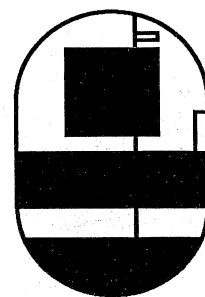




PANTANELLA NEWS



OCT 1992

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NUMBER 30

EUGENE KRZYZYNSKI PRESENTED THE SILVER STAR BY LT. GEN. LEO SMITH

The presentation was a complete surprise to Eugene Krzyzynski and members of the 781st Bomb Squadron

Following our Saturday evening banquet at the reunion, Vernon Burda introduced Lt. Gen. Leo Smith. In the introduction, Vern reviewed the many accomplishments of Gen. Smith. It was interesting to learn that Gen. Smith was born and raised in Omaha, and now, just retired from the United States Air Force as deputy Commander of the Strategic Air Command, plans to remain and work in Omaha.

Gen. Smith then spoke on the tremendous changes in the military and political situations in the world today. His very interesting talk appears on page 6. He then he said the following:

"I was asked to make a special presentation this evening. It is a presentation that is long overdue and much deserved. Two years ago, my very close friend, Lt. Gen. Gordon Fornell, spoke to you and during that presentation he returned some dog tags to four of your members who lost them years before. Tonight I would like to call back to the stage one of the individuals who received his dog tags that night. Gene Krzyzynski would you come forward please."

On his way to the podium Gene commented, "Now what did I lose." Gen. Smith replied, "There are several other things which he lost, none of which he will get back tonight."

"You all know Gene far better that I could know him from the brief biographical sketch that I received, but for those of you that are not quite as familiar perhaps as some; he was born on Ashley street in Buffalo NY on 4 Feb 1923. Gene's father died about year after he was born and his mother passed away when he was in his seventh grade and he was raised by four sisters and a brother. They did a great job as one can tell.

"When the war broke out, Gene was a junior in high school and he wanted to join up right away, but his sisters and brothers convinced him completing his school was more important. So he did that while working

part time at Bell Aircraft Corporation. When he graduated he was off to the Marine Corps to enlist. Well, he didn't make it because he had a problem with his teeth.

"Failing that, Gene marched down to the Navy recruiting office. There was a line outside the door that stretched down the block and way around the corner. Gene found the line at the Army recruiter shorter, so he went in, talked to the recruiter and, sure enough, having graduated from high school, he was eligible to compete for Aviation training. He was excited about that, took the exams, passed and off he went, joining up in October, 1942. After graduating from bombardier school he kept looking for an assignment on a B-24



Lt. Gen. Smith pinning the Silver Star
on Eugene Krzyzynski

crew and one day he was listed with the Dale Tipton crew. Then it was to McCook for training, to Lincoln to pick up their gear and a new B-24, on to West Palm Beach and finally over to North Africa to wait until the Air Base at Pantanella was finished.

"Arriving at Pantanella Army Air Base, Gene began flying missions with his crew. He was shot down on 31 May 1944, but evaded and returned to base. On 16 July they were shot down again and became POW's. But it is a mission on 14 July that I want to talk about this evening.

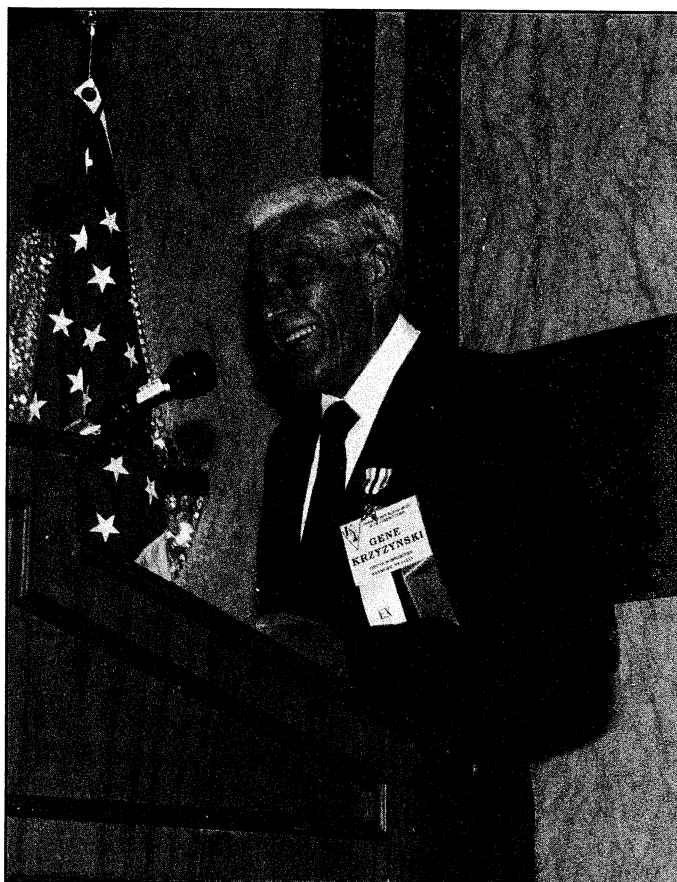
"Now, after all these years we have a presentation to make. I'd like to read you the citation. "2nd Lt. Eugene M. Krzyzynski distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force near Italy on 14 July 1944. On that date Lt. Krzyzynski was a bombardier on a mission with an assigned target of

Porto Marghera Italy. Because of the weather, the mission was not completed, and the planes were told to return to base. The bomb load in Lt. Krzyzynski's plane was twelve, five hundred-pound incendiary clusters. Because the plane

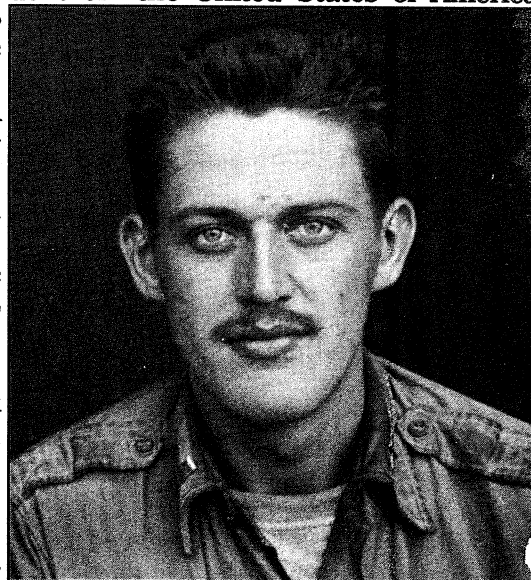
was flying over somewhat friendly territory the group was told not to drop the bombs, but return to the base with the bomb load intact and the fuse removed. While removing the fuses, Lt. Krzyzynski noticed a gas drip in the bomb bay and that the bomb bays were inoperative. Realizing the danger to himself, the crew, and the plane, Lt. Krzyzynski grabbed a fuse that was partially dismantled, and risking his life, carried it to the waist window and threw it out. Just as it cleared the plane, it exploded. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Lt. Krzyzynski has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force. " To all who shall see these presents, Greetings; this is to certify that the President of the United States of America authorized by act of Congress July 9, 1918, has awarded the Silver Star to 2nd Lt. Eugene M. Krzyzynski for gallantry in action 14 July 1944. It was signed by the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Air Force on 24 April 1992.

"With tears and broken voice Gene made these comments, "To receive something like this, especially in the company of you men, is a great honor. I want to thank you all and say that of all the people I have known in this world you have my highest respect and love."

A round of applause and tears of joy for a comrade who was finally recognized after all these years



Gene smiling while saying a few words after receiving the Silver Star



Gene's photo from his POW Identification document

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781st BOMB SQUADRON

as part of the 465th Bomb Group, Fifteenth Air Force, flew B-24 Liberators from Pantanella Airfield located near Canosa, Italy, during WW11 (1944-45). During it's 191 missions over Southern Europe it dropped thousands of tons of bombs, shot down 23 enemy aircraft (German) and received two Distinguished Unit Citations.

IT WAS UNANIMOUS REUNION 92 WAS "THE BEST YET"

Reunion 92 will be remembered as the one where the squadron became one large family. One of the reasons was the hotel - it was just the right size so we could have all of our functions close together. Additionally the hotel staff was super - their friendliness and cooperation were the best ever. And you, the members, came ready to have a memorable reunion.

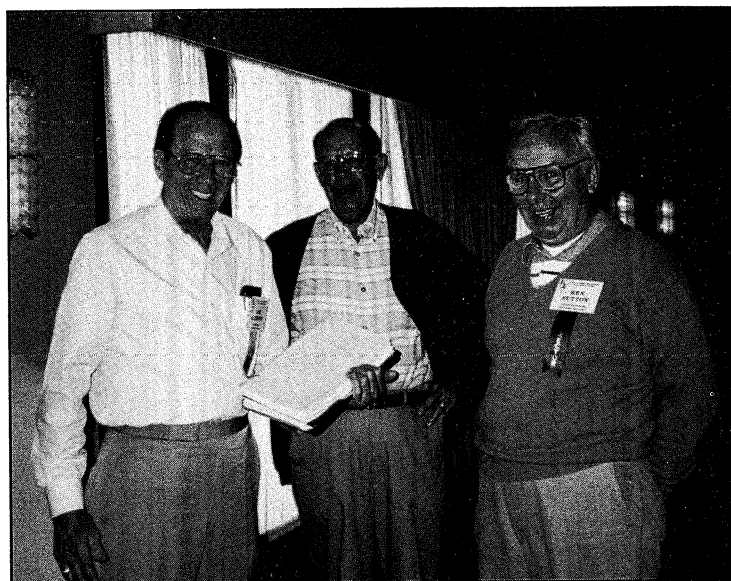
It all began on Tuesday when some of the reunion planners, Ken Sutton, Walt Longacre, O. J. Cowart, Jack Van Slyke and several early birds like Ray Cauble, Edwin Kapusta, and Robert Wootan arrived to settle down for the reunion. Walt Longacre made a trip to Offutt Air Force Base for final arrangements and Ken Sutton met with Jean Farris of the Marriott to go over details at the hotel.

Wednesday morning the reunion planners were busy setting up for registration and going over lay-outs for the hospitality and trophy rooms. By one o'clock, early check-ins were gathering and anxious to register. Some organizing remained in setting up the trophy and hospitality room, but the early birds wandered in and the reunion was under way. By days end over half had completed registration, one day early! That evening there were all kinds of get-togethers for dinner, then the hospitality room saw many more friends meeting until late into the night.

Thursday began early with most meeting at breakfast or in the hotel lobby. Originally a tour was planned to Offutt Air Force Base, but with the change in command all tours were scheduled for Friday. Many took the opportunity to go shopping or sight-seeing around Omaha, and some visited the Doorly Zoo. By afternoon nearly everyone was registered and the hospitality and trophy rooms were full until they closed at 4:30 for all to get ready for photos to be taken at 5 o'clock.

At 5:30 there was champagne "on the house" courtesy of the Omaha Marriott. For those wanting spirits, there was a cash bar with fifty cent drinks.

At 7:00 o'clock the doors were opened to the beautiful dining room. By having tables selected in advance there was no rush as each member was assured of his or her seat with friends. Ken Sutton saw to it that a table was tailored to meet the needs of your group of friends, whatever the size. One late arrival, Barney and Ann Russell, did not get a chance to register so they got a seat at the head table! It worked out fine as Barney was the navigator on my crew. The Russells had been held up at Dallas-Fort Worth airport and arrived



Early birds Jim Althoff, Walt Longacre and Ken Sutton going over final plans.

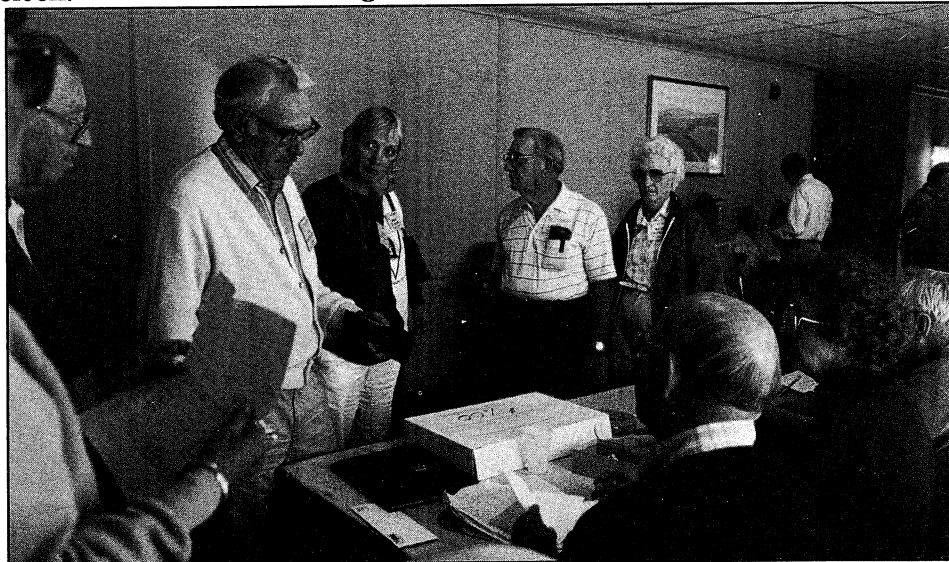
with no luggage.

The first part of the program called for a salute to the flag. Judge Byron Thompson was called upon to present a flag to the 781st Bomb Squadron Association on behalf of Congressman Tom Campbell from California. At our request Congressman Campbell had a flag flown over the Capitol on May 8, 1991 to commemorate the 46th Anniversary of our Victory in Europe. The flag was affixed to the standard for the salute led by Byron. It will now be our squadron flag and will be raised at each reunion.

Loren Foote followed with a prayer before our dinner. After dinner, introductions of guests, widows, and members attending their first reunion were made.

Ken Sutton was introduced, followed by Walt Longacre who described the tours to Offutt on Friday and the Boys Town trip on Saturday.

Then John Zadrozny was introduced and he had a surprise for Agnes Althoff. John, our director who handles awards, presented a beautiful Steuben crystal bowl to Agnes for all the work she has done for the



Walt and Ann Longacre, and Ken Sutton working registration.



Agnes Althoff after being presented the Steuben crystal bowl from John Zadrozny.

Association. It was appropriately inscribed for Agnes to remember this occasion. She was very, very pleased as she says her first love is glass. She could not raise the beautiful crystal bowl as high as she would have liked because her side was bruised from a fall in our motor home. She has a glass collection and this beautiful bowl has already taken the choice spot. When we returned home she went to the doctor the next day and was told she had two broken ribs and torn cartilage.

Following the close of our program, we were entertained by the Air Force's Air Combat Command "Heartland of America" 16 piece band, also known as the Notables. The band is stationed at Offutt Air Force Base. Under the direction of Lt. Dean Zarmbinsky the band played some old favorites - our kind of music. The vocalist, a young Air Force lady was great. When the program was scheduled to end many more requests were made and they played "overtime" to a very appreciative audience.

A lively hospitality room following the entertainment made it a full day for everyone.

Friday began early. Some early birds were seen having breakfast at 6 o'clock to make sure they would have a chance to take their morning walk before the 8:30 bus for Offutt Air Force Base. Some buses were scheduled at 8:30, others at 9:00. All went to Offutt to tour the base, see the Underground and visit the nearby SAC museum.



The Underground was the highlight for the 100 lucky ones who registered first. This command post for the Strategic Air Command, located 40 feet under ground, was the command center for our first line of defense in case of a nuclear attack. Those on the base tour were equally excited about seeing "Looking Glass," the plane that was airborne 24 hours a day until last spring. It was the airborne command post in case of attack on Headquarters at Offutt. Also, seeing the guard dogs and many planes was interesting for those "above ground."

A buffet lunch was served at the Officers Club. Following luncheon, those desiring to see the SAC museum left by bus for an interesting tour. A new arrival at the museum, the SR-71, joined a huge array of planes including the C-133, C-124, Vulcan Mark 11, B-29, B-36, B-58 and many other WWII and later era bombers, missiles and fighters.

Friday evening was open so the crews, sections, or friends could get together in individual groups at various restaurants. And, of course, a check-in at the hospitality room before retiring after a full day.

On Saturday we joined in a share-a-ride to Boys Town. It was only ten minutes away and everyone seemed so pleased to see the large and beautiful grounds. By 10 o'clock everyone arrived to fill the Chambers Protestant Chapel. It was the best attended service we have had. Walt Longacre had made some excellent arrangements and Loren Foote took charge of the Memorial Service. The Chapel was beautiful. Included in the service were Father Peter from the Catholic Chapel, and Pastor Don Sarton, Pastor of the Chambers Protestant Chapel. We sang a number of songs, and the prayer which James Downs wrote, and delivered at Dayton, was read by Loren Foote. Two buglers played the final taps and there was not a dry eye in the Chapel - tears of sadness for our fallen comrades.

Following the service there was a walking tour under the guidance of some of the boys from Boys Town to end, what I believe was, the best Memorial Service we have ever had.

The scheduled 1:30 meeting at the hotel was a little late getting started due to some late arrivals from Boys Town and lunch. We had our usual briefing session led



Rev. Loren Foote reading Prayer of Thanksgiving at Chambers Protestant Chapel

by Byron Thompson and assisted by Hank Willett and Walter Sutton.

The Board of Directors were re-elected and at a later board meeting all the officers were re-elected.

A written poll was taken for our next reunion. The result - the city with the most first choice votes - Tucson. That is where the 781st started and many replacement crews took operational training. It was somewhat of a surprise, although if you go back to our first vote ever taken at Colorado Springs, it was Dayton, San Antonio, Omaha, then Tucson. We had made arrangements for All American to be in Boston, so we had Boston in between, but now it looks like Tucson will satisfy all those early votes. The next vote count named Florida and California, followed by Nevada.

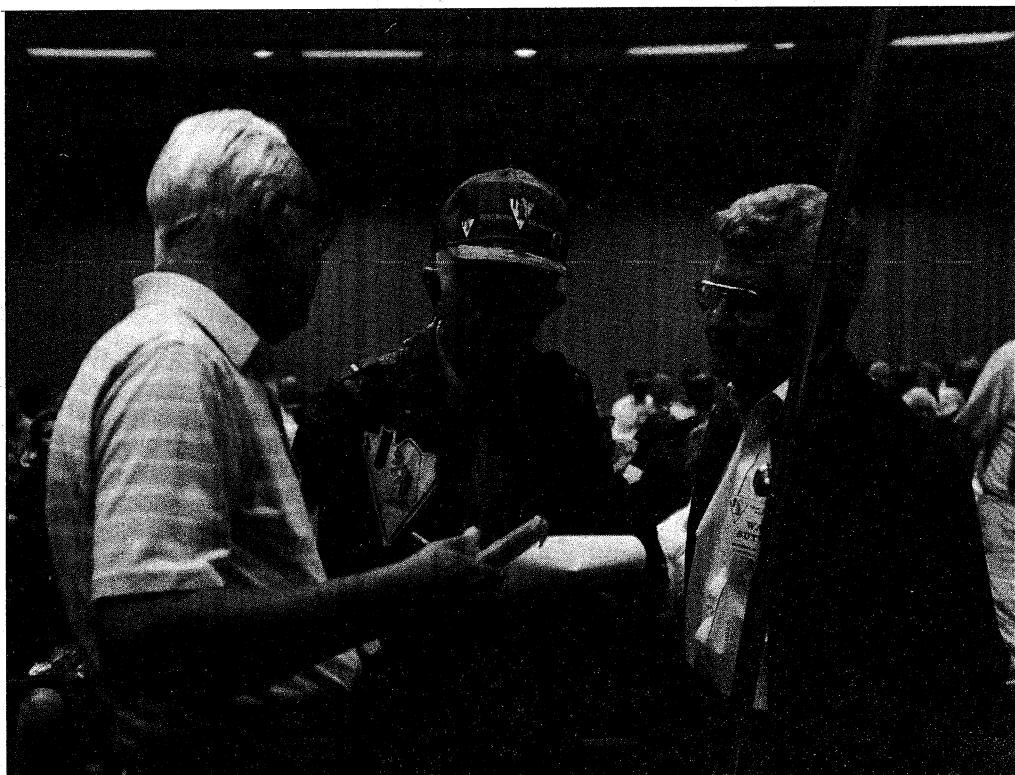
While in contact with Tucson Convention and Visitors Bureau, I found many satisfactory hotels and a great variety of things to do. Since going to a military installation has been high on our list, Tucson has Davis-Monthan, the original home of the 781st, the largest privately funded Aviation Museum in the U. S., Pima Air Museum with a B-24, and one of the silo's housing the Titan missile is now a museum - the only one in the country. And our John

Kennedy knows something about them, so October 1994 we'll have loads of things for you to do and see in Tucson.

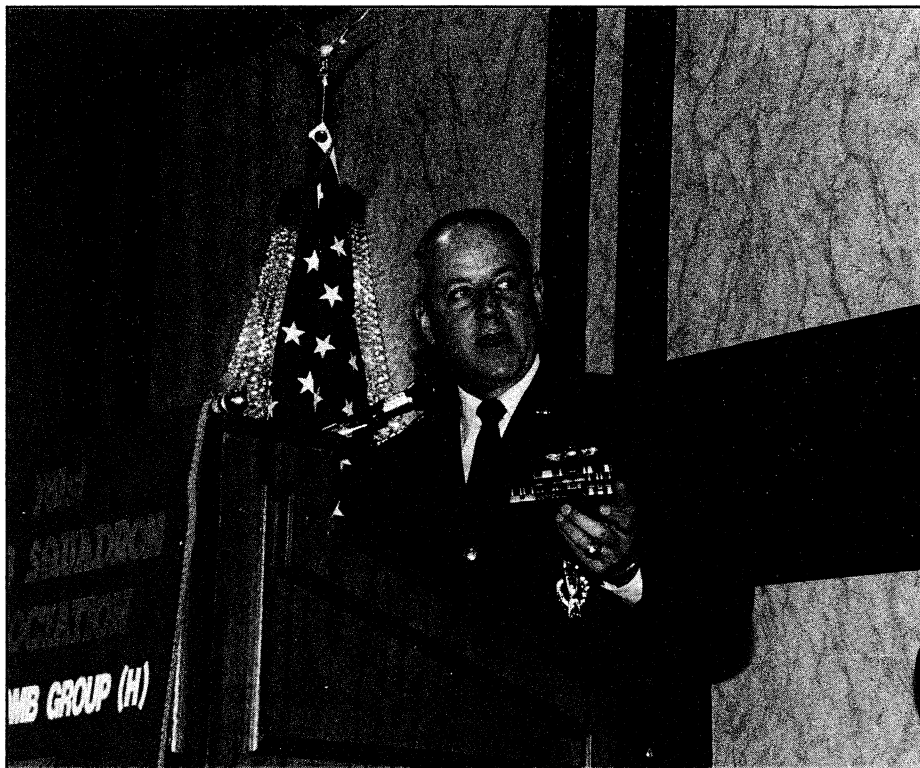
During the program I made a pitch for the Pantanella News pointing out that without you, the membership, taking part in submitting stories of your remembrances of Pantanella or stories of what you have done since Pantanella, there would be no Pantanella News. Pierre Kennedy passed out an information sheet for suggestions on how to develop a story. Russ Maynard volunteered to add to the request

and encouraged all to help out. I've received some early response, so the Pantanella News will keep coming!

Following the afternoon program there was a short hospitality stop, then to our rooms to get ready for the 5:30 "attitude adjustment" hour. The doors opened and the banquet began at 6:30. Joining us at the head table were Lt. Gen. Leo Smith and Mrs. Mary Jo Smith, along with Maj. Steve Reints and Sam Martin. Late arrivals



Our briefing Officers Byron Thompson, Hank Willetts and Walt Sutton preparing for the mission briefing.



WORLD POLITICAL AND MILITARY CHANGES

by LT. GEN. LEO SMITH

I retired June 1 when Strategic Air Command folded its wings into Stratcom and moved into the history books. You were out there to see its successor command, Stratcom. The mission remains pretty much the same with the Navy being a very large part of that Command. What I thought I would do is to talk a few minutes about the changes in the Air Force and the military, but most importantly the Air Force, since you all got together two years ago.

You are probably more aware of the tremendous changes in the world in the military and political sense. And we have been a very big part of that at Omaha in the Strategic Air Command, but we are not alone. As the Berlin wall came down and as the Warsaw pact were disestablished and as the Soviet Union fell apart around us there was a re-look and a re-thinking about our military forces in the

Gen. Smith briefing us on the world military and political situation.

were introduced including Homer Moeller's five children - the largest number from one family.

The presentation of the Silver Star to Eugene Krzyzynski took place, which was covered earlier in the newsletter. Several announcements were made and the final duty I had was to read the number of members recorded on the bottle of bourbon. Our roster shows 608 men, plus 419 in Folded Wings. Then a farewell and all retired to the hospitality and trophy rooms. Gen. Smith and Maj. Reints were interested in the trophy room and spent one-half hour or more reviewing exhibits and talking with members.

Sunday morning started early for some to catch flights as early as 6 AM. Others went to church or enjoyed a breakfast with friends. Departure began in earnest for most everyone by noon. A reunion to remember was over.

I had requests for the names of those who attended the reunion - the 131 men, seven widows, and 142 wives and guests for a total of 280. They are listed later in the newsletter.

Sections represented were engineering, ordnance, communications, armament, operations, intelligence, radar mechanics, medics (flight surgeon) and most of the flight crews. Our squadron's roster is made up of about one-third ground echelon and two-thirds air echelon when you figure the rotation of the flight crews. At the reunion it was approximately 25% ground echelon and 75% air echelon. There were 38 who have attended all five reunions

terms of size and the terms of composition because of that re-thinking and re-looking several things have taken place.

I am sure you are all aware of the base closures that have been mandated by the base closure commission supported by the President and the Congress. That is the first step. Then the draw-down in sizes of the Military Forces in terms of numbers is ongoing and ever present part of our life daily. The drawback of forces from overseas, back to bases in the continental United States, continues and in my view it will continue for the next several years.

In response to a victory in a cold war where, fortunately, we were never called upon to use the weapons that were for that cold war, and particularly the weapons for the Strategic Air Command that represent a culmination of years and years of effort to keep the peace and to deter aggression. We feel very comfortable that that mission was accomplished and we feel very comfortable that it was time for that great command to retire. It had done its job. And done it very well.

So it is part of history now. It had its beginning in 1946 at a period in time when the Air Force was not even a separate service. And it was closed after 46 years, on the first of June this year. That isn't the only sign of re-organizational change in the Air Force. If you have been watching you have seen that as the Strategic Air Command stood down we had also the stand down of Tactical Air Command, the Military Air Lift Command and the creation of two new commands in their place - Air Combat Command headquartered at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia which now has command for bombers, fighters, and missiles, and a Mobility Command at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois which has responsibility for

transport aircraft and tankers. Similarly we had the combining of Air Force Systems Command and Air Force Logistics Command into something which you may remember, the Air Force Materiel Command.

Looking at the world situation in assessing our needs for the future there was a determination made that we could do more with a fundamental reorganization that provided the opportunity for efficiency in both terms of manpower and also is in terms of working for a single boss. And that's what happened. Stratcom is the creation of some things that were thought about many years before, back in 1960. You may have heard about it in the presentation out there at Offutt. Back in those days there was an attempt made to bring all of the strategic forces of the Navy and the Air Force together in a single command. But at that time there was too much parochial in-fighting going on that that was impossible. It has taken 30 years to make that happen. And finally it has, for the benefit of all.

You will see some other changes in the months and years ahead as we adjust and we look at the kinds of hardware and the kinds of mission that each of military service will continue to perform. Air power is certainly going to be a very critical part of that series of missions that we will be discussing in the future. As we draw back forces from overseas that means that mobility becomes clearly a very critical part of any force elements that we continue to deploy or to build in this country. You have to go where the problem is. The problems are not going to come to you. And air power has that advantage of flexibility.

With air refueling capacity we have today, and our fighters and bombers, and our air-lift aircraft, that mobility is ever present and provides the opportunity to reach out and touch someone. And so we see that flexibility to be inherent in most of our aircraft today will continue to be in the years ahead.

It is not a peaceful world out there. You just have to read the newspaper. The Middle East is still boiling, Yugoslavia is not a happy place to be, so I believe in my own heart there will be an opportunity to use that flexibility that is inherent in air power in the years ahead. As I said it is a distinct privilege to be here this evening for a variety of reasons. One is because like you I am now a part of history. The command in which I grew up in and spent most of my life in is likewise a part of history. The key is to remember and honor your past but work to the future. I know you have that in mind, that is certainly my goal.

A few more words about Gen. Smith. As stated earlier he was born in Omaha and now, after a distinguished military career, plans to work and retire in Omaha. He graduated from West Point and attended many schools and had many commands. He has over 4000 flying hours. At the Strategic Air Command he was number two in command.

A letter from **Walt Longacre**, reunion co-chairman and the "man on the site" making local contacts and arrangements for the reunion.

"Ann and I wish to thank all of you fellow members and guests for attending another one of our great reunions. We received many compliments and praises on a job well done. We accepted those as graciously as we could knowing that we alone cannot put such a great event on. Jim and Agnes Althoff and Ken and Nancy Sutton did more than any of you realize. Without their words of advice and suggestions we would not have been able to do what we did.

Our Memorial Service was a surprise to Jim and we pretty much left him out to watch for once and take a breather. This we hope he did not mind. Two other people, Agnes and Nancy kept in the background and when work was to be done they did it. Agnes well deserved her crystal bowl and hopefully she will be able to enjoy it for many years. And for myself without suggestions from Ann, I would not have been able to do what little I did. Most of the Memorial Service was her suggestion. And how about the mints with the flags. That also was her idea. The hotel staff was gracious enough to put them on the tables for us.

Also, without all of you wonderful people who attend our reunions, we would not be able to put these events on. It is your cooperation that makes us want to work just a little harder for you. You are wonderful. There was not a single complaint to be heard.

Pastor Don Sarton of Boys Town did a great job on assisting Loren Foote with the services. The Buglers, who are both musical instructors at Boys Town, were great along with organist. We thank also Father Peter for his message and making it possible for having our services at the Chambers Protestant Chapel. It is a beautiful place.

We hope you enjoyed those tours also. Thank you everyone at Boys Town.

And didn't the hotel and staff do a marvelous job! I hope everyone was pleased. The employees were gracious and warm with their greetings and the food and service was always the best.

Earl Leinart did the arrangements for the base tours and the noon luncheon. He did a wonderful job in spite of all the changes that took place at SAC Headquarters over the past year.

Again, thank you for letting us do something to make your stay in Omaha enjoyable. I'll be seeing you in Tucson."

I receive many comments about the great attendance at our reunions. We have about as many attending as most group associations. As far as I can determine the 465th is the only WWII group from Italy or England that did not form as a group.

In our case I feel our response to the association is largely due to the fact that we started the association recognizing every member the same. We each had our duty during the days at Pantanella and each shared in the success of our victory. Whether you flew or were a mechanic, or a corporal or a captain, today we are all the same - veterans.

FIRST TIME ATTENDEES

James Debevec, Engineer on Crutcher crew.

Harold Erickson, Radar Mechanic
Vance Hutsell, Engineering.

Dean Otto, Nose Gunner on Pitts crew.

Frank Piteo, Top Gunner on Billger crew.

Charles Shoults, Engineer on Wheeler crew.

CANCELLATIONS

Don Fleming had planned to attend his first reunion, but his wife became ill and he had to cancel.

McHenry Hamilton, Group CO had another reunion to go to.

Ernie Van Asperen, was crushing grapes.

Bonnie Rowe had open heart surgery. He called Ben Donahue and still planned to make the reunion without his accordion, but he just didn't have enough time to recover.
Dick Crutcher had to take care of his 91 year old mother. He was going to bring her to the reunion, but it just didn't work out.

George Haushold cancelled just before the reunion due to heart bypass operation.

Michael Horvath wrote he was busy getting settled down in Florida and would not be able to make the reunion.

Jim Wray wrote a note saying he had to be at a grandson's wedding and couldn't make it.

Bob Basinette was planning a trip to Europe.

Bob Freeman's wife had an operation.

Marcel Snyder had cataract surgery (laser) and unable to attend, per Russ Maynard. Marcel and Dolly are well otherwise.

Regrets from Col McHenry Hamilton, Jr., our short time Group CO.
I have written to Paul Durckel and Ed Richardson (of the 783rd) telling them how sorry Pat and I will not be able to be with you in Omaha. Not in person, but in spirit. Unfortunately my buddies from the class of 38C decided to have our 54th anniversary in San Antonio at the same time. Ed called me a couple of weeks ago and we had a long conversation

about that 22 March 1945 mission.

Flying with the squadron that day as a short time Group CO makes me sort of a member of the squadron. The sad part is the missed opportunity in getting to know all of you in Italy. My being at the Reunion in Boston and meeting so many of you made up for some of the pleasure that I missed. God bless all of you, and God willing Pat and I will be at the next reunion."

Mac is referring to the Vienna mission when he was shot down with Ed Richardson, Paul Durckel, etc. And Mac you are a member of our association. We have invited all group personnel since they do not have an association. Many of the group men have attended our reunions.

Regrets from John Zartman . . .

In a little over a month the 781st will be gathering in Omaha for another wonderful reunion. It will be a time of renewed friendships and sharing of old and new experiences.

It is with much sorrow that Charlotte and I will be unable to attend. The muscular dystrophy is causing increasing problems for me. My mobility has deteriorated further and traveling becomes a major challenge. It was necessary for us to go to Ohio in May for a funeral. The travelling was not easy for me and quite a burden on Charlotte.

Our thoughts will be with the 781st and we know it will be another well planned and organized reunion. Please convey my best wishes to all members of the 781st.

Let us remember our comrades that cannot travel to our reunions. A call or note will mean a lot to them.

Why is the Pantanella News so late ?

The same excuse as the last time - the photos are late. In fact, I am going ahead and complete the newsletter without any photos from the Omaha photographer. He was in a serious car accident and we were unable to contact him until October 23. He had the photos sent in, but when they were returned by mail to him they were damaged. In the meantime he had the car accident

and still is unable to work.

The photos will be in the next newsletter. The photos appearing in this newsletter were taken by Frank Ambrose.

Our trophy room had a lot of interest at this reunion. Unfortunately there was very little memorabilia on display from members. I have a small collection of donations which will be at each reunion. A TV helped to show some video and there was enough to have old comrades remember some of the days at Pantanella. We encourage you to bring memorabilia to show your friends. Some are making donations so that their memorabilia will be at all the reunions. "Eventually" all memorabilia is scheduled to be given to the Fifteenth Air Force Museum.

At this reunion Earl Leinart donated a summer helmet with throat mike and a pair of OD Sox in memory of Ray F. Kania, tail gunner on the Barnett crew. This will be added to the collection and be at future reunions. Thank you Earl.

P X ITEMS FOR SALE

We had a rush at the reunion on all of our items and ran out of most everything. Still Available:

781st Cap (Summer) 7.00

781st Shoulder Patch 2.00

465th Bomb Gp. Pin3/4" 3.00

Plus shipping charges - For one or more caps \$1.50, one or more pins, 50¢. Make checks out to the Association and Mail to O. J. Cowart or Jim Althoff.

The gift shop in the Marriott had **T-Shirts** with the large 781st Indian and print circling the patch reading, "781st Bomb Squadron Fifth Reunion - 1992 - Forty Seventh Anniversary of Victory in Europe." A few are left and they will take your orders and send the T shirt to you. Call 402 399-9000 Ext 6684 for credit card orders or mail your check to The Omaha Marriott Gift Shop, 10220 Regency Circle, Omaha NE 68114. Please include your phone number if you mail in orders so they can call you if they have a question. Closeout prices for all are only \$7.81 plus tax total \$8.32. Price includes shipping. Sizes - Youth, medium and large. Adult, small, large and extra large.

VIDEO SPECIAL - Two years ago Vern Burda and I were asked to narrate part of a video. The first part is the B-17 Schweinfurt raid and is narrated by William Heller, a well know B-17 Squadron Commander in the Eight Air Force.

The second part is the target Ploesti and the Tipton and Althoff crew are pictured briefly, then narration by Vern Burda and myself. This portion is nearly all B-24 action shots and generally covers the Fifteenth Air Force along with Ploesti.

The final part is the original Memphis Belle movie, a documentary on this plane that was the first B-17 to finish 25 missions out of England.

The video was shown at times in the Trophy Room during the reunion and there were a number of inquiries on how to obtain a copy.

Except for a few very brief crew photos this is all WWII combat footage and well done. We have a special for our squadron. It can be purchased for \$19.95, (regular \$29.95) plus \$4 shipping. Order direct from World Aviation Video, 4266 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94611. **BE SURE TO MENTION YOU ARE FROM THE 781ST BOMB SQUADRON TO RECEIVE THE \$10 DISCOUNT.**

CALENDAR SPECIAL.

Many of you have seen the 1992 Ghosts calendar. One was on display in the trophy room. The January photo is *All American* with the 465th Group tail markings. Even though the calendar is outdated the photo of the B-24 is still great and excellent for framing. The price has been reduced to \$10 plus \$3 shipping.

FOR 1993 - Just out is the **Ghosts Desk Calendar**. Photographs are outstanding. WWII photos are black & white and current photos of WWII planes are in color. Included are two WWII 781st Bomb Squadron photos. One is Col. McKenna's "**COME 'N' GET ME YOU BASTARDS**" and the other is the Ordnance Section photo with a bomb reading, "**HERE'S AN EGG FOR HITLER'S EASTER BASKET.**" Appropriately it is part of the April calendar. Twenty nine photos in the desk calendar.

This desk calendar sells for \$16.95 plus \$3 for shipping.

Mail calendar orders to: Ghosts, 655 Arkansas St., San Francisco, CA 94107, or call 800-331-8231 (Calif. call 800 642-4554).

FOLDED WINGS

Robert Floyd (Top Gunner/Donahue) passed away May 26, 1992.

Franklin B. Martinez (Flight Engineer/Dahl) passed away July 27, 1992. Notice received from Carl Dahl.

Milton Duckworth (Pilot/783rd Bomb Squadron) passed away September 21, 1992.

Milton Duckworth had bone cancer and died from complication of pneumonia. Al Honey, from the 783rd, notified me. Milton was flying co-pilot for Lt. Col. Clarence (Jack) Lokker when he was shot down. I got to know Mickey during my search for the story on Col. Lokker. He was a subscriber to the Pantanella News and a supporter of *All American*.

ADDRESS CHANGES

Joseph E. Rogers, General Delivery, East Killingly, CT 06243

Harold Farrar, 2584 El Cajon, CA 92019. Phone 619 440-4082.

Jack C. Williams, 13850 E Marina Dr, Apt 101, Aurora, CO 80014.

Ellis L. Vest, 3915 Sunflower Rd, Pilot VA 24138.

Bernard L. Koenig, 20 S 41st St. Apt 56, Council Bluffs, IA 51501.

Charles Speer, 297 Pleasant Dr #84, Aliquippa, Pa 15001.

Arthur Pitts, city address is now Atlanta, GA 30340.

Francis Maccani, 16141 Porto Bello St., Bokeelia, FL 33922.

A long sign at a LIBERATOR AIRCRAFT PLANT back 'over-seas' reads: "Advice to women working in war plants - If the sweater is too big for you - look out for the machines; if you are too big for the sweater, look out for the men."

MAIL CALL



James Debevec wrote a note with his dues to O. J. Cowart, "Dues for the Pantanella News. Best paper in town."

To. O. J. Cowart from **Nick Schaps**, "I just finished reading - I should say devouring - the *Pantanella News*. What a wonderful piece! It was good of Jim to pay tribute to you for your dedication and tremendous contributions these past 7 years. May I add my thanks as well as much appreciation for the work you have done.

"Jim's comment about the dues payment plus his comments about having widows attend and keeping widows on the mailing list prompted my writing this note. Keep me or my wife, Marion, on the list for 10 years. I'm healthy as a horse now, but who knows about tomorrow. My four sons and one daughter also enjoy the Newsletter. Enclosed is my check for \$100 to insure the letter keeps coming. I hope this is agreeable.

"Thanks again for all you do to keep things rolling. I hope I'll see you soon."

From **Russ Maynard**. I've recently been in touch with the following warriors:

Gen. Ben O. Davis, Jr. (Lt. Gen. Ret.). He autographed his autobiography for me. I worked under his "oversight" when he was Ass't Sec. of Department of Transportation while I was in FAA Headquarters.

Joe Rogers & Ruth have sold their Connecticut home and are building in Florida hoping to visit the NE each summer.

Bill McGonigle is trying to complete a house in Sante Fe that he and Ann began a couple of years ago.

Vann Reynolds & Barbara were with us in Dayton. Barbara was fighting cancer then and was too ill to attend Waltham. She died in March '92 and Vann is devastated. He is trying to reclaim his life now. I will be in touch with him again soon. It would be good if other 781st war-

rriors would contact him.

Thanks Russ for letting us know about our friends. In case some of you don't know Gen. Davis headed up the Red Tail (Black) P-51 group that provided cover for us.

The following Mail Call was received after the reunion:

From **Jean Tipton**, "I just wanted to drop you a note to thank you and all those who helped for all the hard and tedious work that went into making the reunion in Omaha such a success. I really didn't think it was possible for a "single" to enjoy - well I was wrong and glad to admit."

Loren Foote wrote a letter of appreciation and comments about how much he and Marge enjoyed the reunion.

Pierre J. J. Kennedy, "The reunion in Omaha was terrific, the best yet. The Marriott was very nice. I received a questionnaire from Marriott's CEO in Washington D.C. which I filled out, and returned, with a good report on the Omaha Marriott."

William "Bill" Jostworth, "The reunion was another grand success. After visiting "Strat Com" and hearing and seeing their operations, I'm sure we all felt safer knowing that the military has the "nuke" situation completely under constant surveillance. Also, walking the grounds and talking with the residents at Boys Town was a most enjoyable and enlightening experience.

"Furthermore, I sincerely appreciated the honor to usher at the memorial service. Both Mary and I were ecstatic over the request to escort Lt. Gen. Smith and his charming wife, around the group, after his fine speech. We further provided him with a 465th pin, 781st patch and a poster, which he was extremely interested in acquiring.

"God willing, and if health and storms don't blow us away, we'll see you all in Tucson in '94. Looking forward to it - as always."

Jean Allen Wood sent in thanks and "Had a wonderful time in Omaha" sums up her expression of the reunion.

If you remember at the reunion on Thursday night before introducing

the widows present I commented about our first widow to attend, **Margaret Dalton**. She passed away since the last reunion, but we still remember her and how proud she was to be at the reunions to represent her husband Donald. Attending along with her was son Mark and sometimes other family members.

I recently received a note from Mark explaining his absence. "We're sorry we missed the 1992 reunion in Omaha. We wished we could have come for another visit with Dad's crew members, but as you can see we have a new addition to the Dalton Family. We hope everything went well and everybody had a good time. Between selling Mom's house and Kristen Ann we've been busy. We pray all is well and we are looking forward to seeing you all in 1994. Please look us up if ever in Arlington Heights, IL."

The note was in an announcement card for their newborn baby girl - born on Sept. 8, 1992, Kristen Ann, 6 lb 15 1/2 oz.. Congratulations to Mark and Nancy and their new addition, Kristen Ann.

Not a letter, but a phone call from **Bob Bassinette** inquiring about how the reunion turned out. Bob had planned to come to Omaha, then a trip to Europe, but a blood clot in his leg put him in the hospital. He is getting along well and sends his best wishes to all.

From **Gene Krzyzynski**

"Although I'm still in a state of shock and living in some sort of twilight zone, I want to thank you for putting together a marvelous reunion. They keep getting better as time goes by. Also I'd like to thank you and all your co-conspirators for the tremendous honor you bestowed on me. You've placed me in a select group of men and I hope that I can prove worthy to be in their company.

"It must have been a lot of work to wade through all the red tape especially after all the years that have gone by. I'll be eternally grateful. It brings back memories of my cadet days when one of the popular phrases was, "The difficult we do immediately, the impossible takes a little longer." That surely applies to

the 781st.

"I don't remember anything I said after the presentation, so I'd like to express what is in my heart. To have been so honored, the company of the men whom I respect and love above all others, made the experience even more rewarding. I thought it honor enough to have served with them. Though these words are borrowed they express my feelings. I'm deeply thankful for that for a few brief moments in my life I had the honor and privilege "To Soar with Eagles."

"I thank you and every member of the 781st family for the most memorable moment of my life.

"God Bless You, I love you all."

ALL AMERICAN

At the reunion there was a report that the names on the bomb bay doors were removed. The names had to be removed to re-skin the doors due to corrosion. After the job was finished last year all the names were replaced. Some may be in a different place due to additional names added.

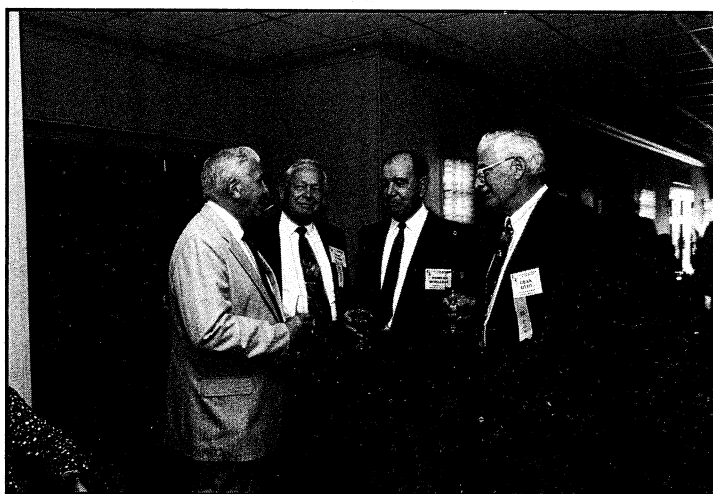
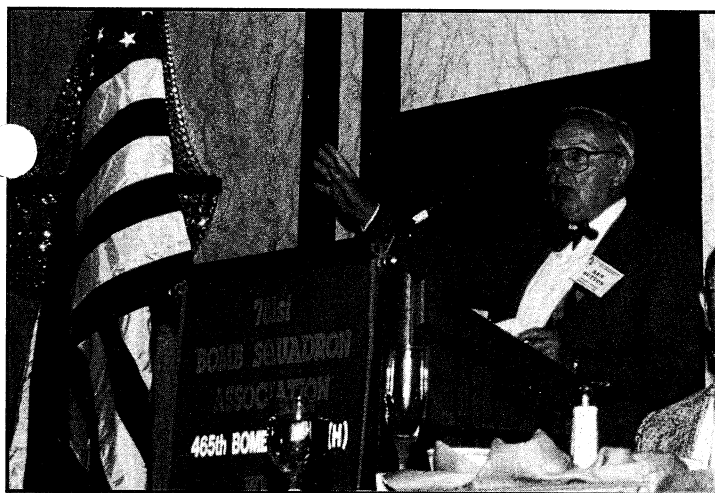
I was informed by Bob Collings that as of October 1992, we were not leading in donations to keep the 465th Bomb Group tail marking on the right tail. Some late contributions were made, but may not have been enough. If we missed the mark, 1993 is a new year and we have the opportunity to get it back on.

WWII AIRCRAFT LOSSES

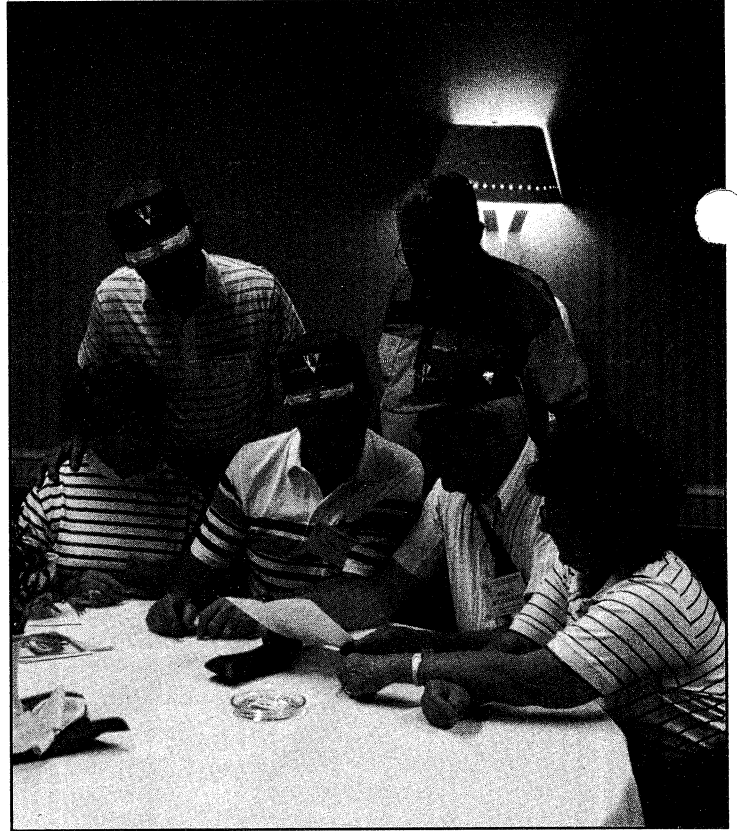
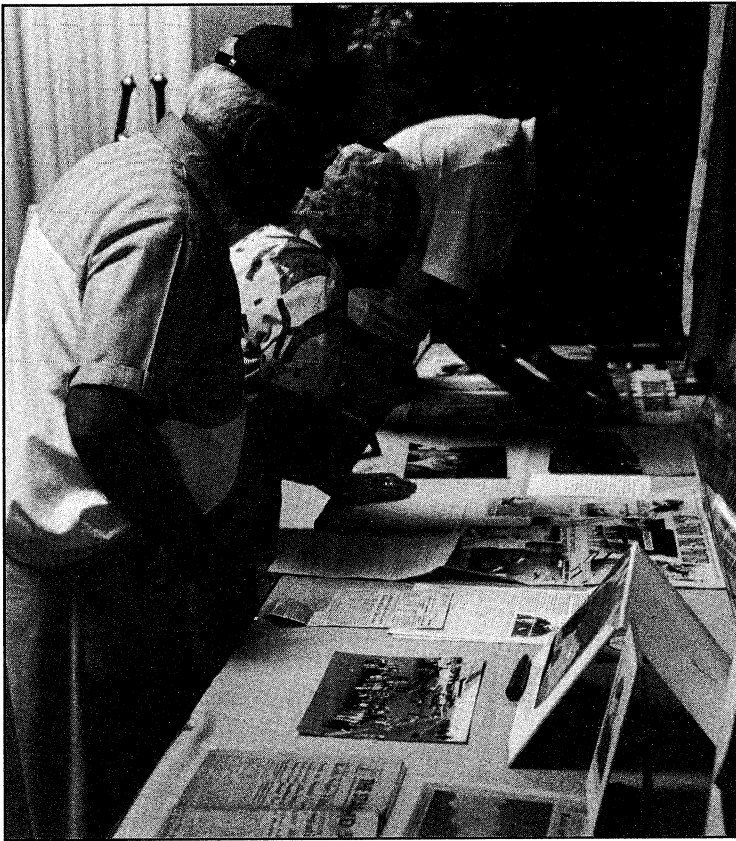
Germany	95,000
United States	59,296
Japan	49,485
Great Britain	33,090
Australia	49,485
Italy	4,000
Canada	2,390
France	2,400
New Zealand	684
India	587

No figures were available from Russian losses. Does anyone know how many B-24s were lost in combat?

JAMES C. ALTHOFF	RAYMOND D. CAUBLE	TELIO P. GIAMMARCO	REUBEN L. KROGH	KENNETH B. REHN	ALBERT I. THOMPSON
FRANK P. AMBROSE	FRANCIS R. CLARK	HAROLD A. GIVENS	EUGENE M. KRZYZYNSKI	MAJ. STEVE RIENTS	BYRON W. THOMPSON
BERNARD BADLER	WALTER CLAUSEN	OLIVER E. GRAHAM	JOHN P. LAYNE	HARRY REUSS	DENLY J. THOMPSON
DANIEL E. BAILEY	FRANK M. COATS	CLIFFORD M. GRANT	ALBERT P. LEBLANC	JOSEPH F. RICH	LAWRENCE J. TIEHEN
JOHN R. BAKER, JR.	DAVID B. COLEMAN	SELMER E. HANSEN	ORREN J. LEE	THERON R. ROBINSON	TERRI TIEHEN
RUSS BALL	HUGH E. COOPER	JOHN C. HEADER	EARL R. LEINART	BARNEY G. RUSSELL	JEAN TIPTON
ARGENE BARNETT	O.J. COWART, JR	LUCILLE HELD	MILTON LEVINSON	JOHN T. RUSSELL	DONALD E. TOOMEY
DOUG BARNETT	CALVERT CRAWFORD	RALPH D. HENDRICKSON	WALTER N. LONGACRE	DALE L. SAMUELSON	FLOYD H. TRUDEAU
DONALD A. BARRETT	R. LEON CROUCH	LYLE A. HERMANSON	LEO G. LUTGRING	HERBERT L. SCHLOSSIN	RAY U. TYLER
HARRY J. BARRETT	CORNELIUS V. CULHANE	MARILYN HIEBELER	LEO LUTGRING, JR	EDWARD J. SCHREINER	JACK VAN SLYKE
KRISTINE BARTUSEK	CARL V. DAHL	JUNE HILL	FRANCIS M. MACCANI	HAROLD G. SCHUSTER	JAMES E. WAGGLE, JR
JOHN B. BAUM	JEAN DAVIS	VANCE R. HUTSELL	ADRIAN A. MARTIN	HAROLD SEITZ	JOHN E. WARD
VINCENT A. BEESON	JAMES DEBEVEC	FRANK T. HYLLA	EUGENE G. MARTIS	JAMES D. SHAFFER	FRANK WASSENAAR
WARREN L. BEESON	MICHAEL J. DEIRONIMI	CHARLES E. INGRAM	RUSS T. MAYNARD	DODIE SHALLMAN	LESLIE S. WHEELER
NICHOLAS C. BELIK	MELVIN L. DERRY	PATRICIA INTILE	KAITLYN MC CLELLAN	ROBERT L. SHETTERLY	HENRY L. WILLETT, JR
MILDRED BELLA	BEN L. DONAHUE	FRANK R. JASICKO	RICH MCCLELLAN	WALKER H. SHIPLEY	THOMAS L. WILLIAMS
ARTHUR W. BOVETT, JR	JAMES F. DOWNS	WILLIAM H. JOSTWORTH	SHERRY MC CLELLAN	CHARLES T. SHOULTS	STANLEY J. WINKOWSKI
MRS. CATHERINE	JOSEPH DOWNS	ROBERT M. JOYNER	CAROL MOELLER	LT. GEN. LEO SMITH	JEAN ALLEN WOOD
BRADY, SR	PAUL N. DURCKEL	EDWIN E. KAPUSTA	HOMER L. MOELLER	CHARLES SORLIE	ROBERT S. WOOTAN
PAUL BRADY, JR	ALICE EDWARDS	DALE L. KEISER	ROBERT MOELLER	GEORGE A. SOROKA	JOHN WROBLEWSKI
VERONICA BRADY	WILLIAM C. ELLETT	JOHN B. KENNEDY	JOSEPH M. NEUMAN	NORMAN G. STENERSON	JOHN ZADROZNY
CHARLES H. BRAUD	ROBERT W. ELLIOTT	PIERRE J.J. KENNEDY	JAMES H. O'NEAL	DONALD D. STERN	CHARLES R. ZWERKO
VERNON G. BURDA	HAROLD ERICKSON, JR	JAMES H. KIENITZ	DEAN T. OTTO	BERTEL E. STIGBERG	LORI FORSLINE
MRS LOLA BUTTERFIELD	JOAN ESKEW	FRANCIS K. KILL	GINO J. PELLESCI	RICHARD J. STORM	JOHN T. FOUNTAIN
WARREN G. CARDEN	HAROLD B. FARRAR	CLARENCE A. KNOX	FRANK A. PITEO	HAROLD A. STRAUGHAN	WILLIAM A. RACHOW
GAYTHOR L. CASS	CHARLES V. FERICH	BERNARD L. KOENIG	DONALD B. POSTEMA	KENNETH E. SUTTON, JR.	MORRIS R. RAPOPORT
JULIA CATO	DENNIS B. FLAHERTY	KENNETH J. KOPP	ORVILLE QUAIL	WALTER H. SUTTON	CURTIS G. REED
	LOREN W. FOOTE				



Men, guests, and widows attending Reunion 92 are listed above. Photo upper L, Ken Sutton, reunion co-chairman - upper right, James Downs in chair, Joe Downs & wives - Lower L Walt Longacre, co-chairman, and "Doc" Rapoport - R, Dave Coleman, ?, Homer Moeller and Dean Otto.



Many were interested in the memorabilia to bring back some memories of Pantanella (left) and sometimes it was something to show each other in the hospitality room (right).

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