

99TH BOMB GROUP



B-17 FLYING FORTRESS

1943 • • AFRICA/EUROPE • • 1945

395 COMBAT MISSIONS

THE 99th BOMB GROUP HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
Vol. 13, No. ~~2~~ 3

MAY 1, 1993

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As reported in our March '93 newsletter we donated \$1000.00 to the Ellsworth AFB Historical Society early last month. Elsewhere in this issue we have included copies of letters from 99th Wing Commander Colonel Bob Hinson and Ellsworth Heritage Foundation President Walt Roetter thanking us. I have underlined a portion of Walt Roetter's letter regarding the donation of artifacts that any of us might have. This appears to be a very suitable, long term home for items of interest that might otherwise end up in the trash heap when we are no longer around. Give it some thought.

You will note a call for a volunteer to be the Editor of this publication since longtime Editor, George Coen, has asked to be relieved of the job. Please give this subject some thought. Get in touch with George and/or Bernie Barr if you would care to take on this job.

Our Mini Reunion at Dayton, Ohio, hosted by Vice President Jim Smith, is in session (April 28) as this issue is in preparation. I'm sure all attendees found a well planned, enjoyable event. We will include Jim's report in our July issue.

ITEMS OF INTEREST ABOUT OUR ONTARIO, CALIFORNIA REUNION

Our meeting dates are October 26 - 31 '93 at the ONTARIO AIRPORT MARRIOTT, 2200 East Holt Blvd., Ontario, CA. • 99th BGHS special room rates will be \$67.00 plus CA taxes per day. We will have our normal HOSPITALITY ROOM and all the refreshments. For the LADIES YOU WILL HAVE YOUR OWN HOSPITALITY ROOM in which you may do as you like . . . Play Bridge • Sew and/or Knit • Show Pictures • Enjoy Refreshments • Visit • Etc. . . . Bring your ideas and enjoy !

Final plans are not complete but will be something like this . . .

Tues., 26th. - Registration, Hospitality Room, Movie at night (130 seat theatre available)

Wed., 27th. - Your choice of a trip to DISNEYLAND & NEW ADDITION or KNOTTS BERRY FARM. • Movie at night • Squadron Meetings

Thurs., 28th. - A trip to UNIVERSAL STUDIOS & Possibly see a filming of a TV Program? or a trip to the WILD ANIMAL PARK north of San Diego. • Movie at night.

Fri., 29th. - A trip to MARCH AIR FORCE BASE with BUSINESS LUNCHEON ON BASE. 99th TACTICS & TRAINING WING may fly in a B-1 and/or a B-52 for us to see. • Movie at night.

Sat., 30th. - A trip to the CHINO AIRPLANE MUSEUM or a trip to LAKE ARROWHEAD RESORT AREA for sightseeing, shopping, & lunch on your own. ANNUAL BANQUET SATURDAY NIGHT (Coat & Tie Event) Music and Dancing.

Sun., 31st. - CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST • Check Out • Make plans for seeing each other at 1994 Hampton, VA Reunion. • End of 1993 Reunion.

MARRIOTT HOTEL will provide PICK UP SERVICE FROM THE ONTARIO AIRPORT which is serviced by major airlines. Bernie Barr is trying for reduced car rental rates so that you can really make this a vacation and see the wonders of California. You may want to drive over to Riverside (26 miles) to the 15th AIR FORCE REUNION & MUSEUM. WHY NOT ?

Our JULY NEWSLETTER will have a complete schedule for registration and selection of events you wish to attend with prices for each . . . NOW REMEMBER THIS. Early registrants will be entered in a drawing to see who gets a ONE NIGHT FREE HOTEL ROOM. IT WILL PAY TO REGISTER EARLY!

PLAN NOW AND COME TO ONTARIO FOR OUR 99th BGHS REUNION. PAUL SHANKS in San Diego will be helping finalize the tour events. WALTER BUTLER, Treasurer, will be CO-HOST and will be handling the money. PAULINE JENNINGS is still waiting for you to mail her your FAVORITE RECIPE for our 99th BGHS COOK BOOK.



THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



GREETINGS: There are times when each of us tend to think back remembering the splendid fighting 99th BG (Heavy). Occasionally a haunting 'close call' comes to mind; something each of us had experienced, probably a number of times, leaving us to wonder how or why we ever made it. Contrast that with your own final 50th combat mission where you have returned to your base safe and sound; that great feeling of relief, and of peace coming over you. This applies to those of us who did indeed, finish the full 50. Those of you who were forced to bailout, that's quite another story; the above being used merely as an illustration.

Each of us has now entered into a period of life when 'things' happen that alter the courses of our own lives as members of the 99th BG Historical Society; generally something irreversible healthwise with little or no ability to slow life threatening situations.

On March 8 '93, I entered the Lander Valley Regional Medical Center for tests, including that awesome tattle tale, the "CAT" Scan. (I hate those tests.) I was advised that my situation was not good and significant surgery was recommended, along with what turned out to be additional procedures (two to be exact) the first being a failure. The second procedure was an overall success, but unfortunately, none of it designed to prolong life, simply to make it more bearable. However, I intend to regain sufficient health that I can continue to serve my Church, the Gideon Ministry and the 99th BG Historical Society as Chaplain; the three most important things in my life outside of my incredibly supportive family.

Other religions and cultures are all around us and we must recognize them. I believe in the Triune God and was brought up in that way, but permit me to tell you about another very unique culture. While in the hospital quite a commotion occurred one noisy afternoon at the entrance of the hospital and proceeded down the halls past my room, beginning first with the typical chant. I heard that "Hi, yi, yi, yi, Hi, yi, yi, yi," voice quavering over the chant, and then caught sight of the Indian Medicine Man dancing, whirling and chanting; his body held low with the back arched, doing that dance from out of the past, taken from the strutting Sage Grouse, "Hi, yi, yi, yi", whirling again, head bobbing up and down, to and fro, feathers from his Medicine Man's head dress flying; proceeding on down the hall to the room where the chanting continued; muffled then with the closed door as he continued to "ward off evil spirits" from his charge, an aged Indian. Where in the world would you have the opportunity to observe such a different and definitely serious display, but right here in Lander, in our new and very modern hospital ! I must point out here that the Indians in this area have taken the basic Christian Religion, but have held to their ancient religious beliefs as well. I loved it !

I have held true to the manner in which I was brought up, and do not fear what is ultimately in store for me, only the concerns for my family. You might call my life after WW II my 51st mission, with all its ups and downs, and now I'm on final. The strength I find in the Scriptures is powerful. It is my sincere hope that my experience might be of help to others, that you may find the same solace and peace when you too find yourselves on that final approach into eternity.

From the 23rd Psalm: THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, I SHALL NOT WANT. HE MAKETH ME TO LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES: HE LEADETH ME IN THE PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE.

YEA, THOUGH I WALK IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH, I WILL FEAR NO EVIL FOR THOU ART WITHME; THY ROD AND THY STAFF, THEY COMFORT ME. THOU PREPAREST A TABLE

BEFORE ME IN THE PRESENCE ON MINE ENEMIES; THOU ANNOINTEST MY HEAD WITH OIL; MY CUP RUNNETH OVER. SURELY GOODNESS AND MERCY SHALL FOLLOW ME ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE; AND I SHALL DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD FOREVER.

A wonderful place to begin.

Joe C. Kenney, Chaplain

NOTES AND LETTERS

- DeALTON T. BOOTH has a video of the 1988 AIR SHOW at the NATIONAL WARPLANES MUSEUM IN GENESEO, N.Y. Anyone wanting a copy at \$20 plus postage per copy write BOOTH at 106 Peck Street, Buffalo, N.Y. 14212
- DANE HANSEN PRODUCTIONS, 3405 Penrose Place, Suite 103, Boulder, CO 80301, Toll Free 1/800/243-7111, Ext. 397 has produced a video tape entitled "BOMBARDIER: THE REAL STORY". Order yours at \$29.95 plus \$4.00 S/H.
- OUR MEMBER JAMES F. BRUNO recommends a book by MEL TENHAKEN entitled "BAIL OUT". For an autographed copy write Mel at 3721 North 54th Blvd., Milwaukee, WI 53216. Cost is \$11.95 plus S/H.



NAME TAGS ?? If you want a name tag send \$5.00 for each tag to Bernie Barr. Give him the name(s) as you want them printed, your Squadron number, and dates you served in the 99th. The tag(s) will be in your registration kit. (Please get one for your spouse/guest.) COME EARLY. . .STAY LATE . . . ENJOY!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

This is a very difficult item to print !! YES, after all these years of dedicated service and promoting our 99th BGHS **GEORGE COEN** has requested that we find a volunteer to become the EDITOR of the NEWSLETTER. **GEORGE, WALTER, AND BERNIE** WILL CONTINUE to serve you as usual.

PLEASE NOTE

OUR CENTRAL CONTACT IS WALTER BUTLER. IF HE CAN'T RESPOND TO YOUR REQUEST HE WILL ASK SOMEONE ELSE TO RESPOND

A FUN PAGE FOR THE NEWSLETTER

Roy Worthington's cartoon in the last newsletter (in honor of our lovely ladies) gives the idea that if you send in your favorite cartoons we might set aside a page for this.

99TH BOMB GROUP CAPS WITH ACTION LOGO AVAILABLE

BERNIE BARR, 7408 VISTA DEL ARROYO, ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87109 HAS CAPS WITH SCRAMBLED EGGS ON BILL AND NEW NEWSLETTER ACTION LOGO AVAILABLE FOR SHIPPING. AT \$8.00 PLUS \$2.00 S/H - \$10.00 TOTAL. A REAL BARGAIN FOR THESE NEW LOGO CAPS. ORDER NOW. ALTON DANISCH has ordered 3.



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 99TH TACTICS AND TRAINING WING (ACCI)
ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE, SOUTH DAKOTA



99th Tactics and Training Wing
1958 Scott Dr., Suite 1
Ellsworth AFB, SD 57706-5000

Mr. Roy H. Worthington
2609 Oakwood Circle
Lompoc CA 93436-1313

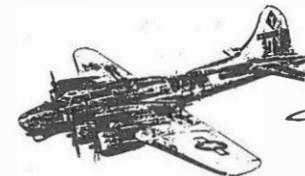
Dear Roy

On 2 Mar 93, Mr. M. J. Larkin presented a check for \$1,000.00 to the Ellsworth AFB Historical Society on behalf of the 99th Bomb Group. It was a very proud event for all of us in the 99th. Your generous contribution will go a long way toward displaying the proud history of the 99th Bomb Group here at Ellsworth AFB.

As a personal note, I want to thank you and all the members of the 99th Bomb Group for taking us under your wing. Your contributions, both personally and monetarily, have and will help preserve the bond of the past and present 99th in our Air Force history. You are always welcome to visit us at Ellsworth AFB either individually or as a group—please stop in. We look forward to hosting you again in the future.

Thank you again for your kind and generous contribution. Please keep in touch!

Respectfully



Bob Hinson
ROBERT C. HINSON, Colonel, USAF
Commander

Ellsworth Heritage Foundation

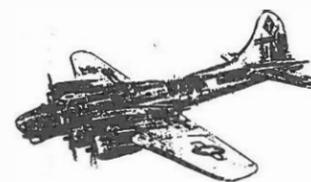
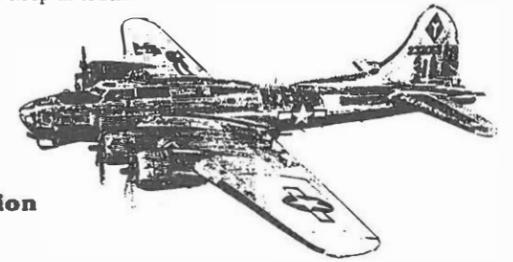
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March 9, 1993

Mr. Roy H. Worthington, President
99th Bomb Group Historical Society
269 Oakwood Circle
Lompoc CA 93436-1313

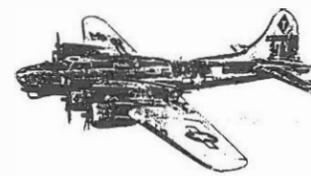
Dear Roy,

Thank you and the members of the 99th for your gift to the South Dakota Air and Space Museum. The \$1000 will build a fitting display of the 99th's outstanding history. Efforts like yours are what allow the history and tradition of aviation to be preserved for the benefit of current and future generations. We are extremely proud that you have chosen the South Dakota Air and Space Museum as a permanent location for the depiction of the Group's accomplishments.

Your legacy, The 99th Tactics and Training Wing here at Ellsworth AFB, continues the tradition of being on the "leading edge" of aviation development and employment. You can be justifiable proud of the accomplishments of the Group from its beginnings in World War II to its current mission of preparing the next generation of aviators to meet any challenges they might face. We will work closely with you to ensure that story is told. If members of your organization have artifacts that they would like included in the display, please contact us and we will arrange to receive them. Also, we would be proud to have members of your organization join the Ellsworth Heritage Foundation. If anyone would like membership information, please have them contact us and we will mail them the information.

Again, thank you so much for your support and we look forward to a long and rewarding future working together to tell the 99th Bomb Group's story.

Sincerely,



Walt Roetter
Walt Roetter
President



SQUADRON WAR DIARY

UNIT HISTORY OF THE 346TH SQUADRON, 99TH BOMBARDMENT GP (H)
MONTH OF FEBRUARY, 1944

A. ADMINISTRATION

Changes of Station:	None	
Organizational Strength:	Feb 1st	71 officers and 353 enlisted men
	Feb 29th	68 Officers and 348 enlisted men
	Net decrease:	3 officers and 5 enlisted men
Changes in Office:	None	

B. BATTLES

See attached sheets

C. CASUALTIES

Missing in Action: 25 February, 1944, Regensburg, Germany.

2nd Lt. Christian J. Dupuy, 0-809713	
2nd Lt. Herman H. McCutchen 0-7533383	Wounded in Action
2nd Lt. John W. Smallwood, Jr. 0-748039	Same Date
2nd Lt. Dale E. Tomlin, 0-803312	
2nd Lt. Charles H. Bilharz, 0-683808	T/Sgt William J. Waters, 39612688
2nd Lt. Charles H. Bilharz, 0-683808	S/Sgt Frazier B. Smith, 18151276
2nd Lt. Chester J. Jankowski, 0-679532	S/Sgt James W. Chason, 14182840
2nd Lt. John E. Mahan, 0-799825	
2nd Lt. Bill J. May, 0-751387	
T/Sgt. Robert F. Humbel, 15354172	
S/Sgt. Richard C. Cederberg, 32605043	Killed In Action
S/Sgt. David (NMI) Gratt, 12157065	None
S/Sgt Charles J. Leatherbury, 37230269	
Sgt. Elbert H. Dugger, 34339772	
Sgt. John F. Wolf, 36260159	
T/Sgt. Theodore W. Bolton, 39613569	
T/Sgt. Lynn M. Farnham, 12166531	
S/Sgt. Paul N. Crider, 33244003	
S/Sgt. James D. Gysan, 11053310	
S/Sgt. Clifford W. Malcolm, 13103522	
S/Sgt. George (NMI) Romontio, 37353024	

D. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

Purple Heart: 1st Lt. Jefferson Waguespack, 0-795104
2nd Lt. David F. Zuckerman, 0-749414
Sgt. Martin S. Colbert, 0-20118752

Distinguished Flying Cross:

1st Lt. Robert P. Kline, Pilot
1st Lt. William B. Blakemore, Navigator
Major Richard E. Evans, Pilot
Captain Carl E. Helms, Navigator
1st Lt. Robert C. Bjork, Bombardier
1st Lt. Herbert (NMI) Jones, Pilot

Silver Star:

1st Lt. James D. Fennessey, Pilot
Sergeant Martin S. Colbert, Gunner

A. DiPasquale, 1st Lt. A.C.
Squadron Historian
Asst. S-2

BATTLES OF 346TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (h)

2-4-44. Eight of our B-17s, Nos. 479, 775, 572, 856, 407, 086, 026, and 436 took off from Tortorella Field with a bomb load of 12 x 500 to raid installations at Toulon Harbor, France. Takeoff was at about 0835. Upon nearing the initial point weather conditions and other Groups over the target precluded any bomb run and as gas supply was a primary consideration, bombs were salvoed into the sea. Lt. Connors at 086 came on to base at 1614. Lt. Crooks, who piloted 436, refueled at Naples and landed here at 1755. The rest were seen to circle over Ajacci, Corsica, for landing and refueling. Because of weather and approaching darkness, planes remained overnight. Flak over the target was heavy, intense and accurate. some fighters were seen but no encounters had.

2-10-44. Seven of our B-17s, Nos. 479, 436, 477, 026, 407, 775, and 086 took off from Tortorella Field with a bomb load of 12 x 500 to raid Cisterna, Italy. Takeoff at 0700 and return at 1030. No bombing as undercast precluded same. Flak was heavy, slight and fairly accurate. No fighters. No. 086, piloted by Connors crash-landed at the 301st Bomb Group when his wheels failed to lower. No Mishap.

2-14-44. Ten of our B-17s, Nos. 513, 477, 479, 797, 487, 526, 815, 858, 436, and 775 took off with a bomb load of 12 x 500 to raid the enemy marshalling yards at Verona, Italy. Takeoff at 1940 [0940?]. Verona was closed in by undercast and Group attacked and hit the Modena yards. Results fairly successful. Flak from Verona was heavy, moderate and inaccurate. Around Modena, some 20 enemy Me 109s and Fw 190s were observed but made no attacks upon our squadron. Return at 1640.

2-15-44. Ten of our B-17s took off at 0730 from Tortorella Field with a bomb load of 12 x 500 to bomb the St. Benedictine Monastery situated three-quarters of a mile west of Cassino. This was declared to be a German stronghold and actually a fort. Results successful and the hill was peppered with many direct hits. Monastery was destroyed. Planes returned at about 1050. No mishaps. Participating aircraft: 407, 026, 526, 477, 263, 479, 856, 815, 418, 775.

2-17-44. Ten of our B-17s, Nos. 513, 436, 815, 858, 477, 797, 683, 407, 572, and 856 took off at 0825 from Tortorella Field with a frag bomb load to bomb the shops and vehicles near the Anzio beachhead. They reached the target at about 1025, bombed successfully and returned at 1200. No fighters but flak was heavy, intense and accurate. Nine of ten of our planes received minor flak hits. No mishaps. #513 completed its 100th mission today.

2-22-44. Five of our B-17s took off at 0820 from Tortorella Field with a bomb load of 12 x 500 to bomb Zagreb A/D Yugoslavia. A/Cs 856, 407, 775, 477, 513. Moderate flak was encountered and all returned safety at about 1315. No fighters.

2-22-44. Six of our B-17s, 479, 436, 683, 797, 815, and 858 took off at 0849 to bomb the Regensberg factories in Germany. Seat of important aircraft production. Weather closed in over target area and no bombs were dropped but some 45 enemy fighter aircraft were encountered and a severe fight took place. Our gunners claimed the destruction of one Me 109 and two Me 210s. Flak was heavy, intense and fairly accurate. Planes returned at about 1545. Bomb load of 12 x 500 was returned.

2-24-44. A/Cs 479, 477, 436, 513, 683, 572, 775, 856, 868, 797 took off at about 0955 from Tortorella Field with a bomb load of 12 x 500 to destroy the oil refinery at Fiume, Italy. About 10 enemy fighter aircraft were encountered and one of our gunners claimed the destruction of one Me 109. Flak was heavy but slight. Mission very successful. Group commanded.

2-25-44. A/Cs 572, 143, 775, 418, 513 took off from Tortorella Field at about 0810 with a bomb load of 12 x 500 to bomb Pola harbor. No fighters observed and only moderate flak. No mishaps. Planes returned at about 1315. Mission fairly successful.

2-25-44. Major Headrick, squadron C.O. took off with five of our B-17s, #479, 436, 815, 858, and 797 at about 0835 from Tortorella Field carrying a bomb load of 12 x 500 to participate in the bombing of the important enemy installations at Regensberg, Germany. The missions was outstanding in results of bombing. The target was heavily defended by some eighty enemy fighters which engaged the formation for about two hours. #436 landed at Foggia Main with three wounded. #858, piloted by Lt. Tomlin blew up over the target area as a result of enemy fighter action. #797, piloted by Mahan dropped bombs and was then seen going down. Two seen to parachute. Both crews listed as Missing in Action. Zucherman claimed destruction of Me 109. Flak encountered was heavy and intense--tracking type. Remaining ships landed at about 1600, bearing many bullet and flak holes. Mission very successful.

SHEET NO. 50 WAR DIARY 346TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON--TORTORELLA, FOGIA
MONTH OF FEBRUARY, 1944 PREPARED BY A. DIPASQUALE, 1ST LT. A.C., ASST S-2

DAY	EVENTS
1.	A day of non operational activity. A touch of Spring and thoughts of the good old U.S.A. What is there to say when man's memory is of home? Let us leave this day to them--alone.
2.	A heavy fog or ground haze came with the dawn and lifted in time for our planes to take off on a mission to Budapest. A mission or visit to the Me 109 plant. Our aircraft were called back while en route and they landed at about 1210. No credit for this hop. This evening our enlisted personnel joined the neighboring South Africans in a social party at the latter's N.C.O. club. A quiz program was set up with coffee, beer and doughnuts to sip and munch upon. Capt. Johnson acted as judge while Capt. Austere, scorekeeper. [sic] An officer of their organization was official interlocutor. Teams were selected to represent both units and the contest was on. Our men took 2nd prize and earned 6 quarts of beer and the winning team got a bottle of Scotch. the South Africans, in a gesture of good sportsmanship traded the Scotch for the beer. It was an evening well spent and to Capt. Johnson went a scroll knighting him to the "Order of the Bended Elbow."
3.	A day of rest and all took full advantage. Few at breakfast, attesting the fact that sleep still held a great number of our operatives. A balmy day. Warm, a brilliant sunshine and a lazy breeze sweeping through the air. The shepherds pastoring their sheep on the broad green valleys and horses grazing on the grass about with idleness and quiet around the countryside painted a picture unlike the turmoil of the times. It set men to thinking of the futility of war and the foolishness of their ways.
4.	Eight of our planes took off on a long mission. To Toulon Harbor, France. A round-trip well over 1100 miles. They did not bomb as difficulty and weather conditions over the <u>target</u> precluded any successful bomb run. Bombs were salvoed into the sea. Lt Connors at 086 returned directly to his base while Crooks, at 436, refueled at Naples and came on in around dark. The rest were seen to circle about Ajaccio, Corsica. Will probably stay there for the night. Promotion recommendations for combat officers are going in whole-sale. They are finishing up so fast that administrative work is behind operational activities. Blakemore and Sgt. Colbert were put in for decorations for work and outstanding action in combat. An overcast appeared over the base around 1500 hours. Predictions were that a gale would blow towards and during night. Winds did come and late at night it continued blowing. It was obvious why our planes could not return.

5. With our planes on other bases as a result of yesterday's mission, no operational activity was possible. No.s 856, 775, 407, and 026 returned to base. They were at Ghisonaccia and not Ajaccio as previously reported. Major Headrick (479) and Chamberlain (572) did not return. Today a wind blew with considerable velocity. It was in gusts and reports were that the speed reached 70 mph in moments. Officers got paid, and a few poker games took place, naturally.
6. Major Headrick, piloting 479 finally returned to the base. He had stopped at an emergency field in Corsica and awaiting clear weather for take off. A wing tip of his plane had been damaged when a strong current tipped the Fortress slightly upon landing. As yet, we have no official work on Chamberlain, piloting 572. Bad weather still hovered about the base and prevented the scheduled operations. Mess Committee for officers drew plans for the erection of a stone mess hall and officers' club. It is to be 80x20 and joined on to the stone kitchen already built. Its roof will likewise be sloping. Major Headrick approved. Officers and enlisted personnel visited town in great numbers--but little activity brought them back in time for supper. Entertainment is in bad shape hereabouts. Movies are not frequent enuf [sic] and when shown, many have seen them by virtue of their antiquity. Foggia offers nothing but despair. Red Cross helps but does not offer any outlet for pent up feelings. It is evident in the manner in which men walk around and fidget.
7. Scheduled operational activity again canceled. Meeting held of all officers and mess plans submitted and approved by them. Trucks were sent to town so that men could take showers and stay in awhile. Workers broke ground in building the mess hall. Cold continues and overcast persists. The S-1, S-2, and S-3 were busily engaged in erecting their offices. Maintenance shelters and wall tent used. Frag boxes in large numbers were available and flooring put into these tents.
8. Early this morning at about 0200 the sound of an explosion awoke the entire camp. A British Wellington had landed with its "wheels up" and crashed. Its load of one 4000 lb bomb went off. Reports have it that the crew was killed and several about injured. This is the second plane that crashed and exploded with its bomb load within a period of a month. New crew arrived late at night.
9. Non Operational. Members of the new crews are as follows: 2nd Lts. William A. Hunnewell, Dexter H. Barlow, Roy A. Kite, and Dalton T. Booth; s/Sgts. Clifford P. Foulke, William H. Breuning, William R. Murnane, Sgt. Dwight L. Hillard, Gordon D. Beese, and Pvt Joseph J. Szabe. Second crew: 2nd Lts. William A. Barrett, Autor R. Aschenbrener, William H. Heelke and John a. Collins. S/Sgt James N. Hahn, Anthony C. Analse; Sgt Richard J. Koehler, James R. Spencer, Dee Wight Bowman and Harold G. Cornelson. Third Crew: 2nd Lts. Julian E. Currie, John E. Botkin, Willard J. Giles, Jr., and Arthur T. Hall; S/Sgt. Robert D. Phillips, Sgts. Dertiz G. Brewer, John McTiernan, Jr., Charles Snyder, and Martin (NMI) Harmann, Jr.
10. Personnel of the Squadron has undergone many changes. Old combat men who have finished have gone and many new ones arriving. It is difficult to know who is who. Operational activity as seven of our crews took off to bomb Cisterna, Italy. This is a point near the newly established bridgehead and some anti-personnel bombs were to be used. We did not bomb as undercast obscured target. Connors could not lower wheels on landing, and flew over 801st area, dropped his ball turret and landing safely and expertly on their field. Little damage to plane. We learned today that yesterday, a Wing official inspected our planes and found them in satisfactory condition.

11. Another new crew--making four in the last three days. 2nd Lts. Walter P. Moody, John W. Davies, Frank A. Spindler and Gustaf W. Holmgren; S/Sgts Orville S. DeLay, Gordon H. Demaray; Sgts. Joseph D. Brueck, J.C. Carroll, Marshal G. Culpepper, and George A. DuLac. It rained most of the day and conditions in camp turned to a muddy area with a cold, penetrating wind. Operations were not possible because of weather. Whereas last month we had a record of activity, so far we have not dropped any bombs this month, altho [sic] on two missions. Jerry has certainly been favored. Lt. Chance of engineering says we have 17 planes on the line. Our crews have not been increased and we have less than 3 men to service each plane. Our line boys have been working night and day to keep the standard of maintenance at a high level and keep these aircraft fit and ready for combat. Lt. Brock is now carried as Personal Equipment Officer in addition to his duties as Armament Officer. He is assistant to Lt. Chance. The new crews have been attending briefing lectures at Group Headquarters throughout the day. Lt. Kirkendall is attending a 10-day course on chemicals at a nearby Chemical Warfare School. And yet another new crew--the fifth this week: 2nd Lt. Walter K. Higgins, Herbert W. Burns, Jr., Orlan D. Carmichael, and James A. Beck. S/Sgt Eddie Delgado; Sgts. Franklin R. Collister, Robert H. Thomson Jr., Robert R. Blair, and Joyce N. Worley.
12. Crews alerted for possible mission to the bomb line area. Situation with ground forces has been serious and weather has forced us to remain grounded. Mission attempted around noon--planes took off but soon returned, as overcast was too thick to attempt any formation flying. New crews continued schooling at Headquarters.
13. Snow covered the ground this morning. Briefing of crews again attempted but no take-off was possible. This month has marked a serious let-down in bombing operations. We have yet to drop on any target--indicating the extent in which weather can hamper operations and the important factor it is in all calculations. Crews remained alerted all day but the scheduled mission never did materialize. An abundance of mail arrived and the letter-writing department again swelled to huge proportions. Mail censorship in a squadron is no small duty. When over 300 men decide to write a few letters, reading and approval is a tedious job.
14. Operational as ten of our B-17s took off to bomb the Verona M/Yds. The weather again proved instrumental in saving that target and in lieu of that our bombers hit the Modesa yards. Fairly accurate results. Flak came thru [sic] from Verona with no damage to our ships and some fighters were seen. They did not attack us. Me 109s and Fw 190s observed. Major Pearsall of Wing came to area and made an administrative impaction [sic] looking at all departments and examining records and books. Examination was apparently successful and complimentary remarks issued from the examiner. Major Evans returned to this base from England yesterday and was seen by us today. He is again in command. Capt Helms returned with him.
15. Today 10 of our B-17s took off on a bombing mission. We were called upon to destroy an old monastery belonging to the order of St. Benedictine. it was built in the 6th century and rebuilt in the 17th. It had a famous library, research rooms, dormitories, etc. It is situated high on a hill about three quarters of a mile west of the town of Cassion. Inasmuch as the Germans had taken the monastery and fortified it heavily so as to become a veritable fort, the High Command, after deliberation, declared it an out and out military objective. All this was carefully explained to the crews at briefing and it was made clear that

- its destruction was absolutely necessary to our Armies on the Vth front. Target was successfully destroyed. we were all sorry to see this happen, but in the eyes of God we know it to be necessary--and justified. A/C 572 returned this day with Lt. Chamberlain after being absent since February 4th.
16. Non-operational. The enlisted men who built themselves a stone mess-hall during the past month and a half had the satisfaction of enjoying its labor this day. The hall was opened. It is beautifully arranged, having windows and doors and built-in kitchen. It seats 160 men. It was tremendously enjoyed by all and will give them the shelter and warmth they lacked since arriving here. The ground crews polished up on some back work and cleaned the line-area of trash and paper and also worked on the planes. The new crews again attended ground school as conducted at Group. Major Evans buzzed the field in a P-38 this noon and later at around 1600 buzzed in a P-57. He was checked out in both. Pfc Jimmy Duroso, heretofore serving in the officers mess is converting into a combat gunner and is attending school.
17. Ten of our B-17s bombed enemy vehicles and shops near the Anzio beachhead. Raid rather successful. Major Evans left this day. A grand officer and man. He was well liked and we shall miss him much. Pvt. Scott has reconverted to combat and flew his first mission since grounded. He flew as gunner when our outfit first arrived here. Lt. Crooks finished his 50th mission. A/C 518, known as "El Diablo" completed its 100th combat mission. Special account story and photos taken. Show tonite [sic]--a new picture: "Gang's All Here."
18. Eleven of our aircraft took off this morning but were recalled just after forming due to bad weather. This month has impeded our air activity all over the Mediterranean Theater. Lt. Crooks received his Distinguished Flying Cross decoration. Major Richard J.E. Evans, former C.O., visited camp this day and finally took off with his orders. headed for the United States. Captain Helms, Squadron Navigator, who has been overseas a considerable time, left with him. Our neighbors, the South Africans, apparently received orders to move. They have been camped next to us since our arrival here. Their outfit were given new B-26 Marauders in place of the Boston A-20 which they had been operating. They will soon be flying their tactical missions soon. [sic]
19. The South Africans are about packed up. The mess halls which they possessed and which we hoped to inherit were carefully dismembered and are to be taken with them. Rumor has it that they will go to Terneli, near the VIIIth Army front. This proves that when in the Army, don't count on anything, go ahead with plans as tho [sic] nothing else existed. We did this and hence have our own buildings. We are learning. Men down at the line were ordered to move away and back to the area. Only two from each section will be permitted to stay there. Wonder if the "Wimpy's" had anything to do with it. They seem to crash around here on an average of twice a month. Cold continued on base with overcast in skies. Show tonite: "Hi Diddle, Diddle" with Adolphe Menjou, Martha Scott, etc. considered good by those attending. And so to bed.
20. An early H hour but no mission because of weather. Very little to report as the Sunday was spent quietly in camp. It was cold. A Lieut. Winters, bombardier, reported as newest addition to the Squadron.
21. Another effort was made to get a mission under way, but the persistent weather precluded that. Crews were on the alert till about noon. The Isle of Capri is again opening as a rest camp. Personnel from the various squadrons are chosen and sent there for a week's rest. Some of this unit have been

chosen and in all probability will leave tomorrow. The rest camp is open to all Army Air Force Personnel. It is probable that an Air Force inspection may soon come and all departments are preparing thoroughly for it. Meals have been fairly good as quartermaster has been supplying meat lately. Peculiar how grumbling dies down when the food improves. Men don't seem to mind anything so long as they can eat fairly well. Mail has started to come in again and normalcy rests with all.

22. A twin mission was planned for today. One group of planes headed for the Zagreb Airdrome in Yugoslavia while another to distant Regensburg, Germany. The former accomplished its mission while the latter was precluded owing to weather which closed in over the target. Combat crews are being credited with two missions for any flight over Bolzano or north of it. Enemy fighter action considerably stiff in area considered "Inner European Fortress." Lt. DiPasquale and six enlisted men took off for a rest at the Isle of Capri--a one week's rest. Left camp by truck for Naples at about 0630. Air Corps policy is to send ground and air personnel, in quota, to said camp each week.
23. Our planes took off to bomb enemy facilities and installations at Steyr, Austria. Group was called back soon after takeoff. Lt. Crooks, Lt. Church and S/Sgt Compton received orders and are on their merry way--home!
24. Our Squadron participated in a Group raid over the enemy target at Fiume, Italy. Major Headrick led our Squadron and the oil refineries received a heavy bombing. S/Sgt Philip A. Frank claimed the destruction of one enemy fighter during the time of the fighter attack. Mission very successful.
25. Another twin mission. Some of our aircraft took off to bomb Pola harbor while our G-model aircraft went to Regensburg. This will go down as one of the big raids of the war. It was a coordinated attack and planes from the English bases and those in the Mediterranean participated. The enemy sent up a strong formation of fighters in opposition and a long contest over enemy territory took place between the bombers and fighters. We lost two planes, those of Lt. Mahan and Lt. Tomlin. One went down with two chutes seen coming out while the other exploded. Crews are listed as missing in action. Lt. Klinex returned and landed at Foggia Main with three wounded: T/Sgt Waters, S/Sgt Chason, and S/Sgt Smith. The target was virtually destroyed. Our men returned visibly affected by the terrific ordeal and long flight. Their gameness and stamina helped considerably to overcome the difficulties presented. Flak was heavy and intense and those who did return landed at about 1600. Lt. Zucerman, flying as navigator for Lt. Kline claimed the destruction of an Me 109. In all, our personnel calculated that some 80 enemy fighters were in the area opposing our group.
26. It rained and in war-time it hinders many activities. The Air Corps no exception to this rule.
27. Continued rain. Orders received indicating that the following men had been awarded the Purple Heart for injuries sustained during operational combat: 1st Lt. Jefferson Waguespack, Sgt. Martin S. Colbert and 2nd Lt. David F. Zuckerman. Other awards: Distinguished Flying Cross to: 1st Lt. Robert E. Helms, 1st Lt. Robert C. Bjork and 1st Lt. Herbert Jones. The Silver Star to: 1st Lt. James D. Fennessey and Sgt. Martin S. Colbert.
28. Non operational and pilots and co-pilots attended a lecture at Group Hq. given by fighter pilots. Practice flight had for all new crews. Old pilots acting as instructors.

29.

Scheduled operation called off on account of weather. Personnel of the squadron paid this day. Construction on the base continues and Enlisted Men's day room is nearing completion as is the Officers' mess and club. Warmer days setting in. Squadron now has 12 planes as a few were sent to Air depot because of age. Two were lost at Regensburg. Our engineering satisfactorily passed the Air Force inspection of all line equipment and maintenance.

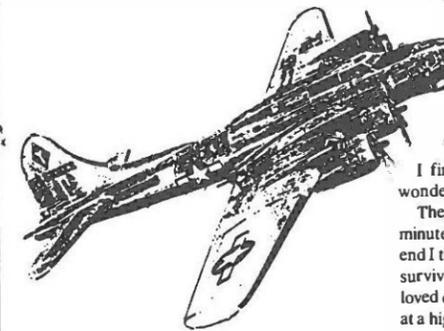


Bill Smallwood's book **TOMLIN'S CREW** is now off the press. You may order your copy from Sunflower University Press, Post Office Box 1009, Manhattan, Kansas 66502 or call (913) 539-1888.

The following are a couple of excerpts to whet your interest.

I attended four reunions following the Dallas affair, and, at the 1988 gathering, in Fort Lauderdale, I was invited to join the Society's Board of Directors. The following year, in McAllen, Texas, the Board elected me President.

It was in Albuquerque in May 1991 that our membership received one of its most exhilarating experiences: the appearance at our reunion of members of the 99th Strategic Weapons Wing, a successor organization to our original 99th. These fliers arrived in their own B-52 bomber, flown from Ellsworth Air Force Base, near Rapid City, South Dakota, and landed it at Albuquerque's Kirtland Field. Desert Storm shoulder patches were on the uniforms of these men who had participated in B-52 bombing missions against elements of the Iraq Republican Guards. They filled us with pride at their recent accomplishments, which added spring to the steps of old veterans. A new dimension to the long history of the 99th organization had been opened.



Epilogue



I find myself at odd moments looking back on this entire episode and wondering what it meant. Was there a theme to it -- a moral, perhaps?

The story of one crew, part of a heavy bombardment group, constituted a minute fraction of the mammoth Allied war effort, but an integral part. In the end I think all of us felt gratified that the cause had been just, that freedom had survived, and, with the exception of our pilot, that we had returned to our loved ones. During annual meetings of our 99th Bomb Group, with fellowship at a high pitch, someone always breaks out with an Air Force song. Then, you remain convinced that it was all worth it.

While actually living through that period, as an aviation cadet, and later as a bombardier, I would learn firsthand the meaning of humility. It probably began with latrine duty, but the climax, the notion of vulnerability, surfaced with the Regensburg mission. First, I watched parachutes billow out of B-24 bombers flying beneath us and suspected that a violent battle was at hand. Then, 15 minutes later, when I, too, had to bail out, the realization hit squarely: I was just as fragile as the rest.

Serving out a term as a prisoner of war called for strong resolve, especially as the war in Germany entered its final phase amid deplorable food conditions. Had it not been for the camp's secret radio reception of BBC broadcasts that furnished true accounts of the military situation, morale would have sunk even lower. Conviction about the final outcome, plus a sense of humor and general faith in human decency, was what sustained us.

This book was written to pass along an experience to others, to family and friends, but also to pay tribute to our pilot and crew and to members of the 99th. Finally, as my daughter indicated in her note, I was writing this for myself.

March 30, 1993



Dear Bernie:

Enclosed is my latest contribution to the "Chaplain's Corner". This was done along the lines you suggested and I feel does the job fairly well. I hope it suits your thoughts and I know it suits mine.

Bernie, I wanted to cover just what has been done and some of what gives us hope that I will be here longer than predicted. First is attitude I believe. Maudie and I are taking this one day at a time and always have a goal of some sort to work on and look forward to. Being able to contribute what little I can to the 99th News Letter is certainly one of the foremost.

What was done surgically to me included relocating the lower end of the esophagus into another part of my stomach. The second was in placing another tube taken from the small intestine out of the lower end of the stomach plus other surgery I'm unable to grasp in a way that I might pass that information, but pretty much all over. The second procedure was the attempt to place shunts into the liver bile ducts for drainage shunting into the small intestine. That one was a failure. The third procedure was the successful attempt to place that shunt properly, but the bile runs into a bag on my side. This is OK since the toxic bile is reducing and I'm feeling much better. Along with this the Hospital Pathologist told me that my tumor has been very slow in growth, possibly as long as thirty years in enlarging sufficiently to interfere with the intake of food. My color is returning to normal, my eating has just begun to digest properly and I'm now able to eat more at one time, going back to the regular norms. I firmly believe that slow growth, although eventually fatal, will grant us that extra desired time. It could go the other way so we still have to be aware of that as well. To illustrate, our tickets are paid for the Dayton trip the 28th of April and we'll be there for sure. Maudie has a relative that lives about 5 miles out of Dayton and has invited us to stay with them. Almost prophetic, since restaurant food can be a problem, more because I still have to remain on a fairly bland diet. In any event I look forward to this and fully plan to be on deck at Ontario.

We received your fine card and the newspaper clipping yesterday and we are happy to receive your support in this and that is one heck of a fine article. That's the kind of stuff our American public has never been privy to. An example is our own dear little granddaughter who is in college now. She got off onto the Gulf War and how wrong it was so I asked her if she knew just who it was that started WW II. Her opinion was that somehow we were on the wrong side. I simply cannot understand why such trash is coming out of our colleges, but it is! Seems they care more about making things "politically correct" than they do TRUTH.

The weather here has finally moderated and we are into our early spring run-off, blue skies and sunshine along with 50, 60, and even 70 degrees one day. I really love it.

While I love Lander dearly and enjoy both winter and summer, I have to say that this past winter was too long and too cold. Also, while I spent those three weeks dealing with my problem in the hospital, some low-life drained the gas tank on my little Ford Escort. I simply couldn't believe it. However, as we drove to our Hospital for my final 'procedure' my older brother and his wife followed as we turned on Beunavista Drive toward the Hospital. Right there on that corner just across the street is the golf course and right next to the sidewalk was a young bull moose and his mother. Frank was totally delighted. So we have lots more going for us than against. Thanks for everything. Give our love to Doris.

Always,

Joe and Maudie

TAPS • TAPS • TAPS • TAPS • TAPS

Dear George and 99ers: Sorry to advise you that ROY K. HORNING, 72 yrs. of 122 Low Ann Dr., Depew, N.Y. DIED OF A HEART AT TACK March 14, 1993. The BLIZZARD of 1993 and his shoveling snow was too much. s/NORINE HORNING. P.S. Tell Bernie Barr that his was SAMS husband and he will remember. • (Yes, SAM Bernie Barr REMEMBERS VERY WELL . MY DEEP REGRETS.)

NEW MEMBERS

ELDON B. AUSTIN	P. O. Box 132	BURKSVILLE, VA	23922
RUSSELL L. CARLSON	982 Lilac Lane	LEBANON, PA	17042
FITZ CORY	992 Paseo Del Sur	SANTA FE, NM	87501
JACK B. EMACK	1922 Brookwood Dr.	AKRON, OH	44313-5006
GARNET S. LADD	623 North Oakland	CARBONDALE, IL	62901
ARRON LIPMAN	4656 Carambola Cir.	NORTH COCONUT CREEK, FL	33066
JOSEPH E. DEMINT	P. O. Box 333, RFD-1	HARDIN, MO	64035-0333
VINCENT A. BELL	2515 Teasley Street.	LA CRESCENTAS, CA	91214
FRANK R. ALT	138 Piper Drive	PITTSBURG, PA	15234
WILBUR F. MASON	714 North Stewart St.	RAEFORD, NC	28376

NOTES & LETTERS (Continued from Page 4)

11/10/92 - Dear Walter:

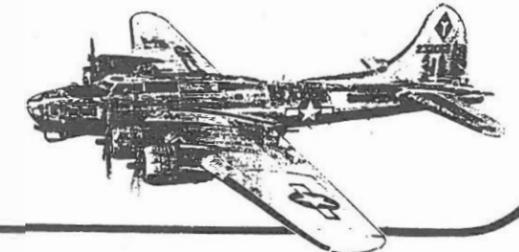
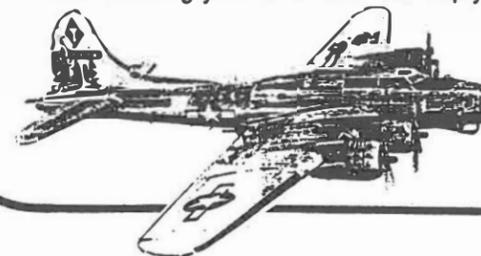
How about a story on PAUL SPEAR and PAUL PETERSON. They flew 50 missions with the 99th and then went to England to fly 25 more combat missions. Has anyone else in the 99th performed two tours in two combat zones? I don't believe the chances of living through two tours was very high. I believe they deserve a medal or special consideration at the next reunion in Ontario, CA.

Yours truly,

s/J. P. Kotowski

(One of the original with MITCH)

Hi J. P.: At our Albuquerque reunion Bernie did make an announcement about the special feat of these two great combat members. They stood and were recognized by the loud applause of fellow members of the 99th. Yes, several of our members flew two combat tours. ANY MEMBER ACCOMPLISHING MORE THAN ONE COMBAT TOUR will be recognized at the 1993 (Ontario) Reunion. Others that I (Walter) remember are Ray Schwambeck, Bernie Barr, Fitz Corey, and others who may come forward after reading your letter and this reply. Walter



99TH BOMB GROUP HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Walter H. Butler, Treasurer
8608 Bellehaven Place, N.E.
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87112

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If your address block above does not have 1993 or later in the upper left corner your 1993 dues are now due.

NAME _____ SQUADRON _____ ASSOC _____

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Mail to Walter Butler, Treasurer, 8608 Bellehaven Place, N. E., Albuquerque, NM, 87112. Make check payable to 99 BGHS. The upper left corner of your address label shows the date through which your membership is paid. • Previous newsletters (1981 to 1986) are available for \$ 5.00 postpaid for all six (6) years. 1997 through 1992 newsletters are available for \$10.00 per year. These past newsletters will give new members a chance to read what was said about them and their friends in past years. PLEASE REMEMBER TO FURNISH WALTER BUTLER CHANGE OF ADDRESS INFORMATION.

REUNIONS

1993

- 99th BOMB GROUP at ONTARIO, CA - OCTOBER 26, '93 • Host is Bernie Barr, 7408 Vista Del Arroyo Ave., NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109 • Phone (505) 884-7970
- 15th Air Force at March Air Force Base, CA - October 30, '93

1994

- 99th Bomb Group at Hampton, VA • Hosts Bob Bacher and Len Smith