

MEN OF

*Official Journal of the Men and
12th Air Force, United States*

VOL XXXIV



THE 57TH

*Women of the 57th Bomb Wing,
Army Air Force in World War II*

Summer 2023



B25 J 'Desirable'

Desirable was shot down by ground fire southwest of Bologna, Italy. All bailed out and evaded capture, eventually returning to their base on Corsica. Here's an explanation of the Seimon Pugh-Jones artwork, posted by John Lund, to our 57th BWA Facebook group:

Remembering this day 78 years ago, when my Father's (Crew Chief T/Sgt John Lund 321st BG/448th BS) plane, "Desirable." 43-27805 was shot down in Italy by ground fire.

She is depicted here brilliantly in intricate detail of her final moments by Artist and my good mate from Wales, Seimon Pugh-Jones. Very fortunate to meet him on this group, when he posted a photo of his relative, Sgt. Griffith (Griff) Williams, with my Father in the background! Read the story on page 38 for more details on B-25 Desirable.

57TH BOMB WING ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR 2023

Title	Name	Phone	Email
President	Richard (Dick) Reed - (340th/486th)	(772) 546-0247	cdreed8@yahoo.com
1st Vice President	Gregory Wichtowski Jr. (310th/381st - Leonard Wichtowski)	(917) 828-6828	greggles327@gmail.com
2nd Vice President	Pam Cosby (310th/379th Bernard T. Peters)		daveandpam9@aol.com
Secretary	Patty Koenitzer (310th/380th - James Moffitt)	(978) 436-0885	pmka624@gmail.com
Treasurer	Louise Bourg (340th/489th - Harry DeBoer)	(269) 674-3155	louisej@hughes.net
Wing Administrator/ Editor	Vinny White (310th/381st - Joe White)	(201) 437-7883	vjwhite57@gmail.com
Reunion Liaison	Jerry Lester -Yankee Air Museum B-25D Historian	(517) 404-1061	cyrenalester@gmail.com
Reunion Coordinator	Tim Jackson (340th/486th - Alvin Jackson)	(504) 231-3063	tjack153@cox.net
Membership Chairperson	Linda Buechling (340th/489th - Millard E. Rives)	(540) 459-8503	gapoova@yahoo.com
Wing Chaplain	Steve Buechling (340th/489th - Millard E. Rives)	(540) 459-8503	gapoova@yahoo.com
Wing Historian/Archivist	Dan Setzer (340th/HQ - Hymie Setzer)	(443) 421-5554	dhsetzer@comcast.net
Wing Historian	Barbara Connolly (321st/447th - Edward C Ennis)	(928) 717-1058	princessbarbi_b25@msn.com
Sales Directors	Jim and Penny Fouse (321st/448th - John Montoro)	(408) 927-9984	pfouse@sbcglobal.net
Past Presidents/ 57th Mentors	Mike Fedirko - 340th/489th	Contact Editor for Information	
Honorary President	Brigadier General Robert D. Knapp	12/26/1897 - 4/25/1994	
Honorary Vice President	John Dillin - 57th Headquarters	Deceased 8/27/1998	
Honorary Wing Coordinator	Robert E. Evans - 340th/487th	Deceased 10/12/2010	
Honorary Treasurer	Tom Sullivan - 340th/487th	Deceased 10/01/2012	
Wing Editor Emeritus	Victor Hancock - 321st/445th	Deceased 09/13/2018	
2022/2023 Reunion Committee			
Dianne Ambrosino	Jerry Lester, Reunion Liaison		
Linda and Steve Buechling	Julie Martin		
Pam Cosby	Tim Jackson, Reunion Coordinator		
Penny and Jim Fouse	Greg Wichtowski Jr.		
Patricia Koenitzer			

In its expansion during World War II, the AAF became the world's most powerful air force. From the Air Corps of 1939, with 20,000 men and 2,400 planes, to the nearly autonomous AAF of 1944, with almost 2.4 million personnel and 80,000 aircraft, it was a remarkable expansion. Robert A. Lovett, the Assistant Secretary of War for Air, together with General Henry "Hap" Arnold, presided over an increase greater than for either the ground Army or the Navy, while at the same time dispatching combat air forces to the battlefronts.

Source: "The Evolution of the Department of the Air Force" – Air Force



57TH BOMB WING ASSOCIATION 2023 NATIONAL REUNION



KANSAS CITY MISSOURI

SEPT. 28—OCT. 2, 2023

Crowne Plaza Kansas City Downtown Hotel



57th Bomb Wing: *Back to Beginnings*



Kansas City — Home of
the Fairfax North American Aviation Plant
where B-25s were built from 1942 to 1945.

Join us as we celebrate the
57th Bomb Wing Association and
the History of the B-25!

The 57th Bomb Wing Association is
transitioning from an IRS designated
“Nonprofit War Veterans Group”
to a new nonprofit being created to keep the
history of the 57th Bomb Wing alive
for future generations.
Join us for this historic reunion!



Special appearance by:
“Miss Mitchell” a flying B-25 with the
Commemorative Air Force Minnesota Wing.
Special up-close-and-personal time for our group,
including rides, ground tours, photos,
and crew interaction.

WWII Veterans and Spouses are FREE for ALL Wing Events !

Flight and Hotel costs for a WWII Veteran and a ‘guardian’ can be paid for in full
by a special program through the Gary Sinise Foundation. (See page 3)
All transportation & accommodations can be arranged for WWII Vets by the 57th Reunion team.

ALL EVENTS ARE HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE.

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2023 REUNION SCHEDULE



Hospitality room available Thurs, Friday, Saturday, & Sunday. Soft drinks & snacks provided.

THURSDAY, SEPT 28, 2023

Arrival Day Hospitality Room Open for Registration and meet & greet. Lunch & dinner on your own with friends.

FRIDAY, SEPT 29, 2023

- 7–9 am Complimentary Private Buffet Breakfast
- 9 am–noon Hospitality Room Open for gathering. The 57th has pre-purchased one flight (6 seats) on the B-25 “Miss Mitchell” for Saturday. Free seats will be offered to WWII Vets first. Raffle drawing at 11:30 for a free seat on this special 57th designated flight. You must be present to win. (Remaining seats on this 57th flight may be available for \$495. each.)
- 12–1:30 pm Lunch on your own
- 1:30–4 pm Visit and tour the *Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum*
Just 20 minutes away from the hotel. View photographs and artifacts illustrating Truman’s life and legacy. Pay respects at his final resting place in the courtyard. Bus provided.
- Evening Dinner with friends at the hotel or area restaurants. Gather in the Hospitality Room.

SATURDAY, SEPT 30, 2023

- 7–9 am Complimentary Private Buffet Breakfast
- 10 am–4 pm **B-25 DAY AT WHEELER DOWNTOWN AIRPORT!**
The 57th has arranged a special fly-in of the B-25 “Miss Mitchell” (Commemorative Air Force, Minnesota Wing) at Wheeler Downtown Airport, 4.5 miles from the hotel. Enjoy up-close-and-personal time with the B-25, including ground tours, photos, and crew interaction. The 57th has pre-purchased a flight for 6 people. A raffle for free seats takes place on Friday morning. Additional rides may be purchased for \$495 each throughout the day. (For more info on the B-25 “Miss Mitchell” flights, visit: www.cafmn.org)
[Watch for possible appearance of a group of Rosie the Riveters!]
Box lunch provided at the TWA Museum at Wheeler Airport, just steps away from where the B-25 will be parked. Following lunch, enjoy an engaging presentation about the History of the B-25 “Mitchell” Bomber and the men and women who built, flew, and maintained them, and with a special focus on the Kansas City factory where the B-25s were built. Presented by Dan Desko, Founder of the *B-25 History Project*. www.b-25history.org
- Evening Dinner with friends at the hotel or area restaurants. Gather in the Hospitality Room.

SUNDAY, OCT 1, 2023

- 7–9 am Complimentary Private Buffet Breakfast
- 10 am 57th Bomb Wing Association Annual Meeting
The 2nd and final vote will take place to transition from a ‘WWII Veterans nonprofit,’ to a new nonprofit created to keep the history of the 57th Bomb Wing alive for future generations. (See page 4) Group photo immediately following the meeting.
- Noon Lunch on your own at the hotel or area restaurants. Afternoon free for exploring or R&R.
- 5:00 pm Attitude Adjustment
- 6–9:30 pm Wing Banquet—Celebrating the 57th Bomb Wing Association and Looking to the Future
The evening includes a fascinating presentation by 57th Bomb Wing Historian Dan Setzer on the *History of the 57th Bomb Wing*.

MONDAY, OCT 2, 2023

- Morning Check out—Safe travels!
Or enjoy a few extra days in the area on your own. (Hotel rate is valid for 3 days before / after the event.)



REUNION HOTEL:
Crowne Plaza Kansas City
Downtown
1301 Wyandotte St Kansas City, MO
Hotel Deadline Aug 28—Register ASAP!

Conveniently located in the heart of Kansas City.

57th Bomb Wing Association Reunion Rate: \$169 / night plus tax. (Parking \$20/night)
 King Rooms or 2 Queens. Handicap rooms available.

If you are staying Sept. 28, 29, 30, and/or Oct 1
 Call for Reservations:
(816) 474-6664, ext. 7500

If you are staying up to 3 days before or after these dates,
 Please call Linda directly at the hotel sales office: 816-460-6623 to complete your reservation. She is very helpful!

Guests **MUST** identify themselves as members of the group for the group rate.

GROUP RESERVATION NAME: "57th Bomb Wing Association"

Group rate is only open to Registered 57th Reunion Attendees.

TRAVEL LOGISTICS



AIRPORT: Kansas City International Airport— 25 minutes
 No airport hotel shuttle available.
 Yellow Cab or "Z-Trip Taxi"—estimate \$40-45
 Lyft / Uber estimate—\$35



******* ATTN: WWII VETERANS *******

NEWS! Complete flight and hotel costs for a WWII Veteran and one "Guardian" ONLY can be covered by a special program through the *Gary Sinise Foundation*. The "Guardian" must be a travelling companion, preferably (but not a firm requirement) under the age of 70, but in any case, someone who is capable of assisting and taking care of the veteran while traveling.

1. **DEADLINE** for WWII Vets to register for the Sinise Foundation benefit is **August 31**.
2. For **Airline Booking and Travel Arrangements**, contact Tom Gibbs with the Gary Sinise Foundation at tgibbs@garysinisefoundation.org before **August 31**.
3. For **Hotel Booking**, please call the hotel directly to make reservations using our Group rate and group code: "57th Bomb Wing Association," as noted above. The Sinise Foundation will work with the hotel to reimburse WWII Veteran eligible guests' hotel accommodations **IN FULL**.

- **Other questions about WWII Veteran benefits?**

Contact Tim Jackson, 57th Reunion Team, tjack153@cox.net, or (504) 231-3062.

QUESTIONS About Reunion Activities or Accommodations?

Contact: Greg Wichtowski Jr Email: greggles327@gmail.com or 917/828-6828 cell

GENERAL TRANSPORTATION QUESTIONS:

Contact: Linda and Steve Buechling, (540) 459-8503 [Home], or (540) 335-5061 [Linda's cell.]

PLEASE JOIN THE EMAIL LIST for future 57th Bomb Wing updates:

Email your info to: Membership Chair, Linda Buechling - gapoova@yahoo.com

The 57th Bomb Wing—Keep ‘Em Flying!!

Honoring the Men and Women of the 57th—and Preserving their Legacy for Future Generations

NEWS: The 57th Bomb Wing is transitioning from a designated “Nonprofit War Veterans Group – 501(c)(19)” to a new 501(c)(3) nonprofit created by the families of our WWII Veterans to preserve the history of the 57th Bomb Wing. (The new organization’s official name to be determined.)

The current tax status as a “Nonprofit War Veterans Group” contains a number of legal requirements, including a minimum number of Veterans to serve on the Board and Executive Committee. As our WWII Veteran numbers dwindle, we all feel that it is very important to continue to preserve the stories of our 57th Bomb Wing Men and Women and their contributions to the freedoms that we enjoy today.

Our veterans, in their wisdom, foresaw this eventuality and included detailed rules and procedures for dissolution of the organization in their bylaws. (What they didn’t foresee, was that we children would be so dedicated to honoring our Dads and Granddads that we would carry their history on into the future!)

The 57th Bomb Wing Association Bylaws Articles on Dissolution and Disposition are as follows:
(Entire Bylaws available for viewing at www.57thBombWing.com/about)

Article B-XII - Dissolution

- 1. Members shall be notified in writing of a recommendation to dissolve the Association*
- 2. Any such recommendation shall be by a two-thirds [2/3] vote of the Executive Board in formal session at a Reunion. The recommendation shall then be presented to the General Membership, for action at the next ensuing Reunion.*
- 3. A two-thirds [2/3] vote of the General Membership shall be needed to carry the motion.*

Article B-XIII - Disposition

- 1. Upon the formal Dissolution of the 57th Bomb Wing Association:*
 - i. All association records, written, pictorial, artifact and others of historical relevance shall be conveyed, by the Historian/Archivist, to the National WWII MUSEUM, New Orleans, Louisiana.*
 - ii. Funds remaining after the disposition of all Association debts, shall be conveyed, by the Treasurer, without stipulation of use, to the Air Force Assistance Fund.*
 - iii. Confirmation of the actions taken, pursuant to i, and ii, above shall be transmitted, in writing by the Secretary, to all Members in good standing, and to all appropriate Government Agencies, i.e. IRS, of the completion of the dissolution.*

At the 2022 Florida Reunion, the first of the required two votes took place, during the Executive Board Meeting as well as at the General Business Meeting. The vote at both meetings was unanimous, including votes in support of the motion by the WWII Veterans who were present, Dick Reed, Bob Stangier, and Martin Biener.

Action to be Taken at the 2023 Reunion in Kansas City:

The “57th Bomb Wing Association” will hold its final vote on Dissolution of the *Association*, and the creation of the new nonprofit organization to preserve the history of the 57th Bomb Wing.

This historic vote will take place during the General Business Meeting on Sunday, October 1, 2023 in Kansas City. The many historical digital resources on the website will remain active and the new nonprofit can continue to contribute to that history. A new Mission Statement and Bylaws will be developed and will define the purpose and functions of the new nonprofit organization.

Our #1 goal is to keep the history of the 57th Bomb Wing alive for future generations!



The 57th Bomb Wing Association Reunion Wing Registration Form

Kansas City, Missouri

Sept 28-Oct 2, 2023

Wing Registration Deadline: August 28 Space is Limited—Please Register **ASAP!**

PLEASE MAIL THIS ENTIRE PAGE WITH YOUR CHECK. (Retain a copy for yourself.)

NEWS! Attn WWII VETERANS!

WING REGISTRATION FEE and EVENT FEES ARE WAIVED FOR WWII VETS AND THEIR SPOUSES.

WWII Veterans: Please fill in this Wing Registration form for you and other paying members of your party, so we can have a count and contact info for attendees, and your event and meal choices.

Your Name: _____

WWII Vet Member: ___ Associate or Family Member: ___

Your WWII Veteran's Name:

Group: _____ Squadron: _____

Your Address: _____

City/ State/Zip: _____

Home Phone/Cell: _____

* Email: _____

Emergency Contact and phone:

GUESTS: The following guests will be with this group. If needed, please list additional guests on a separate page, including addresses and email. (We use this information for the name badges, reunion directory, and participant emergency contact.)

1.) _____
GUEST NAME

Address, City/State

Home Phone / Cell Phone

Email

2.) _____
GUEST NAME

Address, City/State

Home Phone / Cell Phone

Email

Event (WWII Veterans FREE)	# People	X Price	= \$
Registration fee, per person. (Helps cover hospitality room, banquet space & private breakfast buffet.) * WWII Vets—waive Registration FEE *	# _____	X \$30	\$ _____
1. Friday, Sept 29, afternoon—Visit to the Harry Truman Presidential Library & Museum (Fee covers entry fee and transportation.)	# _____	X \$30	\$ _____
2. Saturday, Sept 30 B-25 Day at Wheeler Downtown Airport! - "Miss Mitchell" B-25, Up-Close-And-Personal for 57th attendees. - Box Lunch—TWA Museum (sandwich, chips, cookie) - History of the B-25 Talk (Fee covers B-25 Fly-in cost, bus transportation, and box lunch.)	# Tot People _____ Box Lunches: Roast Beef # _____ Turkey # _____ Vegetarian # _____	X \$45	\$ _____
3. Sunday, Oct 1 Reunion Banquet (Price covers meal and tip)	# of meals	X \$ Price	Meal \$
Grilled Flank Steak \$58	# _____	X \$58	\$ _____
Chicken Picata \$50	# _____	X \$50	\$ _____
(Meals include salad, rolls/b, entrée, dessert, & coffee.) Let us know if special dietary needs.			
Additional Donation To help with bus transportation costs, venue charges, and special services for WWII Vets and their spouses.			\$ _____
Total Amount Enclosed			\$ _____

Make check payable to: 57th Bomb Wing Association

Mail Registration form and check (sorry, no credit cards) to:

Julie Martin, 57th Bomb Wing Association
PO Box 543
Canton, ME 04221

Questions about registration to:

Julie Martin (Red Martin, 340/486th)

Email: jm.highlands@gmail.com, 978-994-1236, call or text Pg 5

FROM NEENAH TO NAPLES

John Stilp (310/428) Collection—Courtesy of John Stilp Jr.

FROM the day when the newspaper carried the story that Technical Sergeant John Stilp had returned to America, until my phone rang telling me that John was in the mill, there had been an air of expectancy among the "Oldtimers" at Badger-Globe.

John was a third hand and back-tender at our mill until about two years ago, when he left us for the Air Force. Within six months after leaving Neenah, he landed in England for further training. He trained there for five months. His crew learned to improvise; using material that was not designed to do the work which they made it do. More material began to flow through and the might of our Nation began to be felt.

After his training in England he was transferred to Africa. Their air division was among the first to use the captured airfield at Casablanca. As rapidly as the enemy was pushed back and fields were put in order, the

American Air Force moved up. They moved so constantly and rapidly that John seldom had the chance to sleep indoors. His shelter was a tent, or the stars; his bed the sand in the bottom of a fox hole.

The operations officer called the crew of five B-25's into his tent one morning and told them that he was assigning them to a very important mission. Intelligence had relayed the information that a tanker, the world's largest, was on its way to Bizerte or Tunis. It was the task of these airmen to stop it. Operations called it a "Must Objective." The crews studied the information supplied them and talked over their plan of attack. With John's plane in perfect running order they started their suicide mission. The tanker was located but with it were five destroyers and several Sibil Ferrys armed with AA guns. The tanker had the protection of these destroyers as well as an air umbrella of Focke-

Wolfe's. The ACK ACK became heavier as they came nearer their objective. The plane was so low, going over one of the escort vessels, that John could see the gun crews loading their guns. As they began their bombing run, their top gunner shot down a Focke-Wolfe. When they released their bombs they felt their ship shudder and almost stop in mid air. The right engine was on fire and the wings and fuselage of the plane was riddled with flak and heavy calibre machine gun bullets. The pilots kept the ship aloft to a point about five miles from where the tanker blazed. The crew knew that the plane would sink in about a minute after crashing. John saw a large hole had been torn in the plane toward the tail, and he managed to crawl out at that point. The rear gunner followed him. The plane stayed afloat for seven minutes before sinking. The rubber raft which should have inflated automatically, had to be

Typo Correction: Siebel Ferries

Source: Badger-Globe, Kimberly- Clark Corporation, Nov-Dec 1943



The group at the Badger-Globe to whom Tech. Sgt. John Stilp talked when he was home on furlough. At the same time, Cpl. Les Johnson was on leave. Both men are Kimberly-Clarkers, and both are claimed by the Badger-Globe.

FROM NEENAH TO NAPLES (CONTINUED)



GOING HOME AFTER FIFTY MISSIONS--At a USAAF Mitchell Bomber Base in North Africa. Shown above is the "Shanghi-Lil," veteran North American B-25 Mitchell Bomber, with her pilot and crew just prior to their take-off for the U. S. All members of the crew have completed 50 missions in this theatre and will now engage in a nation-wide tour in behalf of the War Bond appeal of the the Treasury Department. Following the completion of their projected tour, it is expected that many of them will be assigned to training capacities in the States.

Left to Right:

Capt. James G. Hickman, Orlando, Fla., top position in nose.

S/Sgt. John P. Stilp, Neenah, Wis.

T/Sgt. John I. Gerry, Fairbault, Minn.

1st Lt. Robert M. Westcott, San Jose, California, who appeared after the picture was taken following an unavoidable delay, thus missing out on the picture but not the trip home.

S/Sgt. Loy G. Meyers, Hume, Ohio.

Capt. John H. Beatty, Kittanning, Pa., their pilot.

Bidding them "Bon Voyage" is the Commanding General of the medium bombardment wing with which they affiliated.

FROM NEENAH TO NAPLES (CONTINUED)

pumped up by hand, and it was about 45 minutes before it was inflated enough to carry the five men. They spent that night and all the next day in the raft and after twenty-two hours of rowing toward land, they were rescued by a British PT Boat. The captain told them that if they had continued in the direction they were going they would have reached land; land which was the headquarters of the German E boat division! The crew of John's plane were landed back at their base. They found that of the original five planes detailed for this suicide mission, two returned to their base, badly shot up; two crashed on the main land and one (John's plane) crashed into the Mediterranean Sea. Of the twenty-five men involved in this mission all returned.

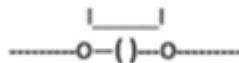
As John told us of their flight over Palermo on Mothers Day, and of the flak which was so thick that they could not see the following plane; of the sensations caused as flak tore through their plane; when he showed us "flak" that he dug out of his radio equipment; steel which would have landed in his back, instead, if he had not been doubling on his machine gun; I began to realize that we have it pretty soft here at home.

As I write this article about John, I suddenly realize that very little has been said about the man who third handed and backtended at our mill. By prying considerably we found that his name has been submitted for the DFC and he now has the Air Medal. He told us that his crew had over fifty missions to their credit. That on the fiftieth mission an 88 mm. shell tore through the plane. Fortunately for the crew it did not explode. The plane was landed in Sicily without casualty, a tribute to both men and machine.

John told us that he was coming back to Badger-Globe when the war is over. We are glad. He turned to John Ciske and said, "Oh yes! and every Saturday night that I am on the night shift Ciske is going to trade shifts with me." Ciske grinned and didn't deny it.

John will be back to us at Badger-Globe because someone, somewhere cared enough for the safety and security of their country and her men, to buy bonds and pay taxes to equip John's crew with the finest equipment. Let's all take this slogan as our battle cry!

I SHALL DO ALL I CAN, NOT JUST MY SHARE!



Mahatma Gandhi was one of the greatest peacemakers in the world, but most people are unaware that he was still alive during WWII. Gandhi was so committed to peace that he tried to write a letter to Hitler, referring to him as a '*dear friend*' and pleading for him to stop the war. However, it's unclear whether or not the messages reached Hitler.

A DAUGHTER'S STORY

The Omaha Flight - A Daughter's Story

by Julie Martin
(Written in 2000)

It was early Sunday morning during the 57th Bomb Wing reunion in Omaha in 2000. Most attendees were headed to the Men's Business Meeting or the Ladies Brunch, but Dad, Mom, and I were in a taxi on our way out to the airport. The B-25, *Old Glory*, was waiting out there on the tarmac, and I had signed up to take a ride.

My father is Jim "Red" Martin, a pilot in the 486th during the final months of the war, January—May 1945. He flew missions over the Brenner Pass, targeting railroad bridges in the push to cut off German supply lines. But I have only recently learned about all this. Dad didn't talk much about his war years when I was growing up, though I do remember the black and white photo that he always kept in a place of honor on his dresser. In the photo, he and five other very young men in Army uniforms stood in front of a silver airplane. Even without knowing anything about it, I could tell how proud those men were to be standing beside that plane.



James 'Red' Martin, 340/486

Dad was a late comer to the 57th Association. He found out about it by chance while reading an American Legion Magazine in 1998, and we've been coming to the reunions ever since. In Spokane, Dad was reunited with one of his original crew members, Jim Davidson. Dad hadn't seen him or talked to him since the day he watched Jim's plane go down in February 1945. Jim called their meeting "nothing short of a miracle." I listened in amazement as Dad exchanged stories with many other veterans, stories we had never heard before. Again and again, I asked questions of these men and women, and they have answered, as if it all happened just yesterday. During the war, they stepped forward willingly to work side by side for a common cause. It was a terrible time for the world, but it brought out the best in many. For that, we will always be grateful.

As the taxi pulled up that day in Omaha, there was *Old Glory*, shining in the sun. Because of my "pilot's daughter" status, I was given one of the seats up front, behind the cockpit. Dad chose not to take the trip. "I've done that!" he said.

Then the engines started. People try to describe the sound of a B-25 engine, but until you experience it, you just can't know. It is more than a sound – it is a sheer, shaking mass of deafening vibration that presses hard on you. You feel it hammering in your chest. It assaults your body, not just your ears. I was fastening my seat belt when I looked out the small window and saw Dad there on the tarmac holding onto his hat, the prop wind blowing his jacket back. I laid my palm flat on the window glass in answer.

Once in the air, I was allowed to crawl up into the bombardier's compartment in the nose of the plane. The passageway is a square green tunnel under the pilot's seat, about 3' by 3' in diameter and two body lengths long. I went in feet-first and pulled myself along with the pole attached to the top. Halfway through the tunnel, I froze, lying on my back, breathless. Enclosed in that

A DAUGHTER'S STORY (CONTINUED)

cramped space, I was overpowered by the roar that I now felt directly against my entire body. I winced at every bump and bounce. Then I realized - those young kids were doing this *while* being shot at!

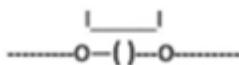
I pulled myself upright in the plexi-glassed curve of the nose and knelt to look around in wonder. Soaring low over the Nebraska farmland, in the very center of America, I knew I was flying inside history. It was a thrill I will never forget. When the B-25 banked wide and deep on its return to the airport, the whole world tipped perilously for a long moment, and then righted itself again.

I was back in my seat as we landed, and Dad watched us taxi to a stop. My knees were still shaking as I came down the ladder to meet him, but my first question was, "When can I go up again?!" Dad climbed up into the cockpit area and somehow, he clambered into the pilot's seat - for the first time in 55 years. He sat for a long time there with his thoughts, reunited with an airplane that had been his friend through many times of terror, as well as of pure joy.

I am forever grateful to the 57th Bomb Wing Association for making these moments possible. I am also grateful for each story I have heard, for the adventure of every reunion trip, for all the dear friends I have made across the generations, and for the understanding I have gained, not only about our collective history, but about my family's personal history as well. Thank you.

Postscript:

Jim "Red" Martin died in April 2008. We had by then traveled together to over 20 national or Eastern Mini reunions together. Visiting cities all over America, we experienced the vast beauty of this country and shared the pride with which these men fought to preserve it. We are forever grateful.



THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER—DICK REED 340TH/486TH

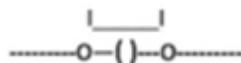
It is said that all good things come to an end - so be it! I will be 99 years of age in a couple of weeks, Claire 96; our great organization is turning a corner and it is time for the next generation. I have no plans to relinquish my ties to the 57th and will be with you as long as I can. Claire and I are still in pretty good shape; we still ride the bikes 20 miles every other day and remain happy and feel lucky to be in our present surroundings. I am not sure as to what lies ahead for the 57th, but I know it is in good hands and I look forward to a bright future for all the membership. And I will never give up my place in the circle of friendship with all you 57th guys and gals.



Chris Gilley Photo

Claire and I are making plans to see you all in Kansas City this coming September. And lets hope the same for the coming years. It was fun being with everyone last year in Florida and I think it all went well. With nothing much else to say, we look forward to seeing everybody in Kansas City, home of the indomitable B-25. And, pray, let us see some more Vets there - certainly some more than the two or three that showed up at the last two or three reunions.

Many different bombers were used during World War II. The B-17, B-24, B 26, and B-29 were the workhorses of the AAF fleet. Both the B-25 and B 26 were twin engine, all-metal monoplanes. The B-25 "Mitchell" and B-26 "Marauder" were medium bombers used mainly at altitudes of 8,000 to 14,000 feet. They primarily supported ground forces by targeting fortified positions, depots, railroad yards and other targets behind battle lines. They also supplemented heavier bombers on more strategic raids. The B 17 "Flying Fortress" was the first of the big bombers used during World War II. It was used mainly in Europe by 8th Air Force but in much smaller numbers in the Far East.



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

VJ (Vinny) White, son of Joseph P. White (310th, 381st)
vjwhite57@gmail.com

I'm sorry this edition took so long to get you all. Working full time and spending quality time with my growing family provide challenges to my 57th work. Thank you to all those that provided stories and permissions! Please feel free to contact Dan Setzer or me with any ideas you may have for future stories in this journal. For this edition, I'm providing an interview my uncle gave to my young cousin, We hope to see you all in Kansas City!. Take care and stay safe!

Vinny



Interview with Edward J White

By his niece, Mary Jane (O'Donnell) Campbell

Circa 1980's (I think)

Edited for grammar/clarity-only, 10-Apr-2001 -vjw- and 29-Jul-23 -Dan Setzer-

"In the past few years and most violently, in the past few days-we have learned a terrible lesson," said Franklin Roosevelt two days after Pearl Harbor was bombed. We must begin the great task that is before us by abandoning once and for all the illusion that we can ever again isolate ourselves from the rest of humanity." He added, "We are going to win the war, and we are going to win the peace that follows."

Edward J. White was 20 years old when President Roosevelt declared war and he had no idea what lay before him. He was the third child out of ten. There were nine boys and one girl, ranging in age from 4 to 24. He grew up in Bayonne, NJ, a city right outside of New York. He never paid much attention to what was going on outside his own world. He thought, however, that someday the United States might have to go to war. Well, that someday came quicker than he thought.

He says he will never forget the day Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, "I had picked my Uncle Eddie up at work. He was a merchant seaman who would bring oil to military tanks. "We were driving down Broadway, when the news came over the radio. My uncle said to me "Eddie, turn this car around and bring me back to work."

"I knew then there were going to be a lot of changes in my life," said Ed. A lot of changes there were, for in the following year, three White boys went off to war in three months. The first to go was Edward's older brother, Vincent, who enlisted in the war. "I remember the day he enlisted; it was October 20, 1942. He volunteered for the Air Force. He was 23 at the time," says Ed. Vincent underwent his basic training at Miami Beach, Fla. and advanced training at Amarillo, Texas, Seattle, Wash. and Las Vegas, before he went overseas from North Carolina as a flight engineer and gunner in the latter part of July.

INTERVIEW WITH EJ WHITE—BROTHER OF JP WHITE (310/381)

Not another month went by when Edward's oldest brother James was drafted to the Army as a Field Artillery specialist. Four weeks later Edward received his draft papers to the Army Ordinance. "I remember thinking that it was the thing to do. All my friends were going and already two of my brothers had gone."

Edward's basic training took place in Steward, Georgia. He was there for three months. "They taught you how to kill and survive," said White. "I remember hiking through swamps that I thought would never end." One good thing happened to Edward there. It was that his older brother, James, was also stationed there. Since James was of higher rank, he sometimes pulled strings for his younger brother, like buying him packs of cigarettes.

He was then transferred to Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri for further training. "I remember when we left Georgia they wouldn't tell us where we were going in fear that the enemy would find out. We went up through the Canadian border to throw off the enemy. The only way we found out where we were going was when the train would stop for water. The farmers would tell us what direction we were heading."

The only happy memories that Edward has of Ft. Leonard Wood was that his younger brother Joey had since been drafted in the Army Air Force and was stationed in, Scott Field, Ill. for his basic training. He was a radio/gunner on a B-25 medium bomber. "We met every weekend." White said with a smile. "It seemed wherever I went I ran into a brother."

After his training in Missouri the troop was being sent overseas. Edward remembers riding the train to New York. He passed right by his city. He could see the steeple of his church, which was right behind his house. "That was the worst, being so close to my family, but not being able to see them."

It was June 1943, when he boarded the Queen Elizabeth in New York. He was among the largest group of soldiers to be shipped overseas without an escort. There were no sub chasers or any navy boats. "We were all on our own," says Ed, "they depended on the speed of the QE to safely get us there. I remember zigzagging across the Atlantic to stay away from the enemy. This added two days to our trip." It took them eight days to finally reach Scotland. There were 27000 troops on the QE. They would take turns sleeping on the deck. "One night you would be inside the next night you would be out on the deck. We were fed twice a day. We usually played cards to let the time pass," added Ed.

When the ship landed in Scotland the troops were taken to Ash Church, England by train. They set up camp there to prepare for the oncoming invasion of Europe. After being in England just a few days, Edward remembers being wakened in the middle of the night. "It

INTERVIEW WITH EJ WHITE—BROTHER OF JP WHITE (310/381)

was about 1:00 in the morning on October 9, 1943 and someone was shaking me. I opened my eyes and my brother Vincent was in front of me. I couldn't believe my eyes. I hadn't seen him in about a year. It was the happiest day for me since the war started."

Vincent was stationed outside of London and the brothers made plans to meet that weekend in Birmingham. It was the half-way mark between them. They were to meet at the U.S.O. club. The U.S.O was a club that American soldiers could go to meet other soldiers. "When you went in, you would sign your name and where you were from. That way you could see if anybody from your city was there. He hadn't signed in yet," said his brother, "so I waited."

Edward had heard his brother was on another mission over Nazi-Germany and that he was to return that day. So he walked over to the English air field to wait for his brother's B-17 bomber to return. "One by one they came in. There were ambulances around for the wounded airmen. A lot of bombers came in that day," said Edward. But his brother's bomber never came back. Edward waited all day. Finally an officer came over to him and told him there was no use waiting around, all the bombers were back. "I just thought it couldn't be. I went back to my camp and told my commanding officer what had happened. He said he would get back to me when he contacted Vinnie's commanding officer."

Well the officer did get back to Ed. It seemed that Nazi anti-aircraft fire had put an end to the brothers' plan. The plane was shot down over Germany. The crew was reported missing. Vinnie's body was not found until December 27, off the coast of Sweden. "It was very hard losing a brother in the war. I was the last one in our family to see him. Vinnie had a little boy back home that he only got to see twice. It really was tough on his wife and his mother. I just wish his son was able to know his father. That's the kind of toll the war had on people. Many innocent people were killed during the war."

It was very hard for Edward and his family to get through Vinnie's death. But the war went on and Edward was shipped to France. Five days after the allies invaded Normandy on June 6, 1944, his troops were sent there to set up a transportation and maintenance depot. This was to keep the invasion moving forward. They arrived at Chateau De Vincennes, two miles outside of Paris. "We arrived there the day the allies took Paris," told Edward.

By now another brother, Frank was in the war. He was in the Army, stationed at West Point. At this point, five White boys had served in the war. For the next two months, Allied troops occupied what had been German headquarters on the Champs-Élysées. After the place was cleared of enemy snipers and the city got back to normal, a replacement depot was formed. On May 7, 1945, Germany surrendered. "I'll never forget that day, but the war wasn't over yet. There was still a war going on in the Far East. I was going to be sent back to the States for 30 days and then I would be sent to the Far East to fight the war there. I was glad to be going home even if it was only for a month."

INTERVIEW WITH EJ WHITE—BROTHER OF JP WHITE (310/381)

Edward left Le Havre, France to land in Newport News, Virginia nine days later. He said, "We were treated with steaks, watermelons, and just about anything we wanted. It was a much better ride on the way back." Once Edward arrived in Virginia he was transferred to Fort Dix by tram. Once he was in Fort Dix he called to let his family know he was on his way home. "I'll never forget the excitement in my mother's voice," he exclaimed.

He remembers walking in his house to be greeted by a happy family. "Most of my friends were still at war. Two of my brothers James and Joey had been discharged. I was very happy to be home."

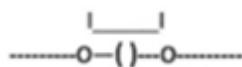
Thirty days later Edward was back on a train to the same Missouri camp he had basic training in. "Then word came over the radio that Japan had surrendered. People were going crazy. God had answered my prayers. As soon as I arrived at camp I put in for my discharge. A few days later I was on my way home.

The war had taken a big toll on Edward and his family. There were five brothers in the war. That was half of the family. Edward remembers their house being the only one with five stars in the window. And one star was in gold. Which meant you had lost a son in the war. He remembers his parents being very strong and brave for their sons. However, since five sons went off to war and one did not return, he says, his mother was never the same. "She went downhill from there. It was the turning point in her life. She had just turned 50, and with the loss of a son, it really tore her apart."

There were many changes in the White house during the war years. "My sister-in-law, Gertie, who was married to Vinnie, moved in after the death of my brother. Mom took very good care of Gertie and her son, Edward Felix."

The White boys who were in the war and not married, would send home part of their paychecks to their parents. They tried to help out any way they could. Once Edward's younger brother, Joey, sent home enough money (\$300) for their parents to buy the house they had been renting for 10 years on East 47th Street. "I think we were very mature for our age. We were between the ages of 18 and 23 and we had a lot of responsibility. I don't think kids today could handle as much. When I read the letters that my brothers and I wrote to each other and to our parents, I can see the love and compassion that we shared for each other."

When I asked Mr. White if the war taught him anything he responded, "To trust in your loved ones and God and to be strong and not to be afraid to show your emotions. War is an experience that I hope no other generation has to go through. It was a time in my life that I will never forget. I thank God every night that I made it through the war. And I also pray for world peace.



FLYING #4 POSITION

Gerald D. Gronley served as a pilot with the 488th Bomb Squadron. He received an Air Medal, and Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) for his service. Long after the war he wrote a memoir so that his family would have a record of his wartime experiences. His family has generously shared that memoir with us. Following are extracts from that document.

I flew twenty-seven missions as co-pilot. Thirty-eight missions were flown as first pilot—the last thirty of them as element leader. I was promoted to First Lieutenant on January 10, 1945.

As element leader I flew in the number four position in a box of six planes. The element leader takes the place of the flight leader in the event that he was unable to complete the mission. It was quite different from flying any of the other positions, because the other five planes in the formation constrict the number four position in the formation. It is boxed in the middle of the pack and the pilot must, at all times, be aware of the proximity movements of the other five planes. His only escape is down. It is also the “bull’s-eye” spot for anti-aircraft fire. It is also physically painful to fly that position. Because of its proximity to number one plane, the pilot’s head is tilted back and he is looking thru the top window above the main windshield. His neck muscles began to tire after a while. It is well to share time with the co-pilot, but not on the bomb run from the IP (initial point) to the target. At that time, you are tucked in close enough under #1 to count the rivets, and the wings of #5 and #6 are overlapping yours. That is the most dangerous time of the flight from the standpoint of a possible mid-air collision, particularly in rough air that was not unusual over the Brenner Pass Mountains in northern Italy. Radical movements cannot be tolerated. Confidence in the other pilots in the box is a must.

Briefing over, we again loaded up on the 2 1/2-ton trucks and were taken to the respective “hardstands”, where the planes were parked, and met with the assigned gunners. Each crew was made up of different pilots, bombardiers and gunners for each mission. The pilot and co-pilot took a walk around the plane checking vital points on a pre-flight check. We usually had ten or fifteen minutes for a “bull-session” and time for those who found it necessary, to relieve themselves in the nearby bushes for the last time before takeoff. We had only relief tubes aboard the planes.

It’s time to climb aboard, put on the Mae West life vest after checking the CO2 inflation cylinders, put on the seat-pack parachute, check the rip-chord; then snap on the flak vest over the chute, fasten the seat belt, and plug in the throat mike and earphones. Both hatches are then secured. Pilot and co-pilot run thru the cockpit checklist. Both windows are opened. It’s time to start the engines. Turn on the energizer and primary switches, throttles cracked, propeller control full-forward, mixture full-rich. Shout out the window to the ground crew, “clear left” and hit the starter switch. The propeller turns and the engine starts loudly, belching out a cloud of smoke. I will never forget that sound. The same procedure is followed for the right engine. It’s a time of anticipation. The whole plane seems to be alive, energized and eager to get going.



FLYING #4 POSITION (CONTINUED)

A few minutes from the IP (initial point) the bombardier, over the interphone, alerts the pilot.

Sometimes the IP is approached coming out of a final turn. This change of direction makes it a bit more difficult for enemy anti-aircraft batteries to zero in and begin firing. The beginning of the bomb run has begun. By the time the IP is reached all planes are pulled in tight to affect a tight bombing pattern, thus maximizing hits on 22-foot-wide bridges. During the final 10 seconds everything must be rigidly set to fly straight and level so that the lead bombardier can “zero-in” the cross hairs of the Norden Bombsight on the target. From the standpoint of being hit by anti-aircraft fire, this is the most dangerous and vulnerable time of the flight. It gives the enemy gunners time to “zero-in” when no evasive action is permitted.

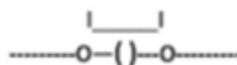
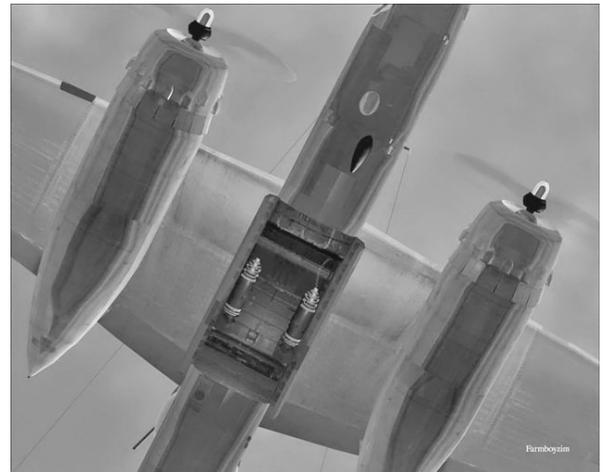
Usually, when flak was encountered, it began appearing before the IP and intensified as the target was approached. Flak helmets were put on as soon as flak began appearing, or before, if it was predetermined that we would be fired upon. Engine instruments and fuel gauges were checked, and it was the job of the co-pilot to monitor them on the bomb run. The attention of the pilot was transfixed on the plane he was flying off of.

Upon reaching the IP, the bomb bay doors were opened. As pilot in the #4 position, I could see the bombs inside of the #1 plane. When released they would wobble slightly and drop in front of our nose, with an initial velocity of 200 mph so there was no danger of collision with them. The lead bombardier would give the command for all bombardiers in the flight to drop their bombs. The simultaneous action of each plane dropping four thousand pounds at once would result in all planes thrusting upward.

It was not unusual to encounter flak and return home with a few holes in the plane, to the point that it became somewhat routine---until my 33rd mission. Our target on that mission was a railroad bridge at Chiari, Italy. I was flying in the number four position for the first time as element leader. I was, therefore, probably more tense than usual, having a plane on each wing and having to hold a very steady position. This all factored into ensuring a compact bomb pattern.

Despite having to focus upward on the number one plane, my peripheral vision caught continuous bursts of flak on the bomb run. I didn't realize we had been hit until we went into evasive action and cleared the target area. In checking the instruments, it was evident that the oil pressure in the starboard engine was dropping, indicating that the oil system had been hit. I alerted the crew on the interphone of the problem, and advised them to keep their head phones on in the event that they needed to be given emergency instructions. Luckily, the pressure stabilized, without red-lining, long enough to enable us to get back to our base. We landed safely with a disabled engine. The cause of the damage and decrease of oil pressure turned out to be a piece of shrapnel about three inches long and three quarters of an inch square that hit an oil push rod. The crew chief brought it to me the next day. I kept it as a souvenir for years but somehow, in our moves, it got lost, along with my dog tags. The ground crew immediately surveyed the damage and counted forty-five holes in the plane. We were very lucky that none of the crew had been hit. Three missions later I was assigned to fly as element leader for the remainder of my missions.

After each mission we were debriefed and then given a shot of whiskey by our squadron doctor, Captain Marino.



EVASIVE ACTION

By Bob Stangier, Pilot 310th BG, 381st BS

and Dan Setzer

Bombers took “evasive action” as they approached the target, then, for three to five harrowing minutes, they flew straight and steady as the bombardier lined up on the target. After “bombs away” someone would yell, “Let’s get the hell out of here,” and evasive action would resume.

What were they evading, and how, exactly, did evasive action work?

The first part is easy... They were trying to evade the German 88mm canon shells screaming up at them from the gun batteries on the ground.

The second part, “evasive action” is more complex.

Here is how Joseph Heller described evasive action in his novel, *Catch-22*. Yossarian, the bombardier, is calling the shots to McWatt, the pilot.

“Climb!” he screamed into the intercom at McWatt when he saw he was still alive. *“Climb, you bastard! Climb, climb, climb, climb!”*

The plane zoomed upward again in a climb that was swift and straining, until he leveled it out with another harsh shout at McWatt and wrenched it around once more in a roaring, merciless forty-five-degree turn that sucked his insides out in one enervating sniff and left him floating fleshless in mid-air until he leveled McWatt out again just long enough to hurl him back around toward the right and then down into a screeching dive. (1)

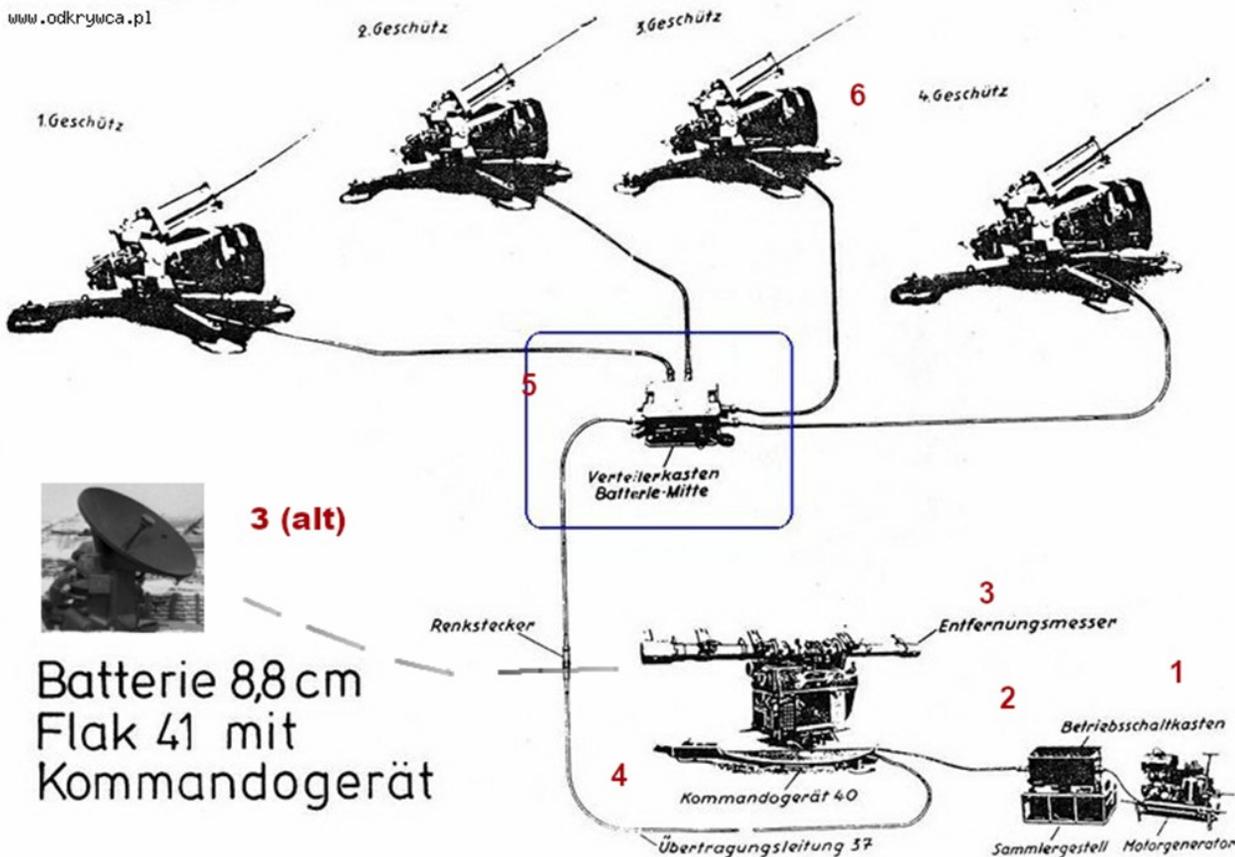
Clearly this is a wild, yet hilarious, exaggeration of how evasive action actually worked.

To fully understand how evasive action worked we have to see how the German artillery men went about laying the guns. “Laying a gun” is a technical term which refers to the process of aiming an artillery piece.

WWII is known as a conflict with some very unique weaponry. However, one of the most ambitious projects was the V-3 cannon, a gigantic machine that could hurl projectiles from Germany across the sea into England. Instead of using rockets like the V-2, the V-3 would be a stationary cannon that could shoot projectiles at distances of up to 100 miles across the sea from mainland Europe into the United Kingdom. Luckily, the cannon was never completed due to bombing runs destroying it before completion.

EVASIVE ACTION (CONTINUED)

This is a diagram of a typical German anti-aircraft battery:



The components are:

1. Electrical Generator

2. Control Box

3. Stereoscopic Range Finder

3 (alt). Some batteries substituted a radar for the stereoscopic range finder. However, it was considered to be less accurate than the manual range finder.

4. Mechanical Analog Command Computer

5. Signal Distribution Box

6. Gun Batteries

In order to hit a moving target you need to know the distance, altitude, speed and direction of flight.

The Entfernungsmesser, or range finder, was the heart of the operation. It was operated by a crew of five men. Each measured a different parameter by tweaking dials on the device. The data was relayed to an analog computer which would calculate where the target would be when the artillery shell exploded.

EVASIVE ACTION (CONTINUED)

The computer sent the settings to gauges on the guns, and the men laying the guns would match the settings in order to point the gun at the target spot. The men loading shells into the breach of the gun would set timers on the shells to explode at the expected target point.



Bundesarchiv, Bild 1011-301-1957-16
Foto: Kurth | 1944 Sommer

Figure 1: Operating the Optical Range Finder for a Flak 88

It sounds complicated, and it was, but the process was very fast. The Flak 88 could fire 15 rounds per minute.

Hitting a target depended upon predicting where the target would be when the round reached it and exploded.

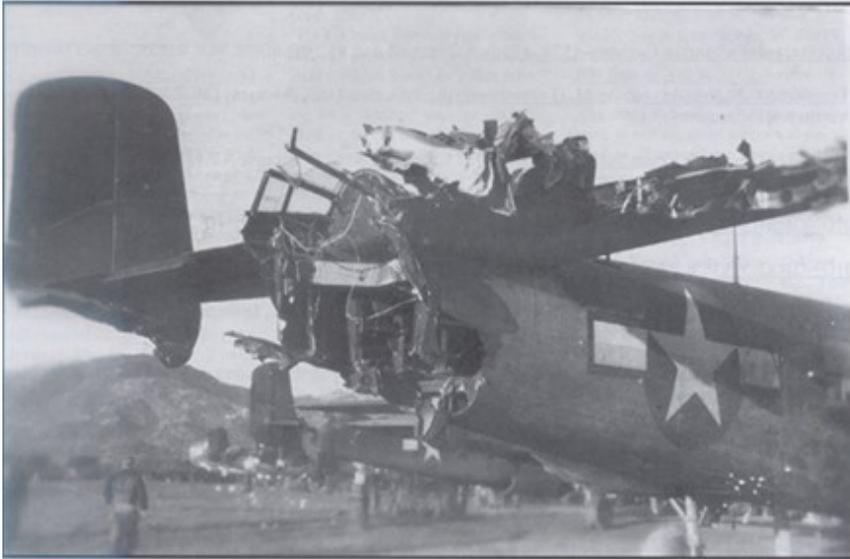
The 88 round traveled at a rate of 1000 feet per second. So, if the aircraft were flying at an altitude of 10,000 feet, the round would take ten seconds to find the target.

Now let us ascend up to the altitude of the bomber formations.

Once the pilot enters within range of the guns, he knows he is being tracked, and the German fire control system is trying to predict where he will be ten seconds from now.

[Continued on page 26]

WE GIVE THANKS TO THE CREW CHIEFS AND CREWS THAT KEPT THE B-25 FLYING!



The men of the 57th BW pay tribute to the maintenance and service crews and to the combat flight crews that took the B-25 into battle.

This photo speaks volumes as this aircraft was able to land back at its home base after suffering incredible damage. We also thank the men and woman who built the B-25.

Tail Gunner

Radio Gunner

Top Gunner

Pilots

Armourers

Bombardier

Refueling

Crew Chiefs

Pilots = Pilotes
 Bombardier = Bombardier
 Radio Gunner = Radio mitrailleur
 Top Gunner = Mitrailleur Dorsale
 Tail Gunner = Mitrailleur de queue
 Crew Chiefs = Mécaniciens
 Armourers = Armuriers
 Refueling = Essencier

TECH NOTES

NORTH AMERICAN B-25B MITCHELL

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINES

Two 1,700-hp Wright R-2600-9
Twin Cyclone 14-cylinder
air-cooled radials

WINGSPAN

67 feet 6 inches

LENGTH

53 feet

HEIGHT

16 feet 6 inches

WEIGHT

20,000 lbs. (empty)

31,000 lbs. (maximum)

SPEED

328 mph (maximum)

233 mph (cruise)

CEILING

21,200 feet

FUEL

692 gallons, with provision for
one 420-gallon drop tank

RANGE

2,500 miles

ARMAMENT

One .30-caliber machine
gun flexibly mounted in
nose, two .50-caliber
machine guns in one
dorsal Bendix turret and
two .50-caliber machine
guns in a remote-control
ventral turret



DOOLITTLE RAIDER

B-25B serial no. 40-2297
(right) heads to Eglin Field in
Florida for training. It would
be 14th off *Hornet's* deck
during the Doolittle Raid.
To save weight, Doolittle's
Mitchells featured a simple
bombsight in place of the
Norden, dummy tail guns
fashioned from broomsticks
and did not carry ventral or
nose guns, as shown in John
Batchelor's illustration.

REMOVABLE
WING TIP

FABRIC-
COVERED
RUDDER

RUDDER
TAB

VERTICAL
STABILIZER

DUMMY TAIL GUNS

HORIZONTAL
STABILIZER

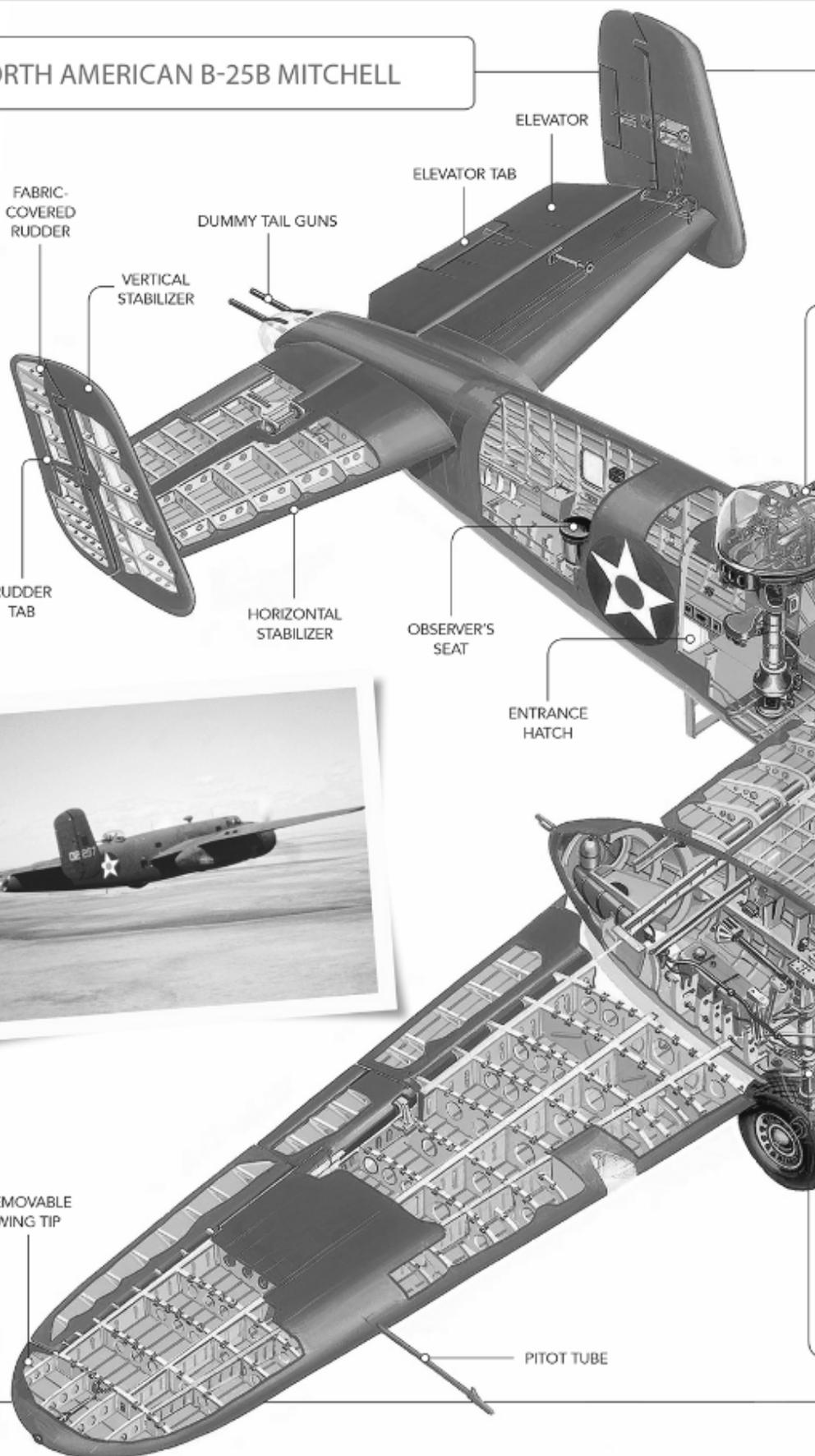
ELEVATOR TAB

ELEVATOR

OBSERVER'S
SEAT

ENTRANCE
HATCH

PITOT TUBE



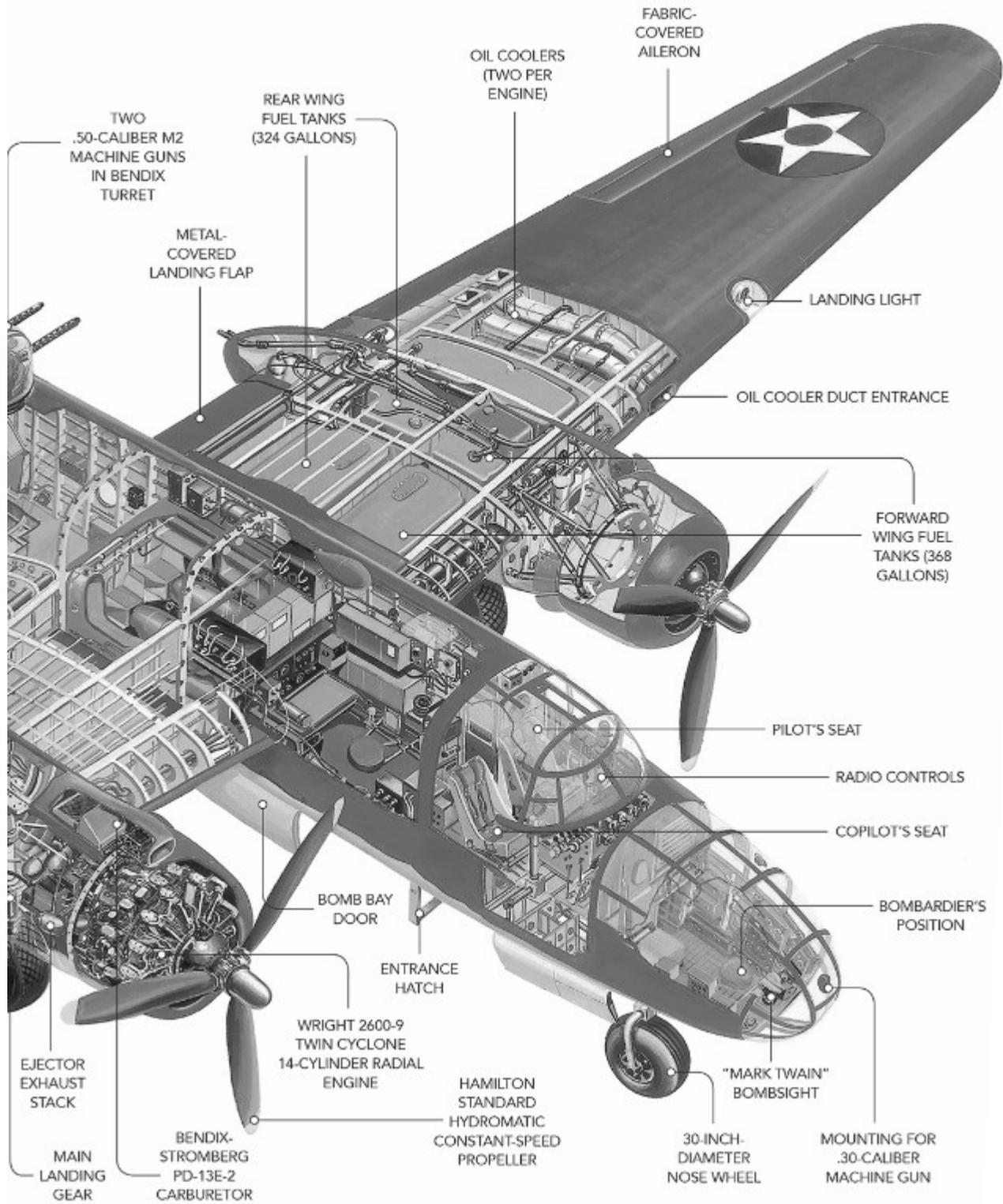


ILLUSTRATION ©JOHN BATCHELOR. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
 PHOTO COURTESY OF FRED BAMBERGER

Source:

<https://www.historynet.com/the-mighty-mitchell-how-b-25s-became-one-of-the-most-essential-aircraft-in-wwii/>

EVASIVE ACTION (CONTINUED)

The pilot makes a course change to the left. If he is lucky, he will see the German shells exploding off to his right. But now, the analog computer is continuing to track him and is sending another prediction to the gun crews.

He maintains his course for ten seconds, then alters course again to the right, and perhaps drops down a few hundred feet in altitude. Maintain that course for ten seconds, then climb while making another turn.

Continue this zigzag, up-down routine while taking care not to stray too far from alignment with the target.

At the Initial Point (IP) of the bomb run, he must now abandon evasive action and fly straight and steady to the target. The bombardier needs three to five minutes to sight the target.

During this time the bombers are the most vulnerable.

There is also another complication for the bomber crews. Unlike Joseph Heller's description where his aircraft is careening all over the sky, the real bombers are flying in a tight, six-plane box. They must maintain the formation while executing the evasive action.

Bob Stangier's technique was to align his view of the lead ship with a blemish on the windshield, or a paint fleck on the rim of the window. As the lead ship made its course corrections he would try to hold his view of the lead ship in line with the marker he had chosen.

In the 321st BG, pilot Dan Bowling and bombardier Joe Silnutzer developed their own evasive action method.

Bowling recalled: "Joe and I decided that the only way to survive our missions was by performing evasive action. We practiced many times on the bomb range. We would fly a certain compass heading to the practice target circle, then turn ten to fifteen degrees right or left, then change again to a different compass heading and immediately change to the exact course to target. Joe's timing with that Norden sight was so accurate that we would only need to spend thirty to forty seconds straight and level to the target." What Silnutzer learned to do was feed in these evasive maneuvers to the computer in the bomb sight.

"When I was out front ahead of everyone else, they had to do what I did, so they followed me. I could look out just after we changed course and see a barrage of flak go off right where we would have been had we continued on. Then we'd turn and there would be another barrage go off where we would have been. When we turned on to the bomb run, the gunners were so confused they didn't have the time to put up that last volley before we dropped and broke formation." (2)

The B-25 had a range of 1,350 miles (2,175 km), a maximum speed of about 300 miles (480 km) per hour, and a ceiling of 24,000 feet (7,300 metres). It could carry 3,000 pounds (1,360 kg) of bombs internally in the bomb bay and more externally on underwing racks.

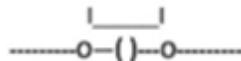
EVASIVE ACTION (CONTINUED)

We have been using 10,000 feet altitude just as an example. The timing would be adjusted for the actual altitude for the bombing run. In the town of Ala in the Brenner pass, the German batteries were installed at a height of nearly 3,000 feet above the valley floor. This gave the gunners a 3-second advantage.

Hank Del Percio, tail gunner 340th BG 487th BS, once “*assured*” me that at some places in the Brenner Pass the German guns were mounted so high on the mountainside that they were actually shooting down on the passing bomber formations. Good ol’ Hank sure knew how to tell a story.

Notes:

- (1) Heller, Joseph *Catch-22* Simon and Schuster 1961 Page 147
- (2) Cleaver, Thomas *Gothic Line* 1944-45 Osprey Publishing 2022 Page 26



LT. COL. PAUL L. YOUNG (321/445) - USAF (RETIRED)

B-25J PILOT – 12th AAC – 57th BOMB WING

TOTAL of 57 MISSIONS, November 44 – April 45

(Revised by Jerry Lester, Yankee Air Museum B-25D Historian/57th Bomb Wing Associate Member)

Lt. Col. Paul L. Young, now 101 (May 20th 2022) years old, remembers a lot about the events in his life as a B-25J pilot. “When the flak popped underneath, the plane would jump. You’d feel it, hear it, and smell it. See the bursts outside the window. You knew they were getting close.”

Paul was born in a small town in Indiana and graduated from Evansville Central H.S. in January 1940. Attended Evansville College to study mortuary science. After the attack on Pearl Harbor the draft was instituted, and he knew he was going to be drafted. “I didn’t want to walk carrying a heavy pack,” he remembers, and enlisted in the Army Air Corps after completing collage in 1942. “I had never been in a plane and didn’t know anything about them,” Paul has been quoted as saying many times.

Paul was assigned to the AAC glider training program before the military closed the program. Having passed the rigorous physical and mental tests he was sent into cadet training to be a bomber pilot at Twenty-Nine Palms, Calif., then to advanced training at Fort Sumner, N.M. He piloted a B-25 for the first time at Mather Field, Sacramento, Calif. In January 1944 at the age of 23 as a 2nd Lt., Paul was assigned to the MTO as part of the 445th Bomb Squadron which bombed bridges, enemy



troops concentrations, gun positions and rail lines in northern Italy. Paul flew a total of **57 missions**, starting his first mission on 11/06/43 through his last mission 04/25/45. Recent research shows the Paul flew at least 16 different aircraft during his time with the 445th BS. His favorite was named “Heaven Can Wait” 44-28928 because he heard it was a “lucky plane to fly”. His bombing runs lasted anywhere from 1 ½ hours to 4 hours 45 minutes. The longest break he had between his missions was 11 days. He flew missions over northern Italy, Austria, and Yugoslavia with 445th BS.

Regarding the B-25J Mitchell, Paul says. “She was a dandy to fly, noisy but very air worthy. She took a lot of punishment”. His planes often returned with holes in the fuselage from anti- aircraft fire. His bomb loads could consist of 250- or 500- or 1000- pound bombs. Max bomb load for the B-25J was 4000 pounds. There were times when his co-pilot had to help work the rudder controls because they were partially shot up. Paul recalls another mission that required one of his crew to volunteer to climb down

LT. COL. PAUL L. YOUNG- 321/445 (CONTINUED)

into the bomb bay to release a bomb that had hung up nose down. The arming propeller on the front of bomb was spinning which meant it had been activated. His crew member was able to manually kick the bomb loose while Paul headed over the Mediterranean Sea before landing safely. In Paul's words, "That was scary!"

After leaving active service, he married his wife Ruby in 1947 and moved to Kendallville, IN where he was in sales for McCray Refrigeration for 23 years and then sold school supplies, retiring in 1986. He retired from the U.S. Air Force Reserves in 1971 after 29 years at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Paul proudly displays his WWII Distinguished Flying Cross awarded to him on June 9, 1945, for actions during the mission on April 23, 1945 and his heroic performance, under "intense anti-aircraft fire," and displaying "great courage and superior flying ability."

As mentioned earlier, Paul's favorite B-25J was 44-28928 "Heaven Can Wait". Its memory lives on in the form of daily recognition of his outstanding WWII military record. Paul's granddaughter, with her husband, owns/operates a contracting company in Ludlow S.D. (YOUNG GUN CONSTRUCTION) which proudly includes a trucking company called "HEAVEN CAN WAIT Trucking" with accompanying nose art in honor of her grandfather. How cool is that?



Paul L. Young, Bluffton, IN

EMAILS TO THE EDITOR

AMAZING COINCIDENCE

Kevin White <kevinjwhite@yahoo.com>

Thu, Jan 13, 2011 at 3:19 AM

To: vjwhite57@gmail.com

Hi VJ,

I happened across your webpage tribute to your dad's WWII service. I congratulate you on the fine job you have done. I felt compelled to write you because of the eerie coincidence. I had two uncles who were aviators in the war - they were brothers-in-law - from Asheville NC. One flew with the 381st BS of the 310th BG, until his crew was lost February 8, 1943, on a mission from Algeria to Sicily. The other flew with the 322nd BS of the 91st BG, and probably arrived at Bassingbourn about the time your uncle was lost - perhaps even in the replacement crew. He completed his tour and died in 1988. These two units have of course always been of particular interest to me, and I had not dreamed there might be another person with the identical interest for almost the same reason.

Again, my thanks for perpetuating the memory of what those fellows did for us all. It should never be forgotten.

Regards,
Kevin White

VJ White <vjwhite57@gmail.com>

Thu, Jan 13, 2011 at 8:07 AM To: Kevin White <kevinjwhite@yahoo.com>

Wow! What a strange coincidence, Kevin.

Thanks for your interest and the message, cuz ;-) I also run the 57th Bomb Wing website. The 310th Bomb Group history files are being transcribed from squadron, army air corps and personal histories. We're up to May '43. You can view them here:

<http://57thbombwing.com/310thHistory/310thindex.php>

The digitized 381st squadron histories, which are very detailed compared to the 15 other 57th BW squadrons, are also available on the website. In addition, the 91st Bomb Group also has a searchable site with many personal accounts. Using google search, a website search can be performed like this:

site:www.91stbombgroup.com_Vincent A. White [*Editor's note Google Sigh Search is no longer free*].

Also try typing in your uncle's name on 57thbombwing.com. A site search may not uncover all the citations, though. Many of the digitized squadron histories are pdf files that were scanned from the microfiche versions. Some pages are unreadable. Others will not yield reliable search results. What are your uncles' names?

Take care and best regards,
VJ (Vinny) White

EMAILS TO THE EDITOR

Kevin White <kevinjwhite@yahoo.com>
Thu, Jan 13, 2011 at 8:51 PM
To: VJ White <vjwhite57@gmail.com>

Hi Cousin Vinnie ;),

Yet another coincidence, I believe. My White ancestors were from Scotland, I believe, and first settled in northeastern NC, in an area still called Scotland Neck, in the 1700s. My branch moved here to western NC, where I still am, around 1900. Asheville is the metropolis of the area, and the highest mountains east of the Mississippi are here - its a beautiful place. A childhood visit to the battleship USS North Carolina led to my discovery of the mothball fleet, which made Bayonne a place of great wonder to me, but I never got to visit. I have been past a few times - my mom lived on Long Island for a number of years.

I had found the 57th Bomb Wing site, but had not realized that was also your work. I commend you for preserving this history, and for all the work you have obviously put into it.

My uncle who flew with the 322nd BS/91st BG was TSgt Thomas Alan Rickman. He finished his tour in May 1944, flying a number of missions on a B-17G named Fifinella. He returned to Asheville after the war, and eventually retired from the NOAA's National Weather Records Center, which was located here. During the war the Army had taken over a large structure downtown, probably one of the nation's first indoor shopping malls, and it was called locally by old-timers the "weather wing". He died in 1988, and seldom spoke of the war.

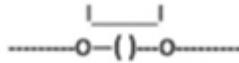
My uncle who flew with the 381st BS/310th BG was TSgt James H. McHarge. He was 24 when he tried to enlist the day after Pearl Harbor. The local recruiting office had run out of forms, and he had to return the next day to sign up. Before he left he gave my mother, who was a young girl, a small teddy bear for Christmas. They put it on the Christmas tree, with the gift tag he had attached still in place, and its been on our tree every year since. He was able to complete training as a sergeant-bombardier, before the AAF made the decision that it took an officer to drop the bombs, and he flew in that position. His crew called their B-25 The Cobra. I have a crew photo, with last names only written on the back. I have never written for a MACR, but I should. I did write the National Archives some years ago and they sent what they had, basically two letters. The first was a form letter, sent to the families of the thirteen men lost February 8, 1943. Two planes went down that day, and one was carrying seven men, no hint of why. The letter had been redacted, but this was done by marking through the names of the other men with a Magic Marker, and if held at an angle to the light the names of the other men could be discerned. All the men pictured in the crew of The Cobra were lost. The other letter was written two years later to the day, changing the status of the men from MIA to Presumed KIA. Family lore has it that a squadron mate visited after the war and said that perhaps two chutes were seen, fueling hope as long as my grandmother lived. There is a marker for Jim in the cemetery here, beside his mom, and he is commemorated on the Tablets of the Missing in the ABMC Cemetery in Algeria. I discovered an account of the bombing mission I presume he was lost on in the microfilm of the local paper. Apparently, the target was oil storage tanks at Palermo. I guess Jim and the Cobra, with the rest of the crew, are still under the Mediterranean somewhere between.

EMAILS TO THE EDITOR

Asheville was of course the home of Colonel Robert Morgan, pilot of the Memphis Belle of the 323rd Squadron. Morgan ultimately retired here, and died a few years ago in the local hospital. When the Belle was flown back to the states the crew took her on a bond tour, visiting the hometown of each crew member, and the old airport (now an industrial park) where the Belle touched down here is a mile or two from where I live. When they were leaving, Morgan flew the Belle between the City Hall (12 stories) and the County Courthouse (15 stories). There's only maybe 100 feet between these two tall buildings, and he had to stand the Belle on one wing to get through. And Beaucatcher Mountain is maybe half a mile beyond, so I am sure he was straining mightily to pull her up and over. Of course, he got in no trouble at all for this wild stunt, what with the tenor of the times. I am sure he scared a lot of people downtown out of their wits though. I am almost certain Morgan and my uncles would not have known one another - Morgan went to an exclusive private school, while my uncles were public school guys, and Alan Rickman was quite a bit older anyway. Morgan lived in Biltmore Forest while growing up, a most exclusive subdivision developed by our local Vanderbilt and adjoining his Estate.

Thanks again for all your work, and I look forward to seeing what I can find on your site. If I find anything worthwhile on my own I'll forward it to you for inclusion if you think it suitable.
Regards,

Kevin White



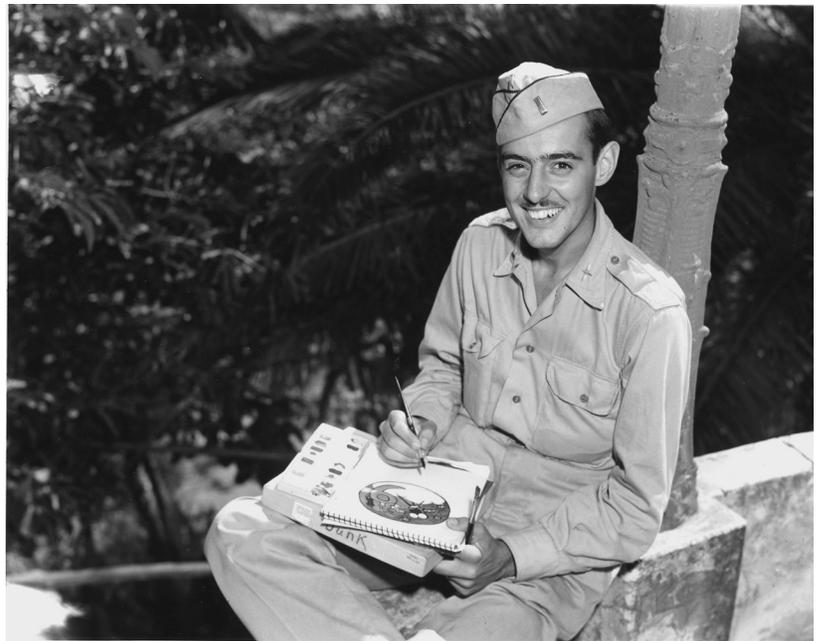
Dominique Taddei

June 18 at 3:12 PM · 🌐

To my American friends from the 57th Bomb Wing.

July 8th to December 25, the museum of Bastia Corsica will present an exhibit entitled " Corsicans in WWII" the poster is this one and you see 1st Lt Wilbur T Blume who was in the 321st BG of Solenzara and then to the 340th BG of Alesani as the officer in charge of the 9th CCU (Combat Camera Unit). In putting

an American officer, the Corsicans want to honor the USAAF presence in the island of Corsica. We will never forget them. Furthermore you see a B-25 Mitchell, according to me she was the 9N (489th BS 340th BG) . The 57th Bomb Wing is honored.



[Continued on page 37]

MONKEY BUSINESS

By Dan Setzer (Son of Sgt. Hymie Setzer, 340th BG HQ)

At the last reunion our Association President, Dick Reed (486th BS), entertained us with a story about a mission he was on wherein a crew member brought along his pet monkey.

The mission was a milk run, fortunately, no expected flak or fighters to contend with. According to Dick's story, as they approached the target Dick, as bombardier, was busy lining up with the target. As he called "Bombs Away" a crew member climbed up onto the bomb bay and peered down into it, presumably, to make sure none of the bombs got hung up in the bomb bay, which could be a major problem upon landing.

As he checked out the bomb drop, he saw the hapless monkey sitting on one of the bombs looking up at him, just as Dick hit the button to release them. Bye, bye monkey!

Today we would view having a monkey as a pet in camp, or on board a noisy B-25 to be an act of cruelty. But those were different, in some ways more innocent times. For most of the boys, a monkey would be a huge novelty. The city boys might occasionally see an organ grinder with a monkey on the sidewalks of a big city, or maybe, if the city were big enough, at the zoo. However, the country boys and the small-town boys might never have seen a live monkey, except, maybe when the circus came to town.

The very idea of actually owning their own monkey would be an irresistible temptation for many of the guys. As the ground echelon of the 340th Bomb Group made its way across the Pacific Ocean on the way to North Africa, the ship made a stop in Bombay, present day Mumbai, India. Here is what the author of the War Diary had to say about the stop:

March 21, 1943

Ship docked at Bombay, India

Sunday was allotted to the other half of the men who didn't get ashore yesterday. However, many of our group managed to slip out with other groups and get a second crack at souvenir-hunting and foul liquor. Trinkets of ivory, jade, brass, and of every description, as well as large British sunhats, web shirts, and shorts, and Indian sandals (Also Indian skull caps) whips, canes, and more damned junk than in a dime store, all came back to the boat. Monkeys, parrots, coconuts, and other commodities, forbidden aboard ship, were deposited ashore by the gang-plank.

India, of course, was not the only place where a GI could pick up a monkey. The air echelons making their way to the MTO via the Southern Route made multiple stops in South America. Here is a photo from an old issue of our Newsletter:



Is this a picture of a frightened copilot on a combat mission? Ans. A Brazilian Monkey on its way to Ascension Island.

MONKEY BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

Needless to say, North Africa would also be a place where monkeys could be found for sale in the bazaars.

Dogs were another popular pet that gave some measure of comfort to men who had been away from home for a long time. Sometimes those pets had a chance to interact. Sterling Ditchey, (310th BG) captured one of those magic moments:

Picture taken by Bonhan E. Cross of a pet monkey and hound-dog, both mascots at the 310th Bomb group.



Sgt. Joseph T. Domsic (489th BS) provided us with a glamour shot of Suzie:



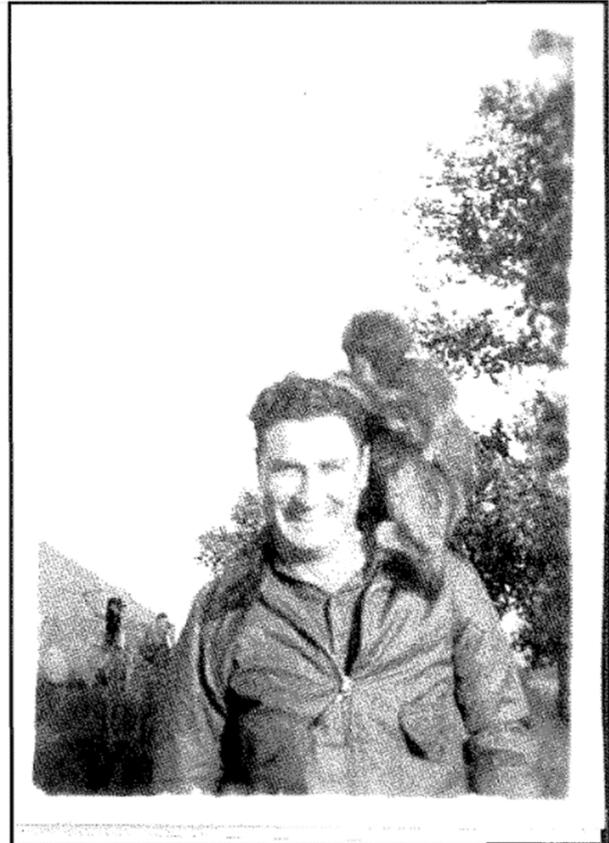
MONKEY BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

The relationships between the GI's and the simians was not always amicable.

The son of Thomas Seabolt (489th BS), Matthew, shared this photo with us along with commentary:

“I have attached a few photos to jog a few memories. The monkey on Dad’s shoulder belonged to another soldier that had a tent close to Dad’s. Dad wasn’t very happy with the monkey when he returned from a mission one day and found the monkey in his tent eating his last candy bar.”

Others seemed less than comfortable when confronted with our evolutionary cousins to judge by the expressions on the human’s faces. The expressions on the monkeys’ faces are harder to read.



Edward Betts (379th BS)



Dan Beagan (489th BS)

MONKEY BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

Here is an extract from the War Diary of the 381st Bomb Squadron:

Tuesday, 18 July 1944.

Pfc. "Mr." James W. Potts is at it again. He threw a neat deal this A.M., purchasing on credit from Sgt. R. L. Dedrick a small monkey for a mere song, said song being rumoured to be in the neighbourhood of 5,000 francs. "Potts" fell in love with the monkey at first sight. It's a cute little thing, full grown and so tiny that it will fit in the palm of a man's hand. Some people are of the opinion that there is a striking resemblance between the monkey and its new master. However, that's a matter of opinion. And here's something "Potts" doesn't know: That although he is going to pay the equivalent of 100 American Dollars for his new pet, it will be all profit for Sgt. Dedrick, as Dedrick got the monkey from a French Soldat for a carton of cigarettes. Wait till "Mr." Potts finds out about that!

August 5, 1944

Pfc. "Mister" Potts has finally decided that it is not to his best interests to maintain a monkey for a pet. Not only does it disturb his dog "Patsy", but "Mister" Potts considers his time too valuable to be spent in chasing the grasshoppers which form 90% of the monkey's diet. Furthermore, he is a farsighted man, and looks ahead to the day when the grasshopper season will be over. Having mused over the situation for several days, "Pottsie" returned the animal to Sgt. Dedrick, with apologies which are rumoured to have been followed by a skirmish of angry words, but "Mister" Potts had the upper hand, as he had not as yet made any payments on the monkey's hundred-dollar cost price. And so, Sgt. Dedrick who is out a nice profit can be seen during his free hours chasing grasshoppers in the vineyard near his quarters, and quietly muttering in his beard.

August 15, 1944

Sgt. Dedrick's monkey died this afternoon from unknown causes. A few of Sgt. Dedrick's friends assisted him at a very informal funeral, which was not attended by "Mister" Potts. "I seen enough of the ugly little critter", Pottsie was heard to remark. "Don't see why I ought to go to its burial, No Sir! Now that time back in Jersey City when I went to old Mrs. McDougall's wake --" Pottsie devoted the next quarter hour discoursing on the social and intellectual advantages of attending Irish Wakes, especially when they are held in Jersey.



Photo Credit: Wikipedia Commons

STORIES FROM THE 57TH BWA FACEBOOK GROUP

[Continued from page 32]

Here is the new museum of Bastia's exhibition poster/announcement,
July 8th to December 23, 2023.

L'EXPOSITION ÉVÈNEMENT



CORSICA

8 juillet
23 décembre
2023

**Museu
di Bastia**

39-45

Les Corses
et la Deuxième
Guerre mondiale
(1939-1945)

© 2023 - 04 97 60 00 00

Bastia
CITÀ DI CULTURA

Settimana

bleu

Storia Corsica

SENTINELLE

STORIES FROM THE 57TH BWA FACEBOOK GROUP - B-25 DESIRABLE

Derek Harris

I wonder if he [1st Lt Wilbur T Blume (321/&340)] was involved in filming this series of training films: (4th reel of 7)

<https://youtu.be/zSAxuWYETck>

Dominique Taddei

Derek Harris, yes he was the movie director of the 9 videos Training during Combat.

Seimon Pugh-Jones

Fantastic..I played the part of the combat cameraman in Band of Brothers.. I wish you every success with your project!

Seimon Pugh-Jones

My relative also flew in B25 'Desirable' .out of Corsica...keep me posted.

Author

Seimon Pugh-Jones - Thank you so much, this is the result of 27 years of work about the 57th Bomb Wing. It's a kind of award and I'll add two books " USS Corsica" and "We Corsicans" but also a short movie entitled "We Corsicans."



John Lund

That's my Father's plane (#43-27805), Crew Chief T/Sgt John L Lund (on the left).

Seimon Pugh-Jones thank you so much.



Seimon Pugh-Jones - Painting I did of Desirables last mission.

STORIES FROM THE 57TH BWA FACEBOOK GROUP - B-25 DESIRABLE

Dominique Taddei I have other pictures...I'll send you:



321st BG, 448th BS,
#43-27805
"Desirable"

321st Bomb Group, 448th Bomb Squad "DESIRABLE" Shot-Down 10 Nov. 1944

448th BS T/Sgt Irving Schaffer Photo



My late father, Sgt. Clarence e Smith (310/381), was a pilot in Corsica. I'll always remember the name of their plane, the Shed House Mouse.



Seimon Pugh-Jones: Griff on the right.

STORIES FROM THE 57TH BWA FACEBOOK GROUP - B-25 DESIRABLE

Seimon Pugh-Jones

Griff on the left, with the big smile..

Fernando Dos Santos Teixeira

1st Lt. Wilbur T. Blume was responsible for the design of the 9th CCU's insignia.



Dominique Taddei

Here is the Nose art of Desirable, she was in the 448th BS 321st BG stationed at Solenzara Corsica.

John Lund

Remembering this day 78 years ago, when my Father's (Crew Chief T/Sgt John Lund 321st BG/448th BS) plane, "Desirable." 43-27805 was shot down in Italy by ground fire.

She is depicted here brilliantly in intricate detail of her final moments by Artist and my good mate from Wales, Seimon Pugh-Jones. Very fortunate to meet him on this group, when he posted a photo of his relative, Sgt. Griffith (Griff) Williams, with my Father in the background!

Griff was a gunner on this final mission. He bailed out and survived along with the rest of the crew. Through detailed information provided by a fellow member, Seimon was able to trace the route he followed with the help of partisans, back to his base.

Together we have bonded and collaborated enormous information regarding this mission from the MACR, eye witness accounts, diaries, and support from the 57th group.

Another bit of irony illustrated in the painting is the "spotter" plane above, The Dutchess #43-4068. It happens to be the ship of my Father's good friend and fellow Crew Chief, Charles Lewis. She was also shot up pretty badly but managed to limp back on one engine where she belly landed at the 310th base.

Salute!

STORIES FROM THE 57TH BWA FACEBOOK GROUP - B-25 DESIRABLE

Seimon Pugh-Jones

On the 15th of April 2020 I had posted on the B25 Mitchell Bomber fans' Facebook page a few pictures that I had in my possession. They were sent to me by my American relative 'Griff' or S/Sgt Griffith Eleazar Williams to give him his full title. A second generation proud American, his Grandparents having emigrated to the States from Mynydd y Garreg, South Wales in the 1890's to Ogden , Utah.

I knew about him, but not much about him. I had always been interested in the subject of WW2 and had been involved in many TV/film projects including 'Saving Private Ryan' and 'Band of Brothers'. After chatting to a Great Uncle who knew 'Griff' and the story that he flew planes in WW2, I was intrigued and wanted to chat with him. WW2 aircraft was also a passion of mine. In the summer of 97 I decided to call him from Wales with the intention of learning more.

His wife Marion answered the phone and we spoke for some time, she told me that Griff was suffering from dementia, she passed the phone to him, the conversation was polite but brief, however I felt that I had least made the effort to connect.

Marion promised to send me some pictures and true to her word they turned up a few weeks later. I studied and cherished the pictures. I also accepted the fact that I probably wasn't going to find much more about his wartime service due to his health condition also, they had lost much memorabilia in a flood.

Over twenty years later and I found myself in Covid lockdown. It was April 2020 and I had time on my hands. I had gone through several boxes of photographs and had come across the photographic copies that Marian had sent me all those years ago. I scanned them and played around with the quality. They looked rather better than I thought they would. I then thought if there was a place on the internet/Face book I could post them, see what happens. Over the years I have had many incredible coincidences happen, probably enough to write a book about, it may happen again, who knows!

WWII was one of the first major conflicts to make use of aviation. There was a massive rush to train new pilots so many of the aviation programs weren't thought out correctly or had enough safety measures in place.

As a result, over 15,000 deaths occurred during pilot training. These were mostly due to pilot error or mechanical failure. It was such a problem that the B-24 bomber was known as the most dangerous plane in the war, receiving the nickname 'the flying coffin'.

To put this into perspective, around 52,000 American flight crew members died in WWII, meaning almost 30% of pilot deaths occurred outside of conflict.

STORIES FROM THE 57TH BWA FACEBOOK GROUP - B-25 DESIRABLE

Seimon Pugh-Jones

I came across the B25 Mitchell Bomber Fan page. I posted the pictures I had and within a day had this reply.

‘My father was Crew Chief on Desirable, looks like it’s him in the background too!!!!

I could not believe it!!!.... A gentleman called John Lund had spotted the picture and identified the aircraft. The cherry on the cake. His father was in one of the pictures. He was carrying a bucket of ‘Prop wash’...lol!!! As John explained.

I just can’t tell you how excited I was after John made contact. Suddenly a wealth of information came flooding through. John directed me to the 57thBomb Wing association Facebook page. From knowing so little, I found myself with a mountain of knowledge in front of me, as I’m a little dyslexic It was quite daunting. So much information, so much I wanted to learn. I even knew the name of the squadron’s mascot dog at this point!!

I was introduced to Barbi Ennis Connolly and had huge support and encouragement from her. I now felt I had something special to investigate further.

My background is photography/TV camerawork and in recent years I ran a small, but quite popular museum in Laugharne, South Wales. I also enjoyed painting.

As I got to know John better, I realized that the wealth of information that came from him and the 57th Bomb Wing association was inspiring me to paint a scene from ‘Desirable’s last mission. Not only would it be a satisfying project/challenge, but it could also supply some extra material for a display that I was planning in our new museum.

Two weeks ago, I started the painting, and today I will finish it... It’s been an amazing journey with daily questions thrown across the pond to John, answers waiting to be read the following morning.

The painting depicts the last few moments of ‘Desirable’ service life , we have endeavored to make it as authentic as possible, if you spot something that’s not right, then please tell me.

When we get our new museum up and running, it will be placed between two mannequins, dressed in original flying gear. (I am still looking for the correct parachute and harness btw). One to represent Griff, the other to represent John’s father.

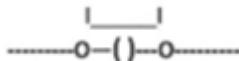
I hope it will be the start of new journey for Desirable, a commemoration to the men who flew in her and were responsible for her. And a tribute to the 57thBomb Wing and their achievements in WW2.

After the war, Griff started his own ‘specialist metals company’ and supplied NASA materials for the first Space Shuttle project.

Would like to thank,

Barbi Ennis Connolly, John Lund. Fabio Venturi, Michel Pestoni and Richard Williams.

— with Brooks Tegler and 6 others



LITTLE KING

This is an extract from an article published in the 2008 Winter edition of the Newsletter, but with a much better photo of the damaged aircraft. The ship from the 380th Bomb Squadron was "Little King." It was the September 14, 1944 mission to Rimini.

The crew that day consisted of:

Pilot Robert E Keane
Co-pilot Arthur E Mohr
Bombardier Byron F Link
Gunner Waist Gunner Alfred C Ames
Radio Gunner Gunner James T Link
Tail Gunner Edward C Martensen

It was then that I was assigned as a tail gunner with a crew that was on a mission to Rimini, Italy. We made our bomb run low. There were Jerry tanks on the side of the hill, on the right side of the river and troops on the ground (like a flood plain area). We dropped our bombs and suddenly all hell broke loose!



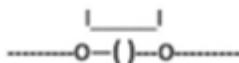
A tremendous wind blew through the aircraft and the pilot racked it up to the right and made a turn. I tried to talk on the intercom but we were all jabbering at the same time. Then the pilot took over and told everyone to stay calm.

What had happened was that the flight above us, and coming in from the opposite direction, had dropped and one of their frag bombs came through the windshield and the co-pilot. He got up, left the bomb in the seat, pulled the hatch under the top turret gunner and bailed out! (I was not aware of it at this time). The turret gunner got down from the turret without falling through the open hatch, went up to the co-pilot's seat and got the bomb, which was armed and threw it out the hatch. The turret gunner then took over as copilot and helped fly and land the aircraft. We made it back safely, and after landing were interrogated. We were then told the whole truth of what happened.

I remember the turret gunner [James T. Link] received the Soldiers Medal for his brave actions.

I don't know how much information you had on the incident when you published the article [in the 2008 Fall edition] about the "Little King's" mission, but I think it rates more than the caption "Oops Sorry." I know because I was there. I lived it."

Yours Truly, Ed Martensen



MORE STORIES FROM THE WEB



Dan Setzer

May 28 · 🌐

380th Bombardment Squadron

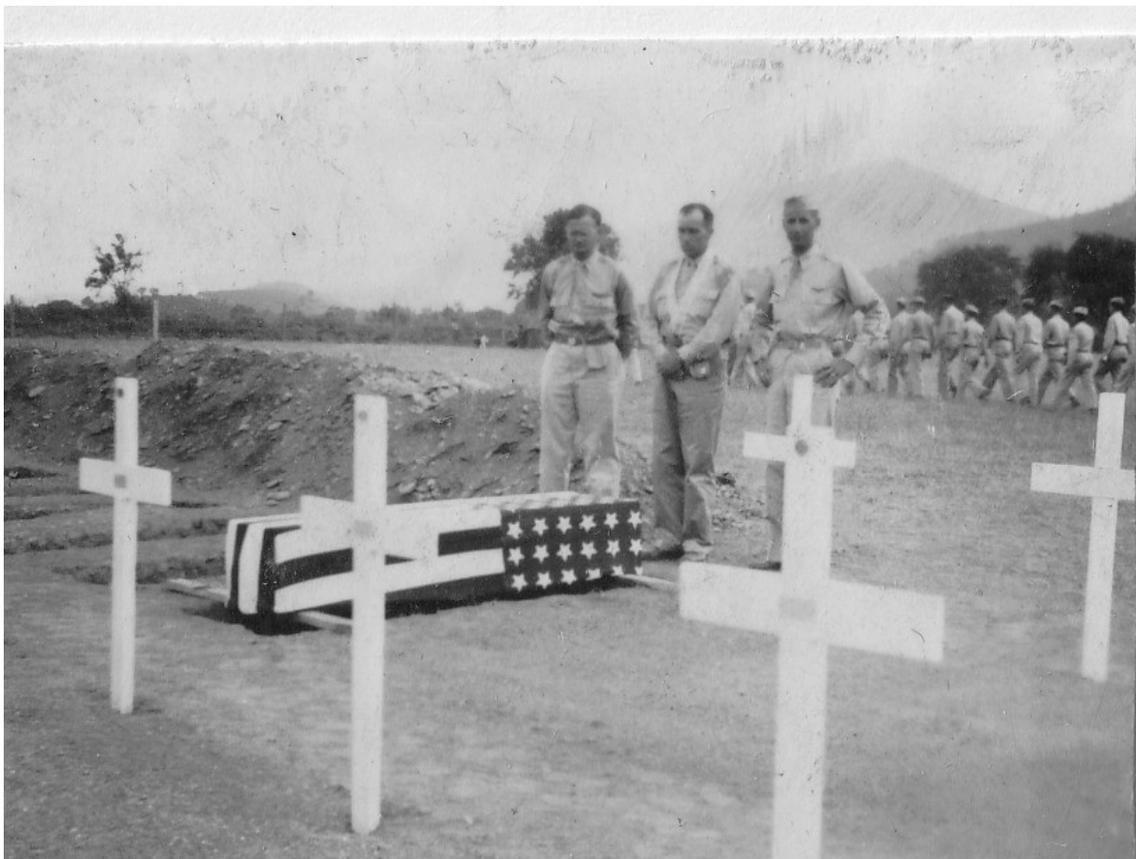
June 1944

Capt. John E. Adams, Squadron Historian S-2 Section

Special Outline Section

We had plenty of reasons during June for being optimistic over the war, as it was the time of the Allied Invasion of France, the fall of Rome, the beginning of the large Russian offensive, and other important military events. However, that changed life here at Ghisonaccia Airdrome very little, and we continued with our work as we had been doing here for months. The weather got hotter during June, but it was cool compared with the last summer spent in Africa, and it was very comfortable at night. Having had little rain during the month, we were operating nearly every day of the month, and a noticeable increase in activities here was effected.

Very few new men came in during the month, and only a few left, thereby making the older combat crew members more experienced veterans at their work. The loss of Lt. Peterson's crew and most of Lt. Quitta's crew came as a blow to all of us, and many of the boys attended Lt. Quitta's funeral in Bastia, Corsica.



STORIES FROM PAST NEWSLETTERS

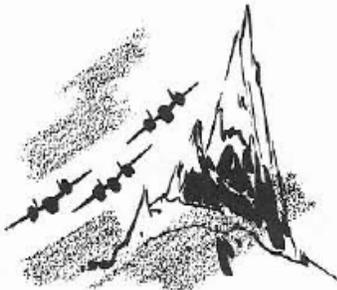
Catch-22 Revisited

Joe Heller Returns to Corsica and Italy

Where the airfield stood, there is nothing. The planes are gone. It's almost as though there never had been an American air base here on the eastern shore of Corsica. It's almost, in fact, as though there had never been a war . . .

These are the words of Joe Heller of the 488th as they appeared in a national magazine upon his return from a sentimental journey to Corsica and Italy. Traveling with his family, Joe visited such cities and towns as Bastia, Cervione, l'le Rousse, and Alesani, names which will never be forgotten by 57th Bomb Wing men. Following are selected excerpts from Joe's well written report:

I had remembered from my military service that there were mountains in Corsica, but I had never appreciated



World War II proved to be the deadliest international conflict in history, taking the lives of 60 to 80 million people, including 6 million Jews who died at the hands of the Nazis during the Holocaust.

how many there were or how high they rose. For the record, there is one peak 9,000 feet high and eight more than 8,000. It was one of those 8,000-foot mountains we were now crossing. The higher we drove, the more the land began to resemble the American West. We soon saw cactus growing beside the road, and then eagles wheeling in the sky — down below us.

My main purpose in coming to Corsica again was to visit the site of our air base, to tramp the ground where our tents had stood and see what changes had occurred to the air strip on which our planes had taken off and landed so many times.

We found the crossroad to Cervione, a mountain village to which we used to drive in a jeep every now and then for a glass of wine in a cool, darkened bar. The bar was still there. It was larger now, and much brighter. Coca Cola was advertised, and a refrigerated case offered Gelati Alemagne, German ice cream, direct from Leghorn, Italy.

Editor's Note: We will continue this report in our next Newsletter.

57th Profile

Meet Bill Hollingsworth



1944



1974

Bill Hollingsworth's nickname back in Corsica in 1944 was "Bullseye." As the 489th Squadron Bombardier, he led the squadron on many successful bridge-busting missions over the Po Valley and the Brenner Line during World War II. His squadron friends remember him also as an active participant in many wild outdoor basketball and volleyball games back in Alesani.

Bill has been associated with Southwest Gas Producing Company, Inc. as Attorney-Landman for 27 years. His office is located in Monroe, Louisiana. Bill and his attractive wife Bobbie attended the San Antonio Reunion and plan to be with us in Albuquerque in July.

Astronaut Deke Slayton 56 Missions in Europe

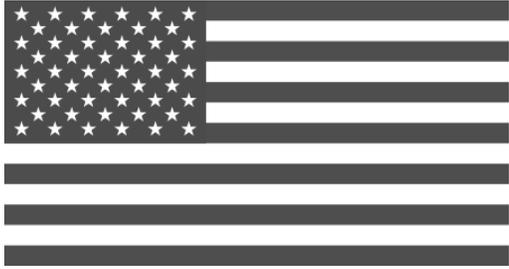
Donald K. Slayton of Houston, Texas, one of the original seven United States Astronauts, wrote recently with the good word that he has high hopes of attending a future Reunion. Deke was with the 340th (486th) in Corsica for 56 missions, and with the 319th in the Pacific until the end of the war.

We quote from, *We Seven*, the Story of the Astronauts.

I got my wings in 1943 and was sent to Europe. Where I flew 56 missions in B-25 bombers with the 486th squadron of the 340th Bomb Group in the 57th Bomb Wing. After my first combat tour



I came home and helped train B-25 pilots [from the 319th Bomb Group] and A-26 pilots for a year. Then I was shipped off to Okinawa just in time to fly several combat missions [with the 319th] over Japan.

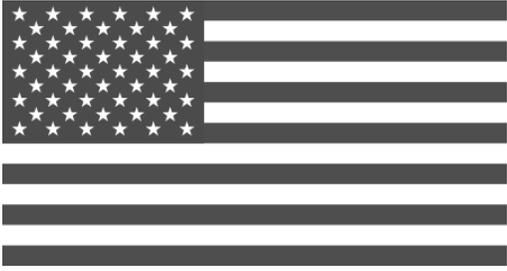


TAPS



This list includes Veterans of the Wing who have passed since our last reunion along with the names of those Veterans about whose passing we have been notified since our last reunion. List is alphabetical.

Name of Veteran	Date of Death	Squadron
Benjamin Angland	2-Oct-2018	489
Col Ernest A Baldwin	12-Mar-2008	428
Eugene C Cowart	4-Nov-2021	447
Donald Dick	13-Nov-2022	487
John Dupuis	5-Feb-2022	380
Raymond Ferrand	10-Sep-2018	428
Maj Franklin F. Fronck	6-Sep-2020	487
James Garner	5-May-2014	487
Alex Geler	27-Dec-2012	379
Stanley Gerry	26-Sep-2014	489
Bernard R. Guild	10-May-2003	447
Col Robert Hamill	18-Sep-2002	489
James Heath	7-Jun-2004	486
Bryant Kirby	22-Dec-2018	379
Franklin Koenig	1-Sep-2015	428
Italo La Rocca	15-Aug-2022	428
Richard Law	25-Dec-2007	448
Lt. Col. Eliot Hull Potter	13-Apr-2021	380
Marshel B. Powell	3-Feb-2017	380
Verlin B. Rowley	14-Feb-2003	447
Arnold Harold Schwab	27-Jan-2018	57th HQ
Col. Dale Wilson Scott	16-Jun-2019	489
Henry C. "Hank" Seiffert, Jr.	5-Jun-2012	380
Claude William Smith	28-Jan-2018	380
James Spears	26-Oct-2022	487
Alvin Strasburger	15-Dec-2015	489
Willis C. Strittmatter	12-Feb-1997	428
Raymond Swingholm	15-Jan-2019	445
James Tolliver	Unknown	486



TAPS



This list includes family members and veterans who are near and dear to our 57th BWA family!
May they rest in peace!

Thomas Lee Bisset [Husband of Joy, whose father was James Jardine Allen (487th)] - Birth: 17-Jun-1955, Death: 21-Jul-2023. Tom and Joy enjoyed traveling with the 57th Bomb Wing Group, families of veterans (including his father in law) who served together in WWII.
<https://www.dispatch.com/obituaries/pwoo0533800>



Rasma (Raz) Wiginton [Wife of Steve, whose father was Captain J Maurice Wiginton (447th)] - Death: September 2022.



Legendary Past 57th BWA Executives - L-R: Bob Evans (487th), Tom Sullivan (489th), and Nick Loveless (486th)

57th Bomb Wing Association
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The barrel near the tent door contained 110 octane aviation fuel used for heating. The barrels on the right contained water. *Gerald D. Gronley Collection*



It is amazing what
you can accomplish
if you do not care
who gets the credit.

-Harry S Truman

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