

POOP from Group



791st



790th



789th



788th

Newsletter of the 467th Bomb Group Association

January 2017

Jack, Returns!



Photo courtesy Archant/Antony Kelly

SEVENTY-ONE Years and two months after gently lifting his B24J from the Rackheath runway on Operation “Home Run”, the long journey back to the U.S. with crew and passengers at the end of hostilities in Europe, Jack Weyler made an emotional return to the scene which had made such a profound impact on a young man barely 20 years old back in 1945. So it was on one of the warmest days of the year in late August we welcomed Jack and Karin Weyler to what remains of the former airfield and Rackheath base which saw Jack and his crew complete 15 combat missions in the 789th Sq. during the last two months of air operations. Having flown in from Houston, TX., the previous morning, this was Jack’s first experience of Rackheath since leaving as 1st Lieutenant B24 Pilot and Crew Commander in very different circumstances. Whilst life has changed almost beyond recognition in some ways since 1945, the feelings from local people towards our veterans is unchanged; they still receive a warm welcome and to have Jack return in 2016 made an exceptional impression on all throughout the brief visit. (More coverage on the special return of Jack Weyler to Rackheath can be found inside this issue).

***** First Mission Tragedy: a previous little known incident *****

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The 467th
Bombardment Group
The Rackheath Aggies



President's Message

By Brian Mahoney

Our energetic and creative Editor and Director, Andy W., is not responsible for the lateness of this issue, which was held until now because your 2017 Reunion Committee had hoped to have firm information in hand by now... Rather than hold this *POOP* longer, and delay our belated Christmas and New Year's best wishes to you all, I will give a brief update on the reunion situation.

It is clear from the review of three possible locations—DC, Florida and Tuscon, as called for by attendees of the wonderful joint reunion in Seattle—that our nation's capital city wins out. It is no secret that several had hopes this would be the case. We had hoped to be giving you the name of a hotel and dates to hold in this newsletter, but it will have to wait for a special mailing, or the next, undelayed *POOP*.

Yours truly is nominal head of the committee, and frankly we have not had a good start, so a spring reunion is now out of consideration. We hope to soon contact you with information on a September or October schedule. I want to take this opportunity to re-open the committee to new blood; if you are willing to sit in on Skype meetings bi-weekly and work with others to secure specific features of this more casual and intimate 'solo' reunion, please be in touch with me right away.

Our board of Directors Vice President, Jay Shower, has had some serious health issues in the past few months. His daughter Snowden, with full support of his dear friend (and our new Secretary) Ann Pooch, is overseeing his care in Arizona. Please keep all three in your thoughts and prayers.

It has been a singular election season and we have an 'unpresided' [sic] form of Chief Executive to be sworn in by the time you read this. Without going into the forbidden topics of religion or politics, I will only say that I hope when we *do* come together in DC, the swamp will still be liveable and enjoyable, and that new alligators and old will once again find ways to tease effective governance and reasonableness back to center stage, and culture-warriors on both sides will remember how to disagree without being disagreeable. Here's to light over heat. Let's hope this is not too much to ask!

Brian H. Mahoney - Archivist@brianhmahoney.com



News From Station 145

From David Hastings MBE

Great news that the Marker lights are now back in action thanks to hard work by Roger, Mr Summers and Diane Dring the Clerk to the Rackheath Parish Council. The fault was not as serious as first forecast and a local firm of Roy Cozens electricians carried out the work at a low cost to help the 467th Veterans. As the two floodlights were over 25 years old and showing their age they have replaced these with modern versions and the whole bill for the entire work was just over £600, so we are back in business and they look great. Also the company supplying the electricity from their office has kindly agreed not to charge us.

On the sad side we have just heard that owing to a change of membership the local Veterans organisation which has been looking after the Memorial site on behalf of the Parish Council may not be able to continue. If this happens Jean, Roger and I will hold the fort until the Parish Council finds a new team.

Another highlight this summer was when I was invited by Chris Ashman the Headmaster to talk to two classes at the Rackheath Primary School on what it was like to live in the War and how we met the American 2nd Air Division. I spent an hour with each class and was deeply impressed by the youngsters and their depth of questions. As part of their airfield project I lent them the 467th DVD and two books on the 467th history. We are just so lucky to have such a great school in our village and it was a privilege to share my memories with them.

Back to the Marker and the flags have been replaced and shortly we will start on the Autumn tidy programme. We can never thank the local Veterans organisation enough for all their kindness and we will miss them if they do have to leave. Diane Dring from the Parish Council hopes to feature the 467th Marker in their next newsletter. Also can we express our sincere thanks to Martie Fankhauser from Tucson for her splendid gift of six new flags for the Marker. Martie, your great kindness and generosity are deeply appreciated and we can never thank you enough.

More news. The Norwich Northern Distributor road is leaving a huge scar on our countryside and has now torn through the domestic site on the old airfield, past the house of the late Harry Gay who was forced to leave many years ago, on its way to the Wroxham road. This massive dual carriageway will skirt Norwich Airport before it finally peters out at Taverham and it will be interesting to see if this £178 million project which is already over budget will bring the benefits promised by the politicians. The unique Village Sign is being re-furbished and I hope to bring you a photo in the next issue.

Finally on a personal note, I have also been kept hard at work as I have been asked to write two books of "Memories", one on RAF National Service in Germany during the Cold War 1949-1952 and the other on my "Forty Years of Flying" which will naturally feature my 29,000 miles of fun in the USA with David Patterson of the 2nd Air Division. Happy days indeed.

We owe you all so much and you will never be forgotten.

With all our best wishes

David and Jean Hastings plus Roger

Base Contact

Hon. Member 467th BG Association

Notes from the Editor



A very Happy New Year to veterans, family, associates of the 467th BG, and our loyal readers of the “*POOP from Group*” as we embark on a challenging year ahead as we strive to maintain and carry the torch to the memory and legacy of the 467th. As each year passes, the veterans remaining tails off dramatically as even the youngest who served at Rackheath enter their 90’s. The Rackheath landscape continues to evolve and traces of the base become harder to discern as new roads, new buildings,

replace the old. Many of the original structures may long have gone but the enduring memory of young American voices and the cacophony of engine noise still resonate clearly in the minds of local folk as the 467th story gets passed from generation to generation. Do your bit to preserve your Grandfathers/Fathers role in the formidable “Mighty Eighth”, so significantly contributed by the actions of the 467th, by supporting and promoting the goals of the Association. Take a look at our vibrant Group Facebook page “The 467th Bomb Group (H), The Rackheath Aggies” so ably administered by Chris Collins, and share those prized photos, memoirs, both here in “*POOP*” and with Chris.

You would have read our President’s words and the plea for additional help staging the 2017 Reunion to be held during either September or October time in DC. I can’t stress how important any assistance will be appreciated if we are to successfully pull together and make this a reality. Brian has experience organizing many past Reunions, particularly with the Heritage League, and would welcome support (however small) if we are to make this happen. Let us continue to build on the highly successful and healthily attended Reunion last year in Seattle by making 2017 an event to remember. Our wonderful veterans continue to grace us with their presence, honor their efforts and achievements by supporting the Reunion and offering your help and assistance to Brian right away.

During August we were delighted to have a number of special visitors to Rackheath who had made the long journey across the pond. Early part of the month saw **Ross Rainwater**, a frequent contributor to this newsletter whose late father **T/Sgt. Roy. L. Rainwater** was a former engineer on one of the original 790th Sq. crews. Accompanying Ross was wife **Suzanne** who’d journeyed from Tennessee, daughter, **Jenny** and fiancé **Tom Fiscella** from L.A., and daughter **Sara** who is married to a Brit. and lives much closer in London. Perhaps highlight of the visit was unexpected access inside Rackheath Hall. Home to Sir Edward Stracey & family during WWII, the Hall was located among the accommodation area of the base and senior 467th personnel would often receive invitation to visit. After years of falling into disrepair, it was converted to luxury apartments and we very fortunate to be invited to view inside by a very kind owner. Much of the original opulence still remains including an impressive entrance dominated by a marble fireplace and wood-panelling leading to a majestic sweeping staircase dominated by a grand stain-glass window. An obligatory stop at the 2AD Memorial Library in Norwich rounded off a wonderful day.



Ross with daughters, Jenny and Sara, at the Marker in August.



A glimpse inside the entrance of Rackheath Hall

As featured on the front page of this issue, we were absolutely thrilled to welcome **Jack & Karin Weyler** to Rackheath in late August. For Jack, a former B24 pilot with the 789th Sq., it was his first visit to the former base since leaving with his crew 71 years ago. A truly emotional visit for all concerned and one which made a significant and lasting impression particularly for the younger folk who now occupy the Rackheath Control Tower. They were all acutely aware of the history of the airfield but to meet with someone “who was there” in 1945, brought home the immediacy of events and sharp focus upon their current surroundings. The local press was in attendance with Jack’s visit duly recorded as front-page headlines the following day.

A full base tour took in visits to the Group Memorial Marker, Control Tower, remnants of the main Rackheath runway, Rackheath Hall, and lunch at The Green Man, in what was a busy day. Jack & Karin were warmly greeted by **Jenny Christian**, Trust Library Manager, at the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library, before departing to hosts **Tony & Primrose Oakden** home in Hertfordshire. The day wouldn’t be complete before a final farewell drink at The Woodman Inn pub, Nuthampstead, Herts., location of the former airfield and Memorial to the 55th Fighter Group and 389th Bomb Group, 8th Air Force, during WWII.



Photo courtesy Archant/Antony Kelly

Main photo: Jack back at Rackheath for the first time in 71 years surveys the former airfield from the restored Control Tower, now office space for a software company. Jack and his crew completed 15 combat missions from the field during 1945.

The following day, host Tony Oakden took Jack & Karin to the American Military Cemetery at Madingley, Cambridge, where they are pictured beside the Memorial Wall to the Missing which is inscribed with the names of 5127 missing servicemen, mostly from the strategic air bombardment of northwest Europe, and the Battle of the Atlantic.



Andy Wilkinson -Editor

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TRAGIC FINALE, PART 2

ARTICLE BY
CHRISTOPHER COLLINS
467TH FACEBOOK ADMIN.



Excavation commences at the crash-site of the P-51 which tragically occurred during the 200th mission celebrations in April 1945. The new NDR development which routes through the former Rackheath base prompted investigation if further remains could be discovered. Note the former Base Gymnasium in the background before demolition to make way for the new road.

As you may recall from **January's Poop**, following research I had made into the 1945 crash of 1/Lt. Robert C. Young's P-51D Mustang at Rackheath, I had decided to contact Norfolk County Council to prompt them to investigate the crash site further. This was due in part to the upcoming clearance work that the Northern Distributor Road (NDR) required though the site and an effort to preserve anything that may still remain from this tragic incident. Thankfully, the Council agreed that a further investigation was required and had also agreed with me on the approximate location of the crash. The decision was then made to call upon the services of Oxford Archaeology East to gain the required licences and carry out the relevant surveys.

Upon my visit to the site in May of this year, I was shocked to see this once quiet idyll turned into a construction site, with large numbers of workmen and earthmovers carrying out the first stages of road building. Amongst the many workers there was even a team of wildlife conservationists on the hunt for members of the local protected newt population with the aid of a specially trained sniffer dog.

The gymnasium at that time was still standing, cleared of its dense surrounding undergrowth and so after taking what was to be my final look, I met the team of archaeologists at what they had now confirmed as the crash site in the open grassed area of the former communal site.

The team, prior to my first visit had carried out the ground scanning radar survey of the site which had failed to spot anything of any great size or significance remaining. Undeterred, the metal detecting survey was well underway with the first six inches of soil already stripped back when I arrived. A good deal of the smaller aircraft fragments and two large distinct patches of .50 calibre ammunition identified by small coloured flags provided the whereabouts of the remains of Robert Young's aircraft.

All of the ammunition found on the site at that time I later identified as being armour piercing incendiary type, as many of the tips retained either their silver paint identification or the lead seal in the base was clearly visible. Many of these bullet tips also displayed an approximate 45° flattening to the point giving some indication of the aircraft's angle of impact. Due to the risk these munitions might still hold even after seventy years, were photographed and taken away by the explosive ordnance disposal specialist on site.

Over the following week the archaeology team continued the metal detecting survey, bagging and marking each find, no matter how small, with its own GPS co-ordinate. Once that layer of earth was surveyed the next layer was stripped off and the process repeated, this time concentrating around a now clearly visible darker feature that was interspersed with corroded aluminium on the surface. The excavation and careful removal of aircraft relics continued until the natural layer was reached at a depth of approximately one metre.

Amongst the two large boxes full of soil encrusted and corroded aluminium were the first easily recognisable parts of the aircraft, these being the propeller spinner and a data plate from the wing mounted gun camera. I found one of the more poignant items discovered to be a small fragment of seemingly innocuous thin, slightly curved green glass, which after closer inspection I identified as being from 1/Lt Young's Aviator sunglasses.



The recovery even gained some local and national media interest with the story appearing in the Eastern Daily Press, the front page of the Norwich Evening News and The Mail online.

At the conclusion of the dig I was tasked with cleaning, identifying and cataloguing each of the 300+ items found. Some of the more interesting items, along with photos from the dig itself can be seen pictured here, and many more on the 467th BG(H) Facebook Group.

Those lucky enough to have been at Rackheath Holy Trinity Church, 1st October, on the day the new village sign was unveiled also had the opportunity to view my display of

aircraft material, along with other exhibitors displaying further historical and archaeological finds from Rackheath and along the NDR route. It was a wonderful event with many village locals, some of our 467th Facebook members and well known friends of the Aggies, David Hastings and James Watts in attendance.

Many thanks to all those who were able to attend, I am extremely grateful to everyone for your continued support.



Obituaries



John G. Phillips, Pilot & Crew Commander 790th

JOHN GURLEY PHILLIPS passed away on September 21, 2016 in New Orleans, Louisiana at the age of 94. Born in Camden, Arkansas on September 8, 1922, Mr. Phillips became a lifelong resident of New Orleans after visiting the city during Mardi Gras in 1948, the year he would begin a long and highly successful business career, and the start of outstanding civic and community work for the city he came to love.

John Phillips proudly served in World War II as pilot of a B-24 Liberator on 32 combat missions in the 467th Bomb Group, 8th Air Force flying out of Rackheath, England. After the war, he continued his education on the G.I. Bill, receiving his B.S. degree from the University of Arkansas in 1948. That same year, Mr. Phillips was hired by Peat, Marwick, Mitchell and Co. as a staff accountant until he joined The Louisiana Land and Exploration Company in 1951, becoming Chief Executive Officer of LL&E in 1972 and retiring as Chairman of the Board in 1984. LL&E experienced exceptional growth during his tenure.

Mr. Phillips was Chairman of the Tulane Board of Administrators from 1978-1983 and under his guidance Tulane ended 25 years of deficits and began rebuilding its endowment. He remained an emeritus director of the university and was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters in 1993. The Evelyn and John G. Phillips Distinguished Chair in Mathematics was endowed in 1992, and The Pierrette Phillips and John G. Phillips Professorship in Orthopaedics will be established later this year. Mr. Phillips was also a board member of The Bank of New York, The Whitney National Bank, Delta Air Lines, Inc., Travelers Corporation, Allis-Chalmers, and Energy Partners, Ltd. He was active in the New Orleans community, primarily with the Boy Scouts of America, serving as President and member of the Executive Council and the United Way as 1976 Campaign Chairman and President in 1977. In recognition of his civic and community accomplishments, Mr. Phillips was honored to reign as Rex, King of Carnival in 1983.

A devoted family man, a true gentleman, and an avid golfer, Mr. Phillips delighted in inviting friends and family for a round of golf at Augusta National Golf Club, where he was a member for over 30 years, a tradition that continued well into his 80's. He was also a member of New Orleans Country Club, the Pickwick Club, and several carnival organizations. He was a past president of the Boston Club and Wildcat Cliffs Country Club in Highlands, North Carolina, where he resided during the summer season. He greatly enjoyed attending Saints games with his family as a charter season ticket holder.



Lt. John G. Phillips (standing third from left) pictured with his crew at Rackheath. They flew 32 credited combat missions assigned to the 790th Squadron between December 1944 and April 45.

The Memorial Library Remembers TONY NORTH

Tony North was originally from Yorkshire but moved to Norwich in 1940. As a schoolboy, he spent a great deal of his spare time visiting local airfields such as Hardwick, Rackheath, Hethel, and Horsham St. Faith.

Tony's loyalty and dedication to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library and the 2nd Air Division Association veterans was legendary.

When he was no longer working as an engineering draughtsman, he found he had more time to spend as a volunteer 'meeting and greeting' visitors to the library, particularly American veterans and their families. An ever increasing number of veterans and families making the trip back to England kept him more than busy. Such was the level of interest in the Memorial Library from visitors and locals alike that Tony joined the library staff in 1985 as Trust Aide, a position he held for many years.

As an associate member of the 2nd Air Division Association, his dedication was rewarded in October 1992, when he became one of the first British recipients to be awarded a 2ADA Distinguished Service Award at the annual convention. It was an award that meant a very great deal to him.

Tony continued in his role at the Memorial library until failing eyesight prompted retirement. However, this was by no means the end of Tony's involvement. As part of any new staff induction process, Tony was invited to share his knowledge of aviation and generally build a picture of what life was like in Norfolk during WWII for local people and those young Americans so far from home. Staff were privileged to hear first-hand experiences from someone who was there. Over many years Tony amassed a photograph collection of B-24 Liberator aircraft from his involvement with veteran Liberator crewmen that became the envy of many. He was always happy to provide help with identifying particular aircraft and generously supplied copies of photographs if requested. He also collaborated with Mike Bailey on a number of very popular books on their shared passion.

After the Memorial Library moved to its current location, Tony continued to be a regular visitor. One of the things that particularly mattered to him was that fresh flowers were placed in the Shrine area of the Memorial Library, adjacent to the 2nd Air Division Roll of Honour. Due to Tony's generosity this was made possible.

During recent years Tony's eyesight prevented him from visiting the library but regular phone calls from staff helped fill the gap on both sides. He was still able to enjoy his garden, watch sport on television and share his knowledge and memories with his many friends. As a member of the Station 146 Tower Association he was also able to enjoy the regular open days through the summer months at Seething airfield.

When Tony's passing was posted on the Memorial Library's Facebook page, it drew many comments reflecting not only his expertise, but his kindness, generosity and helpfulness. Tony bequeathed his collection of photographs to the Memorial Library, an invaluable resource that has already proven to be very helpful. He will be very much missed by library staff, past and present.

Editor: I had the privilege of first meeting Tony in the 80's when I made tentative steps in researching the history of the 467th on visits up from London. Not only was Tony a tremendous asset and steered me to the right areas, we became great friends in recognising our shared passions of B24s and the 2AD. A trip to Norwich was not complete without calling on Tony and going out for lunch at the Rackheath "Green Man". I shall deeply miss our conversations, Tony was a true friend and supporter of both the 467th and 2nd Air Division.



First Mission Tragedy



| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| | John T. McArthur, Jr. Pilot | James R. Prendergast Co Pilot | Otto W. Stokes Navigator | | |
| William E. Walker Engineer | John F. O'Malley Radio Operator | C.J. Rachford Armorer and Gunner | Floyd W. Erickson Assistant Engineer and Gunner | Denver C. Loberg Assistant Radio Operator and Gunner | Frank C. Wassow Assistant Armorer and Gunner |

The F/O John T. McArthur Crew pictured in October 1944 at Savannah, GA., before commencing their journey overseas to be assigned to the 467th BG at Rackheath. Their history with the unit was to be brief where tragedy struck not once, but twice.

THE CHRISTMAS EVE MISSION of 24th Dec. 44 saw the Group assign the largest number of B24s it could muster for an attack on three locations comprising of railroad junctions, bridges, and yards, in what was a "maximum effort" from the 8th Air Force consisting of an overall force of over 2000 heavy bombers supported by 900 fighter aircraft. Targets were in support of Allied troops to disrupt the supply of equipment for the German offensive. Among the record 62 aircraft and crews the 467th BG allocated for the task, it was to be the very first combat mission for the F/O John T. McArthur crew of the 790th Squadron whose target was Marshalling yards at Daun located in western Germany.

The fledgling crew had only arrived the previous month in England and were keen to take part in combat operations. Following a period of intensive training set against some dire English winter weather severely limiting the opportunity to



Family snapshots; Denver Loberg and wife Marjorie also pictured with daughters Tina and Vida while home from leave during 1944

mount combat missions during the month of December, this was their moment. Among the typically young crew was 21 year-old gunner, Denver C. Loberg, from Sedgewickville, Missouri, who like many of his age, had enlisted to do his part in the war effort and had joined the U.S. Army Air Corp. in January 44 after previously working for numerous defence contractors. Married in June 1940 to high school sweetheart, Marjorie Sample Loberg, they were proud parents of two young daughters, Vida aged 2, and Tina, just 4 months, when Denver told his wife he felt it was his patriotic duty to enlist.

It was mid-morning in reported full sunlight that the F/O McArthur crew took up their position in the long queue of B24s composing 7 elements the 467th were to put up on this momentous day. Col. Shower was in the lead ship and was first to depart. The McArthur crew ship was an "H" model olive-drab variety named "Homeward Bound" and one of the original ships flown over with the first crews in March 44. The 467th ships each carried a load of 24 x 250lb GP bombs for the mission and at local time 10:35 "Homeward Bound" departed Rackheath to commence the formation process.

What transpired in the following minutes is best described by quoting directly from the diary of fellow crew member and gunner, Clarence J. Rachford, of Ohio.

"Don't know how to start this tonight unless it's to say it is a miracle I'm alive. We were to go to Daun, Germany, on our first combat mission today and we had a load of 24 250-pound bombs. We took off and gas poured out of number 3 engine. It was a hell of a spray and covered us in the waist. So we had to feather that engine. The nose gunner (Sgt. Loberg) was in the bomb bay putting the pins back in the bombs as we intended to land with them. I went down to help him when number 4 engine went dead. Sgt. Loberg was finished putting the pins in the last of the bombs and I had just climbed back into the waist. The plane was dropping like a rock, so they salvoed the bombs. Had to wait a few seconds as were just passing over a (English) town. We managed to land and then we missed Loberg. The poor guy fell out the bomb bay and was killed. Honestly, it's a miracle we got out alive. As soon as we hit the runway we had to swerve over onto the grass to keep from hitting a truck. Mac (Pilot, F/O J.T. McArthur) made a beautiful landing. We can't figure out what kept that plane from blowing up and what got me out of that bomb bay in time. I was plenty lucky."

Norfolk County Police Records for 24th Dec. 44 record an American aircraft jettisoned bombs 10 miles south of Norwich, later determined as 3 bombs exploding at Boundary Farm, Framingham Earl, with 21 bombs reported as unexploded in the neighbouring village, Yelverton. The records state a body of a gunner without a parachute was recovered by a USAAF team while a British Bomb Disposal Team was on scene to tend to the unexploded bombs (UXB) whose number and exact location was unclear at this time. Initial reports state the bombs and recovered body were some 700 yards south of "The Gull" Public House, which locates the scene to a position something like 6 miles to the south east of

Norwich city centre. No civilian casualties or damage was reported from this relative quiet rural location.

Conclusion: it became clear the dramatic and unexpected loss of Number 4 engine causing the ship to drop alarmingly prompted the Pilot(s) to arrest the rapid descent using the emergency bomb jettison lever. Unfortunately this action, probably as a last resort to save the plane from falling further, was carried out before checking the bomb bay had been vacated by the two gunners.

All members of the F/O John T. McArthur Crew who flew this fateful day were sadly killed during a practice mission accident just under one month later. It seems highly probable if Sgt. Denver Loberg hadn't lost his life in this freak accident on Christmas Eve, he most likely would have been among the crew lost on the 22nd January 45 practice mission accident.

Sgt. Denver Loberg was initially buried in the American Military Cemetery at Madingley, Cambridge. On the 15th August 1948 his remains were returned to his beloved Missouri Ozarks and a funeral held at the Sedgewickville Methodist Church. He is buried at the Cape County Memorial Park Cemetery, Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

Denver's widow, Marjorie Swan, remarried to WWII veteran Norman R. Swan who raised Denver's daughters as his own, along with three children with Marjorie. She is currently aged 93 and very much in good health living in Pocahontas, MO. Daughters, Vida Loberg Stanard and Tina Loberg Druckenmiller are also doing well and reside in Poplar Bluff, MO. and Marietta, GA., respectively.



Main photo shows a satellite image and approximate position Sgt. Loberg fell to earth on the aborted mission of 24th Dec. 44. The area lies 6 miles to the south east of Norwich City Centre and remains a rural and farming location much as it would have done during the War years. Also pictured is the Village Sign of Framingham Earl and "The Gull" Pub referenced in the 1944 Norfolk Police Reports.



Photos: top-left, nose-art of B24H "Homeward Bound" the McArthur crew were assigned Christmas Eve, 1944. Denver C. Loberg pictured at Savannah, GA., before going overseas. Main, burned remains of B24 "Tommy Thumper II" at Old Catton, Norwich, a practice mission accident thought to be a result of a stalled-turn while circling after engine failure. The crash claimed the entire F/O McArthur crew on the afternoon of 22nd January 1945, just less than a month following their first mission tragedy.

Editor's Note: my sincere thanks to Richard & David Druckenmiller, grandsons of Denver C. Loberg, for providing a wealth of material including prized family photos for inclusion in this article. Also Bob Collis, specialist in WWII aviation research and archaeology throughout East Anglia who also contributed both material and guidance researching the background to this incident.

Published in 2014, in "Psychology Today" by Michael D. Matthews Ph.D., a great article on the late Col. Fred Holdrege formerly C.O. of the 790th Sq. at Rackheath

A Pioneer of Military Psychology

A brief biography of Col. Fred Holdrege

Psychology has always played an important role in war. From helping the army develop aptitude tests during World War I to designing innovative strategies to build soldier resilience during the Global War on Terror, psychologists have played a critical role in selecting, training, and preparing soldiers for the challenges of combat. The relationship between war and psychology is fascinating. As important as these contributions have been, we sometimes lose sight of the accomplishments of individual military psychologists. In the past year, I have had the honor to make the acquaintance of one of the early pioneers of military psychology, one who was also a bona fide World War II hero. He is Colonel Fred E. Holdrege, and I think you will find his journey from World War II bomber pilot to pioneering psychologist interesting.



A native of Thermopolis, Wyoming, Colonel Holdrege came of age in the Great Depression. After graduating from high school, he attended the University of Colorado for a year, and then enlisted in the Army in 1936. He so impressed his chain of command that they nominated him for admission to West Point, where he graduated with a bachelor of science degree in 1942. He went on to flight school and into the Army Air Corps for assignment to combat in Europe.

Assigned to the 8th Air Force Group 467th Bomb Group Squadron 790th, Holdrege soon found himself flying bombing missions over Germany. He was promoted from first lieutenant, to captain, and then to major. He served as a squadron commander until the end of the European theater of war in May of 1945. In recognition of his valor in combat, he was awarded two Distinguished Flying Crosses, four Air Medals, two Meritorious Service Awards, two Commendation Awards, and the *Croix de Guerre*.

In a recent conversation I had with Colonel Holdrege, he told the story of how he returned from Europe and why he was so excited to get home. During his time in combat, he was engaged to be married, but wanted to wait until he completed his combat assignment. The bombing missions over Germany were very dangerous, and many airmen did not make home alive. Happily for Colonel Holdrege, he survived his tour and could not wait to return home. In an era when most troops crossed the ocean via troop ships, Colonel Holdrege managed to obtain a ride to the United States in the bomb bay of a B-17 aircraft. In no time, he was in Chicago where he married his wife, Jane. She passed away very recently, after 67 years of marriage.

The war ended a couple of months later with the surrender of the Japanese. I asked Colonel Holdrege where he was when he learned the war had ended. He said he was on a training flight on a B-29 Super Fortress over the Grand Canyon. He was training for deployment to the Pacific theater, in preparation for a ground invasion of Japan. One can only imagine his sense of joy and relief.

That was the war hero part of the story. Now comes the psychologist part. After serving as a B-29 instructor pilot, the Air Force (by then a separate service from the Army) sent Colonel Holdrege to the Ohio State University, where he completed a doctoral degree in human factors engineering in 1953. For the rest of his distinguished career, Colonel Fred E.

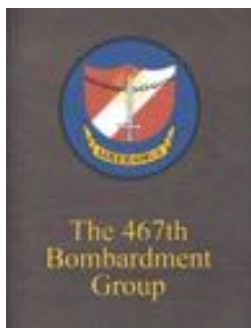
Holdrege served as a military psychologist. He was appointed the first department head of what is now known as the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership at the U.S. Air Force Academy. Following that assignment, Colonel Holdrege commanded several Air Force Laboratories and held senior staff positions. Following his retirement from the Air Force in 1970, Colonel Holdrege was named Director of Evaluation of the National Laboratory for Higher Education, and was president of Colony Park Association. For 19 years, he was a volunteer for Meals and Wheels.

I came to know Colonel Holdrege because he had read an article I had published (with psychologist Angela Duckworth) on the role of grit in the success of West Point cadets. He tracked down my telephone number and cold called me. It was a fascinating conversation. I learned that my first assignment as an Air Force officer was at a laboratory he had once commanded, and he was excited to learn that I had been an instructor in the very same department at the Air Force Academy that he founded many years before. Out of the blue I had found a kindred spirit.

Yesterday (as I write this), Colonel Holdrege called to discuss a research idea he has formulated on predictors of leadership. Now age 97, his mind is as active and engaged as ever. He was a respected and productive researcher. If you search his name in Google Scholar you will get an idea of the depth and breadth of his scholarly interests and contributions. I get the sense that he could step right into a laboratory today and carry out important and meaningful research.

Too often, we fail to take time to reflect on the accomplishments of those who came before us. Colonel Holdrege is not a household name in the history of psychology, but he exemplifies the very finest attributes of a true soldier-scholar. So, Colonel Holdrege, thank you for a job well done. Your service and that of your peers following World War II paved the way for modern military psychology.

Oh, one more thing. We had to cut our conversation a bit short yesterday. Colonel Holdrege needed to head to the pool for his daily swim. A World War II hero, a pioneer of military psychology, and a mentally and physically engaged nonagenarian – a great tale, indeed.



The 467th BG Association is delighted to offer a Softback limited edition of the original 1947 Allan Healy "467th BG History". This fifth and final edition has text reformatting and photographic restoration by Colin LaRussa, also a fully revised and comprehensive Addendum. Price \$50 + \$5 shipping - payment via check or PayPal

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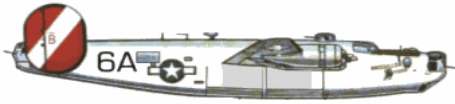
Folded Wings

John G. Phillips - Pilot 790th September 2016

Please send news of "Folded Wings" also Obituaries to 467th BG veterans or prominent Associates where we will be honored to record names in the newsletter. Details to our President and Membership/Data Manager

- Brian Mahoney Archivist@brianmahoney.com

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Chris Collins, along with daughter, Eulalie, with the impressive display of the history and items obtained from the P-51 excavation hosted at Holy Trinity Church, Rackheath, 1st October. The event also featured other local historic finds that were unearthed by the new road (NDR) development that is currently under construction in the neighbourhood. Full story commencing page Six of this newsletter.