



CERIGNOLA CONNECTION

455th Bomb Group Association Newsletter

Fall 1999 – Editor, Tom Ramey, 1211 Montclair Ct., Appleton, WI 54915 (920) 731-2500

From Your President

Another reunion has now come and gone. Our attendance was substantially less this time from most of our other reunions but was still more than most of us expected, and everyone seemed to have a great time.

San Diego is an excellent place for a convention and there were four at the Town and Country Resort while we were there. The organizers of our reunion arranged for some great tours of that beautiful area, and we all owe a big thanks to Gen. Eugene Hudson for all the time and effort he has contributed to this gathering. His help was invaluable.

A new associate member, Craig Ward, attended hoping to find someone who had known his father, John Ward, a co-pilot in the 740th Sqdn. It so happened that his father was a good friend of mine. It was really a pleasure to visit with him, his wife, and his mother.

This reunion was my last official duty as president of the 455 Bomb Group Assn. It has been an honor and a joy for me to serve in this capacity. There are many people to whom I am indebted, especially Col. Lou Hansen, Lt. Col. Gus Wendt, Gen. Gene Hudson and Col. John Davis. It has been especially rewarding to meet so many members I would not have known otherwise. I'm hopeful that we can meet again at the next reunion.

Lt. Col Edward Riggs

A Holiday Wish



Marge and I wish for you and your families a most Happy Holiday Season and good health in the New Year.

Ed Riggs

Your New Association Officers – Board of Directors

Officers

President – S. Sgt. Francis L. Lashinsky – New – 740

Vice Pres. – 1st Lt. Stanley M. Iverson – New – 740

Secretary – T. Sgt. Carl R. Loiocano – New – 741

Treasurer – Lt. Col. Gus H. Wendt – Retained – 741

Directors

Maj. James D. Gould III – Retained – 743

1st Lt. Jack F. Blum – New – 741

Col. John F. Davis – Retained – 741

S Sgt. David J. Frawley – Retained – 742

Maj. John W. Nash – Retained – 742

Capt. James H. Smith – Retained – 741

1st Lt. Edwin C. Mlcak – New – 742

T Sgt. William P. Greene – New – 743

Col. Roderick W. Clarke – New – 743

S. Sgt. Ekdred J. Specht – New – 743

Past President

Lt. Col. Clarence E. Riggs – New – 740

Lt. Col. Lincoln H. Townsend, Secretary, 2nd S Sgt. Donald F. Lonergan, Director, resigned due to health problems

Final Flights

Reno P. Leininger, 3/30/99
M/Sgt 741st Squadron

Warren G. Miller, 4/3/99
Cpl 740th Squadron

John Orville Kerr, 3/23/99
1st Sgt 743rd Squadron

Robert Combs, 6/95
Lt 742nd Squadron

Eugene Villani, 3/29/99
T/Sgt 742nd Squadron, Ed Mlcak's crew

William C. Conlin, 5/20/99
S/Sgt 740th Squadron

John F. Jureka, 4/19/99
Colonel 742rd Squadron, Pilot, USAF
Ret. Commander of the Air Force Postal
Service

John W. Hawkins, 12/7/98
Lt Col 743rd Squadron

Eddy D. Gravwiller, 4/99
S/Sgt 742nd Squadron, James Brown's
crew

Joseph Kenny, 10/6/93
Lt 742nd Squadron

Kenneth Griffen 3/99
S/Sgt 742nd Squadron

Raymond J. Ciccone, 11/20/98
Sgt 740th Squadron

Robert Kafka, 5/17/97
Capt 741st Squadron

James W. Whittle, 3/29/99
S/Sgt 742nd Squadron

George E. Baughman, 11/22/97
Sgt 743rd Squadron

Arthur J. Smallwood, 12/26/97
M/Sgt Group headquarters

Arnold C. Latos, 3/21/99
Lt. 742nd Squadron

Norbert S. Bailey, 8/14/99
S/Sgt 742nd Squadron

John W. Pearce, 5/19/99
S/Sgt 742nd Squadron

Our hearts are with and sympathies go to the loved ones of the 455 members.



Your new president – Francis L. Lashinsky and wife Dorothy – 455th Reunion, San Diego, CA.

There's a Life Membership in the 455th Bomb Group Association Awaiting You! Board votes to change cost of life memberships.

During the 1999 Board of Directors meeting in San Diego, the Directors voted to change the cost of becoming a Life Member from \$100 to \$60. This change will become effective with the 2000 FY year, which is November 1999. In addition, Annual Members who had paid their dues for the last 10 consecutive years thru 1999 can become Life Members for \$25. If any of these members have already paid their dues for 2000, they can become Life Members for an additional \$10. This reduction recognizes that our life expectancy has changed since 1988 when the original charges for Life Membership were established.

455th Bomb Group Association participates in World War II and Air Force Memorials.

During the 1999 Board of Directors meeting, at the 455th Bomb Group Association reunion, your board voted to donate \$1,000 to the planned World War II Memorial. Memorials are already in place for WWI, Korean War and Vietnam War veterans. There is no National Memorial that recognizes veterans who served during WWII. This Memorial will be constructed in Washington DC, site yet to be announced. It should be noted that WWII was the last conflict, where the entire country massed behind the war effort. The Korean and Vietnam conflicts had its dissenters.

Simultaneously the board also approved a donation of \$1000 for the Air Force Memorial. The Memorial is to be located next to the Marine Memorial in Washington, DC.

HATS ON! 455th Bomb Group caps available!



455th Bomb Group (H) caps, celebrating the 60th anniversary of the B-24 Liberator are available. These caps are white with a blue bill, read 455th Bomb Group (H), with a picture of the B-24 printed on the front cap panel.

58 of these caps are available. The cost is \$7.00 per cap (including mailing) and will be sold on a "first come, first sold" basis. Send your request and check to the **455th Bomb Group Association, PO Box 4043, Sierra Vista, AZ 85636-4043.**

History Books Are Off the Press!

At this writing the 455th Bomb Group history rerun is off the press and in the bindery. If you have ordered books they should be in the mail shortly. Response for the book has been great. We'll have a few on inventory for late comers or repeats but when the inventory is depleted, it will be history.



*"I don't see anything wrong with having a second dessert."
Horace Lanford and wife Joyce. San Diego reunion.*



*"If you think flying a B-24 in combat is rough...get into politics."
George Mc Govern. San Diego reunion.*

Early Aviation Innovations

On March 14, 1964, the Air Force Museum at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, unveiled a full-size reproduction of an unmanned flying bomb developed and built by the Dayton-Wright Company during 1917-1918 for the U.S. Army Signal Corps. This forerunner of modern missiles was the invention of Orville Wright, Lawrence Sperry, and Charles Kettering.

Designated the Aerial Torpedo and nicknamed the Kettering "Bug," this weapon never saw combat action. The "Bug" had a wingspan of 17 feet 3 inches, a length of 12 feet 6 inches, a height of 4 feet 8 inches, and weighed 350 pounds. With a high-explosive payload of 180 pounds, it achieved a speed of 55 miles per hour powered by a small 40 hp, four cylinder air-cooled de Palma engine and had a maximum range of 40 miles. It was launched from a dolly running along a light-weight track and was pulled into the air by the thrust of its propeller. It was guided to a target by a system of preset vacuum-pneumatic and electrical controls. When the target was reached, a special control closed an

electrical circuit that shut off the engine and fired detonators that released the wings, causing the craft to fall like a bomb and explode on impact.

Although the final tests were successful, the 25 completed craft given to the Air Service for further testing at Arcadia Field in Florida had a high failure rate attributed to launch crew inexperience. Mass production at an estimated \$1,000 per unit never came about due to lack of funds.

The "Bug" had been the brain child of Charles Kettering. He was chief of "inventions development" for the National Cash Register Company (NCR), founder of the Dayton Engineering Laboratories (DELCO), and the Dayton Airplane Company (later reorganized as the Dayton-Wright Company) which built the "Bug." Kettering's inventions include the first electric cash register, the electric starter, and improved ignition systems.

Orville Wright and Lawrence Sperry were also pioneers in the development of automatic aircraft stabilization devices. Orville Wright had been working on his version since 1905 and received a patent in October 1913. It included a pendulum to control the wing warping and a horizontal vane to operate the elevator, both working through

servomotors powered by a wind-driven generator. On December 31, 1913, he publicly demonstrated the autopilot, making 17 flights before Aero Club of America observers. Orville was awarded the prestigious Collier Trophy for this accomplishment on February 5, 1914.

Less than six months later, Lawrence Sperry demonstrated an autopilot device that eclipsed the technology of Orville Wright's invention. This 20-year-old son of Elmer Sperry (developer of gyroscopic stabilization for ships) emulated his father by developing a similar device for aircraft. Rather than using mechanical vanes and pendulums as Elmer had, Lawrence established a stable platform for two gyroscopes in the cockpit of a Curtiss flying boat. One gyro sensed deviations in the yaw axis and operated the rudder, the other functioned for roll and pitch axes and controlled the ailerons and elevator. Sperry's automatic pilot formed the basis for all subsequent automatic stability systems including modern inertial navigation systems.

Jack Michaelson, CPAM Volunteer Researcher. The Wright Flyer.

Sgt. Salesman

Through persistence, persuasion and a little pilfering, a salesman-turned-soldier showed the Army how to build a stone house in a war zone.

Before America entered World War II, I worked in Atlanta as a salesman. After I enlisted in 1942, the Army gave me two years of training as a radio technician. But my training in sales came in very handy when I was sent to a military base in Italy.

I was assigned to the 455th Bomb Group Heavy, which was part of the 301st Wing of the 15th Army Air Corps. The 455th principally used the B-24 Liberator, a heavily armed aircraft able to carry a very large bomb load.

I was a sergeant, and my job was to visit the B-24s the night before a raid to set the anti-aircraft jamming radio frequency for each plane.

I usually would work from about 9 p.m. until 1 a.m., which left a lot of spare time. That's when my sales skills became useful.

Nearly everyone at the Cerignola base, about 175 miles south-east of Rome, lived in tents. I don't know why they bothered, though; the weather inside was the same as the weather outside. Like most of my comrades, I did not mind the cold, but rain was another matter.

One night I awoke with a start, as though someone had thrown a bucket of water in my face. To say our tent was leaking is an understatement. The water was pouring in. Jack Snyder and I did what we could to try to keep our few worldly possessions dry, then sat talking, mostly complaining about the miserable living conditions.

Sometime that night, I resolved I was going to build us a house.

The next day I began planning my project, which presented several challenges, considering we were in a war zone. The most obvious was a shortage of building materials. But a good salesman always knows how to live by his wits. I was confident I could find what I

would need.

I learned of a sandstone quarry about 60 miles south where masons manufactured hand-sawed "tuffi" blocks. These were solid and about the same size as standard concrete blocks.

What I needed first was a truck, however, which required the approval of my commanding officer. So I bathed, put on a clean uniform, straightened my tie, combed my hair, polished my shoes, and went to see him.

"What do you want, sergeant?" was the commander's brusque greeting.

"Sir, I need to borrow a truck from the motor pool," I replied with all the confidence I could muster.

"Truck!?" he exclaimed.

I explained that our leaking tent was making our lives miserable and I wanted to build a house.

"Don't you know we're at war?" he asked. "We're in a combat zone!"

"Yes, sir, I do realize we're in a combat zone," I said. "It still rains in a combat zone. Tents can leak in a combat zone."

I immediately regretted my smart-aleck reply and apologized, but the C.O. told me I was dreaming if I thought I could build a house. Then, as if it were an afterthought, he picked up the requisition and signed it, saying, "I don't have time to fool around with this nonsense. Go ahead and take a truck!"

My buddies and I figured how many blocks we would need. Then we took \$9, all the money we had, and bought cartons of American cigarettes for 90 cents each at the post exchange. We rounded up all the hard candy we could find, and we were ready to do business.

Our arrival in the small town to the south was quite a spectacle. It

seemed the entire town turned out to greet us. We passed out candy to kids and adults, and somehow overcame the language barrier to barter the cigarettes for the required number of tuffi blocks.

When we returned to base, we were careful to avoid the C.O. until after the blocks were unloaded and the truck was back in the motor pool.

We obtained bags of cement from base supplies and got the walls of the house built in about a week. The floor was made of a poured slab of concrete, which we scored while damp to make it look like a tiled floor.

Then came the task of building a roof. We needed about a dozen two-by-fours to set atop the walls. Over them would be stretched a tarpaulin to keep the rain out. But we didn't have any two-by-fours.

A few days later, while driving a truck around the neighboring 454th BGH, Jack and I were unable to believe our good fortune. There, not far from our truck, was a soldier guarding a pile of two-by-fours.

I immediately began figuring a way to get the guard to give us some of the lumber. Jack was a bit more cautious.

"There may be a gold mine there," he said. "But there's also a corporal standing over there holding a rifle."

I reminded Jack that in civilian life I was a salesman and had taken great pride in my ability to get other people to do what I wanted. We backed our truck up to the pile.

Immediately the guard wanted to know what we were doing. I challenged him back.

"We're here to pick up some two-by-fours for Captain Guerro of the photolab over at the 455th Bombardment Group," I said. "He said you'd have the lumber ready when we got here."

I could sense the corporal's skepticism, so I continued: "Let me tell you something, corporal. You were assigned to guard this lumber, and personally, I think you are

doing a fine job. But, my friend, let me also tell you that your job is to guard this material from the local population, not from your own government. Man, you and I are on the same side! What, do you think I'm trying to steal this lumber?"

It worked. The corporal put down his gun and began to help us load.

As Jack and I drove away with our bounty, we could barely contain ourselves. Yes, the 455th did have a photo lab, but if there was a Capt. Guerro, neither of us had ever met him.

Within a few days, the house was essentially complete.

Next, we needed a heating system. We requisitioned a 55-gallon drum of aviation fuel. The government presumed it was going into a B-24; we didn't tell them any different. We placed the drum a safe distance away from the house and ran a fuel line inside. We used the carburetor from a disabled Army truck to control the flow into another steel drum inside the house.

Whenever we wanted heat, we simply turned on the fuel, let a few drops of gas drip into the drum and then dropped in a lit match. We never again suffered through a cold night.

About two weeks after we completed the house, our commanding officer discovered it was

us who had taken the two-by-fours. We were notified to report to his office.

When we got there, he informed us he was supposed to punish us – but everyone within a 50-mile radius thought our house was the keenest thing since sliced bread. So, the deal was that he would escort every visiting dignitary to our house to show what American ingenuity could do in a war zone. This meant we had to keep it in tip-top shape.

When I shipped out in May 1945 for the Pacific, he was still sending people over to inspect our little house.

After the war, I stayed in touch with Jack until his death about 20 years ago. He told me that with the closing of the Cerignola base, the Army was required to demolish everything that could not be carried away. But our little house did not go down easily. It required a second charge of dynamite to reduce it to rubble.

I like to think it somehow had assumed the character of its builders. It was truly G.I. touch.

*Reprinted with permission.
Credit to John Skelton, Lindsay Peterson and the Tampa Tribune*



The house that Skelton and his comrades built with blocks required a second charge of dynamite to reduce it to rubble when the Italian Army base closed.

Photographs Without A Home

Your Editor receives original photographs to be used in the Cerignola Connection, at times, without a return label or address on the back. It is the policy to return originals promptly after printing – without an address or name it is impossible to do so. If you are missing any of the following photographs, let me know and I'll put them in the mail to you.

**Editor-Cerignola Connection,
1211 Montclair Ct., Appleton,
WI 54915**

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The Reunion

I sat 'midst aging warriors
Shining golden in the after-glow
of youth,
And my heart over-flowed.
Neither those who charged at
Balacava,
Nor those who fell at Gallipoli
Were braver than these.
For, truly they walked "thru the
valley of the Shadow of Death"
and brought the gift of freedom
to me.

Anon

Irving Rubin Writes —

Col. Clarke's text on the B-24 Mickey Ships answered alot of questions for me.

Our crew flew most of our missions in a "Painted" plane named "My Bill" I was informed that the reason we did not draw that same B-24 on every mission was that it was a "Mickey" ship that Col. Robinette flew as a lead crew. I believe Col. Robinette was the Group Commander of the 454th which flew from the same field as we did...San Giovanni. So, naturally, the Colonel exerted a little more influence in the scheme of things than my own silver hard-fought for wings!

As luck would have it...when the war ended in Europe...the good Colonel must have had to remain in charge of his group in the various preparations necessary in order to return them to the U.S.A.. I say that, simply because I was assigned the ship to fly my crew (plus 2 guys from the infantry) back to the states.

I can't remember if we ever operated the Mickey equipment on any of our missions and I certainly never was nominated to fly lead.

However, my Co-pilot, Hirsh Kravit (now deceased) was a guy who just could not stay away from anything technical until he could handle it himself. He even rigged up a front door to our tent that opened up automatically by pushing a button he affixed to the door.

On the leg of our flight home from the Azores to Gander in Newfoundland, about half way, we ran into the worst storm I had ever flown in. I could not see out of the cockpit...couldn't get under the cloud cover and could not get above it. So, we bounced around at about 7000 or 8000 feet. I don't recall lightning, strong winds and punishing rain heading for land and Gander for several hours, completely on instruments all the way. My crew had voted, when we reached the point of no return, to

the Azores that we should continue to Gander.

The next thing that crossed my mind was simply, when the hell would we hit the coast and just how would we know it, as there was no way any of us could see up or down.

Well...here comes our "super technician", Co-pilot, Hirsh. He turned on the Mickey equipment and with guidance from our navigator as to just when we should be approaching land. Hirsh proudly announced to all of us at one point, that "We are now leaving the water and are back on our side of the Atlantic!" after 9 months on the other side.

The storm continued and when we reached Gander the tower told us that the field was closed and we were to find another resting place. Meantime, I was receiving calls from other Gander-bound ships asking just where we were going to set down, most of them in very anxious tones. I looked at a map on my lap and spotted Goose Bay quite a ways away. So, I told our engineer to check the gas and get together with our Navigator and let me know if we could make it all the way to Goose Bay, which was a "stretch." I was told in a few minutes that "it looks like we can make it, but it will be close." At that point I saw that Goose Bay was near the water, so I filed away the thought in my mind that if we were short of the mark, we would "ditch" as close to the shoreline as we could get. Heaven forbid!

Not 5 minutes later as we changed course to head for Goose Bay my radio operator (Micky Scarvarda) called me to say that he had located an ATC base in Stephenville, New Foundland and that field was open and not too far away. Still fighting the storm (I had cut down on power to save gas on the way to Goose Bay) and only a short time later, my engincer (standing right behind me) tapped me on the shoulder and pointed to a big break in the overcast. Looking down, I saw the airfield. The tower at Stephenville had just

instructed me to go to the 4th quadrant and hold until they cleared us to come in. I immediately called the tower, told them what I saw and informed them that I was letting down in the "break" and would call them when entering the pattern so that I could land by contact. I shut down my radio button at once so they couldn't call me back just in case they might still want me to "hold" in that weather.

Well I called the tower for landing instructions when we broke clear at about 3000 feet and they just said, "fine, come on in."

We landed, to everybody's delight (the two passengers from the infantry were too scared to leave the plane for awhile). I was a little on the tired side from fighting the controls for the past 4 or 5 hours so we checked in at the ready room, received trip instructions for the next day and headed for the CLUB where we had a few "belts" and all was well.

Next morning we flew to Bradley Field in Conn., were transported to "Patrick Henry", got on a train headed for Camp Blanding in my home state of Florida where the "Ultimate Surprise" was handed to me. I was the only Airforce guy on the entire infantry base! A colonel looked at my files and nonchalantly looked me in the eye and blurted out, "Lt. do you want to get out of the service?"

He saw a paper in my file that I had filled out while in Italy indicating that I had no desire to remain in the Reserves when the war was over. He told me that I had accumulated more than enough points to be discharged. (I think 80 were required). In kinda total disbelief, I said that I would surely like to take him up on his offer.

And that was it, totally unexpected, and hardly able to digest it all, I went home the next day to Miami Beach as a brand new civilian. That was July 21, 1945.

Decorations and Service Medals

New or Reissue

How to claim any Awards, Decorations and/or Service Medals, U.S. or foreign to which you may be entitled.

Many of us did not receive all of the awards to which we were entitled, some were not awarded, some were determined after you had separated and some you may not have been aware of. Many did not receive the Victory Medal, Reserve Medal or some campaign awards. Or over the years they have been lost or destroyed.

Even if you have received your awards you are entitled to a one time complete re-issue.

If you would like a re-issue here is how you do it:

1. WRITE THE FOLLOWING LETTER

National Personnel Records Center
Military Personnel Records
9700 Page Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63132

Dear Sir:

I would like to claim the Decoration and Service Medals to which I am entitled and have not been issued, as provided for in Department of Defense Regulations. Attached is a completed SF Form 180 (or documentation in lieu of) to aid in locating and validating my military awards.

Please send my military awards and advise of any foreign awards to which I may be entitled. My complete mailing address is listed on the attached.

Thank you in advance;

John Hancock Sr.

2. **COMPLETE** SF Form 180
(Request Pertaining to Military Records)

The SF Form 180 is a standard form available through the National Personal Records Center shown above. The information as shown below should suffice in lieu of a Form 180.

Fill in the following:

Date:

SECTION I- Information Needed to Locate Records

1. Name used during service
2. SSN
3. Date of birth
4. Place birth

Active Service - Past or Present

5. Branch of service
6. Dates of active duty –
Date Entered
Date Released
7. Check one –
Officer
Enlisted
8. Service number during this period

Reserve Service – Past or Present

9. Branch of service
10. Dates of membership
Beginning date
Ending date
11. Check one
Officer
Enlisted
12. Service number during this period

National Guard Membership

13. Army
14. Air
15. State
16. Organization
17. Dates of membership
Beginning date
Ending date
18. Check one
Officer
Enlisted
19. Service number during this period
20. Is service person deceased–
No
Yes (If yes enter date)

SECTION II – REQUEST

1. Explain what information or documents you need

(Enter) This is submitted to facilitate my request for issuance of all Military awards earned by me. Please list any foreign awards for which I may be entitled in addition to my U.S. awards.

2. N/A
3. N/A
4. Purpose for which information or documents are needed
(Enter) To substantiate my request to be issued all awards I am entitled to.
5. Requester is check one
Person identified in part I
Surviving spouse
Next of kin (Show relationship)
Other (Specify)
- 5a. Signature of requester
6. Release authorization–
I hereby authorize release of the requested information/ documents to the addressee shown in 7.
- 6a. Signature of veteran (If other than veteran sign 6B.)
- 6b. Relationship to veteran
7. Requesters complete return address (Enter)

742nd Squadron – You Can Help!

Mark Flora at 12666 W Iowa Drive, Lakewood, CO 80228 (303-969-2956-work 303-985-9677-Home) Needs your help. He's looking for information about, and a crew picture of, his uncles Staff Sergeant Theodore J. Olszewski. He's piecing information about his uncle's service for the grandsons. Olszewski was a crew member in the 742nd Squadron, 455th Bomb Group. If you knew him or the name of his pilot, let Mark know. It will be greatly appreciated.

Chaplains Corner



'Twas the night
Jesus came and all
through the house

Not a person was praying, not
one in the house.

The Bibles were left on the
shelf without care,

For no one thought that Jesus
would come there.

The children were dressing to
crawl into bed,

Not once ever kneeling or
bowing a head.

And mom in her rocker with
baby in her lap

Was watching the Late Show
while I took a nap.

When out of the east there rose
such a clatter,

I sprang to my feet to see what
was the matter.

Away to the window I flew like
a flash

Tore open the shutters and lift-
ed the sash!

When what to my wondering
eyes should appear

But angels proclaiming that
Jesus was here!

The light of His face made me
cover my head—

It was Jesus returning, just as
He said.

And though I possessed world-
ly wisdom and wealth,

I cried when I saw Him in spite
of myself.

In the Book of Life which He
held in His hand

Was written the name of every
saved man.

He spoke not a word as he
searched for my name;

When He said, "It's not here"
my head hung in shame.

The people whose names had
been written with love

He gathered to take to his
Father above.

With those who were ready He
rose without a sound

While all the rest were left
standing around.

I fell to my knees, but it was
too late;

I had waited too long and thus
sealed my fate.

I stood and I cried as they rose
out of sight;

Oh, if only I'd known that this
was the night.

In the words of this poem the
meaning is clear;

The coming of Jesus is now
drawing near.

There's only one life and when
comes the last call

We'll find that the Bible was
true after all.

Margie Knight

Source Unknown

*Ed—May this holiday season bring
you and yours a bountiful
Thanksgiving and a most blessed
Christmas.*

The USAF Chaplains

The official origin of the chaplaincy within the American military services was a resolution passed by the continental congress in 1775. Since that time, military chaplains have administered to the spiritual needs of the serviceman, often at the risk of their own lives. For example during WWII, 8,896 ministers, priests, and rabbis served as chaplains with the American military forces. Of these, 78 were killed in action, 4 died in Japanese prison camps, and 264 were wounded in action. The chaplaincy of the United States Air Force was separated from that of the U.S. Army on June 11, 1948 with the creation of the Office of the Chief of Air Force Chaplains, almost a year after the USAF became a separate service. Today there are more than 1,000 chaplains within the Air Force, whose role involves not only worship and pastoral functions, but also religions and moral education, personal counseling, humanitarian services, cultural leadership, and public relations. Whether it be at a base chapel near a major American city or before an altar made of snow blocks north of the Arctic Circle, the chaplain brings solace to the lives of servicemen and women wherever they may serve.

The Forgotten B-24



The B-24 is the most forgotten plane of WWII. But let us look at some statistics. The cruising speed of a B-17 was 160 mph; B-25, 242 mph; B-26, 260 mph; B-29, 220 mph; — But the B-24 cruised at 290 mph, the range of the B-17 was only 2000 miles while that of the B-24 was 3300 miles. The heavier B-17 weighed 65,500 lbs. while the B-24 weighed 56,000 lbs. The B-24 was shorter than the B-17 but had a greater wing span. And the B-24 was more maneuverable than the B-17.

Let's put that age-old argument to rest!

Looking Backwards!

The roots of the 455th Bomb Group Association go all the way back to Langley Field. Tom Lyle Mitchel, Intelligence Officer for the 743rd Squadron put together the Vulgar Vulture Association, issued membership cards, Walt Disney designed our emblem, and we were off and running.

When the war ended, Tom started a newsletter in an attempt to hold former members of the 455th together. This was mimeographed in letter form and as time passed, Tom had put together quite a list of interested and former members of the 455th.

He also spearheaded three reunions — St. Louis, Chicago, and Milwaukee. After the Milwaukee reunion it was difficult to get everyone together again — everyone was busy attending school, setting up in business or practice, rearing families, or doing their own thing.

Isn't it great...now we're back together again!

MIA? We Need Your Help!

Missing or Inaccurate Addresses

The Postal Service advises us that it cannot deliver the Cerignola Connection to our members listed below. Thus, we have deleted them from our mailing list. They are still on our membership roster. Those with an asterisk in front of their first name, have appeared in the MIA list for one year. They will be deleted from the next MIA listing.

* Murray Abramowitz, 3803 Williamsburg Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45215.

George E. Bercik, 10318 Indianapolis Blvd, Chicago, IL 60617.

John V. Brett, 2 pillow lace lane, Apt 242-D, Ipswich, MA 01038.

Theodore Deppe, 2212 Olde Moll Dr. Bloomington, IN 47401

* Eugene H. Ecklund, PO Box 619 Woodland, WA 98674.

* Wayne H. Fulbright, 36 1/2 Turnpike RRd. Brevard, NC 28712.

Maurice L. Fuller, 903 Schwede Rd Baldwin, MO 63385.

Martin J. Gildman, 407 Beech St., Hackensack, NJ 07601-1341.

Mrs. Marjorie T. Goble, 6 Simmons St., Saugerties, NY 12477.

* Jordain W. Grant, III, 703 Michigan Ave., Lynn Haven, FL 32444.

* Kenneth R. Hampton, 414 Colleen Dr., O'Fallon, IL 62269-3401.

Mrs. Eugenia M. Linell, 528 S. Quebe, Tulsa, OK 74112-4198.

* Marion L. Mason, 608 W. Walnut St., Albion, IN 46701.

Alvin E. Riewe, 1781 Pebble Beach Dr., Apt 114, Ft Meyers, FL 33907-6736.

* Warren F. Schoene, 3101 SW 34th Ave. #905 Box 124, Ocala, FL 34474-4432.

If anyone know the whereabouts or has any information about these members, please let us know so we can bring our database up to date. Names preceded by an asterisk will be deleted permanently from our mailing list if no verifiable information is received. Send info to **455th Bomb Group Assoc., P.O. Box 4043, Sierra Vista, AZ 85636-4043.**

455th E-Mail Roster

Below is listing of E-mail address' of 455th members that were sent to us for publication in the Cerignola Connection. If you want your e-mail address included in this roster, please send it to us; **455th Bomb Group Assn, Inc. P.O. Box 4043 Sierra Vista AZ 85636-4043**

Harry W. Anderson (740), San Antonio, TX. **pomganny@aol.com**

Jack Blum (741), New Port Richey FL. **jblum15677@aol.com**

Howard Cooper, Staton Island, NY **howgladcoop@worldnet.att.net**

Robert (Bob) Collette, St Petersburg, FL. **dotybob1@juno.com**

William (Bill) Crim (741), Lakewood, CO **brcrim@aol.com**

Curtis Diles (740), DAYton, OH **curtis-diles@prodigy.net**

Bob Emick (741), Battle Creek, MI **rfemick@aol.com**

William B. Gernmill (740), McAllen, TX **geml@laguna.com.mx**

William C. Graves (742), Jacksonville, FL **wgraves210@aol.com**

Harvey Hewit (743), Haverford, PA **ihhew@aol.com**

Thomas L. Kablack (742), Crown Point, IN **techmart@mail.icongrp.com**
Erling Kindem (742), Farmington, MN **erlingk@aol.com**

Charles Oltarzewski (740), Gallatin, TN **murphB24@aol.com**

Wesley Powell (740), Seabrook TX **wesjulia@gateway.net**

Walt Shostack (741), Dayton, OH **shirlystack@compuserve.com**

During WWII They Were Singing Our Songs



Comin' in on a Wing and a Prayer
Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me
Don't Get Around Much Anymore
I Couldn't Sleep a Wink Last Night
I Had the Craziest Dream
I'll Be Seeing You
People Will Say We're in Love
Pistol Packin Mama
Taking a Chance on Love
Sentimental Journey
Twilight Time

And many, many more. And to top it off we could understand the words and even slow dance to most!

+++++

Cerignola was the site of the first battle in the Western World with firearms. (guns and cannons) (1500-1510). This was between the French and the Spanish. The first battle at Cassino between the French and the Spanish (1506) ended in the same result as 1944.

Joe English Asks For Help!

I just finished reading the "Spring 1999" edition of the Cerignola Connection and want to thank you and all that contribute to it's publication. It is a blessing to me, "thanks."

On page 20, right center, is a picture of Douglas Brown's crew. The tall one on right in the back row is James Head the bombardier. He was transferred to our crew when Howard Surbeck was designated as a lead pilot. Capt. Surbeck and Capt. Head made a good pilot/bombardier team on some thirty missions. Both had completed their tour and were in Naples, along with some of the other crew members, on the way home when Germany quit. Capt. Surbeck, by then was a Major and was called back to the 455th to fly a plane back to the US.

Major Surbeck returned to Washougal, Washington and was in the grocery business until his death in 1959. Capt. Head stayed in the service and retired as a Lt. Col. He lived in Lewisville, Texas when he died on 3 Feb. 1997.

I'm enclosing a picture of Howard Surbeck's crew. It has not been published in either the History or Connection yet. We are still trying to find two of the crew (McNiff and Pamales.) If you can publish the picture it might help.

AN ERROR!

Stay at it long enough and you'll finally make one! Spring 1997 Cerignola Connection, page 12, mission 71 is in error. Also Group history, page 86. Should read for mission 71, July 2, Budapest, Hungary.

HI!

Just received the spring 1999 Cerignola Connection. Great issue! We have e-mail and our address is shirleystack@compuserve.com. I



Top row (standing) Howard A Surbeck-pilot; Emory V Schalake-co-pilot; John T McNiff-navigator; James A Head-bombardier.
Bottom row (kneeling) Kenneth L Sumwalt-tail gunner; Anthony Pamales-eng; James D Michael-nose gunner; Robert E Berndt-radio; Glen C Kirby-ball gunner; Joseph T English-waist gunner.

was the pilot on the Multa Bono on Oct 12 or 13 when we were shot down over Odertal. We lost our nose gunner, Cpl John Stella, Bombardier Ed Ruyter, tail gunner Bob Brewer, belly gunner Chuck Shropshire, pilot John Noske, engineer Bob Spicer. My radio operator Al Dubetz recently passed away and 741st Squadron Co, Major Jack Reeder also passed away. My navigator Jos. Ostrander and co-pilot Jos Dolinsky are still alive. We spent the rest of WWII in Stalag 3B and Stalag 7A in Moosburg. Thanks for a great newsletter.

Walt Sbostac, 741st Squadron

Al Cratch Writes -



I just received my copy of the Cerignola Connection. You are doing a wonderful job. However, I'd like to give you the names of the 455th crew members in the center of page 18 who had just returned from POW camps in Romania on Sept. 2, 1944.

Bottom row, L to R: Lt. Theodore Stines, co-pilot; T/Sgt Clinton Bantz, radio operator; S/Sgt Arthur E. Bergmann, nose gunner;

S/Sgt Albert E. Cratch, tail gunner; S/Sgt. Troy E. Myrick, ball gunner; Lt. Anthony Foge, bombardier; Dumas, Norgard, Everson, Steiner, Bantz, Bergmann, Cratch and Mynick were members of Norgard's crew. Missing from the picture are, T/Sgt John T. Hartman and S/Sgt Harold Jenkins.

Top row, L to R: Lt. Wm Dumas, bombardier; Capt Clifford Norgard, pilot; Col Horace Langford, Co 741st BS; Glen Mensinger, pilot; Roscoe Wilkes, navigator; Lt. Melvin Everson, navigator.

The plane we were flying on the day we were shot down (April 21, 1944) on our 21st mission was "The Captain and his Kids."

I hope this gives you more news to print. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely, *Albert E. Cratch*

P.S. Norgard's crew were in the 455th BG, 741st Sqd. Col. Langford was our Squadron Commander.

From the Picture Albums!



#492 Ground Crew for Linda Ann. Bradish 3rd from left. Balance unknown.

BIG BROTHER! B-52 will be more than 80 years old before last one goes to scrap heap

The first B-52 entered service May 9, 1961, with the 379th Bomb Wing at Wurtsmith Air Force Base, Mich.

The granddaddy of America's bombers, the Vietnam War-era B-52, is going to have to fly four decades into the new century, the Air Force says. By the time it gives way to a new generation, it will be 80-plus years old.

Most pilots who fly B-52s today were not yet born when their planes entered service in the early 1960s. And those same planes will be flying well into the 21st century with pilots of a generation yet to come.

That certainly speaks highly of an airplane that already has more than tripled its original life expectancy.

"Structurally, they are in great shape," Lt. Gen. Ron Marcotte said Friday. As commander of the 8th Air Force at Barksdale Air Force Base, La. — home to 47 B-52s — Marcotte flies the bombers regularly and says that thanks to exceptional maintenance, the planes are "doing extremely well."

The first B-52s began their Air Force duty in June 1955; the B-52s now flying were built in 1961.

"It's amazing," said Glenn Buchan, a Rand Corp. expert on strategic bombers. "The B-52 is one of the most remarkably successful airplanes ever built." In fact, Buchan said in an interview Friday, the B-52 might be the best model on which to develop the next generation of long-range bombers — a large plane capable of carrying many different weapons and firing them from a great distance.

The Air Force is not ready to invest in a new generation of bombers, however. Over the next

decade or so, the Air Force will devote most of its aircraft development dollars to the F-22 stealth fighter to replace the F-15 Strike Eagle and the so-called Joint Strike Fighter to replace the F-16 Fighting Falcon.

"Preserve what we have" in bombers, is the way Air Force Secretary F. Whitten Peters described the strategy Friday. He and Gen. Michael Ryan, the Air Force chief of staff, briefed reporters on a congressionally mandated "white paper" on the future of the long-range bomber fleet.

The upshot is that the B-52 along with the younger B-1B Lancer and the new stealthy B-2 Spirit, will be kept around until approximately 2037, by which time the Air Force calculates that attrition will have reduced the fleet below the minimum 170 aircraft. The B-52s may fly to 2045. Planning for a replacement bomber might start in 2013.

There currently are 190 long-range bombers in the active fleet: 93 B-1s, 76 B-52s and 21 B-2s. Only 130 of those planes are fully combat ready, however. The rest are in various states of back-up readiness.

The role of strategic bombing has changed greatly since the Cold War, when the nation's leaders believed the United States needed a fleet capable of penetrating the formidable air defenses of the Soviet Union. If war came, it was expected to go nuclear, and the bombers were the backbone of U.S. strategy.

That has changed with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Today the bombers are used routinely in tactical strikes such as the four-day air campaign last December against Iraq. Today a group of B-52s is standing by at RAF Fairford in England for possible use in NATO-authorized air strikes against Serbia.

The B-52s' home bases are Barksdale Air Force Base, La., and Minot Air Force Base, N.D.; the B-1s are mainly at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., and Dyess Air Force

Base, Texas, and the B-2s are at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo.

Known officially as the Stratofortress, the B-52s crews affectionately call it the BUFF (Big Ugly Fat Fellow). Its wingspan of 185 feet makes it wider than it is long (159 feet), and it stands 40 feet high. With eight turbofan jet engines, it can carry 70,000 pounds of bombs, missiles and other weapons and fly 8,800 miles before refueling.

The H model of the B-52 rolled off the Boeing Co. assembly lines at a cost of \$9 million per plane, and the first one entered service May 9, 1961 with the 379th Bomb Wing at Wurtsmith Air Force Base, Mich. Even taking decades of inflation into account, that is a far cry from the \$2 billion it cost to field the B-2.

All these years later, the B-52 still carries the most diverse assortment of weapons in the bomber fleet.

In a conventional role, the B-52 is capable of launching Harpoon anti-ship missiles, unguided "dumb" bombs, cruise missiles, sea mines, precision-guided bombs and cluster munitions used against ground targets.

In a nuclear role, it can launch the AGM-86B strategic nuclear cruise missile, the AGM-129A advanced nuclear cruise missile, and two kinds of nuclear gravity bombs, the B-83 and B-61. The B-2's only nuclear weapons are the two gravity bombs. The B-1 bomber—originally designed for a nuclear role only—has been switched to a strictly non-nuclear role.

Ryan said the Air force is spending \$3.6 billion over the next 10 years to improve communications and other capabilities on the bomber fleet, and it sees about another \$1 billion in needed improvements not yet funded.

*Robert Burns, Washington (AP)
Midland Daily News.*

§ § § §

DoD explains Cold War certificate application procedures

The Department of Defense began accepting applications for a Cold War recognition certificate on April 6. Between 18 million and 22 million former and current service members and DoD civilians are thought to be eligible for the certificate.

Those qualifying for the certificates can apply via the Internet at <http://coldwar.army.mil>; E-Mail at ewrs@Fairfax-emhl.army.mil; or fax at (703) 275-6749.

Applicants can also mail requests to:

Cold War Recognition
4035 Ridge Top Road, Suite 400
Fairfax, VA 22030

Applicants must present proof of service. Army officials caution applicants not to send original documents because they cannot be returned. Applicants must use fax or mail to submit supporting documents.

Persons are eligible for the recognition certificate if they have military or civilian service with the War, Navy or Defense departments between Sept. 2, 1945, and Dec. 26, 1991. Congress established the Cold War certificate in Section 1084 of the fiscal 1998 National Defense Authorization Act.

Requests made online will be maintained for one year to allow ample time for individuals to forward supporting documents by fax or mail. Individuals normally will receive a response within 30 days; however, the turn-around time will depend upon the volume of requests received.

Military personnel can use any of the following documents as proof of service: DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release/Discharge from Active Duty); WD AGO Form 53-55 (War Department Separation Document); or Oath of Office – Military Personnel or Letter of Appointment. Copies of these records can be obtained by writing

to:
National Personnel Records Center
(Military Personnel Records)
9700 Page Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100.

The Total Army Personnel Command is the executive agent for the recognition project. Applicants needing additional information may call the help desk at (703) 275-6279.

From the Afterburner, May 1999

Arlington Visited! A Son Writes His Father

Dear Dad,

While returning from Frederick, Md. last Friday I found myself running ahead of schedule and thought of something I should do. I remembered from one of our phone calls that the 455 monument was located at Arlington National Cemetery and was located near the front gates. I hadn't been to Arlington in years but I knew exactly how to get there from the GW Parkway. The place was crowded with school groups as I entered the main information center. The officer at the information booth was easily able to direct me to where the 455th Bomber Group monument was located.

As I approached the monument I got the same strange feeling that I got when I found familiar names on the wall at the Vietnam veterans memorial. At first it's kind of exciting to find what you're looking for but then the reality of what you're there for sets in. Remembering and honoring the war dead is nothing you would want to make a steady diet of.

Not knowing when I'd be able to make a trip back, I went to the gift shop and bought a throwaway camera so that I could take a few pictures of the plaque and of the surrounding area. In case you never get a chance to make the trip I thought you'd be pleased that

someone from the family had made the trip.

Hopefully the thought that at 1:00 PM on Friday, June 11, 1999 I stopped and paid tribute to the men who died while serving with the 455th will please you and through my pictures you can see it through my eyes. By the way, have I told you recently how glad I am that you made it back? Well I am...

Happy Fathers Day! With love and appreciation,

Pete

Pete knows how badly I want to visit this spot. He also knows it is unlikely that I will make it; hence his visit. I find it reassuring that his generation and those yet to come will continue to show appreciation and respect for what Arlington represents. I wanted you to know that Al Asch's efforts in this respect are very much appreciated.

Harry Prosser

What We Fought For

It is the soldier, not the reporter,
Who has given us freedom of the press.

It is the soldier, not the poet,
Who has given us freedom of speech.

It is the soldier, not the campus organizer,
Who has given us the freedom to demonstrate.

It is the soldier, who salutes the flag;
Who serves beneath the flag;

And whose coffin is draped by the flag.
And it is he who allows the protester to burn the flag.

(Author Unknown)

REMEMBER ME?



Hello. Remember me? Some people call me Old Glory, others call me the Star-Spangled Banner, but whatever they call me, I am your flag, the flag of the United States of America.

Something has been bothering me, so I thought I might talk it over with you – because it is about you and me.

I remember some time ago, people would line up on both sides of the street to watch the parade, and naturally I was leading every one, proudly waving in the breeze.

When your daddy saw me coming, he immediately removed his hat and placed it against his left shoulder so that his hand was directly over his heart – remember?

And you, I remember, were standing there, straight as a soldier. You didn't have a hat, but you were giving the right salute.

Remember your little sister? Not to be outdone, she was saluting the same as you with her right hand over her heart – remember?

What happened? I'm still the same old flag, Oh, I've added a few more stars since you were a boy, and a lot more blood has been shed since those parades of long ago.

But now, somehow, I don't feel as proud as I used to feel.

When I come down your street, you just stand there with your hands in your pockets. You may give me a small glance, and then you look away. I see children running around you shouting; they don't seem to know who I am.

I saw one man take his hat off, then he looked around, and when he didn't see anybody else take off their hat, he quickly put his on again.

Is it a sin to be patriotic today? Have you forgotten what I stand for, and where I have been? Anzio, Guadalcanal, Korea and Vietnam?

Take a look at the memorial honor rolls, and see the names of

those patriotic Americans who gave their lives to keep this republic free. When you salute me, you are actually saluting them.

Well, it won't be long until I'll be coming down your street again. So when you see me, please stand straight and place your hand over your heart, and I'll know that you remembered.

I'll salute you by waving back!

*By David C. Graham
Credit Wisconsin Military Retirees*

Top Ten Transmissions Made by a TRACON (Terminal Radar Approach Control), Reprinted from FAA News, Oct. 1996

10. "Citation 123, if you quit calling me Center, I'll quit calling you Twin Cessna."
9. "If you hear me, traffic no longer a factor."
8. "I'm too busy to have anyone cancel on me." (Cancel his IFR or VFR flight plan.)
7. "You're gonna have to key the mike, I can't see you when you nod your head."
6. "Put your compass in E and get out of my airspace."
5. "Don't anybody maintain anything."
4. Climb like your life depends on it, because it does."
3. "If you want more room, Captain, push your seat back."
2. "Leave 5 on the glide, have a nice ride, lower inside, twenty-six nine...see ya."
(Informal (irregular!) way of clearing an aircraft for an instrument approach—means to maintain 5000 feet until intercepting the glide-slope, lower altitude inside the marker (that's confusing), and call the Tower on 126.9 mhz at the marker.)
- and the number one transmission...
1. "Air Force One, I told you to expedite!"

Getting Closer!

In the spring 1999 issue of the *Cerignola Connection* I ran an article for Dave Bathie, son of Alexander Bathie, who is looking for a crew picture of his father. T/Sgt Bathie was a member of the 740th Squadron and a member of Robert E. Parks' crew. Maybe this can shed some light, if you knew Parks or any other member of his crew please let Dave know. **(Dave Bathie, Dayton Farm, 140 Dayton Street, Sea Cliff, NY 11579-1606).**

Ed

Can You Help Bridget?

Bridget Carroll, 334 W. Medlock Drive, D-103, Phoenix, Arizona, 85013 (Tele: 602-264-7009) would like to hear from anyone who knew her Uncle Jack. T/Sgt John A. Carrol, flight engineer, 712nd Bomb Sqd. He went down in Li'l Butch on April 20, 1944. His body was found, buried in an isolated grave. Five years later his remains were returned for burial in the U.S.A. To find a photo of Li'l Butch and/or the crew would be a joy to her. If you can help, drop Bridget a line.

GUNNER'S POEM

No rings for their fingers, no bell for their toes,
But trussed up in position, with an oxygen hose.

While cords that are countless, bring heat to their suits,
Thru gloves plugged into sockets, and prongs into boots.

Cords for the gun switch, for flak they've steel vests,
And God, given time, there's chutes for their chests.

Masks for their faces, and phones for their ears,
But nothing at all, for their hopes and their fears.
(Author Unknown)

Yesterday I Found College Park Airport!

College Park Airport is the "World's Oldest Continuously Operating Airport." It is without a doubt one of the most significant sites in aviation history. While Kitty Hawk is known to many as the birthplace of aviation, College Park Airport has frequently been referred to as the "Cradle of Aviation" because it exemplifies more than any other site the growing years of aviation.

After the Wright Brothers' first flights at Kitty Hawk, it took them several years to get anyone interested in the purchase of their machine. In 1908 they finally were able to convince the U.S. government to test a much improved airplane. Several other countries then followed suit.

In 1909 the machine was "officially" accepted and all that was left of the Wrights' government contract was to teach two(2) Army officers to fly the plane. It was then that a field was selected in the small town of College Park to carry out this instruction and the College Park airfield was established!

It was Wilbur Wright who captured the attention of a country that still did not realize that man had conquered the air. His flights at College Park with his students were front page headlines, and an enthusiastic nation could not get enough of the activities that were occurring just outside of the nation's capital. With constant crowds, government officials and the ever present press, Wilbur completed the instruction of Lieutenants Humphries and Lahn and later also gave instruction to Lieutenant Benjamin Foulois.

The College Park airfield had established itself as the first military training field and other "firsts" followed. They included the first military officer to fly solo (Humphries), the first U.S. woman to fly as a passenger in an airplane (Wilbur and Mrs. Van Deman), and the first

Naval Officer, Lt. George Sweet, to fly in a plane.

When the military left the field, several civilian aviation companies arrived. Among them were Rex Smith, National Aviation and Washington Aeroplane Companies who either produced their own successful aircraft or gave instruction in Wright, Curtiss, and Bleriot planes. Tony Jannus who worked for Rex Smith and learned to fly here later became famous as the pilot for the world's first airline (1914).

When the government finally appropriated money for aviation in 1911 they decided to set up the first Army Aviation School, again locating at the College Park airfield. Four(4) hangers were built and five (5) airplanes were ordered. As soon as the aviator instructors arrived, they began to make aviation history. During the two years that the school operated at the field the lists of firsts and significant events included:

- the first cross country airplane flight (1911).
- the first testing of a bomb-dropping device from an airplane.
- possibly the first use of lights for night landings.
- the introduction of the "Military Aviator" rating for pilots (1912).
- first group cross-country flight.
- the first mile high flight) Lt. Hap Arnold).
- first testing of a machine gun from a plane.
- first enlisted man to die in an aviation accident.
- the first competition of the MacKay Trophy which was won by the school's Lt. Hap Arnold.

A 1913 bill was introduced to acquire the field as the "National Aviation Field" but this failed and the school left for warmer climates. The civilian aviation companies remained at the field until 1918 when the Post Office Department set up operation there. After a three(3) month trial airmail service operated by the Army from Potomac Field in Washington D.C., the postal service selected the College Park field as the site of the

first service airmail. The first flight took off on August 12th and continued until 1921. In 1919 an airmail hanger and directional "compass rose" were built on the field - both are still in existence today. Also during this time, actor Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. came to the Airport to be flown as an airmail package as part of a drive for war bonds. Paul Garber, namesake of the Smithsonian Garber Restoration Facility, worked at the field as an airmail courier and later learned to fly there.

In 1920, Henry and Emile Berliner brought their experiments with vertical flight to the field. After several years of minor successes, they achieved the first controlled helicopter flight. The Navy Department then lured them to another site. The helicopter is now in storage at the Garber Restoration Facility.

Following the Berliner's success, the Bureau of Standards came to the field to develop and test the first radio navigational aids for use in "Blind" or bad weather flying. They were here from 1927 to 1933. In 1931, the first all blind instrument landing took place and later in 1933 the first completely blind flight during which radio was the sole means used for directional guidance and landing took off from the field. The instruments developed and tested here were the basis for the current instrument landing system (ILS) used by pilots today.

George Brinckerhoff took over the management of the field in 1927 and operated the Brinckerhoff Flying Service there until 1959. While there he taught hundreds to fly, made many attention getting flights, and attracted thousands of spectators to his popular air shows.

During the 60's a movement to "Save the Airport" gathered steam with the help of many of the famous aviators who flew here. In 1973, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) purchased the field to utilize it as both an operating airport and historic site. The airport was

entered into the National Register of Historic Places in 1977 in recognition of its significant role in aviation history.

During its time, this small airport has played host to the Wright Brothers, Glenn Curtiss, Benny Foulois, Tommy Milling, "Hap" Arnold, Lincoln Beachy, Tony Jannus, Frank Lahm, Charles Chandler, and others. Probably no other field in aviation can boast of such a significant clientele nor such an amazing list of achievements. College Park Airport is truly one of early aviation's most important historic sites.

Credit The Wright Flyer

Wright 1909 Military Flyer

Wingspan: 11.12 m (36 ft. 6 in.)

Length: 8.82 m (28 ft. 11 in.)

Height: 2.46 m (8 ft. 1 in.)

Weight: 333 kg (735 lbs.)

Engine: Wright, 25 hp

"Sealed proposals in duplicate will be received at this office until 12 o'clock noon on February 1, 1908, on behalf of the Board of Ordinance and Fortification for furnishing the Signal Corps with a heavier-than-air flying machine."

So read Signal Corps Specification Number 486, issued December 23, 1907, to provide the U.S. Army with its first heavier-than-air aircraft—the first military aircraft in the world.

The general requirements continued as follows: that it be designed to be easily assembled and disassembled so that an army wagon could transport it; that it be able to carry two people with a combined weight of 350 pounds, and sufficient fuel for 125 miles; that it be able to reach a speed of at least 40 mph in still air, which would be calculated during a two-lap test flight over a 5-mile course, with and against the wind; that it demonstrate the ability to remain in the air at least one hour without landing, and that it then land without causing any damage that would

prevent it from immediately starting another flight; that it be able to ascend in any sort of country in which the Signal Corps might need it in field service and be able to land without requiring a specially prepared spot; that it be able to land safely in case of accident to the propelling machinery; and that it be simple enough to permit someone to become proficient in its operation within a reasonable amount of time.

The purchase price was set at \$25,000 with 10 percent added for each full mile-per-hour of speed over the required 40 mph and 10 percent deducted for each full mile-per-hour under 40 mph.

The Wright brothers constructed for the project a two-place, wire-braced biplane with a Wright 25-hp, four-cylinder engine driving two wooden propellers. It had a wooden framework with fabric-covered wings and control surfaces. Wooden skids served as landing gear.

This aircraft made its first demonstration flight at the Fort Myer, Virginia parade grounds on September 3, 1908. Several days of very successful and increasingly ambitious flights followed. On September 17, however, tragedy occurred. At 5:14 p.m. Orville took off with Lt. Thomas O. Selfridge as a passenger. The machine had circled the field four and half times when a propeller blade shattered. The aircraft, then at 150 feet, safely glided to 75 feet, when it plunged to earth. Orville received several injuries, including a broken hip, but Lieutenant Selfridge was killed and the aircraft was destroyed.

On June 3, 1909, however, the Wrights returned to Fort Myer with a new machine. The engine was the same as in the 1908 aircraft, but the 1909 model had a smaller wing area and modifications to the rudder and the wiring. Lt. Frank P. Lahm and Lt. Benjamin D. Foulois, as future Army pilots, were the Wrights' passengers.

Flights continued into July. During one of these demonstrations a sudden stalling of the

engine caused the aircraft to glide into a tree, breaking the skids and ripping a wing. But the damage was repaired in four hours, showing a great advantage for military purposes.

On July 26 President Taft went to Fort Myer to watch the proceedings and was privileged to witness the aircraft ascend under its own power without use of the starting weight. A strong headwind assisted its takeoff with Wilbur running alongside to guide it.

The next day the aircraft satisfied the endurance requirement with a record flight of 1 hour, 1 minutes, and 40 seconds, covering approximately 40 miles in the process.

A course to establish the speed of the aircraft was set up from Fort Myer to Shooter's Hill in Alexandria, Virginia, a distance of 5 miles. After waiting several days for optimum wind conditions, Orville and Foulois made the 10-mile test flight on July 30. The out-lap speed was 37.735 mph and the return lap was 47.431 mph, giving an average speed of 42.533 mph. for the 2 mph over the required forty, the Wrights earned an additional \$5,000.

Other training flights continued during the year at College Park, Maryland. Among the Army officers who learned to fly there from the Wrights was Lt. II. "Hap" Arnold, the future Army Air Force Chief.

The Smithsonian acquired the aircraft from the War Department in 1911.

Smithsonian Institution, Aircraft of the National Air and Space Museum, Washington, DC, 1981

An Interesting Thought...

"If we would only give, just once, the same amount of reflection to what we want to get out of life that we give to the question of what to do with a two weeks' vacation, we would be startled at our false standard and the aimless procession of our busy days."

—Dorothy Canfield Fisher

Black Aviation History

Theodore W. (Ted) Robinson, well-known local pilot and graduate of the famed Tuskegee Army Airfield, spoke Sunday, June 13, at the College Park Aviation Museum to an overflow audience. His topic was "Black Aviation History: An Overview." His lecture was one of the monthly series, *Speaking of Flight*, sponsored by the museum.

The history of African Americans in flight, he told the people assembled, goes back much further than that of the justly famed African American aviators called the "Tuskegee Airmen." Actually, the first training program for African American pilots was begun in the Chicago area in the 1930s by two men, John Robinson and Cornelius Coffey. They were automobile mechanics who had turned to flying. Ted Robinson found them an inspiration when, as a high school student, he haunted the airport on Saturdays. "They didn't treat me like a kid they wanted to get out of the way, they treated me with great respect."

Even before the 1930s, as early as 1911, African Americans evinced an interest in aviation. Unable to get flight instruction in the United States, they went to France to learn to fly. One of these pilots was American Eugene Jacques Bullard, who joined the French army in World War I and became a pilot.

The most famous African American aviator in the early 1920s was Bessie Coleman, Robinson noted. She went to France for flight instruction (the Ecole d'Aviation des Freres Caudron at Le Crotoy in the Somme, France). She graduated in 1921 and was awarded an international pilot's license in France dated June 15, 1921. She was the first black woman ever to win an FAI license. Coleman returned to the United States to barnstorm around the country from 1922 to 1926. She died in a plane crash in 1926 caused by a wrench that jammed the controls. A biography,

Queen Bess: Daredevil Aviator, by Doris L. Rich is available.

Bessie Coleman inspired others to fly, including Dr. Albert E. Forsythe and C. Alfred Anderson, who went on to flying careers. Forsythe became well-known for his long-distance flights across the United States, Canada, and into the Caribbean. Anderson was to become a Tuskegee flight instructor and at one time took Eleanor Roosevelt for a flight.

Credit The Wright Flyer

Just A Common Soldier

He was getting old and paunchy and his hair was falling fast, and he sat around the Legion telling stories of his past; Of the war that he had fought in and the deeds that he had done, in his exploits with his buddies, they were heroes. everyone.

And tho' sometimes to his neighbors, his tales became a joke, all his Legion buddies listened, for they knew whereof he spoke. But we'll hear his tales no longer, for old Tom has passed away, and the world won't note his passing, tho' a soldier died today.

He will not be mourned by many, just his children and his wife, for he lived an ordinary quiet and uneventful life; He held a job and raised a family, quietly going his own way, and the world's a little poorer, for a soldier died today.

When the politicians leave this earth, their bodies lie in state, while thousands note their passing and proclaim that they were great.

Papers tell their life stories from the time that they were young, but the passing of a soldier goes unnoticed and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution to the welfare of our land, a guy who breaks his promise and cons his fellow man?

Or the ordinary fellow who in times of war and strife, goes off to serve his country and offers up his life?

A politician's stipend and the

style in which he lives, are sometimes quite disproportionate to the services that he gives;

While the ordinary soldier who offered up his all, is paid off with a medal, and perhaps a pension small.

It's so easy to forget them, for it was so long ago, that the Tom's of our country went to battle;

But we know it was not the politicians, with their compromise and ploys, who won for us the freedom that our country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger with your enemies at hand, would you want a politician with his ever-shifting stand?

Or would you prefer a soldier who has sworn to defend his home, his kin, and the country, and would fight until the end.

He was just a common soldier and his ranks are growing thin, but his presence should remind us we may need his like again,

For when countries are in conflict then we find the soldiers' part, is to clean up all the troubles that the politicians start.

If we cannot do him the honor while he's here to hear the praise, then at least let's give him homage at the ending of his days. Perhaps just a simple heading in a paper that would say:

"Our country is mourning, for a soldier died today."

(Author Unknown)

Dog Property Laws



- 1) If I like it, it's mine.
- 2) If it's in my mouth, it's mine.
- 3) If I can take it from you, it's mine.
- 4) If I had it a little while ago, it's mine.
- 5) If it's mine, it must never appear to be yours in any way.
- 6) If I'm chewing something up, all the pieces are mine.
- 7) If it just looks like mine, it's mine.
- 8) If I saw it first, it's mine.
- 9) If it's broken, it's yours.

THE 455TH BOMB GROUP IN COMBAT (a continuing series)

JANUARY 1945

January started off just like one would expect in this climate: cold, snow and rain. The outlook for continued operations was not good. The Group had to see what developed from day to day. Most of the targets were communications targets as these were closer and gave us a chance to hit them before the weather changed. Briefings would continue in the off chance that the weather would break and the Group could fly. This was the month when the Wing and Group started designating dual missions and Blue and Red Forces.

Mission 175, January 4 The Group got its first mission of the new year. Twenty-seven B-24's dropped 62.75 tons of 500# RDX bombs on the primary and secondary targets. The primary target was the marshalling yards at Verona Porto Nuava, Italy. The secondary was the marshalling yards at Vicenza, Italy. Flak at the targets was moderate and accurate. One aircraft crash-landed at Gioia when its landing gear would not lock in the down position. The crew was not injured. One top turret gunner engineer was slightly wounded in the leg from flak. All other aircraft returned to base.

Mission 176, January 8 Twenty-six B-24's took off to bomb a goods depot in Linz, Austria. After flying for almost eight hours, all planes returned safely to base without dropping their bombs due to poor weather conditions at the target.

Mission, 177, January 15 Twenty-nine B-24's took off to bomb the

Florisdorf marshalling yards at Vienna, Austria. Nine aircraft returned early and only 19 aircraft dropped their bombs on the target. One plane had its bombs fail to release. A total of 35.5 tons of 500# RDX bombs were dropped by pathfinder method. Flak at the target was intense and accurate. One crewman was severely injured and one received a slight flak injury. All planes returned to base safely.

Mission, 178, January 19 Twenty-eight B-24's took off to bomb the railroad bridge at Brod, Austria. Only 20 aircraft bombed the target with unobserved results. One flight of five did not drop its bombs because their flight leader's bomb bay doors would not open. Two aircraft returned early. One aircraft had engine failure, could not make the field and crashed two miles short of the runway. Four crewmen were injured, one seriously. Flak at the target was moderate to intense and accurate. Six crewmen suffered flak wounds, one serious. Only 24 aircraft returned to base.

Mission 179, January 20 The crews were briefed to bomb the main marshalling yards at Linz, Austria. Twenty-six B-24's tried unsuccessfully to get to the target. They ran into cloud cover from 3/10th to 9/10th cover and impenetrable cloud banks at the head of the Adriatic. All planes returned to base without dropping their bombs.

Mission 180, January 31 On the last day of the month, both red and blue forces were briefed to bomb the oil refinery at Moosbierbaum, Austria. The blue force had 19 B-24's that were carrying 500# GP bombs. They bombed the target and returned to base at 1640 hours. Flak at target was moderate and accurate. Bombing was done by pathfinder method. Results

were not observed. All planes returned safely.

Mission 181, January 31 The red force consisted of 18 B-24's loaded with 500# GP bombs. They too encountered moderate and accurate flak at the target area. They dropped a total of 29 tons on the target by pathfinder method. All aircraft returned to base without casualties.

January was our least productive month to date. All we could hope for was an improvement in the weather. The Group flew a total of seven missions, putting 168 aircraft over the targets. We dropped a total of 200.25 tons of bombs. That was our lowest total since beginning operations in February 1944. We lost two aircraft, but only one was to enemy action. The group had ten crewmen injured; five of those were serious. January was not one of our better months.

FEBRUARY 1945

February started off with marginal weather, then it got worse. The first mission had to be aborted due to bad weather. The concentration on targets this month was still oil, along with our attacks on the enemy's communications, otherwise known as marshalling yards. So far the 15th Air Force had done a tremendous job of disrupting the enemy's railroad system, denying them vital supplies for their war effort. The 455th had a big hand in this operation for which they were justly proud.

Mission 182, February 1 Thirty-eight B-24's loaded with 500# GP bombs took off to bomb the oil refinery at Moosbierbaum, Austria. Weather was so bad en route and at the target that the group leader decided not to bomb as PFF was not prescribed for this mission. No enemy resistance was encountered and all planes returned to base.

Mission 183, February 5 The Group sent 42 B-24's loaded with 250# GP bombs to the oil storage facilities at Regensburg. These facilities were known as Rhenani Danubia Oil Storage. Flak at the target was moderate and inaccurate. Thirty-eight of the aircraft bombed the primary target by pathfinder method and one plane dropped its bomb load on a railroad siding at Mettighafen, Austria. The primary target results were unobserved as the target was cloud-covered. Three aircraft returned early and the rest returned to base without any casualties.

Mission 184, February 7 Both red and blue forces were scheduled and briefed to bomb the oil refinery at Moosbierbaum, Austria. The red force took off at 0815 hours with 20 B-24's loaded with 500# RDX bombs. One aircraft returned early with engine trouble and 19 aircraft bombed the primary target by pathfinder method. Flak at the target was moderate to intense and accurate. No planes received damage and all returned to base safely.

Mission 185, February 7 The blue force with 20 B-24's loaded with the same bomb load took off at 1012 hours. One aircraft returned early because of engine failure. Fourteen aircraft bombed Moosbierbaum by visual methods with fair success. Five aircraft returned their bombs to base as the flight leader's bombsight was inoperative and the rest of the flight did not bomb. Flak at the target was intense and accurate. One crewman was killed in action. Nineteen aircraft returned to base safely.

Mission 186, February 8 Twenty-eight B-24's took off to bomb the Matzleindorf marshalling yards at

Vienna, Austria. They dropped 54 tons of 500# RDX bombs on the target by pathfinder method. Flak at the target was intense but inaccurate. All aircraft returned to base safely. No enemy fighters were seen. However, one B-24 with markings similar to the Group markings took a position off the number two man in Baier Box. Radio contact could not be made and all guns trained on him. When the Group reached Lake Balaton, the aircraft made a "180" and left.

Mission 187, February 9 On the 9th of February, three B-24's loaded with 500# RDX bombs took off to bomb the oil refinery at Moosbierbaum, Austria. The bombing was through 10/10th cloud-cover. The pathfinder return was very good. Flak at the target was intense but inaccurate. All three planes returned to base after flying for almost six hours. No fighters were seen.

Mission 188, February 13 Today, red and blue forces would bomb different targets. Red force would bomb the Matzleindorf marshalling yards. Twenty-one B-24's carrying 500# RDX bombs dropped their bombs, sighting visually. Forty-one percent of the 36.5 tons fell within 1,000 feet of the aiming point, a very successful bombing mission. Flak at the target was intense and accurate, and two aircraft received extensive damage. All aircraft returned to base.

Mission 189, February 13 The blue force was briefed to bomb the marshalling yards at Maribor, Yugoslavia. Twenty B-24's carrying the same load as the red force bombed the primary target by visual methods. Over 40% of their bombs fell within 1,000 feet of the aiming point. Flak at the target was moderate and accurate. Four aircraft received slight damage but all returned to base without incident.

Mission 190, February 14 The red force was briefed to bomb the marshalling yards at Florisdorf, Vienna, Austria. However, 21 B-24's loaded with 500# RDX bombs went to the alternate target, the marshalling yards at Klagenfurt, Austria because of bad weather. There was no flak at the target and all planes returned to base.

Mission 191, February 14 The blue force attacked the marshalling yards at Maribor, Yugoslavia, which was the second alternate. They too carried 500# RDX bombs and dropped them in a good pattern on the target. Over 80% of the bombs fell within 1,000 feet of the aiming point. Flak at the target was moderate and inaccurate, and one aircraft received slight damage. All planes returned to base safely.

Mission 192, February 15 The red force of the Group was briefed to bomb the oil refinery at Kornueburg, Germany. Escorted by P-38's, 19 B-24's loaded with 500# RDX bombs took off at 0830 hours and bombed the refinery by pathfinder. The results were not observed because of complete cloud cover at the target. The lead pathfinder operator said that he had a good picture and the run on the target was very good. Flak at the target was intense but inaccurate. No enemy fighters were encountered nor seen. All aircraft returned to base without casualties.

Mission 193, February 15 The blue force that day also had 19 B-24's loaded the same and were to bomb the same refinery. This force took off one hour later than red force, at 0930 hours. They bombed the primary target by pathfinder method with the results unobserved. Flak at the target was intense but inaccurate. No aircraft

were damaged and all planes returned to base.

Mission 194, February 16 Thirty-nine B-24's took off to bomb the Oberstraubling Airdrome at Regensburg, Austria. Three aircraft returned early so that 36 aircraft dropped over 83 tons of fragmentation bombs on the target by visual bombing. Results were good as frags were seen covering the assigned target area. Flak in the target area was moderate and inaccurate. All aircraft returned to base without casualties.

Mission 195, February 17 Forty-two B-24's took off to bomb the primary target, but weather intervened and the Group had to bomb an alternate target, the shipyards at Fiume, Italy. Three aircraft returned early, two because of engine trouble and one because they lost the formation in the clouds. Thirty-eight of the aircraft dropped 63.5 tons of 500# RDX bombs on the shipyards with only fair results. Flak at the target area was slight and inaccurate and all planes returned to base safely.

Mission 196, February 18 The Group was briefed to bomb the main marshalling yards at Amstatten, Germany. Weather along the route was so bad that the Group aborted the mission without dropping any bombs. All 28 B-24's returned safely.

Mission 197, February 19 The Group was given a choice of bombing several different targets because of weather. Twenty-eight B-24's took off but the weather was so bad that only seven aircraft bombed the sixth alternate target which was the harbor at Fiume, Italy. Five others bombed the harbor at Pola, Italy with poor results. The rest of the planes brought their bombs back to base. Flak at the targets was slight and inaccurate.

All planes returned to base safely.

Mission 198, February 20 Weather again dictated the target, as the Group had to bomb the sixth alternate: Trieste shipyards. Twenty-eight B-24's loaded with 500# RDX bombs dropped 55 tons on the target. The results were much better as almost 80% of the bombs fell within 1,000 feet of the aiming point. Flak at the target was slight to moderate and inaccurate. No enemy fighters were seen and all planes returned to base without incident.

How to Fly The American Flag



TEN RULES ON HOW TO PROPERLY FLY THE FLAG

1. The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.
2. The flag is never allowed to touch the ground or the floor.
3. When hung over a sidewalk on a rope extending from a building to a pole the union stars are always away from the building.
4. When vertically hung over the center of the street, the flag always has the union stars to the north in an east/west street, and to the east in a north/south street.
5. The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of States or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.
6. The flag should never be festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds but always allowed to fall free.
7. The flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon on Memorial Day then raised to the top of the staff.
8. Never fly the flag upside down except as a signal of distress in instances of extreme danger to life of property.

9. The flag is never flown in inclement weather except when using an all-weather flag.
10. The flag can be flown every day from sunrise to sunset and at night if illuminated properly.

FLAG DISPLAY DAYS:

The Flag should be displayed on all days, especially on:

New Year's Day Jan. 1
 Lincoln's Birthday Feb. 12th
 Washington's Birthday
 3rd Mon. in Feb.
 Easter Sunday Variable
 Mother's Day . . . 2nd Sun. in May
 Armed Forces Day. . 3rd Sat. in May
 Memorial Day . . . (Half-staff until Noon) -Last Mon. in May
 Flag Day June 14th
 Independence Day July 4
 Labor Day 1st Mon. in Sept.
 Citizenship Day Sept. 17th
 Columbus Day . . 2nd Mon. in Oct.
 Navy Day Oct. 27th
 Veterans Day Nov. 11
 Thanksgiving Day . . 4th Thurs. in Nov.
 Christmas Day Dec. 25th
 and such other days as may be proclaimed by the President of the United States; the birthdays of States (date of admission); and on State holidays.

38,197,128

That incredible number is the number of military personnel who have fought in all of America's major wars since the War of 1812! Here's the breakdown:

War of 1812:	286,730
Mexican War:	78,718
Civil War(Union Forces):	2,213,363
Spanish American War:	306,760
World War I:	4,734,991
World War II:	16,112,566
Korean War:	5,720,000
Vietnam War:	8,744,000



Your new president Frank Lashinsky with his commander in chief, Dorothy. '99 San Diego reunion.



Ormond Buffington and family. '99 San Diego reunion.



John and Carolyn Pramik. '99 San Diego reunion



George and Betty Underwood. '99 San Diego reunion



John and Ruth Nash. '99 San Diego reunion.



George McGovern and Pamela Hudson. '99 San Diego reunion.



It's great to sit on this side of the podium for a change!" Lou Hansen and Fran – 455th Reunion, San Diego, CA.

From Your Editor

It's enlightening and rewarding to receive the many personal comments on the group history revision commitment card. This kind of support enabled the book to be. Sufficient orders were received to make the book available at a reasonable cost. When I mentioned this to one of our members, he said "there's a lot of good guys in the 455 Bomb Group." And I believe it.

Some of the comments were:
 "I'll take two if necessary to get sufficient orders to justify printing."
 "If you are a little short, I'll pay up to \$100 to help out."
 "If needed, I'll donate \$500."
 "Change the order to two if it is necessary to meet the minimum requirements."

"Have a copy, enjoy reading it."
 "But I do enjoy the one I have."
 "I have a copy of the first printing – much treasured."
 "I already have four copies of this great book."
 "I really enjoy the history and proud record of the group."
 "I have the original edition. Well done! Thanks for all the endeavors of those who figured in the writing and publishing of this exciting memorial of our great Bomb Group. God bless you all!"

Editors Lament

Pay your dues!

Drop me a line once in a while – it gets lonely during a Wisconsin winter.

Pay your dues!

Send in a photo or story for the Cerignola Connection – filling material gets harder to find.

As I write this it seems hard to get into the holiday spirit. 90 degree temperatures outside...it has been that way for a few days, too. But by the time this is gathered, printed, delivered to the post office and mailed special not-for-profit postage, there will be snow on the ground in Wisconsin and the furnace will be running again. Sooooo – Pearl and I want to wish each and everyone of you the warmest of holiday greetings!



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