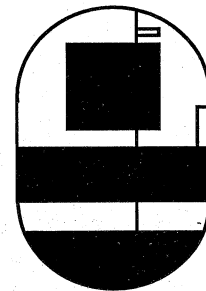




PANTANELLA NEWS



APRIL 1995

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NUMBER 40

FIFTY YEARS AGO IT WAS ALL OVER 465TH BOMB GROUP LAST GROUP TO BOMB VIENNA

Our memories of the period of March and April 1945, fifty years ago, until it was all over, May 8, 1945, was an important event in all of our lives. To recall some of the war in the final days there will be a review of the mission #166 to Vienna, which is noted in the records as one of the two most heavily de-

fended targets in Europe, and a review of the last effective mission for the group #190 to Linz, Austria.

As the war was winding down, our strategic targets were being reduced. Oil had top priority and refineries were successfully bombed, reducing the production to a fraction of the potential. Then

marshalling yards became a priority target to paralyze the German transportation system. Four of the five missions prior to #166 to Vienna were marshalling yards, one to Vienna's Florisdorf Marshalling Yard.

Please read the narrative mission report insert for 22 March before reading page two.



Flak over Vienna. Here is where the phrase was coined, "Flak so thick you could walk on it."

The narrative mission report was typed from the original report. There must have been a new clerk who typed the report due to several errors including the mission as #165. It was actually mission #166.

The report gives the statistics and facts, but does not tell the whole story. I will fill in with my memory of the mission and some input from squadron records and those who flew the mission.

For our squadron we provided 8 crews; Capt. Crutcher, and Lts. Hendrickson, Freeman, Carmack, Ellison, Althoff, Newman, and Kennedy. It was a maximum effort and Capt. Crutcher led the second attack unit, (third box), and Lt. Althoff led the last box (sixth). Also, flying in the lead plane were 781st members Ernest Alden, radar navigator, Paul Durckel, now group navigator, and Alfred Maas former gunner with the 781st.

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781st BOMB SQUADRON

as part of the 465th Bomb Group, Fifteenth Air Force, flew B-24 Liberators from Pantanella Airfield located near Canosa, Italy, during WW11 (1944-45). During it's 191 missions over Southern Europe it dropped thousands of tons of bombs, shot down 23 enemy aircraft (German) and received two Distinguished Unit Citations.

The mission to the target area was uneventful. The I.P. was reached and the group turned on the bomb run. In a minute or two the flak began. The German gunners seemed to be off their mark for a short time, then number one plane got hit, smoke trailing, some chutes tumbling out, and then blew up in 60 seconds. Immediately number two plane took a hit, blew up in 30 seconds and went down. The Germans had found their targets. It was the worst flak I had ever seen. All I could think of was to get out of this terrible mess, but we could not until bombs were dropped on the target. Usually when a number of planes go down you are near the target and the rally would start soon and we would be out of the flak. This day the flight kept going and the planes began to scatter more as hits occurred and engines were feathered.

I did not realize at first why the bomb run was so long. Briefing had told us we would have a 50 to 60 mph tail wind, but instead I found out later we had 60 mph headwind. The wind was 180 degrees off briefing and we had over 100 miles per hour slower ground speed. The Germans and their Wurlitzer-guided flak guns, 88 mm and 155 mm, were having a field day.

Flying lead in the last box I was in a good position to see and hear enough to know that aircraft going over before us were having a very rough time. I had been to Vienna many times before, the previous one was just ten days before when I 'visited' the Florisdorf Marshalling Yards and I got hit in the leg, so the frightening sight up ahead gave me the jitters.

I made a firm rally the second I heard "bombs away." A sharper rally than the book called for, but being the last box we did not have to worry about aircraft behind us and it got us out of some of the flak. As it turned out this was my last mission over Vienna, but the terror in the sky that day will never be forgotten.

Later I learned that our Group Commander, Col. McHenry Hamilton, in the lead plane that blew up, was on his first mission and sur-

vived. From our squadron in the lead plane, the radar navigator, Lt. Ernest Alden was captured by German civilians and hung. A gunner, Al Maas, died in his turret, and Paul Durckel, flying as group navigator got out and was taken POW. The rest of the men in the lead plane were from the 782nd and were all taken POW. I have no record of the fate of the men in the other plane.

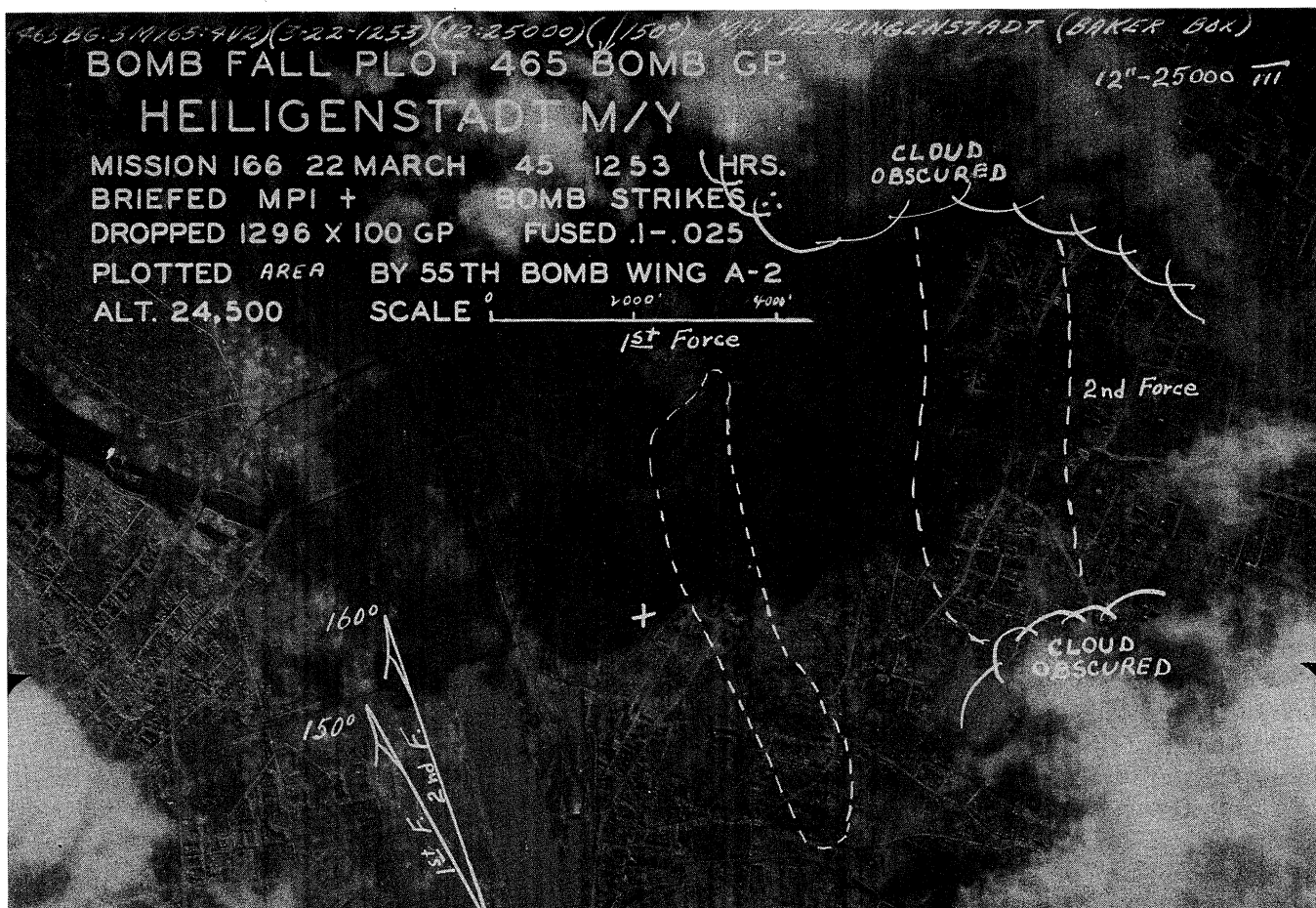
Paul Durckel remembers, when he was helping plan the mission the night before, he advised Col. Hamilton not to go on this mission. Capt. Richardson also advised him against going since he knew how rough the target was and he had a feeling his number was up. Col. Foster, who had gone on R & R, had instructed Durckel he wanted to see Col. Hamilton when he got back. Nevertheless, Col. Hamilton was eager to get his first mission under his belt and insisted on going along.

As the lead plane approached the I.P. they could see the darkened sky ahead from flak exploding over the target area. Since it was Col. Hamilton's first mission, Durckel remembers Col. Hamilton asking what it was. After turning on the bomb run he soon found out.

Durckel also pointed out that there were three men in his plane being trained on lead positions; the co-pilot, Funk, the navigator, Atherton, and Col. Hamilton for lead commander. And he also remembers the top of the nose turret he was in was shot off and his scramble to get out when the direct hit caused the explosion and fire. The new navigator had grabbed the nearest chute, which was Durckel's, and went out the nose wheel door leaving Durckel to find the last chute in the nose area and getting out before being caught by the fire.

Additional details on the 22 March mission can be found in Pantanella News #23, McHenry Hamilton's story "My One-Half Mission" and #26, for Wendell Galbraith's story.

Again, it would be best if you read the mission narrative report for 25 April before reading additional mission information on page 3.



The bomb-fall plot was taken sometime after the bombing. The dotted lines show the area where the bombs were dropped. The white cross shows the aiming point. The first force main pattern started 2,000 feet short and ran across the southern end of the M/Y. The second force began dropping 2,000 feet earlier continuing on across the target into the residential area. You have to remember the lead plane was shot down, followed almost immediately with the second plane going down. With the way the formation was breaking up it is amazing that any kind of a strike was made. Fortunately the lead plane had just dropped its bombs before the fatal hit by flak. The directions on the bomb strike are reversed, the headings were 150 and 160 degrees.

Linz Main Station Marshalling Yards. Mission #190.

In addition to the information on the group narrative report which was enclosed, our records show eight crews flew on this mission; Capts. Crutcher and McDaniel, and Lts. Althoff, Trudeau, Clodfelter, Hendrickson, W. J. Smith and Samuelson. It was Samuelson's last sortie for the theater.

I remember the mission as normal for Linz. We were not in flak for as long as Vienna, but still it was intense. What I remember most is the strange type of flak that penetrated the nose of my aircraft. There was smoke from the hit with a heavy carbide odor, as reported in the group report. My first fear was fire, but the nose section was not a normal place for fire to start. When the flak ceased and we had time to find

out what damage occurred I was surprised to see two strange pieces of flak my bombardier, Hugh Cooper, had collected in the nose section. They were about the diameter of a shot gun shell, but half as long. In the center was a spinner. When it penetrated the nose the carbide spun out in smoke. If it had entered a gas tank you can imagine what would have happened. I think we all can be thankful that this was the last flak fired at the 781st. A heavy salvo of this new flak could have been devastating to a formation.

Hugh Cooper turned one object in to S-2 and kept the other one which he brought to a previous reunion to show.

The following day, 26 April, the squadron flew its last mission, led

by Capt. Crutcher who completed his required sorties. It turned out to be ineffective due to weather at the target. Other crews on this historic flight were Lts. Hewitt, Ellison, Barnett, Billger, Carmack and French.

The mission reports are reproduced almost exactly like the original copy. Some of the abbreviations you may not understand. Here are some answers: a/c, aircraft - I.P., initial point - 6/10 AC, .6 alto cumulous - clouds - SE, single engine - MY marshalling yard - I.A.H., intense, accurate and heavy - 360o, 360 degrees on the compass - CAVU, ceiling and visibility unlimited.

Now some comments about VE day by some of the men.

VE Day Thoughts and Beyond

from Bill Jostworth, Engineering

"Reflecting on my personal thoughts, and happenings, at Pantanella on VE Day, and shortly thereafter, I recall the following: I was working on the line when the G. I. grapevine quickly sprouted the news that hostilities had ended. Suffice to say, I was ecstatic! Then the rumor mill began to hum. The best was we would head home for a 'delay in route' furlough and then be reassigned to the Pacific Theater.

"While on my last visit home, I was wearing corporal stripes, gunnery medals, plus the good conduct and American Theater ribbons. Therefore, I was extremely anxious to get back home and show off to the girls my higher rank, the unit citation with its oak leaf cluster, and the European Theater ribbon with the 7 bronze stars. Boy, would that fruit salad display on my uniform be impressive. I conjured up fantasies and the exciting thoughts about the future, for I was twenty-one, single - and ready to live recklessly in my town.

"But like a big splash of ice water, I went into instant shock when the rumor fizzled and we were ordered to prepare only our aircraft for its return to the U.S.A. After executing the order, I was assigned to assist a carpenter to build shipping crates for various pieces of priority equipment and stencil them for specified destinations.

"Later, I heard that many of our tools were buried in Italy's soil to eliminate precious time and the use of the military machine for transporting equipment back to the states. Furthermore, it was alleged that saturating the American market with those products would economically depress the machine tool industry and stymie post-war recovery.

"Whatever, within a few weeks after V.E. Day, we mechanics were assigned to individual flying crews and were flown to selected airbases throughout South America and the Caribbean area.

"My dreams of ecstasy quickly

dissipated when I was dropped off at a base in the middle of the hot and humid jungles of South America among the noisy parrots, toucans, and wild animals. There I stayed for the duration. Ugh! Ugh! and Ugh!"

Jim O'Neal recalls VE Day. "When I heard the news on May 8th, I jumped up and down and we hugged each other. I for one, gave thanks to God.

"There was a little Italian boy named Frankie, that was no more than 12 years old, who came around our tuffa hut area doing odd jobs for food and handouts. He had often asked me when I thought the war would be over. The morning of V.E. Day he came up off the highway with the biggest grin I had ever seen. We embraced. I have never seen such happiness on a child's face in all my life. Later that morning a truck load of us celebrated by going to Barletta to swim in the Adriatic Sea."

From **George Soroka (Engineering)**, "My memories of V.E. Day are a bit vague. However, I do remember that for several weeks prior to V.E. Day there were all kinds of rumors, so you had your choice. One new order seemed to come into effect; that was to eliminate the concept of a particular ground crew to service their plane. Instead, each plane would have a ground crew chief and the rest of us mechanics would be put into a pool and assigned where needed. None of us liked the idea, but it was, "do it or else."

"However, for me things had very little effect. I wound up with an infected foot and landed in the hospital. It was set up in what had been a house. I was there about a week or longer, all the time sweating out what in hell would happen to me with rumors the outfit was moving out.

"Sure enough, they released me from the hospital and NO MORE 781st! So, I wound up in a "repo-depo." But, that's where I found out powdered eggs didn't have to be green when you ate them, and that they could taste good.

"Days later I was assigned to a B-24 flying to Puerto Rico. Now there was a plane! It was painted black

and had the ball turret removed. As we left Bari for Marrakech I noticed the wings were covered in a film of oil. I checked with the flight engineer who said don't worry that his plane used a little oil. So, on to Dakar. The next morning we took off for Ascension Island and right after take-off the entire plane filled with gasoline fumes. You can imagine our excitement, the bomb bay doors were opened for fresh air and everyone scrambled looking for a gas leak. It was ultimately concluded that the tanks might have been over filled, they expanded in the heat, and caused the fumes.

"How we found Ascension Island is a mystery to me. All volcanic rock, except where the Governor lived. Anyway, I was given a bunk in one of the transient barracks with the rest of the crew, but my mattress was loaded with bedbugs! After scratching for about an hour I decided the hell with this, put on my clothes, picked up my duffel bag, and went down to the plane to sleep. Nobody else had this problem.

"At Georgetown, British Guiana our tired old 24 was still spraying oil, so much so you could skate on the wings. I understood Jostworth, O'Neal, Hutsell, Ferich, and others of the 781st were stationed there. From there it was on to Puerto Rico and Borinquen Field where I stayed 'till V-J Day and was then shipped to the states for discharge."

Victory in Europe

VE Day 7 May 1945

by Pierre J. J. Kennedy

To answer Jim Althoff's question of where I was on the day that World War II ended in Europe, I read over some pages I wrote in the summer of 1945 while at home on a 60 day recuperation furlough, and am sending the following:

On 7 May 1945 I was in Brussels, Belgium, quartered at the Queen Anne Hotel by the British Army which had liberated my group of USAAF and RAF prisoners of war. The Royal Canadian Air Force had flown us out of western Germany to Brussels in C-47s which had flapping wings, bucket seats, and no

parachutes. These planes had first taken British Marines in full combat gear to an airfield in Germany, and after they departed from the C-47, we climbed in.

On our arrival in Brussels we removed the filthy clothes which we had worn for months. They were burned. We were deloused with DDT, given a hot shower and issued brown tankers uniforms with large square pockets. We were given an orientation talk by the British Major in charge of our transportation. He ended by saying, "Well, chaps, you will be leaving soon to join your own forces. Remember your shipping number, but if you want to stay and view the city for a few days, forget the damn number and go out with the next group." I made out an identity card, was given a few dollars by a British paymaster, and sent a letter to my parents in Haverhill, Mass. to let them know that I was O.K.

At the hotel, the Red Cross and Order of Saint John War Organization of London gave us chocolate, tea, coffee, cookies and toilet articles. I soon got sick from eating a chocolate eclair. My stomach which had taken a beating from lack of food as a POW, could not digest an eclair.

That evening I took a short walk near the hotel, and heard that the war was over. Everyone was celebrating in the streets. Actually, for us former POW's, the war ended on May 2nd when we were freed from the Germans by British tanks. The men in my group were in bad shape, and I felt that I could survive only two or three more weeks. Thankfully, the war ended when it did.

It was in Brussels that we left our good friends, the Tommies, and I was somewhat reluctant to part with them. I wrote in my large red notebook, "The Empire forces treated us like Kings all the way."

A few days later, I returned to duty with American forces at Namur, Belgium.

Pierre used the date 7 May 1945 as VE day. I believe most of you will remember it as 7 May as I do. The signing was on 8 May, but the shooting stopped on the 7th.

Pierre was tail gunner and Leonard Goldstein was radio operator

on my crew. They were with the Lovey crew when they went down on Friday October 13, 1944. They were taken POW and spent the rest of the war in Stalag Luft IV. As the Rus-

sians advanced they were forced to march from their camp by the Germans to the west. After 80 grueling days they were freed by the advancing British Army.



May 7, 1944. Hugh Cooper is toasting the gathering which includes Bonnie Rowe at the accordion and Russ Maynard. I don't know how good the photos will turn out. I just hope it will stir some memories. The party is believed to be near the Donahue and Hendrickson casas.



It was my turn to get in the picture with a drink in hand. Martis (with flak helmet and white jacket) and his buddy must have a secret. As I recall, since I was in charge of the Officer Club bar, I opened the liquor storage room and passed out some liquor. Someone told me later that I threw the keys away? All went well until someone threw some live .45 shells in a steel barrel that had a fire in it. When the shells started going off the party broke up. Does anyone have any memories to add to this?

MAIL CALL



Lewis Coghill Sr., "I am retired and some how find myself very busy at the age of 72 years. I am very involved in the Clown Unit of the International Shrine Clown Association and the Shrine Hospitals for Children. As a member of the Medinah Clowns, and all of the associations of the Shrine I find that I am so busy that I cannot find time to attend other conventions or associations.

Just as a support statement of the whys and reasons I have been unable to get to the meetings of the Unit, as of last of September I have made 98 appearances at parties and picnics, parades, churches, schools and other requests. I attended the International Shrine meeting in Denver and the Great Lakes Shrine meeting in St. Louis. I also report the actions of the Medinah Clowns in the Temple news and in the international Clown Magazine, "Clown Alley."

Vincent Beeson, "I want to thank you and the officers of the 781st for doing such a fine job of taking care of our association. As we both know, the life of our club will end some day and I hope the Good Lord lets me live to be one of the few to see the age of 90+ years.

My wife and I also want to thank you for the beautiful plaque you sent to us. It hangs in my den so all can see it. It has a special place on the wall"

A phone call from **Paul Durckel** informed me that **E. W. Richardson** from the 782nd received a new heart on Christmas Day. He is doing fine and will remain in the Los Angeles area for several months. His address there is 1128 Kimberly Street, Redlands, CA 92773.

Richardson was group lead pilot on 22 March on the mission to Heiligenstadt Marshalling Yards in Vienna.

In a letter from **Bob Freed** he

informed me Anthony Nocine was not in Ordnance. He was a ball gunner from the 8th Air Force and flew mostly with the French crew when he came to Pantanella. He also informed me he was shot down while in the 8th Air Force during a raid over Brussels, the resistance located him and he was returned to England.

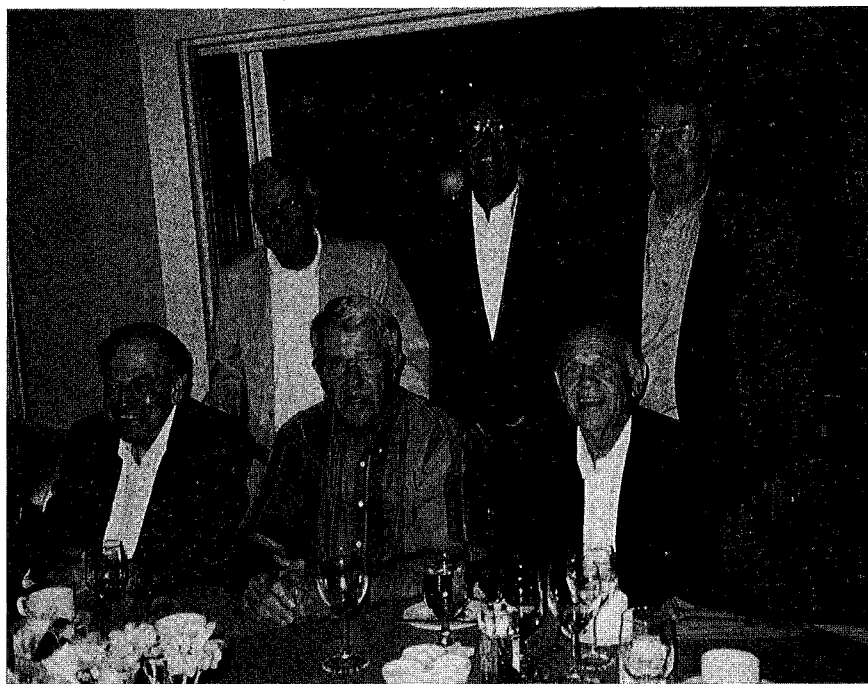
Charles "Bud" Ingram (Engineering), "I have been in the hospital for some heart work, but feeling pretty good now. Sorry to have missed the last reunion, but hope to make the next one."

From **William Bohney**, "Thank you for all the fine work you have done for us members of the 781st. I enjoy the Pantanella News and my grandchildren have used it in their school work and now have an insight on some of our happenings of WWII. I am very grateful."

From **"Hoot" Hosier**, "As I told you I moved back to California. I bought a small travel trailer and put it in a senior citizens park. I am about 4 miles west of Placerville.

Except for my stint in the service and 13 years in Alaska I've lived in this area since 1933. I'm fat, but in good health. I still chase young women and I have a few drinks a couple times a week. My total expenses take approximately one-third of my social security check and the rest is play time."

Ken Foden, "I'm sure glad of the opportunity to apply for a Life Membership. I look forward to receiving the Pantanella News. Every issue I learn more about the squadron and its history. My time in the squadron was quite short. My time in POW camp was longer. I have finally located an old crew member on your list of Tucson Reunion '94'.



Lto R rear: William Yurek, Hayden Bodenhamer, Koenig. Front: Frank Piteo Robert Elliott, Stephen Tabory. Jack Ertel was also present, but could not attend the dinner.

From **Hayden Bodenhamer**, "I am sending a picture (above) of the remaining members of Billger's crew. We met in Florida this past December. Frank Piteo was instrumental in the planning and making what turned out to be a highly successful, emotional and very happy reunion."

Sgt. Marchbanks and I became members of the Tanenbaum (Tanner) crew in September, 1943. We never flew together overseas as my "career" ended quickly. It has been 50 years since I have seen or heard from him.

"Enclosed is a clipping from our local paper. The "All American" fi-

nally left in January. We watched from our ball field as it made several test flights before leaving. I had a hard time convincing some of our ball players it was a B-24. Lucky other vets also read the newspaper. Of course I pointed out the squadron color and markings."

From **Ramon Castillo**, "The Pantanella News is very welcome. It brings back a lot of pleasant memories."

"Unfortunately it has never been convenient for me to attend reunions. My work did not allow time off when things that I would like to do were scheduled. Now that I am completely retired except for yard, garden and house work I have no time at all."

Dean F. Jones, "Boy, 1994 was a bad year for me and my wife health-wise. I hope '95 will be better. You know these "Golden Years" are not so golden, at least in my case."

Russ Maynard, "Caroline and I regretted missing the '94 reunion at Tucson for we feel our 781st people are some of the best we know and it was such a well chosen site for the 781st. Caroline is in very good health again and we should soon be settled after our September move to our new home here in the "Villas of Turnberry" at "Lee's Hill."

"We all have been most proud of the squadron's record performance in its wartime mission. Now, we are all so proud to be associated, over 50 years afterward, with such wonderful people. I trust that you receive adequate fulfillment in knowing how much your efforts have enhanced the recent years of the lives of your comrades and their families."

"Dick Robinson and his wife, Dorothy stopped over enroute to Myrtle Beach. We had dinner together and remembered Pantanella and our more recent squadron reunions. He's vacationing for a month to consider surgery to perhaps get rid of his "pain in the neck."

"I hope to write up an article for you to edit/publish in the Pantanella News before I get too old to write or talk and you get too old to edit or publish."

Some memories from Murray Knowles

The "All American" B-24J made its second appearance to our area. Unfortunately, I missed the first one, but I sure didn't want to miss the second chance.

I spent an enjoyable, memorable afternoon touring "All American" as well as the B-17 Nine O Nine. Both aircraft played a significant role in my USAAF flying experiences.

I had 75 hours stick-time in B-17s, as well as 48 hours ground school in engineering when attending co-pilot training at Tyndall Field, Florida. Flying gunnery students in training missions, so this plane had a special place in my memory.

In to it brought back many memories, not so happy as combat flying could not be construed as "happy" hours.

The last time I was in a B-24 was as George Gaines' co-pilot, Yellow "N" was the plane and it was Friday the 13th of October, 1944, and the target was Blechhammer Oil Refineries.

As I walked through the bomb bay section I recalled the last thing I saw before bailing out was this area of the plane. It brought back more vividly what that moment was like.

For your information the "All American" still carries our group markings on the right rear rudder and vertical stabilizer. It also carries many names from the 781st and 465th Bomb Group. I also spent an enjoyable afternoon chatting with crew members from WWII many of whom were also EX POWs like myself.

The "happy" memories were not the combat missions, but the comradeship of the crew members, officers

and enlisted men, we were family back then and still remember each other with letters at Christmas.

Also happy memories were the hours at the officers club playing ping-pong with **Col. Lokker**, swapping my coke ration for **Mel Farber's** (our bombardier) beer ration, R & R at Capri, a two day pass to Rome, mud skiing down the rutted road down the steep hill in a "borrowed" jeep on base, **George Gaines** trying to shoot a fly on the tent ceiling with his '45 after we had celebrated our first bottles of American booze flown in from Egypt, the whiskey ration after each mission from **Doc Rapoport** (God Bless Him), listening to Vann Reynolds (Navigator) play a borrowed violin from a musician at the hotel in Capri, eating a hard-boiled egg at the Officers Club at 50 cents a pop, and letters from home were just a few of my favorite things."



The Fifteenth Air Force news proclaiming Victory!



Chaplain Blough sent a message after the Dedicatory Service of the Chapel, May 18, 1945 and after most of the group had left.

Dear Friends:

The war is won in Europe and our Group has moved away from Pantanella Field. Some of the men have gone to the Pacific Theater while others are reemployed elsewhere. No matter where we go we shall never forget the me we left there. And to you who have paid the highest price for the victory achieved, we wish to give every consideration of sympathy, and tell you that in memory to our comrades and your loved ones, we erected a Chapel and a Monument to their honor.

On the Monument was carved, in English on the front, and in Italian on the back, this inscription:

"In eternal memory and honor to our
Comrades of the 465th Bombardment
Group (H), U. S. Army, who gave their
lives for peace and righteousness in
World War II
1944-45."

The Dedicatory Service was well received with Bishop Oxnam expressing our deepest thought, when in his message entitled, "We Have a Date With the World," he reminded us that our Comrades had held this date and although it cost them their lives, they died in defense of the sacred rights of our country, as they have believed the world would be a better place for their sacrifice.

"The pains of death are passed,
Labor and sorrows cease;
And life's long warfare closed at last,
His soul is found in peace.
Soldier of Christ, well done!
Praise be thy new employ!
And while eternal ages run,
Rest in thy Savior's joy."
-Montgomery

May God bless you in the years of peace that are ahead.

Herbert R. Blouch, Chaplain

FOLDED WINGS

Alfred Keith Brown (Group) passed away February 7, 1994.

Marjorie C. Gibbs (wife of Robert C. Gibbs) passed away January 1, 1995.

Sammie O. Griffin (Radar Mechanic) passed away January 15, 1995.

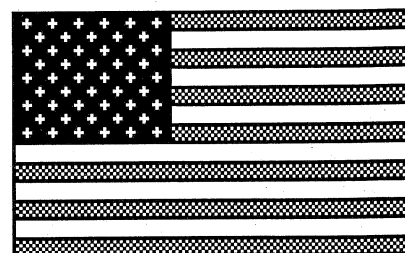
John W "Jack" Ertel (Navigator Bilger) passed away February 7, 1995.

Mrs. Griffin wrote, "Sammie O. Griffin passed away in his sleep on January 15, 1995. He really enjoyed receiving the Pantanella News to read what the rest of the fellows had been doing and to hear of the reunions. He had a heart condition for a good while, but we sure were not expecting him to pass away. We are still in shock, but I suppose time and prayers will help to ease the pain."

A letter from **Bob Elliott** reported Jack Ertel's wife, Ruby called him to report Jack's death. He had been sick for awhile, but attended his crew's reunion in November at Panama City, Florida.

Sick Call

Frank Piteo (Top Gunner/Bilger) had heart bypass surgery on February 9th. Reported by Bob Elliot. Jim Wray has been hospitalized, but is at home now. He has not been doing too well. Maureen hopes with tender loving care at home he'll be on the road to recovery.



LIFE MEMBERSHIP

New life members since January.
What an amazing response to life membership.

22. George G. Gaines, Jr.
23. Francis R. Clark
24. Jack Levin
25. Walker H. Shipley
26. Vernon G. Burda
27. John B. Kennedy
28. Russ T. Maynard
29. Barbour C. Stokes, Jr.
30. Ralph Du Bois
31. Verle B. Dollison
32. William A. Rachow
33. Donald A. Barrett
34. Walter W. Dudley
35. John C. Zartman
36. Richard L. Crutcher, Jr.
37. Robert L. Jasper
38. Ralph H. Hendrickson
39. Kenneth G. Foden
40. Michael J. Deironimi
41. John R. Dickey (Memorial)

Address Changes

NOTICE: Some of your address may not be exactly correct. Be sure to check your label to see if it is exactly the way it should be. The bulk postage mailing does not have forwarding privileges, therefore, if incorrect, the newsletter is thrown away. Ten of the last newsletters were returned with a charge of 35¢ or 58¢ because I had "address correction requested."

You may receive your mail if it is slightly incorrect, but then a new delivery person appears on the scene and it's tossed away.

Donald Toomey, 13480 Wellington Ct., Champlin MN 55316. Phone 612 323-7351.

Hugh Cooper, 1371 Knoll Crest Dr., Kendallville, IN 46755-1719.

Lewis M. Roberts, 2410 Memorial Dr Apt A301, Bryan TX 77802-2842.

Raymond W. Hill, 16 Linder Circle, Sugar Mill Woods, Homosassa, FL 34446.

Michael Horvath, 9502 Ara Drive, Thonotosassa, FL 33541

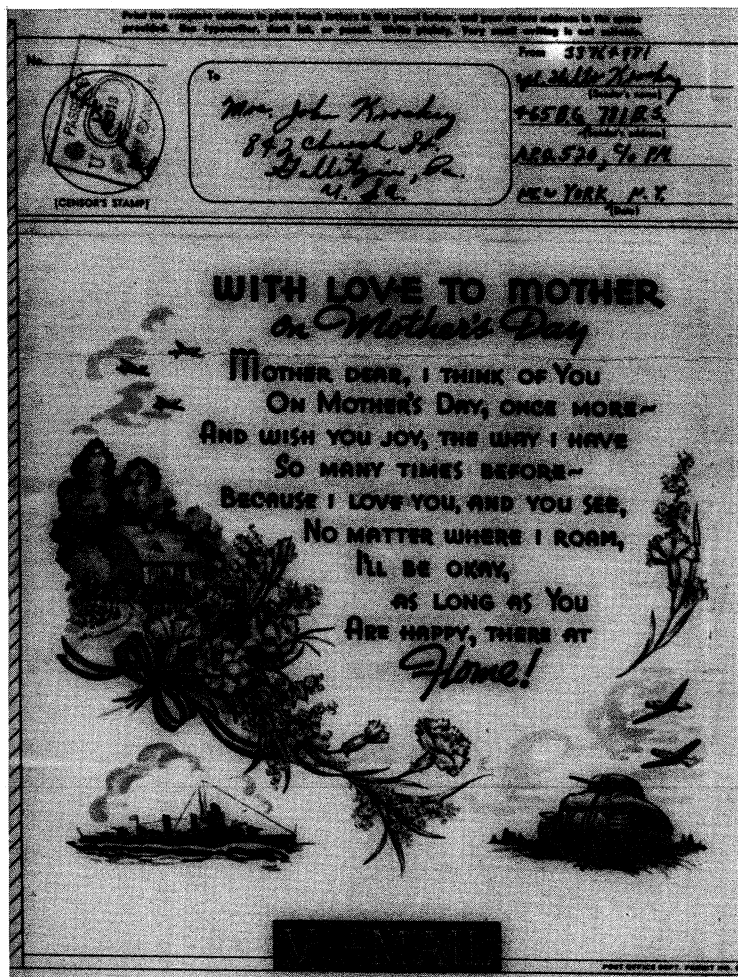
John Messmore, Box number changed to 87.

Murray Knowles, 3001 Northland Rd. Unit 63, Mount Dora, FL 32575. Phone 904 383-9226.

REUNION '94
HOWARD JOHNSON GOVERNORS HOUSE
MONTGOMERY, AL
SEPT 26 - 29, 1996

ADJACENT TO MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE

It's been decided - Montgomery Alabama for '96. We will find a lot of interesting items at this planned location in the deep south for your seventh reunion, and tenth anniversary since the first reunion! Dates are September 26 - 29. Reunion Chairman Nick Schaps will be providing details in a timely manner. Mark your calendars now - if you have a '96 calendar.



This Mother's Day V Mail was just received from Walter E. Kroskey in time for this newsletter and Mother's Day 1995.

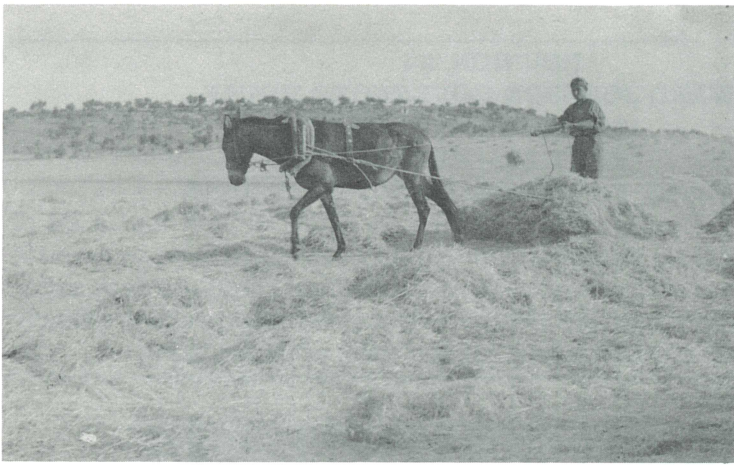
Editors corner

Thanks to those of you who responded overwhelmingly to the latest dues request. We have not made dues a big issue, but apparently we have to remind you once in awhile! A note with one life membership check said, "This will relieve me of keeping track when dues are due." And a delinquent member sent a \$500 check with a note, "Sorry about this!" We like to keep the treasurer in the black, but more important we like to hear from you.

Regarding payment of dues we prefer you send your check to O. J. Cowart whose address is on the second page. Dues are due each year in January, so, if you do not have a 95 (or LIFE) on your mailing label opposite your name it's time to pay up.

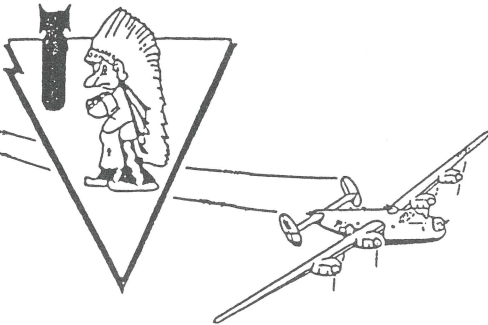
The number of life members has been a real surprise. Anyone is welcome to join.

Again thanks to those of you who have contributed to the *Pantanelle News*. A special thanks to Gene Moxley for the Narrative Mission Reports.



Italy Fifty Years ago. Clockwise, starting upper left - On the base 1944 - nearby picking olives - picking stray heads of wheat - filling water casks at Cerignola. Owner furnished casks, rig and labor for 3¢ a cask. Robert Pennock photos.

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HEADQUARTERS 465TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HV)
APO 520

U. S. ARMY
22 March 1945

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

TO : Commanding General, 55th Bombardment Wing (Hv),
APO 520, U. S. Army.

SECTION 1 (Narrative)

1. 38 a/c of 38 scheduled took off at 0826 hours on 22 March 1945 to attack the Heiligenstadt M/Y at Vienna, Austria. The formation was made up of two attack units with Lt. Col. MC HENRY HAMILTON, Jr. and Capt. EDGEL W. RICHARDSON leading the first attack unit, and Capt. R. L. CRUTCHER, leading the second attack unit.

2. Group and Wing rendezvous were accomplished as briefed.

3. An escort of P-38's joined at 1158 hours in the vicinity of Judenburg and furnished penetration, target, and withdrawal cover and support. Escort departed from formation at 1440 hours in the vicinity of Vis.

4. At the I.P. it was decided to bomb the target by PFF since undercast conditions prevailed, to the extent of 6/10 AC at 14,000 feet, but half way down the bomb run it became apparent that a visual run could be made. Bombing was done visually, but it is not known whether auto-pilot was used as the lead a/c went down at the target. The second attack unit dropped bombs visually employing auto-pilot.

5. Bomb strike photos reveal that the main pattern fell 4,000 feet NW of target, and ran across the southern end of the M/Y. Another pattern is visible in the residential area 6,000 feet WSW of the target.

6. No flak on route out, but at the target I.A.H. flak was encountered.

7. An unidentified S/E a/c was observed at 1320 hours near Radkersberg with five P-38's in hot pursuit. It is believed the a/c was shot down by escort. Three S/E a/c were seen at 1128 hours taking off from A/D at Ljubljana.

8. Weather: 2/10 AC at 10,000 feet prevailed to the Yugoslavian coast. At the Yugoslavian coast clouds increased to 7/10 with tops at 13,000 feet, extending to the Dinaric Alps. At Ljubljana there was 4/10 AC reaching to 14,000 feet while extending to the target area. At the target 4-6/10 AC reaching to 14,000 ft. was encountered. On the route back similar weather conditions prevailed, with the clouds increasing to 8/10 at the Yugoslavian coast, and clearing over the Adriatic.

9. Observations: A single parachute was seen near Sochau, 47 01 N, 16 00 E, it is believed likely that this chute came from the a/c mentioned in paragraph seven (7). It was observed that most M/Y's were vacated and that most rolling stock had been spaced along the right of way outside the M/Y's.

10. 31 a/c landed at 1600 hours. One a/c landed at Bari with a wounded man and returned to base at 1700 hours. Three (3) a/c landed at Zara, two (2) of which returned to base after refueling. The third remained at Zara for emergency repairs. One (1) a/c returned to the base from the assembly area at 0900 hours. Two (2) a/c were lost at the target. No a/c are missing.

b. At Ruhpolding, 4745N-1239E, a white circle on ground with a red cross and a building with a red cross were seen. More red crosses were seen on the south edge of Chiem Lake.

c. A smoke screen at Linz was ineffective.

10. 25 a/c landed at 1550 hours. Two of the spare a/c landed at 1158 hours. There was one early return. There was one a/c at a friendly field and one a/c piloted by Lt. GEMMATO was lost to flak at the target. Nine chutes were seen from this a/c.

11. The route was flown as briefed.

SECTION II (Statistics)

31 a/c off at 0858 hours. Group assembly at 0930 hours at 6,000' over Andria. Wing rendezvous at 0947 hours at 7,000' over Spur.

27 effective sorties. 4 non-effective. 1 lost. 1 Missing.

27 a/c dropped 65.25 tons on Linz Main Station M/Y at 1317 hours from 22,000'. Bombs: 500# RDX, fused .1 N and .01 T.

5.75 tons jettisoned

5.00 tons brought back

76.00 tons total

C O N F I D E N T I A L

HEADQUARTERS 465TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HV)
APO 520 U. S. ARMY

25 April 1945.

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

TO : Commanding General, 55th Bombardment Wing (Hv),
APO 520, U. S. Army.

SECTION 1 (Narrative)

1. 31 a/c of 31 scheduled took off at 0858 hours on 25 April 1945, to attack the Linz Main Station Marshalling Yards. The a/c formed into two attack units with the first being led by Lt. Col. WILLIAM P. DAY, Jr., and the second attack unit was led by Capt. R. L. CRUTCHER.

2. The group assembled over the Andrea area at 0930 hours at 6,000' and wing rendezvous was accomplished at 0947 hours at 7,000' over the Spur.

3. An escort of P-38's joined the formation at 1150 hours at Idnnia and provided penetration, target and withdrawal cover and left the formation at 1240 hours in the Udine area.

4. A visual run was made by both attack units, with the lead a/c using C-1 automatic pilot. The axis of attack was 150 degrees.

5. Bomb strike photos show a good concentration of hits in the north choke point with scattered hits through the center of the yards and a fair concentration of hits in the south choke point.

6. Flak at the target was moderate to intense, accurate and heavy, with the greatest intensity being encountered at bombs away. A large amount of mushrooming bursts, exploding with considerable fire flash and cascading into white smoke streamers were seen. Several a/c received hits by small metal pieces, a sample of which is being sent under separate cover. These small cylindrical pieces have a definite carbide odor.

7. One twin engine a/c thought to be an ME 210 was seen at 1345 hours at an altitude of 25,000' twenty miles north of Klagenfurt on a heading of 360o. 3 unidentified SE a/c in a three plane scattered element were seen over Munich at 1246 Hrs. These a/c were at about 3,500', on a heading of 195o. Two of these were black in color and one silver.

8. Weather: From base to Vis 2/10 C at 3500'. At Ledenice there was 1/10 AS at 18,000', 4/10 AC at 9,000'. At the I.P. there was 4/10 AC to left of course, at 13,000'. Target was CAVU with visibility 20 miles. On return it was clear to Klagenfurt then 4/10 AC to 14,000' continuing to base.

9. The following observations were noted:

a. Near Edling at 4804N-1210E there were three red crosses on white backgrounds in an open area, which looked like panels on the ground. There was also one dark blue or black cross in this area which was seen at 1244 hours.

11. Two a/c down at the target were lost to direct hits by flak, and both were seen to go down in flames. Nine chutes were seen from lead a/c which received a direct hit in the right wing between the #3 engine and the bomb-bay. The a/c was under control for at least sixty seconds after it was struck and was observed to be in a steep bank with flames bursting from the bomb-bay and right wing root. The other a/c was struck in the right wing between #3 and #4 engines, and immediately exploded, diving straight down and bursting into flames. From three (3) to five (5) chutes were reported below the a/c but it is no known from which a/c these chutes came. There was one moderate injury, and one slightly injured. Three a/c received major damage, and six a/c were damaged slightly.

12. The route was flown as briefed.

SECTION II (Statistics)

38 a/c off at 0826 hours. Group assembly at Andria at 0920 hours at 10,500 ft.
Wing rendezvous at 0927 hours over Andria at 10,500.

36 a/c effective, 2 non-effective. 2 Lost. 0 Missing. 1 Friendly Field.

36 a/c dropped 68.8 tons on Heiligenstadt M/Y (Vienna) at 1253 hours from 25,000 feet.

Bombs: 100# GP, fused .1N and .025 T.

4.65 tons jettisoned

2.55 tons returned to base.

76.00 tons total

VICTORIES: 0/0/0

MALFUNCTIONS AND NON-EFFECTIVE

STATUS	TURN BACK	DISPOSITION OF BOMS	REASON
Non-effective	Assembly area	Brought back	Lost prop governor.
Non-effective	Assembly area	Jet 33 in Adriatic brought back 7	Engine failure

11 a/c had bombs hang up. 9 a/c dropped at various locations and 2 a/c returned with 4 bombs.

DATE: 22 March 1945.

MISSION NUMBER: 165

R. C. PEASE
Major, Air Corps,
S-2

(Some explanation of abbreviations - MY - marshalling yard, 6/10 A/C is .6 Alto cumulos clouds - I.H.A. is intense, heavy and accurate flak - S/E is single engine - a/c is aircraft - 360o is 360 degrees on a compass)