



783RD LATRINE-O-GRAM

December Edition, 1990

Picayune, Ms.

"FELIZ NAVIDAD"

If you recall, in the September edition I mentioned to tune into the December Edition, I had a secret to tell you. Tis no longer a secret but I am sure you will all be delighted to learn that we have finally gained our non-profit status. Red Huber has waded through all the crimson tape and finally succeeded. He did have some help from Mike Magazine, Jim Althof, Frank Goplen his C.P.A., his Lawyer and another friend, a retired Post Master. This means a great deal to us in several areas. We are able to put our money in an interest bearing acct. We can ^{now} up to \$25,000 tax free, our postage drops to 8.4¢ per L.O.G. and your dues are tax deductible. Red and I discussed dues and we will keep them at \$15.00, however, if your cookie jar is over flowing and you **are so inclined** you may donate as much as you care to. Now folks, I call that a real Christmas present.

More news that I know you are awaiting is about the 91 re-union site, here goes. San Antonio, October 7-10-91. It was a very close race from start to finish, as per instructions from President Huber I was to cut off the Ballotting as of December 1st. Reception was good and if this is any indication, we should have a great turnout. Bring your spouse's, girl friend or boy friend and dont forget your children. If we all give it our best I feel certain President Huber and Col. Andrus will be extremely proud, not to mention this ole tale gunner.

When I finish one of these L.O.G.'S I always have a sigh of relief and then what am I going to do for an encore. Thanks to many of you I have so many tales to tell you that I will have to condense many of them. I have a story received from Red Huber left over from the September loot. Hopefully I can squeeze it in this time.

Floyd E. Gregory advises me that sales for the history book have been excellent. He still has some copie's available at \$14.00 which includes S&H. Again you may send any amount you care to, any overage he receives will be forwarded to our treasurer. In this case however, make you checks out to Floyd Gregory 2014 So. Anderson St. Urbana, Il. 61801.

Next on the agenda, news from Harry and Lola Fike, Ill have to ask you to turn the page so that I may do justice.

Sam Marie was kind enough to send Harry Fike the original tape from the Atlanta re-union. Harry can have them re-produced for \$20.00 per copy which in this case will also cover the cost of S & H. The following is a list of P. X. items.

Send orders to Harry D. Fike, 2817 Volquardsen, Davenport, IA 52804
(Make checks payable to the 783rd Bomb Sqdn. Assn.)

14 oz Glasses	\$3.00	(emblem on one side and B-24 on the other)		
Caps	7.00	(med blue w/gold trim, Sqdn name and a B-24)		
Squadron Patch	6.00			
SQUADRON T SHIRTS (Navy w/gold emblem)				
Large	\$11.00	X Large	\$11.00	XXLg \$12.00

SQUADRON PAPER PRODUCTS

Squadron Paper Decal (approx 3 1/2 x 4) \$0.10
Squadron Colored Emblem (8 x 10) .10

SQUADRON EMBLEMS - Souvenir of Las Vegas 1987

Self stick Emblems	\$1.00	Tie Clips	\$3.00
Stick Pins	3.00		

4 INCH GOLF TAG - Souvenir of Dayton Reunion 1985

Wright Patterson AFB Tags w/ chain \$1.00

15TH AIR FORCE PIN - Souvenir of Atlanta Reunion 1989

15th Air Force Lapel Pins \$3.00

Above prices do not include shipping costs. Please include \$1 to \$3 shipping. Some items are in short supply and there is no plan to reorder. Orders are filled as received.

Leroy W. "Ted" Newby has written another book which may be of interest to you, " INTO THE GUNS OF PLOESTI" You may purchase an autographed edition for \$12.95 plus \$1.50 S. & H. Make your checks out to Leroy W. Newby 346 Pineview Dr. Venice, Fl. 34293.

LOST SOULS

Richard C. Winston. Navigator on T. W. Bonds crew, found himself and I cant find the words to tell you how happy it makes me. His address is as follows, 139 Rolling Hills Road, Thornwood, New York 10594 (914 769 4652).

Harold "Bud" Michielson 1900 So. Shore Dr. Holland, Mi. 49423 616 335 2224.

Many ballots were returned as they were not able to be delivered. I shall include the names in hopes that some of you will be able to help relocate them. Since Mike is the one that makes out the address labels and hopefully a new roster, please advise him if you have any luck.

John W Reed Jr. P. O. Box 1861 Cooleage Az. 85228

Harry Frame 920 1/2 E. Central Redlands Ca. 92373

Gene D. Carlos 3655 So. Pennsylvania Englewoor, Co 80110

Lyle V Mollenhour 2296 Runnymede Ridge Marietta, Ga 30067

Ms: Amy Reid 111 Ivanhoe Denver, Co. 80220

Paul Buckwald 18072 South Dr. Berea, Oh. 44017

Chin Ngoon 4 Masefield Rd. Nashua, NH. 03062

Lawrence B Thurston Scotland Rd. Winchester, NH. 03470

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Richard B Kupper P. O. Box # 9525 Wethersfield, Ct. 06109
Gerald W. Howard 6 Grandview Circle Storrs, Ct. 06268
Ed Hausner 1405 Kent Place Linden, NJ 07036
Mrs. Vivian Burkhart 144 Madarin Dr. Winterhaven, Fl. 33880
Mrs. Donald Wells 270 Azalea Ln. Ft. Meyers, Fl. 33931
William C. Tedder Rt. 1 Box 144 Demopolis, Al. 36732
John B. Whaley Rt. 14 Box 56 Sevierville, Tn. 37862
Mrs. Maybelle Adair 3292 S. Perkin Memphis, Tn 38118
Mrs. Shirley Hockman 220 Edgewood Terrace # L-23 Jackson,
Ms. 39206
Pete C. Higgins 1320 Preusser East Canton, Oh. 44730
Chas. Holdren 1443 E. Shore Dr. Findlay, Oh. 45840
James S. Hudson 1650 Lawndale St. Detroit, Mi. 48209
Mrs. Robt. Petranek 2135 Williams Blvd. Cedar Rapids, Ia
52404
Francis Kraemer 1021 Andover Ave. Eau Claire, Wi. 54703
Mrs. Lillian Stigliani 211 Thornbrook Rd. Dekalb, Il 60115
Arthur Perkins 208 W. 136 Country View Naperville, Il 60560
Oliver E. Fredrickson 4118 Laramie Ln. Rockford, Il 61108
Mrs. Rita Nickles P. O. Box # 459 Waynesville, Mo. 65583
Collie E. Sheets 6121 Tierra Dr. Shreveport, La. 71119
John Innis Box # 325 Fort Supply, Ok. 73841
Wm. B. Vaughn P. O. Box # 214 Paris, Tx. 75460
Mrs. Clair Ziegler 412 Greenbriar Bedford, Tx 76021
Robert Broker 1102 Veronica St. La Marque, Tx. 77568
Reubin B. Shultz 3600 E 88th Ave Space 42 Thornton, Co.
80229.

SICK CALL;

John Graybill was kind enough to send me his ballot with a note that he would not vote since his health wouldnt allow him to attend. We thank you in spite of your problems for taking the time to respond, true in spirit of a 783 rd-er.

Mike Maggazine wasnt lookin too well and went to the Doc. and lo and behold had some cataract surgery and is looking better. Sarah has to drive him around until Dec. 27th. We all wish you well Mike.

Geneva Wylie had to have a couple of sheet metal screws put into a bone in her right hand. It has been a bad time for her. She tells me child birth was a breeze compared to the pain she has endured with this deal.

TAPS

Joe Haring passed away 3-13-85 with a ruptured aorta. His wife passed away 3-15-90 from cancer. They are survived by a son and daughter that would like to become associate members. Julie "Haring" Beachnau 3457 Bromley Ct. Palmdale, Ca. 93551, Her brother Jeffs address is as follows 5923 Lake Lindero Dr. Agoura Hills, Ca. 91301. We welcome you and your spouse's with open arms. They want to purchase some P. X. items and will try and make our next reunion.

Evelyn Mc Namee wife of John passed away 5-21-90. I dont have any particulars to tell you, however if you know them you may just drop a note, thank you.

Clarence Patterson passed away in 1986. Again I have no particulars but I beg you, if you know any of the family I believe it only proper and fitting to get in touch with them, again many thanks.

Vernon Leggett passed away 7-29-88 with a heart attack. Again this is all the information I have, however I would like to enlist anyone who knows the family and offer condolences from the 783rd.

Mini-Reunions

Yes we had some, on a happier note. I received a package from Joe Bastin, George Josten and Tom Fitzpatrick. Holy Cow it would have been fun to be able to sit there and listen to all that went on.

Members of the Dulitz crew and spouse's met in Denver on Sept. 28th. and 30th. 1990 in Denver. Those in attendance were as follows, Jim and Sylvia Dulitz, Connie and Afra Maffey, Jim and Sally St. Clair, Ed and Marge Keiser, Mort and Teenie Fitzpatrick, Linford and Maxine Lavrack and Tom and Jean Fitzpatrick. Bob and Lorraine Dumas and Bob and Flonnie Lawson couldnt attend because of health problems with the two Bob's. As far as I know a good time was had by all, lots of good food, some sight seeing and no doubt a sip or two. Bless you all, we wish we had been with you.

Now about the Bastin and Josten Mini, may I tell each and everyone of you, I cant possibly print everything these fine gentlemen sent me, it would take up the entire L.O.G. I do have letters and newspaper clippings that as I view from this end, I need to share with you. Both George and Joe did an an awful lot of work to compile what they sent me, each and every piece is a treasure. Now I may get a replacement for doing so but then who cares. Ive heard that Joe became over-deposited and simply had to buy the lake he lives on, what a place for a reunion. I will paste up some stuff and include some photos from the newspaper for you to scrutinize, I know you will be proud. I will continue on the next couple of pages, OK?

My son Jeff and his lovely wife were in San Antonio this past September for a company function. They had little free time but managed a breakfast with Sam Marie down on the river walk. It was no doubt, heavos con chariso. In U S of A standards; this is eggs with meat. I didnt warn Jeff that the meat is either Armadillo or Cabrito, "Goat" At any rate, they enjoyed the visit, short as it was and didnt get sick either. Jeff has promised me that he will attend the next reunion, he is Jack Benny's age and a young chap that his Dad is very proud of and cant wait until you meet him:

Until I get to the next two pages, I must tell you that Picayune is on the move. We have extended our runway here at Pine Tree international to 5000 feet and are fixin to put in Jet Fuel. We have not one but two telephone prefixes, and not last and certainly not least, we have two of our very own street gangs. No drive by shootings as of yet, I guess they cant afford the gasoline.

On to the next couple of pages, re; reunions with the pics. e.t.c.

Fly guys

Bastin, 6 crew members reunited 45 years after WWII stint in Italy

By JENNIFER P. BROWN
NEW ERA Lifestyles Editor

FORTY-FIVE years ago, Dr. Joe Bastin and nine other men of the U.S. Army Air Corps were dropping bombs from a B-24 Liberator in an effort to cripple Adolf Hitler's fighting strength in Europe.

They completed more than 25 missions together in the plane they called "Leading Lady," and despite more close calls than they care to count, all eventually escaped World War II with their lives. Three of the men have since died.

Now, for the first time in 45 years, Bastin and the six surviving crew members have been reunited.

It took three years of planning, but finally they all got together again this week at Bastin's vacation home on Lake Barkley.

"I thought if three guys showed up, we would be doing well. I never expected all six to show up," said Bastin, 63, a Hopkinsville optometrist.

Bastin was a sergeant and served as top turret gunner on the B-24 when he was 18 years old. The surviving crew members who gathered at his home this week are:

George Josten, 68, was first pilot. A retired engineering supervisor for Ford Motor Co., he lives in Greenfield, Ind.

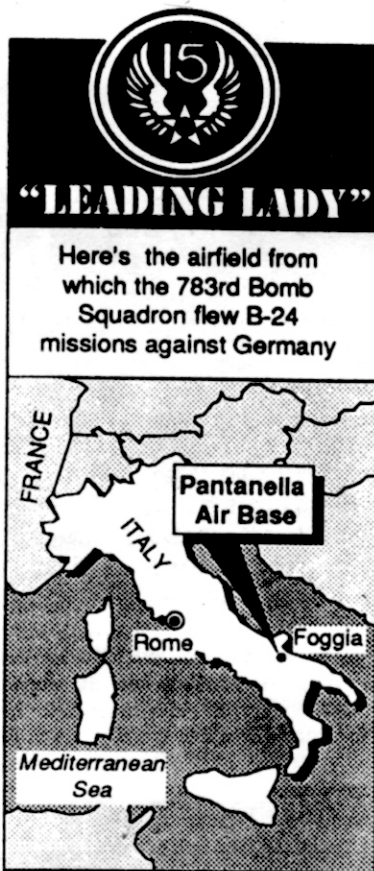
James Lawton, 67, was the bombardier. He lives in Baltimore and recently retired from a shipping company.

J.T. Harp, 64, was the tail gunner. A retired industrial photographer, he now lives in Livermore, Calif.

Edmund Pereira, 69, was the flight engineer. He is a Rhode Island state representative and lives at East Providence.

Bill Bolin, 69, was the co-pilot. A retired sales engineer, he recently moved to Delatona, Fla., to pursue his favorite pastime, golfing.

Doyle Mayo, 68, was the radio operator. He is a retired mail carrier and now runs oil and gas wells near his home in Forgan, Okla.



NEW ERA/David Riley

Bastin said he was especially surprised, and pleased, that the entire group was able to reunite since two of the men have suffered health setbacks recently. Harp is undergoing chemotherapy for cancer treatment, and Bolin is recovering from a broken hip.

Today, the seven men are noticeably grayed, and, when they posed for a group photograph, they teased each other about sucking in their stomachs to make themselves look thinner.

But 45 years ago it was a different group of men.

Assigned to the 783rd Bomb Squadron (H) 465th Bombardment Group (H) of the Fifteenth Air Force, Bastin and his crew were stationed at Pantanello Air Base in southern Italy for one year. They came together as a crew at Westover Field, Mass.

Their job was to knock out oil refineries, munitions factories and other facilities which the Germans

depended on for air superiority.

They flew missions over Italy, Austria, Germany, Romania and Bulgaria.

"It was a tremendous mental anguish, stress and strain on all of us because we never knew if we would come back alive," said Josten. "Needless to say, we became very close in that year."

Pereira commented, "Every time we came home it was a successful mission."

All said they remember the time they returned to Pantanello from a bombing run to find 121 bullet holes in the plane. "Any one of those could have killed one of us, but we all made it," said Lawton.

Mayo was taken prisoner of war by the Germans when he had to parachute out of another plane over Austria. He was held for only two months, but some of the crew didn't find out until years later if he had survived.

Although many of the memories are unpleasant, Josten said that today he thinks mostly of the men he served with in Europe. "Those are the best memories," he said.

In a book titled "The Fifteenth Air Force Story," which was published in 1986 and includes numerous personal biographies, Bastin relates what he believes was the crew's most dangerous mission.

He says, "The one I remember most was over the Brenner Pass, Alps Mountains, in northern Italy. We had just released our bombs and received a hit in the bomb bay. The hydraulic tank had a hole in it and fluid was covering everything in the bomb bay."

"Ed Pereira, our flight engineer, and I tried to stop the fluid leak, and it was almost impossible to stand on the cat walk or hold onto anything. We didn't have our chest chutes on since we couldn't get through the brace on the cat walk."

"I slipped and almost went out the bomb doors. We were at 18,000 (feet), but I could see the rail tracks and snow-covered trees below. The plane was bouncing as the flak was exploding. I still have dreams that I fell out."

THIS SHOULD MAKE US ALL VERY PROUD



DR. JOE BASTIN (photo above) and the men he served with in Italy during World War II are pictured in front of a B-24 Liberator in 1945. The men on each side of Bastin and the man third from the left on the back row have died. The

survivors (photo below) pictured in the same positions at Lake Barkley earlier this week are (from left, front row) Edmund Pereira, Doyle Mayo, Bastin and J.T. Harp and (from left, back row) George Josten, Bill Bolin and James Lawton.



NEW ERA/Jennifer P. Brown

WHATS NOT TO LOVE HERE?

The story is about the same for most bomber replacement crews. But there is a difference in this one as you will sense as you read on. It has something to do with the fact that the crews went to the Quid Fit squadron, the 783rd in the 465th group. There is a spirit, a feeling of pride, a level of confidence that all of us shared.

We gathered at Westover Field from all the various training centers across the nation. And suddenly, we were assigned "to each other" and were identified as a crew. We were young, bright, spirited, eager and very fresh faced bunch of kids. We wanted to get on with our careers and our lives—in peace and harmony.

After nine weeks at Chatham, we learned what a crew is, does, we developed a loyalty and friendship and concern for each other. The guns were fired and cared for properly, the engineer learned to prep the ship and keep it that way, safe to fly. The navigator soon learned to get us lost and found and to take the ribbings of the crew. The co-pilot soon got the pilot trained and into shape and the bombardier got a feel for what it was like to look down on target landscapes from the nose of his ship. The pilot just laid back and watched the whole thing develop and said to himself, "this is 783rd material".

And then suddenly, ^{we} were at Mitchell and we had picked up a new B-24J #42-51947 airplane. From Mitchell we went to a few stops on the way to the Azores and to Tunis. We were held up in Tunis for three weeks and we learned to play bridge which was a costly error on the part of "some of us". We then went north thru Sicily and on to the field at Pantenella. Here we were greeted by all the base with a resounding skepticism, a whispered comment or two such as "—here when the war is half over", "—so young and dumb", "—robbing the cradle, we must be bad off".

But we soon learned that these "old" crews were outstanding. We soon found out that this squadron was NOT an average. This bunch had high standards, had accomplished a great deal of effective fighting of the enemy and knew what to teach us. The "old" crews were being ^{diminished} somewhat by the effects of combat and by completion of their tours and they knew that the established legacy of the Quid Fit gang was not going to be let go to hell. So the original gang did work with us new guys, did measure us in performance and soon made us welcome and good members of the 783rd. We were then the gang to whom the job of finishing the war was given.

And so the time passed and so did the missions. Some of us started in October of 44. We were busy in that month and then the Nov. 20th Blechammer raid got our attention. We were with the Colonel when he went down. We were in flite B on the right wing. We were also getting "shot-up" and mixed around because of hits. It was a "goodie". But that was not to be all.

December thru March and April of 45 we kept up our hitting. Older crews were slowly going out of the squadron and more and more the replacement crews were becoming the "old" gang. We did the original gang proud. We knew what and how to do it.

In June the final combat mission was flown and the final flite back to the states was made. We had taken "our ship" over into combat and we had brought her home again. We were assembled and "disassembled" as crews, we became individuals again. We were free to get married, have children, work, enjoy liberty, do the things we earned.

And so for forty years, we sat on the proud secret of the Quid Fit squadron. But it could not be forever. So in 1983 we broke out the good news and remembered each other at our first reunion. We remembered our dead with respect and honor also. And then we celebrated our squadron with three more reunions, each time telling the stories again and remembering that we all were Quid Fit members, that we ALL were proud.

Geo. Doster

Dear editor,

February 11, 1990

Some information below may be of interest to other squadron members in the 783rd. Please use (or reject) it as you wish.

"In early October the papers announced that a B-24 airplane would be visiting ~~the~~ Mt. Vernon airport for a few days. Much was said about it and how this was the last B-24 to still fly, and was combat-ready.

"I went out to see the ship. I was wearing my B-2 jacket with the 783rd patch on it. Doris was with me. It was a grand sight. It had the 465th Bomb Group tail markings on it!! On it's side, the Corporate sponsor name was shown, the General dynamics Corp. Clew! Stan Pace of the 783rd squadron runs that Corp. He must be involved somehow. As a later letter advised, he was indeed.

"I stood and stared at that ship to my heart's content. It was a beautiful and a complete sight, right down to the machine gun belts and bullets, bombs in the racks, Norden sight. Silver, smooth, shiny. I even got ALL through the inside, even the two front seats. What memories came back.

"While standing there, others stopped and talked, recalled and re-lived some very precious moments. A ball gunner stopped and talked to me. With tears in his eyes, he told me about the last time he saw a B-24--the day he bailed out and lived.

"Yes indeed, we all have great and vivid memories of that ship. And doesn't it make you feel good that a member of our 783rd squadron has worked so hard and with such dedication so that many can remember and enjoy? Hats off to Stan Pace!!

George B. Josten
3064 Pleasant Drive
Greenfield, IN 46140
1-317-861-5764

As a footnote to this message, The 465th. and the 453rd. have been the largest contributors for the upkeep or maintenace of All American, at least until September of 91. Until that time, our tail markings will remain in place, one that we all admire and respect. I am indeed in accord with George, Stan Pace has to be one of the greatest airman to have survived and we all owe him a debt. of gratitude.

November 9, 1990

To: Floyd E. Gregory, editor, 783rd History
Al Wylie, editor of 783rd latrine-o-gram.

Subject: Air Force Museum Publication "Friends Bulletin"

I have been a member of the Air Force Museum for many a year and the publication I receive is an excellent product. The most recent issue for Winter 1990 had article that included information on some famous B-24's.

The point of this communication is to make both of you aware that the Air Force Museum publication is looking for articles on just about any air force related item, person, event, crew, person or other. They are encouraging such things as information on unofficial insignia of a war unit, such as our Quid Fit. The insignia of the 80th Fighter Squadron is featured in the latest issue of Friends Bulletin. Our squadron has a very unique insignia and should prove to an excellent subject for an article.

But it doesn't have to stop with just an insignia story. The publication encourages many articles on war events, etc as mentioned above. I thought that the two of you would be the most interested and best equipped to provide the input should you think it a worthy idea. I am sending this letter to both of you simultaneously.

Stories and other articles, send to:
Editor, Friends Bulletin
P. O. Box 1903
WPAFB, Ohio 45433

Membership per year is about \$15 and it includes a yearly write-in calendar, four issues of the magazine, discounts on all sorts of Air force memorabilia and publications, etc. Call or write:

Friends of the Air Force Museum
P. O. Box 1903
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio 45433
(513) 258-1218



enclosure: info from Friends Bulletin, Winter, 1990.

Harry Fike has perhaps a thousand of the 8 X 10 Sqdn. Insignia that Bob Wills daughter made for us. I think is incumbent on us to follow through with this and whatever else anyone may have to contribute. I for one am very proud of our insignia and sport it when ever I feel like. Some folks may be offended by the drunk rabbit tossin out booze bottles but you can be sure they were empty. So Mr. Harry, if you dont mind will you please send an insignia to Wright Patterson Air Force Base?

Carl Lind and a few others formed a local group called for lack of a better discription, W W 11 Combat Flyers in Rockford, Il. They meet once a month for breakfast @ 6:30 A. M. with about 60 or 70 in attendance. In addition they have a Ladies night and then once a year they have what they call, Plae Dae, golf of-course. They volunteer as a group to help with the annual Air Show and most resently for the All American. They have no rules, no dues or whatever. You must have been in combat with the Army, Navy, Marines, Luftwaffe, Royal Norwegian, R. A. F., R.C.A.F. or whatever.

A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

I was watching an Astro-Giants game when Helen called to me, "It's Burt Andrus on the phone." After the usual formalities he asked if we were going to the Atlanta reunion. My answer, "We wouldn't miss it for the world!" He then commented that the Board wished to nominate me for President and asked if I would serve. My answer, "I'd be honored to serve." Later, after I'd hung up and relayed our conversation to Helen, I blurted out, "I wonder why they didn't ask a younger man?" Then we both laughed. Hell, we are all "old cooters."

If you will bear with me I want to go back and review the last 7 years of my life since the inception of the 783rd Association:

Spring of '83--Don Kay called me from California. His name struck a note but I couldn't connect a face to it. Orv Hiem (my pilot) was visiting his daughter and by coincidence Don lived next door. I can visualize that as the booze flowed their thoughts of getting the old fly boys back together for a reunion after almost 40 years got more grandiose with each refill.

I don't know all "nuts and bolts" of how this meeting germinated into an actual reunion in Colorado Springs but it did!

Helen and I still recall Sam Marie serving as the original greeter at the Colorado Springs Airport. Because the terminal is relatively small he caught us all and oriented us regarding coming events.

What a time we had--Burt Andrus, Rock Lundburg and Dwight Reed put on a real shindig!

Highlights:

1. The memorial service at the AF (Air Force) Academy Chapel where each SQD member K1A was honored.
2. The dedication of our 783rd plaque on the memory wall located in the Academy cemetery,
3. The AF-Brigham Young football game with the parachute teams,
4. The AF Academy formation honoring their own K1A during the past year. Approximately 1,000 cadets participated. The flyover with the lost man formation was spectacular.
5. The golf tournament and dinner was the grand finale.

The Academy treated us like heroes! But, my main event was seeing my old crew mates: Orv Hiem, Rock Lundburg and Dwight Reed (for the 1st time since 1944. That was "choke up" time! Tom Clark was too ill to make the trip, but seeing Burt Andrus, Doc Kimball, Paul Smith and John Walker was the most.

Helen was pleasantly surprised. She was sure, "it will be a bunch of old drunks recounting war stories into the early hours of the morning." She was wrong--she had a great time. The only boozing I did was a couple of hours in Don and Doris Kay's suite.

The Dayton Reunion in 1985:

The Wright Paterson Museum was the main event. They set up ramp stairs so that the ladies could inspect the B-24 on display. Helen's comment, "I don't know how any of you came back alive!" By today's standards the B-24 was a very primitive airplane. No way would you get me to fly in the Collings Rebuilt Plane (Xmas log)--I'll just pat its fuselage and mummer a thank you prayer for getting me home after each mission.

Highlights:

1. Seeing Floyd Gregory for the first time since September '44. He was the best flight engineer in the 15th Air Force. He saved our lives three times by patching up our flak damaged plane in flight home. He was an electrical and hydraulic wizard.
2. Sharing a table at dinner with Stan and Elaine Pace. Those of us that witnessed his plane going down knew that there couldn't be any survivors. Today only a small amount of scar tissue on his hand and face attest to the *job* the German doctors did on Stan. Many of us remember Stan as the "Father Confessor"--the intercessor with that tough disciplinarian C.O.--Burt Andrus.
3. I recognized Pappy Brown immediately. He was one of the few married men in the SQD. He enjoyed embarrassing the impeccable Doc Kimball in some of our sex discussions in the club.
4. Spent one day touring the museums with Floyd and Jean Gregory and Milton and Sarah Roush. Milt and Floyd were buddies on the Hill.

5. Had a long chat with Doc Kimball. While touring the museum, he commented that his toughest duty was deciding when to ground a man due to emotional stress. Helen asked about me. "Red was never a problem. He was too busy playing cards, drinking booze and chasing women to ever think about being scared!"
6. The golf tournament was the finale. Didn't know that my fun visit with Bob Ziegler of Dallas would be the *last* one!
7. Plotted a Texas mini-reunion with Bob and Rosy Anderson while at the airport waiting for our planes.

Texas Mini-Reunion in 1986:

Nine couples (Bob Anderson, Woody Browning, Leroy Crenshaw, Wayland Feely, Floyd Gregory, Golden Jones, Sam Marie, Dick Rogers) and Orbin Rutledge attended. The small number enabled us all to have a great time. The Texas Prison Rodeo was the highlight. The Judd's (the Mama and Daughter team of the Olds' TV ads) were the star attraction. Their RV bus was parked at our Holiday Inn. Some ventured onto the bus and visited with Mama Judd while daughter was in the motel resting. They had our group stand at the rodeo and dedicated a number just for us and our SQD.

Feely, our tail gunner, was my toughest challenge of all the men (I had met again in past reunions) to recognize after 40+ years. We both had the same problem--we hadn't missed any meals! I went from 135 lbs. to 225 lbs. in those years. After a few hours of conversation we both shed those excess pounds in our imaginations.

Las Vegas Reunion in 1987:

The highlight of the reunion was seeing James Cady (and Mary). Again recognition was a problem at first. He couldn't get into that belly turret today! Cady recently retired as one of the top engineers of the California Highway Department. Helen and I spent all of our time visiting with the old "Highland Fling" crew--Gregory, Cady and Feely. Leroy Crenshaw adopted our crew toward the end of his tour. He has to be the best joke teller in all of Texas. He kept us in stitches.

Atlanta Reunion in 1989

Helen had to cancel out due to pending major back surgery. To all of you that wished her well--the back surgery was a success. She is back on the golf course and is looking forward to seeing you in '91.

The highlight of the reunion was sharing three meals with the Bill Powell's and the Pappy Browns. Bill was in great form--full of life--his hair was growing back--his color was good--one could not imagine that he had endured months of battling cancer. He had beaten the curse of the Big C. Sam's videotape of the reunion shows Bill and Norma in many happy scenes, including him at the rostrum thanking us all for the prayers, letters and phone calls during his illness. Little did any of us suspect that in 23 days he would be gone!

Reunions can be both dull at times and full of fun at times. Most of us don't know each other. Even though I was a member of one of the original crews, 40+ years wiped out a lot of memories. I only remember well a handful of men other than my own crew. I didn't know any of the ground support people and they didn't know me.

I didn't know any of the replacement crews but have in past reunions met some great guys. We were part of our country's most victorious period in history--the destruction of the German Air Force and their manufacturing facilities and supply capabilities including petroleum products. The 783rd was one of the best bomb SQDs in the Air Force--maybe the best! Remarkable! Considering that we were just a bunch of 20 year old kids!

As I said earlier, most of us only know a few of the people attending a reunion. We see each other for 48 fast moving hours, then the gates are closed for two more years. But as Jack Meyers said in a get well card to Helen--"We go to visit with my crew members and their wives and to see again a few good friends like you and Red."

That's what a reunion is all about! See you in 1991.

*BEST REGARDS
Red*

Well Dear Ones, this is about all I have to report to you at this point and time. I had best cut this one off or we wont be able to afford to print it. It has been a long Latrine-O-Gram but one I felt was worthy of the news for you all to digest.

Hopefully you all will have a very happy Holiday Season from this wee house to yours, bless each and every one of you.

*Quid Fit
AL*

"Fini"