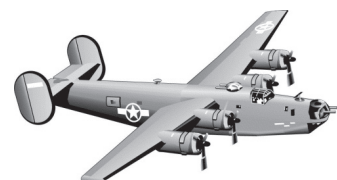




# *Flightline*



Newsletter of the 780<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron of WWII

September 2020

## ***Tenth anniversary of squadron disbanding*** **Remembering Reunions Past**



**780<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron**

**North Africa and Italy 1944 - 1945**  
**Reunion Gainesville, FL October 2001**



This month marks the tenth year since the 780<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron Association dissolved. Also noteworthy this month, the 2020 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force Bomb Groups reunion in Albuquerque, New Mexico, was postponed to September 2021, due to the coronavirus pandemic. The 780<sup>th</sup> held its 39<sup>th</sup> and final reunion in September 2010 in Biloxi, Mississippi (an informal get-together was held in Abilene, Texas in 2011 - see back page). Inside this issue of Flightline are photos of past reunions. If you have others, please email a jpeg image to Flightline at [johnkath5@comcast.net](mailto:johnkath5@comcast.net) and we will publish them.

# Your News & Letters

Editor's note: Since the last issue I received a voice mail from Jim Long (it was so great to hear your voice, Jim!) and a nice letter from Vera Bagley (good to hear you continue to be doing well, Vera!). I also received three emails:

*Hello John and Kathy,*

*I have been performing research on Jackpine Joe, my father's plane, with three Swiss collaborators. They have provided valuable new information and we uncovered new mysteries. We are working on a website on the story of Jackpine Joe. You guys did a nice story on Jackpine Joe, per attached. (Editor's note: see March 2016 issue of *Flightline*.)*

*I am seeking to contact the family of the pilot, Archie Davis. My father was close to Archie and they stayed in touch for many years after the war. I called the newspaper in his town and also left messages with the historical association. I also contacted*

## Contact Me

Contact *Flightline* editor  
at address on back,  
or call 217-414-1400,  
or email:  
johnkath5@comcast.net

*the county clerk. Perhaps you could help me find the descendants of Archie Davis in Wisconsin.*

*I have many files and info to share via the cloud, but I don't want to inundate. I am attaching a few to peruse.*

*Best,  
Josh H. Golden  
Aptos, CA*

Editor's note: I was able to find Archie Davis' 1995 Wisconsin obituary online, which listed a son in California, and forwarded that to Josh. Josh had just been in touch with the son and Josh reports they have been exchanging information.



*Hi Kathy,*

*First off, I want to thank you for stepping up and continuing the *Flightline* information. I certainly look forward to it. I am George Huntington, the son-in-law to Ardel and Philena Steele. I married their daughter Ardel. Ardel was a belly gunner in the 780<sup>th</sup> and has passed some years ago. His wife, Philena (age 96 this month), is still subscribed and has made most of the reunions.*

*If it helps, please use my email address to send the*

*Flightline rather than a hard copy: slackdog1197@gmail.com.*

*My current address is:  
14691 N. Court 5  
Effingham, IL 62401*

*Thanks for your efforts,  
George Huntington*

Editor's note: Hi George! Thanks for writing. I'm happy to add you to the email list. In addition to saving postage and printing costs another benefit to the digital version of *Flightline* is that it is in full color. I stay in touch with your sister-in-law, Tanya Beitz (Ardel's sister), on Facebook. Is anyone else on Facebook or Instagram? Look me up, as Kathy Le Comte.



*Kathy,*

*I have enjoyed reading *Flightline* over the years, and my parents, Howard and Bernice Precup, loved the reunions.*

*They donated some of their memorabilia to the University of Texas, Dallas, in 1998(?) after a presentation by a University spokesperson. The Dallas archives are being updated and I was contacted*



by the Special Collections Division asking if I would like the "duplicate material" from the Howard Precup donation. They indicated that they were trying to contact other donors.

Are you aware of the UT Dallas archives? For example, <https://libarchives.utdallas.edu/repositories/2/resources/309>. One needs to request access to look at the archive contents. Have others been contacted and/or be interested?

Regards,  
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Editor's note: Hi Jim. I remember your parents well. I'm glad your dad donated some of his memorabilia so that it is preserved for researchers and others to see.

I am aware that the 780<sup>th</sup> had a collection at the University of Texas - Dallas but I am fuzzy on the details. I have some old newsletters, given to me by Gene Koscin-ski and, fortunately, they are from the right time in order to confirm

that the collection at UTD started **about 1982**. The minutes from the 1982 Dallas reunion business meeting, published in the January 1983 issue of 780<sup>th</sup> News, mention "sending all records to C. Edward Rice, curator of aviation, University of Texas, Dallas." The minutes also state, "We had a discussion about a permanent home for the Squadron and decided it would be in Dallas Texas." In an October letter published in the November 1983 newsletter Joe Sullivan (ordnance) wrote that he had a propaganda leaflet that the squadron dropped. "I believe this (leaflet) should be in the archives at Texas as I am sure it is one of the only remaining documents of its type surviving the war from our squadron." I recall learning that longtime squadron secretary, Wanda Dannelly (Eleanor Ball's predecessor), arranged for the squadron

collection to go to UTD. Wanda hosted the 1982 reunion in Dallas, so the pieces seem to be falling into place. This might explain how the Precup collection came to be at UTD around 1998. I did an online search for "780<sup>th</sup>" at the UTD Special Collections Archives website but only found the Precup collection. Does anyone have more information? I hope to have an update

Aircraft Factory.  
We had a discussion about a 1983 reunion date. It was decided we try for a date within 60 days after labor day. A motion was made by Herman Beeks to compile a history of past meetings and newsletters. Seconded by Mel Ivins. Motion carried.  
It was suggested by Ben Donahue to send all records to C. Edward Rice, curator of aviation University of Texas, Dallas. Homer York volunteered to help in this project.  
Herman Beeks is trying to get the Bell from the Chapel at Pantenella, he reported that it has been removed and is now in North Africa.  
We had a discussion about a permanent home for the Squadron and decided it would be in Dallas Texas.  
Bez talked about making our group a non-profit organization. It was decided to let things go on as they are now.  
Nomination of Officers. Bez was nominated for President, but declined. Chester Brozek was nominated but he also declined. Don White was

*The section of the October 1982 squadron association minutes pertaining to records going to the University of Texas - Dallas. See underlined portion.*

for the December issue of *Flightline*.



### 780<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron Reunion History

<b>1963</b>	<b>Chicago, IL</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>Orlando, FL</b>
<b>1966</b>	<b>San Francisco, CA</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>Colorado Springs, CO</b>
<b>1968</b>	<b>Dallas, TX</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>Wisconsin Dells, WI</b>
<b>1971</b>	<b>St. Paul, MN</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>Branson, MO</b>
<b>1974</b>	<b>Boston, MA</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>Las Vegas, NV</b>
<b>1976</b>	<b>St. Petersburg, FL</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>Albuquerque, NM</b>
<b>1977</b>	<b>Las Vegas, NV</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>Dayton, OH</b>
<b>1978</b>	<b>Denver, CO</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>Bakersfield, CA</b>
<b>1979</b>	<b>Dayton, OH</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Nashville, TN</b>
<b>1980</b>	<b>Orlando, FL</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>Gainesville, FL</b>
<b>1981</b>	<b>San Diego, CA</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>Peoria, IL</b>
<b>1982</b>	<b>Dallas, TX</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>Reno, NV</b>
<b>1983</b>	<b>Las Vegas, NV</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Gainesville, FL</b>
<b>1984</b>	<b>St. Louis, MO</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>Clarksville, IN</b>
<b>1985</b>	<b>Seattle, WA</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>Portsmouth, NH</b>
<b>1986</b>	<b>Atlanta, GA</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>Indianapolis, IN</b>
<b>1987</b>	<b>New Orleans, LA</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>Bloomington, IL</b>
<b>1988</b>	<b>San Antonio, TX</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>Oklahoma City, OK</b>
<b>1989</b>	<b>Washington, DC</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Biloxi, MS</b>
<b>1990</b>	<b>Reno, NV</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>Abilene, TX</b>
<b>1991</b>	<b>Kansas City, MO</b>		



**Previous page:**  
**Biloxi, MS**  
**2010**

**Right:**  
**Portsmouth, NH**  
**2006**

**Below:**  
**Bloomington, IL**  
**2008**







40th Anniversary Reunion Squadron Photo - Las Vegas 1983

Left to Right: Back Row - Ernie Fallentine, John Schlomer, Jerry Stenger, Nile Horne, Max Freed, John Fleisher, Max Bittner, Jack Kelch, Larry Brechel, Bill Morris, Ben Donahue, Jack Van Slyke, Ardnel Steele, Bob Homuth. Next Row - John McWhorter, Ralph DeSantis, Chester Brozek, Reuben Krogh, Gene Koscinski, Ashby Nelson, Fred Boling, Gerald Munn, Gene Clegg, Wes Schulz, Wendel Galbraith, Bud Stromberg, Bob Tate. Next Row - Jerry Dessert, Bob Morrison, Bob Bleier, Ed Miller, Wanda Dannelly, Bernie Bezinover, Don Pirano, Joe Sullivan, Dick Mooradian, Vern Bettencourt, Bob Christopher. Next Row - Dick Block, Jim Hanselman, Don White, Sal Rodriguez, Dan Beal, Mike Garcia, Jim Bagley, Eldon Tobias, Kent Wilcox. On Floor - Ed Reuss, John Shinstock, Geo. Kuckenbecker, Earl Labrier, Gordon Young, Bill Edwards, John Fitzgerald, Harold Worman, Joe Theena.



**Above:  
Las Vegas, NV  
1983**

**Left:  
Indianapolis, IN  
2007**

**Above right:  
Peoria, IL  
2002**

**Right:  
Dallas, TX  
1982**







Kathy Le Comte  
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## *Flightline*

**Abilene, TX  
2011**



*These photos are of the last time 780<sup>th</sup> squadron members met. If you have reunion photos not published in this newsletter, please email a jpeg to [johnkath5@comcast.net](mailto:johnkath5@comcast.net) for publication in a future Flightline.*