

1944 50TH ANNIVERSARY

4850th BOMB GROUP GOLDEN REUNION - MEMPHIS TENN. SEPTEMBER, 1994

It's 50 years! Oh my God! How quickly time flies by just like the snap of a finger, or the blinking of an eye.

Seems like only yesterday, we were just kids in school reading, writing, arithmetic and reciting the Golden Rule.

Then on a quiet Hawaiian Sunday morning, December 7, 1941 Pearl Harbor was decimated, and World War II had begun.

Swift like a bolt of lightning, striking right out of the blue comes greetings from your Uncle Sam; your country's drafting you!

And before we really knew it, without a right or say we were headed into a bloody War in a land so far away.

Sailing in a convoy to an unknown foreign shore we got more than we bargained for. The troopship Hamilton carrying 500 troops to the fight, was sunk in a murderous, exploding inferno of light.

In a couple of weeks, we arrived at our Italian base to join in the fight, to destroy Hitler's master race.

We traded towns like Toledo, Boston, Memphis, and Mineola for Venosa, Foggia, Montemilone, Spinnizola, and Cherignola.

There was a new tongue we soon got to know bella Signorina, chow, tuffa block, no capish and GI Joe.

We built our quarters with tubing, bomb boxes, Canvas and steel drums over grass Heated our tent and dry cleaned all our clothes with B-24 100 Octane Gas.

We fought off the mud, icy winds, snow, heat and rain enduring long days, endless nights, loneliness and pain.

We loaded the ammo and bombs, then checked all the guns gassed all the bombers and got them ready for their runs.

Then into the vast unknown they flew in a deafening roar God and only God knew for them, what he had in store.

They went to their targets in massive savage attacks with escorts and enemy fighters screaming down their backs.

Squadrons and squadrons turned the sky erie charcoal black combined with the huge concentration of murderous enemy flak.

The targets were treacherous here's the names of a few (Ploesti-Blackenhammer-Austria)
We hit them extra hard for the old red white and blue

As each mission returned we knelt silently to pray that all crews who flew would return safely that day.

Most thankfully came back from each days bombing foray unfortunately some lives were lost, some listed as MIA.

So we treated our wounded, and mourned over our dead then it was back into action, full throttle ahead.

Days, weeks, and months just seemed to drag past then VICTORY THANK GOD!
We're going home at last!

We made lasting friendships in the scary time of war a bond that keeps us brothers, forever and ever more.

We did what we really just had to do
I'd do it all over again, I know, so would you.

A lot of our buddies have passed and gone on ahead it's now our duty, to honor and venerate our dead.

As time quickly passes it's so sad but true we're dwindling down to a very precious few.

So no matter who, or what we are, wherever we may go remember it wasn't too far back, we were just GI Joe.

Now let's all thank God for our blessing galore and pray that future generations never, ever know war.

We fought, we died, but we endured, doing it for old glory
And now we've come to the end, of our 4850th year story.

We so proudly defended our country and flag when they so badly needed a lift
we answered the call, and gave it our all
we're the proud boys of the 485th.

May God Bless America Forever!
We Love You!

John DiRusso

1944

P.S. Our prime target was left untouched, it makes me boil as I reflect back we should have knocked out the orange marmalade factory, in the heart of Hackensack!