



The 461st

Liberaider



VOL. 17, NO. 1

June 2000

SOMEWHERE IN THE USA



In This Issue:

First Casualty

Reunion 2000 Info

Czech Trips Planned

The 461st Liberaider
461st Bombardment Group (H)
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Inactivated: 27 August, 1945
Incorporated: 15 November 1985

Corporate Hdqtrs: 121 S. Wilke Rd. Suite 600, Arlington Heights, IL 60005

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Officers:

Robert V. Hayes, President, 2345 Tall Sail Dr., Apt. G, Charleston, SC 29414-6570
Gail M. Peterson, Vice President, P.O. Box 461, Spencer IA 51301-0461
Robert T. Casey, Treasurer, 121 S. Wilke Rd. Suite 600, Arlington Heights, IL 60005

Directors: 1998 - 2000

Leonard D. Cole Hdqtrs. SQDN Rt. #1 Box 495, Osage Beach, MO 65065-9713
Paul J. Bella 764th SQDN 225 Terrill Rd. Fanwood, NJ 07023-1019
Henry J. McCann 765th SQDN 18 Wills Drive, New Hartford, NY 13413-2823
Gerald Huizenga 766th SQDN 228 103rd Ave Zeeland MI 49464-1402
Kelton G. Bush 767th SQDN Oxford Hgts. Apts, Chel #9, Albany, NY 12203

Alternate Directors:

Nye E. Norris Hdqtrs. SQDN 559 S. Waverly St., Columbus, OH 43213-2756
John A. Young 764th SQDN 456 S. Ironton St., Apt. 304, Aurora, CO 80012
Walter D. Fries 765th SQDN 3958 Howerton Rd. Northampton, PA 18067
Eugene W. Brock 766th SQDN 1332 Nursery Rd., Anderson, IN 46012
Socrates Delinedis 767th SQDN 305 Caracas Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89128-0137

Committee Chairmen:

Membership James L. Hardee, 1864 Herman St., Atwater, CA 95301-3215
Post Exchange Wally Robinson, 3E. Cardot, Ridgeway, PA 15853
Historian Frank C. O'Bannon, 9260 N. Fostoria Dr., Tucson, AZ 85741

2000 Reunion : Ed Stevenson - 6485 Pinehill Rd
Shreveport, LA 71107
ESteve68@aol.com

"The 461st Liberaider"

Rob Hoskins - Editor - 310 Tyne Ave., Murfreesboro, TN 37130-4513
The "Liberaider" is published twice yearly on behalf of the members of the organization.
Permission is granted to use articles provided source is given.

Errata, Addenda

Crew 18 can't get a break!

Ed Trenner wrote in to point out that, once again, the picture we ran concerning his crew was mislabeled. On page 24 of Vol. 16 No. 2, we misidentified the crew member to Ed's right as Copilot Bill Paradise, but it is in fact Bombardier John Smith. I'm 0 for 2 with Crew 18, so maybe we need to get a crew history into the archive... Sorry Ed!

Tempus Fugit

With so many 461st BG projects running simultaneously here, it is becoming obvious that I won't be able to respond personally to as many of the letters and contributions as I would like. If you have sent in an article, crew photo, or archival documents and photos, rest assured that it is all being compiled and absorbed.

When requested, items will be returned once they have been scanned into the computer. It might just take a while...

Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

Thanks to all who wrote, emailed and called with comments about the "December" issue of The Liberaider. The larger type was a bigger hit than I had expected, and everyone seemed to enjoy the content.

Remember, most of that material comes from you, the member, so don't hesitate to send in your anecdotes, memoirs, diaries and pictures for consideration! Even if it doesn't make it into the very next issue, the ebb and flow of material will almost certainly make space for it in a future edition.

Along with the material provided by so many Liberaiders, what makes this publication excel is the groundwork laid by George Dickie throughout his years as Editor. The high standard he set will be a challenge to meet, but with your help I'll do my best to keep up that level of excellence.

If not for the involvement of the members of the 461st Bomb Group, neither the web site nor the documentary would have taken off as they have, and both projects have attracted a great deal of attention to the Group and its history.

In short, I appreciate your support, patience, and participation in all these efforts, but if it appears as if I'm doing big things, it's just because I'm standing on the shoulders of giants.

Rob Hoskins
Editor

Sleepy Time Correction

Jim Robinson, Jim Sipple, and Kermit Harrison, all from Crew 21-1, wrote in to make sure it was clear that Ken Githens was Command Pilot of Sleepy Time Gal when it was shot down on 25 July 1944. That was not mentioned in the story, and I failed to point it out in the caption of the crew photo accompanying the article.

Ken's widow, Wanda, contributed his POW writings to the Group Archive, and the contents of that volume have inspired an all-krriegie issue which will be published in June 2001. A sample of his sense of humor and gift for satire can be found in this issue on pages 26 and 27.



I really enjoyed reading "Life in a Tent" in the December '98 issue of the Liberaider. It brought back a couple of memories of our tenting days near Tunis while waiting for the 461st to move to Italy.

I was the Bombardier on "Spep" Wilson's crew that was involved in the mid-air collision over Bihac Yugoslavia on the Group's first mission April 2, 1944. All our crew bailed out safely, except the Co-pilot - Joe Lotus - whose chute didn't open. In touring Europe in 1960, we saw his name in a new cemetery in Italy - listed as missing in action - but I am sure he was buried in Bihac Yugoslavia.

Trivia - two of my most vivid memories in our "camping":

We had music - By removing the carbon core from flashlight batteries, plus a needle and a rubber band, we made ourselves crystal radios and with the help of our head sets from the plane, we could listen to very enjoyable music from Tunis.

Pigeons - It seemed like the wind blew continually, the latrine was located on a rather high slope. As a customer tried to throw the toilet paper into the pit, the wind would whip it up and sail it across the countryside - just like a flock of pigeons - Always good for a chuckle - Even if you were freezing you know what.

Hope you can read these scribblings - old age (81) is getting to us "old survivors".

Sincerely,
Emil L. "Whit" Whitney
6847 S Hill Street
Littleton, CO 80120

Dear Frank,

Just a note to let you know that I appreciate receiving copies of The Liberaider. You and your organization have done a fine job. One of the reasons I'm interested in the activities of your organization, past and present, is I knew many of its leaders, some very well. Fritz Glantzberg, Phil Hawes, Brooks Lawhon and Jim Knapp - all great guys.

Life goes on pretty well for us here in Air Force Village II. I still struggle around on the golf course a couple of times a week.

Trust all goes well with you, best regards,

Bill

MGen. W. B. Keese, US AF (Ret.)

Former CO, 484th Bomb Group



I came into the 766th Squadron in late December, 1944, as a member of Charles T. Courtney's crew R50.

Due to shortage of tents I lived with:

Josiah Hooper, A/C

Bud Beach, Navigator

Fred Bennehoff, Bombardier

I flew a couple of missions with this Crew, 12/12. Coming off the target one day (I was with my regular crew) Hooper's aircraft dropped out of the formation with one engine out and one smoking badly. We called fighter cover for him (Pinetree) and heard no more. In 1984, I read from the roster that all were KIA and in Epinal.

Can anyone tell me what happened to to this crew?

Bruce M Wilkin, CP
9796 N Millbrook Ave
Fresno, CA 93720-1312

Mail Call - Continued

Dear Mr. Hoskins,

The article on page 35 of the December 1999 issue of the 461st Liberaider concerning the B-24 'Myra G' brought back memories of the many missions that I flew the 'Myra G'. As you indicated it was a "Mickey Ship", and as a result flew in the lead position in the first attack unit leader formation.

After digging out my copy the 461st Bomb Group Mission Summaries I was the pilot of the 'Myra G' as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Mission Cmdr.</u>
8-17-44	Ploesti, Rumania	Capt Rider
8-23-44	St. Polten, Austria	Maj Goree
8-28-44	Szolnok, Hungary	Col Glantzberg
9-3-44	Smederova, Yugo	Maj Goree
10-7-44	Komorum, Hungary	Maj Goree
10-12-44	Bologna, Italy	Maj Goree
10-17-44	Vienna, Austria	Maj Goree
11-1-44	Graz, Austria	Lt Col Lawhon
11-6-44	Vienna, Austria	Major Goree
11-17-44	Blechhammer, Ger	Lt Col Lawhon
11-20-44	Blechhammer, Ger	Lt Col Lawhon
11-21-44	Troop Conctr, Yugo	Capt Mixson
12-6-44	Maribor M/Y, Yugo	Capt Mixson
12-17-44	Odertal, Ger	Capt Mixson
12-25-44	Wels M/Y, Austria	Capt Mixson
1-4-45	Trento M/Y, Italy	Capt Veiluva



Henry A Jones - Crew Chief of Myra G

Jones was previously the crew chief of Ship #9, Evil Weevil.



Wilburn H "Rebel" Thomas (L) and Henry A Jones working on Myra G's de-icer boots.

In all of the above missions the 'Myra G' was the lead B -24 in the first attack unit leader formation and I was the pilot.

Henry Jones who was the crew chief of the 'Myra G' informed me that shortly after I completed my missions the 'Myra G' received damage to the radio room and the fuselage and was sent to the scrap yard.

As to why the vertical stabilizers were painted black while the fuselage had a natural metal finish (see photo to left), I can only speculate as follows: Since the 'Myra G' was the lead ship we circled the area after takeoff so the rest of the formation could get into position for heading for the target. The black stabilizers would distinguish it from the other planes and therefore be identifiable to the other pilots making it easier to get into position the flight formation.

Respectfully,
 William G. Garrett
 624 Mather Avenue
 Ishpeming, MI 49849
 Former "A" Flight Commander
 764th B Sq 461st B G

I would like to personally thank you for featuring Jim Sipple's articles in the latest issue of the Liberaider Magazine.

I am Jim's oldest son, Ken. I can't tell you how proud I am of my Father for both his Military Service to this country and his interest and support of the 461st organization. Dad never talked much about his experiences as a prisoner of war or his missions to the family until he got involved with the 461st reunions. Your organization and the support of his fellow crew members over the years has allowed my brother Ray and I to learn so much about our dad and his military experiences.

I would very much like to purchase two additional copies of this issue to hold as a keepsake of our family history.

Thank you again for using my Dad's writings, We are all overwhelmed with your gesture.

Ken Sipple

ksipple@columbiaresearchlab.com



Hi Rob:

My name is Frank C. Weiner. I was a Navigator with the 764th Squadron, 461st Bomb Group. The reason I'm writing to you, (no computer as yet) is that in the December issue of the Liberaider, 1999, Vol. 16, #2 there is no mention of any of the missions that were flown during the dates of May 1, 1945 to May 5, 1945. I'm enclosing a copy of our combat record which contain some of those dates. I did not fly all of my missions with my regular crew. Instead, was shifted around to other crews due to a shortage of Navigators. Am also enclosing a list of names of my regular crew, plus any information I have about them. We were a replacement crew arriving in January, 1945. I know that there were a large number of crews that had flown missions during those dates. We would all appreciate it if you could mention those missions in some future editions of the Liberaider.

Right now I'm trying to find some old pictures of my original crew. If I can find any, I'll bring them along, possibly to the next reunion.

THANX,

Frank C Weiner

154 Butler Rd

Quincy, MA 02169-2349

Editor's Note: Mission entries in the Group History end in April 1945. Can anyone provide information on missions flown after April 26?



Received my Liberaider today, and immediately pulled up the website (new to me) after devouring the journal. Congratulations on your first issue! Great improvements!

Will get out our crew picture and get a copy to you. Found my name among the "late comers" joining the 461st in April '45 - just in time to make Missions 218 (N Italy) and 222 (Linz), which were covered in this issue.

On 13 May 45, I flew one of four ships to drop supplies at low-level over Wolfsberg POW Camp in Austria - this must have been the last, or one of the very last post-war missions for the 461st. At low level, the mountain valleys in Austria were much like what you saw in "Sound of Music" - beautiful, even during wartime. We went in en trail at 200 feet below the ridge levels on each side, and had to throttle down to 145 mph to minimize bursting the bundles which were dropped onto paneled grass fields adjacent to the camp - then we had to throttle up quickly to make a hairy turn at the end of a box canyon to get out.

Have a few things you may want to include in future issues, and will write again.

Guyon Phillips

4406 Graham Rd

Greensboro NC 27410-5403

guyon@juno.com



"Sunny California" seemed an ironic reference in the winter of 1943. Harsh weather and violent storms took their toll on the aircraft and crews of the fledgling 461st Bomb Group flying from Hammer Field near Fresno.

In the final hour of daylight on November 22, 1943, B-24E #41-28465 was four miles above and forty miles south of Tonopah, Nevada. At 5:10 P.M. the ominous buzz-saw whine of an over-revving propeller abruptly punctured the nonchalant cockpit conversations of 2Lts. Reginald V. Tribe Jr. and Edwin J. Drucker. Vicious spasms of vibration racked the Liberator's wings and fuselage, tied eleven stomachs in knots and shredded the complacent routine of training mission number twenty-two. The twin-tailed bomber violently slued left and slumped beyond the reach of the melancholic November sunshine.

At the direction of Major Paul R. Yurkanis, commanding the 765th Bomb Squadron of the 461st Bomb Group, Assistant Operations Officer 1Lt. Norman E. Smith issued flight operational orders number twenty-two of November 22, 1943. Five B-24s would depart Hammer Field at 11:30 A.M. on a high altitude cross country navigation/bombing mission from Fresno to Tonopah via Bouse, Arizona. Midway in the mission, the 765th was scheduled to rendezvous with the 766th over Riverside and proceed north in formation to the gunnery and bombing range at Tonopah.

Tribe was eighteen minutes late taking off and the delay was attributed to the extra caution he displayed in accepting #465 for the six hour and forty-five minute mission. Tribe and his crew had flown the same aircraft two days before when the number two propeller had gone berserk. The crew had experienced minor difficulty in getting the propeller to fully feather. Tribe, on the advice of flight engineer Sgt. Carl J. Berends, let the engine cool for five minutes, then unfeathered and restarted the engine. Oil pressure had remained slightly high, but the engine performed normally during the hour long flight back to Fresno. Tribe wrote up the incident on his form 1A. The bomber was grounded.

Due to the 6/10-9/10 cloud cover the planned rendezvous with the 766th was a bust. The five planes turned north past Muroc and plodded towards Tonopah.

On the 21st Corporal Izzo replaced number two's propeller governor and compensating relief valve. In addition Staff Sergeant Reese repaired number two and number four's carburetor temperature sensors. Flight chiefs Master Sergeant's Basiliere and Larsen reviewed Izzo and Reese's repairs and signed them off. #465 had logged 206:45 flight hours when the 765th acquired her from the 725th squadron on November 5, 1943. The mandatory acceptance and 200 hour inspections were performed on delivery and on November 7.

A fifty hour check was completed on November 15 when the bomber had logged 283:10 hours. The checks revealed no maintenance problems. As the aircraft's next inspection was not due till 333:10 hours, there was no requirement to filter or change the propeller governor's oil upon the installation of the new governor and relief valve.

As an unforeseen consequence, oil contaminated with wax and sludge was poised to foul the new propeller governor and relief valve.

On the 22nd, #465's crew chief T/Sgt. Charles P. Regan reported to Tribe that the #1 generator was out and the A-5 autopilot was inoperative. Tribe, though being trained to fly and fight in less than perfect conditions, only accepted the Liberator after conferring with Drucker, Berends and Regan. The five Liberators lifted away from Hammer Field and wheeled in a high climbing circle towards Caliente.

During the first hour of the mission, cameraman Sgt. Francis H. Finnegan became airsick over Daggett. An hour later, over the turnaround point at Bouse, Arizona, the number three and number four superchargers began surging and manifold pressures fell five inches on the affected engines. The problem did not appear to be serious and Tribe was able to maintain formation. Berends stood between the two pilot's shoulders and fretted about bringing numbers three and four's power ratings up with the port side engines.

"I think thirty-nine inches was the maximum manifold pressure that we could get out of number three and number four. That was at 16,000 feet," Sgt. Berends later recalled.

On the return leg from Bouse, the lead navigator diverted from Needles to Indio. The five-plane formation arrived over Riverside at about 2:44 P.M. Due to the 6/10-9/10 cloud cover the planned rendezvous with the 766th was a bust. The five planes turned north past Muroc and plodded towards Tonopah.

Tribe and Drucker bundled in, and hindered by

their fur and leather flying suits, reacted to the emergency through their fingertips. Tribe hauled number two's throttle and supercharger levers backwards against their stops. Drucker shoved number two's mixture control level forward into idle cutoff and rammed the throttles of the three good engines forward so hard that his left palm stung. Tribe snapped forward, reached above the compass and punched the bright red fast feathering button for number two.



Ship #465 was a B-24E like this one from the 766th Squadron. This photo was snapped at Hammer Field, and shows the staff of the 766th Bomb Squadron.

The metallic screech softened to a bass roar as the prop slowed from 2,800 rpms to 1,500 rpms. With a thin click the feathering button popped out and the propeller again spooled up to destruction. Tribe cursed and jammed the button down again. Same result. Unable to hold altitude, Tribe peeled away from his number three position in A Flight and requested a heading for Fresno from navigator 2Lt. Howard C. Steward. Tribe and Berends were able to coax the number two engine to stay feathered.

Tribe and Drucker halted the Liberator's plunge at about 17,000 feet, dialed in enough rudder trim to counteract the drag of the dead engine and picked up the heading for Fresno.

Five minutes later, over the Cactus Mountains, the shriek came again as the number one propeller ran away.

Continued Page 8

Tribe and Drucker peered over their oxygen masks at each other and exchanged a pensive look of finality. Fresno was out of the question. The weathered B-24 sank toward the stratus deck at about 1,300 feet per minute. Tribe requested a heading for the nearest airfield, which was at Tonopah.

Navigator Stewart later recounted, "Our weather briefing was very short and not in detail. We were given CAVU for this area.."

Confronted by the solid undercast, Lt. Stewart extended a previous sun line, plotted the curves of the wind on his Weems plotter and called out a direct heading to Tonopah. Tribe and Berends reset number one's circuit breakers and replaced the fuses, but no avail.

#465 was in the clouds now. Tribe ordered his crew to don their parachutes. Through gaps in the clouds, the target outlines of the aircraft carrier and battleship carved into the dry lake bed appeared in front of the vibrating B-24. At 5:25 P.M., Drucker directed navigator Stewart to give radio engineer Sgt. Jack G. McGray an updated position report and ordered McGray to send out an SOS.

***Finnegan accidentally pulled the red D-ring and opened his chute inside the waist...
...the cameraman's chute was snafu.***

McGray at his radio table tapped out SOS six or seven times on 4495 kcs, 6614 kcs and 8200 kcs. His only answer was silence.

The Liberator slipped below Cactus Peak, sank into the low saddle at the northeast corner of the mountains, turned and coughed its way through the Ralston Valley. Sgt. Berends left the flight deck for the bomb bay where he began transferring fuel from the dead engines to the straining

right engines.

"At this time the number three engine caught on fire. We were at about 4,000 feet above the ground, and I (Tribe) headed for a highway, so the crew could be picked up easily." Teetering at the edge of a stall, Tribe babied the ailerons, and nursed the Liberator into a final turn towards the highway. "On seeing that I could not reach the highway, I gave the order to bail out."

McGray clamped his key down and headed for the bomb bay.

The bail out alarm clanged throughout the bomber's interior. Bombardier Ekdahl and navigator Stewart went out through the nose wheel doors. Assistant engineer Masters engaged the auxiliary hydraulic unit and opened the bomb bay doors. Masters, Berends, and McGray filed past the blue 100lb. sand-filled practice bombs and bailed out. In the waist of the doomed bomber, ball gunner Sgt. Donald E. Holliday saw the bomb bay doors open and three crewmen bail out.

Holliday scrambled back to the escape hatch where he joined tail gunner Sgt. Raymond J. Metzger, waist gunner Sgt. Jacob W. Kline and photographer Sgt. Francis H. Finnegan in snapping on their parachutes. Finnegan accidentally pulled the red D-ring and opened his chute inside the waist. Metzger responded to Tribe's urgent verbal order to bail out by answering that the cameraman's chute was snafu.

Tribe replied that he would ride the B-24 down with the photographer. Metzger and Holliday jumped. Kline made a last effort to refold the silken folds of Finnegan's chute, but was gamely waved away by Finnegan. Kline hunkered down at the edge of the escape hatch and dangled his legs into space. Finnegan turned his back to the nose and braced himself against the belly turret's bulkhead.

Up front Drucker elected to stay with Tribe.

With only the number four engine turning #465 fell

in a wide arc to the left. Tribe and Drucker's right legs throbbed from the strain of holding their rudder petals to the floor. In dead silence Tribe lowered the nose and settled the B-24 into a steep glide for a wheels-up landing. The seven men swinging in their parachutes watched #465's twin oval rudders fade into the desert twilight.

#465 fell too fast for Sgt. Kline to escape. A blur of brown sagebrush and gray desert rocks rushed at his face; Sgt. Kline pulled up his feet and wrapped himself around the belly hatch. Tribe and Drucker hauled back on their yokes and held on, their arms in an iron "V". At 110 mph the B-24's belly thudded onto the desert floor backpanned with shale and gouged out parallel grooves from east to west. Kline was catapulted forward twenty feet across the disintegrating bomb bay into the bulkhead of the command deck.

A blur of brown sagebrush and gray desert rocks rushed at his face; Sgt. Kline pulled up his feet and wrapped himself around the belly hatch.

Kline then ricocheted aft and crumpled up in the darkness of the crushed left fuselage. On the opposite side of the plane, impact forces whipped off photographer Finnegan's flight cap and stripped off his boots and socks. In the cockpit, which lacked crash harnesses, Tribe and Drucker's seat belts dug into their stomachs. The two pilots were thrashed forward and backward and whipped from side to side. The windshield cobwebbed then disintegrated and flung shards of armored glass into their faces.

The nose crunched backwards and inwards. The control columns speared back through the cockpit. A clenched metal fist of countless protruding sharp edges trapped the two pilots. Drucker's seat belt broke and his forehead slammed into the uncushioned coaming at the bottom of the

windshield frame.

With her wings in a near-level attitude and a rooster tail of white alkaline dust following, #465 skated across the sand. The right wing tip sagged and trailing sparks the bomber skewed clockwise as it skidded. 465's back fractured behind the bomb bay. The B-24 left her ruined tail behind and ended her death slide within a half mile of the highway. Abruptly the cacophony of grinding and ripping metal stopped. The total silence was fouled by the crackling of flames.

Finnegan opened his eyes. The pain in one ankle was excruciating. There was small crack above his head. Finnegan shredded his gloves and cut his hands on the jagged aluminum as he enlarged the crack into a hole. He poked his head out, but his shoulders jammed. Finnegan ducked back inside, turned around and onto his side and slid out the hole feet first. Outside he heard a cry for help coming from the other side of the plane. Francis Finnegan hobbled around the broken fuselage and limped up to the left side. A bloodied Tribe clawed his way out of his overhead escape hatch and staggered from the plane.

Kline, befuddled by a veil of constant and shattering back pain, called again for help. Finnegan found the gunner with his head and shoulders poking from the jumble of wreckage, pinned under a D-2 oxygen bottle. Finnegan crouched down by Kline.

"I can't move my legs!" Kline yelled.

Finnegan heaved the oxygen bottle off Kline, grabbed his wrists and tugged the gunner from the plane. The pain in Kline's back jabbed deeper and harder, but he dug in his heels and pushed while Finnegan drug him fifteen to twenty feet away from the plane.

Tribe squinted his eyes against the skull cracking pain, pushed the blood from his eyes and nose with the palms of his hands. He staggered back to the smashed nose section and yelled for Drucker.

Continued Page 35

SHORT BURSTS

Quick Takes and News Briefs

Two Groups Outbound To Czech Republic

The international interest in the 17 December Odertal mission has resulted in the opportunity for two groups of 461st BG veterans to participate in ceremonial events in the Czech Republic.

Gino Dinucci has arranged to guide a group of Liberaiders to the town of Trenciaske, and he forwards this invitation to all 461st veterans from the Mayor of the town:

This year we will celebrate the 55th anniversary of the end of World War Two and pay tribute to millions of people who gave their lives in the fight against Nazi domination.

Thousands of Americans took an important part in the struggle for democracy and justice, including you and your fellow fighters, putting your lives at stake for the ideals of freedom.

We would like to express our gratitude for all your heroism and sacrifices along the road to victory."

Citizens of our town had built the modest memorial at the Liberator crash site for all of us and future generations.

Allow me to extend my invitation to visit our town during the 55th WWII anniversary. I would like to shake the hand of the man who gave us so much. I strongly believe we could meet at the Liberator memorial.

I would be honored to meet you and extend our gratitude and hospitality.

Peter Modransky

Mayor - Trenciaske, Czech Republic

Gino's group has a tentative departure date of 16 August, and he encourages any who are interested in going with him to contact him as soon as possible. They plan to be gone about 10 days. You can reach Gino at (516) 538-1371 (Days).

Your humble Editor will be part of a second group leaving in September to visit 461st BG crash sites as guests of a civilian Czech flying club. The Czech Air Force will be assisting us as we visit several crashes which are currently being excavated by the flying club.

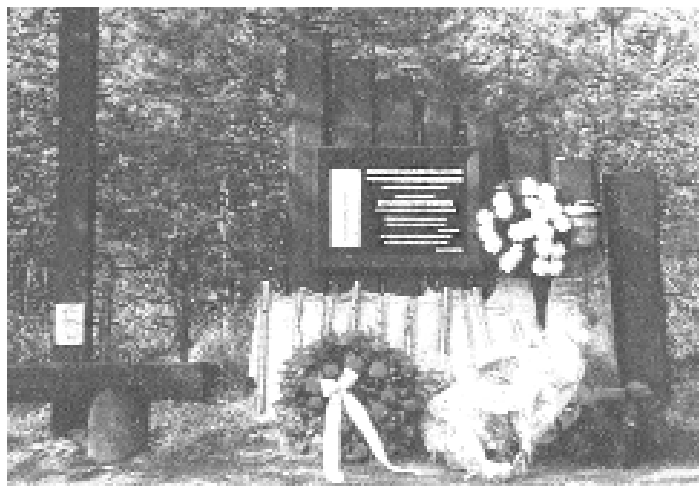
Members of JG300, who faced the 461st on December 17, will also be joining us for a memorial service at the monument to Tom West's crew in the village of Troubky.

We'll be shooting interviews with witnesses to 461st BG crashes and those who aided downed Liberaiders for the documentary while we are there, and we'll be visiting other sites in Poland with members of the Aircraft MIA Project (see facing page). We hope to visit Odertal and Blechhammer as well as relevant crash sites in what is now Polish territory.

Our total time in Europe is not yet set in stone, but we, too, are looking at about 10 days of activities beginning with our departure on 9 September.

You can read a bit of the correspondence that has passed in working with our Czech friends on page 14 of this issue.

The Czechs are extremely interested in hosting any Odertal veterans who might like to join us, so if you would be interested in this trip, please contact me at (615) 896-2059.



The group travelling with Gino DiNucci will participate in a memorial service at this monument to Roland Morin - 765th Bomb Squadron, near Trencin, Czech Republic.

New Book on Horizon:

FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE LIBERATORS

The 461st BG Archive has supplied several photographs for inclusion in an upcoming book on 15th Air Force B-24 units. This is the third in a series of B-24 books being published by Osprey Aerospace Books, all of which have been written by Bob Dorr.

Bob is still in need of material for his book, in the form of first-person accounts and photographs. He would appreciate a call, letter, or email if you would like to add your story to his book.

Contact him at the following addresses:

ROBERT F. DORR
3411 Valewood Drive
Oakton, VA 22124
tel. (703) 264-8950
e-mail: robertdorr@aol.com



B-24 Museum Seeks Veteran Info

PUEBLO, Colo. (AFPN) -- The Pueblo Weisbrod Aircraft Museum, home of the International B-24 Museum, is building a database of former B-24 / PB4Y-1 Liberator and PB4Y-2 Privateer aircraft crew members. The database will help veterans locate friends and serve as a source for historical research.

Editor's note:

We will have copies of the museum's questionnaire at the reunion in Shreveport, but you can also get a copy by contacting them directly through:

Jason Unwin, Secretary
Pueblo Weisbrod Aircraft Museum and
International B-24 Memorial Museum
Pueblo, CO
(719)948-9219
pwam@iex.net



Aircraft M.I.A. Project (AMIAP) is a group of researchers who collect information on USAAF aircraft that crashed or landed in Polish territory during the WWII.

The main AMIAP objective is to create a complete list of such aircraft.

The members of this group come from all over Poland but they are united by their dedication to solving 50+ years old mysteries. Until now we have succeeded in identifying locations of air crashes and landings of over a hundred B-17 Flying Fortresses, B-24 Liberators, P-51 Mustangs and P-38 Lightnings.

We are promoting our interest and spreading knowledge about the USAAF air offensive in Europe through articles in the daily press and magazines in Poland. We hope to publish the results of our research in the form of a book.

We are looking for participants' and witnesses' accounts of these crashes and landings and for any documents and photographs that are related to these events.

If you landed or crashed in Polish territory (or your friends or relatives did) please send e-mail or write to us. We will gladly hear from you and provide information, if possible.

Aircraft M.I.A. Project - Mike Mucha
al. Wielkopolska 43
60-603 Poznan - Poland

Web Site: <http://www.samoloty.ip.pl/amiap/>

461st Bomb Group Crew Photo Project

The archive now swells with pictures of over 125 crews. Still, we are less than half-way to our goal of archiving the photos of the 300+ crews which served with the 461st Bomb Group in WW2. 92 of the photos were already in the Archive, but many have been contributed since the request ran in the last Liberaider.

In the next issue of The Liberaider we will print a full list of the crews we have archived, and those which we know we are lacking. In this way, if you do not see your crew on either list, you will know that they are not yet accounted for. If we do not yet have a picture we hope it will further encourage you to send one in.

A Note On Crew Numbers

There are a few different ways that crew numbers are referenced within the Group's database. Of course, the original cadre of crews were assigned numbers corresponding to their Squadron assignment (i.e.: 1-19: 764, 20-39: 765, 40-59: 766, 60-79: 767).

As those crews were replaced, two different methods were used to identify their replacements. In some instances the replacement crew was assigned their predecessor's number plus the letter R (i.e.: Crew 32 may be replaced by Crew 32R). In other instances the replacement would receive a -1 rather than an R. This was carried on through subsequent replacements in many cases.

Other crews are designated only by their training crew numbers (usually a four digit number, but not always), and still others were given a 3 digit number upon assignment to the 461st BG, which does not seem to be Squadron-specific.

Beginning with crews assigned in the Autumn of 1944, we begin to find crews numbered by the date they were assigned to the 461st (i.e.: if 3 crews were assigned on 3 April, then one would be Crew 4/3, another would be 4/3-1, and the third would be 4/3-2).

If you do not know your crew number, we may be able to dig that out of the database.



Frazier Crew Photo - Back Row: Halsey H Long (E); Raymond E Dowell (BG); Lawrence D Witmer (TG); Walter RThomas (Asst E); Joseph S Pergola (NG)
Front Row: Melvin J Meyer (CP), Ernest R Frazier (P); Michael J Ucci (N); Chester F Johnson (B)
(See facing page)

When submitting crew photos to the archive, please try to include the following information:

Any Crew Numbers You Remember Being Used: In some cases there may be more than one.

Specific Crew Positions: Because MOS numbers do not indicate gunner positions, please be as specific as noting RIGHT and LEFT Waist when possible.

Nicknames: In most cases, we can pull full names and spelling from the database, so let us know what nicknames were earned within your crew.

Crew Training Information: Please supply us with your Training Crew Number and the Stateside base at which your crew was assembled.

Crew History Or Anecdotes: Give us the story of your crew and how you worked together in the air and on the ground.

Individual Aircraft With Which Your Crew Was Associated: After the loss of the original batch of H-Models, aircraft were not as closely associated with particular crews. However, if your crew became quite familiar with an individual ship let's get that into the record.

THE ERNEST R. FRAZIER CREW

After finishing Phase Training in Tucson, Arizona, the crew met in Topeka, Kansas, to pick up a new B-24 to fly to the 15th Air Force in Italy. Nothing of note happened on the flight except the super-charger on the No. 3 engine would not perform in flight. The problem was not found in Topeka or Grier Field, New Hampshire, but while at Gander Lake, Newfoundland, a ground crew chief went on a test hop and found the problem while observing the linkage of the throttle and the engine cowling. With the engine cowling partially closed in flight the linkage was hanging on the cowling. When back on the ground the Crew Chief took a hack saw and cut a small plug out of the cowling which fixed the problem. The plane was left in Bari, Italy, and we went to the 461st Group, 767 Squadron, in a six-by Army truck.

We had flown two missions when the Air Lift to Lyon started. We flew two missions to Lyon but on the return of the second trip the weather turned ugly. After seeing a "water spout" just off the coast of Rome we landed at the first opportunity on a dirt strip recently abandoned by the fighter planes. We went into Rome for a couple of days until the runway dried out enough to take off and then returned to Torretta Field.

Two of our Combat Missions were "especially interesting". The first one was Mission No. 164 to the Linz North Main Marshalling Yard, Austria. The mission is described very well in the June, 1998, *Liberator*. With two crippled planes falling toward our formation, I tried to open up the formation and about that time I saw a string of 100 pound bombs go by my left wing tip. I didn't know whether one of the bombs or something else took about five feet off the left wing tip. We lost a couple thousand feet of altitude before the plane was fully righted. Not knowing how the plane would fly we elected to fly straight as the Group rallied to the left. The flak followed the Group, and a half dozen P-51's flew cover for us back to Italy.

After evaluating how the plane reacted to flying, we elected to attempt to land the plane. All the

crew elected to stay with the plane rather than bail out over the Field. The plane was brought in for landing 20 MPH faster than normal and leveled off just above the runway with a little power on. The left wing stalled out first but we were practically on the ground and were able to land successfully. The name of the plane and whether it ever flew again is not known.

The other "very interesting" mission was Mission No. 196 on March 16, 1945, to Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Austria. Just before we got to the target it was evident that the flak was right on our altitude and soon I heard a burst of flak and the ensuing spraying of the left side of the fuselage with shrapnel. Among one of many things that happened was that the aileron control cable was severed and the plane went into a spiral to the left. After what seemed like several minutes of trying to get that wing up, the Co-Pilot, Mel Meyer, got enough correction in the trim tab, and with the assistance of the Automatic Pilot, which was already warmed up, the plane slowly righted itself. Most of the radio cables were also severed but one auxiliary system was still intact. The other planes in the 767th came back and flew formation with us until we got back over Italy.

After the other planes left it was determined that the ailerons were the only controls damaged. Johnson caught a piece of flak in the small of the back but escaped with a severe bruise thanks to the flak suit. The extra crewman, a photographer, got a nick on the shoulder from flak between the flak suit and his neck.

Since the plane could be flown with the rudders and elevators on manual and the ailerons on Automatic Pilot it was decided to try to land the plane. With the Co-Pilot handling the ailerons on Automatic Pilot, the plane was landed with all the crew intact. What made this mission even more exciting was that this was Sortie No. 33 for us. Thank goodness the last two Sorties were uneventful.



Face to Face at 17,000 Feet

Our contacts within the Czech Republic have helped us unearth some very interesting information regarding the 17 December 1944 mission to Odertal. A flurry of email has crossed the Atlantic in both directions as we have shared anecdotal accounts of the battle, and a recurring pattern of intentional and accidental unarmed incursions into the formations of the 49th Bomb Wing has been revealed.

At first reading, we thought we had made the connection between the two following accounts, but as we dug further, we found that the fighters involved were of different types. The resulting hypotheses led us to think there may have been misidentification at play here, but John Bybee has uncovered accounts of almost identical events occurring in different formations during the same attack.

Draw your own conclusions, but it makes an interesting read...

My name is Orville Hommert. I was on the mission of Dec.17, 1944. I was the tail gunner of Capt. Marion Hammets crew (484th BG). This day the pilot was Major James Lyle and Marion Hammet, now deceased, flew as co-pilot. We were flying in the formation Dog 11. This was my 19th mission so was use to the routine on such missions. I did fly 35 missions, but this mission stands out in my memory more then any other I flew.

I saw the whole attack take place. When the German fighters attacked the 461st Bomb Group I saw it all. I alerted the crew the 461st was being attacked by the German fighters. I called out on the intercom as 461st B-24s were going down. It was something like this:

"A B24 is going down...", I hardly had it out of my mouth when I said "Another B24 is going down...", and almost as soon as I said it another B24 would be going down. It was happening just that fast. I remember Marion Hammet, Pilot of our crew, say on the intercom, "My God there won't be any of

them left". For awhile I felt the same way.

We were then attacked by Me 109's. I remember shooting at one coming straight in at six o'clock. I thought I hit him because he turned belly to us and dove straight down trailing smoke.

The 484th lost two planes on this mission. One was ship # 28 "Little Joe" flown by Pilot Charles A. Himmler. He was flying in Baker 12 position. The second plane lost was #38 flown by Rodger A. Martin. He was flying in Easy 22 position. Getting back to our box of planes in Dog there was 6 planes to begin with. One had to abort (#86 flown by Pilot Lt .Williams) because of oxygen leak.

As the German fighter attack continued B-24 #38 slid out of his position and came up into our box on my right, I'm the tail gunner, but left as far as the box was concerned. He hardly got up next to us when fire started coming out of his bomb bay, streaking along the bottom of the plane. The bomb bay doors were closed. In a matter of seconds he rolled over to his left and went down. I never saw him again.

Now is the most bizarre thing which happened I will always remember the rest of my life. All of a sudden sitting right next to us is a ME-109. He is just like part of our formation. He is just sitting there, not making any effort to attack us. I can hardly believe my eyes. At this moment our waist gunner, who had him dead to rights, fired just 2 rounds when his gun jammed. At this point the German pilot looked over at me. I can see him plane as day. I saw him with his flying helmet on, his oxygen mask on his face. At this point he waved at me and on a reflex action on my part I waved back. Then he was gone, winged over to our left and dove away. Again, I will always remember this. His 109 was silver grey with black splotches all over it.

I have often wonder why did he do this daring yet foolish thing. Why didn't he try to shoot us down? Was he out of ammunition or were his guns jammed? I will always wonder and would like to

know the answer to those questions. I have often wondered if he survived the war and if he is still alive today. If he is I'm sure he will remember the story I have just told you. I have also wondered if the German groups have associations such as we have.

If you have anything to add to this story I would like to hear from you.

Orville Hommert
484th Bomb Group

=====

Hallo Orville,

Thanks for your reply. Let me give you several more information. I spoke to few former members of JG 300, and they told me a lot of details from that day.

First, you don't know probably, that complete fighting squadron (about 80 airplanes) followed your bomber squadron several miles. They flew along you in distance and hiding themselves in clouds (they were trained for IFR flying). Squadron leaders tried to find a gap among groups of American bombers and a place where there are not American fighter planes. Unfortunately they found your Bomb Group. They told me you were separated from rest of your friends. They flew on right side from you at same speed. Then squadron leaders gave orders to start intercepting. So, squadron was divided to groups, accelerated, flew about 10 miles ahead from you, made right turn, flew in opposite direction and when were groups abeam you in opposite direction, make right turn behind your tails and started attacking you.

They told me they hit several bombers at once. Mr. Schroeder was "steward" leader. He picked out one bomber with red tail, aimed at inner port engine and pressed all guns -- nothing happened. He was angry, because his "number 2" just hit B24 on his left side, shot off B-24's right rudder (this rudder hit FW 190 of his number 2 just a second later and pilot had to bail out). Later on he

realized he is flying Dahlia's aircraft and there is some problem with the guns. Then he decrease throttle, to fly at same speed as B 24 (probably yours) He recoiled guns, pressed all buttons, but without any effect. He told me he was surprised that the top turret didn't shoot at him.

Then he looked at the tail gunner. At this time he heard from radio that American fighters just arrived. He saluted to tail gunner, made split S and tried to find cover in fast, low level flight. After getting back to his airbase, he had serious problems to explain why is he coming back with a fully armed machine, without any damage. He was accused from cowardice, but his number 2 confirmed his explanation from hospital, where this pilot was after he bailed out.

He told me that he is happy after all these years, because if would his guns worked properly, he would have brought your aircraft down (he had 7 kills). I am sending you his photos as attachment. I am working on getting his address. But I tell you, he as well as others survivors are ashamed to even speak about it. He told me, "I am trying to forget it all 55 years".

Jan Hlavacka
Nerudova 13
750 00 Prerov
Czech Republic
phone: ++420 641 20 77 47
Email: hlava@cbnet.c

Editor's note:

If anyone remembers seeing a stabilizer strike an enemy fighter on this particular mission, please let us know. Pinning the above incident to the 461st's formation would confirm at least three such encounters within the immediate area that dreadful Sunday.



PLEASE fill out the REUNION REGISTRATION FORM and send it along with your check to the address shown **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**. There is a lot of accounting and planning work that has to be done and we need your input as early as we can get it. The **CUT-OFF** date is **October 1, 2000**, but **please send it in sooner if you can**.

PLEASE NOTE: There will be a \$10.00 late fee charged for any tours or meals that are booked after the arrival in Shreveport, so make your reservations by October 1, or earlier.

REGISTRATION DESK HOURS

The Registration Desk will be manned during the hours shown below. In case of emergency, contact the front desk of the hotel and/or page Bob Hayes.

Thursday,	19 Oct.	12:00 Noon to 5:00 PM 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Friday,	20 Oct.	7:30 AM to 8:45 AM 4:30 PM to 5:30 PM
Saturday,	21 Oct.	7:30 AM to 8:30 AM

We will have a Seating Chart for the tables at the Annual Banquet at the Registration Desk. You may sign up for a specific table provided you have the names of the people in your party and a paid-up ticket for each person at the time you sign up. We will put the table number on each ticket. You do not have to sign up for a complete table. First come, first served. Remember we are all friends and members of the same association.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thurs. 19 Oct.	Registration desk and Hospitality room open at 12:00 NOON to 5:00 PM
	5:30 PM Dinner on your own.
	8:00 PM Major Carl Peter presents "Icebird", recovery of crash damaged air craft from remote and hostile regions of Antarctic Plateaus.
	(Major Peter was in charge of our 461st Arlington Ceremony last year.)
Fri. 20 Oct.	9:00 AM Depart Holidome, loading at South door.
	Tour Barksdale AFB and 8th Air Force Museum
	11:30 AM Load buses and depart for Louisiana Downs
	12:00 Noon Lunch at Louisiana Downs in Sky Room
	3:00 PM Return to hotel
OPTION:	9:00 AM Depart Holidome, loading at South door.
	Tour Norton Art Museum
	11:30 AM Load buses and depart for Louisiana Downs
	12:00 Noon Lunch at Louisiana Downs in Sky Room
	3:00 PM Return to hotel
	4:30 PM to 5:30 PM Board of Directors Meeting
	6:00 PM Cash bar available before dinner
	6:30 PM Squadron Dinners and Mardi Gras entertainment
Sat. 21 Oct.	9:00 AM Load buses at South door.
	9:30 AM Tour American Rose Center
	12:00 Noon Return to hotel
	12:30 PM Lunch on your own

Sat. (cont.)	1:30 to 3:00 PM	Annual Meeting. We will also have Prof. William Oldson, Director of "World War II and the Human Experience," from Florida State University, give a presentation on the importance of preserving WWII memorabilia.
	5:30 PM	Cash Bar before Dinner
	6:30 PM	Annual Dinner and Dance (11-piece Big Band Music by Bill Causey, Jr.)
Sun. 22 Oct.	8:00 AM	Memorial Breakfast to honor our deceased comrades.

Other Items on the Agenda.

Documentary interviews: This will be the final opportunity to film interviews for the 461st Bomb Group Documentary. After this year's reunion we will begin to cut together the final drafts and prepare for final production.

Rob Hoskins and Charlie Joesten will once again be handling the interview duties. We are in particular need of interview subjects involved in the following events:

Witnesses to the 2 April 1944 Mid Air Collision on the first mission.
The cargo missions to Lyon.
The 25 July 1944 mission to Linz, Austria (anybody out there make it all the way home that day?)
The 4 October 1944 bomb release disaster over Munich.
The 17 December 1944 mission to Odertal Refineries.
The POW supply missions in May 1945.

We're coming down to the wire on the production of the video, and there are still many holes to fill in the way of first person accounts, so please don't consider the above list to reflect the only accounts we wish to pursue. Some of the most interesting vignettes we have gathered so far have come from completely unexpected sources, so if you have the time, we have the film!

Of course, sitting for an interview takes a little over an hour, and you will probably miss one of the tours, but we had good luck at the Omaha reunion in delivering our Saturday interview subjects to tours already in progress, so we will try to keep that as an option this year as well.

The Group Archives: Please give some thought to anything you might wish to donate to the Group Archive. Diaries, photographs, drawings, patches, memorabilia - in short, practically anything that pertains to the experience of fighting the war in the air from Fresno, Oudna, and Torretta Field. Frank O'Bannon and Rob Hoskins would be happy to help your material find its way into the Group's collection of photos, documents and artifacts.

Jacket and Patch Photos: If you still have your flight jacket or leather patches, we will have a camera and photographer on hand in the hospitality suite each evening to make sure these fragile yet evocative artifacts are properly committed to film. Every year the colors fade a touch more - the leather cracks another centimeter. Let's document these before they deteriorate any further!

Scrapbook Scanning: As always, your archive and web site teams will be burning the midnight oil to scan as many scrap books and photo collections into the computer as time will allow. If you can leave your items to be scanned at a later date, please package them as you would like to have them shipped to you upon completion.

461st BOMB GROUP (H) INC. REUNION -- 2000

GENERAL INFORMATION

HEADQUARTERS:	Holiday Inn, Airport - Financial Plaza (Holidome) 5555 Financial Plaza Shreveport, Louisiana 71129 (318) 688-3000
LOCATION:	Financial Plaza is an access road parallel to Interstate 20, on the south side and between Exit No. 10 (Pines Road) and Exit No. 11 (Interstate 220). This location is on the West side of Shreveport and a short distance West of the Airport.
PARKING:	Plenty of parking for automobiles and motor homes.
AIRPORT TRANSFERS:	Complimentary, for Airport Arrivals, call the Holidome at 688-3000 and their shuttle bus will pick you up.
RV PARKS :	The nearest RV Park is: Shreveport-Bossier KOA 6510 West 70th Street Phone no. 687-1010.
ROOM RATES:	\$67.00 plus taxes (for 1 Person, 1 bed to 4 People, 2 beds) \$104.00 One Bedroom Suite Our block of rooms for the 461st includes: 45 Rooms with King size beds 47 Rooms with two double beds 8 Rooms HCP Access

FLAVOR OF LOUISIANA:

BARKSDALE AFB: has been an integral and welcome part of Northwest Louisiana for over 65 years. At present it is home of the 2nd Bomb Wing and over 50 B-52 Bombers. Barksdale is rich in the history of keeping peace as well as being a training base and The Strategic Air Command. You will be able to tour the Base and see a B-52 Bomber.

8th AIR FORCE MUSEUM: is also at Barksdale AFB. The museum features galleries filled with memorabilia from Barksdale, the 8th Air Force and the oldest aerial bombardment unit, the 2nd Bomb Wing. Seventeen aircraft are on display, including a B-24, B-17 and the beautiful P-51 Mustang.

The R. W. NORTON ART GALLERY: houses incomparable collections of American and European paintings, sculptures and decorative arts spanning more than four centuries. It is particularly well known for its collections of works by Western Artists Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell. The Main building and South Wing contain 18 Galleries plus many more interesting exhibits and gardens. In the spring time, over 10,000 Azaleas are in full bloom.

461st BOMB GROUP (H) INC. REUNION -- 2000 (Continued)

Louisiana Downs: After a tour of Barksdale AFB and The 8th Air Force Museum or The Norton Art Gallery, rest your weary feet and enjoy a delightful Buffet at Louisiana Downs in the exclusive Sky Room. The 461st Group will be ushered in as a group and will be the only occupants of the Sky Room. The buffet will be open during our stay there. One race will be named in honor of the 461st Bomb Group. You will be able to participate in the racing or just visit and enjoy the gourmet buffet and atmosphere. If you desire, you may also play video poker. \$31.00 per person.

The American Rose Center Tour: You will see over 40 acres of roses, 20,000 magnificent roses in full bloom. There are over 60 gardens of antique roses, celebrity roses, thornless roses, handpainted roses, most in theme gardens sponsored by different cities and states all over the United States. The tour will be guided and golf carts will be used for those unable to walk the rather lengthy paths. The third week in October is the best week for viewing the roses in their "Fall of The Year" blooming period. Since this is Headquarters of The American Rose Society, you will see the Nation's newest hybrids and the All-America Rose Selections. \$12.00 per person.

SQUADRON BANQUET: Friday night, October 20, 2000, you will be honored with a delightful CAJUN BUFFET and entertained with a touch of Mardi Gras (in October) complete with a King and Queen and Krewe of Centaur paraders and dancers. The Master of Ceremonies will be the exciting and fun loving Cajun, Robert Trudeau. The Krewe will have beads to throw, just like in any other Mardi Gras parade. Be there for a fun time. \$25.00 per person.

GROUP BANQUET: Saturday night, October 21, 2000, we will have our more formal banquet with a plated dinner. You will be welcomed to Shreveport - Bossier City by the Honorable Mayor Keith Hightower of Shreveport and the Honorable Mayor George Dement of Bossier City. After dinner dancing will be to the BIG BAND SOUND of the Bill Causey, Jr. Band. Music will be from the 1940's and 1950's. \$31.00 per person.

MEMORIAL BREAKFAST: Sunday morning, October 22, 2000, to honor those of our Group who gave their lives for our country, and those of our Group who have passed away since that time. There will be a Barksdale AFB Chaplain and Color Guard conducting the service. It will be a plated meal of coffee, tea, juice, fruit, muffins and croissant. \$11.00 per person.

Note: All of the event and meal prices include tax and gratuities.

A \$10.00 late fee will be assessed for tours and meals booked after arrival.

Don't Delay! Register Today!!

REUNION REGISTRATION FORM**461st Bomb Group Reunion****19th - 22nd October, 2000****Shreveport - Bossier City, Louisiana****Headquarters: Holiday Inn Financial Plaza
(Holidome)**

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS REGISTRATION FORM AND MAIL WITH CHECK PAYABLE TO:

461st Bomb Group Association**Ed Stevenson****6485 Pinehill Rd****Shreveport, LA 71107-9698**

Send Payment Before October 1. There is a \$10.00 late fee after October 1.

REGISTRATION FEE:	_____ @ \$10.00 ea.	Subtotal _____
Thursday, 19 October	# of Persons	

BARKSDALE AFB TOUR & LA DOWNS:	_____ @ \$31.00 ea.	Subtotal _____
Friday, 20 October	# of Persons	

OR

NORTON ART GALLERY & LA DOWNS:	_____ @ \$31.00 ea.	Subtotal _____
Friday, 20 October	# of Persons	

SQUADRON DINNER:	_____ @ \$25.00 ea.	Subtotal _____
Friday, 20 October	# of Persons	

AMERICAN ROSE CENTER:	_____ @ \$12.00 ea.	Subtotal _____
Saturday, 21 October	# of Persons	

BANQUET & DANCE:	_____ @ \$31.00 ea.	Subtotal _____
Saturday, 21 October	# of Persons	

MEMORIAL BREAKFAST:	_____ @ \$11.00 ea.	Subtotal _____
Sunday, 22 October	# of Persons	

If you have return address labels, please attach
one here.

Contact Hotel Directly For Reservations Before 22 September, 2000

NAME _____ SQUADRON _____

(As you want it to appear on your name tag)

SPOUSE _____ CHILDREN/GUEST _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE _____

Group Arrival: 10/19/00**Cut Off Date: 9/29/00***This request must be recieved by the hotel before 4:00 PM on 9/28/00*

Holiday Inn Financial Plaza

(318) 688-3000

461ST BOMB GROUP

Reservation Request

(Please Prit Clearly)

Arrival Date: _____

Departure Date: _____

Arrival Time: _____

Departure Time: _____

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

Home Address : _____

Phone: _____

Please check type of room requested. Rates are subject to tax. Reservations must be submitted by 4:00 PM 28 September 2000.☐ King \$67.00☐ Double \$67.00☐ Concierge \$104.00

Share with: _____

☐ 1-Bedroom Suite \$104.00☐ 2-Bedroom Suite - **Call for rate.**

Special Requests:

All reservations must be guaranteed with credit card or advance deposit.

Guaranteed by the following (circle one): (AX MC VS DC CB DIS)

Credit Card # _____ Expiration date : _____

Card Holder Name: _____

Check Enclosed: \$ _____

Please return this form to:

Reservations
Holiday Inn Financial Plaza
5555 Financial Plaza
Shreveport, LA 71129



GREAT THINGS ABOUT GETTING OLDER

You can eat dinner at 4:00

Your investment in health insurance is finally beginning to pay off.

Kidnappers are not very interested in you.

It's harder and harder for sexual harassment charges to stick.

Your secrets are safe with your friends because they can't remember them either.

Your supply of brain cells is finally down to a manageable size.

No one expects you to run into a burning building.

Your joints are more accurate than the National Weather Service.

In a hostage situation you are likely to be released first.

Dog property laws

From 455th Bomb Group Assn.

Cerignola Connection

- 1) If I like it, it's mine
- 2) If it's in my mouth, it's mine
- 3) If I can take it from you, it's mine
- 4) If I had it a little while ago, it's mine
- 5) If it's mine,
it must never appear to be yours in any way
- 6) If I'm chewing something up,
all the pieces are mine
- 7) If it just looks like mine, it's mine
- 8) If I saw it first, it's mine
- 9) If it's broken it's yours



ACTUAL announcements from ACTUAL church bulletins:

Don't let worry kill you - let the church help.

Thursday night - Potluck supper. Prayer and medication to follow.

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.

The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind. They can be seen in the church basement Sunday.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?" Come early and listen to our choir practice.



Before you criticize someone, walk a mile in his shoes. That way, if he gets angry, he'll be a mile away -- and barefoot.

A third grade teacher collected well known proverbs. She gave each child in her class the first half of a proverb and asked them to come up with the remainder of the proverb. Their insight may surprise you.

Better to be safe than

.....punch a 5th grader.

Strike while the

.....bug is close.

It's always darkest before

.....Daylight Savings Time.

You can lead a horse to water but

.....how?

Don't bite the hand that

.....looks dirty.

No news is

.....impossible.

A miss is as good as a

.....Mr.

You can't teach an old dog new

.....math.

If you lie down with dogs, you'll

.....stink in the morning.

Love all, trust

.....me.

The pen is mightier than the

.....pigs.

An idle mind is

.....the best way to relax.

A penny saved is

.....not much.

Two's company, three's

.....the Musketeers.

Don't put off till tomorrow what

.....you put on to go to bed.

None are so blind as

.....Stevie Wonder.

Children should be seen and not

.....spanked or grounded.

You get out of something what you

.....see pictured on the box.

When the blind leadeth the blind

.....get out of the way.

And the favourite:

Better late than

.....pregnant.

Stumpy and his wife Martha went to the State Fair every year.

Every year Stumpy would say, "Martha, I'd like to ride in that there airplane."

And every year Martha would say, "I know, Stumpy, but that airplane ride costs ten dollars, and ten dollars is ten dollars."

This one year Stumpy and Martha went to the fair and Stumpy said, "Martha, I'm 71 years old. If I don't ride that airplane this year I may never get another chance. "

Martha replied, "Stumpy, that there airplane ride costs ten dollars, and ten dollars is ten dollars."

The pilot overheard them and said, "Folks, I'll make you a deal. I'll take you both up for a ride. If you can stay quiet for the entire ride and not say one word, I won't charge you, but if you say one word it's ten dollars."

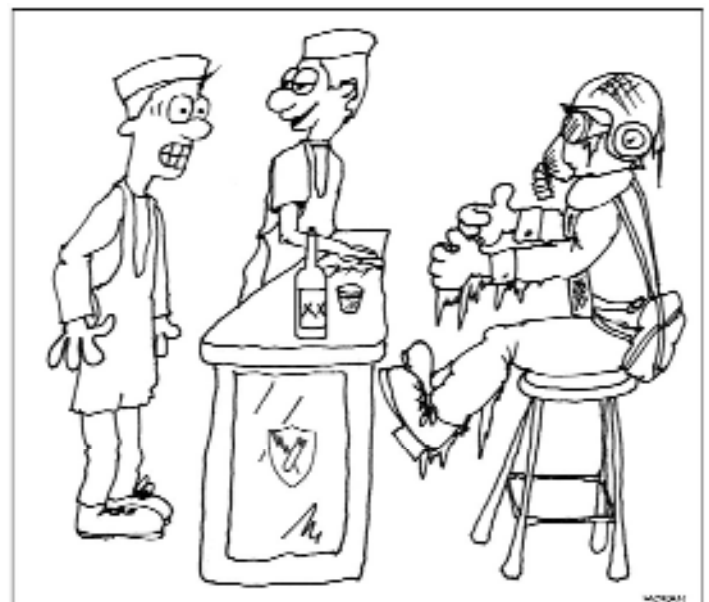
Stumpy and Martha agreed and up they go.

The pilot does all kinds of twists and turns, rolls and dives, but not a word is heard.

He does all his tricks over again, but still not a word.

They land and the pilot turns to Stumpy, "By golly, I did everything I could think of to get you to yell out, but you didn't."

Stumpy replied, "Well, I was gonna say something when Martha fell out, but ten dollars is ten dollars."



HE'S A GUNNER ON A LIBERATOR. HIS CREW BRINGS HIM IN AFTER EACH MISSION AND SETS HIM ON THAT STOOL TO THAW.

ARCHIVIST'S CORNER

Notes and News
from the
461st Bomb Group Archive



"Cherokee" (42-52389) began its service with the 461st as ship #53 in 766th Squadron. She spent a little time in the boneyard before being returned to service with the 764th as ship #11. The mission markings were eventually painted over so as not to compromise faith in the airframe...



Amazingly, out of almost 100 crew photos that were already in the archive before we began the Crew Photo Project, this is the only one we could not identify. Does anyone recognize this 767th Squadron crew?



Very soon, anyone who would like a copy of the official Group History will be able to have one at almost no cost. Thanks to the persistence of **Hughes Glantzberg** (son of 'Big G') and **Betty Spirito**, we are posting monthly chapters to the web site which can be printed from your home computer. Finally, a fully legible copy of the entire history will be available to anyone who wants it, for the price of a pack of paper and a printer cartridge.

Several chapters have already been processed and posted to the site, and the team of Glantzberg and Spirito are making more available all the time. It won't be long until all 380+ pages will be ready.

All of us who have squinted and fussed over the original copies for so long appreciate the fact that this project took as much skill in cryptography as typing! We all owe Hughes and Betty a resounding THANK YOU!

While we're on the subject of volunteerism, there are still many projects that could be adopted by anyone with a bit of time to spare and a willingness to lend a hand. Typists are still in demand, and there are a couple of important projects on the facing page that could use a ramrod.

V-Discs

When on rest leave to Bari, Rome, Capri, and the like, servicemen sometimes had the opportunity to record their voices for the folks back home. The process usually involved a phone booth sized enclosure with a microphone and a cutting machine. Any G.I. with a few loose lire could cut a 78 rpm platter to let their Stateside listeners know that they were missed, but that all was well.

Interestingly, some of these discs were made so that you would put the needle down next to the label rather than on the edge, and would play from the inside out.

If anyone still has their 'V-Discs' or any other recordings, it would be good to get tapes of them into the archive.

Adopt - A - Project

We could use an extra set or two of hands to help undertake a few tasks which will make the archive more complete. There isn't much complexity involved, just a bit of persistence to bring the projects to fruition.

MACRs - We have a fairly complete list of 461st Bomb Group aircraft losses now, so we have a good set of data to work from in requesting Missing Air Crew Reports from the Air Force Historical Research Agency (AFHRA) at Maxwell Field, Alabama.

We need someone who can take the time to request, and follow up on MACRs for all of the aircraft in the losses index.

IARCs - Also using the Losses Index, we need to begin gathering copies of the Individual Aircraft Record Cards for each of the aircraft listed. As we expand the aircraft database to include all the planes that passed through the Group, we will accumulate IARCs on each aircraft.

Since the serial numbers of the lost aircraft are already indexed, this will also mainly be an exercise in following up on requests for the copies.

Contact Frank O'Bannon or Rob Hoskins if you can help.



Harold Seberle provided the archive with this photo of himself beside the 'Line Taxi', which was built by maintenance personnel from the 767th Squadron. Would anyone care to comment on this piece of aeronautical improvisation? (Note missing tail wheel.)

Videos Available

We still have copies of the two promotional videos for the documentary.

The 8 minute tape is a short piece about why we are making the documentary, and a segment about the Odertal mission. This tape can be had for \$5 - mainly to cover postage.

The 30 minute tape has the promo segment and an additional 21 minutes of silent footage shot on the field at Torretta in 1944 and 1945. Along with the film shot on the base, there are a few minutes of aerial footage from one of the POW supply drops. This tape sells for \$30 to raise funds for acquiring and preserving additional footage for the documentary.

Make checks payable to:

Rob Hoskins
310 Tyne Avenue
Murfreesboro, TN 37130

And the Story Begins

By Kenneth O Githens - Crew 21-1 765th BSq *Stalag Luft 1*

At one time there dwelleth in a land called South Foggia a group of strange men who flitteth here and there in the sky and maketh like birds for such was their business, to bring destruction upon their enemy, who dwelleth across the water called "the ditch". And they were called as birdmen.

And one morning as the sun first shineth on the hut of the sleeping birdmen, the C.Q. entereth therein and he sayeth "Arise, for the time of briefing is at hand" -- and he hastily departeth, for he was wise in the ways of the birdmen, and with much mumbling and cursing they arose and appeaseth their tender bellies with greasy food and cold coffee, for alas, such was the manner of their mess officer who walketh about on paddled feet.

Wherefore the birdmen wendeth their way to the hut of briefing wherein they beheld strange markings on the wall. Many and numerous were the red spots on that plan of the enemy's stronghold and their gaze fell upon the hand-writing on the wall, for such it was, and they sayeth one to the other... "NO! This cannot be!!" And there was much weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. But the sound of murmuring suddenly ceased as the Great Red Dog entereth the room, and he spake unto them saying...

"Yea verily, wing upon wing of our big friends must go forth this day and assaileth the enemy, and let us not laggeth, for he who strayeth behind is lost!"

And there was one amongst them who was called S-2 for he claimeth to know the ways of the enemy, but he went not amongst the enemy and they spoke one to the other, "Whyfor doth he speaketh for he knoweth not the way of the enemy and the odds which we all reapeth in the end."

And still another spoketh to them of the winds and the clouds, but he leadeth them to confusion and they heedeth him not.

As they leaveth the briefing hut, all in great consternation not unliketh fear, and some entereth the little houses in great haste, and still others entereth the big house in still greater haste. Thus they departeth to their winged steeds wherein they entangleth themselves in many hooks and gadgets, and strange straps and contraptions after a confusing manner, and each was known to the other by various numbers and colors that they may know the plans: and in this manner each after the other they breaketh the bonds of the earth.

And one amongst them runneth fast, but he lifteth not, for his R.P.M. runneth over, and others wondereth at his good fortune, and still another returneth because his temperature riseth though he waxeth cold. And as they cometh to the appointed place their little friends arriveth not and the birdmen are troubled for Lo! - the target approacheth. And as they drew nigh unto the target they beheld many and numerous and thundering flashes among them and they weaveth and swoopeth to avoid and escape the flack for such it was called. And one called Cartwheel George called the Great Red Dog and sayeth "Whither shall we turn? Canst thou not lead us out?" and the Great Red Dog sayeth "Oh thou of little faith, why dost thou murmer against me in the hour of tribulation?"

And at this time great multitudes of enemy birdmen descendeth upon them and they were clobbered for such was the custom in those days. And they calleth for little friends to come forth and give them succor, and they came forth, save one who came fifth for he speaketh of having a Focke-Wolfe on his tail. Whereupon each of the birdmen turneth this way and that way and were lost one unto the other and great confusion reigneth. And Wallpole Able calleth to Wallpole Baker saying - "Wherefore art thou", and Wallpole Baker answereth saying "Lo! and behold! I spinneth out and am lost to thee." And they cryeth one to the other "We hitteth the silk, yea, verily go and do likewise. And many and numerous were the white parasols which fluttereth earthward.

Thus entereth they ignobly into Kriegieland!

Ken Githens was piloting 'Sleepy Time Gal' when Crew 21-1 was shot down over Linz, Austria on 25 July 1944. You will find more of Ken's work in an upcoming special issue devoted to Kriegie Art, Poetry and Prose.

TAPS



Please forward all death notices
to:

Bob Hayes
2345 Tall Sail Dr., Apt. G
Charleston, SC 29414-6570

As with any new medium of communication, the internet brings us good news from old friends, but also carries the occasional bad news of old friends passing away. Frank O'Bannon has found a way to search the Social Security Death Index via the web, and has found the names of many 461st Bomb Group veterans. Some had never been accounted for and others had not been heard from for a while.

There are so many on the list that Frank supplied, we are holding individual notices that were submitted after April 2000 for inclusion in a less lengthy roll.

One disclaimer should be made however. The online version of the SSDI only gives first and last names - no middle name or initial. The date of birth is listed though, so Frank was able to narrow his search criteria somewhat in instances where he had no Social Security number. Therefore - there is the slightest of possibilities that some entries here may be in error. If you see someone listed in error please notify Bob Hayes at the address above and we will be happy to announce the good news.



Missing No Longer



Headquarters Detachment

	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
Bannister, William L		2162	10 Dec 1999
Bell, Lloyd F		237	2 July 1997
Donovan, Joseph W		2161	18 Apr 1998
Gregory, Charles E		1092	16 Nov 1999
Hudson, Henry M		4823	7 Feb 1998
Royce, Mark B		807	18 August 1992
Ross, Albert C		673	23 Dec 1993
Sabin, William A		405	27 Apr 1997

764th Squadron

	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
Archer, Vinal E.		750	Mar 1997
Arvanties, George		501	24 Apr 1995
Austin, Jack		757	10 Jan 1994
Aversa, Vincent		757	15 Jul 1995
Baca, Joseph R		748	Sep 1990
Barefield, William S		748	03 Apr 1997
Beatrice, Michael A		747	14 Jun 1999
Bennet, William H		807	21 Jul 1999
Bloxom, Clarence W		1092	17 Feb 1999
Bombard, George A		932	01 Nov 1997
Bower, William R, Jr		1034	01 Oct 1997
Bradish, Earl W.		612	08 Mar 1999
Britton, Roy S.		612	07 Jul 1995
Harry E. Brown	Jersey Shore, PA	911	10 Sep 1999
Calgie, John	Toledo, OH	747	18 Dec 1997
Cunningham, Robert R		748	16 May 1989
Davis, Robert E	Prattville, AL	748	16 Feb 1999
DeNunzio, Charles J.		612	11 Nov 1995
Dillard, Fred H.		1034	04 Jan 1997
Doyle, Edward G.		911	10 Oct 1992
Dudding, Charles	Tulsa, OK	685	07 April 1999
Dughi, Roger D.		1092	03 Aug 1996

764th Squadron - Continued

	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
English, James E. Jr.		612	17 Jul 1997
Fortuna, Anthony R.		748	24 Sep 1995
George, James J.	Warren, OH	612	03 May 1997
Gooder, Wilbur J.	Des Moines, IA	757	27 Feb 1994
Goodhue, Edward F.		750	20 Apr 1995
Griggs, William M.		748	06 Mar 1995
Grooms, John W		345	04 Dec 1993
Harbort, Harold E.	Ft Atkinson, WI	014	10 Oct 1994
Hendry, Thomas P		1034	15 Jul 1997
Hockman, Robert L		612	14 Jan 1999
Horgan, Daniel F		237	06 Feb 1995
Hundley, Rosco W		4822	09 Feb 1999
Jackson, John T		612	14 Feb 1994
Javaruski, Thomas	Hawthorne, NY	757	11 Feb 2000
Joyce, John P		2120	13 Feb 1996
Jurack, Carl F		1092	01 Jan 1996
Kenniston, Frank		747	14 May 1998
Krull, Roy		754	15 Dec 1994
Leie, Richard V	Swiftwater, PA	511	15 Jun 1996
Liebhaber, Bernard P		014	18 Mar 1993
MacDonald, William A		612	09 Dec 1997
Martinez, Frank A		901	Jan 1984
May, Hobery C		590	01 Oct 1999
McCarthy, Paul W		612	17 Jan 1999
McCoy, Herman H		???	19 Nov 1996
Merkel, James	Califon, NJ	1034	12 Mar 1995
Mermelstein, Nathan		4000	21 Apr 1989
Mizgalski, Joseph C		745	25 Nov 1993
Montalto, James J		748	15 Jan 2000
Montanelli, Richard G		1092	4 Jul 1995
Neiman, William L		1034	19 Oct 1994
Nuzun, Albert L		612	15 Aug 1996
Ostrowski, Henry J		501	Dec 1996
O'Rourke, James M		612	22 Jun 1997
Preddy, Rex B		747	Aug 1983
Ptak, Vincent J		612	2 Dec 1997
Quigley, Walter B		757	19 Nov 1995
Rapp, Stuart D		275	20 Feb 2000
Rathfelder, Marvin W		1092	Mar 1994
Revis, Rex W		911	11 Jan 1994
Ritz, William J		612	23 Jan 1999
Robertson, David D Sr		612	24 Apr 1994
Scaife, Edward	Nanty Glo, PA	345	16 Feb 1999
Scott, William J	Hemet, CA	757	30 Jul 1995
Sligar, Glenn A	Whittier, CA	748	14 Feb 1996
Voigt, Harold T.		824	08 Mar 1994

764th Squadron - Continued

	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
Weber, Ralph A.		1092	23 Jul 1999
Wedlock, John H		809	24 Sep 1997
Weiss, Robert J		911	11 Mar 1998
Whitecotton, William L.		1034	18 Dec 1999
Wieland, Roy J		612	27 Aug 1999

765th Squadron

	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
Alford, Chester F		757	12 Sep 1996
Alford, Chester P		748	31 Mar 1997
Barison, Albert A		748	14 Sep 1999
Bates, Floyd		060	14 Sep 1994
Baumgardner, Nathan L		1092	04 Apr 1995
Bizzarri, Eugene L		345	21 Aug 1999
Board, James M		612	04 May 1996
Dalton, Robert R		612	18 Sep 1998
Dendy, Troy D		0200	03 Jul 1999
Dubal, Robert		4822	30 Sep 1996
Farr, Howard J	Hillside, IL	612	26 Mar 1999
Flaherty, Thomas A		945	10 May 1999
Foltz, James E		611	08 Oct 1993
Fortin, Paul E		612	06 Apr 1994
Franks, James D		1092	24 Jun 1996
Fulton, Oran E		1035	28 Nov 1997
Gallant, Anthony D		757	17 Jan 1994
Galle, Irving F		612	31 Jan 1996
Gaskell, John W		612	Jan 1987
Gleim, Eugene J		911	20 Sep 1994
Graves, James M		747	01 Jun 1997
Green, Arthur G		901	10 Feb 2000
Haag, William C		612	13 Feb 1997
Hanel, Clifford C		612	01 Aug 1994
Hinkebein, Louis J		747	18 Mar 2000
Hodges, Carney V		612	05 Dec 1998
Huber, Roy E		1092	29 Oct 1993
Johnson, William E		750	02 May 1997
Kahn, Raymond T Jr		1092	01 Mar 1998
Keenan, Harry C		911	29 Nov 1992
Leibe, Edward A		612	26 Apr 1999
Lind, Lloyd		590	04 Jan 1999
Lishin, William		612	07 Apr 1999
Mahen, Michael L		901	16 Jul 1997
Manolakelli, James		757	03 Feb 1994
Marmo, Angelo	Rochester, NY	748	22 Nov 1994

765th Squadron - Continued

	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
Martin, Conrad O		747	08 Nov 1999
Martin, Kenneth R		612	15 Dec 1998
McCallicher, Russell R		757	21 Dec 1998
McCray, Jack G		757	04 May 1998
Miller, Johnson S		1092	05 Nov 1999
Parlapiano, Joseph	Waterbury, CT	405	10 Nov 1998
Plummer, Donald I		1034	07 May 1996
Shanklin, Norman A		748	07 Aug 1996
Stringer, Glen E		748	26 Oct 1998
Tampas, Peter S		747	14 Jul 1998
Van Riper, Warren A		932	15 Jun 1994
Wester, Robert G		1092	26 Apr 1998
Wheelock, Carl B		612	17 Jan 1996
White, Roger F		1035	27 Apr 1998
Woods, Harry R		757	12 Sep 1996
Woods, Harry R		748	31 Mar 1997
Yagersz, John W		612	Jul 1995
Yurkanis, Paul R		1092	13 Jun 1997

766th Squadron

	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
Avery, Wilford J	Mishawaka, IN	750	15 Jul 1995
Balle, Lawrence		501	07 Apr 1998
Baugh, George V		612	11 May 1993
Berry, Bernard		748	18 Feb 1998
Bilinski, John		060	14 Nov 1995
Black, William B		1034	Nov 1985
Blais, Richard D		612	05 Oct 1995
Blanton, James W		612	Dec 1983
Booth, John W		612	01 Dec 1996
Bothwell, Leon D	Granada Hills, CA	911	15 Jan 2000
Boyd, John H	Chula Vista, CA	1092	19 Nov 1997
Bretillot, Guy		1035	14 Mar 1997
Brothers, Charles L		1092	02 Feb 1998
Brown, Francis H		612	21 Dec 1996
Campbell, James H		911	31 Dec 1992
Campbell, Kenneth U		501	13 Feb 1996
Carpe, Joseph		345	03 Mar 1997
Crisp, Albert F	South Lake, TX	612	17 Sep 1999
Dean, Harry E		748	22 May 1995
Donohoe, Harry T		1034	15 Jul 1997
Edwards, Robert F		1092	17 Nov 1996
English, James		1035	26 Sep 1991
Flynn, Daniel	Sumter, SC	612	21 Feb 2000

766th Squadron - Continued

	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
Genser, Max		901	19 Jan 1993
Guduto, Anthony		747	15 Sep 1987
Horwath, William		620	07 Feb 2000
James, Homer I		747	14 Sep 1992
Jones, Joseph C		750	19 Jan 1993
Jones, William T, Sr		748	06 Sep 1992
Kaplowitz, Sol		612	18 Mar 1994
Kesey, William T	Lakeport, CA	1034	Jun 1993
Kilburn, Elihue		060	28 Apr 1997
Kinard, Johnny C		911	03 May 1997
Kolesar, John		511	22 Jan 1996
Lacow, Louis		287	13 Jan 1996
Lamb, William G Jr		748	04 Mar 1997
Lanulette, Alfred	St Petersburg, FL	748	03 May 1999
Licata, Sebastain		612	08 Jan 1999
Lloyd, Elwood M		612	04 Feb 2000
Lower, Edward J		612	Dec 1993
Lundquist, Donald D		748	06 Dec 1993
MacDonald, Thomas H		748	09 Aug 1998
Mahlum, Conrad E		1092	07 Aug 1993
Malinowski, Thomas J Jr		901	15 May 1994
Mason, Earl Jr		748	16 Oct 1999
McGara, Donald R		1035	13 Jul 1996
McRill, Paul C		1034	10 Feb 1993
Morton, Henry	Lenoir, TN	612	
Oczkus, Michael		1034	24 Nov 1993
O'Steen, Paul E		748	07 Nov 1993
Powers, William	Roswell, NM	1092	
Stoloff, Marvin	Birmingham, MI	1034	07 Oct 1999
Whaley, Warren G		612	18 Dec 1995
Wilkins, Kenneth S		409	21 Dec 1992
Wingo, James	Ft Smith, AR	929	25 Jan 1997
Winter, Cleo	Raymore, MO	1092	
Wires, John W		748	13 Jan 1997
Wisuri, George T		014	Nov 1972
Young, John D		612	Dec 1980

767th Squadron

	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
Forrest M. Bent	Sinking Springs, PA	757	1995
Bales, Mark		050	21 Feb 2000
Batt, Jay		037	29 Jul 1998
Bennett, Herald D		2120	27 Apr 1993
Bilan, Louis J Jr		747	17 Dec 1993

<u>767th Squadron</u> - Continued	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
Boyer, Clyde L	Palm Bay, FL	1092	25 Sep 1997
Branch, Leonard L		911	20 Dec 1995
Brown, Woodrow	Spartanburg, SC	748	27 Feb 1995
Calhoun, Robert D		751	26 Jul 1994
Cameron, Donald		1092	16 May 1999
Curran, George J		555	Sep 1966
Dillon, Ivo L	Nashville, TN	757	29 May 1998
Dupree, Arthur R		612	15 Jan 1989
Dwyer, Joseph G	Staten Island, NY	612	09 Dec 1993
Erwine, Robert C		685	30 Aug 1997
Estrada, Raymond P		750	01 Apr 1994
Fedrau, Abraham		612	19 Mar 1998
Fletcher, Butler G	Panama City, FL	747	16 Mar 1998
Fox, Howard R	Montgomery, AL	1034	08 Jul 1997
George, Harold W		345	20 Mar 1996
Gilmer, Clarence		612	16 Jul 1999
Godek, Anthony	Brewster, MA	901	13 Dec 1992
Gray, Ernest N		901	10 Mar 1994
Harbin, Andrew B		304	23 Sep 1995
Herring, Dale D		345	14 Mar 1993
Hessler, Eugene E		612	Sep 1971
Jazwa, Walter E		748	04 Jan 1996
Jewell, Roy J		1092	07 Nov 1993
Jones, Robert K		1034	31 Mar 1993
Kaufhold, Robert R		1034	11 Mar 2000
Keffer, Warren G		612	13 Feb 1996
King, Jack B		620	4 Feb 1998
Leeth, George D	Hamilton, TX	612	06 Dec 1996
Lima, John B	Arcata, CA	1035	28 Oct 1992
Lorenz, Karl F		612	29 Aug 1997
Ludwig, Herbert A		4825	27 Jan 1999
Marlowe, James P		1092	13 Aug 1993
McDaniel, James N		612	25 Aug 1993
McLaughlin, John J		747	06 Sep 1996
McPeck, George I	Manlius, NY	748	07 Apr 1997
Neary, James	Bellmore, NY	612	12 Jun 1996
Olsen, Jack W		612	23 Jan 1997
Olsen, Wallace D		612	16 Mar 1998
Stockton, Floyd C	Anadarko, OK	1092	28 Feb 1994
Taube, Melvin	Somerville, NJ	757	09 Jun 1998
Webster, Herbert N	Lake City, FL	748	20 Nov 1995
Willing, Thomas P		1092	02 Dec 1997
Woodbury, Robert D		852	11 Aug 1998
Yarbrough, Julius C		911	15 Apr 1998



First Casualty - Continued

Tribe caught a glimpse of Drucker's slumped form and attempted to reenter the blackened and twisted cockpit, but was restrained by Finnegan.

The parachutists landed within a two mile radius of their downed bomber. Ball gunner Sgt. Holliday, his chest heaving and short of breath, arrived first. Bombardier Ekdahl picked up his chute and sprinted over a small knoll to reach the plane and was joined by tail gunner Metzger and radio operator McGray. Navigator Stewart and assistant engineer Masters landed close together. Stewart was stunned by his hard landing and his shoulders shivered from the combination of cold dry air and excitement. Masters aided Stewart and together they headed for the plane. Engineer Berends dislocated his ankle on landing and was the last to arrive at the crash site. Sgt. Holliday helped Finnegan to drag Kline to safety.

Tribe, Metzger and Finnegan made a desperate attempt to enter the mangled nose to rescue Lt. Drucker, but were defeated by the fire. The raging inferno consumed the fuselage and cremated Edwin J. Drucker.

At 5:45 P.M., Vernald F. Brown, an employee of A. Teichert and Co., had just finished his shift at the Tonopah Range and was ten miles south of Tonopah and headed towards Goldfield on Highway 95 when the flicker of flames coming off the desert from the east side of the highway caught his attention. Brown wheeled off the highway and drove to the flames.

Dr. Cantor, a physician stationed at a nearby Indian Reservation, was also attracted by the flames. He pulled off the road and joined Brown at the crash site. Doctor Cantor washed clotted black blood from Tribe's face and applied iodine to the cuts. He then treated and bandaged the rest of the crew in the glare of Brown's headlights. Brown took a blanket from his car and wrapped Kline in it. An army lieutenant in a private car happened by and Tribe and Finnegan rode with him to the Tonopah hospital. Another civilian car transported Berends to the hospital.

At 6:00 P.M. Oakland Air Traffic Control notified Tonopah Tower of the mayday it had received from a Fresno-based B-24 and made its position as 37-5'N 117-9'W. Tonopah Tower tuned to 6614kcs but heard nothing. Captain Dimitry Pratas began an investigation.

Sixteen minutes later the Tonopah engineering section notified the Tonopah control tower of the location of Tribe's crash landing. At 6:37 P.M., a patrolman at Alkali called the Power Plant at Silver Lake and informed them that an army bomber was burning one half mile off the Goldfield Highway. The officer said he was unable to reach the crash site, and requested the power plant staff to forward his report to Tonopah. Army ambulances were dispatched and arrived at the crash site at 7:15 P.M. and transported the remainder of the crew to the hospital. Brown left the crash site at approximately 7:45 P.M.

Tribe, Metzger and Finnegan made a desperate attempt to enter the mangled nose to rescue Lt. Drucker, but were defeated by the fire.

At dawn, jeeps and 6x6s bearing investigators wyed around the B-24's wing tips and encircled the broken tail. 465's wings canted up like amputated arms to an apex of blackened and melted metal at their stubbed roots. The right stabilizer, elevator, vertical fin and rudder, which were aligned with the path of the flames, were gone. All four propellers had been ripped from the engines and were lying flat about four feet forward of the engines. All the blades were bent, only one set was in the feathered position. The calcined remains of the Richmond Hills, New York native were removed and officially identified from dental records.

The 3G8-A15D Hamilton governors were recovered from engines one, two and three and sent to

First Casualty - Continued

the Sacramento Air Service Command at McClellan Field, CA. for analysis. Paul Thompson, foreman of the electrical department, conducted a bench test on the three governors. All the governors' oil pressure output was very low, only fifty lbs. at first, which rose to a maximum of 225 lbs., then fell back to 150 lbs. -- 330-350 lbs. was required for normal operation. Feathering switch pressures were equally low at 25 lbs., with electric motors slow and limit stops rough. On November 26, 1943, Thompson sent his findings to Captain Charles D. Payne, 409th Sub Depot Maintenance Officer at Tonopah; the governors and feathering mechanisms were sluggish and failed due to dirty oil containing wax and sludge preventing said governors from developing sufficient pressure.

On November 27, 1943, an accident board consisting of Major Kenneth W. Northamer, Captain Dimitry Pratas and 2Lt. Joseph W. Jackson convened to investigate accident number 44-11-22-6 (fiscal year 1944, sixth accident on November 22, 1943). The board absolved Lt. Tribe and the maintenance crew of any blame in the death of 2Lt. Edwin J. Drucker and the loss of B-24E #41-28465. However, the board recommended that propeller governor oil be changed every 100 hours or filtered every twenty-five hours.

So far, for this writer the paper trail is silent as to the relative fates of the ten survivors of Tribe's crew after November 22, 1943 - John Bybee

In addition the board further recommended that all aircraft be equipped with crash harnesses. "In this particular case the co-pilot's life may have been saved if this safety factor had been available." The board's finding were reviewed on December 6, 1943 and approved on December 8, 1943. The report was forwarded to Captain McKnight at Wright Field on January 6, 1944.

Lt. Edwin J. Drucker's "last landing" illustrates that in flight as in life danger does not fade with familiarity, nor does courage wane when confronted by the unexpected. Deaths and injuries inflicted by operational accidents are just as grievous and no less honorable than those suffered in combat. Perhaps, a quote from Sloan Wilson author of *ICE BROTHERS* sums it up best, "Forgotten now and little honored then, but still they'll never have to wonder if they are men."

So far, for this writer the paper trail is silent as to the relative fates of the ten survivors of Tribe's crew after November 22, 1943. Perhaps, the readers of the *LIBERAIDER* may have photos, memories of Tribe and his crew that they would wish to share with me.

***Editor's Note:***

You may remember John's excellent article about Ken Smith's crew in Vol. 10 - #2 (12/93), "Angels Unknown". The amazing number of research hours John has spent in studying the 17 December 1944 mission to Odertal has resulted in perhaps the best collection of materials on that operation in North America.

As you see here, his interest in other aspects of the 461st Bomb Group's history is just as avid, and we hope that someone will be able to help him fill in the missing pieces of this story and its aftermath.

Please feel free to contact him by any of the following means:

John Bybee
Rt 2 Box 16
Vermont, IL 61484
Phone: (309) 784-4800
Email: jsbybee@winco.net

We all anxiously await the Odertal book, John!



John Trommershausser on the wing of the Group hack he and Brooks Lawhon lifted from a depot near Foggia. His description of the bird brings to mind "The Ransom of Red Chief" somehow... Of note in this photo is that this aircraft participated in Operation Torch, as is indicated by a yellow border around the national insignia. The yellow seems to have been crudely overpainted with brown.

Mail Call - Continued

In Dec./Jan. time period, Brooks Lawhon and I flew up to a base near Foggia one dark and rainy night. We landed without permission after buzzing the field and receiving some runway lighting. I taxied around to a revetment where a Sergeant was flashing a light, Brooks jumped out, climbed into the P-40, started up and took off. We had no contact with the base at all. I followed in our B-24, and we returned to our base.

The next day the P-40 was given a quick paint job and became the shepherd we flew to cuss the formations to close up and fly right. We checked ourselves out by reading the tech order for the P-40.

First time I did a roll, all sorts of crap fell out of the plane. I believe we were suckered into stealing it to keep it off the maintenance rolls. It was such a piece of junk that you started it up then topped off the coolant before the flight. Was a lot of fun to fly though.

This was the only P-40 on the base in 45. Glantzberg must have taken his when he pulled out.

Just thought you should know for the record.

John Trommershausser
johntrom@aol.com

Continued Page 38

Many thanks to Jon Moran (son of Tom Moran - 765) who did a great repair job on the picture above. This is what he started with.



Mail Call - Continued

I do not find in your list of missing crews anything about Cleon Connor and his crew. We were on the way to LINZ on March 31 and in very thick clouds. He was flying in 5 spot and I was in 7 spot. The last we saw of him he flipped over and went straight down and he and his crew were never heard of again so all I can think of is that he got vertigo or his instruments toppled.

We had gone through some of our training together and went to the 767th squadron about the same time and became very good friends. If anyone knows anything about this I would like to hear from them.

Keith Card
900 17th St
West Des Moines, IA 50265
keithcard@webtv.net



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Dear Rob Hoskins --

My full name is Gerald A. Rezendes (most who know me call me Jerry) and I was in the 767th Bomb Squadron - 461st Bomb Group from 9-3-44 to sometime in April 1945. Our pilot was Harry Walsh co-pilot Edwin Warren, Navigator Richard Sebastian Leggio - Bombardier Leonard Rosenthal - Engineer and left waist gunner, Walter "Zack" Adamczak - nose gunner Donald Harvey - top turret gunner, Donald Adams - ball gunner Paul Brabham - tail gunner Clarence Van den Heuval and myself, the radio operator and at times, the right waist gunner, also appointed to third in command of the ship.

I would draw your attention to pages 38 and 39 of the December 19th '99 issue describing the efforts of Lt. Colonel Brooks Lawhon to reassemble the Group which had been scattered by snow-storm.

Lt. Colonel Lawhon and myself completed our last required mission at the same time on the same plane, so you can imagine my surprise when I saw his photo in the Liberaider along with his accomplishments! Shortly after completing our final mission, Public Relations came out to the hard stand to take photos and write up an article.

I kept a complete diary of the missions that we flew and have included a photocopy of the transcript of my 33rd mission as mentioned in the newspaper clipping. [ed.: see facing page]

Currently, I will be 80 years old in September and am enjoying reasonably good health (at this time in life, we all have ailments!!) and have been retired from the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. since May 2nd, 1981.

I love to putter around the yard and on "good days" enjoy golfing as a member of the Plymouth Country Club. My loving wife, Aurie and I celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary on Sunday-October 25th, 1998.

Keep up the good work and I wish you all the very best in your endeavors.

Sincerely,

Gerald "Jerry" Rezendes
PO Box 3411
Plymouth, MA 02361

Wednesday - March 9, 1945

33rd mission to Graz, Austria *again* !!

Carried - 500 lb. bombs and 2,700 gallons of gasoline.

Briefed on two plans - Primaries and Bruck at Linz.

No enemy fighters moderate but very accurate flak - we were hit and four large holes were counted - wing tank near No. 2 engine - two in bomb bays and one in top of fuselage - gasoline leaking considerably from tank into bomb bays. At an altitude of 22,000 ft. flew down Main Street in Bruck to Bomb Graz!! Abandoned run because of severe gasoline leakage and dropped our bombs on no particular target -- perhaps some small bridge in the countryside!! We flew in ship 19. Deputy Group-Captain Fred Gray - co-pilot - and 1st Lt. Carey was the "Mickey" (radar) Operator - 2nd Lt. Jack Gerschberg was the nose Navigator - Taylor as tail gunner - Don Harvey as right waist position - Paul Brabham at left waist position - our co-pilot Edwin Warren flew with Miller and Clarence Van den Heuvel flew with Roemer.

Four men had zero oxygen upon landing, and Taylor was having trouble with his oxygen mask, and our interphone was erratic. As radio operator, I stayed on liaison throughout the mission except during the trouble period. We had taken off from base at 1100 hours and on our return, landed 15 minutes before darkness at 1745 hours.

Nearing the end of my missions and it's getting rougher!!

Flying time - 6 hrs., 39 minutes



T/Sgt. Gerald A "Jerry" Rezendes, flanked by 1st Lt. Harry Walsh (L) and Col. Brooks Lawhon (R) as all three men completed their combat tours on the same plane.

35 Missions

T-SGT. GERALD REZENDES

PLYMOUTH, April 10, — T-Sgt. Gerald Rezendes, 94 Spooner street, radio operator on a B-24 Liberator bomber in the 15th AAF, recently flew his 35th combat mission against the enemy. "That was strictly a milk-run," says Rezendes. "Not a single enemy plane and we didn't even see flak until the second run over the target. I was surprised as we were flying against the Muhlendorf railyards in Germany, which is a pretty important target now. We made two runs over the yards, but it wasn't until our second that they fired one single burst of flak at us. All it did was rip the ignition harness of a ship in our formation."

Rezendes' missions have taken him to some targets that were in marked contrast to his latest one. He had a forced landing following a midair collision that knocked out three of his ship's engines on one mission, but he recalls the occasion only with regrets about missing his supper.

"I think my 33d mission was my roughest," says Rezendes. "We flew to the railyards at Graz, Austria, and were struck by flak on the first run over the target. They landed two good shots the size of grapefruits in the bomb-bay and a couple more in the wing and fuselage."

Rezendes entered the AAF Feb. 2, 1942, and received his training in radio at Sioux Falls, S. D., and in aerial gunnery at Yuma, Ariz. Prior to joining the army, he was employed as a rope inspector by the Plymouth Cordage Co. He was graduated from Plymouth High school in 1938.

He wears the Air Medal with three bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, and is authorized to wear the Distinguished Unit Badge with one bronze Oak Leaf Cluster.

His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Manuel Rezendes, live at the Plymouth address.

Special Issues Planned

There are a few special issues of *The 461st Liberaider* on the horizon, so I think I'll start asking for material now rather than waiting till the last minute. Take a look at the following list and give some serious thought to anything you might be able to contribute. Beginning with Volume 18, No. 1 (June 2001) I'd like to pursue the following features:

Kriegie Art, Prose and Poetry: Some of the most enthralling material in the archive comes in the form of POW diaries, sketches and memoirs. If you spent time 'Behind the Wire' please consider submitting content for this first special issue.

Nose Art and Nose Artists: With photos of over 70 named aircraft already in the archive, this could be a very visually engaging edition. I'd like to hear from some of the artists who applied these portable masterpieces, and the crews that got to know the aircraft by name.

Ground Crew Special: Without a doubt, the most overlooked facet of the air war. For every man who got airborne, there were 10 men who put him there. If you served on the ground at Torretta, here's the chance to tell your story. Air Crew members are also encouraged to provide commentary on the men who got you into the air day after day.



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310 Tyne Avenue
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