



PANTANELLA NEWS

Published by 781st Bomb Squadron Association©

#94 January 2009

FAREWELL DAYTON HELLO KANSAS CITY IN 2009 Whiteman Air Force Base Home of the B-2



781st. members attending the 2008 Reunion pose in front of Chapel 2, Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, OH. The Stained Glass window gracing the front of Chapel 2 is a replica of the stained glass window from the Chapel at Wheelus AFB, Libya commemorating the courage of the crew of the B-24 "Lady Be Good" who perished in the desert in 1943.

Funds for the design and manufacture of the window in 1960 were donated by USAF personnel of the 7272nd. Air Base Wing stationed at Wheelus AFB, Libya.

MEMBERS KEEP IN TOUCH

Notify or contact any or all of
the individuals listed below for any
FW's---Address Changes---News
Or Whatever

PANTANELLA NEWS

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News Stories, FW's and Obits

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781st Bomb Squadron Association
c/o Orren Lee, Pres.
2312 Braemar Dr.
Sioux Falls, SD 57105

Officers

Orren Lee: President

Vice President: Bernie Badler

Patty Kill: Treasurer

Secretary: Connie Ogden

Imd Past President: Barney Russell

Board of Directors

James C. Althoff, President Emeritis

Frank Ambrose

Earl Leinart

Bernie Badler

Chaplin: Frank Wassenaar

PANTANELLA NEWS

Editor: Frank Ambrose

781st BOMB SQUADRON (H)

Part of the 465th Bomb Gp. 15th AF
Italy 1944-1945

Flew 191 Missions
over Southern Europe
dropping thousands of tons of death
and destruction to the enemy.
Shot down 25 enemy aircraft
Received Two
Presidential Unit Citations

Veternans, Families and Friends Who Attended The 2008 781st Sqd. Reunion

Frank Ambrose
Gloversville, NY

Frank Ambrose II
Atlanta, GA

Bernard Badler
Petaluma, CA

Pearl A. Bailey
Doane Bailey
Hermitage, PA

Nicholas C. Belik
Ruth V. Belik
Masury, OH

Charles "Bubba" Braud
James E. Braud
Thibodaux, LA

Walter Clausen
Connie Clausen
Gregg Clausen
Fenton, MI

Leonard H. Emmel.
Deborah Parisi
Lenora Simmons
Homer Glen, IL
Kenneth Emmel
Sandra Conrad
Christopher Conrad

John Fandrey
St. Paul, MN

Robert L. Freed.
Meadowlands, PA

Glen Haywood
Carolyn Harman
Ann Arbor, MI

Col. Richard Loch, USAF Ret.
Kathleen Loch
WPAFB Ohio

Betty L. Keiser
David G. Childers
Patricia L. Childers
Ft. Wayne, IN

Francis "Ken" Kill
Elizabeth "Betty" Kill
Findlay, OH 45840

Karl C. Kill
Carol Kill
Powell, OH
Patricia Kill
Springboro, OH

Arnold R. Kill
Eleanora Kill
Spencerville, OH

Susan Kill McAfee
George McAfee
Findlay, OH

Thomas "Tom" Kyle
Rena Parker
Montrose, CO 81401

Orren J. Lee
Carole J. Lee
Sioux Falls, SD

Homer Moeller
Lois Moeller
Scottsdale, AZ 85253

Constance "Connie" Ogdi
Candace Tannery
Dickinson, TX 77539

Major Sherwood Olson

Curt G. Reed
Curt G. Reed, Jr.
San Jose, CA

Kenneth B. Rehn
Lois Rehn
Bill Rehn
Woodhull, IL

Bonnie G. Rowe, Jr.
Atlanta, GA

Barney G. Russell, Jr.
Anna H. Russell
Barney G. "Bud" Russell III
Magnolia, AR

Chuck Sorlie
St. Paul, MN

Roland J. "Ron" Soucy
Rolanda M. "Randy" Soucy
Rodger T. Soucy
Gregory J. Soucy
Beavercreek, OH

Joseph Soucy
Pompano Beach, FL

Denny Sutton
Kathleen Sutton
Henderson, KY

Walter Sutton
Margie Sutton
Evansville, IN

Dr. Elliott B. Sweet
Laurie Bedus

Jon L. Tallman
Carol A. Tallman
Poland, OH

Frank Wassenaar
Dottie Wassenaar
Alma, MI

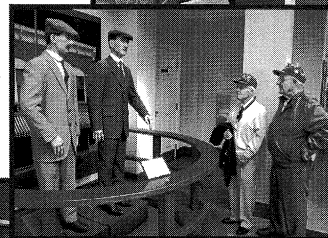
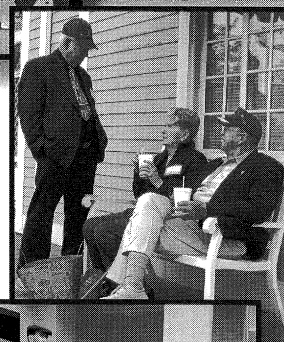
Kennard R. Wiggins, Jr.
Mary Elizabeth Wiggins
Elkton, MD

Judy Willett
Roni Lee Willett
Hamburg, NY

John Zadrozny
Belle Vernon, PA

Banquet Guests were:

Lt. Gen. John L. (Jack) Hudson
(Speaker), Mrs. Marsha Hudson,
Gen. Hudson's aid, Capt. Francis
Marino and guest Capt. Sandra
Ishmael, Gen. Hudson's staff: Major
Darien Hannert and Capt John
Kosobud, Col Richard Lach USAF
Ret and wife Kathleen Lach.
Major Richard Mader, USAF and
wife Gail, 2 children, John who led us
in the Pledge and daughter Madeline
and 4 Members of the Base Honor
Guard



Minutes of the 2008 Meeting of the 781st Bomb Squadron Association

2008 meeting of the 781st Bomb Squadron Association was held in the HopSquadron Association Hotel. Wright Patterson Air Force Base, in Dayton, Ohio on October 7, 2008. The meeting was called to order at 19:00 hours by President, Orren Lee. Chaplain Frank Wassenaar gave an opening prayer.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited. President, Orren Lee asked that all WWII Veterans stand. As they stood up they received a standing ovation. Then he asked for all the Associate Members to stand. He explained these are members who have paid their dues and are eligible to vote.



President Lee then thanked Ron Soucy and his son, Greg for making possible an outstanding reunion; Ken, Betty and Patty Kill for efforts as Treasurer; Frank Ambrose for his great work in making the Pantanella News so successful, and Carole Lee, Executive Secretary for all of the hours she has devoted to the 781st Col. Larry Benson introduced Rob Young, the Speaker who gave us a briefing on technical intelligence as opposed to operational intelligence. He is a Historian for the National Air and Space Intelligence Center.



Secretary's Report was not read, as it was published in Pantanella News. Motion to accept the report was made by Barney Russell. Seconded by Frank Ambrose. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report was given by Patty Kill. Report will be filed for audit. Copies were handed out at the meeting.

Unfinished Business:

Frank Wassenaar made a motion to bring tabled motion back to table, regarding Memorial to Strategic Air and Space Museum, Omaha, NE, Seconded by Connie Ogden. Frank Wassenaar suggested a motion to strike the \$30,000.00 and put in an unstated amount. John Fandrey made the motion and it was seconded by Candy Tannery.

A motion to accept the amended motion. James Braud made the motion, Frank Ambrose seconded. Motion carried. Discussion after the above motions: Frank Ambrose suggested spreading the money around. Patty Kill: all members enjoy Pantanella News; keep money back for Pantanella News.

Ron Soucy: If we give memorabilia to Wright Patterson our stuff would get lost. Barksdale needs funds; they have run out of funds. Funds should go to a well funded museum.

Motion to donate \$5,000.00 to SAC Museum was made by Leonard Emmel. Seconded by Elliot Sweet. Motion carried.

Frank Wassenaar made a motion to adopt the resolution stating the manner in which the Association's assets shall be disposed of as follows: Considering the eventual end of our association, that when that time comes, our final board of directors will present all remaining funds of our treasury and all of our memorabilia, to our existing scholarship fund at the SAC Museum

in Ashland, Nebraska from the 781st Bomb Squadron Association.

These contributions are in honor of our folded wings comrades and will be



used as flight training scholarships for qualified students to be awarded and supervised by the current director of the museum. Ron Soucy seconded. Motion carried.

Patty Kill was asked for the current reunion finances. "A full report will be January Pantanella News".

New Business:

Future Reunions. After suggestions and discussion Bernie Badler made a motion the 2009 Reunion will be Kansas City. Hotel in Independence. B2 Flying Wing. WWI Museum, Truman Library, Art Museum. Motion seconded by John Fandrey. Motion carried.

Report of Nominating Committee was given by Barney Russell:
Suggested Slate of Officers
President: Frank Wassenaar
Vice President: Greg Soucy
Secretary: Connie Ogden
Treasurer: Patty Kill
Board of Directors:
Frank Ambrose, Earl Leinart, Bernie Badler

Chaplain: Orren Lee
Frank Wassenaar declined the nomination.

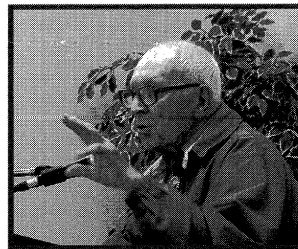
Greg Soucy then spoke up that he also declined the Vice President nomination.

After discussion, Orren Lee accepted the nomination for a second term, Bernie Badler accepted the Vice President for a second term and Frank Wassenaar accepted a second term as Chaplain. President Lee asked for a motion to accept the slate of officers as presented. Candy Tannery so moved. It was seconded and carried.

Ken Sutton made a motion to give \$500.00 to the School House Project in memory of Hank Willett. Betty Kill seconded it. Barney Russell suggested the motion be tabled. Leonard Emmel put \$100.00 for the School House Project and suggested individual members donate, not the Squadron Treasury.

Carole Lee read a letter of greeting from The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA). Meeting adjourned 21:00 hours.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Ogden



Getting To Dayton

This is 'My Log' of the dates, times and experiences encountered on my journey to Dayton. I was flying US AIR and my plane was due to take off at 11:48 on Sunday morning the 5th of October from the Albany New York Airport. I was due to arrive in Dayton at 3:28 PM that afternoon.

Frank Ambrose

Sunday-Oct. 5-

5:30 AM- Arose and finished packing my luggage

6:30 AM- Departed for Albany after first stopping at MacDonald's Drive Thru for a traveling cup of coffee to make the 2 hour journey to the airport more enjoyable.

8:30 AM- Checked in with US Air, they charged me \$15. extra for my baggage.

Going thru Security was a nightmare. I had to remove my coat and shoes placing them on the conveyer and almost before I entered the Scanning Arbor the alarms began sounding.

I was escorted into a holding booth where I was told to remove my belt and other metal objects. I tried to inform the Guard that I had had a hip replacement which caused the alarm to sound, undismayed, the Guard continued to wave his wand around my head, around my arms up into my arm pit and down the side of my body down to my the legs and feet.

Then placing the wand on the inside of my ankle he waved his wand, once again, up the inside my leg up to my crotch, on down again and up the other side.

By this time I was becoming a little concerned. Having been forced to remove my belt and asked to remain still with my feet apart and arms outstretched, I felt my pants gradually slipping off my hips. By the time he concluded waving his wand up and down the front and up and down my back my pants had slipped almost low enough to hit the water line.

9:15 AM:- Entered Food Court to order and eat Breakfast.

10:15 AM:- Finally locate my Departing Gate. It happened to be the last gate in the concourse, I was relieved after the long walk to sit and wait for boarding.

11:15 AM- The aircraft was on time and Boarding began. Unusually long walk through the Jet-Way which did not terminate at the aircraft door. Instead, the Jet-Way ended suspended 20 feet above the tarmac in open air. Off in the distance I caught a glimpse of a surprisingly small twin engine Prop Plane. A long narrow set of steps

led down the open Jet-Way down to the concrete below.

We were instructed to follow the Yellow line for approximately 50 yards to the Aircraft. The aircraft turned out to be a small twin engine 20 or 30 passenger prop jet.

11:45 AM- Aircraft door closed and locked, pilot begins taxiing to the active runway.

Approaching the active from the taxi strip the pilot begins to apply full power as he continued without stopping and turning onto the Active Runway to make a running take-off.

1:00 PM- Arrive at Philadelphia 10 minutes early. Locate new gate for a 1:45 PM departure for Dayton.

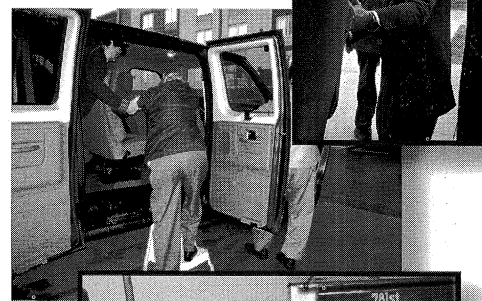
The Departure Board signifies a one hour delay. And then a two hour delay and continuing delays until a 4:30 departure was announced.

4:37 PM- Boarded the same type aircraft as on the first leg, I think they are called "Regional Jets" finally arriving at the Dayton Airport almost 3 hours late.

6:10 PM- Arrive at baggage to be greeted by two young gentlemen holding a 11x14 colored photo of a B-24 with the words "Welcome 781st BS" emblazoned over it.

Wow, what a Greeting!

A big 'THANKS' to our genial 'Limo Chauffeurs', Greg Soucy and his cousin Joe Soucy.



**SOUICY EXECUTIVE
LIMO SERVICE**



The following is a reprint of an article as it appeared Jan. 23, 2007 in 'The Valley Independent' newspaper in Pennsylvania profiling one of our Squadron Vets, John Zadrozny

By CHRIS BUCKLEY
Staff Writer
cbuckley@tribweb.com

By the time the war ended War in the Pacific, acquired 145 service points - nearly double the 85 needed to be discharged.

But the Fairhope man was given just a 30-day furlough with orders to join the war in the South Pacific.

Zadrozny was participating in a parade in Charleroi when he learned that the war was over with Japan.

Zadrozny grew up in Fairhope and graduated from Marion High School in 1941.

He was working for Corning Glass making radar bulbs when he was drafted into the Army in January 1943.

He was sent to Fort Meade, Md. for basic training, then to Jefferson Barracks, Mo., before heading to Pasadena, Calif., for ordnance and armory school.

"I was never away from home," he remembered. "Then, two weeks later, I'm in California. My parents thought I was going over (to the war zone) right away."

When Zadrozny did get his orders for overseas in August 1943, the trip across the ocean was harrowing. The troop ships were headed into the Mediterranean Sea when they received an alert- "two German submarines were waiting for them". "Our only recourse was to make a smoke screen and full steam ahead," Zadrozny said.

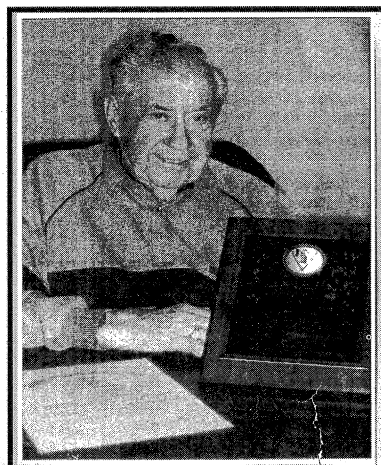
His ship escaped, but a troop ship carrying members of the 780th Squadron was sunk, he understands. "I thanked the good Lord," said Zadrozny - they could have aimed their torpedoes right at our ship, which was right next door"

Zadrozny was assigned to the 781st Bomb Squadron, 465th Bomb Group, 55th Bomb Wing in the Army Air Corps.

This Issue of the Pantanella News was made possible by the Members of the 781st Ordnance Section

Specifically, Zadrozny was a member of the ground crew in charge of loading bombs and ammo on the B-24 type bombers. We also had to maintain the 50 caliber Machine guns. Bombs had to be loaded-fused and armed for the next mission. We were always busy. Never a dull day.

The ground crew worked mainly at night, loading the planes for bombing missions. They would then eat breakfast and get some sleep before another night's work. Zadrozny recalled one day eating breakfast when first sergeant came in and said, "The bomb dump exploded. you guys have to get out there."



There were incendiaries flying all over the place," Zadrozny said. "We salvaged what we could and got our crew the hell out of there." No one in Zadrozny's squadron was killed, but other squadrons were not as fortunate.

The squadron was trained how to camouflage the planes when

on the ground to prevent German or Italian bombers from trying to take them out. That never occurred, but the threat was always there.

German propaganda radio announcer Axis Sally had a couple of messages for the 465th Bomb Group.

"When we got into North Africa and were listening to Axis Sally when she said, 'I see that the 465th made it safely. Hope you have a nice stay in Italy.' And we didn't even know we were going to Italy." Then she later said, 'I see the 465th is building an airstrip and some nice mess halls. We going to come over and have dinner with you.'" "They were playing with our minds, to add a little stress to the jobs we were trying to do."

John was never wounded, but he did sustain one service-related injury while trying to load a 500 pound bomb onto a plane, the hoist holding the bomb swung around and Zadrozny was struck in the chest by the explosive weapon. After he returned to the U.S., Zadrozny went to a doctor because the swelling in his chest persisted. Concerned that the injury could turn cancerous, the doctor did surgery. Even today, Zadrozny carries with him a reminder of the four-inch incision the surgeon made on his chest.

Zadrozny recalls meeting some local friends overseas, including Andy Belsick, of Fairhope, and Archie Mitchell and Sam Krolocik, of Arnold City.

The men of his squadron also took over two companions, even against orders. Zadrozny said the men smuggled two dogs in their duffle bags overseas to Africa and later Italy. The animals became the squadrons mascots.

Zadrozny told himself that if he survived the war, he would take three months off. But two weeks after his discharge, Zadrozny was back to work at Corning Glass. He retired in 1986. He met his wife, Helen, in Charleroi while on furlough. They married Sept. 14, 1946.

Zadrozny was in Rome with Robert Freed on a three-day pass when that city was liberated. Even today Zadrozny gets together twice a month with his friend, either in Fairhope or in Freed's Washington, Pa., home.

Zadrozny said even today he often thinks of his days in the military. "Its always in here" Zadrozny said touching his forehead "Its always in here..."

TREASURER'S REPORT

781st - 2008 Reunion Report

Revenue:

Transfer from checking (balance from last reunion)	\$245.52
Registrations & Fees	\$7,725.00
Total	\$7,970.52

Disbursements:

Bus	\$698.17
Van (rental, fuel, step stools, parking)	\$1,076.86
Snacks, Liquor, Beer, Wine	\$304.57
Pianist	\$75.00
Carillon Park Fee	\$250.00
Luncheon, Banquet	\$3,073.56
Museum Floor	\$1,600.00
Miscellaneous	\$105.00
Total	\$7,183.16
Reunion Balance (Revenue - Disbursements)	\$787.36



Reunion ScrapBook....



And Letters...

From: p.bailey1@verizon.net
Date: November 11, 2008
Subject: Pantanella News New
To: fambrose@frontiernet.net

Frank,
 It is just a comment that I would like to make regarding our reunion at Dayton Ohio.

I was honored by having my son, Doane Bailey with me at the reunion. It was his first time. He had recently retired from teaching at our local elementary school and has piloted his own plane for several years. I had flown with him prior, but was honored when he offered to fly me to the reunion.

I want to thank all those attending who welcomed him with open arms. The men from 781st had great rapport with him as they shared their flying experiences. We both had a great time. He had no idea what a great group of people you all are. I know that Dan was looking down and smiling at us all. Once again, thanks for everything.

Pearl
 (widow of Dan Bailey who was tail gunner on B24 of Bob Joyner's crew. Dale Keiser was the last, I believe, of that crew to pass on in January 2008).

Thank You

We are in receipt of a \$5,000.00 donation from the 781st Bomb Squadron Association to the 781st Bomb Group Scholarship Endowment here at the Museum.

Thank you very much to all those 781st members who have made this endowment possible. The Museum is delighted to host the scholarship fund of the 781st and we hope to have two youngsters attend camp in 2009 in the name of those from the 781st who have "Folded Their Wings."

I have included my contact information below. Thanks again ... and please extend a special thanks to all the 781st Association members for their service to our country and for their commitment to the 781st scholarship endowment here at the Museum.

Best regards,

Mac

John "Mac" McLean
 Executive Director
 Strategic Air and Space Museum
 28210 West Park Highway
 Ashland, NE 68003
 (W) 402-827-3100 Ext. 201

781st Bomb Group Scholarship Fund Report

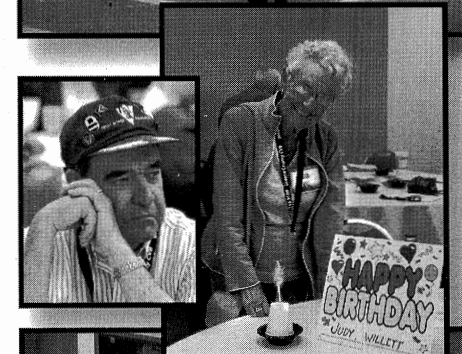
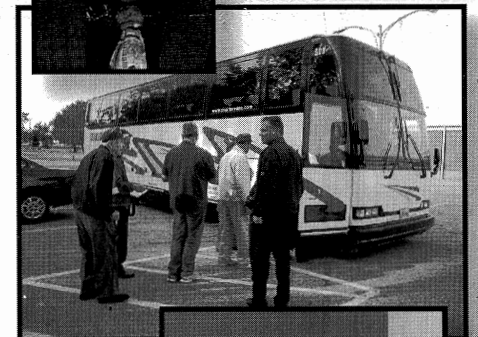
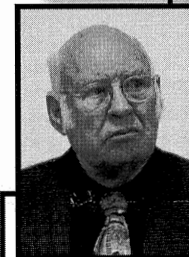
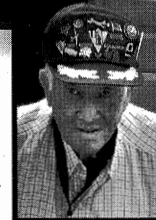
Anyone interested in contributing to the scholarship fund should make the check payable to The Strategic Air and Space Museum and on the memo line mark it for the 781st Bomb Group Scholarship Endowment.

Mail it to John "Mac" McLean at the address in his thank you message.

2009 REUNION REPORT...

The 2009 Reunion Committee has been working on plans for our next affair in Kansas City. Whiteman AFB, home of the B-2 Flying Wing is located near there and several other points of interest, the WWI Museum, Truman Library, Art Museum and others.

Plan on Kansas City for 2009!



Two surprised presentations were made at the Reunion Banquet. Approaching the podium, Ron Soucy announced that he had a 'Special Announcement' asking Carole Lee, Betty and Ken Kill to come forth.

In recognition and appreciation for their outstanding and dedicated services to the organization, Carole and Betty and Ken Kill were presented with a Laser-engraved Lucite Mantel Plaque thanking them on behalf of the 781st. for their outstanding service to the Association.

The inscription on the plaque read, "With gratitude for your outstanding professional, dedicated and voluntary efforts for the 781st Bomb Squadron Association. We the members of the 781st are honored and grateful for your contributions". To Carole Lee as Executive Secretary of the 781st Bomb Squadron Association and to Betty and Ken for their outstanding service as treasurer.

From Carole Lee...

I want to thank the 781st Bomb Squadron Association for the plaque presented to me in appreciation at the reunion.

It is beautiful and a nice remembrance of the 2008 Dayton Reunion. I have put it in a place of honor on a bookcase in our front entrance.

Thank you very much.

Carole Lee

From Betty and Ken Kill...

To the members of the 781st BS Association, Ken and I want to thank all those involved in surprising my husband and I by presenting us with a beautiful plaque.

Please accept our heartfelt thanks by the honor given us, we will cherish the plaque forever.

Betty and Ken Kill

AND MORE LETTERS...

Original Message-----

From: Frank Ambrose <fambrose@frontiernet.net>
Sent: Oct 17, 2008
To: Ronald Horne <rmjdo@earthlink.net>
Subject: 781st Reunion

Ron-
We missed you and Al at the reunion-
It was Great!
Frank

Reply.....

From: rmjdo@earthlink.net
Date: October 18, 2008
To: fambrose@frontiernet.net
Subject: Re: 781st Reunion

Al LaBlanc & I rally missed all of you as well. He is doing better but has many things to take care of before he can be cleared to travel. Al & I went to a High School football game last night the 17th and he had a ball. I will tell him about your email and I will begin to pimp him about next year.

SF
Ron



From: milheritage@aol.com
Subject: 781st Bomb Squadron Association Reunion
Date: October 12, 2008
To: frank@frankambrose.com

Dear Frank,

I just wanted to drop a line and tell you how much Liz and I enjoyed the 781st Bomb Squadron Association reunion in Dayton.

We had a marvelous time, and we were very gratified by the warm greetings, fellowship, and hospitality we enjoyed in your company. We really enjoyed meeting my father's comrades and their families.

Thank you so much for a wonderful and memorable event. I know a lot of work, and a lot of love went into making it such a success.

Please pass along our gratitude and our congratulations to all who contributed.

Ken and Liz Wiggins

Mr. Russell T. Maynard
4428 Mine Road
Fredricksburg, VA 22408
Aug. 07, 2008

Mr. Frank Ambrose, Editor: Pantanella News

Dear Frank:

Sending E-mails are not as easy for me as writing.

I'm ever amazed at your continued publication of the Newsletter and thank you and commend you for it.

Every issue is most interesting! I've previously submitted and you have published "Bio" articles hopefully that were interesting for your readership. So, the comments below may be considered supplementary.

Most of the 781st. Sqdn. will remember that I joined the Sqdn. in May 1944 as Co-Pilot on the Jack Frazier Crew. We were one of the first Replacement Crews to join the Squadron.

I probably flew with more different crew members and Pilots than any other Sqdn.

Pilot! This was due to the Group Hqtrs. action to designate Capt. Frazier as a 'Lead Pilot' at about the 20 Sortie Stage.

So, therefore, he flew with the Colonel/Attack Unit Crews.

Frazier had great Leadership Skills. Squadron Operations needed a Veteran Combat Pilot to assign as "Crew Commander/ Combat Instructor" to fly

missions with new Replacement Crews on their first sorties on the recommendation of Capt. Frazier, Major Wray and Capt. Willett, all of whom I had flown with as their Co-Pilot.

I was flight checked by Capt. Blankinship and certified as a "Crew Commander".

So, not only did I fly as Co-Pilot for many of the Sqdn. Original crews, I also flew as "Combat Instructor" Pilot with most of the Replacement Pilot/Crews until Feb 1945.

I might insert here that Capt Willett was the most competent "Combat Pilot" with whom I flew with on a mission.

Best Wishes, Frank

Russ Maenad

See P.S. on reverse side

P.S.

We regret we will not get to go to the Dayton Reunion. We do not travel more than an hour away from home anymore. Please give everyone our best wishes!

R.T.M.

8/11/08

Ray U. Tyler
1500 Parkside Ave Oaks 923
Morton, Ill 61550

Dear Frank:

I'm in a Sr. Home and we just moved into a new home so I have a new address.

Ray U. Tyler
1500 Parkside Ave Oaks 923
Morton, Ill 61550

I see some of your photos every once & a while and enjoy them. Photos have become my hobby ever since I joined the Air Force at Kelly Field. I bought a nice camera in the P.X. I sent a bunch of pics to Harry Carl for our history book. I also helped locate several of the 781st men.

I was a B-24 Navigator but my hearing did me in so I ended up being a Cryptographic Security Officer- first in the 781st and then the 465th.

I've been to 3 reunions- 2 in Ohio and once at Omaha.

Sorry to learn of Jim's and Harry's demise. I considered them among my best friends.

My writing hand is getting tired so-----
Friend Ray Tyler

P.S.

I'm enclosing 2 fives to help with postage.



From: rlf1@peoplepc.com
Subject: Re: Pantanella News
Date: November 10, 2008
To: fambrose@frontiernet.net

Dear Mr. Ambrose,

This is Sharon, Bob Freed's daughter. My father has become very forgetful, but remembers your last reunion in October and many of the others with several pictures in the game room.

He probably will not be able to answer on line on the computer. Whatever you print in your newsletter, I know he would be so happy to receive the info.

I am here in the Pittsburg area helping to get things organized for my mom and dad. A copy of your newsletter would be so appreciated by them both. Please send to Box 246, Meadowlands, Pa. 15347. I live in Hawaii and will say "Aloha",
Sharon Freed Akana.

Praise the Lord and Pass The Ammunition

Before the 465th and the other groups in the 15th could deliver the 500 pounders and assorted other means of destruction and devastation to the Oil Refineries of Germany, a vast array of Liberty Ships, laden with this awesome cargo, were forced to make their way across the perilous North Atlantic.

This is an account of such a journey. It was submitted by a former US Navy Gunner attached to a Liberty Ship transporting Bombs and Ammunition to the 15th AF in Italy during WWII, some of which the 465th 'proudly' delivered to the Oil Fields of Germany

My name is Rawland G. Brown, US Navy Armed Guard Gunner #601-75-23.

I was born a twin on November 14, 1926. My brother's name was Rowland C. Brown and he only lived a very short time. Together we only weighted 2 1/2 lbs, I weighted 14 oz. My mother could put her wedding ring up to my elbow and I was the size of a qt. milk bottle, but my mother was strong and helped me survive.

I joined the Navy when I was 17 years old and went to boot camp in Samson, NY for 6 weeks and then on to gunners school in Sheldon, VA. I was then assigned to a gun crew on the Liberty Ship SS Archbishop Lany and we set sail for Bari, Italy.

We were loaded with 500 lbs. bombs and fuel, our commander was Lt. W.S. Reed Jr., one of the best officers you could ask for. He looked after his men and we looked after him. We sailed out of Norfolk, VA, the weather was bad but we got through it.

When we were in the Mediterranean enemy air craft was over head but they could not find us so we went on, the last six or 7 days we had no escorts at all. We had to stop in Brindisi over night because we could not make it to Bari that night.

There was an air raid at the air field base but they didn't find us. The next morning we went to Bari, we picked up a harbor pilot to bring us in because two days before the Germans in an air raid had sunk 17 ships in the harbor and they had to guide us through it. It took us a few days to unload, then we headed home, when we got home we had a little shore leave.

Then we loaded up again this time we were going to Naples and Leghorn, Italy.

The Atlantic was bad and then, October 14, 1944, we came under submarine attack some where off the coast

of France and about a day and a half from the Rock of Gibraltar. Our Commanding Officer was Ensign Glenn T. Grossan, he was a heavy man, he had just came out of Officer Candidate School.

On October 14, 1944 I was on watch from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. I spotted something dark at about 3 points off of star board. They laughed at me and said it was a whale, but on the other side was a German submarine, the convoy escort ship picked this one up.

I knew what was going to happen after sun down, the German submarines liked to hit a tanker this way, they didn't want to sink it they just want to put it on fire.

Sure as hell the tanker on the port side of the convoy was on fire, and we were called to battle, on my way up to the gun I saw a torpedo going through the water towards a ship that was about 3 points portside of ours.

I remember going up the gun deck ladder and something hitting my leg but I didn't think much of it at the time, we were to busy. When we got the all clear I went down to our quarters and one of my buddies said to me "Brownie, what is wrong with your leg?" my pants had blood on them and a hole in them. When I took them off there was a hole in my leg and it was bleeding so we got the first aid kit and cleaned it up, there was not a doctor on the ship.

The next morning I took my pants up to the stern to wash them in the salt water that was the best washing machine we had. Then I turned around and looked up to our gun and I saw a piece of metal on the deck, it was about the size of a golf ball. I looked at it, it was sharp, and I knew where it came from, it was from the ship next to us that was on fire. I didn't want any of the men to report it, you see if anyone saw anything on the deck and the captain saw it and no one said

anything they would all get extra duty so I threw it over the side, but at least I knew what hit my leg.

That night my commanding officer didn't come to see how my leg was and he didn't check on me the whole trip. While we were there I thought they would have a Navy doctor check

my leg but they did not. We took 750 troops plus 31 officers to Leghorn, Italy in full battle station because the town was just taken over and you could here the sound of gun fire. Then we came back down and picked up what ever they wanted us to take back to the US.

Our gun crew was 35 men with Navy Radio men our ship had a Navy Radio on it. Some of the men were, Zimisky, Moore, Anderson, Swanson and many more.

We didn't get back until December of 1944 to Portsmouth, VA.

No, I didn't get the purple heart but I will have carried the scar for 64 years, if I make it to November 14, 2008.

If you asked me if I would do it all over again, I would say yes.

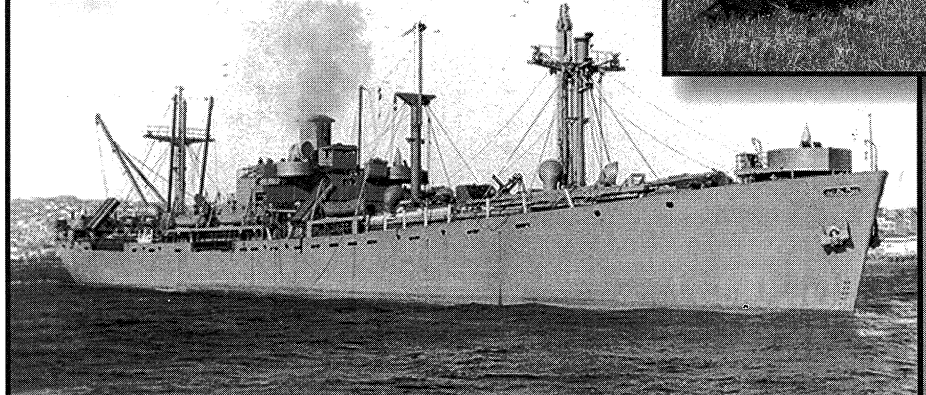
They called us "Shark Bait" we had the best gun crew out there, we worked together. I do not think anyone is still alive today, but if there is please call me at 518-725-8504, Rawland "Brownie" Brown. US Navy Gunner #601-75-23.

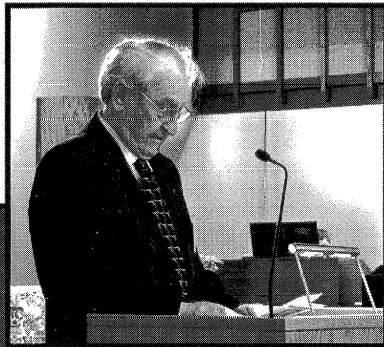
I was in the Portsmouth Navy Hospital for 2 months, January and February 1945. They did all they could for me and then sent me home...

Rawland G. Brown



WWII ERA LIBERTY SHIP





Memorial Service of Remembrance

2008

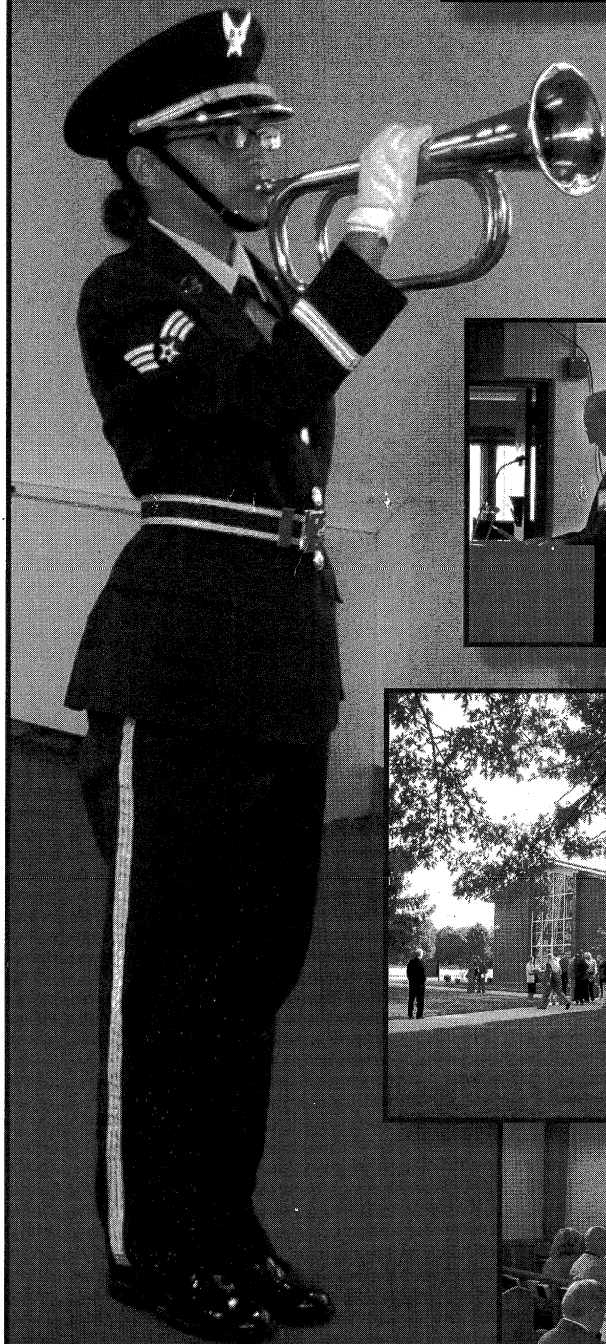
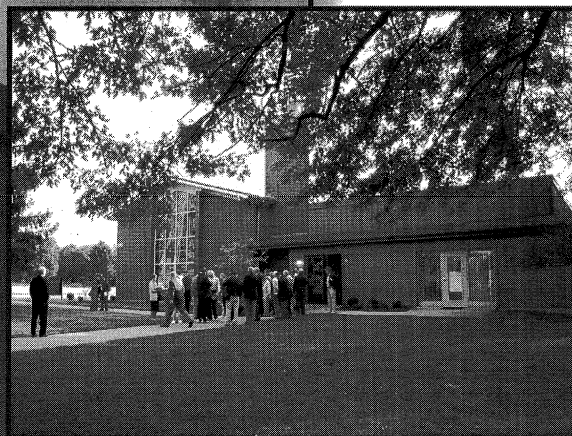
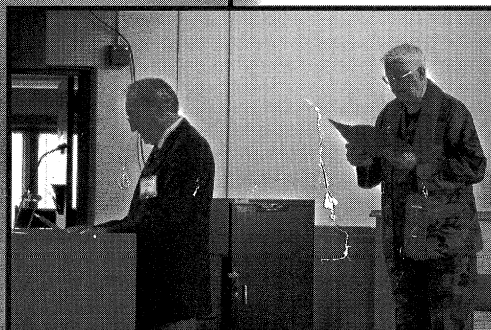
The 781st Squadron's 2008 annual "Memorial Service of Remembrance" was held in Chapel 2 on Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio.

The highly emotional ceremony commenced with the "Posting of the Colors" by the WPAFB Color Guard.

The Invocation was given by Base Chaplain, John Strode.

A prayer for 'Fallen Comrades' and a list of those members that have joined the 'Folded Wings' since our last reunion was read by our Association Chaplain Frank Wassenaar.

The Ceremony concluded with a heart wrenching rendition of "Taps" and the Retiring of the Colors by the Base Honor Guard.



FOLDED WINGS

Mar (Jerry) Jancarik:

Tail Gunner: MacFarlane Crew

To: Frank Ambrose

This is to inform you that my husband passed away on September 19th 2008 at the age of 87.

He served in WWII, 15th Air Force, 465th Bomb Group as a B-24 tail gunner in Italy.

His Pilot was John MacFarlane.

I know of only two members still living.

They are Hoyt Adsit and Robert George.

On June 6th 1944 he was shot down while bombing the Polesti Oil Fields. He was a PW in Romania.

He will be greatly missed by his family.

Sincerely,

Chrtered Jancarik

Richard Jack Storm

Navigator: NB Smith Crew

Richard "Dick" Jack Storm passed away Oct. 7, 2008, at Town Center Village in Portland. He was 84.

Dick graduated from Jefferson High School.



He attended the University of Portland, and his college education was interrupted by his military service in the Air Force. He served as a lieutenant and navigator in the 781st Bomber Squadron in the

Italian theatre of operations during WW II.

He is survived by his wife, Patricia Ann; his son, Richard Storm of New York, N.Y.; daughter, Nancy Anderson of Oregon City; grandson, Sean Anderson of Oregon City; brother, Jack Storm of Milwaukee.

Howard Morris Brown:

783rd. Navigator

From: Martin_R_Blustine@raytheon.com

Subject: Passing of Howard M. Brown

Date: October 16, 2008

To: Bobbleier@aol.com,
frank@frankambrose.com,
dottaway@stny.rr.com,
poppop783@sbcglobal.net

It is with regret that I inform you of the passing of **Howard Morris Brown** on September 29, 2008 in Framingham, Massachusetts.

He was 90 years of age.

You will see that Hal belonged to one of the original 17 crews of the 783rd stationed at Pantanella and served as navigator with "Perry and the Pirates."

Very respectfully,

Martin R. Blustine

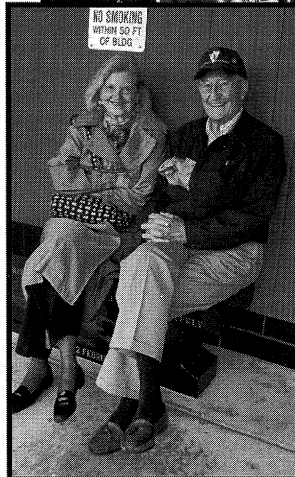
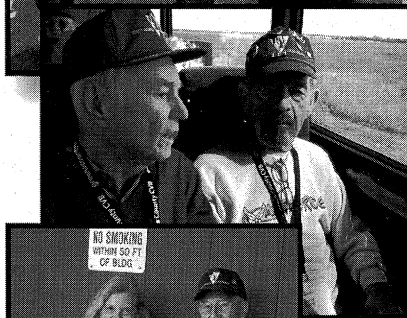
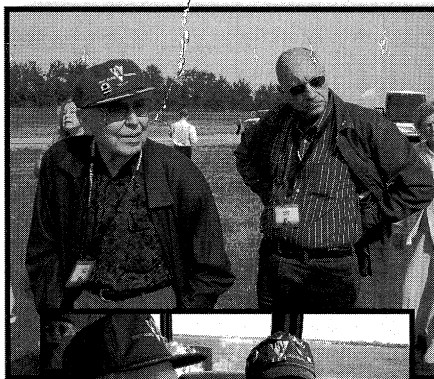
Nephew

Our thoughts and prayers are with all our fallen comrades who have found everlasting peace. You have served your country well. We will remember you forever

Memorial...

A Memorial Contribution to the 781st BS Association was received from Bernie Badler in Memory of his brother **Lester Badler**.

Lester Badler died September 12, 2008. Lester was a B-24 Navigator who flew the "HUMP" from India to China in WWII.



President's Corner

781st Friends –

We had a good reunion in Dayton. It was heartening to have such a good turn out. We have heard from some how they enjoyed the reunion. We also heard that the two that had to cancel because of illness are doing better.

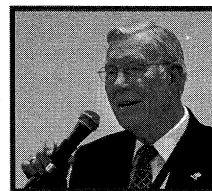
George Hausold called a few days later and said he was home and feeling better. He was on his way to the reunion and got sick at his daughter's house and had to be hospitalized.

Albert LeBlanc's son-in-law, Ronald Horne, emailed that Al is doing better. They had been looking forward to Ohio but now are planning for next year.

Now our thoughts turn to next year. Carole has toured a hotel in Independence, Mo. We are waiting for a proposal from them. There is a lot to do in the area. We will schedule a tour of Whiteman AFB after the first of the year and go from there. There will be more information on the 2009 Reunion in the next Pantanella News.

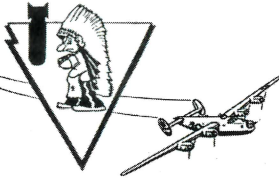
I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a "Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and a Wonderful 2009 Year!"

Orren Lee



781st BOMB SQUADRON / 465th BOMB GROUP / 15th AIR FORCE
PANTANELLA NEWS January 2009

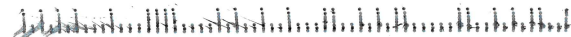
781st "PANTANELLA NEWS"
c/o Frank Ambrose, Editor
44 East Blvd.
Gloversville, NY 12078



Best Wishes
for a
**Happy and Prosperous
NEW YEAR**

Cand O LEE
2312 BRADMAN DR
SIOUX FALLS, SD
57105

5710584126 C048



On tour in
Downtown Dayton,
781st B-24 Fliers
pose beneath a full
size Bronze Sculpture
depicting the Wright
Brothers flying the
'1905 Wright Flyer III'
aircraft for the first
time successfully.

