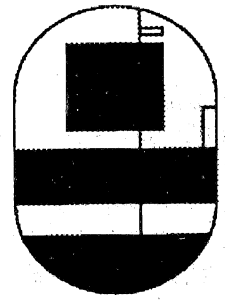




PANTANELLA NEWS



JULY 1999

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NUMBER 57



Russ Maynard and Frank Quagan. Frank painted this jacket for Russ in 1944.

This continues (Part III) and concludes Russ Maynard's story of his career in aviation. It covers his activities after he returned to the U.S. through his retirement from the Federal Aviation Administration.

Stateside Flight Duty (Military)

After a thirty-day leave I reported to the redistribution center at Miami Beach, where I was reassigned to the Air Transport Ferrying Command in Memphis, Ten-

nessee. Until my discharge in November of 1946 into the active reserve, I enjoyed flying all over the United States in AT-6s, P-40s, P-61s, A-26s, B-25s, B-24s, B-17s, and C-47s.

On one flight in a B-25 from Laurel, Mississippi en route to Lubbock, Texas I

made a "forced" landing at Tyler, Texas Airport. I had feathered the right engine and the other Wright was against the "peg" on the cylinder head temp. Although the maintenance section at Laurel had signed off on draining and refilling the auxiliary tanks I transferred water

from the right tank to the right engine. The ferrying group based at Love Field, Dallas sent a C-47 with a mechanic aboard to help me get the B-25 operating again and I delivered it in a snowstorm at Lubbock. A newly-graduated 2nd Lt. Hank Barker was my co-pilot on this flight.

On another trip that winter at Christmas time, I picked up a Douglas A-26 at Grenada, Mississippi to take to the Navy at Norfolk, Virginia. The left engine quit on take-off at 50 feet with gear retracting. I was solo of course, so I feathered it, went around and returned to the runway. I traded it back to the control officer for another A-26.

I had intended to deliver direct but by the time I had exchanged airplanes and readied the second one for flight, it was nearly dark so I decided to hop

down to Jackson, Mississippi, R.O.N., (remain overnight) and visit my girlfriend there. At this time a "cold spell" covered the Gulf states. Temperatures were well below freezing that night and the next morning during my pre-flight run-up the left prop "sucked" up about four square feet of macadam into the propeller. The ground below the macadam had contracted, allowing separation. So, it took a third effort to deliver the Navy their A-26 two nights later at about 2000 hours.

I was assigned on another flight to take a new C-47 from Tinker Field near Oklahoma City to Romulus, Michigan where the RCAF was to pick it up. It was loaded with an R-2000 P & W engine, other miscellaneous cargo, and four WAC's that Operations had decided to have me drop off at Memphis before delivering the aircraft to Romulus. Weather briefing and information indicated the weather front that had gone through was moving southeastward, was not severe, and there were no reports from westbound traffic of any violent encounters.

I took off about 1945 hours central time with an assigned altitude of 9,000 feet. Within forty minutes I penetrated the front, and for the next thirty minutes I wrestled the C-47 from 11,000 feet to 7,000 feet in all attitudes, including inverted. Few C-47s or pilots have been more challenged on structural or piloting integrity than that new aircraft and veteran combat pilot.

After flying into more stable weather, I sent my co-pilot rearward to assess the cargo and occupants. Yes, the

ladies were "sick" of flying and the cargo had been well-secured. On landing at Memphis I wrote up the incident and requested the operations officer to order an engineering evaluation of the C-47 before I took it to Romulus. The next day after an engineering sign-off on the airplane, we delivered it.

The Ferrying Control officer there assigned us to another C-47 to take to Douglas' modification center at Tinker AFB in Oklahoma. Another wintry weather front was moving northwest/southeast from Iowa through Illinois, Missouri, etc. Air Traffic Control would not clear me below 10,000 feet. So I filed at 12,000 feet to Oklahoma City.

En route the old bird could not handle the "rime" so I requested but was denied a lower altitude to escape the heavy stuff. A second request was denied, and I was informed that after Tulsa I could descend to 4,000 feet. I advised Air Traffic Control that I was involuntarily descending and declaring an emergency. When I reached 6,000 feet I had shed some wing ice and advised I was "maintaining."

Upon landing at Tinker AFB, Operations ordered me to call Air Traffic Control and report why I descended without clearance. I learned that altitudes below 10,000 feet were reserved for the "Sacred Cow," a DC-6B carrying President Truman to Independence, Missouri. This of course prompted a "reply by endorsement" through channels.

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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 its 191 missions over Southern Europe it dropped thousands of tons of bombs, shot down 23 enemy aircraft (German) and received two Distinguished Unit Citations.

Thirty-Six More Years in Civil Aviation

After separation from active military duty in November of 1946, and a month or so at my parents' home in Kenova, West Virginia, I returned to Detroit and flew AT-11s, T-6s, etc. at Selfridge Field in the reserve unit there. I also flew small airplanes and acquired a civilian flight instructor rating. I had declined an opportunity to fly with American Airlines out of Los Angeles upon separation from the military, and I still was not interested in airline flying as a pilot. So I decided to return to college at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia, on the G.I. Bill.

While attending college I instructed student flyers at the Aero Seaplane Base and Chesapeake Airport on the Ohio River. In addition to college and seaplane flying, an ex-naval aviator (Angelo Lewis, deceased) and I purchased a Culver Cadet airplane. It had a 65 hp continental engine, two place, side-by-side seating, and retractable main landing gear. It cruised 120 mph and was the smallest of production private aircraft at that time.

We reconditioned it to top operating condition. After several months of fun flying the little Culver, Angelo forced-landed it due to weather in a central Ohio farm field and totaled the airplane. Thus, my third airplane ownership was not so profitable as my first two!

I had majored in Business Administration at Marshall University and in the spring of 1950 I was hired by

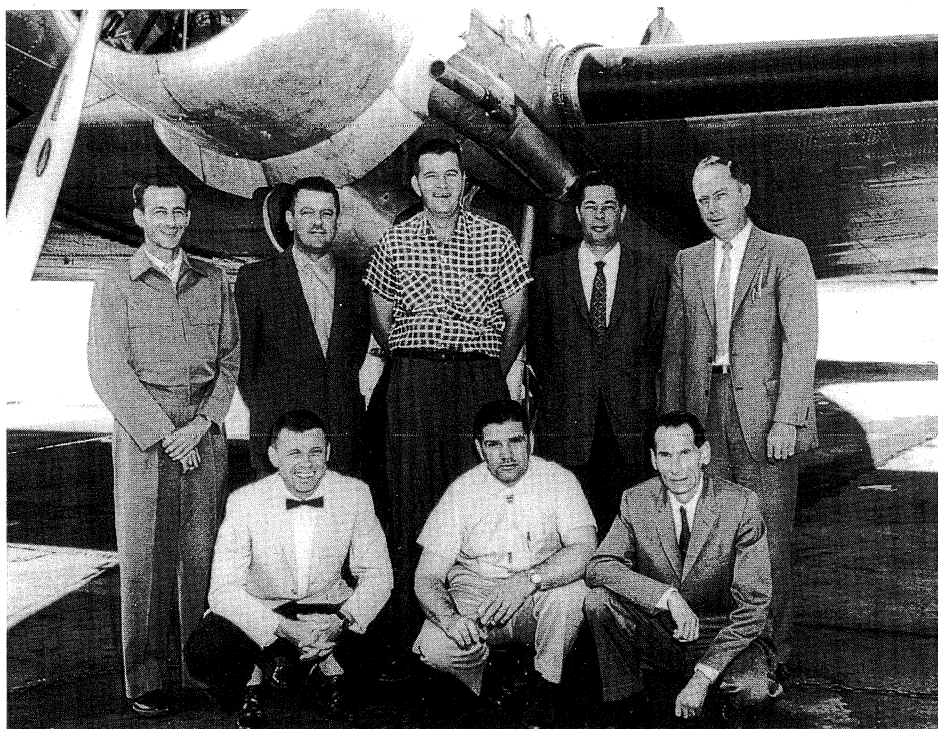
Huntington Airport, Inc., operators of the Chesapeake Airport (Ohio), as their general manager. The company operated a Cessna aircraft dealership of sales and services, a flight training school, a commercial charter flight service, aircraft storage, and major repair/maintenance as well as used aircraft sales.

At that time Huntington and the tri-state area had no airline service. The closest airport for airlines was in Charleston, West Virginia (50 miles east). The owners of Huntington Airport, Inc. were not active in its operations. So, even though all important changes/improvements were made with the approval of the corporate officers, I was granted

a rather free hand in managing the company's operations.

This aviation company had not been operating profitably since CPT programs had ceased with the war's end, and it took sixteen months to produce a month in the "black" and sustain profitable operations. This we did by changing the focus from flight operations to aircraft sales and services for corporate aviation operations.

We instituted a specialized air taxi service (pioneering the current third-level commuter air carrier services of today) to connecting airlines at Charleston, West Virginia, Cincinnati, and Columbus, Ohio. We also formed a staff of professional pilots providing



Rear, L to R: "Gerry Adler", Carl Smith (Instructor), "Tommy Thomas (Instructor), Bill Grant (Inspector), Jim Purcell. Front, L to R: Russ Maynard, "Mac" Hogan, Fred Faffley. Completing a special F.A.A. Course leading to "All Ratings" on their Airline Transport Pilot Certificates. A workhorse DC-3 in background.

cockpit service to corporate aircraft operators to whom we sold aircraft by day/week/month and to others who, for a time, could not utilize full-time pilots/co-pilots of their own employ.

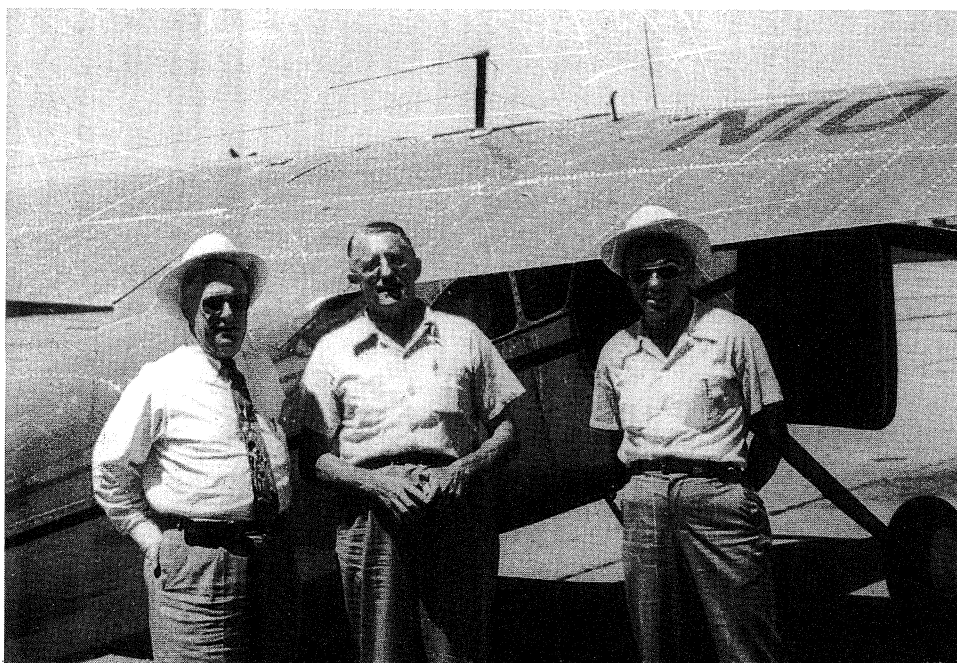
After two and a half years working excessive hours and days, I felt "burned out" and the Cessna Distributor, Cincinnati Aircraft, Inc., offered me a posi-

increasing business volume and profits, until December 1, 1959.

In early 1958, I began to explore ways of expanding business and/or facilities. The Chesapeake Airport was operated on a leasehold from the owners of the real estate. The facilities could not be expanded and necessary capital to launch otherwise available options was

the small business for nearly a decade, I had served on the dealer advisory panel to the president of Cessna Aircraft Company (Duane Wallace.) I had served as a board member of the Ohio Aviation Trades Association, and also served as chairman of the Tri-State Transportation Council. among other trade and civic groups such as Rotary International.

It did not take long to obtain a permanent appointment as an Aviation Safety Agent for the Federal Aviation Agency. I had been a designated pilot examiner for the old CAA and had considerable experience in the operations and maintenance of single/multi-engine aircraft, as well as seaplanes/amphibians, etc., and pilot training as a flight instructor and school operator. So an appointment was available as soon as I freed myself to accept it



Russ Maynard (on right) with two Cessna Dealership owners and a Cessna 195 at the Cessna factory for a global sales meeting in 1950.

tion as sales manager charged with establishing new dealerships and strengthening sales in existing ones.

After accomplishing my primary job there in one year, the investors at Huntington Airport, Inc. offered a part ownership to me to return to their company as Chief Operating Officer and General Manager. This I accepted even though the company's financial posture and dollar volume had suffered during a year of inept management. I operated this company,

too costly for borrowing. So, I became interested in the growing part the federal government was to play in aviation safety with the adoption by Congress of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958.

This act dissolved the Civil Aeronautics Authority under the Department of Commerce and created the Federal Aviation Agency with broader functions in civil aviation. It took a year to "divorce" myself from Huntington Airport, Inc. where, in addition to managing

Over Twenty Years of Federal Aviation As A Civilian

The Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) developed and enforced the safety regulations for the design, manufacture, operations, maintenance, and the certification and inspection of aircraft and the flight and ground personnel related to these activities. In addition, the FAA was responsible for the safe control of air traffic and the facilities for such control in airport, terminal, and En route areas.

Operations and mainte-

nance inspectors were assigned to offices responsible for either air carrier or general aviation activities. Air carrier office functions included the inspection and certification of the scheduled airline operators, their repair facilities, and air and ground crews except for "air taxis."

General aviation offices were responsible for the inspection/examination and certification of all other civil aviation activities, including "air taxi" operators. Airways Facility Flight inspection offices were responsible for the inspection/certification of ground navigation and terminal facilities used for aircraft operations and air traffic control. Engineering/manufacturing offices were responsible for the inspection and certification of design, engineering, and manufacture of aircraft and parts/accessories, etc. Avionics inspectors might be assigned to any of the above-described offices.

I was a General Aviation Operations Inspector in the field offices of the FAA from December 1959 to February 1967, at which time I was selected to a staff position as a specialist for the Flight Standards Service of FAA Headquarters in Washington, D. C.

As a field inspector, I was assigned duties in Portland, Maine and Columbus, Ohio; general aviation offices and temporary duties in Charleston, West Virginia and Westfield, Massachusetts; and flight training courses at the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City.

These duties included:

1) inspection and certification of numerous air taxi operations,

flight training operations, agricultural applicators, and other "fixed-base" types of aviation operations, such as parachute clubs,

2) examination of written/oral/flight testing of literally hundreds of applicants for civil pilot certificates and ratings of private, commercial, airline transport, flight instructor, and pilot examiners for land, water, and ski operations/classifications,

3) guest lecturing at various colleges, universities, and other citizen groups,

4) issuing Certificates of Waiver of the Federal Aviation Regulation for special flight operations such as air shows and other low-level operations, and

5) investigation of incidents/accidents involving aircraft operations or airmen and the enforcement of the F.A.R. (Federal Aviation Rules.)

As a specialist on the Administrator's staff in the Washington Headquarters of the FAA, I had many diverse assignments during my fourteen years of service there. Initially, my assignment was as part of a team developing policy and program guidelines for the certification and training of pilots and designees who examined them for certification.

In succeeding years, my assignments were more focused on individual responsibilities of developing the current flight instructor recertification program, the FAA's oversight of the R.O.T.C. flight instruction programs, and coordination of the National Air Show program for the Administrator. During Headquarters service I was intermittently flying Agency aircraft of different types on

various research/passenger-carrying missions.

Prior to 1967, there had been no requirement for certificated flight instructors to renew their qualifications to continue instruction authorized by their certificate. As the principal Operations Inspector for the FAA in Columbus, Ohio, and with the cooperation of the Engineering Department and the School of Aviation of Ohio State University, we developed the Flight Instructor Certification and Refresher Course which proved that education in methods of instruction and in academics related to flight training for flight instructors would improve the quality of flight training, especially of new pilots. The government (FAA) and industry endorsed the concept and the national program was developed. It still exists today with only minor modifications.

Also, prior to 1974, there had been no formal agreement between the Department of Defense and the Department of Transportation for the FAA's supervision of R.O.T.C. flight instruction programs at colleges and universities. The authority and oversight of the FAA was contained in FAA, U.S.A.F., U.S. Army, and U.S. Navy policy manuals and was very fragmented and contradictory on numerous important issues.

After nearly a year of effort I was able, on behalf of the Administrator, to persuade the legal departments and flight operations divisions of all of the above agencies to become signatories to a document (agreement) that I had developed in coordination with

flight training personnel of the various military departments. The agreement remains today as the controlling document for all aspects of the R.O.T.C. F.I.P. Operations.

In 1977, the FAA's National Air Show program coordinator passed away suddenly at his desk as a result of cardiac arrest. He was a close friend and associate of mine. I had been an advisor to him as coordinator and had written some policy matter for his program, so, upon his death, I was assigned the additional staff duty of National Coordinator. Certificates of Waiver to permit air demonstrations and full-blown air shows are issued at the field office level, which is overseen by a designated Regional Office Specialist who is a member of the coordination team for the national program. The activities of all aerobatic and other aircraft demonstrations are coordinated and controlled by this FAA program, military or civilian, within the United States.

Many interesting experiences enrich my memories of work as the coordinator of the top individuals in aviation and the top airmen in military and civilian demonstration teams. I will relate one true highlight that occurred in 1980.

The Annual International Aerobatic Meet that crowned the international teams and individual champions from a series of contests in 1978 voted to allow the United States team to host the 1980 meet at Oshkosh, Wisconsin. It was to be sponsored by the U.S. International Aerobatic Club (I.A.C.), a division of the Experimental Aircraft Association headquartered

in Oshkosh.

The annual meet had never been held in the U.S.A. for the reason that the FAA would not permit aircraft that did not have an FAA certificate of air worthiness to be operated in U.S. air space. Most aerobatic aircraft used in these "meets" were "custom" built for aero-

trator's program coordinator for air demonstrations, it was my "ball" to carry. The I.A.C. provided me with detailed and specific information concerning the rules of the "meet" and air worthiness standards incumbent on each participant. After conferences with the chief attorneys for the FAA and



L to R: Former Astronaut "Deke" Slater, "Chuck" Yeager, Wayne Barlow, Russ Lincoln, Russ Maynard.

batic competition and the cost of obtaining certification was prohibitive.

The Board of Directors of the U.S. I.A.C. sent an early request for a Certificate of Waiver to the FAA Central Region's district office in Chicago, Illinois, and a certificate was issued with the requirement that participating aircraft have an FAA air worthiness certificate. The regional attorneys for the FAA also denied waiver of the "special condition" provision of the Certificate of Waiver. The I.A.C. and the E.A.A. appealed to the Administrator for administrative action to enable the "meet" to be held without a compromise of safety.

Since I was the Adminis-

trator's program coordinator for air demonstrations, it was my "ball" to carry. The I.A.C. provided me with detailed and specific information concerning the rules of the "meet" and air worthiness standards incumbent on each participant. After conferences with the chief attorneys for the FAA and

the Department of State, I drafted a set of "special conditions" for the regional office to include in its Certificate of Waiver to the I.A.C. The "special conditions" called for air worthiness inspections by FAA certificated, designated engineering inspectors of foreign aircraft after they arrived at Oshkosh, having flown there (or having been shipped there) on "conditional" certificates to operate cross-country, avoiding all population centers. At any rate, this was accomplished approximately ninety days ahead of the scheduled "meet" for August, 1980.

The event known as "World Aerobatics '80" at-

tracted some 45 foreign aircraft and the best aerobatic pilots in the world. It has been deemed the most successful in history. No incidents of unsafe operations occurred.

The Administrator, General Chuck Yeager, and Astronaut Donald K. (Deke) Slayton were invited to witness the event as V.I.P.'s. "Deke" (deceased 1994) was the honored presenter of awards. I was designated to represent the Administrator from FAA Headquarters with the regional director from Chicago.

For enabling the "meet" to take place in the United States, the E.A.A. and the I.A.C. each issued special citations and awarded plaques to me upon my retirement in 1982. The "World Aerobatics 80" provided a reunion for two West Virginia (hillbilly) veteran pilots, General Chuck Yeager and myself. Though we had grown up less than 50 miles from each other in adjacent counties, we never met until 1946 at Wright Patterson AFB Officers Club where I had R.O.N. before ferrying a P-61 to Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Later in 1950, "Chuck" visited my airport at Chesapeake, Ohio where, while on leave, he would fly his uncle's Piper PA-12 airplane for the fun of it. The two of us enjoyed exchanges of WWII stories during his visits. In the meantime, "Chuck" had broken the "sound barrier" in the Bell X-1. Later he commanded a unit in Korea flying Republic F-86s.

Few people are aware that during the '40s Chuck Yeager and Bob Hoover (the dean of air show pilots in the decades of the '70s and '80s) would do air demonstrations on

weekends at air shows. They were based at the Air Force Engineering Flight Test Unit at Wright-Patterson, and their exhibitions were unofficial as far as the Pentagon was concerned. However, their demonstrations led to the formation of the official demonstration team of the USAF, the "Thunderbirds."

I retired from the FAA in February of 1982, and for one year was an aviation safety consultant. I then retired professionally from aviation activities. My pilot log books total 9,800 hours in aircraft cockpits, large and small, operating over three continents. The damaged propeller of the A-26 cited in the foregoing account is the only aircraft damaged while I was at the controls (outside of combat operations.)

When I retired from the FAA, the agency had nearly 800,000 pilots active and certificated in all classes of private, commercial, and airline transport. I held an Airline Transport Pilot Certificate with "All Ratings Authorized." Only about one fourth of FAA operations inspectors were ever issued the above rating (special authorization) for the operation of any type of aircraft. The DC-3 and I began flying in the same era of aviation development. It continues to be important as an aircraft component; however, I am no longer a "cockpit technician" of the DC-3 or other aircraft.

I take some satisfaction in that my career in the cockpit spanned from piper cubs to jets and four-engine aircraft. It has all been a marvelous and rewarding experience.

Yugoslavia Remembered

The unrest in Yugoslavia brings back memories to many of us serving at Pantanella during WWII.

Some of the air crew remember the bombing missions to Yugoslavia hitting German troops and war materiel. To others it was a bail out area on the way back from Ploesti or other targets that were routed over Yugoslavia.

The missions flown were:

11 June 44 Belgrade.
Smederovo Oil Refinery East of Belgrade.

21 Aug 44 Nis, Airdrome.

2 Sept 44 Nis, Marshalling Yard.

5 Nov 44 Mitrovica, Troop concentrations.

16 Nov 44 Prijepolje, Troop concentrations.

19 Dec 44 Maribor, Marshalling Yard.

1 Mar 44 Maribor, Locomotive Depot.

16 Mar 45 Pragersko, Marshalling Yards.

plus other targets of opportunity not listed.

Members are commenting on their memories of some of the targets. Jack Van Slyke remembers the recent bombing of Smerderovo Oil Refinery which brings back his memories of that target. And Bob Bassinette notes, "In the course of our dispute with Yugos our guys knocked out a bridge in Nova Sad. I'd swear we knocked it out 50 years ago. Didn't even have a "smart bomb."

WHY IS THE 465TH BOMB GROUP INSIGNIA ON THE RIGHT TAIL OF THE ALL AMERICAN?

Because of some dedicated 465th Bomb Group men and their donations!

Our group started early on to recognize the joy of having one B-24 roaring through the skies all over America to show what the most produced heavy bomber during WWII looked like.

I became interested in it when I heard of the planned restoration. I asked Pierre Kennedy, tail gunner on my crew, who lived nearby, to check it out. He gave the OK sign and I sent in a nice donation. As a result I was the first pilot to make such a donation and was listed on a plaque installed on the back of the pilot's seat. It is still there. Later I was listed under the right cockpit window as pilot of a crew.

As restoration got underway at Kissimmee, Florida more men became interested and we had 465th Bomb Group members making donations and getting names on the plane.

Then it became competitive between groups to see which one donated the most for the tail insignia. The 465th was one of the first and has maintained their insignia every year except one. Our group has donated more than any other WWII group. When the year comes to an end there is activity from some who care to exchange what was needed to

keep the insignia there. Men have come up with \$10,000 (George Kuchenbecker from 780th) just to secure the insignia one more year. What group loyalty!!

Recently I learned the All American changed its name to The Dragon and its Tail. It was the name of the last B-24 that was scrapped. One tail marking still has the same familiar 465th markings.

465th Bomb Group B-24 donors

A recent Collings Foundation Newsletter listed contributors to the All American in different categories.

The 1999 tour began in January.

Dedicated Crew/Lead Crew/Plane

Sponsor

780th

George Kuchenbecker

781st

James Althoff

Frank Piteo

Michael Deironimi

782nd

George Goodwin

Harold Glasser

Distinguished Flying Command

780th

James Mulligan

Eldon Tobias

Howard Draper

781st

John Layne

Homer Moeller

Barney Russell

Marcel Snyder

Harold Straughan

Frank Wassenaar

John Zartman

Warren Carden

O. J. Cowart*

Ralph Hendrickson

Pierre Kennedy

J. H. Kienitz

782nd

William Magee

Ralph Tash

William Johns

Ove Kaas

783rd

Burt Andrus

Wanda Dannelly*

Milton Duckworth*

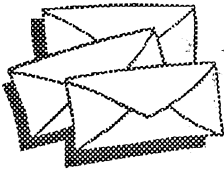
* Deceased

CORRECTION

Because of a computer error, Charles R. Zwerko's name was omitted from the list of members who have attended every reunion. We apologize for this error.

Reunion 2000

At our reunion in Dayton the majority voted for our next reunion to be held in California providing satisfactory arrangements could be made. This has been accomplished and the board of directors has decided that Reunion 2000 will be held at Fairfield, California, September 11 to 17, 2000. Final planning is now underway. Fairfield is on Interstate 80, 45 minutes north-east of San Francisco and 40 minutes south of Sacramento. In each case the airport is about 15 minutes more. More details in the October newsletter.



MAIL CALL

Van Reynolds (Gaines Navigator) comments, "Thanks to you and Jack Smith for the Pantanella News. Since my second sweetheart passed away I had just about given up on everything. The 781st keeps me going again."

Terri Tiehen helped on our address request for Van Reynolds. She had received a Christmas Card from him and sent in his new address. We'll publish more names for help in keeping our roster up to date.

Seth Hawkins, (O'Brien Navigator). "Sorry we couldn't make the reunion this year. Bill Jostworth's message was terrific. I had never realized how those guys felt."

Floyd Trudeau (Pilot) sent a note that he had a heart by-pass and a bad back. He'll try to make the next reunion.

From **Ernest Magmore**, (Ordnance). I had a bad 1998, but now my health is OK except for one problem I am nursing. I keep in close contact with Bob Freed and John Zadrozny. We were very close during our service and I enjoyed it. The Newsletter keeps me feeling closer to all old buddies.

Robert Leasure (Group Operations). Enjoyed the January issue of the Panatanella News with the news and pictures of the Dayton reunion. Ruth and I enjoyed our days in Dayton. You and the committees did a wonderful job and it was good to see the 781st and

other squadron personnel, but I was disappointed that more group people did not attend.

William Coonan (Engineering) "The Dayton reunion write-up was a great issue. Was proud to read Bill Jostworth describe the ground echelon's activities and feelings. Always wanted to attend a reunion if only some one had organized a large group from Engineering. Enclosed a check for dues for the wonderful Pantanella News."

OK, Engineering, how about a committee to contact all Engineering men to get a gang to attend Reunion 2000!!

A letter from **Monroe Beebe** (Tail Gunner on Hy Newman crew). "When I read of the extremely harrowing experiences and actual loss of life of many of our crews I begin to think that the crew I was on had it pretty easy, but not a trip or trips recommended for a Sunday afternoon outing. And yet ours was comparably mild. The late arrival of our crew into the fray was probably the biggest help in our favor. Best wishes to all."

A letter from **Bert Stigberg** (Navigator on Barnett crew) with a request for a history book. He notes that he thought he had ordered enough history books originally for all his family, but his family had a surprise—another grandchild appeared on the scene. He also noted that the reunions just get better and better and better. *Just wait until reunion 2000 it will be the best yet!*

A letter from our member in Hollywood, **Frank Piteo** (Bilger Top Gunner). He's a life member, but continues to send

dues! We'll have to get him to join us at the California reunion. He missed the last one because he had a problem getting around.

Frank writes, "The remarks that Bill Jostworth made in regards to the ground echelon was very touching. I remember on the return of many missions the ground crew would ask if there was any problems with the plane. We could see that they were very concerned with our flights."

Bill mention about the saboteur. I remember one of our planes that blew up on take-off and it was told to us that something was placed in the nose wheel and that at take-off the nose wheel collapsed and the plane up-ended and all the crew were lost. Rumors that were spread after they caught the saboteur were that he was dropped over a target without a parachute. That was one rumor, who knew what to believe.

My co-pilot, Tex Bodenhamer, telephoned me about the wine remark made in the Pantanella News. I also heard from Bob, our engineer. This I have to tell you — any time my co-pilot telephones he always says that "this is the jerk calling." When we were in Casper, Wyoming, we had 9 men from the North and Tex was the only Southerner. He asked that we should have a name for our crew. One day I told him at the hard stand before a practice mission that I had a name. He asked what name did I have for the crew, and I told him "Nine yanks and a jerk." He laughed so much and said that's it.

Tex was a nut, but his

comical remarks and carrying on sure kept our morale up. We had a good crew in all over two years together there was never a harsh word among us. I believe that helped a lot to get back in one piece. We had only one injury, but we could not put it up for a purple heart. Pop, our radio operator, was always a nervous wreck on all the missions. On the return of one mission that had lots of flak, he came to get his shot of whiskey with his canteen cup. He always would take his canteen cup and he would go around and ask anyone who did not drink to pour it into his cup. He got quite a bit that night. He slept in the upper bunk and in the middle of the night he had to go to the bathroom and getting out of bed he fell and broke his nose. We still think he deserved a purple heart.

Dick Krekel (Brenneman tail gunner), "My wife, Mickey, and I usually go to Nevada for the winter, but this year we stayed in Wisconsin. Staying here for the winter gave me a chance to do some wood carvings and artwork. This March I have an African animal display going into the new Sussex library. Being in the graphic arts business, starting out as an artist apprentice, probably gave me the interest in drawing and carving.

Congratulations on having a fine reunion. I will try to finally make the next one."

Response has been overwhelming to the PX listing in the previous newsletter. Along with many orders there were many notes from the members. Following are some:

From **Mrs. Peg Hafey**, she told about her husband,

Charles (Chick). He has had alzheimer's disease for some time and is now in an alzheimer's unit. Peg indicated she attend the next reunion if she could find someone to travel with.

Jean Allen Wood. She ordered a 781st mug as a gift to Denny Horton. He is a member of the Robert French crew as was Lehman Wood, Jean Allen's husband who is deceased. She also noted that the person who did the design for the mug, Frank Quagan, was on the same crew.

And a note from **Frank Quagan** who ordered a mug and jacket patch for a friend, Harold Adams. Frank noted, "I painted the 'Flamin' Mamie' on Russ Maynard's jacket in 1944. The jacket has been proudly displayed at all our reunions.

George Kilby notes on an order for mugs, "We should thank John Zadrozny for getting them for us."

Robert F. Arnold noted he was in Engineering and was excited about receiving a mug.

Wilhelmina Hinton, "I would like to order one of the 781st mugs. I collect coffee mugs and this will be a great addition to my collection. My late husband, James W. Hinton, was with the W. J. Smith crew."

Florence Grant writes, "I want to order two of the 781st mugs. My husband, Clifford Grant, flew with the Lovey Crew. He passed away five years ago from cancer. I hope to be at the next reunion."

Our PX Officer, **Barney Russell**, sent a note along with the checks for PX items. "Here is a list of PX shipments to date along with their checks. These cups are a hell of a bargain. I've

got half of them left, but I'm running out of shipping boxes and packing material." *Barney, we all thank you for sending out the PX orders. Since we have not had a list in the newsletter and with the new mugs Barney was swamped with orders.*

Griscom Bettie writes, "Dear Mates; I am glad you have kept the 781st together. I was lucky to have flown as co-pilot with Col. Bob Shetterly."

Francis J. Walborn writes to Whomever; You guys are doing a fantastic job and I truly enjoy the newsletter you send. I am enclosing a check for thirty dollars to prevent the lapse in membership for another few years.

Something that happened during my tour in Italy. Capt. Dickey was flying with another crew. The plane was hit and set on fire. Capt. Dickey flew the plane out of the formation and parachutes started coming out. Witnesses said the plane blew up before Dickey bailed out. We presumed he was dead. After an extended period of time, the Red Cross reported him injured and in a Budapest hospital. This sounds like an interesting article for your paper and I would also like to know what actually happened.

Since this is the computer age, I would guess that a very large number of us have computers and access to the Internet. If all member's e-mail address was published, this just might help us keep in touch with one another better. *You're right! The numbers I have to date are listed elsewhere in the news. And let's hear about Capt Dickey. Ed.*

Address changes

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

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

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

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

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

William H. Coonan Phone 828 252-0564.

Frank Piteo's phone number is now 323 851-0251.

FOLDED WINGS

Donald S. Rymal (nose gunner on Wortham crew). Reported by his son.

Conard Croston's date of passing away has been confirmed as 30 April 1997. Reported by Pierre Kennedy.

Col. Price Dealyon Rice, a Tuskegee Airman who flew 61 combat missions with the 99th Fighter Squadron as fighter cover for the 15th Air Force passed away recently. He was 83.

After WWII he remained in service as a military test pilot, taught at Howard University, a tour of duty in Korea, worked with the U.S. Customs Service and taught at Skyline Community College, San Bruno, CA 1969 to 1975.

Hugh E. Cooper (Bombardier on Althoff Crew) passed away March 22, 1999. Ellen, his wife, phoned to tell me Hugh passed away at their home from heart failure. He was 82. Those of us who knew Hugh

("Coop") will remember him as a jovial person who looked at the bright side of everything. He loved to spend his spare time playing poker.

Casa mates Ken Sutton and Ernie Van Asperen joined the card playing most of the time along with other squadron members.

Dues Time!

Dues are \$10 per year payable in advance. Your label has the year. It should read 99 (or LIFE) to be current.

Let's make it 100% for 99! Please make out checks to 781st Bomb Squadron Association and mail to the the 781st Bomb Squadron Association office at 2 Mt. Vernon Lane, Atherton, CA 94027.

ADDRESS CORRECTIONS.

Boy! do you people move around! I received 16 newsletters returned, or post office cards notifying of an address change, in one week. On two the Post Office had just a note saying the addressee moved! The cost was \$11 for the week. With the notice I put on the newsletter to reply for the correct address it can cost \$1.50 per mailing if returned. I feel this is necessary to keep our roster up to date, but you all can help by notifying me of any change of address. Be specific. If you go to Florida for the winter, eg, give me exact dates so you will receive the newsletter there. I have had approximate dates on some to automatically mail according to that. I find many dates are changed, so in the future please let me know when you will be away as I will not be using any dates given me after this mailing unless they are current.

If you miss a newsletter and want a back issue please let me know.

E-Mail

There has been some activity between squadron members on "E" Mail." If you would like to join the group please send in your "E" mail address. These are the numbers I now have:

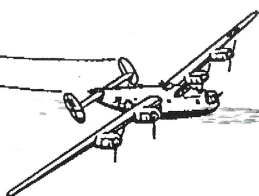
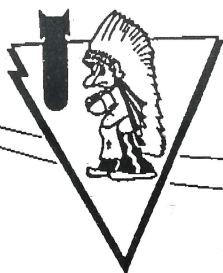
Jim Althoff
Bassinette
Ambrose
Ken Sutton
Barney Russell
Francis Walborn
Marcel Snyder
Bob Bleier (780th)

althoff781@aol.com
bassinette@Juno.com.
amber@superior.net
nsutton@worldnet.att.net
Barney Russell@hotmail+mail.com
fwalborn@columbia-center.org
bobbler@aol.com



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