



LIGHTWEIGHT TOWER CALLING



No. 43

March 2009

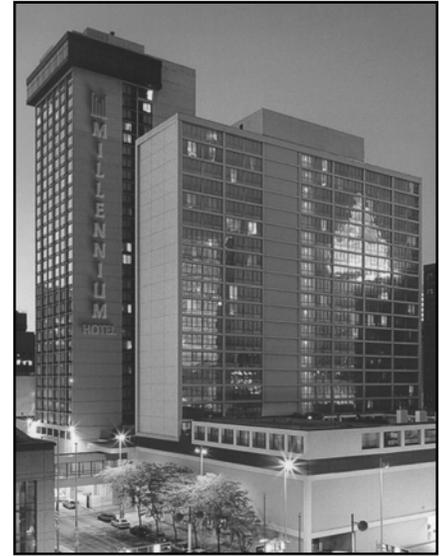
Cincinnati, Ohio 2009 by Bob Hanson

Our next reunion will be in Cincinnati, Ohio. Dates will be October 7th through October 11th 2009. The 485th has never had a reunion in Cincinnati before, so everyone will enjoy new sights. The Millennium Hotel in downtown Cincinnati will be our location with a room rate of \$109 plus tax. The hotel is located one block from Tower Place, an upscale Mall of over 75 stores. The mall includes Saks 5th Avenue, Tiffany's, exclusive boutiques and over 30 restaurants ranging from fast food to fine dining, all within walking distance of the hotel.

There will be tours offered including a bus tour to Wright Patterson Air Force Museum one day. To those that have never been, this museum is known as one of the premier Air Force displays. Another event planned is an evening dinner cruise on a River Boat on the Ohio River.

All tours and events will be sent out along with hotel reservations by each squadron reporter long before the reunion is scheduled. With the 2nd and 3rd generations joining us more and more (and taking over so many duties of running and putting the reunion together) I am sure there will be many items of enjoyment for ALL!

Bring friends or relatives to this annual affair and enjoy a memorable trip to Cincinnati, located in the heart of good old USA!



San Antonio Missions Including the Alamo by Frances Fowler

The 44th Annual 485th Bomb Group Reunion was held October 8-12, 2008 at the Double Tree Hotel, San Antonio, Texas. San Antonio is famous for The Alamo, the many Missions and the River Walk. The Spanish Missions were established along the San Antonio River in the 18th Century. There were five (5) missions within a few miles of each other. The entire city was beautiful with many Missions and beautiful sights for all to see and visit.

About 160 Veterans & their families (including a few fourth generation

children) were in attendance at the reunion.

Early arrivals on Tuesday, October 7th were Bob Hanson, Lynn Cotterman and Bill Cummings. Others arrived also, and all met and visited. On Wednesday, Phil and Michelle Cummings arrived and did the shopping for the Hospitality Room.

Registration started at 1:00 PM on Wednesday, Oct 8th. Information on the two cities picked for next year's reunion, Chicago, Illinois and

Cincinnati, Ohio. This gave attendees a chance to review the cities and the places for tours, before the Business Meeting on Saturday, October 11th. As voted on last year, all persons eighteen (18) years or older, who paid a registration fee are eligible to vote for next years reunion. At 5:00 PM the hotel hosted a Welcome Reception for the 485th Bomb Group on the patio by the swimming pool. This was a great welcome reception.

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During the day a reporter from Channel 12 came to interview Bob Hanson and Lynn Cotterman. The reporter filmed for about 30 minutes. The interview showed on the 6:00 PM news and lasted about two minutes.



Thursday, October 9th we boarded the buses for a City Tour. This tour took us by many historic sites; with the first stop at Mission San José, “The Queen of the Missions” is the largest mission in San Antonio. Descendants of the Coahuiltecan Indians that lived in the walls of the missions still live in the area. This beautiful church is still very active. Next stop was The Alamo. In 1836, 150 men took cover behind the walls of the Alamo after General Santa Anna’s army declared retaliation against Texans for their attempt to cut themselves off from Mexican rule. Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie couldn’t withstand the forces of Santa Ana’s troop. The shrine of the Alamo still stands as a reminder of the lives lost for Texas to gain their independence. The tour made a stop at the San Fernando Cathedral, the original church of the Canary Island settlers. Continuing on we drove by the Riverwalk, Hemisfair and Park (the site of the 1968 World’s fair). The Tower of Americas top rotates for a 360-degree view of San Antonio. An early lunch and shopping at El Mercado, a Mexican Market. The tour continued to drive by many historic sites before heading back to the hotel.

In the evening a Mexican Dinner Buffet was served with a great Mariachi band providing entertainment.

Friday, October 10th buses took us to downtown San Antonio, for a tour of the Riverwalk and surrounding area. There are many River walks around the country, but San Antonio’s River Walk “Paseo del Rio” in Spanish is the most famous. The river walk winds through the downtown area and creates an entirely different outlook on the city. We took the River Barge tour through a beautiful blend of heritage, traditions and natural beauty. Our tour guide explained the use of the locks to keep the water at a certain level. The river ranges in depth from 5 feet to 18 feet. There were many beautiful bridges as well as unusual buildings. The tour took approximately 45 minutes and was very enjoyable. When the tour ended we took a short walk along the river looking at some of the many shops and stopped for Mexican food. Many of the people from the 485th were dining at the same restaurant. We had the best beef tamales we have had in years. While waiting for the bus to take us back to the hotel we visited with many from the 485th. At 5:30 PM we boarded buses for a drive to the Diamond W. Chuck wagon Supper and Cowboy Show. Before dinner one of the cowboys brought out a very large long horn steer, which performed various acts. Of course, he had to have his treats in between performing.

The food was typical of Western barbeques and very tasty and the cowboys were very entertaining.

Saturday, October 11th the group Meeting was conducted by Bob Hanson and went very well. The Secretary and Treasurer’s reports were read. Approximately 160 were

in attendance at the reunion. A minimum of 150 is required to hold the reunion. Phil Cumming and father Bill were again thanked for all the work they do for the Hospitality Room. Phil’s wife, Michelle, also is a great help to the Hospitality Room. Bob Hanson, Sr. commended Steve and Laura Sharpe for the great job they did on Lightweight Tower. Jerry Whiting was unable to attend this reunion due to some serious health problems. We signed cards for mailing to Jerry. During the Business Meeting Special Guests were recognized and spoke for a short time to the attendees. The Special Guests were: Dr. Jakob Mayer from Innsbruck, Austria; Bob Johnson of the 449th Bomb Group who spent some time in the prison camp with 485th detainees; Carlo Briscece and John Mollica who were born in Venosa, Italy and were present when the 485th was stationed there. Also introduced were: Joan Tomhave Newman, daughter of Col. Tomhave, Karen Ianniello and brother Greg Bush, Mary Ann Gworek, niece of Walter Gworek; and Gerald Weinstein, son of Sy Weinstein (photographer for the 485th Bomb Group in Italy). Squadron Reporters have been replaced by Second Generation people. Bob recognized Sarah Peterson from the Armed Forces Reunions. After the Squadron pictures were taken a cash bar was available in the banquet room.



Sarah Peterson from the Armed Forces Reunions

Pre-dinner music and music for dancing was performed by “The Second Line”. This group of musicians played great Dixieland/Jazz music, which was enjoyed by all. Bob Hanson opened the banquet with a welcome and a Prayer/Blessing. George Chaplin said the prayer. John Mollica entertained us with singing and some dancing. John sang “That’s Amore”. All enjoyed his singing and dancing. Couples enjoyed dancing to the good music with the dance floor usually fairly full. John Rau and Stephanie Capaziello danced. John Mollica sang, “It’s Now or Never”. He also dedicated a song, “Oh Marie”, to Jerry Whiting. All enjoyed an evening of good food, great entertainment, and dancing.

Sherrill Burba, Bob Hanson and George Chaplin conducted the Sunday morning memorial breakfast and service. George is a retired Episcopalian priest and did the service. George also led the singing of songs, as Al Martin was unable to attend the reunion this year due to illness.

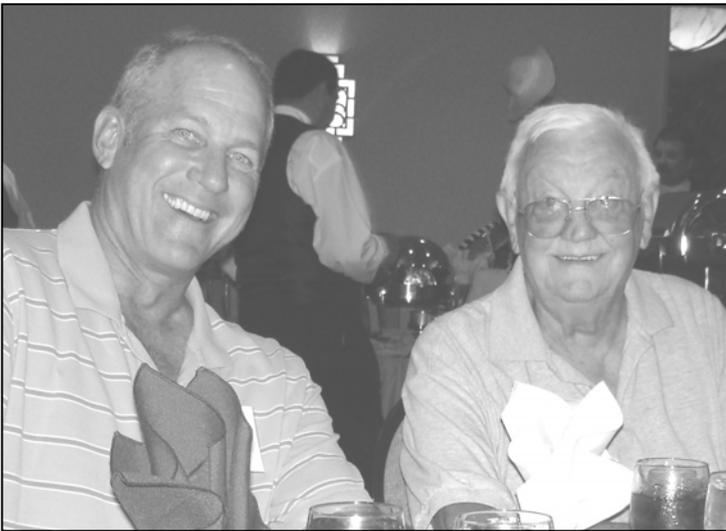
Next year we will meet in Cincinnati, Ohio with one tour to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. See all of you next year!



John Mollica serenading the 485th during the Banquet Dinner



Vern Christiansen’s amazement at Johnny’s performance is captured in the photo above



Mark LaScotte & Arthur Hurley – 828th Thursday Mexican Dinner Buffet



Cliff & Carol Studaker with Jolene Veal Stockton – 830th Thursday Mexican Dinner Buffet

A TRIP BACK TO VENOSA

By Jerry Whiting

It still seems more like a dream than reality. It happened so quickly. I had hoped and dreamed to visit Venosa, Italy one day, the temporary home of the 485th BG Bomb Group from April 1944-April 1945. My Dad, a tail gunner in the group, talked often of his stay there. He arrived in Italy in October 1944 and flew home in late May of 1945, shortly after the war in Europe ended.

I heard stories from my Dad about Venosa and the surrounding area. He was not a tourist in Italy. He and the 2000+ men with him, stationed at the airfield near Venosa, were there to fight a war. It was their main and only purpose for being there, flying bombing missions to the European countries under Hitler's control. Some of the men did go into town occasionally, a break from the combat, fear, and flak-filled skies. They went to Venosa and to the surrounding towns. Those who survived and returned home safely after the war brought those memories with them. My Dad was one of those grateful survivors.

Dad told stories about Venosa and the poverty there during the war. He talked of his little friend Tony, an Italian boy who visited the base. He talked of the wheat field that became an airfield and the mountain, "Old Sawtooth" as they called it, just a few miles away where more than one B-24 bomber from the group crashed. He had a few photos, but just a few, and most of these were of his crew.

He had one photo that was particularly important to him, a photo of Tony, the Italian boy, standing alongside John Manfrida, the nose gunner on the crew. Over the years Dad wondered what happened to Tony and the other children. He hoped Tony did well after the war, that life had treated him well. He said Tony had good survival skills, even at such a young age, but he



still wondered how he fared in life. At times he tried to remember Tony's last name, but was never certain of it. The poverty in and around Venosa really bothered Dad. It presented itself everywhere at the time, in the rundown buildings, ragged clothing, and undernourished, friendly children and adults. These were the memories he shared with me.

After I had written two books about the 485th Bomb Group, *I'm Off To War, Mother, But I'll Be Back* and *Don't Let the Blue Star Turn Gold*, the men in the 485th Bomb Group Association asked me to be their historian. I agreed, enthusiastically. Although my Dad died in October 2001, this was a good way to keep his memory alive and to be an active participant in preserving the group's history. Meanwhile, a researcher in Torino, Giancarlo Tagliatti, assisted me in identifying Tony and learned that Tony was still alive. I learned that Tony's last name was Preite.

I met Pasquale Libutti and Renato Mancino through the magic of the internet. Both knew of the American airfield at Venosa and were interested in knowing more about the 485th Bomb Group and both offered their assistance in helping me learn more about the field. About the same time I learned of a former Venosa native who now lived in Florida, Carlo Briscese. I began exchanging emails with Carlo's daughter, Emanuela and also spoke to him on the phone. All of this was happening so quickly.

Just a few weeks later I learned that Commander Mary Ann Gworek, United States Naval Reserve, the niece of one of the 485th Bomb Group airmen, was stationed in Naples. In email correspondence she told me she wanted to visit Venosa, where her uncle, Walt Gworek, was stationed before he was shot down and became a Prisoner of War. When I offered to put her in touch with my new friends Pasquale and Renato, she invited me and my wife to visit her and Naples and then visit Venosa with her. Mary Ann wanted us to use her frequent-flier miles to visit her, but the trip would have to be made quickly, because Mary Ann was returning to the U.S. in early March and it was already the end of January. My wife couldn't make the trip, but less than three weeks later I was in Naples, with my head still spinning from the recent sequence of events.

Pasquale and Renato graciously agreed to take time off work and show us Venosa. During a phone conversation with Carlo Briscese, I learned he not only knew Tony Preite, but Tony was his good friend and Carlo visited the airfield with Tony as a little boy. When I sent Carlo a photo of my Dad's crew, Carlo remembered my Dad and a couple of the other men. It was like a dream to me. Could this really be happening? Carlo also contacted Tony and asked Tony to meet with me on my trip.

As Mary Ann and I rode on the bus to Candela, where Pasquale and Renato were meeting us, I wondered what Venosa was like. Was the poverty still there? Is Venosa clean or dirty? Would I really get to meet Tony Preite? If so, would he have specific memories of my Dad from so many years ago? Were any of the buildings still standing from the airfield? What does the castle look like? Does the statue of Horace look the same as in the photo I have? I wish my Dad was still alive so he could share this experience with me.

When the bus stopped at Candela, Pasquale and Renato were waiting for us. I'm not sure who was most excited, but as soon as Mary Ann and I got off the bus, I knew this would be a wonderful experience. Pasquale spoke more English than Renato, but words were not important right then. I knew I had some new friends.

As we drove to Venosa, I saw the countryside was picturesque, like a postcard. Pasquale pointed out the general location of the airfield, close to the highway, which we would visit the next day. As we approached the outskirts of Venosa, on a winding road, I could barely contain my excitement. I was so happy when we entered the town that Venosa was beautiful, clean and charming, with no signs of the poverty my Dad described. Renato navigated the narrow, stone-surfaced streets that weren't much more than pathways, taking us past the statue of Horace, which looked just like the photo, to our destination, the Hotel Orazio.



Pasquale Libutti, Jerry Whiting & Mary Ann Gworek

The owners of the hotel were expecting us. We learned that Tony had phoned to see if we arrived. After Mary Ann and I took our luggage to our rooms, Pasquale and Renato took us on a walking tour of Venosa. It was nice to see the locals, of all ages, strolling down the sidewalks or sitting on benches, enjoying the warm afternoon. More of Pasquale's and Renato's friends joined us. I learned, as we spent more time with them, that each seemed to have an area of expertise, such as local history, ancient history, photography, and global positioning to identify landmarks.

Early in the evening Tony Preite met us at the castle entrance. I know there were tears in my eyes as we shook hands and hugged. It was like a dream. With the castle in the background, photos were taken as a group of locals watched. We went to a sidewalk café, where we shared good conversation, some of the local spirits, food and friendship.



Jerry Whiting & Tony Preite

The next morning two carloads of our new friends took us to the location of the airfield, now a grain field. Tony accompanied us and provided details from his memory of the Americans and their big bombers as GPS coordinates were plotted, photos taken, and details explained. A farmer plowed his field on a tractor, where once the heavily-laden bombers struggled to take off. Old Sawtooth loomed in the background, most definitely a reference point for the bomber crews as it looked down onto the plain.

I video-taped and photographed the scene and my new friends. Mary Ann looked as overwhelmed as I felt as we drove down a dirt road to our next stop, a tent area. Tony was talking in Italian and we stopped as Tony pointed to the field. He walked into the field about 70 yards and stopped. Tony identified this spot as the location of my Dad's tent in the 831st Bomb Group

Squadron tent area. Mary Ann's uncle's tent was in the same area. I watched the grass blowing in the breezing, imagining how Tony must have felt as a young boy, thinking of my Dad and his buddies. Many of those who survived the war are gone now, but I didn't want to dwell on that.

I knew the headquarters building, once a farmhouse, was about 200 yards from the tent area. It was too much to hope for to think it might still be standing. I looked down the dirt road and saw a building. We went to the end of the dirt yard, where a locked gate blocked our path. The abandoned farmhouse certainly resembled the headquarters building, and it was the correct distance from the tent area, but perhaps this was too much to hope for. We opened one of my books to look at a 1944 photo of the headquarters building. It sure looked like the same building, but could it be?

We honked the horn, trying to attract the attention of anyone on the farm. A dog barked & geese cackled, but we saw no sign of human life. Finally, we climbed the fence to get a closer look. We saw no one as we approached the buildings. Now I was certain this was the old headquarters building. I photographed & videotaped the front of the building. One of my companions knocked on the door of the main building, but there was no answer.

After we climbed the fence to the road we heard a horn honking. Across the field we saw a vehicle driving toward us. The man in the car stopped at the gate and wanted to know what we were doing on the property. My friends explained the situation and Mr. Francesco Rienzi, invited us back to the property. He told us he was the caretaker for the property. He said people were not allowed inside the building due to a dispute, but he welcomed us onto the property to take more photos and to visit with him.

After our visit, with lots of photos, video tape, new friends and wonderful memories, but tired and hungry, we returned to town where our new friends treated us to a wonderful meal at a restaurant across from the castle. Pasquale's wife, Agata Libutti, joined us. She brought a family treasure to show us, a beautiful, embroidered tablecloth made from an American parachute. It was nice to have another woman in our group and I'm certain that Mary Ann also appreciated having another woman with us. After the meal we went for another walking tour of Venosa during the early evening hours, seeing more of

the beautiful local sights, with history lessons provided by Pasquale and the group. I slept well that night.

The next morning I got to see the ancient church and we toured the castle, before stopping again at the sidewalk café for refreshments. Several of our new friends were there to say goodbye, including Tony. Later, Pasquale drove us back to Candela to catch our bus. Thoughts filled my mind on the bus ride back to Naples. It was an experience I will cherish. More importantly, I now know the men in the 485th Bomb Group, like my Dad, are not forgotten.



Abandoned farmhouse that was once the 485th Headquarters Building



Agata Libutti with the embroidered tablecloth

SAN ANTONIO CITY TOUR ~ THURSDAY OCTOBER 9TH, 2008

By Jody Boyd submitted by Marvin Lindsay

According to our tour guides, Millie and her husband, “Big Bad” Leroy Brown, Native Americans originally lived in the San Antonio River Valley near San Pedro Springs and named the area “Yanaguana,” meaning “refreshing waters. In 1691, a group of Spanish explorers and missionaries came upon the river and it’s inhabitants on June 13, the feast day of Saint Anthony of Padova, Italy and named the place and river “San Antonio” in his honor. Today, San Antonio is the seventh largest city in the United States with 1.7 million inhabitants. It is known as an historic urban center made of many districts including the Alamo District, Historic Civic District, La Villita District, and Market Square District.

Mission San Antonio de Valero, was established in 1718, the first of five Spanish Missions. The church structure that stands today in midtown was begun about 1755. Abandoned in 1836 with the completion of its original purpose, it became known as the Alamo, the “Cradle of Texas Liberty.” Rebelling against repressions of Mexico’s Santa Anna, 189 U.S. volunteers, including William Travis, Davy Crockett, and Jim Bowie, met their demise as they defied an army of thousands for 13 days— from February 23 to March 6. Santa Anna declared it a glorious victory; his aid commented: One more such glorious victory and we are finished. Four other San Antonio missions were established by Franciscan friars in the early 18th Century: Mission San José - known as the “Queen of Missions,” is both a State and National Historic Site. Entirely restored, it’s Rose Window, and granary transport visitors to “another time.” Mission Concepcion, the oldest un-restored church in America, permits a peak into life in 1731. The chapel and bell tower at Mission San José are still in use, and the irrigation system established for Mission Espada operates the Espada aqueduct and dam today.



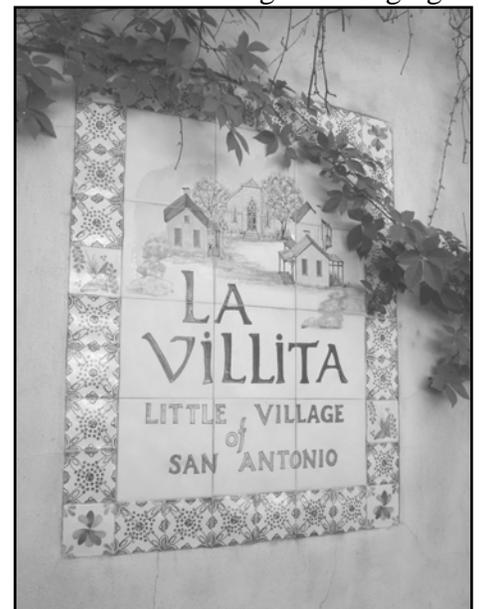
Margie & Wayne Smith (829th)
Mission San José

Even lunch was a historical event at Market Square’s famous 24-hour restaurant and bakery, Mi Tierra; shopping at El Mercado and people watching!



El Mercado - San Antonio's Market Square

San Antonio’s rich history prevails around every corner! La Villita, the oldest surviving neighborhood, dating from the 1750’s, is now full of artists and craftsmen. The Tower of the Americas built for the World’s Fair in 1968, sports an observation deck offering views of the city and the five military bases surrounding it. The Emily Morgan Hotel, formerly the Medical Arts Building built in 1924, complete with gargoyles expressing a variety of “ailments” is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It has intrigue beyond architecture. Who is Emily Morgan? In April of 1836, at siesta time, the Texas army led a charge against Santa Anna’s camp at San Jacinto and the Texan’s won the decisive battle in only 18 minutes. Folklore has it that a mulatto girl belonging to Colonel Morgan was closeted with General Santana at the time of the attack. Thus some consider Emily the key to victory. Though this story is unconfirmed, she is believed to be the inspiration for the well-known song. “The Yellow Rose of Texas!



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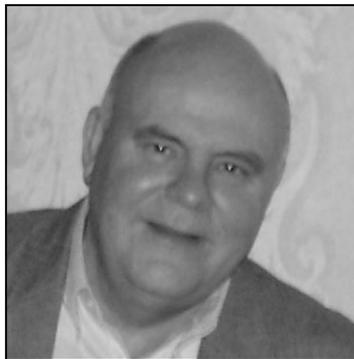
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HEADQUARTERS 2ND GENERATION



Mary Habstritt, Gerry Weinstein, Kathleen Arnold, Joan Tomhave Newman

SPECIAL GUESTS



John Mollica, Rae Mollica, Lina Briscese, Carlo Briscese, Greg Bush, Karen Ianniello,
Joan Tomhave Newman, Jakob Mayer, Mary Ann Gworek & Bob Johnson

828TH SQUADRON



Seated: Ken Wall

Front Row: Gregory Lahay, Robert Yates, Bill Ryan, Lee Busroe, Jack Eden, James Rau

Back Row: Jack Whatley, Sherrill Burba, Arthur Hurley

Not Pictured: Charlie Taylor

829TH SQUADRON



Front Row: John Duntley, Robert Brown, Milton Fundling, Marvin Lindsay, David Roth, Harry Johnson

Back Row: Jack Behunin, Arthur Fowler, Russell Arthur, Wayne Smith

830TH SQUADRON



Standing: Bill Cummings, Clarence “Deacon” Miller, Bueford Cooper, Cliff Studaker, Clyde Corbett, Howard Boxley & Walter Michalke

831ST SQUADRON



Front Row: Lynn Cotterman, Bill Brokaw, Herbert Frels, Harold Wilder, Cliff “Woody” Woodbury, Robert Hanson, Sr., Eugene LaMar

Back Row: Vern Christensen, George Chaplin, Jess Ledbetter, Frank Nardi, Bob Hickman

828TH SQUADRON – 2ND & 3RD GENERATIONS



Front Row: Shannon Yates, Steve Yates, Kathy Yates, Carol Yates, Karen Bain, Thomas Eden, Robert Rankin-Gilliland, Blake Yates

Back Row: Rory Yates, Mark LaScotte, Carol LaScotte, Daniel Crouchley, Jack Whatley

829TH SQUADRON – 2ND, 3RD & 4TH GENERATIONS



Front Row: Kimberly Johnston, Stephanie Reasoner, Angela Reasoner, Brady Johnston, Richey Johnston, Dixie Lindsay, Kathy Lindsay, Alena Johnston, Lee Cristelle, Anne Johnson, Lynn Gallo

Back Row: Steve Lindsay, Michael Lindsay, Elizabeth Arthur, Steven Roth, Billie Roth, Glenn Johnson

830TH SQUADRON – 2ND & 3RD GENERATIONS



Front Row: Randy Cooper, Michele Cummings, Heidi Beason, Carol McIntire, Laura Keate, Kathleen Alman Koecher, Quentin Koecher, Jolene Veal Stockton, Barry Corbett
Back Row: Chuck Beason, Scott McIntier, Phil Cummings, Santiago Stockton, Steve Sharpe, Craig Keate

831ST SQUADRON – 2ND & 3RD GENERATIONS



Seated: Kathy Frels & Stephanie Capozziello
Front Row: Gray LaMar, Tom & Patti Haley, Donna Hanson, Pam Hanson Phillips, Kathie Padgett, Mary Ann Gworek, Karen Ianniello, Kay Brown Gary, Robert Gary, Chrisi Culp, Ken McClain
Middle Row: Tom Christensen, Robert Hanson, Jr., Bill Phillips, John Frels, Linda Haley, Jim & Gail Eamon, Meredith Padgett, Diane Leslie, Greg Bush, Tom Brown, Cindy Brown
Back Row: Barbara Nardi Mason, Steve Barnes, Bill Leslie, Mark Leslie, Nick Brown, Nate Brown

WIVES OF VETERANS



Seated: Mildred Roth & Frances Fowler

Standing: Frances Fundling, Carol Studaker, Kitty Nardi, Ruth Miller, June Ryan, Martha Joan Yates, Marie Ledbetter, Joanne Brokaw, Margie Smith, Alice Russell, Joyce Busroe, Helen Wall

POWS / MIAs



Standing: Eugene LaMar, Vern Christensen, Frank Nardi, Robert Yates, Herbert Frels, Marvin Lindsay, George Chaplin, Bill Ryan, David Roth



June & Bill Ryan with Jack Yates – 828th



Lee Busroe – 828th with Glen Johnson,
Milton Fundling & Anne Johnson - 829th



Marvin Lindsay & Kim Johnston – 829th



Bill, Phil & Michele Cummings – 830th



Herbert Frels & Steve Barnes – 831st



Linda Haley, Stephanie Capozziello &
Bob Hickman – 831st

MINUTES OF THE 485TH BOMB GROUP

Business Meeting Saturday, October 11th, 2008 Double Tree Hotel San Antonio, Texas

The 44th Reunion Business Meeting was called to order by Chairman Bob Hanson. A silent prayers was said for those who were lost overseas, the ones who have joined Journeys End since the last reunion and all those who are too ill and couldn't attend the reunion. Bob got a call from Warren (Gabby) Meyers daughter on Monday, October 6th stating that Warren had just passed away. The service was held during the reunion. Also, George Dyer's wife "Cotton Bell Katy" passed away recently.

Bob Hanson led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Secretary's report of the 2007 reunion in Kansas City, Missouri was read and approved with the change that "all persons 18 years of age and over who paid a Registration Fee" were eligible to vote for next year's reunion city. The minutes were then approved.

Lynn Cotterman read the Treasure's report. Lynn reported a balance of \$5,887.81. A minimum of 150 is needed to break even, and approximately 160 were registered.

Bill Cummings and son Phil again did the work for the Hospitality Room. Phil's wife Michele helped out as well. This was the first year in quite sometime that the bar had a charge. The balance of the gift from the Estate of Ben Skelton was used up last year.

Jerry Whiting was unable to attend the reunion due to a recent diagnosis of a serious medical condition. A couple of cards are circulating to be sent to Jerry.

Keep Jerry and Ann in your prayers for a speeding and complete recovery. We look forward to seeing both of them at the 2009 reunion. Lynn Cotterman recognized people who have made the operation run. Through the efforts of many, more veterans and families have been found. Also the B-24 crash sites are being found and memorials erected.

Bob Hanson introduced our special guests. Dr. Jakob Mayer of Innsbruck, Austria has been doing extensive research on the B-24 crash sites in Austria. A B-24 plane, which crashed in Innsbruck, was found in 2001. Two B-24 planes collided with each other and a total of nineteen (19) lives were lost. One person survived the plane crash. At the crash site a ring was found. The ring was turned over to Bob Hanson and hopefully a surviving member will recognize the ring & be able to receive it from Bob. Bob thanked Jakob for the time, talent & efforts on our behalf. Jakob is trying to find the young people who helped the surviving airman to safety so his family can thank them. Jakob said the town of Innsbruck sent greetings to all the veterans.



Dr. Jakob Mayer

Bob Johnson, a gunner in the 449th Bomb Group stationed in Grottaglie, Italy, was next introduced. Bob was shot down over Ploesti in June 1944 and spent time in the Shuman Prison Camp, Bulgaria, with many of the 485th prisoners of war. The camp commander for the prisoners was Major Walter Smith of the 829th Squadron.

Carlo Briscece and his brother-in-law John Mollica were born in Venosa, Italy and their ages were 12 and 4 respectively during the time the 485th was there. They furnished sausage, etc. to the men. They met Sammy Schneider, but for 50 years thought he was dead. Carlo still owns property in Venosa and both families visit there often. Carlo, John and their families live in Winter Park, FL.

Mary Ann Gworek is the niece of Walter Gworek. Mary Ann is a retired Commander in the Navy and is in the Reserves. Walter was one of the first shot down and was a POW. All POWs returned home together. While Mary Ann was still active in the Navy she was stationed in Naples, Italy with US Naval Forces Europe and 6th Fleet. She had an interest in where her uncle was stationed. She contacted Jerry Whiting and the two of them went to Venosa and learned much together.

Karen Ianniello and her brother Greg Bush were in attendance. When Greg was a teenager he was doing odd jobs to pay for flying lessons. A retired Air Force Colonel had him clean out his attic. There were albums with WWII pictures of planes and servicemen.

Rather than put them in a dumpster as instructed, Greg kept the albums. Recently, he asked his sister, Karen, to scan the photos on the computer. When Karen scanned the pictures she identified one of them as Bob Hanson. Karen contacted Bob and she and Greg made the reunion, along with Karen's husband Joe. The photos were taken by Oliver Fisher who was with Bob and the rest of the crew on "Bachelors Roost".

Col. John Tomhave's daughter, Joan Newman, was introduced. Joan was just a toddler when her father was shot down on a mission over Northern Italy and later died in captivity. Joan lives in San Antonio where she teaches High School Chemistry. She was glad she was able to attend.



Joan Tomhave Newman

Gerry Weinstein was thanked for all the large poster pictures on display in the Hospitality room. His father, Sy Weinstein, took these pictures. These pictures are now digitally restored and the group will be able to purchase pictures from Gerry.

Second generation persons are replacing the veterans as Squadron Reporters. The Reporters are as follows:

Headquarters - Kathleen Arnold
828th - Terry Boettcher

829th - Steve Lindsay
(when Marvin steps down)
830th - Phil Cummings
831st - Jerry Whiting

First timers at the meeting were introduced. Those in attendance at the meeting were: Bill & Dianne Leslie; Mark Leslie; Joan Newman; Don Magness; Laura & Ray Keate, George Chaplin, Steve & Billie Roth, John Frels, Steve Barnes, Carol Lipscomb, Joe Filutze, Robert Rankin-Gilliland, Carol Alman and Stephanie Capazolia.



Joe Filutze, Stephanie Capazolia & Robert Rankin-Gilliland

David Roth spoke up and noted that he is the last surviving member of the Hugh White's crew from the 829th Squadron.

There is no airplane for this year's reunion for the most members of a crew present. John Jackson received the plane last year. John passed away this past year. John's son sent Bob Hanson the plane (minus the box). The plane didn't come through the mail very well. It has now been retired & is at Bob Hanson Sr.'s home.

Lynn Cotterman made up a display of the two places for next years reunion. This gave all a chance to look at both places review the tours, etc. The two places picked were Chicago, Illinois and Cincinnati, Ohio. The Vote was as follows, Chicago (39) Cincinnati,

(42). Next years reunion will be in Cincinnati, Ohio Oct 7-11 2009.

Extra glasses may be purchased for \$1.00.

The oldest veteran in attendance was Hal Wilder. Bob Hanson gave Hal a hat stating that he was the oldest vet at San Antonio.



Hal Wilder

Books by some of the veteran authors are on sale in the Hospitality room. Also Bob Johnson has his book on sale.

Pictures will be taken in the Courtyard by the swimming pool starting at 5:00 PM, be sure to wear your name badge for identification purposes. The photographs will be done digitally and can be viewed and purchased right after the picture is taken. Be on time for your group picture.

Phil Cummings has a CD with 830th pictures. You can watch this on the TV Phil has set up in the Memorabilia Room.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Frances J. Fowler
Secretary

MAIL ROOM HEADQUARTERS

By Kathleen Arnold

Greetings veterans, family and friends of Group Headquarters - As the new Group Headquarters Reporter, I would like to introduce myself to those who do not know me. I am a proud 2nd generation member, and the youngest daughter of Major General Walter "Pop" Arnold, the original 485th Group Commander. As there are now few original HQ members remaining, many of you probably never knew or served with my father. However, I hope that some of you did get to meet him at group reunions over the years. Pop Arnold left indelible impressions on everyone he met. He was quite charismatic, and had a commanding presence, but then again, my opinion of him is naturally biased.

I came along 10 years after the war, in 1955, when my Dad was Chief of Staff, of the Strategic Air Command, at March Air Force Base, Riverside, California. During wartimes and peacetime, my 3 sisters and I proudly watched our father rise to notoriety in the United States Air Force in top command positions. His official Air Force Biography is public knowledge, but it doesn't reflect the myriad of good friends and hundreds of people Pop personally influenced over his lifetime. Nor does it tell us that he directly contributed to the birth and growth of the United States Air Force Strategic Air Command and Tactical Air Command; two of the mightiest and most respected air defense organizations in the world. He commanded alongside some of the greatest military men of modern times, many of whom were his close personal friends and, he planned, organized and participated in numerous historical military and world events. My Dad walked with and advised world leaders of many nations.

After Dad retired, I grew up to have a 16-year career in Civil Service and worked as a Congressional Investigator/Auditor for the U.S. General Accounting Office (currently the Government Accountability Office.) In 1992, I quit government service to become a full-time Mom, and that has been my career of choice for the past 16 years. I met my best friend and soul mate, Jerry Seigel in 1981, and in October 2008, we celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary. Jerry and I have a 17-year-old daughter, Rebecca, who is currently a senior in High School, and looking forward to entering the University of Colorado, Boulder, school of Engineering this fall.

My mother, Catherine, amazes me and she single-handedly runs our family "estate" of 72 acres in Colorado Springs. In 1974, she and Pop built a magnificent home there, and that is where she intends to stay until a greater power says otherwise. My oldest

sister, Julia, is a talented dentist and has practiced dentistry in places like Saudi Arabia and Russia. She now has a successful private practice located near the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. My other sister, Sally, is a Chief Master Sergeant in an Air Force Reserve unit at Peterson Field, Colorado Springs, and will be going on a 6-month deployment to Iraq in March. She is proud and anxious to serve her country during war, just as her father did. Please keep her in your prayers. My other sister, Lita, passed away in 1993. Lita was extremely unique; full of spirit and gusto, much like her father, and we all miss her dearly. I'm thankful for our sweet memories of her, which sometimes still make me cry, but more often now, make me laugh.

I've always been proud of my Dad, but growing up I took his career with a grain of salt. I knew what his official Air Force titles and ranks were, but I never really knew the details of what he actually did. It wasn't until 1989, when Dad was asked to write his account while a POW that I began to appreciate him as more than just my father. I became a WWII and Air Force history junkie. I began questioning Dad about his military experiences and privately began writing his stories down before his death. In 2002, after he passed away, I researched his military records and history, contacted many of his old friends, and began attending the 485th reunions. It has been such a rewarding journey for me, inspiring me to become active in several veterans organizations.

Some of you HQ folks I know already and stay in contact with, but for those of you who I haven't had the honor of meeting, please feel free to contact me, give me your comments, let me know what's on your mind, & tell me how I can better serve all of you. It is the least I can do to honor my Dad & everyone else who served our country.

MAIL ROOM 828th SQUADRON

Sherrill Burba was in attendance this year having recovered from his bout with pneumonia in 2007. Members of the 828th Squadron explained that minutes were not taken during this year's meeting. Squadron members shared stories.



Jack Yates & Bill Ryan – 828th

MAIL ROOM 829th SQUADRON

By Marvin Lindsay

The meeting of the 829th Squadron followed the general meeting of the 485th Bomb Group. Marvin Lindsay called the meeting to order. He asked for a moment of silent prayer for the loved ones we lost since last year: Allen Carlson, Phillip & Lucy Colluccio, Henry (Hank) Dolim, & Tom Mahon. He also mentioned those who could not attend the current reunion due to illness including Jerry Whiting, Don Whitman, Al Martin, Naomi Lindsay, Anna Carlson and others unknown to us.

Marvin thanked Fran Fowler for keeping records, mailing lists & Journey's End lists updated. The thanked Alice Arthur for filling in as the recorder.

First timers were welcomed. As Marvin pointed out, we would probably be unable to continue the reunions without the assistance of our 2nd and 3rd generation relatives and friends. In fact, Marin may soon turn over his chairmanship to his son, Steve Lindsay.

Correspondence was shared, including obituaries for Katie Dyer, Lucy Colluccio & Betty Best.

Marvin reported the money now left in the squadron account is \$93.42, hardly enough for a mailing. The gift given by the Ben Skelton estate to 829th members, covering registration for several years has now been used. The hat was passed and \$270 was collected.

The following people were in attendance: Wayne Smith, Russ & Alice Arthur, Milton & Frances Fundling, Donald Magness (first timer), Harold Johnson, Tony, Steve, Marc & Clara Altobelli (first timer), Robert C. Brown, Michael Lindsay, Steve Lindsay, Marvin Lindsay, Sarah J.(Jody) Boyd, John Duntley, Arthur and Fran Fowler, Jack & Mary Ann Behunin, David & Mildred Roth, Steven & Billie Roth.

There being no old or new business, the meeting was opened to the sharing of stories and the chance to explore questions. Tony Altobelli knew that his father, Gino, was in the crew piloted by Tom Peyton. His father was injured, but returned to the crew. Tony wants to fill in the events from October 1944 to April 1945 knowing the crew was a replacement crew. He was told about several books by Sammy Schneider and especially Jerry Whiting's historical records.

It had been reported at the general business meeting that the "Most crew members Present" award – a model B-24 in a box had been "retired". Steve Lindsay asked if that award should be re-instated. It was reported that there used to be ground crew recognition years ago. Since there are fewer veterans able to come, it was agreed to leave it as is.

Jack Behunin, remembering his experiences, told of a ground crewman teasing the gunners as having it "easy". So the ground crewman was smuggled onto a plane going to the third raid on Ploesti. On the way, he helped, enjoyed the scenery & got along fine. When the flak came in and a hole appeared in the waist window, he found the gunner's life not so easy. The got back to Venosa OK and Jack said the ground crewman never offered to go again.

Marvin told of a Ploesti run where there was a problem with electricity and hydraulic lines, smoke and trouble with the bomb bay door. The engineer got up there and hand cranked the landing gear down. When they landed at Venosa the brakes wouldn't work, so they went round & round to slow down and used up the fuel so they could stop.

Marvin also told of a trip to town on a motorcycle – to refill used wine bottles. The story reminded Jack Behunin of the use he made of a Norton Motorcycle.

Those who attended last year remembered seeing the huge B-2 planes, using tow men in an airplane, taking the place of 8 planes and 80 men. Each reunion has brought the attendees new experiences. There was a motion to adjourn at 11:29am. Marvin closed with a hope to see 829th members in Cincinnati in 2009.

Respectfully submitted, Alice M. Arthur
Recorder



Alice & Russ Arthur – 829th

MAIL ROOM 830th SQUADRON

By Philip Cummings

The meeting was called to order and was started with a Prayer by Bueford Cooper. Followed by the pledge of allegiance to the Stars and Stripes.

The treasures report was given stating that there was plenty of money in the bank for the years ahead. A special thanks to all who made contributions to the 830th squadron thru out the year.

The first speaker to be called on was Howard Boxley. Howard gave a very enlighten talk about hitchhiking to Rome and touring there and to other areas around Rome. He had many stories of his encounters with the people he met along the way.

Our second speaker was Clifford Studaker. Clifford recalled the mission when they were having problems with their engines and eventually had to leave the formation. After turning back toward Venosa Clifford discovered that when he had propped his foot up on the side of the cockpit he had mistakenly turned off a switch to the engine. Upon turning the switch on the engines ran fine and they were able to rejoin the formation. Clifford no longer propped his foot up in the cockpit.

The final speaker was Bueford Cooper. Bueford related to the group how he was able to procure a trip at the Kansas City reunion to Whiteman AFB. He spent many hours talking to the officials and to the B-2 squadron personnel. They told of the missions they flew to Iraq and back in the opening days of the Iraq war. We thank Bueford for all his hard work. Seeing the B-2 Bomber up close was a treat that we will never forget.

There being no new of old business, we closed with a prayer from Clarence "Deacon" Miller.

A special thanks to Laura and Steve Sharpe for the great job they have done with the Lightweight Tower.



Clarence "Deacon" & Ruth Miller with
Laura & Steve Sharpe – 830th

MAIL ROOM 831ST SQUADRON

By Lynn Cotterman

There were about 35 at the squadron meeting which was opened with a prayer. Since Jerry Whiting was not able to attend the reunion Lynn Cotterman conducted the meeting. We wished Jerry a fast recovery. Everyone introduced themselves adding a little about their background and explained their connection to the 831st Squadron. Questions were taken by the veterans. I have been asked several times, "What is the difference between missions and sorties". I admit it is confusing and this is how it came about.

When our Group arrived in Italy 50 missions was the requirement to complete a tour of duty. However, on long flights the crews received credit for two missions. All targets north of the 48th parallel were counted as double missions. Targets north of the 48th parallel included Vienna, Regensburg, Munich, Blechhammer Linz, etc. However, under this arrangement a trip to Ploesti where the odds of returning were not good was counted as one mission. Also I understand that if a mission was extremely difficult the Group Leader could declare it a double. This caused considerable complaining and was not good for morale. A decision came down from Wing Headquarters, "One time over the target would be counted as one mission, regardless of length and difficulty". The number of missions required was reduced to 35. To avoid confusion the name was changed to "sortie". However, both names were used interchangeably (and still are) by the crews which adds to the confusion.

Since the relatives and friends outnumber the vets 3 to 1, maybe a change in the meeting format might be productive. One suggestion was to arrange the chairs in a semi circle to make a friendlier and close arrangement. Bring suggestions to the meeting in Cincinnati next year or e-mail them to Jerry.



Kay Brown Gary & Robert Gary -831st

CHUCK WAGON SUPPER & COWBOY SHOW

By Lynn Cotterman

Friday evening we boarded a bus for Diamond Long Horn Ranch for a chuck wagon supper and cowboy show. It took a while to get out of town creeping along with the Friday rush hour traffic. Turning into the lane to the ranch we saw the long horns grazing in the pasture. Those horns are really long! I understand that one measured 10 feet across from tip to tip. I wonder how they keep from injuring each other.



We entered the huge rustic barn which was filled with picnic type wooden tables and benches with a stage up front. Outside an amusing trick steer act began. We watched a long Horn steer respond to a trainer. Then we moved inside to the Barbecue buffet that included barbecue brisket, large Pinto beans, salad and all the trimmings. The cowboy band played all the favorite Texan songs, "Yellow Rose of Texas", "Don't Fence me in", "Deep in the Heart of Texas" with some cowboy humor in between. Then we saw a six shooter exhibit and Shoot Out featuring our own Richey Johnson & Phil Cummings. All in all it was an enjoyable evening.



Richey Johnston and Phil Cummings
"Shoot it Out"



Our very own City Slickers -Straight from NYC!
Mary Habstritt & Gerry Weinstein - HQ



Clyde Corbett (830th) with some of his
Cowgirl Fans

A special THANKS to
Frances Fundling, Barry Corbett, &
Robert Rankin-Gilliand for sharing
their personal photos for the
newsletter publication.

MY JOURNEY CONTINUES

By: Kathleen Arnold

As many of you know, or don't know, I am honored to take over the Headquarters Reporter duties from Warren Sortomme,



although I doubt I can fulfill the roll as well as he has. Warren has become so special to me because he was the Group Pathfinder Navigator and shot down on the same mission as my Dad. Warren has graciously shared his life with me, and told me stories about my Dad that I never knew. I am forever grateful and thankful to him for so many things, but particularly, his many, many years of devotion, dedication, and service to the Group and his country.

The 44th Annual 485th Bomb Group reunion in San Antonio stands out as one of the great ones, not only because of all the honored vets and family members who were present, but because of all the special guests that attended this year. It's another marvelous example of how Jerry Whiting has excelled our group to new heights by crossing borders and oceans to unite people in a common goal: To honor the men of the 485th past and present.

There was a wonderful international flavor to the reunion this year and through Jerry's tireless efforts; he has reached out beyond our shorelines to the battlegrounds where our fathers, grandfathers, uncles, brothers, cousins, and friends fought so valiantly. This year, he brought together people

from Italy and Austria, as well as welcomed newcomers from our own home shores.

From Italy, via Florida, Carlos Briscese and his wonderful family graced us this year with not only their heartfelt stories and memories of Venosa, but with their warm personalities and fabulous voices as well. Carlo's daughter, Emanuela, told me her father was a man of few words, but the whole experience of going to the reunion enabled him to talk more about the war with her than he ever had, and she just loved hearing about it.

Jakob Mayer from Austria honors us by honoring our fallen planes and crews on isolated mountaintops in his country. I loved his story of how his life in real estate unexpectedly changed when the local town constable came to him with an English letter to interpret. In addition to being in real estate, he is now a dedicated crash-site investigator, working to resolve mysteries and reunite lost loved ones. He finds his pursuit so rewarding and he is truly a remarkable inspiration to us all.

And then there were honored guests, Karen and Joe Ianiello, and Greg Bush, who prior to last year had no association with the 485th Group at all. Karen and her brother, Greg, collided with the 485th through divine circumstances. Their miraculous rescue and recovery of Oliver Fisher's photo album sounds like an episode on History Detectives! Their dedication and perseverance to discovering the truth earns them eternal respect and gratitude of every 485th group member. They are honored members of the Group and I hope we see them at future reunions.

Also present were Gerry Weinstein and his wife, Mary Habstritt. Gerry brought the most magnificent jumbo-size group photographs that surrounded the walls of the room we were in. Everywhere you looked, there were giant B-24s flying all around. I personally felt like I was actually flying in formation with the Group. They were fantastic!

Gerry's photographs sparked a touching event. One morning, a pilot staying at the hotel walked by our room, stopped, looked in, did a double take and he hesitantly stood in the doorway of our hospitality room. I greeted him and he asked if he could come in and look at the photographs. I enthusiastically welcomed him in. He was totally awed and absorbed in the magnificence and size of Gerry's photographs and said his father had been a B-24 pilot with the 5th Air Force in New Guinea during the war. He had never seen pictures of the B-24 like this, and as a pilot he truly appreciated the aircraft. His Dad didn't have many photographs or personal memorabilia from his war days, so he really immersed himself in everything that was on display. He wished he could spend more time talking to our veterans, but business called, and he had to leave. He told me through his brief encounter at our reunion, he felt more connected to his father, who passed away several years ago. He thanked us for sharing with him, & he felt he had a greater insight into what his father did during the war. Perhaps his father's spirit was there guiding him to our room. I just love how our group brings people together & closer to loved ones. I think Sy Weinstein would be proud of his son, Gerry, for making that happen.

Another special guest was Joan Tomhave Newman, a fellow daughter of a 485th Group Commander, Col. John Tomhave. I was so fortunate to have my Dad return home from the war and live a full, rewarding life; Joan was not as fortunate. Her Dad heroically gave his life in battle for his country, and for the freedom of many nations and people. I have learned a lot about what the burdens and responsibilities of a Group Commander are. She can be proud of her father. He led courageously, served honorably, and made the ultimate sacrifice. I was so glad to meet Joan, and to have the opportunity to share our father's stories. I hope we meet again.

Our final special guest was Bob Johnson, who was in a POW camp with several 485th group members. Unfortunately, I never got the pleasure of meeting Bob, so I will enjoy reading his book, Gidi Gidi Boom Boom. Since my Dad was also a POW, I just can't get enough literature on the subject. I'm so grateful to veterans like Bob who write their stories for future generations to learn from.

Again, this reunion was one of many emotions for me. There were so many shining faces that I hadn't seen in a couple years, and many new faces who touched my heart forever. Then, sadly, there were faces I will never see again because

they've made Journey's End. Being at the reunion makes me feel closer to my Dad by being among the great men he served with. I want to thank everyone; the veterans, their family members, honored friends and special guests for their heartfelt welcome and for sharing their lives with me. I look forward to serving as the HQ Reporter, and I wish everyone good health and prosperity. Hope to see you in Cincinnati in 2009!



John & Rae Mollica Lina & Carlo Briscese



David Roth & Kathleen Arnold



Città di Venosa



Bob Johnson 449th Bomb Group

REMAINS OF 831ST LIBERATOR RECOVERED FROM VIS HARBOR

By Robert W. Vanderpool

(Nephew of Robert J. Vanderpool, Navigator on board the Valiant Lady)

Sime Lisica, a young Croatian researcher who has been an outstanding overseas resource to the 485th, traveled to the island of Vis in August 2008 to gather information regarding the Valiant Lady, which had ditched in the Vis harbor on January 20, 1945. By any measure, the success of Sime's research efforts during his 3-day stay on the island exceeded all reasonable expectations.



Sime Lisica

Sime developed an interest in the Valiant Lady's tragic history during a meeting earlier this year in Croatia with Jerry Whiting, the 485th historian. The Valiant Lady (42-52699) was an 831st Liberator piloted on 1/20/45 by 2nd Lt. John Dobler of the 828th. John, and the rest of the 10-man crew, had been based in Venosa only about one month and had previously flown only one or two missions due to January's poor weather conditions. In conjunction with 27 other 485th Liberators, their mission that day was the bombing of communication installations in Linz, Austria. Mission records indicate that severe weather forced the formation to climb to altitude sooner than had been planned and may have been

responsible for fuel shortages that several of the planes later experienced during the mission. Favorable weather was experienced over the target and the bombing mission was generally considered to be successful. However, the bomb group experienced intensive, accurate, and heavy flak over the target and 16 of the 28 planes incurred minor flak damage.

Running low on fuel, the Valiant Lady attempted to make an emergency landing on the partisan island of Vis. According to reports; however, the plane ran out of fuel less than 2 minutes from the runway and was forced to ditch without power in the Vis harbor. As was often the case with the B-24, the fuselage of the Valiant Lady broke in half upon impact with the water, and the two halves either completely or partially separated before sinking to the bottom of the harbor. The four surviving members of the crash (all located to the rear of the plane's bulkhead during the crash) were not seriously injured and were helped ashore by local fisherman. The crew's remaining six members were apparently trapped and drowned in the forward section of the plane. Lying in only 50 feet of water, the plane was later noted to be readily visible to swimmers from above. Seventeen months later, local authorities used a crane to remove the majority of the plane's wreckage and the remains of the crash victims.

When Sime arrived in Vis earlier this year, he first interviewed 30

to 35 older islanders and found them to be friendly and forthcoming with information. Many of those interviewed could recollect the B-24's crash and the events surrounding the rescue of the four crewmen. Many could also recall the subsequent removal of the plane. As Sime relates, "After some time, the plane was cut in pieces and transported elsewhere. One man told me that he and other people or children were taking the tires for making shoes and aluminum for other things. Later some children were pulling out the aluminum from the water to sell for money."

After Sime was shown the exact scene of the crash by the locals, he was convinced that some of the plane's remains might still exist and be visible at the harbor's floor. Although scuba diving is not permitted in the harbor, Sime is an experienced free diver and was soon able to locate and recover remains of the wreckage. In Sime's words, "The first signs were 50 caliber bullets and a lot of small parts of aluminum with rivets on it, aluminum pipes, and a parachute harness still locked together with small parts of textile belt on it. The harness bears the



Recovered parachute harness

inscription ‘Made in USA/Darling’”. Other recovered materials include part of the copilot’s upper front corner window, a bomb bay release control, and an emergency trigger and CO2 cartridge which inflates the Mae West life jacket. Sime’s subsequent restoration of these parts has been remarkably effective considering that they been on the harbor floor for over 60 years.

Sime’s trip to Vis also included a visit to the British War cemetery



Vis Harbor ditching location

and the area where the Vis emergency landing strip was once located. At the military cemetery near Milna, Sime also placed flowers, a candle, and a photo of the Valiant Lady and the American flag.

In tribute to Sime’s outstanding efforts on behalf of the 485th and in memory of the Valiant Lady’s crew, a collection of the recovered plane’s parts will be on display at the next 485th reunion.

(Author’s Note: This article is dedicated to the crews of the Valiant Lady, Pick-Up (42-94750), and Yankee Doodle Dandy (42-52718) – three 485th planes which all ditched on the same day. Of the latter two planes, there were no survivors. The author expresses his appreciation to Sime Lisica and to the 485th historian, Jerry Whiting, who provided a wealth of background information.)



Valiant Lady

PIERCED STEEL PLANKING: THE GATES OF THE WAR

<http://www.storiedelsud.altervista.org/Venosa%20PSP/indexPSPxEnglish.htm>

Some of our Italian friends have created a website with information and photos about Venosa, the 485th Bomb Group’s presence there and what we left behind.

The website is named after the Pierced Steel Planking (PSP) runway material. PSP was joined together with hand tools to provide a hard runway surface suitable for bombers, where lack of time, materials or equipment prevented the use of normal runway construction methods. Each 10-foot section weighs 64 pounds and was able to be installed at 125 square feet per man-hour. The PSP was left behind after the war and later used by Venosa locals as a building material. The website highlights some of these uses.

Please take a few moments to check out this website.



PSP as an entry gate

NOTES FROM THE HISTORIAN

By Jerry Whiting

To say this has been an “interesting” year would be an understatement. For those of you not aware of it, I’ve had a health issue (throat cancer) that forced me to cancel plans to attend the reunion in San Antonio. I was fortunate enough to receive calls & updates during the reunion from my friends there. I heard it was one of the best ever. Due to my health, I’ve gotten a little behind on entries & corrections to the website, but I’ve managed to keep up with the requests for information and/or assistance, aided by Lynn Cotterman & several others. The initial treatments went well and, with the scheduled surgery, I should be back to normal.

The website continues to be the primary source for Vets from the 485th, their families & friends to find us. For example, a few weeks ago I was contacted by Ira Helms, an 829th Squadron pilot, who found us through the website. From him I’ve received a crew photo & bio, as well as some interesting stories I’ll add to the site soon.

Another recent website contact was Ned Permenter, who requested any details available on his cousin, Raymond Permenter, from Randall Bearden’s 828th crew. Ray was killed over Vienna on 7/8/44, along with his entire crew. An interesting tidbit I learned from Ned is that Ray was an outstanding high school athlete who still holds several school records at the high school in East Bakersfield, California, & the high school stadium was named after him. Quite an honor. Ned is hoping to have some sort of a ceremony so the students today will know the story behind the naming of the stadium & hoping to find a way of preserving the story at the school.

One of the highlights of the year for me was a trip to Italy & a visit to Venosa. You can read about the visit to Venosa elsewhere in this issue, but on this same trip I also visited our Italian friends in northern Italy & met with the Mayor of Chiusaforte, who took me to the site where some of Colonel Tomhave’s & Lt. Stockdale’s crew landed, returning from the mission on 2/16/45 to Regensburg. Fabio Stergulg & Enzo Vinci, assisted by Fabio Orlando, are still working on their book about these two crews. Their research has been outstanding & they continue to learn new details about what happened to the men after the planes crashed. They are still missing photos of a few of the men on Colonel Tomhave’s crew that day, all of them from the 829th Squadron. If any of you have a photo of Lt. John Carmody (navigator on Earl Pooley’s crew), Lt. Woodcock (bombardier on Wilson Moore’s crew), or Sgt. Bruce Graves (radio operator on Ward Richie’s crew) that you could copy for me, I’d

appreciate it. I’m happy to pay for any copying costs. It’s even better if you could scan & email me the photo at: EAJWWhiting@aol.com.

After my trip to Chiusaforte, I went to Croatia & met with Sime Lisica, the researcher who found the 485th B-24 in the Adriatic in 150’ of water a few years ago. (Sime is also the researcher who recently found wreckage from Valiant Lady, an 831st Sqdn plane. You can read about this discovery elsewhere in this issue.) With Sime’s assistance I was able to tell the story of this 829th Sqdn crew in my book *Don’t Let the Blue Star Turn Gold*. Sime took me to meet Maria Glavan & her family. Maria rescued crew members Bob Bishop & Bill Culver & I was able to personally thank her for saving the lives of these men. Sime also took me to meet Nikica Peros & some of his family. Nikica, who was a partisan, took us to the actual site where he swam into the Adriatic with his cousin, under fire from the Germans, & rescued pilot Richard Boehme, tangled in his parachute lines. At the end of the visit Nikica grabbed my arm, looked directly into my eyes, & said, “I’d do it all again for you Americans.” That says it all.

Sime took me to the airport at Zagreb at the end of my visit. We were talking about the plane he found in 150’ of water & the crew that we researched together. We’re both proud of being able to tell the story from both the American & Croatian sides. Sime commented to me that we had “finished our mission” so to speak, & told this wonderful story. I told Sime that the story wasn’t finished. He had a surprised look on his face. I told him that this story wasn’t finished because we were now part of a larger story ourselves, the story of the continuing cooperation & friendship resulting from our original research. I think this is true about many of these stories.

The most recent news I’ve received from our Venosa contacts Pasquale Libutti & Renato Mancino is that a local publisher there is considering a book about the 485th & their stay at Venosa. This is still in the “talking” stage, but it shows the interest & appreciation the Italians have for the efforts of the 485th in winning their freedom.

Since my visit to Italy, John Schill (830th pilot) visited Venosa. He also received the same royal treatment I did from Pasquale Libutti.

I appreciate all the cards, emails, calls, thoughts & prayers I’ve received from many of you in the past few months. I hope to see those who are able to attend at the reunion in Cincinnati this year.

NOTES FROM THE HOSPITALITY ROOM

By Phil Cummings

The Hospitality room was again a place great interest and activity. Gerry Weinstein brought over 30 enlarged pictures from his father's collection as the 485th photographer in Venosa. They were very impressive & created lots of interest & conversation.

Steve Sharpe brought four large books of information he scanned from the collection of Clarence "Deacon" Miller. Steve spent countless hours scanning the pictures, articles and memorabilia into the books for everyone to enjoy. It was quite a collection to go through and well worth the time spent enjoying Deacon's work.

Karen Ianiello and her brother Greg Bush brought a photo album of the 831st squadron that had been lost for many years. This book was filled with pictures taken by a member of Bob Hanson's crew that no one had ever seen before. Bob thought the pictures were lost and was very excited to be reunited with them.

Dr. Jacob Mayer from Austria was at the reunion. He has investigated and found crash sights of the 485th BG in Austria. He enjoyed many conversations with the 485th personnel and their families.

Phil Cumming put together a DVD with over 300 pictures from the 830th squadron that was playing on a TV for all to watch.

Available at the bar was a bottle of homemade Rakija. This was sent to the men of the 485th BG from Niko Peros of Croatia. Niko and his cousin helped rescue a B-24 crewman, Richard Boehme from the 829th Squadron. Jerry Whiting visited Niko in March 2008. Many crew members and their family members were able to sample his Rakija and we thank him very much for it and what he did for the war as a Partisan.



Greg Bush, Bob Hanson & Karen Ianiello
enjoy photos from the past



Seated: Steve Sharpe, Clarence Miller & Craig Keate
Standing: Tom Duntley, Lee Christelli, Mark Leslie &
Jolene Veal Stockton



Phil & Bill Cummings – 830th
Don Crouchley – 828th



Carlo Briscese recognizes Italian friends
in the photo from Francis Fundling's
1980 trip to Venosa

MEMORIAL BREAKFAST - SUNDAY – OCTOBER 12TH 2008

By Bob Hanson

This was our 21st Memorial Breakfast, being started by Sherrill Burba in 1988 at the reunion in St. Petersburg, Florida. A large attendance, as usual, and we were fortunate to have a first timer, Rev. George Chaplin, present. Rev. Chaplin, a retired Episcopalian priest, conducted the services assisted by Sherrill Burba & Bob Hanson. Rev. Chaplin was on the crew of Jesse Minter of the 831st Squadron & handled things in a professional manner and his style was evident.

Our usual fine buffet spread was enjoyed by all and the services included a flag folding ceremony with Marvin Lindsay in charge. Neal Swann was the pianist and did an excellent job.

Included were a reading of the National Anthem and singing of the Battle Hymn of the Republic by all. Joan Tomhave, daughter of the late Colonel Tomhave, read the 485th Bomb Group prayer that was written by Sherrill Burba. Also included were a reading of Psalm 23 and Revelation 21 followed by the flag folding ceremony.

The Missing Man lone table was next on the agenda followed by a reading of Please Remember Me by John Dirusso. Rev. Chaplin said the prayer of Benediction and all stood in conclusion by singing “Let There Be Peace on Earth”

Taps played at the end and hugs and farewells till next year ended the ceremony.



Sherrill Burba



Missing Man Table



Flag Folding Ceremony

JOURNEY'S END - MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

C. D. Adams	830th	2008	Tom Mahon	828 th	2009
Marvin Berkin	831st		Roy A. Mehrkens	829th	
John J. Breen	831st	2008	Warren Meyers	831st	2008
Allen Carlson	829th	2008	Kenneth R. Moore	828th	
Gino Chiodetti	831st		James K. More	828th	2003
Phillip Colliccio	829th	2007	Lloyd Proudlove	831st	2008
Henry W. Dahlberg	831st	2007	Joseph Rippinger, Jr.	830th	
Henry P. Dolim	829th	2008	Kenneth R. Robinson	829th	
GD Egger	828th		Ed Sass	828th	
George Estok	831st	2008	Joseph Seaton	829th	2007
John J. Godfrey	831st	2008	David W. Shannon	828th	
Milton Grubic	828th		Phillip Smagula	828th	
David Hansen	831st	2008	Carl Spiegel	831st	
Chester A. Kida	829th	2007	Paul Vanamberg	829th	
Peter Lambros	829th		Charles Watson	828th	
Kenneth R. Leisure	831st	2007	Howard Woodyard	831st	2007
Ted Levine	830th				

"RETURN MAIL WITH NO FORWARDING ADDRESS"

The following names were deleted from the Squadron Rosters. If any Veteran or Family Member has any information as to a new address or if the Veteran has joined Journeys End, please forward that information to the Squadron Leader or to Bob Hanson. Thanks for any help you may give us to keep the records accurate.

Mariam Bishop	828th	Russell Lauer	828th
Ira Bronson	828th	Forrest Leveille	828th
Tom Cashin	830th	Robert Lewis	828th
Warren Domer	828th	Martin Lydard	828th
Francis Fabian	830th	Ash Maniatty	828th
Dr. Thomas Falcone	830th	Raymond Moatz	828th
Robert Holihan	829th	Joseph O'Neill	828th
Lloyd Huset	828th	Robert E. Samuels	830th
John Jamnik	828th	Peter Signorotti	828th



SPECIAL NOTE FROM GERRY WEINSTEIN

Gerry plans to mail letters to our group with a list of photos available for order from his father's collection. Gerry asked that we give everyone a heads up that the return address on these letters will be General Tools & Instruments, LLC.

Gerry can be reached at:
 40 West 77th Street #17B New York, NY 10024
 Phone: 212-431-6100 ext. 236
 E-mail address: gerpra@aol.com

485TH BOMB GROUP BOOKS

I'M OFF TO WAR, MOTHER, BUT I'LL BE BACK

By Jerry Whiting and Wayne Whiting

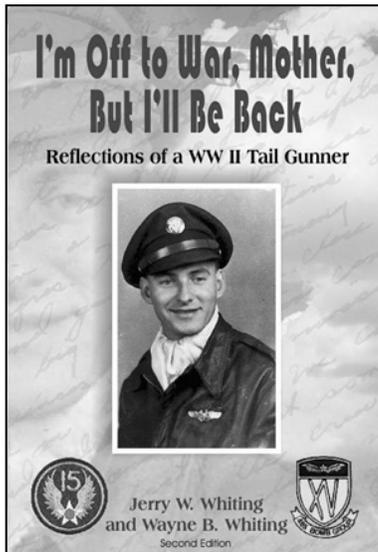
This newly revised edition, released in June 2007, is now a hardcover book. This expanded; collector's edition 250+ page book has nearly 100 photos. This is the true story of a 485th BG tail gunner, enhanced by excerpts of more than 200 letters he wrote home. It includes:

The survival tale of an 831st Squadron airman and his buddies who were shot down over enemy territory, but eluded capture and returned to Italy six weeks later. The story of the 485th Bomb Group's unique relationship with the Tuskegee Airmen.

The saga of one of the last bomber crews shot down over Europe on the final mission flown by the 485th, and their "capture" by the Russians.

The capture of a Messerschmitt pilot and his fighter by two pilots and a navigator from the 830th Squadron.

The miraculous account of a navigator's survival after he was blown out of his bomber and fell 10,000 feet without a parachute.



JUNE 2007 REVISED HARDCOVER COLLECTOR'S EDITION!

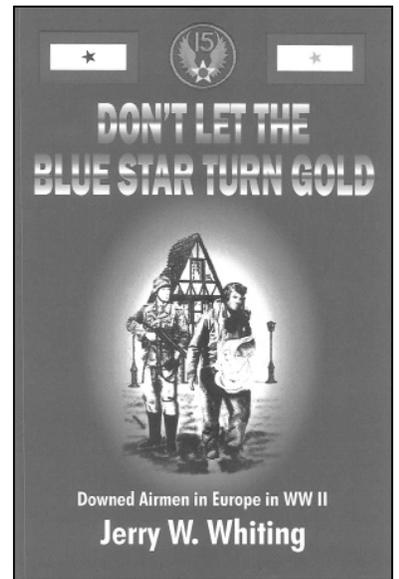
The continuing search today for a 9-man crew lost over Blechhammer.

DON'T LET THE BLUE STAR TURN GOLD

By Jerry Whiting

These are true stories of 485th Bomb Group airmen who didn't return from bombing missions. The 250-page hardcover book has 65 photos. The stories are about the struggle to survive, so that blue star proudly hanging in the window at home wouldn't be replaced by a gold one.

There are accounts of love, duty and courage. Included are stories of the families at home and their efforts to cope, after receiving that dreaded telegram advising them their loved one was Missing In Action. There are accounts from Europeans who witnessed the bombers falling, including recent stories from some who aided the airmen. Each story is placed in the context of what was happening elsewhere in the world. The author shares background history of how each story came to be, often with surprising revelations. This is a book about captures, escapes, evasions and....sometimes death. Painstakingly researched and inspirational, it's a must read for anyone interested in WWII history, particularly for those interested in the 485th Bomb Group.



BOOK ORDER FORM

Book	Price	# of books	Total
<i>Don't Let the Blue Star Turn Gold</i>	\$ 20.00	_____	\$ _____
<i>I'm Off to War, Mother, But I'll Be Back</i>	\$ 20.00	_____	\$ _____
<i>Mission By By The Numbers</i> Edited by Sammy Schneider	\$ 20.00	_____	\$ _____
\$5 for 1-2 books, \$10 for 3-8 book		Shipping/Handling	\$ _____
(All books shipped 1st class or Priority Mail)			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _____
Total amount enclosed			\$ _____

(Check or money order payable to: Jerry Whiting)

Ship to:

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Mail order form to:

Jerry Whiting 2576 Fox Circle Walnut Creek, CA 94596
 Phone: (925) 934-5204 Email: EAJWWWhiting@aol.com

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HANCOCK	SORTOMME			MONROE	PARLI
BUNDY	TOWERS			ICK	LASSEIGNE
FOWLER	HUCKEY	SIMS	TRINCHE	AKINS	HERRINGER
WOODYARD	COTTERMAN	GEYER	CARLSON	SHELDOR	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
CATHART CREW 35	MCGEEHEE CREW 35	ROEHN CREW 35	LINDSAY CREW 35	WOLF CREW 45	FUNDING
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
BROKAW	ABBOTT	WHITEMAN	HALL	MORGAN	SCHLICHTER
HANSEN	HICKMAN				

15th Air Force Wall - March Field, California
 Personal Tiles can still be made and be set at our 485th plaque on the 15th AF Wall. The cost is \$50.00 for one line of 20 spaces and \$75.00 for two lines of 20 spaces. Here are two examples of tiles that have been set on our island
 MGEN WALTER E ARNOLD CPT ROBERT B SKELTON
 CMD 485 BOMB GP POW PILOT CREW 24 829 SQ
 To order a tile, send the lettering to me with no more than 20 spaces for each line.

Warren D. Sortomme, 3490 Turquoise Lane, Oceanside, CA 92056-4866, (760) 945-8439, Sortomme@dslextre.com
 Check made out to: The March Field Museum Foundation
 485th Vets Tiles - January 1, 2004
 Headquarters - Walter E. Arnold, Robert M. Benson, Douglas M. Cairns, Ben B. Cook, John B. Cornett, S.W. Hancock, Hadley M. Huckeby, Warren Sortomme and Loyd F. Towers.
 828th SQD - Jess Akins, Karl Anderson, Lloyd Arnold, Arlynn Brown, Horace Choate, George Ick, Lionel L. Lasseigne, Roger Monroe, Edward Nett, Clifford L. Parli, Sammy Schneider, Ben O. Sims and Albert Trinche.
 829th SQD - Big Alice from Dallas - Jay T. Baker, Gerald Behunin, Earl L. Bundy, Robert J. Camden, Allen W. Carlson, Kenneth L. Carter, Joseph W. Cathcart, Arthur J. Forzier, Milton Funding, William G. Furgueson, Harvey H. Huber, San A. Keele, Michael I. Kopcha, Marvin H. Lindsay, William G. Long, Slayton M. McGehee, Donald P. Roen, Marion E. Shelor, Robert B. Skelton, Donald R. Whiteman, Wallace Williams and Irvin N. Wolf.
 830th SQD - Robert E. Baker, Bill Cottingham, George Dyer, M. Greenwood, Chuck Heringer, Joseph H. Morgan, Bill Oliver, Joe Richmond, Paul Rofield, W. Schlichter, Everet H. Swann, Bob Towne, Fran Tunstall and R. Wesley.
 831st SQD - C.A. Abbott, William Brokaw, Lynn Cotterman, William Geyer, R. Oliver Haden, Earl A. Hall, David T. Hansen, Robert W. Hickman, Dan Sjodin and Howard P. Woodyard.



GRANDFATHER STORIES

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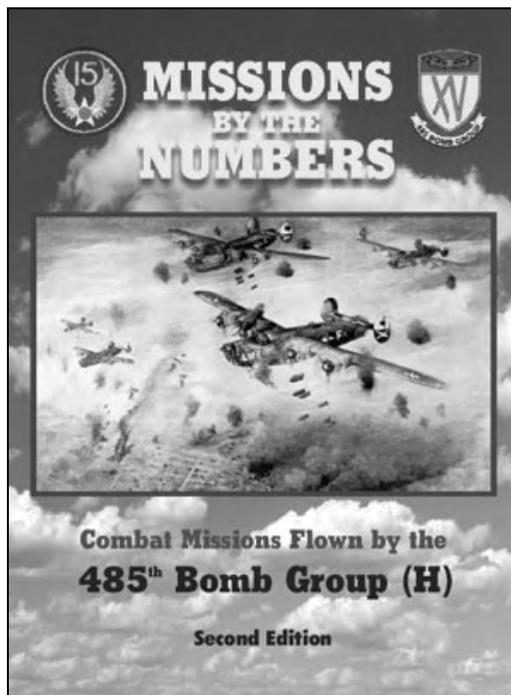
<http://www.grandfatherstories.com/>
 email: WILDER495@RoadRunner.com

MISSIONS BY THE NUMBERS

Edited by Sammy Schneider

This book includes mission summaries of 187 combat missions flown by the 485th Bomb Group. Included are stories written by several members of the group that tell the complete story of a mission, from the minute the coded message was received until the mission was completed. Also included is the story of a gunner who was shot down and captured and the story of a crew that struggled to make it safely through the Brenner Valley, also known as "flak alley", with severe battle damage.

There are 20+ photos in this 190-page, quality paperback book, including several photos of bomb strikes, damaged B-24s, escort fighters and reconnaissance photos, as well as maps and charts. There is also reference information on group losses and bomb types, a sample of a pilot's "flimsy" (secret plan for the mission) and much, much more. This is a book about the 485th Bomb Group, told by the men who lived it. This is a very limited edition.

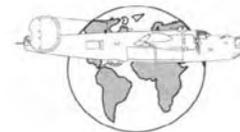


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WWII B-24's IN ITALY

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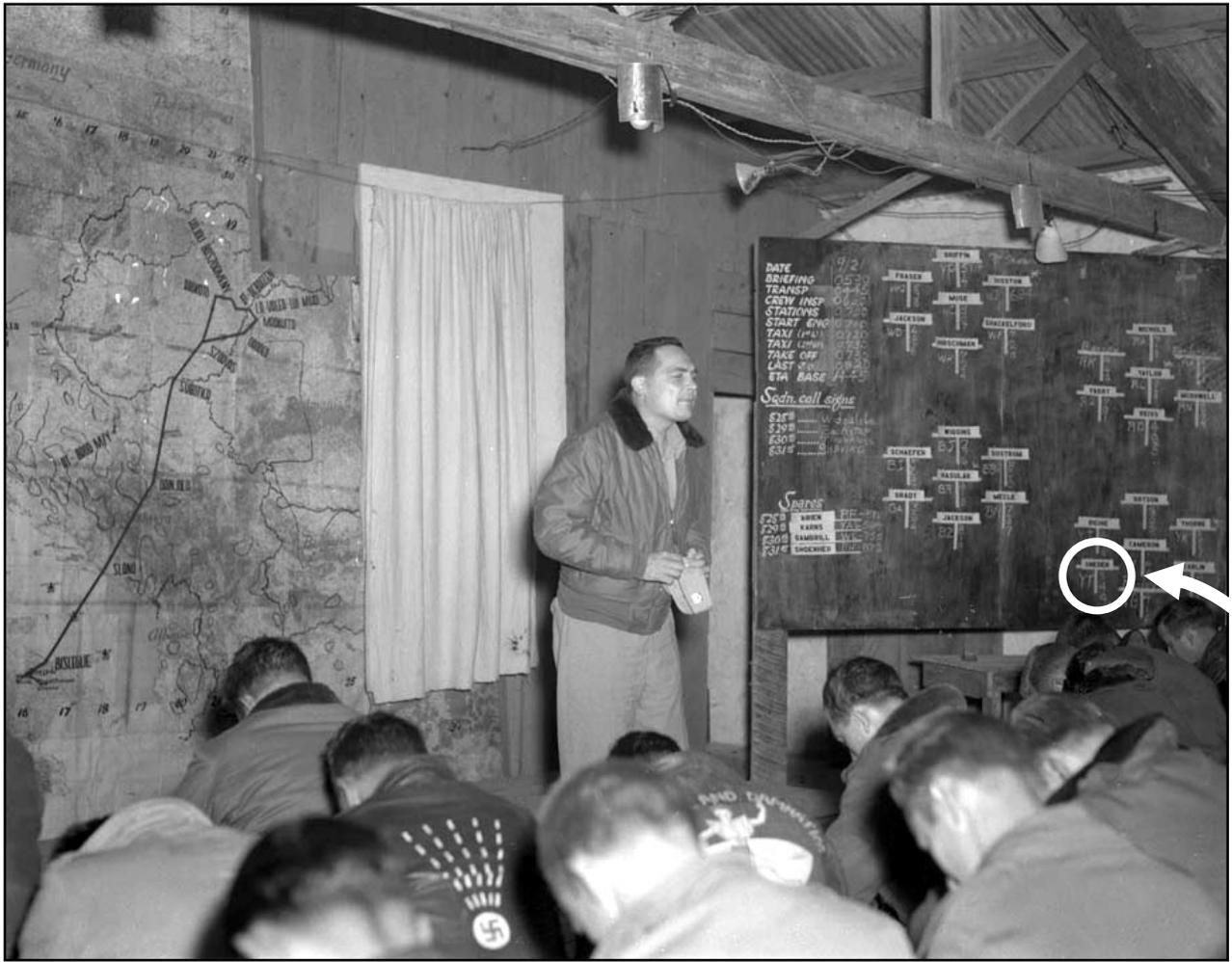


831st Bomb Squadron
 Engineering Officer
 485th Bomb Group
 15th Air Force

An amazing video made primarily from personal 35mm color slides each with full commentary. It includes:

- 1943 training scenes in the US.
- Scenes along the Southern Route to Italy and a map of the route. Florida to Puerto Rico, then Brazil, then Dakar, W. Africa, Tunis and finally Venosa, Italy.
- Loss of the Liberty Ship *Paul Hamilton*.
- A year of war-time activities at Venosa, plus trips to Bari, Rome and Naples.
- Shots of badly damaged B-24's that "made it home."

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MISSION #83 – SEPTEMBER 21ST 1944

This mission bombed the 1st alternate target Brod North Marshalling Yard in Yugoslavia. During this mission one aircraft, #78344, went missing. This plane is shown circled on the board above.

Robert is the grandson of Avery Gilliland, 828th pilot, KIA over Blechhammer on his first mission on December 26th 1944. On that day Gilliland flew his first mission with Lt. Arthur Lindell's crew to gain experience. Their plane received a direct hit over the Blechhammer South refinery & broke into two pieces. The entire crew was killed.

Don Crouch, bombardier on Gilliland's original crew, retrieved Gilliland's A-2 leather jacket and kept it all these years in hopes of finding Gilliland's orphaned son. In March of 2008 Robert found the 485th and has since attended the reunion in San Antonio. Robert has been reunited with his grandfather's jacket and many friends from the past he didn't know he had.

Finding Robert has provided closure for Don as well as crew member Bill Williams, ball gunner on Gilliland's original crew.

Welcome to the group Robert and thanks Don for this wonderful gift to Robert!



Robert Rankin Gilliland proudly wears his Grandfather's jacket