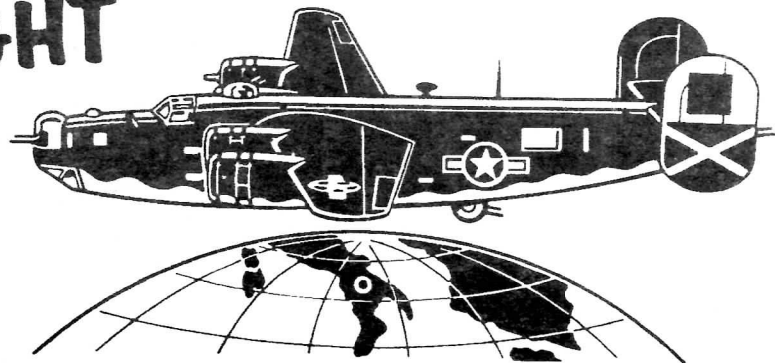


LIGHTWEIGHT TOWER CALLING



No. 36

MARCH 2002

485th Bomb Group Reunion in 2002 Reno, Nevada

Our next reunion will be held in Reno, Nevada, September 9 – 13, 2002. Room rates are sky-high on the weekends which is the reason for scheduling our reunion during the week.

Our headquarters will be at the Silver Legacy and the rate will be \$72.00 per night plus tax, which at the current level will be a total of \$80.64.

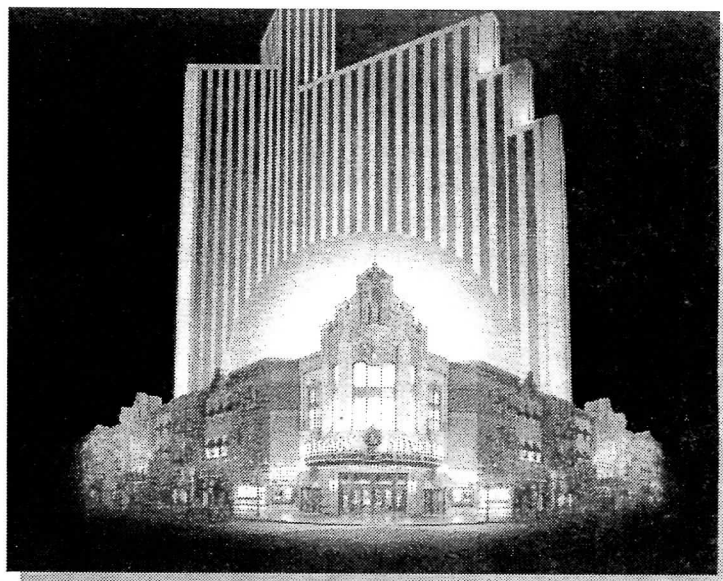
For your entertainment several trips are being planned, such as a tour of Carson City, Nevada's state capital, and Virginia City, a thriving ghost town. On another trip, we'll take a driving tour along the rim of Lake Tahoe, with a stop at the Ponderosa Ranch, location for much of the Bonanza TV series.

Still another event will be at the National Automobile Museum where, also, we'll enjoy a delicious dinner.

Complete details covering this reunion will be furnished in a separate mailing. This should be another fun reunion, so please mark your calendar now and plan on attending.

See you in Reno in September.

Bob Benson



-IMPORTANT NOTICE OF DATES- FOR BALLOON RACE AND AIR RACES

In contacting Reno convention office on February 13, 2002, the following dates are in effect — Balloon races are running from September 6 - 8 — and National championship air races are September 12 - 15, 2002. These two events attract people from all over the country and large crowds are expected. Our 485th reunion starts on Monday, September 9, and ends at noon Friday, September 13. Early reservation to our reunion will be a *must* this year, and to those planning on attending either of the two races (either before or after our 485th reunion) should plan on higher hotel rates for both weekends, and will be responsible for making their reservations for both of above events. Rates for Friday and Saturday nights are \$109.00 plus tax. For Reservations call: Group Reservations Department at Silver Legacy, 1-800-687-8733. Request Group Code 485Bomb.

In Memoriam

Walter E. "Pop" Arnold

August 15, 1913
February 22, 2002

2nd Day of Infamy . . . New York City

September 11, 2001

. . . Do We Want to Go Back to Normal? . . .

Four thousand gathered for mid-day prayer in a downtown cathedral. A New York city church, filled and emptied six times last Tuesday. The owner of a Manhattan tennis shoe store threw open his doors and gave running shoes to those fleeing the towers. People stood in lines to give blood, in hospitals to treat the sick, in sanctuaries to pray for the wounded.

America was different this week. We wept for people we did not know. We sent money to families we've never seen. Talk show hosts read Scriptures, journalists printed prayers. Our focus shifted from fashion hemlines and box scores to orphans and widows and the future of the world.

We were different this week.

Republicans stood next to Democrats. Catholics prayed with Jews. Skin color was covered by the ash of burning towers. This is a different country than it was a week ago.

We're not as self-centered as we were. We're not as self-reliant as we were. Hands are out. Knees are bent. This is not normal. And I have to ask the question, "Do we want to go back to normal?"

Are we being given a glimpse of a new way of life? Are we, as a nation, being reminded that the enemy is not each other and the power is not in ourselves and the future is not in our bank accounts?

Could this unselfish prayerfulness be the way God intended for us to live all along? Maybe this, in His eyes, is

the way we are called to live. And, perhaps the best response to this tragedy is to refuse to go back to normal.

Perhaps the best response is to follow the example of Tom Burnet. He was a passenger of flight 93. Minutes before the plane crashed in the fields of Pennsylvania he reached his wife by cell phone. "We're all going to die," he told her, "but there are three of us who are going to do something about this plane."

We can do something about it as well. We can resolve to care more. We can resolve to pray more. And we can resolve that, God being our helper, we'll never go back to normal again!

-by Max Lucado

Missing in Action!

The 485th Bomb Group Banner and the folding plaque listing reunions are both missing. The

last reunion they were seen was in St.

Louis, MO, in 2000. No reward, but we would

sure like to have them back to display in Reno. If

anyone can help, please call Bob Benson or Bob Hanson. Their phone numbers are listed in this publication.



Thank You!

THE GREAT RENO BALLOON RACE

The nation's top 120 balloonists vie for cash and prizes in three events. The popular Dawn Patrol offers a stunning light show and is followed by a mass ascension of all balloons.

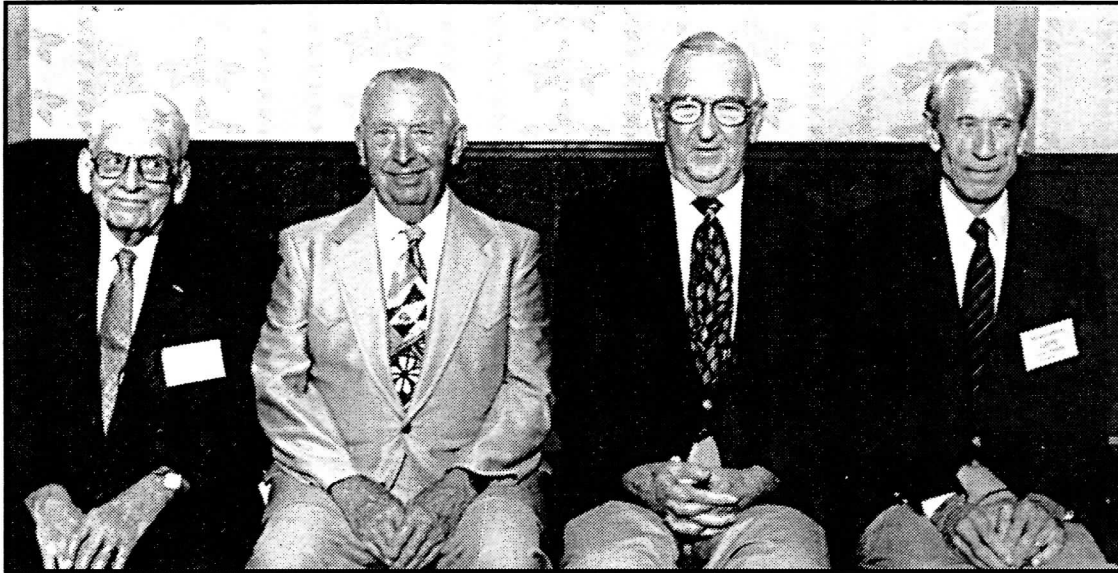
Rancho San Rafael Park, Reno. (775) 826-1181

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP AIR RACES

The world's longest-running air races is the only worldwide event which features all four race classes: Unlimited, Formula One, AT-6, and Biplanes. Military jet displays, aerobatics and skywriters also appear.

Reno/Stead Airport (775) 972-6663 or airrace.org

HEADQUARTERS



Left to Right:

B. Benson,
W. Sortomme
W. McKinney
L. Towers

2ND & 3RD GENERATIONS



Left to right: First Row: Sheri Bridges, Daniel Bridges, Carol Whitesel, Beverly Biggi, Bernice Willenburck, Carol Harrison, Anna Pantek, Theresa Kujawa, Michell Teltay

Second Row: Donald Bridges, Dennis Sites, Lt. Col. (R) Wm. Oberholtzer, David Cummings, Martin Cameron, Clayton Cameron, Anthony Kujawa, Hank Willenbruck, Paul Pelton

Third Row: Al Tunstall, Jayne St. Marie, Wm. Cameron, Kay Cameron-Conner, Steve Conner, James Cameron

828TH SQUADRON



Left to Right: Row 1: W. Whitaker, W. Lancaster, C. Norris, S. Tanka, L. Busroe, H. Julin, J. Eden, G. Lahay, K. Wall
 Row 2: N. Montulli, A. Gilbert, T. Roemer, L. Sullivan, J. Morrone, G. Tuttle,
 B. Freeland, B. Blakely, M. Lydard, M. Hails
 Row 3: S. Burba, C. Taylor, D. Ermackodich, W. William, M. Sites, T. McDowell, J. DiRusso, W. Reid

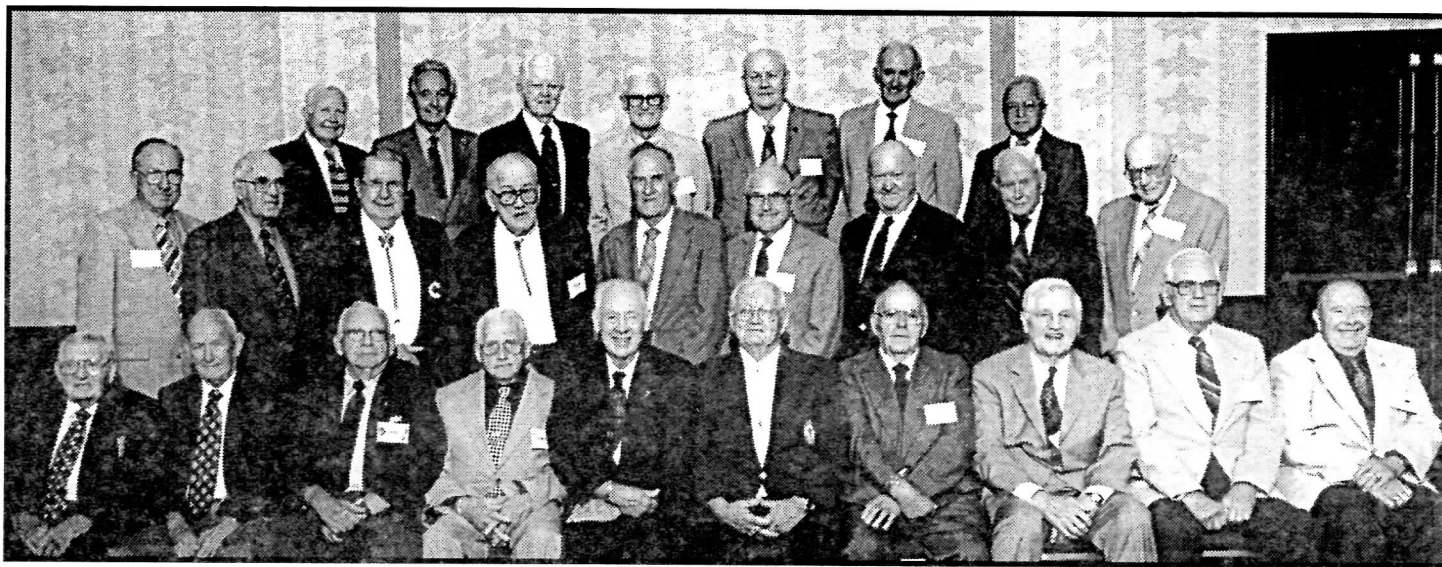


829TH SQUADRON



Left to right: Row 1: A. Martin, J. Behunin, I. Wolf, M. Lindsay, R. Brown, B. Brown, W. MacLean, C. Frye
 Row 2: M. Fundling, J. Hudson, A. Fowler, H. Johnson, R. Arthur,
 W. Smith, J. De Mauro, D. Whiteman

830TH SQUADRON



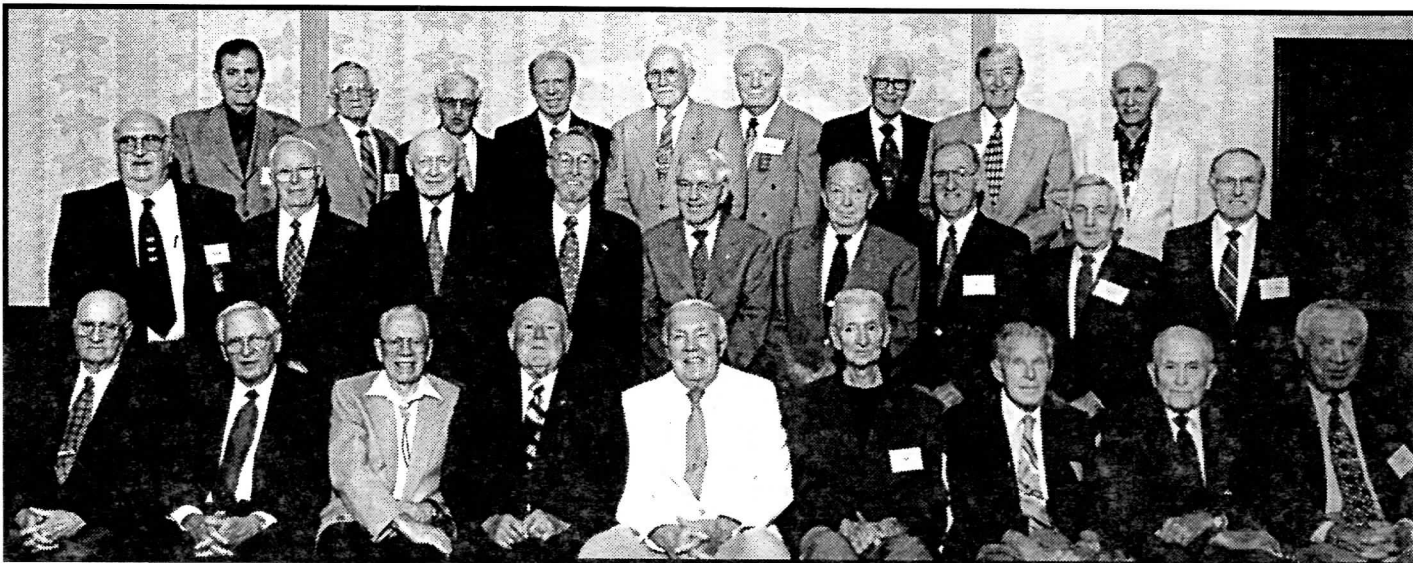
Left to Right: Row 1: T. Lipinski, E. Gunn, F. Caster, N. Garner, C. Miller, H. Oberholtzer,
H. Muehlemann, J. Kelly, R. Campbell, R. Leary

Row 2: C. Studaker, L. Rich, W. Gorman, H. Steigerwalt, W. Devore, T. Levin, W. Cummings, J. Hunter, W. Salter

Row 3: D. Landrum, L. Hoadley, W. Forrester, F. Tunstall, G. Dyer, A. Thompson, R. Baldwin



831ST SQUADRON



Left to Right: Row 1: L. Little, L. Cotterman, H. Dahlberg, D. Sjodin, R. Dietrich,
E. Burke, J. Nagle, H. Woodyard, F. Rubinstein

Row 2: G. Hess, H. Richards, J. Ledbetter, W. Brokaw, R. Conklin, W. Meyers, J. Bremer, J. Jackson, G. Bell

Row 3: F. Nardi, L. Gagne, S. Nenadich, R. Rector, J. Godfrey, G. Byrd, V. Lewis, R. Hanson, T. Tamraz

WIDOWS



Left to right:

Maxine Bulls, Lillian Cairns, Leona Schoultz, Mary Karns, Peg McCabe Fetton, Anna Reifer

POWs - MIAs



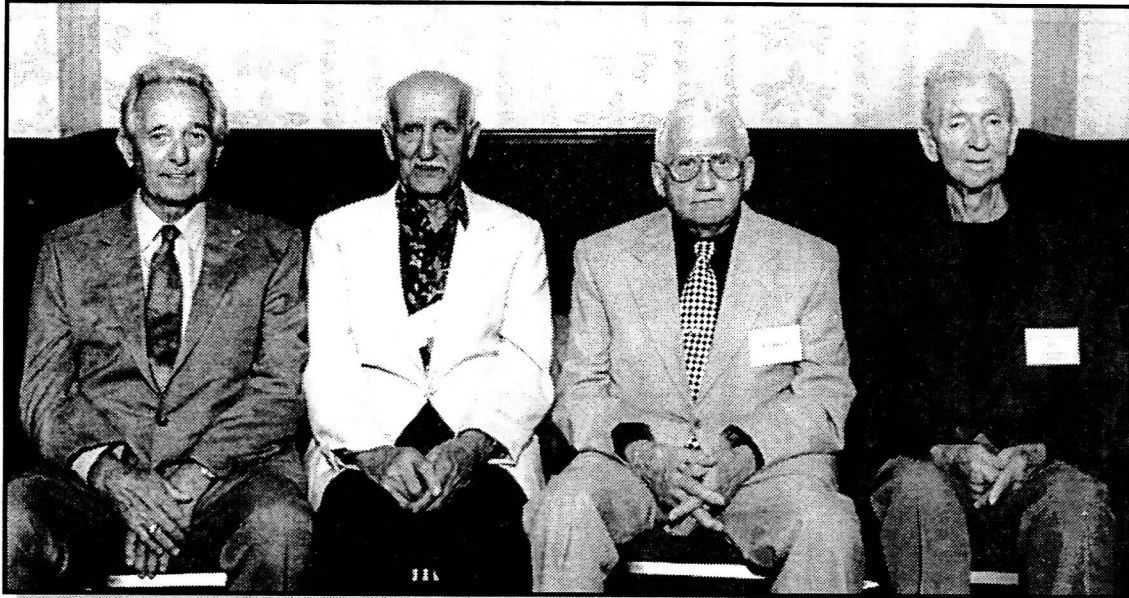
Left to right:

First Row: L. Little, L. Gagne, J. Godfrey, I. Wolf, T. Tamraz, M. Lindsay

Second Row: R. Rector, S. Nenadich, F. Nardi, W. MacLean, V. Lewis, W. Sortomme, H. Oberholtzer

Third Row: D. Landrum, L. Hoadley

1ST TIMERS



Left to Right:
L. Hoadley, T.
Tamraz, N. Garner, E.
Burke

15th Air Force Wall 485th Bomb Group Plaque – Your Tribute In Tile

Our 485th Bomb Group Plaque has been mounted on the 15th AF Wall at March Field in Riverside, CA and the individual tiles and the 485th insignia tile have been set on the pavement in front of the plaque.

Nineteen personal tiles have been set as of this writing (December 2001); 6 from headquarters; Arnold, Cairns, Cornett, Huckeby, Sortomme, Towers; 10 from 828th; Akin, Anderson, Arnold, Brown, Carlson, Choate, Monroe, Nett, Sims, Trinche; 2 from 829th; Carlson, Shelor; 0 from 830th; 1 from 831st; Cotterman.

Crew chief Jess Atkin, 828th, donated four tiles to honor some of his fellow crew chiefs in the 828th. More tiles can be set with the present group. If interested I will be happy to submit your application.

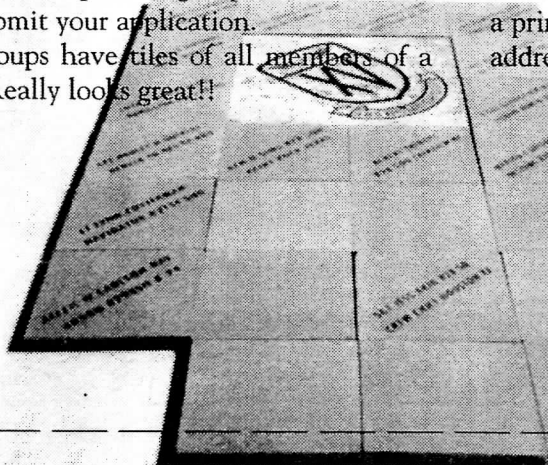
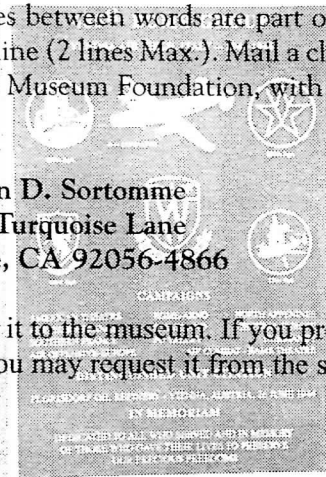
Some bomb groups have tiles of all members of a crew set together. Really looks great!!

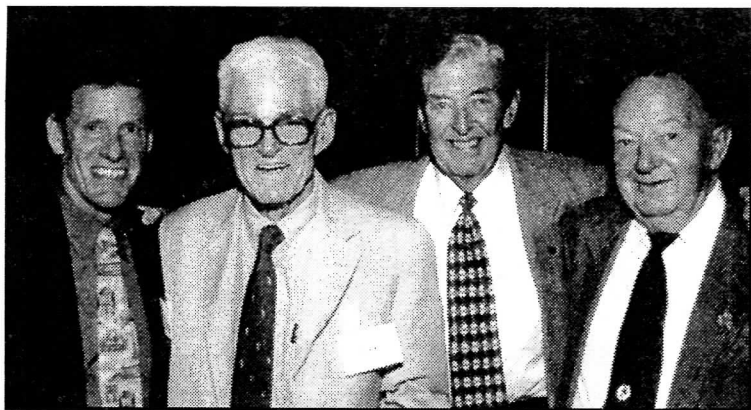
Cost for a personal tile is \$35.00 for 20 spaces on one line and \$50.00 for two lines of 20 spaces each.

To apply, please print in upper case block letters, noting that blank spaces between words are part of the 20 spaces available per line (2 lines Max.). Mail a check, payable to March Field Museum Foundation, with your printed request to:

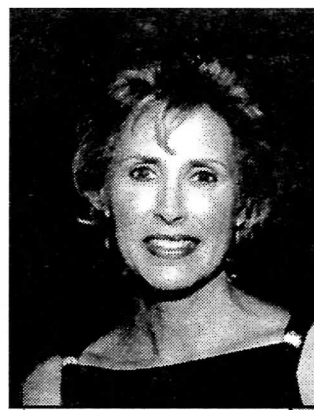
Warren D. Sortomme
3490 Turquoise Lane
Oceanside, CA 92056-4866

I will record it and sent it to the museum. If you prefer a printed application, you may request it from the same address.





↑ Al and Dad Fran Tunstall, Bob Hanson, Warren Meyers



↑ Jo Haden Galbraith



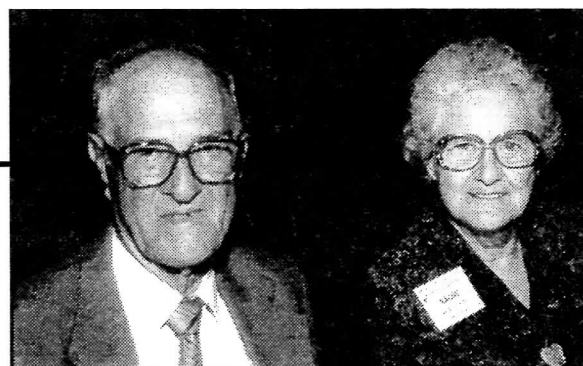
Howard Woodyard—one of the original founders ↑
of the reunions for the 485th—He, and his late
wife, Marguerite were the 831st squadron
reporters and tireless, hard workers! We ALL
owe a debt of gratitude to Woody.

PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS

2001



↑ Art & Fran Fowler
with ladies from
Living History Show



↑ Bill & Naomi DeVore—830th Squadron



↑ Martin & Gloria Lydard with the Little Maids of History



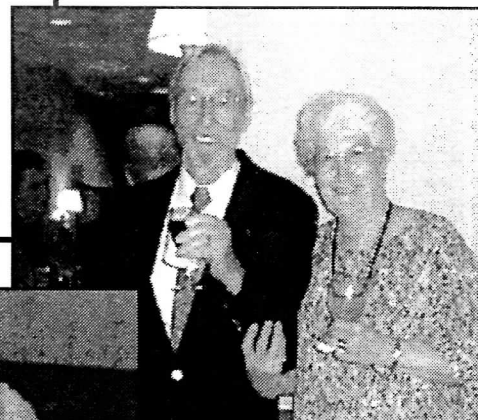
← Harry "Slim" Steigerwalt—830th Squadron—1st Timer



Jack Eden
Joe Morrone
Harold Julin
Stan & Mrs. Tanka
- Jack Eden (Crew #6)-828th

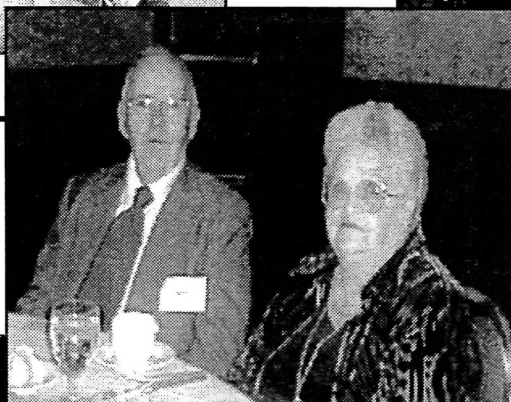


Jack Bremer &
John Jackson
- 831st Squadron



↑ Bill & JoAnne Brokaw

Herb & Betty Muehlemann ⇒



↓ Newlyweds!
Icie & Al Martin



Clarence "Deacon" &
Ruth Miller ↑
- 830th Squadron



↑ Bob & Lynda Hanson • Jack Bremer • John Jackson • Glenn & Mary Bell • Warren Meyers
- Bachelor's Roost Crew-831st Squadron

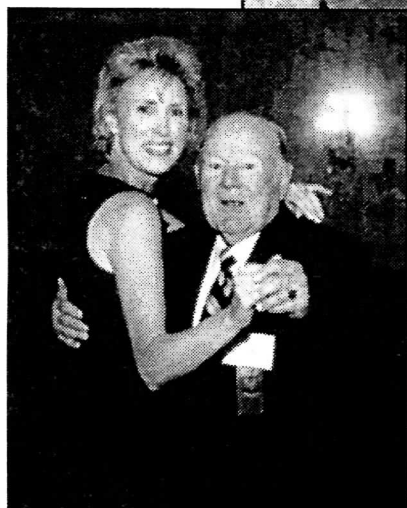
⇒
Ken & Helen Wall
with daughter &
granddaughter



↑↑ Bill & Zola Williams



↑ Loyd & Evelyn Towers



↑↑ Jo Haden Galbraith
& Dan Sjodin



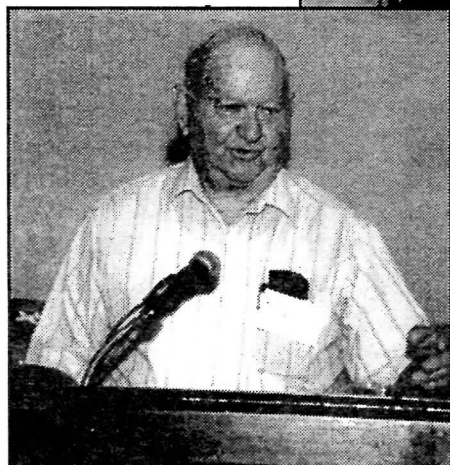
↑ Warren & Joyce Sortomme



⇐ Zola Williams at Memoial Breakfast



↓↓ Bill Cummings
-830th Squadron

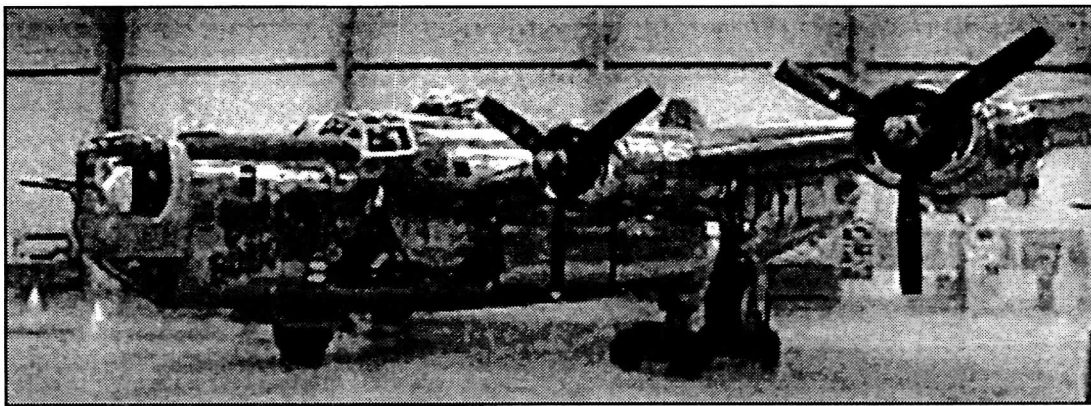


⇒ Rev. Don Whiteman
at Memorial Breakfast



⇐
Lynda & Bob Hanson
receiving plaques
Bob Benson & Lynn
Cotterman making the
presentation

MORE
PHOTOS
2001



- Arizona Aerospace Foundation B-24 donated by Republic of India -

CONSOLIDATED B-24J LIBERATOR

TECHNICAL DATA

After its first prototype flew on December 29, 1939, the B-24 went on to become one of the most famous United States heavy bombers of WWII. It first entered combat on June of 1941. Thereafter it saw action in all theatres of the war. It represented the modern technology of its day with its highly efficient Davis wing and sliding (instead of hinged) bomb bay doors plus numerous improvements made during the war years.

The Navy used many Liberators for anti-submarine duties. These carried the designation, PBAY-1. Later in the war the Navy flew its own variant of the original design, the Privateer, that had a lengthened fuselage and a tall single tail fin and rudder.

More B-24's were produced than any other American plane during the war. Ironically, of the 18,000-plus built, only 12 remain today.

Type:	Long Range Heavy Bomber
Crew:	8-10
Engine(s):	4 Pratt & Whitney R-1830 radial engines of 1,200 HP each
Wing Span:	110 ft., 0 in.
Length:	67 ft., 2 in.
Height:	18 ft., 0 in.
Maximum Speed:	290 MPH
Cruising Speed:	180 MPH
Combat Radius:	N/A
Ferry Range:	2,100 miles
Service Ceiling:	28,000 feet
Armament:	Ten .50 cal. machine guns and 8,000 lbs. of bombs
Cost:	N/A

Christmas in Venosa . . . 1944

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the Group
The big wheels and wigs were grinding out poop.

The bombers were parked on their hardstands with care
Waiting for armament soon to be there.

The fliers were all nestled all snug in the beds
When out of the darkness there came quite a knock.

We cursed the OD and looked at the clock.
Briefing will be in two hours, he said.

Time marches on and the minutes fly by
So it's out of the sack and make with the flying.

We rush to the mess hall quick as a flash;
We ate cold powdered eggs and hideous hash.

Then a long bumpy ride to the Group briefing room
Where the big wigs preside and dish out our doom.

The target is told and the first six rows faint

For lo and behold! Vienna, it ain't!

The brain has slipped up, oh my poor aching back,
We're bombing a target that throws up no flak.

So, it's back to the truck and off to the line;
The road is now smooth and the weather is fine.

The crew is at stations, the check list is run,
The engines run smoothly as we give them the gun.

Then suddenly the pilot wails in despair.

Look at the tower, they just shot up a flare.

We dash to the window with a heart full of dread—

The pilot is right! The damn thing is red!

So, it's back to the sack and we sweat out our fate,

For there's a practice formation at a quarter past eight

- 485th BG Author Unknown

485TH GROUP REUNIONS

Another Great Reunion in Harrisburg

By Lynn Cotterman

The Old War Horses of the 485th Bomb Group met again September 6-9, 2001, for the 37th Annual Reunion. The gathering place was the Hilton Harrisburg and Towers in the center of downtown Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. I arrived Tuesday and parked my car in the hotel garage. There are many shops and restaurants within walking distant so I never used my car during the reunion.

Tuesday evening I walked down Second Street where there is a number of restaurants. I stopped in one of the local watering holes for a sandwich and a brew. There I saw some other early birds, Ken and Helen Wall who were having dinner with some of Ken's crewmen. Ken was on Tom McDowell's crew who was also there with Clem and Francis Norris, William and Alda Lancaster, their son, Webb, and his wife Sandy.

On Wednesday, the day that most vets arrive, I strolled down the enclosed arcade which connect the hotel to Strawberry Square where they are specialty shops and casual eateries (fast food). Mulligan's crew was already there eating lunch. Frank Nardi was excited because he found a cigar shop with a smoking room. We had a hard time getting him to leave so we could return to the hospitality room.

The first day in the hospitality room is one of the highlights of the reunion for me. We visit with friends that we haven't seen for a year and make new friends. Each year more of our offspring, friends and relatives are attending or I should say joining our family. They are a great addition to our social gathering.

Some States have strange liquor

laws and Pennsylvania is no exception. Bartenders are not allowed to collect for the refreshments. We were not aware of this strange law ahead of time. A basket was set on a table near the bar and everyone was on their honor to donate for the cocktails. This didn't work out to be the best system mainly because the method was not explained too well.

Thursday we were bused to Gettysburg where we toured the battle grounds and learned about the fighting technics during the Civil War. I think I would rather take my chances flying through flak rather than enduring point blank firing across an open field. Their bloody battles didn't last long, but the war did. We returned to the hotel and enjoyed an outstanding buffet dinner with entertainment.

Friday we boarded the bus for the town of Hershey and a tour of the Chocolate factory. I was surprised to learn that Mr. Hershey had several business failures before acquiring a fortune. Here is an example of a person who used his wealth wisely by helping others, helping the poor, creating jobs and giving to others.

The first Friday of each month the town of Harrisburg sponsors a block party. The street next to the hotel was blocked off and there were food venders and live entertainment. The patio of the hotel restaurant is next to the street and I joined Mulligan's crew on the patio. This ended another enjoyable day.

The group meeting was held Saturday morning with Bob Benson presiding. The minutes of the meeting are elsewhere in this publication. The squadron meetings followed the group meeting.

Saturday evening our photos were taken for posterity. The Vets scrubbed up pretty well for old geezers. This year a photo was taken of the second and third generations that attended. However, the notice didn't get circulated and several of the descendants missed the photo session. Then the banquet began with a scrumptious dinner followed by dancing.

As I left the banquet I heard some music coming from the street. Crossing the lobby I ran into Frank and Kitty Nardi's daughter, Barbara Mason, who was on her way up the street where another block party that was being held for the benefit of some local charity. Ah, for the energy of the youth.

On Sunday morning breakfast was served and the memorial service was held to honor our fallen comrades. This brought to close another successful gathering of the eagles. Now we are looking forward to our next mission in Reno, Nevada.

Our Country Will Prevail ...

Our country will prevail this time as it did when it was our turn. A feeling persists among us that may perhaps be explained by an email that crossed my desk recently from a correspondent in Australia. I quote: "You have never lived until you have almost died. For those who have fought for it, life has a special flavor the protected will never know."

Worth thinking about!

- excerpted from a letter
from Warren Gorman,
Arizona Liberator Group,

Veteran's Day in Branson

BY LYNN COTTERMAN

Each year the town of Branson holds one of the largest Veteran's Day celebrations in the country. This year the 15th Air Force and the Tuskegee Airmen were invited to be the guests of honor. The black squadron of Tuskegee Airmen flew P-51 fighter planes and escorted us (the B-24 and B-17 Bombers) on combat missions during the latter part of the WWII. Sometimes when returning from missions we would be low on fuel and land on their fighter strip to refuel. This is the only time we saw the men who escorted us on missions. The Tuskegee Airmen received very little recognition for their contribution to the war because of the segregation policies at that time. The Branson Veteran's Day committee thought that Veteran's Day would be a good time for a reunion between the two groups and also it would be opportunity to acknowledge the Tuskegee Airmen for their part in WWII.

The Tuskegee Airmen were well represented, but there didn't seem to be a large number of veterans from the 15th Air Force. The veterans from our Group got together for the dinners and activities, but otherwise we were on our own. At our table were Irene and Jack Godfrey, Bill and Jan Williams, Leo Gagne; his daughter, Michele Pelton and her husband, Paul; Jerry Whiting, son of Wayne; Jo Galbraith, daughter of Bob Haden, and her husband, Madison; Bob Hanson and myself.

The runway at the airport in Branson is not long enough to handle B-24's, but few smaller vintage planes were flown in from a museum in Florida. A P-51 buzzed the airport several times and rides were available in a AT-6. There were several other planes for inspection including a twin engine AT-10, the training plane in Navigation school. It had been restored and was in better shape than

were ones we flew in.

Branson, a small, friendly community, has exploded into a center for wholesome entertainment that is oriented to families. It's a fun place and has first class shows. since the town is located in the beautiful hills of southern Missouri, new roads and streets are difficult and expensive to construct so traffic is still bumper to bumper and sooo slow. The town was all dolled up for the Christmas Holidays and also had a patriotic theme. Since Lynda Hanson didn't make the trip, Bob and I hung out together. Some of the shows were sold out prior to 9/11, but because of cancellations we had no trouble purchasing tickets at the door.

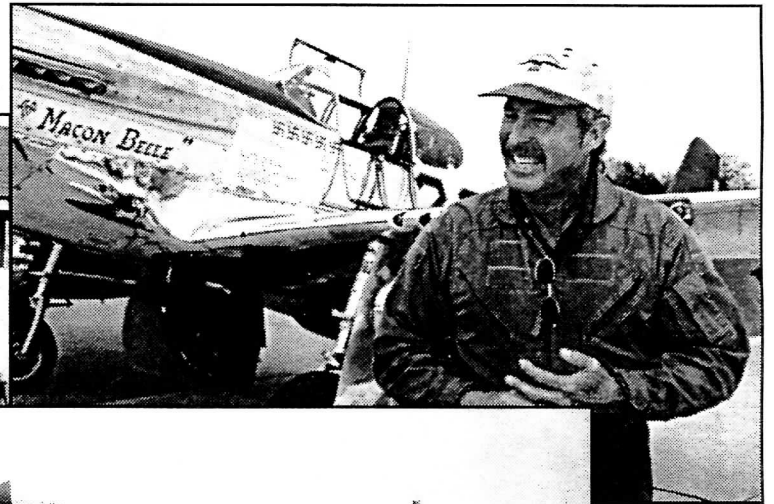
It was an interesting trip and we were glad to meet and talk with men from the fighter group that were our partners in WWII.



→
Kermit Weeks, Owner of fantasy of Flight, Polk City, FL
and his P51 he flew to Branson, MO for Veterans week



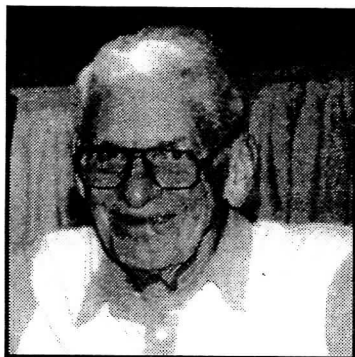
↑
Branson, MO, Veterans week: Lynn
Cotterman, Irene and Jack Godfrey, Leo Gagne
and daughter Michaela Pelton, Bob Hanson



←
Tuskegee
Airmen—
Buffalo
Soldiers and
15th Air Force
veterans at
Branson, MO
for Veterans
week



485TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP



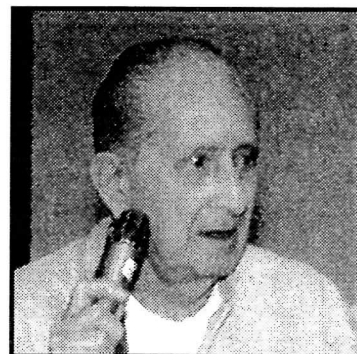
CHAIRMAN

Bob Benson
11002 N. May Ave. #211
Oklahoma City, OK 73120
(405) 752-2575



DEPUTY CHAIRMAN & LWT EDITOR

Bob Hanson
7300 Sun Island Dr. #1801
South Pasadena, FL 33707
E-mail-RVHSR@aol.com
(727) 360-2808



HISTORIAN

Sam Schneider
8271 S. Continental Divide Rd.
Littleton, CO 80128
E-mail-Sammytg_828@msn.com
(303) 933-3490



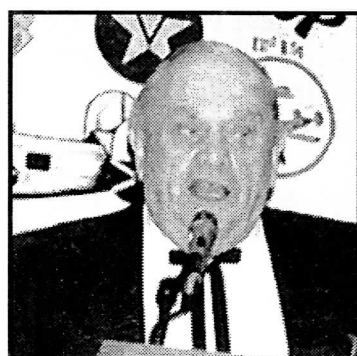
HEADQUARTERS REPORTER

Warren Sortomme
3490 Turquoise Lane
Oceanside, CA 92056
E-mail-Sortomme@dslextreme.com
(760) 945-8439



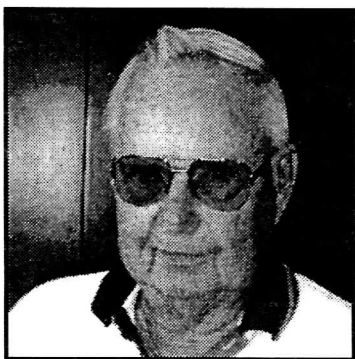
485TH SECRETARY

Lynda Hanson
7300 Sun Island Dr. #1801
South Pasadena, FL 33707
E-mail-RVHSR@aol.com
(727) 360-2808



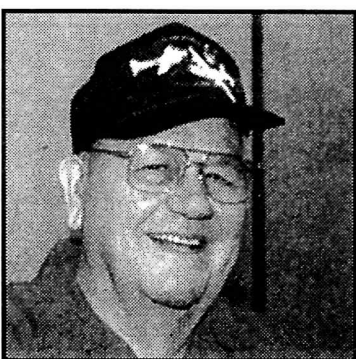
828TH SQUADRON REPORTER

Sherrill Burba
11314 Hillcrest
Dallas, TX 75320
(214) 361-1383



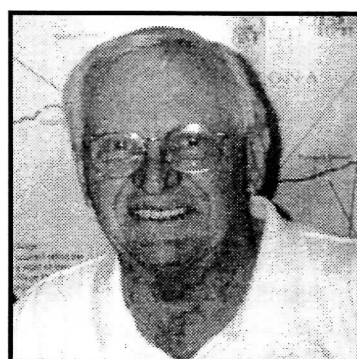
829TH SQUADRON REPORTER

Marvin H. Lindsay
3900 Cimmaron Tr.
Granbury, TX 76049-5251
E-mail-mhlindsay@itexas.net
(817) 326-4010



830TH SQUADRON REPORTER

George Dyer
1920 So. Columbus
Stuttgart, AK 72160
(501) 673-1044



831ST SQUADRON REPORTER/TREASURER

Lynn Cotterman
6425 Dorado Beach, N.E.
Albuquerque, NM 87111
E-mail-Lyncott@juno.com
(505) 823-2283

MAILROOM - HEADQUARTERS

BY WARREN D. SORTOMME

Again, our numbers were few at Harrisburg, PA, but we sure had a good time. One more time, Bob & Dorothy Benson and the Armed Forces Reunion made it possible for all the veterans, ladies and guest to enjoy themselves by doing wonderful preparation work and completion of all their tasks.

In addition to the Bensons, headquarters was represented in the Pennsylvania Capitol by Walter & Barbara McKinney, Warren & Joyce Sortomme, Loyd & Evelyn Towers and Lillian Cairns and her family; Robert & Terry Cairns and David & Mini Brooks.

Thanks to the Cairns Clan, one and all, we were treated to the history and proper way of folding the U.S. Flag during a ceremony at breakfast Sunday morning.

Many of our members were unable to make the trip for this reunion because of health, long distance to travel or previous commitments. Pop Arnold has a difficult time making connections from Colorado Springs to the east coast and he had to close his Wyoming ranch before winter.

Bill Angle was sorry not to attend, he is still interested in the group and sends greetings to the old gang as he turned 86 last September.

Joyce and I hoped again to visit Hank & Althea Hancock during our trip to Yellowstone National Park, but a bout with food poisoning made it necessary to change our plans. Having plenty of extra "Reunion Glasses" at our disposal after the reunion, we were able to obtain three glasses for them, one for each of their sons. There should be more comments about the

"Glasses" in this edition of the LWT.

The 485th Bomb Group Plaque has been mounted on the 15th AF Wall at March Field in Riverside, CA and the individual tiles have been set on the pavement in front of the plaque. The plaque really looks great as do the tiles and the large 485th insignia tile. Headquarters has six tiles so far, they are Walter E. Arnold; Douglas M. Cairns; John B. Cornett; Richard M. Huckleby; Warren D. Sortomme; Loyd F. Towers; at this time there is still room for more tiles to be set with this group. If interested, let me know your intentions.

Until we meet in Reno, NV or next years LWT, stay healthy and remember your help for keeping our organization in good financial condition is most appreciated.

Hershey, Pennsylvania ————— "The Sweetest Place on Earth"

How sweet it is!! "Sugar-cocoa Butter-milk-lots of TLC" was the recipe to make "Chocolate town, U.S.A." or AKA Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Hershey, population 11,900 and located in the rich Lebanon Valley of Pennsylvania was founded by Milton S. Hershey in 1903. The aroma of chocolate and seeing street lights made as giant Hershey Kisses makes you realize you are in the city that grew from a dream of a shrewd and determined businessman. Memories of being a poor boy influenced him on decisions he make during his life, especially that of founding a school for needy children.

Within the city are found many of Mr. Hershey's dreams; Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, part of the Pennsylvania State University Geisinger Health System. The 550-acre campus includes the hospital, several research buildings, outpatient and fitness centers. A 23-acre Hershey Botanical Gardens; Hershey Museum, giving the highlights of Mr. Hershey's life, the development of his chocolate empire and local history; Hershey Park has more than 60 rides, including eight roller coasters, 24 children rides and entertainment to keep you busy all day; 11-acre ZooAmerica-North American Wildlife Park, a zoo of more than 200 animals.

Under construction and soon to be opened, Giant Center, a 300,000 sq. ft. building with 10,500 fixed seats and a capacity of 12,500 including 40 suites and 688 club seats. This will be the new home of the Hershey Bears Hockey Team as well as numerous sporting events.

The Hotel Hershey, high atop 300 panoramic acres with 235 rooms within a classic Mediterranean designed structure that was built during the Great Depression as part of Mr. Hershey's "Great Building Campaign."

"Chocolate World" is the official visitor center of the Hershey Food Corp. and home of one of the largest chocolate and cocoa plants in the world. An automated tour ride explains the chocolate-making process from cocoa bean to the finished product. A free sample chocolate bar ended the tour and after a nice lunch there was time to purchase every type of Hershey Goodies.

Hershey Industrial School, founded in 1909 by Milton and Catherine Hershey, after they had realized great success in their chocolate business, as an Industrial School for boys to learn a trade and develop into responsible adults. When they founded the School, the Hersheys could not have imagined the impact their generosity would have on the thousands of children in need.

After the premature death of Mrs. Hershey in 1915, the Deed of Trust that spelled out the criteria for enrollment put into place financial provisions to ensure the School's mission to perpetuity. Now called Milton Hershey School, it is the largest shareholder of the Hershey Foods corporation.

As we toured Founders Hall, a building in tribute to Milton and Catherine Hershey, the beauty of the chapel/auditorium and the rotunda was a sight to be seen. Today the School serves more than 1,200 students between the ages of 4 and 15 who meet the financial, social, and educational requirements. Each student is provided food, housing, clothing, books, medical/health care, dental services and the finest rounded education at no cost to them or their family. Following graduation from the 12th grade, students have the opportunity to attend the college or university of their choice, the cost paid by the Milton Hershey School.

Myths about chocolate, whatever they may be, remember buying Hershey Bars, even with almonds, helps to support the children in the Milton Hershey School. Can you think of a better reason for eating a chocolate bar?

MAILROOM 828TH SQUADRON

BY SHERRILL BURBA

I was asked to write about the Sunday morning memorial breakfast for this years Lightweight Tower, and this was our 14th annual breakfast honoring our deceased, held on September 9th, 2001. It was well attended with about 96% of attendees being present. This breakfast started in 1988 at the reunion in St. Pete Beach, Florida and has become a part of each reunion that all enjoy as a fitting way to end each gathering.

The flag folding ceremony, conducted by Lillian Cairns family including her son and son in law was extremely well done and was very impressive. The Cairns family have 107 years of military service and still counting. My family's 58 year of service seems small in comparison.

Al Martin did his usual excellent job of singing solo and being our song leader.

Rev. Donald R. Whitmen, a Baptist minister as well as being a pilot in the 485th, delivered his usual stirring message.

I appreciate all the help received during the services and especially the participation of the ladies. We have made a few changes down through the years and may make more if requested.

If there is anyone in the 485th that can play a piano enough to perform on Sunday morning — you will be drafted!

Most people took their memorial breakfast program home with them.

I am hoping to be in Reno in September 2002 and shall look forward to seeing you there.

This is a report of the 828th meeting which was held immediately following the regular 485th business meeting on Saturday morning September 8th, 2001.

The 828th had 31 veterans present plus 4 second generation visitors.

We were saddened by the death of our beloved commander, Col. Ed Nett. Ed was buried at Arlington National Cemetery. He flew 55

missions and was promoted to Lt. Colonel at age 25.

At the squadron meeting, all members present stood and gave their names, their jobs in the 828th and various interesting and funny comments.

A collection was taken and the good guys came through with the amount of \$221.00. This leaves a balance of \$1017.54 in the 828th records with no outstanding bills.

During the year, we learned of the passing of Benjamin Clark in May 2001 — Ray Ebersole in 2000 — Russell Genage in 1995 — Ray Trautman in 2001 — Ed Nett on June 25, 2000. Our sympathy goes to the families of these men.

I was re-elected squadron reporter for the coming year and will continue to do my best to serve the 828th. The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

May you all enjoy good health and join your comrades in Reno, Nevada, in 2002.

MAILROOM 829TH SQUADRON

BY MARVIN LINDSAY

January 2, 2002

It is my pleasure to report on the Thursday evening entertainment September 6, 2001.

Our compliments to the Harrisburg Hilton Chef's for a beautiful and tasty buffet, with choices of beef, chicken, and grilled salmon with all the trimmings ending with an entire table of decadent deserts including the area specialty of "Shoo Fly Pie."

We were then entertained by the "Little Maids of History," Bonnie Fairbanks and Pat Sowers. They are

performing artists who have appeared in such prestigious places the The Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, The State Dept., The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and many more.

They appear in a broad range of roles as historical personages, some authentic and some imaginary.

They took us back in time with costumes, conversations and antics. With the help, aid and assistance of some of our 485th "Eagles," some gray and some bald, demonstrating such common tasks as lacing of one's "Bustle" with the aid of an assistant

(one of our eagles) placing a foot on the back of the lady for leverage to pull the strings tight and thus reduce the size of the lady's waist.

Then by costumes, actions, and dialog, they demonstrated some do's and don'ts of courtship, proper conversation, and other requirements, of being a "Lady."

On a serious note they told of the hardships, and suffering related to the various "plagues" and diseases of the era. They demonstrated by the use of Lotions, and Potions how they healed and concealed

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

the blemishes left by the "Pox" and other illnesses.

The authenticity of the reproduced clothing, and the talent and performance displayed by the ladies made for a very enjoyable evening.

It makes one think when we hear of the 'Good Old Days.'

Speaking as a rookie reporter one of the highlights of my first Squadron meeting was the presence of five members of the Cameron Family, Their Father was a member of the 485th. I want to give a Huge Thank You to Sammy Schneider for his ability to get people and information "connected"

and to all who are contributing to the effort of getting our Children, Grandchildren and others interested in the history of the 485th.

After we said good bye to our 485th extended family Sunday, September 9th, Naomi and I drove to Richmond, VA. To visit family on our road home and were there when the tragedy struck. September 11th. This is a vivid reminder of how fragile life is and the need to be thankful for each day.

*Hope to see you all in Reno.
Marvin Lindsay, 829th SQ.*



MAILROOM 830TH SQUADRON

BY GEORGE DYER

The following is my write-up for Harrisburg. About 9 a.m. on September 6, 2001, we boarded the bus for our tour of the town of Gettysburg and the battlefields.

Our guide, Mr. Clay Rebert, seemed to know every inch of the town and battlefields. He explained to us each battle that was fought, where, when, and which side won. I don't believe anyone could have done a better job than Mr. Rebert. He said that he had been doing this for about 23 years and it really showed in his descriptions and narrations.

During our tour, Mr. Rebert took great pride in pointing out all of the artillery and statues. He also was very knowledgeable in regard to the states involved, and the number of men from each state that participated in the battles. It was very impressive as to condition of the artillery pieces and the grounds.

Our tour ended at the visitor center and the Gettysburg Museum of the Civil War, where we were shown

the history of the complete battle of Gettysburg by the use of an electronic map that detailed every battle, time and date of occurrence. It also included the victor in each battle, number of men involved and was truly an outstanding method of gaining an overview of the big picture of Gettysburg. We were also interested in noticing the equipment used in those days, in fighting and defending one's life and compared to present day weapons, was very primitive. We could not help thinking about the advancement of technology to even World War II standards.

The battle at Gettysburg began on July 1, 1863, and lasted 3 days. The Union army was commanded by General George Meade and the Confederate army by General Robert E. Lee. Each side had adequate officers and men for their battles. In all, there were about fifteen battles in and around the town of Gettysburg.

Historians and scholar's say that more men were killed in the battle of

Gettysburg than any other, before or since in this war. They say that total casualties, killed, wounded, captured or missing in action, was 23,000 men for the Union army and 28,000 men for the Confederate army. The battle known as Pickett's Charge occurred July 3rd and 12,000 Confederate soldiers participated having a casualty rate of 5,000 men in one hour. This ended the battle of Gettysburg. On the 4th of July, General Robert E. Lee and his men started their march back to Virginia.

Our guide, Mr. Rebert, made note that all statues, monuments and cannons were put in place by the veterans of this great battle.

There were many soldiers that received high honors but only one Congressional of Honor awarded — Joshua Chamberlain of the Union armed for his daring heroism and tenacity in holding his position at the battle of the Little Round Top.

MINUTES OF 485TH BOMB GROUP

Business meeting – Saturday, September 8, 2001, at Harrisburg Hilton Tower, Harrisburg, PA

Chairman Bob Benson called the meeting to order and asked for a moment of silent prayer for our deceased members. He announced that Earl Bundy and Ed Nett, plus a number of others, had passed away since our last reunion.

He then stated that there were 252 total attending this reunion, with several second and third generations in attendance. There were also 4 first timers attending. Ground crews were asked to stand. There were 127 in total attending this business reunion.

Count of squadrons is as follows:

828th	31	Hdquarters	4
829th	17	Widows	6
830th	31	POW's-MIA's	15
831st	28		

The minutes from the St. Louis reunion in September 2000 were read by Secretary, Lynda Hanson, after which a motion was made to approve as read.

Lynn Cotterman, treasurer, reported \$1700.30 was the present balance in treasury.

Bob Benson, and Lynn Cotterman both thanked Lynda and Bob Hanson for their efforts for the 485th and presented each with a plaque for publishing the Lightweight tower.

Bob Benson also thanked the squadron reporters:

Warren Sortomme, headquarters
Sherrill Burba, 828th Squadron
Marvin Lindsay, 829th Squadron
George Dyer, 830th Squadron

Lynn Cotterman, 831st Squadron

Bob Hanson also thanked Bob Benson for the great job he was doing as chairman of the 485th bomb group.

Bob Benson reported that the 485th banner and the plaque of all of the past reunions is missing. If anyone has any information as to either of these, please contact Benson or Hank Dahlberg.

Hank Dahlberg told again of his video that could be ordered from him for \$10.00. Note: see other sections of Lightweight Tower for information and

address to order this video.

Jack Behunin of Ben Skelton's crew (829th) told that Ben's widow, Virginia, had donated \$1000.00 to the 485th in Ben's memory and presented check for same at that time.

John DiRusso told of a bridge in Plymouth, PA, that had been forever memorialized as *Pearl Harbor Memorial Bridge* through his efforts.

Chairman Benson told that Jack Godfrey had designed the glasses for this year's reunion and that there were some left over and could be purchased for \$2.00 each.

Flight crews were asked to stand.

Jim Mulligan's crew won the trophy with 6 in attendance.

Bob Hanson told of a 15th Air Force reunion, along with the Tuskegee Airman, to be held in Branson, MO, with the dates being September 7 through September 11, 2001.

Warren Sortomme announced that information on the dedication of the 485th plaque and tiles at March Air Force base in California, would be in *Lightweight Tower* publication. He thanked members for donations and that excess of \$500.00 would go back into the 485th fund.

Suggestions for next year's reunion were given. George Dyer spoke of Little Rock, Arkansas; Bob Hanson told of Reno, Nevada and Bob Benson mentioned Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Will Weber of Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. gave data on the 3 cities: Little Rock, The Doubletree Hotel at \$91.00 plus tax and dates of September 17 – 22; Oklahoma City, The Marriott Hotel at \$91.00 plus tax and dates of September 17 – 22; Reno, The Silver Legacy Hotel at \$72.00 plus tax and no set date at this time in September. These three cities were voted on. Little Rock - 26 votes, Oklahoma City - 24 votes, and Reno - 42 votes. Weber also said that the Reno rate of \$72.00 would be from Monday through Friday instead of our usual

Wednesday through Sunday noon — reason being that all Nevada hotels increase their rates substantially for Friday and Saturday nights.

A suggestion for a cruise for 2003 was offered by Jane Oberholzer.

Frank Nardi told of a POW convention in Tucson this year. The exact dates were not discussed.

Chairman Benson said squadron meetings followed this business meeting, and to please be on time this evening at 5 p.m. sharp, for photo sessions to be held on 2nd floor. These pictures would also include 2nd and 3rd generations plus, naturally, widows.

Dan Sjodin asked all to stand who had completed 35 sorties in Italy.

Hank Dahlberg told of a book, *I'm Off to War, Mother, But I'll Be Back*, written by Jerry Whiting, son of 485th tailgunner, Wayne Whiting. These books may be purchased for \$14.95 plus \$5.00 for S/H. (Information elsewhere as to this in *Lightweight Tower* as well as information of the book, *Missions by the Numbers*, edited by Sam Schneider, our 485th Bomb Group Historian)

Bob Hanson mentioned a change at Reno reunion from our usual format. The hospitality and memorabilia room will be combined in one large room with a coffee station, cookies, etc. at one end with a bar and many tables set up in center for all groups to visit and socialize.

Sherrill Burba made motion to re-elect Bob Benson as chairman. This passed unanimously.

Al Martin made a motion to have Reno reunion the second week of September, if that date did not conflict with the Jewish holidays.

Lynn Cotterman made a motion to adjourn and so ordered, to attend squadron meeting immediately following the business meeting.

Submitted Respectfully,
Lynda Hanson - 485th Secretary

JOURNEY'S END – MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

Lloyd Allan	2001	829th	Earl Bundy	2001	829th	Russell Genage	1995	828th	Chester Nowak	2001	829th
Lewis Anglin	2001	829th	Morris Burney	1999	829th	Walter Gworek	1992	831st	Ewin Olsen	—	831st
Walter E. Arnold	2002	Hdqt	Harold Burns	2001	829th	Harvey Hansen	2000	829th	Albert Paul	1999	831st
Frank Bailey	2001	830th	Michael Ciullo	2002	831st	Robert Hickman	—	831st	Frank Sandoval	1996	830th
James C. Barrett	2001	830th	Edward Clark	—	828th	Clarence E. Hilyard	2000	830th	Ray Troutman	2001	828th
Dean Bassett	1999	828th	John Coughlin	2001	831st	Willis Jolly	2001	831st	Layton Tuggle	2001	829th
James Beck	2001	831st	Joe Coker	1999	828th	Olin Jones	2001	829th	Bob Watson	2000	829th
Steven Berner	2000	829th	Richard Erhardt	2001	831st	Thomas Kastello	1999	828th	Wayne Whiting	2001	831st
Jack Bersack	1999	828th	Ray Ebersold	2001	828th	Howard Keech	2000	828th	Norman Williams	1994	—
Ivan Billett	1999	828th	Kermit Feldman	—	829th	Norman Lynch	1999	828th	Sam Williams	2001	831st
Harold Boigan	1998	828th	William Ferrell	2001		John McCarthy	2001	830th			
Delmer Brinkman	1993	829th	Oscar Fleishmann	2001	831st	Raymond Meschenl	—	828th			
Bob Brown	2002	831st	Herman Garber	—	829th	Ed Nett	2001	828th			

The Jimmy Fales' Story

Fall 829

(Observed from the inside)

July 20, 1944, we were over on the way to bomb the Zeppelin Works at Friedrichschafen, Germany. The assigned crew was: Thomas Baker, P; Robert Capitaens, CP; F. Holcomb, N; J. Durdon, B; John Randich, Nose T; Kevin McGovern, Ball T; Robert Downoy, Top T; Gordon Simpson, Eng; Walter Heubner, Radio Opr and Jimmy Fales, Tail T.

We were over Northern Italy when the formation was attacked by 15 Me 109's and FW 190's. The first indication of trouble was a loud roaring sound of a Me 109 passing overhead. The plane was shaking and vibrating. I landed on my back against the ball turret mechanism. Also I felt something hit my back and could feel blood. (I still have a 2" rectangular piece of metal in my back.) The Tail Turret had been hit by a rocket and was completely blown off with Jimmy Fales still in it—only the oxygen and electric lines remained. I hoped that he was dead before the turret hit the ground.

Simpson and I manually operated the ball turret and McGovern crawled out. Simpson went to the cockpit and nose area and said that they were blown to pieces and there was no hope as we were losing altitude. The plane was steady so I think Lt. Baker, the pilot, had somehow put on the automatic pilot.

Simpson yelled, "BAIL OUT." I jumped first and I saw McGovern leave next followed by Simpson. I lost my boots when the chute opened. I could see the plane in the distance on fire and going down.

Later after talking to Simpson, he waited until it was almost too late, as his chute barely opened and he landed in the 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 and was captured by a 15 – 16 year old *Facisti*. 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. 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 out a sofa from the house; offered wine, milk, etc. After 10 – 15 minutes about 50 *Wermacht* led by a SS Officer. With all those German GI's they must have thought they were being invaded I had no problem with them (the Germans) and they took me to a clinic, where a doctor looked at my back. He said he wasn't going to probe, as it was too deep. Also said that he attended UCLA to study medicine. 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, AWOL's, etc., I presume.

I spent three days there and was treated OK by the inmates, offered cigarettes, etc. I was then moved to a *prison – solitary for two days* – and 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 another cell. Another two days in the *cooler* and I was taken to a Railroad Station. I met Simpson, McGovern and two other *airmen* POW's 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 the train 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 a hospital with 8 – 10 *airmen* prisoners. The treatment was OK, fairly good food and no bad incidents. I can not exactly remember how long I was at this *hospital*, until middle of September, possibly.

Three others and myself were then taken to *Obreusel*, for interrogation and transit. Then quite a coincidence. The same Mueller, German Officer was the *Chief* there. I did not admit 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. Another train ride, through *Berlin*, where we sat in the Railroad Yards while the British were bombing a lot of trains. We arrived in *STALAG #4* near *Belgard* in *Pomerania* (now a part of *Poland*).

On February 5, 1945, we marched out, as the Russians were coming. We walked 800 miles to near *Lubeck, Germany* and were liberated, May 4 by the British. On the march we slept in barns and outside. No bad treatments, but food shortage. we would miss food for two days at a time, so lost some weight. Of course there were other happenings during my *Kriegie* time, but that is another story. I arrived home in *Stevensville* on June 5, 1945, my *birthday*. I also had physical problems, contracted *TB (Tuberculosis)* and was in *Army Hospitals* in *Michigan* and *Denver, Colorado* until June of '46.

Personal items: had forty years in the *Postal Service* (including *Army time*). Retired in 1982. First wife passed away, September 1984. I remarried in 1991 to Mary Jane. We each have two children from our first marriages and eight grandchildren between us.

LETTERS TO OUR HISTORIAN ——— *The Jimmy Fales Story*

Like the famous baseball trio, *Tinkers to Evans to Chance*, I received a letter from Walter Heubner—Radio Operator (828th Squadron - crew 13 - Pilot Tom Baker) who in turn received a letter from Bill Herring. Herring was a top turret gunner in the 831st Squadron - Lt. Erhardt's crew. Bill got Walt's address from Carl Mazzoni (828th Sqdn. Reporter at the time).

Bill goes on to say, I was on the mission you wrote about in the Lightweight Tower. So much of what has happened "way back when" is such a blur, so fuzzy, that I would doubt that it ever happened, if it weren't for the facts that I have a couple of medals some connecting paperwork and of course, am in contact with several of my crew. I also attended a reunion in Savanna.

But there has always been one thing that has not become fuzzy, one thing that I have thought about a thousand or more times and still to this day as I saw it the second it occurred "way back when." And that is the

incident that you wrote about in the Tower.

You saw it from the inside, I saw it from the outside. We had reached the *Udine-Trieste* coastline, when we were hit by the fighters. They came out of the sun and hit us from the starboard side. I caught a glimpse of them from my top turret as they came down and started firing. I'm certain I didn't hit a thing. Your squadron must have been flying ahead of the 831st because I first caught sight of your plane in front of us and off to the right a bit. Suddenly, it went nose up in the air and seemed to hang like that, perfectly still for a split second. That's when I saw the *Tail Turret Fall Out* and I could see the hole it left open in the rear of the plane. I also saw the turret fall and it fell strangely—like this ? I didn't know who was in it, but I remember thinking like you, "I hope the guy is dead." Then we swept by and I didn't see your plane or the turret again. We were close to the shoreline when it all happened that I always wondered if the turret fell in the sea or on land.

At debriefing, I said what I saw and someone said whose plane it was that went down; and then someone said the tail gunner was a Jimmy Fales. I almost fell off my chair. Let me tell you why.

The night before the mission, I was at the group EM bar when I got to talking to a guy that I remembered meeting before—Jimmy Fales. I remember the conversation because of two things. He said he didn't want to fly any more missions and that he was thirty one years old. I recall thinking at the time, "My God . . . 31." He should be home with his grandchildren. I was just 20. Well that's all of it. Maybe I won't think about it again but I probably will.

I too was shot down—27th mission—went to STALAG 4, marched 650 *klicks*—kilometers—and was freed by the Yanks near Halle, Germany about April 27th or so. That's it. I hope this finds you in good health.

(signed) Bill Herring

As we read some of these block buster stories from time to time, *please remember them and all those who died for the cause of freedom in all the wars.*

LETTER FROM OUR HISTORIAN, *Sammy Schneider* ———

A 3rd book is in the offing titled *It's Our Turn to Fly*. There will be many stories of our flying personnel. plus on ground personnel—cook aka *Pastry Chef*—and a section to be headed "Stories My Friends Send Me." a couple of stories and diaries from my best friend E Fleury who left with our convoy with his 69th General Hospital that debarked at Algiers and bivouacked at Goat Hill on April 19, 1944. The next day on April 20, the Paul Hamilton was hit and sunk by a JU-88 Torpedo bomber with a loss of 154 men of our 831st squadron. Fleury ended up in the CBI—China Burma Theatre of operations caring for many of the wounded of Merrill's Marauders. Another part about going home in a jeep over the Burma road from Ledo

to Kuming in 17 days. other stories about a visit many years later to Normandy on D-day. these are beautifully written making you feel that you were there at every spot described. I added another about an American couple visiting London on July 4th (our Independence Day) and wondering why they were there instead of the USA for the celebration, and their meeting with an English couple who made them feel very much at home on same date.

Now my request to all of our 485th family: please send any stories that you may have, especially from our **GROUND CREWS**. They were with the fly boys and did an amazing job in all aspects of there assignments. There must be stories out there yet to be told. Also again, I say, how about

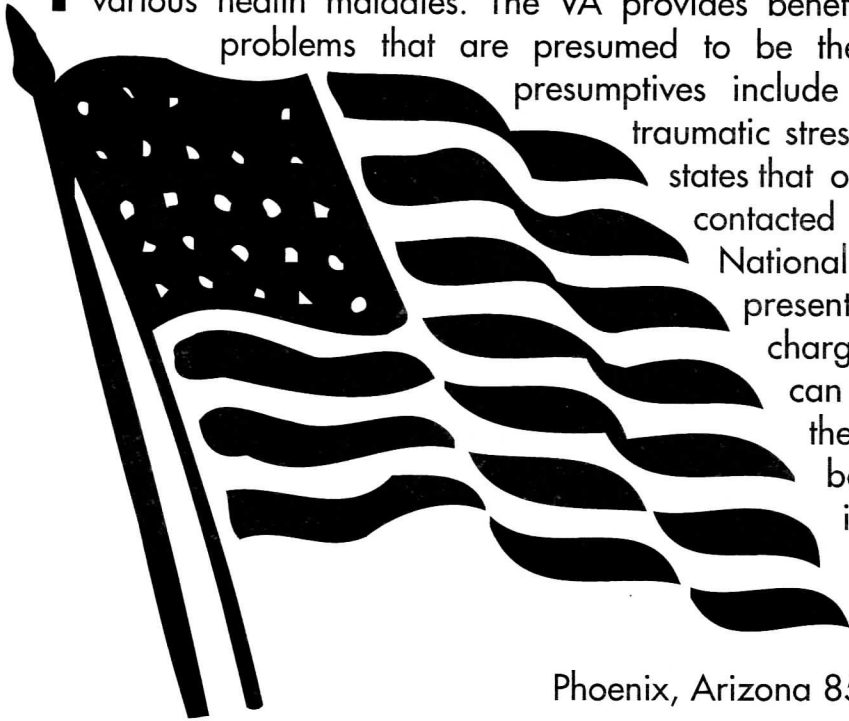
pictures, crew pictures also—not in the "This Is How It Was Book" that tells its own story. Possibly something about camp or neighboring towns—perhaps strike photos from men in the photography section. Hopefully, I will compile this with the help of Lynn Cotterman and others that have helped before. I honestly believe that the world should hear more about the 485th and their part in WWII.

I sincerely thank all of you for the assignment of Historian, for it gave me the therapy I need being handicapped. I have suffered from an occasional fall and still "hang in there" and hope to be able to continue for a few more years. And as I always say in signing off—SO THIS IS MY STORY FOR TODAY.

-Sammy Schneider

Former POW's

The American Ex-Prisoners of War has asked us to advise our members that the Department of Veterans Affairs provides tax free disability compensation to former POW's who have various health maladies. The VA provides benefits and treatment for over 20 health problems that are presumed to be the result of POW experiences. These presumptives include heart problems, osteoarthritis, post traumatic stress, and many others. The organization states that only 35% of those who are eligible, have contacted the VA and that it has accredited National Service Officers who will assist in presenting your claim to the VA without charge. Those interested in more information can contact your VA Regional Office using the 800 number listed in your telephone book's government pages. Those interested in more information about American Ex-Prisoners of War may contact the National Service Office, 3225 N. Central Avenue, Suite 407, Phoenix, Arizona 85012-2421. (602) 745-2201.



MISSIONS BY THE NUMBERS

Edited by Sammy Schneider

AN ACCOUNT OF THE 187 MISSIONS FLOWN BY THE 485TH BOMB GROUP OVER EUROPE

Missions By The Numbers tells the story of the 485th Bomb Group that was stationed in Venosa, Italy and flew combat missions in B-24 Liberator Bombers over Europe during World War II. The debriefing of each mission tells it like it was. Also described is the great amount of planning and teamwork involved in flying a successful combat mission. The mission began in the afternoon when a coded message was received from Wing Headquarters with preliminary information about the next day's mission and ended with the dropping of the payload on the target the next day. The planning and preparation before that first plane was allowed to take off is described in articles written by



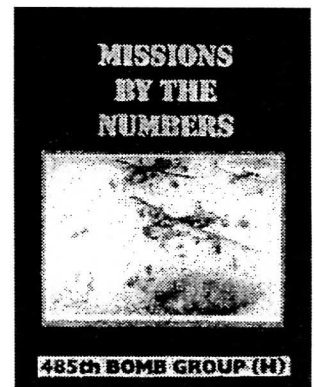
the men who were there. Included is a narration of the perfect bomb run, a story of a crewman who bailed out and tried to avoid capture and another story of a harrowing flight through the Brenner Valley (Flak Alley) on two engines.

Over 180 pages of history in a book with a colorful soft cover with strike photos, a map of secret landing strips, the pilot's flimsy (the secret plan of the mission), flak photos, bomb types, photos of damaged planes and much more. It is a story told by the men who lived it and is interesting reading for people of all ages.

TO ORDER:

Send your name, address, and a check or money order for \$15.00 + \$5.00 S/H to:

MISSIONS BY THE NUMBERS
6425 Dorado Beach, NE
Albuquerque, NM 87111



I'm Off To War, Mother, But I'll Be Back

BY WAYNE B. WHITING AND JERRY W. WHITING



This is the story of a WWII tail gunner, told through excerpts of more than 200 letters he wrote to his mother. It is also the story of the last six months of the European Air War, as seen through the eyes of one 485th Bomb Group airman, as he tries to keep his promise to his mother to return safely. Included are the following stories:

- The story, told from the beginning to the end, of one of the few 485th B-24's that survived 100 missions.
- The tale of survival of one airman who was shot down over enemy territory, but eluded the Germans and returned safely to Italy with his copilot nearly six weeks later.
- The unique relationship that the 485th had with the 332nd Fighter Group, the famed Tuskegee Airmen, resulting from bad weather. (Included is a touching letter from the 332nd to the 485th.)
- the saga of one of the last crews shot down over Europe, on the 485th's final mission to Linz, Austria.
- The capture of an ME-109 pilot and his plane by a 485th pilot.
- The miraculous account of the navigator who survived after being blown out of his B-24 and falling 10,000 feet without a parachute.

Countless interviews went into the making of this book. Official 485th Bomb Group records were used to verify the information, as well as diaries, escape/evasion reports, and newspaper documentation of events at that time. The Foreword was done by Sammy Schneider, 485th Bomb Group Historian. The 178-page paperback book includes 30 photos, including several that were not previously published.

For your copy send a check for \$14.95 = \$5.00 shipping and handling to:

Jerry Whiting
2576 Fox Circle
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

I am trying to take an active role in encouraging people to come to the reunions from my generation and those younger. I'd thought about the idea of having a meeting at a reunion for "Offspring of the Vets" or something like that, where the next generations could get together to discuss different things.

I may be meeting with some people locally here, who have asked lots of questions about where to get info about vets, etc. I'll probably give a little presentation on where to go to get the info (government sources and others). I have quite a few resources I used when writing my book and had various amounts of success. I wonder if it would be of benefit at the reunion to present some of this info in an informal setting, like a mini-seminar, with handouts.

It's always been my belief that I don't want to take anything away from you guys. I certainly don't want to be "center stage," but I'll do whatever I can to promote the cause, and don't mind working. I send e-mails to a lot of the people who write to Sammy, encouraging them to continue their searches and to come to the reunions. I think that some of these newer people will come to Reno and I'll do anything I can to make them feel welcome.

[Note from the Editor: Jerry Whiting has a good idea. He's a sparkplug for the next generation and that has to be good for the 485th. I hope there are enough of the 2nd generation in attendance to have Jerry have a mini-seminar, etc.]

**Henry W. "Hank" Dahlberg's
Video of WWII**

***B-24's in Italy
A Personal Video***



*Hank Dahlberg
talking about
video*

Editors Note:

I enjoyed viewing the video and believe those that did not purchase one in St. Louis will enjoy having one to bring back remembrances of sunny Italy in 1944 and 1945.

The total price (including shipping and handling) is \$10.00 and may be sent to:

**Henry W. Dahlberg
6191 S. Southwood Drive
Centennial, CO 80121**

(303) 738-8927

Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery.

Veteran proud of memorial accomplishments

By Carl Rotenberg
Times Herald Staff

WEST CONSHOHOCKEN — It was a proud day for John DiRusso on Nov. 15, 2001, when the Blue Route bridge over the Schuylkill River was renamed the Pearl Harbor Memorial Bridge.

The World War II veteran had waged a decade-long campaign to commemorate the Dec. 7, 1941, attack on Americans at Pearl Harbor.

He lobbied congressmen, the U.S. Postal Service, local governments and schools to fly the American flag at half-staff on Dec. 7. He even wanted the date to become a national holiday.

Last fall the Plymouth resident asked the borough councils of Conshohocken and West Conshohocken for support to rename the Matsonford Bridge on Fayette Street the Pearl Harbor Memorial Bridge.

But Conshohocken politicians were against the proposed name change because the Matsonford Bridge has historical ties to the Revolutionary War.

Nothing concrete came from his patriotic efforts until he convinced U.S. Rep. Joseph Hoeffel, former state Sen. Richard Tilghman and state Rep. Kate

Harper to sponsor a House bill renaming the Blue Route bridge.

House Bill 103 was passed on June 8, 2001.

In mid November, local officials, politicians and reporters gathered at a park-and-ride lot on Matsonford Road to dedicate the Blue Route (Interstate 476) bridge connecting West Conshohocken with Plymouth.

Among DiRusso's supporters attending the wind-swept dedication were West

Conshohocken Mayor Joseph Pignoli, Plymouth township Manager Joan Mower, then state Sen.-elect Connie Williams and state Reps. Lita Cohen, R-148th Dist., and Kate Harper, R-61st Dist.

Since the November dedication service, DiRusso made sure West Conshohocken businesses observed the Dec. 7 anniversary date by lowering their American flags to half-staff.

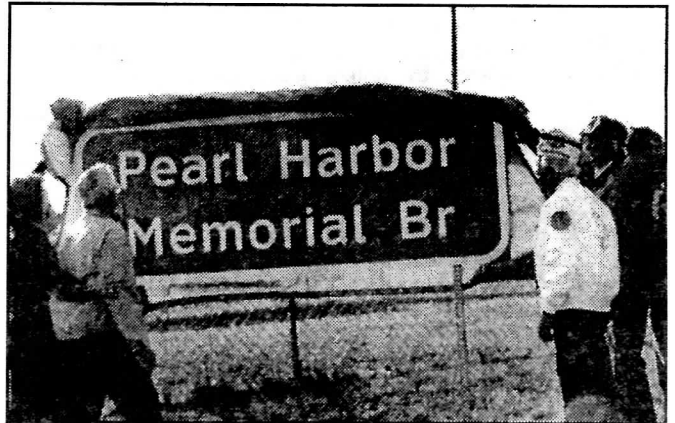
"The mayor of West Conshohocken and I got the 12 businesses to fly the American flags at half-staff on Dec. 7," said DiRusso. "That's the law, that all government installations and private citizens should fly the flag at half-staff."

DiRusso placed a lei on the West Conshohocken monument on Dec. 6 in preparation for the Dec. 7 commemoration of Pearl Harbor.

On that Friday morning he drove around West Conshohocken to savor

World War II veteran John DiRusso holds his hat over his heart during the Pledge of Allegiance at the dedication of the Pearl Harbor Memorial Bridge in West Conshohocken in this Nov. 15 file photo.

Alisa M. Salerno
The Times Herald



Alisa M. Salerno/The Times Herald

John DiRusso, second from right, and other veterans uncover the new Pearl Harbor Memorial Bridge sign at the Matsonford Park and Ride in West Conshohocken on Thursday. The sign was raised onto the I-476 bridge that crosses the Schuylkill River.

the American flags.

He plans to organize a one-year commemorative program at the bridge next year.

DiRusso's military career started when he was drafted into the U.S. Air Corps just after turning 18. He had just graduated from Benjamin Franklin High school in Philadelphia.

He fought in southern Italy during World War II as a top-turret gunner in B-24 Liberator bombers. DiRusso served in the 15th Air Force, 485th Bomb Group, 828th Squadron.

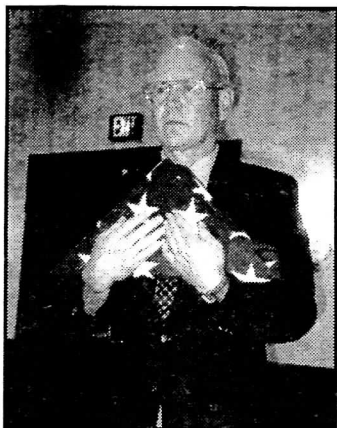
DiRusso's goal has always been to keep the wavering attention of the American public on the events of Dec. 7, 1941.

In November, he said: "My goal is simply to get this issue in front of the public. Pearl Harbor cannot be forgotten and those who lost their lives there cannot be forgotten."

"It's important, perhaps now more than ever, to do whatever we can to recognize and remember such an important event."

Carl Rotenberg can be reached at crotenberg@timesherald.com or 610-272-2500, ext. 350.





THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE U.S. FLAG FOLDING CEREMONY

Each fold of the United States Flag when taken down at Retreat or used at a Military Funeral has a specific meaning.

The Flag is folded from the Stripes end to the Stars to acknowledge that the 13 Stripes represent the 13 original Colonies that have now become 50 States represented by the Stars.

Each fold thereafter also has a particular significance:

- The 1st is the symbol of life.
- The 2nd is the belief in eternal life.
- The 3rd honors the Veteran who gave his life.
- The 4th represents our weaker nature, as American citizens, trusting God.
- 5th is a tribute to our country.
- 6th represents where our hearts lie (as we hold our hands over our hearts).
- 7th is a tribute to the Armed Forces, protection our Country which flies the Flag.
- 8th is a tribute to mothers and to "the one who entered the valley of the shadow of death that we might see the light of day."
- 9th is a tribute to womanhood.
- 10th is a tribute to fathers.
- 11th is a tribute to Jewish citizens.
- 12th is a tribute to Christians.

When the Flag is completely folded with only the Stars showing, it represents our National Motto, "In God we trust."

Because when the Flag is completely folded it looks like a cocked hat, it reminds us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington, the sailors who served under Captain John Paul Jones, and all those who followed, preserving our rights, privileges, and freedoms.



To Whom it May concern:

As a United States Air Force retired pilot and as a pilot who flew the B-24 approximately 900 hours, including a 51 mission tour in Italy with the 15th Air Force, 485th Bomb Group, 831st Bomb Squadron during the spring and summer of 1944, I take this opportunity to comment on the book by Stephen Ambrose entitled *The Wild Blue*.

It is a very interesting and exciting story, but for a major book representing actual events it contains a lot of inaccurate information, especially concerning the B-24 aircraft. Examples follow:

1. "The B-24 had no heaters." False - It had gasoline heaters that were very useful at altitudes below 12,000 feet.
2. "The 15th Air Force WWII combat tour was 35 missions." False - It was 50 missions.
3. "Four engine aircraft never flew off of the Isle of Vis." False - My assigned aircraft, *The Character*, returned to my unit at Venosa with four new engines and four new oil tanks about three weeks after I left it there with extensive combat damage on July 26, 1944. It completed 95 missions,

including the last one the unit flew on April 25, 1945, which was reported in the 485th Bomb Group newsletter, *The Lightweight Tower*.

4. Ambrose, in his appearance in a November 2001 Fox Network TV program, stated, "The B-24 landing gear had to be operated manually. False - The B-24 landing gear operated hydraulically. Also the TV picture shown was the most unflattering picture of a B-24 that I have ever seen.
5. Ambrose included the statements that "every B-24 take-off was an adventure" and "I don't think any pilot in WWII ever made a take-off in a B-24 that did not scare him" which were extreme exaggerations and false as far as I am concerned.
6. The statement, "Taxiing was a challenge" was false. That might have been true for non-regular B-24 pilots like Air Transport Command pilots that flew all kinds of aircraft, but not for experienced B-24 pilots.
7. "The B-24 was hard to fly." False - I also

flew B-17's, B-25's and C-47's, among others, and the B-24 was no harder to fly than any other multi-engine aircraft prior to those with boosters attached to flight controls.

Frankly, it appears that Ambrose was "jazzing" up his story by ridiculing an aircraft that served our nation well.

I also feel that he was very inconsiderate of Co-pilot Rounds and Navigator Cooper by publishing information about Rounds getting VD and Cooper getting temporarily lost while flying across the Atlantic Ocean on the return flight to the USA. There should have been more consideration for their families and descendants.

I am sorry that the 15th Air Force newsletter *Sortie* made such a glowing endorsement of the Ambrose book. The book should have been more truthful, particularly about the B-24 aircraft.

Jesse I. Ledbetter, Lt. Col., USAF (Ret)

• Memory Lane •

THE STARS AND STRIPES

Daily Newspaper of U.S. Armed Forces

in the European Theater of Operations

GERMANY EDITION

Volume 1, Number 38

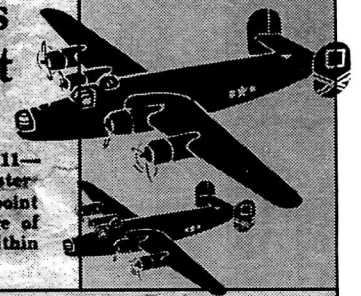
Saturday, May 12, 1945

85 Points Needed To Go Home, If -



Army Says You're Not Essential

WASHINGTON, May 11—The War Department yesterday announced its point system for the discharge of 1,300,000 enlisted men within the next 12 months.

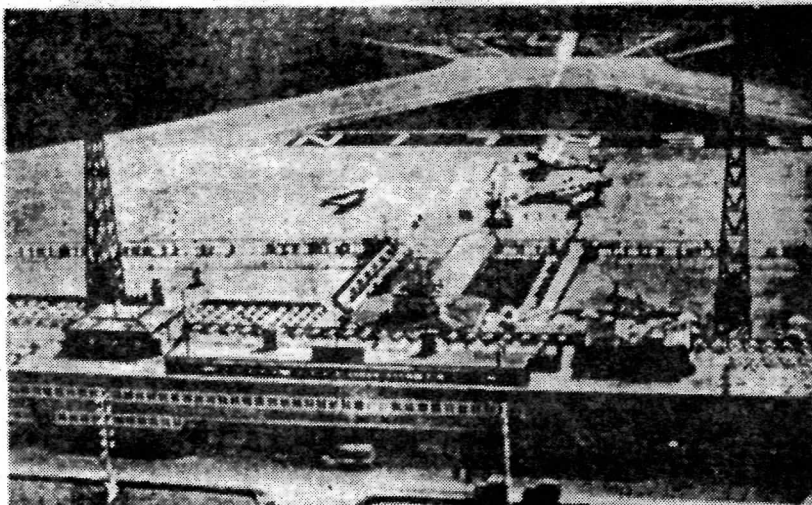


Hitler Joins His Pal



When this picture was taken, Hitler and Mussolini were riding high as Europe's Fascist chiefs. Now Adolf has joined Benito in death, the German radio reported last night.

Nazis' Airport a Perch for Allied Eagles



Germany's main peacetime air terminal, Tempelhof Field, is a military base which the Allies will be able to put to good use. Tempelhof is a suburb of Berlin on the Teltow Canal and was founded in the 12th century by the Knights Templars.

Training Planes for Sale



A prospective buyer gets the feel of an Army primary trainer, one of 1,000 training planes placed on sale by the AEC and available at the Concord, Calif., sales center. The Fairchild, Ryan and other makes, which once carried Army and Navy Red Wings, have been declared surplus and are priced from 700 to 1,400 dollars.

Clippings from
The Stars and Stripes of 1945

Courtesy of
James B. Wheatley

"HE LEFT WITHOUT SAYING GOOD BYE"

The years slip by and I ask myself why I don't write my view of the war
But we flew the slot, and the only view I got was the rear end of a B-24.

Still, if I can stay awake, and my hands don't shake, and I take it nice and slow,
I'll tell you what I can remember, and make up the rest as I go.

I first heard the news on the radio, parked in the truck with my girl.
It all started over a woman, when they attacked some lady named Pearl.

After I read the chart and bent over and coughed, they declared me fit for the war.
Since I had good eyesight, they said son, you go fight with the United States Air Corps.

But I said, no thank-you, I would do what I could to keep America free,
But why should I fight with the Army Air Corps? They, hadn't done nothing to me.

Then the government got real impatient, and the letter that came in the mail,
said, boy, if you don't come P D Q you could spend the duration in jail.

So I went, and got sent to a place called Lightweight, never did understand why.
It wasn't because of the airplanes there, they looked too heavy to fly.

We were told, wars are won by confusing the enemy, and that might very well be,
cause with all them code words, and everybody named Roger, it sure was confusing to me.

Even the outhouse had a french name, and the kitchen was always a mess.
You wouldn't believe what they served on a shingle, but it wasn't half bad I confess.

The bath room facilities were a total disgrace, and that was my favorite gripe.
I've had two operations, and still use preparations, all from trying to sit on that pipe.

We didn't have much of the comforts of home, but one thing was better by far,
In the States, we got shots from a needle, over there they came from a jar.

But things weren't all bad in the place called Lightweight, the man in charge of the place
was a sweet, gentle soul, we all called him Pop, but of course, not right to his face.

Pop seemed to me like a guy you could fish with, smart but with good common sense

The sort you would like for a father in law, or to chat with over the fence.

He led us on something called missions, to places a far piece away.
I think it must have been India, they opened the doors to Bombay.

The fellows I roomed with, thought this old country boy was some kind of an ignorant joke.
They told me them flack shells could kill a man dead, but I saw they was nothing but smoke.

One would think missionaries would talk to the Lord, about helping to keep the world free,
But the only praying I ever heard, was Lord don't let them hit me.

But still the ways of war seemed foolish to me, like on our missions to dry up their oil.

Instead of using paper towels, we dropped aluminum foil.

Some of our drops made a whole lot of smoke, and some left big holes in the ground.

But that should have come as no great surprise, them drums weighed five hundred pounds.

Some days we just dropped indecencies, and the radio said we hit them with silk.
And everybody wanted to go on those runs, when we tried to drown em with milk.

We dropped in on some people named Marshall, and I'm sure we tried very hard,
but I had a look at some of the pictures they took, and we mostly just tore up their yard.

We took of one day and flew over some snow, with Pop at the head of the pack.
We dropped, and came home like he told us we should, but Papa he didn't come back.

We sat by the phone and answered mail call, and they say that grown men don't cry,
but I heard some sniffing as we laid in our sacks, cause he left without saying good-bye.

Why did Pop split? And where had he gone? Was a question that stayed in my head.

Did he leave because of something we did, or was it something we said?

Well the days turned to weeks, and the weeks to a month, then came rumors, ugly and mean.

Pop had been spotted skiing the Alps and in beer joints with Lili Marlene.

I couldn't believe it, weren't we all over there trying to save our great nation?
you don't begrudge a man a few beers, but this wasn't no time for vacation.

Then some guy said Pop was bailed out, and I knew he'd be home without fail.
Pop would be back on the very next bus, now that he was no longer in jail.

But he still didn't come, and I didn't know where our PaPa could be.
If anyone knew in the 828th, they didn't see fit to tell me.

Then I finished my missions, and they sent me back home, to the farm to finish my crop.

And for the forty-five years it took to grow old, I wondered what happened to Pop.

When telling grandchildren how I won the war, they would ask me again and again,
Grandpa, tell us one more time, about how you lost that poor man.

Then Lightweight Tower came calling, and I said to myself, it don't get no better than this.

Up near the top was a picture of Pop, and Jack and Jessie had made it to Vis.

So PaPa came back, but he don't look the same, and I'll wonder to my dying day.
Was it Lili Marlene or a skiing mishap that made his hair turn so gray.

Now PaPa dear, When you disappear and leave us to ponder your fate,
don't leave us on hold for forty more years, cause I don't have that long to wait.

And Pop, should you even leave us again, perhaps we won't take it so hard.
If you'll pick up the phone and give us a call, or at least drop us a card.

PS If you call collect, evening rates are cheaper.

Respectfully Submitted,
Charlie C. Taylor, Jr.
828th Sqdn. 485 B.G.

JOHN



U.S. ARMY AIR CORPS

