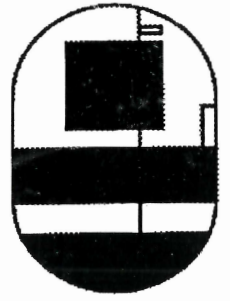




PANTANELLA NEWS



January 2002

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NUMBER 67



My Life in the Service of the U. S. Army
Air Corps—By James C. “Jim” Althoff

Jim on the Wing of an Army Air Corps Trainer

Many changes occurred in my path from birth on the family farm near Lansing, Iowa in 1922 to serving in the United States Army Air Corp.

From Iowa our family moved to Wisconsin and settled down in the small town of Bangor, where I graduated from high School in 1941.

Since funds were not available for college I chose to join the Government's National Youth Administration that furnished room and board while attending a Vocational school in nearby LaCrosse, Wisconsin.

I chose the business administration classes. Inasmuch as the supervisor of the Youth center where I stayed needed

help in his office, I volunteered to help him in my free time.

Shortly thereafter Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and it changed any plans I may have had. I thought of war and the possibility of serving, but had no desire to enlist. Later, after seeing many friends enlisting or being drafted I changed my plans and became interested in serving without singling out any branch of service.

One day I saw an ad for the Marines and decided it was the branch I wanted to serve with. I obtained the required doctor's health certificates, went to the nearest Marine enlistment office and was accepted. Three days later I left for Milwaukee to join a group being assembled to ship out to boot camp.

At Milwaukee a Navy doctor gave me a physical and ended it by saying "step on the scales to be weighed and then go over to join the group going by train to San Diego." As I stepped on the scales he was observing me and said, "Wait here". He then called out to the sergeant at the desk, "Give this boy a ticket home, he has flat feet." I was very surprised since I was not aware of having flat feet. In high school I was on the championship basketball team and also was winner in low hurdles in track.

I returned home, very disappointed, and went back to the job I had at the youth center. I was hired as assistant supervisor before I tried to enlist, so I returned to the center to attend night school and work during the day.

I still had the desire to enter service so I tried the Navy. On the application I had to answer the question if any branch of service ever had turned me down. When I told of the denial of the Marine application I was told they could not accept my application. I tried the Army and received the same reply. I later learned this was an automatic denial for entry into any other branch of service. I returned to the Center and felt I would end up 4F, denial for physical reason and never get to serve.

Several months later two of the boys who had been at the youth center called me for a room at the center for the weekend. I told them I would I set one aside for them. When they arrived they said they were going to take the examination for enlistment in the Aviation Cadet program. They also said they were going out for the evening to celebrate and asked me to join them. I did and after a beer or two I got excited about their plans and after thinking about it for a short time I said I would join them the next day for the exam to enlist. I said I would tell a little white lie about my other attempts to enlist!

The next day I went with them, passed the physical, and was accepted. In all my physicals after that I never was diagnosed as having flat feet.

Three months later I received a telegram to report to Chicago along with several hundred other boys. It was quite an exciting time and some apprehension for someone without experience away from home.

781st Bomb Squadron Association
2 Mount Vernon Lane
Atherton, CA 94027-3037
(650) 325-8356

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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.

Two and a half days later we arrived at Miami Beach, Florida. My duty here for several weeks was marching up and down the beach, doing calisthenics, and listening to some lectures. It was the new cadet program where we would be Army Air Corp Privates and receive five months of college when one was open.

A month later I left for Marshall College, Huntington, West Virginia for the five-month course. I attended some classes and would get a few hours in an airplane. It was not flight training, but mostly to familiarize us in an airplane. It was the first time I had ever been in an airplane.

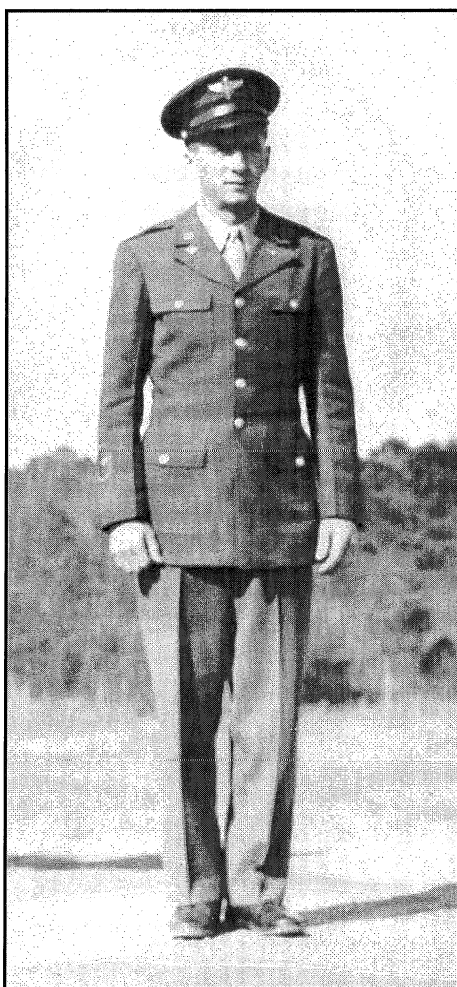
After only two weeks at the college I was given a test for flight training, I passed it and was sent to Nashville, Tenn. where I was classified for pilot training as an Aviation Cadet. My five months of college ended in two weeks.

In a few days the training began with pre-flight at Maxwell Field, AL, then Lakeland, FL for primary—in a Stearman PT 17, and then Macon Field at Valdosta GA, for basic flying in a BT-13.

I was doing well until I had a check ride. Upon landing after the check ride the check pilot informed me he was going to wash me out. I was shocked, but went to the hanger to find out what to do next. Here my regular instructor found me and said he heard about the check ride and told me to forget about it. I would not be "washed out." He said the

check pilot didn't know what he was doing, that I was trained to fly heavy bombers and I was qualified for that job. The check pilot was a civilian pilot who was commissioned a Second Lieutenant and made an instructor without having any military experience or any flying time in heavy bombers.

I remained there and completed the basic flying school. It was interesting to hear our class had fewer 'wash-outs'



Cadet in Advanced Training

then normal. They felt it was the fact that we had ten hours of familiarization of airplanes. I was then transferred to twin-engine advanced training. There I was

the first in my class to pass the final flight test. I graduated with Pilots-wings and a Second Lieutenant commission.

The next phase was B-24 transition at Maxwell Field, Alabama and then on to Davis-Monthan at Tucson, Arizona to meet the nine men who were assigned to me and who would make us the Althoff Crew.

We completed our crew training and were transferred to Topeka, Kansas to take delivery of a new B-24J Number 42-1492. Our process for checking the plane out was for the engineer to check the engines and fuel supply, and then it was only to check to see if the compass worked. We flew parallel to a fence, which was a true North and South line. The compass indicated the same, so we were clear to begin our journey.

Now our orders were to report to Naples, Italy!

Our first stop was scheduled for New Hampshire. After landing on the taxi strip the props kicked up some surfacing material, which damaged our de-icing boot on the leading edge of the wing. This caused a three-day delay for repair work.

From there we flew our first over-water flight—to Newfoundland. Here we laid over two days for weather to clear. We departed early in the dark of the morning of Aug. 21, 1944 for the Azores Islands across the Atlantic Ocean.

Navigation was all dead

reckoning since we could not use the radio because the Germans had submarines lying off shore to give false signals, causing off course headings, which would burn up our fuel before reaching our destination. At least that is what we heard.

Shortly after departure we ran into a violent Atlantic storm. We could not get drift readings, nor see the moon or sun, for celestial readings, nor could we see the ocean. When the estimated time of our arrival at the Azores Islands was up I called Barney Russell, our navigator, to see where he thought we were. He replied, "We should be there now."

Seconds later a hole opened up in the clouds below us and I saw a spot of the ocean. I immediately banked and dove the plane down through the opening in the clouds. I pulled out about 10 feet above the water and to my right was the runway, which extended out in the ocean from the field on an Azores Island. I proceeded to land but I did not know the extension was steel mat runway nor was I prepared for the loud noise the steel mat made. We landed safely and taxied to an assigned spot.

After parking and discussion with the crew I learned that

our ball gunner thought we had crashed in the ocean when we landed on the steel mat. All he could see out either side of the plane was water and the loud noise from the steel mat made him think we crashed, so he started to climb out the waist window to swim ashore.

Our radio operator, Leonard Goldstein, and tail gunner, Pierre Kennedy grabbed him and pulled him back in the plane. It was a happy ending for all.

The following day (Aug 22) we flew to Marrakech, Africa for an overnight stay and refueling, then to Tunis where we first saw the results of war. Then on to Gioia, Italy arriving Aug 26th.

We stayed there a few days awaiting an assignment to a base in Italy. It turned out to be Pantanella! We found the base without difficulty and landed at Pantanella on Aug 28, 1944.

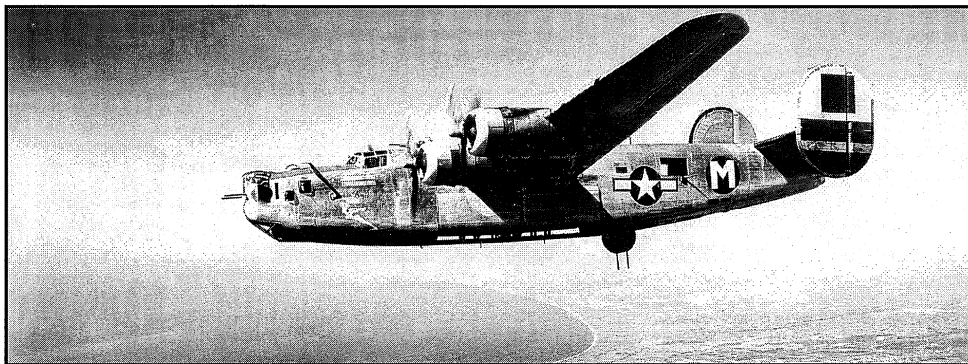
As soon as we landed and parked we were told to unload all of our personal things since the plane was going to be transferred to the 460th Bomb Group by one of their crews, which was waiting nearby. It was quite a disappointment to not be able to take the plane into combat after flying it all that distance. After the war I learned that my plane flew the

rest of the war with the 460th Bomb Group and when the war ended the pilot took the plane up and did some buzzing of the country-side, got reckless and crashed, killing all on board.

My enlisted crew members were assigned their tent and the officers were assigned to a newly pitched tent in the officers' area. It had dirt and grass for a floor and a cot for each which was still in a shipping bundle.

The following day (Aug 29) Hank Willett took me on an orientation flight over the area to get a layout of the base. The next day (Aug 30) I was posted to fly a mission as co-pilot to get checked out to fly combat. During the night I became ill and went on sick call the next morning.

The next day (Aug 31) I got worse so Doc Rapoport sent me to the hospital (a tent just over the hill.) After a week in the hospital I went back to the base and found my co-pilot had been transferred out of the squadron and my crew was assigned to Ernie Van Asperen who had just made first pilot. He had been co-pilot for Joe Athon who finished his missions and went home. I was then co-pilot for the crew.



Guardian Angel

10 Sept 1944. I flew my first mission—to **Vienna**** as co-pilot for Ernie Van Asperen and with my crew that had been transferred to Ernie. Our plane was "Guardian Angel", also known as "Yellow M". The target was the Saurerwerke-Dieseleng Factory. It was one of the tough

Saurerwerke-Dieseleng Factory. It was one of the tough targets that was a long distance from Pantanella and was heavily defended with many flak guns and fighters; therefore it was designated as a double that counted as two missions. This mission, and future doubles, will be followed by two asterisks (**).

We had a flight of P-51s for escort. We lost an engine when starting back to Pantanella and were very happy to have the close escort of the P-51s. Pierre Kennedy wrote down the name of one of the planes, "Thisizit". Several years ago he located the pilot. I chatted with him about the mission and it was good to hear more about our first combat flight. We later learned about the losses on this first mission. The Leggate crew was shot down over the target and Carl Dahl's plane got shot up and the crew had to bail out before he could return to Pantanella.

12 Sept 1944. The mission was **Gunzburg Germany**** to bomb the Wasserburg Jet Aircraft Factory with Van Asperen and crew. All went well until the target area—where we encountered intense, accurate and heavy anti-aircraft flak. We made it over the target and unloaded our five 1000 pound bombs at 23,000 ft.

As we turned away from the target to head home we were approaching Munich when a call went over the inter-com, "Enemy fighter 6 o'clock high!" I squeezed down in my seat, not knowing what to expect. I could not hear the tail gunner or waist gunners firing very well, but

when the top turret gun went off just above and in back of my head WOW! There was an odor of cordite and thud of guns that I will always remember. Then over-head roared an ME-109 with a P-51 on its tail. The fighters soon disappeared, diving down between the B-24s and I was relieved.

It was not until 1998, at one of our squadron reunions, that I learned more about the attack. One of the top gunners in another of our planes figured the ME-109 was coming in for an attack but was jumped by the P-51 and it headed for the B-24 formation since he knew the '51 would not fire at him with all stray shots hitting the 24s. I never did find out what happened after they left our formation. The bomb run was considered a fair strike.

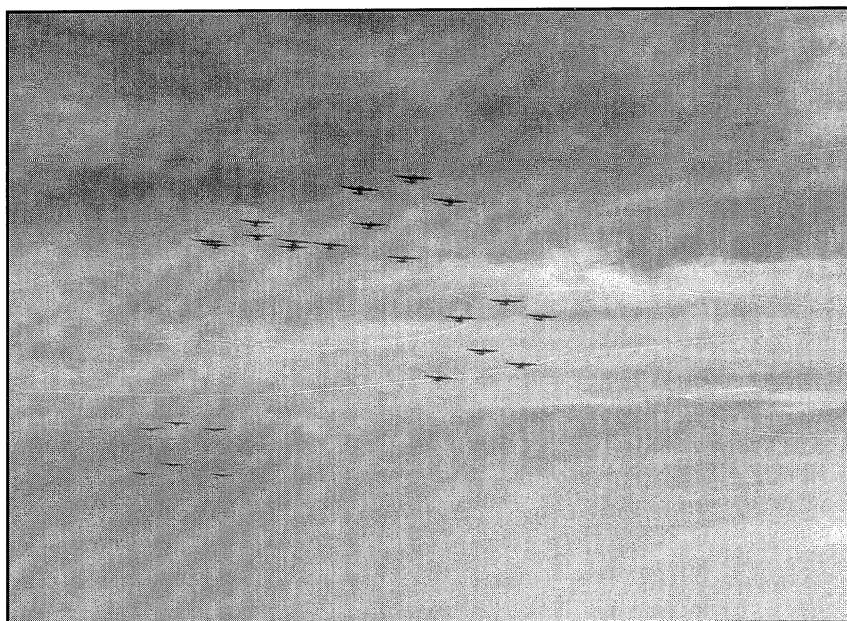
13 Sept. The mission was **Oswiecim, Poland****. The target was the Synthetic Oil Refinery and rubber plant. I flew with my crew and Ernie Van Asperen who was lead pilot of the second attack unit. The

bombing record shows 500# RDX bombs were dropped at 11 o'clock at 22,800 feet.

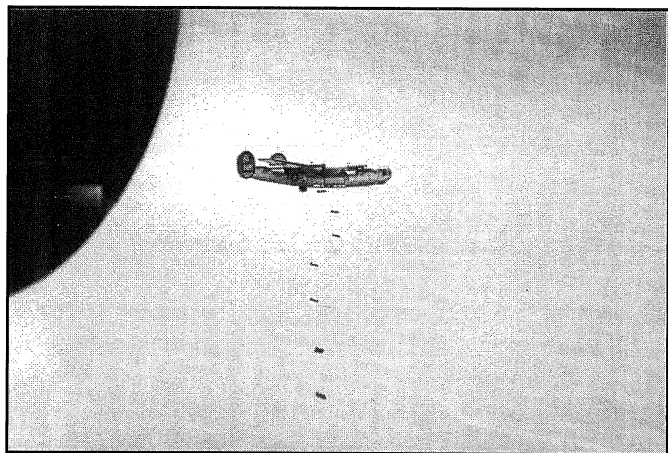
We ran into some of the heaviest flak concentrations I had ever encountered. After turning off from the target I learned that tail gunner Pierre Kennedy's gun and the back of his seat were hit by flak but with no injury. The lead plane, commanded by Col. Clark, our Group Commander, was shot up so badly he was forced down in Russia.

Our hydraulic lines were shot out and on return to the base we had to crank the landing gear down by hand. The runway was cleared as we had no brakes and the rudder control arm was shot off, but we stopped just short of running off the end of the runway. I was beginning to get the feeling of combat.

17 Sept. The mission was **Budapest.**** The target was the Shell Oil Refinery. The crew was Ernie Van Asperen,



En Route



Bombs Away

was Ernie Van Asperen's last flight with my crew. He finished his mission and returned to the United States. I then flew with my crew with Tom Hammond as co-pilot. Flak was average and we bombed at 22,000 feet. The bombing report was excellent results.

22 Sept. The mission was to Munich** to bomb the railway workshops. I was assigned to fly as co-pilot for Lt. Col. Jack Lokker, our Squadron Commander, and some members of my crew; Pierre Kennedy, Leonard Goldstein etc. And some lead crew members, Walt Sutton, Wilton Carter, Nicholas Belik, James Waggle and Jewel Shelnut.

I had been recommended to be lead pilot and was getting checked by Col. Lokker who was flying group lead. It was an interesting experience. We were in an older model B-24 that had a different autopilot (A-1 Sperry). In this lead position the autopilot could be used some of the time. With autopilot I had a chance to get a view of the country we were flying over.

When we approached the

Alps it was a beautiful sight flying over snow-covered mountains.

Then Col. Lokker tapped me on the shoulder and said to take over as he was going back to take some photos from the waist windows. I soon learned what went

on in the lead plane. The fighter escort called to report they were running late and wanted to know our position so that they could intercept us.

I had no idea of our exact position, so I contacted the navigator, Wilton Carter, for a reading. I then gave the fighters the position and all went well since we did not have any fighter opposition that day. Col. Lokker returned to his seat with a big smile after having taken some great photos.

We then proceeded to Munich to bomb by radar (PFF) the Railway from 22,000 feet. It was my first experience with radar on a bomb run. Flak was intense, accurate and heavy, but we got the bombs away.

7 Oct. The mission was Ersekujvar, Nove Zamke, Hungry.** (Maps of 1970 show Ersekujvar, Hungary to be Nove Zamke, Czechoslovakia.) The target was the Marshaling Yard. I flew with Lt. Col. Harold Bullcock, Group Operations Officer with some of my crew plus some from the model crew. Pierre Kennedy (my crew), Shack

Myers (Dickey Crew), Wilton E. Carter (Blakita Crew), and Jim Waggle (Model Crew) to fly in this group lead position.

We had some unusual security with P-38s for escort. It was the only time I saw P-38s in close support for the flight I was in. With PFF the target was hit with excellent results and this time we escaped some of the flak. It was Shack Myer's last mission as bombardier.

10 Oct. The mission and target was the S. Dona di Piave Highway Bridge in Northern Italy. I flew with Lt. Col. Jim Wray, Our Squadron Commander and my crew. All went well for another successful mission, except there was a flock of sheep and a shepherd by the bridge. Poor guy, I don't know how he made out. There were no fighters. The flight time was 7 hours. As I flew more missions I developed some superstitious ways to think to relieve some of the pressure or fears of the mission. One was to wear one piece of the same clothing I had worn on previous missions, another was turn a certain way out of the door each time upon leaving for a mission. And, of course, a prayer was in order. And I remember going down the stairs to the briefing room and stepping off to the right every time. Anything to keep our minds off of what the target would be for the day.

12 Oct. The Mission was Bologna. The target was The Bologna Stores Depot, Italy. I had some men from my crew, some from the lead crew and William Rachow. We had scant flak, so it was a milk run. It



Vienna Welcome

turned out to be a good mission.

13 Oct. The Mission was **Blechhammer**** to bomb the South Synthetic Oil Refinery located between Kosel, Germany and Opole, Poland. The mission was one of the worst. I had my crew and John Hartshorn (McDaniel Crew).

A late change placed two of my crew, Leonard Goldstein and Pierre J. J. Kennedy, to fly with the Lovey crew instead of the orders they had to go to Capri for rest camp that morning. But they were awakened in their tent and told of the change in orders.

I did not know of their

change until I returned from the mission. The mission got underway that day and at the target the flak was fierce. I had many hits, a gas leak and, the plane in front of me blew up. The pilot, Lt Alexander Lovey, and co-pilot Raymond Morse were killed in action.

My two crew members, Leonard Goldstein and Pierre Kennedy were in that plane, but got out in spite of a fierce fire in the bomb bay. They were taken prisoners of war and served the rest of the war in German prison camps and on death marches. It was a day that I reflected on often on later missions when I remember seeing the plane get shot down and on fire as an awful sight and the thought that all

aboard could easily have been killed including my two crew members.

17 Oct. The mission was a tough one", **Vienna.**" I had my usual crew (ex Goldstein and Kennedy.) The target was the Industrial Area. The target was camouflaged and most of the planes dropped on the lead plane and hit the fake target. My bombardier saw the real target and zeroed in on the real target. He was telling me this on intercom, so I let him know we would follow his sighting and hit the real target. We dropped the bombs with excellent results. He would always follow the bombs on the way down and call out the strike to me. This time was



This is **Guardian Angel**. The Crew, however, is basically the Marvin C. Rice Crew. Rice was replaced by James B. Doyle as Pilot when the Rice Crew (The first 781st Squadron replacement crew) joined the 781st Squadron ca late June of 1944. Doyle was Co-Pilot on the Robert J. Smith Crew prior to this move. . See page 144 of the Squadron History for the original Rice Crew and page 147 for the Robert J. Smith Crew.

In 1986, Eugene Fenner identified the above men in this picture as follows.

Rear - L to R: James B. Doyle, Pilot; Roy L. Duffey, Nose Gunner; John E. Stark, Bombardier/Navigator;

Front - L to R: Darrell E. Kinney, Engineer; Kenneth J. Kopp, Ball Gunner; Raymond J. McDonald, R/O; Robert M. Bergin, Co-Pilot; Ones C. Farmer, Tail Gunner

a real thrill to him and to me to know we did better than the lead crew. It was seldom something like this would occur.

1 Nov. The mission was **Graz**** the target was the Marshalling Yard. Bombed by PFF. My crew with Hammond as co-pilot. Weather was bad so we

hit the alternate. It was an 8-hour flight.

5 Nov. The mission was **Vienna**** again to bomb Florisdorf Oil Refinery. The bombing score was 100% Accuracy. It was not very good for the nervous system. I was flying with my crew with a new co-pilot, Thomas Hammond,

who would fly with me for the rest of the tour of duty and back to the United States.

6 Nov. The mission was **Vienna****, Florisdorf again with my crew, with replacements for Kennedy and Goldstein. Bombs were dropped south of Vienna. We dropped 500# incendiary

bombs by PFF with good results; our radar navigators were getting a workout. Neil Culhane joined my crew for this mission. The bomb run was rated 100 % accurate.

7 Nov. The mission was the Isarco Albes Bridge in Italy. I flew with Lt. Col. James W. Wray, Group Operations Officer, and other lead crew members, and some of my crew, Walter Sutton as lead bombardier and Barney Russell, James Oursler, James Culbertson, and Henry Black. Bombs were dropped at 14,000 feet with 97% striking within 1000 feet of mean point of contact.

An Air Corp record! The bridge was wiped out and so were some goats near the bridge.

10 Nov. The last mission in 1944. I was scheduled to fly a mission, but after we were assembled and ready to go two red flares were shot from the control tower, the mission was cancelled. This was the only time this ever occurred on one of my missions. This was a stroke of luck for me. I was feeling the missions and I thought this would be a rest for me. We returned to our tent and played some cards to pass the time. I rarely joined in since I usually had other things to do. This day, however, I joined in the card game and took some losses.

Apart from the losses I began to feel ill and ended up by going to see Doc Rapoport, our Flight Surgeon. I ended up with some pills to relax and went to bed in the afternoon. I got worse, but slept until midnight

when I had to call for help from my tent mates since I not able to get up and walk.

They got Doc and I was put on an ambulance and taken to a hospital which was an old school house in Venosa, Italy about an hour or two away. At the schoolhouse they had to carry me in and then gave me a shot and I was out for the night.

The next morning emergency appendectomy surgery was performed. It certainly wasn't a hospital, no nurses, etc. A spinal injection did not work, after a minute or two I could feel all the carving and shock set in. So, a piece of gauze was placed over my face and something was poured on it, probably ether, as I passed out, but later the surgery was completed and I spent two weeks recuperating.

Since I was the only officer I had the job of censoring all the mail. Then an ordnance casualty was brought in next to me. He was all wrapped from his waist up. Three holes in the gauze around the head for his mouth and nose. He had a bomb fuse go off in his hands, which were blown off up to the elbow. Peace came to him on the second day. He was covered with a sheet and removed.

After two weeks of recuperation in the hospital Sgt. Miserlas arrived to pick me up to return to Pantanella. He filled me in on the latest news. One was that morning a 464th plane blew up on take-off. When we arrived at Pantanella they were removing the last of the accident. The next day I was scheduled for a mission, however,

Capt. Adler saw my name on the roster and knew I had just come home from the hospital, so he had it changed to a rest camp, The Isle of Capri! He thought I should have a longer recuperating period. After a nice trip to Capri I came back and orders were waiting for me to go to Santa Cesera rest camp.

20 Jan. 1945 It was back to flying combat. My mission was **Linz, Germany****, to bomb the Linz Main Marshalling Yard. With my crew plus Jones crew, Dobbs, Fox, Ellsworth and Elmo. This turned out to be a tough mission. I was assigned to fly with the Jones crew on their first mission to teach them how to fly combat. The flight took off and went normally but I began to feel the cold as we climbed to altitude. If I remember it correctly, George Ashley was leading and determined to hit the target.

Weather forced us to higher altitude. The temperature dropped to a minus 65 degrees centigrade. It was the coldest mission flown. Flak was intense, accurate, and heavy. The bomb load was 100# GP bombs. The bomb strike was considered good. On the bomb run I began to lose control of the airplane.

I had to call the leader to report I was moving out of formation because of the risk of collision. I stayed off side of the formation until we returned to lower altitude and I regained control. However, ten of the planes did not return to Pantanella that day due to fuel

shortages. I was watching my fuel and following the procedure I learned from Ernie Van Asperen and made it back to Pantanella safely. Two other planes ditched in the Adriatic with only 11 of the 20 men surviving.

On the following mission the Jones crew flew on, they ran out of fuel over the Adriatic and all were lost. They had called for a heading for a landing, but the fuel ran out before they got over land.

1 Feb. The mission was **Maribor, Austria**** not a very successful mission with bombs dropped near Graz. With my crew we bombed PFF a 6:50 min flight.

7 Feb. The mission was **Vienna, Austria****, to hit the Florisdorf Oil Refinery again. We had excellent results bombing from 24,500 feet.

16 Feb. The mission was **Regensburg ****to bomb the Obertraubling Airdrome. We dropped frag bombs at 24,000 feet on Me-262 jet fighters on the ground and in the hangers. The Germans were madly pushing some fighters in the hangers to be hidden and maybe protected some. I saw two blow-up as they were being pushed in the hanger. The total reported later was 25 Me-262's were destroyed on the ground. It was an excellent strike!

One of the sights I remember so well and one of the worst memories was the loss of a B-24 and it's crew. As the bombs were dropped the formation was in a curve over the tar-

get with the lead formation slightly higher, while dropping bombs it was swinging off to the left. The next squadron came in at a lower altitude and happened to get underneath the departing squadron. Either an accidental release or a bomb that had hung up was kicked out, but one bomb landed on the wing of a B-24. I was flying deputy lead and could see very well. Over the command radio a friend of the crew in the B-24 was calling to bail out.

The bomb was smoldering and it would be death for all on board if it exploded. No one bailed out even after repeated calls, and then it happened, the entire plane erupted in a brilliant red flame and all was silent. As it flopped around and flames reduced three chutes opened. Then the flame around the plane went out all at once and the blackened B-24 kept going in a spin and crashed. Only one man in a chute survived.

19 Feb. The mission was **Vienna.**** The target was Matzliensdorf Marshalling Yard. It was the most frightening target.

Ploesti was considered worst at first, but when it fell many of the guns were shipped to Vienna. I was sent to Vienna Nine Times. This mission was rated success.

21 Feb. The mission was **Vienna,**** to hit the same Matzliensdorf Marshalling Yards. It must not have been hit hard enough two days before. With my crew plus Rachow. It was a successful mission.

27 Feb. The mission was **Augsberg, Germany.**** The Locomotive Depot was the target. With my crew plus Rachow. Bombed with PFF on another successful mission.

4 Mar. The mission was **Szombathly, Hungary**** and the target was the Marshalling Yard. I flew with my crew and we had a rating of fair for the bombing.

My Casa mates, Van Asperen, Cooper and Russell, were all getting tired and decided to plan a trip to Rome. It was decided we should have a jeep to get around in Rome. Barney Russell and I were given the task of driving to Rome by jeep.

Ernie Van Asperen talked George Ashley out of his jeep for the trip. Ernie and Hugh Cooper took a B-24 flight to Rome. We had a good trip by jeep, but it was getting dark when we got there. We were lucky to find Cooper and Van Asperen as they were leaving the Red Cross for the hotel we were to stay in. It turned out to be a very interesting trip in Rome but we knew we had to get on our way back to Pantanella.

This article will be continued in Pantanella News Number 68.

Folded Wings

Norman Hunter, Ball Gunner on Dickey's Crew, passed away October 25, 2001. The cause of death was heart problems.

He was living in Perkins, South Carolina. From John Fandrey.

Donald E. Toomey, Navigator on Al Lovey's Crew, passed away Aug 14, 2001.

His wife, Fay E. Toomey, 9015 Co Road 116; Homel, MIN 55340, notified us in a note to John Ogden

Don died of an accident from a bump to the back of his head, causing a slow blood leakage and resulting brain pressure. He was brain dead when he got to the hospital.

He was 82 years old and a member of American Legion Post #115, American Ex-POW Association and the Disabled American Veterans.

Editor's Corner

Please Notice!!

There has been an increase in the number of returns of the Pantanella News due to incorrect addresses. We do our best to produce an interesting Squadron Newsletter.

However, I just don't understand how so many of you do not notify us of an address change and do not request the Newsletter when you miss one because of an address error.

Note that John Ogden, our Treasurer, is now listed as the return

address on the Pantanella News. Send your corrections to John so that we can keep our roster current and you will receive the Pantanella News promptly.

John also receives the yearly dues/subscription, which is \$10.00 per year.

Keep current so you won't miss a single issue of this important Squadron publication.

MAIL
CALL



From Walter Clausen:

I am sure you folks know you were really missed at the reunion in Omaha. It wasn't the same without you. We know that your absence couldn't be helped after that terrorist disaster in New York.

We also missed Pierre Kennedy and Leonard Goldstein. They had planned to come but there were no flights. Walter Longacre did a good job on the reunion, but did not have the help he had lined up—but all in all it went

well. We are spending the winter in Florida. From your adopted crew member, Walt Clausen.

From Bill Coonan, Engineering:

I would like to recommend a wonderful book that will bring back memories of the experiences our group had in Italy, "The Wild Blue" by Stephen E. Ambrose. It is about the flying experiences of 22 yr. Old Pilot George McGovern who flew 35 mis-

sions in B-24s. He won the Distinguished Flying Cross and later was a U.S. Senator and Presidential Candidate.

He flew with the 741st Squadron, 455th Bomb Group stationed near Cerignola, Italy. I got the book from the Library.

Thanks for the work you do on the Pantanella News. I still play golf two days a week, poker once a month, and do maintenance at the homeless shelter every week.



781 St BOMB SQUADRON ASSOC
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