



LIGHTWEIGHT TOWER CALLING



No. 37

MARCH 2003



Holiday Inn-Select in Little Rock, Arkansas

Please Notice

Among the various memorabilia on display at the Reno reunion were a number of 7" x 9" photos of the 485th Bomb Group in combat. They were sent to the reunion for everyone to see and, if interested, to order prints for home reference. My name and address were on the back side of each photo and order forms were provided.

It appears that 15 of these photos were INADVERTENTLY and UNINTENTIONALLY taken home by some of our members, and I will greatly appreciate having them returned.

Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated and I thank you very much.

Bob Benson

Little Rock in 2003

Our ranks are getting thinner each year but, by golly, there are still enough of us to warrant continued annual reunions. (I remember when we had 450-500 in attendance at our reunions.) However, the year 2003 will be no exception as we plan to get together again, this time in Little Rock, Arkansas. The date: September 17-21, 2003 and we will be headquartered at the Holiday Inn-Select.

Mark your calendar now and plan to join us for four days of fun and activity. Hope to see you then.

Bob Benson

A Great Reunion in Reno

by Lynn Cotterman

The target for the 38th Annual Reunion of the 485th Bomb Group was the Silver Legacy Resort Casino, Reno, NV; "The Biggest Little Town in The World." You might say we had the Biggest Little Reunion also. Although the numbers were down some, from previous years, the enthusiasm was there and it turned out to be one of the best reunions ever. The reunion was held from Monday through Friday this year rather than the usual days, Wednesday through Sunday. This is because the hotel rates on the weekends in Reno are out of our range. We will go back on the Wednesday through Sunday schedule next year.

"REUNION" continued on next page

Continued from "REUNION" on previous page

The hotel was conveniently located off Interstate I-80 in downtown Reno only 10 minutes from the airport. Although the population in the metropolitan area is more than 160,000, the downtown has retained its small town image. The streets have not been widened so you can cross the street without risking your life. Many shops are within walking distance. I felt at ease walking there.

The parking garage adjoined the hotel with elevators connecting directly to the lobby which was located on the second floor. The hotel was more than 38 stories high with the fastest elevators in the West. Before entering the elevators a security guard asked to see room keys; a result of the tragedy in New York City.

There were restaurants and shops on the second floor of the hotel and the main casino was down on the street level. The second floor extended over the street and connected to the El Dorado and Circus Circus hotels. Walking through the shops and cafes you could leave the Silver Legacy hotel and be in the El Dorado Hotel without realizing it. More than one person tried to charge a purchase to their hotel room and were told that they were not in the right hotel.

The centerpiece of the Silver Legacy is a replicate of a huge mining machine. It was on the second floor and was a couple of stories high and spread out quite a bit. We had to walk around it when going to the hospitality room. At various intervals the mining machine went through a cycle. Lights came on and the huge gears started grinding.

The hospitality/memorabilia room was the best that we have had. The room was long and rectangular with seating for 100 people around 10 tables and there was room to gather around the bar that was located at one end of the room. Tables were placed against three walls for memorabilia. Ah! Space is luxury. The only fault that I could find was that it was a little far from the lobby. You had to pass by

rows of slot machines on the way. I didn't have much luck with the slots. I couldn't find a machine that would provide entertainment at a reasonable cost.

Bob Benson gave us the name of a man to contact in Reno to help set up the bar. He turned out to be the Athletic Director of the University of Nevada/Reno which was located down the street. His Rugby Team was looking for ways to raise money for the team. They offered to tend the bar for tips. It's against the law to sell liquor without a liquor license so we set up a "suggested donation" list for the drinks and a basket on the bar. We had our basket on one end of the bar and a glass bowl for tips for the Rugby team on the other end. I think the Rugby team made out better than we did, but they deserved it; they did a terrific job.

Bob Hanson, Jerry Whiting and I arrived Sunday evening and set up the hospitality room Monday morning with help of the Rugby team. Ted Day, head of Air Force Reunions, ran interference for us when we needed something for the set up. He and his assistants manned the registration table just outside the hospitality room. Most of the flights arrived late in the day so the hospitality room didn't get much play the first day, but we made up for it later.

Tuesday we were up bright and early for a tour. There are a lot of early risers anymore. No matter how early I hit the lobby on the way to grab a cup of coffee and a sweet roll, some of the gang was already there. I think Fran and Art Fowler must stay up all night.

We boarded the buses for Lake Tahoe and the Ponderosa Ranch where the TV show, Bonanza, was filmed. The countryside was dry and dusty and some small lakes were almost completely dry. At the Ranch I was interested in the collection of old (antique) farm equipment. It brought back memories of my boyhood on the farm in Indiana. When we returned to the hotel, I shook the dust off my

shoes and headed for the hospitality room to visit with some of the gang.

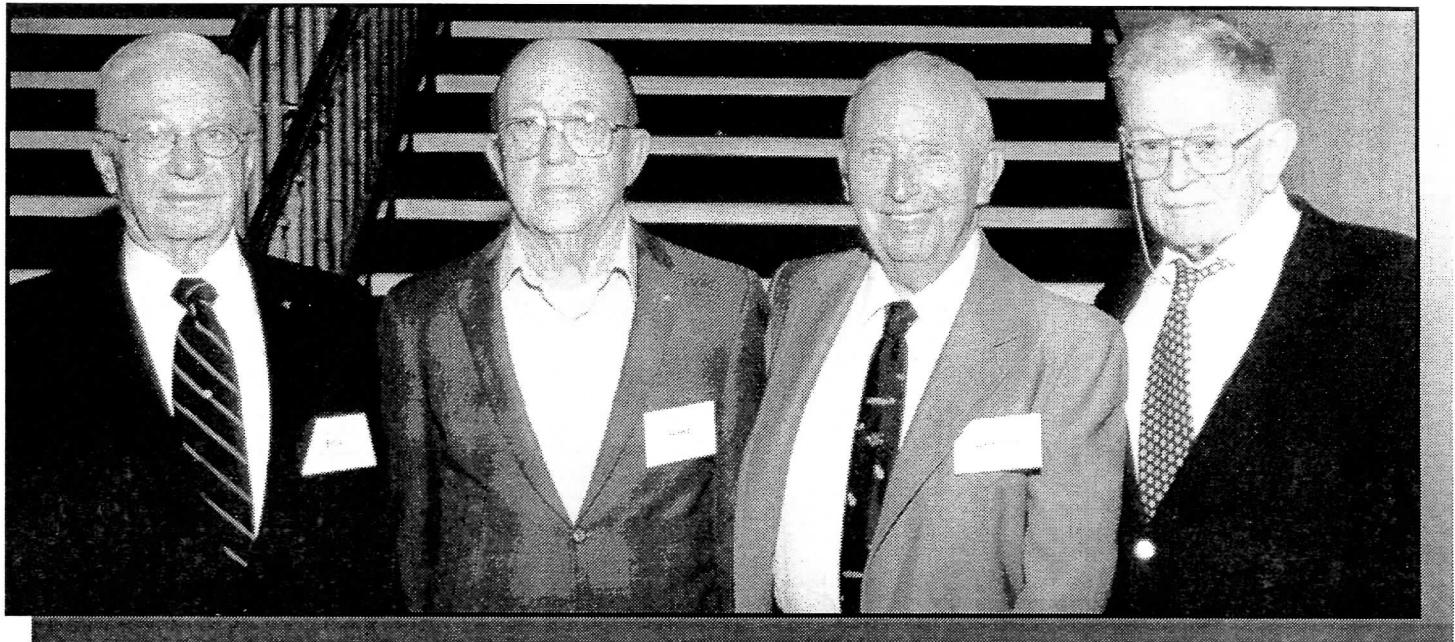
Wednesday we toured Carson and Virginia Cities. I ran into Bart and Marilyn Brown in Virginia City and we had lunch at one of the old Western cafes with some of Jackson's crew. Virginia City is very interesting and I could have spent more time there. I hope to return sometime. We arrived back at the hotel at one o'clock so I checked out the hospitality room. We had a good crowd and we had a chance to catch up on the things that happen to each other's families during the past year.

In the evening we went to the National Automobile Museum where we had dinner. We viewed some restored cars like the ones we owned through the years. Then back to the hospitality room where we picked up where we had left off in the afternoon, but we still shut down the bar before 11:00 pm.

I have to think to keep the day straight. The Group meeting which is usually held on Saturday was held on Thursday. Our Chairman, Bob Benson, was unable to attend the reunion this year. Bob Hanson, vice chairman, conducted the meeting and handled it very well. He kept the meeting rolling and we were out at 11:00 am, right on schedule. The minutes are elsewhere in this newsletter. The squadron meetings followed where we shot the breeze most of the time which is always a lot of fun.

After the squadron meeting I had lunch in the Sweetwater Cafe which was one of the restaurants in the hotel. I joined John Jackson and some of his crew; Jack Bremen, Bob Halling and Bob Hanson. Thursday evening we met the photographer in the foyer of the Grand Ball Room. After the photo session we entered the ball room for the dinner and dance. Friday morning the traditional memorial breakfast and service was held. This wrapped up another highly successful reunion much too soon.

HEADQUARTERS



Left to Right: W. Herblin, H. Hancock, W. Sortomme, W. Bank

2ND & 3RD GENERATIONS



Left to right:

First Row: Bob & Kay Gary, Jerry Whiting, Georgia Kasten, Ann James, Becky Marlin, Philip Cummings

Second Row: Ed McCarthy, Dennis Sites, Judy Sites, Anthony Kujawa, Lynn Gallo, Mike Marlin, Michelle Cummings

Third Row: Hank Willenburck, Bernice Willenburck, Theresa Kujawa, Jan Levin, Alan Levin, Charlie Brown, David Cummings, Neal Swann

Fourth Row: David Brooks, Mimi Brooks, Carol Harrison, Lee Harrison

828TH SQUADRON



Left to right:

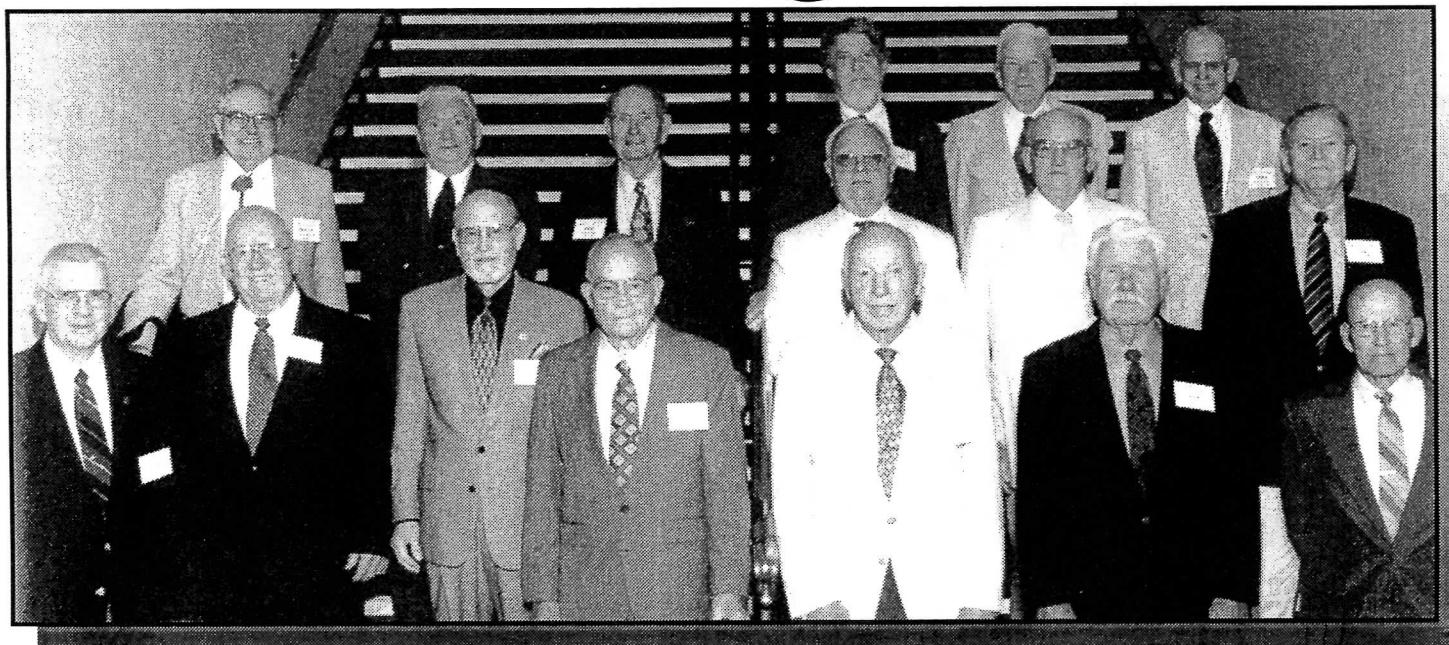
First Row: T. McDowell, B. Williams, E. J. Devane, H. Julin, J. Morrone, K. Wall, G. Sorensen, H. Laorno, M. Hails, S. Burba, L. Paine

Second Row: G. Lahay, C. Taylor, R. Stanley, S. Tanka, M. Sites, J. Eden

Third Row: P. Whitney, G. Dell, M. Mattison, B. Reid, J. Rau



829TH SQUADRON



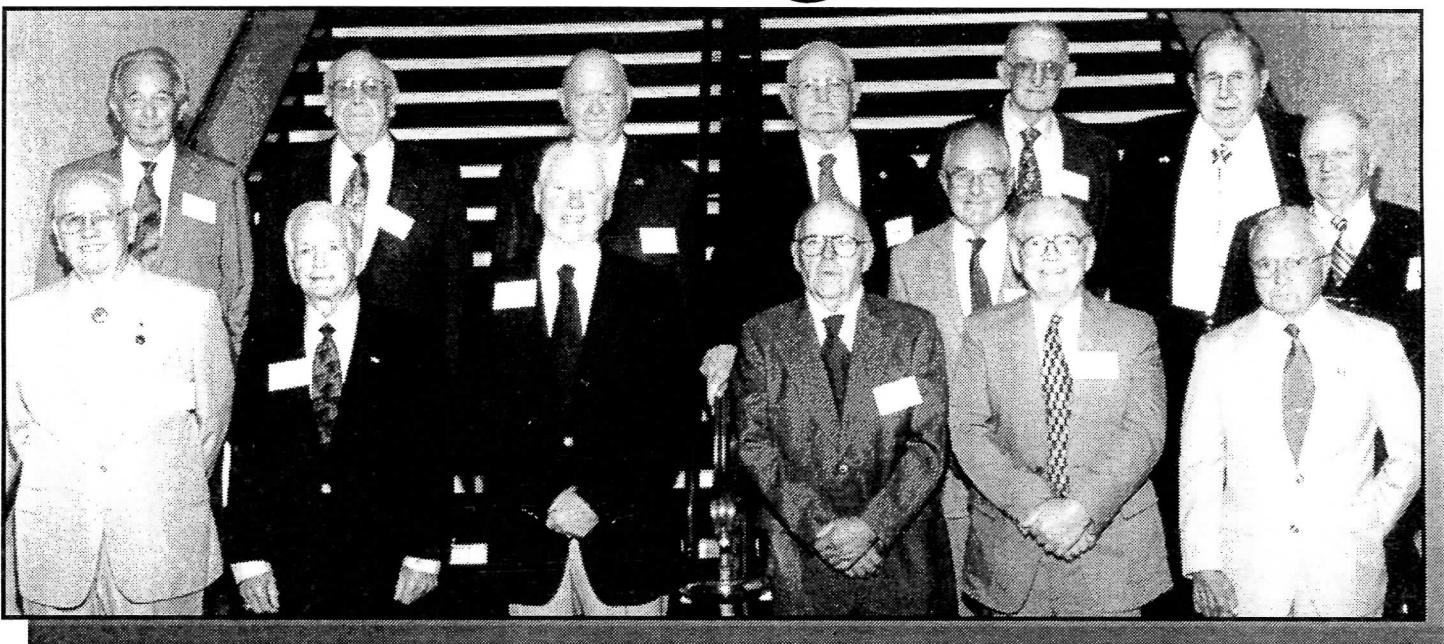
Left to right:

First Row: K. O'Connell, A. Martin, R. Brown, H. Johnson, D. Whiteman, J. Behunin, W. Knowles

Second Row: B. Brown, A. Fowler, H. Dolin, A. Carlson, R. Defour, E. Drider

Third Row: R. Arthur, W. Smith, C. Crane

830TH SQUADRON



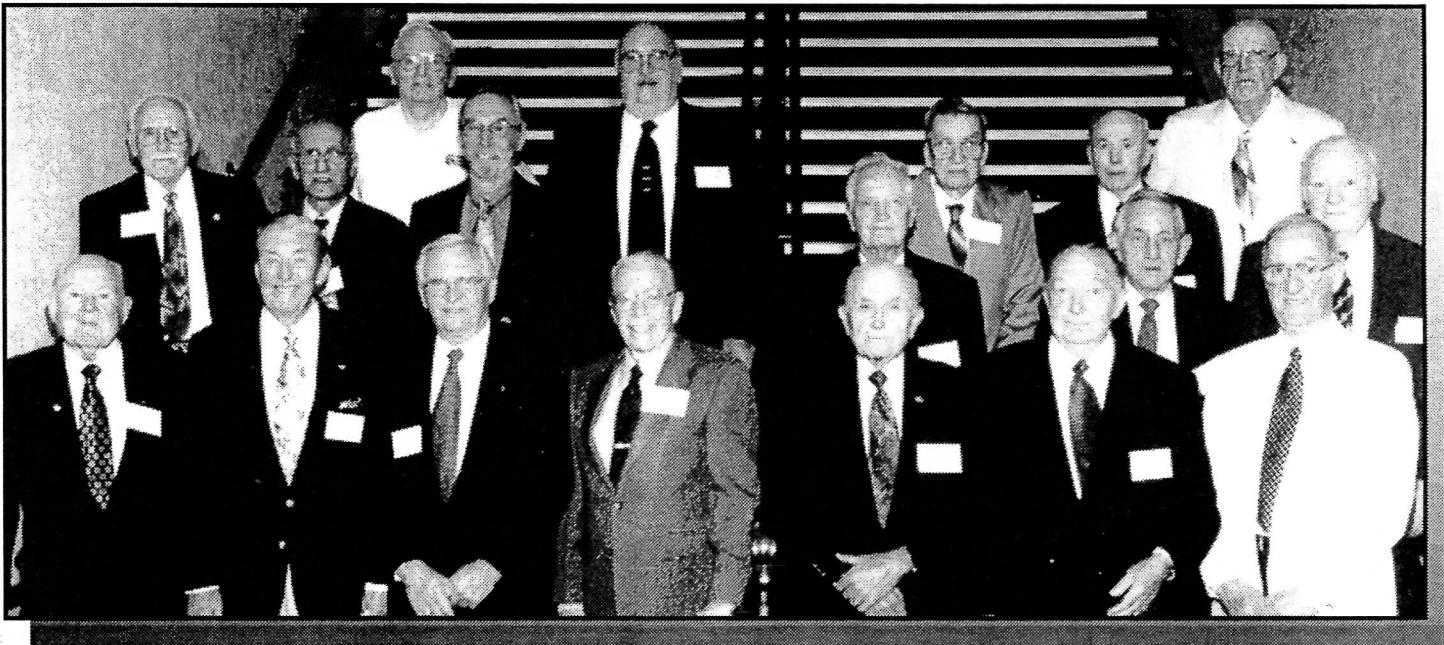
Left to right:

First Row: G. Dyer, B. Cottingham, R. McAlpine, H. Muehlemann, R. Merrill, R. Baldwin

Second Row: L. Hoadley, E. Peterson, B. Cummings, H. Boxley, T. Levin, A. Thompson, W. Gorman, J. Cundiff



831ST SQUADRON



Left to right:

First Row: D. Sjodin, R. Hanson, L. Cotterman, H. Dahlberg, H. Woodyard, W. Meyers, J. Bremer

Second Row: J. Godfrey, T. Tamraz, W. Brokaw, E. Hall, J. Jackson, G. Byrd

Third Row: C. Bostrom, G. Hess, K. Brown, R. Halling, E. McCarthy

WIDOWS

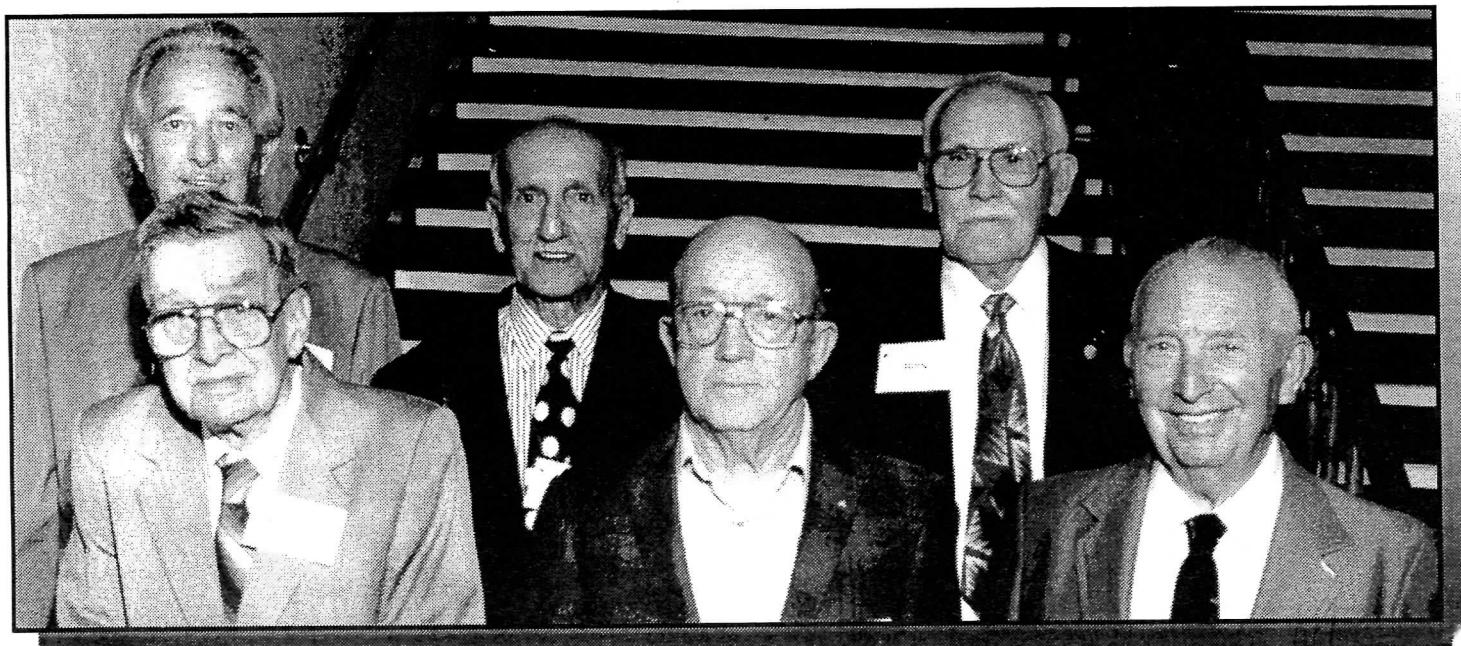


Left to right:

First Row: Iris Griffin, Mary Swann, Lillian Cairns, Maxine Bulls, Sonia Nakis

Second Row: Anna Rebholz Nett, Mary Karns, Leona Schoultz, Catherine Arnold

POWS - MIAs

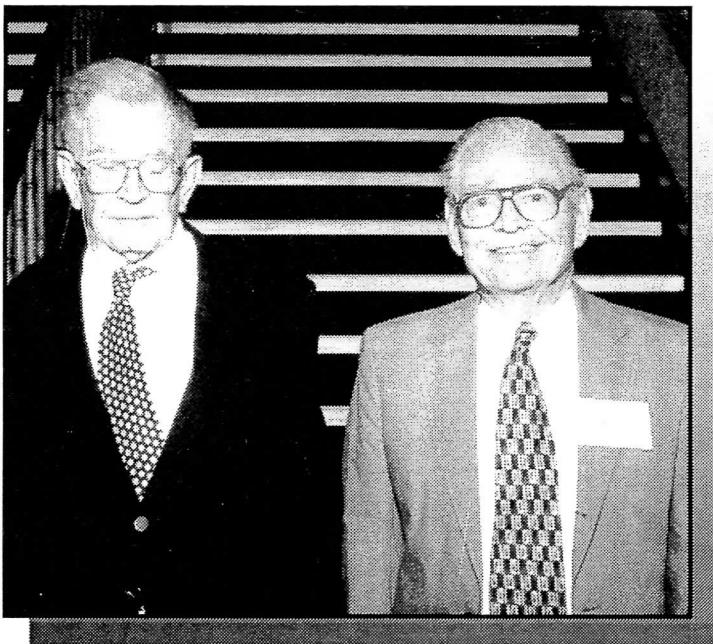


Left to right:

First Row: K. Brow, H. Hancock, W. Sortomme

Second Row: L. Hoadley, T. Tamraz, J. Godfrey

1ST TIMERS



Bill Banks, Rick Merrill

15th Air Force Wall - Tiles

As of 1 January 2003, the 485th has 64 "Personal Tiles" set in front of our plaque on the 14th Air Force Wall at March Field Museum in Riverside, California.

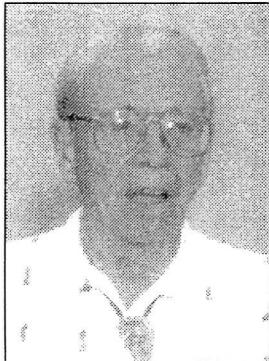
Squadron tile count is: Headquarters - 9 Pop Arnold, Benson, Cairns, Cook, Cornett, Hancock, Huckeby, Sortomme and Towers: 828th - 13: Akin, Anderson, Lloyd Arnold, Brown, Choate, Ick, Lasseingne, Monroe, Nett, Parli, Schneider, Sims and Trinche: 829th - 22: BIG ALICE FROM DALLAS, Jay Baker, Behunin, Bundy, Camden, Carlson, Carter, Cathcart, Fowler, Fundling, Furgueson, Huber, Keele, Kopcha, Lindsay, Long, McGehee, Roen, Shelor, Skelton, Williams and Wolf: 830th - 13: Robert Baker, Cottingham, Dyer, Frohling, Greenwood, Heringer, Oliver, Richmond, Rofield, Swann, Towne, Tunstall and Wesley: 831st - 7: Abbott, Brokaw, Coterman, Geyer, Haden, Sjodin and Woodyard.

All of Robert Skelton's crew 24, "BIG ALICE FROM DALLAS" are together, thanks to the estate of Robert Skelton and crew member Jack Behunin. Fran Tunstall's

COOK	POP ARNOLD	CORNELL	CAIRNS	NETT	SAMMY
HANCOCK	SORTOMME			MONROE	PARLI
BUNDY	TOWERS			ICK	LASSEIGNE
FOWLER	HUCKEY	SIMS	TRINCHE	AKINS	HERRINGER
WOODYARD	COTTERMAN	GEYER	CARLSON	SHELOR	KEELE
ROBERT BAKER	ANDERSON	BROWN	LLOYD ARNOLD	CHOATE	BENSON
TUNSTALL CREW 45	GREENWOOD CREW 45	ROFIELD CREW 45	RICHMOND CREW 45	FROHLING CREW 45	SJODIN
OLIVER CREW 45	DYER CREW 45	COTTINGHAM CREW 45	WESLEY CREW 45	TOWNE CREW 45	SWANN
CATHCART CREW 35	McGEHEE CREW 35	ROEHN CREW 35	LINDSAY CREW 35	WOLF CREW 45	FUNDLING
BIG ALICE FROM DALLAS CREW 24	SKELTON CREW 24	KOPCHA CREW 24	HUBER CREW 24	FURGUESON CREW 24	LONG CREW 24
BEHUNIN CREW 24	JAY BAKER CREW 24	WILLIAMS CREW 24	CARTER CREW 24	CAMDEN CREW 24	HADEN

crew 45 is also set side by side, because of the hard work given by crew member Bob Towne and with the help of his crew buddy, George Dyer. Joe Cathcart's crew 35 have five crew members represented, thanks to Mrs. Martha Cathcart.

There is still room for additional tiles, the more the better for the 485th. The cost is now \$50.00 for one line and \$75.00 for two lines. If you are interested in having a tile set on our "485th Island" contact me at: Warren D. Sortomme, 3490 Turquoise Lane, Oceanside, CA 92056-4866. Phone: (760) 945-8439. E-mail: sortomme@dslextreme.com



**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.**

THE BIG STORY!! BREAKING NEWS!

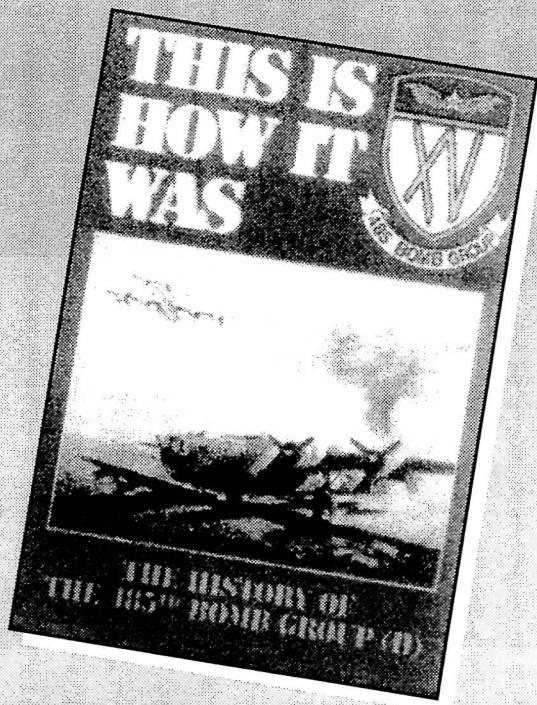
A second printing of "This Is How It Was", the history of 485th Bomb Group (H) has been completed!

However, only 300 copies were printed and are being sold on a first come basis.

Don't be left out! Order today!!

Call Southern Heritage Press 1-800-282-2823 and have your VISA or Mastercard ready. The price is \$39.95 plus \$5.95 for shipping and handling for a total of \$45.90.

**GREAT
CHRISTMAS
PRESENTS!**



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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

Father's WWII Letters Spark Book On Heroism

All his life, Jerry Whiting's hero had been his father, Wayne. Wayne Whiting was a B-24 tail gunner with the 831st Squadron of the 485th Bomb Group that flew missions as part of the 15th Army Air Force over occupied Europe during World War II. Growing up, the younger Whiting listened to his father's wartime stories with admiration.

Jerry Whiting always knew his father's tales of close friendships, trust and respect among crew members of the group were stories that begged to be told and shared with others. So when his father was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease a few years ago, Whiting knew it was important to preserve his father's wartime memories.

And, one day, the impetus to write a book about his father came in the form of a box containing more than 200 letters Wayne Whiting wrote to his mother. The correspondence covers a two-and-a-half year period as the

older Whiting wrote about his experiences while promising his mother, Orrilla Whiting, that he would one day return home safely.

Whiting remembers the day he received the box of letters, which his own mother, Gustie, had kept. He had just come back from having breakfast with his father and talking about the older Whiting's experiences during the war, when he discovered the box on the kitchen table at his parents' home in Martinez.

"My mother had always kept a promise to my grandma that she would keep the letters," says Whiting, a Walnut Creek Resident.

The letters proved to be the spark for the book.

"This started out to be the story of one airman and his experience,"

Whiting writes in the introduction to his book, "I'm Off To War, Mother, But I'll Be Back."

"As it progressed, the focus shifted

Jerry Whiting,
author



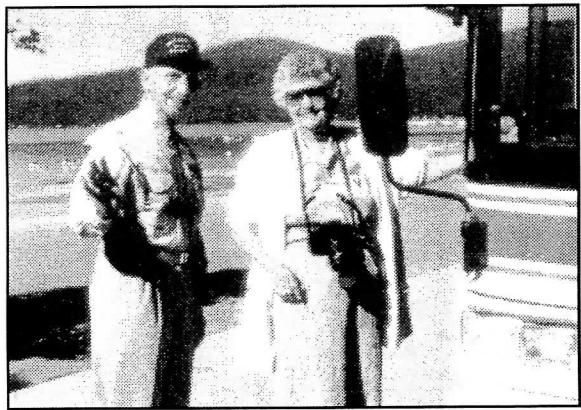
and it became more the story of family, a combat crew, friendships and the dedicated, brave men of the 485th Bomb Group. I know he'd prefer it that way."

The combination of letters and conversations with some of his father's crew members convinced Whiting that writing a book was a great way to honor his father and the men he flew with during the war.

He contacted members of the 485th Bomb Group through the group's historian and his attendance at two of the group's annual reunions. Whiting adds that the U.S. Air Force historian research center in Alabama proved to be useful in obtaining microfilm records as well as photos. Most of the photos published in the book came from crew members.

"I'm estimating there were about 70 people that I contacted for information from his bomb group," says Whiting, a retired Walnut Creek police officer.

"BOOK" continued on page 20



↑ Milt and Fran Fundling boarding for bus trip



→ Jack Buhunin announcing gift of \$10,000 to Bomb Group from the estate of Ben Skelton, 829th Squadron



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS

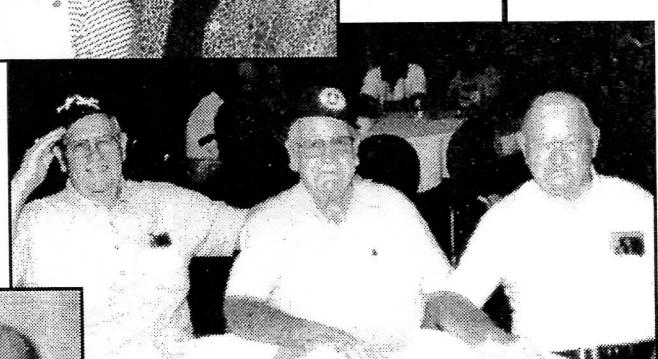
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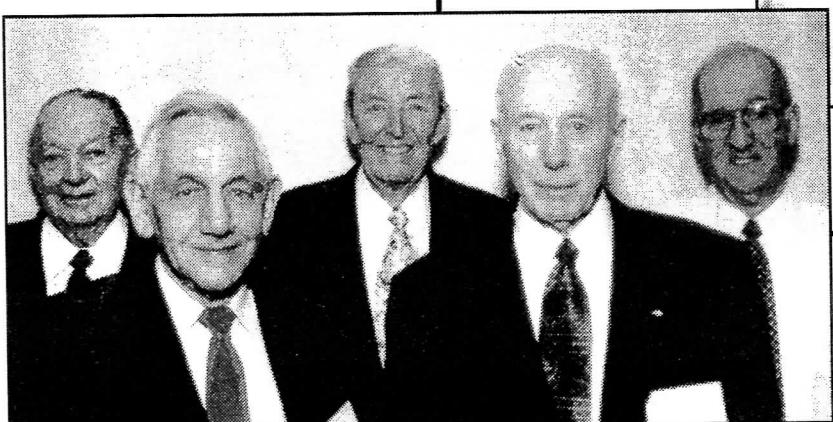
↑ George Dyer and "Cotton Bell" Katy Dyer



←
Left to right,
Catherine Arnold and
Anna Rebholz Nett



↑ Left to right, George Dyer, Everett Peterson and Bill Cummings



↑ Left to right, Warren Meyer, John Jackson, Bob Hanson, Bob Halling and Jack Bremer "Bachelor's Roost" 831st.

⇒
Bob Hanson presenting corsage to Francis Fowler for all her work for 485th. Francis will be our new secretary.





↑ Ponderosa Ranch ⇒



↑ Enjoying a "hoss burger", left to right, Woody Woodyard, Hank and Virginia Dolin

⇒
"Cutting the rug"
The Gray Eagles still getting
the job done.



Bob Hanson
presenting plaque
to Lynn
Cotterman
↓



↑ Flag Folding ceremony
at Memorial Breakfast



⇐
Dinner at
Harrah's car
museum.

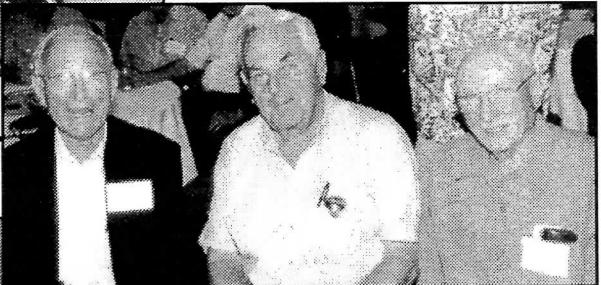


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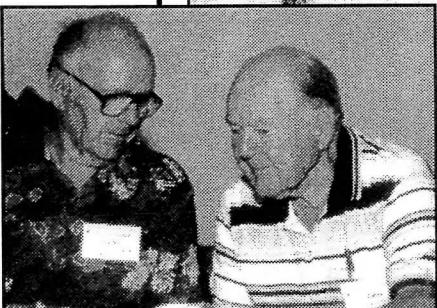
Pledge of Allegiance at Memorial Breakfast.

↑ Jack Eden, Stan Tanka and
↓ Hal Julin, Eden Crew 828th.

→
Roger Monroe
and
Dan Sjodin
at business
meeting.



⇒
Herb Muehlemann
and Dan Sjodin



↓ Al and Icie Martin



⇒
Bob Baldwin
and J.B. Cundiff
830th "Bacon's Beavers"

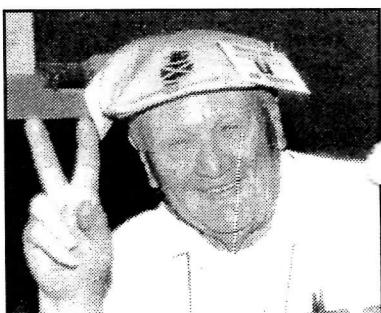


↑ Earl and
Jeanne Hall

↑ "Duck Bags - Not Doggie" at Harrahs museum.

MORE PHOTOS 2002

⇒
J.B. Cundiff
830th "Bacon's
Beavers"



Minutes of 485th Bomb Group

Business meeting - Thursday, September 12, 2002 at the Silver Legacy Resort, Renom NV

Acting Chairman, Bob Hanson, called the meeting to order and asked for a moment of silent prayer for our deceased members. He announced that Bob Benson was unable to attend the reunion due to health problems, and he was acting on his behalf. He also announced that General Walter "Pop" Arnold and many others had passed away since our last reunion.

There were approximately 181 attending this reunion, with several second and third generations in attendance. There were 2 first timers attending.

Count of squadrons is as follows:

- 828 54
- 829 40
- 830 37
- 831 33
- Headquarters 8
- Widows 7
- POWs and MIAs 6
- First Timers 2
- 2nd and 3rd Generations 17

Due to Lynda Hanson's health problems, the minutes from the Harrisburg reunion in September 2001 were read by Secretary, Frances Fowler, after which a motion was made to approve as read.

Bob Hanson presented Frances Fowler with an orchid corsage for the work she did on the mailing list and filling in as secretary.

He then requested a silent prayer for Bob Benson and all the people who lost their lives on September 11, 2001 at the World Trade Center, The Pentagon, and the field in Pennsylvania.

Catherine Arnold, the widow of General Arnold and Lillian Cairns, the widow of Col. Cairns were introduced.

Sherrill Burba read a letter from Col. Cornet regarding the Happy Warriors.

George Dyer made a motion that all remaining members make an unamended motion that all the widows who participate in the reunion every year to honor their spouses, be allowed to vote on any issue in the

business meeting; and that the widows would not pay any dues. The motion was seconded by Dan Sjodin. The question was asked and was carried unanimously.

Lynn Cotterman, treasurer, reported that there was a balance of \$1,700.30 at the beginning of the year and that there was \$1,780.64 this year as a balance in the treasury.

Jack Behunin presented a check from the estate of Ben Skelton in the amount of \$10,000. The money was to be used as Jack decided. Ben Skelton was a member of the 829th Squadron, so Jack donated \$5,000 to the 829th Squadron treasury and \$5,000 to the 485th Squadron. Al Carlson representing the 829th Squadron will give the money to Marvin Lindsay, the Squadron Reporter.

A plaque was given to John DeRusso in absentia in recognition of all his efforts on behalf of the cause of WWII and getting a bridge in Plymouth, Pennsylvania memorialized as "Pearl Harbor Memorial Bridge". Lynn Cotterman will see that John receives the plaque. Lynn also reported that John was inducted into the National Freedom Foundation.

Bob Hanson recognized Lynn Cotterman with a plaque for all his work as Treasurer for the 485th Bomb Group and as the 831st Squadron Reporter.

In Harrisburg it was reported that the 485th Bomb Group Banner and the plaque listing all the placed and dates of past reunions was missing. To date it has not been found, but if found please return to Bob Hanson. Bob Hanson made up a new list of all the reunions and Lynn Cotterman will take this plaque home.

Number of Flight Crews present:

- Jack Eden's Crew 5
- John Jackson's Crew 5

On the toss of a coin John Jackson's crew won the Liberator trophy to take home until next reunion. Those present from John Jackson's crew were: John Jackson, John Bremer,

Robert Halling, Robert Hanson and Warren Meyers.

Helen Wall stated that there were still 8 members alive from Jim Mulligan's crew.

Warren Sortomme announced the Island for the 485th Bomb Group at March Air Force Base is now in place. Following is a list of tiles by Squadron:

Following is a list of tiles by Squadron:

• Headquarters	8
• 838	13
• 829	10
• 830	12
• 831	4

Information on obtaining tiles will be in the Lightweight Tower publication.

Al Martin recognized Bob and Lynda Hanson for their efforts on get the Lightweight Tower printed and mailed.

Ted Dye requested that all slips for the banquet table assignments be turned in at 4:00 pm. Also the pictures will be taken on Thursday, prior to the banquet at 5:00 pm, starting with the 828th Squadron.

Suggestions for next year's reunion were given. Ted Dye mentioned Oklahoma City, OK; George Dyer mentioned Little Rock, AR; and Bob Brown mentioned Columbia, SC.

Ted Dye of Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. gave the following data on the three cities suggested: Oklahoma City, The Marriott NW at \$85.00 plus tax and dates of Sept. 30 to Oct. 6. Parking is free; Little Rock, Doubletree Inn at \$96.00 plus tax and dates of Sept. 3 to 7. Parking is free; Columbia, Adams Mark Hotel at \$89.00 plus tax and dates of Sept. 24 to 28. Parking is \$4.00 per day.

Ted Dye stated that Oklahoma City has good fight connections with the Cowboy Hall of Fame, Stockyards and Guthrie, the Williamsburg of the West, all good places to visit.

**"MINUTES" continued
on next page**

Continued from "MINUTES" on previous page

George Dyer stated that at Little Rock the hotel has been 100% renovated with proposal dates of Sept. 3 to 7 proposed with a possibility of Sept. 23 to 28 as alternative dates. Rates for the rooms apply to 3 days prior and 3 days after the reunion. There is also 2 RV hookups at the hotel. The 485th would have to furnish their own refreshments and liquids for the hospitality room. All activities would be on one floor. Entertainment around Little Rock could be a trip on the Arkansas River Shuttle, the Air Force Base, a paddle boat trip and fish fry.

Bob Brown stated that Columbia is celebrating freedom to attract military groups to their city. You can get a direct flight to the airport. The hotel is downtown with the capitol building nearby, the Zoo/Botanical Garden, State Museum, Fort Jackson Army Post and the band plays 40's music. The weather in September is pleasant.

Ted Dye stated that the drinks in the hospitality room were by donation only and was put on by the University of Nevada Rugby team. In the future most hotels will not allow a hospitality room served by the reunion persons, they will be set up by the hotel. In Oklahoma City mixed drinks would be \$1.50, beers \$1.00, wine \$1.00 and soda .50¢. In the future it would have to be your own room as the hospitality room.

Ted also mentioned many other cities for reunions. One place mentioned was New Orleans which has a high crime rate and parking in

the city is \$17.00 per day.

A vote was taken on the 3 cities selected with the following counts: Oklahoma City, OK, 20 votes; Columbia, SC, 19 votes and Little Rock, AR, 32 votes.

The reunion in 2003 will be in Little Rock, AR with the dates to be determined. William Reid asked why the reunion was not being held East of the Mississippi this year and the response was that it no longer applied.

It was requested that all changes in zip code or area code be referred to individual Squadron Reporters so that the roster could be corrected. A total of 875 Lightweight Towers were mailed and 77 were returned. These were again sent out and approximately 50% were again returned. Each time one is returned and resent, it costs the Bomb Group double.

Bob Hanson mentioned that Bob Cook will be taking photos at 5:00 pm. Please be prompt for the sitting.

Bob Hanson said that Heritage Press is printing an additional 300 copies of Sam Schneider's book "This Is How It Was." This will be the last printing and the cost will be \$39.95 plus shipping. Cards were available for anyone wanting to order a book.

There is a Google Search Engine for getting information on the Air Force. The Internet site is armyairforces.com.

Bob Hanson stated that they would be making a new banner for the 485th Bomb Group. Neal Swann, son of Everitt Swann, said that he will make

up the new banner for the 485th at his expense.

Ed McCarthy said there was a video in the hospitality room on "B-24 Training", which all were invited to watch.

Bob Hanson said there are 140 reunion glasses remaining and they were purchased at \$2.40 each, but all can be purchased at \$1.00. Any remaining ones will be given away.

It was recommended that a donation be made to the University of Nevada Rugby Team for manning the hospitality room. It was noted that with the donations given by all attendees there was plenty of money for the team.

Some of the 485th members attended the 15th Air Force Reunion at Branson, MO which also honored the Tuskegee Airmen.

Dan Sjodin asked that all stand and say the Pledge of Allegiance.

Sam Schneider is looking for more stories to write his third book. If you have any stories to tell, please pass them on to Sam.

Bill Brokaw recommended that we invite the fighter escort to one of the future reunions.

A motion was made to adjourn and so ordered, to attend squadron meetings immediately following the business meeting.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Frances Fowler, 485th Secretary*



Hello, Remember Me?

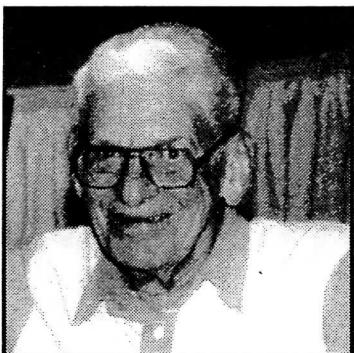


right salute. Remember little sister? She was saluting the same as you—remember?

What happened? I'm still the same old flag. Oh, I have a few more stars since you were a boy and a lot more blood has been shed since those parades of long ago. But now when I come down your street, you just stand there with your hands in your pockets. Then I see the children running around and shouting—they don't seem to know who I am. I saw one man take his hat off, then look around. He didn't see

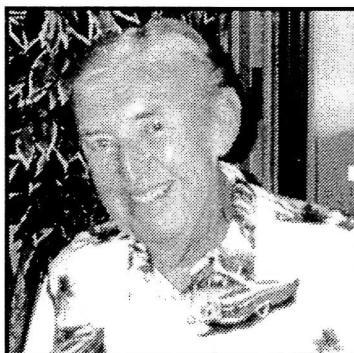
anybody else with their hats off so he quickly put his back on. Have you forgotten what I stand for and where I've been? Anzio, Guadalcanal, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm. Take a look at the memorial honor rolls of those who died to keep this Nation free. When you salute me, you are actually saluting them. It won't be long before I'll be coming down your street again. So, when you see me, stand straight, place your hand over your heart and I'll salute you by waving back—and I'll know that YOU REMEMBER!

485TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP



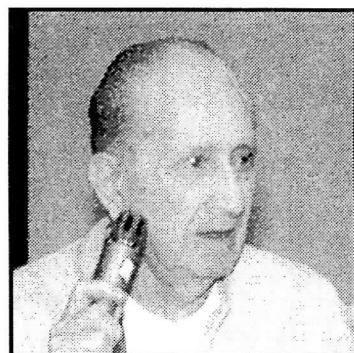
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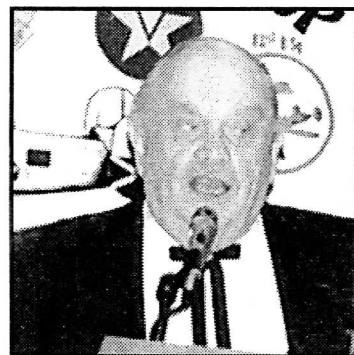
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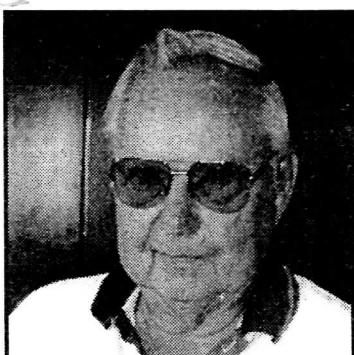
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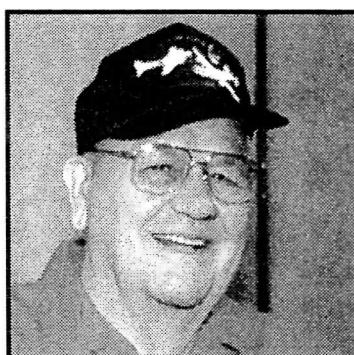
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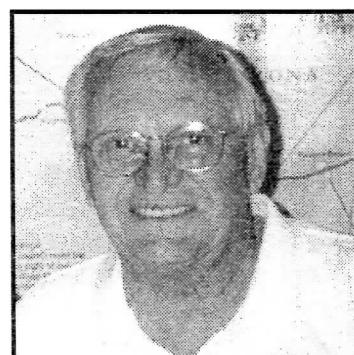
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MAILROOM - HEADQUARTERS

By Warren D. Sortomme

Royal Flush - Black Jack - Jack Pot - 7 Come 11 - Bingo!!! Everyone from headquarters who attended our 38th Reunion in Reno, NV were "winners!"

Bob and Dorothy Benson were unable to make the trip this year because of a health problem, we sure missed them, but I'm sure they will be with us at Little Rock in September.

Bob Hanson moved over to the left seat and with Lynn Cotterman's assistance, help from the squadron reporters and Fran Fowler, all of the trips and events went as planned. Once again Armed Forces Reunion did a great job. The young men and ladies from the local college did a wonderful service for us in the hospitality room.

Catherine Arnold surprised us with a much awaited visit to the reunion. It was so nice to see her and let her know how much we loved her "Pop". William Banks and his wife Caroline

were first timers, Bill was with the group from the day it was organized and served as the Statistical Control Officer and Trial Judge Advocate. Lillian Cairns, her daughter and son-in-law, David and Mimi Brooks, were with us again. It's great they are able to include the reunion with their busy lives.

Hank and Althea Hancock made the trip from their home in Montana and the weather was nice for the drive to Reno and back home. Hank was Pop's nose gunner and parachuted with us over Bleechhammer. William and Kathryn Herblin made the trip once more from Texas, always wonderful to see them.

Don Huckleby, son of Hadleym Huckleby, Aerial Photo Interpreter, made the trip again from Colorado. He and his brother, Richard, continue their interest in our association. Joyce and I made the trip with our trailer, we traveled 4,000 miles, so it was a short drive this year.

Everyone knows by now that we lost our Commander Walter E. "Pop" Arnold on February 22, 2002. We will forever miss him.

I'm sorry to report that Evelyn Towers, Lloyd's beloved wife, passed away April 13, 2002. Lloyd wanted to attend the reunion, but in addition to his loss, he was recovering from open heart surgery. Maybe next year.

We were informed of the death of Harold E. Sheppard from Lubbuck, TX on July 2002.

John "Beau" Cornett lost his beloved wife, Djoni, on September 7, 2002 after a long illness.

May our veterans and loved ones rest in peace and honored glory.

Until we meet in Little rock or next year with the LWT, stay healthy, wealthy and wise and remember your donation of a few dollars will help to keep our organization in good financial condition and is most appreciated.

DINING WITH AUTOMOBILES "STARS"

By Warren D. Sortomme

The experience we will never forget, spending several hours at the National Automobile Museum viewing over 220 antique, vintage, classic, special interest, and one-of-a-kind wonders which includes The Harrah Collection.

As we walked down the streets of the past, its cars, sights, sounds and places were fun to explore and bringing back memories of long ago. Multimedia Theater, a fast-paced, high-tech history of the automobile featuring real cars on the stage; Blacksmith's Shop, 1890-1913, one of the finest collections of "Horseless Carriages." Turn of the Century Street, 1914-1931, early cars and bold experiments. 1930's Street, a "service

station", (remember, they checked the oil, cleaned the windshield, put air in the tires, filled the gas tank, gave you Green Stamps and said thank you!) with '30s and '40s classics. 1950's Street and present, follow today's cars and to tomorrow's classics.

To mention a few, we were able to look at, but not touch, the 1907 Thomas Flyer, winner of "The Great Race" from New York to Paris; 1938 Phantom Corsair, one-of-a-kind experimental car; 1960 Flying Caduceus, the first jet-propelled land speed car; Al Jolson's Classic 1933 Cadillac V-16; Lana Turner's 1941 Chrysler Newport, one of only six made. Remember WWII? James Dean's 1949 Mercury from *Rebel*

Without A Cause; John Wayne's '53 Corvette and a Copper Mercedes with Silver trimmings.

Our dinner tables were set on Main Street, we were able to view the shops on the street and the cars parked along the curbs as we were served a most delicious meal of mixed greens with roma tomatoes, grilled breast of chicken with basil and sun dried tomato cream sauce, grilled polenta, fresh vegetables, rolls and butter, chocolate mousse cake coated with chocolate truffle ganache, coffee, hot tea, iced tea and milk.

Not one slot machine could be found in the museum so it was a night to remember and only a short ride on the bus to and from the hotel.

MAILROOM 828TH SQUADRON

By Sherrill Burba

Once again, I was asked to write about the Sunday morning memorial breakfast for this years Lightweight Tower and this was our 15th annual breakfast honoring our deceased members. The turnout was excellent for this affair and it was started in St. Pete Beach reunion in 1988. There have been many that have told me "this is the highlight of each reunion" and I am happy that they feel that way.

The format has varied a little from year to year and I am always open to suggestions to make it more meaningful to anyone. We are fortunate to have the ladies who assist in the service. I would like to use more people, so volunteer if you like. We always need a piano player so anyone that is capable in that department would be most welcome.

I appreciate very much the stirring message that Rev. Donald R. Whiteman, a Baptist minister as well as being a pilot

in the 828th always delivers. Al Martin is another that keeps things running smoothly and directs the singing and is very active in putting things together for this event. There are always more that contribute to making this a success so thanks to all that participate.

This is a report of the 828th squadron meeting that followed our general business meeting. Once again, the 828th had a good showing having 24 veterans in attendance plus having 21 spouses and guests.

I have received letters from 1st Sgt. Bailey Jenkins, George Ick, and Jess Akins that health problems and prevented them from attending this year.

Since our reunion in 2001, we have received word that many of our 828th members have passed on—please see Journey's End in this publication for a full list of deceased. Our deepest and

heartfelt sympathy goes out to the families of all.

Our financial condition is good—as of November 21st, 2002, we had a bank balance of \$1,046.66 with no outstanding bills.

I have a new computer but am not on line yet. If you are on line, send me your email information, plus any phone number changes (including area code changes) and zip code changes for mailing.

Colonel John Beau Cornett, who commanded the 485th bomb group for 34 days before being shot down, now lives in Dallas. His wife died on September 5, 2002 and is buried in Dallas. Each month I take him to a meeting of the "Happy Warriors" a group of veterans who were in the Air Force since WWI.

I hope to see all of you in Little Rock in September of 2003. Best regards to all.

MAILROOM 829TH SQUADRON

By Allen Carlson, substituting for Marvin Lindsay,
whose wife was in surgery and unable to attend the Reno reunion.

After the group meeting, the 829th Squadron had its meeting in a room assigned. There were 17 squadron members including Col. Hank Dolin and 2 squadron widows in attendance. A sheet was circulated to get any address, zip codes or telephone number changes. Frances Fowler will send a mailing list to all in attendance, as requested by Donald Whiteman.

A first timer, Rene Dufour and his wife, Ellen, were in attendance. They live in California. Milton Fundling was concerned about keeping the membership informed on members who have died in 2002. One in particular was Franklin Lambrecht. Frances Fowler was able to verify his

death and he will be honored at the memorial service. It was asked if Medic Kearny Weyand who died in 1999 was listed. Frances Fowler did not have him listed on her sheet.

Col. Dolin was recognized and thanked for being in attendance. He in turn thanked the squadron by telling an anecdote. A higher ranking officer had criticized the group for not saluting. Col. Dolin gave the squadron a talk. When inspected by General Atchison he was saluted regularly. He said to Col. Dolin, what did you tell those guys? My arm nearly fell off. Col. Dolin indicated he was assigned to the 829th late in 1944.

Discussion was had about the generous contribution made by the

estate of Ben Skelton in the amount of \$10,000. This was presented by Jack Behunin, a member of Ben's crew, who asked that it be split equally between the 829th squadron and the 485th bomb group. A motion was made by Barton C. Brown that a tile be ordered for each of 10 members of Skelton's crew for the 15th Air Force Wall at March Field. The money for the tiles will come from the Skelton contribution. The motion was 2nd by Russell Arthur. Approval was unanimous. The tiles should be ordered by December, 2002 before the price rises.

A letter of appreciation will be sent to Virginia Skelton and letters telling "829th" continued on next page

"829th" continued from previous page

about the tiles will be sent to the surviving Skelton crew members by Alice Arthur, the recorder for 2002.

More discussion was held about the \$5,000 that will be sent to Marvin Lindsay. Milton Fundling moved and Barton Brown seconded that \$4,000 should be placed in a CD for further discussion next year. The motion passed unanimously.

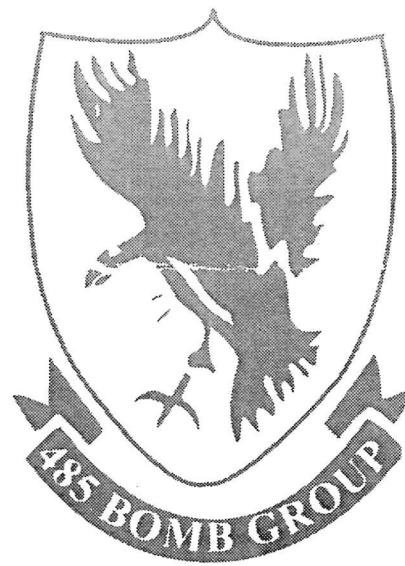
Any ideas about the use of the money should be sent to Marvin Lindsay and be on next years agenda.

Milton Fundling passed a card around to send messages to Wythe

Napier. He lives in Austin, Texas and his son has usually brought him to the reunions. This year a health crises and the amputation of legs make it impossible for him to attend. Good wishes were sent on the card.

Al Martin suggested that a letter of thanks and appreciation be sent to Marvin and Naomi Lindsay. Alice Arthur will take care of that in the name of the 829th and also send a card to Martha Cathcart saying thank you and we missed her this year.

The meeting was adjourned with thanks to Alice Arthur, recorder.



MAILROOM 830TH SQUADRON

BY GEORGE DYER

The following is my write-up for the Reno tours of Carson City and Virginia City. After finding the bus loading zone, we boarded our bus at 8:15 am and off we went.

Our guide's name was Ester Vacchina and a very knowledgeable person in pointing our various things to us. The driver's name was Cassie Traub, and she also was not only an excellent driver, but the way she maneuvered the bus around some of the sharp corners was quite impressive.

It wasn't too long before we arrived at Carson City, which is the capital of Nevada. Here are a few pertinent facts about Carson City—the altitude is 4,600' above sea level, area is 146 square miles, with the population being 52,800. The average days of sunshine is 266, with the medium high summer temperature of 89 degrees and the medium winter low temperature 19 degrees. The state flower is the sage brush.

Our destination was the Nevada State museum where we arrived about 9 am. We had one hour to spend in the museum before re-boarding the bus to continue on with the tour.

Being on our own in the museum, we selected three items that were very impressive. First place, we viewed the silver setting obtained from the battleship Nevada, and was certainly an

eye catching item. Next, the Carson City mint press #1 was an outstanding piece of machinery. It weighs six tons and struck its first coin on February 22, 1870. The coin was called the seated liberty dollar. The press was moved in and out of Carson City a number of times in later years. Third—the replica of the famous liberty bell, located just outside of the museum is one huge historical object. There were many more things to see, but the above three items were the main ones that caught my attention. We again boarded our bus at about 10:15 am and continued on our trip to Virginia City.

Our guide pointed out many interesting things to us. One item was the abundance of wild mustang horses in the fields along the road that roam freely. Next, we were told about, and could see, old abandoned mine shafts on the side of mountains with tailings piled outside the shaft's entrance. This was material that was not suitable for ore.

We then drove by Kit Kat Kitty's house of prostitution with the signs visible as to the nature of the business. We noticed a few cars parked in front of the house, so business must be conducted around the clock.

Upon arriving at Virginia City at 11 am, we immediately boarded an open air trolley pulled by a small tractor. This was a 30 minute tour with the driver

giving us all the data of each building, age and general use of said building. It was a very pleasant trip with the weather being ideal and the guide very knowledgeable.

We then had time to walk each side of what was considered main street. After browsing a number of stores, found them to be very interesting but strictly a tourist stop that kept our interest and imagination working full time to absorb all of the items offered for sale. The citizens and merchants of this little town depend upon the tourist trade for nearly 100% of their livelihood.

The tour returned to Reno, arriving at 1 pm and it was most enjoyable, well planned and very informative.

The squadron meeting this year was enjoyed by all—we know that Father Time has a way of cutting our numbers in attendance, we had 15 830th members plus their families. We hope to have a larger turnout next year in Little Rock as the more central location tends to attract more veterans and families. I have received letters from quite a few this past year telling me about more 830th members that have reached "Journey's End". This will be published in Journey's End of Lightweight Tower. I hope to see all of you next year at the 2003 reunion and am sure that you will be very happy with the accommodations, rates and amenities.

MAILROOM 831ST SQUADRON

BY LYNN COTTERMAN

Saturday evening banquet is always the highlight of the reunion for me. I was seated at Dan Sjodin's table with Hank and Iris Dahlberg, Jerry Whiting, Eugene McCarthy and his son, Ed, Catherine Arnold, widow of General "Pop" Arnold and Anna Nett, widow of Colonel Ed Nett, CO of the 828th Squadron. Both ladies lost their husbands this past year and we were pleased to see them attend the reunion. They are very friendly and easy to talk with—nice ladies. Also at a different table was another nice lady, Iris Griffin, widow of Colonel Richard Griffin, CO of the 830th Squadron who also passed away last year.

Colonel Dan Sjodin, CO of the 831st Squadron, is the only remaining Commanding Officer that was with the original Group that left Fairmont Army Air Field, Nebraska for Italy. He is so healthy it's disgusting! Actually, I'm happy for him, but more than a bit envious. He told me that he is 83 years old and just had a check up at Randolph Field, San Antonio, Texas and got a clean bill of health. He takes no medication, doesn't smoke or drink, walks two miles each day and dances three times a week with different ladies. He said that he has a hard time remembering the ladies' names so he calls them all "Honey".

Dinner was enjoyable with a choice of entree, chicken or prime rib of beef. When the band started playing Dan was the first one on the floor. Some things never change. The dance floor filled up during slow music and clear out when a jumping tune was played. However, I can't say that the party lasted into the wee hours.

The number of 831st veterans attending this year was down mainly because of health problems. I counted 19 members. Bob Plocica who missed

this year, humorously wrote, "It's hell to get old." Last year Mulligan's crew had the most members present, but this year, for various reasons, the only crew member present was Jack Godfrey with his wife, Irene.

We have two new members this year. Murray Sheridan and Stan Plesnarski. Murray Sheridan is from Fort Worth, Texas and was on the 485th Group for 58 years. He is planning to attend the reunion in Little Rock. Stan Plesnarski is from Pottsville, PA and was a bombardier on Ken Craighead's crew, which was one of the crews that flew "Tail Heavy". No first timers this year.

Joan Monahan wrote me that Wilfred "Bill" Lonsway had passed away. He was the radio operator on Young Ben Barber's crew. Others that passed away are Leo O'Brien on Ted Jacobs' crew and Charles H. Dahlgren on Richard Erhardt's crew. Also on the "Journey's End" list are, Garrett Vosser, James Bright a Gunner on Minter's crew and Michael Yaworsky (1985) who was the radio operator on David Blood's crew that bailed out over Yugoslavia in December 1944. Then in December Ray Heskes said he read in the St. Louis Post Dispatch that Les Sutter had passed away. Rowena wrote that her husband Paul Wilson passed away in March, 2000, but somehow we missed reporting it.

Steve Milanz reported that Ned Peirano who was Bert Roswold's co-pilot has passed away. Steve was the navigator and they attended the reunions faithfully. The death of Edward Wroblewski, co-pilot on Carl Bostrom's crew leaves another empty seat at the reunions.

Lisa Lovas reported that her father, Louis Voerman, a member of the ground crew, passed away a couple of years ago. She found many photos

that he had taken while in Italy and made them available to us. Copies of 33 of the photos can be seen at the next reunion in Little Rock.

I received an e-mail from Jerry Whiting telling of the death of Bob Baker, pilot of the crew that flew "Tail Heavy's" 100th mission. Jerry said that in checking the "Journey's End" list that was in the memorabilia room at the reunion, the following members on Baker's crew had passed away previously, but were not on the list: Bryan "B.W." Nauman, engineer and Fred Hosier, gunner.

I goofed last year. I reported that Robert Hickman on Wiggins crew had joined the "Journey's End" gang. I received an e-mail from his daughter, Linda Capozziello, who wrote, "Hey, my father is alive and well in Reynoldsburg, Ohio." She had asked questions about the crew and particularly about Wiggins and wondered if anyone knew him, but I didn't know the inquiries were for her father since he doesn't have e-mail. But in the spirit of the Group, they were good-natured and forgiving about it.

Here's a little friendly advice—don't eat frozen candy bars. On the second day I bit down on a frozen Snicker's bar and a tooth snapped off. It turned out to be quite an expensive candy bar. I had a toothy smile for a few days.

Thank you for your support and letters and cards that keep me informed about your families and new mailing addresses. All of you should think seriously about attending the reunion next year. There will not be many more chances to meet with the gang. So, leave your troubles behind and try to make it to Little Rock. Keep in touch, my e-mail address is Lyncott@juno.com.



LAKE TAHOE/ PONDEROSA RANCH

BY FRANCES J. FOWLER

Our route to the Ponderosa Ranch took us through the beautiful Truckee Meadows. The Truckee River flows only 72 miles between Lake Tahoe and Pyramid Lake. The Reno valley has many companies for ware housing, a low technology (silicon wafers, etc.) and light industry. These are a diversity from the gambling and tourism. During the Pioneer days, ditches were dug for irrigation purposes from the Carson and Truckee rivers. This was the main source of water for the pioneers. Our route followed a partial route of the Donner party.

There are three hydro plants along the river to provide power for the area. During the pioneer days when the lake froze ice was cut in blocks and stored at the Boca Ice House. This was a stop along the transcontinental railroad, and the trains would stop for

ice to cool down the fruit and vegetables being transported.

Reno was formerly named "Lakes Crownings". The ice melt from the Carson Range of the Sierra Nevada Mountains is the water source for Lake Tahoe. We went through Truckee, CA which is named for a Piaute Indian chief (who was a guide and interpreter for the pioneers.)

The main trees in the area are Ponderosa and Jeffrey pines, all of which were cut during the pioneer times and now are all second-generation trees. Also there are Pinion pines which produce a small nut which is used in salads, and various types of American Indian dishes.

The drive along the rim of Lake Tahoe is one of the most beautiful sights. Tahoe is one of the largest alpine lakes in the world. Made a stop at Kings Beach for some picture taking

at the lake. Tahoe means "big water" and is at 6,200' elevation.

We arrived at the Ponderosa Ranch for a tour and lunch. The Ponderosa is where the TV series "Bonanza" was filmed. A tour of the Cartwright Ranch house proved amazing as everything seemed so small compared to what was seen on TV. The Ponderosa is an old-west town complete with working blacksmiths, and many exhibits. One very interesting working exhibit was the glass blower. He made many beautiful bowls, paperweights and other items. All of the exhibits were great to view. Had lunch of either Hoss burgers or chicken. Food was great and the weather was perfect.

Our trip back to Reno was by way of Mount Rose. Mount Rose is one of the large ski areas in the Reno/Tahoe basins.

"BOOK" continued from page 9

"And every single one responded."

Whiting discovered amazing, heroic stories about the group, including 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 co-pilot nearly six weeks later.

Whiting also tells the story of the relationship that the 485th had with the 332nd Fighter Group, the famed Tuskegee Airmen.

In November 1944, Whiting says, when his father's plane had mechanical problems and was forced to return alone to its home base in Venosa, Italy, after a bombing mission, one of the Tuskegee Airmen escorted the aircraft when Wayne Whiting could not keep up with the rest of the group. In December of that year, when the bomb group was not able to make it back to their own base due to bad weather, they landed at the base of the Tuskegee Airmen and stayed there for five days.

"(The airmen from the bomb group) got the opportunity to spend several days with the Tuskegee Airmen and

got to know their protectors," says Whiting.

Whiting says that when he showed the letters to his father, it would trigger memories about the war. As Wayne Whiting's health deteriorated, Whiting spent more time with his father, helping his mother care for him. Father and son bonded during that time as the older Whiting continued to talk to his son about World War II. Whiting acknowledged his father as the co-writer of the book because it was a story of a World War II airman told through excerpts taken from his letters.

The book was well received by his father's fellow crew members and others, says Whiting.

"There were lots of tears (shed) during the writing of the book," he says. "During interviews, I found that even people who didn't initially want to talk about the war eventually would talk about it. One of the guys in his groups said, 'It's not just your dad's story, it's the story of all of us. We all made promises to our moms and we shared a similar experience.'

Three years went into the writing of the book, published last year just weeks before Wayne Whiting died October 18, at the age of 78.

"When we were doing the book at the beginning stages, he was much more aware of things and was interested in the project. But he also wanted the focus of the book to be on his friends than on him," says Whiting.

What Whiting sensed through the letters "was a very strong sense of friendship, trust and admiration of the people he flew with." He also found out how homesick his father had been and learned from his aunt how each letter that arrived at the Whiting household validated that he was still alive.

The book was a labor of love that included help from his wife, Ann, his siblings, Sheree and Doug, and many friends, says Whiting.

"The book is definitely a tribute to my dad. I didn't want it to be just a war story. I wanted it to be about family and friendship."

JOURNEY'S END – MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

Charles H. Dahlgren	2001	831st
Wilfred Lonsway	2002	831st
Michael Yaworsky	1985	831st
Leo O'Brien	2002	831st
Les Sutter	2002	831st
Karl Anderson	2001	828th
Joseph Scogmaniglio (Milo)	1991	828th
Don Amenson	1997	828th
Paul Lundberg	1997	828th
Ernest L. Turner	1971	828th
Jack Olson	1960	828th
Edwin C. Tuttle	1991	830th
Richard Griffin	2002	830th

Paul Alexander	1999	828th
Ed Wroblewski	2002	831st
John Vandenries	2002	829th
Garrett Vosser	2002	831st
Franklin Lambrecht	2002	829th
Robert Baker	2002	831st
George Ward	831st	
Richard Tall	831st	
Raymond Lonergan	2002	830th
James C. Barrett	2001	830th
R.C. "Dick" Bizzero	2001	830th
Frank J. Brockell	830th	
Arthur L. Cook	2001	830th

Marshall Knight	2002	830th
Dan Ricker	1997	830th
Robert Wade	2002	830th
Joe Morrone	2002	828th
Ned Peirano	2002	831st
Louis Voerman	2000	831st
James Bright	2002	831st
John Wisner	2002	829th
John Bowling	2002	829th
Fred Waters	2002	829th
Frank Lancier	2002	829th
Virgil Anderson	2002	831st
Francis Tunstall	2002	830th

LETTER FROM THE HISTORIAN

BY SAMMY SCHNEIDER

Once again I can't make it. I did many times before and had a most wonderful time. Now it's your turn again.

Meeting buddies and family you knew or did not know, just yakking away with those wonderful memories. The good ones of course and exchanging those interesting happenings for the benefit of our younger generation who are always on the lookout for some additional information about their kin. It would be a father or any relations that were part of the 485th bomb group.

On my computer I have enjoyed researching information about them. Once found, how little it may be. Happiness is expressed beyond words when I advise them of what I located pertaining to their kin. Many present could vouch for that which has been another way of finding more personnel connected to the 485th family.

Recent case in point, Bonnie Lee Bailey, a niece of Chester Lee Bailey, gunner on one of three planes that ditched off the Isle of Vis in Yugoslavia. First find as little as it was his name in the 828th squadron index spelled Baileu. Although spelled wrong it was a beginning. Our reprint of *This Is How It Was and the History of the 485th Bomb Group* will correct the spelling to Bailey. Another wing man, our Editor Bob Hanson, looked up errors in the first printing and advised SHPress and changes were made.

Another happy incident when I received word from Lynn Cotterman that 300 copies of our first book, *This Is*

How It Was and the History of the 485th Bomb Group, was to be reprinted and ready for the Reno Reunion. The price of \$39.95 is the same, plus \$5.95 S/H due to a postage increase. Many have asked for the book but unfortunately it was out of print and it was a rare find. When one individual found a copy via Amazon Books they gave a ridiculous price of \$150. Even though I told the individual to return the book and get his money back, he couldn't but was happy to have found one. Other prices in Paul Gaudette Book Store in Phoenix sold for \$55 a copy as well as listed in various magazines for similar prices. It was originally printed in May, 1995. The books will be sold on a first come, first served basis.

Book number three titled *It's Our Turn to Fly* (Lynn Cotterman is my wing man on this mission and I may be calling on Jerry Whiting for additional assistance as Jerry is now a retired policeman). Jerry wrote a book of his own about his Father Duane Whiting tail gunner in the 831st squadron. *Mama, I'm Off to War but I'll Be Back*, I have more than sufficient stories and ready for publishing but more keep coming in. I may have mentioned before that a section in the book will be called *Stories My Friends Sent Me*. Stories from people that were not directly connected with the 485th. Example, my best friend Ed Fleury, I grew up with was with the 69th General Hospital. A 2nd Lt. at the time who I met at Camp Patrick Henry, Nieuport News, Virginia—just before shipping out in the same convoy for our overseas assignment. Our convoy anchored outside of Algiers. Port of

Oran on September 19th. The 69th debarked in Oran on Goat Hill and we waited to leave the following night, September 20th and as we all now know that was the night that JU-88 torpedo bombers hit the Paul Hamilton with 504 men aboard—154 men were from our 831st squadron. I was aboard the James Hoban next to the Hamilton with many from the 828th Squadron personnel. Part of that story is in a diary I wrote and can be read in TIHIW.

My friend Ed gave me two diaries about his hospital unit, which ended up in the CBI (China, Burma, India) theater of operations. The 69th took care of the Merrill Marauders wounded. It seems that the 485th has been getting lots of publicity because of our books to at least be able to show what the 485th did during our tour overseas. Now there is another book called *By God We Made It* by Vern Christensen, original crew of Hell's Angel's. But on his 50th mission to Osweicam, Poland on September 13, 1944 one of those Silver Planes were hit by flak and of 11 men only four survived in landing. Stalag Luft 4 was their home at first. After our great war, the four survivors were invited to the Polish Embassy for dinner and the presentation of medals. Like all POWs their stay was no picnic. *By God We Made It* has had four printings and yet just learned about it from Chris who sent me a copy which is most appreciated.

So, "This is my story for today" with love to all and as I always say best wishes always with good health topping the list.

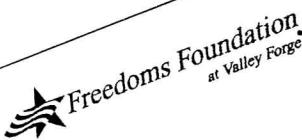
JOHN DiRUSSO RECEIVES THE GEORGE WASHINGTON HONOR AWARD



Above is a picture of John DiRussos at a local bank in PA where his poem "Destiny" is displayed from December to Memorial Day each year. He received this award on December 8, 2002 at Valley Forge, PA from the Freedoms Foundation.

John accepted this award on behalf of all of those killed at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 and for all of our 485th Bomb Group living and deceased.

The award is also shown and the 485th should be very proud of John's accomplishments as well as having a bridge named in honor of Pearl Harbor. This bridge is the Blue Route span over the Schuylkill River and many years, months and days were spent by John in getting this done. The 485th Bomb Group is truly proud of John's accomplishments.



August 16, 2002
John DiRussos
1214 Butler Pike
Conshohocken, PA 19428

Dear John,

Congratulations! Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge is pleased to inform you that you have been chosen to receive the George Washington Honor Award for your entry in this year's Freedoms Foundation National Awards Program. Your program exemplified the essence of responsible citizenship and the benefits of a free society.

Since 1949 Freedoms Foundation's National Awards program has honored exceptional work. Through a selection process based on quality and content, recipients are chosen to become part of a historically prestigious group of American citizens that advance the American ideal.

Your George Washington Honor Medal will be presented to you at an awards ceremony to be arranged by the Valley Forge Freedoms Foundation Volunteer Chapter. An invitation will be extended to you to attend and receive your award at a ceremony conducted this winter, or the award will be mailed to you if you are unable to attend the awards ceremony.

Best wishes in your future endeavors.
Sincerely,

Aaron Siegal
President and CEO

NARRATION OF POW EXPERIENCE

BY MARION E. SHELOR

Editor's Note: Believe this is worthy of being in this years *Lightweight Tower*—Marion E. Shelor was a Bombardier on crew #32 with Jonas A. Latwaitis as aircraft commander. The story speaks for itself and once again gives an idea of the experiences that some of the 485th bomb group went through.

Our 485th Bomb Group was stationed in Italy. On June 9, 1944, our mission was to bomb railyards in Munich, Germany. As we neared the target, German 109's attacked our 485th Group. Our squadron was flying rear flight. We fell away from our group after being damaged. Through the attack, our plane was set on fire and shortly exploded.

I received head wounds, face burns to the extent that I felt that my face was blown off. I was stunned evidently, as my navigator kicked me to get my chute on. We could not wear our chutes with our flack suits. I was in the process of removing the flack suit when I was burned, also leaving burns on my wrists. I got the chute on, the plane exploded. The burning plane disintegrated around us. I became aware of being blown out, and the chute having opened with a shock (I don't remember pulling the cord). I could not see a single person in the sky, just burning aircraft. I thought I was the only survivor. As I hit the ground I saw armed men coming toward me.

I was picked up by a local constable, an old man and a young boy, taken to a farm house, then to a hospital, treated the burns somewhat, the head wound and for shock. Then to the local police station. That was the first I had known the Navigator was alive also. We later learned that our Flight Engineer had been shot prior to the planes burning and had bailed out.

As the Gunnery Officer and

Bombardier I have replayed a thousand times the fact that I should have dropped the bombs before we exploded. The dumping of our bombs earlier might have saved our crew members. When I realized that we were falling away from the rest of our Group, I looked back into the bomb bay and saw complete fire under the flight deck, shortly the plane exploded. This memory of our crew and the fire and explosion has been with me continually for 50 years.

We were picked up at the little town of Erding (near Munich), from the police station there we were taken on a flat bed truck (with other crew members recently picked up from other planes), by way of Landshut, Frankfort and Wetzlar, later to Sagan, Stalug Luft III. We were there until late January, 1945. Food was scarce and we were on half rations in September, 1944...we would save special items to order to have it for Thanksgiving and Christmas. We were always hungry. In September we were cut to half of what had been our ration. Red Cross parcels were of much help. Food became less and less until the later part of January. We believed the Russians were getting nearer.

Excerpt from a letter written February 7, 1945, Nurernbeg, Germany (copy of notes to wife, that was carried home):

"The last 10 days have been pretty rough ones. I hate to say this but my thoughts and actions have been very self-centered. Been mainly concerned with keeping myself alive. First, on Saturday, January 27, we were playing bridge about 9:30 pm. 'They' came running through the block yelling to get packed that we were marching out. We knew something was bound to happen. The Russians were getting closer every day. We all hoped against hope that the Germans would leave us to the Russians—no soap—so we

started throwing stuff together (had one hour).

Finally, about 12:30 am, the 28th, as snow was about 4" deep we marched out. All that night and into the next day until about 10:00 am. Stopped in a little town called Freiwaldau. No place to go except the street. So we stayed out on the cold windy street for 4 or 5 hours. Got next to a stove for 20 minutes, had to take turns! We marched out about 6:00 pm after I had burned all my letters and trivia from home, extra clothing, suitcase and etc. trying to warm. It was snowing to beat hell when we started but let up a little as we went on. Finally about 10 or 11 pm that night the Germans got the idea someone was trying to escape into the woods—so they have a Wild West show with 2,500 of us with our faces in the snow. flattest I've ever been in my life. Someone says crawl back on the road and stand up. So we do! So they start shooting again. Now I lay on my back flat—same way we had cooling off. So on we go. Stop at a small town—no shelter, no nothing! They take in about 30 or 40 that can't walk any farther. Rest of us go on. It's now about one or two am Monday. They find a barn that some can stop in. Steve, Doug and Charley drop off (smart men). The rest of us are told that we have to march 16 more kilometers—so we do. In about an hour guys start to drop exhausted—can't leave them cause they would freeze to death. So buddies start helping them through! Honey, about half way I decided it was time to find out if I was man or mouse (please, pass the cheese). I have never been so tired and sleepy, exhausted in my whole damn life! My right heel was killing me. Maybe it was good it did, it kept me going! Men were going to sleep walking. We just kept going! Honey, about 8 or 9 am Monday morn,

"POW" continued on next page

"POW" continued from previous page

about 2,000 of us got into Moskau, Germany."

"We were in Moskau in barn, pottery factory (with too much heat if you were on the inside) departed Moskau at 1200, January 31st. Our third stop was at Graustein, arrived at 2300, 31st departed 1700, February 1. Arrived at Spremberg 2200, February 1, departed February 2, 0800 via Box Cars (50 men to a car crowded in like the cattle that been in the cars before, nor had the cars been cleaned previous to our boarding). We were in these for 2 nights, men with dysentery, no food or water.

We arrived in Nuernberg on February 4 (1530 hours). These barracks were overcrowded, no heat. Malnutrition and filth were the conditions we moved into. What German food was given were dehydrated vegetables with worms. No clothing replacements. The place was filthy with lice and fleas and other vermin. Bathing and washing facilities once each two weeks...no bedding available. All the conditions led to infections and dysentery. Rats, mice and bed bugs were also prevalent. Sanitation was terrible. Aborts were open. Bad, bad.

Another excerpt from a note written March 22, 1945 from Nuernberg:

"Honey I haven't written for a long time now. Mainly because we have been so miserable. Honey, I can truthfully say I didn't know what war was until the last two months! Until last Thursday we have been existing on a non-working Germans ration of food. Our food has been cut several times...now, one loaf of bread a week, and 38 gr. spuds. I've had two showers in two months. The men are so skinny it's pitiful. Men you've been with and seen in good physical condition are skeletons—yes. I'm included—probably weight less than 100 pounds.

Have I been scared? Two large American raids on Nuernberg (3 km)

about 2 dozen British night raids—yes. We all sweat them out. Bombs have dropped so close our barracks wall is pushed out. The only thing that keeps us going now is the knowledge that this is about over and we will be home again. Also, GI Red Cross trucks are bringing us a few parcels."

"Honey, the ones at home that we love and think about will never know what they have been to us and getting us through. Sounds as if we are feeling sorry for ourselves. Maybe we are. Another raid on, Baby—better finish this later. Just pray to God this is over soon! All my love, Yours. M.E."

The numerous air raids at Nuernberg made life miserable for all. The final weeks were a bad dream of air raid sirens, day and night, with bombs dropping throughout the city. Great damage was done to the city. Our hopes of liberation were shattered. Two days after Easter when the Germans decided to move us on. Under their control we moved! I had a pack of belongings wrapped in my army blanket, personal items, a log and little food. Began walking...we left Nuernberg in very severe nasty weather...we walked for about 10 days, hunting and trading for food with the German people, as we could.

We arrived at Moosburg on April 13 to a camp which was already filled with thousands of PW's. We were under a big tent erected wherever space was available. Bedding was a blanket on straw, or in fox holes. It was better times, cooking what we could outside using "klim" cans, fuel was a problem, in order to heat anything. We had daily rations of black bread.

Allies were continuing to bomb Munich, heavy raids around us. Small towns and rail yards. B-26's continued to clobber the area. Again we needed the fox holes we used constantly at Nuernberg.

April 29, our artillery was just over the hill, bullets whistled into the area during the Sunday open field mass, we

knew our troops were beginning to push through the area. Early afternoon, everything stopped and Moosberg fell. We saw General Patton come into the camp shortly after noon.

Later we were loaded onto flat bed trucks taken to Landshut. On May 3, in C-47's we left for Paris. We were taken to a place for delousing, etc. At Lucky Strike we were among the first group to leave. We left on the SS Brazil, used for the repatriates, wounded, etc.

The experiences that continue to haunt me most would be seeing the fire in our bomb bay and wondering why I hadn't dropped the bombs, and/or the loss of seven of our Crew members. The Forced Marches with lack of food and water that took its toll on knees, backs and feet. The continued bombings at Nuernberg (by our Allies) and the almost undescribably filth of the place—lack of food, the sanitation, the two nights in Box Cars, no place to relieve ourselves, dysentery, etc.

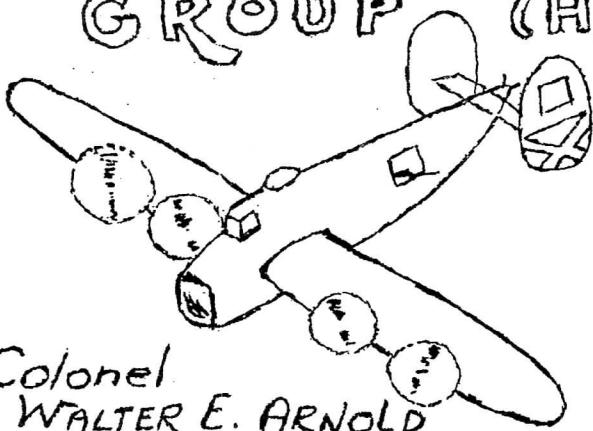
As a Gunnery Officer and Bombardier, I have replayed a thousand times the fact that I could have dropped the bombs before we reached the target. (I have realized since that we could never have reached the target—the dumping of the bombs earlier might have saved our crew members). When I realized that we were below, and far back from the rest of our plane formation, I looked back toward the bombay and saw fire under the flight deck and in the bomb bay, shortly the plane exploded.

I continue to feel most grateful that I arrived home and was met in Kansas City by my wife. She had not heard from me or my whereabouts since before we left Sagan, until the middle of May, when we sent cablegrams.

It was also a great joy to see my son, Michael, (10 months old) for the first time. In spite of it all, God has been good to me!"

Marion Shelor passed away in 1999.

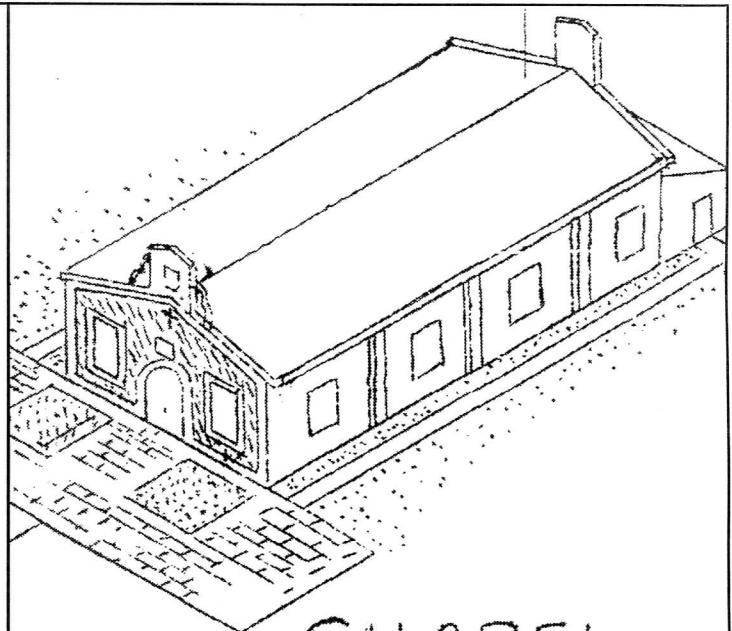
GROUP CHAPEL
DEDICATION SERVICE
485TH BOMB
GROUP (H)



Colonel
WALTER E. ARNOLD
Commanding

SOMEWHERE IN ITALY
JULY 16, 1944
@ 1830

CAPT W.M.P. GOLDER --- GROUP
CHAPLAIN

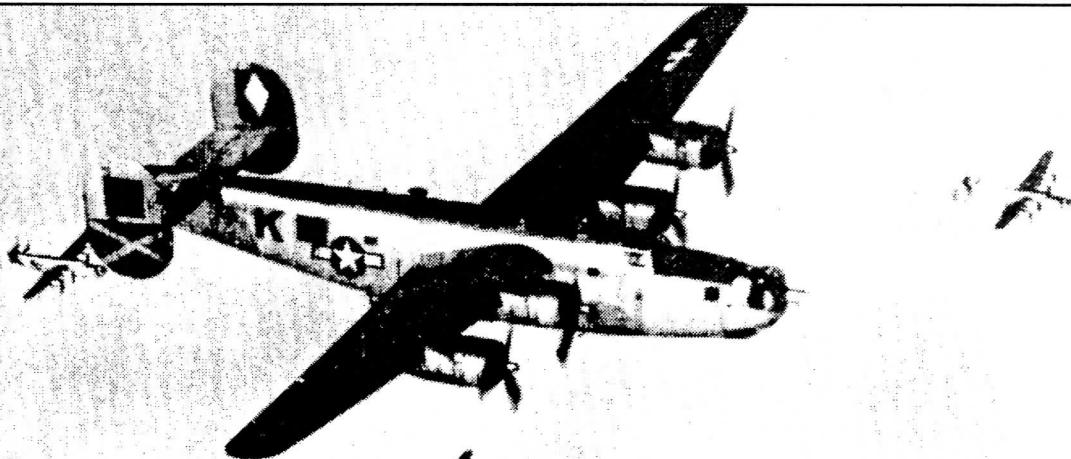


CHAPEL

485TH BOMB GROUP(H)

SEATING CAP.	-----	275
FLOOR AREA	CONGREGATION ----- 1350 □	
CHANCEL	-----	450 □
OFFICES	-----	300 □
TOTAL	-----	2100□

S/SGT. J.F. EAGAN



The 485th in action — TIGHTEN UP THAT BOX BEFORE BOMBRUN!

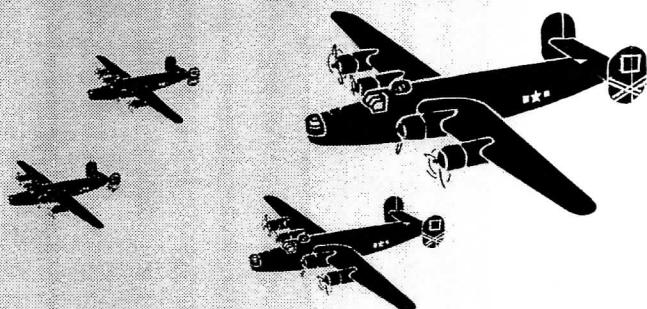
• Memory Lane •



USO Show at 485th



R & R in Rome, February 3, 1945



Air Base Reunion Planned at Fairmont

FAIRMONT—A Fairmont Air Base reunion is planned for June 2003.

Preliminary plans include an airship, displays of full-sized and model airplanes, free plane rides for children, a parade and displays recognizing veterans.

The event's working title is "Celebrate 100 years of aviation at the historic Fairmont Airfield." It is expected the 2003 event will fill area motels and restaurants, much like a similar reunion at the air base did in 1996.

For more information, write the Fillmore County Historical Society, Box 333, Fairmont, NE 68354.

List of Reunions for 485th Bomb Group - 15th AirForce World War II
 (Note: 828th Squadron had 5 squadron reunions from 1960-1964)

Host

1. Newton Fall, Ohio.....August 14-15, 1965Bill Schoultz
2. Grand Rapids, MI.....August 19-21, 1966Carl Gigowski
3. Springboro/Dayton, OH.....August 19-20, 1967Edward Manning
4. Dearborn, MI.....August 18-20, 1968Howard Woodyard
5. Edwardsville, IL.....August 15-17, 1969Les Sutter
6. Oklahoma City, OK.....August 15-17, 1970Bernard Rempe
7. Atlantic City, NJ.....August 21-22, 1971Stan Turecki
8. Huston, TXAugust 25-27, 1972Andre Salazar
9. Rochester, NY.....August 3-5, 1973William Best
10. York, NBAugust 2-4, 1974Bob Marland
11. Atlanta, GAAugust 1-3, 1975Homer Hale
12. Vail, COAugust 5-8, 1976Rod Ritchie
13. Minneapolis, MN.....August 5-7, 1977Dan Sjodin, Bob Halling, Irv Parker
14. Newport Beach, CA.....August 4-6, 1978Roger Monroe
15. Pittsburgh, PA.....August 3-5, 1979Claude Sheline
16. Return to Venosa, Italy.....Sept. 15 - Oct. 2, 1980B. and Laura Rempe, Bentley Hedges Trav
17. Louisville, KYJuly 31-Sept. 2, 1981Al Martin
18. Austin, TXAugust 6-8, 1982Al Peshka
19. Chicago, ILAugust 4-7, 1983Art Hurley, Bill Long
20. Charlotte, NCSept. 28-30, 1984Dean Bassett
21. Brownsville TXOct. 9-13, 1985Dan Sjodin, Jack Whatley
22. Nashville, TNSept. 24-28, 1986Joe Cathcart
23. Scottsdale, AZSept. 23-27, 1987Lloyd Proudlove
24. St. Pete Beach, FLSept. 28-Oct. 2, 1988Bob Hanson
25. San Antonio, TXSept. 6-10, 1989Chet Konkolewski
26. Dayton, OHSept. 4-9, 1990Ed Nett
27. Little Rock, AKSept. 11-15, 1991George Dyer
28. Peabody, MASept. 30-Oct. 4, 1992Ken Wall
29. Albuquerque, NMSept. 15-19, 1993Barton Brown, Lynn Cotterman
30. Memphis, TNSept. 14-18, 1994Rocky Jordan
31. Scottsdale, AZSept. 13-17, 1995Lloyd Proudlove
32. Savannah, GASept. 11-15, 1996C.W. West
33. Dallas, TXSept. 4-7, 1997Sherrill Burba
34. Louisville, KYSept. 3-6, 1998Al Martin, Don Peden
35. Denver, COSept. 15-19, 1999Armed Forces, Inc.
36. St. Louis, MOSept. 27-Oct. 1, 2000Armed Forces, Inc.
37. Harrisburg, PASept. 5-9, 2001Armed Forces, Inc.
38. Reno, NVSept. 9-13, 2002Armed Forces, Inc.

Freedom Is Not Free

I watched the flag pass by one day.
 It fluttered in the breeze.
 A young Marine saluted it, and then
 He stood at ease.
 I looked at him in uniform
 So young, so tall, so proud,
 With hair cut square and eyes alert.
 He'd stand out in any crowd.
 I thought how many men like him
 Had fallen through the years.
 How many died on foreign soil?
 How many mothers' tears?
 How many pilots' planes shot
 down?
 How many died at sea?
 How many foxholes were soldiers'
 graves?
 No, freedom is not free.
 I heard the sound of taps one night,
 When everything was still.
 I listened to the bugler play
 And felt a sudden chill.
 I wondered just how many times
 That taps had meant "Amen,"
 When a flag had draped a coffin
 Of a brother or a friend.
 I thought of all the children,
 Of the mothers and the wives,
 Of fathers, sons and husbands
 With interrupted lives.
 I thought about a graveyard
 At the bottom of the sea,
 Of unmarked graves in Arlington.
 No, freedom is not free.

**Students score
low on history test**

**TO YOU IT'S "ANCIENT HISTORY..."
I STILL FILE PEARL HARBOR
UNDER "CURRENT EVENTS"**



St. Petersburg Times

— Cadet Major Kelly Strong,
 Air Force Junior ROTC,
 Homestead, FL, 1989.

New York

London Edition

Paris

EXTRA

EXTRA

THE STARS AND STRIPES

Daily Newspaper of U.S. Forces
★ Vol. 5 No. 242--1d.

in the European Theater
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1945

