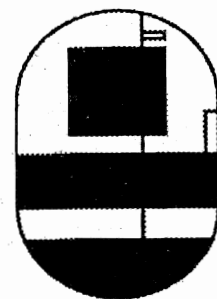




# PANTANELLA NEWS



APRIL 1999

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NUMBER 56



Frazier Crew: L to R: Rear Row: Leo Seitz, Ball Gunner; Wm. A. McGonigle, Bombardier; Russ Maynard, Co-Pilot; Jack Frazier, Pilot. Front Row: D. Kinney, Flight Engineer (replaced A.C. Davis, KIA), J. Werner, Gunner; T. Robinson, Armorer/Gunner; J. Radzik (Rogers), Radio/Gunner; H. Taylor, Turret Gunner.

*This is Part II of the story by Russ Maynard about his career in aviation. Here he describes joining the 781st Squadron, some of his combat activities, and his ultimate return to the United States.*

## The Langley Field Interlude

**W**e were at Langley about twelve days. Jack Frazier would sign out one of the old Model "D"

B-24s assigned to operations and we would fly practice missions (with a skeleton crew) so he could instruct me in flying the B-24. We practiced maneuvers (stalls, slow flight, landings, and take-offs, etc.), emergency procedures, and weather flying. In this respect Jack was very smart for he would have otherwise had to enter combat operations with an unqualified co-pilot.

Jim Holt, our navigator, was reassigned to radar training at Boca Raton, Florida, and we were assigned a new B-24H with radar bombing equipment, a radar nav-

igator to get us across the Atlantic, and two radar maintenance technicians to take overseas.

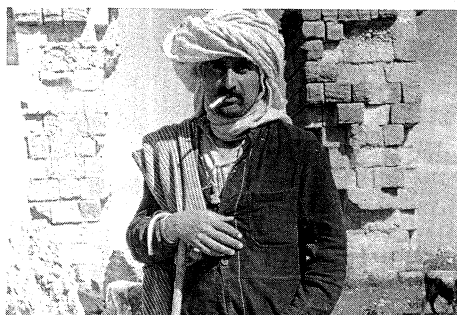
## The Overseas Journey

**W**e departed Langley Field on May 27, 1944, for Grenier Field in New Hampshire to stage and to receive our overseas orders. Our orders were "secret" and not to be opened prior to four hours from United States shores. We were also issued interim orders to proceed

to Presque Isle, Maine for overnight and transatlantic briefing.

The following afternoon we took off for Gander, Newfoundland for supper and refueling, then took off at 2200 hours for Lagens Airfield on the Azores Islands for refueling. We were initially assigned a cruise altitude of 7,000 feet. On our Atlantic leg to the Azores, we were in clouds and icing so we requested 5,000 feet, which was just below the icing level but amidst moderate to heavy snow for some 3-1/2 hours. We turned on the landing lights so those aboard could enjoy the beauty of the snow. None had ever been aloft in a snowstorm before.

The navigator shot a fix (celestial) after we got out of the clouds, determining we were some 250 miles west of Lagens Air Field and within two miles of our plotted course. We soon picked up the RB (radar beacon) at Lagens and homed in on the A.D.F. (automatic direction finder). We were the third B-24 to land on the newly-laid steel



Russ Maynard in disguise?

matting on Lagens. After our nose wheel lowered to the surface, we hit a sharp "bump" in the surface and collapsed the nose gear by breaking the "scissors" arm. We were at Lagens three days.

Then on to Marakesh, Morocco, where we tasted our first "powdered" eggs. We remained there overnight and then traveled across the Atlas mountain range to Tunis. Turbulence over the mountains at 11,000 feet rendered our Minneapolis Honeywell Autopilot inoperable. Tunis was our reporting point to the 15th AF. From there we were ordered to take the B-24 to Gioia, Italy to be made "combat-ready," then proceeded to Pantanella to join the 781st with "Flamin' Mamie," our new B-24H.

## Combat Flying with the 781st Bomber Squadron

Initially, our crew was assigned to the 484th Group but for reasons unknown to us we were reassigned to the 781st at the last moment. No doubt each group was competing for "Flamin' Mamie" because "she" was radar-equipped. It was squadron policy for crew commanders to fly their first few combat missions with combat veteran crews before taking their own crews on a mission. Our first mission as a crew was on June 23, 1944, to hit the Girgui oil storage facilities in Romania.

On the 30th of June, Austin Davis, our flight engineer, flew with the Lt. Dickey crew and did not return. We learned later that Sgt. Da-

vis and others had been killed. The mission to Blechhammer was one of deep emotion for our crew. Operations assigned me to fill a co-pilot vacancy on another crew for that day. We learned that Sgt. Davis was killed by the Weremacht (German army). This tragic occurrence proved to our squadron and especially to our crew the mission hazards of what we were doing, and had a deep effect on all of the Frazier crew.

Among the aircraft names I flew to targets in were "Belle Ringer", "Pleasure Bent", "Supernatural", "Paper Doll", "Guardian Angel", "Joegia Wolf", "Miss Fortune", "Test-Hop Tillie", "Agony Wagon", "Hot Matilda", "Skin Wagon", "Flamin' Mamie", et al.

I was one of the more fortunate crew members in the 781st. I did not have to leave a wife or children at home to go into combat; I had comfortable living quarters at Pantanella in the 12' x 14' "tufa rock" casa just 150 feet up slope from the "O" Club/Mess; I never had to land short of home base; and I suffered no injuries nor illness due to combat exposure.

There were two missions that stand out in my memory and neither is the one cited for awarding the DFC to me. I went to Blechhammer near the Polish and German border three times, Vienna several times, Munich and Brux once each, and Budapest, southern France, Ploesti, et.al. One mission to Friedrichshafen, Austria on the north shore of Lake Constance on August 3, 1944, when the 465th had its heaviest loss of aircraft from fighters, stands out in my memory. We lost several B-24s off the tail end of our formation that day. My log book reflects eight in the REMARKS column.

Frazier's crew was in #3 position of a second attack unit on the left wing of Major Jim Wray, who was leading that day. As I recall, the main Air Force had gone to an alternate location, but we contin-

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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 WWII (1944-1945). 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.

ued to the primary target without escort and were between cloud layers at about 26,000 feet. The attack came from some twelve to fourteen FW-190s from 5 o'clock low through to 11 o'clock high.

I think this may have been the mission when Dick Robinson, our armorer gunner, was credited with a "probable." The intercom was busy calling out "bogies" from the time they appeared through the undercast. At Jack's command, I called on "B" channel for escort aircraft at first sighting of a "bogie."



Checkerboard Friend

Escort aircraft were some forty miles away with the main attack force. They were Col. Ben Davis, Jr.'s Italy-based P-51s (the unit of all-black airmen). Very soon two escort aircraft encountered the Luftwaffe and chased the FW-190s out of the sky. I watched one make a kill from a pursuit curve in front of us (within a 1/4 mile distance). The FW-190 had completed his pass through our formation and I heard on "B" channel a call from a "buddy" of the one in his "attack pursuit curve" saying "Just got two, how are you doing?" While his tracers were flying at the FW I heard the reply, "I got one . . . now two!" just as I saw the FW-190 enter a dive in flames.

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*Editor's note: See Pantanella News #49 and #50*

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In 1993, General Davis autographed his book (an autobiogra-

phy) for me and we recalled that particular mission and others in a nostalgic remembrance. His outfit had quite a harvest that day. I had never met General Davis until 1976, when he was Assistant Secretary of Transportation and had oversight of the Federal Aviation Agency. I brought a document to him for signature of a program I was working on for the FAA administrator.

The second mission that was most memorable to me was one to Vienna where flak was heavy, intense, and accurate. We lost two engines shortly after "bombs away." This did not create too much of a problem in remaining aloft, but before we got very close to home base the #4 engine was past redline on temperature and the oil pressure was nearing zero. We had observed oil trailing from the nacelle en route.

Our hydraulic lines were leaking from the flak damage, and we manually extended the gear. On final approach we discovered the right tire was ruptured. Jack had Sgt. Radzik (now Rogers) shoot off the very pistol as we began our approach and ordered all crew members to prepare for a "rough" landing!

On touch down Jack yelled to me, "No brakes!" So, the hydraulic accumulators were also mechanical victims of flak damage. Due to the ruptured tire on the right side and no brakes to counteract the flat tire, the aircraft peeled off the runway toward the 464th parallel runway. The 500 feet or so of median between the two runways was truly "unimproved terrain." However, the #4 Pratt & Whitney with super hot cylinder heads and no indicated oil pressure delivered enough power to overcome the ruptured right tire, and Jack was able

to realign the aircraft on the 464th steel matting.

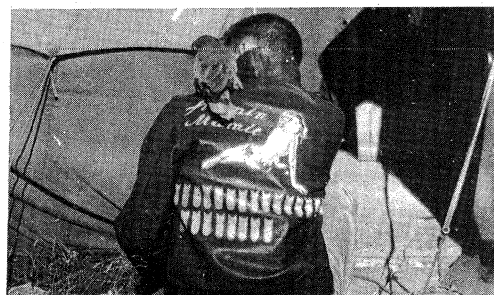
The rough terrain and the flat right tire decelerated the aircraft even without brakes. So when we were practically stopped, Jack hit the alarm bell as a signal to all aboard to evacuate the aircraft and also activated the "crash bar" to shut off fuel, engines, etc. However, the #4 engine kept running and pulled the aircraft around on the pivoted flat tire. We were so



Russ Maynard, Jack Frazier and Wm. McGonigle at rest camp.

thankful that no crew members were injured by flak or the rough landing. One gunner broke an ankle when he leapt from a waist window to the steel matting.

As Jack and I were making our way clear of the aircraft (it was full of gas and hydraulic fumes) we met Col. Josh Foster, our Deputy Group commander, yelling to get



Jack Frazier: Flamin' Mamie and Credits

the fuel off so that the engine would shut down. Jack grabbed him by the arm and said, "Colonel, the fuel is off and leaking throughout the bomb bay and wing section!" Col. Foster did a quick about

face at that moment.

In early December of 1944, Frazier was assigned "lead pilot" duties and thereafter flew with "lead" crews. On his recommendation and that of Operations Officer, Hank Willett, I was checked out (two flights in two days) as a

command combat pilot and flew my remaining combat missions with remnants of Frazier's crew and new crews receiving orientation into combat flying.

I finished my tour with a credit of 58 missions and flew back to the United States in

mid-March of 1945.

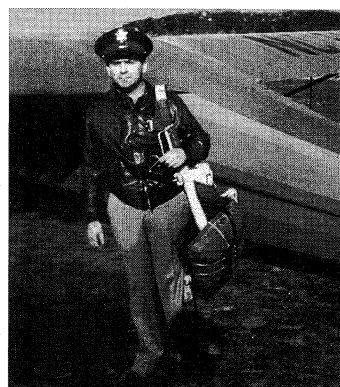
*Episode III (the final part) of this saga will follow in an early issue of PANTNELLA NEWS. It covers Russ Maynard's post-war career in civil aviation and, ultimately, with the Federal Aviation Administration.*

## How I Got to Pantanella

By Morris R. "Doc" Rapoport

The story behind the picture below is as follows: I was an Intern at a New York City hospital on Dec. 7, 1941 and immediately went down to the Recruitment Center at 90 Church Street to volunteer. I chose the Army Air Force and then had a problem with the medical Director of my hospital as he could not replace me.

However, I prevailed and on Special Order 37, dated 12 Feb. 1942," By Order of the Sectary of War, G.C. Marshall" I was assigned to Tyndall Field, Panama City, FL. I was pretty impressed!



Doc in Training ...

As a ward physician at the Station Hospital, I found myself doing tonsillectomies and treating minor illnesses. As this was not my idea of fighting for my country, I went to Headquarters and put my name down for transfer to a flight squadron.

Almost immediately I found myself in an ambulance as part of a motor convoy of one five-passenger car, one 1/4 ton truck, five 2-1/2 ton trucks, four officers and

30 enlisted men traveling from Panama City, FL. through the center of the United States to Janesville, Wisconsin. By the reception we got along the way, you would have thought we were returning heroes having won the war.

Our orders stated that upon arrival at Janesville, we were to become the 16th AAF Glider Training Detachment attached to a civilian flying school. We took up quarters in the YMCA, and soon received our first class of students. We set up ground school and quickly our first Piper Cubs arrived. Each cadet was to complete ground school and then receive 16 half-hour lessons in which to solo.

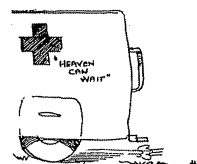
During this time I was treating all the civilian personnel and of course never accepting payment. The owner of the school asked me if I would like to take flying lessons myself. I applied to my C.O. and asked for permission to fly and I received official permission to fly in civilian aircraft. This would be today's equivalent of being asked to become an Astronaut!

I went through ground school quickly and then began my flying instruction in an Aeronca Chief plane. First learning the controls, then taxiing, then handling the plane, then stalls, spins,

landings, etc. I remember my first landing— I must have dropped down from about ten feet! After the plane came to a stop, the instructor climbed out of the plane and said, "Never do that to me again!"

I did improve and after 7 1/2 hours I had my first solo flight. It was an experience I will never forget. After that I was allowed to take up a Piper Cub and do some solo flying. Not having had any navigation instruction I simply followed the railroad tracks home. The picture you have, I was standing next to a Piper Cub at the 16th AAF Glider Training Detachment, Janesville, Wisconsin.

In November, the weather got too cold for flying and we returned to Tyndall Field. I applied for and was accepted at the School of Aviation Medicine, Randolph Field, San Antonio, Texas. After graduation I spent several months with a B-17 squadron and finally S.O.#7, Headquarters, Army Air Base, Kearns, Utah, assigned me to AAB, McCook, Nebraska and as the saying goes, after that all is history.



... And working at Pantanella



## A Checkerboard Tale

*Following is an article by Frank Ambrose describing a chance meeting he had during the Dayton Reunion.*

The "1998 781<sup>st</sup> Reunion" turned out to be more A A Checkerboard Tale than a Squadron reunion when an event at the Museum caused a chance meeting with a number of our members and a member of a famous group of Fighter Pilots.

The "Air Force Museum Foundation" and the "International Association of Eagles" cosponsored an event aptly titled "Gathering of Eagles" featuring an assortment of 14 famous and legendary historical aviators who were slated to appear in person to recount their exploits and experiences.

Seven "Eagles" were gathered the first week of the "Aviation History Symposium" who were expected to take part in personal appearance presentations, panel discussions and memorabilia signing.

The initial "Gathering of Eagles" coincided with our reunion and among the first of the four "Eagles" making a personal appearance was Colonel William Campbell. USAF (Ret.) Col. Campbell was a member of the 99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron of Tuskegee Airmen and he flew on their very first

combat mission. If you recall, it was the 99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron that so successfully flew cover for our Group while flying on runs over Europe.

At the museum I asked permission of Col. Campbell's aide to meet with the retired Colonel to personally thank him for the protection his squadron gave our bombers. The old veteran almost blew my mind when I mentioned B-24s in Italy and he responded, smiling and with a twinkle in his eye, that he vaguely recalled a time when a B-24 visited his base and ran off the iron matted taxi strip into the mud and had to be towed out.

In my waning memory I think I also recall that very same beautiful "Stand-Down" day. As I remember (it's been a few years) that day, I had requested a plane with my personal Pilot, Hank Willett and his Co-pilot,

Doc Rapoport to go on a very important "Photo Mission" in order to take interior views of Mt. Vesuvius. One other person, I think a Crew Chief, was on board as well. Returning from the volcano, cruising about 5000 feet we soon encountered P-51s. I radioed to ask if they would like to give me a few fly-bys so I could photograph them. When the aerial photo session ended we were invited to visit their base.

Willet made a beautiful landing as attested by the still standing open bottle of beer on the floor where I had placed it in order to take photos. Never spilled a drop! However, as we turned off the runway onto the

taxi strip, the right landing gear ran off the narrow matting into the mud. I never did say anything that day, but I really think it was the Co-pilot's fault. After all, Doc Rapoport was sitting in the right seat and I think he should have advised Hank of the narrow matting on his side of the plane. We never did get to visit anyone that day, by the time they dragged the plane out of the mud it was time to get home.

Chit-chatting before the banquet Saturday night, Hank was reminding me how he served as



Photo by Ron Kaplan, *The Flight Journal* magazine correspondent

my personal pilot for all those "High Priority Special Photo Missions" while in Italy. Affirming, I recounted the conversation I had earlier in the day with Col. Campbell who had brought up the "stuck-in-the-mud incident." I asked Hank if he could recall it. He said he couldn't! I'm certain I have a negative of the incident somewhere.

By now a large group of men, women and children associated with the 781<sup>st</sup> had gathered around the famous P-51 pilot as he recounted various experiences. Pulling rank (photographer's rank) I asked if he would honor us by standing among us for a group photo. He complied graciously as flash bulbs popped at the rare photo opportunity. I'm really proud to have met the Gentle-



Frank Ambrose, Charles Bradley, Colonel William Campbell, USAF(Ret), Irene Bradley.  
Photo by Ron Kaplan



st BOMB SQUADRON





## My Grandfather, S/Sgt George J. Le Comte

by Kathy Le Comte Lupton

I'm sure some of you who haven't met me are wondering who I am and what the devil I'm doing hanging around with 70-year-old but very youthful men! Ladies, you have no need to worry. I am already married to a great guy. But I apologize to any of you single guys out there looking for a date for next Saturday night.

But to be serious for a few moments, my name is Kathy Le Comte Lupton. I drove here by myself from Springfield, Illinois and I am the granddaughter of S/Sgt George Le Comte. And to put it simply, I am here to learn from all of you.

My grandfather joined the 780th Bomb Squadron in late November 1944. He came to the out fit from the 8th Air Force in England as a replacement gunner.

aircraft fire, setting it aflame in the nose and cockpit and knocking out the controls, the electrical system and the hydraulic lines. As the plane started downward in a spin, the crew members began bailing out." Six of the 11 crew bailed out successfully. My grandfather was not among them.

That was 1944. Flash forward 48 years and that is when I became seriously interested in my grandfather's story. The questions I started to ask myself were, "Who was he?" "What did he do during his short life?" and "What happened on that day over Vienna in 1944?"

My grandmother and father couldn't answer those questions, for various reasons. And, for the most part, neither could the three surviving members of Lt. Larson's crew. So, I had to look elsewhere for answers.

That is how I found Bob Bleier, who immediately put me on the list to get the Flightline newsletter.

to see all of you at future reunions.

*Kathy's grandfather was from the 780th Bomb Squadron. She asked to speak to the 465th Bomb Group at the banquet on Saturday night. Many approached her after the program and offered their help to fill in more about her grandfather's mission.*



## Twenty-six Members Have Attended All Eight Squadron Reunions



L to R: Joe Theena, George Kuchenbecker, Kathy Le Comte, Harold Worman, Bill Edwards. All from the 780th Bomb Squadron Association.

On December 11, 1944, on a mission to bomb the Vienna South Ordnance Depot, S/Sgt Le Comte was on a plane piloted by Lt. Vern Larson - The Mission Belle. According to an official report, over the target "the aircraft was hit by anti-

When I read about this reunion - and learned all the squadrons were going to be here - I knew I had to come. For the last four days I have met many people - both from the 780th Bomb Squadron and the 465th Bomb Group family. I hope

James C. Althoff  
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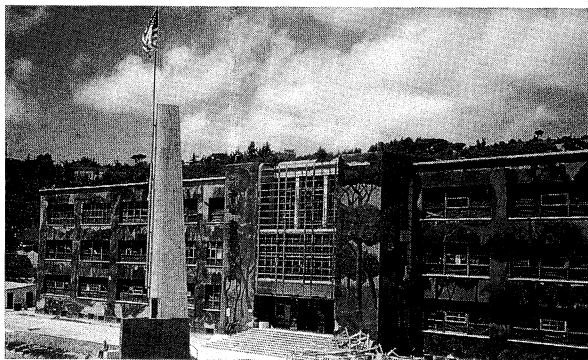
*The following article was written by O.J. Cowart on December 27, 1996*

## Remembering Pantanella

**T**his article may bring back memories of long ago. Perhaps some of the air crews are not aware of some of these events.

What time were you born, yesterday? Sometimes to this question, I would like to reply, "I wish I had not ever been born"! This would be a valid remark only under some circumstances. On my way overseas in February, 1944, I would have given anything if the boat would just stop rocking, rolling, rocking, rolling. Food on board ship was such that we had only two meals a day, and it seemed like we were always hungry. After spending 30 days on very basic liberty cargo ships, which were definitely not luxury ships, it was a welcome relief to set foot on dry land.

We were billeted in Naples in freezing weather in a large Italian school building (Count Ciano College), without heat or glass in the windows. We had no beds and



The building we were billeted in at Count Ciano College.

slept on cold marble floors in freezing weather. I was waiting in Naples for a week at this place, before going to our final destination, Pantanella Airfield. To this very day, I still have mental flashbacks of what happened so long ago, but

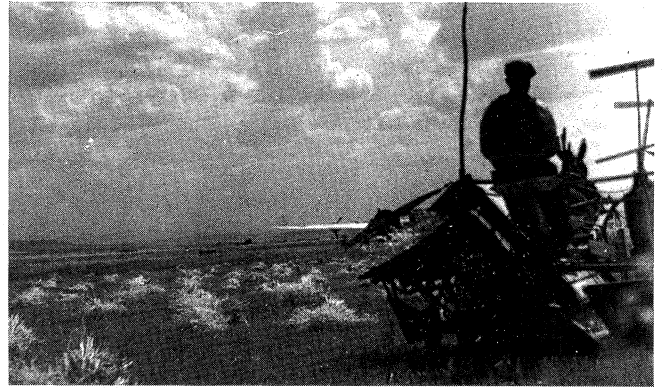
it still seems like only yesterday.

In line to empty my mess kit of the food I was going to throw away, were little dirty Italian kids, with one gallon cans holding them up so that our uneaten food could be taken home to 'mamma' to be prepared for a home meal. There was pushing and shoving competition among the kids to get the food in their cans. One pale, thin, cute little girl about 6 or 8 years old with a dirty face, cotton dress, and no coat or shoes in freezing weather, held up her tin can for me to deposit my left over food in. After the long trip and miserable living conditions, my emotions took over at this point, and looking at that pathetic creature I wanted to cry. But, soldiers don't cry, do they? After that experience, I always left some extra food for the little kids. I wonder if that little girl survived to adulthood under those terrible conditions. As a 21 year old Sargeant in the US Army Air Force who had just spent 30 days on a crowded Liberty cargo ship, (the most miserable life imaginable), I was not prepared for this introduction to a war.

### Pantanella

Airfield was located approximately half way between Bari and Foggia, near Cerignolia. The airfield was home for B-24 Liberator four-engine heavy bombers. It was a large airfield with two bomb groups (eight bomb squadrons). I have been back to Italy two times, once in 1985 and the last time in 1988. The last tour I was on in 1988 went back to what had been Pantanella Airfield. Since it

had been a large farm, the original farm buildings were still there just as we had left them, plus some of the buildings we had the Italians construct. Some large murals were still in their original condition after over 45 years. The steel mat runways were constructed in a valley and we lived on small mountains (hills) nearby. During rainy weather,



Farmers harvesting grain at Pantanella

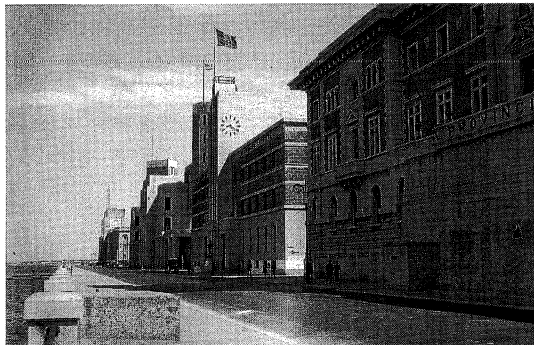
this helped to keep us out of mud.

There were two runways parallel to each other (this was not common in most airfields). When we arrived, winter wheat was growing, and the Air Force permitted the Italians to harvest their crop within a few feet of our B-24 Liberators. After the war, the US army asked the farm owner, an Italian princess, what buildings she wanted and then proceeded to leave the land in its original condition.

The steel mat runways are now gone. I have recently discovered that the US government paid rent to the land owner who loaned (?) her land for that airfield. I'll bet the German government never paid rent to anyone under the same circumstances, (or maybe they did ??).

In a small village named Locona, near where Pantanella Airfield was located, the local Italians have a small bronze plaque as a memorial to all the American soldiers who were stationed at the nearby airfields.

At one point, while unloading bombs trucked from a railhead, the whole bomb dump exploded killing 10 American GI's and 20 Italian civilians working there.



Bari, Italy waterfront from window of Fifteenth Air Force Headquarters

During the war, the Italians suffered defeat, humiliation, death, and deprivation. While attending Intelligence school in Bari, Italy on the Adriatic shore, I lived among the Italians for a month and was exposed to a different culture and lifestyle.

I was billeted in a six-story apartment building and in the mornings when the Italians were using water in the city, the pressure was so low that we had to go downstairs to wash and shave. This without the benefit of an elevator! And, as luck would have it, I was on the top floor.

While unloading bombs, one of the ships blew up in the Bari harbor. There were apartment buildings near the docks, and many people were killed. Arms, legs, and body parts were everywhere, but, life goes on. Maybe I'm wrong, but I could not help but feel sorry for the Italians who generally appear to be a happy people.

On the tour in 1988, while in Germany, we were asked not to wear any item that showed we were in the US Air Force. Some people are still suffering from the effects of our bombing during the war. The

tour guide informed us that the Olympic Village in Munich was constructed on low land that was filled in with the rubble from buildings and streets destroyed as a result of our bombing during WWII.

On the way back to the U.S. after the tour in 1988, I was standing in the security line at Heathrow airport in London. The security man kept looking up at my head. He was speechless and finally asked me if I would mind removing my cap. This I did, but I learned it is not a good idea to wear a cap in an airport with '781st Bomb Squadron' on it. Especially now you don't even whisper 'BOMB' in an airport, much less wear a cap proclaiming a whole bomb squadron. At times back during the war, it seemed like the war would never end, but as you all know, it did.

## **FOLDED WINGS**

**Mrs. Ruth Young Graham** passed away October 27. Her husband Oliver Graham was unable to attend the reunion because of her illness and notified me of her passing.

**William Bruce**, Former President and founder of the 782nd Bomb Squadron Association, passed away Dec 8, 1998 from a heart attack. Bill was with us at the Dayton reunion in October and I had a chance to talk to him there. He planned and led the tour to

Pantanella a few years ago and I first met him there when I surprised him by being at Pantanella when his tour arrived. He had a heart attack in November and never fully recovered. Information sent by Jack Van Slyke. Jack attended the funeral and expressed condolences from the 781st. Bill lived near Jack and they have been in touch over the years.

**Conard Croston**. I did not get a response from the family, but learned from another source that Conard passed away. I did have contact

with the family last year and he was very ill then and not expected to live long.

Joe Roger's wife, **Ruth Rogers**, passed away Oct. 15, 1998.

**Billy Bickley**, (Navigator on Schuster crew) passed away in 1995. Reported by Bob Mathews.

**Walter E. Kroskey** (Radio Operator on Joyner crew) passed away Dec. 9, 1998. Reported by Dale Keiser.

## **PX SALE**

781st Bomb Squadron History Book \$35.

781st Bomb Squadron slide presentation by Harry Carl, on Video \$17.

Order above items from **Harry**

**Carl, 550 Creek Road, Chadds Ford, PA 19317**. Make Checks for these two items Payable to Harry Carl and send to Harry Carl.

Following PX items to order from **Barney Russell, 1014 N. Washington St. Magnolia AR 71753**. Make checks payable to 781st

Bomb Squadron and send to **Barney** with your order.

**New Item. 781st Mugs**. It is the most beautiful mug I have ever seen. They are a limited edition made by Corning Glass, light weight, white, with the Pissed-off Indian, the 781st identification and a flying B-24 designed by

Frank Quagan. Imprint colors and black and red. They can be used in the microwave oven. No more will be available after the current shipment is gone since Corning closed down this department. John Zadrozny worked for Corning for 40 years and was able to get them for

half price. Order now at \$6.95 each. They make a great gift! **Leather 781st Bomb Squadron Jacket Patch**, \$10. Just like we had at Pantanella. Limited supply. **465th Bomb Group caps**. \$10. Men's and ladie's **watch with 781st insignia** on dial \$25.

White or black border **781st shoulder patch** \$2. **Rubber stamp of B-24** \$5, **465th Bomb Group pins** \$3.

All prices include shipping. Whata' deal.

Below is a list of members we have not heard from since 1996.

How about giving a hand in contacting any of these men you know.

Lawrence White  
Earl Viands  
John Nelson  
Robert Munson  
David Mitchel  
Leo Long  
Truman Leath  
Calder Lamprey

Lewis Chester Gordon  
William Pulley  
John Pursler  
Milton Storkamp  
John Nelson  
Ray Trautman  
Jack Williams  
Shapowsky  
Bob Carr  
Burton Alper  
Robert McCague  
Lawrence White  
James Gringich

Kenneth Pulham  
Paul Jackson,  
Harold Bakner  
Hope Tryon  
William Pulley  
Wilburn Taylor  
Frank Shonk  
William West  
Wm Mustachi  
John Baker  
John Stark

## Address changes:

**Robert Shetterly** 15282 Woodgrove Rd., Purcellville, VA 22132.

**Murray Knowles**, PO Box 374,, Mount Dora, FL 32756-0374.

**Eugene Martis**, 238 Voyager Estate, West Newton, PA 15089. Phone 724 872-5289.

**Van Reynolds**, 592 Deep River Rd., Colchester, CT 06415.

**Col. McHenry Hamilton** 5341 St. Ives Lane, Tallahassee, FL 32308. Phone 850 906-9797

**William H. Coonan** Phone 828 252-0564.

## MAIL CALL

From **Dodie Shallman** after receiving her plaque for her story for the Pantanella News, "I thank you all for a very lovely tribute. That is, without a doubt, the most handsome piece of work I have ever seen. It makes me feel very humble when so many others have written such interesting stories about their experiences.

I think of you all so often and feel badly to have missed the last reunion. Northwest Airlines does not get my vote for "Airline of the year." Their strike was a disgrace and felt by all Minnesotans.

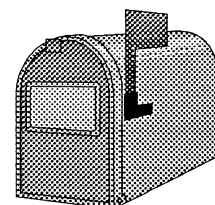
However, I shall stop grum-

bling about what I couldn't help and be forever grateful for all my friends, the lovely plaque and being allowed to participate in your newsletter. I'll try to make it to "reunion 2000."

**Joseph Rogers** writes, "I had wondered for years what happened to the "Flamin' Mamie," and I finally found out in the April Pantanella News. That was the B-24 Jack Frazier's crew flew from the States to Pantanella. I still have my copy of the secret orders authorizing the flight from Grenier Field, New Hampshire to the 15th Air Force in El Alouina, Tunisia. Members of the flight crew were Jack Frazier, Russ Maynard, Fred Drow, Bill McGonigle, Austin Davis, Dick

Robinson and myself. We also carried as passengers, Ed Lynch and Boyce Sims who were ground crew radar mechanics.

"Joe told about his wife's passing and they had planned to attend Dayton, but Ruth became very ill in September and passed away in October. Ed."



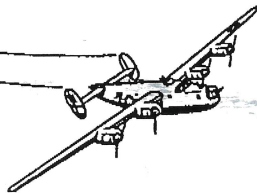




Easter Sunrise Service sign—Near the enlisted men's mess. The 464th Bomb Group was quartered just over the hill beyond the sign.

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