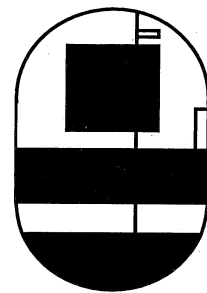




PANTANELLA NEWS



OCT 1996

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50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AIR FORCE

By Brigadier General Brian A. Arnold

The following address was given by Gen. Arnold at the banquet of the 781st Bomb Squadron.

Many of you were on active duty on Sept. 18, 1947, when, under the leadership of General Spaatz, the Air Force became a separate service, an equal to the Army and Navy.

We've come a long way in 50 years. It's been fifty-two years since you were at Pantanella, so for the next few minutes, I want to give you a broad-brush, update on a few significant issues.

Of course, there have been numerous changes, but I'd like to start by stating a constant that bridges World War II to 1996. I admit that with all of the "gee whiz" technology and powerful hardware that are being used by today's military, it would be easy to believe that "armaments" are the secret to our long success. But you and I know that the people are the heart and soul in our prosperity as a nation and as a military.

Because of that — and because of the direct correlation between readiness and quality

of life for our people and their families — the Air Force puts a lot of emphasis on quality of life for our people. Quality of life is the number one reason people choose to remain in today's voluntary Air Force.

Therefore, we've put a lot of emphasis on several quality of life priorities, including compensation and benefits, health care, community support and family programs, retirement, educational opportunities, and housing.

While the importance of people

hasn't changed in the Air Force the last 50 years, the number certainly has. We have far fewer people to work with these days. At the end of World War II, the Army Air Force had the largest air force ever assembled, with nearly 2.4 million airmen; today there are approximately three-hundred eighty-nine thousand people on active duty in the Air Force.

Of course, the most obvious change in the Air Force in the last 50 years is the equipment with which we work. Technology is allowing us to do mind-boggling feats today that were nothing more than science fiction during World War II.

In 1993, the Department of Defense conducted a bottom-up review of our national military strategy. One of the primary findings was that it is highly likely that U.S. military forces will be called upon to defend U.S. interests in a lethal environment, but that it is difficult to predict from where and when that call might come. Events since 1993 have confirmed that finding.



Brigadier General Brian A. Arnold, commandant, Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps, addressing the 781st Bomb Squadron at their banquet.

As a result of that review, the Air Force began a carefully constructed, time-phased modernization plan. The time-phased approach covers near-term, mid-term, and long-term efforts while keeping a smart and cautious eye on our use of this nation's money. Part of that modernization process is upgrading of our bombers to perform unbelievable tasks.

Since we are bombers, I want to concentrate on them, but I would be remiss to not briefly mention the F-22, which is currently one of the Air Force's top priorities.

The F-22 is not scheduled to be operationally deployed until 2005, but it has us excited right now. It's truly a revolutionary next-generation air superiority fighter. We believe no aircraft anywhere will be able to compete with it for decades.

The F-22 is a new breed of jet that promises to restore a decisive

technical and tactical advantage that we've been losing as other nations gain more advanced weapons.

In stealth technology, in essence, allows a pilot to hide from the enemy. It uses a combination of shape and materials that deflect or absorb radar energy, effectively reducing the range at which enemy radars can detect it.

Supercruise technology is a combination of new engine and aerodynamic advances that allow the F-22 to cruise at supersonic speeds without using the fuel-gulping afterburners our current fighters require. In other words, it has far better supersonic range than the F-15 and better acceleration.

The F-22's "brain" is a highly sophisticated computer able to perform nine billion operations a second. It displays offensive, defensive and navigational data in an easy to read format.

This system — called "integrated avionics" — also provides the F-22 with a picture of the battle space never possible before. This picture will include, type, location, speed and direction of enemy aircraft; type and location of surface threats; effective range of enemy radars and weapons; targeting priorities and solutions; and all relevant information about the F-22's wingman and other friendly aircraft.

This aircraft is so advanced that the SA-6 that shot down Capt. Scott O'Grady's F-16 over Bosnia would not have been able to complete the complex task of acquiring, tracking, and shooting down an F-22.

In 1944, General Eisenhower was quoted as saying, "If I didn't have air supremacy, I wouldn't be in there." As you can see, the F-22 should give us unquestionable air supremacy in the future.

Closely following the F-22 on the list of Air Force priorities is the modernization of our bomber fleet. Currently, we have fifty-six B-52s, sixty B-1Bs and thirteen B-2s - a far cry from the thousands of B-17s, B-24s, B-25s, B-29s and other legendary aircraft of WWII.

I enjoy talking about our bombers because, like you, I'm an old bomber...and I enjoy talking about

putting iron on target. A change that hits particularly close to me the last July 27, retirement of the Air Force's last 4 F111s...an aircraft that during the last 30 years has dropped almost every kind of air-to-ground weapon and has rained devastation from Hanoi to Baghdad. It's an old friend of mine. We spent a lot of time together.

A few moments ago, I mentioned the huge fleet of WWII bombers. Today's bomber fleet will number less than 140. Without all those bombers, how is the United States Air Force going to keep putting iron on target? With a combination of technology and old-fashioned common sense, the Air Force will continue to strike at will, on time and with unequalled accuracy.

Our newest B-2 Spirit stealth bomber was christened the "Spirit of Oklahoma" just two weeks ago. It's the 13th operational B-2 to be delivered, the fifth in 1996. Eight more are scheduled for delivery by early 1988 to complete the planned fleet of 21 B-52s.

I've already commented about your stellar performance in the B-24. Since you're familiar with that aircraft, let me give you some comparisons with our current bombers to get you up to date.

*The B-24 could cruise at 175 miles per hour and had a range of thirty-two hundred miles; the B-2 flies at more than triple that speed and can travel across entire continents without refueling and go another ten thousand miles on a single refueling. And as I mentioned about the F-22, the B-12 has the advantages of stealth technology.

*The B-24 could fly at an altitude of twenty-eight thousand feet; the B-2 and B-52 can fly up to fifty thousand feet high.

*The B-24 could carry eight thousand pounds of bombs; the B-52 can carry seventy thousand pounds of bombs, mines and missiles.

Of course, we have some very capable pilots today as well. You know that some of them used that power effectively earlier this month during Operation Desert Strike. On September third, two B-52s flew

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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.

more than fourteen thousand miles across United States and the Asia/Pacific region before launching 13 conventional air launched cruise missiles at Iraqi targets.

The missiles slammed into surface-to-air-missile sites and air defense radars in response to Saddam Hussein's attacks on Kurds in northern Iraq. The entire mission lasted only thirty-four hours!

Speed is one of our strengths. The Air Force offers the quickest response and longest range forces available to the president in a fast-breaking crisis. Our bombers can launch from the United States and reach any point on the globe with precise, lethal strikes in 20 hours.

After Desert Strike a few weeks ago, one of the B-52 crew members commented that the mission was a great opportunity to show the capabilities of the B-52. He said, "We can do this kind of thing anytime, anywhere in the world."

As an example of how far and fast we can go, last summer, a B-52 crew from Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana set six aviation speed records for speed over a six thousand-mile course, unrefueled and with a payload.

The record-setting flight, nicknamed "Long Rifle," took-off from Edwards Air Force Base in California, flew to Adak Naval Air Station, Alaska, and returned — all in 11 hours and 23 minutes at an average speed of 556 miles per hour!

I mentioned earlier that the bombers are in the midst of an upgrade. These upgrades are helping us integrate our newest con-

ventional weapons onto all our bombers. They'll give our non-stealthy B-52s and B-1s multiple target, stand-off, precision strike capabilities as well as increase their survivability.

The combination of a limited number of B-2s with upgrades to our existing bombers provides an affordable approach to maintaining the capability required to "swing" — if need be — between two major regional conflicts.

Brigadier General Brian A. Arnold is Commandant of the Air Force Reserve Training Corps which is headquartered at Maxwell Air Force. He is responsible for recruiting, overseeing the preparation of more than 15,000 officer candidates through a comprehensive college program and 144 host universities, and monitors citizenship training for more than 85,000 Junior Air Force Reserve Training Corps students at more than 600 high schools throughout the United States and overseas.

Commissioned in 1971 the general has spent the majority of his career as a pilot in FB-111 and B-52 aircraft. He has served as commander of U. S. Forces, Azores and commander of the 65th Air Base Wing, Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal.



Gen. Arnold receives a copy of the history book of the 781st Bombardment Squadron from Harry Carl.

MONTGOMERY IS SCENE OF ANOTHER GREAT REUNION

The reunion was scheduled for Sept. 26, but it began two days earlier.

On Tuesday we arrived in the late afternoon and were greeted by Esther and O. J. Cowart who had arrived earlier in the day. Later I met other arrivals and by evening I discovered there were more Tuesday arrivals than at any other reunion. Lots of eager beavers! And the reunion was underway!

Wednesday morning saw some of the early birds at breakfast and others were getting acquainted with the layout of the hotel. The volunteers for registration and the trophy room were getting set up. Since I did not drive my motor home, I was fortunate that Bernie Badler, who lives near me, volunteered to bring the boxes of memorabilia and records. They were unloaded and put on display.

I had arranged to go with Harry Carl to the Historical Research Agency at Maxwell Air Force Base to view 465th Bomb Group and 781st Bomb Squadron records. Additionally, Harry Carl inquired about eventually donating his personal photo collection and then inquired about the possibility of the 781st Bomb Squadron donating their records. We found the Agency very helpful and interesting.

Harry found out how much brass is stationed at Maxwell. While parking at a curb, like all other cars in the area, Harry's car was tagged by a Major. His instructions were to appear before a Lt. Col. within 24 hours. He did not read the entire tag when received, so he is responding by letter. It seems as though there was a slight curve in the street. However, there were no signs indicating no parking and the curb looked well used.

We returned before noon to find registration opening and name tags beginning to appear. And, more new arrivals began showing up. Over half were checked in by the end of the day. That evening many had dinner in the hotel, and others at nearby restaurants. We had dinner with

Ken Foden and his new wife, Dot. Later the hospitality area became a popular spot and there were many friends meeting well into the night.

Thursday began with the usual breakfast and then registration, hospitality, trophy room and PX got a lot of action beginning at the opening at 9 AM. Our lay-out was different than in the past. All of our activities were in one large room. The hospitality, trophy room and PX were separated from the dining area by dividers. It worked out great. It was very easy to locate someone you wanted to talk to. Also, there was free coffee and soda all day long.

At 5:30 the cocktail party began in the hospitality room. It was a chance for all to see who had arrived and to greet old friends.

At 7 o'clock the dinner call was heard and assembly began in the adjoining dining room. Harry Carl was master of ceremonies.

Those of you not at the reunion may not know I had surgery in August and was uncertain of the outcome and uncertain if I would make the reunion. At that time I informed the board that I had asked Harry Carl to take on my duties at the reunion which included the meetings. He willingly accepted and did a great job. Earlier in the year Ken Sutton took over as overall reunion chairman after the untimely death of Nick Schaps, and did his usual great job.

After all were assembled for dinner Jim Waggle led the pledge of allegiance to the flag which was flown over our Nations Capital for the 781st Bomb Squadron on May 8th, 1991 to commemorate the 46th Anniversary of Allied Victory in Europe. Then Loren Foote gave the invocation.

After dinner Kelly Mott, Convention Marketing Manager, with the Montgomery Chamber of Commerce, was introduced by Harry Carl. She welcomed us to Montgomery and gave us an idea what there is to see and do in and around Montgomery. Miss Mott was a great help in planning the reunion.

Harry spoke about the success of the Life Membership and asked all Life Members to stand. Then some recent members who had not received certificates were presented with theirs. It was noted that wives of Life Members will retain Life Membership and will con-



The usual bustling registration table. As much visiting and showing pictures as registering.



John Zdrozny receiving a plaque for his service as a board of director.



Esther Cowart receiving the beautiful Steuben bowl.



Lunch at the Maxwell Air Force Base Officers Club.



A few names, R to L, Ferich, Jostworth, ? ?, standing, Dolly Snyder, Oliver Graham, ?, Cauble.



Ann and Barney Russell, Paul Durckel, Walt and Ann Longacre. Al and Dot LeBlanc, And ?



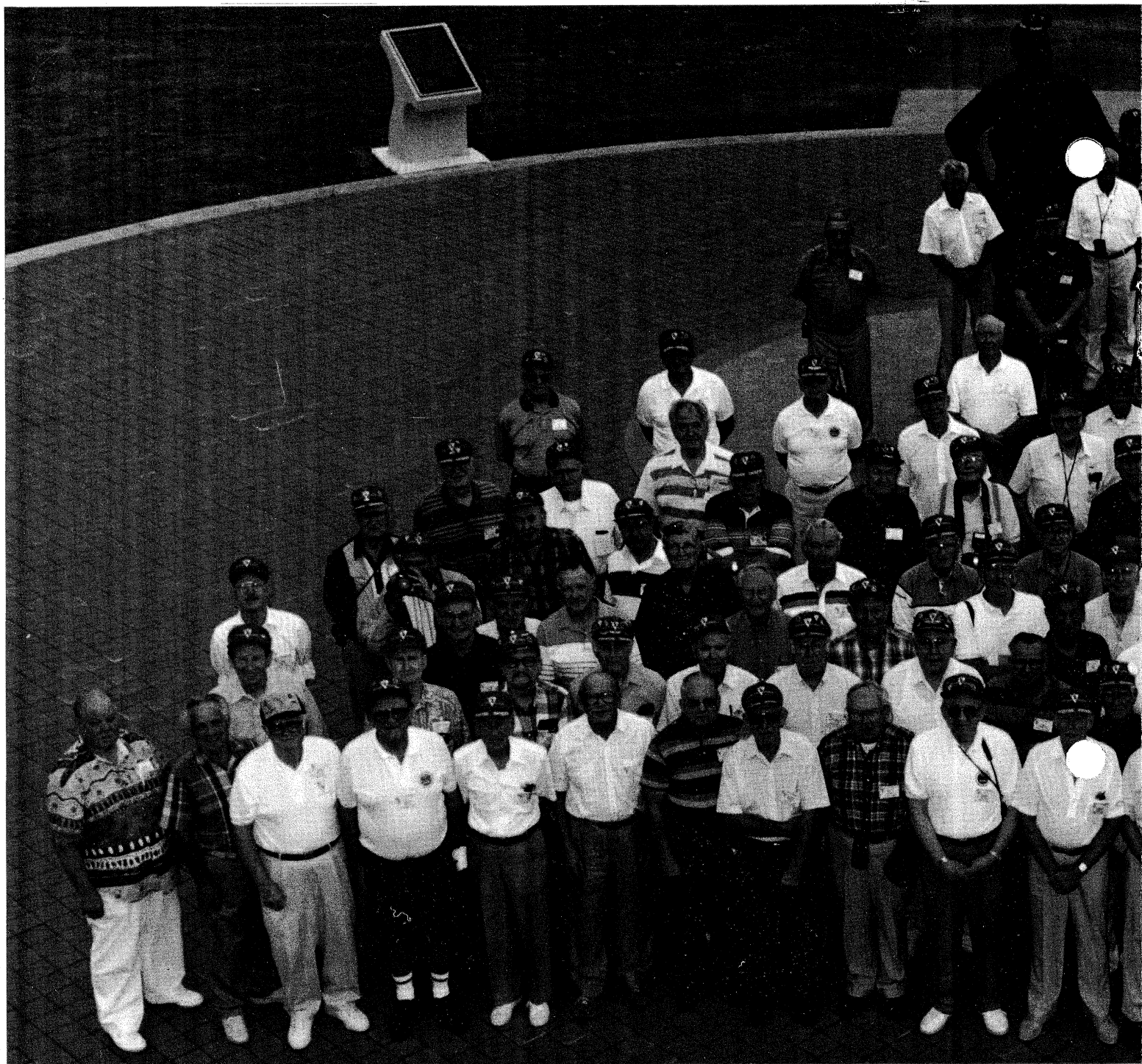
The Ordnance Section on a night out.



Byron Thompson receiving a plaque for the years best story in the Pantanella News.



Ken and Dot Foden star gazing and watching the eclipse.



There were 107 men present when this photo was taken at Maxwell Air Force Base, AL. on Sept 27, 1996

tinue to receive the "Pantarella News" and are very welcome to continue to participate in our reunions.

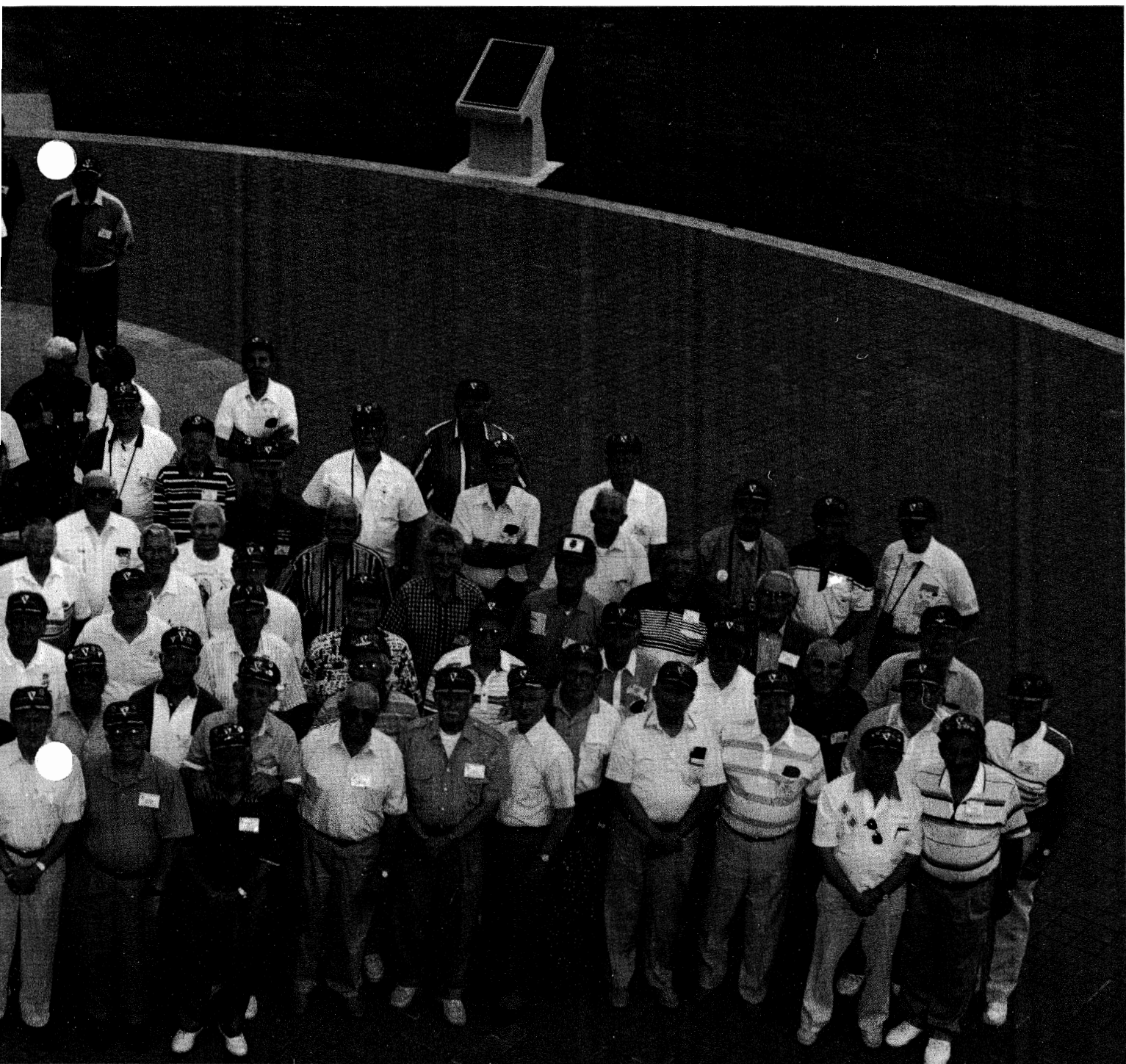
A number of introductions were made such as Les Wheeler with his three sons in attendance, widows, first time attendees, etc.

Marcel Snyder led a brief review of the various places we had held reunions and some important events like being filmed for a Good Morning America show, the opportunity to go through the B-24 "All American," the presentation of the Silver Star to

Gene Krzyzynski, etc.

Also included in our Thursday program were acknowledgements to those who helped the association during the year and especially those who contributed so much to the reunion: Nick Schaps for initiating the preparations for the reunion and working on the planning until his untimely death in December. To Ken Sutton for taking over handling the arrangements for the reunion and supervising the volunteers who helped. To Walt Longacre for organ-

izing the dinner table assignments and his part in the memorial service. To Loren Foote for leading the prayers at all our affairs, and particularly the memorial service. To O. J. Cowart for looking after the association's money, preparing the name tags, assisting Jim Althoff on the roster and other computer work. To Ben "Kitty Kitty" Donahue for making the hospitality room a success. To Jack Van Slyke for overseeing the Trophy Room. To Barney Russell for keeping track of the PX and han-



dling the sales. To Byron Thompson and his helpers for the briefing to be held on Saturday. To Kelly Mott of the Montgomery Visitors' Center for all the help she provided to Ken Sutton for local arrangements. And to the wives of all these men who for their help and understanding about the time each member has spent for Squadron activities.

Harry then spoke of the help many have contributed to the 781st. John Zadrozny was then called for-

ward and presented a plaque for his many years of outstanding service on the Association Board of Directors.

Then he noted that we encourage and recognize members who have developed articles for the "Pantanella News," and we have initiated a program to present a plaque for what we judge to be the best article published each year. The first of these was for Ralph DuBois of Group Intelligence (S-2) for his article entitled "From Haybarn Stor-

age to 465th Bomb Group S-2" appearing in issue #39 in January 1995. Ralph was not able to attend, so we will send his plaque with our sincere thanks for this great job.

The second plaque for outstanding journalism was awarded to Byron Thompson, our Squadron Intelligence Officer, for APULIA-ITALY "Home of Pantanella Army Air Base" which appeared in the "Pantanella News" issues #41, 42, 43, and 44. This was a job especially well done in concept and execution.

We then called Esther Cowart to come to the podium and and praised her for her help in assisting O.J. as the treasurer of the association, particularly in maintaining order in proper collection and recording of dues, tickets, sales, etc. during all reunions. She was then presented a beautiful Steuben vase as a small token of the Association's appreciation of her efforts.

We then talked about the Association and the need for members to serve on the Board and participate in helping in Association activities. Twenty-three volunteered of which two were elected to the Board of Directors on Saturday, Robert Shetterly and Robert Freed. The other volunteers will be contacted later for help in other areas.

Friday's first activity began with a Board Meeting at 7:30. Others gathered in the restaurant area during the next two hours for breakfast. If anyone read the local paper that day they would have seen a nice article about our reunion.

The schedule called for loading the buses at 9:30. A slight error in timing somewhere, but all enjoyed some visiting until the buses arrive. Buses departed with a guide on each bus to give history of the area and pointing out the City Center and State House. A lot of history in Montgomery and old Montgomery. One example is an historic train station where the trains stopped under a shed. The only thing missing was an engine puffing and smoke curling out from the building. I made four trips in and out of this station in 1943 and 1944. Other points of interest including the capitol, Martin Luther King Memorial etc.

From Montgomery the buses departed for Maxwell AFB about 6 miles away where we were left off at the Officers Club for lunch. A short talk during lunch and we were on our way to the Memorial Service at Chapel 2. It is a beautiful chapel and a very moving service was held. After the bugler played taps at the end of the service there was not a dry eye. Thanks to Loren Foote and Walt Longacre for all the arrangements.

Then it was on to have our group

photo under the direction of Frank Ambrose. Lucky for us the occasional rain had stopped.

Following this was our tour of Maxwell AFB, and Ken and Nancy Sutton had an opportunity to see the house they lived in for awhile in WWII. We all enjoyed seeing the beautiful base. I heard one negative comment - there were no planes! Yes, Maxwell is headquarters for all Air Force Officers training and there are only a few passenger planes that come and go.

At the last stop we heard a talk given by the Historical Research Agency. Then we continued on and it was 5 o'clock when we arrived at our hotel. Most were happy to be back after a full day. It was a night for crews and sections or just friends to have dinner together. The hospitality and trophy room area had activity all evening.

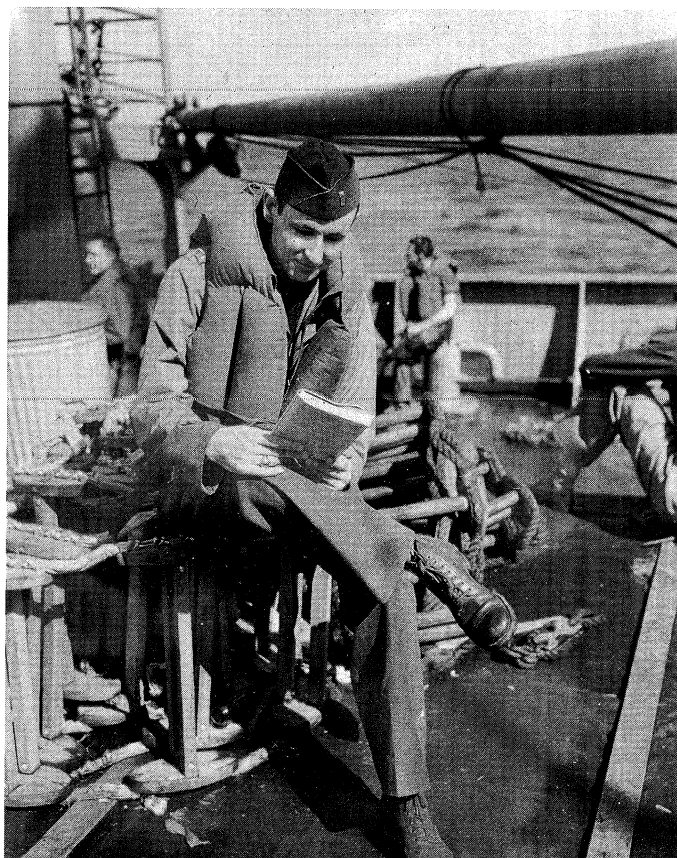
Saturday called for our usual morning program which began at 9:30. After some announcements Harry Carl called upon Byron Thompson and his briefing crew to simulate the briefing held 52 years ago at Pantanella. Of all the targets Byron briefed he said he remembers this one the best. It was for the target on 3 August 1944 to Friedrichshafen, Germany (Aircraft Factory). Byron outlined the route to the target, where the fighter attack took place, and the return to the base. The Group received a Presidential Citation for the excellent success of this mission. The Group also suffered losses, eight B-24s and their crews. Hank Willett, Doc Rapoport, Loren Foote and Walter Sutton were all part of the briefing program.

Then members in the audience were asked to give

their remembrances of the mission. Some excellent stories were told by Russ Maynard, Hank Willett, and others.

Byron remembered that there was an investigation from wing after the mission to see that all crews were properly briefed on the enemy opposition in the area. The investigators were satisfied to learn the briefing had given a complete report on expected enemy opposition. A full report on the success of this mission will be published in a future newsletter.

Harry Carl reported on the board of directors meeting held on Friday morning. He presented the nominations for the board of directors to the membership. They were; Harry Carl, Ken Sutton, Jim Althoff, Bob Shetterly, Bob Freed, Jack Van Slyke, O. J. Cowart and Charles F. McKenna III, Emeritus. A vote by show of hands approved the nominations thereby electing the above directors. Outgoing director, Stan Winkowski, was praised for



Byron Thompson reading a book aboard the ASA GRAY at sea on the way to Africa in 1944.

Photo by Frank Ambrose - he seems to be everywhere!

serving on the board since 1986. The board of directors elected all the existing officers at their meeting.

We reported that the board of directors recommended Dayton, Ohio for the 1998 reunion. Two other squadrons (780th and 782nd) have indicated they will be meeting at the same time in Dayton to make this a 465th Bomb Group meeting for one day. By a show of hands the membership agreed. More details on this in future newsletters.

A suggestion was made by Carl Dahl to hold the next reunion in California. After a discussion Carl Dahl was appointed to form a committee to review potential reunion sites in California or other Western sites and report back to the board.

A program with aircraft recognition slides was planned, but the prior program was longer than expected so it was decided to forgo the slides and adjourn the meeting. The rest of the day was free to spend in the hospitality area visiting, going over memorabilia, or touring the local area.

At 5:30 the cocktail party began in the hospitality room. Brigadier General Adrian Arnold arrived at 6 and was able to meet many in the hospitality area. By 7 all were seated in the adjoining area for our banquet. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Marion Schaps and her son Tony. Loren Foote gave the invocation.

After dinner General Arnold was introduced and gave a very interesting talk. After dinner General Arnold was stopped numerous times to be photographed with various members.

Before officially closing the reunion we displayed the bottle of bourbon being kept by the Association to be enjoyed by the last two active men in the Association. Then a farewell to all and a suggestion for all to plan on another wonderful reunion at Dayton, Ohio in September, 1998.

Sunday saw the usual last farewells and for most the conversation touched on how wonderful the reunion was. It seems each time it is, "This was the best one ever." And they are always right because we have developed a closer friendship

as we get to know more of our comrades. We are linked by our memories and common interest. We may be listening to someone explain in detail an event that happened over 50 years ago at Pantanella or we may discuss our children or grandchildren. And the widows and family members like to hear of their husbands time at Pantanella. And it is so satisfying to see the patience of our wives and children who attend. They are attentive and keenly interested in hearing 'old' comrades relive their lives during the dangerous times at Pantanella.

I hope the renewed friendships will encourage more of you to write about your days at Pantanella. I know they will be of interest to all of us. Take an example from those whose articles fill the newsletters.

I stayed over on Sunday. It was church and breakfast with the Longacres and LeBlancs, then back to our room for rest. Since it was a suite I had a microwave, so we had fresh popcorn and watched the ball games. There were 19 scheduled to stay over, but a few changed reservations and left Sunday. That evening we joined Pierre and Rosemary Kennedy in the restaurant at the hotel.

The reunion is over, but the memories will linger and the friendships have a closer bond.

Many letters of appreciation have been received by the officers, directors, volunteers and myself for our efforts. We deeply appreciate your response and we will keep this end going as long as there are you young men of yesteryear. And also such a delight to see family, widows and children attending to enjoy the reunion and some who are now on the volunteer list. Our average 300 declined to 227 mostly due to health or family members health. 19 cancelled after registering earlier for the same reasons. Thirty-three have attended all 7 reunions. Three attended for the first time.

**US AIR FORCE
50th ANNIVERSARY REUNION
AND 15th AIR
FORCE REUNION, LAS VEGAS,
APRIL 22-26, 1997.**

This fantastic gathering to celebrate the 50 years of the U.S. Air Force and a reunion of the 15th Air Force is going to be the grand-daddy of all past, present and future Air Force reunions! Already 8,000 rooms are booked for this event.

If you are considering going I will point out four items for you to consider; the two associations involved (Air Force Association and Fifteenth Air Force Association), the hotel, and an anniversary book.

1. The Air Force Association sponsors "Air Force Fifty," the 50th anniversary of the Air Force. Their events cover six days and is expensive as you will see when you get their program. I recommend only the registration (\$18) so you can get into the Exhibit Hall where reunion groups will be featured, some entertainment, and the huge display of aerospace exhibits. Add the welcome reception on the 23rd (\$10). For transportation they have the best deal, a bus shuttle from hotels and convention center \$17 and for Nellis for the free air show \$11. Total for Air Force Association (or Air Force Fifty) is \$38.

2. I suggest the 15th Air Force Association registration for \$143. This is a four day event within the time frame of the 6 days of the Air Force Fifty event. You can cut the 4 days to 3 and miss only a brunch and memorial service.

Here is what is included: A welcome reception with an hour free bar and hors d'oeuvres, a two day pass for the 15th Air Force Combat Theater, the 15th Air Force Commander's luncheon with special program, 15th Air Force banquet with a flat-waving patriotic show featuring each Group and a 90 piece concert band, a farewell brunch, Memorial service with wreath laying, and all registration fees.

The total for both that I have recommended would be \$188 plus your hotel.

3. The hotel selected is the Holiday Inn (Boardwalk) 3750 Las Vegas

Blvd. South, has reserved rooms for the 465th Bomb Group for \$89 for one to four per room with slight additional charge for three or four people. You can of course go to other hotels, but not all are on the bus link to all events.

4. You might want to consider an anniversary book which will be produced after the reunion on the history of the Air Force along with group histories and events and photos of the reunion. Harry Carl has written a two page history of the 465th Bomb Group which was submitted with a number of our choice photos to be included in this commemorative book.

You have to look at the program and events and decide which events you want to attend and determine how long you want to stay, then make your reservations. All reservations must be in by March 27, 1997. It will get very tight for rooms after the first of the year.

Prices on the book and all events are listed separately. Almost all events carry a large discount if ordered early. Registration for the Air Force and the 15th Air Force are handled separately. The hotel reservations are handled directly with the hotel. And the book is ordered from Turner Publishing. I can only give you the information or direct you on how to get it.

At this point no gathering of the 465th is planned, however, a luncheon or dinner could be arranged at a later date if such interest is shown. Add this to the \$143 and you have \$199 for all the events I have listed.

Upon arrival the 23rd I would go to Convention Center and/or the combat theater, and in the evening attend the AFA International Airpower reception.

On the 24th take in the combat theater, the aerospace exhibit and the 15th Air Force Commanders Luncheon. Dinner with WWII friends on your own. Or, it could be a good time for all 465th attendees to join together at a dinner?

On the 25th go to Nellis AFB for the free air show and static displays. The evening will be the 15th AFA Banquet and Patriotic Show.

On the 26th attend the Memo-

rial Service with wreath-laying and departure brunch. (If you have a time problem, you could leave on the 25th after taking in most of the events.).

Reservations have to be made in advance to the hotel, to the Air Force Association for the Air Force Fifty and to the 15th Air Force for their events. Most have to be completed by February or March 1997. After that date all rates go up quite a bit.

Also, the Fifteenth Air Force Association has special discounted round-trip air fares. For example, Boston to Las Vegas for \$240.

I can copy registration forms for you, but you are better off with direct contact as you will get all the information they send out.

15th Air Force Association, PO Box 6325 March AFB, CA 02518.

AFA registration for Air Force Fifty at AFA Registration, PO Box 9129, Silver Springs, MD 20916-9129.

Holiday Inn Casino, 3750 Las Vegas Blvd South, Las Vegas, NV 89109. 1-800-635-4581.

The book, "The Air Force 50th Anniversary Commemorative Book" can be ordered from Turner Publishing Company, 412 Broadway, PO Box 3101, Paducah, KY 42002-3101. \$49.95. \$5 less in orders of 10, \$10 less on orders of 25.

Please let me know if you are going to attend so I can list you on a roster of all 465th Bomb Group planning on attending. I will be mailing the roster to each of you before reunion time.

Bruce Miller reported the passing of John Heavy. "I have been notified that John Heavy, 82, of Haverstown, Pennsylvania died Friday, June 14 and was buried with military honors Tuesday, June 18. His daughter, Peggy, called and told me of his passing. She said he suffered from back pains for a long time. Now he has found peace.

"He will be missed by all his old in the Armament Section."

Denley J Thompson attended the funeral service of Joseph Neuman and sent in information on

FOLDED WINGS

Barbour C. Stokes (VanSlyke/Navigator) passed away Sept 12, 1996.

Raymond J. Josephine (Worthman/Radio) passed away May 1990.

Billy L. Bickley (Schuster/Navigator).

Bennie C. Naticchioni (Shetterly/Gunner) passed away June 13, 1996.

Mark Thompson (Gunner) passed away July 22, 1996.

Clayton F. McDaniel (Pilot) passed away July 10, 1996.

John Heavy (Armament) passed away June 14, 1996.

Joseph A. Del Guercio (Communications) passed away May 20, 1996.

Larry Tiehen passed away July 30, 1996. Larry's daughter, Terri, reported Larry had a stroke after surgery.

Joseph M. Neuman (Wheeler Navigator) passed away August 26, 1996.

Jerome "Jerry" Jolicoeur, Jr., son of Dodie Jolicoeur Shallman died accidentally May 30, 1995. Jerome was born 26 days after his father, Jerome Jolicoeur was Killed in Action July 10, 1944. Jerry became a diabetic at age 10 and at 51 his health was deteriorating. He was considered disabled, but still liked to keep his house in good repair. He was on a step-ladder doing repair when he fell and sustained severe head injuries which caused his death.

Our thoughts prayers to our fallen comrades who have found everlasting peace, — you served your country well. We will remember you forever.

him. Joseph Neuman was 75 when he passed away at Lake Forest, CA. He entered the army in 1942, later transferred to the Army Air Force and was commissioned as a 2nd Lt Navigator. He joined the Wheeler crew & McCook for training and flew 50 missions from Pantanella.

From **FLIM FLAM**
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
by Chaplain Eugene McCahey

Hey, Joe, what are you doing?
Who, me? I'm sweating out number 50.

Maybe another would say, I keep 'em flying. Deep down inside, however, in keeping with my first article, the reader understands that the Chaplain refers to daily living. Some soldiers overseas appreciate a substantial answer to the purpose of human experience, and the seeking of happiness.

"There are no atheists in foxholes." I say to that - Pass the salt, please! Servicemen are just a cross-section of civilian Americans, and not all G.I.'s carry rifles. Now about a version for 465th lads? Try this on for size - There are some morons on hilltops! Heads or tails? Penicillin, pincushion or blasphemous barrage! You can't live that way.

What makes Joe tick? Intelligence and free will - brains and heart. Standard equipment, sometimes rusty, but always capable of first echelon repair. Truth and goodness are the objective. What's it all about? Well, you really want to be happy? The poem, "The Hound of Heaven" by Francis Thompson tells the story better than this rapid style of writing. We aspire to nobler things and yet are well aware of our aiming too low.

God gave us human life for such few years and places His children on probation so that they may follow the Redeemer and work out salvation by adhering to his law in their hearts. No one denies the certain fact of death and it is good policy to ask God's pardon for one's offenses. Because the savior is to judge everyone on their own record and penance is necessary for our spiritual welfare as we travel heavenward's - real home. Strong faith plus good work are the ingredients of a full life and just because the problem of evil plus human respect causes misery and empty heroic, there is no reason why our purpose in this life should

be obscured as God offers us the means to build and integrated personality and to help others as time marches on.

**MEANWHILE, BACK AT
PANTANELLA**

By O. J. Cowart

Who can fail to remember watching movies at night. The bomb fire protectors used for seats did provide a measure of comfort for watching, but did become hard, especially if the movie was not a good one. In cold weather there was an additional problem. The movie would become dimmer and dimmer until no more picture. Headquarters had a very large truck mounted generator. I was told that this American built rig had been given/sold to the British. Probably it was "found" and requisitioned by some of the 465th group personnel. The generator had a governor connected to the carburetor which would unexpectedly ice up sometime in cold weather. It would then be necessary to thaw out the carburetor for several minutes and then the movie could continue. This also affected the whole headquarters compound on the top of the hill.

SICK CALL

John Ward had heart attack. He is now in therapy and is getting along very well. Reported by Jack Van Slyke.

Ed Kapusta was taken ill at the reunion and entered the hospital. His fellow Ordnance men kept close tabs on him. On Monday he was released from the hospital with Doctors instructions to take life a little easier. John Zadrozny and Bob Freed stayed with him and saw to it that he got to the airport on Tuesday. He is now home and getting along well.

FLIM FLAM
Y'ALL CATCHEZ ON?

There was a young belle of Natchus,
Whose garments were always in patches.
When comment arose
On the state of her clothes,
She drawled, "When Ah itchez,
Ah scratches!

DUES

It's that time of the year again. If you want to keep the Pantanella News coming we need \$10 per year! It actually costs us more with increased cost in printing, paper and postage. Thanks to those that add a little or a whole lot to keep the cost down for those who cannot afford more. About March 1997 we will be mailing out the Apulia booklet as a bonus to all those current in their dues at that time. Look at your mailing label - if it does not have a 97 to the right of your name you are not current.

EDITORS CORNER

The newsletter is always late after a reunion. January will also be a little late, but then we'll get on schedule by April.

More reunion photos in later news. It sure is a pleasure to see all those smiling faces.

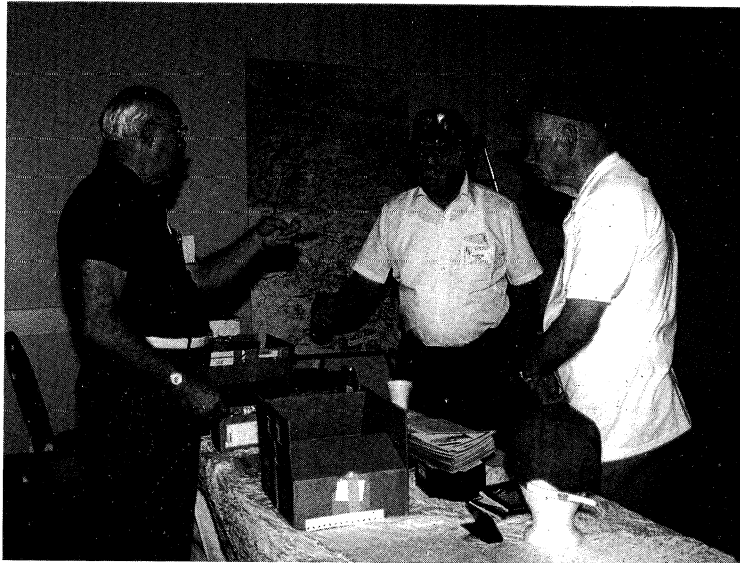
Last call if your address or phone number has been changed or is incorrect on your label. A new roster will be out soon.

A final comment on my health to let you know I am back to normal - the same as I was before all those tests, operations etc. The doctors still don't know what caused a small spot on my lung, but I am delighted to know it is no longer there and I am feeling great.

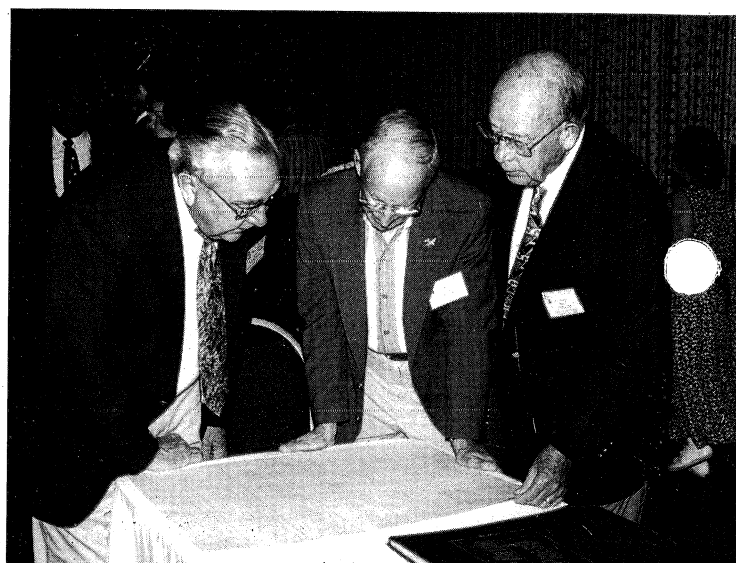
A list of all life members will be in the next newsletter. Now hitting the 100 mark.

Some of the reports for Folded Wings do not have dates or further information. When sending in notices please be more complete if you have the information. We like the date, cause of death, and some other particulars as their comrades would like to know.

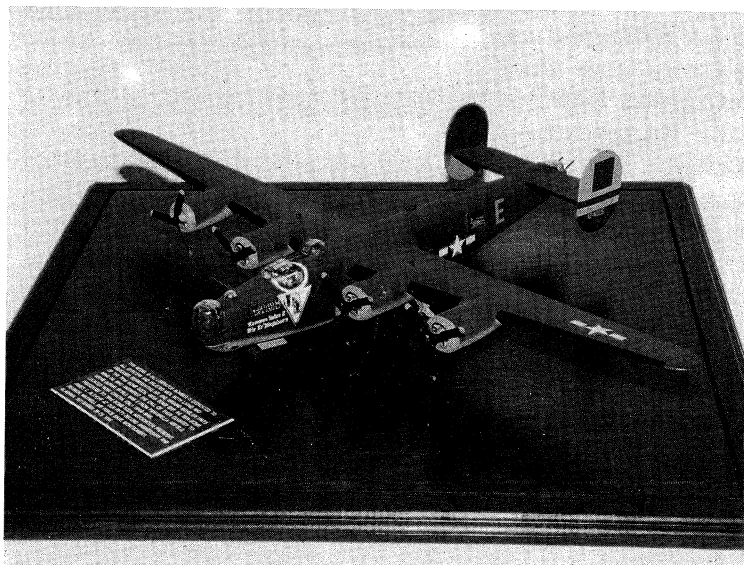
I would like to take this opportunity to wish each and everyone of you a Joyous Christmas and a Happy New Year. And may you have good health. Keep in touch with your Comrades and Keep 'em Flyin'.



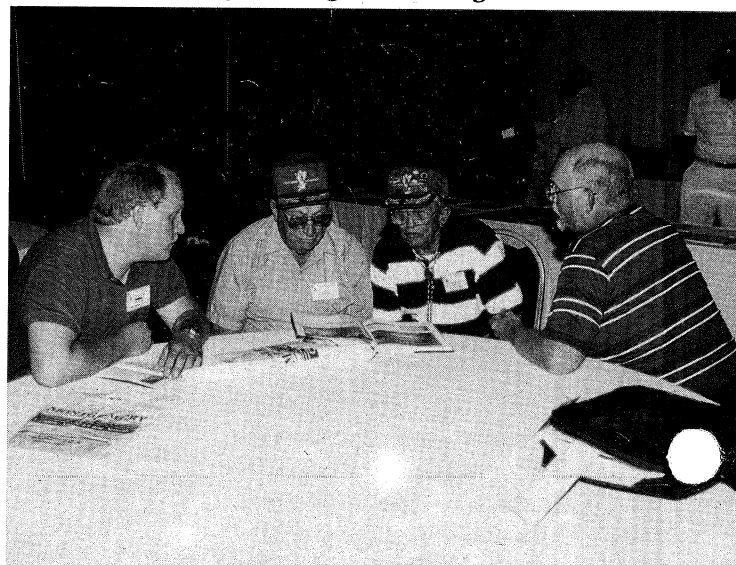
Barney Russell, PX Officer selling his wares.



Some serious consideration on dinner seat reservations, Walt Longacre (right) in charge.

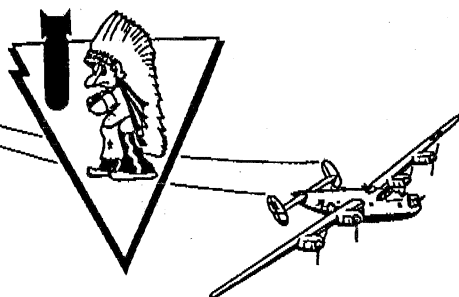


Perfect B-24 model of Chief JoJon made by Bob Freed and present to me for the 781st Bomb Squadron.



Les Wheeler with his two sons and comrade.

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2 Mt. Vernon Lane, Atherton, CA 94027



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