

Vol. 30, No. 2

DECEMBER 2013

SOMEWHERE IN THE USA

Omaha, NE – 461st/484th Bomb Groups Reunion - 2013

Thursday, October 10, was arrival and check in day.

The registration table was open all day as was the hospitality room with refreshments and display tables. Dave, Barbara, and Linda had everything in order and check in was quick and easy.

The General Meeting was held at 7:00. Hughes Glantzberg welcomed the attendees. Possible destinations for 2013 were discussed with Branson, MO winning the vote and Little Rock, AR coming in second. Dave Blake will be

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Daily Log of a World War II B-24 Pilot

by
2nd Lt. Robert E. Harrison
1944-1945
767th Squadron
Crew #81-R

Bertrand A. Benedict
John G. McGarr
Lester M. Friedman
Clarence E. Farris

October 1944 – June 1945

Overseas Log of R.E. Harrison and Crew

Wellington A. Gillis
Pat R. Macarelli
Edward A. Loyko
Ernest E. Gilbert
Richard G. Bickel

Part III

Part I of this log was started in the December 2012 issue of the Liberaider. Part II appeared in the June 2013 issue of the Liberaider. Copies are available on the 461st BG website

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Our Trip Home

by
Robert G. Gilbert
Ball Turret Gunner
Crew 16-3
764th Squadron
461st Bomb Group (H)

states by the present combat crews. Our crew was assigned an older B-24 named 'Cherokee'. Our Crew Chief went over the airplane with his line crew and fine-tuned the old bird for her last long flight.

MAY 15, 1945

Everything was mass confusion at our base. Crews were packing up their personal things getting ready for the move back to the states. Crew briefings were held informing us of our route home. Most of the planes were to be ferried back to the

Lt. Brashawitz had been promoted to lead navigator for the entire 461st Group and would not be making the trip home with the rest of the crew. A navigator who had lost the rest of his crew was assigned to our crew. We also had an extra flight engineer riding along.

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Taps

May they rest in peace forever

Please forward all death notices to:

Hughes Glantzberg
P.O. Box 926
Gunnison, CO 81230
editor@461st.org

764th Squadron

<u>Name</u>	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>DOD</u>
Burton, George A.	Walla Walla, WA	1092	9-15-13
Kucera, Joseph	Mesa, AZ	1034	8-18-13
Moats, Rollin R.	Coshocton, OH	901	6-29-13

765th Squadron

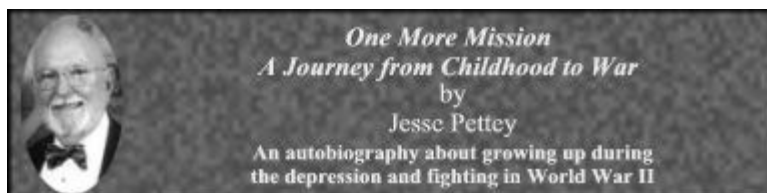
<u>Name</u>	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>DOD</u>
Pogue, Jack	Pass Christian, MS	4823	7-3-13
Richey, Lucian A.	Florence, AL	757	1-25-13

766th Squadron

<u>Name</u>	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>DOD</u>
Hanson, Stanley F.	Naples, FL	1034	5-7-13
Reichard, Richard W.	Chicago, IL	757	5-1-13
Schreck, James A.	Greensburg, IN	612	2-21-13
Smith, Robert G.	St. Petersburg, FL	1092	9-11-13

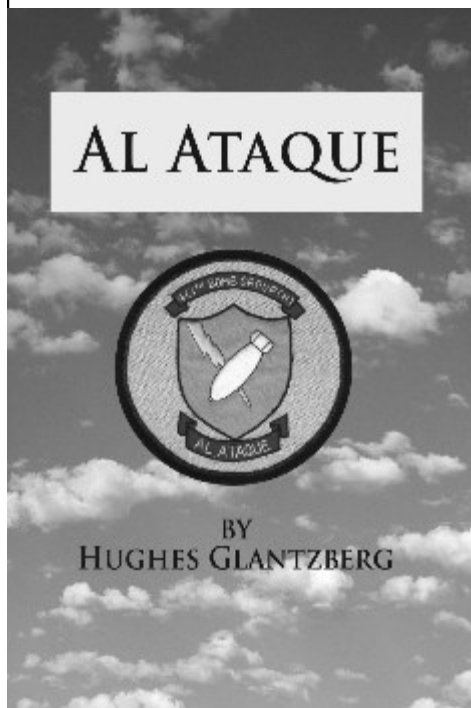
767th Squadron

<u>Name</u>	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>DOD</u>
Edwards, David S. Jr.	Union Bridge, MD	757	6-20-13
McGinnis, Robert N.	Trail Creek, IN	911	3-2-13
Rowe, Thomas E.	Oak Lawn, IL	748	9-4-13
Schlosstein, Fred W. Jr.	Lehigh Acres, FL	748	11-7-13
Venturi, Guido	Ukiah, CA	911	4-8-13



With a special interest in World War II and the 461st Bombardment Group in particular, I found this book excellent. Most of the men who fought during WWII were in their late teens and early 20s. It's amazing to be able to read about their activities. Liberaider Editor

Available from Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble and Xlibris (at a 15% discount) (<http://www2.xlibris.com/bookstore/bookdisplay.asp?bookid=11013>).



Al Ataque

History / General

Trade **Paperback**

Publication Date: Nov-2006

Price: \$26.95

Size: 6 x 9

Author: Hughes Glantzberg

ISBN: **0-595-41572-5**

413 Pages

On Demand Printing

Available from Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble, Ingram Book Group, Baker & Taylor, and from iUniverse, Inc

To order call 1-800-AUTHORS

Trade **Hardcopy**

Publication Date: Nov-2006

Price: \$36.95

Size: 6 x 9

Author: Hughes Glantzberg

ISBN: **0-595-86486-4**

Al Ataque is an excellent book that describes the preparation a bomb group goes through before being deployed overseas as well as the problems of shipping over five thousand men and supplies along with some eighty B-24 aircraft from a stateside base to a foreign country. The book details the establishment of Torretta Field which was used by the 461st for the duration of the war in Europe. The 461st Bomb Group flew two hundred and twenty-three combat missions between April 1944 and April 1945. Each of these is described in the book. Personal experiences of veterans who were actually part of the 461st are also included.



Music Bravely Ringing

by
Martin A. Rush
767th Squadron

This is the story of a small town boy who, during WWII, wandered onto the conveyor belt that turned civilians into bomber pilots. Initially awed and intimidated at the world outside his home town, he began to realize that this was an opportunity to have a hand in stimulating and challenging dealings larger than he had expected. He had a few near-misses, but gradually began to get the hang of it. His story is that like the thousands of young men who were tossed into the maelstrom of war in the skies. He was one of the ones who was lucky enough to live through it.

This book is at the publisher now and should be available early in 2008.

(Continued from page 1)

checking out travel issues for Branson which is a small commercial airport that currently served by Southwest and Frontier airlines.

Friday, October 11

Buses were loaded and took off at 9:30 Friday morning. Our first tour destination was Boys Town, a National Historic Landmark and the only National Historic Landmark in Nebraska.

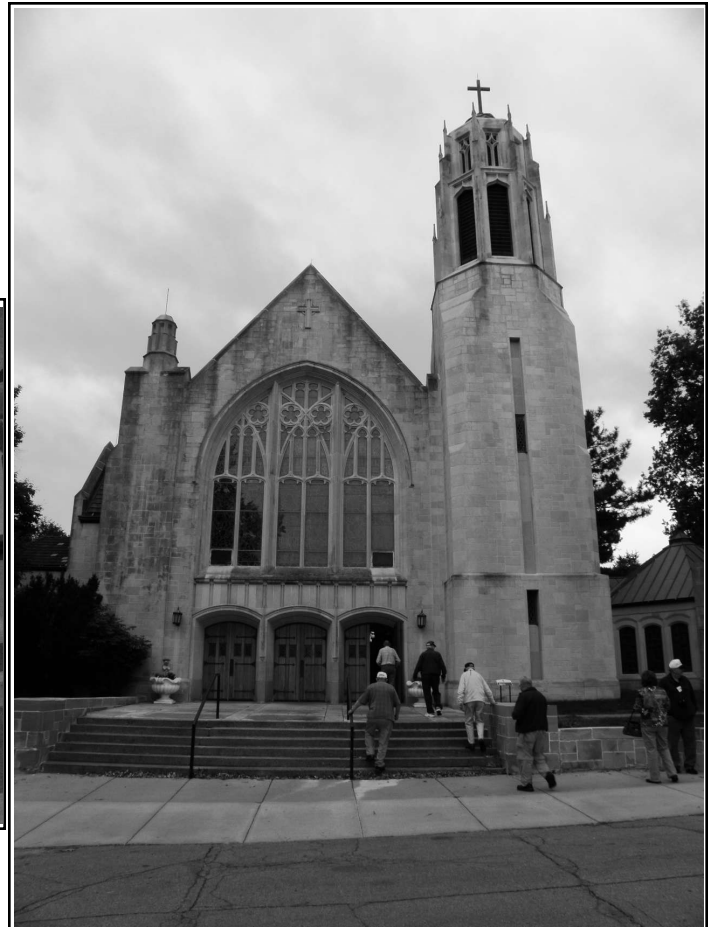


Each bus picked up a tour guide and we drove around the extensive grounds and stops at the Dowd Chapel and Father Flanagan Tomb, the Hall of History and the Visitor Center. These stops



Father Flanagan's home

and the tour guides provided extensive information about the story of Father Flanagan and his humble beginnings for his "boys' home" up to his early death just after WWII and how the program has been maintained and expanded since then. The Boys Town mission, that now includes girls, is truly amazing. Many lives have been touched through the work done here. Residents live in houses of 6-8 kids with a full time parental couple.



Dowd Chapel



Father Flanagan's Tomb

We then headed to Mahoney State Park for lunch. We had a nice buffet lunch (that pretty much cleaned out the kitchen!) with a lovely view of the park and Platte river from a hilltop.

From there, we boarded the buses for a short journey to the adjoining Strategic Air & Space Museum, lots of planes and infor-

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Hall of History



Pilgrims Courage First National Park



Mahoney State Park Lodge



The Durham Museum

mation to read and see. This museum is privately funded so the government shutdown, going on at the time, did not affect it.

The buses returned all to the hotel mid-afternoon where there was more socializing in the hospitality room. The two groups each held their own dinners in the evening.

Saturday, October 12

Buses departed at 9:00. Each bus picked up a tour guide at the Omaha Visitor Center in downtown Omaha. We were then treated to a running commentary of Omaha's historic areas including the Gold Coast which is a residential area containing early mansions built by the wealthy. It includes the Joslyn House, currently a former residence that can be rented by the public for all types of social occasions. The Joslyns were a wealthy couple who left quite a mark on Omaha's cultural scene.

We were treated to a stop at a downtown park, Pilgrims Courage First National Park, which contains many bronze statues depicting the journey of pioneers westward. The bronze statues



Strategic Air Command Museum

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in the form of bronze buffalo were seen along the city streets for 6 blocks to end up near a water feature in front of a hotel with bronze and stainless geese flying up from the water. It was very cool.

Our next stop was the Durham Museum housed in the former Omaha Union Pacific Train Station. Here we enjoyed a sack lunch and then wandered among the many exhibits. After a few hours here, we returned to the hotel for socializing or watching football.

Saturday evening was the combined group dinner. It was another great meal and a good time was had by all.



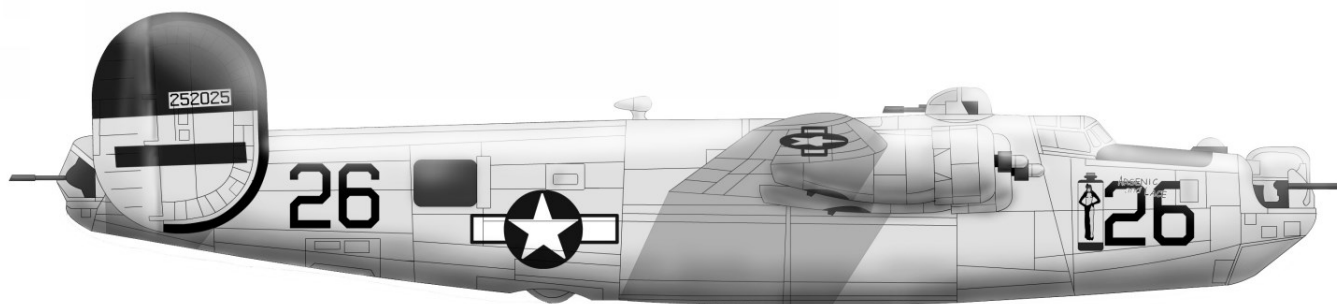
Veterans

Sunday, October 13

The Memorial Breakfast started at 8:30. Before eating, Hughes said a few words and the Bellevue East High School AFJR ROTC presented the colors. They did a great job! The pledge of allegiance was performed by all and an invocation was made by Chaplain Captain Christopher De Luice. We enjoyed another great breakfast.

Services were held consisting of a few songs, taps for those we have lost and a short address by the Chaplain. Hughes had a few closing remarks.

And all too soon, another reunion has come to a close. Hoping to see all of you next year wherever we are.



**Fifteenth Air Force
451st/455th/461st/484th Bomb Groups
2014 REUNION**

Branson, Missouri

Thursday, September 18th—Sunday, September 21st

For 2014, we are planning on expanding the reunion to include the 451st and 455th Bomb Groups, etc. Because this spans multiple bomb wings, we felt the name should be something indicative of this. Thus we're calling it the ***Fifteenth Air Force Reunion***.

We don't have any details for the reunion next year at this point in time. For now, please mark your calendars for these dates and check the web-site as we develop the plans for what promises to be another fan-tabulous reunion.

Look for complete details and registration information in your June, 2014 issue of *The Liberaider*. You can also keep up on developments as they happen by visiting your web site: **www.461st.org/**

For more information, see the President's Corner on page 39.

As a reminder, the registration fee, Friday and Saturday night meals and Sunday morning breakfast of the 461st veterans will be paid for by the Association.

When it comes to welcoming veterans, Branson is a destination unlike any other. They say "*Every day is Veteran's Day*".

Dave Blake

The 461st Liberaider
461st Bombardment Group (H)
Activated: 1 July 1943
Inactivated: 27 August 1945
Incorporated: 15 November 1985

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(www.461st.org) in the Liberaider section.

Thursday, February 1, 1945

We were briefed for a place up beyond Vienna and I guess we would have reached there if things had gone right. During takeoff, a ship came in with a bad engine and piled up at the end of the runway. That held us up and we were 1.5 hours late getting off. We nearly didn't make it. The thing didn't want to fly and I had to yank it off at 105 MPH. We just hung in the air for a long time. Right away a turbo began acting up so after fooling with it for a while, I called it off. No use on taking a chance with something like that.

I didn't do anything all afternoon except read.

Tonight, after I finished writing to Ruth, they notified me that we had to test hop a ship. We dubbed around and couldn't contact the tower. Finally taxied down the runway in front of it. They gave us two red flares so we didn't go.

Today's flying time 0:35
Total flying time 69:50

Friday, January (I'll get it yet) February 2, 1945

Didn't bother to get up this morning until almost nine. An hour later we were on our way to test hop another ship. Farris was to be our engineer. We got off OK and then discovered that the wheels weren't coming up. Bickel discovered the hydraulic leak in the bomb bay. We had lost quite a bit of fluid by then. Ed held his fingers in the hole until we landed. Hy had to pump the flaps down. We landed with 35°. There was just enough pressure for the breaks.

Didn't do anything but read all afternoon and then took a shower. Before supper, Mac put a match to the stove which was saturated. I was outside expecting the worst and Ed hid in the shower. She blew but plenty. Knocked a piece

of tin through the door and lifted the stove two feet in the air. Flames went to the top of the tent and some of Ed's things caught fire. It ripped up the floor a little too.

There was a show tonight and then I wrote to Ruth. There was no mail.

Today's flying time 0:15
Total flying time 70:05

Saturday, February 3, 1945

Not much doing today. There was a stand-down and we are scheduled for a practice bombing mission. It was to be norm altitude, but when we took off at eleven, the ceiling was seven thousand. The target was hard to find and as the PDI wasn't working, we made toggle runs on the thing. Ed and the gunner bombardier didn't do too badly.

There was nothing to do in the afternoon so I wrote a couple of letters and read a little.

There was a G.I. movie which was pretty good. After that I wrote to Ruth and got to bed some time after eleven.

Still no mail. Situation is nearing the point of exasperation.

As far as I know the crew is going to Capri this week. However I'm not on the orders. I'd just as soon stick around here and come and go as I please for a week.

Today's flying time 1:40
Total flying time 71:45

Sunday, February 4, 1945

A rather quiet day as Sundays should be. Hy and I had an hour's Link beginning at eight. Other than that we had nothing to do. I spent most of the time in the hut. It wasn't a very good day.

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Managed to write a few letters – not very long ones though.

There was no mail again today. No one is very happy about it all.

There was a show tonight. It wasn't the best, but was good for a few laughs.

We are on Capri orders for tomorrow. That is the crew is. I'm just going to kick around for a week or so. Go to Bari and Foggia – perhaps Naples.

Monday, February 5, 1945

Well, this day was a little different to say the least. The weather was good and we took off for Naples. I just wanted to see the town and planned to come back with the ship. The weather wasn't too good at Naples and we sweat out the landing. We ate at the rest camp mess and then went into town. It's a large city with street cars and buses such as they were. I'd like to roam around the place some time. I had lost my hat out the hatch when we landed and had to get another. I left the other boys and came back to the hotel to catch the truck for the field.

When we got back to the field, we had to wait because the mission was just getting in. Finally a ship cracked up on the runway and we had to go to another field. Some of us got a truck and came back in it. The plane got in about a half hour ahead of us.

Tuesday, February 6, 1945

Not much to talk about tonight. At present it's raining quite hard and I don't imagine tomorrow will be very good.

I didn't get up until eight-thirty and just loafed around all morning. After lunch, Cameron and I went in to town. We just went to the post office, club and PX. We were going to take in the show, but the picture didn't sound so good and we decided against it.

There was a show at out theatre, but after seeing the first few minutes of it, I left. Wrote to Ruth, took a shower and went to bed.

Tomorrow I'm planning to go to Bari, but I guess it will depend on the weather. It wouldn't be a very good trip in the rain. Hope the crew is having better weather than this.

Wednesday, February 7, 1945

Another day come and gone and I haven't much to account for. I just hung around the hut not doing much of anything. I did some reading and wrote a short not home.

I woke up after eight this morning and didn't feel much like going to Bari. Rawchuck wasn't up and he felt the same way. I thought I might go to Foggia, but only got as far as the line and then changed my mind.

Rawchuck and I plan to make it to Bari tomorrow.

At night I just listened to the radio and wrote to Ruth. Another fellow kept me company most of the day and night.

There was no mail this afternoon.

Thursday, February 8, 1945

Rawchuck and I left about eight-thirty and picked up a truck in town that was going to Bari. It took us to within three or four miles of the city. We had lunch at a transient mess and then, after visiting the PX, we went looking for the Red Cross club. With the help of some captain and his Jeep, we finally got to it. From there we had some coffee and doughnuts at the coffee shop. Of course we did quite a bit of walking and looked the town over. It's not home or even comparable to Charleston, S.C., but then this is Italy.

We got another fast, wild ride back and it took us 2 ½ hours from the city to the base.

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There was a show tonight after which I wrote to Ruth. Received three more of her letters. The baby may come a week or so early.

Friday, February 9, 1945

Not much to relate tonight. Had thought about going back to Bari, but I changed my mind this morning. Instead another fellow and I went to Cerignola. We spent some time looking at cameras and then, after having coffee at the Red Cross we went to the post office. Then we took in a USO musical comedy at the show.

From there we came "home." Tonight I did nothing but read some papers from home and write to Ruth.

I didn't get any letters from her today. At her last visit to the doctor, he again told her that he thought she would have a boy and that it may come early. Hope I hear as soon as possible.

Tomorrow I plan to go to Foggia, but we had better wait until tomorrow comes and see.

Saturday, February 10, 1945

Here we are again and with not much to talk about. Planned to get up early and get in the PX line, but didn't. I did get rations before nine though. It wasn't until ten before I finally made up my mind to go to Foggia. I went alone and got a good fast ride from Cerignola.

I didn't do much. Ate at the transient mess and spent some time at the club. I looked for something to send Ruth, but had no luck.

It was almost three when I left. Got another good ride and then got a haircut in town.

There was a short GI show tonight and then I wrote to Ruth. Received two swell letters from her.

She's feeling fine and everything is coming along nicely.

Sunday, February 11, 1945

Not too much to talk about tonight. I didn't do anything at all during the day. I had decided to stay "home" today and that's just what I did. It would have been too bad if I had gone anywhere because it poured all day.

I didn't do much except write a letter or two (one to Peggy) and did up a package to send to Gil's mother.

There was some good music on the radio all through the day and night.

I got a couple of letters from Ruth and one other one.

My foot locker arrived and I spent some time going through the stuff that was in it.

There was a show at night. I had seen it before, but sat through it again. Then I wrote to Ruth and listened to the radio. Tomorrow, Rawchuck and I plan to go to Foggia.

Monday, February 12, 1945

I didn't get up until after eight-thirty, but Rawchuck and I took off before nine for Foggia. We got rides OK, but had to detour and that road was plenty rough. We didn't do anything when we got there except sit around in the club. We played checkers and read. Then walked around for a little while. We started back after one and when we got back to Cerignola, decided to go to the show, but the picture wasn't much good and we didn't stay.

The crew came back tonight so we go back to work tomorrow.

I wrote to Ruth. It wasn't a very good letter. I guess there was too much going on and there wasn't much to write about.

There was no mail at all today.

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Tuesday, February 13, 1945

I loafed around again today. We had nothing scheduled xaring the day except I collected two shots and a vaccination.

It was a swell day as far as the weather is concerned. I was out for almost an hour tossing a baseball around and that was just about all I did during the morning. After lunch and the shots we saw a surprise showing of "Winged Victory". It was a pretty good show, but long.

There was a party tonight, but we just went for the supper and then came back. We're flying tomorrow.

Mac found out that he has a dose of "clap" and has to go to the hospital for some shots tomorrow. We'll have another navigator on the mission.

Received three swell letters from Ruth and one from home and a couple of packages.

Wednesday, February 14, 1945, Valentine's Day. Mission #11, Moosbierbaum Oil ref

Had a very uncomfortable night. My arms ached and I thought too many things about the mission.

They woke us up at five. We had a navigator from another crew. The target was an oil refinery at Moosbierbaum, not far from Vienna.. We had pretty good weather up there although there was an under cast until we reached the target. The flak was off to one side and we hit the place fairly well.

The trip back seemed long. In all, the mission wasn't too bad. Wouldn't mind more like that.

I was quite tired so I wrote a short letter to Ruth and got to bed before ten-thirty.

Mac came back for a little while, but he has to go back again.

Today's combat time 7:10

Total combat time 79:10

Thursday, February 15, 1945

Not much happened today. During the morning I fixed my photograph album. I had a lecture during the afternoon and spent the rest of the time reading some papers that had come in the afternoon.

At night there was a movie, "Gaslight." It is the movie version of the play "Angel Street" that Ruth and I had seen back in 1942. It was very good, but not as good as the play.

I wrote a short letter to Ruth and then decided to go to bed. We're up for the mission tomorrow. Hope it's as good as the last one.

Have had a funny feeling during the past couple of days. I wonder if Ruth is in the hospital now?

Friday, February 16, 1945, Mission #12, Rosenhaim M/Y, Germany

We were briefed for a jet propelled air field up above Munich only to be bombed if a visual run could be made. Had the same ship as the other day and the take-off was OK. We had to assemble above the overcast. A visual run couldn't be made so we hit the Rosenheim marshaling yards. We had been briefed on fighters, but no flak. We saw neither. The trip back was OK until we reached the spur. Ceiling was down to two thousand and we nearly ran into a couple of flights of 17s. I never saw airplanes scatter as those big birds did. Then our flight had to go around twice before peeling and then I had to make two more turns before I finally got in. There were planes all over trying to get in – anyway at all.

There was a critique and then I wrote to Ruth. That's all.

Today's combat time 8:00

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Total combat time 87:10

Saturday, February 17, 1945

If I remember correctly, there isn't much to talk about tonight. We had a lecture this morning, but that's about all. We did have a first aid lecture scheduled for one, but it was cancelled. I spent most of the day writing letters and "worked" a little on my album.

There was no mail from Ruth. Mail has been poor during the last few days.

Wrote to Ruth and took a shower after supper.

Mac is back from the hospital and is OK now.

Sunday, February 18, 1945

Other than a long first aid lecture this morning, we had nothing else scheduled. The mission got off OK, but came back before noon because of bad weather further north.

I spent the rest of the morning reading a couple of Sunday papers that had come in and listening to the radio. During the afternoon I wrote a couple of letters.

Hy and Ed played pinochle at night. They may have a chance to get to the Riviera if they can beat a few more people.

I wrote to Ruth, but didn't get to bed until after eleven.

Monday, February 19, 1945

Not much happened today. If there had been a stand-down, I was to have flown a practice formation, however the mission flew.

During the afternoon, they wanted me to go down to Bari and pick up a plane. It was very windy and the weather didn't look too well so they postponed the trip for a couple of hours. On the second attempt, we found that the Gioia was

closed. I didn't mind one bit as I wasn't fussy about going down there.

I didn't do much all day except read. I was going to write, but didn't feel like it.

I did receive two letters from my wife which helped matters considerably.

Tuesday, February 20, 1945, Mission #13, Fiume, Italy

We didn't take off until after nine this morning. The target was Bolzano in Italy. We had to assemble above the clouds and everything went fairly well. Hy flew most of the trip. He's beginning to catch on pretty well. An hour before target time, they began changing the target from one alternate to another. The primary was covered by overcast. We started finally to Trieste, but ended up by bombing Fiume after making two runs over the place. The four flights had split up and we were alone from there back to the base. It was rather cold up there today. We only saw a couple of bursts of flak.

At night I went to the show and wrote a short note to Ruth and then shaved.

I only hope we have more missions like today.

Today's combat time 6:10

Total combat time 93:20

Wednesday, February 21, 1945

Just another lazy day. I did absolutely nothing. And I do mean "absolutely." Didn't get up for breakfast until the last minute and then we cleaned up the hut. General Doolittle, Spaatz and Twining paid us a visit. They didn't stay for dinner however, but we enjoyed a very good meal including chicken and ice cream with cake.

I spent most of the day reading and wrote a couple of letters. I also tried to sleep for a while. I

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

had very little ambition.

There was no mail again today – just keep it up.

We're flying tomorrow so I guess I'd better get to bed.

Thursday, February 22, 1945, Mission #14, Kemmen, Germany

We were briefed at 0500 for a marshaling yard a little south of Nuremburg. And the bombing was to be done from 13,000 feet! Everything went fine until we reached the Alps. We came down from nineteen to seventeen thousand feet and then we were in the clouds. On the other side, we came on down further. The weather was so bad that we became lost and the colonel decided to hit a target in the vicinity. On a sharp turn, our flight split and there were many near collisions. After bombing the place, we lost the group and had to climb to 23,000 in order to top the weather. As it turned out, the rest of the group was hit by flak on the way back. At one time, we were down to twelve thousand feet over Germany.

Two old letters from Ruth today.

Today's combat time 8:05

Total combat time 101:25

Friday, February 23, 1945

Not much doing today. Hy and I had to get up for Link at eight. There was nothing else scheduled except for a group meeting at eleven.

I had nothing else during the morning except clean up around the hut.

I received a card from Mrs. Benedict written on the 15th saying that I had a son. There was no late mail from home or from Ruth so that's all I know. I spent the rest of the afternoon going slightly crazy. I also received a letter from Marian Gillis so I wrote to her.

At night I wrote a fairly long letter to Ruth, took a shower and got to bed about eleven or so.

Now I can't wait until the mail comes in tomorrow!

Saturday, February 24, 1945

Not much happened today. That is until I got my mail late in the afternoon. Received a lot of it – five or six letting me know about my seven pound son. He was born at 1125 on February 13. Both he and Ruth are doing well. I was floating on air all night and the cigars are gone. Also had a little champagne to celebrate. It certainly made me very happy and it will be so much to look forward to.

There wasn't much doing all day. Hy and I went in to town to the show and the post office. I owe dad Dixon \$5 because of the fact that the baby's name isn't Beverly.

I wrote to Ruth tonight and then to bed fairly early. We are flying tomorrow.

Sunday, February 25, 1945 Mission #15, Linz, Austria

And so we were off to Linz again. The weather was bad over the base and we were hoping for a stand-down, but no. Climbing through the clouds, we lost the flight and it was an hour before we found it and the group. We had just about decided to tack on to the 484th and go on up with them.

The trip was uneventful and although the target was black with flak, we didn't get hit. I really sweat out the bomb run though. We saw a number of enemy fighters including one that crossed in front of us on the bomb run.

They are using both runways for takeoff and landing and it speeds things up considerably.

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There was a show tonight, but I didn't bother about it. There was quite a bit of mail including one from Ruth written after the baby was born.

Today's combat time 7:20

Total combat time 108:45

Monday, February 26, 1945

Not much doing today. If there had been a stand-down I would have had to fly a bombing mission. There was, but they had a group practice mission so I didn't go bombing.

At noon, Hy and I went in to town. Didn't do much. No, I'm wrong! I just sat around writing letters all afternoon.

There was quite a bit of mail again today. I imagine that it will slacken off soon.

I finally wrote a fairly decent letter tonight to Ruth. It took me some time though.

Spent the rest of the evening listening to the radio.

Tuesday, February 27, 1945

Another quiet day. The weather was swell and I tossed a softball around for a while during the afternoon. The rest of the day I spent writing. Only two letters, but they were fairly long.

Mac has been sick with a cold during the past two days, but began to look alive again today.

The mail was slim, but I did get another letter from Ruth. She seems to be well and happy.

There was a show tonight so we took it in. Haven't been to one in over a week. Things are tough.

Wrote to Ruth and listened to the radio.

Wednesday, February 28, 1945

Not much to relate today. I had nothing sched-

uled all day and didn't know just what to do. We wouldn't be paid until sometime during the afternoon, but I wanted to go in to town and get some money orders. I borrowed \$70 and went in to the post office and then to the club. I was back by one-thirty and got paid.

It was a swell day. Tossed a softball around for a while and then just dubbed around.

There was no mail from Ruth today – just a couple of cards.

We're flying tomorrow so we didn't stay up very late. Ed and I listened to the radio until about ten-thirty.

Thursday, March 1, 1945, Mission #16, Moosbierbaum O/R

We were briefed for Moosbierbaum near Vienna. We were up with the lug wheels and flew deputy lead in B flight. It was good to fly on the right wing for a change and I enjoyed it. For the most part, anyway. We ran into weather and dubbed around for almost an hour. We finally got to the target, made a "dry run" and then came over it a second time. There was plenty of flak, but it was just a few feet low. We only picked up four or five small holes.

It was a long time to be in the air for that trip. We saw one or two enemy fighters too.

I didn't do much at night. There was a pretty good concert by a soprano after supper. Wrote a short letter to Ruth and got to bed around eleven.

Today's combat time 8:20

Total combat time 117:05

Friday, March 2, 1945

Just another day with not much to talk about. They caught me this morning for a practice bombing mission. It was ten-thirty before we got off and had to go up to 20,000. Before we came down, my feet were freezing. As it was we

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logged almost three hours.

There wasn't much to do the rest of the afternoon so I didn't do it. Could have written some letters, but didn't. Started Ruth's letter, shaved and then went to supper.

Benedict came in on a pass from Bari. He will be back here and will probably fly with us again. All the boys made S/Sgt. Gilbert is in for Tech. I'm glad that Benedict made it.

Finished writing to Ruth and then got to bed. She and the baby are fine.

Today's flying time 2:50
Total flying time 74:35

Saturday, March 3, 1945

Today was more or less wasted so I'm not even going to try and write anything. The morning just went by. Then after lunch I got some mail and ten papers so I spent more than two hours reading. By that time, most of the afternoon was gone. Spent the evening listening to the radio and writing to Ruth.

Sunday, March 4, 1945

Didn't wake up until almost eight-thirty. Went over to operations and they got me for a trip up to a P-38 base. The engineering officer wanted to get something. It didn't take long to make the trip and we were back by noon. We flew the cargo ship and that thing can really travel.

I wanted to write this afternoon, but felt sleepy. After lying down for an hour and dubbing around, I finally ended up by writing three v-mails.

There was a show tonight, but I had seen it so didn't go. Had hoped to write a decent letter to Ruth, but I guess there was too much competition.

Shaved and went to bed. We don't fly tomorrow

as I thought we would.

Today's flying time 0:50
Total flying time 75:25

Monday, March 5, 1945

They wanted me to fly a practice bombing mission this morning, but I had "contracted" a case of the "G.I.s" and managed to get out of it. Perhaps I should have gone up. As things turned out I just wasted the day.

I did some reading during the day and in the afternoon wrote two or three letters. Didn't feel like writing though and Ruth's letter at night wasn't very much.

We were surprised to learn that we are up for tomorrow's mission. We got to bed by nine-thirty.

Tuesday, March 6, 1945

We got up and were briefed for "Big V", but a stand-down was called before we got to the line. I had to fly a practice bombing mission and that took care of the morning. We only went up to 15,000 and then played around in the clouds a while. Loyko played co-pilot.

I didn't do anything in the afternoon except read a couple of papers and some mail. There was nothing from Ruth which was discouraging.

I went to the show after supper and it turned out to be pretty good.

Finished Ruth's letter in between radio programs and didn't get to bed until ten-thirty or so. We aren't up for the mission tomorrow.

No mail from Ruth today.

Today's flying time 2:10
Total flying time 77:35

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Wednesday, March 7, 1945

Not much doing today. Wrote a letter or two in the morning and during the afternoon, I had to fly a practice formation mission. We flew a ship having one of the new formation sticks. They work very nicely. We led the flight and went down to Taranto. We weren't up for long, but it did away with the afternoon.

There was nothing doing after supper and I wrote to Ruth – a very sad this it was too. There was no mail from her today.

We're up again for the mission tomorrow. Weather doesn't look too good. There was another stand-down today.

Today's flying time 2:20
Total flying time 79:55

Thursday, March 8, 1945, Mission #17, Hegyeshalon, Hungary

We were up early this morning and found that the target was an easy one or was supposed to be. The weather was bad, but we took off and formed over in Yugo. We had no trouble except a little worry with the engine. We made two runs on the target as it was covered on the first one. We didn't have too much gas when we got back here.

The crew had to see a colonel just when we got back. He was making an investigation about a chute that we took from Jesi. I had signed for it and turned it in at our personal equipment. I don't think anything will come of it.

There was no mail from Ruth today. I felt quite tired and wrote a short letter to her.

Today's combat time 7:40
Total combat time 124:45

Friday, March 9, 1945

Not much to talk about today. The mission was

rough and everyone was shot up. Two ships didn't come back, but one is at Vis.

Nothing was accomplished this morning, but this afternoon I went in to town with a couple of the fellows. We went to a premier showing of a new movie. We can now get our rations at the PX in town so I picked mine up.

Finally got a nice long letter from Ruth. It was written the first day she came home from the hospital. She seemed to be happy about having the baby to herself.

We're up for the mission tomorrow so I had better get to bed.

Saturday, March 10, 1945

We were up early and briefed for a Hungarian target. It might not have been so bad, but it was called off after we had reached the planes. I managed to get out of the practice formation that followed, but my freedom didn't last long.

After lunch I had to take up a ship to calibrate the airspeed indicator and to swing the compass.

We didn't get off the ground until after two and it was five when we landed.

Received a letter from Ruth, but my letter at night wasn't too good. We didn't stay up very late and the radio was off by nine-thirty. We're up again for the mission tomorrow.

Today's flying time 2:40
Total flying time 82:35

Sunday, March 11, 1945

Again we got up and again it might not have been a bad mission, but we stood down just after we got to the planes.

There was a practice formation and although everyone had to delay it as long as possible, we flew for 2 ½ hours. It wasn't what one would

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461st Bombardment Group (H) Association Membership

For membership in the 461st Bombardment Group (H) Association, please print this form, fill it out and mail it along with your check for the appropriate amount to:

Dave St. Yves
5 Hutt Forest Lane
East Taunton, MA 02718

If you have any questions, you can E-Mail Dave at treasurer@461st.org.

The 461st Bombardment Group (H) Association offers three types of membership:

- **Life Membership** – Men who served in the 461st during World War II and their spouses are eligible to join the Association for a one-time fee of \$25.00. This entitles the member to attend the annual reunions held in the fall each year, receive the newsletter for the Association, The 461st Liberaider, and attend and vote at the business meetings usually held at the reunion.
- **Associate Membership** – Anyone wishing to be involved in the 461st Bombardment Group (H) Association may join as an Associate member. The cost is \$15.00 per year. No renewal notices are sent so it is your responsibility to submit this form every year along with your payment. Associate membership entitles you to attend the reunions held in the fall each year and receive the newsletter for the Association, The 461st Liberaider. You are not a voting member of the Association.
- **Child Membership** – Children of men who served in the 461st during World War II are eligible to join the Association as a Child Member. The cost is \$15.00 per year. No renewal notices are sent out so it is your responsibility to submit this form every year along with your payment. Child membership entitles you to attend the reunions held in the fall each year, receive the newsletter for the Association, The 461st Liberaider, and attend and vote at the business meetings usually held at the reunion.

Type of membership desired:		Life <input type="checkbox"/>	Associate <input type="checkbox"/>	Child <input type="checkbox"/> Father's name:	
First Name:		Last Name:			
Street Address:					
City:			State:		Zip:
Phone number:		E-Mail address:			
Squadron #:		Crew #:		MOS:	
ASN:					
Check No.:		Amount:		\$	

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call a good formation.

I didn't do anything during the afternoon but listen to the radio. I started a letter to Ruth, but didn't finish it until after supper which I had in the hut.

I received two letters from Ruth today. The baby is fine and she feels swell.

We're up again for the mission tomorrow so I guess I better get to bed.

Today's flying time 2:30
Total flying time 85:05

Monday, March 12, 1945, Mission #18, Florisdorf, O/R, Vienna

Of course the target didn't make us feel too happy about the whole thing. It's at Vienna and is a fairly warm spot. The weather was OK and the trip up there was uneventful. We bombed from above twenty-six thousand and although there was plenty of flak, it didn't come too close.

We were to fly one ship, but the guns weren't clean so I decided to fly another. Evidently people didn't like it.

Now that we're passed the half way mark, I hope that the remaining missions go as well as the last few have.

There was no mail from Ruth and it took me a long time to write to her after supper. It seems to be getting more difficult each day to do any letter writing.

Today's combat time 7:30
Total combat time 132:15

Tuesday, March 13, 1945

Not much to talk about today. It was a wonderful day as far as the weather was concerned – warm and sunny.

I didn't accomplish anything during the morning except to clean up.

After lunch, Ed, Lebsack and I went down in the valley for some target practice. The target for the most part were small lizards at ten paces. We were out for over three hours. (Strange as it may seem they didn't want me to fly.)

Three letters from Ruth completed the afternoon.

There was a show at night which we took in and it took me three hours to write.

My ears are still ringing from the shooting.

Wednesday, March 14, 1945

Nothing worth mentioning happened today. I wasn't scheduled for anything this morning. Everyone else took off for town so Lebsack and I went in. We just picked up rations, got a haircut and walked around for a while. We got back fairly early. They had come around for me to fly so I'm glad that I was away.

There was no mail from Ruth. I spent a good part of the afternoon reading some newspapers and then started Ruth's letter.

We are planning on being up for the morning's mission so we got to bed fairly early. A feeling that it's Vienna again. By "The Beautiful Blue Danube."

Thursday, March 15, 1945, Mission #19, Weiner Neustadt, Austria

They woke us up at four this morning for briefing an hour and a half later. We were briefed for Vienna. Just before takeoff, they changed it to an alternate which would have been a five hour trip. But the weather was poor and we couldn't bomb visually so we had to go to another – Weiner Neustadt. We hit more weather and still some more on the way back. There was no flak

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and the trip was less than seven hours. We were back by two-thirty.

There was no mail although I did get a couple of packages.

Wrote a short letter to Ruth and got to bed fairly early.

Today's combat time 6:50

Total combat time 139:05

Friday, March 16, 1945

They didn't bother me at all today which was a very pleasant surprise. However, I more or less wasted the day. I didn't get up until after nine and by the time I cleaned up and started a letter home, it was time for lunch.

After that I read a couple of papers and what mail I received. I finally finished the letter I had started in the morning and then began Ruth's letter. It didn't turn out to be a very long one.

I've been leading a very lazy life and have almost twenty letters to answer. I had better get on the ball or I won't be getting any mail.

Saturday, March 17, 1945

Wasn't so lucky today. There was a stand-down and they got me out of bed at 0730 for a practice formation flight. We didn't get off until after 0930 and stayed up for a couple of hours or more. We had a ship with a formation stick and used it for a while. It worked pretty well. It's very sensitive and I'll need a couple of hours of practice to get fully used to it.

Didn't do anything all afternoon but read my mail and pick up some identification cards at S-2.

Ed got his commission tonight. Perhaps I'll get a boost in the next month or so.

Wrote to Ruth and listened to the radio for a while.

Today's flying time 2:25

Total flying time 87:30

Sunday, March 18, 1945

Another stand-down today, but I didn't have anything to do all day. It wasn't a very good day to be out. I spent most of the day writing letters. Started Ruth's letter soon after four and finished early. I spent the evening reading and didn't get to bed until eleven-thirty or so.

We had to spend some time after lunch cleaning up outside the hut. McNarney is supposed to be around here sometime this week.

There was a show tonight, but I didn't feel like seeing it. There was no mail from Ruth.

Monday, March 19, 1945

A very dull day and I accomplished nothing whatsoever. I read all morning and continued after lunch. I was going to write some letters, but didn't get to them.

The only mail from Ruth (or anyone for that matter) was an old one that has been held up.

The mission flew today so we will be up tomorrow for number twenty.

I wrote to my wife and got to bed by nine-thirty, but stayed awake a hour listening to the radio.

Tuesday, March 20, 1945, Mission #20, M/Y Wels, Austria

They woke us up at 0530, but the briefing time hadn't been set because of a change in the target. We finally were briefed for Wels a little after seven. We were briefed to fly at 19,000 feet and let down two thousand for the bomb run.

We climbed to 24,000 and went through some weather that might have been avoided had we stayed down.

There was no flak so I let Kunkes take the rally

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461st BOMB GROUP
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED OCTOBER 31, 2013

Cash Balances - November 1, 2012

Checking account	\$4,257
Vanguard investments	5,917
	<u>10,174</u>

Income

Interest and dividends	11
Reunion income	14,590
Donations	1,000
Dues and memberships	175
	<u>15,776</u>

Total Income

Expenses

Reunion expenses	17,022
Liberaider expenses	1,173
Other expenses	90
	<u>18,285</u>

Total expenses

Net loss for period	(2,509)
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Cash Balances - October 31, 2013

Checking account	7,665
Vanguard investments	0
	<u>\$7,665</u>

(Continued from page 19)

and watched the bombs hit. It was the first time I had seen anything like it. We hit the marshalling yard dead center.

I was tired tonight and after the critique I wrote a short letter to Ruth, took a shower and got to bed.

There was no mail at all today. It has been skimpy the past few days.

Today's combat time 6:50
Total combat time 145:55

Wednesday, March 21, 1945

Not much of anything to do today. It was warm and sunny and a good day to start a tan.

I cleaned up in the morning, there was a class scheduled for ten, but it was cancelled because of the visit of Gen. McNarney. He came in the morning along with Gens. Twining, Bevens and Lee and stayed until after lunch.

During the afternoon I sat outside and listened to the radio while I wrote some letters.

The noon meal was very good, of course, but the supper was back to the same old stuff.

Stayed up rather late listening to the radio, reading and eating sardines.

Letter from Ruth today.

Thursday, March 22, 1945

There wasn't anything of any importance today. I wasn't scheduled for anything.

The bombardiers have been pooled now so that Ed won't be flying with us every mission. Only three fly with the flight, and there are five in Boyer's flight.

The mail was good today – four letters from Ruth.

They did have me schedules for a test hop at 0830 this morning, but it was postponed until one. As it turned out, the ship wasn't ready then either.

I spent the afternoon reading and started Ruth's letter.

Took in the show after supper.

We received our Air Medal today. We're due for a cluster too.

Friday, March 23, 1945, Mission #21, Kagan O/R, Vienna

So we got it again – back up to Vienna. It was the target that was supposed to have been hit yesterday/

The weather was clear all the way. We didn't see a cloud in the sky all the way and it was the same over the target. We were in the flak for six minutes and I was sweating when we finally did get out. None of our squadron was hit except for a few small holes. I guess the group did lose one ship.

When we got back to the base we had to circle for almost an hour. The 484th messed up a couple of landings. Two ships bailed out their crews.

The critique was the same old story and nothing much was gained. I guess we missed the target.

We could see the Russian lines on the way back.

Today's combat time 7:50
Total combat time 153:45

Saturday, March 24, 1945

Nothing much about today to make it interesting.

Went to town this morning to pick up rations and to mail some packages.

Took in the sun all afternoon and did some read-

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FIRST STOP TUNTSIA, NORTH AFRICA

The airfield was in great shape, with wide paved runways and no mud this time. Our stay was a short one, just to refuel and check over the airplane. After a hot meal and a good night sleep, we were ready to fly the next morning.

STOP # 2 MARRAKESH, FRENCH MOROCCO NORTH AFRICA

The only thing I remember about this stop was the weather. It was so hot on the runway that I think you could have fried an egg on the concrete. The food was much improved from our previous visit and they even had cold beer. I was not a great lover of beer but that one sure did taste good. It was the first cold drink we had in about 6 months. The beer was in a metal can and brewed in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The next morning we refueled the airplane and headed south over the Alas Mountains and a great desert.

STOP # 3 DAKAR, SENEGAL WEST AFRICA

If you look at a map you will see that Dakar is the closest point of Africa to South America. The airfield had been carved right out of the scrub brush. There was no fence around the field and very little security. Natives were walking along the runways and around the planes as we landed which was a very dangerous situation. Many of the women were carrying water cans and big bundles on their heads. The men were content to just tag along.

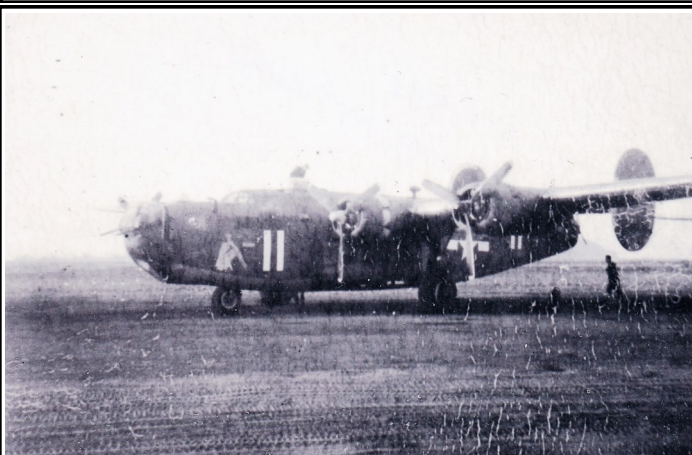
The food was not too great and the housing and support facilities were meager. Housing was no problem for Eddie and me. We volunteered to pull guard duty on the airplane once again. The revetment where we were parked was very near the heavy bush. During the night we heard a lion roar several times. We didn't go out to investigate.

The next morning the rest of the crew returned to the airplane and started the preflight prior to take off. A short time later word came down that no flights were to go out today. Bad weather was brewing off the coast of Africa. We spent most of the day just lounging around the plane and talking to some of the natives.

Early the next morning all ten of the B-24s were ready to go. Planes were lined up waiting their



Crews waiting for take off



Our B-24 'Cherokee'

turn to take off. The first plane lifted off the runway, retracted the landing gear and promptly exploded in a huge ball of fire. There were no survivors. All flights were canceled and ordered back to their parking area. Planes were double checked for any possible problems. After a delay of about one hour the group started taking off again.

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The trickiest navigating was from Dakar to Natal, Brazil across the South Atlantic. The navi-



Eddie & Jimmy with natives



A group of natives



Native soldiers and Gilbert

gator had to use celestial for the first time, shooting the sun all day and getting fixes by reading the waves with a drift meter. When we established radio contact with the Natal tower we were informed that they had 10/10 cloud cover. Arriving over the field we found a hole in the clouds and landed. Several other planes had to go to another field at Recife, Brazil.

STOP # 4 NATAL, BRAZIL

The airfield was very good with security and adequate facilities for the crews and airplanes. They were geared up for our arrival and for the many hundreds that would follow in the coming

weeks. We were not going to risk anyone fooling around our B-24 so we posted our own 24-hour guard. Eddie and I pulled the night shift once again.

At dusk Eddie and I took over the guard duty on old 'Cherokee', while the rest of the crew lived it up at the clubs on base. They discovered that the Brazilian beer had a high alcohol content and like any good airmen went to bed early. Tomorrow we fly north towards the United States.

The next morning the crew reported to the flight line early to relieve Eddie and me. While we were using the facilities and getting our breakfast they discovered that flight engineer Salyers was missing. It is time to refuel the plane and flight check and no Ernie. The rest of the crew started a search of the barracks and found Ernie in a strange barracks very drunk and naked. Lt. Miner found some clothes for him and walked him back to the flight line. It was quite obvious that the Brazilian beer had done him in. The rest of the crew pitched in and refueled the airplane. The ground crew was amazed at how much fuel we had left in our tanks. They accused us of stopping for gas somewhere else. Thanks to our ground crew chief in Italy, who was a genius, our plane was running mean and lean.

Take off time was 0900 and old Ernie was breathing pure oxygen and trying to sober up. He proceeded to get very ill and made good use of a gallon tin can. No one had any sympathy for Ernie and his problem.

About two hours into the flight we flew into a severe tropical rain storm. The wind turbulence was bouncing us around and we were forced to hang onto something solid. The rain was so heavy that we couldn't see the tips of our wings. I was thinking what a terrible place to get forced down. We were over the Amazon River area and lots of deep jungle. If we went down in that mess no one would ever find us. Fortunately the storm only lasted about 30 minutes and suddenly we were in bright sunshine. Old 'Cherokee' had

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not missed a beat and was flying like a new bird.

STOP # 5 BRITISH, GUIANA

British, Guiana (Now called Guyana) is in extreme northern South America - a very hot, tropical climate that seemed to be mostly jungle. Our landing strip was good and refueling was immediate. Our stay was to last overnight, just long enough for the gang to visit the Officers Club and sample rum and coke. They kept an eye on Salyers to make sure he didn't disappear again. Everyone was on the flight line and ready to fly at 0900 the next morning.

STOP # 6 JUNE 7, 1945 PUERTO RICO

We flew north on a beautiful day at about 5,000 feet over the south Atlantic. The water was so blue and in some areas very shallow. Faithful old 'Cherokee' just cruised along without a care in the world. What a horrible ending for such a fine airplane. She would soon be in the salvage yard at Kingman, Arizona and destined to be made into pots and pans.

The Air Force at Puerto Rico was built as a permanent base to last forever. It had served as a base for south Atlantic patrols looking for German subs during the war. The base was first class and one of the most complete facilities I had ever seen. They had everything that a small city could offer for the personnel. Our visit the first night to the cafeteria type mess hall was a big surprise. The food was the best and they had ice cold milk! The barracks were all brick structures and very comfortable with beds that had mattresses. We were up and down to the cafeteria bright and early for a real all American breakfast of bacon, real eggs and all of the trimmings. At 0900 we were in the air again headed for Hunter Field, Georgia.

LAST STOP HUNTER FIELD, GEORGIA

Our flight across the Gulf of Mexico was one unforgettable sight. Flying low over the Gulf and following the Gulf Stream up the east coast of Florida. Miami Beach was a beautiful sight and our destination was rapidly approaching. Lt. Rathfelder got on the intercom and said, "Men, this is our last flight with old 'Cherokee' and as a crew and members of the 764th Bomb Squadron of the Fifteenth Air Force. When we land, we will all be Air Force personnel due for reassignment. We may never see one another again during our Air Force careers. I wish you all good luck in your new assignment." He was absolutely right for that's just what happened.

Landing at Hunter Field the confusion really started. Everyone was trying to get his personal bags and things off the airplane. B-24s were everywhere, some landing others taking off to be ferried to Kingman, Arizona to the salvage center. It was a little hard to take knowing the fate of all of those airplanes, that they were being replaced by big brother B-29s. This was the last time I saw a B-24 until 40 years later.

As far as I know there are only two flying models of the B-24 in the United States. One called 'Diamond Lil' owned by the Confederate Air Force Association which is a stripped down transport version. The other B-24 is the 'All American' which is completely restored in every detail. There were 19,256 B-24s produced during World War II and were used by many nations in all parts of the world. At one time the Willow Run bomber plant in Michigan was producing a new B-24 every 58 minutes. The Liberators never had the glamorous press coverage that was lavished on the Flying Fortress B-17s. We who flew the B-24s had a special feeling about the big ugly brutes.

Our 461st Bomb Group was officially shut down

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and ordered back to the States on May 17, 1945. During its 13 month deployment in southern Italy it achieved one of the highest records in the Fifteenth Air Force. In those 13 months the 461st had dropped 10,885 tons of bombs in nine countries:

AUSTRIA
CZECHOSLOVAKIA
FRANCE
YUGOSLAVIA
GREECE
HUNGARY
ITALY
RUMANIA
GERMANY

Losses sustained by the group were:

Killed in action:	198
Missing in action:	93
Killed in the line of duty:	33

Since activation of the 461st Bomb Group, over 5,300 men served within the squadrons. During its tour the group lost 99 B-24s to enemy fighters, flack, and weather. Gunners downed 129 enemy fighters, probably destroyed 44 more and damaged 16.

Group personnel were awarded the following Military Decorations:

4 Legions of Merit
11 Silver Star
319 Distinguish Flying Crosses and 28 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters
66 Bronze Star with 1 Oak Leaf Cluster
15 Soldiers Medals
2,806 Air Medals with 29 Silver Oak Leaf Clusters
4,328 Oak Leaf Clusters
271 Purple Hearts and 8 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters

The 461st Bomb group was called back to active duty during the Korean War and again during the Vietnam War.

During WWII in the European theater the British and the Americans lost 33,770 airplanes over Europe. 79,281 British airmen were lost. 79,265 members of the United States Air Force were also lost. This was indeed a high risk occupation.

EPILOGUE OF CREW 16-3 AS OF THIS DATE JUNE 2, 1998

LT. M. RATHFELDER - PILOT remained in the Air Force until 1947. He was promoted to Captain and assigned to the Sioux Falls base working at a desk job processing personnel for reassignment and discharges. Returning to civilian life he was back at flying. This time he was the personal pilot for a very famous radio personality in the Chicago area. He flew for Don McNeil for several years. Later he was an insurance investigator for a large company based in Ohio. Deceased 1994.

LT. ROGER MINER – CO-PILOT was discharged in late 1945 and returned to his home and wife in Connecticut. Roger returned to college and received his degree in archaeology. He moved to California and went to work for a large oil company exploring for new oil deposits. His job took him to Alaska and many places in central and south America. Deceased 1997.

LT. T. MARVIN - BOMBARDIER was discharged in 1945 and returned to Louisiana. No one ever heard from him again. The 461st Association could find no record of him with the VA, Civil Service, or Social Security. Deceased 1998.

LT. BEN BRASAHWITZ - NAVIGATOR stayed on in Italy for several months. Returned to the States and secured an appointment to Air Force flight training. Graduated as a fighter pilot and remained in the Air Force for two more years. After returning to Ohio he was engaged in a successful tool and die business. He now owns and flies a state of the art glider. Ben has changed his name to Brasch.

SGT. E. SALYERS - FLIGHT ENGINEER was

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discharged in late 1945 and returned to the hills of Kentucky. No one ever heard from him again. Deceased 1998.

SGT. J. EBERLEIN - TAIL GUNNER was discharged in late 1945 and returned to the Chicago area. We exchanged Christmas cards and messages for many years. Deceased.

CPL. W. QUIGLEY - RADIO OPERATOR - WAIST GUNNER was discharged in late 1945 and returned to California where he operated a service station. We exchanged Christmas cards for many years. Deceased 1995.

CPL. J. GEORGE - TOP TURRET GUNNER was discharged in late 1945 and returned to Warren, Ohio. He worked with his brothers in the pin ball business. Mary Jane and I visited Jim and his wife in early 1950. Later Jim went into the insurance business. Deceased 1997.

CPL. E. PECESKY - NOSE TURRET GUNNER was discharged in late 1945 and returned to New Jersey and married Maurine. Later moved to Denver and operated a TV and radio repair business. We visited Ed and Maurine in New

Jersey and they visited us in Ohio several times. On several occasions we visited the Pesesky's in Denver. Deceased 1986.

CPL. R. GILBERT - BALL TURRET GUNNER was discharged in late December 1945 and returned to Ohio. Married Mary Jane in 1948 and tried farming for a living for a few years. Received an appointment as a Rural Letter carrier in 1951 and retired in 1982.



Bob meets Mary Jane - summer 1946



William D. Griffin

Navigator
Crew #124
766th Squadron
461st Bomb Group
1925—2010

William Dallas Griffin was an American photographer, chemist, teacher, inventor, and World War II veteran. He is most noted for more than 500 of his nature and scenic photographs which have been published in books, magazines, and calendars. His work has appeared in Encyclopedia Britannica, Time-Life, National Geographic, Audubon, Reader's Digest, PSA Journal, The Sunday Newark News, U.S. Camera, New Jersey Outdoors, and Ranger Rick. William is represented by AnimalsAnimals Picture Agency in New York City.

William was born at 1:15 AM on January 1, 1925 in Plainfield New Jersey, the son of Ralph Eastman Griffin and Jessie Dallas Griffin. As a boy he received his first camera at the age of eleven. It was a Univex Model A camera that cost thirty nine cents. In 1936, at the age of eleven, he snapped a photograph of the air ship Hindenburg as it flew over Manasquan New Jersey, along the Jersey Shore, with his Univex Model A camera. While attending North Plainfield high school his talent in photography grew and he became photo editor for his high school year book. He also earned a varsity letter in baseball in high school. He graduated from North Plainfield High in 1942 as the recipient of the Calco scholarship in chemistry.

William entered Rutgers University in the fall of 1942 to study chemistry. In 1943 he enlisted in the Air Cadet program of the United States Army. He graduated from the Army Air Corp's Ariel Navigation School in San Marcos, Texas. In 1944 he transferred to Davis Monthan Air Base in Tucson, Arizona where he trained in a B-24 Liberator heavy bomber. After graduation he ferried a new B-24 bomber to Italy. He became a member of the 461st Bomb Group of the Fifteenth Army Air Force at Cerignola, Italy. As a First Lieutenant in the Fifteenth Army Air Force he flew twenty-six missions over southern and central Europe as a navigator in a B-24 Liberator, for which he was awarded the Air Medal.

After World War II he returned home and, on Halloween in 1947, William married Margaret Ann Rutledge, whom he had known since he was fourteen years old, from North Plainfield New Jersey. He resumed his college education and in 1948 he graduated from Rutgers University with a Bachelors of Science degree in Chemistry. In that same year William and Margaret moved to Morristown New Jersey, where he went to work for Allied Chemical. William worked for Allied Chemical for twenty-three years. William holds eleven patents in Organic Chemistry with the United States Patent Office. William's research resulted in commercial process for producing Phenol now used worldwide.

In 1953 William became a founding member of the Morris Photocolor Club. He is also a past President of the Morris Photocolor Club. William is also a past officer of the New Jersey Federation of Camera Clubs and a past member of the Photographic Society of America; honored with Fellowship (FPSA).

For thirty years (between the years 1965 and 1995) William taught photography at the Madison/Chatham adult school in Madison, New Jersey.

Since 1955 William had lectured throughout Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware on photographic, nature, and travel topics to camera clubs, garden clubs, youth groups, and senior groups. In 1977 William was the first person in the eastern United States to receive the Photographer Naturalist Citation from the Photographic Society of America. This award recognizes prolific acceptance of nature photography in international exhibitions.

For twenty years William had a color dark room set up in his home where he created color prints which he made available for exhibitions, competitions and also for sale.

William retired in 1990 from the County College of Morris in Randolph New Jersey, where he had spent seventeen years teaching math and chemistry, and supervising the Chemistry Department Preparation Room. After his retirement he continued at the County College of Morris another eleven years as an

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adjunct chemistry professor. He also taught photography at the County College of Morris for twenty of his twenty-eight years of service.

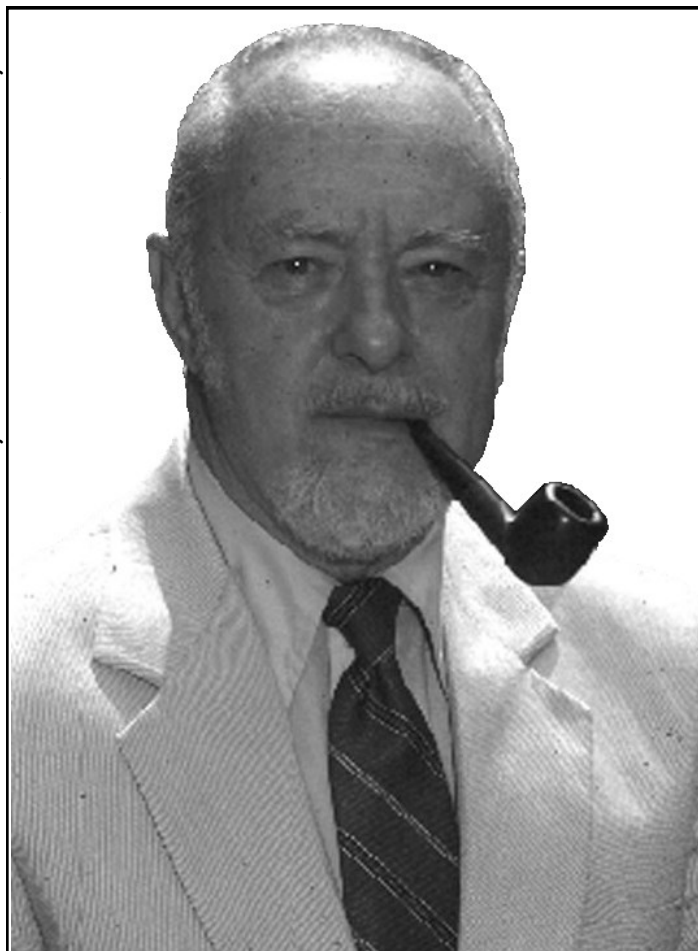
William was listed in Who's Who In the East (24th edition), Who's Who In Science and Chemistry (2nd and 3rd editions), and in Who's Who In American Education (4th edition). He was also listed in American Men and Women of Science.

His most notable photo subjects include birds, nature subjects, covered bridges, lighthouses, steam engines, and scenery. He has captured many photos of his published song birds' right from his own dining room by photographing birds on the bird feeder outside his dining room window. Many of his famous shore bird photographs were captured along the Jersey shore in locations such as in Brigantine, New Jersey, Cape May, New Jersey and Stone Harbor New Jersey, as well locations in Florida such as the J.N "Ding" Darling Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island, Florida, and the Florida Everglades. His favorite spots for covered bridges and scenery were Vermont, Maine, and Pennsylvania (Bucks County and Lancaster County). The New England coastline was his favorite place for lighthouse photography.

In 2001 William was awarded medals for Distinguished Service in World War II by the State of New Jersey and also by the County of Morris in New Jersey.

William was almost always smoking a pipe and also enjoyed smoking cigars. He loved gardening and growing house plants and always found joy in his tropical fish tanks. His favorite pastimes included listening to classical music and watching football and baseball games. Known for his sweet tooth, it was rare for a day to go by that William did not have a bowl of ice cream. William and Margaret are the parents of six sons: William Jr., Richard, Larry, Robert, John, and Jeffrey.

On Thursday March 18, 2010 at 6:55 PM William died in the Intensive Care Unit of Morristown Memorial Hospital in Morristown New Jersey after suffering from a massive stroke.



"A photograph is conceived in the eye of the photographer, becomes a potential in the camera, emerges in the darkroom, and culminates in the eye of the viewer. Each step affects the photograph, but of the four steps the last is most important. For whether the viewer is the general public, an editor, or the photographer himself, the viewer determines the success of each photo" William D. Griffin - 1979



William D. Griffin kneeling left.

WWII Bomber Pilot's Poem

by
Hugh C. Weaver
Co-Pilot
Ryan crew #71R
767th Squadron
461st Bombardment Group

A low incessant rumbling cracked the stillness of dawn
With a whirl that grew in volume to a quake;
Armored monster birds of battle hit the runway, then were gone
Leaving only deadly silence in their wake.

Turbo's churning, engines roaring, ever driving toward the sun,
Rank on rank, in vee and echelon they stacked;
Bucking broncos, pitching inward as they tightened for the run,
While the lashing, steel drawn 50's slowly tracked.

Then for minutes all was silent, save for ceaseless engine din
As the heavies drove like arrows to their ring-
Just as cluster upon cluster plunged from bomb racks deep within,
Raging hell came bursting upward on the wing.

First it puffed, and then it bellowed, like a clashing cannonade
Belching ragged steel which ripped and then destroyed;
Tough metal twisted, engines coughed, heavies fought and then they swayed,
'Til they finally hit the rally and deployed.

Then the crippled journey homeward bound for those who still remained
For the others – peaceful rest from the battle flight;
Once again above the runway clashing engines were unchained,
As the combat – wearies peeled off to alight.

Shaded talking, ever softly, came from grim – faced lips of men
As the ground crews heard of battle's latest fate
Then in strained and reverent silence, each returned to work again
"For they also serve who only stand and wait."*

*Quote from John Milton

POW honored 56 years later

*From
The Start Ledger*

November 9, 2000

WWII airman lauded by Czechs

By
Alison Waldman

What Hjalmar Johansson remembers best about when he plummeted hundreds of feet through the bright blue sky above Czechoslovakia is the perfect silence.

Suspended by a thin white parachute, the 19-year-old nose gunner for the U.S. Army Air Corps did not hear the sounds of ammunition ripping through metal or explosions from the battle that ensued overhead.

"It is suddenly deathly quiet and you are in another world," said Johansson, a 75-year-old World War II veteran who now resides in Montville..

The plane carrying him and eight other crew members on a mission to destroy a German oil refinery in 1944 had been gunned down by German fighter pilots.

On that cold December day, Johansson landed in an open snow-covered field in Czechoslovakia, where he sprained both ankles and was eventually apprehended by German soldiers occupying the area.

Nearly 56 years later, Johansson returned to what is now the Czech Republic with other members of the 461st Bomb Group on an 11-day trip funded by the Czech Airman's Association.

He and five other U.S. veterans toured Prague and other surrounding towns in September to visit the numerous crash sites from the battle.

"The Czechs hold the American veterans in such high esteem... they were treated like superstars," said Robert Hoskins, who helped organize the trip between the U.S. veterans and the Czech-flying club.

Son of a member of the 461st Bomb Group, Hoskins dedicates a majority of his free time to researching the history of the group composed of approximately 5,000 members.

Hoskins said the trip gave the veterans an opportunity to meet the people of the country they helped liberate while allowing the Czechs to express their appreciation.

"We were astounded and couldn't believe their gratitude," said Johansson, who described constant receptions, dinners and award ceremonies at each of the towns they visited.

Johansson said many of the older citizens repeatedly thanked him for his efforts to liberate Europe and recounted their memories of the war and experiences with U.S. soldiers.

"They don't feel that they are respected here in the states, they are taken for granted... Over in Europe they were highly respected," Hoskins said.

Hoskins, who is currently creating a documentary on the 461st Bomb Group, said the battle Johansson survived was one of the group's deadliest.

On that day, 11 planes, including Johansson's, were destroyed, 39 men died, and the rest were taken as prisoners in a battle that lasted three minutes.

Once apprehended, Johansson was taken to a police station where he was kept in solitary confinement as German soldiers tried to extract information about the group's methods of attack, operation and location.

"Name, rank and serial number is all I would give them," Johansson said.

He and other POWs were shipped to a POW camp on a six-day train ride with standing room only, forcing the 60 passengers to take turns sitting down.

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ing – just wasted time.

Ruth, in one of her letters that came today, says that Mrs. Gillis has received a telegram saying that Gil is a POW. I hope so. At least he's safe and didn't try to come across the Adriatic.

She also writes that Bobby has gained two pounds in one month. He seems to be doing OK for himself. He certainly isn't like his father in that respect.

That just about did it for today. I had to see Poole this morning to straighten out a complaint that Bickel and Gilbert made to the Air Inspector.

Sunday, March 25, 1945

They were out to get me today, but nothing came of it. I was supposed to take a crew to Bari and then continue to the gunnery range. That was cancelled early. All I had to do was take the crew to Bari and come back. They found someone else to do that job.

I spent all day out in the sun reading and writing just a little. I also played a little softball and luckily I did because I was wanted to test hop a ship.

During the day, which was sunny and warm, I racked up a pretty good burn.

We took in the show at night, but it wasn't very good.

Wrote to Ruth, shaved and got to bed by ten-thirty. We are flying tomorrow.

Monday, March 26, 1945, Mission #22, Straszhof M/Y, Vienna

The marshaling yard we were briefed for is just east of Vienna. There was no flak at the target, but the rally was made right at the outer ring of "Big V's" guns. We flew by Budapest on the way up and everything went OK. The rally was

terrific and the nearest flak burst just below us.

Then we flew through weather. Near Yugo, it got thick and we nearly collided and it was every man for himself. We ran into snow and rain, but broke out of the clouds over the Yugo coast. We were lucky enough to end up with Poole who was in the lead ship.

The war is going very well. With a little good luck, maybe the end isn't too far distant.

There was no mail today.

Today's combat time 8:10

Total combat time 161:55

Tuesday, March 27, 1945

It isn't worth writing anything today. I didn't do a thing. We weren't scheduled for any flying even though there was a stand-down.

I had an S-2 lecture in the afternoon that lasted an hour or so. Did some reading and then played two hand solitaire with Lebsack.

There was a good show at night – "Animal Kingdom" – then we played some more cards. It was late when I wrote to Ruth and it's now almost midnight.

Wednesday, March 28, 1945

Had to get up around seven for a practice gunnery mission. We didn't get off until nine and flew for a couple of hours. I didn't mind it and the enlisted men enjoyed firing the guns.

On the way back from the range, I let each one of them fly the ship. What a wild time!

The afternoon wasn't much to talk about. Wrote two or three letters.

There was no mail today although I did get a

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number of packages.

Russians are closing in on Austria and the western front has broken wide open.

Today's flying time 2:05

Total flying time 89:35

Thursday, March 29, 1945

No mission (3rd day), no practice, no ambition. Spent the morning reading papers from home.

During the afternoon I played some softball.

There was a show and we took it in.

There was no mail and I couldn't write much to Ruth.

The war news is good and I'm beginning to wonder if we'll finish our missions over here.

Friday, March 30, 1945

Another uninteresting day. Only one ship flew the mission, but I didn't have to fly any practice flight.

I spent the morning reading. There were four letters from Ruth that helped things considerably.

After lunch I played a couple of games of softball until about four.

After supper, we went to a Red Cross stage show. It was very good, but lasted longer than I thought it would.

Saturday, March 31, 1945

Not much to say about this day. I went in to town this morning for rations and a money order.

This afternoon took in the GI movie and then got paid. Had planned on playing softball, but there was no game.

Wrote a couple of letters.

Tomorrow we'll be flying. At least we're up for the mission.

Rumors beginning to circulate about what will happen after the war ends over here.

Sunday, April 1, 1945, Easter Sunday

This was a messed up day all around. We were briefed at 0630, but the target was changed from Bruck – rather to there, from Linz. Consequently we didn't take off until noon. Everything went swell until we got over Yugo and then we ran into Cirrus at nineteen thousand. It was supposed to be five thousand higher. So we flew around in circles and finally came back, bombs and all. Of course there will be no credit for a mission.

We landed late, missed the show, but there was no critique.

Started Ruth's letter this morning and didn't write much tonight.

The clocks go ahead an hour tonight.

Today's combat time 5:40

Total combat time 167:35

Monday, April 2, 1945

Not a very interesting letter. OK. I'll start again. Not a very interesting day. There was nothing scheduled for me and I spent the day loafing around.

Did some reading and played a little ball during the afternoon.

The mail was pretty good with three letters from Ruth. The baby seems to be doing very well. Hope to get a picture in a few weeks.

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Tuesday, April 3, 1945

Another uninteresting day except today we had to fly a little. There was a stand-down and I had to go down to Gioia to pick up a couple of new crews. We had to wait around down there for a while. When we got back here we were stuck on the line until almost two. Gilbert flew as co-pilot. Kunkes was sick. I let him fly it down there and he did OK.

There was no mail this noon and all I did during the afternoon was to play a little ball.

The movie wasn't too bad. They threw in a new VP film in Technicolor, no less. It was right to the point.

Today's flying time 1:00
Total flying time 90:35

Wednesday, April 4, 1945

Another stand-down, but I wasn't scheduled for anything and decided to go to town. We didn't get up until almost nine and had cleaned the place up in a few minutes when the inspecting party arrived. All was in good enough shape to pass.

Put off going to town until after lunch. Just picked up rations and a money order.

Tomorrow have to fly a practice flight – briefing at 0730 no less.

A letter from Ruth today. Wrote to her and got to bed rather late.

Thursday, April 5, 1945

Today was a little different to say the least. We had to fly a practice bombing mission for which they woke me before seven. We were down by eleven or a little after.

I didn't do anything during the afternoon except to write a couple of letters. At five I was notified

that I had to fly some men somewhere. I didn't find out where we were going until I was in the plane. It was up near where we spent New Years. Everything was very secret.

It was dark when we got back here. We were flying a cargo ship and I can't land them in the daytime let alone at night. What a landing! We bounced sky high and hard too. First time I've flown at night in six months.

Today's flying time 4:50
Total flying time 95:25

Friday, April 6, 1945

Another day wasted. Didn't accomplish a thing. Not even to writing any letters. Spent most of the day reading and talking with some of the boys who are going home tomorrow. All of Rawchuck's are finished and Cameron and Berkman go tomorrow.

Mail was pretty good today. Ruth enclosed a letter of hers written last October which had been returned.

There was a good USO show at night. We're up for the mission tomorrow. Perhaps we'll get away from 22.

Saturday, April 7, 1945

Thought that I might get another mission in today, but it was just a repetition of last Sunday. We didn't brief until almost ten. The target was in Italy and might have been rough. Took off at noon and although there was plenty of weather, we evaded most of it. A half hour before target, got a report that it was undercast and as it was to be visual, we abandoned the mission and came on back. Just another waste of time.

There was no mail today. There was no show either and as we're back up for the mission tomorrow, it's time to get to bed.

Today's combat time 5:30

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Total combat time 173:05

Sunday, April 8, 1945, Mission #23, Gorizia, Italy

Today was it. We got the mission, but what a fight. It started off wrong when the duty officer overslept and didn't wake us until briefing time. We missed most of it, but managed to get a little breakfast. The takeoff was messed up, within an hour we ran into weather and scattered all over the sky. We got together again and got up above Florence as the weather thickened and the flights (intact) split up. We got together again at Ancona and went across the Adriatic to the target. Even then we dropped bombs all over the countryside and probably didn't hit anything worthwhile. In all, my 23rd mission took 18 ½ hours.

Mail from Ruth today and there was a good show tonight. Jack is home for ten days.

Today's combat time 7:30
Total combat time 180:35

Monday, April 9, 1945

Not much doing today. Mac flew on the secret mission. It's up in northern Italy somewhere. Probably to help the lines.

I wasn't scheduled for anything and just hung around not doing much of anything. Spent the morning reading and then wrote a couple of letters during the afternoon.

There wasn't much mail although I did get a letter from Ruth.

Wrote to her and took a shower. We have to fly a ferry trip to Rome tomorrow.

Tuesday, April 10, 1945

Mac flew again on another of those missions. We took off for Rome about ten landing about an hour later.

Rome is nice. A lot better than Naples and cleaner. It's huge and modern for Italy. I was only there for a few hours, but didn't get a chance to see very much. Sometime I might be able to get a chance to get up there again. We had a good meal at the rest camp hotel. We messed around getting the passengers together and getting cleared.

We didn't arrive back until after six-thirty. Managed to get supper.

We are flying tomorrow.

Today's flying time 2:10
Total flying time 97:35

Wednesday, April 11, 1945, Mission #24, Bronzolo M/Y, Italy

We briefed fairly early for an 0830 take off. There was something wrong with the fuel system in the ship we had and had to get a spare. We had a little turbo trouble on the way up, but made it OK. The flak at the target was light, but accurate. Our flight lost a ship and a man on Boyer's crew was hit pretty badly. We weren't in the stuff for more than thirty seconds.

Mac received a cable saying that his mother was seriously ill so he has permission to fly as often as he wants to. He's flying again tomorrow which will make 27 for him.

There was no mail today and I didn't write much of a letter to my wife.

Today's combat time 5:55
Total combat time 186:30

Thursday, April 12, 1945

Not much doing today. I went in to town for my rations this morning. I was back by noon. During the afternoon I took in the sun and wrote some letters. There wasn't anything else to do.

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Mac flew on the mission. I guess it was a milk run.

There was no mail from Ruth, but I did get one from Mother. Jack married on the second of the month. I'm disappointed. I was hoping that he wouldn't. I guess they didn't see very much of him while he was home.

Friday, April 13, 1945

There was a stand-down today, but no practice flying at all. We just hung around not doing much of anything.

Heard on the radio this morning that Roosevelt died last night.

I read all morning and then read a couple of letters this afternoon (I meant to say I wrote a couple).

Again there was no mail from Ruth. Can't say that helps morale any.

The field was buzzed all day by P-51s, P-47s and a B-25. Really had a gay old time.

Not much doing tonight – just listened to the radio.

Saturday, April 14, 1945

Not much doing today. I spent the morning reading. They almost had us fly, but evaded that OK.

During the afternoon, I took in some sun and wrote a letter. It became cool so I didn't stay out there long.

Finally got another or rather one letter from Ruth. We fly tomorrow so I guess it's time I got to bed.

The war is progressing well. The Russians have Vienna and are on their way to Linz.

Sunday, April 15, 1945, Mission #25, 5th Army

Front

We didn't brief until almost nine this morning. The mission is in connection with a 5th Army drive. Everything was planned down to the minute. Target time was just two minutes before the time bombing had to cease.

The weather was bad at takeoff and the assembly was a messed up affair. We didn't join the formation until almost an hour after takeoff. However, the weather cleared and the rest of the mission was good. I didn't see any flak. We plastered the target – one of our best jobs.

I saw part of tonight's show, but had to go to critique.

Four letters from Ruth, but I couldn't write to her tonight. I'm tired. Mission again tomorrow.

Today's combat time 6:05

Total combat time 192:35

Monday, April 16, 1945, Mission #30, 5th Army, Credit granted 3 May 1945

We briefed almost an hour earlier this morning. The takeoff and assembly was better than it was yesterday. However, there were some clouds in the target area and though we went over the target, no bombs were dropped. It was the same type mission as yesterday.

So we flew another six hours and received no credit. That makes three missions gained in six attempts. We aren't doing so well.

Received four letters from Ruth today, but still couldn't write her a half decent letter tonight.

We are on the mission again for tomorrow. It's probably the same kind of deal.

Today's combat time 6:00

Total combat time 198:35

Tuesday, April 17, 1945, Mission #26, 5th Army

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Front

Briefing was at nine and the target was the same as it was supposed to be yesterday. Everything went well on the way up and there was no flak at the target. We did see some after the rally. On the way back, Boyer's ship ran into a little trouble and he left the formation. The deputy lead had left before so I took over the flight lead. I don't care much for it.

The 47th Wing is moving out and the crews moved to other groups. Hatem is in the 766th and another crew we knew at Charleston is here with us.

Had another letter from Ruth, but couldn't write tonight.

Bickel has made T/Sgt.

We're flying again tomorrow. Paper says we are a tactical air force now.

Today's combat time 5:35
Total combat time 204:10

Wednesday, April 18, 1945

Briefing was to be at 0720, but a stand-down was called while we were at breakfast.

I went in to town this morning, picked up my rations and got back a little after noon.

There was some mail and I spent part of the afternoon writing home and to Ruth.

That's about all there is that is worth mentioning.

Unless I'm flying, the days are more or less wasted. The same boys are flying tomorrow as were up today so I guess there is nothing else to do but go to bed.

Today is the first of many anniversaries to come, of our wedding. I hope I can be with Ruth hereafter.

Thursday, April 19, 1945, Mission #27, Ausio R/

R Bridge

Briefing was early this morning at 0515. The target was up in the Brenner Pass. And flak was listed as intense. I didn't feel any too good on the way up. I guess my stomach was nervous if that's possible. Well, it didn't turn out too badly. We must have caught them asleep because, although the flak was intense, it came late and we had rallied before reaching the area.

I saw Hatem at briefing. He has two less missions than I, but he will be flying lead. He has another son born the 12th of the month.

Mac has 31 missions and is in for the DFC and his promotion which he will no doubt get before I get mine. I should have it before the first of the month.

Today's combat time 7:00
Total combat time 211:10

Friday, April 20, 1945

Not much doing today. Mac flew again and I was awake fairly early this morning.

I had Link at nine and spent the rest of the morning cleaning up my corner.

I sat outside reading most of the afternoon and then visited her letter (Ruth's) before supper. Finished it and then played ball for a little while.

We're flying tomorrow so I guess there's nothing to do except get to bed.

Received a letter and two cards from Ruth – one for our anniversary.

Saturday, April 21, 1945, Mission #28, Attnang Pichiem M/Y

Briefing was at 0630. The target was near the Austrian line and wouldn't be too bad. However, the weather didn't look too good and it was worse before we got very far. So we headed for an alter-

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nate. Had to come down to sixteen thousand and that is where we bombed. There were clouds around the target area and our flight, along with two others, made four passes before letting the bombs go. We missed by a half mile. The flights all returned separately.

No one was eaten out at the critique and one flight even did a very good job.

There was no mail and I only wrote a short letter to Ruth.

Today's combat time 6:55

Total combat time 218:05

Sunday, April 22, 1945

Spent a lazy day, although it had indications of being quite the contrary. Woke us at 0600 for practice formation. Kunkes went to the dispensary and got grounded. Fooled around and Cameron decided to fly co-pilot. The others had gone out to the ships. The tower told operations that the ship I was to have flown, had taken off. So that put me on the ground. But the good captain determined that I fly, scheduled me for calibration. Mac had gone to town and it was too rough so it was finally called.

It was windy all day and very dusty. I just sat around and read and listened to the radio.

I don't think we'll fly tomorrow. There was a stand-down today.

Monday, April 23, 1945

Not much to record today. Mac and Ed flew today and consequently I was awake early and didn't get to sleep again.

I just sat around not doing much of anything. Wrote a letter and then did some reading. Spent the afternoon outside reading some newspapers from home.

At night, there was a meeting and then I wrote to Ruth.

Being sleepy and up for the mission tomorrow, I think it is a good idea if I get to bed. We'll probably be up early in the morning.

Mac should finish up tomorrow. Ed is now even with the rest of us.

Tuesday, April 24, 1945, Mission #29, Rovereto M/Y, Italy

Another early briefing for a marshaling yard up in the Brenner Pass. It was to be rough having 18 guns or so. When we took off, the ship developed a gas leak and we had to go in. It didn't take long and I met the formation out on course.

We made two runs on the target, but saw no flak. Three of us were scheduled to hit the gun emplacement.

A lot of ships ran low on gas and by the time we were on our way home I was leading the flight. A total of four ships dropped out. I started in nine position, but reached three before the base.

Saw part of the show tonight and then went to critique. Mac finished up today and will be heading for home in a week.

Today's combat time 7:05

Total combat time 225:10

Wednesday, April 25, 1945

Just another day and I spent it loafing. I wasn't scheduled for anything and in the morning I went in to town and back in less than two hours. I picked up a Shick electric razor. Very much surprised that they had the things.

Started to spend an afternoon reading, but got into a softball game instead.

That just about did it. The rest of the evening was uninteresting.

Received a couple of pictures of Ruth and the baby. Couldn't see much of him, but Ruth looks swell.

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Mac received his promotion or rather he went after it so that he could get on orders to go home.

Thursday, April 26, 1945

Today isn't worth mentioning. Rumors are flying about flying cargo missions in the near future.

This morning I had to fly a practice bombing mission. It only took a couple of hours and we didn't mind the flying.

In the afternoon, I started to read and get some sun, but ended up playing softball the rest of the afternoon.

At night there was a pretty good show so I started Ruth's letter before supper.

We're flying tomorrow so it's best I get to bed. Just hope that it isn't Linz or even Bolzano.

Today's flying time 2:00
Total flying time 99:35

Friday, April 27, 1945

Today was much the same as yesterday. Evidently a stand-down was called during the night because no one came around to get us up. I lost a couple of hours of sleep just waiting for someone too.

I had to fly a practice formation and it was after noon when we landed.

The afternoon was broken up by a training film at three which we had seen before. Consequently I accomplished nothing.

Started Ruth's letter early and then just sat around after supper.

There was no mail. Another stand-down has already been called.

Mac is going to Rome tomorrow.

Today's flying time 2:10
Total flying time 101:45

Saturday, April 28, 1945

Nothing doing today. There were no practice flights and it rained most of the day.

I spent most of the time writing letters and reading as that's about all there was to do.

There was no mail and I wrote most of Ruth's letter before supper.

The war news is good. The Americans and Russians have met up near Dresden and Berlin has been encircled and half of it taken.

Guess I'll get to bed early tonight. Another stand-down has been called for tomorrow.

Sunday, April 29, 1945

His is getting monotonous. Nothing doing today except for a practice gunnery mission this morning. We had a good time flying with B-17s and C-47s.

I spent the afternoon reading and wrote one or two letters.

There was no mail today which didn't help matters any.

There is another stand-down. I guess it's because of weather although it is OK around here.

Today's flying time 3:00
Total flying time 104:45

Monday, April 30, 1945

Another day wasted away. I was scheduled last night to make a ferry trip to Naples, but Cameron wanted to go so I got out of all practice for the day. As I'm writing this two days later, I'm not quite up to what happened the rest of the day. I don't think that much was accomplished.

We were put up for the mission that is up for tomorrow.

More from Robert Harrison's daily log in the next issue of the Liberaider.

President's Corner

WOW! Fantastic!

This is the way I would summarize our 2013 reunion with the 484th. I think I speak for everyone who attended when I say to the Reunion Committee -

**“Thank you! Thank you! Thanks you!
For another great reunion!”**

It's going to be hard to top this one, but perhaps they will pull off another for 2014..

As I write this column, very little is firm, but since the Reunion Committee Chairperson keeps me informed along the way, I feel confident to talk about a few things.

As most of you are aware, the group voted for going to Branson, MO in 2014. The alternate was Little Rock, AR, but the overwhelming favorite turned out to be Branson. Dave Blake evidently did a pretty good job of selling Branson to the attendees. I told everyone not to make their reservations just yet as there were a lot of details to be worked out. The Reunion Committee needed to check out a lot of things before Branson became the destination for 2014. As of now, Branson is looking pretty good. It's still not a done deal, but all of the show-stoppers seem to be minor.

Some of you may be aware that the 451st Bomb Group has been holding a reunion for the last couple of years. We have been invited to attend their reunion in the past, but with the fantastic work our Reunion Committee has done, we have preferred to do our own thing. Well, perhaps the Reunion Committee has been doing too good a job. The 451st has now asked to throw in with us and come to whatever the Reunion Committee comes up with. This even includes the 455th Bomb Group that joined the 451st in Tempe, AZ this year.

When the 484th Bomb Group joined us at our reunions, it was easy to call the event the **461st/484th Reunion**. Now with the 451st and the 455th joining us, the approach of listing the bomb groups that attend seems a little bit awkward. This is particularly true as we can probably expect others to join us in the future. We thought about calling it the **49th Bomb**

Wing Reunion, but that is already inappropriate with the 455th attending since they were a part of the 304th Bomb Wing. The only name that seems appropriate is the **Fifteenth Air Force Reunion**.

What does this mean for our reunion? Well, for the 461st and 484th people, there should be very little change. There will be more people attending. I understand the 451st reunion in Tempe, AZ this year had 140 people attending. We had 98 in Omaha this year. Combining these two will mean some 200+ people will meet in Branson in 2014. This isn't a bad thing as the more people we have attending, the better our pricing for rooms, meals, tours, etc. We will still have the group dinners on Friday night. We will have two more for the 451st and 455th, but the 461st will have a dinner that night with only our people attending. The Saturday night banquet will be much larger, but we will still have sign-up sheets for everyone to decide who they want to have dinner with. And I assume the Reunion Committee will come up with another fantastic speaker. So as you can see, the reunion will be pretty much the same as it has been provided the Reunion Committee can make all the arrangements. I'm sure they will be able to manage it.

There is one change you'll notice at the reunion in 2014. Over the last few years, the Association has been paying for the veterans of the 461st to attend the reunion. The veterans still need to arrange their own transportation, but once there, we have covered the cost of everything—meals, tours, and registration. We have been doing this because our treasury had a sufficient amount of money in it and we wanted to spend that money on our veterans. We have now reduced the treasury to the point where we would like to retain a lot of the balance for publishing the Liberaider. As a result, at the 2013 reunion, we decided to scale back our payment for our veterans. We will still pay for the registration and meals (Friday and Saturday nights and Sunday morning), but we will not longer pay for their tours. We expect this will pretty much cut the hit to the treasury in half.

I hope to see everyone in Branson in 2014. Although I don't know what the Reunion Committee will come up with, I know it will be another great reunion.

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Visit
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Webmaster Comments

I have put off writing this article for the Liberaider because I'm not really sure what to write. I believe everyone knows about the 461st website and what it has to offer. It's huge and hopefully I've got it set up so it's fairly easy to find what you may be looking for in that mass amount of information. About all I can think of for this issue would be some hints on finding your way around the website.

Last year I told you about holding down the <Ctrl> key and pressing the plus key on your keyboard to enlarge the page. I also told you that you can use the <Ctrl> and minus key to step back to the original size for the page. These are nice to know regardless of the website you are visiting.

Here's another useful tip. Suppose you are looking through the 461st website and you come across a link (that's a blue underlined word or phrase) on a page. You're curious where that link will take you and what information you'll see there, but you haven't finished reading the current page. Would-

n't it be nice if you could click on that link in such a way that it opens in a new tab leaving you to finish reading the current page. There definitely is a way to do this. If your mouse has a middle button, you can use this button to click on the link. If your mouse doesn't have a middle button, try holding down the <Ctrl> key while you click on the link. You'll see another tab open for that linked page. You can either continue reading the current page or switch to the new page to see what information is there and then come back. This trick works on all websites that contain links. Enjoy!

Now if you really want to read the new page, hold down both the <Shift> and <Ctrl> keys while you click on a link. This opens the linked page in a new tab and changes to that tab instead of leaving you on the original page. The original page is still there in the original tab.

I look forward to seeing all of you in Branson, MO in 2014.