

# PANTANELLA NEWS

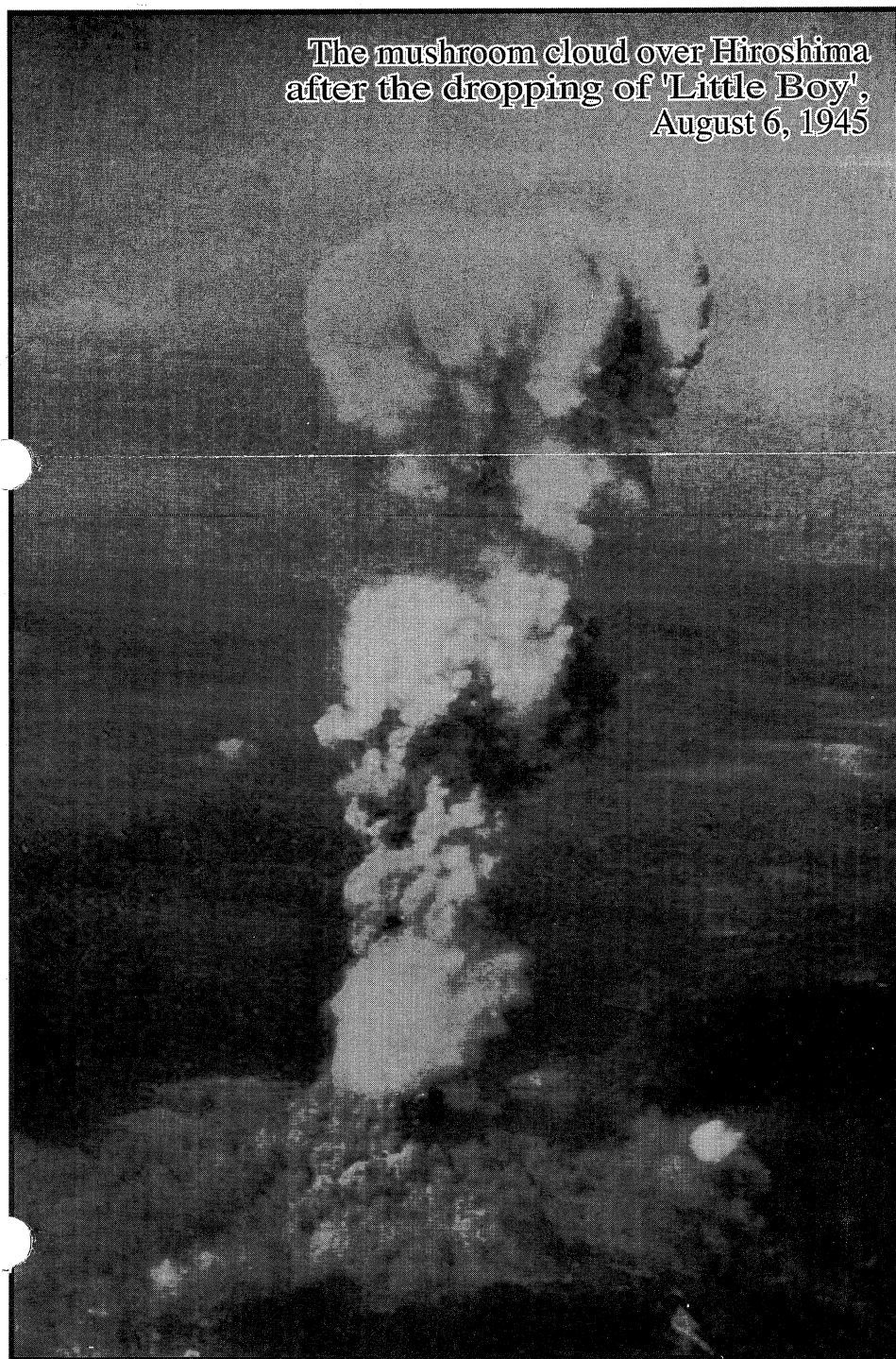
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#97 September 2009

## WAR TO END ALL WARS ENDED 64 YEARS AGO

### 81st Set To Explore Truman Museum and Whiteman AFB

The mushroom cloud over Hiroshima  
after the dropping of 'Little Boy',  
August 6, 1945



The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were nuclear attacks near the end of World War II against the Empire of Japan by the United States at the executive order of U.S. President Harry S. Truman on August 6 and 9, 1945, respectively.

After six months of intense fire-bombing of 67 other Japanese cities, followed by an ultimatum which was ignored by Japan, the nuclear weapon "Little Boy" was dropped on the city of Hiroshima on Monday, August 6, 1945, followed on August 9 by the detonation of the "Fat Man" nuclear bomb over Nagasaki.

The bombs killed as many as 140,000 people in Hiroshima and 80,000 in Nagasaki. In both cities the overwhelming majority of the dead were civilians.

Six days after the detonation over Nagasaki, on August 15, Japan announced its surrender to the Allied Powers, signing the Instrument of Surrender on September 2, officially ending the Pacific War and therefore World War II, **which would go down in the annals of history as 'the war to end all wars'.**

The war in Europe had ended earlier when Germany surrendered a little over 2 months before on May 7, 1945.

*President Truman Museum Archives  
Independence, MO*

## MEMBERS KEEP IN TOUCH

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

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**PANTANELLA NEWS**

Editor: Frank Ambrose

781st BOMB SQUADRON (H)

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

Flew 191 Missions  
over Southern Europe  
dropping thousands of tons of death  
and destruction to the enemy.

Shot down 25 enemy aircraft

Received Two

Presidential Unit Citations

## ENDING THE WAR TO END ALL WARS...

Before dropping the first Atomic Bomb the people of Japan were deluged with millions of leaflets dropped by B-29's urging the citizens to petition the Emperor of Japan to accept our terms of surrender and end the war or risk the awesome devastation of all of their cities

This is a transcript of the leaflet which was dropped on Japanese cities immediately following the bombing of Hiroshima.

### TO THE JAPANESE PEOPLE:

"America asks that you take immediate heed of what we say on this leaflet.

"We are in possession of the most destructive explosive ever devised by man. A single one of our newly developed atomic bomb is actually the equivalent in explosive power to what 2000 of our B-29's can carry on a singular mission.

This awful fact is one for you to ponder and we solemnly assure you it is greatly accurate.

"We have just begun to use this weapon against your homeland. If you still have any doubt, make inquiry as to what happened to Hiroshima when just one atomic bomb fell on that city.

"Before using this bomb to destroy every resource of the military by which they are prolonging the war, we ask that you petition the Emperor to end the war.

Our President has outlined for you the thirteen consequences of an honorable surrender:

We urge that you accept these consequences and begin the work of building a new, better, and peace-loving Japan.

"You should take steps now to cease military resistance.

Otherwise, we shall resolutely employ this bomb and all out other superior weapons to promptly and forcefully end the war."

## EVACUATE THE CITIES



This is a photo from the 'Library of Congress Archives' showing the 'Enola Gay' being up-loaded with the A-Bomb. The 'Bomb' appears to be resting in a pit below the level of the tarmac. If there is anyone out there that can describe this procedure of loading bombs on a B-29 please enlighten me.



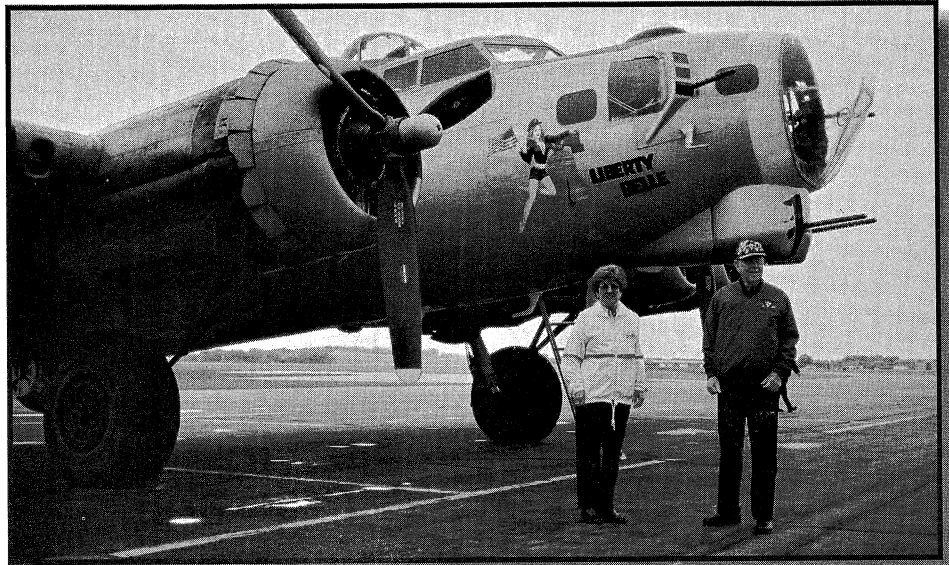
## A Sentimental Journey for Orren Lee

by Carole Lee

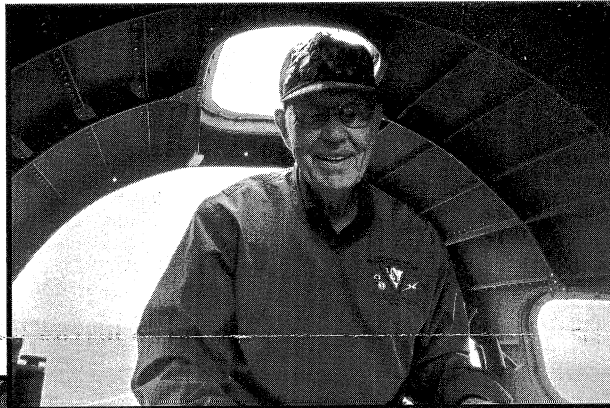
Orren and I had the opportunity to ride in the Liberty Belle, a restored B-17 which has been flying around the United States giving rides. It was in Sioux Falls for a week at the Business Aviation Field. The Sioux Falls Argus Leader advertised that it would be giving rides on the weekend.

My boss, Mike, and Dave, the Engineer/Project Manager I work with, called me in the office to tell me they would like to give Orren a ride in the B-17 that was out at the airport.

I made the comment that Orren was a radio operator and gunner on a B-24. They said they would check to see if the B-24 would be coming back and give rides since it had been here a few years ago. I called Orren to tell him what they were talking about and he said "A B-17 isn't all bad. I trained on one". When I informed Mike



Before taking off, Carole and Orren Lee pose in front of the Collins Foundation's B-17



From the looks of his smile, Orren must have enjoyed his flight

"Bikes" at the church in Cheyenne, WY where our grandson-in-law is a pastor and had a ride on a Harley, now a B-17 ride!!!

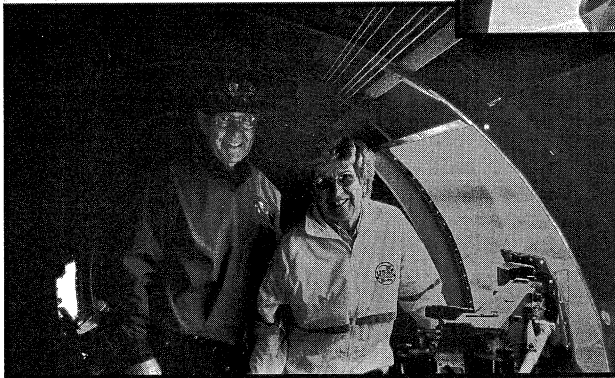
I think I will save bungee-jumping.

We were scheduled

pilot. I was somewhat apprehensive as to how safe this flight was going to be. I did not have a parachute. We were given earplugs as the aircraft revved up the engines and checked gauges, etc. This took quite awhile. Orren said he never had earplugs during the war and he wasn't going to use them now. I soon took mine out also. I was totally unprepared for the emotion I felt as we took off.

Unbelievable! I felt a lump in my throat. We used seat belts during take off but were allowed to roam all over the plane while in flight. We were in flight about ½ hour. We flew at an altitude of about 1500-1800 ft.

.....Carole Lee



Orren and Carole pose at the waist position while in flight

that Orren had trained on a B-17 he told Dave to call and make the arrangement. They and invited me to accompany Orren as well.

Of course I said "for sure, but I don't need to go". I had seen the price in the paper of \$430.00 each. Mike said "I have always wanted to do this for Orren." I told him I am working on my 'bucket list'.

I have gone tubing down the Salt River in Arizona, had a hot air balloon ride, and just the week before they had a "Blessing of the

to be the first riders early Saturday morning. They led us out to the plane so we could look it over and a briefing from the flight engineer. We loaded with a crew of 3, pilot, co-pilot, and the flight engineer and 7 other riders plus the pilot's young son. I was glad to see a co-



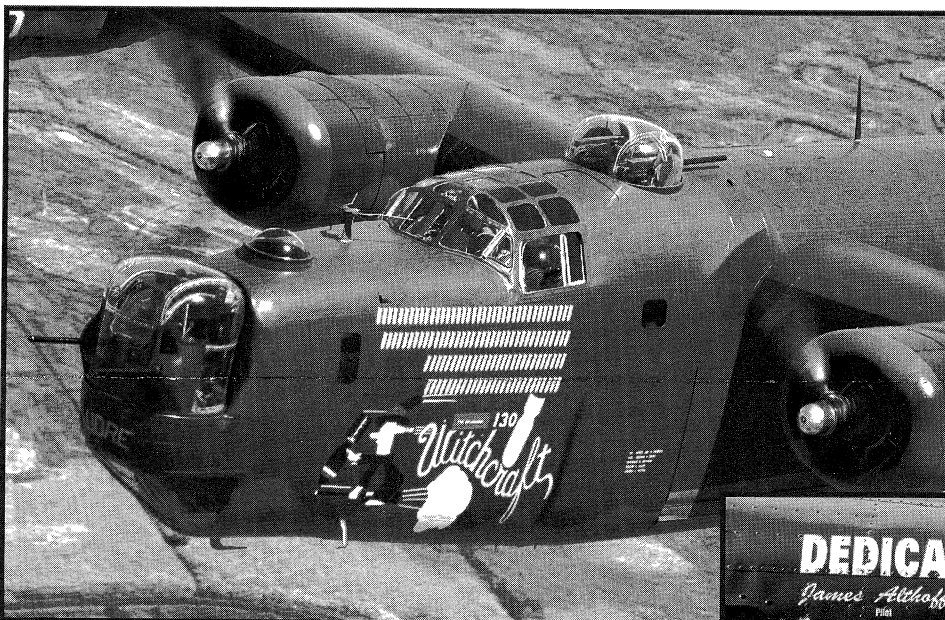
Instinctively recalling his training, Orren prepares to fire his 50 at a formation of flying geese that he was sure were ME-109's

# My First Tour of a B-24

By: Patty Kill

In August of 2008, the Wings of Freedom Tour, a U.S. traveling exhibit of some of the country's most famous World War II aircraft came to the Dayton-Wright Brothers Airport in Dayton Ohio for a three-day event.

Since I live very close to the airport it would be my chance to finally tour the inside of a B-24, the plane my father flew on as a bombardier in the 781<sup>st</sup> Bomb Squadron. Driving home from work on August 11, the first day of the event, I could hear the very loud roar of planes flying overhead. Then I saw the B-24 and B-17 circling the airport right above me.



It was a spectacular sight. Several of my neighbors heard the noise and were outside talking about the WWII planes flying overhead. At that point, I knew this was an opportunity I couldn't pass up.

This tour is organized and sponsored by the Collings Foundation. I knew many of the members of the 781<sup>st</sup> have seen these planes which are the only ones of their type still flying. So the next day I went to tour the planes and find out all I could about the experiences my Dad and the other veterans of the 781<sup>st</sup> must have had on the B-24. I also knew that Jim Alltoff, President Emeritis of the 781<sup>st</sup> Squadron Association was a significant supporter of this foundation.

Approaching the entrance, I spotted a group that looked like the crew members and organizers. I introduced myself and told them I was interested in touring the plane and writing an article for the 781<sup>st</sup> news-

letter. They immediately took me "behind the ropes" and called over the B-24 crew chief Jeremy Cain to give me a personal tour. For the next hour, Mr. Cain walked me through the plane, answering all my questions and allowing me to access sections of the plane not open to other people on the tour.

I found out that the B-24 was the most produced aircraft in U.S. History. There was a very large pile of oil containers sitting underneath the plane as they have to carry their own oil. At 200 gallons of fuel consumed per hour it is a good thing they do not have to bring that along too. Entering from the rear of the plane, my initial reaction was how stark it was, certainly not built for comfort in any

way. Not that I was expecting reading lights, attendant buttons and tray tables, but there were no padded seats and in some cases what they had to sit on I would not even call a seat. Lots of cold metal everywhere - all functional, no luxury.

I had to walk down the very narrow catwalk to get to the front of the plane which reminded me of a gymnastics balance beam.

My Dad told me later how he used to have to be on that narrow walkway and reach down to loosen stuck bombs as they were flying in enemy territory.

I also could not believe the size of the openings for the guns on the sides of the plane. A question for the veterans - how did you not fall out of the plane? Also, how did you not shoot your own wings off? My guess is that it took lots of training and practice.



I was then taken up to the cockpit and allowed to sit in the pilot's seat. To get there, I had to crawl over the controls, careful not to hit the brake or the red strap holding the throttle. I remarked that it was extremely difficult to see out of the plane and was told that the B-24 was one of the most difficult aircraft to fly.

I asked Mr. Cain about his experiences since as the chief mechanic, he was required to be onboard whenever the plane flew. He told me how he was surprised when they did a simulation of a bomb drop and how the plane did not bounce at all even with the change of weight. However, when they simulated firing the guns, the plane shook incredibly. So maybe

the veterans can tell me if this is really how it was?

While I do not know much about airplanes or flying, I felt very fortunate to have this experience and enjoyed the VIP treatment.

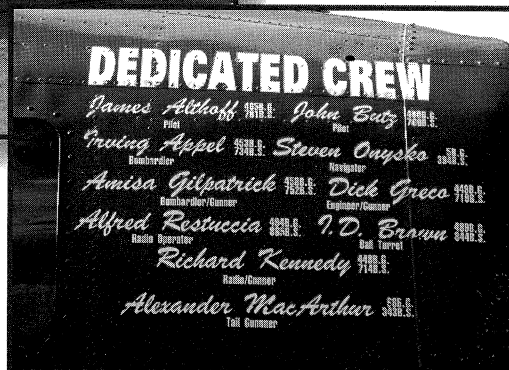
This article reflects just some of my thoughts of the tour and I am very interested in getting feedback to some of my questions. So feel free to

send me your comments at:-

**<pkill@woh.rr.com>.**

That day I spent touring the B-24 made me appreciate even more what the men of the 781<sup>st</sup> Bomb Squadron did in service to our country.

.....Patty Kill



The list painted at the top of the right side of the nose slightly behind the nose turret with the title "Dedicated Crew" honoring individuals who were instrumental in restoring this B-24. Heading the list is the name of James Althoff as Pilot, our former and 1st President of our Association.



## More Things to See In Independence

Independence is the home of President Harry Truman and the beginning of the Santa Fe, Oregon and California trails. It's a place for fun where you can experience terrific shopping, wonderful restaurants, numerous accommodation choices, and a variety of exciting attractions and outdoor activities.

There's so much to see and do in Independence. From unique shops to sixteen heritage attractions that played a key role in shaping the future of our nation, it's all there in a great hometown atmosphere. Just minutes from Kansas City and the 4th largest city in the state,

The National Frontier Trails Museum located in Independence is a museum, interpretive center, and research library dedicated to telling the rich history of America's principle western trails.

One of the most fascinating epics in American History is the story of the overland migrations across the western American wilderness during the mid-nineteenth century. Thousands of wagon trains slowly snaked their way along rugged trails, crossing wind-swept prairies, barren deserts, and formidable mountain ranges. The pioneer adventurers faced storms, mud, swollen rivers, accidents, deserts, choking dust, thirst, deadly plagues, and many other dangers to seek trade, new homes and opportunities in the West. Many did not survive the grueling journey, with tens of thousands of unmarked graves silently guarding the trails today. This extraordinary saga ranks

today as the largest voluntary, overland mass migration in the history of the world.

The three principle trails which crossed the West were the Santa Fe, Oregon, and California. The Santa Fe Trail, begun in 1821, was a 900-mile foreign trade route unique in American History due to its overland rather than seafaring commerce. The 2,000-mile Oregon Trail began to be heavily traveled in 1843 by settlers wanting to establish new homes in the

fornia emigrants as well. Every spring during the trails period the center of present-day Independence was blanketed by thousands of emigrants, complete with wagons, teams, other livestock, tents, cargo, and supplies.

Commotion, confusion, and excitement reigned as wagons were purchased, loaded, and organized into trains.

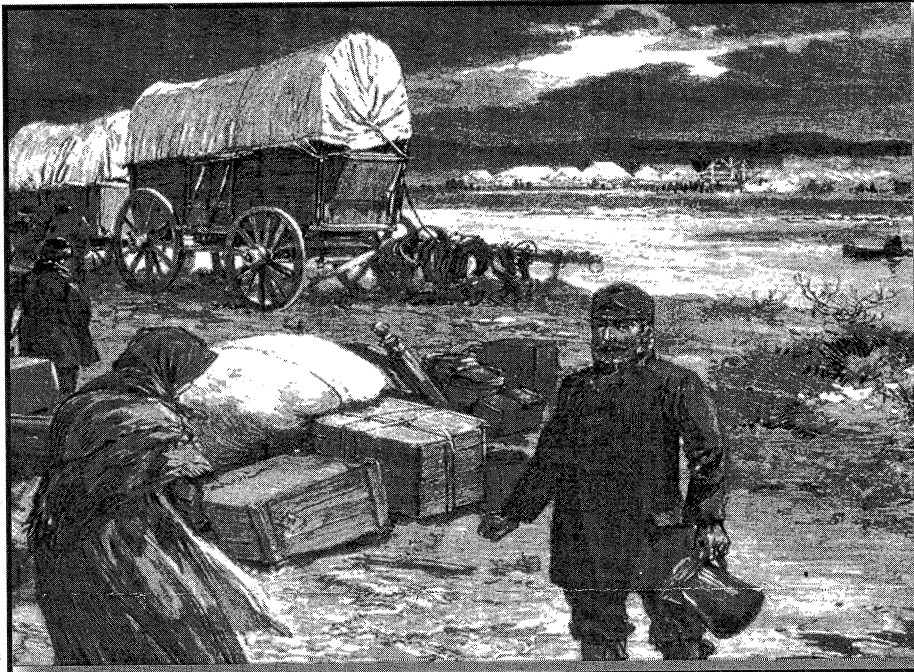
Many of the emigrants washed and watered their livestock with water from the large, free public spring once located

just a hundred yards north of today's National Frontier Trails Museum. Thousands of wagons rolled down the hill from the square and passed this spring and crowded camping site, bound for Mexico to trade, or to a new home in Oregon or California. Water still flows from this pioneer spring on the grounds of the museum.

In 1989-90 the National Frontier Trails Museum was built by the State of Missouri with the surviving portion of the Waggoner-Gates Mill incorporated into the design. The old mill's locker room

was refurbished as well, and serves as the national headquarters of the Oregon-California Trails Association.

Operated by the City of Independence, the **Trails Museum** tells the story of the exploration, acquisition, and settlement of the American West. An award-winning introductory film prepares visitors for the interpretive exhibits which guide them along the Santa Fe, Oregon, and California Trails. Quotations from trail diaries are extensively used, allowing pioneer travelers to tell of their experiences in their own words.



northwest, while others forked off on the equally long and grueling California Trail to seek their fortunes in the gold fields. Together, these three rugged pathways and their pioneers changed the face and history of America.

Independence, a frontier village of only a few hundred people poised on the edge of American civilization, was the principle "jumping-off" point for all three of these western trails. Founded in 1827, the town first became the eastern terminus for the Santa Fe Trail, and later as an "outfitting" post for the Oregon and Cali-

## ATTEMPTS TO FORM JOINT 81st- 82nd REUNION FIZZLES...

Over the past few months, efforts were being explored on the possibility of having the 782nd join the 781st at the reunion at Whiteman's AFB. Carole and I had been communicating with Dean Ottaway, Editor of the 782nd's "FLIMSY". For a time the mission was progressing and destined for a "GO". However, Dean suffered a serious injury and has been committed to a wheelchair.

As a result of the injury he has been forced to curtail his efforts so there will be no official joint session. He did inform us that he would still attempt to lure some of his group to attend ours.

**781st BS  
2009 Reunion  
October 4-5-6-7, 2009  
Hilton Garden Inn  
Independence, MO  
SEND IN YOUR  
RESERVATION TODAY**

## FLYING TO KANSAS CITY

For those of you who are flying to the 781st Reunion and want to share the cost of a taxi to the Hotel with someone, email Carole Lee at <clee75@q.com> and give her your flight information.

She will inform you of others who will be arriving at that same time providing you with their email address and /or phone number so you can arrange to meet. Check the June 2009 Pantanella News for Shuttle information

**FIRST ISSUE PANTANELLA NEWS October 1985**

pages 1 &amp; 2

Copies courtesy of Pierre J.J. Kennedy Archive

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## 781ST BOMB SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

**NEWSLETTER**

OCTOBER, 1985

**NUMBER ONE** - This is the first Newsletter of the 781st Bomb Squadron Association. We have searched and have not found another association or organization of the 781st. We will consider this the official association. Don't you think it's about time the fighting 781st gets active?

**BACKGROUND** - With all the reunions starting about the time of the 40th anniversary of D Day in Europe I began to think more about my crew and the 781st, and our times at Pantanello, Italy. I began to search for my crew and found three of them. Then I became affiliated with the 783rd since I knew some of them and had flown with them. I attended their second reunion in Dayton, Ohio this past August. I can't say enough about the comraderie and spirit of the 783rd. On the second day of the reunion we went to Wright-Patterson and while standing in line to go aboard the 'ol B-24, I began chatting with the next in line who turned out to be another 781st member, James Marcel Snyder. Right there we decided to get the 781st active. I got back home September 1 and dug out an old yellow dog-eared roster of officers that the squadron put out about March 1945. I began calling and located about 35% of those that I tried to find. I had made up my mind that when I had 50 I would get out a newsletter. It has been very interesting to talk to many of you and I hope in the next month or so there will be another 50 to talk to.

**ORGANIZATION** - Until there is a reunion where officers and directors can be elected by the membership, we will organize with a temporary board of directors. As I mentioned, James Marcel Snyder met with me in August and he will oversee membership east of the Mississippi, and I will do the same in the west. Marcel expects to retire early next year and he said he will "work full time for the 781st". Marcel was a Mickey operator in the 781st. The other director on the East Coast is Pierre J. J. Kennedy; more information about him later in the newsletter. Ben Donahue was a pilot and lives near me so we have been in touch over the years. Ben has been attending the 780th reunions which have been held yearly for about 20 years. We will probably add another director or two before the first reunion.



## PAGE 2

**PURPOSE** - The purpose of this association is to locate and have as membership all who served in the 781st Bomb Squadron from its beginning in 1943 until July 1945. The association will publish a newsletter of interest to all members and furnish a roster so lost "old buddies" can be contacted. We will also develop a history of the squadron for ourselves and our families.

**REUNION** - We plan on a reunion next year and at the present time are working on Colorado Springs, Colorado for September. Plans are to be near some Air Force activity like the Academy or a museum, etc. Future plans will be decided at the first reunion. Most of you have indicated you will attend a reunion and we would expect to have over 100 members plus wives.

**781st HISTORY** - We're working on this and expect to have a full history by reunion. Anything that you have that might be of help, please let us know. We have no records to work from so they all have to be dug up from the past. We can find some in old military records, but personal items have to come from us.

**CREWS** - We encourage crews to plan reunions at the same time as the squadron reunion.

**465 BOMB GROUP** - There is no active group association that I know of. We would like to tie into a group reunion. Some work is being done to see if it can be done for next September. We all want to keep our squadrons together; however, it would be nice if we could all meet in individual squadrons at nearby hotels and one day make it a 465 Bomb Group affair. I mentioned the 780th and 783rd as having reunions. The 782nd had their first one in Dayton and Marcel and I spent an evening with them - another fine group.

**WIVES** - Wives will be a part of the reunion and we will have special events for them.

**PIERRE J. J. KENNEDY** - Pierre has been selected to be the first member to have his story told. Pierre happened to be my tail gunner so I know him quite well and know his story. We arrived in Pantanella August 27, 1944 and little did Pierre know that six weeks later he would be POW. After flying 12 sorties he was scheduled for Capri with the rest of the crew for rest camp. The night before he was pulled from the rest camp orders and had to fill in on Lt. Alexander Lovey's crew. Co-pilot was Lt. Raymond Morse. The target was Blechhammer and the date was Friday, October 13th. The sortie was #13 for Pierre. That morning all went well until turning off the IP with full bomb load and just beginning the bomb run when Yellow "L" took a direct hit in the gas tanks in the right wing. Needless to say, the plane became a flaming fireball. Pierre managed to get out of his turret and crawl forward to get out of the hatch in the floor. He was last out of the waist section. By that time fire was extending beyond the waist windows and the plane was vibrating and out of control. He did not know what was going on up front until after capture when he learned both pilots were KIA and the rest of the crew got out. After being captured he ended up at Stalag Luft #4 in Gross

## And Letters...

From: malt6022@aol.com  
 Subject: Command Pilot James Althoff  
 Date: May 23, 2009  
 To: frank@frankambrose.com

Frank,

It is with a heavy heart I inform the 781st BS Association of the passing of Jim Althoff. At 10:05 AM, Friday May 22, he flew his final mission.

The end had been rapidly approaching, but until the last day, we had hoped he would have one more opportunity to see his loved B24 of the Collings Foundation while they were in town. Sadly, it was not to be. He was not able to go with fellow residents on Monday for a van ride to the planes I had organized, as I had for the past 5 years. In his "memory box" outside his room, I had his pilot's log opened to the page where he last flew "All American".

The end was extremely quiet and peaceful with me at his side. He remained an officer and gentleman to the end. The staff was truly sad to have him pass, everyone on duty came to pay their respects while we waited for the mortuary to come, tears streaming from their eyes. I was amazed by this as these people deal with this almost daily. Dad profoundly touched everyone he met.

Although I did not participate in many of the events of the 781st, I spent many years folding, stapling, stamping and addressing the newsletter. I also would sometimes take dad to the printer and proof read on occasion. Sue and I were fortunate to participate in the DC reunion on behalf of dad.

Our family has suffered a huge loss with his passing, 20as has his family of the 781st. He is now with his beloved wife, Agnes.

May God Bless you, I have said before, you all are "the greatest generation".

*Mike and Sue Althoff*

From: becky@iscastings.com  
 Subject: 781st Pantanella News  
 Date: July 13, 2009  
 To: frank@frankambrose.com

Hi Frank -

We'd love to have any and all join us at the  
**783rd Reunion in Washington DC**  
**October 16-19**

If anyone would like to attend, have them email me and I'll send them a packet.

<becky@iscastings.com>

Have a great day!!!

**Becky**

Becky Meyer is the 783rd's BS Association Secretary

### 781<sup>st</sup> BS Assoc 2009 Reunion

October 4-5-6-7, 2009

Hilton Garden Inn, Independence, MO

Tel: 1-816-350-3000

### Reunion Agenda

#### Sunday, October 4, 2009

3:00 PM to 9:00 PM Registration/Hospitality

#### Monday, October 5, 2009

9:00AM- 5:00 PM Registration/Hospitality

7:00 PM Director's Meeting

#### Tuesday, October 6, 2009

8:00 AM Bus to Whiteman AFB

10:00 AM-11:00 AM Memorial Service

11:00 AM-12:00 Noon Lunch - Mission End

12:00 - 13:30 Tour B-2, A-10, Apache

5:00 PM Business Mtg - Hospitality

#### Wednesday, October 7, 2009

10:00 to 3:00 AM Truman Museum

6:00 to 7:00 PM Open Bar

7:00 to 8:30 PM Banquet - Hotel

8:30 to 9:30 PM Program

**781<sup>st</sup> BS**  
**2009 Reunion**  
**October 4-5-6-7, 2009**  
**Hilton Garden Inn**  
**Independence, MO**

**SEND IN YOUR**  
**RESERVATION TODAY**

First you forget names,  
 then you forget faces.  
 Then you forget to pull up  
 your zipper.  
 Much worse when you forget  
 to pull the zipper down!

### 781<sup>st</sup> MEMORABILIA

The reunion in Independence will be giving us an opportunity to gather memorabilia to be donated to the Strategic Air and Space Museum for the 781<sup>st</sup> BS Exhibit.

If you have items you wish to donate, please bring them to the reunion. We will display them in the hospitality room, record them with the donor and deliver them to the Museum after the reunion.

### LEST YOU FORGOT

If you have forgotten where you placed the 2009 781st Registration Reunion Form worry no more!

Another Registration Form is inserted in this issue for your use. Stop reading this Newsletter and fill the form out and send it in NOW!

Once you've mailed it in, then come back and continue to read the balance of the Newsletter.



## The PANTANELLA NEWSROOM....

One of the most boring chores in producing the newsletter is the job of adhering the individual address labels and postage stamps to each of the issues.

Generally, the time spent in editing and working on the layout takes a little over two months, however once the paper is printed it's imperative that they be mailed as soon as possible.

To accomplish this task of "stamp lickin' I generally solicit help from volunteers at the local McDonald's.

Once there, I look for any small group of two or more chatting Senior Citizens and then humbly attempt to solicit their service to volunteer for the chore.

In most cases everyone is more than eager to assist.

Needless to say, I had to buy the coffee....

Shown in this photo are volunteers at McDonald's in Gloversville, New York engaged in labeling and addressing one of the past editions of the **Pantanello News**. Left to right are:- Marguerite Burlingame with her husband Waldo Burlingame and Mary Neri.



## Big Spring Bombardier School Webb AFB in Texas

The Army Air Forces Bombardier School and Webb AFB in Texas was constructed in May of 1942.

The purpose of the field was to train aviation cadets in high altitude precision bombing.

Norden sight was rated as far superior to any previously developed instrument for computing a bomb trajectory.

The instruments were so highly classified that they were stored in a heavily-guarded vault such as banks have.

When students prepared for practice runs, they had to get clearance to the vault area, and when issued their sights, they exited in pairs accompanied by armed security.

Part of the bombardier's oath required that he defend the sight secrets to the death.

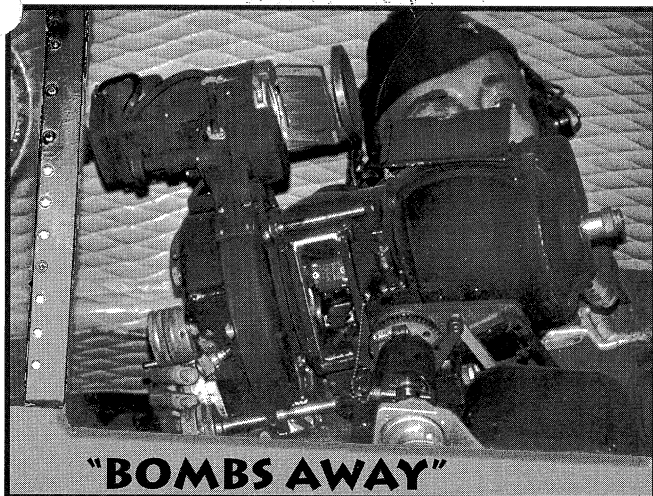
The forty-second class of cadets to finish the school completed the course of training and received the silver wings of bombardiers on Sept 26, 1945. At that time, nearly 6,000 students had graduated and the field's training

planes had flown approximately 400,000 hours and more than 60 million miles.

Over 1,200,000 practice bombs had been released on nearby bombing ranges. While engaged in this huge training program and under wartime conditions, only four fatal accidents occurred.

Many of the young men who trained at the school went on to fly combat missions in such planes as the B-17 Flying Fortress, B-24 Liberator, B-25 Mitchell, B-26 Marauder, and B-29 Superfortress in both theatres of World

A number of the 781st Bombardiers are Big Spring Bombardier School Alumni.



Training consisted primarily of ground school courses and practice missions over a target area larger than some of the nation's smaller states. The post proper covered an area of 1,280 acres.

The first class of cadets (118 men) arrived Sept. 16, 1942, to begin bombardier training in the B-18 and the AT-11 training planes. After an intense three month course, the class graduated, exactly one year and ten days after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor.

Perhaps the most zealously guarded secret at the Big Spring Bombardier School was the Norden bombsight. At the outset of the United States involvement in the war, the

### The Princess I Married



The Woman I Gotti

### FIVE RULES FOR MEN TO FOLLOW FOR A HAPPY LIFE:

1. It's important to have a woman, who helps at home, Who cooks from time to time, cleans up and has a job.
2. It's important to have a woman, who can make you Laugh.
3. It's important to have a woman, who you can trust and who doesn't lie to you.
4. It's important to have a woman, who is good in bed and who likes to be with you.
5. It's very, very important that these four women.....

**Do not know each other!!!**

## What We Will Be Doing In Independence

The Harry S. Truman Library and Museum is located on a small hill in Independence, Missouri, Truman's hometown.

It was the first presidential library to be created under the provisions of the 1955 Presidential Libraries Act, and is one of twelve presidential libraries administered by the National Archives and Records Administration.

Unlike his successors, Truman actively participated in the day-to-day operation of the Library, personally training museum docents and conducting impromptu "press conferences" for visiting school students. He frequently arrived before the staff and would often answer the phone to give directions and answer questions, telling surprised callers that he was the "man himself."

From the time the Library opened, President Truman maintained a working office there, often working five or six days a week. The office appears today just as it did when Harry Truman died on December 26, 1972.

President Truman's funeral services were held in the Library's auditorium and he was buried in the courtyard. His wife, Bess Truman, was buried alongside him in 1982.

The museum offers an introductory film on the life of President Truman, and two floors of exhibits relating his life and presidency through photographs, artifacts, film clips, documents, and memorabilia. It was the first presidential library to contain a full scale replica of the Oval Office,

The library also contains The White House Decision Center, an educational program in which school students take on the roles of President Truman and his advisors facing real-life historical decisions in a recreation of the West Wing of the White House.

The mural 'Independence and the Opening of The West' by Thomas Hart Benton adorns the walls of the lobby entrance. The mural, completed in 1961, was painted on site by Benton



### Replica of the Oval Office

The full scale replica of the Oval Office was the first presidential library to contain that feature and has been copied by the Johnson, Ford, Carter, Reagan, and Clinton libraries.



### Mystery Photo...

The above photograph that appears to be of a young recruit fresh out of boot camp was sent to me in a plain brown envelope with no identification or return address. If any of you can identify or shed any information about this young lad please inform me so as I can pass it on.

### This Letter to Carole from Walt Longacre

*Carole, I put together a little of something that I remembered about Jim Althoff that will be of use to you to put in the bulletin.*

Walt

#### Tribute to Jim.....

When I heard Jim was trying to locate members of our squadron, I immediately contacted Jim to help him locate the members of our squadron.

He had a roster of all the names, so he gave me a bunch of names of which I located quite a few. After we got a lot of the members located he then suggested a reunion. He then planned to make it central and we agreed on Colorado Springs for our first reunion. He then traveled to the city to find accommodations, so they would be affordable for all of us including meals etc.

He was always very thoughtful and considerate of everyone. I worked with Jim on all the reunions, and I and my wife always managed to get together for lunch and dinner (even a toddy in his room. Jim enjoyed scotch.) We got to know him and Agnes real well and considered them as good friends.

He did a good job for our squadron.

Thanks Jim for serving and loving our country. And now we say goodbye.

**May your soul rest in peace. Amen!**

**781st BS  
2009 Reunion  
October 4-5-6-7, 2009  
Hilton Garden Inn  
Independence, MO  
SEND IN YOUR  
RESERVATION TODAY**



## FOLDED WINGS

### James C. Althoff...

Pilot: Althoff Crew

**James C. Althoff** Born in Lansing, Iowa, December 8, 1922. Died May 22, 2009, after battling Alzheimer's for several years. Predeceased in 2004 by his loving wife Agnes. He joined WWII as a pilot in the Army Air Corps in 1944, flying 57 combat missions out of Northern Italy in B24s. He met and married Agnes in Milwaukee after the war and moved to California to join fellow pilot Ernie Van Aspern in business. Together they built Ernie's Liquors to a chain of 90 plus stores.

Liquor Stores Association, California Retail Liquor Association and was on various other association boards of directors. Inducted into Sky Ranch Foundation Hall of Fame in 1995, a charitable foundation providing funding for Sky Ranch for Boys in South Dakota, helping troubled teens. An avid duck hunter, boating enthusiast and flier he built several ultra-lights. He enjoyed his family, gardening, water skiing, scuba diving, fishing and traveling.

He remained active in business until Alzheimer's slowly took his ability to actively participate.

He is survived by three brothers, three sisters; two children, Patricia and Michael; five grandchildren and five great-grand-

## President's Corner

### 781<sup>st</sup> Friends –

I'm writing this in the middle of July. Recently we celebrated the birth of our Nation. Have you ever wondered what happened to the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence?

Five signers were captured by the British as traitors, and tortured before they died. Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned. Two lost their sons serving in the Revolutionary Army; another had two sons captured. Nine of the 56 fought and died from wounds or hardships of the Revolutionary War. They signed and they pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

What kind of men were they? Twenty-four were lawyers and jurists. Eleven were merchants, nine were farmers and large plantation owners; men of means, well educated, but they signed the Declaration of Independence knowing full well that the penalty would be death if they were captured.

Carter Braxton of Virginia, a wealthy planter and trader, saw his ships swept from the seas by the British Navy. He sold his home and properties to pay his debts, and died in rags. Thomas McKean was so hounded by the British that he was forced to move his family almost constantly. He served in the Congress without pay, and his family was kept in hiding. His possessions were taken from him, and poverty was his reward. Vandals or soldiers looted the properties of Dillery, Hall, Clymer, Walton, Gwinnett, Heyward, Rutledge, and Middleton.

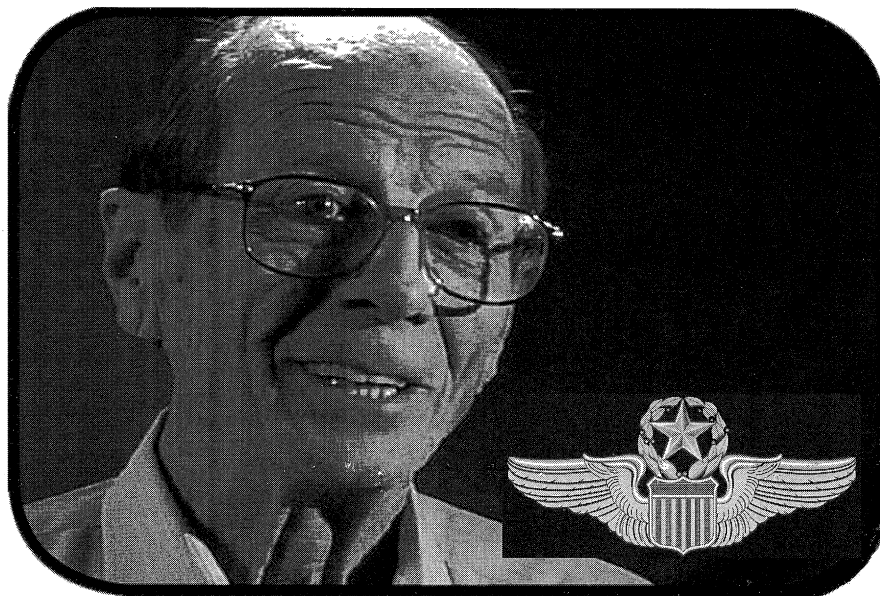
At the battle of Yorktown, Thomas Nelson, Jr., noted that the British General Cornwallis had taken over the Nelson home for his headquarters. He quietly urged General George Washington to open fire. The home was destroyed, and Nelson died bankrupt. Francis Lewis had his home and properties destroyed. The enemy jailed his wife and she died within a few months. John Hart was driven from his wife's bedside as she was dying. Their 13 children fled for their lives. His fields and his gristmill were laid to waste. For more than a year he lived in forests and caves, returning home to find his wife dead and his children vanished.

So, take a few minutes and silently thank these patriots. It's not much to ask for the price they paid. **Remember: freedom is never free!!**

By the time you get this, Carole and I will have attended the Military Reunion Planners Conference in Branson, Missouri in August. We hope to have the option of Branson for you for the next year's reunion.

If someone else comes with a plan as I requested in the last Pantanella News, we will have a choice. And that would be a good thing.

**Orren Lee...**



Called back to service for Korean War, Jim served as a pilot instructor in B17, B24, B25, T28 and T33s. After Korea he stayed in Active Reserve and flew fighter jets out of Hamilton Field.

He resigned his commission in 1957 and devoted full time to family and business. He was awarded Command Pilot Status. In addition to Ernie's Liquors, he was an owner or partner in various businesses, restaurants and bars, apartments and motels on the Peninsula.

Co-founded and ran from his home, the 781st BS Association (WWII B24s); was instrumental in establishing Jackson Rancheria Casino; and helped Indian tribes nationally.

He served terms as president, National

children.

He will be greatly missed by all who knew him. A Funeral Mass was held Thursday, May 28 at 10:00 am at Church of the Nativity, 210 Oak Grove Ave, Menlo Park, with Burial following at Holy Cross Cemetery, Menlo Park.

Contributions to charity may be made in Jim's name to Sky Ranch Foundation, PO Box 8420, Fredericksburg, VA 22404, or the Alzheimer's Assn., Northern CA, 1060 La Avenida, Mountain View, CA 94043.

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

### Clifford Derr...

...Radar Mechanic

From: dparksbonnie@msn.com  
Subject: clifford derr  
Date: June 29, 2009  
To: frank@frankambrose.com

Frank,

**Clifford Derr** died April 1, 2007.

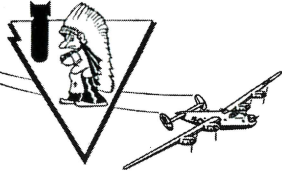
Please remove him from your mailing  
Thank You

**Bonnie Parks (daughter)**



# PANTANELLA NEWS<sup>SM</sup> Sept. 2009

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c/o Frank Ambrose, Editor  
44 East Blvd.  
Gloversville, NY 12078



**781st BS  
2009 Reunion  
October 4-5-6-7, 2009  
Hilton Garden Inn  
Independence, MO  
SEND IN YOUR  
RESERVATION TODAY**

ASSOC 2009  
CAROLE J. LEE  
2312 BRAEMAR DR.  
SIOUX FALLS, SD 57105-4126



A B-2 Spirit soars after a refueling mission over the Pacific Ocean. The B-2, from the 509th Bomb Wing at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., is part of a continuous bomber presence in the Asia-Pacific region.  
(U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Bennie J. Davis III)

