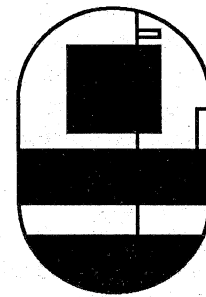




PANTANELLA NEWS



JANUARY 1992

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NUMBER 27

1992 REUNION OMAHA SEPT. 10 TO 13

The convention committee, headed by Co-chairman Ken Sutton and Walt Longacre, have been working on plans for our upcoming reunion. They promise another well planned reunion which will give you a chance to meet your WWII comrades during our social events and meetings, and to see some nearby Air Force activities.

Our meeting hotel is the beautiful Marriott Hotel. It is easy to get to and has plenty of free parking. Room price is \$62 plus tax. All of our meetings and dinners will be at the Marriott. There are many other restaurants nearby for the meals on your own. Across the street is a major shopping center. Present plans call for a visit to SAC Headquarters at Offutt (cont'd on page 3)

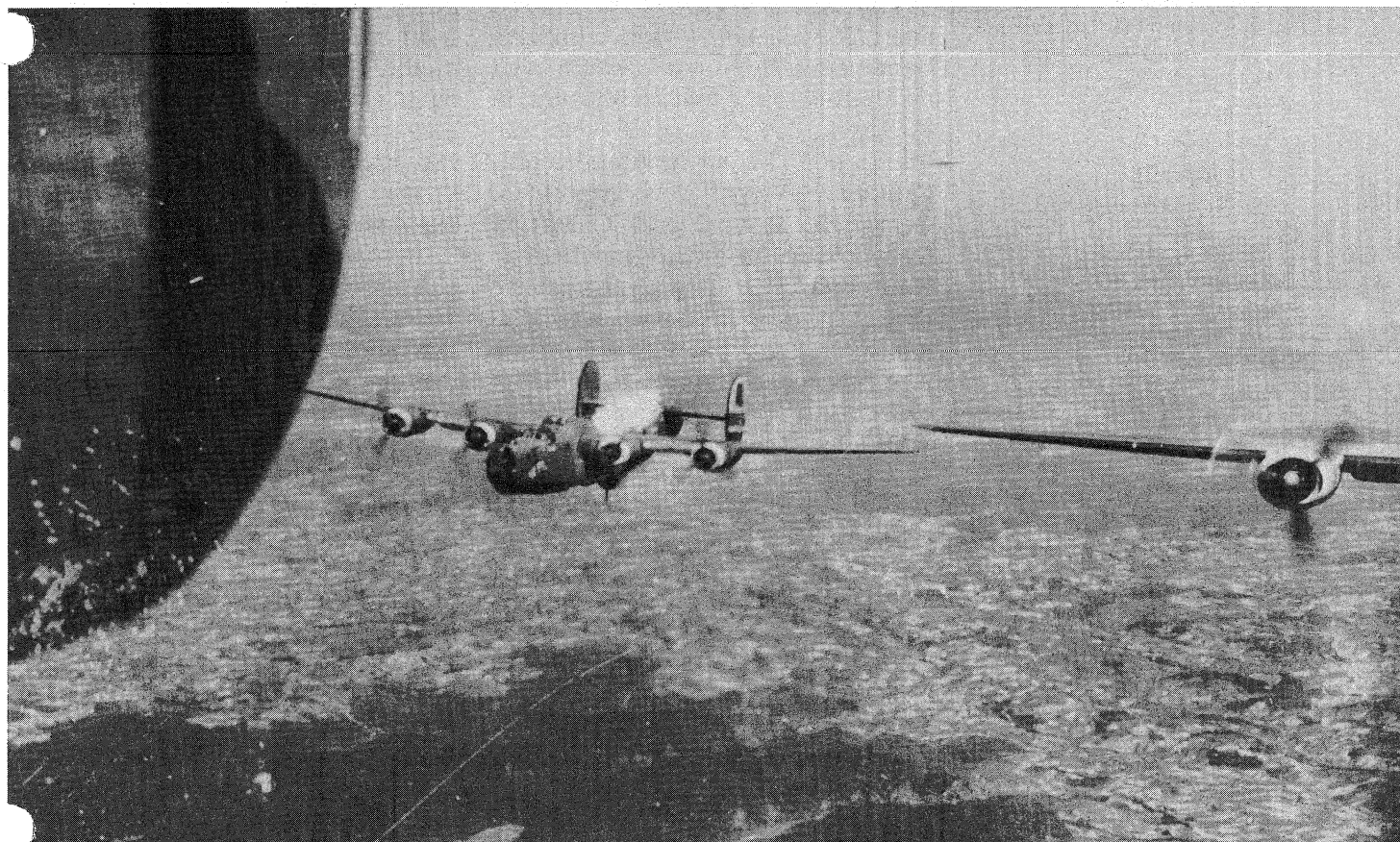
THE STORY OF THE PRINCE CREW

The Prince crew was the first crew to get shot down in the 781st Bomb Squadron. The first part of this report is the Escape Statement given by Harold Holden to an interrogator on 24 July 1944. It gives a detailed account of what went on inside the plane.

ESCAPE STATEMENT

By 2nd Lt. Harold D. Holden, 465th Bomb Group, 781 Bomb Sq., Co-Pilot, Age 25, Home Address 917 N.E. 17th St., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Mission number 7. Returned to duty 21 July, 1944.

The aircraft was returning from Weiner-Neustadt on 30 May. In the Zagreb area it was attacked by one ME 109. The gas lines and oxygen lines were badly dam-



Custer's Folly, Yellow "G" with Lt. George A. Prince crew aboard. The plane is on fire from an Me-109 attack and later explodes taking the life of George Prince and Calvin Canyock.

aged. Then the electrical system was knocked out. A fire was started at the oxygen tanks and rolled on to the flight deck. The pilot was reluctant to abandon ship, but finally when an ammunition box was ablaze and the incendiary shells began to explode, he advised the co-pilot to go back and see that the crew bailed out (there was no interplane communication). The co-pilot attached his chute and went back. He watched the men start bailing out. He returned to the flight deck and took over the controls just as they snapped. The ship lurched into a

spin throwing the co-pilot out of his seat and pinning him against the side of the flight deck. Because of the terrific physical pressure the spin exerted, he was unable to move and remained pinned in place while the flames rolled around him, burning his hands and face. The airplane suddenly exploded. At the moment, five men had their parachutes hooked on. They were blown clear of the ship and parachuted to the ground. The pilot and navigator went down with the dismembered aircraft.

The co-pilot landed and was immediately in the care of the Partisans who attempted to stay the flow of blood from the co-pilot's head wound. He learned then that Sgts. Dubinsky and Smith had parachuted. Smith was very badly burned. They learned that they were in a town named Bodeno (Japra). North of another Japra, they were treated by a Partisan doctor; Smith was too seriously injured to be moved and Dubinsky, his intimate friend, decided to remain with him. An officer, Lt. White, remained also, to supervise the care of the injured flyer. The co-pilot Holden, with both hands severely burned, was moved on 13 July to the British Mission, in this area, the location of which he knows not. Before he left his companions, he viewed the graves of Lts. George A. Prince, and Calvin J. Canyock, in an Orthodox Catholic Churchyard. On 14 July, he left the British Mission for Glasoe where he joined the large party of Americans who proceeded finally to the point of evacuation. They were evacuated 21 July.

The co-pilot regarded the escape lectures useful.

Providing "A" Force concurs, it is recommended that these men be returned to combat operations in this theater.

HENRY PACLUCCI, 2nd Lt. A.C. Interrogator

The following information was obtained by Pierre Kennedy from the Missing Air Crew Reports.

The target for the 781st Bomb Squadron on 30 May 1944 was the Flugzeugfabrik Aircraft Components Factory at Neudorf, Austria.

The crew consisted of 1st Lt George A. Prince, Pilot; 2nd Lt Harold D. Holden, Co-Pilot; 2nd Lt Calvin J. Canyock, Navigator; 2nd Lt Murray Septoff, Bombardier; T/Sgt Harry M. Smith, Engineer & Left Waist Gunner; T/Sgt John L. Crowley, Radio Operator & Right Waist Gunner; Sgt. James F. Downs, Ball Turret Gunner; Sgt Jack C. Williams, Tail Gunner; Sgt Abraham Dubinsky, Asst. Engineer and Top Turret Gunner;

1st Lt George A. Prince, Pilot, and 2nd Lt Calvin J. Canyock, Navigator, are listed as Killed In Action in Missing Air Crew Report #05438, declassified September 10, 1982, which contains the documents for Lt. Prince's mission on 30 May 1944.

After leaving the target. Lt. Prince's B-24, Yellow "G", was attacked by one ME-109 fighter. The bomber was hit in the left wing, near the fuselage and a fire started there. Three crewmen bailed out. The plane continued on, below and behind the formation for approximately ten minutes. Then it slid down and away from the formation. Two more men bailed out. Then an explosion in the waist blew the tail section off the plane and a second explosion blew the ship apart.

Witnesses reported that eight chutes were seen. Of the three ME-109's that attacked the formation, two were shot down, and another was damaged. Six witnesses submitted reports, including 2nd Lt Robert Shetterly and 1st Lt Lewis Roberts from the 781st Bomb Squadron.

Lt Shetterly's report reads; "We had been off the target approximately 50 minutes descending on a heading of 180 degrees. At 11:25 at 14,000 feet my Tail Gunner called out "3 ME-109s attacking at 6 o'clock level." My Tail Turret, Right Waist and Tail Gunners said that Dog Five had been hit and was burning. Shetterly wrote that Prince pulled out to 1,000 feet from the formation. The four engines were running OK. Later in his report, he

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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.

stated, "At this time the plane was flaming from the main wing tanks, throughout the bomb bays, and back past the waist. At 11:37 I saw the tail break off."

Lt Roberts' report added that the fighter that attacked Prince's plane was destroyed, and another damaged. "This action took place over Yugoslavia just south of the Austrian border. The ship was not contacted by radio. All engines were operating normally at the time of disintegration. It is likely that seven men landed safely."

2nd Lt Robert Scanlon, 465th Bomb Group, noted in his account, "The bomber straggled during the entire flight. It was a least four ship lengths behind position in formation, when attacked by fighter."

Additional statements were made by crewmembers; Holden, Septoff, Downs, Williams and Patrick, stating that Prince and Canyock were KIA.

Some crewman said that the Yugoslavian Partisans had described the bodies they found by the plane's wreckage. The Partisans buried both flyers at Budimlac Japra, Yugoslavia.

Sgt Abraham Dubinsky wrote on a Casualty Questionnaire that he was blown out and parachuted OK. "5 bailed out, 5 blown out - 3 escaped death (of the 5 blown out).

Due to extension burns and injuries Harry Smith remained in Yugoslavia with the Partisans until August 12th when he was flown to the 26th General Hospital in Bari. He remained in Bari until December when he was flown to the U.S.

The interrogator of Jack C. Williams, Tail Gunner gives the following report.

Target was Weiner-Neustadt, May 30. Bombs away and left target area, heading for Yugoslavia. Near Zagreb were hit by 3 Me-109s; in one pass the gas lines and oxygen were shot up and fire started in command deck and bomb bay. Waist gunner Sgt John Crowley was wounded in left shoulder and leg. T/Sgt Harry M. Smith, engineer, fought fire and others prepared to bail out. Ammunition box caught on fire and incendiaries started to go off. Sgt

Williams, Sgt Crowley, and Sgt Downs, bailed out. Fire got out of control and ship started to spin; bombardier Lt Septoff and nose gunner Cpl. Patrick bailed out. Ship exploded and threw out co-pilot Lt Holden and S/Sgt A. Dubinsky and T/Sgt Harry Smith. Pilot Lt. George Prince and Navigator Lt Calvin Canyock were killed in the explosion or the subsequent crash.

Sgt. Williams landed near Sisak. Peasants picked him up and went for the woods. Ran into Partisans and was taken to a house; about 3 hours later Crowley, very badly wounded, was brought in. Travelled 8 hours towards Petrinja, where they met Sgt Downs. Next day Crowley taken in hospital in Bania; Downs and Williams went to Glina; here met T/Sgt Alders of 464 Group. Next day others of Alders crew joined them. Stayed in Japra area from 6 Jun to 12 July.

When Sgt Downs bailed out a Me-109 made a pass at him, firing a burst and zooming right over his chute. Felt tugs in shroud lines as bullets must have hit; when he hit the ground, he saw 15 holes in the chute. Sgt Williams also saw the holes. Peasants picked him up, travelled all day, and by evening met a British officer.

Lt Septoff got hung up in a tree, and a Partisan helped him get down; was taken to a house about 2 miles away. Sgt Patrick was brought to him. Were taken to Dajkic Japra area to hospital and later joined by Downs and Williams. About 38 Americans were together. Lived at first for days mostly on soup, a greasy water without salt; food very scarce. On 12 July were told were going to a strip near Glamoc. Very rough terrain to Glamoc on 17 July. Were told Germans were driving toward Glamoc airstrip. Plane for evacuation did not come in that night; heavy rain. Moved back N.W. a little way, arriving 3 a.m. At 4 a.m. roused and told to move at once as Germans were on way. Traveled N.W. and reached hills near Tisafo; stayed here and were evacuated 21 July.

Dubinsky was very badly burned on arms and face. Picked up by two

civilians who gave him water, and carried him to farmhouse where he found engineer and co-pilot. Doctor came out and took the three to a hospital. Lt Holden and T/Sgt Harry M. Smith were badly hurt. Smith and Dubinsky stayed in hospital 74 days until 11 August, and flown out to Bari by a DC-3 with Russian Crew. Lt. Holden left 20 July for Italy. Germans were all around.

Recommend award for Sgt Dubinsky for staying behind at hospital to look after Sgt Smith.

All the survivors evaded the enemy and eventually returned to Pantanella. T/Sgt Harry M. Smith was awarded the Silver Star for Exceptional bravery above and beyond the call of duty in the face of enemy opposition.

Rae Branch's crew and Joe Athon's crew each shot down one of the German fighters that were attacking the group.

Harold Holden died in 1983 and James Patrick died in 1986.

In a recent phone conversation with Harry M. Smith he confirmed that five men were in the plane when the final explosion occurred; Calvin Canyock, George Prince, Harry Smith, Abraham Dubinsky, and Harold Holden.

Most of the crew has remained in contact with each other over the years.

Reunion (from page 1)

Air Force Base to visit their underground facilities and a visit to the museum nearby with lots of aircraft.

Our memorial service will be at Boys Town, just a few miles away.

In the past we began our reservations in January, however it is a little early and you all have been so prompt, so we will wait until the April *Pantanella News* to include the reservation forms.

Plan now to attend the '92 reunion. Relive some of your days at Pantanella with your WWII comrades. All the letters and notes I have received indicate above average response, so I believe this will be the largest attendance we have ever had.

EARL "DEACON" VIANDS

When the war broke out I was in Panama and was sent to South America on LB30s. It was similar to the B-24, but it was not fit for the war zone, so they used them for patrols.

My crew chief on the LBs was R. J. Billings. That is when I met Leo Lutgring. Leo worked on Arty Anderson's crew. Then, as the war got further on, we broke up and I was sent to Galapagos Islands, which was called the "rock", for four months before I could come home. There at the "rock" I met Denley J. Thompson. He was from West Virginia and I was from Virginia. We got along OK.

We were then sent to Tucson, Arizona. I got back with Leo and some of the boys I was with in South America.

It was so hot in Tucson I told Leo, "Lets go back with another cadre." Some of us got with the 465th Bomb Group and headed for McCook, Nebraska. Some of the men were sent to UTC to learn to rough it overseas. Leo and I never had to go. We were in McCook for six months

and headed for North Africa and had to wait for the Engineers to finish laying the steel matting on the runway at Pantanella Air base. I can't think of all the details. Leo and Denly Thompson will have to help.

I was the oldest B-24 mechanic in the squadron, so Leo gave me McKenna's ship to crew which was the model crew.

We were short on mechanics, so I had two ships and a crew of 3 men to help. My ground crew was Glen King, Arnold Heiman and Walter Gates. The flight engineer was Waggle. I would sit up at night trying to teach him to splice cable that was shot in two. He was very good. Chief Jo-Jon was also known as Mac to the boys. It was the only one that had the insignia, the bulls eye, painted on. But we had a problem. Col Clark was the group CO. As well as I can remember he said we could not do what we did. We did it any way. It didn't bother Col. Mac. But it was hard to stand at attention up on the hill for two hours. It did not bother any one but one. He chewed two inches off his pipe.

I was nick named "Deacon" and that is how some will still remember me.

After the war I continued to work on engines. I spent the rest of my working career doing so.

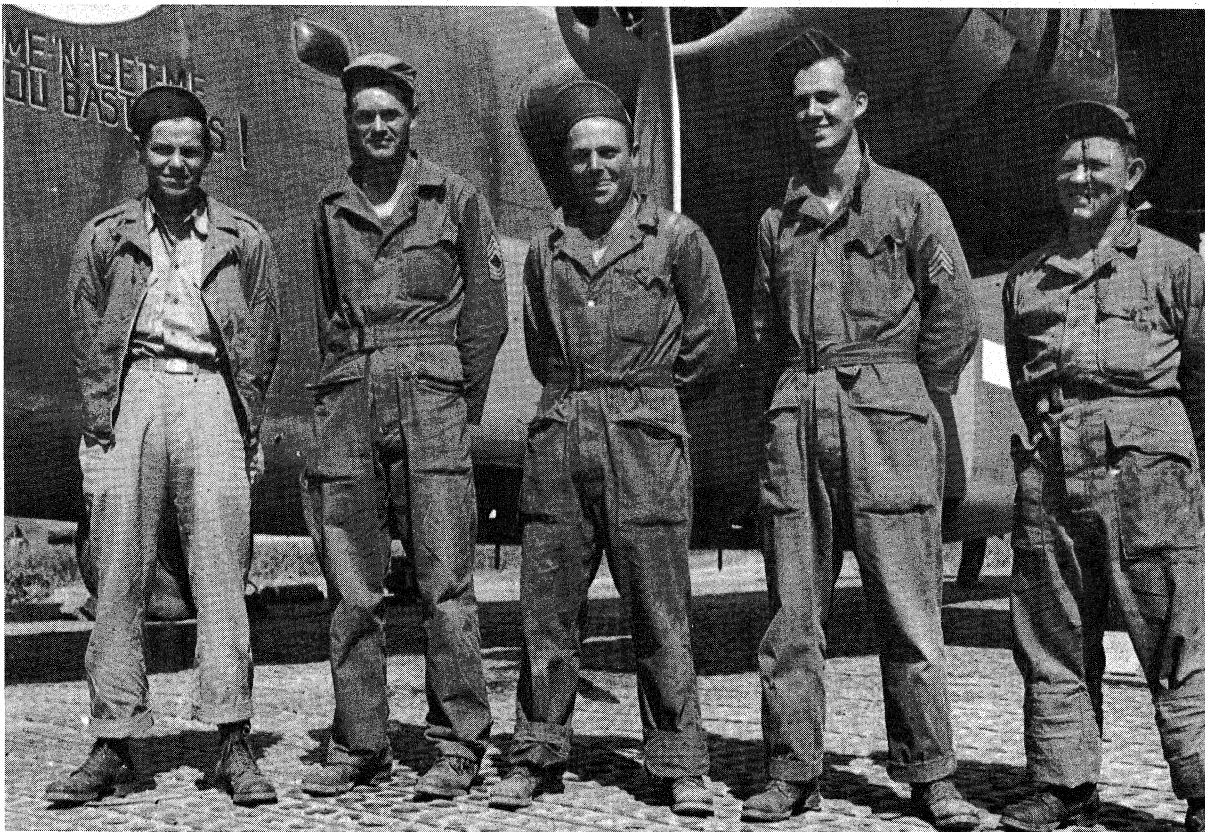
I raised two daughters and have two grandchildren plus three great grand children. I am 77 years old and feel as good as new.

From Shack Myers Diary REST CAMP ON ISLE OF CAPRI.

June 8, 1944. Here I am on the beautiful Isle of Capri, and I do mean beautiful. We came over here Monday for 7 days. Didn't do much before we came here. Went to church Sunday. I couldn't win a dime at poker. In fact I borrowed \$300, but the night before we came over here I got the hottest I've ever been. Joe (Athon?) owes me \$310, Sutton (Ken?) \$80, and I won \$230 from Ace (John Dickey).

The Doc gave us a quart of rye to bring with us and Ace and I got fairly plastered our first night here. Got here about 1730 Monday by boat from Naples. We're staying at the LaPalma Hotel. Soft beds with sheets, the best of food and I'd mean the best. WOW! and for \$1 per day.

The first afternoon Ace and I took the boat trip up to the Blue Grotto. I thought that I'd seen some beautiful sights when I was in the islands, but this takes the cake. The entrance is just wide enough to let a small row boat in and is so low that you have to get down in the bottom of the boat to go in. The dome of the cave must be about 30 feet high and the water is the clearest, bluest I've ever seen. Its really an awe-in-

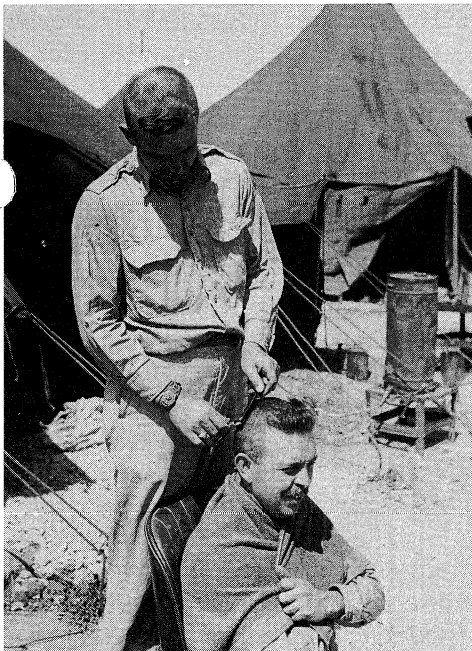


L to R Unknown, Earl "Deacon" Viands, Leo Lutgring, Arnold Heiman, and Walter Gates. The plane is "Chief Jo-Jon."

spiring sight. We came back and started drinking Tom Collins and got another pretty good load on. Not much to do here at night except drink.

Yesterday afternoon Ace and I and the "girls" took a couple of carriages and went to Ana Capri and saw some more beautiful sights. The church of San Michele is 200 years old and really beautiful. The road up there winds back and forth along the side of the mountains that rise 2000 feet. Sure are some breath-taking views from up there. Came back and took the funicular cable car down to the Grand Marina - water front - and went aboard the US destroyer Parker. One of the sailors showed us around. It was really interesting.

Started on Tom Collins again and after supper met the rest of the crew and had quite a time with several quarts of champagne. Oh what a horrible way to fight a war.



Albert "Shack" Myers getting a hair cut by Charles Stenerson?

Such is life on the Isle of Capri. Does this bring back any memories?

Since "Shack" gave some impressions on Capri I thought this might be a good time to give the story about San Michele's Bell.

THE LEGEND OF SAN MICHELE'S LUCKY LITTLE BELL

Once upon a time a little shepherd lived at Anacapri, and he was

the poorest among the poor children of the place. His only welt was a small hut which he shared with his mother, who was a widow, and a tiny sheep which she used to pasture on the slopes of Mount Solaro.

One evening, as it was getting dark, the child lingered to pick up flowers and when he turned around to call the small sheep he could not see her any more. He felt a pang of pain in his heart. What would happen now to him and to his mother? At that moment he thought he heard a distant and feeble ringing of a bell, and thinking that it could be the sound of the bell the tiny sheep wore about her neck, he rushed in that direction. His tiny bare feet flied carelessly on the pebbles, of the thistles and of the night already fallen... until he got to the edge of a ravine.

Here, a sudden flash of light stopped the poor boy, and, wrapped up in a golden beaming light splendid on his white horse, St. Michael appeared to him: "My boy," said the Saint taking off from his neck a small bell which hung down on his breast, "Take it and always follow its sound; it will keep you from all danger."

The little shepherd, thrilled with emotion and joy, took the precious gift to his mother, and the small bell came out miraculously from his shabby jacket wrapped in a green frame of vivid quadriphyllous.

Since then his life was filled with sweetness and happiness and everyone of his wishes was satisfied. On the spot of the apparition a villa was built which was called San Michele, and the miraculous little bell reproduced for you in a tiny amulet will be your talisman of luck and success.

Some of the wording is apparently poor translation, but I thought you would like the exact wording on the note that came with the bells purchased on the Isle of Capri.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

A letter from Andrew "Birdie" Dobek. "This is "Birdie" Dobek,

engineer on McDaniel crew. As you know I have tried to locate **Walter Thomas Jefferson Day** (Radio Operator on McDaniel Crew) for the past eleven months. Well, I have struck pay dirt. He lives at 104 Springdale Ave., Neptune City, New Jersey 07753, which I think is his summer home. His permanent home is in Florida.

"I think I wrote to every organization in New Jersey and I got a clue from the License Bureau. Our library in town had about twelve phone books of the state of New Jersey and there was Walter T. Day listed."

I think "Birdie" should now be called "Bird Dog." A number of our members have been on the look-out for Walter Day but it took your persistence to find him. Thanks for the efforts.

Walter promises to write about his activities since WWII and his family.

If you received a pamphlet about the 465th Bomb Group in about July 1945 you will find a photo of Walter Day on a hospital bed being presented a Purple Heart by Col. Foster. Maybe Walter will tell us where he was wounded?

So many of you did such a great job finding our lost souls several years ago that it is a rare occasion to add a new member to our list. This time we have a second one to add. **Pierre J. J. Kennedy** and **Alli American** found us another one. Pierre was reviewing the list of Distinguished Flying Command donors to All American when he spotted **Frank Piteo's** name (Billger/waist gunner). Pierre then wrote to the Collings Foundation and received Frank Piteo's address, 3280 Bennett Drive, Hollywood, CA 90068. Home phone 213-851-0251, work 818-503-9392.

I had checked the same roster but missed the name. Pierre has been very diligent in continually checking for new members.

Have you heard about the latest dance craze? It's called the Politician's Polka. You take one step forward, two steps back - and sidestep the issue!

MAIL CALL



In a letter from **John Zadrozny** he enclosed a newspaper article on **Bill Tylavsky** (Hurd/Engineer). This is the article;

Bill Tylavsky remembers the pangs of hunger that rumbled in his stomach during the Great Depression.

"They were pretty lean years," recalled Tylavsky, 73, of Export, PA. "Ninety percent of the people were looking for something to eat."

For the past three years Tylavsky has been donating produce from his bountiful garden to help feed struggling families and others who today find it difficult to put food on their tables.

So far this year, some 6,000 pounds of tomatoes, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, sweet and hot peppers, squash and cucumbers from the two-acre garden behind Tylavsky's Hamilton Avenue home have been donated to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank in McKeesport.

Some remaining cabbage and cauliflower must still be harvested this fall, explained Tylavsky, a retired parts manager for the former Keystone GMC Truck Co. in Wilkensburg.

Tylavsky has little help tending to the garden. His son, William, an Export dentist, helps with some of the chores. But the bulk of the planting, cultivation and other work is done by Tylavsky.

Ten and 12-hour days in the garden are not unusual. Tylavsky completes the gardening work despite health problems. He has two artificial knees made of plastic and stainless steel.

He also must handle the household chores and care for his wife, Esther, who suffered a stroke two years ago.

Tylavsky relies on a corps of volunteers from the Crossroads Presbyterian Church in Monroeville and the Faith United Methodist in Delmont to harvest the produce.

Most of the gardening costs are covered by Tylavsky.

He plans to continue the garden and supply the food bank. But "I don't know what's in store for me next year. Age is a hell of a factor," he said.

Along with the article was a large color picture of Tylavsky holding a variety of peppers he grew in his garden. A great project and I'm sure he gets a lot of satisfaction from helping others.

S/Sgt Adolph Rindal wrote that he was better known as "Duffy." He was crew chief on hardstand "D" and the crew included Howard Hopkins, Ralph Maguire and Robert E. Lewis. "Flamin Mamie" was one of the planes they worked on.

Norman Hunter, Jr. was heard from. "We were away for a while and read about some information on "Super Natural," John Dickey's crew's plane.

"I was at the reunion in Dayton and coming out of the hospitality room a fellow was asking if anyone on the Super Natural was present. I told him I was the ball gunner. He said he was the ball gunner when the ship went down. He bailed out with the crew and injured his ankle. He asked me after I showed him my scrapbook for the names and addresses of the crew. He gave me his name and address (Ohio), but I cannot locate it. I sent him the information, but never got a reply.

"Maybe if you put this in the Pantanella News he will read this and tell the story on Super Natural going down, and maybe he will write to me.

"I flew my first mission May 6, 1944 and finished my missions August 22, 1944.

"Hope to see you in Omaha in September. I'm retired and have been living in Clearwater, Florida for eleven years."

My records do not show the date Super Natural went down. It is recorded as crashing on Feb. 19, 1945, by a B-24 historian. Maybe we can get some help on this from someone in the squadron.

From **George Soroka**

"In going over some of my Pantanella News bulletins I ran across an article called FLIM FLAM in the April 1991 issue. It regarded a spaghetti fest. Whoever wrote this article either didn't have all the information or has a short memory as my name was left out as being one of the attendees.

"I have a vivid recollection of that dinner. It was held at the farm house directly across the road from our huts down on the field. These were the people who farmed the field we were using and Charlie Butta, who was the promoter of this dinner, arranged with them to put it on. The fixings for the meal came in a large part from the men attending who asked for and got home spaghetti, etc. It is possible that Charlie Ferich may have attended this or contributed to it. Anyway, Charlie had a food locker you wouldn't believe. One whole wall of his hut was lined with food sent by his folks. Charlie could have fed the squadron for a week.

But I digress. The dinner was very good. I don't believe there was any meat, but the sauce was very good. I recall that the meal was paid for by giving the people in the farmhouse chocolate bars and I do think some money. It was a distinct improvement over the chow at the squadron. Does anyone remember the canned butter?

"This is just to get the record straight. Not intended to offend whomever wrote the article."

All the FLIM FLAM articles are from the group newsletter by that name. Each squadron made a contribution. The articles were written during 1944-45 and are now available from the Archives microfilm the squadron has.

Thanks for your remembrances, George. Your comrades will enjoy it. I'm sure there are many more remembrances - how about hearing from more of you men?

Another diddy. . .
Birthdays are good for you! It's the people with the most birthdays who live the longest!

FOLDED WINGS

Theodore R. Snyder (Armament) passed away May 15, 1991.

Harold C. Butterfield (Engineer / R.J. Smith) passed away August 11, 1991.

Roland Frantzen Green (Engineering) passed away July 9, 1991.

Harry R. Edwards (Ball Gunner/RJ Smith) passed away September 29, 1991

Kenneth DeMott (Nose Gunner/ Tryon) passed away Mar. 21, 1990.

A letter from **Bruce Miller** (Armament). "Once again I must notify you that the 781st Armament Section has suffered another loss - the second within three months. Recently I received a short message from Ted Snyder of Orlando, Florida stating that Theodore R. Snyder (father) died May 15, 1991. No other details.

"Ted Snyder was a Technical Sergeant in the Armament Section from McCook Air Base until September, 1944 when he departed Pantanella for the states where he attended B-29 training school.

"Ted was a member of the old Air Corps, having enlisted in 1937 or 38,

after graduation from high school. I believe he told me that he was sent to Panama after basic training.

"Ted lived in Harrisburg, PA during spring and summer and traveled to Orange City, FL each fall and winter. I spoke to him last fall just before he departed for Florida."

A letter from Denly "**Tommy**" **Thompson** informed me that Harold Butterfield died of cancer. Harold lived most of his life in Hastings, Nebraska and was a dairy and food inspector for the city of Hastings. His wife passed away some years ago.

"**Mrs. Katherine Green** informed us of her husband's death. "I am writing you to tell you of the death of my husband Roland Frantzen Green. He died July 9, 1991 of a heart attack. He enjoyed receiving the Pantanella News and so many times he would say "I knew that fellow!" I heard his war stories so many times I felt I knew the men also. In the October issue there is a picture of Charles Kramer. As I remember, he and Frantzen went to Rome and the two of them had a private audience with the Pope.

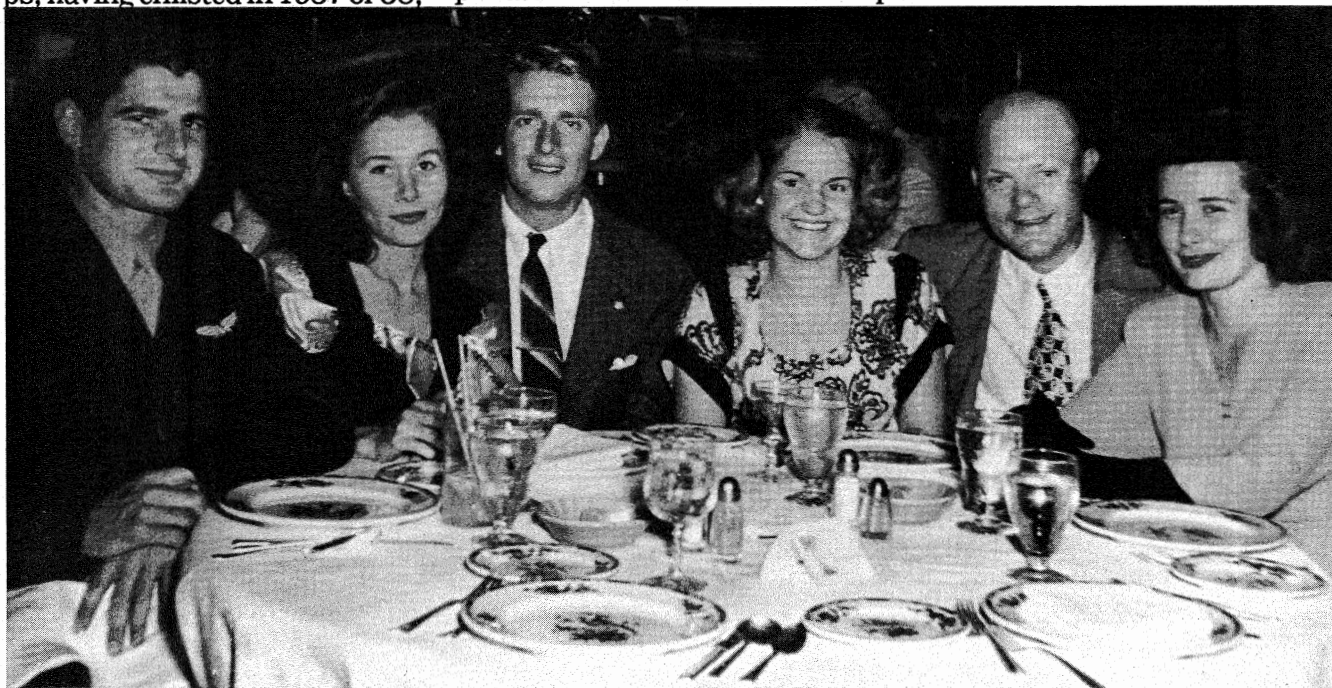
This young Mormon boy from Utah was very impressed. He was personal aide to the commanding officer at Davis-Monthan Field in Tucson and then sent to Italy via North Africa. I never got tired of his stories and each year we planned on "The Reunion." Sorry we never made the trip. I would love hearing from his friends. A few dropped by in 1950, but the only one he hears from now is Albert Nagel in California.

"It was an amazing time in our life."

OK old comrades, how about remembering Frantzen. You know Katherine is lonely now and would enjoy a note.

Jack Van Slyke notified me that Harry R. Edwards died of a massive heart attack.

A letter from **Dennis Flaherty** also informed me of the death of Harold Butterfield who found out he had cancer three weeks before he died. Dennis had visited Harry Edwards, ball gunner on his crew (R.J. Smith), for three days and was shocked to hear he died just three days after he left.



The handsome guys and beautiful gals in the photo are, L to R; Paul Durckel, Dorothy Graham, Dick Graham, Penny Hartshorn, John Hartshorn, and Helen Green, guest of Paul. The photo was taken August 25, 1945 at the famous Coconut Grove in Los Angeles. It was the first time these three members of the McDaniel crew got together after the war. Paul Durckel had gone down over Vienna and was a Prisoner of War, so they all had a lot of filling in to do. I wanted to run a photo for remembrance of John Hartshorn who passed away last July. Paul Durckel sent in this photo and I thought the men that remembered John would enjoy it. My log shows John flew with me on Friday, October the 13th and March 24. It was noted by John when he sent in a machine copy of this photo before he passed away, "this was probably the first reunion of the 781st!"

ALL AMERICAN NEWS 465th Bomb Group 1991 Champions!

In the September Collings Foundation Newsletter it was reported that the 465th Bomb Group, along with the 453rd Bomb Group, were the two groups that contributed the most during the past year, so they will be recognized with their Group markings on the right rudder of *All American*. This is the third year both groups were champions.

Thanks to all of you who contributed so generously toward the restoration of this great airplane. It makes us all proud to be a part of our squadron and group. And a special thanks to our sister squadrons, the 780th, 782nd and 783rd Squadrons who have become more active with *All American* and helped the 465th Bomb Group to be a winner.

Space on the aircraft is running out for Honor Crew recognition. If your crew is not listed and you desire to have it listed contact the Collings Foundation at 508 568-8924.

ALL AMERICAN CALENDAR

Recently I came across an aviation calendar that has the best photography I have seen. What makes it special is the January photo of *All American* with our group marking on the tail. The photo alone is 11 1/2 by 17 inches. The wing span of the plane is 15 inches, so you can really see the detail of the plane. The other 11 photos are the same size and are taken of other WWII planes such as the P-51. The calendar is available from the photographer and producer, Philip MaKanna. Write to Philip MaKanna, GHOSTS, 665 Arkansas St., San Francisco, CA 94107. Or, call toll free 800-331-8231. Price is \$13.95 plus \$3 shipping. California residents add 6% tax. Other aviation books and photos available.

ADDRESS CHANGES

O. J. Cowart, Jr., 2634 Beluche, Galveston, TX 77551. Phone 409 744-2942.

Roy Byrd, PO Box 6, Toyahvale, TX 79786.

John Jurdyga, 2750 Lincoln Blvd. #119, Oroville, CA 95966.

Francis Maccani, 8956 Cotillion Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45231

Larry Tiehen, PO Box 215, Dacono, CO 80514.

William Wood, 3254 SE Mahali Ln, Port Orchard WA 98366.

James W. Wray, Jr., 8623 Starcrest Dr #X12, San Antonio, TX 78217.

Hayden Bodenhamer, 34 Oak Creek Ridge, Longview, TX 75605.

Harold Seitz, 2970 W Laquila Aerie, Tucson, AZ 85741.

Raymond Zurawski, new street address 1346 7th St. NW.

Cornelius Culhane, PO Box 3148, Pocasset, MA 02559.

John Richardson, new box number is PO Box 1891.

Dodie Shallman, new street address, 1405 Carriage Hills Dr.

James Stahl, 600 Dewey Ave, Galena, IL 61036.

Frank A. Piteo, 3280 Bennett Dr., Hollywood, CA 90068, Phone 213-851-0251.

Many changes were not sent in, but our spies have run you down! Remember the bulk mailing does not provide forwarding so be sure to let us know if you move. We can't always find you.

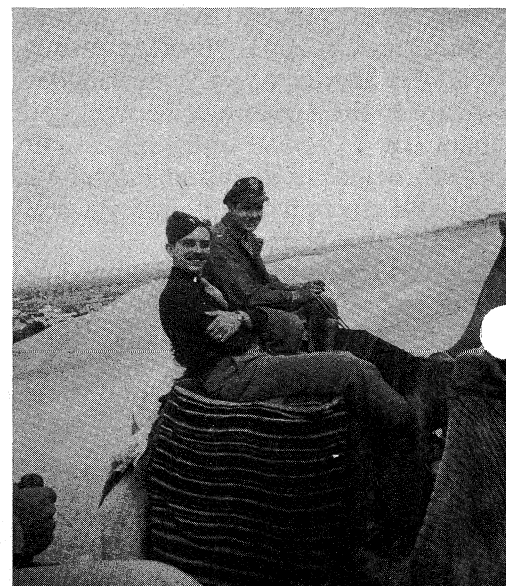
Some names we have not yet found that moved - Theodore Snyder, Willie Golden, and Robert Slottke.

HISTORY BOOK

Harry Carl has shipped the last history book. Several late orders had to be returned. The printer, Taylor Publishing, has had the history book listed for sale in their catalog. They wanted to see if there was enough interest in the book for a reprint to be sold by them. The association would get a royalty. Harry Carl reports word from Taylor

Publishing is that they have had unusual interest in the book. Some inquiries as far away as London. There is a good chance for a reprint by Taylor Publishing. It was listed for \$37 in their catalog. If you are interested contact Taylor Publishing Company, PO Box 3518, Dallas, TX 75221.

I know you all join me again in thanking Harry Carl for the magnificent job he did in putting together the history book. Harry and Donna were recognized at our last reunion, but the mention of the history book always brings back thoughts of Harry and his work for the 781st Bomb Squadron. What a joy it is to leaf through our history and recall the men and the times we spent together.



The above photo was sent in by **William Coonan** (Engineering) inquiring who the men were. I am quite sure Albert "Shack" Myers is on the right. Maybe another of the Dickey crew on the left? Anyone know? It looks like they are riding a camel in North Africa

Barney Russell, navigator on my crew, was doing guard duty during one pay day. He was toying with his .45 - and you guessed it - it went off. Right at eye ball level inches away from Marcel Snyder and Jim Wray. Barney was sweating out his promotion and it may have been delayed a few weeks, but Jim Wray relented and gave him his promotion to First Lieutenant!

OUR 781ST PLANES

Jim Kienitz (Radio Operator/Stenerson) was the first to reply on the aircraft list. He must have some complete records since he gave a lot of detail. Their plane, 42-52521, was Paper Doll, Yellow "I", which they received at McCook and flew to Pantanella. Paper Doll, with the Stenersen crew aboard and with James W. Wray as an observer, flew the first mission the 781st was on. After the war Paper Doll flew back to the U.S.

The ground crew was Donald K. Shaw, crew chief, Albert M. Honthaas, Daniel Hernandez and John R. Riggs.

Jim Kienitz inquired if we had records of the total number of missions each plane flew. That information is not available. And I have a question for Jim - do you know who flew Paper Doll back to the U. S.?

Dennis Flaherty (Tail Gunner/R.J. Smith) wrote that Yellow "J", Angel of the Sky, was piloted by R. J. Smith. The crew flew it over with the original cadre from McCook.

From **Connie Hamilton**, "I really enjoyed the last newsletter, especially the listing of aircraft assigned to the 781st.

"I have a scrapbook with pictures of a lot of these planes. Now I can put names with the photos. Planes not listed by name are the following: Alley Oop, V Grand, The Yakima Kid, Shark, Picadilly "Lilly", "Jo Mo." In these photos are my husband, Don Hamilton, nose gunner on the Ellison crew, and Chuck Kramer, tail gunner on the Ellison Crew.

"I also have the Christmas dinner menu for 1944.

"You listed Guardian Angel as returning to the U.S.A. by Gordon Ellison. It arrived June 15, 1945. Sounds like several of you arrived that day.

"Looking forward to September, 1992."

Connie, I believe all the names of planes you listed were in

our sister squadrons. They all flew with us though on our group missions.

Thanks for the information. I'm still waiting to hear from more of you on additions to the list.

A LOAF OF BREAD A JUG OF WINE AND THOU!

by Ben Donahue

The 781st Bomb Squadron had many very dedicated Sergeants who were hard workers at their assigned jobs. One such Sergeant who will remain nameless in this little tale, was such a person. But! He did have one little secret that finally betrayed him. About every 2-3 weeks Sergeant Joe received at mail call the very same shaped package which he immediately took to his quarters and did not let anyone know or see what was in the package. Then one spring day disaster struck. Sergeant Joe had received his package and had retired to his tent. Within an hour or less, his tent and possessions were ashes, along with his other 3 tent mates possessions. Sergeant Joe's package every 3 weeks contained a very stale loaf of bread which had

been hollowed out just enough to allow a pint of good American booze to fit in. The bread was wrapped, very carefully tied, and boxed within the size limit allowed for packages for GI's. This time Sergeant Joe allowed his stove to overflow onto the floor as he was putting a match to the 100 octane fuel. The problem magnified itself because the Sergeant was pretty well oiled having consumed most of the booze along with 3-4 cans of beer. His tent partners were a bit upset and ready to kill him. But, cooler heads prevailed. NOW! WOULD THE REAL SGT JOE, PLEASE STAND UP AND GIVE US HIS NAME!!!

PHOTO ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many of the photos appearing in the Pantanella News do not give recognition to the photographer. In the prior issue I learned that Bernie Badler was the photographer for two photos, the one with Jack Van Slyke and John Ward and the one with Ernie Van Asperen in front of his tent. Bernie had a miniature Speed Graphic and has all of his original negatives. You will note quite a few in the history book.



The above photo was sent in by Morris Cohen. He noted on the photo, "The shack holds fuzes of all types. The two fellows leaving the shack have two different kinds of fuzes in their racks. The first fellow is carrying tail fuzes and the second nose fuzes. They are placed in the bomb and it makes the bomb explode."

CHURCH CALL
465th Bomb Group (H)
H. R. Blouch, Chaplain
Sgt. E. E. Snider, Chaplain's Assistant

RELIGIOUS SERVICES * NOVEMBER 12 TO NOVEMBER 19

Sunday, November 12 - PROTESTANT - 1030 and 1830
CATHOLIC - 0800 and 1600

Weekday, PROTESTANT WEDNESDAY 1800
CATHOLIC - MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY 1630
JEWISH FRIDAY 1800

All these services will be held in the theater building except the Wednesday and Friday evening services which will be held in the Group Courts and Boards Room.

Chaplain McCahey will hear the Confessions of the Catholic men before each of the Masses.

The Sky Pilot briefs -

PAUL'S VOYAGE TO ROME

60 - 61 A.D.,

PAUL IN CAESAREA - 58 to 60 A.D.

Luke was with Paul in Caesarea and it is thought that this is the time when he wrote his Gospel.

JOURNEY TO ROME - Fall 60 to Spring of 61 A.D.

The story of the shipwreck is a classic - Acts Ch. 27. He showed himself a master of navigation and a leader of men whose sound faith in God assured all of safety.

PAUL IN ROME - (61 to 63 A.D.)

During these years he wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon and possibly Hebrews, if he was its author. Taken back to Rome he was beheaded about 67 A.D.

The following article appeared in the news recently about a mass grave found in Yugoslavia. Since the area brings back memories to many of you I thought you would be interested in this in case you have not seen it.

ZAGREB, Yugoslavia - A mass grave discovered last week in northern Yugoslavia may contain the remains of 40,000 people executed by victorious Communists in 1945, a newspaper reported Tuesday.

Most appear to have been Ustacha (or Ustashi) soldiers of the defeated Nazi puppet state of Croatia, Vjesnik said.

The victims apparently were executed after surrendering to Communist partisans or being deported to Yugoslavia by the Western allies from Austria, where many had sought refuge at the end of World War II.

The Ustachi were an elite, SS-type military unit accused of murdering hundreds of thousands of Jews, Serbs, and Gypsies after the so-called independent State of Croatia was created under German auspices in 1941.

Some of our crews ended up in the hands of the Ustachi. The Tipton crew, for example, was turned over to the Germans by the Ustachi.



Yellow "Q", #41-28857, crashed at Pantanella per Leo Lutgring's records. Also John R. Beitling, Aviation Historian, notes it crashed on Dec. 14, 1944 and was salvaged. We did not have a mission on that date. Could it be as a result of the Doss night mission on Dec. 12th? Who can add to this?

THE BERNIE BADLER STORY

I believe that I was one of the very few pilots in our Squadron that started out as an enlisted man. I enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps on June 10, 1940 in Philadelphia, PA three months out of high school. As a publicity stunt a group of us enlistees were flown from Philadelphia Airport to Langley Field, VA in a B-18A - my first airplane ride. Here I was assigned to the 41st Reconnaissance Squadron where we got our basic training. After basic I was assigned to the ground crew of a B-18A and also got to work on the B-15, at the time the largest airplane in the world. Talk about an assortment of aircraft, this outfit had it. There were B-17As, B-18s, B18As, B-15s, A-17As, P-12s, B-10s and a couple of PT-17s. The most important item here was the fact that the operations officer of the squadron was Captain Curtis Lemay! Yes, even then he had the ole cigar in his mouth.

From Langley I was sent to the aircraft and mechanics school at Chanute Field, IL from which I graduated. Then after returning to Langley to the same outfit in early 1941 we were sent to Gander, Newfoundland as the second U. S. unit to be stationed there. I was at Gander on December 7, 1941. I didn't even know where Pearl Harbor was located at that time. But with the rapid expansion of the Air Corps I was promoted to Sgt. (I was never a corporal). At Gander the squadron had mainly B-17As with which they flew anti-submarine patrols over the North Atlantic.

Even though I was a Sgt. I had to pull guard duty as we were very short of personnel and I can remember doing guard duty out on the parking ramp guarding the early model B-24Ds. Boy, what an odd looking aircraft I thought after being around the sleek-looking B-17s. Little did I know what was in store for me. Anyone who has been at Gander in the winter knows the type of weather there and I can still visualize myself seeking shelter from the biting wind behind the landing gear strut of a B-24.

In the spring of 1942 I returned to Langley and was assigned to the 2nd Bomb Group and I immediately put in my application for pilot training for which I was accepted. I went through the Gulf Coast Training Command graduating from Ellington Field, TX in the class of 43G. Being in service previously I was always a student officer which gave me certain privileges.

There is nothing spectacular that I can say about my combat tour due to the fact that our crew was one of the very few

that started out together and we all finished up with not one man getting injured or wounded! This is not to say that we had all milk runs because among other things we hit Ploesti no less than 5 times.

One mission that does stand out in my mind was one over Vienna when we were hit by a flight of German fighters at the IP and the 464th was flying below us and to the right. I saw 4 or 5 of their planes go down almost immediately. After they made one pass at us the P-51s came to our rescue. The best escort that we had seemed to be the 464th Bomb Group because as soon as enemy fighters were sighted they headed for the 464th - they were sure a hard luck outfit.

After my last mission, which I completed at the same time as Jack Van Slyke and John Ward, we celebrated by drinking boilermakers in their tent.

On one mission I flew as co-pilot for a new crew and the target was the jet aircraft factory at Wasserburg, Germany. Even though there was practically no enemy opposition it seemed that everything else happened. First of all the bolt to my seat belt came loose, then the heaters stopped functioning, then over the IP the flight leader stalled the flight out and, as I was flying at the time, I pushed forward on the wheel to pick up speed, but the pilot was pulling back on the wheel to keep from hitting the plane underneath us. Well, we survived that episode but then another problem confronted us. As we were in one of the rearmost formations we had to constantly jockey for position and in doing so we used up an awful lot of fuel. So, on the way back to the base the pilot decided to head for an English field on the Italian coast. They gave us clearance to land, but on final approach they fired a red flare that said that we had to go around as their aircraft had to take off on a mission. Well, in my nervousness I pulled up the landing gear first instead of some flaps, so until those wheels came up and gained some flying speed I was "chewing doughnuts out of my parachute." We did get down safely, got some fuel, and flew back to Pantanella, landing just about sunset. My good friend, Bill Ellett, was there to greet me. He thought that I was lost on my last mission.

Upon returning to the States I was sent to Tyndall Field, FL where I was assigned to gunnery school flying B-24s as co-pilot. Then I was checked out as first pilot and my first flight was my good friend, John Ward, as co-pilot.

This job was very enjoyable; flying air-to-air and air-to-ground gunnery missions for gunners from the U.S.,

France, and China. After several months I had a better opportunity. My roommate, a former B-26 pilot, was one of the base test pilots and he got me the job of test pilot also.

This was the highlight of my military service. I got to fly all kinds of airplanes - the P-40, P-63 (the improved version of the P-30), C-64, and B-26 Marauder. The C-64 was a single engine transport made in Canada and they are still used by the "bush pilots." My main job was test pilot, mainly B-24s. This was my last job on active duty and I was separated in June, 1945, just 5 days short of having 5 years of service.

After being in the Inactive Reserve I became the photo officer for the California Air National Guard. I was taken off flying status in 1955 after an operation for a herniated disc, then made operations officer and promoted to Captain.

I reverted to Inactive Reserve until I acquired 20 good years of duty for retirement. During these years I was promoted to Major.

As for my personal life, I got married in 1947 and have 3 children. One, my son, is a PHD in computer science, department head at the University of Pennsylvania, and 2 daughters who live near me in Castro Valley. I was divorced and have been married to my present wife for over five years.

I have been an estimator-salesman selling windows and patio doors to builders and contractors. At the present time I am doing this part time and my wife and I own an Espresso Cafe and enjoy the business thoroughly. I had the pleasure of having the Van Slykes as my guests for lunch this past September.

Along with keeping busy with the cafe, I have a complete woodworking shop for making cabinets and make stained glass windows. I made over a dozen and gave every one away!

Until I went to the first reunion of the 781st I had not been in contact with anybody from the squadron except Al Rodman. Now I really look forward to the reunions. Sadly to say, except for Rae Branch at the first reunion, I have been the only one from the crew to attend the reunions.

After all of these years I still have vivid memories of my life as a member of the Rae Branch crew and I still feel a closeness to them. As I wrote after the reunion in San Antonio I did get to visit with most of the members in person and now I see to it that I keep in touch even if only with Christmas cards.

I am very grateful that we trained as a crew and finished up as a crew and that I am still alive and healthy to tell the story.



A briefing by Maj. Harold Bullock, Group Operations Officer, at Oudna Field Number Two, 20 miles south of Tunis, in Tunisia. It doesn't look like there was a "uniform for the day." The building was known as the "White House." It was Rommel's headquarters while he was in North Africa.

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