

# 783<sup>rd</sup> Latrine O Gram

SEPTEMBER 2000

Fifteenth Air Force  
55<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing

## Polish trip helps vet fill WWII scrapbook

By RENÉE WIGHTMAN  
Of The Oakland Press

Bob Wills' unexpected Christmas gift from his daughter took him on a nostalgic trip nearly halfway around the world.

His present was a plane ticket to Poland, allowing him to revisit the spot where his B-24 Liberator crashed more than 50 years ago during World War II. The 79-year-old Independence Township resident also toured the area where he was held captive by Russian forces for five weeks.

Wills co-piloted a plane that was shot down Nov. 20, 1944, over Zamosc, a town in eastern Poland near Ukraine. He and nine other crewmen were captured and held prisoner in a farmhouse near the field where they crashed.

His interest in the past was revived a few years ago after he researched the war. His renewed drive to document his experiences culminated in his trip to Poland two years ago.

He now is finishing a scrapbook that will chronicle his military stint.

In the spring of 1943, Wills enlisted in what became the Air Force and then graduated from the cadet program in 1944. At the rank of first lieutenant, Wills was honorably discharged in 1945, the day after V-J Day, which marked the Allied victory over Japan.

In writing down his experiences, Wills contacted Wojciech Krajewski, a Polish archaeolo-

### INDEPENDENCE TWP.

gist. Krajewski was seeking WWII veterans who had landed or crashed planes in Poland.

For three months before he left for Poland, Wills corresponded via e-mail with Krajewski, nicknamed "Indy" (after the Indiana Jones movie character). The pair met during

Wills' visit to Poland, and Krajewski wrote an article about Wills' experiences that was published in Aviation Revue Magazine.

Krajewski works for the Polish Army Museum in Warsaw and has been in contact with 20 veterans through e-mail.

"I help them, and they help me. I am

very interested in the aviation history in the period of WWII," he wrote via e-mail. "They are a living history. They saw war in the air and took part in the flying missions against the enemy."

Krajewski recently compiled artifacts and information from Wills and other veterans for a museum exhibit about American and British aerial missions over Poland.

While visiting Poland, Wills also was interviewed by a local newspaper representative and met an 83-year-old woman who had witnessed his plane crash.

Around the time of the crash, Soviet Premier Josef Stalin had warned the U.S. and British governments that American planes would be shot down if



Wills in 1944



Photo courtesy Bob Wills

Bob Wills was held captive at this house in Poland during WWII

they flew over Poland in an effort to aid the Polish army.

"So here we are, coming in and landing right in the middle of this," Wills said. "The Russians said the (Polish) underground was killing Americans, and they were protecting us. And we had a young soldier with a machine gun at our door."

After three or four weeks in captivity, his crew managed to escape through a window at the farmhouse and walk into town, but they were quickly caught and returned to the home.

Wills, then 23, believes members of the Polish underground were responsible for notifying

troops at the U.S. air base in Poltava, Ukraine, of their capture. The Russians released Wills and the other prisoners

soon after U.S. troops arrived.

He said revisiting the site "brought back some very unpleasant memories."

While Wills was in the military, he filmed scenes at camp and on missions with an 8 mm camera. The film was later transferred to videotape and shown at a recent reunion of the 783rd Bomb Squadron of the 15th Air Force.

At his summer home in Independence Township, Wills has nearly finished a thick scrapbook of photos, documents and other military mementos for his family to enjoy.

"(The WWII veterans) are disappearing fast," he said. "All these memories are going to be lost. We should make something for our kids."





## Happy Birthday

BOBBY WILLS- on left-Aug 12th. Wasn't he precious?

CLEO JACKSON-on Sept 6th said hello to the BIG 79!

GENE KULCZYK-on Sept 8 also hit the Big 80!

GREATEST BD PRESENT POSSIBLE for these 3 Drafted Recruits-Trip to fountain of youth!

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6 STARS ON HEADER REPRESENT-ROME; ARNO; SOUTHERN FRANCE; AIR BATTLE OF GERMANY;  
AIR BATTLE OF BALKANS & NORTHERN FRANCE CAMPAIGNS -the Squadron participated in.

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MAJOR GENERAL MIKE FARAGE USAF-on 9-1-00 at Lackland AFB, MIKE pinned on his second star as his proud father and mother NYME & JUNE joined by other members of the Farage family looked on. Not being an Academy graduate rising to two star rank is quite an accomplishment. CONGRATULATIONS MIKE!

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### A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

It is now just a few days since the 783<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Squadron's Quad Cities Mini Reunion ended, and Lola and I are settling down to more routine things such as making final preparations for my high school reunion in Lincoln, Nebraska on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. It seems that the more reunions you organize, the easier it is (just as much work but a lower level of worry).

Twenty-nine attended the mini reunion (including 2 new life members, our daughter, Cheri Amhof and our son, Randy). Lola and I were fortunate to have all twelve adult members of our family attend the dinner on Saturday night (4 great grand children not included). There were 39 at the dinner. Everyone seemed to have a great time beginning with our Davenport Welcome on Thursday afternoon (thanks mainly to Lola, Cheri, and her husband, Roger Amhof who served as bartender for the event); the tour of Rock Island Arsenal and the John Deere Commons on Friday; the golf outing on Saturday; and ending with the dinner Saturday evening. Our host motel, the Signature Inn in Bettendorf, Iowa, took care of all of our squadron needs in fine fashion and the attendees had nothing but praise for the motel and it's staff.

Twelve states from coast to coast were represented even though, regrettably, it was necessary for several to cancel their reservations. This included our golf coordinators, Joe and Doe Einecker, who had to cancel the last minute because Doe took a bad fall doing serious damage to her arm/shoulder. We're sorry you missed out on this great weekend of camaraderie.

I held a meeting of the officers and the two board members attending the reunion to make a final decision on our next reunion site. After considering all of the suggestions made at Kansas City (and there were at least 7 or 8), it was decided to have our 2001 reunion in Omaha. This city meets all of the basic requirements for our reunion site - good air connections, interstate highway system, interesting attractions, golf facilities, and riverboat gambling (not a requirement but enjoyed by many). Dates will be established in time for publication in the next LOG.

Lola and I want to thank all that attended the mini for making the effort to get here and making this a special time for our whole family. Quid Fit, Harry Fike

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#### NEW E MAIL ADDRESSES

ROBERT ANDERSON

robtande@swbell.net

RALPH SMITH

smith783@earthlink.net

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**IMPORTANT NOTICE**-Neither Mike Magazzino or Ralph Smith are deceased nor resigned from the Board. The 'Ole F/O' fighting this damned computer left their names off inadvertently. Please accept our sincere apologies.

QUID FIT!

**JOHN & IRIS SLAUGHTER**-we have received word that John a life member of the Squadron Association passed away in 1996 followed by his wife Iris 3 years to the day. We regret we could find no record of John and hope someone reading this will forward some personal info to be included in a future LOG.

**JACK MEYER**- after giving Big C all the fight he could muster passed away January 3, 2000 at the age of 76. He will be remembered as the Navigator on the Fred Johnson Crew. He is survived by wife Ruth; daughters Nancy Audretch and Janet Lynette; and sons Leo and Richard Meyer; 12 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. In civilian life he was the owner and operator of Interstate Castings for 55 years. He was a big supporter of Notre Dame and his beloved Catholic Church. As a member of the Squadron Association he will be remembered for his long and faithful service. Both as Secretary and Treasurer where he invested your Savings in a high yielding Fund. At the Kansas City Reunion he attended aided by the use of a wheel chair and supply of oxygen joined what meetings his ebbing health would allow. Following the Reunion he traveled to Mexico seeking medical help to further aide in his struggle. Optimistic in his struggle to the end we were surprised to receive a check instructing us on how to invest in the Texas Weekly Lottery only 2 days before his passing. Gripped in a final struggle and taking time out to attempt winning The 'Big Mamoo' can only be termed an optimistic fighter. WE HAVE LOST ANOTHER OF THE BEST!

**HELEN HUBER**-having given Big C a fight far beyond the average ability departed on her trip to join Red 3 months to the day following his flite to Eagles Nest. They met following WW II when Red had returned to the University of Illinois and she was attending Nursing School. She is survived by a son Burke Huber, Jr and wife Mary Kay of New Braunfels, TX and their 4 grandchildren; as well as a daughter Vicki Fewell and husband John and their 2 grandchildren of Duncanville, TX. Health problems prevented her from attending our later Reunions. However, of those she did attend she will be remembered as a jovial lady capable of making Red step lively when she popped him with a one line zinger. At their retirement home located on one of the fairways of the Elkins Lake Country Club in Huntsville, TX she was a regular player until prevented by health problems. Many will remember her putting on her plaid tam; with her cigarette holder at a jaunty angle; jumping in their golf cart kept at the house heading for the number one tee. WE HAVE LOST A SPECIAL LADY!

**COLONEL JOSEPH P. GARVEY USAF RET**-born February 3, 1922 passed away peacefully at his residence located in Laurel, MD April 27, 2000 after a long struggle with cancer. At his bedside was his son, Joe and his loving companion, Peg Rudd reciting "The Chaplet of the Devine Mercy". He was the widower of Katherine Wilbanks, his wife of 48 years that had been his high school sweetheart at Buckley High in Hartford. During that period he was a well known athlete receiving letters in football, basketball and baseball. He joined the Squadron as a F/O Bombardier flying 23 missions. Following WW II he formed his own accounting business while attending American International College in Springfield, MA until recalled to active duty once again in 1951. He was assigned to Countermeasures Warfare School. Other assignments included the USAF Security; The National Security Agency and the Defense Intelligence Agency. His duty stations from 1952-72 included Wakkinnai, Japan, The Tokyo Arena; MACV, Vietnam; Samsun, Turkey; Darmstadt, Germany; Frankfort, Germany; The Pentagon; and NSA, Ft Meade from 1971-79 when he retired. While stationed at the Pentagon he completed his B. A. at the University of Maryland graduating in 1970. After retirement he was a well known member at the Ft Meade Golf Club being a member of the "Greusome Foursome" and the "Dew Sweepers". He continued to golf until March 2000. He is survived by his son , Joseph Garvey of Laurel, MD; brothers Donal Garvey of Wethersfield and Edward Garvey of Lisbon; and his sister of Wethersfield. Burial took place in Arlington National Cemetary. WE HAVE LOST ANOTHER OF THE BEST!

**KENNETH O. (KEN) MONGE**-born October 9, 1915 passed away February 3, 2000. Ken will be remembered as the Nose Gunner on the Pilegard (Nelson) crew one of the original 17. While flying his 28th mission they were 'scragged' on the July 7, 1944 run to the 'friendly village' of Blechhammer. On that fateful day 5 of his crew were **KILLED IN ACTION**. He was to spend the remainder of the war as a guest of the Germans in Stalag IV POW Camp. Many of you will recall Ken and John Walker running a big 'galloping domino' game each pay day. He is survived by his wife Phyllis; sons-Michael and Jack Monge; daughters-Beth Hanson, Peggy Feski and Patty Pearce; Step Sons-Lon and Dan Steutelberg; Step Daughters-Lori Ringaman and Debbi Nelson-Moos; 19 Grand Children and 7 Great Grandchildren. **WE HAVE LOST ANOTHER OF THE BEST!**

**HARRY OGDEN**-we received word Harry lost a determined battle with Big C. He will be remembered attending many reunions and always a cooperative participant with a great sense of humor while enjoying a drink at the bar. Unfortunately, we only knew he was the Co Pilot on the Frank Mayall crew having flown some 20 plus missions. At this time no word has been received from his family members requesting more of his history. If received it will be included in another LOG. **WE HAVE LOST ANOTHER OF THE BEST!**

**PLEASE NOTE**-with regards to the above TAPS SECTION in many cases it has been most difficult if not impossible to obtain sufficient info to write a similar obit for each member and spouse. So many families have failed to respond. To correct this problem for sometime we have experimented with a personnel questionnaire included in this issue that would provide necessary info plus be of historical value. **PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO COMPLETE AND RETURN! CONTROL WHAT MAY BE WRITTEN ABOUT YOU! Corrections, Additions Appreciated.**

**DON'T PROCRASTINATE-DO SO TODAY!**

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**MARJORIE BROWN**-wife of Neil (Pappy) Brown is battling failing health and is now confined to a wheel chair.



**DOT ROGERS**-wife of our past president recently suffered a sinking spell and was rushed to the hospital via EMS. After an over night stay the Medics determined a few \$100 prescriptions should control her problems(Living with 'Ole Grouch' would give anyone a sinking spell).

**DOE EINECKER**-our Lady Golf Chairwoman fell breaking an arm just below the ball joint that required surgical pinning causing her to miss 'Davenpookeyville'.

**YOU 'OLE' FRIENDS TAKE TIME TO REMEMBER THESE LADIES WITH A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT**

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**DO YOU REMEMBER?**

Shortly before departing McCook, NE 1/Sgt Jim Sexton and another Non Com had a disagreement and Sexton prevailed suffering a broken hand that required a cast to set the broken bones. At Camp Patrick Henry just as all of the troops were lined up to take their final physical it was learned anyone with a cast would be removed from shipping orders which put Captain Schwartz our Exec and Troop Commander into a panic. The problem was promptly solved when one of the Squadron Officers(a former 1/Sgt) removed his shirt replacing it with Sexton's and proceeded to form up the Squadron and march it down to the hospital and go thru the physical posing as Sexton. After quickly passing thru the examining line he exited; rushed to the barracks swapping back to his own shirt and returned to again pass thru the examining line. Will buy the first to correctly name the 'Acting 1/Sgt' a red soda pop at the next Reunion.

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**MESSAGES RECEIVED FROM THIRD STOOL DOWN-STAN PACE**-attending his West point Class reunion missed the 'Davenpuski' round up. **MARTY SEILER**-a former New Yorker now living it up in 'Earthquakeville'. **MICKEY SCHWARTZ**-reported in now living the good life in Venice, FL. **JIM KYES**-reported in from North Dakota. **CARL MILLBURN**-forwarded the words to I WANTED WINGS from his Florida retirement home.

# 783<sup>RD</sup> BOMB SQUADRON

## MEMBER INFORMATION

MEMBER NAME

DATE OF BIRTH

BIRTH PLACE

NO. CHILDREN

NO. GRANDCHILDREN

NO. GREAT GRANDCHILDREN

NAMES OF CHILDREN & SPOUSES

DUTIES OF MEMBER WITH SQUADRON

IF COMBAT CREW MEMBER-NUMBER OF MISSIONS

IF WAS MEMBER A POW; DATE & MISSION SCRAPGED; WHERE INCARCERATED  
(UNUSUAL PRISON CAMP EXPERIENCES ON BACK OF PAGE OR ADD A SHEET)

IF SCRAPGED & EVADED CAPTURE; DATE & MISSION  
(BRIEF NARRATION OF ESCAPE EVENTS ON BACK SIDE OR ADD A SHEET)

THOSE MAKING MILITARY A CAREER-RESUME ON ANOTHER PAGE

EDUCATION COMPLETED AFTER SERVICE

CIVILIAN OCCUPATION; PROFESSIONAL INFO; ACHIEVEMENTS ETC

OTHER INFO MEMBER DESIRES INCLUDED IN SQUADRON REUME

**IMPORTANT! COMPLETE SPOUSE INFO BACK SIDE!**

**PLEASE COMPLETE & RETURN TO: SAM MARIE; 13306 LOBELIA; SAN ANTONIO, TX 78232**

## SPOUSE INFORMATION

**SPOUSE NAME**

**BIRTH PLACE**

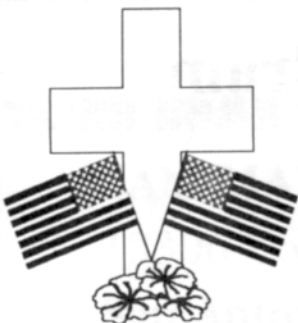
**NUMBER OF YEARS MARRIED**

**HOW DID YOU MEET HUSBAND**

**HOBBIES; ACTIVITIES (SEWING; GARDENING; CHURCH; BOWLING ETC)**

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**OTHER INFORMATION DESIRED ON EITHER SIDE**



## TAPS

*MSGT RICHARD LeROY (DICK) SNOW USAF RET*-born August 22, 1924 in Winlock, WA passed away January 21, 2000 in Bellingham, WA with an internal infection that resulted in 3 operations all of which were unsuccessful. Dick will be remembered as the Engineer on the Golden Jones crew making all 35 of his missions. He was recalled to active duty with the Air Force in 1950. His first duty station upon being recalled was Mather Field. Next was a 3 year tour in Paris, France. This was followed by a 3 year tour at Boling AFB where he flew for the Secretary of State & other dignitaries. His next duty station was McChord AFB. After a short stay his Squadron was transferred to Hickam Field, HI for another 3 year tour. There he made many flights to Japan, Philippines, Alaska etc. In January 1963 he transferred into computer work at Blaine AFS. His final duty station was Tyndall AFB where he retired in 1969. Returning home to Bellingham, WA he entered the electrical trade. He worked on numerous school and commercial building projects in the state of Washington before spending 3 years in Alaska installing traffic lights in Fairbanks. In 1983 he retired once again. Following service with the 783rd he had returned home and married Lillian Richards a high school sweetheart. In addition he is survived by a son Terry Snow; two daughters Gail Wright and Susan Canady; brothers Bill and Melvin Snow; 12 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren. A son Craig passed away in 1995. In his retirement years he enjoyed many endeavors watching professional sports events, fishing, camping etc. All will agree he lived a full and productive life serving his country and family in a most productive manner. ***WE HAVE LOST ANOTHER OF THE BEST!***

*WEYLAND (CHAMP) FEELY*-made his final flite to eagles Nest on July 12. Being one of those ornery and tough Gunners he made two determined recoveries from crippling strokes. First one on the left side followed by one on the right. With Big C following so closely these two struggles with great determination that characterized his life he waged a stubborn battle before his reserve tank ran empty. With the Squadron he will be remembered as a 50 mission Tail Gunner on the Heim crew as well as with Colonel Clark and Johnny Knaus when they got clobbered over Oswiecim, Poland and had to land behind Russian lines. This left their B-24 unflyable. In order to return back to Italy Colonel Clark commandeered a B-17 and joined up with the 8th Air Force making a shuttle run on Szony, Hungary. During this return flite they once again experienced heavy flak and severe battle damage. Many will recall passing his tent and observing Weyland stretched out on that lawn chair affair with his pet chicken 'Umbriago' perched on his belly. To many the name 'Umbriago' will denote a brave fighting rooster. Actually, 'Umbriago' was the scrawniest, worse looking hen you ever laid eyes on. That was why 'Umbriago' hadn't made a trip to the skillet long before. He was born December 23, 1922 in Corpus Christi, TX where he was raised before enlisting in the Army Air Corps in 1942. After his service days he returned to Corpus and attended Del Mar College. He then joined Reynolds Metals and retired as a Welding Superintendent in 1970. He is survived by his wife Margaret of 52 years; his daughter and her husband Nancy and Clarence Young; two granddaughters; three great granddaughters; a sister and numerous nieces and nephews. His courage and determination was documented in the Golf Expose in the last LOG. The writer had the honor to deliver a brief eulogy and present the flag in behalf of the Squadron at his final service. There is a story regarding this individuals devotion to the Squadron that must be told. At the KC 'Round Up' he had purchased one of Harry Fike's new white Squadron caps. On his return home he had pinned some wings and other memorabilia on it and throughout his final struggle had it placed where it was within his sight. At the final visitation it had been placed on his casket. When the family went to say their final goodbye his cap representing his beloved Squadron was placed inside the casket. My professional life as a Geologist necessitated I attend the services of many prominent oil operators with bank accounts in the millions resulting in interesting services. However, if the true love and devotion displayed for Weyland at his service by his family members and friends could be transformed to monetary values he departed life a 'Billionaire'. ***WE HAVE LOST ANOTHER OF THE BEST!***

# 783RD BOMB SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

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San Antonio, Texas 78232

Nonprofit Org.

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San Antonio, TX

Permit No. 3358

(FORWARDING AND ADDRESS CORRECTIONS REQUESTED)



## NEW DISCOVERED LOST SOULS

## REPORT ADDRESS OR PHONE CHANGES TO

MIKE MAGAZZINE

24023 E. Oakland Rd

Bay Village, OH 44140

440-871-3203

## ADDRESS UPDATES

Leonard D. Clutts, Jr 15591 East Fairfield Rd, Mt Vernon, Il 62864-7790

Merle (Mickey) Schwartz 1035 Indus Rd, Venice, FL 34293

Leroy Neil Brown Brookhaven Manor Aapt 249, Ann Arbor, MI 48103-6430

## TELEPHONE UPDATES

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Bobby Wills 248-394-0029

Joseph McGrath 206-285-5289

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BOB WILLS, TREASURER

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