



# THE 99th Bomb Group Historical Society



Newsletter

Vol. 6, No. 2

Mar. 1 1986

## SOCIETY OFFICERS

PRESIDENT, Joe Chance  
TREASURER, Walter Butler  
CHAPLAIN, Harvey Jennings

VICE-PRESIDENT, Lew Boatwright  
HISTORIAN, George F. Coen  
EDITOR, George F. Coen

## REUNION NOTICE

WIN TWO ROUNDTrip TICKETS ON UNITED AIRLINES TO DESTINATION OF YOUR CHOICE WITHIN CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES. DETAILS ON PAGE \_\_\_\_\_!!!!(bsb)

## THE PRESIDENTS CORNER

We have been unable to locate Joe's remarks which, as near as we can recollect, were sent off for typing about December 15th. We did not realize the loss until too late to replace them. We apologize. geo.

## FROM THE VEEP

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The affairs of this organization are managed by a Board of Directors who are elected by the general membership during the annual meeting. Two vacancies on the Board need to be filled at the reunion in Dayton because Bernie Barr and Joe Chance will have completed their 4-year terms.

President Joe Chance has appointed the undersigned Chairman of the Nominating Committee. It is my desire to extend to each 99BGHS member the opportunity to nominate a person(s) to serve on the Board. According to our by-laws the requirements are: (1)The individual must have consented to serve. (2)If being elected for the first time, he must be present at the annual membership meeting in Dayton. (3)He must have been a member of the 99BGHS for at least one year before the election. Nominations may be mailed or telephoned to me, Lew Boatwright, Star Route 1443, Corrales, New Mexico 87048, Phone (505)898-1564.

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Now that the New Year is here, I would like to wish all of you the best and most prosperous year ever.

A letter of appreciation for services rendered, signed by the President, will be received by the next of kin, if the nearest Office of Veterans' Administration is notified of the death of a veteran.

Take care and have a happy New Year!

*Harvey*

Remember when you were 2nd Lieutenants and Corporals waiting to be assigned to combat duty, and finally you were assigned to the 99th, and waiting to fly your first mission? Even though you hadn't flown your first sortie, you already had your "50 mission crush" on your hat. Then the morning came when you were awakened at 0430 hours, had your breakfast, went to the briefing, and the chaplain gave the prayer for your safe return - and you finally get airborne. Once up there in formation, on the way to the target, one of the gunners called out "fighters at 3 o'clock high." You looked out the window and wondered where all those airplanes came from as they started their turn-in and began shooting. You said a little prayer and the Lord answered "Have faith in me and I will see you through." Then the flak started coming and you said your second prayer. The Lord said "I am beside you." Back at home base you hugged each other and you knew that you had 49 more missions to go. You had become a combat veteran real fast.

Harvey

TAPS - (see also Page 23)

Fletcher, Walter S., 5140 S. Tallwood Cir., W. Melbourne, Fla HQ  
Laroche, Edward A., 926 Tall Pine Dr., Port Orange, Fla  
Pellas, Paul M., Box 9, Spangler, Pa 347

**UNITED AIRLINES, OFFICIAL CARRIER, OFFERS SAVINGS ON TRAVEL TO DAYTON!**

UNITED has joined with 99th Bomb Group to offer special airfares (not available to the general public) when you attend the 99th Bomb Group Reunion in DAYTON, OHIO and travel between June 25 and July 1, 1986.

To obtain a 5% discount from any UNITED available/applicable fare (any published restrictions/conditions apply), or a 30% discount off standard coach fares (all restrictions waived) follow these steps:

1. Either you or your preferred travel agent phone UNITED'S toll-free number at 800-521-4041 (48 contiguous states), or 800-722-5243 extension 6608 (Alaska, Hawaii). call daily 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. EST.
2. Immediately reference the special 99th. Bomb Group account no. 6008H.
3. UNITED Specialists will provide information and make reservations for all flights and fares, including the special 99th fare. The special 99th Bomb Group fare is available on flights within United States.
4. You may purchase your ticket from your local travel agent, or United will mail them to your home or office. Whichever means of ticketing you choose, the special 99th Bomb Group fare can only be obtained when the reservation is initiated by telephone through your special United number 800-521-4041, and ticketed in the U.S.

In addition, 99th Bomb Group members who have paid their 1986 dues and who obtain their flights on UNITED (as outlined above) will be eligible for a special drawing. The prize: two (2) complimentary round trip Continental U.S. tickets good for travel before December 31, 1986. (holiday periods excluded-winner pays taxes on tickets)

Call toll-free   
**800-521-4041**

 **UNITED AIRLINES**

On June 15, 1986 UNITED AIRLINES will provide us with a list of members that have made reservations on United to our reunion-the drawing will include ALL names of members (dues paying) on this list. Reservations after that date can not be included in drawing. So plan ahead and reserve early.

Seats are limited, so call early for best availability. Fares are guaranteed at time of ticket purchase.

CALL TODAY\*\*\*YOU MAY WIN THE TWO COMPLIMENTARY TICKETS\*\*\*\*

Arranged by your friend-bernie barr---

Please Reserve \_\_\_\_\_ room(s) for \_\_\_\_\_ adults  
\_\_\_\_\_ children  
Phone # (Daytime) \_\_\_\_\_  
Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Arrival Date \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date \_\_\_\_\_

Room Preference 1 King Bed \_\_\_\_\_  
2 Double Beds \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE INCLUDE ONE EVENING'S DEPOSIT**

Reservations will be held only until 6 p.m. local time unless guaranteed by one night's room rate in advance, or a credit card number and expiration date. Check-out time is 1:00 p.m. Rooms may not be available until after our check-in time of 3 p.m.

**NOTE: To honor your reservation request the Hotel needs receipt of this card 14 days prior to your arrival.**

MAIL THE HOTEL RESERVATION FORM TO:

DAYTON MARRIOTT HOTEL  
1414 South Patterson Blvd. - Dayton, Ohio 45409

-----  
cut along this line

99TH BOMB GROUP HISTORICAL SOCIETY - REGISTRATION FORM:

Member's name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Spouse or Guest \_\_\_\_\_

Member Registration Fee	\$20.00
Spouse or Guest Registration Fee	\$10.00
Thursday 6-26-1986 (optional)	
Glimpse of Dayton Tour	\$16.00 each ( )
Friday 6-27-1986 (optional)	
99th BGHS Business Luncheon	
Members and Guests	\$10.00 each ( )
Saturday 6-28-1986 (optional)	
Buffet Breakfast	\$10.00 each ( )
99th BGHS Banquet	
Entree: Chicken Marsala	\$17.00 each ( )
Prime Rib	\$21.00 each ( )
Sunday 6-29-1986 (Optional)	
Buffet Breakfast	\$10.00 each ( )
Meal prices include Ohio sales tax and gratuities	
Total	_____

Make checks payable to 99th Bomb Group Historical Society. Please send registration and appropriate fees to:

Ernest K. Gentit  
RFD #2 - Box 398  
Bryan, Ohio 43506 Tel # (419) 636-3959

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TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS  
1986  
REUNION

THURSDAY - 26 JUNE, 1986 (Option day)

1000.....1600 REGISTRATION - HOTEL LOBBY  
1000.....1500 GOLF - WPAFB - Golf Chairman: Pete Bezek  
(arrange your own transportation)  
1300.....1600 "GLIMPSE OF DAYTON" - HARTLINE TOURS  
INFORMAL DINNER - With your friends  
1300.....2300 HOSPITALITY ROOM - OPEN

Check the hotel bulletin board in the lobby for the location of 99th BGHS activities.

FRIDAY - 27 JUNE, 1986

0900.....1000 99th BGHS BOARD MEETING  
1000.....1700 REGISTRATION - HOTEL LOBBY  
1200.....1400 99th BGHS Luncheon, (Members & Guests)  
1400.....1700 HOSPITALITY SUITE - OPEN  
1400.....1500 BOARD MEETING - SALON - Election of Officers  
1700.....1900 99th BGHS MLXER (By the Marriott Pool)  
INFORMAL DINNER - With your friends.  
1900.....2300 HOSPITALITY ROOM - OPEN  
1900.....2300 15th AF FILMS - SALON "C" - NO CHARGE  
ART KNIPP VIDEO FILMS OF PREVIOUS REUNIONS

SATURDAY - 28 JUNE, 1986

0730.....0900 BUFFET BREAKFAST - BANQUET ROOM  
0945.....1030 BUS BOARDING FOR MUSEUM - Check with Committee for boarding  
1100.....1130 MEMORIAL DEDICATION - U.S. Air Force Museum locations.  
1145.....1600 15th AIR FORCE FILMS - Museum Theatre

Return buses (to the Marriott) will be scheduled throughout the afternoon, with the first bus leaving at 1300 and the last bus will leave at 1600.

1300.....1700 HOSPITALITY ROOM - OPEN  
1600.....1800 REUNIONS PHOTOGRAPHS - FOYER  
AARP GROUP PHOTOGRAPH  
1800.....1900 COCKTAIL HOUR (Semi-formal attire)  
1900.....2100 BANQUET DAYTON BALLROOM (Semi-formal attire)  
2100.....2400 HOSPITALITY ROOM - OPEN

SUNDAY - 29 JUNE, 1986

HOSPITALITY ROOM - CLOSED  
0730.....0930 BUFFET BREAKFAST - BANQUET ROOM  
1300 HOTEL CHECK-OUT TIME

THANK YOU FOR COMING.....HAVE A SAFE TRIP HOME!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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December 6, 1985

Steve Birdsall  
31 Parkland Road  
Mona Vale 2103  
Sydney, Australia

Dear George:

Many thanks for your letter and the listing. I feel that I can add to it, and will pass on what I can for what it's worth. As you will see, there are some contentious issues, but what's really contentious after forty years...still, hopefully we can add to the history of the 99th, if only a sidelight of it.

Beginning on Page 4 of your listing...

23244 - I have this aircraft as lost with 97th Group April 2 1944.

23251 - lost with 97th January 11 1944.

23383 - lost with 97th June 11 1944.

"24570" - no such B-17 number - is 25470 I believe.

25419 - Whizzer - see photos page 219 Bowers' Fortress in the Sky.

25786 - lost 483rd April 15 1944 Nis mission - page 21 Rust  
(the blazing B-17, wrongly identified as 463rd Group)

25832 - I have the name War Bird II.

25946 - lost with 97th Group July 2 1944.

25948 - I have name Thunderbolt; lost with 97th December 19, 1943.

"29483" thru "30446" - correct radio call/tail numbers are  
229483, 229492 (lost July 5, 1943), 230396, 230446 (MIA  
October 10, 1943).

46397 - Addition - aircraft MIA March 23, 1945.

46430 - MIA November 7, 1944.

46431 - Addition - aircraft MIA April 25, 1945.

46492 - If number correct, could not be in War Diary as early as  
May '43, as a late B-17G model.

48431 - I have this as 8th Air Force...?

"223018" - Not a B-17 number - duplication of 23018 I believe.

"223189" - As above, dupe of 23189.

"225419" - As above, dupe of 25419.

"229147" - Not a B-17 tail number.

"229388" - Not B-17 number, dupe of 25388.

"229393" - Not B-17 number.

"229396" - Not B-17 number.

"229413" - Must be dupe of 25413, as no such B-17 number.

229467 - Name was Flack Dodger.

229474 - 96 missions.

229485 - Seven mission with 483rd Bomb Group.  
 229513 - El Diablo.  
 229606 - I have as lost with 8th Air Force July 27, 1943.  
 229918 - MIA with 97th Group January 11, 1944  
 230095 - MIA with 301st Group February 25, 1944.  
 230343 - MIA with 97th April 2, 1944  
 230459 - MIA with 97th February 22, 1944.  
 230462 - MIA with 97th March 18, 1944.  
 232013 - Old Mose, MIA April 2, 1944.  
 232028 - MIA July 23, 1944  
 232044 - 483rd Bomb Group aircraft (throughout war).  
 232055 - Could not have gone down March '43 - a Spring '44 B-17G.  
 232068 - MIA July 28, 1944.  
 232071 - Nine Wolves and a Poppa.  
 232101 - Definitely El Lobo II of 457th Group, 8th Air Force.  
 "232733"- Not a B-17 number.  
 "234091" - I believe is 230491 - other not a B-17 number.  
 "239449" - Not a B-17 number.  
 "425349" - Is 25439 tail number (full serial number 42-5439)  
 "446868" - Tail number 46868, serial number 44-6868.

Hope this is of some interest, and some use. By the way, the last entry leads me to point out that 446868 might have been painted on the tail, but it should have been 46868. I've noticed that occasionally on late B-17Gs the full serial number was painted on the tail, presumably after damage or whatever demanded a re-application of the numbers.

I also noticed how many ex-99th Group aircraft were MIA with the 97th. This indicates a pretty hefty transfer of your B-17Fs to the 97th at some stage. Can you recall why this happened? And what airplanes the 99th received in return?

I'll be looking forward to whatever you can find out about 23026. By the way, I don't think she could have gone down in August 1943, as I'm sure she was around until at least March/April 1944.

Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year!

Sincerely,



# 7 Beavertail Lane  
 Palm Desert, Cal. 92260  
 December 10, 1985

Walter H. Butler - Treasurer  
 99th Bomb Gp. Historical Society  
 8608 Bellehaven Pl. N.E.  
 Albuquerque, N.M. 87112

I don't know where you people got my name, but I am happy to receive the November newsletter of the 99th BGHS. You will find my check for 1986 dues enclosed.

Now, can I ask you to help me dig up some of my own history? I was assigned as a pilot to the 349th (?) Bomb Squadron of the 99th Bomb Group (Commanding Officer Major Wiper), in July of 1944. On a mission to Ploesti on July 27th we were forced down and captured by Partisans (?) Chetnicks (?) in Albania. My personal effects and records were never returned to me, so I have little to go on in reporting the combat portion of my military adventure to my grandchildren.

All members of my crew eventually returned home in reasonably good condition after spending the remaining months of the war in Europe as guests of the 3rd. Reich.

Where can I find an account of that mission, and perhaps other missions that I flew in July 1944?

Is there anything of that nature at March Air Force Base? Who could I call there (I am only 60 miles away from there in the winter months).

Thanks for any help you can offer, and best wishes for a happy holiday season.

sincerely,



Permanent home address:



Mr. & Mrs. David C. Conner  
 7050 S.W. Hoodview Place  
 Beaverton, OR 97005

Dear Dave;

By now you have received a copy of the Group War Diary for the Ploesti mission of July 15th, 1944. You will note that it was another routine day. Of course that depends upon the point of view, and we would welcome your story about that routine day.

your comrade, george

If you are reading this about March 1st-Bernie Barr is in the hospital recovering from elective corrective surgery. He should be home within a few days.  
 geo.

10 Jan 86

Dear George Coen, and Walter Butler,

I am not sure how I got onto the mailing list of the 99th Bomb Group. But I expect it is likely through the manipulations and machinations of my great and wonderful friend, Bernie Barr.

So, Walter, please take the little piece of greenish paper, enclosed and toss it into your reservoir for newsletters---or whatever.

George, I can say for certain that you will get a great deal of flak and even a fighter attack ( from me, a friendly one) on your notes in the 1 Jan 86 newsletter. About connecting 100% casualties and still having some survivors. I have loved probability theory and statistics for about 40 or 50 years, and just can't resist making the following remarks:

If there is an S (a survivability probability) for one mission. And this is constant for any number of missions. And if S is equal to .97265 (as you put it).

Then, clearly, Y for the probability that a healthy young flier will survive 25 of these nasty things, is:  $S^{25}$  is Y which is (about).50. No sweat. But, if I then want to know X or the probability that our hero will survive 50 missions---I no longer need a calculator. For X is the same as Y squared. Or .5 squared. Or .25. Not .06247. My cheap little hand held calculator also agrees with me. If someone challenges you on this, George, and they will---retreat as gracefully as possible.

One can imagine a variety of ways to describe what is meant by a tour that has 100% casualties. It is not self evident how one should define the meaning of this term. I would do it this way--I am now just gazing off into the wild blue yonder---Starting out with a Group or Wing, or .... and a fixed S (chance of any person surviving one mission)-- And saying that I must replace each lost airman. How many missions will be flown before I have had to make 100% replacements? That is, my total losses (the guys shot down were the real losers), reach a number which is equal to the initial total number of fliers.

For fifty missions, I can easily deduce an S, and I find it to be .98. That is easy. I lost .02 (2%) on each mission. Times 50 is equal to 1. Losses equal the initial number of poor drivers. If I should use this for S, it is easy to see that I would get a Y equal to S raised to the 25th power, or .60346.... for the probability that one makes it through 25. And for my chance of making it through 50--just the square of Y or S raised to the 50th power, or ~~SSSS~~ .36417.....

I hope that you do not conclude from this that all Ex-Ancient-Prehistoric Fighter pilots are bastards. I flew P 47s from England, and made it through 56.5 missions. If I say that my chance of making it through 56 missions was one half, then I can say that my S (survive one mission) would be: ~~SSSS~~.... .987698..... If I had known that, then, I would have stayed with my mother.

*Walt*  
Walter Beckham

P.S. Bernie Barr knows full well that I couldn't fly a B 17, or any other plane with more than one engine.

Dear Little Friend Walter Beckham:

Walter, you are entirely right. I not only got the theory wrong, but the math is goofed up too. There is a 36% chance of surviving a tour figured on 100% casualties. George

Fellows, our friend Walter was a fighter jockey in the 8AF and was the leading ace at the time he was shot down. geo

99th B G H S  
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURES  
FOURTH QUARTER YEAR 1985

BALANCE 30 SEPTEMBER 1985		1501.04
INCOME:		
OCTOBER 1985 DUES AND DONATIONS	470.00	
NOVEMBER 1985 DUES AND DONATIONS	690.00	
DECEMBER 1985 DUES AND DONATIONS	710.00	
	<u>1870.00</u>	1870.00
TOTAL		<u>3371.04</u>
EXPENDITURES:		
OCTOBER 1985		
GEORGE F. COEN MISC. EXPENSE	80.92	
BANK DEPOSIT TICKETS	2.97	
TOTAL OCTOBER	<u>83.89</u>	
NOVEMBER 1985		
INFORMATION ARCHIVAL INC. TYPING	46.00	
DATACO - PRINTING NEWS LETTER	638.98	
INFORMATION ARCHIVAL INC, TYPING	44.20	
PETTY CASH - POSTAGE W.BUTLER	50.00	
TOTAL NOVEMBER	<u>779.18</u>	
DECEMBER 1985		
TOTAL DECEMBER	-0-	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		<u>863.07</u>
BALANCE 31 DECEMBER 1985		2507.97

From Carl E. Mitchell of Shreveport, LA

1 September 1984

Dear George,

I apologize for being so late in acknowledging your letter. I'm the world's greatest procrastinator. Thanks for the picture of Pete and myself.

I also received a copy of "Rommel's Last Stand" from Cortesi and found it interesting in spite of a few errors which are inconsequential at this late date.

As regards the Sicilian Invasion mission, I'll list what my diary says.

"July 8, 1943. Today I was called back from making a raid. At 14:00 a new mystery ship was assigned to me. #42-25941. It carried secret equipment. At 09:00 this morning, I was informed Sicily was to be invaded the next morning. We took off at 14:00 for a secret landing field in Tunisia. Landed there at 16:12. Was informed I was to stand by as a spare ship. Only 4 planes were to cover the landing operation. We carried enough gas for a 15 hour flight. No bombs. As much ammunition as we could carry. At 19:00 the 4 planes took off on their exciting mission. At 19:30 I took off and returned to Navarino I was greatly disappointed in not being able to go with the rest. John (Kowtowski) went and I shall repeat his notes. Quote" Searchlights and flak kept the sky well illuminated. One light nearly picked us up twice. We circled Sicily for two hours and then returned home to Navarin." Unquote.

The rest that I remember is that the planes were dull black and none of our crew were allowed to enter the radio compartment.

Well, George, I enjoyed seeing you again at Houston, won't be able to hack the schedule for Seattle, wrong time of the year, but plan on going to Dayton.

Sincerely

*Mitch*

Never procrastinate, Mitch!

geo

Dear George:

It was certainly a pleasure to talk with you about a month ago when I was in Albuquerque. What a surprise when you informed me over the phone that not only did you know me, but that we flew together on my very first combat mission to Palermo, Sicily. You were so right. When you stopped by my motel the next morning, my memory unfeathered a bit and I now have a definite recollection of you over in North Africa in 1943.

My 201 file shows that I joined the 99th at Gowan Field, Boise, coming from the 29th Bomb Group on September 26, 1942. Originally I was in the 346th Squadron, but about mid-November 1942 I was transferred into the 416th. When the air echelon departed overseas, I was one of the pilots to stay behind with the ground echelon. By the time I caught up again at Naverin, you fellows already had about 20 missions logged.

For a long while I was used as utility co-pilot and flew with quite a few of the crews in different aircraft. I remember many missions with Sidney Buck, Joe Trentadue, and Bill Osborne. Later I was assigned my own crew and flew 23 missions as first pilot, completing 50 on February 17, 1944.

I have always been particularly proud of my crew and airplane. Both were the best. Wilson and Nickelson were in the nose, C.D. Boggs co-pilot, Carol "Pappy" Carter top turret, Wally Bush radio, Joe McGuire waist, John Morris ball turret and Phillip O'Reilly tailgunner. Now I know I have left out my other waist gunner. I'm embarrassed, but I just can't recall his name right now.

My plane was 229472, Sweater Girl. I recall putting the 99th mission on 472, after which we had engine trouble and I flew my last two in other planes. The original pilot on 472 was "Windy". I'm not sure who this was but I bet you can tell me. My crew chief was "Nick" and he always came through with the best maintenance.

George, I'm sending you copies of several special orders cut at Gowan Field. They should be of historical value if you don't already have them. Also, here are just a few faded prints taken with the camera I smuggled overseas. I've got many more shots and if I ever can find the negatives I might be able to furnish you with better quality prints.

I'll be looking forward to your news letters and hope some day I can attend one of the reunions. It's very evident you fellows are doing a great job in preserving the history of the 99th. Thanks!

R.R. 2, Box 98  
Syracuse, Indiana 46567  
April 5, 1982

Very truly yours,

*Bob*  
Robert K. Braungart

### THE WAR DIARY

Once again we furnish some War Diary entries which were somehow bypassed. At this rate we never will find out how the war ended. geo.

#### SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 25 February, 1944 - POLA, ITALY

#### I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: None.  
B. Flak: The 99th bomb Group went over the target with squadrons in trail, echelon left. From a mean altitude of 22,000', moderate accurate and heavy flak was encountered. This was of the tracking type.

#### II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

- A. Land: (All observations from 21,000' to 23,000')
- 1105 - Large coal docks and loading piers at Osere, 45° 10' N, 13° 37' E.
  - 1106 - Landing ground seen at 44° 56' N, 13° 57' E, no planes, runway is good shape.
  - 1112 - Large oil and gas dumps at F-13 on Target Chart #4-51-NA.
  - 1129 - What appeared to be an army camp area was observed at 45° 10' N, 14° 07' E.
- B. Water: 1052 - A large M/V anchored at the SW tip of Silba Island at 44°21'N, 14°43'E. Possibility that this may be a CC.  
1053 - No. large M/Vs in Zara harbor 44°21'N, 14°43'E.  
1110 - 16 M/Vs and 2 CC in Pola Harbor.  
1113 - 5 Medium M/Vs heading NW out of Pola Harbor at D-10 on target Chart 4-51-NA.  
1114 - 12 seaplanes in water at E 18 and 19, 4 seaplanes at G-10, 3 seaplanes at 0-9.

#### MISSION REPORT

1. UNIT: 99th GROUP: TIME: 1940 DATE 25 Feb 1944
2. 18 OFF TO: Regensburg, Germany
3. 4 EARLY 14 SORTIES.
4. 14 OVER TARGET AT: 1250 HOURS, AT 21,400 FEET
5. 10 DROPPED ON TGT 30 TONS 500 LB. BOMBS .1/.01 FUSES
6. We don't know if other 4 planes dropped on target as they were hit before target time.
7. 100 E/A SEEN: Wara ME109s, 110s, 210s, FM190s, JU88s, and JU87s
8. 100 E/A TARGETS, ETC. Will be covered in the special narrative report.
9. 20 CLAIMS for e/a destroyed. 1 JU88, 6 ME110s, 1 ME210, 2 FM90s, 10 ME109s
10. FLAK AT TARGET: Heavy, intense and accurate.
11. 4 : Enemy fighters.

1. UNIT: Notary 0810 DATE: 25 February 1944
2. 21 OFF TO: Pola, Italy

6. 1 OTHERS: Dropped 5 tons on Zara harbor while returning early. Hits were at I-9-10 on TC #-132-NA, starting at the edge of the water and going on ----- axis of 50° 1100 hours.
7. 5 E/A SEEN: over target at 1000 ft alt. coming from SW of target.

10. MAH Moderate, accurate and heavy.

14. RESULTS. ESCORT GAVE TIME AND PLACE OF RENDEZVOUS AND DEPARTURE FROM BOMBERS  
Good coverage of area included in N 0-7 and along water front installations westward to J 5 and 6 with several bombs hitting in water of the harbor.

B. Water: 1057 15 small M/Vs in Zara harbor  
 1120 Pola harbor, smoking, heavy, black and billowing.  
 1405 10-12 DM/Vs in Trieste harbor  
 1406 4 med DM/Vs in Trieste Harbor, 6 small patrol boats  
 1410 Fiume Harbor was smoking grayish black smoke.  
 1434 15 M/Vs in Trieste harbor, 7 appeared to be large transports.

C. Flak Positions: It was impossible to pinpoint these due to the intense and prolonged enemy fighter activity.

D. Air: 1215 Just before Klagenfurt, 1 B-17 of 301st left wing on fire, in a spin, no chute seen.  
 1220 1 B-17 of 301st at Klagenfurt both wings on fire and a steep wing over 3 chutes seen.  
 1230 B-17 of 301st on fire, 4 chutes, 1 parachute hung up on bomb bay.  
 1250 B-17 of 301st in distress, 4 chutes.  
 1300 2 B-17s of 2nd Bomb Gp., collided, 3 chutes

### III. CONCLUSIONS

#### A. Total Losses:

From flak	0
From Fighters	4
Other Reasons	0

#### B. Damage:

From flak	7 planes
From Fighters	5 planes
Other reasons	0 planes

(3 men suffered minor battle wounds)

#### C. Victories: (Claim sheets being submitted)

##### Destroyed

1 Ju 88
6 Me 110s
1 Me 210
10 Me 109s

### WAR DIARY OF THE 99TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) 347TH BOMB SQ

#### MONTH OF JUNE 1944

1 June -- Today was again nonoperational. This morning a fifth wing public relations office sergeant and a MAAF photographer came out and took pictures and stories of nine of our combat men. At 1000 hours all combat personnel met at their respective ships and were instructed on loading bombs by the armament section. There was again no mail and the men are really wondering just exactly what is going on. Supper tonight was one of those very disappointing meals. Instead of fresh meat, we had corned beef.

2 June -- Today was operational with the earliest H-hour we have had since being overseas. After the ships took off, everyone went back to bed for awhile. Food today was very poor and a lot of the men made their own meals in their tents of eggs and toast. Right after supper tonight, iced beer was served to the men. Each man was entitled to two bottles. Part of a British unit moved into our squadron area today and are eating at our mess hall. Tonight was Bingo night and the top prize of the evening was fifty five dollars shared by three who made their bingo at the same time.

3 June -- Today is another nonoperational day and a period of relative inactivity. The men have their own ball games between each other here in the squadron. There is always a good many men in the day room playing ping pong, darts, cards, or reading and writing letters. It is amusing to watch the English boys, now attached to us, watching the Dice and poker games going on. It seems that they have never indulged in these large games. They also have quite a time with the ping pong balls and are swatting them all over the room. Tonight "No Time for Love" starring Fred McMurray and Claudette Colbert played here on the base.

4 June -- Today was another of these quiet Sundays in Italy of which we have had so many. It seems that Sundays are usually inactive. A good many of the men attended church services, others went to town on pass and still others went swimming on the afternoon truck to the beach. We missed having fresh meat tonight and it certainly makes a difference.

5 June -- Today was also quiet except for the formation held this morning. The formation for all enlisted men and officers was at nine o'clock. Lt Stusser talked first telling us of the schedule worked out for the next three weeks. To be at least thirty minutes of close order drill each day, a daily inspection of the tents and squadron, and twice a week there is to be a standby inspection of the tents with all personnel in class A uniform. Then Captain Newman, our Squadron Surgeon, talked about renewing our efforts to guard against Malaria. The inspection of the tents today was at 1115 hours. The truck ran to the beach again this afternoon. For supper tonight we had fresh beef, canned sweet potatoes and gravy, fresh butter and bread, coffee with canned fruit cocktail for desert.

6 June -- Today was unusually quiet again. We had one hour of close order drill this morning from 0900 to 1000 hours. A small amount of mail came in this afternoon and was very welcome. We had fresh roast beef for supper tonight.

7 June -- The usual drill period came off this morning and it was very dusty on the drill field. This afternoon at 1400 hours we had a USO show here on the base at our area theater and it was very good with a large crowd attending.

8 June -- Nothing of interest took place today. The usual drill period was held this morning.

9 June -- We had the 99th Bomb Gp. orchestra out at our drill period this morning and they pepped the marching up quite a bit. A lot of mail came in this afternoon and the men were very glad to see it. The truck went over to the beach this afternoon and quite a number of the men went. Tonight was "Bingo Night" and everyone enjoyed it thoroughly. The top prize of the evening was forty nine dollars but was divided between three men. We had fresh ham for supper tonight and it was very good for a change. Captain J.H.J. Hough and our executive officer, Captain Scarbrough returned from rest camp today.

10 June -- The regular drill period came off this morning. The band was out again and the boys all dressed in class A uniforms, passed in review before the Group Adjutant, Capt. Sarosy. Nothing else of importance happened and the show was held tonight at the Group Headquarters briefing room.

11 June -- Today was another nonoperational very quiet Sunday. Transportation was furnished to and from church services as usual. The ships returned today from Russia and of course a lot of tall tales floating around. We had fresh meat for supper tonight.

12 June -- Today was nonoperational again and a good many of the men went into town and to the beach. It was very dusty all day long and the showers had a very busy day. A heavy amount of mail came in today and the men were all very happy about that. There was no fresh meat today and the meals were generally very poor. "What's Buzzing Cousin" with Ann Miller and Martin Orchestra played at the local movie here on the base tonight.

13 June -- Today was operational for us and all of the men got back in their regular stride again. The H-hour was early and the ships returned shortly after noon. There was a U.S.C. stage show #111 at 1900 hours this evening in the area theater. It was very good and all of the men enjoyed it a lot.

14 June -- Today was again operational and a highly successful mission was accomplished. A small number of letters came in today but they were mostly for the new men of the squadron. We had fresh meat for supper tonight and it was very good. "The Falling Sparrow" with John Garfield played at the area theater here on the base tonight. This is the first time that a movie has been held in the open air for fear the insects would be too annoying.

15 June -- Today was scheduled to have been operational and it was an early H-hour. The mission was canceled however sometime after briefing was held. The squadron S-2 office is very busy today on PRO work on the crews that participated on the shuttle run to Russia. A good bit of mail came in this afternoon. The news is sounding very interesting these days and all of the men are anxious to hear each day what is going on. There were three very poor meals today.

16 June -- Today was operational with another of those extremely early H-hours and the men were up and stirring long before daylight. Nothing exciting happened around the squadron except that quite a number of letters came in today and the men were all pleased. Tonight was the weekly Bingo game and everyone had a good time in the enlisted men's day room. We had some very good fresh steak for supper tonight.

17 June -- Today was nonoperational and a practice mission was flown. A good many of the older combat men have finished their tour of duty in the last ten days and we have several new crews. We got word this morning that one of our crews that went down some time ago over enemy territory are prisoners of war and another crew will be back with us in a few days after being in enemy held territory for some time. A little mail came in this afternoon. The meals today were generally poor and there was no fresh meat.

18 June -- Today was another one of those nonoperational Sundays. It had been scheduled to be operational and a very early H-hour but the mission was canceled after briefing. A good bit of mail came in today. We had fresh meat for supper tonight. The other nine men of Lt McDonnell's crew who had been in an enemy occupied country for some time returned to the squadron today and every one was certainly glad to see them again.

19 June -- The mission was again canceled early this morning while briefing was going on. Outgoing mail was very heavy this morning and the men are doing a lot of letter writing during their idle time. Quite a bit of mail also came in today. All three meals were very poor today and a lot of the men are eating eggs, cucumbers, onions and the like in their own tents that they buy from the Italians. "Hired Wife" with Louise Albritten played at the area theater tonight.

20 June -- Today's mission was again canceled because of weather. These consecutive nonoperational days are getting boresome but they are cool and nice with a few scattered showers to settle the dust. The boys are still writing a lot of letters besides going to town or swimming. It seems too good to be true but more mail actually came in today. We all hated to see our First Sergeant, John R. Repka from Pennsylvania, leave us today. He was one of the few original men of the squadron since it was organized nearly two years ago. He was transferred to the Fifteenth Air Force and is to assume duties of First Sergeant of the headquarters Squadron there. Chow was fairly good today. This morning we had hot french toast with marmalade, cereal, fruit juice and coffee. For dinner we had corned beef, lima beans, fruit cocktail, and cold lemonade. For supper we had fresh roast beef, potatoes, spinach, pears, and iced chocolate.

21 June -- Today was nonoperational and very quiet around the squadron. The weather was cloudy and cool all day. Last night we were all startled when a British Wellington Bomber caught on fire on the take off and the bomb loaded exploded. There was a heavy volume of outgoing mail today and quite a bit of mail came in. The food was pretty sorry at all three meals today and we had no fresh meat. "As Thousands Cheer" starring Mickey Rooney played at the open air theater here on the base tonight.

22 June -- Today was operational with only a short mission and the ships returned shortly after noon. Tomorrow is scheduled to be operational but most of the work was done before night. Fifteenth Air Force Special Services put on their Arabian dance show this afternoon and the largest crowd attended that has ever been to any show here before. The girl was really quite a number and the men really enjoyed themselves. We had fresh steak for supper tonight.

23 June -- Today was operational for us and another successful mission was accomplished. ; Our former Sergeant Major returned from rest camp today and assumed the duties of First Sergeant. One of the Administrative Clerks in the orderly room assumed the duties that he was relieved of. There was a formation of all enlisted men and officers who were in turn transported by truck to group headquarters where medals were presented to the men by Brig General Lawrence of 5th Wing. A small amount of mail came in this afternoon. Tonight we received instructions that there would be a strict blackout in the area. There were no explanations. The regular Friday night bingo game was postponed until Sunday night.

24 June -- Today was nonoperational and everything was quiet around the squadron. There was a formation at 1350 hours and the articles of war were read to the enlisted men. A lot of mail came in this afternoon and everyone was very happy about it. We had creamed chicken tonight for supper. "In Old Oklahoma" played here on the base tonight.

25 June -- Today was operational for us with a very early H-hour and a very long mission. We were notified today that bombers of the Eighth Air Force were due to land on our field this afternoon but this was later on called back as canceled. A small amount of mail came in again this afternoon. We had fresh pork, rice and records illegible shortly afterwards by the post exchange.

26 June -- records unreadable usual. The meals were very good today and we had fresh meat for supper. A records garbled Most of them spent the evening answering all of their correspondence. The microfilms snarled better already. The enlisted men's mess hall was just gone over a few days ago.

27 June -- Today was operational for us but that was about the only thing of gwa kokshi effort on the part of the orderly room to get the tents and bivouac area in good no good each tent are responsible for the surrounding outside area as well as the inside. pas bon

28 June -- Today was nonoperational and many of the men headed for town or else went to the beach on the truck this afternoon. Quite a bit of mail came in this afternoon. S-1 and S-2 are both remodeling and rearranging their offices and also taking extreme measures of cleaning them. The dust is terrific these days and everything has to be cleaned several times a day. We had fried chicken for supper with several good dishes to go with it. It was actually the best meal that we have had in some time. "Mr. Big" starring Donald O'Conner played at the open air theater here on the base tonight.

29 June -- Today was another nonoperational one for us and things were generally quiet. A very uninteresting day with poor meals and no mail.

30 June -- Today was operational but nothing particularly exciting about the mission. Day call was at 1030 hours and it wasn't long until the first of the month games got under way and lasted until the lights went out tonight. It was also the regular Friday night bingo game and that conflicted with the poker and dice games going on. We had for supper tonight.

*None of the above was bleeped or censored; it just was unreadable. Supply your own captions. S.O.S? geo.*

ESCAPE STATEMENT

31 May 1944

Sgt Gus T. Brown Jr., 99th Bomb Gp., 347 Bomb Sq

Mission of 24 January 1944 to Sofia. Target area obscured by clouds. Ship turned and headed for alternate target. Ran into severe storm, gasoline supply exhausted, visibility was nil, so crew baled out. All crewmen baled out. Landed area south of Unice.

Never in enemy hands.

Brown only had kit with halox tablets, etc., in it. Other crewmembers with him had old type kits with d 15 and gold pieces. Escape maps useful. With assistance of American mission member money was exchanged for local currency and was useful in purchase of cigarettes, small toilet articles, etc. Briefing of officers in crew had emphasized Partisan influence in Yugoslavia to extent that pilot in Brown's crew drew a star in the snow when he met the first native. Since the crew was in Chetnik territory this was a dangerous thing to have done. Enlisted men of the crew had not been briefed on conduct in Yugoslavia

Appendix A

Landed in Zlatsbor area south of Unice. Made contact with Chetniks on night of bale-out. Entire crew made contact with each other on second day after bale-out. Contacted Captain Milomir Kolmevic, of Kraljevo, a Chetnik officer who guided group most of the distance to American officer (Marco) about 100 kilometers south of point of landing. Traveled NE direction avoiding cacak, crossed Dicina river at night and railroad and highway paralleling river--narrowly avoided German patrol on highway. In small village met man who claimed to be an American doctor formerly resident of Belgrade--Peter Uvanovich (sic), this man and his wife were evacuated with the flyer. Met Captain Maja V. Batuicevic formerly of Belgrade, now chief of staff of Chetnik camps in area--was very friendly to American flyers. Chetniks were helpful and friendly to crew. Guarded airstrip during evacuation.

From a standpoint of security there is no objection that this man being returned to operations in this theatre.

Appendix B

Saw few evidence of Chetniks fighting Germans. did see Chetnik troops moving in direction of Dicina River to fight (according to Chetniks) the Partisans. Brown had a thirty- or forty-minute talk with Mihalovich. Expressed his thanks for kind treatment at the hands of the Chetniks. Mihalovich stated he liked the Americans and would like to meet all the American flyers in the area, and that he would like to visit America after the war. No political or military conversation.

Mihalovich was offered sanctuary by the Americans but preferred to remain in Yugoslavia. He was of course shot by Tito's partisans. gfc.

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Farley, Leonard A., S/Sgt., 121382293, 346th Bomb Sq., 99th Bomb Gp.  
 Born - 10 March 1921 Enlisted - 15 September 1942  
 Home Address - Westdale, New York  
 Peacetime Profession - Student  
 MIA - 6 October 1943  
 Missions - Twenty-five  
 RTD - 2 September 1944.  
 Duty on A/C - Tail Gunner  
 Ref No. USA/SKP/25  
 2 September 1944
2. Never in enemy hands.
3. On a mission to Ulnico, Italy, source's plane encountered fighters and flak when about 100 miles inland. The plane lost its position in the formation and shortly afterwards there was an explosion in the left bombay caused by either flak or fighter attack. Immediately after this occurred source realized that the other members of the crew were bailing out so he attempted to open his own escape hatch. This was jammed so he went to the waist hatch. At first this jammed but he managed to free it and helped the two remaining members of the crew, both of whom were wounded to bail out.

All members of the crew bailed out safely with the exception of the engineer who had been killed when putting on his parachute. The airmen landed in the vicinity of Bressia, 4533N 1013E, near Leudriana (?). Source was immediately picked up by a Carabinieri who set off for his headquarters on a motorcycle with source riding on the back. At the first curve in the road when the machine slowed down source jumped off and made off across the fields. The Carabinieri stopped and fired about three shots from a small pistol but did not hit source who hid in the hedges until it was dark.

After dark source made his way to a farmhouse where he was given some food and a gift of civilian clothes by the farmer. He stayed the night in the house then spent the following week hiding in an outhouse being fed by the farmer. After a week had elapsed source was taken to another place where he found some English ex prisoners of war. He stayed about a week during which time he obtained news of the rest of his crew.

After a week here source and the others were introduced to an Italian woman who spoke English and was connected with a Helpers Organization. Her father had been taking care of the missing members of source's crew. She took them along to her organization who in turn took the party to a Partisan camp in the mountains where they met British and American escapers (?)

Two weeks were spent at this camp under not very good conditions. Source found out from Partisans where the co-pilot was and went down and brought him to the hideout.

The two Americans and three Englishmen decided that they should attempt to get to Switzerland as a drive had been started against the guerillas. They hired their own guides and on 11 November 1943, they crossed the border into Switzerland.

They reported to the Swiss police who on orders from the officer commanding escapees took them to Berne. They were put with other internees and allowed to live the same sort of life but lived in different hotels under orders of the American military attache. While here Source met the pilot, navigator and bombardier all of whom had been helped by an Italian organization.

Source and another enlisted man on hearing that Grenoble had been taken and that the Rhone Valley was controlled by the Maquis decided to escape and get back to Allied hands. They set off for a point south of Lake Geneva where they had been told it was safe to cross. The two escapees got lost in the mountains for about sixteen hours, when they did finally encounter someone they found they were in France. The French peasant directed them to Oyenez, 4616N 0539E, where they found the Maquis in control. They were given food and sheltered before being taken to Annecy, 455N 0608E.

In Annecy, they struck a spot of bother as the chief of the local Maquis movement thought they were German spies. After a lot of argument, an interpreter was produced who proved the airmen's identify after which they were sent to the American Headquarters in Grenoble.

From here they were sent to an Allied airfield where they obtained an air passage to Bari via Corsica.

W.L. JONES,  
 Captain, AC.,  
 Interrogator

- 3 Incls:  
 Incl 1 - Ltr, 983.6  
 Incl 2,3 - Appendix B, C

APPENDIX B

Anna Mahlony - Cremona, 4508N 1001E - Helped Source to contact English organization. Helped take care of the crew members. Warned crew members of interrogation in Switzerland.

APPENDIX C

8. T/Sgt Richard Dickerson - Was shot through head and killed while putting on chute.  
 Pilot - Otis Lee F/O Known to have been in France on the way to Italy, having escaped from Switzerland.  
 Rudolph, Manchel, Navigator Is in Switzerland with American Legation at Berne.  
 Lt Carver, Bombardier Also in Switzerland with Legation in Berne.  
 F/O Carleton Alderson Is in Bern, Switzerland  
 Co-pilot  
 William Jones, S/Sgt Is Prisoner of War in Germany. Informed by Red Cross  
 Right waist gunner in Switzerland.  
 Cunningham, S/Sgt Also Prisoner of War in Germany.  
 Left waist gunner  
 Ritter, George Received telegram from navigator's parents stating that  
 Ball turret gunner Ritter had returned to States.  
 Kramer, Ralph, T/Sgt Prisoner of War in Germany

5 September 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Lee, Otis Saber, F/O, T-60145, 99th Bomb Group, 346th Squadron  
 Born - 16 September 1920  
 Enlisted - 23 January 1941  
 Home Address - RFD #2, Rockdale, Miami, Oklahoma  
 Peacetime Occupation - Student  
 MIA - 6 October 1943  
 RTD - 4 September  
 Missions - 24  
 Duty - Pilot

2. Never in Enemy Hands

3. On a mission to northern Italy, 6 October 1943, B-17 aircraft was attacked by E/A near Brescia. The controls and electrical system were shot out. All the crew but the Engineer, Victor G. Dickerson, bailed out in the vicinity of Brescia from 18000 ft at 1230.

Upon landing Source was picked up by Italian partisans and taken to the woods where he was hidden until dark. That night the Italians brought Source civilian clothes and showed him the direction of the front lines. Walking in the direction of the lines many Germans were met. He then decided against traveling south. In a small town about 230 miles south of Turin Source boarded a bus for Milan. On 11 Oct 1943 he left Milan on a train headed for the Swiss border. He was accompanied by an Italian during the trip. Upon reaching the border Source succeeded in evading the German Patrol and crossed into Switzerland on 13 October 1943. When he reached the first small town he reported to the Swiss police who

contacted the American Military Attache in Bern. He was then taken to Bern and turned over to the Attache on 17 October 1943. From there he was taken to Basle to an internee camp but after six weeks was reclassified as an escapee and returned to Bern on 30 November 1943. After 5 weeks in Bern he was taken to Klosters where he remained until 30 May 1944. From Klosters Source was moved to Glion (?). He remained at Glion until 23 August 1944 at which time he was taken to St Gingaf (?). At this town Source met the Maquis who took him to an American Army Division which made plans for his evacuation. Source was evacuated from an air strip (near Salon) to Bari via Naples on 4 September 1944.

GEORGE D. McWILLIAMS  
2nd Lt. AC  
Interrogator

## 3 Inclosures:

- Incl 1 - Ltr, 383.65
- Incl 2 - Appendix B
- Incl 3 - Appendix C

*These originals are very hard to de-cipher,  
as the ink has spread among the paper fibres.  
So we guess at the names for the blanks. geo.*

APPENDIX B

Captain Jones (American)  
(?) Borina (Italian woman in Milan)

APPENDIX C

- 7. Escapees
  - Carlton O. Alderson, CoPilot, Glion
  - Thomas Carber, Bombardier, Bern
  - Rudolph E. Menchl, Navigator, Bern
  - Leonard A. Farley, Tail Gunner, France
- 8. Casualties
  - Victor G. Dickerson was killed in the plane before the crash.
- 9. P.O.Ws.
  - Ralph E. Kramer, Radio Operator, Germany
  - Willie C. Jones, Waist Gunner, Germany
  - Harry L. Cunningham, Waist Gunner, Germany

12 Oct 1944  
USA/SKP/118

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Blankenheim, Norbert E, 348 Sq., 99th Gp.  
Born - 22 Oct 1915 Enlisted - 5 July 1942  
Home Address - 2029 St. Milwaukee, Wis.  
Peacetime Profession - Printer  
MIA - 24 Sep 44 RTD - 12 Oct 44 Missions - 27
1. Pulling, William G., 12172699, 348 Sq., 99 Gp.  
Born - 15 June 1923 Enlisted - 18 Nov 42  
Home Address - Old Forge, N.Y.  
Peacetime Profession - Telegrapher  
MIA - 24 Sep 44 RTD - 12 Oct 44 Missions - 5
2. T/Sgt Willima G. Pulling was flying on the same plane as Lt Blankenheim (navigator) on the mission to Ireno. On 24 July 44 about 15 minutes before the target was reached, No. 1 engine lost oil pressure and would not feather, a few minutes later it caught fire and started to "windmill." Bombs had been salvoed in a field, and the pilot -- Lt Fast -- gave the order to bail out. Source saw seven chutes including his own, and does not know what became of the other three.

Source landed north of Genoa on a mountainside, hid his chute and contacted the tail gunner S/Sgt Mill who landed nearby. By moving further up the hill they contacted another two members of their crew, T/Sgt Harry and S/Sgt Miller.

All walked down the hill and obtained food from an Italian peasant and headed towards the coast -- using their compasses. Another peasant was contacted just outside Genoa on 25 July, and the party lived in a hayshed on a farm for three days.

The Italian helper took them on 28/9 July through Genoa suburbs onto a hill on the east side where they hid out with 4 Russians and 1 Austrian soldier who were waiting to join the Partisans.

After about a week in this area -- getting food from peasants -- Source and his three companions were taken by a Russian colonel from the Partisans into an area on the west side of the main road running N from Genoa. Here Source contacted Lt Blankenheim and the radio operator -- T/Sgt Marech at a Hq of the Partisan band.

T/Sgt Pulling and Lt Blankenheim, with others in the party, left Partisan camp 7 August 1944 at 0230. Germans were approaching. All six of crew were trying to reach some S. Africans in hiding. Got there in evening of same day. Joined eleven other S.A.s nearby. Left Wed a.m. for vicinity of La Spezia to wait for lines to come to them. Stayed first night near Busella, 4455N, 8-55E, next night near Attone and stayed there one day leaving around 0930 on the next morning, 13 August 1944. Partisans in whose camp they had stayed, took them by truck to town near Alpieselles - 4415E, 9-50E. Next morning went to Cavati where they met some So. Africans who told them of an Italian who had been sent up in area to help our men and who had a radio. Waited two days there for instructions and then found out they would have to be at Motereggi by 20 August to pick up guide -- arrived on time, but no guide. On 21st left to find another guide whom they contacted on night of 21st, this guide had contact with 5th Army. Party had swelled to 11 by then. Stayed near Monteregeggio until 2 Sep when they left because of poor food. Stayed one day at Torpiano then went to Sesseta. Were taken there by Eyetis paratrooper who was waiting for a launch. Stayed there till 30 Sep (They stayed in area of Torpiano going to surrounding villages for food.) and then found they could go through lines. Picked up Fifth Army guide and rations at Onstolia. Left there 1 Oct. Spent next 5 days getting to lines and through them. On 6 October near town of Capriglia met first US troops. Stayed that night in Pietrassanta. Via truck then to Viaraggio, 7th Oct; Livornio, Florence on the 8th of Oct., Arezzo the ninth and Rome then to Naples on the 11th, arriving Bari 12 Oct 1944.

A.A. BATHS  
1st Lt., A.C.  
Interrogator

## 3 Incls

- Incl 1 - Ltr 383.6 (2)
- 2 - Appendix B
- 3 - Appendix F

APPENDIX B

Ocendi Liovio - Torpiano - fed three men 2 meals a day for 16 days.

Guiseppe Borgo - Torpiano - breakfast for two weeks - woman mended socks - washed clothes, etc.

APPENDIX F

Says 15 U.S. paratroopers near Attone had landed at night in rocks and all were pretty well banged up. Were in a patriot hospital. Thinks they may have contacted 5th Army by now. Heavy night traffic moving north out of Genova in July & August. Believed moving toward Alessandria. Other four members of crew last heard from as being near 4408N-1007E, 3 Sep 1944. No thoughts on Pilot, co-pilot, or Right Waist Gunner - Bombardier landed in proximity of Lt. Blankenheim.

PRESS RELEASE  
FROM: 99th Bomb Group  
THRU: 5th Wing (US)  
November 12, 1943

By S/Sgt. William Brink Jr.

ATTENTION: Lowell, Mass., Sun

AN ADVANCED NORTH AFRICAN AIR BASE--Veteran of historic Flying Fortress raid on Rome and service in two war theaters, 1st Lt. Stanley J. Polak, 22, of 552 E. Merrimack St., Lowell, Mass., a Fortress navigator, is on his way home from North Africa after completing his allotted 50 bombing missions with the 15th Air Force.

Polak headed for England Sept. 25, 1942, taking off from Goose Bay, Labrador, and spent more than five months in the British Isles before being assigned to combat duty in North Africa.

With Maj. Gen. Doolittle's powerful Mediterranean armada the navigator began combat flying May 15, 1943, with a raid on Terranova, Sardinia, and finished up October 30 with a mission to Turin, Italy. He has been decorated with the air Medal and nine Oak Leaf Clusters.

Polak was graduated from Lowell High School in 1938 and took post graduate work at the school until entering the Air Forces as a cadet Dec. 18, 1941. Unmarried, he is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Polak of Lowell.

--bb--

November 12, 1943

ATTENTION: Berthoud, Colo., Bulletin  
Long Beach, Cal., Press Telegram  
Long Beach, Cal., Sun

AN ADVANCED NORTH AFRICAN AIR BASE--Veteran of both historic Flying Fortress raids on Rome, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Dean H. Coleman, 28 year old Flying fortress navigator of 24 Esperanza, Long Beach, Cal., is on his way home from North Africa after completing his allotted 50 bombing missions with the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force.

Coleman began combat flying May 24, 1943, with a raid on LaMaddellena, Sardinia, and finished up October 31 with a mission to Antheor in south France. He has been awarded the air Medal and eight Oak Leaf Clusters.

Born at Berthoud, Colo., Coleman graduated from Long Beach Polytechnic High School in 1933 and in 1938 received a B.S. degree in accounting from the University of Kansas. Unmarried, he was office manager for the Pacific Finance Co. of Long Beach until entering the Air Forces as a cadet Feb. 4, 1942. He won his navigator's wings Jan. 2, 1943, at Mather Field, Sacramento, Cal.

--bb--

AN ADVANCED NORTH AFRICAN AIR BASE--1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Anthony S. Mastropaolo, 27, of 1858 Mamlin Ave., Tyrone, Pa., a Sicilian-born Flying Fortress bombardier who often dropped high explosives on his native country, is on his way home from North Africa after completing his allotted 50 missions with the 15<sup>th</sup> U.S. Air Force.

Mastropaolo began combat flying May 25, 1943, with a raid on LaMaddellena, Sardinia, and finished up October 31 with a mission to Antheor in southern France. In between were many smashing, high altitude attacks on targets in Sicily, Italy, Austria and Greece. He has been awarded the Air Medal and nine Oak Leaf Clusters.

The implications in bombing his homeland Mastropaolo dismissed with the comment: "It was my job."

The bombardier was graduated from Tyrone High School in 1934 and in 1940 from the University of Alabama, where he majored in commerce and finance. Single, he entered the army as an enlisted man April 22, 1941 and was accepted as a cadet Jan. 12, 1942. He won his bombardier's wings in November, 1942, at Albuquerque, NM.

--bb--

November 12, 1943

ATTENTION: Charleston, W.Va., Gazette  
Logan, W.Va., Banner

AN ADVANCED NORTH AFRICAN AIR BASE--Credited with blasting down a Messerschmitt 109 in aerial combat although wounded by enemy pursuit fire, Staff Sergeant Athol A. Strickland, 20, of Blair, W. Va., a Flying Fortress waist gunner, is on his way home from North Africa after completing his allotted 50 bombing missions.

Strickland bagged the ME 109 over Foggia, Italy, on a day when 40 enemy pursuit jumped his Fortress formation. Although wounded early in the scrap, he stayed at his guns and sent the 109 crashing in flames. He was awarded the Purple Heart for his injuries and also has received the Air Medal.

The gunner began combat flying May 6, 1943, with a mission to Marsala, Sicily, and finished up November 2 with a raid on an Austrian target.

Born at Sharples, W. Va., Strickland left high school to enlist in the army October 8, 1941. He is unmarried.

AN ADVANCED NORTH AFRICAN AIR BASE--1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Robert W. Hain of Tres Pinos, Cal., flew home his patched up Flying fortress today and brought with him a tale of near disaster in the skies over Italy when he waded all alone through a hail of German pursuit fire with only two good engines and only one machine gun turret operating to hold the fighters at bay.

The 27 year old pilot, a veteran of 47 missions, brought his crew safely through the ordeal and landed at an emergency field in Corsica. The lone gunner, Sergeant Frederick G. Terhune, 23 of 638 E. 25<sup>th</sup> St., Paterson, N.J., destroyed one of four attacking Messerschmitt 109s and probably destroyed a second.

It was on the Fortress raid over Bolzano November 10 when the No. 1 engine of Main's ship suddenly "conked out" just short of the target. The pilot was forced to order the bombs salvaged, feather the useless engine and pull out of the protective cover of his formation.

"We were all alone then," Hain said, "and four ME 109s jumped on us."

A 20 mm shell from one of the pursuit plowed into the gas tank of No. 3 engine but luckily did not explode. Terhune, who as engineer on the ship had abandoned his top turret to transfer gasoline from the feathered No. 1 to No. 3, hastily began to shift fuel from No. 3 to No. 2.

"Gas was pouring out of the punctured tank," Main said, "and No. 3 engine wasn't much good. All this time tracers were flying past my window like fireworks and I was amazed that we only got that one hit."

Main ordered Terhune back to his turret. All other guns in the rear of the ship--ball turret, tail, radio compartment and waist--had jammed or were otherwise not functioning.

"I rushed back to my turret," Terhune said, taking up the story, "and saw the four MEs sitting about 250 yards behind us, firing leisurely. I didn't have time to use my sights. I swung my turret on them and fired a four second burst. One dropped and started down in flames. I fired two more bursts and another one spouted smoke and went down."

The crew lost sight of the first plane, but the second was seen to crash for a definite victory. Terhune, one time Paterson semipro pitcher and football player, has four previous victories to his credit in 32 missions.

The Jerries turned tail but Hain's troubles weren't over yet. Something went wrong with the feathered No. 1 propeller and it began to "windmill" under air pressure. No. 2 ran out of gas and had to be feathered. No. 3 was still turning but not putting out much power.

"I headed for a landing fast," the pilot said. "We were near Adjaccio, Corsica, which has a small field. It wasn't easy. I had to swing fast at the end of the runway to avoid running off."

Days later, after the Fortress had been repaired, Hain flew his ship back to North Africa and was ready for mission No. 48.

--bb--

(Photo)

Mutually congratulating each other are two members of a Flying Fortress crew who together saved their ship from German pursuit over Bolzano, Italy, November 10. At left is 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Robert W. Hain, 27, of Tres Pinos, Cal., who piloted the ship on two engines and a punctured gas tank through a hail of German fighter fire. Right is Sergeant Frederick G. Terhune, 23 year old engineer-gunner of Paterson, N.J., (638 E. 25<sup>th</sup> St.) who single-handedly blasted down one of four attacking Messerschmitt 109s, probably destroyed a second. The certain victory was Terhune's fifth.

--bb--

(Photo)

November 15, 1943

ATTENTION: Hollister, Cal., Free Lance  
Paterson, N.J., Evening News, Morning Call

Chalking up his fifth victory over German pursuit is Sergeant Frederick G. Terhune, 23 year old Flying Fortress engineer-gunner of Paterson, N.J., (638 E. 25<sup>th</sup> St.) while his pilot, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Robert W. Hain, 27, of Tres Pinos, Cal., looks on. Over Bolzano, Italy, November 10, Hain brought his ship and crew safely through a German fighter attack on two engines, while Terhune single-handedly destroyed one of four Messerschmitt 109s, probably destroyed a second.

--bb--

(Photo)

# NEWS, DUES & VIEWS

Your editor heard an interesting story during the Seattle reunion. At a lunch counter in the town of Burien, a former Boeing employee joined in the general reminiscing and the following emerged:

It seems that under the stress of ordinary formation flying, an occasional wing would fall off a B-17. This caused talk and Boeing at once investigated. It was found that the bolts were being tightened by husky gentlemen newly recruited from the logging camps of Washington. Some of these ex-loggers gave good measure indeed when tightening said bolts: They added a pipe "cheater" to the large wrench, thus sometimes causing the bolt threads to pass the yield point without stripping the threads.

So now you know! George

George, I found out that, if you want to locate a fellow comrade, the way is to write a seeking letter to the last known address or the V.F.W. Service Office of the known State or Veteran's Administration office in the state. The seeking letter to the last known address is to the newspaper of that town which usually has a Letter To The Editor Column. Fab Fabiniak

Thanks, Fab. We have had the time and energy (and money) to send postcards to people of the same last name in the town of last address, but we have not been able to do anything on the phone nor to write personal letters. Our postcards have really been adequate until now, but the time has come when our big returns are coming from you faithful searchers who can write and call to locate your crews.

Incidentally, it takes time to research the names sent to us, but we do get the job done. It may take several months to locate the directory for an individual, but mostly the delay is about one month. geo



Lawrence Cortesi's latest book, OPERATION ROME, is about the interdiction of the Italian rail system. I enjoyed it thoroughly, and I believe that you will too. It is hard to obtain, for reasons known only to the publisher. geo

Dorothy Wrentmore is going to bring a picture to Dayton to raffle off for the Society. Thanks, Dorothy! geo

## QUOTES

Japan, The Final Agony

One quickly exhausts superlatives when describing the bravery and stubborn determination of Japanese troops, for they fought with fanaticism in every field and on every occasion. As Field-Marshal Slim has said, the strength of the Japanese army lay in the spirit of the individual soldier; 'He fought and marched till he died . . . it was this combination of obedience and ferocity that made the Japanese army, whatever its condition, so formidable . . .' To the Japanese soldier or sailor, surrender was unthinkable, death as light as a feather'.

## Quote of the Month

"So many federal employees are now selling American secrets to foreigners that the country faces an acute secrets shortage."

Russell Baker  
Syndicated Columnist

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\*\*\*\*\*

Walter is starting to record the telephone numbers of all members. We are also filling in the missing squadron numbers on the roster, even if it does cost us 45¢. We'll do our damndest!

And we herewith present the missing portion of the 1986 roster. We do not know how these zippy, zealous, zesty zealots were omitted.

99th Bomb Group Member List: Z

Zanoni, Adam J.	219 Common St.	Braintree	MA	02184	346
Zawila, Ed	5254 W. George St.	Chicago	IL	60641	
Zick, Lorin W.	140 1st St	Prairie du Sac	WI	53578	346
Ziebarth, John	c/o Comstock Engineering 391 Taylor Blvd., Suite 110	Pleasant Hill	CA	94523	Assoc
Ziegler, Max A.	500 E. 18th St.	Jasper	AL	35501	416
Zigler, Clay O.	3930 Forest Manor Ave.	Indianapolis	IN	46226	348
Zygmund, Walter J.	68 Whitehead Ave.	Sayerville	NJ		346

## TAPS

Carel F. Carter of the 416th died April 30th, 1970.

C.D. Boggs

Philip C. O'Reilly died January 11, 1986 of a heart attack which followed apparently successful lung surgery. Philip's last mission with the 416th was April 5, 1944 over Ploesti M/Y. He flew most of his missions as tail gunner in Sweater Girl with pilots William Osborne, Robert Braungart and Charles Boggs.

Dear George;

I am sorry to inform you of the death of my father, Paul M. Pellas Box 9, Snangler PA. in October. My father passed away of a sudden heart attack on the 15th. He was a member of the 347th, 99th Bomb Group. I must tell you that he looked forward to your newsletters, reading every one from cover to cover, and saved every issue. He always said he would like to go to a reunion when he retired, but he passed away two weeks before retirement which would have been on the 31st.

Sincerely yours

Paul Pellas

## CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Robert G. Mack	41 Turtleback Trail	Point Vedra	FL	32082
L.B. Warner	2988 N. Oakridge Dr.	Harrarah	OK	73045
Theodore Sharp	46 Langfield Dr.	Buffalo	NY	14215
Mrs. John E. Roquemore	5854 Dickson Rd.	Jacksonville	FL	32211
John Casley	30518 Southfield #211	Southfield	MI	48076

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642 Francis D. Ambrose	248 Bridge Ave.	Bay Head	NJ 08742 347
643 Charles H. Jeffers	Box 758	Pocono Pines	PA 18350 346
644 George L. Goodburn	1071 Beechview Dr. N.	Werthington	OH 43085 416
645 Ernest R. Jenkins	73 Folly Rd. Blvd.	Charleston	SC 29407
646 David C. Conner	7050 SW Hoodview Pl.	Beaverton	OR 97005
647 Robert J. Cannellos	Box 241	Syracuse	NY 13209
648 Louis Coury	1206 Portland Ave.	Cambridge	OH 43725 416
649 M.C. Stout	2204 Running Deer Lane	New Port Richey	FL 33552 HQ
650 George F. Perry	6236 SW 47th Place	Portland	OR 97221 416
651 Henry A. Duff	409 Meramec Sta. Rd.	Valley Park	MO 63088 301BG
652 Jack B. Blanks	5712 Wallace Neal Rd.	Charlotte	NC 28208 348
653 Bill Aspengren	703 33rd St.	Des Moines	IA 50312 Assoc.
654 Henry C. Orlofski	15 Paul Place	Haskell	NJ 07420 348
655 Walter C. Beckham	3419 Georgia St. NE	Albuquerque	NM 87110 353mu
656 Donald E. Hatch	1242 Hatch Rd.	Waterloo	NY 13165 348
657 Mrs. Peggy Park	804 Twin Points	Horseshoe Bend	AR 72512 347
658 Italo D. Bucalo	2020 Emily St.	Philadelphia	PA 19145 416
659 Nick Rajkovich	340 Palmetto Dr.	Lake Park	FL 33403 301BG
660 Milton E. Ficklin	2547 Easton	Tulsa	OK 74127 347