



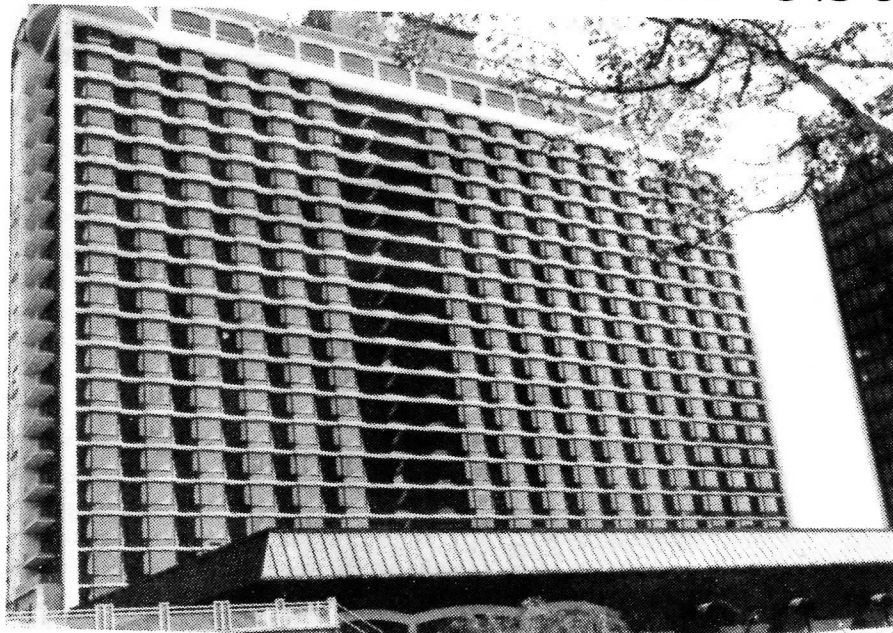
LIGHTWEIGHT TOWER CALLING



No. 32

March 1998

Louisville to Host Reunion



1998 Reunion Headquarters — Galt House, Louisville

A Great Reunion in Dallas

By Bob Hanson

We want to praise our host and wife and co-host and wife, Sherrill and Geraldine Burba and Marvin and Naomi Lindsay, for a wonderful reunion with everything going as planned.

Dallas is an excellent reunion city and the Adams Mark Hotel in downtown Dallas had every amenity needed for making a successful reunion!

I arrived solo Wednesday in early afternoon and things were going right along in the hospitality and registration room. An abundance of people were socializing and renewing old friendships as well as new arrivals were registering. All in all it

was one busy place!

The itinerary Wednesday was open, so everyone was free to roam and tell old war stories, and compare hair and waistlines. All in all, lots of fun in meeting up with the gray eagles once again.

People ask "don't you get tired of meeting every year" and my thought on that is, "if you had been in Italy with the 485th in 1944 and 1945, you would understand why we do not get tired of attending these reunions!

Thursday morning at 8:30 a.m., the golfers departed for Tennison Golf Course. There were lots of them gathering in the lobby by 8

(Continued on page 2)

The 1998 485th Bomb Group reunion will be held in Louisville, Ky. from Thursday, Sept. 3 until Sunday, Sept. 6. Reunion headquarters will be in the downtown Galt House.

Hosts will be Alvin (Al) Martin and Don Peden.

Highlight of the Thursday events will be a tour to the Louisville Slugger Museum, where bats are handcrafted much as they were when the first Louisville Slugger was turned out in 1884.

Also on the schedule for Thursday will be a visit to The Falls of the Ohio State Park, located across the Ohio River from Louisville.

The renowned 375-million-year-old Devonian fossil beds at the Falls of the Ohio are the largest exposed outcropping in the world.

Thursday evening dinner will be held at Huber's Family Farm in Southern Indiana.

On tap for Friday will be a Lexington Bluegrass tour to the Kentucky Horse Park. It is a unique tribute to Kentucky's most vital industry and home to over 40 breeds of horses.

The annual banquet will, as usual, take place at reunion headquarters at the Galt House on Saturday evening.

Sunday morning will see the Memorial Breakfast, led by Sherrill Burba, just prior to breaking up and heading back home.

Said Al Martin: "If you are not attending our reunions you don't

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Dallas

(Continued from page 1)

a.m., so I know it was well attended. Didn't hear who won what, but know a good time was had by all.

Also on Thursday at 9 a.m., a crowd departed from the Arboretum Tour by bus and reports on that was oohs and aahs about the glorious sights of flowers etc.

On Thursday evening it was an open night with various crews and groups going to a variety of restaurants and sights and lots of them headed for West End, which is Dallas's downtown section of night-life, entertainment, good restaurants and lots of fun. The 485th was well represented in that section Thursday evening. Once again, the hospitality room was full and going strong until after 10 p.m.

Friday, September 5, dawned on Dallas bright and clear and lots and lots of the group were headed, by bus, to a tour of downtown Dallas. Before leaving the downtown bus tour, we were driven by the site of JFK assassination — very stirring and am sure that all aboard the bus had their personal thoughts as to where they were when they heard the tragic news on that fateful day of November 22, 1963.

Next stop was the South Fork ranch. This was a real treat for all of us former Dallas TV fans and South Fork was just as impressive as it used to be on the show. We were given a wonderful opportunity to tour through each room and see just how ostentatious the fictional people who ran Ewing Oil Co. on the show, can live!

Many souvenirs were purchased as a memento to TV Dallas the shop in the main building was doing a landoffice business.

After leaving South Fork, we headed to Brazos Cattle Company, a restaurant in Allen, Texas, where a private room was set for the 485th. Good Texas chow with grilled chicken sandwiches, cheeseburgers or chicken fried steak sandwiches were the fare of the day.

Pop Arnold was also caught in the act during lunch and was led away

in cuffs — I don't know if he was trying to get a double order of food, but something came up about cattle rustling and with his background of cattle drives, guess his past caught up with him. He was led out by a 6'4" Texas Ranger, cuffed and was led through the restaurant to the many laughs of the 485th. Pop always enjoys himself at each reunion and this time was no exception.

The buses returned to the hotel about 2:30 and headquarters and squadron meetings were scheduled for 3 p.m. to 4:30. This was accomplished and then time to shower, cleanup and catch the buses for the Mesquite Rodeo and barbecue buffet. The barbeque was excellent and the rodeo started very promptly at 8 p.m. After seeing the Mesquite rodeo on TV on TNN channel so many times, everyone was very impressed with all 15 events.

The grand entry, invocation and national anthem started the event, then followed with bull riding, steer wrestling, calf roping, bareback riding, calf scramble, Tijuana stud poker, saddle bronc riding, wrangler pro rodeo bullfight series, drawings for boots etc., followed by cowgirls barrel racing, and ending with another session of bull riding.

The bull riding has to be the toughest of all contests and most of the cowboys came out second best in trying to ride these large Brama bulls. The falls these cowboys take will surely show up in later life as aches and pains bigtime.

The 485th bomb group had a special section roped off for them and our flag was in the grand entry and was seen on national TV on TNN station. It was truly a wonderful night and am sure everyone in attendance really enjoyed their Mesquite Rodeo night!

Saturday, September 6, was bright and clear and our business meeting started promptly at 9 a.m. Earl Bundy opened the meeting and turned the podium over to Bob Hanson who was acting secretary. His wife, Lynda, had suffered a vertebrae problem in an auto accident

and was unable to attend.

He also told about the results of the ballots sent to all and having received 27 replies in total and the 485th unanimously elected Bob Benson as new chairman.

Bob Hanson also spoke about the fact that the bomb group was fortunate to have a man of Bob Benson's ability to take over the important, responsible job, and spoke of Earl's dedication for eighteen years and the calm guiding hand he has given us.

Lynn Cotterman then presented Earl with a plaque from the bomb group and Bob Benson then took over the meeting as new chairman. Howard Woodyard gave a financial report that was approved as read.

Bob Benson then made the startling announcement that Colonel Doug Cairns, had passed away that morning at Baylor Hospital in Dallas at 8:45 a.m. of a massive cerebral hemorrhage suffered the evening before. A moment of silent prayer was offered for Colonel Cairns and his family.

Sherril, our host, made an announcement of taking Doug to the hospital with wife, Lillian, the evening before and staying with her at the hospital — a sad part of our business meeting as everyone loved and respected Doug Cairns.

Al Martin spoke about 1998 reunion to be in Louisville, Ky. and promised another outstanding gathering. We met there in 1981 and can attest that Louisville is indeed a fine town for a reunion. Al assured all, he has an excellent schedule already set-up, so get your reservations in early — as soon as you receive your data and hotel rates etc., get your scheduling all set and mail in early! This really helps the hosts and assures a large turnout and successful reunion.

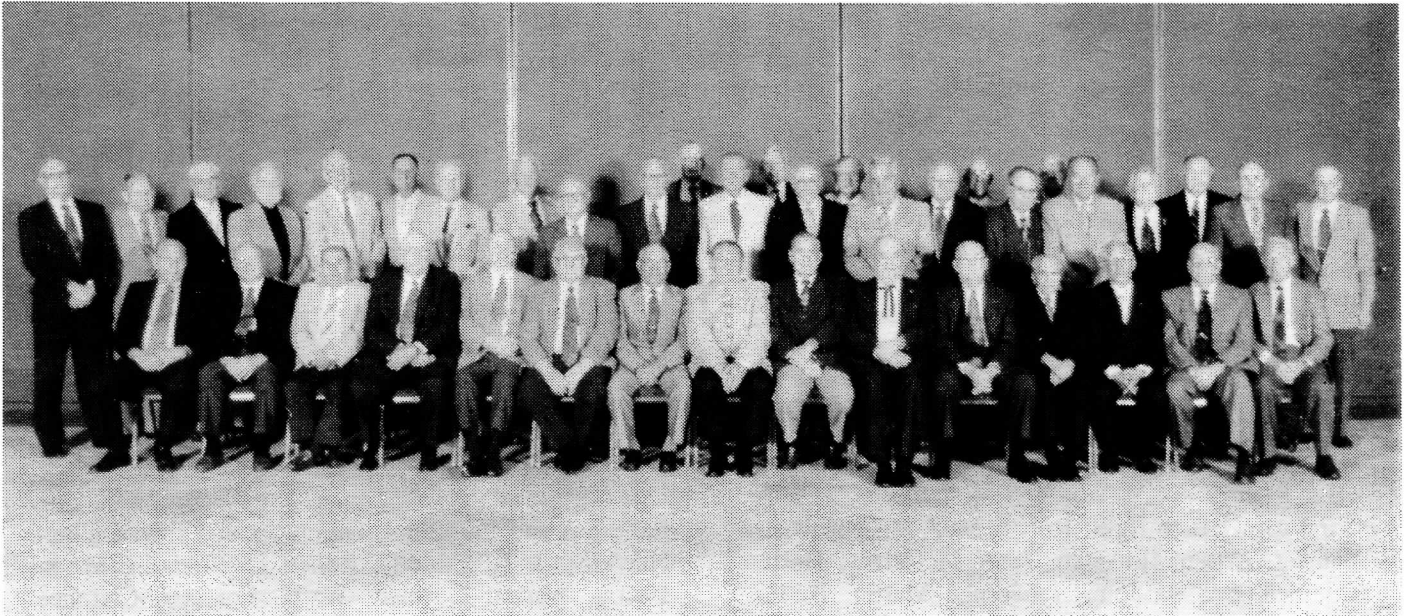
The remainder of the day until 4:15 p.m. was open and many were up in the memorabilia and hospitality rooms that afternoon relaxing and enjoying visiting with old friends.

All pictures were taken from 4:15 until 5:15 and then the cocktail hour

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Squadron Photos

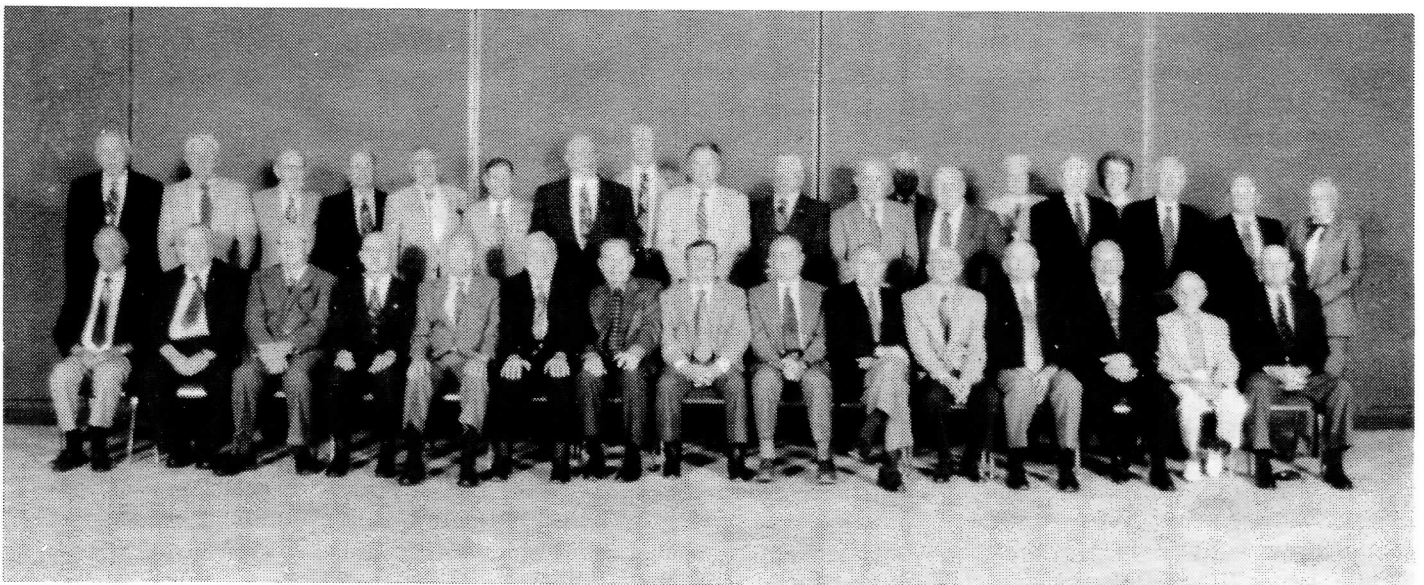
828th SQUADRON



First row, left to right: Fred Freyermuth, Larry Sullivan, Herman Laorno, David Shannon, Carl Mazzoni, Ambrose Borgetti, Gordon R. Sorensen, Gregory A. Lahay, Lee A. Busroe, Sherrill Burba, Gordon Simpson, Nicholas Montulli, Antonio R. Siller, Joseph A. Morrone and Jack Eden. Second row: Walter Huebner, Maynard Sites, John D. Russo,

William Reid, Don Dedew, Mike Hails, Dan Ermackovitch, Arthur Hurley, Clem Norris, Fred Almgren, Harold Julin, Stanley P. Tanca, George Tik, Tom McDowell, E. T. Orgass, W. H. Lancaster, Clifford L. Parli, Tom Roemer, Joe O'Neill, Ed Nett, E. J. DeVane, Jess "Hap" Akin, Calvin Fite, Ed Beeson, Gil Bell and Ken Wall.

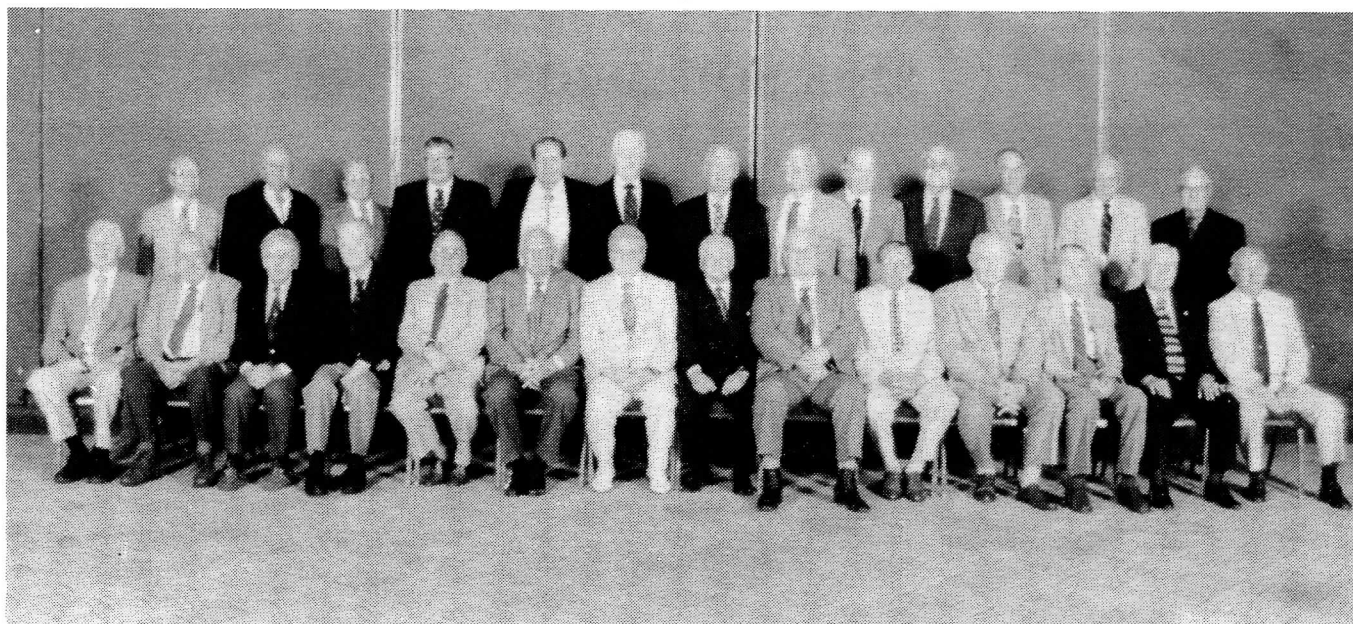
829th SQUADRON



First row, left to right: Thomas E. Hough, Wythe J. Napier, Kearney B. Weyand, Milton Fundling, Donald F. Paar, Slayton McGehee, Irvin N. Wolf, Jim Ridout, Harold Johnson, James G. Gray, Thomas M. West, Kenneth Robison, Philip W. Colluccio, Chester Kida and Wesley L. Rowland. Second row: Don Whiteman,

Gerald Behunin, Robert C. Brown, Henry P. Dolim, Barton C. Brown, Leon J. Best, Joe Cathcart, E. L. Bundy, E. B. Krider, A. J. Fowler, J. R. Scott, Alvin (Al) Martin, Allen (Al) Carlson, Wayne Smith, B. W. Jackovich, Russell Arthurs, Tom Peyton, Clinton Feller and Marvin Lindsay.

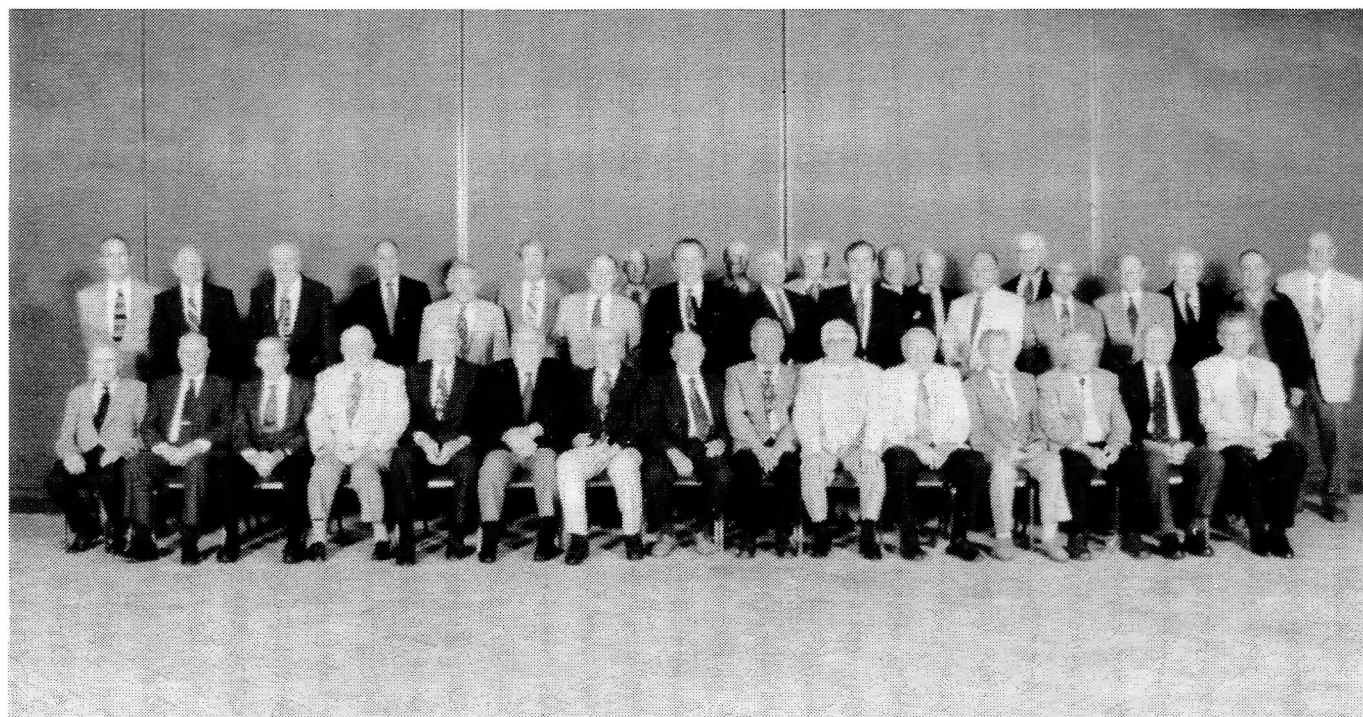
830th SQUADRON



First row, left to right: Robert McAlpine, Robert E. Plaister, Arthur Housden, John McCarthy, Herb Muehleman, Les de Jong, Lawrence Martin, B. F. Cottingham, George E. Dyer, Richard Griffin, Kinnard H. Muse, Roy (Buzz) Boling, Donald B.

Landrum and Edward J. Gunn. Second row: Delbert Hawkins, J. B. Cundiff, Robert L. Baldwin, M. R. Bacon, Warren Gorman, W. C. Forester, Clarence Miller, Howard Boxley, Bill Cummings, Pete Peterson, W. K. Devore, Jim Hunter and Ted Levin.

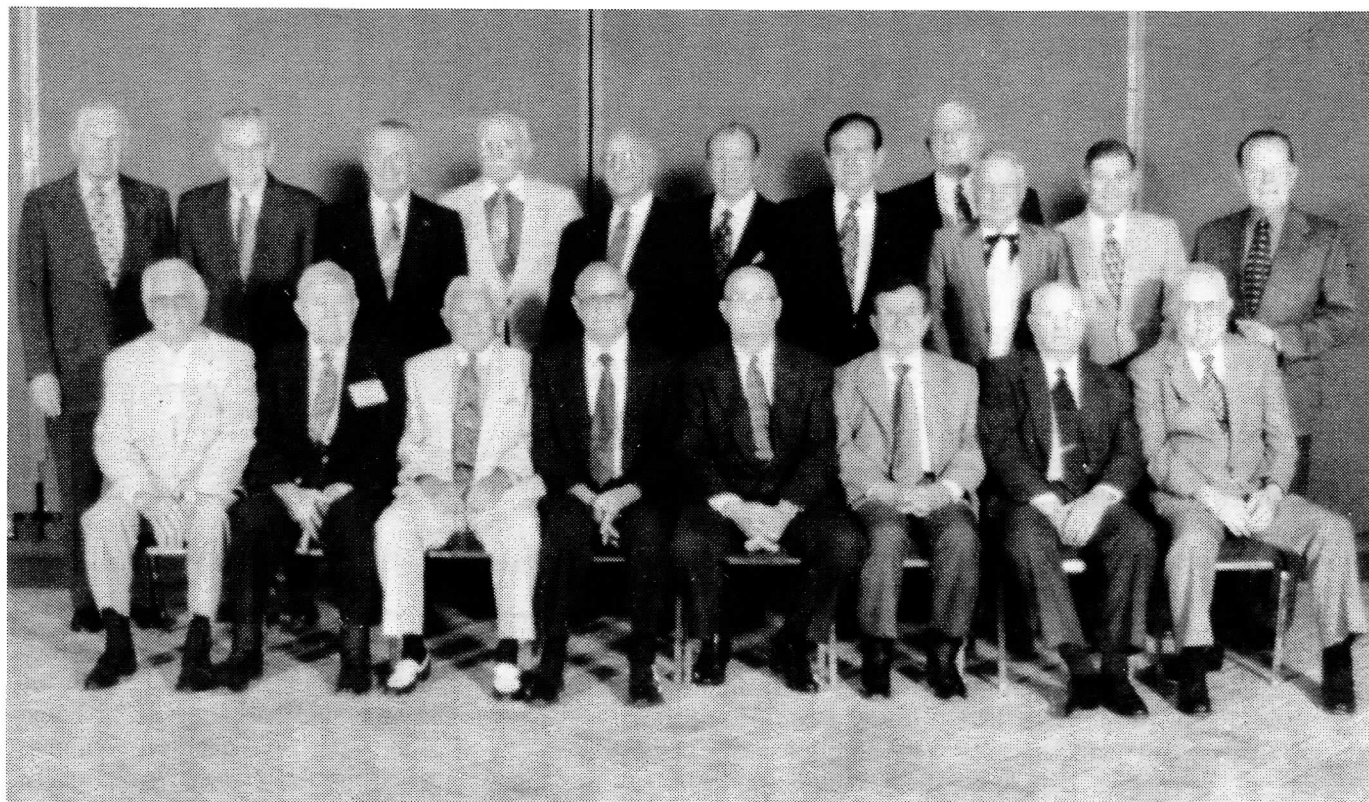
831st SQUADRON



First row, left to right: Howard Woodyard, Leonard Little, Lewis Baker, Robert Lewis, Jesse I. Ledbetter, Bob Monahan, Harold Richards, Dan Sjodin, Frank Chaffin, Lloyd Proudlove, Robert Dietrich, Jack Nagle, Lynn Cotterman, Homer Cotton and Edward Wroblewski. Second row: David T. Hansen, Lee M. Craig, George C. Byrd, Ned C. Peirano, John S.

Jackson, Robert V. Hanson, Sr., O. Warren Meyers, Bob Halling, Bob Plocica, Bill Brokaw, Sam Giaimo, John Godfrey, Frank Nardi, Robert Rector, Arthur Dusenberry, Edward Siantz, Stephen W. Mlinaz, A. A. Salazar, Roy Bulls, Joe P. Williams, Lamont Parker and E. J. McCarthy.

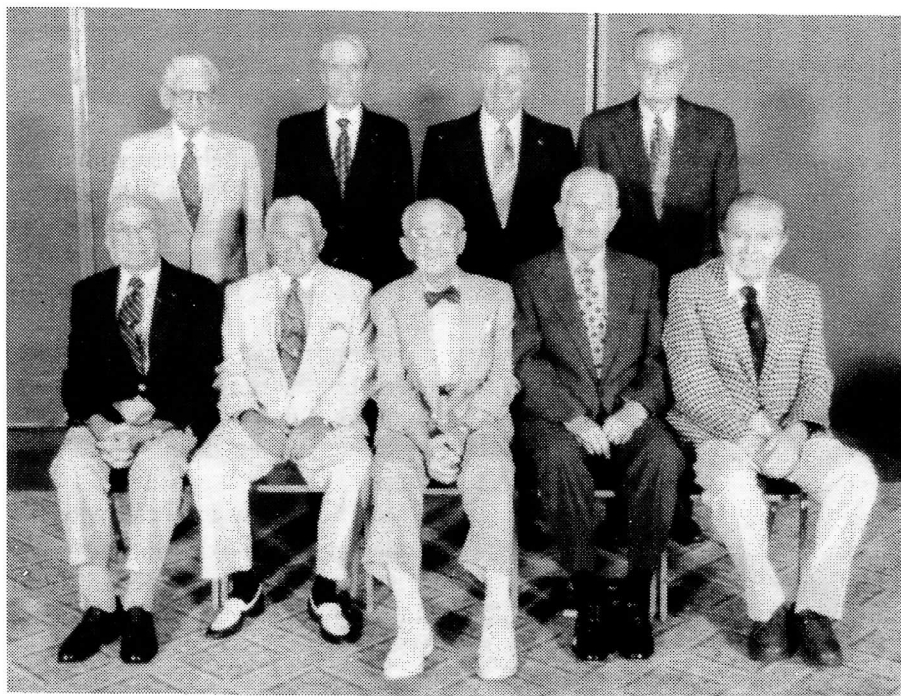
PRISONERS OF WAR



First row, left to right: Lloyd Proudlove, Slayton McGehee, "Pop" Arnold, Walter Huebner, Gordon Simpson, Jim Ridout, Leonard Little and Ryan Scott. Second row: John B. Cornett, Howard J. Cherry,

Warren D. Sortomme, John J. Godfrey, Sam Giaimo, Bob Rector, Frank Nardi, Marvin Lindsay, Joe Cathcart, Leon J. Best and Irvin N. Wolf.

HEADQUARTERS



First row, left to right: Bill Herblin, "Pop" Arnold, Maurice S. Priver, M.D., John B. Cornett and William R. Angle. Second row: Robert Benson, Loyd Towers, Warren D. Sortomme and Howard J. Cherry.

Louisville

(Continued from page 1)

know what you are missing. I would personally like to introduce you to some of the greatest people in the world here (in Louisville) next September.

"Do any of you know how many more of these reunions we will be able to have? Please come while you can.

"Don Peden and I are trying to put together a great time for everyone coming here in September. There may be a little surprise or two in store for you. Of course, seeing everyone and being together will be the best part.

"And when you come, please plan to stay for the Memorial Service. Sherrill put together a beautiful program honoring our comrades who sacrificed their all over there.

"So — yawl. Come now, - ya he-ah!

Al Martin urges one and all to come early and stay late.

Letter From Lynn Tipson

The following is a letter written by Lynn B. Tipson, assistant operations officer of the 829th squadron. It was sent to our historian, Sam Schneider:

Thank you for your letter again. I think you might be interested in the two sets of orders of which I enclosed.

The first is a copy of the orders sending us to AAFSAT for initial training as the cadre around which the 485th was formed. Oddly enough, a good portion of our training in Orlando was around South Pacific activities. So when we left to go overseas, most of us sent our winter outfits home before we left only to learn after we had taken off from West Palm Beach (we had orders to fly a certain course and not to open up our orders telling us where we were to end up, until we were an hour out) that we were headed to Italy and not the South Pacific.

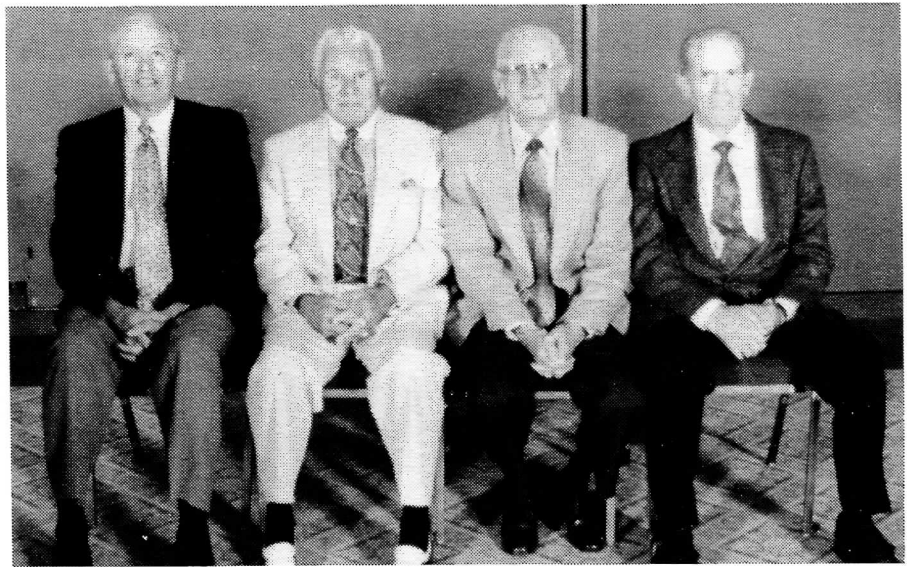
The second set of orders was sending us from Fairmont to Lincoln, to then proceed overseas. I think you will find a number of your unidentified members on that list.

They took at least one member of each crew and replaced them with squadron or group personnel (including squadron officers and top flight maintenance enlisted men). I flew over with Doug Bond's crew.

While in Tunis, Colonel Arnold remembered that before the war I was an accountant. So after we had been there a week or so, he wanted me to process a payroll, since everyone was short of cash. He, therefore, delegated me to get the job done.

If you remember government paperwork, that was quite a challenge, but I accomplished it and the whole group got their pay.

As assistant operations officer, I had no crew, but flew with other crews, sometimes as first pilot, but always in command, except for one flight when I flew with Major



MIAs

Left to right: Kenneth Robison, "Pop" Arnold, Tom West and Lew Baker.

Boney, our squadron commander. Having been an instructor pilot at Boise, I could fly just as well from the co-pilot seat as in the pilot's seat.

I only completed ten missions. The day I was shot down I flew as flight leader with Hugh White's crew. They had aborted a mission with engine trouble which nobody could find, so I volunteered to fly with them to see if there was some problem.

Hugh's story is fairly accurate except that his experienced co-pilot was in command. Dave Ross was a substitute bombardier on that flight and when we were hit, he was standing by my seat (co-pilot side).

The blast tore out the right side of the plane and the controls and instrument panel on that side. It tore off Dave's kneecap and blew several holes in my right thigh. Dave crawled to the bomb bay with me and out we went.

Our experiences are too long to write in detail, but Dave and I spent 4-1/2 months in Luftwaffen Lazarett (most of the time the only two POWs) and we received excellent treatment. Eventually we were shipped out and had to go through interrogation and then on to Stalag Luft III, Sagan.

Interestingly enough, after 24 hours solitary confinement routine,

my interrogator came in and proceeded to tell me I had been in the 829th squadron of the 485th bomb group, that my squadron commander Boney had gone back to the states, that Col. Herblin had completed his missions and had gone home, and that Col. Arnold had been shot down in September.

When Dave and I arrived at Stalag Luft III, we were put in the same room with 13 other members of the 829th, all shot down on June 9, 1944. We were in the west compound and we later found out that Col. Arnold was in the south compound, just across the road.

I wish I could help you with news of Frank Dalton. He is listed on the second set of orders along with his crew. Perhaps his son might be able to locate one of the crew who could fill him in.

He must have lasted longer than me, if he was in front of an officer's club. We didn't have anything but a mess tent and our sleeping area tents when I left.

I do hope you go ahead with the sequel to the book. Too bad I got shot down so early. I missed a lot. Phil Cummings was one of my best friends.

Sincerely
Lynn

Dallas

(Continued from page 2)

started before the dinner in the central ballroom. The ballroom was decorated beautifully and dinner was served promptly at 6:30. The food was very tasty and everyone had a good time.

After dinner, Sherril had some presentations before the entertainment started. Al Martin was made a Kentucky Colonel (his 2nd time) and Marvin Lindsay and Chet Konkolewski were awarded the title of "Admirals in the Texas Navy," Chet received his in absentee, as he was unable to attend due to illness.

Music, dancing and entertainment were big on Saturday night schedule. The Hella Shrine Temple Nobles of Note provided the music and our type music of the '40's was the mainstay of the evening. Sherrill had also made arrangements with Stan Mahler, a singing judge and cowboy poet to put a show on and everyone enjoyed him.

Nancy Moore, a music major in voice at Texas Women's University, sang "Danny Boy" and was excellent. Mike McKelvey, a PHD in voice at University of Texas, sang Dixie and the Southerners really gave him a large ovation. I'm sure there were a few north of the Mason-Dixon line who also enjoyed him. Slaton McGehee, of the 829th, had his square dance group do several squares.

The Sunday morning memorial breakfast was very well done with Sherrill Burba in charge and Al Martin leading us in singing. We had some very outstanding speakers: U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson, of Texas, spoke to us of his six plus years as a POW in Vietnam — very inspirational and each enjoyed him — he is also an author of "Captive Warrior" and a real honor to have him as our No. 1 speaker.

Lee and Mable Craig, of the 831st, furnished the piano and the violin music for the breakfast.

Also had a Jewish Cantor, Nathan Kaplan, who spoke and Catholic Bishop of Diocese of Dallas; Bishop



Running the Registration Table — Geraldine Burba (left) and Naomi Lindsay (standing).

A Thank You for Earl Bundy

After serving over 25 years as chairman of the 485th Bomb Group, Earl Bundy has decided to step down so that he may, for the first time, really relax and enjoy the annual reunions.

We are indebted to Earl for the many years that he devoted to the 485th and its successful reunions, the annual publication of the L.T.C. and the direction he constantly gave to the committee.

Stay with us, Earl, and enjoy yourself, and thank you very much.

Charles Grahmann who followed him in a stirring address.

The 485th also had its own Rev. Don Whiteman, a pilot from the 829th, who again spoke to us and equally impressive during the service, as he always is. We also had a pilot from the 828th, Don Peden, who is a church of Christ Evangelistic minister, who gave an outstanding sermon. He had assisted in building churches throughout the world. This was truly an outstanding

Having been elected your new chairman, I will do my best to carry on the functions relating to our future reunions and their success. Thank you for your confidence.

Your committee now consists of: Chairman: Bob Benson; Group Headquarters: Warren Sortomme; 828th Squadron: Carl Mazzoni; 829th Squadron: Joe Cathcart; 830th Squadron: Chester Konkolewski, and 831st Squadron: Lynn Cotterman.

Bob Benson

Memorial breakfast and everyone felt so spiritually high at its conclusion.

Bishop Grahmann also offered Holy Communion for the Roman Catholics who attended the breakfast.

To those who were unable to attend the Dallas reunion, you missed a good one, but will look forward to seeing you all in Louisville, Ky. September 2 - September 6 1998. Godspeed and stay healthy!

Mavis Akin Painting Appears on Book

On the front cover of the 485th historical book, "This Is How It Was," is a reproduction of a little-known B-24 called "Skeeter."

How it came to be selected for such a prominent place is quite a story.

It is a reproduction of an oil painting of an 829th plane. The plane's crew chief was Jess "Hap" Akins, Jr., now of Brenham, Texas.

And the artist who painted the work from which the reproduction was made is none other than Jess' talented wife, Mavis Akins.

It all started in 1992 when the late group historian, Carl Gigowski, asked 485th veterans for pictures and articles to become part of a history of the group which he was compiling.

Mavis Akins insisted that Jess send some of the photographs the couple had been saving for nearly 50 years. Thus, Jess sent about ten photographs to Carl.

After Carl's death, the photographs were sent to Sam Schneider, the new historian. Sam, in turn, gave them to Southern Heritage Press, along with many other photographs, for possible use in the 485th book.

A representative of the publishing company called the Akins home saying that they were considering using one of the Akins' photos for the front cover of the book. During the discussion, Mavis said that in 1985 she had painted a 24 by 30-inch oil of Jess' last plane, called "Skeeter," a nickname for the couple's son, Jess W. Akin, III.

The representative asked her to send him some 4x5s and two slides of the painting.

Mavis is considered a very fine artist in florals, landscapes and still-life, but this was her first attempt to paint an airplane. For her husband she later painted two other B-24s, "Junior" and "The Lady."

It was apparent that a reproduction of an oil painting, according to the publisher, would be better for the



Mavis Akin, artist, with her latest painting featuring B-24s, Life, Buzz Job and Princess Marie.

A Report from Earl Bundy

I first heard of our group having reunions in 1968 and attended for the first time. Since then we have enjoyed many happy reunions. We have grown as a family and I have been extremely proud to be a part of each and every family as we have raised our families year after year.

I want to write to each of you and let you know how much I have appreciated all your help during the front cover than a reproduction from a photograph. Thus, the "Skeeter" appeared on the front cover.

According to Jess, his wife was "thrilled" that her painting had been selected. He said it represented to her a tribute to the worrisome days she and other wives had spent during the years their husbands were in the service.

Thus, the front cover become a tribute to the 485th's fallen heroes, but also to the families who were left behind during those dark days.

past 15 years as your chairman. It has been a real honor for me. With all your help we have been successful in finding many members of our group.

I was so pleased to receive the beautiful plaque from all of you at this year's reunion presented to me by Lynn Cotterman. I was also proud to receive an engraved travel shaving kit from my loyal 829th Squadron members. I was at a loss for words at the presentation but I did thank all of you. I wanted to say more before turning the gavel over to Bob Benson, but I knew he would do a better job than I did.

I am in good health and look forward to enjoying many more reunions. Keep up all your efforts and I will see you each year.

Sincerely,
Earl Bundy

Minutes of the Group Meeting in Dallas

Minutes of the 485th Bomb Group business meeting — September 6, 1997 at 9 a.m. at the Adams Mark Hotel in Dallas, Texas.

Earl Bundy opened the meeting promptly with a silent prayer for our departed comrades.

Earl then turned the meeting over to Bob Hanson who presented the following:

1. First, Bob talked about his wife, Lynda, the 485th secretary, and her condition after an auto collision on August 23rd that she was involved in. She had injured two vertebrae in her neck, was in a brace and unable to attend the reunion. Bob stated that he would be acting secretary for the Dallas reunion.

2. The results of ballots sent to all members of the 485th were as follows: 27 responded and three persons suggested other names than Bob Benson.

These three were sent letters immediately stating that the names in nomination must be willing to serve and to write or contact them to make certain they would be willing to be chairman. All three declined, so hence a unanimous decision for Bob Benson to be the new chairman of the 485th.

He also said that the 485th bomb group was indeed fortunate to have a capable dedicated and intelligent man like Bob Benson to accept the work and responsibility of leadership.

3. Bob Hanson also said that we were indeed fortunate to have had Earl Bundy for some 18 years serving as our chairman, and have benefitted greatly by his guidance.

He then turned over the meeting to Lynn Cotterman to present a plaque to Earl for his past service. Lynn presented the plaque from the bomb group and Earl was visibly shaken by the presentation.

Bob Benson then took over the meeting and called upon Bob Hanson to read the minutes of the 1996 Savannah, Georgia meeting. Minutes were approved as read.

Howard Woodyard then gave a treasurer's report: \$1675.68 in checking account — the bank charges a fee if balance drops below \$1500. A \$1000 CD's which earns approximately \$180 per year in interest total. \$2010 cleared in Savannah reunion in 1996.

He also said that Lightweight Tower cost us about \$2,000 per year to publish. John DeRusso made a motion to accept Woody's report with a second by Lloyd Proudlove.

Bob Benson then made the announcement that Colonel Doug Cairns passed away at Baylor Hospital at 8:45 that morning. A moment of silent prayer was offered for Col. Cairns. Sherril Burba, our host, gave a report about taking Doug Cairns to the hospital the previous evening with Lillian.

Sherril also mentioned that this reunion will result in a loss of approximately \$2000. This will be firmed up to an exact figure later in the year. He also made mention to having all religions at the Sunday memorial breakfast to speak. This included a Rabbi, Catholic Bishop, and our own Rev. Don Whitman.

Bob Benson praised Sherill and Geraldine Burba and Marvin and Naomi Lindsay for a wonderful job in co-hosting the reunion in Dallas.

Next was the count as follows: POW's 14, MIA's 5, Widows 3 and first timers 6.

Crew of most members present — Tom McDowell had six and Roy Bolling reported has five alive and all were present.

Pop Arnold and Beau Cornett (Group Commanders) were present. Squadron Commanders as follows: 828th Ed Nett and Cal Fite, 829 Hank Dolin, 830 Dick Griffith and 831 Dan Sjodin. Original group Flight Surgeon in attendance, Dr. Morris Priver.

Leona Schontz reported that the first group meeting was in 1964 and Bob Deeds and Carl Anderson helped to put it together. She also reported that Carl was very sick and

unable to attend the Dallas reunion.

Approximately 180 vets were at the reunion — about 375 in attendance total. Dan Sjodin asked for all that made their 50 missions to stand. No squadron count — Bob Benson announced this was to be abolished.

Next years reunion will be Louisville, KY. — the dates will be 9-2-98 thru 9-6-98. The reunion will be held at the Galt House Hotel and rates will be \$68.00. Galt House is located at 4th and River St. Thursday will be tour of Louisville Slugger Bat factory and a Fossil dip across the river in Indiana and Friday will be Lexington Blue Grass. The Shantee Golf course will be used for golfers at the reunion.

The Longest distance was Sacramento, California with J. B. Carnduff receiving the mini B-24.

John DuRosso read "Freedom is not free" by Kelly Strong. John also stated that letters to elected officials, Corp. CEO's, etc., to fly the flag at half mast on Dec. 7th each year in honor of Pearl Harbor can be effective.

Sherril Burba announced that the photographer will take all pictures on hours as per program. Bob Benson called for someone to host the reunion in 1999 and no one stepped forward.

Helen Wall told of an organization called "Armed Forces Reunions" that take over 100% and arrange all items, etc. for a small fee.

Pop Arnold spoke of Earl's devotion and length of service as well as Woody's length of service and to give Bob Benson our 100% support!

Al Martin introduced his co-host, Don Peden, for the Louisville 1998 reunion.

Bob Benson read a prayer and joke to keep everyone laughing and adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted

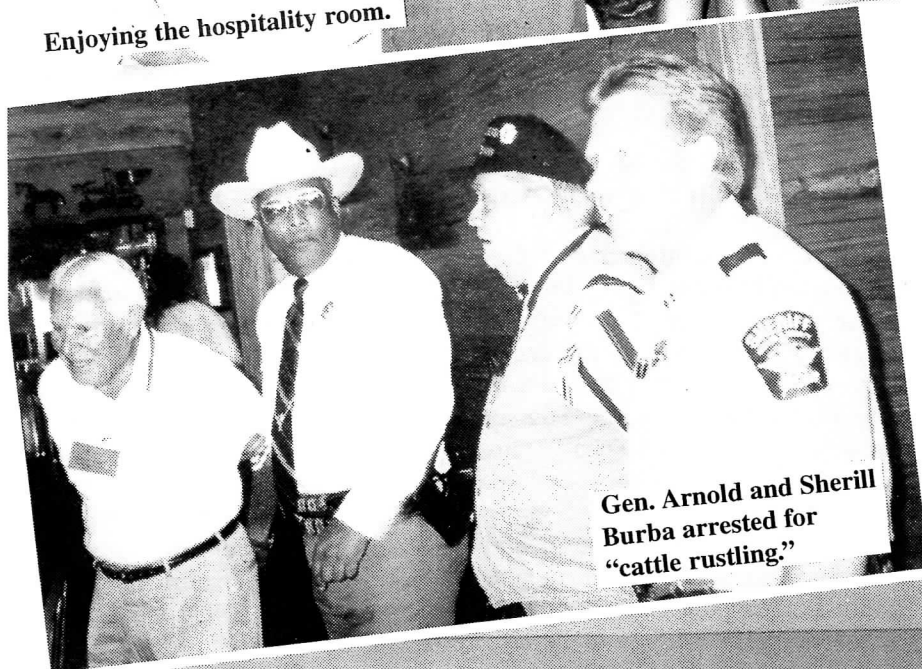
Bob Hanson - acting secretary
in absence of Lynda Hanson

P.S. — A thanks to Helen Wall who assisted in taking of notes.

Snapshots at Dallas



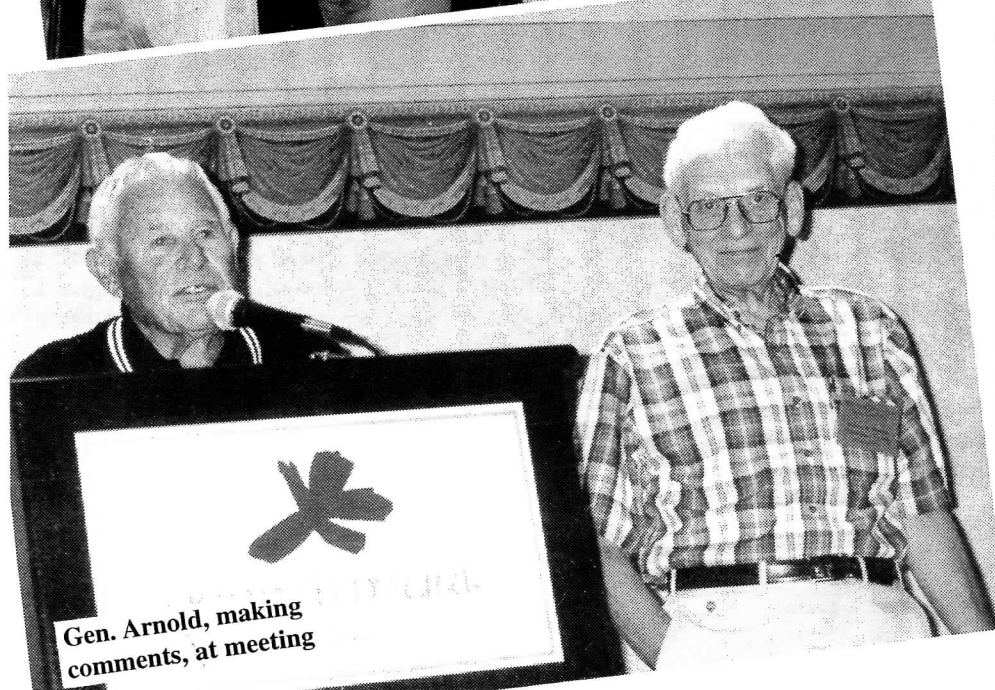
Enjoying the hospitality room.



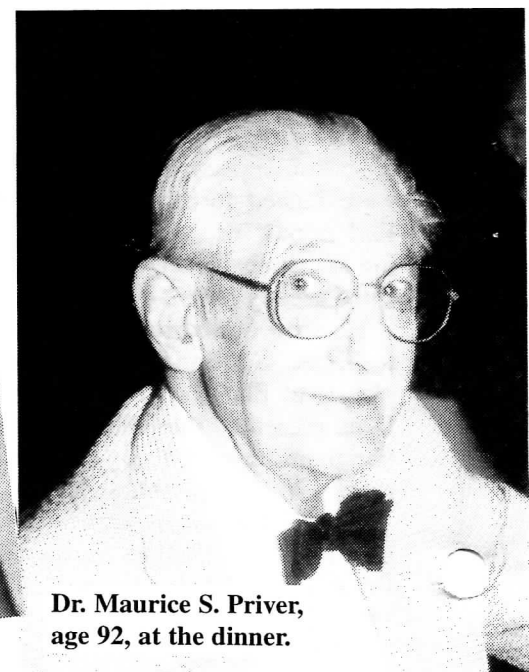
Gen. Arnold and Sherill Burba arrested for "cattle rustling."



Loyd and Evelyn Towers



Gen. Arnold, making comments, at meeting



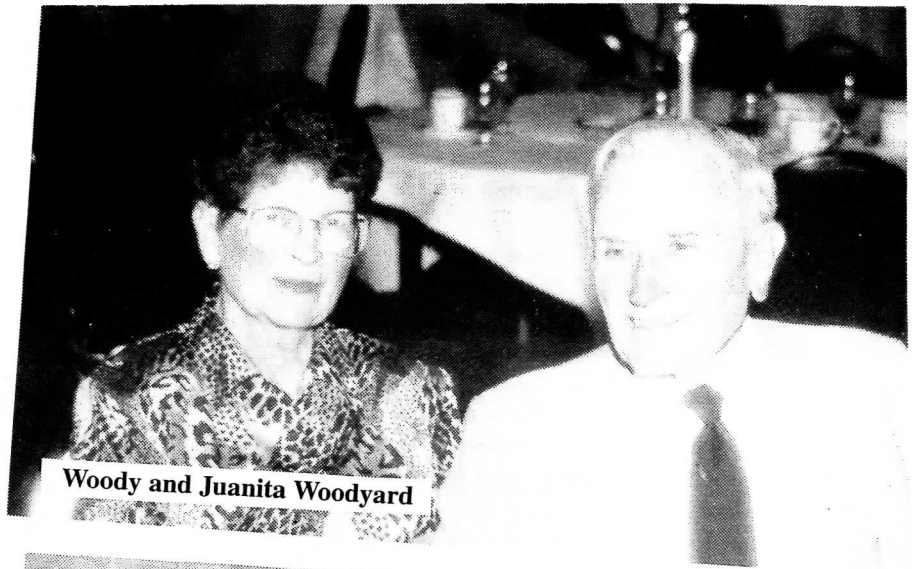
Dr. Maurice S. Priver, age 92, at the dinner.

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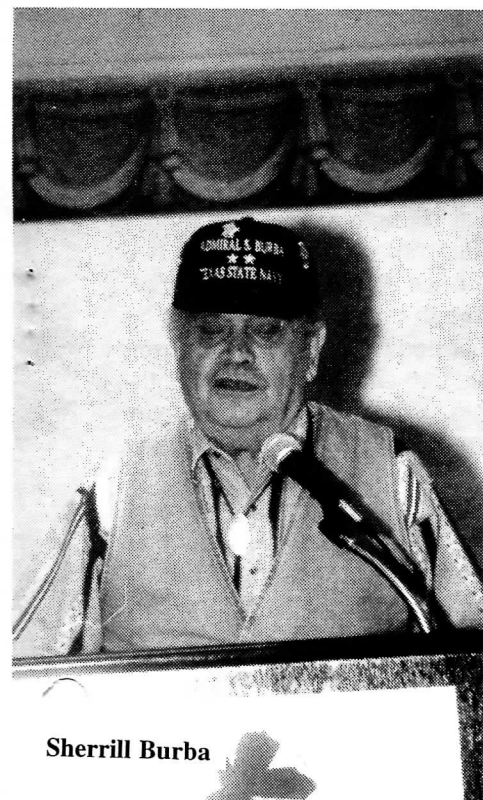
Phil and Lucy Colluccio



Woody and Juanita Woodyard



At the rodeo



Sherrill Burba



Visiting the Arboretum

Photos courtesy of Frances Fundling, Robert Benson, Jess Akin, Early Bundy and Warren Gorman.

A Story A Radio Operator Won't Forget

By Walter L. Heubner

It was June 20, 1944. The following were assigned to fly on Mission No. 35 to Friedrichshaffen, Germany:

Pilot, Thomas Baker; co-pilot, Robert Capitaens (his first mission, replacing our co-pilot Lt. Pope); navigator, F. Holcomb (replaced Lt. Black); bombardier, J. Durdon; nose gunner, John Randich; ball turret, Kevin McGovern; top turret, Robert Downoy; tail gunner, Jimmy Fales; right waist, Gordon Simpson; flight engineer, and left waist, Walter L. Heubner, radio operator.

(Note — July 20, 1944, the day of our flight, was the day of the attempt on Hitler's life. Also, it was the day that Col. Gabreski, P-47 pilot, was shot down. I saw Gabreski at the transit camp near Obreusel, Germany while I was a prisoner.)

The mission was uneventful until we were at about 14,000 to 15,000 feet altitude. The first indication of trouble was a loud roaring sound, possibly the ME-110s going overhead.

Our plane was shaking and vibrating. I was thrown and landed on my back against the ball turret mechanism. Also, I felt something hit my back and I could feel blood. (I still have a two-inch rectangular piece of metal in my back.)

Our plane had been hit by ME-110s with rockets. The tail turret was blown off and the cockpit and nose turret blown to pieces. Simpson checked out the nose and cockpit and reported there was no life.

The tail turret, with Jimmy Fales in it, was completely gone. Only oxygen and electric lines remained. I hope he was dead before the turret hit the ground.

Simpson and I manually lifted the ball turret and McGovern got out OK. We were losing altitude and Simpson said to bail out (I think Lt. Baker had somehow put the plane on automatic pilot.)

I jumped first and lost my boots. I saw McGovern leave next and I could



At the Banquet — Col. Calvin Fite (left), 828th squadron commander, and Crew Chief Jess "Hap" Akin.

see the plane in the distance on fire and going down.

Simpson waited until it was almost too late, as his chute barely opened and he landed in water. He was picked up by some Italians in a row boat (but that is another story and quite interesting.)

I landed in a garden on top of some corn. I did not have time to unbuckle my chute before I was taken captive by a 15-or 16-year-old "Fascisti." I was pretty surprised to sit up and see a rifle in my face. No chance to run.

He was so nervous and more scared than I (if possible) so I did not argue. He was really shaking and I wasn't about to take any chances. We marched to a courtyard.

About 30 Italians, men, women, kids, all curious but very friendly, brought a sofa from the house, offered me wine, milk, etc.

After ten to fifteen minutes, about 50 Wermacht, led by an SS officer, arrived. With all those German GIs, the Italians must have thought they were being invaded. I had no problem with the Germans.

They took me to a clinic where a doctor looked at my back. He said that he wasn't going to probe as it was too deep. He said that he had attended UCLA to study medicine. I also got

some "propaganda" baloney from him.

From there they took me to a small hospital that was also a jail. The Germans there were patients, but also prisoners, AWOLs, etc., I presume.

I spent three days there and was treated OK by the inmates. I was offered cigarettes, etc. I was then moved to a prison solitary for two days and I was interrogated by an officer named Mueller.

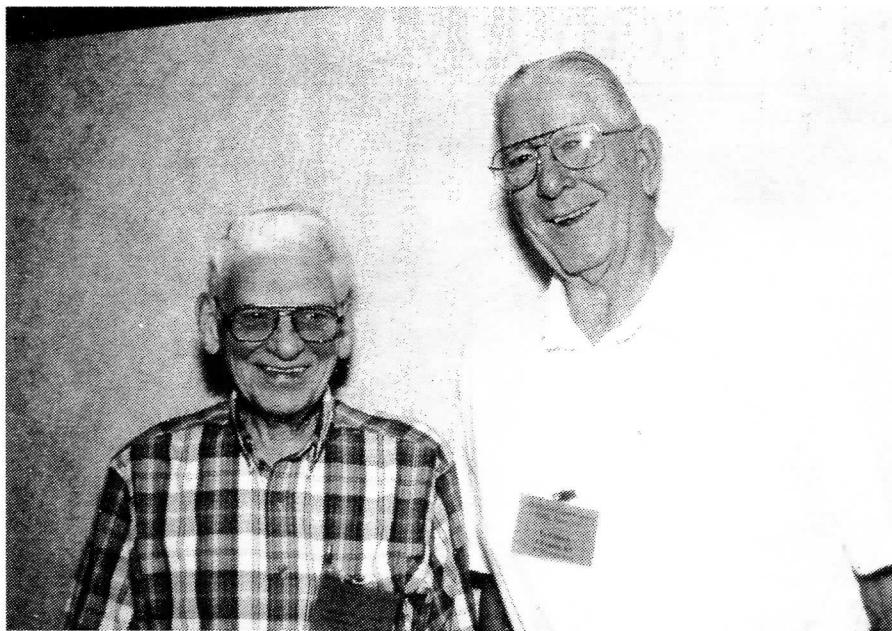
We (Mueller and I) did not get along too well so, after some threats and shouting, I was sent back to the cell. Another two days in the cooler and I was taken to a railroad station. I met Simpson, McGovern and two other airmen POWs there. We traveled through the Brenner Pass.

At this point I was separated from the other four and I was put on another train. This happening was discouraging and I did not know the reason for it.

We ended up in Munich where I was taken off and put onto another train. However, I experienced a little roughing up by women on the last train. They knew I was a POW and proceeded to elbow, kick, etc. before the guards rescued me.

I ended up in Friesen, Germany at

(Continued on page 13)



Two Chairmen — The group's two chairmen. Bob Benson (left), who has replaced Early Bundy (right) at the helm of the group.

Heubner

(Continued from page 12)

a hospital with eight to ten airmen prisoners. The treatment there was OK, fairly good food and no bad incidents. I cannot exactly remember how long I was at this hospital — until the middle of September possibly.

Myself and three others were taken to Obreusel for interrogation and transit. Quite by coincidence the same Mueller was the "chief" there. I did not admit to knowing him, but he remembered me. We had another "conversation" and he said I was a spy, etc.

In the end he sent me back to my cell and I had to return the extra cigarettes he had given me.

There was another train ride, through Berlin, where we sat in the railroad yard while the British were bombing a lot of trains. We arrived at Stalag #4 near Belgard in Pomerania (now a part of Poland).

On February 5, 1945 we were marched out, as the Russians were coming. We walked 800 miles to near Lubeck, Germany and were liberated May 4, 1945 by the British.

On the march we slept in barns and in the open air. We suffered no bad treatment, but there was a shortage of food. We would miss food for two

Seeking Stamps For Youngsters

By Sam Schneider

Teaching kids a hobby. That is what your Lightweight Tower editor, Don Webb, does as a community service. He is an advisor for a stamp club for fifth-and sixth-grade children (11-and 12-year-olds).

Don is always on the lookout for stamps to give to the kids. Should you have some used stamps (American or foreign), Don would appreciate receiving them for his elementary school stamp club.

This activity keeps some kids busy doing the right things. It keeps Don busy, as well.

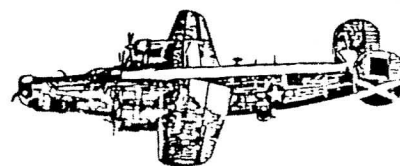
days at a time, so I lost some weight.

I arrived home in Stevensville on June 5, 1945, my birthday. I had physical problems. I contracted tuberculosis and was in Army hospitals in Michigan and Denver until June of 1946.

Personal items: I had 40 years in the postal service (including Army time). I retired in 1982. My first wife passed away in September 1984 and I remarried in 1991 to Mary Jane. We each have two children from our first marriages and eight grandchildren between us.

JOURNEY'S END

Ralph Alley (829th)	1997
Tony Annie (Hqts.)	May 1997
Richard Barnes (831st)	Feb. 1997
David Blood (831st)	May 1990
R. V. Burling (829th)	1997
Douglas M. Cairns (Hqts.)	Sept. 1997
Albert R. Childs (828th)	
Harold E. Dundon (831st)	Feb. 1997
Eral L. Easley (828th)	
Joseph Faraci (828th)	May 1995
Charles Graves (828th)	1994
James Hourihan (831st)	Nov. 1997
James Johnson, MD, (831st)	Mar. 1997
L. J. (Jelly) Jones (829th)	1997
William R. Kearns (828th)	
Robert Keiser (828th)	Nov. 1994
C. J. Kozak (830th)	July 1996
Paul Linse (831st)	June 1997
Herb Little (828th)	1994
James Maetzold (831st)	July 1997
Edmond Manning (828th)	
John McDermott (830th)	
Slayton McGehee (829th)	Dec. 1997
George Murphy (828th)	June 1996
Robert N. O'Malley (829th)	1997
Norris Pannill (831st)	Dec. 1997
Al Peschka (829th)	1997
Kenneth Ponte (828th)	Nov. 1996
Houston Register (828th)	1992
Don Roehn (829th)	1997
James J. Samson (828th)	1995
Edwin A. Sibila (831st)	Oct. 1997
Melvin C. Sieks (828th)	May 1996
Harry Stein (831st)	Apr. 1997
Carl Sterba (830th)	Apr. 1996
John Szabo (831st)	Feb. 1996
Eugene Tolle (830th)	Mar. 1997
Gustave Valentine (828th)	1990
Robert Volbrecht (828th)	May 1997
Francis (Frank) Ward (830th)	
	Nov. 1995
Francis A. Winner (831st)	Aug. 1997
Herbert (Pappy) Wren (828th)	
	Apr. 1995



Today It's Our Turn to Fly

By Sam Schneider

Four o'clock in the morning — so early to hear "40 minutes to briefing." Crew 6 was painted above our tent flap.

We were the gunners of the plane, "The Lady," all sleepy from staying up late last night watching a movie at our theatre, "Roxy Under the Stars."

"Roxy Under the Stars" was the name of the 485th theater, per Deacon Miller, who was the projectionist for the group.

Our minds synchronized with thoughts; it would have been nice to have gotten more sack time.

But it was not to be, so we got up from our warm cots, dressed and headed for a quick latrine stop, washed up, then walked, every so slowly, to the mess hall for a quick cup of coffee and a couple slices of bread with the ever-so-available orange marmalade. Some personnel took a chance with the powdered eggs.

Waiting outside is Mike Friedman with his truck to take us to the briefing room to see what's in store for today's mission. The briefing room fills up quickly with other gunners who are flying that day.

In the main, our crew is quiet with the exception of a "hi" or "hello" or a signal wave to someone you know. Talking seems to start and reaches a crescendo with guesses about where we are going.

A moment of silence takes place when someone yells "Attention" when our briefing officers enter. Gradually each officer speaks his piece — one on weather, another on what we can expect in way of the number of anti-aircraft guns and the type of enemy aircraft which may be encountered. There is also a word about friendly escort, P-51s; P-38s perhaps taking us to the target and P-47s escorting us back.

The gasping part is when the wall drape is dropped, showing us the



Earl Bundy, reading the plaque presented to him in recognition of his service as group leader upon his retirement. On right is Lynn Cotterman.

European Theater of Operations map with a red button touching the target for that day.

The briefing ends when Chaplain Golder says a prayer, asking for Godspeed to complete our mission and for a safe return home.

We hop into Mike's truck again to the equipment shack to pick up the necessities for the mission — chest or seat back, flak vests (a couple perhaps — one to sit on and one to stand on as a little extra protection), heated flying suit, gloves, oxygen mask and a flak helmet.

Then it is on to our plane revetment area. Hop off, say hello to Andy Anderson, our crew chief, and his assistant, Andy Byrnes, lie down on the steel mats, use our chutes for

a pillow and try to get some shut eye, or gab some more, kidding one another while waiting for Skipper, Julin, Hanky Frietas and Tanca, our officer buddies, who went to a special briefing.

On their arrival more kidding while Tanca, our bombardier, would hand out kits which held a couple of maps, made of parachute silk, and 48 American gold and red seal dollars. They were for use if our plane got shot down and we were successful in parachuting safely.

The maps were for your bearings to get back to friendly territory, if you were lucky, and the money was to pay for favors to any good Samaritan along the way.

(Continued on page 15)

LIGHTWEIGHT TOWER CALLING

Published annually by and for
the veterans of the 485th Bomb
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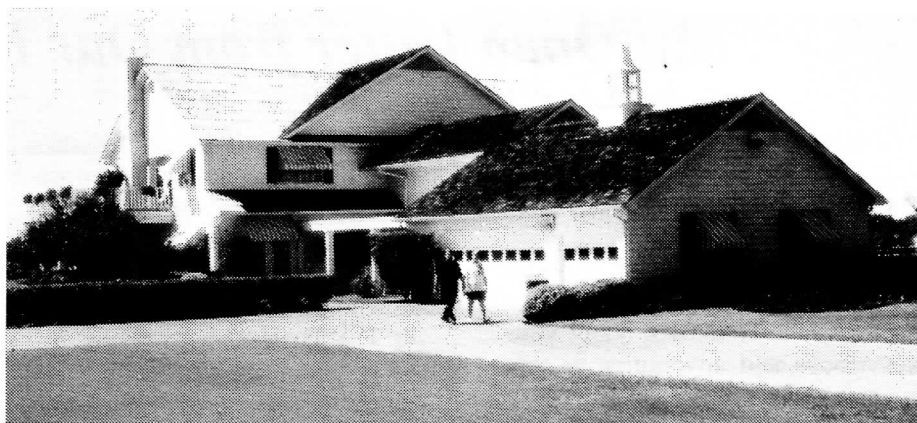
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Schneider

(Continued from page 14)

Soon, Skipper would give the order to get aboard. In we would go, making a visual check that ammo and chutes were in place, etc. More gabbing while we waited for the flare. Gradually Skipper and Julin would start the engines and go through their pre-flight checklist. Mac, our engineer, was doing his bit on the flight deck.

Little by little our squadron's planes taxied out to the take-off line and about every 30 seconds or so, a plane is airborne, heading for Altamura, our rendezvous area. The planes would form in proper forma-



Friday morning tour of South Fork



Scene at the Mesquite Rodeo and barbeque buffet.

tion and all were on the way to the target for the day.

Most of time we flew over water, passing Corsica, constantly climbing. During that period we talked in the waist section, looking over the terrain which was a beautiful sight to behold — plowed fields in square or rectangular shapes with greenish hues.

Just before we reached 10,000 feet, we got the order to man our turrets, making more visual checks — oxygen, heater rheostat working and load our guns and start looking all over for anything unusual. Then we got the order to test fire our guns with a couple of short bursts.

Matty was in the nose; Reggie on top; Morrone down below; Beamist and McGinn at the waist. I could

hear the rat-tat-tat-tat and knew they were all at their posts.

Looking out my turret window I could see other squadron planes to the side and sometimes below me. From here on in it is strictly business as we approach the initial point and then the bomb run.

Those who were lucky that day have flown through that flak and avoided enemy fighters via the help of the fighter escort, then rally together and head for home base to be debriefed as to what we observed during the time over the target.

"Mission completed."

Sam Schneider - Historian
485th Bomb Group
828th Squadron
Crew 6 — Plane,
"The Lady"

An Open Letter from Our Historian

Another year has passed and my wishes are for an all-out wing-ding affair with laughter and happiness for all.

Happiness to meet your buddies, the old and the new, with families and friends to reminisce about your experiences and adventures as you remembered them.

It appears that our book continues to sell. Books A Million, a large book store in my area, bought *The History and This Is How It Was Stories*, sold out and now has brought a couple more. On E-Mail I have received two requests as to how and where to purchase the book.

Also, Warren Gorman who was with a replacement crew that flew in Life, sent me an advertisement from Paul Gaudette Books in Tucson, Arizona. They are selling the book for \$55 per copy.

Southern Heritage Press must have made another printing, so if you still want a copy, please call SHP at 1-813-823-1938. They do not have a toll free number anymore. The price would be \$39.95 plus \$3.50 shipping and handling. Florida residents pay a 7% sales tax. And remember *The History* and many other books are for free listening on audio for the blind and handicapped. Please contact your library for particulars.

The assignment that was given me to compile a list of our Journey's End personnel was completed with the help of all our reporters. It has been forwarded to Col. Ben Franklin, director of the 15th AF Association, for their records as requested.

That list numbered 368 but not included were the 154 personnel of the 831st Squadron that went down with the Liberty Ship U.S. Paul Hamilton on April 20, 1944. It was sunk by JU-88's torpedoes off the coast of Algiers.

Since sending the Journey's End list to Col. Franklin, I received a

very complimentary letter of thanks for our efforts. A copy will be posted on the bulletin board in our hospitality room.

Please remember them and all those who died in all the wars.

As I write this open letter, my intent is to continue collecting stories from our flying personnel; and hopefully to get stories from our wonderful ground crew as well. It is possible that a couple of the stories will be in the next LTC Newsletter.

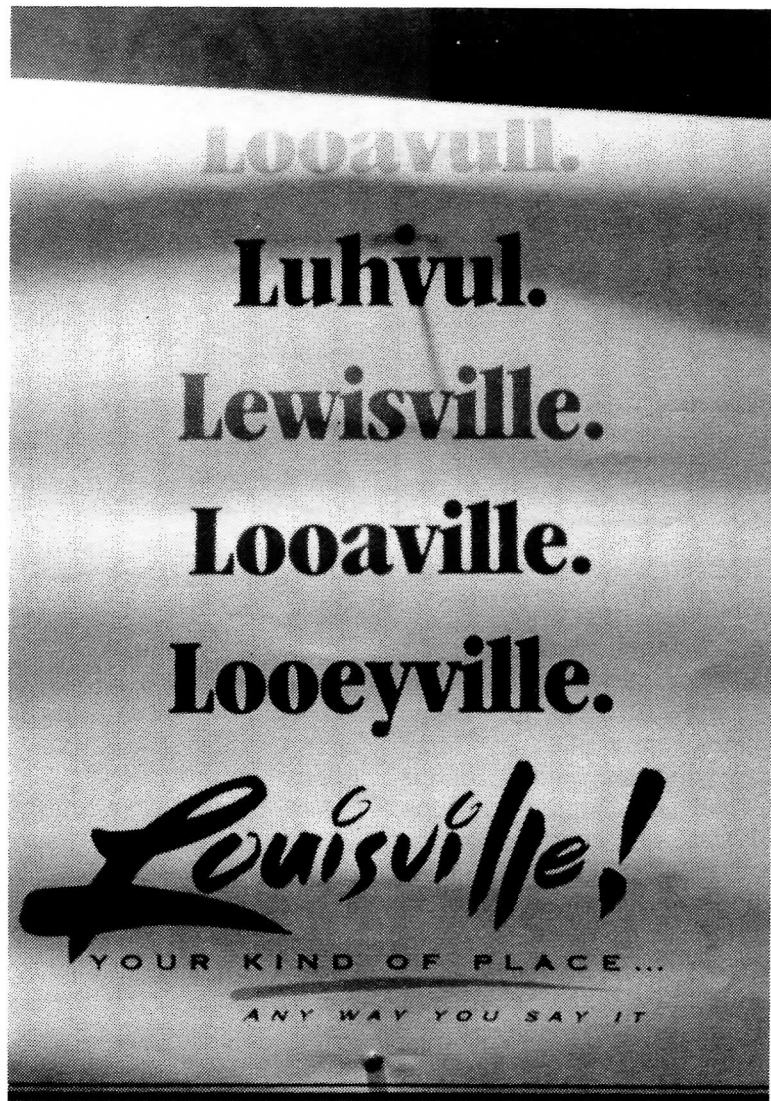
So far I have a number of stories from flying personnel. But I repeat, ground crew personnel should send me stories, also.

A couple of stories I received were from crew members that were shot down early in their flying careers. They never knew about the 485th organization and reunions until they heard about the book.

Unfortunately, the 485th did not have any money for a second book. As a result of the executive meeting, Bob Benson and the reporters had voted not to support a second book and understandably so.

And as I usually say: *That Is My Story For Today*. Best wishes always.

Sammy Schneider



The poster at the Dallas reunion, advertising the 1998 reunion in Louisville.

Death Claims Col. Douglas Cairns

The 485th lost one of its commanders on September 6 when retired Air Force Col. Douglas Moore Cairns, 86, died of a stroke.

Cairns was attending the Dallas reunion when he suffered a stroke and died.

He was the last wartime commander of the 485th. Born in New York City, he had lived in Redlands, Calif., since 1972.

He was a 1933 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., and a 1934 graduate of the Air Corps Advanced Flying School in Kelly Field, Texas.

From 1934 to 1941, he was a pilot with the 26th Attack Squadron in Wheeler Field, Hawaii, and the 4th Air Base Squadron and 19th Bombardment Group at March Field in Riverside, participating in the first mass flight of B-17s to Hawaii.

During World War II, his duties included ferrying bombers to the Royal Air Force and instructing RAF pilots. He also commanded Air

Transport Command stations in the Pacific and flew 22 combat sorties over Germany, Austria and northern Italy.

Following World War II, Cairns served as a member of the AAF Board on Military Awards and commanded the Basic Pilot Training Group at James Connally Air Force Base in Waco, Texas.

In 1951, he became a member of the United Nations Command Planning Group and had a part in the truce negotiations in Korea.

Later in the 1950s, he was assigned to the Pentagon, and from 1957 to 1960 he was assistant deputy inspector general for individual training and education at Norton Air Force Base.

Cairns retired from the Air Force in 1963 after serving as a member of the Research Studies Institute at Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., and as deputy director of the Aerospace Studies Institute.

His decorations include the

Legion of Merit with Oak Leaf Cluster, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Commendation Medal and Air Force Commendation Medal.

After retiring from the Air Force, he earned a master's degree in teaching and was a substitute math teacher in San Bernardino and Redlands secondary schools from 1965 to 1968. He also taught at San Bernardino State College the summers of 1967 and 1968, and taught math at a private school on Catalina Island from 1968 to 1970.

Survivors include his wife, Lillian Cairns of Redlands; two daughters, Julie Nerney of Garden Grove and Mimi Brooks of Vacaville, Calif.; his son, Robert Cairns of Lexington, Va.; his sister, Mary Tomlinson of Winter Park, Fla.; nine grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

MAIL ROOM

485TH BOMB GROUP HQ — Warren Sortomme



Dallas '97, celebrating the 485th's 33rd reunion; three of our past commanders, Walter E. "Pop" Arnold, John Cornett, Douglas M. Cairns, and our original deputy commander, William L. Herblin, were with us "Deep in the Heart of Texas."

Saturday morning, September 6, the celebration turned to sorrow with the sudden passing of our last combat commander, Col. Douglas M. Cairns, USAF-Ret. Doug, his wife, Lillian and members of their family attended many of our reunions. We will miss him. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Lillian and her family and a sincere invitation to continue attending our reunions.

Headquarters was also represented by Djeni Cornett, Kathryn Herblin, William and Hilda Angle, Robert and Dorothy Benson, Howard Cherry, Dr. M.S. Priver, Warren and Joyce Sortomme, Loyd and Evelyn Towers and their guests, Robert and Myrtle Brewer, from Austin, Texas. A good turnout, but I hope we can do better in Louisville.

I regret to inform you that Tony Annie, of Headquarters, completed his last mission in May of 1997. Tony was tailgunner on "Pop" Arnold's crew and was shot down with Pop and me on 27 August 1944. He survived his stay in Stalag-Luft 4 and the infamous death march across Germany with three of his surviving crew mates, Shirley "Hank" Hancock, William Killian, and Ben Long. Our heartfelt sympathies are extended to his wife Frances and family.

Many "Thank You's" to Earl Bundy for all of the dedicated years as chairman of the 485th BG. Earl should be able to enjoy life and reunions more now that our own Bob Benson has been elected to take the responsibilities of chairman.

Thank you's are also in order for Bob Benson and Dorothy for those devoted years as headquarters reporter and for accepting his new position in the group; also, I personally appreciate all of the help he has given me to take his place as your reporter.

Dallas was a great reunion, due to the planning and hard work of Sherill and Geraldine Burba and Marvin and Naomi Lindsay, our hosts. The Farmer's Market and "Herd on the Street" of Longhorn steers was Texas all the way — BIG! South Fork Ranch and Mesquite Rodeo were also Texas, as was DART rail transportation — seniors ride all day for a buck.

Food, entertainment, and accommodations at the Adam's Mark Hotel were first class and most of us met

lots of new people while waiting for and riding the elevators.

Our next reunion will be in Louisville, Kentucky, home of the Blue Grass, Churchill Downs and the Louisville Slugger baseball bats. From September 2-6, 1998 we can stay at the Galt House Hotel for \$68.00 a night and I am sure Don Readin, Al Martin will see that we have a wonderful time. You will receive a schedule and hotel information in the spring of '98. Hope you can be there.

Bob tells me there are expenses involved with this job like postage, phone calls, supplies and stuff. Many of us have given Bob an annual donation in the past, I ask you to give me the same financial support so we can keep the wheels of the 485th rolling. Thank you!

Stay healthy, wealthy (if possible) and wise to attend the reunion in Louisville. See you in September.

828TH BOMB SQDN —

Carl Mazzoni



This year's reunion at "Big D" ran the entire gamut of the emotional spectrum, from great joy to the most extreme sadness. It was very joyous greeting old friends and comrades and catching up with the news from all of them.

Sherill Burba and Geraldine, his wife, were our hosts and Marvin Lindsay and his wife, Naomi, were co-hosts. They did a tremendous job and made a memorable reunion of our "group." Their tours of Dallas and the surrounding area were great; including items of historical interest and fascinating trivia. We had a great time!

The saddest occurrence was when Col. Cairns became ill Friday afternoon and passed away Saturday morning. Our sincerest condolences to his wife and family. It seems most appropriate that this brave leader of men should die among the men he lead so valiantly in battle.

The 828th meeting was held Saturday afternoon. We had approximately 40 men at the reunion. Leona Schoultz passed cards around for us to sign for Karl Anderson. She delivered them to him.

I just got a Christmas card from him and he tells me he had a rough year. We are sorry to hear that, but hang in there, buddy, better days are sure to come, and we'll pray for that.

Tony Siller, our squadron artist, raffled off ceramic tiles of our squadron insignia and raised \$75 for our squadron fund. Tony also have ceramics to two POW and first timers who were at the reunion, as well as a special award to John De Russo. Thank you, Tony, ever so much for your superb efforts. They are appreciated.

Ed Nett, one of our favorite colonels, addressed the men, thanking them for their devotion and dedication to our squadron. It is we, Ed, who should thank you and men like you and Doug Cairns for your service to our country and to the men you led.

We have been informed that we are eligible for a World War II Greek medal. To get one, write:

Air Attache
Embassy of Greece
2228 Massachusetts Ave. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

Enclose a copy of discharge and D.D. 8.

That's it. See you in Louisville, Kentucky, Sept. 2-6, 1998.

829th BOMB SQDN. —

Joe Cathcart, Jr.



The Reunion in Dallas was a great success. Big "D" has a lot to offer in the way of attractions and Sherrill and Geraldine, aided and abetted by the 829th's own Marvin and Naomi Lindsay, surely knew how to show it off. I do believe that Sherrill knows everyone in Texas.

Texas is known for doing everything on grander scale than anywhere else. For example, you like fountains? In the grounds of one Dallas Office Building there are enough fountains to supply all the monuments in D.C.

You like statuary? In a tribute to the cattle industry there is a presentation of a full-scale cattle drive that has more statues of cattle than in all the rest of the free world, Dodge City included.

As usual, Martha and I squeezed in all of the activities that we possible could and enjoyed them all. We can report first hand that the arboretorium was impressive, the South Fork Ranch was just like TV and the Mesquite Rodeo was awesome for us uninitiated rodeo viewers.

Those who played golf had nothing but praise for the courses and the same tall tales we have learned to expect. Golfers have a lot in common with fishermen.

Many of us took the opportunity Thursday night to visit the West End. This is an old warehouse area which has been revamped into a trendy, loud and raucous restaurant and entertainment area, complete with street vendors and entertainers.

Great fun! We took the DART, a modern surface train that had a stop in front of our hotel and the West End as one destination. It was a splendid facility but the automated ticket machine was a little too high-tech for many of us. Not Betty Best who managed it from the first. After getting all of our party's tickets, she got them for the other 485th people who came up and finally for people we had never seen before. Dollar bills were being passed around like a floating crap game.

The Saturday meeting went through without a hitch with our new Chairman, Bob Benson, taking over from Earl Bundy, the previous meeting's minutes read by Bob Hanson subbing adequately for but not nearly as charming as his wife, Lynda, who was unable to come as a result of an injury which we all hope is now completely healed.

The Saturday evening banquet consisted of an excel-

lent meal and great music of our era provided by the big band sound of Hella Shrine Temple Nobles of Note. All of us like to get out on the floor for our favorite pieces, but no one matches the skill, diversity and stamina of Milton and Frances Fundling.

As another treat we were entertained by a square dance group who gave us an exhibition and some instruction. A part of this delightful group was the 829th's Slayton and Jo McGehee, long time participants of this group.

Earl Bundy and his new wife were again in attendance as was Barton Brown and his bride of a year attending for the first time. Hank and Virginia Dolim, from Honolulu, were also again in attendance and again came the farthest to attend although they no longer play that game. The 829th again had a good turnout, some of our regulars were unable to make it, but we had a few first timers and a few others who had not attended recently.

At the squadron meeting Earl Bundy was presented an inscribed leather travel case as a token of appreciation by the squadron for his many years service. The squadron meeting recognized newcomers and discussed the postage fund. I reported that due to the generosity of there squadron we had ample reserve for the time being. The fund is used by the reporters to pay their costs (mostly postage) and any surplus is sent to the general treasure of the 485th.

This, with funds returned by the reunion hosts, is used to publish the Lightweight Tower Calling. I did not receive as much in contributions as I had in the past and after transferring some monies to headquarters and some to repay Earl Bundy's past expenses our balance is a little lower than I would like going into the heavy expense period of 1998. I would welcome any donations and again heartfelt thanks to those who have already contributed.

During the year prior to the reunion considerable research into past records was conducted in order to update our Journey's End listing. This was reviewed at the squadron meeting and several additions made by those present. Our 1997 losses prior to the reunion were R. V. Burling, J. L. (Jelly) Jones and Robert N. O'Malley.

We were saddened when Kearney Weyand reported that he had gone by to see Al Peschka who had registered and had found him far too ill to attend. Sometime later Kearney called me in Nashville to inform me that Al had passed away. Al and Alvera you may remember best as the gracious host and hostess of our reunion in Austin a few years ago.

After returning to Nashville, in a short period of time, I was informed of not only Al's death, but Ralph Alley's death and Don Roehn's death. Mary Roehn called and told me that Don (who incidently was the bombardier on my crew) suffered a heart attack over the Atlantic on a return flight from Europe and never recovered although flight was diverted to the nearest landfall.

While on this subject, I would like again to urge everyone to make an effort to attend the reunion next year in

Louisville. The years are adding up fast for all of us and your failure to attend will not only lessen your chance of visiting old comrades, but might also deprive them from seeing you once more.

Although I am sure that this sorrowful event will be treated more fully, I feel that I would be remiss if I did not comment on the death of Colonel Doug Carnes at the reunion. This is a great loss to the 829th as it is to the entire group. All except a few flying crew members served under Doug's command.

I was one of the few who did not have the privilege of serving under Doug, but had grown to know him as well as Lillian and the rest of his family through their attendance and support of the 485th's group activities. I doubt if there was ever anyone who exemplified the appellation of an "Officer and a Gentleman" any more than he. He will be sorely missed.

Sunday morning, the reunion came to a close with our annual Memorial Breakfast. Sherill had arranged a truly ecumenical event with Protestant, Catholic and Jewish participation. This I think is always the high point of the reunion. It was done in excellent taste, was well received and, particularly in light of recent events, a most meaningful ceremony.

Best wishes for a wonderful 1998 that includes a visit to Louisville in September.

(After the submission of the 829th Mail Room write-up, it was learned that Slayton McGehee died in a Dallas Hospital the night of December 16, 1997. His passing will leave a great void in the lives of his crew members and all his friends in the 829th.)

830TH BOMB SQDN —

Chester Konkolewski



Since I was not able to be present at the Dallas reunion, I needed to find someone to make out this report. I contacted George Dyer. He agreed and would do his best.

We checked in at the registration desk, picked up the packets, headed for the hospitality room, greeted all our friends, spent sometime there, and then headed for our room.

We did not participate in the golf activities, but a great number did. The golfers had a great time.

We did not attend the Dallas Arboretum, visit the John F. Kennedy museum, or browse the West End District. On Friday the group boarded the busses for a trip to the South Fork Ranch of the famous Dallas TV Series. During this trip, the tour guide pointed out many interesting places.

The tour of the South Fork Ranch showed the rooms, many pictures on the walls, the furnishings and fabulous decorations. To most of us in attendance it was exciting to see the bedroom where 'JR' slept.

Every one was impressed on the layout of the grounds,

horse barns, and how well it was kept.

From South Fork we drove to Allen, Texas for lunch at the Brazos Cattle Co., where we had a good taste of Texas Barbecued Mesquite Beef. It was most delicious and everyone liked it.

The local newspaper had a nice writeup: "Friendships forged in battle renewed (headline). The 168 members of the group, part of the 15th Air Force, met in Dallas for an update of life's changes and a remembrance of war days."

Friday evening, we boarded busses to attend the Rodeo in Mesquite. Filled with excitement, it was just great! A prestigious tribute was extended to our group, we were recognized on TNN-TV: our 485th Banner was also in the grand entry into the arena.

In the morning session on Saturday, each squadron held its meeting. Bill DeVore who flew "Buzz Job" opened with a prayer. While we were conversing, contributions were taken, and a nice sum was collected for the LWT mailing.

In the afternoon, the general membership meeting took place.

After Sunday morning breakfast, a memorial service took place. After the service, most of the attendees stayed to say a few good bye's, wish each other well and then departed for home.

Thank you, George.

I wish to thank the following for their contributions to the LWT fund: Robert Plaister, Ted and Rose Lipinski, Bob and Donna Samuels, Clarence and Ruth Miller, Roy and Mildred Tempinski, LeRoy Sanders, Frank Hammett, Herbert and Betty Muehlemann, Bill and Betty Cummings, and Steve and Jean Paynic. Thanks for all those wonderful Christmas wishes and wishing me well.

I do hope this year will be much kinder. I wish you all the best and may the good Lord be with you always.

Bob Easery is having some leg problems and says he needs just too many pills.

Likewise with our Buddy, Bob Samuels, who is also suffering with leg problems. He needs to depend on crutches at times. Like he says, it's hell getting old.

Jack Snipes recently became a widower and had relocated from Atlanta to North Carolina. Lynda Hanson is still slowly recovering from her accident from a few months back. We wish her the best.

John Strang is staying active with the North Coast Vintage Aviation Society in California. He and Mickey took a trip to Jolly Oled England.

Francis and Mary Tunstall moved into a retirement community. Fran said there are not as many vets here as compared with where they lived before. Fran has a bad case of emphysema and needs much care — best wishes.

Father time took its toll on the following: Francis (Frank) Ward: Nov. 17, 1995; Mary Sanborn, Janet Raidel, Evelyn Hansen, Carl Sterba: Apr. 6, 1996; Eugene (Gene) Tolle: Mar. 9, 1997; John McDermott UNK, C. J. Kozak: July 31, 1996.

831ST BOMB SQDN —

Lynn Cotterman



I want to add my congratulations to Sherrill, Marvin and their wives for a successful reunion. We had a great time visiting with our friends and touring the city of Dallas.

I had no trouble driving to Dallas from Albuquerque, but driving in downtown Dallas is something else. When I arrived I saw the huge "Adam's Mark" sign on the top of the hotel, but all the streets were "one way" leading away from there. Frank Nardi also had some trouble with a "one way street" and he has the ticket to prove it.

I think the city was trying to confuse the drivers to promote their new train system and riding the train is a good way to get around the city. It sure beats driving, especially after an evening at the "West End." One of the routes is named Ledbetter; I wondered if they consulted Jesse about using his name.

Zeke and I went looking for gifts for the grand kids. We ended up at a shopping mall a few miles north of the city. They say Texans try to build the biggest and this mall is like a small city. It's so spread out that we had to drive from store to store.

We wish Lynda Hanson a speedy recovery from her injury. Actually I thought I would see Bob Hanson wearing a neck brace instead of Lynda. Last Spring Bob celebrated his 75th birthday in a unique way. Bob and two of his children have birthdays close to the same time. His offspring talked Bob into celebrating their birthdays by making a sky dive. All three made the jump over Florida and had the dive caught on film. Bob also made a sky dive on his 70th birthday, but he is not making any promises for his 80th one.

Woody Woodyard called in the Spring to tell me that Harold Dundon had died in February. Bill Brokaw said that Dr. James Johnson, our Flight Surgeon, passed away in March after a bout with leukemia.

We were glad to see his wife, Judy, at the reunion. David Blood's wife, Faye, also attended the reunion. David passed away in 1990, but it hadn't been recorded. A letter was returned to me in April with a note that John Szabo had died. John Breen wrote that his cousin Jim Hourihan, bombardier on Joe Hasulak's crew, passed away. Robert Dietrich told me that James Maetzold, copilot on Al Kaufman's crew died in July. Also I received letters telling of the passing of Francis Winner, Paul Linse, Edwin Siliba, Harry Stein and Norris Pannill.

We have two newcomers and one is a first timer. Bob Rector found his crew's navigator, Sam Giaimo. Sam attended the reunion for the first time. Sammy Schneider gave me the address of Jim Beck from Wichita who I understand is a vet from the 831st. I don't have any more information about Jim yet.

I'm looking forward to seeing you in Louisville, the home of the Kentucky Derby.