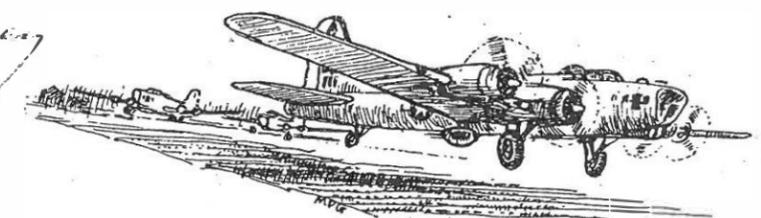
We are excited about being your co-hosts for our April 16-21, 2002 meeting. We hope when you leave to go home, you'll say it was one of your best ever reunions. Nashville is such a great place to visit.

You can extend your stay for five days before or five days after our dates for your same low price. Normal room is \$139 per day.

We've planned four outings, which we hope each of you will take advantage of. We've been on these trips many times and they are our top picks. A lot of free time is left for you to see and do other things. When you arrive, your packet will have brochures on it all - The Ryman Auditorium, The Parthenon, County Music Hall of Fame, Opryland Hotel Gardens, Opryland Mall to name a few. For Civil War buffs there is Franklin, Tennessee. Nashville and Stones River are close by.

We do so want you to come. We always look forward to seeing you again. We have several coming that have never attended. See you in '02.

*Walt Montgomery*  
Walt Montgomery  
347<sup>th</sup>



**The Mirror**  
By John T. West, Jr.

The other day, I happened by chance,  
As I passed a mirror, to give it a glance,  
and I wondered who that old man could  
be, who with his mouth wide open, was  
looking at me.

His bald head was sprinkled with a little  
gray fuzz,

And he wasn't at all handsome (like I  
always was).

He looked like a sack of mis-mated parts,  
Put together without aid of instructions or  
charts.

And while I know that my shoulders don't  
slump,

This person's were misshapen in one  
ugly hump!

Now, if that was my image, I only can say,

They don't make mrrors like they did in  
my day.



NEWS, NOTES, LETTERS & IMPORTANT INFORMATION  
 REGISTRATION  
 99<sup>th</sup> THE BOMB GROUP HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION  
 Maxwell House Hotel – Nashville, Tennessee

April 16-21, 2002

Tuesday, April 16

Register in Hotel Lobby – Hospitality room open. \$10 fee x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

Wednesday, April 17

Breakfast – Load buses at 9:15 for tour of Preside **Andrew Jackson's, "The Hermitage"**.  
 Lunch at Hermitage. Bus to hotel. Tour, lunch, bus \$20 ea. x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
 Remainder of day – Hospitality room and/or your personal touring.

Thursday, April 18

Hospitality room – 8 til ? p.m. – Personal tours of area  
 10:00 a.m. – Directors Meeting  
 12 Noon – Lunch & **Annual Meeting** at Hotel \$20 ea. x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

Friday, April 19

9:00 a.m. – Load bus – General Jackson paddle wheeler - 4-hour trip up the Cumberland River,  
 lunch on boat, and floorshow. This should be highlight of our week  
 \$39 ea. x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
 6:15 p.m. – Load bus to "The Grand Ole Opry Show" at Opryland – 7:00 p.m. til ?  
 \$31 ea. x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday, April 20

8:00 a.m. – C-130 flight around Middle Tennessee courtesy of Tennessee National Guard for all  
 who want to go – FREE – weather permitting Names \_\_\_\_\_  
 Saturday Night - Banquet on hotel roof – Dinner, dance, some surprises  
 Menu: Beef \$25 ea. x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
 or  
 Chicken \$25 ea. x MARK ONE = \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday, April 21

Fairwell Breakfast

Please mail this ASAP with your check to: "Bob Johnson"  
 PO Box 38  
 Denton, NC 27239  
 Phone: 336-859-4607



Maxwell House Hotel  
 2025 Metro Center Blvd.  
 Nashville, Tennessee

Welcomes

99<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Society  
 April 16, 2002

Your Special Group Rate is:  
 \$79 (Single or Double Occupancy) Room and Continental Breakfast  
 or  
 \$82 (Single or Double Occupancy) Room and Full Breakfast  
 Deadline for Group Reservations is March 01, 2002

To insure availability & obtain group rate, your reservations must be received by above date.  
 Call 1-866-866-8086  
 Or  
 Return this application prior to reservation deadline

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival Date \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date \_\_\_\_\_

Maxwell House Hotel requires either a one-night deposit or credit card to Guarantee your  
 reservations. Individual cancellations may be made without Penalty up to 48 hours prior  
 to arrival.

Guarantee with – AMEX \_\_\_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_\_\_ MC \_\_\_\_\_ Diners \_\_\_\_\_ Disc \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your room preference or any special needs.  
 Please note that room types are based on availability.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Smoking \_\_\_\_\_ Non-smoking Number of People \_\_\_\_\_

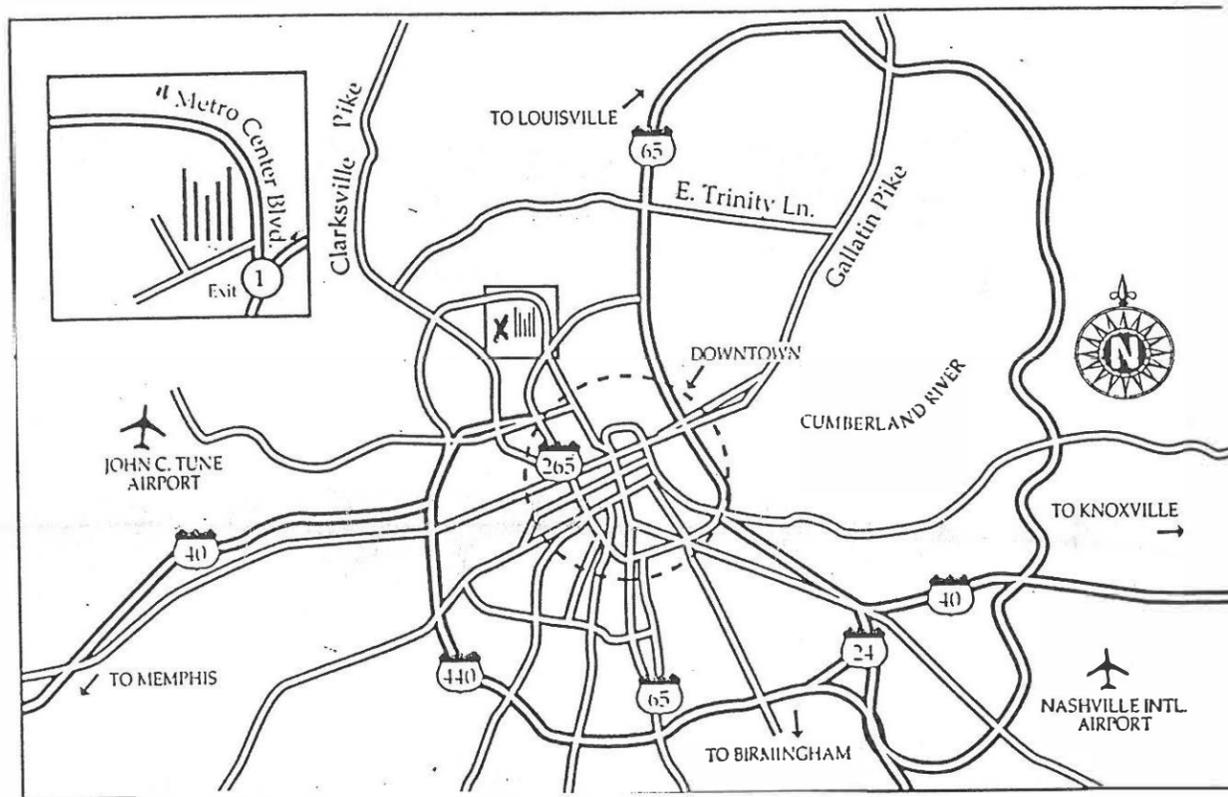
Special Requests: \_\_\_\_\_

RV Hook Ups, K.O.A. Music Row – Opryland



**Maxwell House Hotel Location Map**

2025 Metro Center Boulevard  
 Phone (615) 259-4343  
 Fax (615) 313-1327  
 Reservation Free # 866-866-8086  
 \*Please call in your reservations



JOHN HENRY received this from JIM KIRKPATRICK

Subj: B.S. Barr  
 Date: 8/6/01 3:33:13 PM Central Daylight Time  
 From: jdkirkpatrick@juno.com  
 To: HStldw2@aol.com

Hi John,

I want to tell Bernie that I just received the latest news letter and I thought the intrview he had was the most interesting I've ever read, I had to read it all before I did anything else, things we never could get out of him at lunch. I hope you guys are all well. I miss the lunch and the gabfest that we had. The football Hall of Fame is over for another yearexcept for the football game which is tonight.

Tell all the others I said hello and I miss them.

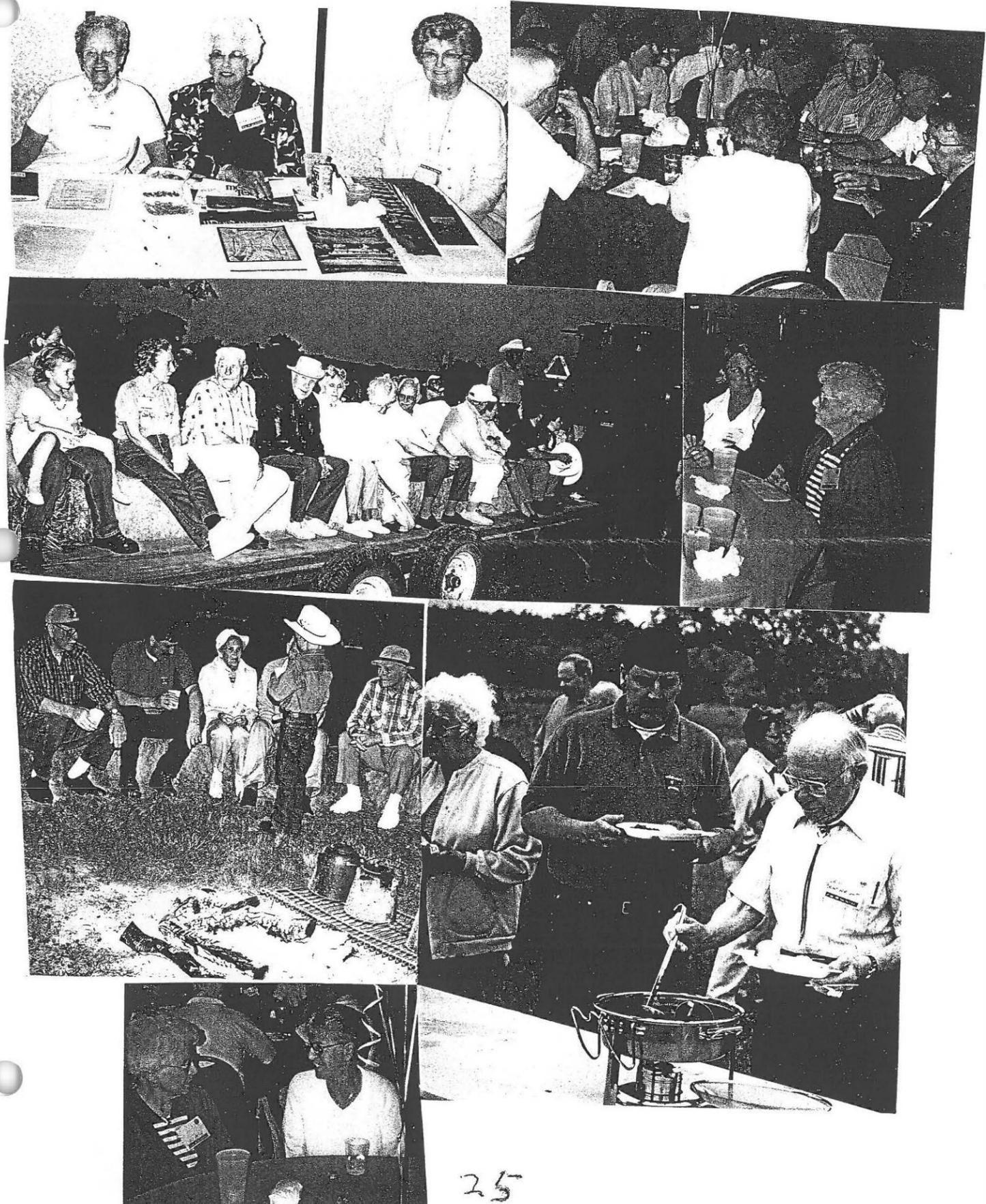
We are having a drought here, its been a month since we've had any rain( I thought I was in New Mexico.

Talk to you later, keep me informed.

As ever Jim 8/6/2001

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the following montage of pictures were sent in by EDWARD P. MAY and CHUCK DOWNEY. These are photoes taken during the 2001 Reunion in San Antonio.



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# 99th Bombardment Group Historical Society

Walter H. Butler, Treasurer  
8608 Bellehaven Place, NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87112

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Assoc 2002  
Robert H. Penoyer  
123 N. New Apt D  
Monterey Park, CA 91755

91755+2030 06



Members are reminded that the dues are \$15.00 per year. PLEASE check the date shown on your mailing label. If it does not show 2002 or later, your dues are now due. Send a check to *Walter Butler* payable to the 99th BGHS for as many years as you desire. Life memberships are \$90.00. If you do not pay before January 1st, you will not be a member and will not receive a newsletter.

As the Editor-publisher etc. Bernie needs your personal story and any photographs that you have so Bernie can compile the newsletter every three months. Your story is valuable and of interest to other member. Please send your typed story to Bernie Barr, 7400 Vista Del Arroyo, Albuquerque, NM 87109. Please get your typed copy to me by the 1st day of *January, April, July or October*.

Our front page needs your WWII photo with name, rank and sq. I can crop the photo to fit the available space. If you want the pix back, let me know.



Hosts for our *Nashville Reunion. Edith & Bob Johnson-Mary Belle & Walt Montgomery*