



The 461st

Liberaider



'87 REUNION 1—4 OCTOBER

The 1987 461st Bomb Group Reunion will be held at the Holidome Inn, AAA 3 Star, that is located in Suffern, NY. It is located in a wooded area, is entirely enclosed, and has the facilities to accommodate a Group of our size. Transportation is available from the main airports in the New York area (35 miles) and takes about one hour to get there. Rental cars will be available at the Inn for those that wish a car after their arrival. The normal car rental agencies are available at all airport terminals. It is as easy drive to the Inn for those that desire this method of transportation.

The amenities of the hotel include a swimming pool and sauna in the lobby for you brave persons, with tennis, and a putting green for those so disposed.

As many of you have expressed the desire to visit this area, it should be noted that this period of the year will produce the highlights of the fall colors. You can tour before or after the reunion to your hearts content. West Point and our Army Air Corps days make this area even more meaningful. This is where Hudson sailed to the site of Albany in 1609, and who has not read about the Iroquois Confederacy of the Five Nations founded about 1570, the battles of Fort Ticonderoga and Niagara, the Revolutionary War battles at New York, Long Island, White Plains and Oriskany to name a few. And then there is the Legend of Sleepy Hollow to investigate. It will take you weeks to explore this part of our great nation.

The Inn has reserved 175 rooms for our reunion that will start on October 1st and reach its crescendo at the Banquet on Saturday night, October 3rd. Departure will be on October 4th. The Holiday Inn system is now programmed to accept our reservation. You may make your reservation by calling 1-800-465-4329 after October 15, 1986. The address of the Inn is #3 Executive Blvd., Suffern, NY 10901, Phone: (914) 357-4800. For those of you traveling by Motor Home, there is ample free parking at the Inn but no hook-up facilities.

At the end of the last reunion many expressed their feelings that we had given them what they wanted while attending a reunion. With that in mind we plan to give you

the same this time. The schedule of events will be:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| October 1, 1987 | |
| General Registration | 10AM—4PM |
| Mini Reunions | 10AM—? |
| Evening | Free Time |
| October 2, 1987 | |
| Breakfast—buffet | |
| Board buses for West Point | |
| Tour of West Point | |
| Memorial Service | |
| Lunch | |
| Museum Tour | |
| Cadet Parade (if available) | |
| Return to the Inn | 4:30PM |
| Evening | Free Time |
| October 3, 1987 | |
| Business Meeting | 10AM—11AM |
| Balance of Day | Free |
| Attitude Adjustment Hour | 6PM (1800) |
| Banquet and Dancing to the 40's music | |
| October 4, 1987 | |
| Buffet Breakfast with friends | |
| Checkout | |

More details will be forthcoming.
MAKE YOUR PLANS NOW!!!!

MISSION NUMBER FIFTY—G. J. Mayfield 765th Squadron

July 20, 1944, Crew 36 of the 765th Sqdn. Landed with all but the Bombardier Dennis, Engineer Mayfield, and Radio Operator McRee completing their 50th mission. The crew had been drafted for a fill-in mission with other crews. The mission was uneventful. The Bombardier, Engineer, and Radio Operator did make the flight. I was notified that I was scheduled as Engineer for the next day's operation with Col Glantzberg and other group crew members. Col Glantzberg never flew milk runs so I anticipated a difficult mission. At the briefing July 22nd, I learned Col Glantzberg was flying the 15 Air Force lead over Polesti, Rumania, with a B-24J Pathfinder Instrument Bombing Aircraft. I had previously flown three missions over Polesti and one over Potesti, the oil port on the Danube. According to intelligence this area was defended by 1100 anti-aircraft guns 88 and 105mm. On previous missions smoke screen covered 100 sq. miles of target area. The same was true today as the target

(Continued on page 4)

The 461st LIBERAIDER
 461st Bombardment Group (H)
 Activated: 1 July 1943
 Inactivated: 27 August 1945
 Incorporated: 25 November 1985

CORPORATE HDQRS: Broadway at Pearl & Main, Box 838, Council Bluffs, IA 51502

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 1987 Reunion: Frank C. O'Bannon
 1989 Reunion: Harry J. Oglesby

LIBERAIDER

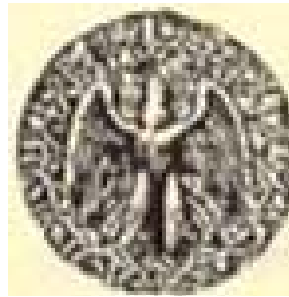
Frank C. O'Bannon—Editor
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TREASURER'S REPORT
STATEMENT PERIOD ENDING 6-20-86

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| INCOME: | |
| Dues | \$2,992.07 |
| Reimburse of Endorsement Stamp | 7.50 |
| TOTAL | \$2,999.57 |
| EXPENSES | |
| Postage | \$11.60 |
| Printing (B. Harrison) | 56.80 |
| Liberaider | 298.38 |
| Reinburse to PX Account | 13.22 |
| Directories | 330.00 |
| Patches | 212.60 |
| Endorsement Stamp | 7.50 |
| TOTAL | \$930.18 |
| BALANCE IN ACCOUNT | \$2,069.39 |
| TOTAL | \$10,136.16 |

FINANCIAL REPORT—PX ACCOUNT

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| | <u>As of 8-31-86</u> |
| BALANCE IN ACCOUNT—8-4-86 | \$309.30 |
| AUGUST INCOME | |
| Interest on account | \$1.34 |
| Income from Pins | 8.00 |
| Patch Sales | 4.50 |
| Income Book | 4.61 |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$18.45 |
| AUGUST EXPENSE | |
| Pictures prepared for newsletter printing | \$62.50 |
| Postage | 25.05 |
| TOTAL EXPENSE | \$87.05 |
| BALANCE IN ACCOUNT—8-31-86 | \$234.12 |



The Department of Defense has approved a medal for all former Prisoners of War and will be available for distribution next summer (1987). The relief on the medal is an eagle surrounded by barbed wire and bayonet points. The ribbon is red, white, blue, white, black, white, blue, white, and red. Recipient's name will be engraved on the reverse. Further information will be furnished upon receipt.

* * * * *

PURPLE HEART

Recent legislation has changed the precedence of the Purple Heart award so that it now ranks immediately below awards for valor.

* * * * *



MEMORIAL PLAQUE

Inquires have been received regarding the purchase of a copy of the Memorial Plaque that we placed on the wall at the Air Force Academy Cemetery. A source has been located that will produce a 1/2 size (6 in. sq.) copy. In the smallest quantity, that we can order, it will cost you \$15 ea. In the event that we would be purchasing in larger lots the cost would go down appreciatively. If you would like to order one of the Plaques please advise me. Delivery is about 8 weeks after ordering.

* * * * *



Capt Iconis, Capt Ahlberg, Maj MacDougal, Maj Mixson
 Early 1944—766

Mail Call

Dear Frank:

The packet with the album and other papers came today. Thank you very much. My dues will be in the mail to Ed Spetman tomorrow. How about sending some of the 82 degree weather up this way? We have had almost 2 feet of snow since I talked to you the other day and its still snowing.

Thanks again. Dick Durand—764th

(Ed: Men, don't forget your CARE packages of wood next winter)

* * * * *

From E. J. Amos Larsen—766th

“Here is a story for you—how I found Yetter!

I was telling my cousin about the bailing out experience—really to his kids—and he said, ‘This was in Italy, and you were flying B-24’s’, and I said ‘Yes’. ‘Hey I work with a guy who was in Italy with B-24’s’. And I said, ‘What is his name?’ He said, ‘Jack Yetter’. So we hurried over and there was Jack. He wanted to know what I was doing in Racine and I said this was my town. He said, ‘Not for the last 40 years’, and he was right because my YMCA career had taken me all over the midwest and now I was retired and had come home. We reminisced and in my folder I found orders dated March 30, 1945, making Capt Jack N. Yetter issuing officer for combat whiskey. Yetter and I had a big laugh and we have had several get-togethers and we feel that the 461st is in good hands right here in Racine”.

* * * * *

John S. Martin (451st BG)

Dear John,

Re your letter in the April 1986 issue of the 15th AF Assoc. newsletter. Your co-pilot’s name was John J. Kane (0681434). He later transferred to the 461st BG, 767th BS, and was the pilot on our B-24 when we were shot down on July 25, 1944, after attacking the Herman Goering Tank Works at Linz, Austria. Kane was wounded in the neck during this mission. He spent the rest of the war, with me, at Stalag Luft I, on the Baltic almost due north of Berlin, near a small town called Barth.

I am sure Kane is the same as the one you are looking for. He had fair hair, was of average height, perhaps about 5’8”, but built like a tank and with the face and disposition of a bulldog. It was this testy temper of his that saved those of us still alive. After numerous fighter attacks from the tail, Kane saw one swooping down on us from about 12 o’clock. By now he was mad! He pulled up the nose of our plane, directly toward the fighter. He later said he fully intended to ram. The fighter pulled up his nose. Kane pulled up higher. The fighter broke off the attack. * * * I remember hearing the story about Kane being involved in landing a B-24 on the Anzio fighter strip.

* * * * *

Milton Radovsky—767th (We are still looking for this man, his home of record was Chicago.)

* * * * *

CHRISTOPHER C. BRUNER, PO Box 70211, Seattle, WA 908107, would like to contact anyone who flew with, or knew, his father, Charles W. Bruner, 764th Sqdn.

* * * * *



Smyrna, TN—40 Year Old Plus BOQ’s

July 19, 1986

Dear Frank,

* * * * * Enroute we visited some of my old Army haunts—Walnut Ridge, AR, 44D, where I took Basic; Blytheville, now a SAC base, where I took Advanced—We couldn’t get on that base; Smyrna, TN, where I went to B-24 Transition School; and Ft. Knox, where I graduated from OCS and was a Tank Officer and Platoon Leader before I entered flying training. I enjoyed it all immensely, and my wife, as always, was very patient. In response to your letter, yes, we flew seven plane boxes in December of ‘44, nearly every mission was maximum effort, with 9 and even 10 plane boxes. We called these “conga lines”, lots of swaying and accordion effect. Those poor devils at the rear (and I was one, part of the time) earned a day’s pay on those flights. By this time, the Luftwaffe was grounded due to lack of gasoline, but the flak got more intense as the Krauts moved the AA batteries back from territory occupied by the Allies. When the war ended, the occupation forces counted over 2000 German AA guns, 88mm or larger, at Vienna. I never saw but one German fighter and he had two Mustangs on his tail! However, two days before I joined the Group, it suffered a heavy loss at Odertal Oil Refinery, Germany. The Luftwaffe pooled its meager gasoline supplies and used it to go after our wing. Our squadron lost 5 out of 7 planes and the Group 10 out of 28. I was assigned a tent where the bunks were almost still warm. This happened once more in the early part of ‘45, but I wasn’t up that day, and our losses were less severe due to good Mustang cover. By then, we had three crews for every plane, so we only flew about every third mission. You should try to find a survivor to write up the Odertal disaster. That day shouldn’t be forgotten * * * * * Vahl Vladyke—765th

* * * * *

NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE NOTICES

Members are requested to place notices in local newspaper, or monthly magazines of organizations that you belong to, regarding this organization. Many of the men that we are getting replies from say that they have been looking for reunion notices of our Group for years. We need to get the same message out several times a year in the same source to get their attention. Have them contact you or use my name and address in notices—Frank.

* * * * *

(Continued from page 1)

was covered with smoke and we needed the Pathfinder for target bombing. Preflight was normal but without the Crew 36 comradeship which usually consisted of the Bombardier instructing the Ball Turret Gunner to climb out on top of the ball and jump in the air if the turret dropped out and that would break his fall.

Crew 36 had been to Cairo on R & R and a fortune teller told the Bombardier he would be wounded and some of the crew were offering 10-1 that it would happen on this mission.

Combat equipment was loaded including the jewel pots. These were regular issued steel helmets which airmen sat on when the flak got thick. There was a saying that they sure got tight around the waist when the flak got thick.

Take-off, climb out and cruise were normal as we watched the 15th Air Force formed behind us. We proceeded to Polesti. I checked the equipment fuel supply and the right waist gun. My procedure required transfer of fuel from the outboard tanks when we were out of the flak after the bomb run. This was to prevent a wing from being flown off if we were hit in the tank area.

As we approached the target at around 26,000 feet we found the smoke screen in place. We hit the T.P. and turned toward the target. From the rt. Waist I saw two bursts of flak bracket the right wing and someone up front called three bursts directly in front at our altitude. Almost immediately a flak burst in #4 engine, it set the engine on fire and blew a hole in the top of the right Tokeo tank and it was burning too, #3 engine quit also.

The plane started down out of control in the middle of the flak field. The bail out bell was ringing and Col Glantzberg ordered bail out. Suddenly the side slip pulled the fire out of the engine and gas tank. I started yelling on the inner phone that the fire was out. We had been trying to ride the aircraft out of the flak field before we jumped. Col Glantzberg got the plane under control at around 4,000 feet on #1 and #2 engines, then asked for a crew count. With all the crew in tack we started toward Turkey. After checking #3 engine and finding no damage it was restarted and purred like a kitten.

We discussed the fuel situation and to make it to Italy we needed the fuel from #4 tank and the Tokeo tank that had been on fire. Because of the fuel system design on the B-24J I had to remove a fuel line and plug a fuel line over the bomb bay with 50 caliber shell in order to use the gas from #4 and the Tokeo tank.

Everything was thrown over board and even our jewel pots to decrease the weight of the plane and we finally arrived back at our home base 2 1/2 hours after the rest of the Group. We had flown from the Turkish border to Italy at tree top level without seeing either a German or American aircraft. As we landed and rolled to a stop our fuel was leaking all over the aircraft. The B-24J Pathfinder was junk after only one mission, my 50th.

When I got back to my tent all my crew were preparing for R & R in Rome which had just come under allied control. Col Glantzberg had me passing information and instructions to newer crews on procedures that had brought the aircraft home. For this mission I received the Distinguished Flying Cross. I didn't find out about it until thirty-nine years later when I attended the 461st & 484 reunion near my home in Williamsburg,

Virginia.

Crew 36 departed Morrison Field, Florida, February 1, 1944 flying our aircraft to S.A., Dacar and North Africa to Italy. We flew our first mission April 2, 1944, and during April, May, June, and July the 765th Sqdn lost 22 aircraft and crews. Crew 36 returned state side on Troop Ship General Bliss and arrived in New York on September 1, 1944.

* * * * *



Company Street— 1944

AIR FORCES ESCAPE AND EVASION SOCIETY

Members of the 461st, who evaded or escaped from their foes, are eligible to join this Society. Write to Ralph K. Patton, 720 Valleyview Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15243. If you have any questions contact Doid Raab (767).

MANUEL F. VAN EYCK, 12365 Cohasset Skt., N. Hollywood, CA 91605, is compiling a book about the American Airmen shot down during their operations over Czechoslovakia. He would appreciate your contacting him if you were one of these airmen.

* * * * *

AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR—STALAG LUFT IV contact Leonard E. Rose, 8103 E. 50th St., Indianapolis, IN 46226

* * * * *

AIRPLANE NOSE ART

Randall I. Bond, Art Librarian, Syracuse University, 222 Waverly Ave., Syracuse, NY 13210 is researching material for a book. Would like photos, and how and why of the insignia.

PRESIDENT'S EASTERN ROUND ROBIN

Telephone calls and visits were extremely rewarding. Wish that I could say I contacted every man in the areas that I covered, but that was not to be.

While in Philadelphia I talked with John McGrath (765), who had just lost his wife two months ago, and is now retired. James C. Clark (461) is still working; Jonas H. Palmer's widow (767) is preparing a list of his wartime addresses for us; Arthur C. Piccoli's widow (767), "Art was always trying to find members of the Group"; Michael L. Pelleritti (767) is deceased; Thomas M. Voegele (767) is retired from the plumbing business but is back at it in the machinery business with his sons; and Joe Mullahey (461) is well, retired and admits to being 75.

At Red Bank, NJ, I called Bill and Edna Paradise (764) who couldn't wait to come over and show us their home. It is great and Bill certainly is happy in retirement. Other phone calls to George Thullesen (767), Vincent Ptak (764), Joel and Bertha Fish (766), and Tom and Marge Javaruski (764) resulted in a mini reunion being held that afternoon and night at the Molly Pitcher Inn. The feeling of enthusiasm at this little get together was the same as that experienced in Colorado last year. Also tried to call Leigh M. Lott (461). I was only able to talk to his wife and daughter as he was being admitted to the nursing section of the retirement village that day. Both women mentioned that he has always had a great thing going for the 461st.

The next stop was the Thayer Hotel located on the grounds of the USMA at West Point. There is no doubt that a lot of history is there and in adjacent areas for visitors to see and enjoy. Met with Fred Hill (764) for lunch, he is working in the Pro Shop of a local golf course. Managed to catch up with Robert J. Murray (765) in Peekskill, NJ. He is still working.

The next stop was Boston, where I talked to Caristos Kardulas (767) in Nashua, NH. He was astonished to find that Paul L. Letendre (766) also lived in Nashua. Talked to Mrs. Letendre as Paul was working that night. I had a feeling that they would be together soon to hash over the war again. Hoisted the White Flag and fled Boston. On the way south I called Fred M. Lautieri (766) only to find that he was in bed with the flu. Mrs. Lautieri was sorry that he was not able to talk with me as he was always looking for 461st men. I had a neat, but short, talk with Jim and Eleanor Lazuk (461). He is recovering from a hip operation (plastic) and has the other one not in the best of shape.

I can't tell you what a great feeling it is to talk to men from the 461st while traveling. It is a little work but you should do it on your travels. Many of these men have not been contacted in years and are really happy to see you,



B/R Bill Paradise, Tom Javaruski, Joel Fish, Frank O'Bannon
F/R Edna Paradise, Bertha Fish, Marge Javaruski, Millie O'Bannon

or at least to talk to you on the phone. Those that I contacted were extremely interested in our group and our future. FCOB

HOW IT LOOKED FROM THE AIRPLANE

By

Joe Zillili—766th

The mission (13 April 1944—Duna A/C Factory, Budapest, Hungary) report was accurate in describing the collision of our aircraft in the number 4 position and that of Lt. Baumans. I was in the upper turret facing aft when I heard a muffled explosion. I looked over my left shoulder and saw that a portion of the left wing of Lt. Baumans's had been blown away and the remaining portion of the wing was a ball of fire. The lift on the right wing caused it to rise and flip over in an upside down altitude. It then began losing altitude and the right wing came down and smashed the upper turret Plexiglas dome. Our plane then began to lose altitude.

Lt. George Reed, our navigator, who was seated at the radio table when the collision occurred pulled on my leg and signaled to me to bail out, which I proceeded to do and Lt. Reed followed immediately thereafter. The other crew members had also been ordered to bail out.

At Stalag Luft III when I was able to rehash the events with Lt. Reed he advised me that when Lt. Bauman's plane collided with ours the propeller from the right wing of that plane had cut through the fuselage at the co-pilot's position striking Lt. Owens. It was Lt. Reed's belief that Lt. Owens was killed instantly and never left the aircraft.

I have no first hand information regarding Lt. Mowery. However, one of our crew, and I can't recall who it was, said that his chute failed to open. If that be the case it can be assumed he was killed on impact. The balance of the crew bailed out successfully, including Lt. Philip

Caroselli. The eight surviving members of the crew and Lt. Caroselli were interned in Stalag Luft III prisoner of war camp in Sagan, Germany, until late January 1945 when we were forced marched several days in the snow, then put in cattle cars and taken to Stalag VII, in Moosburg, Germany, from which we were liberated on April 29, 1945, by the 14th Armored Division.

Shortly after the end of the war Lt. Mowery's body was returned to the United States and was buried at his home town of Dillsburg, PA. I and two or three other crew members attended the funeral.

In the summer of 1958 my wife and I visited Lt. Reed in Lawville, NY, where he was practicing law in his father's law firm. One week after our visit, Lt. Reed and the pilot of a Piper Cub were killed as the plane crashed shortly after take-off. My wife and I attended the funeral.

Lt. Caroselli is now deceased. * * * * If you have any further questions please don't hesitate to write.

* * * * *

ORIGINAL CREW #10, 764th, reporting that all men, including two replacements, have been found and kicking. Crew members are Vernon L. Wastman, Frank C. O'Bannon, Walter J. Galloway, Michael Doshan, Donald C. Johnson, Clyde McKinstry, Robert Arndt, W. A. "Bill" Rohde, Frank D. Tibbets, Donald G. Charland, Warren Spray and Vernon L. Baker.

* * * * *

Have visited Frank Tibbets (764) and Ralph Green (766) in the past few months. Watch out for Ralph—he is a COOK! Norman Caudill (766) stopped by for a short visit to talk about the Group. (Ed)

* * * * *

ITALIAN CORRESPONDENT

I have received several letters in which men have indicated a desire to find out what happened to the boys and men who worked for them taking care of their quarters. If your Italian is good enough to correspond with the officials (Church, City, and School) in Cerignola, please let me hear from you. Starting salary might get as high as 1 Lira for an expert! FCOB

* * * * *

Milton Radovsky (767, 10710 Lockridge Dr., Silver Spring, MD 20901, would like you to contact him if you participated in any capacity in the attack on the Herman Goering Tank Works, Linz, Austria, on July 25, 1944. He is researching for a book on this raid.

* * * * *

1986 MEMBERSHIP DUES

If you have not received your membership card and directory you have not sent in your dues to Ed Spetman. Attendance at the 1985 reunion does not cover your '86 dues.

* * * * *

Dear Frank,

I was thrilled to hear from you and to receive copies of the 461st Liberaider. I was Flight Engineer on Charles DeSpain's B-24 crew.

Roland F. Bills—766th

* * * * *

Dear Frank,

It was good of you to write to me about John Benton. We hate to hear about these things but realize that it is inevitable at our age.

I was glad the Colorado reunion gave John & I a chance to meet again after all these years.

Every reunion brings forth old and new friends and memories that will never be forgotten.

Dick Freeman—764th

* * * * *



David P. McQuillan 3rd, 767, with his 461st PA plates
Your editor has CA plate "461BMGP"

STATE/AREA REPRESENTATIVES

The following members have agreed to represent the 461st, and to aid in finding members, in their state:

| | | |
|-----------------|-------|------------|
| Milton Radovsky | (767) | Maryland |
| Bill Harrison | (764) | Florida |
| Howard Ritter | (765) | Michigan |
| Tom Moss | (765) | Colorado |
| James Colavito | (765) | New Mexico |
| Clifford Winham | (765) | Arizona |
| Ralph Seeman | (766) | Washington |
| Ralph Seeman | (766) | Oregon |

If you have a name in there are they will try and find him for you. If you live in one of the open states and would like to help, please get in touch with your Squadron Director or Frank O'Bannon.

* * * * *

Ever wonder why the Mess Hall was always in trouble? Here is the way we grew in 1943:

| Date | Officers | Enlisted |
|--------------|----------|----------|
| 11 August | 49 | 161 |
| 30 September | 67 | 402 |
| 31 October | 264 | 1070 |
| 30 November | 376 | 1683 |

NOW lets hear it for the men in the Mess Halls!!!!

* * * * *

CORRECTION TO "OUR BIRD" STORY

The story in the last Liberaider regarding the B-24 is only partly true. Your editor fell prey to Pride of the Unit and several other words that Webster could add to this story. The clue "that there were no flak holes" went unregarded. The following letters tell the story as it really was and is:

May 1986

Dear Frank,

* * * * Re your letter wherein you referred to the picture of 'ersatz' B-24, in 461st markings, that appeared in the Feb. 1986 issue of the Liberaider; The aircraft on display at Lackland is not really one of our 'birds', it was so painted by the museum staff from, as luck would have it, photographs and data that I had much earlier submitted to Roger Ward of England, * * * * and I have a pretty fair 'library' built up over a good many years.

When I first learned of the Lackland ship some years ago, I wrote to the involved museum, and in short order received a nice reply from the curator, Gloria M. Livingston, who acknowledged the idea came from the above mentioned publication. I had also sent to her several other shots that I had taken of the real "#39" to back up my claim. Our bird was serialized 44-50616, the ersatz bird was numbered 44-51228. I'm enclosing a print taken sometime in early '45 on the "Townplan" base—our Sqdn call, if you were a 765th jock, and recall, was "Sampson". Funny, after all these years the radio call signs are still very fresh in my mind. * * *

The '87 location sounds fine—will look forward to it.

Cheers, Stan Staples—765th

* * * * *

May 12, 1986

Dear Frank,

* * * * * Let me set the record straight about the B-24 at Lackland AFB in San Antonio. In 1979, I was visiting my closest friend, a boyhood buddy from my youth in Marshallton, Iowa, who was then a Colonel, Command Pilot at San Antonio. He took me out to Lackland and I nearly flipped when I saw #39, for I had flown #39 at Torretta.

However, when I got home, I looked up the serial number of the Lackland airplane (451228) and discovered it did not match the serial number of the real #39. * * * * Both airplanes were B-24 M's and both were built at Willow Run. * * * * I flew the real version a time or two, it handled beautifully (compared to other B-24's, that is—everything is relative!). * * *

To add insult to injury, Lackland decided about 1981 to repaint their version, the colors of the airplane flown on the low-level Ploesti mission by the late AF Chief of Staff, General Brown. It was a big event, including a grandstand full of people and a parade-by of several contingents of Lackland trainees. Naturally, the new version had a more illustrious past but that didn't make me enjoy the alteration any more. I've never been back. It's sad to think of the 18,000 B-24's being destroyed and so few being preserved. * * * * *

I was one of the lucky ones who got to fly home. I brought #27, a beast to fly, back to Hunter Field at Savannah, Georgia, via Dakar and Natal. It was a memorable trip. In fact, those 1945 memories overwhelm all others by comparison.

Sincerely, Vahl Vladyka—765th

B-24 LOCATIONS

- B-24D AF Museum, Dayton, OH—Painted to colors of the 367th Bomb Gp.
- B-24J March AFB, CA. Formerly Indian Air Force
- B-24J Pima Air Museum, Tucson, AZ. Painted with colors of the 459th Bomb Gp. Formerly Indian Air Force
- B-24? Castle AFB, CA. Believe recovered from South America.
- B-24D Sacramento Air Museum—recovered wing and engine. This plane was lost in training by the 461st while at Hammer Fld.
- B-24M Lackland AFB, TX
- C87 Confederate Air Force, Harlingen, TX. Being modified to B-24 configuration as bomber parts are located.
- B-24J Collings Foundation, Stowe, MA—Formerly Indian Air Force

* * * * *

NEW GROUP PATCHES AND DECALS

The new 3" 461st Bomb Group cloth patches are now in stock. The colors from the outside in are red with white letters, white with blue shield with yellow lightning bolt and white bomb. Looks great on jackets and caps at reunions and something to brag about anywhere! The 4" decals will be available late September using the same design as above. Great for your car or ID on your bags at the airport.

* * * * *

PONDER THIS FOR A MINUTE

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| Our largest loses occurred at: | Totals |
| Linz, Austria | 22 |
| Odertal, Germany | 10 |
| Ploesti, Roumania | 10 |
| Vienna, Austria | 8 |
| Munich, Germany | 8 |

The largest single loss occurred at Linz, Austria, where we lost 15 A/C out of 21 over the target. At Odertal, Germany, we lost 10 out of 26. These figures do not include A/C considered Class 26 at the Base upon conclusion of the mission. Nor do these figures reflect that on one mission every A/C (32) over the target sustained flak damage. Cinco de Mayo? Naaaw "Just another day at the office" over Ploesti on May 5, 1944.



Home sweet home—1944

TAPS

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|-----|-----------------------|----------|-----|
| Bickel, Richard G. | Unk | 767 | Lemke, Rueben W. | 1986 | 764 |
| Brlansky, Joseph C. | 3/8/85 | 765 | Little Carlton B. | 1966 | 766 |
| Bryant, Richard R. | Unk | 764 | Lowerins | 8/1982 | 766 |
| Campbell, Oliver H. | 1980 | 766 | Manson, Walter W. | 1971 | 764 |
| Carvelas, George L. | Unk | 765 | Margolis, Sidney | 1968 | 765 |
| Cocking, Byron D. | 1960 | 767 | Martin, Gord L. | Unk | 764 |
| Delaney, Leonard C. | 7/18/80 | 461 | Mashon, Ross | 1986 | 765 |
| Echlund, Vincent | Unk | 765 | McLemore, Wallace H. | 1969 | 765 |
| Ferguson, Herman E. | Unk | 765 | Miller, William N. | Unk | 767 |
| Fisher, Manly K. | 1980 | | Mills, Virgil S. | Unk | 764 |
| Foley, Arthur R. | 1980 | 764 | Nash, Donald | Unk | 765 |
| Francisco, Vrooman L. | 1983 | 765 | Palmer, Jonas A. | 12/15/67 | 767 |
| Geyhon, William | Unk | 766 | Pelleriti, Michael L. | 1/9/77 | 767 |
| Gibbons, John F. | Unk | 767 | Penoyer, Lawrence R. | 1985 | 766 |
| Gildart, John R. | Unk | 767 | Piccoli, Arthur C. | 8/26/83 | 767 |
| Hartwell, Euwell D. | 1985 | 764 | Roeben, Walter J. | 9/26/84 | 764 |
| Herman, Jack | KIA 1944 | 767 | Shipman, Floyd D. | 1979 | 764 |
| Hofmann, Donald W. | Unk | 765 | Strong, Harold B. | Unk | 767 |
| Huemmrich, Karl F. | 1983 | 764 | Vanriette, John | Unk | 767 |
| Jenks, Jasper T. | Unk | 765 | Wallace, Albert | Unk | 766 |
| Johnson, Roy L. | KIA 1944 | 765 | Weir, Robert A. | Unk | 764 |
| Laclef, Dansal E. | 10/17/82 | 767 | Wilcovitz, Ramond L. | 1984 | 767 |
| Lehman, Jay W., Sr. | 1/1985 | 766 | `Work, Samuel | Unk | 766 |

461st BOMB Group (H) 1943-1945

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