



POOP from GROUP 467

VOL. 9 NO. 1

STATION 145 RACKHEATH APO 558

MARCH 1, 1990

FOUR HUNDRED SIXTY-SEVENTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HEAVY) ASSOCIATION, LTD.

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FROM THE PREZ

"Beware the ides of March!" That warning was given to Julius Caesar shortly before he was assassinated. The Roman "ides of March" corresponds to our 15th of March and for many years U. S. taxpayers dreaded that date. Since 1955, though, our tax date has been the 15th of April. Starting this year, people who contribute to the 467th Bomb Group (Heavy) Association, Ltd. and itemize deductions on their tax returns can reduce their dread of tax day and the Taxable Income and Total Tax amounts on their returns.

Thanks to efforts by Phil Day and Bill McGovern, the IRS determined last August that the 467th Bomb Group (Heavy) Association, Ltd. is exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(C)19 of the Internal Revenue Code, EIN 39-1592334. Donors can deduct their contributions to the organization. So, check with your tax advisor on how this determination can help lower your taxes for 1989 and in the future.

Here in Southern California, the 9th annual Southern California 2nd ADA reunion, sponsored by five Orange County 2nd ADA members, was held on 24 February at the El Toro Marine Corps Air Station, an evening of good company and excellent food, and the Marine Corps hospitality for which the Officers Club is famous. A Marine color guard participated in our opening ceremonies and two young WW II aficionados displayed their extensive collection of Air Corps uniforms, flight gear, and other memorabilia that they had displayed at the B-24 Celebrations at Fort Worth and San Diego. The guest of honor was Steve Miller, son of Major Glenn Miller, the band leader.

The 1250 limit for the 1990 2nd ADA reunion in Norwich has been filled but there are cancellations. I had never been back until my wife and I went to the 1987 reunion three years ago and we were overwhelmed by the friendship of the English people and the activities that we participated in. So, we're going again this time. Sometimes I have a guilty feeling that maybe I'm depriving someone who has never gone back, but we did make our reservations and we're going.

There have been cancellations coming in to Evelyn Cohen. You can contact her to place your name on the waiting list.

Jordan Uttal has undergone surgery on his knees at Johns Hopkins Hospital. He has sent a status report on our American Librarian Fund

Drive and the 467th's standing (we are 4th in dollars received) that follows.

	2ND ADA TOTAL	GOAL: \$500,000 TOTAL	467TH PERCENT
Cash Received	\$191,252	\$15,002	7.8
Number of Donors	1,568	127	8.1
Pledges Outstanding	70	6*	8.6

* (\$655 Pledged)

With the interest that has been earned, pledges, and transfers of funds from the 2nd ADA treasury, the total in the fund is now \$338,692; we need \$160,000 more to meet the total goal.

WILL YOU HELP?

Donations and/or pledges should be sent to: Jordan Uttal, 7824 Meadow Park Drive, Apt.101, Dallas, TX 75230.

Coincidentally, I have just received "The Story of the Second Air Division Memorial Room" that I recently ordered from Joe Dzenowagis. This 35-minute video features Jordan, who, since 1972, has been a member of the Board of Governors of The Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division USAAF (its correct name). He is our foremost authority on the Memorial Trust and the development of our memorial. In the video, he describes its historic highlights, on-going developments, and the significance of the 2nd Air Division Memorial Room in the Norwich Central Library.

Jordan traces the memorial's development from an idea in the minds of three 2nd Air Division members right after V-E Day to honor more than three thousand 2nd Air Division comrades who died in combat to the unique force for friendship between the two great English speaking nations it has become.

The video contains poignant cameo bits from earlier Dzenowagis videos, "Faces of the Second Air Division" and "Eight Candles for Remembrance", and historical media clips about the people and events that have brought the memorial to what it has become, "a fitting tribute to all who perished and to all of us who survived".

"The Story of the 2nd Air Division Memorial Room" is a presentation in the AMERICAN PATRIOTS series of our Military Video History Project and continues the work of preserving the 2nd Air Division's effort in World War II. If you're interested in a living memorial that reflects your contribution to the defeat of Nazism, this video his highly recommended.

FROM THE EDITOR

POOP FROM GROUP, Volume 9, No. 1. So we begin our ninth year of publication. Dated March 1, 1990, mailing was a week plus after that as I had open heart (triple) bypass surgery on February 9. This operation is now rather common place, highest count elective surgery now being done. Found in a stress test on Monday, confirmed by dye tests on Thursday, and done on Friday. Mother Nature - Father Time. Too many cigarettes (50 years). Progress and prognosis - excellent. Promised to feel good, better, best in next two or three months. I'll tell you how it turns out in Poop For Group 9-2.

A reminder to you who are going to Norwich in July 90 with the Second Air Division Association. Your final payment was due to Evelyn Cohen on February 28, 1990. This late reminder is put in via Jack Stevens. Also, he again suggested that there had been cancellations and if you are interested in going, get in touch with Evelyn Cohen at 06-410 Delaire Landing Road, Philadelphia, PA 19114.

Other reunions/mini-reunions are taking place all over the country. The 467th Convention 1990 is written up fully in this POOP. Some of you are of the 801st/492nd Bomb Groups. They will reunion in Memphis, Tennessee 20-22, September 90. Contact John Walker 2360 E. Sugnet, St. Midland, MI 28640. Bombardiers, Inc., will reunion 16-20 May 90, in Houston, Texas. Leon Brown 9002 Cliffwood Drive, Houston, Texas 77096. is contact.

Roster still grows. We added 13 vets and three associates this last three months, but lost two to mail foul ups and three to death. Send me names/addresses of the 467th vets you correspond with, let's get them on the roster.

The Association has instituted a "Friends of the 467th" Award. This is a plaque, suitable for framing and display, to be given, upon approval of the Association Board of Directors, to any one who has made an outstanding contribution to the Group and/or the Association. An example: Adam Soccio - Adam located many 467th veterans through phone and letter contacts and was financially supportive of the Group/Association. An example: Kenneth A. Darney - Served as Vice-President of 467th in its association with the Second Air Division Association. Served as President of Second Air Division Association.

Send your recommendations for the award to: William F. Dillon, 1115 Buena Vista, Amarillo, Texas 79106. Bill will consolidate the recommendations and present them to the Board for final approval.

Especially important, as to time, are recommendations for our English friends. We would like to be able to present these personally during the 2ADA Convention - Norwich 1990 in July. Bill suggests a cutoff date for these of April 30, 1990.

The personal stories and diaries printed in POOP have been well received and commented upon. Please send me what you have for inclusion in future POOPs.

467TH CONVENTION 1990

The 467th Bombardment Group (Heavy) Association, Ltd. will convention in Omaha, NE from noon, Thursday, October 4, 1990 to noon, Sunday, October 7, 1990. Association headquarters will be at the Red Lion Hotel/Omaha in downtown Omaha, a Mobil Four Star and a Triple A Four Diamond hostelry, where we have a block of 125 rooms. The principal number of Association functions will be held in this facility or begin and end there. Reservations for the Association block of rooms can be made only via the Pre-Registration Form of this POOP.

The events schedule at this time is:

Wed., Oct. 3: Day Room open at noon for

early arrivers. Display yours and look at the memorabilia of others. VCR and monitors for appropriate tapes. Coffee, tea, soft drinks and snacks most hours when the Day Room, this and subsequent days, is open.

Thur., Oct. 4: Breakfast Buffet Option for early arrivers. Day Room open from 1000 to 2400. Registration from 1200 to 1800. Hors d'Oeuvres party and cash bar from 1800 to 2100.

Fri., Oct. 5: Breakfast Buffet for all from 0700 to 0900. Bus to Offutt AFB and SAC Museum from 0830 for windshield tour of Offutt, a tour (probably) through "Looking Glass"--the SAC Airborne Command Post, lunch just off base at a nice restaurant, then a visit to the SAC Museum before returning to the Red Lion. Three groups of no more than forty per group can go on the underground Command Center tour after lunch, BUT this is only for the hale and hearty as you will be required to descend and climb eight to ten flights of stairs to the Center. A Western Buffet with Cash Bar from 1800 to 2100 will end the day's planned activities. The Day Room will reopen at 2100.

Sat., Oct. 6: OMAHA DAY begins with Breakfast Buffet from 0700 to 0900. The Day Room will be open from 0900 to 1800 and 2100 to 2400. An Omaha Tour from 1000 to 1530 is being offered as an option, 5-1/2 hours by bus to five places of interest in and around Omaha. At one of the stops there will be an opportunity for those on the tour to have lunch. We will also have a lunch option at the Red Lion for those not taking the tour, who want to go privately to one or more of the many attractions of Omaha.

If enough interest, it will be possible to schedule an afternoon at the Greyhound races at Council Bluffs.

A Business Meeting of the Association will be held from 1600 to 1700 hours and all are urged to attend.

The Banquet, preceded by a Hosted Bar from 1800 to 1900, will begin at 1900. There will be some ceremonies with this and in all likelihood a speaker from SAC.

Sun., Oct. 7: HAIL AND FAREWELL Breakfast Buffet from 0700 to 1000. The Day Room will be open from 0800 to 1200, to collect the memorabilia and for goodbyes.

THE COSTS: All rooms at the Red Lion have king or queen-size beds and will accommodate one to four people. The cost per room, per night, from October 1 through October 9 will be \$63, tax included. We are asking that you make your room reservations at the Red Lion through the Association, using the following form. The Red Lion will confirm your reservation direct to you. If you do not choose to stay at the Red Lion (make your own arrangements), we have no further responsibility as to your lodging. The cost of Convention activities is \$125 per attendee, plus the cost of options the attendee chooses. We are asking that as soon as possible after you have read this, that you fill out and return the PRE-REGISTRATION FORM following so that we can get on with the logistics of this Convention. Send a minimum of \$75 for each room you wish to reserve at the Red Lion. The remainder (\$12) will be used to pay pre-convention costs and will be credited to your account when you are sent a final statement for Convention costs about September 1, 1990. Your room cost(s), for the charges of and to your room(s), will be paid by you and be your responsibility upon checking out, but you will have a credit of \$63.00 to it when you have made your reservation(s) through the Association PRE-REGISTRATION FORM.

We have had a few misunderstandings at prior conventions about costs of participation. We are trying to make this as clear as possible. If you do not make your room reservations at the Red Lion through the Association PRE-

REGISTRATION FORM, we cannot help you in any difficulties you might have with your lodging. In addition to the room costs which you will pay, each participant's cost will be a minimum of \$125 for Convention activities. There are some optional affairs that, if chosen, will have costs in addition to the Convention activities cost of \$125 per person. There are no deductions for non-participation in scheduled activities, please don't ask for them. Refunds of cancellations received prior to September 15, 1990 will be 100%, no explanation needed. After September 15 we cannot guarantee that the hotel will reimburse you, but the Association will reimburse Convention activities costs 100% to October 1, 1990; after that probably less than 100%.

Please do not wait to send in the PRE-REGISTRATION FORM. Fill it out as completely as possible. This is the only way we have to proceed with Convention planning. We have to know how many are going to attend and which functions, when and how they will arrive and leave, a myriad other things you will tell us when the returned form is completely filled out.

If you have any questions, call or write FLOYD PUGH, 2004 S. Kentucky Avenue, Sedalia, MO 65301. Phone (816) 827-2661 or PHILLIP G. DAY, address and phone number on masthead.

When we receive your completed PRE-REGISTRATION FORM, we will see that you are registered at the Red Lion if that be indicated and you will be placed on a special mailing list for additional Convention information over the next months. Don't delay, do it today.

American Airlines has been chosen as Official Convention Airline once again (previously SHV and FTW) for 467th Convention 90. If you use American, you will be offered discounts of 5%, 10% or 40% off the round trip fares for your flight when you mention the 467th Reunion Star No. 05004 G (and you are 62 years or older). AARP members can receive an additional 10% off these discounted fares. If you are coming in by air, check with American or your travel agent to take full advantage of all discounts.

Discounts apply only to tickets purchased 30 days prior to the Convention. Further American information can be obtained by dialing (800) 433-1790.

Omaha is also serviced by Am Track. Some of you may want to look into that mode of transportation.

2ADA SOUTHWEST MINI-REUNION

The seventh annual Southwestern area 2nd ADA mini-reunion will be held April 21, 1990 at the Harvey House on Midway Road, Dallas, Texas. Cost is \$30.00 per person as usual. The annual meeting of the Executive Committee of the 2nd ADA will be held in conjunction with the dinner, which affords the membership an excellent opportunity to meet with members of the committee for questions and or gripes. For those that wish to stay over, discounted rooms at the hotel are available.

For further information, contact the 1990 Committee Chairman, Paul Surbaugh, 7620 Westwind Drive, Ft. Worth, Texas 76179. (817) 236-7906.

LAST POST

We have been notified of the deaths of the following comrades of the 467th:

Elson S. Herrick
Donald Prytulak
Alvin G. Straub

"May they go from Strength to Strength in the Life of Perfect Service in GOD'S Heavenly Kingdom."

ROSTER ADDITIONS

Benjamin J. Bertalot	Princeton, IL
Chester J. Bienkowski	Ridley Park, PA
Rozell Bosworth -A	Bristol, RI
Francis Cedargren -A	Thousand Oaks, CA
Harry L. Clayman	Harrisonburg, VA
*Toby A. Cordova	Albuquerque, NM
Howard V. Garrett	Fayetteville, GA
George O. Hobkirk	Orlando, FL
Henry H. Kipper	Millboro, DE
Robert C. Ludd	Prospect, CT
Lewis W. Owens	Mineola, NY
John A. Quinn	Bradenton, FL
Harvey P. Pettit	Naples, FL
Lowrey H. Spencer	Las Vegas, NV
Everett R. Stevens	Carmel, ME
Donald O. Talbott	Miami, FL
J. Wilds -A	Norwich, ENG

*Returned to Roster from LOST SOULS.

Don't let any of the above go unwelcomed. Call them, write me for their address. Get together and further the Association.

LOST SOULS

POOP to following returned by USPS. Please try to locate them and tell me.

Alfonson Bolenda, Bergen, NY
Julius N. Summa, Kirkwood, MO.

Al Bolenda was just added to roster at last POOP. Whoever sent in his address, please do so again.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Cash on Hand 11-01-89	
Operating Fund	\$8,502.85
Contributions	560.00
Interest (2 Months)	110.22
Jacket Sales Income	137.50
Sub-Total	9,310.57
Expenses	
Misc. Officers and Directors	51.76
PFG 8-4 Reproduction	190.16
Secretarial, Roster, etc.	337.29
USPS	134.05
Artwork/printing	
certificates and cards	1,214.98
2ADA Librarian Fund	1,000.00
Sub-Total	2,928.24
Cash on Hand 03-01-90	
Operating Fund	6,382.33
Ken Darney Fund	65.00
Rackheath Historical Marker Fund	230.00
Albert Joseph Shower	
Endowment Fund	6,105.00
TOTAL ALL FUNDS	\$12,782.33

PX SECTION

Remember profit from the following items accrues to the 467th operating account:

"THE HISTORY OF THE 467TH": \$30 - Vince LaRussa, 97 Grayton Road, Tonawanda, NY 14150.
"THE WITCH RETURNS": Painting Photograph \$7.50. Vince LaRussa above.
Group Cap: \$6.00. Lloyd Haug, 3115 Franklin St., Minneapolis, MN 55418.
Group Window Decal: \$3.00. Bob Sheehan, 1828 E. 27th St., Tulsa, OK 74114.
Group Windbreaker: \$27.50. 1 Small, 5 Medium, 8 X-Large, 1 XXX-Large left. First Come - First Served - Phillip G. Day, address on masthead.

LITTLE FRIENDS

I have just finished reading and rereading "Zemke's Wolf Pack", the story of Hub Zemke and the 56th Fighter Group as told to Roger Freeman.

I do not know how fighter escort for the Eighth Air Force was assigned prior to September 15, 1944, that probably would be a whole new book of facts, figures, and speculation; but after that date, definitely, there were five fighter groups assigned to the Second Air

(Bombardment) Division for escort of the B-24s, these were the 4th, 56th, 355th, 361st and 479th Fighter Groups.

Briefly, in the period April 1944 through April 1945, the period of the 467th's combat experience:

4th Fighter Group - Flew P-51 B, D & K's. Formed from RAF Eagle Squadron, oldest Fighter Group in Eighth Air Force. Highest total air and ground claims of enemy aircraft for USAAF. First over German airspace, Paris and Berlin. Claims 583-1/2 E/A in air, 469 on ground but had losses of 241 A/C. Col. Donald J. M. Blakeslee outstanding C.O.

56th Fighter Group - Flew P-47 D & Ms. First USAAF Group to fly P-47s. Only Group to fly P-47 throughout hostilities - Destroyed more E/A in air combat (674-1/2) than any other Eighth Air Force Fighter Group. Credited with 311 E/A destroyed on ground. Had losses of only 128 A/C. Col. Hubert Zemke and Col. David C. Schilling outstanding C.O.'s. Top scoring fighter aces, Francis Gabreski (28) and Robert Johnson (28) flew with 56th.

355th Fighter Group - Flew P-51 B, D and Ks. Destroyed more E/A (502-1/2) in ground strafing than any other Group. Credited with 365-1/2 E/A air claims. Lost 175 A/C.

361st Fighter Group - Flew P-51 C, D & Ks. Claims of E/A destroyed, 226 air and 105 ground with losses of 81 A/C. Detached to 9th AF and VIII FC 12/44 to 3/45.

479th Fighter Group - was still flying P-38 Js through September 44. Converted to P-51 D Mustangs. The last Fighter Group to join the Eighth. Hub Zemke became C.O. on 12 August 44 (from 56th F.G.), became POW on 30 October 44. Preceding/Succeeding Zemke as C.O. of Group was Kyle L. Riddler. E/A claims 155 air, 279 ground with losses of 69. The last E/A claim by Eighth Air Force, 25 April 45, was by 479th.

Each of these Groups had three squadrons, the squadrons a maximum of 36 A/C, later about 25. The pilots' tours were initially 200 combat hours, later raised to 250 and, again, later to 300 hours. This equates to from 60 to 100 combat sorties as compared to the bomber crews 25-35 missions and 225 to 250 hours.

LETTER FROM TOM SWINT

In 1944 I was stationed at AAF Station 145, Rackheath, 467th Bomb Group (H). We did our pub crawling at Horning Ferry Public House. Nearby was the RAF's WAF Camp Horning, an underground radar tracking station. These WAF's kept track of all UK aircraft. In those days it was all hush-hush secret.

I dated LACW "Tommy" Atkins, sort of a female RAF Corporal. She would come over to Rackheath and we would dance at the Aero Club to Rex Floyd's orchestra. Every month or so Rackheath sent a 6x6 truckload of virile young males to WAF Camp Horning to dance with the young ladies. They had a 3-piece combo and an out-of-tune piano. To spell them off, the girls played Glen Miller records, given to them by 467th guys. All low key and informal.

At intermission they served punch and biscuits. Tommy and I strolled through the gardens and hatched out this plot. She said security was so lax she could smuggle a man inside her Nissen hut and no one would be any wiser. The wheels started to turn. Lowery Spencer, a Link Trainer Operator, bet five quid Tommy and I couldn't pull it off. The next dance was a month off.

Tommy said there always were empty bunks. The WAF quarters were inside an enclosed compound. Guards at the picket post were bored. She suggested I come to the next dance; she'd bring a large RAF overcoat and a WAF cap. I could walk in the center of an after-dance crowd returning to their quarters. Once I got inside the hut I was on my own. Agreed.

I had an all-night pass. Spence agreed to hide my bike outside the WAF gate. I stashed my PJs and clean underwear in a paper bag. I was nervous as a whore in Church at the dance. At the intermission, Tommy took my brown bag to her hut and alerted her bunk mates. They made plans for my arrival, meaning no one would be caught in her skimpies.

When the dance was over, the Yanks loaded into their truck and departed. Tommy gave me the great coat and a WAF cap. I scrooched down in a crowd of RAF gals and got safely past the picket station.

Like kids in "Night before Christmas", visions of sugar plums danced through my head--sugar plums in lacy underwear and garter belts. Boy, was I in for a surprise!

Tommy took me inside the hut. All the girls were in wrappers or in their work slacks. After ten minutes of giggling and laughter, the "Lobster shift" was off for the OPS building. Someone turned off the light and I undressed. Tommy was a couple of bunks down from me. She said the swing shift didn't know I was aboard. She said it would serve them right for being so noisy when her shift tried to sleep. I was nervous.

The first swing shift group went straight to bed, undressing in the dark. About a half hour later, three stragglers came in. They had been off base down at the Ferry Pub. One was tipsy; she had had beer for beer with her Yank. Paraphrased, she described how the Yank had explored her womanhood. I heard Tommy giggle when Topsy told how her Yank fooled around and missed the last bike ferry and had to ride around by Wroxham to get to Rackheath. I'd gone that route.

I dozed off, and woke up with Tommy shaking me and putting her finger to her lips. Two females were undressing near the door marked "ablutions." All I could see was that WAF's wore a breast binder that they rapped around their bosom. I was pretty sure they wore bras when they went on pass. After bathing the girls discussed some watch officer who always brushed against their thighs whenever he got a chance--"A real sod and a pain in the arse."

I dozed again. Tommy woke me again about 5:00 a.m. Propped on an elbow I watched a WAF put on civvies, then put on her WAF uniform over the civvies. Tommy explained the girl would be "inspected" before going on pass, smalls and all, RAF stockings. She would change at the Rail Station in Norwich, go home in civvies with no hassle from RAF SP's. Seeing her in her slip made me feel like a peeping Tom, but it didn't stop me from looking.

At 7:00 a.m. Tommy's shift left for the mess and the "Ops". I sneaked out of the compound with her shift and walked briskly down to the gate. I strapped my brown bag to the luggage carrier and rode off to Rackheath and breakfast.

When I took my things out of the bag there was a pair of WAF "passion killer" navy blue bloomers. Pinned to them was this note:

"These knickers should convince your chums that you really spent the night in a WAF hut. All the best, Monica."

I made a big deal of it, but I had seen more woman flesh in a 3rd class compartment on the train up from London.

After the war, Tommy married a doctor and moved to the Midlands. She's the mother of five and a gray-haired grandma now. To me she's still 22 and a LACW at WAF Camp Horning.

Tom Swint
January 9, 1990

LETTER FROM LLOYD DAVIES TO VINCE LARUSSA

Dear Vince, I really appreciated and enjoyed your remembrance of our eleven days aboard ship

on our way to England, in last POOP.

However, in regard to the mysterious box of food which you allege I told you to throw overboard, our recollections differ somewhat. To be exact, my memory of the event agrees with yours in only two respects:

1. Items as per your description did find their way out of the kitchen.

2. A buck sergeant did have the items mentioned in his hands, and later to a large extent in his stomach.

The truth, now.

I never even got a whiff, let alone a taste of that chicken. I only heard about it after it was gone. We were going to have chicken that night and they cancelled it because they said some buck-sergeant got away with the food.

I ate my two stand-up meals a day and got so weak from hunger I could hardly make it off the ship.

The truth will out, LaRussa! Someday, people will know.

Well, I can forgive but I can't forget. I figure you owe me a little marmalade at least.

All the best,
Lloyd.

January 11, 1990

LETTER FROM BOB TWYFORD

Thanks again for your reply to my note. I appreciate your efforts in giving me some of the info I requested. I was wishing we had an address on Lt. Jones, the Supply Officer. I wanted to write to him; also Juan Torres, the Navigator.

Thanks kindly for a copy of the operations order sending us back to the States. Brought back some memories. You asked if I was with the Chapman Crew when it was shot down over Berlin. Yes, I was, Phil, and I'm enclosing an account of the "Mishap of Crew 92" as written by Bill Chapman, Pilot.

The B-24J that was rebuilt by the Collins Foundation was at the Port St. Lucie Airport for a couple of days. A friend here and myself watched it land and of course spent about a day over there discussing missions with some other members of the 8th. My friend, Bill Winklerek, was with the 491st. This visit sure brought back some memories over and above what Bill Chapman wrote.

Recalling, on the morning of the Berlin Mission, George Fuller (Engineer) and Harold Van Tress (Navigator) stayed off by themselves this morning which was very unusual. We always joked around before we took off on a mission. They were just not themselves. I often wonder if they had a feeling that something was going to happen.

The mission was about the same, lots of flak, etc. We were making lots of contrails and I got the word over VHS that we were descending below the trails. I relayed this message to the Pilot. If I remember, we dropped down to 19,500 feet from 22,000 feet. When I got the word to bail out over the intercom, I told the Tail Gunner and the Radio Operator we were going. I went first and was so close to the Co-Pilot that we could talk. He drifted off into a wooded area and I landed in an open field. I lost my boots when the chute opened, but for some reason I had my shoes tied onto my parachute harness which most of us neglected to do on most missions. After getting the harness off and my shoes on, I stood up and started to the wooded area where the co-pilot landed. A few shots over my head changed my mind quickly, and I stood there with my hands raised until the Russian troops approached me. The American flag with the Russian "Ya Amerikenite" was in my pocket instead of on my arm where it should have been. I finally convinced one of the troops to reach into my pocket and get the flag. In doing this he took my wristwatch.

John Wallace (co-pilot), Bill Yarcusko (Bombardier) and myself got together at some Headquarters. Bill could speak Polish so the Russian got a Polish soldier from the ranks and he was our interpreter. When we finally convinced them we were Americans things went well. Bill told the Commander that a Russian soldier took my watch. The Commander said to point him out, he would get my watch and shoot the S.B. By his actions I really think he would have.

After we all got together at Harold's funeral, we left for someplace unknown. We found out later we were going to Poznan, Poland. En route in the back of a Model A truck, we ran out of gas several times and of course it took the driver some time to get some. It runs in my mind we stopped overnight at a hotel of some kind. We had supper and a birthday party for Bill Chapman. I remember the Vodka flowed freely and the ride the next day was very uncomfortable. We finally got to Poznan, Poland and I don't remember how long we stayed there. A C-47 flown by a Russian Crew took us to Lublin, Poland. I remember while we were in Lublin we went to Church on Easter Sunday and also we visited one of the crematoriums (can't remember which one) used to cremate the Jews and other political prisoners.

We were in Lublin a few days waiting to be picked up and start back to England. An American plane finally arrived, taking us to Poltania, Russia. Like our "West Point of the Air." We were deloused, issued clothes and assigned a tent. After cleaning up we went to chow. While standing in the chow line, a tap on my shoulder turned me around and it was a fellow from my home town whom I grew up with. We played American Legion Baseball together. He was the Sgt. Major of the Eastern Air Command. Their duties were to get P.O.W.'s and others like us back to the American forces. Of course, Bill Enright sent his mother a letter (V-mail) telling her he had a visit with Bob Twyford and his crew. So our folks knew we were safe long before they were notified by the War Department.

We were there several days and Bill Yarcusko and myself did a little scouting around. We ran into a couple of Russian girls digging out a big stump. Bill was able to communicate with them with his Polish and explained to them how we would get rid of this stump in the U.S.A. They were quite impressed and invited us to their home. When we arrived they were playing on an old phonograph "The Stars and Stripes Forever". We really had a good time with them.

A B-24 belonging to the 15th AF was at this base and they were waiting for a B-24 crew to fly it back to Italy. We did with a Russian Fighter escort the whole way. From Italy we finally made it back to England and a flak leave. We got back to Rackheath from leave the day the War ended in Germany.

Do however you want with this story and the pictures.

Hope I didn't bore you.

Kindest regards,

Bob Twyford.

THE MISHAP OF CREW "92"

by William R. Chapman

On March 18, 1945 Crew 92 was dispatched on an operational bombing mission to Berlin, Germany.

Crew "92" consisted of the following personnel:

William R. Chapman, pilot

John W. Wallace, co-pilot

Edward J. Alexander, pilotage navigator

Harold P. Van Tress, DR navigator

Martin F. Bezon, mickey (radar) operator

William M. Yarcusko, bombardier

George E. Fuller, engineer

Albert B. Palmer, radio operator
Myrl L. Anderson, tail gunner
Robert C. Twyford, waist gunner
Alsie G. Austin, top gunner.

We were leading the second squadron of the 467th Bomb Group. About 25 miles from the target we encountered a barrage of heavy flak, and at that time the mickey operator gave me a five degree right correction which seemed to be all the evasive action necessary as we went through this barrage with apparently no damage. Visibility was good and the pilotage navigator said we were right on course. The DR navigator called that we were on course and making a ground speed of 300 mph. The mickey operator called the bombardier to get ready to clutch in, and the bombardier replied that he already had the target in his sight. The drift was killed as several minutes passed, and the pilotage navigator said we were coming in right on the target. About 20 seconds before bombs away we received a direct hit by heavy flak just forward of the bomb bay.

We were at 19,800 feet on the bomb run, and the first thing I noticed after the explosion was that we were at 16,500 feet in a tight right turn. I had had a severe jolt under my seat and my left leg felt numb. I could not exert much pressure with my left leg, but with the co-pilot's help, we managed to right the ship. The turn and bank indicator, rate of climb, airspeed, and altimeter seemed to be the only instruments that were any good. I switched the inverter to #2.

A white fire was burning beneath the flight deck. A molten piece of flak landed between the co-pilot's legs. Where it came from and how it got there is still a mystery. Without thinking he stomped on it, but hurriedly withdrew his boot. The molten piece of flak bore through the steel and dropped out the bottom of the airplane with the ease of an ash burning through paper.

My interphone was shot out and about half the oxygen outlets had no pressure. The co-pilot's interphone was all right, so I told him to tell the crew we were low enough to come off oxygen. Flak was bursting all around us. I looked up and to the left and saw the bomber stream turning left, away from the target. We turned left following them out. The mickey operator told me that the navigator had been killed by a piece of flak which went through his helmet and out the other side. He said that the engineer, who was standing by the bomb bay to hold the utility control handle open and to fire flares at bombs away, was blown out of the airplane.

There was a large hole in the ship about the size of the forward bomb bay where the engineer had been standing. The bombs were still in the ship. The bombardier salvoed but nothing happened. I then pulled the pilot's salvo handle and just pulled out a piece of wire. It was impossible for the bombardier to get from the nose to the bomb bay, so I sent the mickey operator down to see if he could release the bombs.

We were still over the center of Berlin, and a lot of flak was bursting around us, but I don't think any hit us after we started down, as we were changing headings and losing altitude. The instrument panel was in a mess. I noticed we had full left trim rolled in. When the co-pilot pulled the throttles of #3 and #4 engines all the way back, then pushed them all the way forward, there was no effect on the ship. We tried to feather #3 and #4 but could not.

The co-pilot and I then decided to head for the Russian lines. The pilotage navigator told us to take a heading of 90 degrees. The fire was out now, and the mickey operator and top gunner had thrown out everything they could that was burning. The bombardier's glass had

been blown out by the concussion, and the air rushing through the huge hole probably helped blow out the fire below the flight deck. The co-pilot called Blue Leader to tell him we were heading for Russia. There was no answer. The set may not have been working as the liaison transmitter and the mickey sets were shattered.

I sent the top gunner to check the gas, and he said the glass tubes on the gauge were broken, also that the catwalk was all that was holding the ship together. The mickey operator said it was impossible to release the bombs as the A-2 releases were blown off and the shackles were twisted and distorted. Mickey also said he had released the arming wire from the shackles.

We were clearing the eastern suburbs of Berlin, and I knew it would be impossible to land the ship, but was trying to get across the lines to bail out the crew. We were now at 11,000 feet, losing altitude at about 800 feet a minute. We knew we would have to hold what altitude we could before crossing the lines. I turned the supercharger to #10 position and had all throttles full forward. The co-pilot pointed to #2 manifold pressure which read 64". I moved the throttle back, then forward and apparently the gauge was functioning properly. I left it there for about five minutes, as we were crossing the battle line. At this setting #1 manifold pressure was reading about 28", #3 - 17", and #4 - 10". I think we were getting full power from #2 engine, a little from #1 and none from #3 and #4. It was very difficult to hold the ship straight. My left leg felt dead and without the co-pilots help, we could not have made it.

An Me-109 then made a pass at us from 7 o'clock. The tail gunner fired, also the left waist. The Me-109 knocked out the tail guns on this pass, and the left waist could not aim accurately as there was no power for the K-13 sight. The 109 had his right landing gear down. Three Russian Yak fighter planes then came up and the 109 left. I noticed the large Red Star on the fuselage of the Russian planes and started dipping the left wing to show them our Air Force emblem. They looked us over and turned back towards the tail. A minute or two later we heard a rain of slugs going through the waist and bomb bay. I think each ship made one pass, as we were raked over three times. We were now over the Russian lines. I kept dipping the left wing hoping they would recognize us. We were at 6500 feet now and flak had been following us all the way from Berlin. After the second Yak made a pass at us, I told the co-pilot to order the crew to bail out. My interphone was out, so he gave the order over interphone and rang the alarm bell. He said it was acknowledged from the nose by the bombardier and from the waist by the waist gunner. The waist gunners said the bell did not ring, but it was heard in the nose. From the flight deck, the top gunner went out the bomb bay first, followed by Mickey. After the co-pilot called again to the waist and nose and received no acknowledgement, he tapped me on the shoulder and left. I watched them go, then set the C-1. I stopped for a minute and looked at the navigator. He was lying across his table with blood all over the flight deck. There was a large hole in his head and part of his brains lay on the table. It was awfully quiet; then I heard the slugs from the third Yak ripping through the ship, and I got down on the station five bulkhead. It would have been difficult to recognize the ship from this position, as everything was twisted and covered with oil. I then went out the bomb bay.

I went into a cloud right after leaving the ship, so I opened my chute. My first sensation was like being suspended in air, and it seemed very natural to be floating down. I saw two

chutes about 3000 feet below me. Then a Yak fighter came in and made a pass at me. I could see his tracers streaking by me and hear his guns as he fired. The first two passes he made were while I was too dazed to think; I just hung there and watched him. However, on his third and fourth passes, I remembered what I'd been told about slipping a chute, and I pulled on the right riser so hard I nearly collapsed the chute. I saw another Yak making passes at the two chutes below me.

About 500 feet from the ground I heard rifles and machine guns firing from the ground, so I kept up the evasive action slipping my chute. Some of the slugs whistled by pretty close. Nearing the ground, I turned the chute so I was facing downwind and the jolt was not as much as I had expected. Maybe I was too scared to have much feeling. As I collapsed my chute on the ground, I saw a Yak turning to make another pass. It seemed to take a long time to unfasten my chute. I rolled on the ground about 20 feet away from the chute and lay still as he passed over. He did not fire this time. Men were running down the hill towards me firing overhead, so I stood up and held my hands up. I first thought maybe I had landed in German-held territory, but as they came closer, I saw some of the Cossack hats with the Russian star on them. I shouted "Ya Ameri- nents", but they thought we were German para- troopers. They had me walk in front with my hands overhead to a truck where they had the radio operator and the tail gunner. As we were driving off a soldier rode up on a horse waving a revolver. He swung at the tail gunner a couple of times and pointed the revolver at his head, snapped it several times. Luckily it did not go off until we were about 50 yards away, at which time some of the other soldiers stopped him.

We were taken to the Commandant's Office of the 29609 Field Unit at Vermeinfeld, Germany, about three miles from where we were picked up. It was now about 1430 hours. After an hour I convinced him we were Americans. They then fed us and sent us to the hospital about two miles away in a wagon accompanied by a Polish flyer.

The radio operator had his ankle bandaged and I had my rump bandaged. They also gave me a tetanus shot. The airplane had crashed, and they told me they had the body taken from the wreckage. They insisted on our eating again and brought out some food, but I only drank some "Spirits" (white lightning). Pretty soon the radio operator and I looked at the body, but the ship had burned and there was no identification. They gave us some papers and Mickey's log book which were in the ship and picked up out of the wreckage.

A car was waiting for us then, and we were taken about six miles to Landsberg, Germany. We were given supper, and they opened a bottle of Vodka for us and gave us a room. There was a fire built in the room and everything possible was done to make us comfortable. The next day I was carried across town and met the co-pilot, Mickey operator, and waist gunner. They were then brought to the place we were staying and given an adjoining room. There were still three of our crew unaccounted for.

The funeral for the navigator was set for 1800 hours March 19, 1945. The Russians came by about 1630 hours for us to write an inscription to go on the grave. Later we went down to the street and there were two trucks waiting. The one in front had a rug spread on the bed floor. On it was a metal casket with four palms in pots at each corner. There were two armed guards of the Russian Army standing on each side of the casket. The second truck had rows of chairs placed on it for the crew members with some Russian guards. We rode about 3/4 mile to a large square in Landsberg, Germany. About 90% of the buildings en route had been bombed or shelled. When we arrived at the square, I noticed about twenty graves of Russians with wooden crosses and a Red Star on top. We met our top gunner for the first time at the funeral. There were three Russian Colonels, a major, several other officers, plus a company of about 50 soldiers. I said a few words and gave a short prayer. Then we all came to "present Arms", and the company of soldiers fired three volleys. The casket was then placed in the grave. The Russians took
(Cont'd Next Page)

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enough time first visit to read "Saga of a Reluctant Co-Pilot"!

Yours sincerely,

Andy Wilkinson

P.S. I work as an Air Traffic Controller at the London Air Traffic Control Centre, close to

Heathrow Airport. Any 467th members visiting England and who are interested in modern aviation matters would be welcome to be shown around the complex by myself. Prior notification of a visit is essential.

Andy



Jack Stevens, Colonel Albert J. Shower and Jeff Gregory at Historical Monument Dedication.

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