



780th NEWS

DALLAS, TEXAS

MAY 85

NEWS FROM SEATTLE - GEORGE KUCKENBACHER

The Seattle reunion is really beginning to pick up speed and the climate here for this function is getting rather exciting. The options for activities that we have uncovered is almost endless. We're having a difficult time trying to select from the many things that would be of interest to a lot of the members of the 780th Squadron. If half of what we would like to do for all of you comes through it will be without a doubt the best reunion the 780th has ever had. The big problem is I don't think there are 29 hours in every day. We're going to try to come up with enough options on the outside activities to have something for just about every taste or fancy that you would care to bring with you. Our basic schedule is all pretty well set as of this time and we're rapidly coming to the point of anchoring the fixed functions with times and places. As of this writing our schedule looks something like this:

Wednesday, September 11th. The early bird NO host dinner. The final selection of location is still to be made and we have several excellent options available. We will be meeting with several groups on May 28th to select the time and place. Rest assured no one will be disappointed.

Thursday, September 12th. Registration at the Hilton starting at 10:00 A.M. There will be a surprise bag for all with a Northwest selection of trinkets and momentos tailored for the men and their ladies. The hospitality room will open at noon high above beautiful Seattle with a view that starts at the Olympic mountains to the west and ends at the Cascade mountains on the east. Just imagine the blue waters of Puget Sound and Lake Washington and the panorama of the city all nestled in the hands of the snow capped mountains. I intend to have the hospitality room as high as I can get it in the hotel to take maximum advantage of the view that we will have available.

Thursday dinner is included in the registration fee and again the final site selection will be made on May 28th. There are so many excellent dining opportunities with good northwest character that it's a chore to pick and choose. Again, I assure you, you will not be disappointed.

Between registration and dinner there are a host of shopping opportunities within easy walking distance of the hotel. For the more adventuresome there are free buses to get you to the major shopping areas downtown or the waterfront and its group of salty shops and attractions.

Friday morning as usual is the annual business meeting and breakfast at the Hilton. We will elect a group of officers for the 780th, select a site for the 1986 reunion and elect an 1986 reunion chairman. Praise the Lord! Hallelujah! And all those words that say it's been a ball but I'll be glad when it's over. After the meeting we get on to the fun things of the day.

The most important of these is our trip to the Boeing 747 plant in Everett. This is housed in the largest building in the world in total volume. Boeing has regular tour buses in the plant to take visitors through all the awesome sites they have to offer. Time permitting we will stop at St. Michael winery in Woodenville on our return trip for a tour of the winery and a traditional tasting of their many fine wines. They maintain a sales outlet adjacent to the lobby and tasting rooms where they sell their wines at very attractive prices for case or half case lots. And you can mix or match the contents. Also stocked are many varieties of cheeses both foreign and domestic to wash down with their fine wines.

Saturday is an open day for everyone until the banquet at 7:30 P.M. You can take your choice of water skiing on the lake to snow skiing in the Cascades or a thousand things in between. The Boeing museum of flight. A boat trip across the sound to Tillicum Village for Indian dining, crafts

and folklore. The arboretum and rose gardens. Hiram Chittenden locks with a fish ladder to watch Pacific salmon on their long road upstream to the spawning grounds of their birth. The Space Needle for a breath taking 360 degree of Puget Sound country. And the list goes on and on and on.

Saturday night is the banquet that allows us all to put on the dog and dress up a bit and shake a leg to some big band sounds and contemporary music of your choice. Be sure to bring you appetite and set your mind for a most enjoyable evening.

Sunday morning breakfast will be at the top of the Hilton. We have set aside the northwest corner for the 780th so we can say our farewells while taking a last look at the mountains, the water and the city.

That's all for this time, we'll get you some details in about another month. That is providing Wanda doesn't skin me alive in the meantime.

An additional note for the real bomber buffs. Boeing is hosting a 50th anniversary celebration for the 50th birthday of the first B17 rollout from Plant 2. They have three certified birds and have permission for several formation flyovers on Friday-Saturday-Sunday, July 26,27,28. Should be a great sight.

As of 5/10/85 the following have either made their hotel reservations, sent in registration or both.

Ben Donahue & wife, Gordon Young & wife, Bob Bleier & wife, Joe Theena & wife, Earl LaBrier & wife, John Fitzgerald, Ed Ruess & wife, Fred Boling & Frances Wells, John Fleisher & wife, Bill Edwards & daughter, Paul Baker & wife, Nile Horne & wife, Eldon Tobias & wife, George Kuckenbecker & wife, Matthew Rogers & wife, and last but not least, Wanda Dannelly.

REUNION IN SEATTLE - GLORIA KUCKENBECKER

Plans are progressing nicely. We are going to have such a good time! Our hotel is bending over backward to assure everyone will be comfortable. Our hospitality room has a most fantastic view of the city & the weather in September should be wonderfully moderate. You'll really enjoy your visit, I promise. A couple of organized outings are in the "works" & there are numerous and sundry other fun things to do depending on your inquisitiveness and/or energy. Looking forward to seeing YOU in September.

JOHN FITZGERALD - April 29, 1985

Well, I thought I would report on my attempts to locate and find the members in Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma wishing to attend the Seattle reunion. First I sent a letter with postal cards to all of those members and all they had to do was "X" the card and deposit it in a mail box. Sorry to say some of them must have found this hard to do so I will not attempt to reach them again. First the members who will attend the reunion: Jack Ball, John Fleisher, John Fitzgerald. Members who have passed away or wish their names removed from the address list: Jim Buchanan passed away 6/14/84, Dennis Gayner passed away 5/5/81, Hubert Johnson is a member of the 783rd and wants his name removed from our membership list. Members who will not attend the reunion: Kinzer Cope, Robert Fromkin, Robert Guertin, Jack Hardy, John Knaus, Robert Korthanke, Clyde Lewis, Les Miller, Rich Sigle. The following have not answered the request so I will no longer try to follow up on them: Larry Crane, Robert Crumpton, Louis Linderman, Haskel Patterson, Arthur Phelps, Don Pirano. Well that is about all for now and as I believe I have completed my job I will resign my commission and retire until the reunion in September. Change Les Miller's ZIP code to 63121.

MATTHEW ROGERS

Been doing a lot of camping, staying on the go a lot, we're really enjoying our retirement. We are looking forward to seeing you in Sept in Seattle. We will be leaving Louisiana in May or June, we are going to Alaska, and will stop off in September to be with all of you in Seattle. We have a beautiful grand baby 2 months old. We are really enjoying him.

REYER SWAN

My wife and I moved to Florida, our new address is on my check. Please send the registration forms for the Seattle reunion to our new address because there's always a chance our mail not being forwarded. My wife and I are looking forward to Seattle. I enjoyed our reunion in St. Louis very much. Had a great time. Reading the newsletters about the St. Louis reunion brings back pleasant memories. It'll be great to see everyone again. Keep up the good work and we'll see you in Seattle.

BEN DONAHUE

Just a short note to let you know my bride and I are all set for the Big "S". Sent the monies in this date. We will be one of the early arrivers. Two or three of the guys had asked me where I got the return stamp on my envelopes (see address below). Send to that address and I am sure they will send out catalogs and order slip, etc. Lucille and I will be taking off for Reno, Tonopah and Las Vegas in a couple of weeks. Tonopah was where Rube and I trained together. Going to be interesting to see just how it has survived these 40+ years. The old base is used by several firms now for secret testing. Because the field is right in the middle of the Nellis AFB gunnery range. Going to Vegas and pay our yearly dues. Take care and God willin' we will be with you in Sept.

MICHAEL R. QUINN, CURATOR
HISTORY OF AVIATION COLLECTION
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS DALLAS

I want to thank you very much for the material on the 780th Bomb Squadron 465th Bombardment Group. It's a fine collection including some material which I don't believe that we have anywhere in our archives, namely, detailed mission record of the squadron during World War II. The bound books will become part of our regular research library and the other pictures and records will be kept together for anyone wishing to do research on that particular group. I found it personally very interesting to note that the LTV A-7 Corsair that I flew for the Navy carried the same amount of payload that the B-24 carried back in the early 40's. One pilot, one engine, same payload. Military aviation has come a long way. Thanks again for your donation.

GATHERING OF EAGLES - LAS VEGAS, NEV.

1986 marks the 40TH Anniversary of the Air Force Associations, SAC, TAC, ADC, etc. In celebration, AFA is sponsoring a major Aerospace gathering of civilian and military leadership from the USAF and other friendly Air Forces, Industry Leaders and Aerospace Affinity Groups such as the Society of Experimental Test Pilots, The Doolittle Raiders and Reunion groups, etc.-A true gathering of Eagles! This is planned as an aviation gathering of historic proportions. Start making your plans now- the dates are 17 April-1 May 1986-Las Vegas MGM Hotel and Las Vegas Convention Center. Highlights of the week will include a USAF Fire Power demonstration at Indian Springs AF Auxiliary Field, two "pull out all the stops" flight demonstrations by the Confederate Air Force, Industrial Displays, Symposia and Social Gatherings. (This is for information only to our members, since it was decided several years ago to hold our reunions during the month of September).

CRUISING AROUND THE NORTHWEST

Gosh, I am really getting excited about the cruise and wish all of you could have joined us. The following are taking the trip. Fred Boling & Frances; Eldon Tobias & wife, Jack Ball & wife, Nile Horne & wife, Gerald Munn & wife, Maurine Growden and Wanda Dannelly. We will be sailing at 5 P.M. September 4th for a week of fun, food and relaxation. Needless to say, we will have lots to tell you on our arrival in Seattle.

CHARLES W. MOSES (MOE)

Enclosed my check for the 780th Squadron Dues. We had a great visit last month with Joe & Donna Maze and Jim & Margaret Fendley. Our first contact since 1945 came in November of 1984 when Joe & Donna stopped by on their way to Orlando, FL. We had just returned from visiting our son Bill, who is stationed at Langley Air Force Base, Hampton, VA. with the 48th Fighter Interceptor Squadron. I am sure some of the squadron members will remember this outfit, they were the P38's that were a part of the 15th Air Force in Italy and were well trained in "Buzzing". Langley is near Hampton Roads, the Port of Embarkation for the 780th Ground Personnel. The staging-area Camp Patrick Henry, (Camp Swampy) I believe is now Patrick Henry International Airport. I would like to say "Thank You" for caring for the 780th Squadron Association. It was a great feeling to be re-united with old friends - it was the highlight of the year for Deanie and I.

JOHN J. FITZGERALD

Well I have been quiet long enough. After reading the crap release from the 783rd in our great newsletter I have to respond.

I waited for one of our stalwarts to answer these course, vulgar and obscene statements from those rearend 783rd squadron members but it is not so. Come on Bernie Bezxinover, Ben Donahue, John Fleisher, Nile Horne, Ken Wilcox lets give these "D Box" Charley's a few words of wisdom from the old 780th.

Who are these come lately guys who all live in one area and brag about their reunions. Wait until they have about ten and they can come back and tell us all about their grate (notice how that is spelled) experiences.

How come the 783rd finally found their members. They couldn't find their way out of their squadron area but waited for the trucks from the 780-781 and 782 moved out and then they would follow to the flight line. The only thing wrong generally they would follow one of the other squadrons to their planes. They took for granted words of the Group commander that the squadrons were numbered in order of intelligence that is why they were fourth in the group. In fact, I once heard Colonel Joshua H. Foster say that the 783rd should have been numbered about 000. During a critique I heard Foster tell the Intelligence Officer to put the 783rd in Box D low because he did not want to be hit by one of their gunners or have bombs dropped on his plane by these blanky banana brains.

Our armament section always told stories of the 783rd it seems the 783rd was always first in getting all their bombs and ammunition in planes first however when the crews arrived they found everything in backwards. I wonder how the crews knew as they couldn't tell a bomb from a 50 caliber shell.

But our electrical and engineering section held them in great esteem. They said if we would have had light bulbs on the planes the 783rd would have been the best if they did not try to screw the bulbs in the wrong way.

Our Intelligence section always had a high spot for the 783rd's intelligence. The only thing wrong we had no way to put people on the moon back in 1943-1944-1945.

Although I left our flight crews to last and did not wish to use asbestos paper for the rest of our section's comments; the comments of the crews should enlighten the 783rd. The flight crews stated they do not know how the Bombardier and Navigator of the 783rd were in the rear of the plane and the tail gunner was in the nose. How did the ball turret gunner get on the top of the plane. However only the tail gunners on the other squadrons could see the 783rd flying as they always flew box "D" and in fact some of the tail gunners said the way the 783rd flew they could not see them the majority of the time.

One more statement, why, when the 783rd went through Canosa in open trucks did the women of the village get rid of their honey buckets in the trucks? Did these Italian women know something that the other squadrons in the 465th Bomb Group did not know? By the way how does the 783rd know about a \$2 cat house everyone tells me they only know their way to a haystack?

COL. JACOBS (JAKE) M. PUTNAM USA (RET)

I received your letter (from Ashby) dated 6 April 1985. Thank you both for the information about the 780th Bomb Sqd. Association's reunion. I really do wish I could be in Seattle in September for the reunion. However, Wanda, as you know my beloved 783rd Bomb Sqd. Association will be having our reunion in Dayton, OH on 22-26 August 1985. If I attended both reunions, with my health problems, it would most likely kill me. Not a bad way to wind out my life. However, I'm certain you both will understand. Wanda, I have enclosed my check to pay up my dues in the 780th Bomb Sqd. Association. Please, keep the 780th News coming. I enjoy reading about the members (at times I remember a name) of the "sister" Squadron and second best military Association in the US as always just behind and one step to the left of the 783rd Bomb Sqd. Association. Keep my name and address on the 780th roster and mailing list. IF, I had not noticed a 465th Bomb Gp. (misprint, should have read 456th Bomb Gp.) reunion, in the December 1983 issue of the American Legion magazine. And IF my letter had not been forwarded on (through several people) to the 780th. Or IF you (Wanda) had not listed my name and address in the "780th News". Also, IF our (783rd) old "beloved leader" Sam Marie had not picked my name from your listing. I would have still been running around in the dark, listed as a Lost soul, with my 783rd Bomb Sqd. Association. We all know the 783rd turned out to be the very best (without computers) and always the most: loving, boozing, cursing, scrounging, fighting organization during WWII. We may have been a little late getting organized, but we now have the best military (783rd) Association in the country. IF, you do not believe me, just ask any member of the 783rd, they will tell you the same thing. We have always been number ONE, and now, and also forty one year ago. Seriously. I owe a lot to you, I thank you, and wish you, and the 780th to always have a good landing. I know you will have another "great" reunion. Someday, perhaps, we can arrange to have a joint (780th & 783rd) reunion at the same time, date and place.

EDWARD RATKOVICH, MAJOR GENERAL USAF (RET)

It looks as if we are going to miss another reunion. Since I have not attended any of the previous 41 reunions, not coming to the 42nd keeps my record intact. The problem with us this time concerns our previously made plans to be in Europe most of Sept. We are disappointed in missing another reunion, but please do not give up on us. We do sincerely want to attend a reunion and meet all those wonderful people we have been reading about these many years. Remember, we came late to the squadron and do not know many of the members. You mentioned in your last newsletter that Atlanta and other cities are being considered for our 1986 reunion. Besides Washington, D.C., may I suggest you look at Las Vegas again. The Air Force Assn. is sponsoring a major Aerospace gathering in Las Vegas during the period 27 April-1 May 1986. Since this gathering is being billed as a "Gathering of Eagles", the 780th is well entitled to be there! Enclosed is a check for my dues. Whatever is left over goes to the 780th News Expenses.

JOHN FLEISHER

Before I forget it this time I'll enclose my check for the newsletters. Am feeling fine and figure the doc will let me go if I take my pills. On these assumptions I've sent my reservations and notified John Fitzgerald of my intentions. Reserved the hotel room and sent in registration fee to Geo. K. We are taking little one so will plan on a baby sitter there instead of the problem we had in '84. Hae Suk is looking forward to the trip as she has never seen that area of the USA. After that trip she will have seen more of the USA than most people and has only been here 4 years. We plan to drive and meet the Nelsons in Idaho. They have retired also so we can set our own schedule. (John inquired about the cruise and I sent him info on same). Maybe the doc will nix the trip on the boat must wait awhile for that answer. Over & Out.

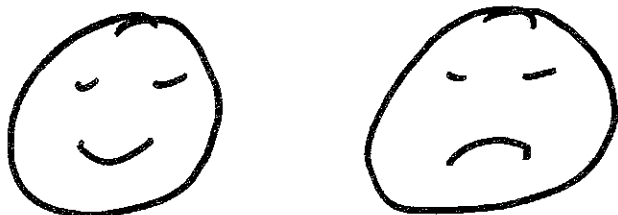
EDITORS NOTES - WANDA DANNELLY

I had a nice visit with George & Gloria here in Dallas about a month ago at the airport during their layover between planes. We never stopped talking about the reunion and they are really going all out to make this a super reunion. NOW it's up to you the members to make your plans to get there. If you've ever done a reunion or convention you know how much it means to get reservations in early to the hotel as they can only hold rooms so long and the registration forms sure help the ones doing the meetings to make plans. Enclosed are all the necessary forms for making plans SO DO SO IMMEDIATELY.... We want to show the 783rd - last report I had they have about 125 men that will be in Dayton. SEE YOU IN SEATTLE.

Check The MAILING LIST FOR ANY CORRECTION - PLEASE

I visited with the Boling's & Rowe's in Atlanta mid March - WQ

COME ON Fellows LET US KNOW what you've been Doing.



Which will it be in Seattle for me?

Wanda

Seattle '85

