



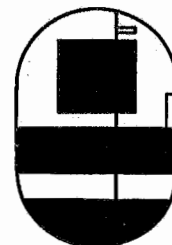
781st BOMB SQD.

PANTANELLA NEWS

781st BOMB SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

NUMBER 9

JULY 1987



465th BOMB GRP

FINAL NOTICE FOR REUNION '87 TO BE HELD IN DAYTON, OHIO SEPTEMBER 17 - 20, 1987

REUNION INFORMATION - Details on the reunion are in a later section of the Newsletter. Attendance will exceed Colorado Springs - over 200 men are expect in addition to their wives and guests. Early registration helps in our planning, so if you plan to go **MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW**. If you have to cancel you will get full refund if cancelled by the date of your reservation.

TO GO OR NOT TO GO - We know some have questions because of health or finances. If these two issues are not a problem and you still have some questions we suggest you call someone that went to last year's reunion. Over 60% are registered for this one - that will give you an idea about their feelings. If you can't make it for other reasons there is always next year at San Antonio, then every two years after that.

A letter after the reunion from **Loren W. Foote** was one of many that expressed their thoughts of the reunion - in part, "I want to write to you about our great 781st Bomb Squadron reunion. What a delightful time to meet again those that we served with at Dalhart, Texas, McCook, Nebraska and Pantanella Airbase in Italy, and also now to meet their wives. My wife remarked, a number of times, how nice it was to see the camaraderie and friendship after all these years. How choice a commodity that is - that has lasted for so many years since serving in Italy. This only adds to the feeling that everyone has...that the 781st was truly a #1 unit. On behalf of my wife Margaret and myself, we extend our thanks for a very memorable and enjoyable time. We look forward and trust we will be able to attend the next one and those in the years ahead and enjoy the comradeship that has lasted over all these years."

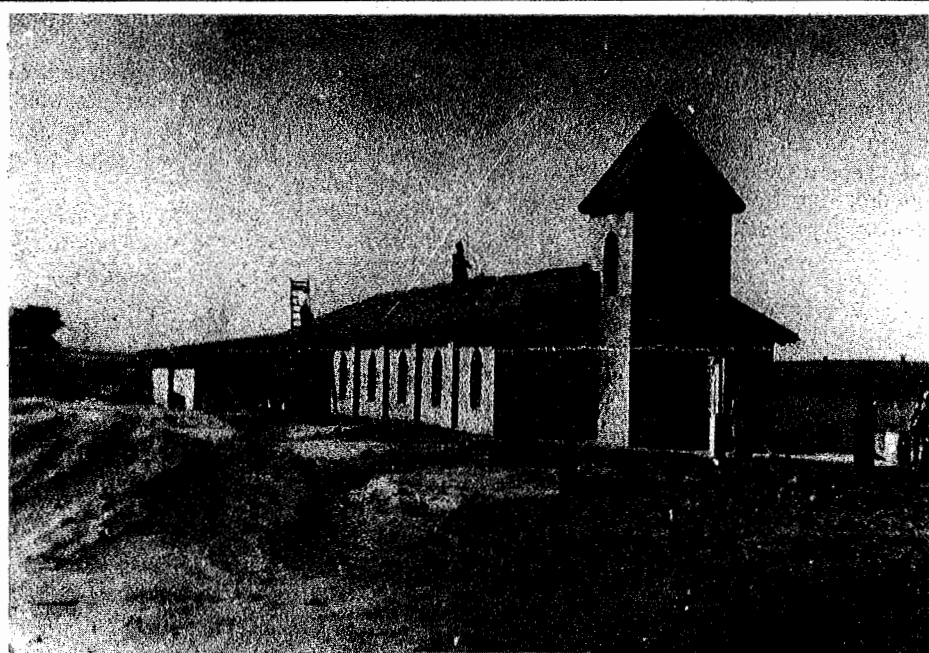
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR - I received a letter from **Frederick Maute** in which he noted that he was surprised to receive two Newsletters. He was listed twice! He also noted he was BTO. We all know that meant a "Bit Time Operator." What I didn't know was his MOS 867 was BTO RADAR MECHANIC - BTO meaning Bombing Thru Overcast.

LES WHEELER sent a note and a copy of "A Trip Back To Italy After 38 Years" by Morgan Kelly. I believe I have seen this in another Squadron Newsletter. We will publish it at a later date.

HOMER MOELLER (Pitts Co-pilot) recently got together with Dean Otto. They have lived 15 miles apart for 25 years and it's

the first time they have seen each other since Dean went down on 16 December 1944 when Blakita was taking the crew on their first mission to Brux. Homer, being the co-pilot, did not fly that day. He continued to fly with other crews in the squadron. I recall one trip over Vienna with Homer when we were flying Fox One and saw a couple planes go down in Able and Baker Box.

THE EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE was recalled by O. J. Cowart, Jr., who attended. He recalls it being hard to hear the service due to the bombers warming up and taking off for the mission that day.



The Chapel - Putting the finishing touches on the chapel. Wording from the plaque in front of the chapel will be on our plaque that will be dedicated to the men Killed in Action during the squadrons year in combat from Pantanella. I understand the chapel was one of the few buildings to remain and the plaque is still there.

PRESIDENT
JAMES C. ALTHOFF
2 MT VERNON LANE
ATHERTON, CA 94025
(415) 325-8356

1st VICE PRESIDENT
JAMES MARCEL SNYDER
1226 ROYAL OAK DRIVE
WINTER SPRINGS, FL 32708
(305) 365-7938

2nd VICE PRESIDENT
WALTER M. LONGACRE
2046 EAST 8TH STREET
FREMONT, NE 68025
(402) 721-3557

TREASURER
RUSSELL T. MAYNARD
721 RUTHERFORD DRIVE
FREDERICKSBURG, VA 22401
(703) 786-8951

SECRETARY
BEN DONAHUE
385 OAK STREET
MT. VIEW, CA 94041
(415) 967-1855

HISTORIAN
HARRY S. CARL, JR.
550 CREEK ROAD
CHADDS FORD, PA 19317
(215) 388-2562

DOC RAPAPORT informs me that he has moved - just one-half mile away, but he said it could have been 1000 miles since it was just as much work. When he gets settled we'll hear more from him and publish his story.

HOW DID WE EVER WIN THE WAR ???

BY WILLIAM "BUCK" WEAVER

GENE WEISS -----writes that Vern Burda is planing a trip to Europe to retrace their steps taken while POWs. They'll wind up in Munich for the Oktober Fest! Sounds like a great trip.

NICHOLAS SCHAPS wrote he got a bad break. His group of 12 golfing buddies are making their annual trip to somewhere again this year and it's Scotland September 15 to 26. He's planning on San Antonio in '88. That should be a great trip also. Good time of the year to golf in Scotland.

JERRY COTTLE, from Engineering, does work at the Air Force Museum in Dayton and reports he's shinning up the B-24 for his buddies in the 781st. Some of the information on Wright-Patterson is coming from Jerry. We'll look forward to seeing him at the reunion.

JUDY WILLETT reports she called the hotel and made reservations. She was told she was the first one. Sorry Judy, you were too early! They must not have been set up since they lost your reservation! And Hanks little (80 lbs) Black Lab liked the 781st cap so much he chewed it up. Another is on order.

RUSS MAYNARD reports the last he saw **FIVE GRAND** was in Kingman, Arizona waiting to be scrapped. Somewhere recently I read about the crew from another squadron that brought it back to the US. A report on that when I find it.

"HOW DID WE EVER WIN THE WAR" - By William "Buck" Weaver, Asst. Intelligence Officer. The following letter from Buck. "I received your letter last week and a copy of the Pantanella News. Needless to say, I was excited about the reunion and only wish I had known about it.

I left the 781st about 1 January 1945 and spent 3 weeks in Naples before I got on the SS United States for a ride back to the States. This was a deluxe passenger liner and the treatment was superb. Quite a difference since leaving the environs of Pantanella and the war.

The reason for my leaving was the death of my step-father in Sallisaw, Oklahoma, leaving my mother alone with both of her sons serving overseas in the service. She panicked and asked, through the Red Cross, for a 30 day emergency leave for me to come home to assist in her adjustment. Herein lies the tale which only could happen in the service. You won't believe the following, but I am going to detail it for your amusement.

After taking care of my mothers affairs and completing my 30 day leave, I was directed to report to Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis where a troop train was being assembled. The train was to take a large number of troops to Camp Patrick Henry Virginia, to board a troop ship and subsequently my return to the 781st in Italy.

I reported to Jefferson Barracks as directed, but was told to take 15 more days

leave as the troop shipment was not ready. So, I went home to Mt. Vernon, Illinois, 60 miles away. I enjoyed another 15 days leave on Uncle Sam reporting again at the end as directed, only to be told again to take another 15 days for the same reason - troop shipment delayed. So back home again for more vacation, and at the end of this period I decided to telephone JB, and lo and behold, I was given 15 days more.

Finally, in mid-April 1945, I arrived at the POE in Virginia, but the ship still was not ready to board and probably not until May 2; so I had to goof off two more weeks around Norfolk- Virginia Beach area - all paid for by Uncle Sam! Tough war huh! I'm feeling guilty about my good fortune by now and hate it that you boys are fighting my battle. But wait -- there is more!

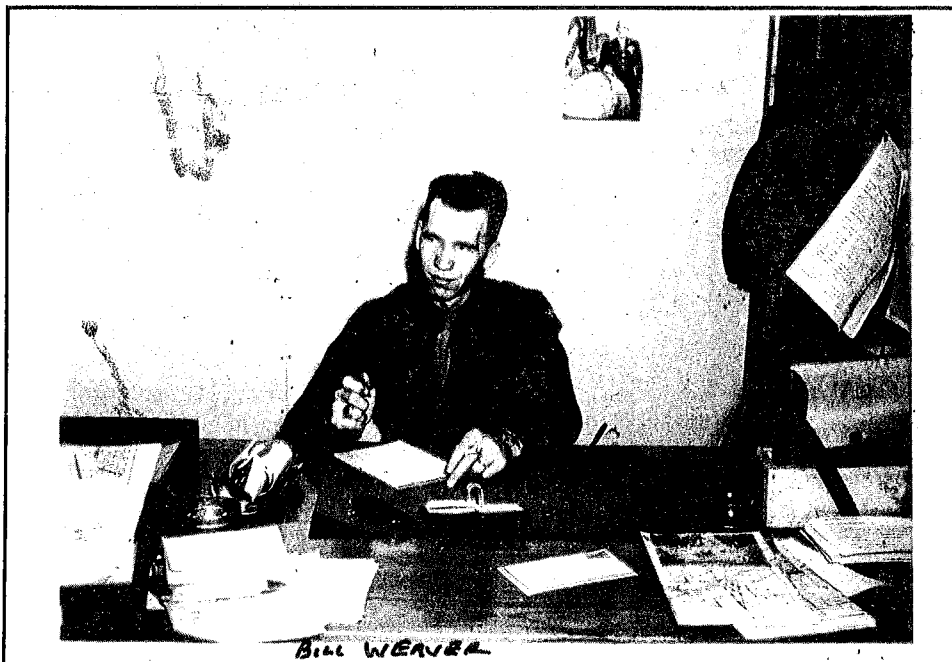
Early in the morning on May 3rd, we were roused from bed and told to make formation at 8 AM for roll call and transport to our ship in port and be ready to sail. Roll call began and first off my name was called to fall-out and report to Base Headquarters for further instructions. So, I did post haste, only to be told that a telegram had been received directing that I be removed from the overseas shipment and await further instructions. Headquarters said to stay on base, check-in daily, but enjoy myself until further word arrives.

Finally, on 5 May 1945, orders came thru sending me to Atlantic City for the three R's - Rest, Recuperation, and Reassignment - can you believe it? I could not believe my good fortune, but called my wife to come and enjoy the famous boardwalk and the luxurious hotel furnished us for another two weeks of FUN! My cup runneth over.

Finally, my reassignment is made and I am to report to Orlando, Florida, for an Intelligence School with accent on the Pacific warfare. So, now I know I was to be retrained and sent to the Pacific Theatre of Operations, rather than join the 781st.

I decided to buy a black market Ford and drive to Orlando to my new assignment and boy, was that a mistake. About every 100 miles I would blow a black market tire and this thing used a quart of oil every 75 miles of the way.

After completing my school there I full expected to be headed West and be shipped to the Pacific Theatre, but that was not to be. My new assignment read permanent base assignment to Meridian Mississippi Air Base as Air Intelligence



BEESON (cont'd)

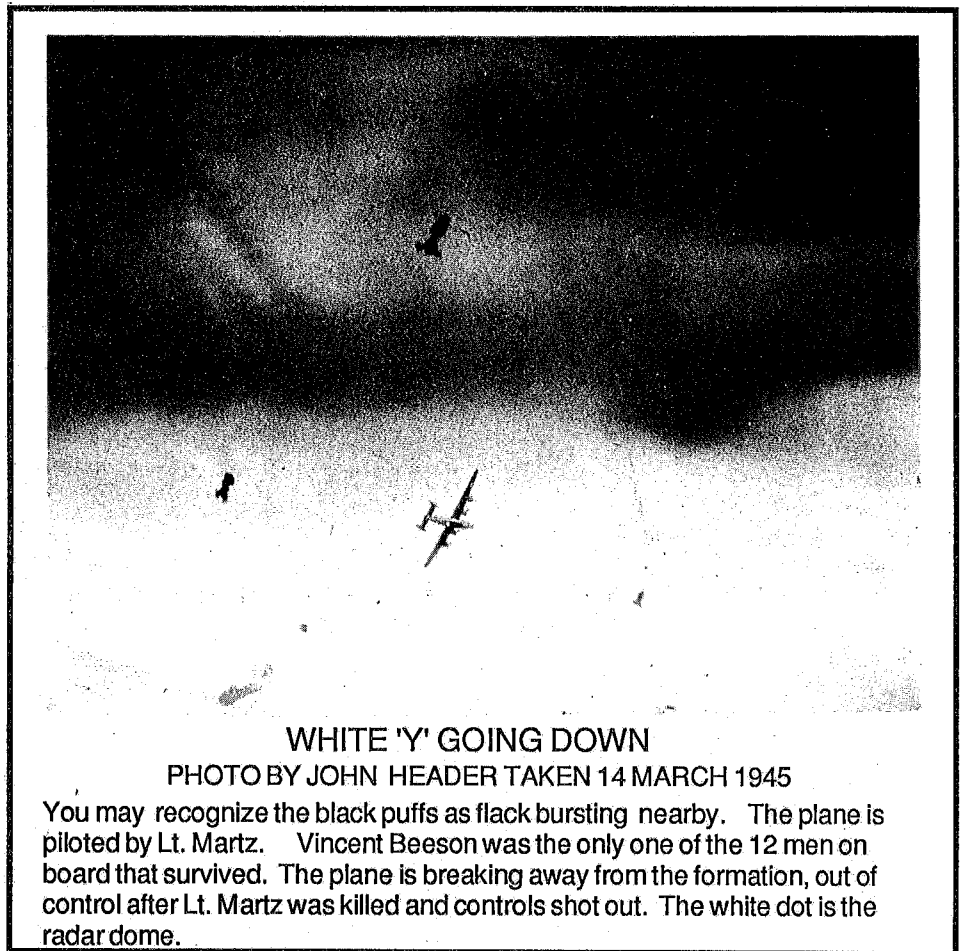
which is written in the letter to the Romans 8:32."

A letter this week from Glen Haywood, Copilot on Ellison crew, writes: "I read with great interest Vincent Beeson's account of his experience at Nova Zamky. We were on that mission, and I think I counted four chutes (Lowell Myers might be able to confirm) which I recall as being at ample altitude as they would have had to have bloomed to be seen. You may recall that Martz was still a terrible shade of yellow, being just back from a bout with hepatitis. I often wished he had been held a little longer, but I guess that would have upset the giant lottery we were a part of. I had forgotten that Hershey was on that flight, although I remember him as from Purdue, and a prime mover in the electrification of our camp. I still recall riding out to the planes that morning, and the strange look one of them gave me when I said we would see them that evening. He was very pale, which made his freckles stand out, but I can't remember his name, although it might have been a replacement for Bonnie Rowe."

Glen met someone after the war that he believes was a navigator and had gotten out of one of our planes that went down. He met him in Houston and believed he worked for Best Fertilizer company from California. He was 6 foot 2, over 200 pounds and believes he played football at Stanford and played in the Rose Bowl against Nebraska. He ended up a POW. Can anyone come up with the name of this man??

A letter from Milt Levinson, "George Smith was a Mormon from Salt Lake City and I wrote to him to establish an address. To date I do not know if he went down with Martz' crew or not. The strange story about George is that on two previous occasions he was unable to make a mission he was scheduled for, and both times the crews went down. Ed Dworetzky, on Martz crew that day, was a replacement gunner, like myself, who came over in August 1944 from the 8th Air Force when it was decided to fly a 9 man crew and the navigator flew the nose. Ed married an English girl hours before he shipped out and did not even have a honeymoon. Later, after the war, I was in Chicago and called his parents to verify that he went down with the ship. When I saw that picture in the Newsletter, it was an eerie feeling when I saw both of those Men!!"

an observation on the Lt. Martz plane and crew - the squadron narrative indicates three chutes were seen. These reports were not always accurate, so there could have been four, especially since four were



WHITE 'Y' GOING DOWN

PHOTO BY JOHN HEADER TAKEN 14 MARCH 1945

You may recognize the black puffs as flak bursting nearby. The plane is piloted by Lt. Martz. Vincent Beeson was the only one of the 12 men on board that survived. The plane is breaking away from the formation, out of control after Lt. Martz was killed and controls shot out. The white dot is the radar dome.

found outside the plane and not burned. What happened frequently, and was almost the fate of Vincent Beeson, was the killing of our airmen by civilians, then stripping them of all clothing. Grim facts that we knew little about then, thank God, but well documented now.

PLEASE look over the enclosed roster very carefully. Many are listed without crew or section. If you know where they were assigned or anything at all about an address, please let us know. Some names are not spelled correctly - we'd like to know that also. Many of the names were taken from hand written lists, so we've had problems with spelling. We will not give up until all are accounted for!

CAPS - They will be available at the reunion for \$9. If you are not attending the reunion and want a cap, send \$10 (includes mailing) To Russ Maynard, Treasurer. They will be mailed AFTER the reunion. These are beautiful caps, the insignia is all stitched, leather adjustable band - one you will be proud to wear.

MEMBERSHIP - 915 of the 1175 men have been located (340 are in Folded Wings). There was a lot of cooperation - just like the days at Pantanella. Walt Longacre, chief sleuth, reports a slow down on replies. Please give Walt a hand if he asks for help in your area.

THE ROSTER enclosed is a list of men not yet located. From the last Newsletter you have those already located, so if you are looking for a name and it's not on either list it is most likely on the Folded Wings roster. Later this year we'll have a complete roster when we have found everyone!!

FOLDED WINGS - Jacqueline Ries Crawford informed us that John Ries, Sr. passed away 25 November 1968. A returned Newsletter noted that Harvey Morris passed away February 1986. Henry Gick wrote that he tried to contact Frank Cizek and was informed by his wife that he passed away January 1987. Frank was in the medic section. H. Frank Quagan received information that Edward Fairbrother, a navigator, passed away December 1985. I have just learned that Richard Heaney passed away last August. He was the well liked bombardier on Mullan's crew. And Marcel Snyder informs me that Howard Sopenoff, Macrarlane's bombardier, passed away 10 January 1987. Our condolences to the families of these fine men.

RADAR MAINTENANCE SECTION



Most of the men in the Radar Maintenance Section are shown in the above photo. Those identified are L to R, Front row (5 men), #3 John Scalones, #5 Clifford Derr, Second row (11 men), #1 John P. McCleary, #5 Ed Auerbach, #9 James Marcel Snyder. Third row (9 men), #1 George Huddleston, Jr., #2 Ed Hansen, #3 John Baum, #4 John W. Mayhew, #5 Dexter Harris, #6 Irving I. Gamoff, #7 James E. Stahl, #8 Arthur Lehmann. Rear - (9 men) #1 James E. Frank, #2 Sammie Griffin, #3 William Grooms, #6 Sam O. LaRue, Jr., #7 David E. Pennington, #8 Bill Sims. If you know any of the other men, please let us know.

RADAR MAINTENANCE SECTION -

One of the primary objectives of a heavy bomb squadron is, by flying deep into the enemy's heartland, to destroy his capability to wage war. This includes depriving him of fuel to operate his war machines, factories to build equipment, and rail and road systems to transport men and materiel.

Even today, the movies, the documentaries, and the media all glamorize the flight crews, and perhaps this is right, because these men put their lives on the line every time they flew. Had it not been for the support of the ground crews, however, the planes may never have reached a target or dropped a bomb.

When talking of ground crews, one immediately thinks of the aircraft mechanics and the ordnance experts who, in the 781st Bomb Squadron, did an outstanding job of "keeping 'em flying!" Today, let's talk briefly of one of the several sections which received little

publicity--the men of the Radar Maintenance Section.

The 781st Bomb Squadron stood out in our group and, as a result, was honored to have the radar personnel, both operators and maintenance technicians, assigned to it. From the beginning, their task was difficult at best. Test equipment was scarce; spare parts were a luxury; and time to do the job was a joke. Like other sections, the 8-hour day, 40-hour week was next to illegal or immoral in the Radar Maintenance section. Operators would return from missions and report that the equipment was "out." It would be test-checked in the aircraft, taken to the radar "shack" and bench-checked, and returned to the aircraft for another check. Frequently, all the tests indicated that the equipment was operational. Now what do you do? The finger pointing solved nothing! Finally John P. McCleary, the Radar Maintenance Officer, arranged to have some of his men put on flying status

so that they could check the equipment at altitude. You guessed it! Electronic equipment not in pressurized, heated cabins did not always perform the same as it did at sea level. Now, by closer cooperation between the operators and the maintenance personnel, the number of outages was significantly reduced.

Another problem effected the morale of the BTO (Bombing Through Overcast) Maintenance Section. The story spread rather rapidly that extended exposure to radar caused one to become sterile. This would apply to the crews flying radar aircraft as well as the ground maintenance personnel. Fortunately, the question was resolved in a very practical manner.

The Radar Maintenance Section had a little dog (Heintz-57 variety) as mascot. Her name was Lady, and she was constantly in and around the radar shack. One day it was discovered that she was going to be a mother. When she delivered six normal, healthy pups, the specter of

RADAR - CONT'D

sterility vanished. Of course, Lady was given a more appropriate name.

We all remember using radar for bombing through the clouds, and the Germans using radar to aim their '88's at us. They were equally as effective as we were. One countermeasure, which we used early in the European campaign, was chaff which, you will remember, was small metallic strips cut to reflect the specific frequencies and, therefore, to confuse the enemy antiaircraft gunners. Some said, however, that it acted as an arrow pointing to the plane dropping chaff.

Then we developed electronic radar countermeasures equipment to jam the German radar. In simple terms, the operator would scan the radar frequency range until he picked up a signal. He would send out a countersignal; which jammed the ground radar. Many games were played between the German ground crews and our airborne countermeasures operators, but essentially the operation was as indicated.

At first, the radar countermeasures personnel from the Radar Section flew the equipment in combat. After three or four missions, however, it was decided that the radio operators should be trained in the operation of the equipment and that the countermeasures men should remain at Pantanella. Regardless, the record shows that, once the electronics countermeasures equipment was operational, the group did not lose one aircraft to antiaircraft fire.

Hopefully, there will be a big turnout of the Radar Section at our reunion in Dayton and that we can all join in a Dutch-treat dinner Friday, 18 September 1987. I'm sure the wives will enjoy hearing of their husbands' adventures. Be sure to contact Jim (Marcel) Snyder so that he can obtain a reservation for the group.

AIR FORCES ESCAPE AND EVASION SOCIETY - Known as AFEES, it is an association of those who bailed out and escaped or evaded the enemy. The President is Ralph K. Patton, 720 Valley View Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15243. Contact him for further information.

<<<< THE NUMBERS >>>>

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE 15th AIR FORCE LOST 3400 PLANES IN WWII ? OF THOSE, 3000 WERE BOMBERS!

PANTANELLA

Here's one - where did the name Pantanella come from? At the reunion John Wilson had some information and has since done some research. We're awaiting this information for the full story.

While talking to Fred Maute recently he recalled an event while he was still at Pantanella and most of the men had left. He overheard a conversation with the Commanding Officer (Or some Officer in Charge) and an Italian Princess. He still remembers her long flowing gown and telling the Officer which buildings to tear down and which to save. Fred was in Radar Maintenance and remained briefly due to the fact that the radar men were separated from us and scheduled to go directly to Japan. At the reunion Jim Wray told of most of the buildings being razed by bulldozers. I once heard the personal equipment was set fire and burned. Who was the last one to leave and who can fill us in???

465th BOMB GROUP

Since each of our squadrons formed their own Association, the group personnel have too few men to make a worthwhile Association. We have formed a separate section and have invited group personnel to join us. First to respond was Gale Graham, Group Information and Education Officer. Gale has a lot of information that we are looking for in the way of history and we look forward to hearing more from Gale. Welcome aboard.

COURTESY

This was 100% perfect at our last reunion. We join together for a memorable time and everyone appreciates the thoughtfulness...

THE ARMY AIR CORPS SONG

Off we go into the wild blue yonder,
Climbing high into the sun,
Here they come zooming to meet our
thunder,
At 'em boys, Give 'er the gun!
Down we dive spouting our flame
from under,
Off with one helluva roar,
We live in fame or go down in flame,
Nothing'll stop the Army Air Corps!

VERSE

Here's a toast to the host of those
who love the vastness of the sky,
To a friend we will send a message of
his brothermen who fly,
We drink to those who gave their all
of old
Then down we roar to score the
rainbow's pot of gold,
A toast to the host of men we boast,
The Army Air Corps.

CHORUS

Off we go into the wild sky yonder,
Keep the wings level and true,
If you'd live to be a greyhaired
wonder,
Keep the nose out of the blue,
Flying men, guarding the nations
border,
We'll be there followed by more,
In echelon we carry on,
Hey! Nothing 'll stop the Army Air
Corps!



ADDRESSES - My, My, the world is spinning fast these days. Some seem to take off and land in a different location without telling anyone. Nine returns in one day!! One of these days you'll miss your favorite Newsletter. A word when you move would be appreciated!

HISTORIAN'S COLUMN - Lots of interesting articles are coming in which will all add to your enjoyment in the Newsletters and History Book. Most of us have forgotten a great deal of the days, Pantanella, but in addition to refreshing our memory by these articles, there will be a lot of new information that we were never aware of.

REUNION AND RESERVATION INFORMATION

DATES - 17 to 20 September 1987

PLACE - HOLIDAY INN, CONFERENCE CENTER I-675, 2800 Presidential Drive, Fairborn, Ohio 45324. Phone 513 426 7800. It is near Dayton, adjacent to Wright-Patterson AFB. It is a new hotel due to open in July. We'll have information on restaurants and shops at check-in beginning on Wednesday the 16h. Free transportation from the airport by calling the Holiday Inn.

RESERVATIONS - For reservations, if you have not made them, send in the enclosed form to the hotel with a copy to Jim Althoff. We have 175 rooms reserved and expect to be sold out of those rooms in July. Overflow will be at the Patterson Inn, 800 N. Broad St., Fairborn, Phone 513 879 3920, about 10 minutes away. Use the same registration form for Patterson - if you are told Holiday Inn is full and have to register at Patterson Inn. The hotel is not open until July and does not send out confirmations unless you request it. If you are on the enclosed roster you are reserved. I am in contact with the hotel weekly, so if you have sent your reservations to me I will be confirming with the hotel. If you are staying with friends or in a motor home, please so indicate on the form you send to me.

COSTS - \$55 per day plus 11% tax, double or single, with rates good during you stay if you come in early or stay over. (Patterson Inn rates are \$48). We will have two squadron dinners, Thursday will be \$17 and Saturday \$19 per person including taxes and tip. These prices may be slightly less depending upon the menu we select. Other meals are on your own. The hotel will have a good coffee shop and other restaurant and fast foods

available in the area. A registration fee not to exceed \$20 per person will be collected at registration. This may be less, depending upon costs the squadron will incur for supplies, equipment rental, name tags, etc.

DRESS - Casual, except for the banquet. We suggest a jacket and tie for the men and cocktail dresses for the ladies for the banquet Saturday night. Active duty and retired officers and men may wear mess dress. Those at the speakers table will be notified and may wear formal attire. Friday we ask all that have the 781st cap to wear it to the dedication of the Squadron Plaque. The group photo will be taken then and most likely a TV crew will be taking a tape for an opening salute on "Good Morning America." In the event of rain it may be taken at the hotel or in the Museum auditorium. The "Good Morning America" salute will be on National Television November 17th.

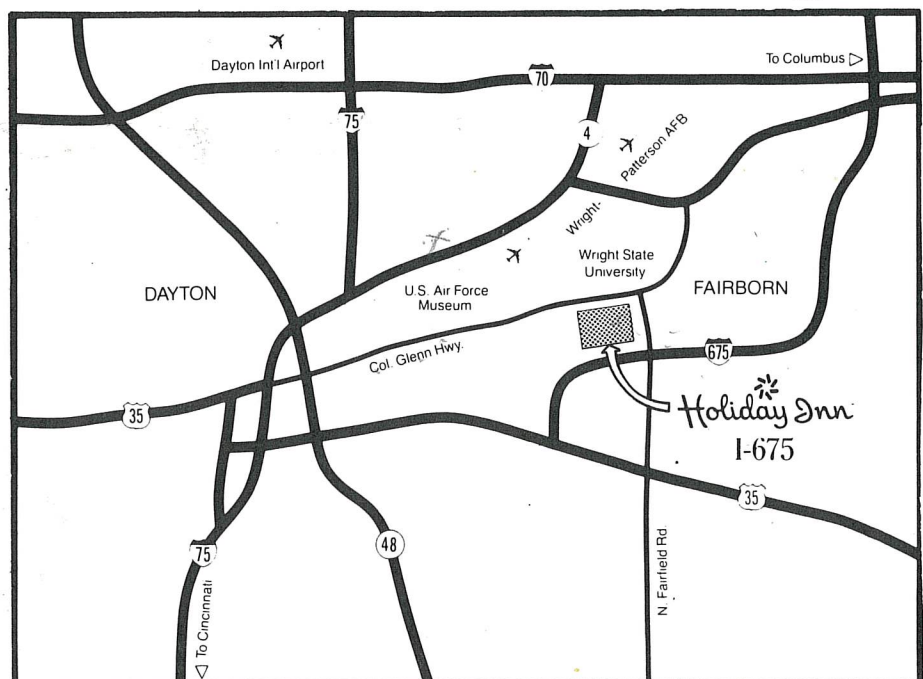
WHAT TO BRING - WWII memorabilia like pictures, old uniform etc. There was not enough time at the last

one to see all the pictures. There will be time to wear your old uniform (if it fits!) during the reunion.

VOLUNTEERS - Check in at registration. Dollie Snyder will need the help of some of the ladies at registration and we'll need a few men for 'leg work'.

HOSPITALITY ROOM - It will be open about noon on Wednesday, so if you check in early join the Eager Beavers at the hospitality room. Ben Donahue will be overseeing this popular spot and keeping order!!

HOST COMMITTEE - Four of the men living in the area of the reunion have 'volunteered' to serve on the Host Committee. If you have any questions of the area call or write them to see if they can help. They are Frank Maccani, Roland Soucy, John Zartman and Vincent Beeson. Frank and Roland have spent many hours on the selection of the site for the plaque, acquiring the tree, coordinating with the Museum, etc. When you see the plaque and site I'm sure you'll agree - it was done right and will be a lasting memory that our squadron can be proud of.



REUNION HEADQUARTERS IN DAYTON, OHIO

PROGRAM - For the Eager Beavers, we'll have the hospitality open Wednesday afternoon along with a TV room showing WWII videos, if anyone is interested. Probably an afternoon registration to take the load off of Thursday. Thursday will be hospitality, and video along with registration, until 1700. That evening is a cocktail hour, dinner and program. The program will consist of a get-acquainted period followed by the terrific slide presentation, "Tales from Sacajawea," by Harry Carl. This will get you in the mood and by the time the evening is over you'll have relived some of your times at Pantanella.

Friday will be a day you won't forget. The day will be spent at Wright-Patterson AFB. The first event, at 0930, is the dedication of the 781st Bomb Squadron Plaque in the Memorial Grounds next to the Air Force Museum. It will be in memory of our Comrades Killed In Action. We have requested a fly-over, bugler, etc. Following this will be the filming for an opening on "Good Morning America." Plans called for visiting the Museum the balance of the day, however, since this is the Air Base and the date for the official celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the U. S. Air Force, we will not schedule any organized event. You will hear the drone of WWII aircraft along with some of the latest jets. You should be able to kick some tires on many of the WWII aircraft, meet many of Aviations Greats and no doubt not find enough time to take in many of the events. The evening is open for crew or section get togethers.

Saturday's program will be announced after your arrival. We had the business session, hanger flying and an afternoon program planned, but with all the activity at the Wright-Patterson, we'll wait to see what will be most interesting. The evening will be cocktails and Honors Banquet at the Holiday Inn. It will include some surprises and be an evening to remember. This will close the reunion.

Sunday morning most will be leaving after sad farewells. A roster of those staying over will be available in case some of you want to get together on Sunday.

TRANSPORTATION - We have not arranged for any public transportation. Almost all registrants will be staying at the Holiday Inn. Our only event away from the hotel will be Friday at Wright-Patterson. Car pooling worked so well at Colorado Springs that I do not

see a problem here. We are only a few minutes away and over half are driving. We will coordinate the car pooling at registration. For those staying at Patterson Inn, we will also coordinate car pooling for that 10 minute ride. Remember the comments from last year - It was most interesting to meet other 781st members that I had not known before!

SINGLE MEN - If you want to share a room, let me know and I'll give you the names of others desiring to do the same. The room is \$55 total whether one or two are in a room.



Hermann Goering

More on the Me262 - In an interview with Hermann Goering in the book "IMPACT" is an interview with him before he "chickened out". "If I had to design the Luftwaffe again, the first airplane I would develop would be the jet fighter - then the jet bomber. I am convinced the jet planes would have won the war for us if we had had only four or five months more time. Our underground installations were all ready. The factory at Kahla had a capacity of 1,000 to 1,500 jet airplanes a month."

LOOSE LIPS SINK SHIPS

MOTOR HOMES - Dayton Tall Timber Resort, a KOA, on Interstate 70, 15 to 20 minutes away - Phone 515 833 3888. All hook-ups. Twin Towers County Park, 9 miles away. electric hook-up - call Ed Bice 513 376 7440 or 513 879 5700 Ext 7440. John Byam State Park, 12 miles - no hook-ups.

THE COLOR YELLOW - That was our squadron color in case anyone wonders why the last page is usually yellow.



FLIM FLAM TIME

From the "Poets Corner."

She got up in the morning,
And put on her robe,
Went downstairs,
Raised the blinds

Took the cover off the parrot,
Went into the kitchen,
Put on the coffee

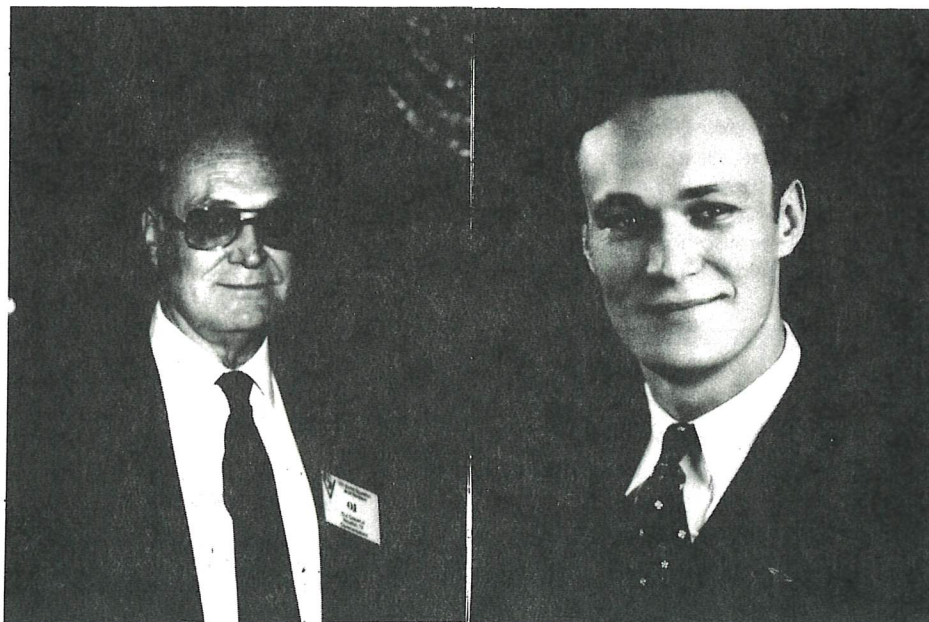
Lit the fire,
The telephone rang-
It was her boy friend

He said, "Hi ya baby,
Be right over,
Just got off the ship"

"She hung up the telephone
Pulled down the blinds
Took off the coffee,
Turned out the fire

Came back to the living
room,
Put the cover on the parrot
Slipped off her robe
And started upstairs

The parrot called after her
"Kee-rist, has this been
a short day!"



O. J. COWART, JR. - The same smile after 43 years. O. J. spent most of his time at Pantanella in the code room "on the hill" and was assigned to communications.

Contributions to the Newsletter have been made by the following; Marcel Snyder, story on Radar Maintenance Section - Vincent Beeson and John Header, photos and material on the Beeson Story - Harry Carl for Bill Weaver's photo - Walt Longacre for his newspaper article. We appreciate your contributions - without them we would not have a Newsletter.

Well, my friends, this will be the last Newsletter prior to the reunion. Your enthusiastic response will make this another memorable reunion. Your Officers and Directors have made plans for an interesting time. We have not scheduled this event just to spend some time together. Our purpose is to relive the days at Pantanella, to renew friendship and camaraderie, and to finalize the information necessary for our history book. We will also have time to enjoy some nostalgia by

visiting the oldest and largest Air Force Museum and partaking in some of the 40th Anniversary celebration of the Air Force. Special Air Force ceremonies on Friday include appearances of Air Force Officials and "honorees" such as Medal of Honor winners, fighting aces, former prisoners of war, astronauts and "other Air Force pioneers and leaders." We hope to have the Fighting 781st recognized during the events. On Saturday there will be two hours of aerial demonstrations and other activities, some continuing on into Sunday.

A reminder that families of members and of deceased members are invited to the reunion. Several families are already registred. We will see that friends of the deceased will welcome the families and inform them of ther Fallen Comrades service to his country.

To those of you that are unable to attend, our thoughts will be with you, and to those of you that cannot travel due to your health, our prayers for a speedy recovery.

Have a pleasant summer and a safe journey to the reunion.

Jim Atthoff

REUNION RESERVATIONS AS OF JUNE 18TH

FRED G. ABOUD
QUINCY F. ADAMS
HOYT F. ADSIT, SR
JAMES C. ALTHOFF
FRANK C. AMBROSE
ALLAN L. ARVESON
HENRY A. AYRES
MELFORD BADERSCHNEIDER
DANIEL E. BAILEY
MALVERN J. BARNER
JOHN B. BAUM
VINCENT A. BEESON
WARREN L. BEESON
NICHOLAS C. BELIK
VERLON H. BENNETT
ARTHUR W. BOVETT, JR
CHARLES H. BRADLEY
CHARLES A. BRAUD
WARREN G. CARDEN
HARRY S. CARL, JR
GAYTHOR L. CASS
RAYMOND D. CAUBLE
EDWARD J.F. CHAPIN
FRANCIS R. CLARK
DONALD E. CLODFELTER
DAVID B. COLEMAN
HUGH E. COOPER
JERRY F. COTTE
O.J. COWART, JR.
*PHIL CRABBE
RICHARD L. CRUTCHER, JR
* LORRAINE DALTON
DENNIS A. DANIELS, JR
MICHAEL J. DEIRONIMI
MELVIN L. DERRY
LOUIS J. DESLATTE

JOHN R. DICKEY
VERLE B. DOLLISON
BEN L. DONAHUE
JAMES F. DOWNS
WALTER H. DUDLEY
HARRY R. EDWARDS
WILLIAM C. ELLETT
ROBERT W. ELLIOTT
LEONARD H. EMMEL
JOHN W. ERTTEL
CODIE J. FAISON
JOHN FANDREY
CHARLES V. FERICH
LEO A. FINK
KENNETH G. FODEN
ROBERT L. FREED
TILEO P. GIAMMARCO
LEONARD J. GOLDSTEIN
CHESTER LEWIS GORDON
GARVIN L. GOYNE
OLIVER F. GRAHAM
WAYNE N. GRUBAUGH
RICHARD C. HALL
GLEN HAYWOOD
RALPH D. HENDRICKSON
RAYMOND W. HILL
JACK W. HUDSON
JOHN J. HUGHES
WILLIAM H. HUGUS
PAUL W. IHDE
CHARLES E. INGRAM
PAUL W. JACKSON
ROBERT M. JOYNER
EDWIN M. KAPUSTA
JOHN B. KENNEDY
PIERRE J.J. KENNEDY

GEORGE F. KILBY
FRANCIS K. KILL
CLARENCE A. KNOX
KENNETH A. KOCH
* HARRY KOHLER
GEORGE KURKOUSKI
* PETER B. LAUGHNER
ALBERT P. LEBLANC
EARL R. LEINART
MILTON LEVINSON
LAWERENCE S. LILLLY
WALTER M. LONGACRE
FRANCIS M. MACCANI
PAUL H. MALLETT
ADRIAN A. MARTIN
EUGENE G. MARTIS
RUSS T. MAYNARD
JOHN F. MESSMORE
HOMER L. MOELLER
*TED MUSKOVIN
JOSEPH M. NEUMAN
GINO J. PELLESCI
ROLAND PHARIS
KENNETH T. PULHAM
WILLIAM A. RACHOW
KENNETH B. REHN
HARRY REUSS
THERON R. ROBINSON
JOSEPH ROGERS
JOHN T. RUSSELL
DALE L. SAMUELSON
HERBERT L. SCHLOSSIN
ELMER L. SCHOEFFEL
EDWARD J. SCHREINER
JAMES D. SHAFFER
WALKER H. SHIPLEY

MALLORY H. SIMMONS
WILLIAM F. SIMS
HAROLD L. SEITZ
GEORGE L. SMITH
JAMES MARCEL SNYDER
CHARLES W. SPEER
JAMES E. STAHL
JACK V. STALLINGS
DONALD D. STERN
BERTEL E. STIGBERG
HAROLD A. STRAUGHAN
KENNETH E. SUTTON, JR.
WALTER H. SUTTON
ALEXANDER SZALAY
ALBERT I. THOMPSON
BYRON W. THOMPSON
RAY TRAUTMAN
WILLIAM S. TYLAVSKY
RAY V. TYLER
JACK VAN SLYKE
ZEBULON W. WALL
JOHN E. WARD
FRANK WASSANER
LESLIE S. WHEELER
HENRY L. WILLET, JR
DR. THOMAS L. WILLIAMS
JEROME K. WILLIAMS
ROYAL A. WILSON
STANLEY J. WINKOWSKI
JAMES W. WRAY, JR
JOHN WROBLEWSKI
FREDERICK P. YOST
EUGENE M. YOUNG
WILLIAM YUREK
JOHN ZADROZNY
JOHN C. ZARTMAN
DOMINIC ZINOBILE



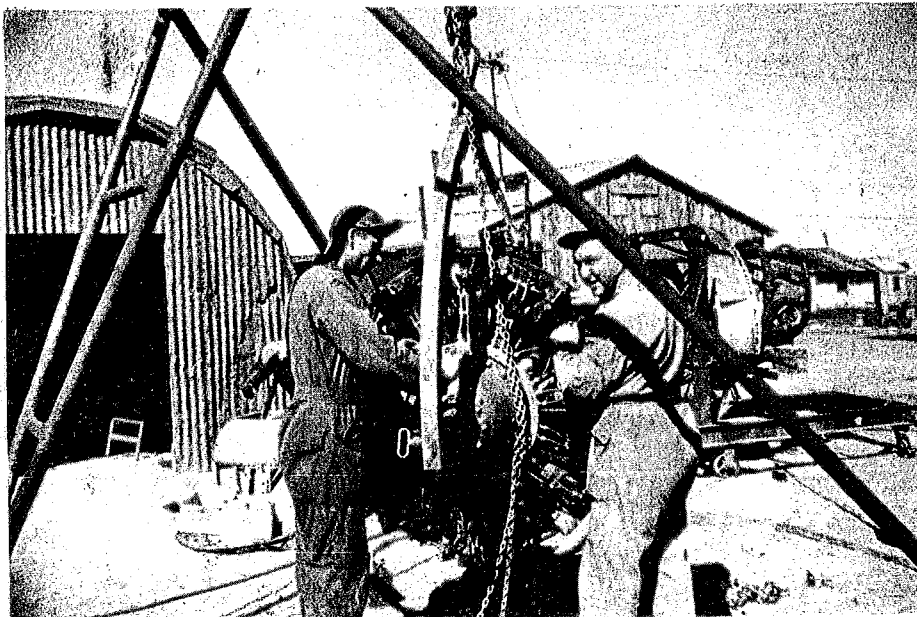
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION- The above photo taken during the early days at Pantanella shows 20 of the total of 37 in communications. Front Row, L to R - Edgar Howlett, Michael Horvath, Arthur Silberman, William Fitzpatrick, Joseph Del Guercio, Earl Mielke, John Richardson, Clifford Bronson, John Lorenz, Back Row, L to R - Jack Stallings, Alex Lipinski, Conrad Tylenda, Herbert Schlossin, Raymond Avery, Leo Gieseke, Joseph Carroll, Ernie Porter, George Ellison, Marshall Cooper, and the Communications Officer Harry Carl. Some of the men like O.J. Cowart, for example, had duties at group headquarters and were not present when the picture was taken. The other seventeen are: Hilborn Best, O. J. Cowart, Andy Getsy, Emory Hall, Kellard Hall, Cleveland Hughes, Alva Jones, Clarence Knox, Joe La Pena, Verner Mackey, William Richards, Hyman Rubin, William Rupert, Carlton Samuelson, Herbert Wieland, Martin Zerigian, and Chester Chiles.

Eighteen are members and seven are deceased, with twelve more to find. We have some very active men from this section. We are fortunate to have O.J. Cowart, who has devoted many hours to keep our rosters in order and come up with designs for our newsletter heading, reunion name tags, etc. And Harry Carl who is putting together the reunion booklet and working on the history book. It's an enormous task for Harry and if you were at the reunion to see his slide presentation you know he is a dedicated 781st member.

PILOTS FLIMSY - A copy of one Jim Wray sent in is attached. This was a maximum effort with our ssquadron putting up six planes in the second group. In that box were Willett, Zalk, Crutcher, Gaines and Lovey. The typical Blechammer mission took it's toll. Lovey went down over the target with he and Morris KIA and the crew POW. Gaines bailed out after the target area and all returned, some taking four months to get back.

Also enclosed is part of a FLIM-FLAM with an article about Milt Levinson

ENGINE CHANGE - Al Honthaas sent in this picture. He's not sure if on the left is John Diggs or Francis Harvey. And maybe the other man is Jim Shier or Al Toomey. How about it engineering - who has the correct names? Al noted, "Out of two, make one."



WALT LONGACRE - I know I have made mention of Walt a few times regarding his efforts on membership and I have to say a few more words

before closing. My first contact with him was just over a year ago. He was very interested in getting the 781st organized, sent in a page of names and began the search for members right away. He has taken on the task just like he took on those Me 109's from his nose turret on the George Ashley crew. I won't give away Walt's score - I think he would like to do that at the reunion. One thing I can tell you though, is that no one will be able to beat his number. Walt is in charge of locating all former members of the 781st. Once a new member is located he notifies Marcel or myself to follow up and send the newsletter and questionnaire.

NEXT NEWSLETTER - The next newsletter will be out in April. We'll update the reunion with a list of those already registered, an article by Col. McKenna about his last day as a POW, a new report on the Me 262, and other untold stories about the days at Pantanella.

And I finally got a computer. First I called it a confuser, than frustrating, and a few other words. But patience and persistance seems to have worked. I still don't know where to put those coma's though! Between OJ, Harry, and Marcel, who all have computers, I'll get straightened out.

Until April - good health and pay your taxes on time.

Jim Althoff



Born of a desire for freedom, carried to the ends of the earth in the spirit of brotherhood, defended at great personal sacrifice, flown in pride and honored as the symbol of the greatest democracy in the world, the American flag carries the history of a nation woven into its fabric.