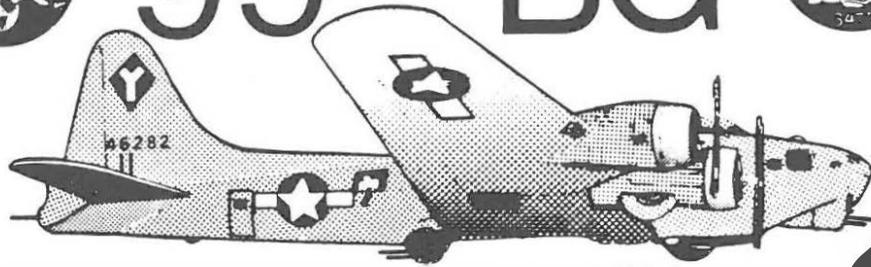




99th BG



B-17 FLYING FORTRESS
HaSq, 346th, 347th, 348th, 416th
395 COMBAT MISSIONS
1943 AFRICA - EUROPE 1945



THE 99th Bomb Group Historical Society Newsletter

Vol. 7 No. 5

Sep. 1, 1987

SOCIETY OFFICERS 1987 - 1988
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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings;

The next important date on our calendar is the 15th Air Force Association Reunion at Colorado Springs, Colorado. Those dates are October 14th through 17th, 1987. Make your arrangements now to attend this fine Reunion. The 99th Bomb Group is Headquartering at the Antler's Hotel. Call in you reservations now at 303-473-5600 and they will be most happy to take care of your needs. If you don't belong to the 15th AFA, to join you just send them a check in the amount of \$15.00 to P.O. Box 6325, March Air Force Base, California 92518. Time is getting close and these arrangements need to be made to assure you a place to stay at the Antler's. You need also to write Bernie Barr, 7413 Vista del Arroyo, NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109 to let him know you'll be there and with whom. He needs this information to set up the luncheon at the Air Force Academy on Thursday.

Thursday has been set up pretty much as a 99th Bomb Group day. The rest of the Schedule will follow the 15th Air Force set up. The exception on that day is for the Western Night Dinner at the Flying W Ranch for the evening.

In reading our July 1 99th Bomb Group Bulletin I note that some of those "War Diary" reports this time, that I flew on a number of those missions. I kept a diary of sorts but these reports are more extensive and relate facts that I failed to keep. These are especially interesting to me and I am noting these additions and plan to write about them later. A part of my problem is no doubt the fact that visibility from the Radio Room on a B-17 has it's limitations. The only clear view you have is straight up through that hatch, and from that point straight up your visibility is unlimited. Our tight formation discipline

is again in evidence when the War Diary Report gives the accounts of the many attacks begun by the Germans but become not aggressive as they closed with us breaking off before any damage can be made from either side. From the view point of the German pilot, you know that as he lines up on us he has to observe that tight formation and that would undoubtedly influence his willingness to press on in. We all have much to be thankful for, and certainly very much to be proud of, to have been a part of this very high quality Bomb Group.

We must each recount some of our experiences and share them with the rest of our Group. There are experiences to be shared by all of us and they are truly interesting. From a more dramatic point Bernie Barr speaks of a tail gunner who went in all the way to the ground in the tail section of his B-17. He encouraged this Tail Gunner to write about this experience and he did comply. We have that in our archives and should all have read that account in the Bulletin. The point is that this Tail Gunner died shortly after. Without this priceless account written when it was, it would have been lost for ever. This example goes far beyond that of anything I might have to write about but it does amplify the significance of relating and sharing experiences with one another. Let's get these written down and sent in to George Coen. If you don't type, just write your account and we'll see to it that they are transcribed and published.

We'll see you all in Colorado Springs.



Joe C. Kenney
Joe C. Kenney

RECOLLECTIONS BY LEW BOATWRIGHT

In the July 1987 newsletter, I gave my perception of the bombing strategy during 1943 and a general idea of how the group aimed and dropped bombs on the assigned target. As we climbed to bombing altitude, it was important for the lead bombardier to record wind direction and velocity at various flight levels. Also needed were ballistic tables for the type of bomb to be released. Therefore all aircraft in the group carried the same bomb load.

When we were over enemy territory, anti-aircraft fire was encountered on most missions. This was from 88 millimeter and 105 mm artillery. The guns were radar controlled and the projectiles time fused to explode at our altitude (usually about thirty thousand feet). After the projectile was fired, the enemy did not have the capability to change its direction. Approximately thirty seconds later it would arrive at our altitude.

Avoiding this type of enemy action was simple - the group leader would make random course changes (10 degrees or less) every 20 to 25 seconds. Many times I have seen an anti-aircraft salvo explode off to one side exactly where we would have been had the flight direction not been changed. Only on one mission did I see evidence of anti-aircraft fire tracking our formation while changing course. This was over Foggia Aerodrome, Italy after "bombs away" and we were turning to the west toward the Mediterranean coast. Above thirty thousand feet, I did not consider enemy anti-aircraft fire to be a major threat. However, below that altitude, I was concerned.

Another anti-aircraft tactic was the "box barrage." Imagine a transparent shoebox in the sky and placed across the flight path between us and the target. Smoke from exploding shells within the box made it highly visible and the flash from each reminded one of a July 4th fireworks display. This happened on our approach to the harbor at Palermo, Sicily. Next time we went after the anti-aircraft batteries - more about this later.

On a typical mission, the navigator in the group leader's aircraft was responsible for getting us to the IP (initial point) and the bombardier from IP to the target. The IP was carefully selected, normally upwind from the target, an easily recognizable natural landmark such as a lake, a river or island. High altitude winds over Italy, usually from the north, often exceeded one hundred miles per hour and this could give us a ground speed of 360 mph or greater. Since this is six miles each minute and the bombardier needed a few minutes to set up the bomb run, the IP was located eighteen or more miles from the target. The objective was to destroy the target and to minimize our exposure to enemy action near heavily defended targets.

If the target was a large area (airfield, oil refinery or railway marshalling yard), the formation was altered at the IP to what was called a "Company Front." Designated flights (three aircraft each) moved up abreast of the lead flight to make the width of the formation equal to the target width. The bomb interval was set so the string of bombs from each aircraft would cover the target length. (To be continued)



HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520 US ARMY



9 January 1945
Ref. USA/SKP/425

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Niketh, Edward G., 2nd Lt., O-827036 347th Sq, 99th Gp
Born - 13 Oct 1916 Enlisted - 27 Oct 1943
Home Address - 3510 Washington St., Gary, Indiana
Peacetime profession - Machinist Duty - Pilot
MIA - 7 Nov 1944 RTD - 8 Jan 45 Missions - 5 (over target)

2. Source 1, 2nd Lt Niketh.

Source's ship was hit as soon as it straightened out on the bomb run. The #1 engine received a direct hit and left wing burst into flames. The ship fell over on its right wing and started to fall over. Source gave bail out order and then he and co-pilot fought ship under control. This was difficult as controls had also been damaged and it took both men on the control. (Bomb run was made at 15,000 feet.)

Source held controls while co-pilot left the plane, then attempted to get out of his ship. The plane fell into a spin and he was unable to leave. After an undeterminable length of time, the plane exploded and the pilot was hurled out head first. He pulled rip-cord a few seconds later and the chute opened almost immediately. Source hit shortly thereafter, not more than 50 yards from his burning plane, near Maribor, (46-35, 15-35). The plane was burning and was almost completely destroyed.

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. Source hit in valley surrounded by small hills. Landing on his feet, he slid a few yards until collapsing his chute. He attempted to get up and run, but his legs refused to hold his weight, due to shock, when the m.g. shells in the plane began exploding. He rolled over into a gully and remained there until they stopped. Then he walked up a hill toward a house whose inhabitants fled at the sight of Source. He remained there for a while, when a group of B-24s came over and bombed Maribor. He evidently was near a flak emplacement as spent flak was falling all around the house.

To accomplish this record, 99th Fortresses met and battered the best the enemy had to offer over North Africa, Pantelleria, Sicily, Sardinia, Italy, southern France, Greece, Germany and Austria. Most of the aircraft wiped out were the enemy's top-flight warplanes -- JU 88's, ME 109's and FE 190's.

On the ground, great chunks were hacked out of German air strength in four notable raids in which 99th bombing accuracy was at its best. Outstanding among these was a raid on the Milo Airdrome at Trapani in Sicily, April 5, 1943. The group, flying only its third mission in combat, destroyed or damaged 85 of 150 enemy aircraft present on the field. Photographs of this mission, showing virtually all bomb strikes within the target area, later were published widely as examples of near-perfect bombing.

The group also: knocked out 48 enemy aircraft on Castelvetro airdrome in Sicily May 21; 51 on Naples-Capodichino airdrome in Italy May 30, and 88 on Istres Le Tube airdrome in southern France August 17. The latter raid was the first by Mediterranean heavy bombers on France.

Similarly in the air the 99th made large inroads on German fighter strength in three outstanding encounters with Hermann Goering's crack pilots. Few of the group's airmen will forget the raid on Gerbini airdrome in Sicily on July 5, when a solid wall of more than 100 pursuit tried to keep a mere handful of 27 Fortresses from reaching the target.

In a running battle lasting almost an hour, the group's gunners blasted down 38 fighters, probably destroyed 11 and damaged one. The target was hit and only three Fortresses were lost. Crewmen dubbed it a complete course in gunnery from primary to post-graduate.

In a raid on Foggia No. 2 airdrome in Italy August 25, the group was credited with destroying 40, probably destroying 18 and damaging 12 of 100 attacking fighters. Over Foggia main airdrome on September 7 the count was 32 destroyed, 1 probably destroyed and 6 damaged of 50 attacking pursuits.

Almost hidden in these statistics was the drain on the Luftwaffe at times when allied movements into Pantelleria, Sicily and Italy depended heavily upon an impoverished enemy airpower.

And, while the group took pride in its achievement, much of the credit was due individual exploits of airmen-pilots, co-pilots, navigators, bombardiers and gunners -- who gave the 99th its fighting tradition.

Outstanding among these was the feat of Staff Sergeant Benjamin F. Warmer, a six-foot-six waist gunner from San Francisco, Cal. (340 Hayes St.) who shot down seven axis fighters in one day -- the Gerbini raid. Other gunners on Warmer's crew boosted the total to a record 12 planes destroyed by one ship in one raid.

Another "hot gun" was Staff Sergeant Jack D. Guerard, a pint-sized tail gunner from Beaufort, S.C., who bagged four fighters in the September 8th raid on Frascati, Italy. 1st Lt. Lewis S. Franck, a quiet, retiring bombardier from Scotland Neck, N.C., also hit a four-bagger when he grabbed a nose gun on the October 1st raid on Augsburg, Germany, and sent a quartet of Nazi fighters earthward. This raid was the first by Mediterranean heavy bombers on Germany.

On many occasions 99th fighting men carried on at their guns despite great physical pain from wounds. There was Staff Sergeant Eugene L. Cantley of Dry Creek, W. Va., a waist gunner who was wounded in the knee and back along with five others of his crew over Messina, Sicily. Although he collapsed once from pain and shock, Cantley rallied to shoot down a fighter. He was decorated with the Silver Star.

Staff Sergeant Floyd L. Laxson, a tail gunner from Colorado Springs, Colo. (719 E. Cache La Poudre) shot down a fighter after its fire had blown him out of his seat and tore a hole in his foot which put him in the hospital for weeks.

The comic touch was added by Capt. Frank Was, a pilot from Santa Ana, Cal. (617 Orange St.) who once flew his lumbering Fortress up behind an idling Focke Wulf 190, one of Germany's fastest fighter planes. Unaware that the Fort was within 100 yards of its tail, the hapless Focke Wulf went down under the fire of Was' gunners.

These and other men made the stories behind the statistics. The enemy had failed to keep the 99th from its target on any of the group's 119 missions. Each time it tried it lost -- heavily.

--bb--

In Air Battle Over Sicily

U.S. Gunner Downs 7 Planes

(This dispatch was written by Staff Sgt. Benjamin F. Warmer III, of San Francisco, a Fortress gunner who shot down seven enemy planes in a great aerial battle over Gerbini, Sicily, Monday, his seventh wedding anniversary. This probably was a record kill for a single gunner on one mission. Warmer is a former bodyguard of Treasury Secretary Morgenthau.)

By STAFF SGT. BENJAMIN F. WARMER III

A FLYING FORTRESS BASE IN NORTH AFRICA, July 6.—(AP)—“Judge, I kept my word.”

That's what I want to tell my father, Superior Court Judge Benjamin F. Warmer of San Bernardino, Calif., because I promised to get a few planes for him when I came over here. I named my gun “The Judge” and it came through today in great shape.

I got at least seven planes and I believe I hit and damaged more.

We were told before the take-off that we were hitting one of the toughest spots in Sicily, and we accepted it at its face value without losing confidence in our ability to come through. The warning turned out to be a bit of an understatement.

About five minutes off the target we ran into a howling anti-aircraft barrage, and coming up through their own flak were more enemy pursuit planes than we had ever seen. It had been their habit to lay outside their flak until it was over, but today they came right into their own fire.

GUNS WINKING

The first plane I got a shot at came in at the start—a Messerschmitt peeled off from our right,

and leveled straight at us with his guns winking. I winked back until the German was 50 yards away, and then I saw him burst into flames and plough down under our Fortress. I signalled the left waist gunner to look out of his window and see if the plane went down. He nodded yes.

Number two and number three were daisies. Two M-109s made a run together at the Fortress. I got one on the way in. He peeled off in a roll. The other came on but broke his run at about 50 yards and I opened up on his belly when he exposed it in a turn. The first plane slid off to the right for approximately 1000 yards and the pilot bailed out. The second plane went down and the pilot also left it.

Meantime one of our own Fortresses had been set on fire.

The next two victories I didn't even intend to claim, but the gunners in some other plane saw them parachuting down. There was a Messerschmitt making a run at our Fortress and I picked him up as he started his bank, held the trigger down until the plane began to smoke, and he started out of control like a leaf floating in the breeze.

GETS 2 MORE

The other one was making a run on a ship of ours—the one that was in trouble. The enemy had to pass within 50 yards of me, so I put approximately 200 rounds into him and the last I saw of him he was in a vertical dive and burning.

I got two more fighters, but didn't have time to identify them positively.

They were both making passes at a Fortress behind us, and as they banked to make a run on her they had to pass me. They first tried dodging tactics when they saw my

tracers, but he was too close for me to miss and he went down before he got to the plane he was after.

The other one was doing the same thing. He was just under our tail and below us and shooting at the ship behind us when one of my incendiaries made him explode in the air. He was number seven.

WANTED ACTION

I passed up my chance for a commission in the army to become a gunner because I wanted to get some action, and today I had my hands full.

I knew every one of our boys who went down—we had been eating together, palling around together and living together for eight months. I only wish I could have gotten a plane for every one of them.

We looked on those fellows who shot it out with us today with sort of mixed emotions. We respected them for their flying ability, because they are part of the German air force's Flying Circus.

TERRIFIC FIGHT

I think we are capable of handling them in the same way on every mission if it becomes necessary, but I don't think they can stand it. In fact, I doubt if they ever had a worse beating than they received today.

I've just finished reading the synopsis of a book, “Queens Die Proudly,” and it exemplifies perfectly just how I felt when I saw two of our Fortresses go down. One was burning from stem to stern as three fighters made passes at her. The ball turret gunner was still in position and he got all three in that one pass. Every gunner in the squadron will verify it. He went down with the Queen.

It isn't the machine alone—it's the combination of the men and the machine that makes the Fortress.



SHE HAS A REASON TO SMILE—Helen C. Warmer, wife of Staff Sgt. Benjamin Warmer, looks over letters recently received from him on the occasion of their sixth anniversary which her husband celebrated by knocking down seven planes in one engagement over Sicily. He is a gunner in the Air Force and his picture is beside Mrs. Warmer on the table.—(NEA Telephoto)

From the files of Margaret (Mrs. Lew) Boatwright, from the newspapers of the time when Lew was with the 99th.

Thank you, Margaret.

NEWS RELEASE
OCTOBER 13, 1944

15th AAF IN ITALY: -- Friday the 13th date of ill omen of many flyers holds no terror over one B-17 flying fortress crew of the 15th AAF as six members of the crew crash-landed safely while flying their 13th mission.

Shortly after takeoff the B-17 piloted by Second Lieutenant Lloyd H. Wileman of Toledo, Ohio, reached an altitude of approximately 8500 feet when one of the prop blades on the number four engine snapped off and hit the number three engine knocking that one out of commission also. The order was given to jettison the bombs but the bombs hung up in the bomb racks, refusing to leave the ship. Crew members hurriedly replace the pins on all the bombs with the exception of one for which the pin could not be found and this bomb was far from safe as a piece of cargo when landing as the pilot prepared to bring the aircraft down. Second Lieutenant Andrew J. Herbenick, Bombardier, Lyndora, PA, snatched up a piece of wire and improvised a pin for the lone bomb and as the crew "sweated out" the landing, pilot Wileman and co-pilot Second Lieutenant Harold Kingery, of Ripley, Tenn., brought the plane in for the landing and only a few bruises were suffered by the crew.

The six men who were flying the mission that would have brought their totals to 13 were Staff Sergeant Wilbur T. Massey, Engineer, of Mays Lick, KY; Assistant Engineer, Sergeant Robert H. Drier, St. Louis, MO; Staff Sergeant Andrew A. Huy, Radio Operator, Melbourne, FL; Sergeant Joseph Chonody, Jr., Ball Turret Gunner of South Bend, Ind; Gunner John J. Sherry, Sergeant, of Lewiston, ME; and Tail Gunner Sergeant Samuel H. Hughes of Clayton, N. Mex.

Although not on his 13th mission, Technical Sergeant Bruce W. Blount, Aerial Photographer and former Gunner, of Evanston, IL, says this Friday the 13th was his lucky or unlucky day according to the point of view for it was his second crash landing on a Friday the 13th. A former flyer of the Royal Canadian Air Force during a period of 16 months, Sergeant Blount said, "This was my fifth crash landing since I've been flying, and the second one that has occurred on a Friday the 13th. The other one took place after a mission to Berlin while I was flying from England last year. I can't recall the month offhand but the date sticks in my mind prominently." Technical Sergeant Blount has been in the USAAF since June 3, 1943, and has also crashed with the USAAF previously but said, "I guess Friday the 13th is my unlucky day all right, but I guess I really was lucky to get out of this one with only a bump on the head."

The eleventh lucky man to survive the crash without serious mishap was Second Lieutenant Claude Acree, Navigator, of Jacksonville, FL.

99TH, 463RD B-17 GROUPS WIN CITATIONS

Major General Nathan F. Twining, Commanding General of the 15th AAF, Tuesday awarded in separate full-dress ceremonies the blue battle streamer of War Department Distinguished Unit Citations to the 99th and 463rd B-17 Flying Fortress Groups.

For the 99th, it was the second organizational award in little more than a month, the group having received a Presidential Citation on Sep 27. Tuesday's honor cited the 99th for an attack, led by its commanding officer, Colonel Ford J. Lauer, Ligonier, Indiana, lead pilot of the first shuttle run to Russia, against the aircraft factory at WIENER NEUSTADT, AUSTRIA, on April 23, 1944, when it laid a devastating concentration of bombs in the immediate target area.

The attack was accomplished despite interception by 25 rocket- and cannon-firing enemy fighters, five of which were destroyed, and with anti-aircraft fire which riddled 31 of 36 participating Fortresses. No bomber was lost.

Commanded by Colonel George M. McGregor, 900 Chalfonte Drive, Alexandria, Virginia, the 463rd was cited for an attack on the Romano-Americano oil refinery at PLOESTI, rumania, on May 18, 1944, when the group continued alone to the target after all others had turned back because of adverse weather.

The group inflicted heavy damage on the refinery, but was swarmed upon by a force of 100 fighter planes after leaving the target. In a running air battle, 463rd gunners shot down 28 fighters and probably destroyed 30 more, against the loss of seven bombers.

The 463rd formerly was commanded by Colonel Frank Kurtz, south pacific veteran of "Queens Die Proudly" fame, who recently returned to the United States. The PLOESTI mission for which the group was cited was led by Major James W. Patton, Hiawatha, Kansas, a squadron commander.

In a quick switch between airfields, General Twining added personal congratulations to the air and ground personnel of both groups, whose devotion to duty was recognized in the high awards. The General affixed the streamers to the groups' colors after the men passed in review to the music of the 15th AAF military band. Also present at the both ceremonies was Brigadier General Charles W. Lawrence, Orlando, Florida, commanding general of a Fortress wing in which the two groups are members. All units of the wing now hold at least one Distinguished Unit Citation for "outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy."

The 99th has rolled up a total of 293 missions in continuous operation since March, 1943, while the 463rd has flown 133 missions since going into action in March, 1944.

RECEIVES DSC FOR FLYING B-17 HOME ALONE

At the War Department Citation ceremonies for the 99th Group Tuesday, General Twining presented the Distinguished Service Cross--the United States; second highest award--to a 99th pilot, Captain Warren Christianson, 23, of 1629 Sixth Street, Minneapolis, Min.

Capt Christianson, veteran of 50 bombing missions, who also holds the Air Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, was cited for a mission to VIENNA, AUSTRIA, August 23, 1944, from which he flew his ship back home, on two engines, after all other crewmen had bailed out. On this mission, here is what happened:

Flak at the target knocked out the engine and jammed the elevator controls. En route home, the ship plunged 10,000 feet in a spin. Christianson righted the ship, but all other crewmen had parachuted during the plunge. Another engine caught fire and had to be feathered. The supercharger of the third engine cut out. Christianson was lost for a time without his navigator. He cleared mountain barriers by a few hundred feet, got home to land with a flat tire.

NEWS RELEASE OF NOVEMBER 20, 1944

15th AAF IN ITALY -- The Veteran 99th Bombardment Group of the 15th AAF today landed after the successful completion of the 300th mission with the target for the day, Brno, M/Y, Czechoslovakia.

Led by Major Wayne J. Seward, of Guernsey, Wyoming, the Group joined the ranks of the few with 300 Axis attacks behind them. In less than 20 months of actual combat flying, the unit has struck targets in France, Italy, Sicily, Albania, Sardinia, Greece, Yugoslavia, Africa, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Roumania, and participated in the first shuttle run to Russia. In on the invasion of the European continent and the invasion of Southern France, the 99th has proven itself one of the ace B-17 Flying Fortress units in this theater.

The Group is now commanded by Colonel Ford J. Lauer, of Ligonier, Indiana.

By: Sgt. John Wiggin

NEWS RELEASE OF NOVEMBER 21, 1944

15T:H AAF IN ITALY--Presentation of seven Soldier's Medals and one Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Soldier's Medal was made at a 15th AAF B-17 Flying Fortress base in Italy by Brigadier General Charles W. Lawrence, of Orlando, Florida, at ceremonies there today.

The awards were made for "heroism at great risk of life" on January 27, 1944, when a bomber loaded with bombs crashed on takeoff and caught fire. While rescuing a crew member from the fire and keeping the onlookers from the burning aircraft, the bombs exploded and wounded all eight of the men who had rushed to the scene and were attempting a rescue of the crew members.

Award of the cluster was to Staff Sergeant James A. Kish, 1034 Lakewood Ave., Youngstown, Ohio, and the medals were given to Captain Clarence S. Rowland, Kingston, NY; Sergeants Earl A. Silvis (not present at ceremony) of Muskegan, Mich.; Arnold F. Hydenberg, Revere, Mass.; William R. Metcalf, Keysville, VA; Privates First Class William N. Pansarella, Providence, RI, and Joseph M. Alamillo, 170 East 4th St., NYC; and Private Edwin J. Morrison, Wakonda, SD.

General Lawrence addressed the men saying in part, "In my opinion, there is no higher award than the decoration of the Soldier's Medal. Before the present war, only 3500 Soldier's Medals had been presented in the history of the United States Army. This is an award the men should be very proud of. To receive a cluster to a Soldier's Medal is something few men have done. I am very proud to be present to make the awards."

NEWS, DUES & VIEWS

As noted in the REUNION Column, Galaxy Tours is preparing a trip to the USSR. The high point of the trip will be an all-day visit to the Poltava Airfield from a base at Kursk.

Your Editor has been impressed by Soviet hospitality. One engineer friend always had an unlisted number, although he was an official of the National Society of Professional Engineers. He told us that his purpose was to avoid unwanted telephone calls from agents of Soviet Russia suggesting his return to the land he had left in 1919.

Having served in The Second Imperialist War, your editor cannot claim to be unbiased. That is the war which became overnight The Great Patriotic War.

Here in our ivory tower it is our editorial policy to keep your Newsletter acceptable for entry into Poland and Czechoslovakia, but since even the mildest criticism of the Soviet Government is likely to be interpreted by the censor as a "Hate USSR" comment, we can assume that this newsletter is contraband in the USSR. Please let us know if you find us to be wrong.

george

Comrades; The upper right corner of your address label shows your dues status. If the label shows a 1986, you are in danger of having the picture of your plane turned toward the wall, and it is time to remit a check to Walter.

geo.

Leroy W. "Ted" Newby, author of Military Book-of-the-Month Selection TARGET PLOESTI: View from a Bombsight, screen play writer on the "human side of the bombers' war", and Technical Consultant on SSI's computer game, B-24, has addressed groups of various compositions and ages all over the country.

"Your Memorial Service message at our second 15th Air Force reunion was a fitting tribute to the Armed Forces; past, present and future. You are invited back to address our next reunion at Colorado Springs."

C. E. Ben Franklin
Lt. Col. USAF Ret.
15th Air Force Assoc.
March Air Force Base, CA

"Thank you for sharing with me your address to the 15th Air Force Reunion. The words of the Yugoslavian woman (Thank you for saving my country) are still meaningful after forty years. We owe much to the men and women of our armed services."

George Bush
Vice President
United States



FOR THE MEN WHO FLY 'EM • FOR THE MEN WHO KEEP 'EM FLYING

ISSUE

MARENGO (AAFB), IL

FRENCH GOVERNMENT BLOCKS AWARD OF CROIX DE GUERRE TO AMERICANS

THE WHYS AND WHEREFORES

On the evening of Friday, October 31, 1986, in Paris, France, more than 125 United States Army, Air Force, Navy, and WAC veterans, representing 45 different WW-II units were shocked to hear that the President of France refused to authorize Medals for our American units.

In a very impassioned speech, LTC Hal Ryder, organizer and liaison with the Comite d'Action de la Resistance (surviving members of the French WW-II underground/resistance forces) informed us that French President, Francois Mitterand, chose to ignore the proposal. It seemed the reason for refusing to sign the proclamation was due in large part to the advice of a retired World War-Two French Colonel.

What precipitated this Colonel's negative attitude towards our award was apparently long term and deep seated. It had to do, as whispered between the Americans and our French hosts, with the theory that some years ago (during the German occupation) the leader of the of the wartime Resistance, Madame Marie Madeleine Fourcade, ran afoul, drew the hostility of, the previously mentioned Colonel (whose name was never offered). Whatever transpired between Madame Fourcade and the Colonel must have been of a military nature, and has never been resolved. When Madame Fourcade was elected to head the Comite d'Action de la Resistance, a very prestigious and highly respected French military order, it seemed that this Colonel was not pleased. It was pointed out that this may have been his way to retaliate for past transgressions.

Our hosts, the former Resistance fighters, were appalled by this action of their government, and have vowed to try and make it right. They look upon the behavior of the Colonel as, "The mental behaviors of an old man."

Whatever may have caused the loss of our planned award, there was a feeling of betrayal to those that traveled to Paris from all parts of the United States to take part.

I, personally, felt jilted about the fact that our 451st Bomb Group, represented by 6 of our members, did not gain the Croix de Guerre as had been hoped and planned. What we got, instead, was a "Certificate and Medallion of Appreciation" for having attended, courtesy Comite d'Action de la Resistance. I can't fault the Comite, nor LTC Ryder for our loss. I can only hope the situation can be rectified and the honors still be awarded.

WELL PLANNED TOUR

Those that attended from our Group were: Robert Barnd (726th); Howard Bryan (727th); John Cunningham (724th); Bob Karstensen (724th); Donald

Keister (727th); and John Schneider (726th). With wives, companions, and offsprings we made up a commendable group of 13 souls.



451st MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Front Row: Barnd, Karstensen, Keister
Back Row: Schneider, Bryan, Cunningham

Our Tour Group was visibly protected wherever we went. We had uniformed police as well as plaincloths security throughout our stay. The scare of terrorist bombings was still evident. Each time we boarded our buses for whatever destination we were escorted by several motorcycled Paris Gendarmes.

What amazed us was the absolute disregard the motor cops had for the "crazy" Parisian motorists. They zipped in and out between cars, sirens wailing, clearing a path for our four bus caravan. When a motorist failed to yield, the police would soundly slap the side, or hood of the car, and wave him aside. If that failed, he hauled back with his foot and caved in the door of the vehicle. If the driver was still defiant, the cop would reach over and rip off his outside mirror. That generally caught the motorists attention. In Paris traffic, if you are driving a car, the normal flow of travel isn't very fast. Traffic jams are common, and cautious drivers are rare. But with escort like we had, Lordy, could you make time.

Not only did we have land escort, but when we were boated up the Seine River to view the French Statue of Liberty, a patrol boat accompanied us.

(Cont'd Page 2, Col. 1)

We sincerely hope that this did not dampen the Bastille Day Wine-Tasting

War Diary

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SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 8 July 1944 - ZWOLPAXING AMO AND FUEL STORES

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: This Group observed 15 E/A, all Me109s. Eight E/A were observed in the Zagreb area and 7 were seen in the vicinity of the target. These E/A did not attack our formation.

B. Flak: Over the target, at a mean altitude of 24,000 feet, the Group encountered heavy, intense, accurate flak, of the barrage and tracking type.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: 0845 - 11,000', lone B-24 returning to Italy, jettisoned bombs and exploded at 42/45N, 15/55E, possible 2 chutes.

1058 - 23,500', B-17 believed of 463rd Bomb Group hit by flak and blew up at 48/06N, 16/28E, 2-4 chutes.

1115 - 22,000', #057 of 99th Bomb Gp, exploded at 47/15N, 16/50E, 5-10 chutes.

1258 - 5,000', B-24 burning on A/D runway on Vis Island, 43/03N, 16/10E.

III. CONCLUSION

Damage: From Flak - 24 (2 major, 22 minor) (3 men, minor flak wounds)
From Fighters - 0
Other Reasons - 0

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 9 July 1944 - PLOESTI-XENIA OIL REFINERY, ROUMANIA

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: This Group met with little opposition. The only E/A were 8-10 ME109s in the vicinity of the target, five (5) at the target and 3-4 fifteen or twenty minutes after the target.

B. Flak: Flying at a mean altitude of 23,200 feet, over the primary target the Group encountered heavy, intense, accurate flak of the barrage and tracking type. Seventeen of our a/c suffered minor flak damage and 3 men were wounded from flak, not seriously. Slight, inaccurate flak was encountered at several points on the route in and back.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: 0925 - 20,000', 7 men bailed out of #925 at 45/15N, 24/00E, when #3 engine caught fire. Rest of crew extinguished fire and brought a/c back to base.

1239 - 10,000', an unidentified T/E a/c which had been following our formation turned back at 42/50N, 17/42E.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 13 July 1944 - PINZANO RR BRIDGES, ITALY

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No fighters were observed by this Group at any time during the mission.

B. Flak: No one single burst of flak was seen en route to the target, at the target, or from the target. Mean altitude over the target was 20,050'.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 14 July 1944 - HUNGARIAN OIL CO., REFINERY - BUDAPEST

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: Four unidentified s/e e/a were reported seen by this Group at 48/28N, 18/57E. The e/a were a considerable distance away and made no attempt to attack.

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B. Flak: When over the target at a mean altitude of 24,000 feet, this Group met heavy, moderate to intense flak. The flak was accurate, of the barrage and tracking type.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: 1 B-17 down over target - 5 chutes seen. 0955 hours. A/C was smoking, losing altitude.

0956 - 24,000', B-17 of Group behind us down in spin just after target.

1030 - 1 a/c (unidentified) appeared to be on fire at 45/27N, 18/32E, was way back.

1014 - 21,000', 26/28N, 19/57E, 1 s/e unidentified a/c spinning down.

III. CONCLUSION

Damage: From Flak - 9 a/c received minor damage, 1 a/c considerable flak damage
From Fighters - 0
Other Reasons - Radio operator wounded by crank handle when opening bomb doors by hand on bomb run at the target.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 15 July 1944 - OIL REFINERY, PLOESTI, ROUMANIA

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No fighters were observed in vicinity of the target. When at position, 42/59N, 19/43E and flying at 16,000', what appeared to be an Me109 trailed our formation from 0815 to 0830, before escort rendezvoused.

B. Flak: This Group encountered heavy, intense, accurate flak of both the barrage and tracking type.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: 1011 - 23,000', one B-17 down over target, no chutes.

1020 - 23,000', B-17 going down in flames just N of target area. 2 chutes. Believed to be from 463rd Group.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 16 July 1944 - VIENNA - INDUSTRIAL AREA, AUSTRIA

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: As this Group approached the vicinity of the target, 48/08N, 16/56E, at approximately 1036 hours, eight to ten Me109s and FW120s made single passes at various a/c in the formation over a period of about 10 minutes. There were nine separate encounters, all of them pressed from the rear, at 6 o'clock high, 6 and 7 o'clock low from out of the clouds, and 5 o'clock high. Some of the enemy pilots appeared very aggressive pressing to within 100 yards and diving under the rear of the formation to again attack our a/c toward the front of the formation. The escort drove all of the attacking fighters away and furnished good cover. There are no claims and one of our a/c is missing, cause unknown.

The enemy fighters were both silver with dark bellies, and a dark gray color.

At 0903 hours, an Me109 was observed trailing the formation for ten minutes before disappearing from sight.

B. Flak: This Group encountered intense, accurate, heavy flak over the target area. While some flak was of the barrage type, it was preponderately of the tracking type. Flak was first encountered about 15 miles before the target being moderate but increasing until two minutes after the IP it was intense and accurate. This intense flak was continuously encountered from that time and until the Group had dropped bombs and were 15 miles south of the target on the route back. Twenty of the Group's a/c suffered minor to major flak damage, one officer was slightly wounded and one a/c is mission from unknown cause.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: 1023 - 23,000', one a/c biplane observed flying at 15,000', 47/48N, 17/05E.
 1030 - 23,000', 2 B-17s collided and went down burning at 47/50N, 17/00E. No chutes.
 1046 - 25,300', 2 chutes observed at target area from unknown cause.
 1047 - 25,000', B-17 going down over target, 5 chutes.
 1048 - 25,000', one Me109 going down at target, believed to have been shot down by P-51.
 1130 - Message received from #909 of 99th Bomb Gp. S.O.S. position 46/20N, 16/50E at 4000', heading 120 degrees.

III. CONCLUSION

A. Total Losses: From Flak - 0
 From Fighters - 0
 Other Reasons - (#909 of 348th Sq sent out SOS at 1130 hrs from 46/20N, 16/50E, altitude 4000', heading 120 degrees, cause unknown)

B. Damage: From Flak - 20 (3 severe and 17 minor - 1st Lt N.M. Parish, bombardier incurred a minor flak wound on finger.
 From Fighters - 0
 Other Reasons - 0

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 19 July 1944 - MUNICH B.M.W. ORDNANCE DEPOT

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: This Group saw 5 Me109s in the target area. These E/AC were at a distance and were not seen to attack any of the formation.

B. Flak: At the target, this Group encountered moderate to intense, heavy flak which was accurate as to altitude and inaccurate as to deflection. Six of our A/C suffered minor flak damage. No flak was encountered en route to or from the target.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: 1055 - B-17 going down at 48/25N, 12/46E, no chutes observed.
 1123 - 24,000', B-17 on fire at 44/11N, 17/33E.
 1136 - A B-17 from group behind us caught fire and was seen heading 260 degrees toward Switzerland at 46/35N, 12/36E.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 20 July 1944 - MEMINGEN A/D, GERMANY

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: This Group observed a number of Me109s and a few Me410s and some FW190s, none of which attacked the formation. About twelve Me109s were seen in the area around Udine and the balance were observed in the target area. Some were engaged by the escort and others were attacking B-24s while a number were not observed in any action. Three Me109s seen in the Udine area were silver colored with the fuselage and tail assembly, from the cockpit back, painted a bright red.

B. Flak: One burst of heavy, inaccurate flak was observed over the target. No other flak was encountered by this Group.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: 1000 - 19,000', a B-24 going down, under attack by enemy fighters at 45/58N, 12/20E, 8-9 chutes.
 1020 - 22,000', A B-17 down at 46/30N, 12/10E, 8 chutes.
 1102 - 23,000', A B-24 down in target area, no chutes.
 1108 - 23,000', an unidentified fighter going down in smoke at target area.
 1120 - 22,000', Italian voice came in clearly on command at 6440 kilos, 46/10N, 11/08E.
 1144 - 22,000', Italian voice said bombers in sector 25, over 6440 kilos and asked for a reply.
 1152 - 18,000', A B-24 down burning, at Brederchafen, 47/40N, 09/30E.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 21 July 1944 - SYNTHETIC OIL PLANT, BRUX, YUGOSLAVIA

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: The 99th bomb Group encountered no enemy fighter opposition today, but observed 40-50 Me109s from the Udine area up to the target at Brux. These were seen from 1020 - 1200 hours at altitudes of 20,000 - 22,000' off in the distance being engaged by the escort and attempting to attack the heavy bombers behind us.

B. Flak: While at the target area and flying at a mean altitude of 19,500', the 99th Bomb Group encountered heavy, moderate to intense flak, accurate as to altitude and deflection. Two a/c suffered minor flak holes.

C. Smoke Screen: 1035 - 21,000', Salsburg, approximately 100 smoke pots covering area 2 square miles.
 1140 - 22,000', over target 50/75 pots, grey, white.
 1215 - 18,000', Linz (48/20N, 14/10E) heavy smoke screen.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: 1046 - 22,300', at 47/54N, 13/36E, 4 e/a engaged and shot down by P38s.
 1047 - 22,000', at 48/00N, 13/30E, 2 B-17s down, 6 chutes, 1 blew up and 1 in spin.
 1106 - 21,000', 48/13N, 13/30E, 2 unidentified a/c went down.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 22 July 1944 - ROMANO AMERICANO REFINERY - PLOESTI

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: This Group encountered no fighters at the target or en route to and from the target.

B. Flak: Flak over the target was heavy, intense, and accurate, of both barrage and tracking type. Mean altitude was 24,800 feet.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Smoke Screen: Effective screen over target, white and brownish smoke. Estimate 160 pots surrounding target, and wind carried smoke over target.

B. Air: 1100- 25,000', A B-17 believed to be from 483rd Bomb Group down in flames over target, no chutes.
 1359 - 11,200', a/c #028 of 99th Bomb Group dropped behind formation at 42/25N, 18/42E. There was no May Day call.

III. CONCLUSION

Total Losses: From Fighters - 0
 From Flak - 0
 Other Reasons - 1 (missing)

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 24 July 1944 - TURIN TANK REPAIR WORKS, ITALY

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No fighters were observed by this Group at any time during mission.

B. Flak: Flak at the target was heavy, slight to moderate and inaccurate, of both barrage and tracking type. One burst of red flak, low, was observed. No flak was encountered en route.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: 1120 - 21,000', #106 of 348th Squadron turned back from 44/25N, 07/24E, with 1 prop feathered. Believed to have landed at Corsica.

III. CONCLUSION

Total Losses: From Flak - 0
 From Fighters - 0
 Other Reasons - 1 a/c missing

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 25 July 1944 - HERMAN GOERING TANK WORKS, LINZ, AUSTRIA

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: At the target area, the 99th Bomb Group encountered 16-20 Me109s and FW190s for a period of 20 minutes from 1130 to 1150 hours, at an altitude of 25,000'.

There were 3-4 single, unaggressive attacks when individual enemy planes would come in to 400 yards, from 11 o'clock high and pass underneath the formation, hotly pursued by P-51s.

The Me109s were gray with black spinners while the FW190s had yellow noses and blue bellies.

Two Me109s were observed shot down by P-51s at 1130 hours at 48/20N, 15/07E.

B. Flak: While flying at a mean altitude of 25,000', the 99th Bomb Group encountered heavy and intense flak at the target area. This was accurate to altitude and deflection, resulting in minor flak damage to 15 a/c.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Smoke Screen: 1144 - 25,000', ring smoke pots SW to SE of target, just starting up - low dense grey smoke.

1144 - 200 smoke generators on banks of Traun river and Danube river. Smoke rising straight up - not effective.

Steyer - excellent smoke screen - white smoke (wind did not affect).

Linz - screen not effective, pots along river SE of target, approximately 800 yards apart. Wind blowing smoke away.

B. Air: 1138 - 25,500', 48/26N, 14/47E, B-17 hit by flak - burst in flames - no chutes.

1142 - 24,200', B-17 blew up over target - 3 chutes.

1144 - 25,500', 48/17N, 14/20E, B-17 lost wing - 5 chutes.

1215 - 07/35N, 14/15E, B-17, 3 engines feathered, losing altitude.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 26 July 1944 - WIENER NEUDORF A/C ENGINE FACTORY-AUSTRIA

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: Only one a/c from this Group observed enemy fighters. Five E/A were reported 15 minutes off the target. There were no attacks.

B. Flak: Heavy, intense, very accurate flak was encountered over the target area. Flak lasted for approximately eight (8) minutes, beginning at start of bomb run and lasting until just after turn-off point.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Smoke Screen: Smoke screen over target, ineffective. Approximately 20 smoke pots (white smoke) strung out between grey smoke generators. Smoke pots first observed after turning at IP. Estimate 150/200 smoke pots in vicinity of target.

B. Air: 1120 - 23,000', B-17 losing altitude at 47/50N, 16/55E, heading 125 degrees.

1141 - 17,000', B-17 dropped out of formation at 46/55N, 17/30E, no engines feathered and no fires.

1235 - 15,000', B-17 losing altitude at 3,000', at 43/35N, 16/50E, heading toward Vis.

III. CONCLUSION

Damage: From Flak - 7 men wounded by flak. 25 a/c received flak damage, 24 minor, 1 with 2 engines knocked out.

From Fighters - 0

Other Reasons - 0

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 28 July 1944 - STANDARD OIL REFINERY, PLOESTI

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: This Group observed no fighters at the target, or en route to or from target.

B. Flak: Flak at the target was heavy, intense and accurate, of both barrage and tracking type. Some flak was observed en route at 44/01N, 22/16E, probably Rgetina, and at 43/55N, 22/15E,, Grjana. It was not effective, however.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Smoke Screen: Approximately 200 scattered smoke pots SW of Ploesti. Did not obscure target as on other occasions.

B. Air: 11024 - 1 B-24 down over target - 3 chutes.

1113 - 1 B-24 burning on ground, 44/18N, 22/55E.

1226 - 1 B17 #068 went down in Yugoslavia, 42/50N, 20/10E, 10 chutes observed.

III. CONCLUSION

Total Losses: From Fighters - 0

From Flak - 1 a/c #068 crashed and exploded in Yugoslavia, 10 chutes observed.

Other Reasons - 0.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 30 July 1944 - BROD M/Y, YUGOSLAVIA

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No fighters were observed by this Group at any time during the mission.

B. Flak: Flak at the target was heavy, slight to moderate and inaccurate, of barrage and tracking type. Mean altitude was 23,200 feet. There was no flak encountered en route.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 31 July 1944 - PLOESTI/XENIA REFINERY

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: This Group observed no fighters at any time during the mission.

B. Flak: Flak over the target was heavy, intense and accurate, of both barrage and tracking type. Slight, accurate to inaccurate flak, came up from Vidin and Bor.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

Air: 1105 - 24,000', at target 1 B-17 group ahead exploded, 5 chutes.

1110 - 23,300', after turning off target - 2 props windmilling.

1138 - 10,000', 45/10N, 25/10E, B-17 trouble losing altitude.

1143 - 18,000', 45/10N, 34/30E, B-17 in trouble.

1256 - 14,700', P-38s flew above formation - dropped belly tanks, nearly hit B-17s, 43/10N, 20/20E.

III. CONCLUSION:

A. Total Losses: From Fighters - 0

From Flak - 0

Other Reasons - 0

B. Damage: From Flak - 18 a/c received minor damage

From Fighters - 0

Other Reasons - 0

C. Victories: None.

D. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report: None.

HEADQUARTERS
NINETY-NINTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ARMY AIR FORCES
Office of the Intelligence Officer

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 7 August, 1944 - Blechhammer South Synthetic Oil Plant

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: Fifteen, what were believed to be E/A, ME109s, were observed by this Group at 1309 hrs. approximately 25 miles SE of Sisak, from an altitude of 18,000'. There were no encounters.

B. Flak: Flak encountered at the target was heavy, moderate to intense, fairly accurate, of barrage and tracking type. Slight to moderate flak was encountered at a number of points along the route, but was not effective.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Flak Positions: At target area, batter at (17, I) Target Chart #108A-NA. Mostar, 43/05N, 17/22E, H-M-inaccurate, barrage, inaccurate
Vrgorag, 43/13N, 17/23E, heavy, moderate, inaccurate
Vitina, 43/14N, 19/39E, heavy, moderate, inaccurate
Dunaalanac, 43/44N, 18/20E, heavy, slight, inaccurate
Pezinor, 48/17N, 17/16E, heavy, moderate, inaccurate
At 43/34N, 17/35E, heavy, moderate, inaccurate, tracking.
At 43/21N, 17/35E, heavy, moderate, inaccurate, tracking.
At 43/21N, 17/49E, heavy, moderate, inaccurate
At 47/39N, 18/20E, heavy, slight, inaccurate
At 49/58N, 18/43E, heavy, slight, inaccurate
Lise, 43/22N, 17/35E, heavy, slight, accurate.

B. Smoke Screen: 1118 - approximately 150 smoke pots (48/50N, 19/02E, on east side of an unidentified city at approximately 48/50N, 19/02E. Screen was very effective. Smoke screen at target area was effective, extending up to 5000 feet.

C. Land: 0951 - 22,000', no a/c on A/D at 45/33N, 18/40E
0952 - 22,000', no a/c on A/D at 45/33N, 18/08E
1023 - 24,300', 7 s/e a/c at 47/09N, 18/25E
1024 - 24,000', 20 s/e a/c at A/D, 46/09N, 18/15E
1028 - 25,000', no a/c on A/D at 47/18N, 18/56E
1030 - 24,500', smoke screen over Budapest
1034 - 23,500', much activity in factory area at 47/44N, 18/40E
1054 - 25,000', no a/c on A/D at 48/44N, 19/08E
1056 - 25,000', large supply dumps at 49/44N, 19/10E
1055 - 25,000', many barracks and 6 large storage tanks at 48/56N, 18/42E
1102 - 26,000', 500 cars in M/Y at 49/07N, 18/55E

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 13 August, 1944 - Romano Americano Refinery, Ploesti

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: This Group saw no enemy fighters during the mission.

B. Flak: Over the target at a mean altitude of 25,700 feet, flak was heavy, intense and accurate, barrage and tracking type. the most intense flak came from South of the City five or six miles. There was no other flak encountered. A number of A/C were damaged slightly, and 4 men received minor wounds.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Flak Positions: Flak came from target area, as far as 5 or 6 miles south of City. No batteries were pinpointed.

B. Smoke Screen: Smoke screen covered the city generally, but did not obscure the target. Pots on east side of city were being lighted when bombs were dropped.

C. Land: 1012 - 26,000', no a/c on A/D at 44/38N, 22/38E
1103 - 27,200', non-effective smoke screen over Romano Americano Oil Refinery at Ploesti
1110 - 26,800', 20 s/e a/c on landing strip at 44/30N, 26/00E
1112 - 26,800', 30 unidentified a/c at 44/34N, 26/04N
1115 - 25,000', 700 cars in M/Y at Bucharest, 44/28N, 26/10E
1116 - 25,000', 9 s/e a/c on A/D at 44/22N, 26/10N
1130 - 24,000', 6 s/e silver colored a/c at 44/07N, 24/56E

D. Water: 0937 - 25,000', 35 barges on Danube at 44/44N, 21/34E
1002 - 20,600', 45 barges stationary at 44/39N, 21/56E

1325 - 3 blue marks on water at 42/02N, 18/08E, with 2 B-17s circling. Possibility of a B-17 ditched.

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Total Losses: None
B. Damage:
From Fighters: 0
From Flak: 14 a/c received minor damage; 4 men received minor wounds
Other reasons: 0
C. Victories: None
D. Corrections on telephone mission report: None.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 15 August, 1944 - Beach #261, South Coast of France

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No enemy fighters were observed at any time during the invasion.

B. Flak: Only one burst of flak was seen at the target area, mean altitude over the target was 12,800 feet.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Land: Black smoke was observed rising from Toulon or Marseilles.

B. Air: 0915 hours, 10,000 feet, 41/39N, 12/51E, 5 miles NNE of Cisterna Di Roma. Believe A/C crashed in field alongside small stream.

0720 hours, 12,500 feet, 2 A/C in mid air collision over target; too far away to observe if any chutes came out.

0916 hours, 12,000 feet, 41/41N, 13/22E, what appeared to be A/C was burning on ground.

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Total Losses: None
B. Damage: None
C. Victories: None
D. Corrections on telephone mission report: A/C #094 which was reported missing has been heard from and is returning to base with feathered prop.

PHILIP M. BARNES
Captain, Air Corps,
Acting Group S-2

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 17 August, 1944 - Nis A/D Dispersal Area, Yugoslavia

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: This group observed no enemy fighters in the target area, or enroute to and from target.

B. Flak: Over the target at mean altitude of 18,900 feet, heavy, slight, inaccurate flak was encountered. Heavy, inaccurate flak was met at two locations, indicated under heading: Flak Positions. Several bursts of pink and red flak were observed.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Land: 0836 hours, 20,300 feet, 20-30 s/e A/C observed at target A/D
0911 hours, 14,500 feet, no A/C or L/G at 42/51, 19/53

B. Air: 0828 hours, 20,000 feet, B-17 going down between IP and target at 43/44, 21/28, 10 chutes, B-17 crashed and exploded.

C. Flak Positions: H-S-I at target (18-1/4 E) target chart #8-102-NA
Lecice (43/25N, 20/40E) H-S to M - fairly accurate, tracking. Altitude: 19,500 feet.
Town of Poska, 18,000 feet (43/18N, 20/37E) H-S-Inaccurate - some bursts were pink and red.

III. CONCLUSION

A. Total Losses: None
B. Damage: None
C. Victories: None
D. Corrections on telephone mission report: 63.8 yons of 120 lb. frag instead of figure reported.



PHILIP M. BARNES
Captain, Air Corps,
Acting Group S-2



Here, from the files of Harold Klug, is a picture of the Sebket d' Oran with a B-17 in the foreground. The date? Why May 4th, 1943 of course

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 18 August 1944 - ROMANO AMERICANO REFINERY, PLOESTI

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: This Group saw no enemy fighters during the mission.

B. Flak: Over the target at a mean altitude of 25,700 feet, flak was heavy, intense and accurate, barrage and tracking type. The most intense flak came from South of the city five or six miles. There was no other flak encountered. A number of A/C were damaged slightly, and 4 men received minor wounds.

III. CONCLUSION

A. Total Losses: None
B. Damage: From Fighters: 0
From Flak: 14 a/c received minor damage; 4 men received minor wounds
Other Reasons: 0
C. Victories: None
D. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report: None

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT:

MISSION: 20 August 1944 - OSWICEIM SYNTHETIC OIL WORKS, POLAND

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: while en route to the target 20-25 E/A consisting of Me109s, Me110s, and FW190s were seen from 0935 to 0945 hours in the Budapest area. These were at altitudes of 23,000 to 24,000 feet and some of them were solid black in color. They attacked the groups ahead of us, diving down thru their formations, 3 abreast. Two passes were made at the 99th Bomb Group from 11 o'clock high, while in the same area. These were very unaggressive.

B. Flak: The 99th Bomb Group, while flying at a mean altitude of 26,400 feet, encountered heavy and intense flak in the target area. This was accurate as to altitude and deflection and resulted in 11 aircraft getting minor flak holes. Heavy, slight and inaccurate Flak was encountered in the Budapest area en route to the target.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Air: 0948 - 22,000', Budapest, 1 P-51 shot down, pilot bailed out.
1052 - 22,400', 48/20N, 19/40E, 1 B-17 down - no chutes.
1115 - 21,000', 48/40N, 18/30E, 1 B-17 crashed - dove straight to ground.

B. Water: 0800 - 16,000', 42/25N, 16/25E, naval vessel, possibly DD headed SE.
0950 - 22,000', from 46/00N, 18/31E, to Budapest at least 200 barges in river.
0950 - 23,000', 46/34N, 18/52E, in Danube - 30 barges, headed east.
1240 - 17,500', 45/09N, 17/06E, 7 barges on Sara River.
1318 - 16,000', 8 vessels in Split harbor, 2 very large.
1216 - 44/51N, 18/50E, 5 flak barges firing at other groups.

III. CONCLUSION

A. total Losses: From Flak - 0
From Fighters - 0
Other REasons - 0
B. Damage: 1 minor leg wound from flak
From Flak - 11 a/c received minor damage
From Fighters - 0
Other Reasons - 0
C. Victories: None
D. Corrections on Telephone Mission Report: None

PHILIP M. PHILIPS
Captain, Air Corps
S-2, 99th Bomb Gp (H)

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 22 August 1944 - Odertal Synthetic Oil Plant, Germany

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: This group observed 15 A/C too far away to be identified, but believed to be fighters, just before escort rendezvous, at 1029. One ME109 was observed at approximately 5 minutes after rendezvous, one ME109, probably the same E/A was attacked by 5 F-51s and seen to go down in flames.

B. Flak: Over the target at a mean altitude of 25,700', our group met heavy, intense, accurate flak of both barrage and tracking type. At 48/10, 17/06, heavy, intense, and what appeared to be accurate flak was fired at 483rd group.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Flak Positions: Indefinite number batteries at 48/10N, 17/06E, heavy, intense, accurate.

B. Smoke Screen: Effective smoke screens were observed at several places. Smoke screen over target was effective, the smoke blowing over target from closely spaced pots south of target. A grayish smoke was observed over Sisak. At another point, 45/22N, 16/43E, was a very effective, yellowish smoke screen. Effective smoke screen was also reported at Pess. Other smoke screens are indicated under observations.

C. Land: 0905 - 15,000', 4 s/e a/c on A/D, 43/43N, 16/39E
 0930 - 21,000', 3 unidentified a/c a Banjaulka A/D, 44/46N, 17/12E
 0936 - 20,800', smoke screens over Lanja, 45/22N, 16/13E and St. Rimer, 45/21N, 16/45E. First time over the route, these areas have been screened.
 0943 - 21,700', smoke screen at Banova-Juamiga, 45/26N, 16/55E
 1005 - 24,000', burning oil and fires to 15,000', at 46/40N, 17/30E
 1015 - 25,000', A/D vacant at 47/12N, 17/26E
 1025 - 25,800', A/D vacant at Gyor, 47/41N, 17/37E
 1055 - 25,800', A/D vacant at Peysa, 47/21N, 17/29E
 1125 - 26,000', 500 cars in M/Y at 50/13N, 17/50E
 1140 - 26,000', effective smoke screen over target
 1224 - 20,500', 25-30 long trains in M/Y at 48/22N, 17/34E
 1225 - 20,500', no a/c on A/D at 48/36N, 17/51E
 1245 - 20,000', 3 a/c burning and 20 more a/c on field at Syambathely A/D 47/16N, 16/36E

D. Water: 0939 - 21,600', 14 barges in river at 45/09N, 17/18E
 1042 - 26,000', 25 barges headed N on Danube at 47/45N, 17/55E
 1358 - 12,300', 2 subs in harbor at Split 43/32N, 16/27E, also 4 medium M/Vs.

E. Air: 1025 - 22,000', unidentified a/c crashed at 47/12N, 17/00E, no chutes seen
 1138 - 26,800', B-17 down in target area, 8 chutes
 1145 - 26,800', B-17 from group behind us exploded over target, no chutes
 1205 - 23,000', unidentified a/c crashed at 49/05N, 17/05E, no chutes
 1409 - 10,000', #164 of 99th Bomb Group headed for Vis.

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Total Losses: None
 B. Damage: None
 From flak: 11 a/c received minor damage; 3 men wounded, 1 slightly, 2 seriously
 Other reasons: None (1 a/c at friendly field)
 C. Victories: None
 D. Corrections on telephone mission report: None.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 23 August, 1944 - South Industrial Area, Vienna, Austria

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: The 99th Bomb Group had no encounters with enemy fighters on today's mission. Two (2) TE/AC were seen at 19,000' near Zara, Yugoslavia at 1120 hours. They fired three rockets at the group behind us and trailed the formation for approximately 30 minutes, keeping 2,000 yards to the rear.

B. Flak: While flying at a mean altitude of 25,900', heavy, intense and accurate flak was thrown up from the Vienna area. This was accurate as to altitude and deflection, resulting in flak holes on 24 a/c.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Flak Positions: Flak batteries were pinpointed as follows:
 48/08N, 16/26E, heavy, moderate, accurate
 46/41N, 16/00E, heavy, moderate, inaccurate

B. Smoke Screen: An ineffective smoke screen was observed at the target, Vienna, smoke appeared to be coming from smudge pots located on the SE part of the city. An effective smoke screen was noted at 48/13N, 16/10E from the Purkersdorf area.

C. Land: 1250 - 25,300', Purkersdorf, 48/13N, 16/10E, effective smoke screen from pots SE of town
 1252 - 26,000', A/D, 48/07N, 16/28E, no a/c observed
 1255 - Vienna, ineffective smoke screen from pots SE of city
 1307 - 21,000', A/D, 47/16N, 16/37E, 50 E/A - ME109s, JU88s; 15 ME14s; others unidentified
 1309 - 22,000', A/D, 47/15N, 16/35E, 12 T/E a/c on ground
 1309 - 23,000', A/D, 47/30N, 16/55E, 15 T/E silver E/A and 10 S/E black E/A

D. Air: 1330 - 17,000', 45/20N, 16/53E, 1 B-17 #282 in spin 10 chutes came out, a/c was able to maintain flight and return to base by pilot alone.

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Total Losses: None
 B. Damage: 24 a/c (minor flak damage); 1 man killed by flak; 2 slightly wounded.
 C. Victories: None
 D. Corrections on telephone mission report: None.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 24 August, 1944 - Pardubice A/D Installations, Poland

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: This Group reports seeing 5 enemy fighters, all after the target, from 5 to 20 minutes. There was one encounter, a single simultaneous attack by 2 ME109s from 12 o'clock.

B. Flak: Over the target at a mean altitude of 24,200', no flak was encountered. There was some flak along the route at several points but it was not effective.

III. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Flak Positions: Indefinite number guns at Lins - St. Valentine, heavy, moderate, inaccurate.

Flak from 47/30N, 15/20E, flak 2 miles left of course

Flak from 49/18N, 14/18E, heavy slight, inaccurate

Flak from 48/07N, 14/52E, heavy, moderate, altitude accurate, deflection off

Styer, 48/03N, 14/25E, heavy, moderate, inaccurate, fired at others

Vicinity of Grein, 48/08N, 15/00E, heavy, slight, inaccurate.

Flak from 48/04N, 14/45E, heavy, moderate, accurate

B. Smoke Screen: Smoke screens were observed coming from several towns enroute, which are indicated under land observations.

C. Land: 1011 - 16,400', Zara A/D, 44/05N, 1/20E, vacant

1135 - 22,2500', smoke screens over 48/18N, 14/18E, and 48/03N, 14/25E

1140 - 22,500', smoke screens at 48/07N, 14/52E, 48/04N, 14/45E, 48/02N, 14/39E

1146 - 23,000', 100 barrack-like buildings at 48/39N, 15-25E

1150 - 24,000', heavy smoke screen at 48/25N, 15/21E

1151 - 24,000', heavy smoke screen over Vienna area

1221 - 24,000', huge column of oil smoke at 49/38N, 15/32E

1235 - 23,500', large fires at 49/58N, 15/17E

1240 - 22,500', 30-35 s/e a/c at 40/57N, 15/48E

1243 - 22,800', 25-30 s/e a/c at 49/38N, 15/20E

1257 - 21,500', 600-700 cars in M/Y at 48/38N, 15/10E

1330 - 21,600', 25 s/e and t/e a/c at A/D 47/12N, 14/44E

1345 - 20,000', no a/c on A/D at 46/04N, 14/33E

1358 - 20,000', no a/c at A/D, 45/03N, 14/20E

D. Air: 0920 - 12,000', unidentified a/c in water at 44/10N, 15/10E

0930 - 14,000', 2 t/e a/c exploded at 42/35N, 15/43E, 10 chutes

1237 - 23,000', P-38 shot down a FW190 at 50/01N, 15/44E

1254 - 21,600', B-17 smoking and losing altitude, 49/00N, 15/00E, after attack by s/e fighter

E. Water: None

III. CONCLUSION

A. Total Losses: None

B. Damage: None

C. Victories: None

D. Corrections on telephone mission report: None.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 25 August, 1944 - Lisen A/C Factory, Czechoslovakia

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No enemy fighters were seen or encountered by the 99th Bomb Group on today's mission.

B. Flak: No flak was encountered today either enroute, at the target or on the way back.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Smoke Screen: A smoke screen covered the area N of Vienna from 48/18N, 48/25E to 15/57N, 16/10E, with smoke generators coming from both sides of the Danube. This was 8/10 effective.

B. Land: 0857 - 19,000', Ammo Depot (?) at 44/50N, 17/22E

0854 - 18,500', A/D, 44/51N, 17/50E, no E/A

0903 - 18,000', A/D 44/46N, 17/12E, 2 t/e - 24 s/e

0939 - 21,000', L/G, 47/09N, 19/00E, vacant

0907 - 20,000', M/Y, 45/10N, 17/40E, approximately 500 RR wagons

0955 - 22,000', A/D, 47/16N, 19/08E, 16 unidentified a/c

1004 - 22,000', A/D, 47/30N, 19/12E, Budapest (?) - 20 unidentified a/c

1010 - 22,000', M/Y, 47/40N, 19/40E, approximately 1500 RR wagons

1019 - 22,000', M/Y, 48/00N, 19/50E, 600 to 800 RR cars

1129 - 19,000', 48/14N, 15/06E, group factories - no activity

1120 - 20,000', A/D 48/20N, 15/55E, no e/a present

1132 - 19,000', M/Y, 48/07N, 15/42E Anstettin, approximately 300 RR cars, 2 round houses - 20/25 locomotives in SW of M/Y

1145 - 18,000', M/Y 48/08N, 14/52E, 800 RR cars

1150 - 16,000', 47/15N, 15/08E, 12 E\$/A under trees, hear dispersal area in River valley - L/strip not visible

1222 - 14,500', M/Y, 45/16N, 15/00E, 700 RR cars

C. Water: 0947 - 21,000', Danube river, 46/39N, 18/57E, 6 large barges

1125 - 20,000', Danube river, 48/25N, 15/28E, 5 barges headed SW on River

1250 - 11,500', 44/36N, 14/45E, 50 small vessels in harbor

0930 - to 1130 - barges observed at various points along Danube River.

D. Air: 1103 - 22,300', 1 B-17 blew up over target, no chutes seen.

III. CONCLUSION

A. Total Losses: None

B. Damage: None

C. Victories: None

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 26 August, 1944 - Avisto Viaduct, Italy

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No enemy fighters were seen or encountered by the 99th Bomb Group on today's mission to Avisto, Italy.

B. Flak: While flying at a mean altitude of 22,680', heavy, moderate and tracking type of flak was encountered at the target area. This was accurate as to altitude and deflection, resulting in seven (7) a/c being flak holed and one (1) man getting a slight finger wound.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Flak Positions: Flak positions were pinpointed at G-12 on Tgt. Chart #4-138-NA. Heavy, moderate and accurate flak was encountered at 46/05N, 11/07E near the target area.

B. Smoke Screen: There was no evidence of any smoke screen at today's target. At 0955 while flying at 22,600' an ineffective smoke screen was seen developing at Trento A/D, 46/06N, 11/06E.

C. Land: 0932 - 21,000', no a/c on A/D, 45/40N, 12/12E

0935 - 23,000', 10 s/e a/c at A/D, 46/03N, 12/32E

0937 - 23,300', 8-10 s/e a/c at 46/06N, 12/20E

1019 - 19,400', no a/c at Villaorba A/D, 45/45N, 12/14E

1025 - 19,000', 400-500 cars in M/Y at 45/40N, 12/15E

1100 - 17,000', no a/c on A/D at 45/51N, 12/23E

D. Air: None

E. Water: 1030 - 17,000', 2 large M/Vs anchored in harbor at Venice

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Total Losses: None
- B. Damage:
 - From flak - 7 flak holes (minor)
 - 1 man - flak wound (minor)
- C. Victories: None
- D. Corrections on telephone mission report: Line 5 should read 70.5 tons of bombs dropped. Line 6 should read 13.5 tons returned or jettisoned. Line 12 should read one man slightly wounded by flak.

PHILIP M. BARNES
Captain, Air Corps,

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 27 August 1944, Blechhammer North Synthetic Oil Plant, Germany

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: This group observed no enemy fighters in vicinity of target, before, to and from target.

B. Flak: Over the target, at a mean altitude of 27,400', flak was heavy, intense and accurate, both barrage and tracking type. Flak came up from several other points along the route, but it was not effective.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Flak Positions: At target, 60 heavy guns were counted. At target -H-I-accurate (18-17, M-N) (4-5, N) target chart #13-33 N.A. Kanaron - 24,300', (45/45, 18/07) H-S-in-accurate. 49/56, 18/43, 21,300', H-S-intense, Gyor, off course, H-S-Accurate (going and coming). 22,000' Vitkovice (19/k50, 18/18) H-S-fairly accurate.

Smoke Screen: Smoke around at Primary Target (Blechhammer North); was not effective, pots appeared to be in process of being lighted. A very effective screen was observed at Oswicoln (50/02, 17/13)

C. Land: 1000 hrs. 18,000' - 10 s/e a/c at 44/46, 5/40
 1042 hrs., 22,000' - 10 unidentified a/c at 46/43, 17/27
 1048 hrs., 23,000' - 5-10 unidentified a/c at 47/20, 17/30
 1050 hrs., 23,300' - 20 t/e and 10 s/e a/c at 47/47, 17/40
 1100 hrs., 24,500' - 500 cars in M/Y at 47/40, 17/40
 1220 hrs., 21,300' - 500 cars in M/Y at 49/58, 15/18
 1253 hrs., 18,800' - 1 unidentified a/c at A/D 48/18, 18/06
 1324 hrs., 18,500' - 11 t/e and 6 s/e a/c at 44/64, 12/25
 1541 hrs., 17,000' - A t/e a/c in wheat field at 45/58, 12/14, believed to have been crash landed B-17
 1336 hrs., 14,000' - 8 s/e a/c on A/D at 45/45, 16/08

D. Air: 1160 hrs., 26,300' - #670 of 346th Squadron on fire at 58/16, 18/00 and exploded, 6 chutes.

E. Water: 1067 hrs., 24,000' - 18-20 barges on Danube at 47/44, 8/00 1440 hrs, 11,500' and launches going east at 43/05, 16/65, speed undetermined.

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Total Losses: One a/c hit by flak over target, blew up.
- B. Damage: 14 a/c received minor flak damage, and 3 received slight flak wounds.
- C. Victories: None
- D. Corrections on telephone mission report: Three men were wounded.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 28 August, 1944 - Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Austria

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: On the way in to the target 12 ME109s and 4 ME210s were observed between 1004 and 1031 hours at altitudes of 23,000 to 24,000'. Four (4) ME109s first flying, parallel to the formation out at 3 o'clock started to make a pass swinging over to 1 o'clock but broke off at 1,000 yards when our group fired short bursts at them. The four ME109s were seen flying in front of the formation heading in a westerly direction. They made no attacks.

B. Flak: While flying at a mean altitude of 26,00', the 99th Bomb Group encountered heavy, moderate to intense and fairly accurate flak. This was both barrage and tracking type and resulted in one man getting a minor wound and two (2) a/c being slightly holed.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Smoke Screen: An ineffective smoke screen was encountered at the target with pots surrounding the entire area. It seemed as if these had not been lighted in time. Smoke screens not too effective were also observed over Gras, 47/05N, 15/25E. Styer, 48/05N, 14/28E. Lims, 45/18N, 14/18E.

B. Flak Positions: Flak batteries were pinpointed as follows:
 Kagreb, 44/49N, 15/69E, heavy, moderate, accurate
 Mariber, 46/33N, 15/39E, heavy, moderate, accurate
 Marlovak, 45/40N, 16/10E, light, moderate, accurate
 Dragnion, 45/49N, 15/20E, light, moderate, inaccurate.

C. Land: 1010 - 23,600', A/D 45/49N, 15/50E, 3 t/e, 1 s/e a/c
 1015 - 23,000', A/D, 45/45N, 15/57E, 6 s/e a/c on ground
 1016 - 23,000', A/D, 45/49N, 16/02E, no a/c observed
 1102 - 27,00', A/D, 48/13N, 16/07E, 30/40 s/e and t/e a/c
 1107 - 25,200', at target, smoke screen not effective
 1125 - 25,000' 48/36N, 15/25E, approximately 300 barrack like buildings around camp
 1045 - 26,000', A/D, 47/17N, 16/36E, 12 s/e and 1 t/e a/c
 1107 - 27,000', A/D, 48/20N, 15/55E, no a/c observed
 1142 - 19,000', A/D 43/20N, 14/53E, 500 RR cars in yard
 1140 - 19,000', A/D, 48/30N, 15/00E, 1 unidentified a/c on ground
 1233 - 17,400', M/Y 45/54N, 15/30E, 12 long trains
 1200 - 18,000', smoke screen - Graz - very effective
 1252 - 16,000', Dugaveon on Mermion river, large factory, 500 x 300', very active
 1255 - 15,000', 45/07N, 15/29E, unidentified silver a/c in wheat field. Looked like B-17.
 Smoke screens at Styer and Linz - Linz effective - Styer not effective.
 1247 - 16,000', 45/27N, 15/30E, large factory, 2 large buildings, no activity

D. Air: 1009 - 22,000', 1 B-17, 45/30N, 15/25E crashed in mountains and burned, 10 chutes seen.

1107 - 22,700', 1 B-17 at target went down, 5 chutes seen
 1102 - 26,000', 1 B-17 out of control - headed direction of Vienna.
 1155 - 16,000', 44/45N, 15/32E, 1 B-17 wrecked on ground.

E. Water: 1124 - 23,000', 48/12N, 15/10E, 12 barges tied up on Danube.

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Total Losses: None
- B. Damage:
 - From flak: 2 a/c minor. 1 man flak wound (minor) 1st Lt. Daniel M. Jones ASN 0-746890 had a few plexiglass splinters in his eyes.
- C. Victories: None
- D. Corrections on telephone mission report: None.

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 29 August, 1944 - Szolnok M/Y, Hungary

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No enemy fighters were observed by this Group at any time during the mission.

B. Flak: Heavy, slight, inaccurate flak of both barrage and tracking type was encountered over the primary target and also over the second alternate, at a mean altitude of 24,200'. One lucky burst caused slight damage to one of our a/c. No other flak was along the route.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Land: 0920 - 20,000', 5 unidentified a/c at 44/46N, 17/21E
 0921 - 20,000', A/D vacant at 44/51N, 17/15E
 0941 - 21,700', a B-17 on ground at 46/55N, 17/04E
 0955 - 23,000', 3 unidentified a/c at A/D 46/42N, 17/31E
 1013 - 24,000', A/D vacant at 47/42N, 17/41
 1015 - 23,500', 12 trains of 75 cars each at Gyor M/Y. 47/44N, 17/38E
 1020 - 24,000', 500 cars in M/Y at 48/00N, 18/10E, Erse Kujvor
 1040 - 26,000', no a/c at 48/55N, 18/03E
 1058 - 19,700', 8 t/e a/c and 3 s/e a/c at 46/55N, 19/42E
 1205 - 19,000', 7-8 t/e a/c at 46/32N, 19/02E
 1217 - 15,000', 8 span RR bridge leading to M/Y, 46/10N, 18/57E
 1230 - 15,000', 6 transport a/c at 45/54N, 19/52E
 1232 - 14,000', large factory with 4 tall smoke stacks operating full blast at 45/44N, 18/22E
 1300 - 13,000', 2 s/e a/c at A/D, 44/56N, 17/12E

B. Water: 1015 - 45 barges moored at 47/46N, 18/02E
 1225 - 14,500', 15 small boat on Danube, 46/00N, 18/40E
 1252 - 14,000', 5 seaplanes moored at 45/07N, 17/31E
 1322 - 14,300', 54 barges at 46/06N, 18/36E

C. Air: 1105 - 26,000', a silver B-17 followed formation about 30 minutes staying 10 miles behind
 1153 - 21,300', a black B-17 was seen at a distance after turning off target, Szelnok M/Y. A/C flew nearly in front of formation, then fell back.

D. Smoke Screen: An effective smoke screen was observed over Budapest at 1132.

E. Flak Positions: None observed.

III. CONCLUSION

A. Total Losses: None
 B. Damage: One a/c received minor flak damage
 C. Victories: None
 D. Corrections on telephone mission report: One a/c was slightly damaged from flak. Telephone mission report reported none damaged.

PHILIP M. BARNES
 Captain, Air Corps,
 Acting Group S-2

SPECIAL NARRATIVE REPORT

MISSION: 28 - 30 August, 1944, Novi Sad RR Bridge, Yugoslavia

I. ENEMY RESISTANCE

A. Fighters: No enemy fighters were seen. However, one of our a/c reports an attack, presumably by EA, from 6 o'clock, low. The attack occurred at 1010, just off the target, while flying at 20,700 feet. This a/c received minor flak damage and other holes were identified as 20.

B. Flak: Heavy - slight to moderate flak was encountered over the target at a mean altitude of 20,600 feet.

II. SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS

A. Flak Positions: 24 guns located around city of Novi Sad; six guns were spotted on east of river. Near Ljunusk, 43/07, 17/39 - inaccurate. At primary 6 guns at (P,8); 5 guns at (K,&); undetermined number of guns at (L,18); target chart #8-30NA.

B. Smoke Screen: Livno - 20,300 feet, 43/50, 17/01, very effective smoke screen.

C. Land: 0900 hrs - 18,000', on beach 43/27, 16/42, 4 e/a on ground
 0909 hrs - 10,300', Livno 43/50N, 17/01E, very effective smoke screen
 1013 hrs - 19,000', A/D at 44/49, 20/23; no a/c
 1015 hrs - 18,000', A/D Belgrade; no a/c observed
 1100 hrs - A/D at 43/07, 17/46; no a/c observed

D. Water: 0957 hrs - 21,000', 12 barges being pulled upstream by tug at 45/14, 19/30

III. CONCLUSION

A. Total Losses: None
 B. Damage: 1 a/c received what was believed to be 20 MM damage. 1 a/c minor damage.
 C. Victories: None
 D. Corrections on telephone mission report: 20 a/c returned bombs to base, instead of 21 a/c as reported. 1 a/c jettisoned 3 tons in Adriatic.

PHILIP M. BARNES
 Captain, Air Corps,
 Acting Group S-2



LETTERS



Friday 7/15-8 AM

Dear George:

I am writing today to tell you about what happened when we landed in Switzerland.

The 5 officers and flight engineer of our crew were sent to a different place, and us 4 other guys stayed in Adelbodin with the other air crews which came down that day. I believe there were three others.

Smitty told me in Dayton that 2 or 3 weeks later they were repatriated to France, where they were picked up by the 346th, which Fred Troy piloted a B-17 with Headley as co-pilot and brought them back to headquarters of the 15th A.F. There, they came back to the squadron for a day, then they were sent home to the states.

What Shorten, Estes and I think is that we must have had a bunch of important people up front, to get released from Switzerland so fast, and come back to headquarters.

Sincerely
 Vic Fab

46 Langfield Drive
Buffalo, New York 14215
October 10, 1985

99 B. G. Historical Society
8608 Bellehaven Place N. E.
Albuquerque, New Mexico

ATT: President and Treasurer:

Enclosed is my check for \$45.00 covering dues for 85 and 86.

Also all back newsletter 81 to 84. I am also enclosing a copy of my mission record, some addresses of my crew and copies of some pictures of some of our crew and aircraft, Hammerhead, we were assigned to, until it was lost by another crew.

I appreciate having received the three copies of the newsletter.

Fred Hueghlin, my radio operator sent me a copy originally. I also flew most of my missions with Captain Twamley who recently passed away. The addresses I am enclosing, some are current, which I will mark current. The others are not too recent and which I have lost contact with.

My wife and myself would have liked to have made the reunion in Seattle. Even though we couldn't make it, we sure are going to plan on the reunion in 86 at Dayton. I recently retired from the U.S. Post Office so, I have free time and God willing, we will be there.

I was on mission 245 to Osweicen, Poland that my Radio Operator, Fred Hueghlin asked about. I don't remember anything in particular except that it wasn't exactly a milk run. Perhaps he can enlighten my memory the next time he writes me.

My last mission was good old, Blechhammer, Germany. I was flying engineer with a Col. from Group - his name I don't recall. Anyway, we ended up using three aircraft before we got into formation. One ~~had~~ a malfunctioning prop, the second damaged a radar dome on take-off. I know the pilot poured it on and we finally caught our formation. I believe we were leading the group that day., December 19-44. Memories linger on - hoping to see some familiar faces in Dayton in 86. Keep up the good work with the newsletter and thanks for the copies.



Theodore "Ted" Sharp



Maj. Gen. Fay R. Upthegrove, U.S.A.F., Ret.
684 East Main Street
Bradford, Pennsylvania 16701

Monday, 6 May 1983

We print this letter from our sponsor because it belongs in the Historical Record. This Newsletter goes to numerous authors and to several Museums.

geo.

Dear George,

Thanks for your nice letter. Your enthusiasm tells me that the reunion must have been a real success, and I am awaiting your July letter to fill in the blank spots.

One thing has me rather confused and that is the remarks about Covert and Cottoneyed Joe and the Eighth. I don't recall that crew going to the Eighth, nor their being on the Swinefurth mission. They could have gone up to help out or on one of the exchange crews or some other reason that I don't remember. One of his Gunners, James E. Purnell, was in quite a fight in the 99th and I have a press release about the mission somewhere in my papers. It seems to me that it was quite late in 43. I'm glad that Cook made it. The other two Officers were Hager and Barney on the crew list that left Salina. McCluskey, Schneider, Puzan and Kowzan completed the crew. Maybe you can jog my memory a bit.

I read "The Battle of the Bismark Sea" and the brief reference to Col Fay R. Athergarde (not sure of the spelling).

I was in command of the 38th Bomb Group from its arrival at the port of embarkation, San Francisco, in January '42 when changes of orders returned the CO and the squadron CO's back to help with crew training and left me in command. I'm enclosing a copy of my career from Pearl Harbor to 1946 which will explain part of it and why I was not in the Pacific with the group but the name could have gotten mixed up in the writer's mind who wrote about the Bismark Sea Battle.

I was pretty popular with the group and after they had gotten to New Zealand and I was at Patterson Field, I got an SOS from my ground echelon to please recommend some promotions as they had no boss but me to do that. So with the help of one Sgt Major who stayed with the air echelon, I got a typewriter and tapped out about 30 forms for promotion and sent them off and found out much later that they were received and executed, which relieved the worry somewhat.

My S-2 was involved in rounding up all the Jap planes that were shot down and he helped name them all. His wife's name was Louise and mine was Sally and so I was immortalized in a left handed way as two planes were named after the girls. I guess this ought to confuse you enough so I'll await the newsletter and wish you the best.

Sending my history of the 304th wing in separate envelope.

Uppie

The stay in Frisco, awaiting a boat called for in the original orders is a story in itself -- confusion on confusion.

The remarks about COTTON-EYED JOE and Schweinfurt refer to a picture in Ballantyne Books' SCHWEINFURT purporting to show a plane shot down at Schweinfurt. It was actually our 99th plane photographed on 4 May 43. geo.

Edward & Sara Jackson
2107 Perry Ave. No.
Minneapolis, MN 55422
588-3629

4/9/86

HI GEO

RECEIVED A LETTER FROM A RETIRED COLJ.W. HINDS QUERING BOUT THE EXPLOITS OF BEN WARMER ALSO WHERE HE MITE BE LOCATED. GAVE HIM AS MUCH INFO AS I HAD WHICH CANT BE MUCH HELP ON FINDING BEN. TOLD HIM SOME INCIDENTS THAT I REMEMBERED. SUCH AS BEN WIRING UP MY CHUTE SO IT WOULD FIT PREPARTORY TO A JUMP ON OUR FIRST MISSION ALSO THAT HE WAS INSTRUMENTAL ON CHANGING THE FEED BELTS ON THE WAIST GUNS SO THAT THEY WOULD FEED FROM OVERHEAD INSTED OF FROM THE SIDE THUS PREVENTING JAMS. INCIDENTLY THE BAIL OUT WAS OUR SECOND CATASPHROPHE ON OUR WAY OVER TO N.AF. WE HAD AN AIR COLLISIONSHE TRULY WAS APTLY NAMED "GREMLIN CASTLE" WE LOST TWO PLANES ON THAT MISSION. WHAT TRULY WAS COMMENDABLE WAS ONE OF THEM THE THIRD LANDED SAFELY THRU THE EFFORTS OF THE RADIO OP. NAMED EPSTEIN. HE WAS LATER DOWNED AND CAPTURED NEVER HEARD WHAT HAPPENED TO HE AND HIS CREW. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE I AM SURE THEY WERE TAKEN PRISONER. I THINK HIS NAME WAS MORRIS EPSTEIN HE WAS WORTH A WRITE UP. I MAY BE WRONG ON HIS NAME AS MEMORY FADES SURELY THERE IS SOME RECORD. I DONT KNOW THE DATES NOR WHAT THE TARGET WAS SO IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FINDING OUT I SURE WOULD APPRECIATE FINDING OUT. AS YU CAN ASCERTAIN FROM HIS NAME HE WAS JEWISH KNOWING WHAT HE WAS RISKING AND FLYING HE TOOK DOUBLE CHANCES. I ALSO TOLD HIM BOUT TOM CAMPBELL OUR ENGINEER GOING OUT IN THE BOMBAY AT HIGH ALTITUDE NO OXYGEN AND KICKING THE BOMBS LOOSE WHEN THEY FAILED TO DROP. THE RIDUCLOUS I DINT TELL HIM SUCH AS EMMET WORTHY OUR LEFT WAIST GUNNER TAKING HIS FIDDLE ALONG TO PLAY ON OUR ROME RAID. NOR WHEN I MISTAKENLY CREDITED WITH A MISSION I WASNT ON THUS GIVING ME A QUICKER HOME DATE. SURE WISH I KNEW WHO FINGERED ME ON THAT GOT A PRETTY GOOD IDEA BUT CANT CONFIRM IT. SHUD HAVE BOY SCOUTED IT AND TOLD THEM MYSELF. BOUT THIS COL IS HE WRITING A BOOK OR IS HE DOING RESEARCH ON OUR OUTFIT???? OR JUST B WARMER CURIOUS TO KNO HIS INTEREST. MEBBE A BILL COLLECTOR???????? WELL THASS ALL FER NOW OH YES WHEN IS THAT DAYTON REUNION CANT LOCATE THE NOTICE ON IT. THANX FER THE COMIC BOOK. WERE WE THAT NAIVE IN THE FORTYS MY WIFES BIRTHDAY UN ADULTERATED CORN BALL. QUITE A BIRTHDAY PRESENT NINE ENEMY PLANES

SEE YA



MAY THEY ALL BE MILK RUNS FROM NOW ON

FROM THE DESK OF MO MOTT, 483BG,

1 Sep 86

Dear George

Was reading some of my notes and found I'd written you a letter concerning your 6 December 85 99th B.G. Historical Letter.

Decided it was about time to mail it. Your 6 Dec ltr contained an article by Steve Birdsall concerning B-17 aircraft not accounted for.

It was especially interesting to me since the list shows B-17G #2320213 "ole Mose" MIA 2 Apr 1944. So here's "Ole Mose" history. Dates are difficult to remember after some 40 years but I'm sure the following is reasonably accurate.

This particular aircraft was assigned the 817th Bomb Sqdn, 483d Bomb Gp and was a brand new "G." It was assigned to my crew in early Mar 1944 at McDill Air Base, Tampa Fla. Our squadron chose names from Al Capp's "Lil Abner" comic strip. The crew and I selected the name "Ole Mose," and I personally painted a picture of "Ole Mose" followed by "Ain't Daid" on the left side of the nose.

Needless to say, we were extremely proud about having a brand new acft to fly to Italy. Later in March 44, we flew to Fozzia in our new "G" landing at the 99th Base where we were to be housed temporarily by your people.

Shortly, we were advised that we'd "cut our teeth" (combat) by flying war-weary 99th B-17Fs and our new "Gs" were turned over to your 99th.

The crew learned that "Ole Mose" was scheduled to fly his 1st combat mission (flown by a 99th crew), so on 2 Apr we all went down to the flight line to watch his return. "Ole Mose" and crew failed to return. "Ole Mose" was "daid".

We never learned the fate of the crew but hoped they were safe.

Later, we received new Gs at our new base near Streparone, but no one ever suggested we call it "Ole Mose, the 2d."

Thought this might be of some interest. Again, sorry I've delayed this note--

We're leaving 6 Sep for our Reunion in St Paul at the Radisson Hotel 10-14 Sep.

Keep in Touch
Mo

Dear Mo;

At a recent showing of the USAF Film about Poltava the camera showed a good shot of the nose art of OLD MOSE on the hardstand at Poltava. Our best to the 483rd.

Hey, that was June, 1944. What, what, what? ^{george}



Jan 16, 1987
Prescott, Ariz.

99th B.G. Hist. Society

Dear Mr. Butler:

Enclosed check for \$15 is for 1987 dues. I read all the newsletters with enthusiasm. Sorry that I cannot attend reunions. The main reason is my wife's physical condition. We have no relatives near enough to care for her and to employ someone would be too costly. I note that most of the narratives deal with flying people. As you may recall or know, I was one of the ground people (347th Engineering) who kept the planes going. My particular job was to keep records of work done by the mechanics and sometimes write U.R. reports to Dayton, Ohio. The Society has reached out to many of us, I am sure that all of us appreciate the work that is being done to perpetuate and honor the 99th B.G. Hist. Society people.

Sincerely
Stephen Molnar
347th Bomb Sq



26 May 1986

Dear George:

The account(s) beginning on p. 18 of the May 1986 Newsletter have prompted me to try to remember what I can of that day — 24 January 1944 — my 14th mission. All because I recall quite a few things happening then that maybe a few other members of the 99th BGHS would have their own ideas about, one way or another...

My memory of the mission is that we went to Sofia and found that part of the world cloud-covered. So we turned for the secondary target and there came a front, moving in from (I guess) the northwest, and we had to climb over it, which was getting pretty high for a formation of Mighty Flying Forts. So we then let down to bombing altitude and the secondary target (p. 18 of the May 1985 Newsletter says that was Nis) was also obscured.

And then we turned for the tertiary target and there came another front and we had to climb over that and by that time pilots were calling in to say they were running low on fuel and were leaving the formation to get home on their own.

What the tertiary target was — and whether or not we got near it — is anybody's guess, as all that part of Europe was 100% cloud covered by that time and what remained of the 99th Bomb Group formation headed back in the general direction of Italy. God knows where the rest of the 5th Wing was...

The clouds beneath us pretty well disappeared by the time we were over the Adriatic and I remember only four B-17s being in formation by then, the rest scattered, and word coming over the radio of ships turning back to bail out over the Balkans. When we raised Italy one of our four left to hunt for some place to land and we three turned right, up the coast. In a few minutes I saw the strip at Bari and used it.

I believe the two remaining Forts got back to Tortorella, the Group leader and his second element lead — his deputy — both, I believe, in Tokyo Forts. My memory is that five Forts either bailed out over or (crash?) landed in Yugoslavia and quite a few ditched.

(At Bari, I landed short and turned left off the runway as quick as I could and another 17 went right past me, having come in long and hotter than a two dollar pistol. This guy ran out of runway, went through an opening in the boundary fence, which was being patrolled by an Italian soldier. This guard, when he saw the Fort almost on top of him, threw his rifle into the air and ran off in all directions. The airplane continued across a pretty heavily-traveled road, neither hitting nor being hit by any of the traffic, and washed out its gear in some sort of orchard up a hill.)

Next day I talked with one of the pilots who had ditched, a Cadet classmate whose name I can't seem to recall. He had landed in a mine field off Bari, successfully, but in getting their rafts out they lost their paddles. And British Air-Sea wouldn't go in after them because of the mines. He was a trifle out of sorts as they had had to spend most of the night paddling their rafts out by hand...

I think the 5th Wing lost a hell of a number of airplanes that day — five in Yugoslavia, as mentioned above, and eight or more by ditching and other causes. None to enemy action. The 24th of January was a real disaster as far as I could see — and I'm wondering if anyone else remembers it the same way.

Yours,


EDWARD M. MOORE/ROUTE 2, BOX 740-A/UMATILLA, FL. 32784/904-869-5645

3305 Kenilworth
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
16 Mar 87

Dear George:

Sure was nice to talk to you. It helps me even to know that other parts of the country have nice weather! Of course the sun came out today so that always brightens my outlook. I am writing because I thought it might clarify what I was asking for on the phone.

It's one of those stories that produce ten questions for every one that is asked. I almost have it solved but just need documentation from various sources.

On 18 July 44 the 99th flew, or started to fly to Memmingen, Germany to dump fragmentation bombs on an airdrome. HQ. intell. figured it to be an easy hit with only a few enemy AC (100) with only 50% able to get off the ground. I wonder who they bought that info. off of!

Of course weather interfered as usual and somehow, no as part of SOP, groups got separated in the 10/10 cover and winds over the Alps. Here's where it gets tricky.

The 483rd Bomb Group at the IP was hit by over 175 E/AC and lost 14 of their 26 planes. They say a recall was given (and it may well have been) but that their flight leader kept going. There is alot of bitterness that has accumulated over forty years as a result.

However, I have discovered that they were not the only ones over the target. (They were at the time they went over it, which makes their view of it true for them.) Documents show that 203.5 tons of GP's were dropped by 79 B-17's. No way could 12 AC of the 483rd carry that tonnage! At least two other Gps. went over, most likely the 2nd and 301st, as they each report losing an AC.

I have documentation coming that verifies the 463rd went over with fragmentation bombs. I know the 97th turned and hit a target of opportunity, the Carsarsa RRBr. I am only blank on 99th activities.

Now being that the official HQ Summary says 47.5 tons of frags were dropped and that the 463rd says they dropped almost 50 tons of frags I think the 99th must have turned around.

What I need is documentation of what did happen. I found only your 99th War Diary for July in old newsletters, nothing there...do you have any Mission or Special Narrative Summaries on 18 July 44? If the 99th did turn around then it would have probably been an uneventful (not necessarily) trip and it might be hard for you to locate anything.

Anyway, anything you could find would be really appreciated. Don't go to the trouble of copying anything, but if you find something to jot down for me just list what document it comes from so I have something to back myself up with.

This whole investigation was the result of a monograph I did last semester. The paper has now been nominated for an award in the History Department and I am under some deadlines to get this wrapped up. If you find something real hot please call me collect; (616) 381-1323. One of these days I won't be a pest with requests for what seems like trivia!!

Sincerely,

Carol

(Carol Rizzo)

Dear Carol;

As I mentioned in my belated letter, the records for that particular month are ambiguous. They sometimes show two missions for one day without any explanation. Perhaps our members can recall what happened.

best - geo



The Stars and Stripes--Mediterranean
Vol 1, No. 120, Tuesday, April 4, 1944, Italy Edition

From the files of Wallace Bush

**MAAF HEAVIES PULL FIRST RAID OF WAR ON BUDAPEST YARDS
Planes Hammer Aircraft Plant South of Capital**

LONDON, April 3--Reports were current in Europe tonight, the BBC said, that Budapest would be evacuated.

MAAF HEADQUARTERS, April 3--One of Germany's vital communications centers was attacked for the first time today when a large force of heavy bombers of the 15th USAAF blasted the railway yards at Budapest. The Liberators and Fortresses also smashed an important aircraft factory just south of the Hungarian capital, which is about 500 miles from Italian air bases.

The Budapest raid was announced late today in a terse communique which gave no details.

This initial assault on Hungary opened a new chapter in the aerial operations of Mediterranean-based Allied aircraft. It foreshadowed additional onslaughts on enemy targets in Hungary, the satellite state which the Germans recently occupied. Hurried troop movements have been particularly heavy through the city's railway yards as German and Hungarian forces were shifted to and from the Russian front.

Additional heavy blows were struck at enemy rail points in Yugoslavia. Liberators and Fortresses bombed the railway yards at Knin, a junction on the main line from Fiume to Sibenik and Split; the yards at Brod, which form a junction of lines from Zagreb to Belgrade and Sarajevo, and the yards at Drnis, half-way between Sibenik and Knin.

Yesterday, Fortresses and Liberators of the 15th USAAF shot more than 100 enemy fighters out of the sky during a heavy attack on the aircraft factory and ball-bearing works at Steyr, Austria, 90 miles west of Vienna.

Yesterday's assaults, which included raids on a variety of targets in Yugoslavia, set new records in the number of planes sent out by the 15th, the number of bombs dropped, the number of enemy fighters met and the number shot down. The largest number of victories previously scored came on Feb. 25, when 97 enemy planes were destroyed during the Regensburg raid. Thirty-three Allied planes are missing from the day's operations.

Escorted by Thunderbolts and Lightnings, nearly 500 American heavies met an estimated 300 German planes in the skies before and after the attack, while an intense flak barrage was sent up over the target. Despite everything the enemy could do--including rockets and aerial bombs used by some enemy planes--extensive damage was reported to the ball-bearing works and the Daimler-Puch aircraft components factory.

The ball-bearing plant at Steyr is believed to be the most important still in production for the German war machine since similar factories were knocked out from Italy and Britain. This was the third daylight attack on the Steyr works by Mediterranean-based bombers.

Forts smashed the railway yards at Bord, Yugoslavia, on the main line between Belgrade and Zagreb, while Liberators blasted the Mostar airdrome, 50 miles east of Split, and the rail yards at Bihac, 50 miles north of Zara. Still further aid to Marshal Tito's Partisans was provided by Spitfires which strafed invasion craft at the island of Brac, off Dalmatia. No enemy fighters were met here.

Wallace Bush has a peice of flak which pierced theirplane on this raid. Nichol森 and he finished their missions.

BOEING NEWS WEEKLY, June 1944

Veteran Fortresses Make Hall of Fame

No by line

From the files of Wallace Bush

With the 15th Army Air Force: Thirteen Flying Fortresses have been named for the "Hall of Fame" in the Mediterranean since leaving Boeing in the fall of '42. They were nominated out of the original 35 in a veteran B-17 group on their combat record in that theater.

Still flying and fighting strong, the Forts have an average of 95 combat missions apiece to date. They have prowled the length and breadth of the Mediterranean theater to amass 1,241 combat missions and 10,726 flying hours.

Their names are not so distinguished sounding as their accomplishments. They go by such names as "Bugs Bunny," "Bad Penny," and "Sweater Girl."

They've withstood the dust of North Africa, the rain and mud of Italy--and the best the enemy has to offer in opposition.

Today they are the pride and joy of their crew chiefs who nurse them and keep them going. They care little that they are battered ugly ducklings among sleek new B-17s with chin turrets and silver skin. They've carried high the emblem of the US Army Air Forces.

dateline Michigan/Thursday, July 3, 1986

From the files of Al Wertz

War Bird Home to Roost as Aviation Fans Buy B17

By JOEL THURTELL/Free Press Staff Writer

As the World War II B17G heavy bomber's long, tall tail settled onto the runway at Willow Run Airport Wednesday, Joe Slavik knew he'd spent his money well.

Slavik and his brother, Stephan, both of Orchard Lake, had donated \$50,000 toward the Yankee Air Force's \$250,000 purchase of the last B17 for sale.

The plane is one of nine flying in the United States and 12 in use worldwide, all of them now in the hands of collectors or museums.

For Joe Slavik, 69, the plane's arrival meant realizing an old dream: to fly a B17 like the one named "No Comment Needed," which he piloted on bombing runs over Germany.

"My only string was that they let me fly it once in awhile," he said.

Now that the 1,150-member Yankee Air Force owns a B17, symbol of US air power in World War II, work begins to raise \$100,000 to restore the 41-year-old plane.

Eventually, its orange nose, wing tips and tail will be transformed into a clean silver and it will bristle with the .50-caliber machine guns that earned it the name "Flying Fortress."

The B17's performance on the two-day trip from Mesa, Ariz., was "wonderful, beautiful," said its co-pilot, retired Air Force Maj Gen Richard Bodycombe.

Slavik flew B17Gs from a base near Cambridge, England, in World War II, and remembers the four-engine craft as "the greatest bird in the world--it brought me back safe from 35 missions."

When it rolled off the Lockheed-Vega assembly line in July 1945, its chin, belly and topside had rotating turrets, and there were gun ports on its sides, tail and nose.

It was vulnerable to pursuit planes, and the Army Air Force lost many on daylight raids.

"I cam back with 215 (bullet) holes once," said Slavik.

The Yankee Air Force's Boeing-designed B17 lacks those guns and turrets now. But it still has the high tail, with a leading edge carried far forward on the fuselage. The distinctive nose, long and roomy, was where the bombardier would have controlled strikes on German towns like Schweinfurt, Cologne, Frankfurt, Munich, and Leipzig.

The B17G purchased by the YAF never saw wartime duty, though.

Of the nearly 13,000 built, it was 12th from the last, built after the war ended. It was used in the 1940s and '50s by the Coast Guard for air-sea rescue, and carried a 27-foot lifeboat slung under its belly.

It also has been used to drop chemicals on forest fires in California, and appeared in the war movie, "Tora! Tora! Tora!", said YAF secretary Grant Martin.

THE STARS AND STRIPES--MEDITERRANEAN
Vol 1, No. 120, Tuesday, April 4, 1944

From the files of Wallace Bush

ONLY DADDY'S DRAFT BOARD SURPRISED BY QUADRUPLETS

New York, April 3--Mrs. Harry Zariief, 27, this week became the mother of the first set of quadruplets in medical history to be born without surprising anyone. Her three girls and a boy were born prematurely at Sloane Hospital for Women, but they were nevertheless expected, because last December X-rays indicated that Mrs. Zariief probably would give birth to four children.

Birth of the quads, all of whom are in good health, won a draft deferment for their father, who is concert master for the Columbia Broadcasting System. Two months ago, when Mr. Zariief learned that the four youngsters were on the way, he was 1-A and had been called for induction. He informed the draft board of the situation and asked permission to be on hand for the event. The draft board was dubious.

"That's the worst excuse I ever hear," the chairman of the board exclaimed. But he changed his tune when the Zariief's doctor confirmed the news.

Mr. and Mrs. Zariief have one other son, Teddy, six years old. His only comment on the multiple birth was: "Now I'll have a new brother to play with."

The four infants were born with an audience which included every important obstetrician of the hospital and an overflowing gallery of students and nurses.

The father, a short, trim man, would not comment much about his fatherhood. He explained that he had sold exclusive rights to his story to a New York newspaper.

The children received their first formula feeding in air conditioned oxygenated cribs.

Triplets were born at the same hospital shortly after the quads arrived. Three girls were born to Mrs. Muriel Bachant, 21, whose husband, Herbert, is a corporal in England.

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QUOTES

ADMIRAL OF THE PACIFIC by John Dean Potter

While Somerville was deciding discretion was the better part of valor, Nagumo on AKAGI's bridge was pondering another signal. When TONE's float plane reported the two British cruisers he realized they were steaming toward the exact spot where his carriers had originally intended to launch their planes. This original course had been given out by code message. Then Nagumo suddenly decided to alter course. As he was so near British territory and did not want to risk a radio signal being picked up and used for direction finding, this change was given to the fleet by flag signal. This meant the British could not possibly know he had changed course. But why were they sailing so accurately to cut across his original course? Was it a coincidence? Or did they know he was on that course? Could this possibly mean they were able to read the Japanese naval code?

Nagumo dismissed this idea as unthinkable. However he mentioned the situation in his report on the battle. Although this was the circumstance of an enemy fleet being in the exact position to intercept - which was to prove so disastrous at Midway two months later - Tokyo read his report and instantly dismissed the code-breaking possibility just as he had done. They decided it was only a coincidence. p. 145

REUNIONS

- 9 Sep. 1987 98th Bomb Group, Colorado Springs, CO
- 23 Sep. 1987 97th Bomb Group, Dayton, OH
- 11 Sep. 1987 Swedish Internees, Hasslo Airfield, Sweden
- 9 Sep. 1987 483rd Bomb Group, Boston MA
- 1 Oct. 1987 461st Bomb Group, Suffern, NY
- 14 Oct. 1987 99th Bomb Group at FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION REUNION
Colorado Springs, CO
15AFA, P.O.Box 6325, March Air Force Base, 92518
- 14 Oct. 1987 8AFHS, Pittsburgh, PA
- SPRING, 1988 99TH BOMB GROUP, FORT LAUDERDALE, FL.
Jules Horowitz, 3507 Oaks Lane, #911, Pompano Beach FL 33069
- 11 May, 1989 Bombardiers, Inc., Dayton OH
E.C.Humphries, Star Rte. #1, Box 254, Eagle Harbor MI
Ph. 906/289-4440
- May, 1988 Galaxy Tours visit to Poltava, USSR.
Mark Burton, P.O.Box 234, Wayne PA 19086, ph . 800/523-7287
in PA 215/254-6600

99th Bomb Gp Historical Society
Walter H. Butler - Treasurer
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Sep 1987

TAPS

GUTZWILLER, "TED" Our Newsletter has been returned marked GESTORBEN. Ted, a member of the Swiss 99th Infantry Battallion, wandered into the Seattle Reunion at a time when we were cleaning out the Hospitality Room. An engineer, he was an accomplished story-teller and a credit to the Force. We can only hope that there is some mistake and that he will find his way into some future reunion. gfc.

GRASSMAN, VICTOR Victor's death is reported by his cousin John of 726 E. Negley Ave., Evansville IN 47711 No further details.

BRASWELL, ABEL A. Abel is reported as having died June 10, 1987. We have no further details at this time. gfc

CHANGES OF ADRESS

Joseph Carroll	P.O.Box 5130	Grove City	FL 34224
John J. Morris	25 Bexhill Dr.	Carmel IN	IN 46032
Sirsee Henexson	P.O.Box 93	Williams	AZ 86046

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