



CERIGNOLA CONNECTION

455th Bomb Group Association Newsletter

Winter 1992

Season's Greeting's

REUNION '93!

Mark your calendar for October, 1993 and plan to attend the 455th Bomb Group reunion to be held at Norfolk and Langley Air Force Base, Virginia. This will commemorate our 50th anniversary where we came together as a Group at Langley for assignment of personnel, training and equipping prior to embarking on the long trip to Italy to fly combat. It is where the character of our Group started to form, especially with the ground support personnel. Our programs at the reunion will feature the ground support personnel, especially the enlisted men who did so much to make up an outstanding Group for flying combat. The Air Force at Langley has agreed to support us during a memorial service there where we will install a plaque to commemorate our 50th anniversary and as a memorial to those who paid the ultimate price for victory with their lives. The enlisted men will be featured at our banquet as well as at the services at Langley.

Those of us who flew the airplanes greatly admire the ground support personnel. You made the long journey overseas in crowded liberty ships during very rough seas and the submarine menace. You remained overseas under difficult living and working conditions throughout the war while the combat crews could return home after completing their combat missions. You became a close-knit organization dedicated to excellence in keeping airplanes ready for combat and performing the supporting functions of organization and administration, medical, ground transportation, facility maintenance, food and special services, intelli-

gence and operations.

The planning for our reunion is well underway. Louie Hansen, Al Asch and I visited Norfolk and Langley to make preparations for supporting our reunion. In addition to the dedication services at Langley, our banquet and maintaining a hospitality room, planning is going forward for trips to Colonial Williamsburg/Overview of Yorktown; Langley Air Force Base, including lunch, Air and Space Museum and a ride through Fort Monroe; and Naval Base tour (the largest naval base in the world), lunch at the base and ship's tour. There are other things of interest such as General MacArthur Center, unique shopping bazaar, historic buildings and the water front where one can walk in a park-like setting and enjoy seeing the ships in the harbor, cruise ships and other activities, all within walking distance of each other. Virginia Beach is a relatively short distance from Norfolk. These activities will be at your own choosing.

Louie Hansen, our fine Executive Director, will be sending you a packet of more detailed information and forms for attending the reunion. Let's make this a good one, everybody attend to see old friends and buddies from WWII to commemorate our 50th anniversary.

Hugh Graff, President

War Stories

Our Association is planning a publication we choose to call "War Stories" to be submitted by our members. As you know, we have published a hard bound history book of the war activities of the 455th Bomb Group. Many of you provided information for its publication. Since then, we have received letters from our members expressing concern that their experiences were not included. Now is our chance to correct this.

The "War Stories" book will be paper back and rather inexpensive to publish. It will contain the stories you send us with little or no changes except for some editing. We want stories from the ground (combat support) personnel as well as from the flight crews. We encourage stories about the boat trip; loading the aircraft with bombs, ammunition and fuel; maintaining the airplanes in inclement weather with very little group support equipment; tent life; scrounging spare parts and creature comfort items; unique happenings in administration, special services and medical care; preparation of mission briefings; funny stories about rest camps and going to town; and other stories you consider appropriate. In doing this, we will have a more complete history of our Group and it will be something we can leave that touches the personal lives of our members who served in Italy. In addition, the wives are encouraged to submit articles about their experiences during the war years trying to be with their husbands, keeping the family together while their husbands were overseas, and putting up with rationing and shortages of housing and transportation.

Stories from air crews are included in our history book and we expect many will be republished in their original form for the "War Stories." However, additional crew stories are encouraged.

The authors' names will be included in the final publication as the contributor and we encourage you to include names of those within the text who helped make the stories. Please send your stories to Al Asch, 6205 Meadow Court, Rockville, Md 20852. Tele: 301 881 1376.

Al Asch, Historian

Tie a string around your finger to remember to send in your dues!

Dues are due November 1, 1992 for the year 1993. We do not send out a reminder billing, saving the expense of a mailing and thus use the Cerignola Connection as the medium to get this message out to you. It's only \$15. For this you get not only an honored membership, but all informational mailings, reunion information and attendance, plus all copies of the Cerignola Connection. If you didn't send your check to Louie Hansen, P. P. Box 6125, Spencer, Iowa, 51301,— do so today.



Rub-A-Dub-Dub!

Three unidentified members of the 742nd Bombardment Squadron clean up in an "open air aqueduct spa" in southern Italy. (Picture submitted by Joe Hachey.)

Bits and Pieces

Midair

I would like to take a minute to tell you about a strange thing which occurred seconds after the collision between the Lundwall and Pidcock aircraft 3/19/44. We were flying some distance behind the two aircraft and I did not see the actual collision, only the debris seconds later. After I had done my best to avoid the debris and leveled out again, the wing of one of the aircraft appeared off our left wing tip, as I recall about 3-4 spans out. The entire fuselage was completely gone but the engines appeared to be running normally and the wing was staying abreast of us. After what I recall as several seconds, the wing peeled off to the left and down and disappeared from view.

Aerodynamically and otherwise, I guess this couldn't happen but it did. Later, back at the base, I was surprised that none of my crew, nor apparently anyone else, had seen this.

(Submitted by Bill Arnold)

Did You Know?

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. General Senger of the German XIV Corp and later the German X Army is the source of this item.

*Submitted by Frank Pappalardo,
743rd Squadron S2*

Chaplain's Corner

Lord of the Nations, guide our people to go forward in justice and freedom, that our nation may bring glory to your name and blessings to all people. Amen.

*"If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there Your hand shall lead me,
And Your right hand shall hold me."
Ps. 139-9-10*

*Arnold Lundwall Writes...

The amount of work that went into the 455th Book obviously was substantial. It provides a detailed and significant record of the history of the Group, the experiences had, and brings home to anyone who reads it the emotional stresses that every member of the Group underwent on a daily basis. On the other hand it also sets forth the dedication and commitment of those who served. Finally I was struck in reading the book at how young the men who served as pilots and crewmen were during this critical time for our country and for the world.

I would hope that if you have a chance you will indicate to the authors and those who put the book together what a terrific and meaningful work they did - particularly for someone such as myself.

NOTE: Son of Lt. Albert Arnold Lundwall who was killed in action with the 455th Bomb Group, 740th Sqdn 3/19/44.

Contributions to the

Cerignola Connection

Contributions to the Cerignola Connection are always welcome. Dig into that dusty footlocker or album and send fotos, stories, anything of interest to your membership. We'll print, with credit, in forthcoming issues. When sending materials you want returned, affix an address label to the material. All contributions should be sent to Tom Ramey, Editor, *Cerignola Connection*, 1211 Montclair Ct., Appleton, Wisconsin, 54915.

Letter to 741 Personnel

May I attempt to clarify possible misunderstanding on the Volume III of the "Partial History of the 741 Squadron."

This is not a commercial venture nor a profit-seeking undertaking. On Vol. I and Vol. II, I personally underwrote much of the expense. We sold the 2 volumes at reproduction cost plus postage.

On Volume III, I am keeping some record of the expenses incurred: postage, reproduction of pictures, reproduction of some things to include in the Volume III. Incidentally, Vol. III is an attempt to cover as many of the replacement crews as is possible from the information available. I am short a large number of crew photographs. I am short a large number of crew rosters. I am short any information at all on a number of crews. Maybe over time more people will become aware of and join the 455 Gp Association, attend reunions, see the 741 Squadron History, and fill in the blanks.

So, the final cost of the Vol. III will be the reproduction costs per copy, plus postage, plus the other expenses, divided by the number of orders for the Vol. III. Reproduction of the volume should be in December 1992 or

Bits and Pieces

The Old and the New

Let this New Year be the beginning of a new life in each of us wherein "old things are passed away." Not the old thoughts, of course, which are still true: but those that remain to nurse and encourage our prejudices. Not the old emotions that are filled with kindness: but all anger and bitter feeling and railing. Not the old reverence for the authority of God: but all fears born of our unworthy service apart from Him.

Not the old gracious ministries that blessed mankind: but the harsh words, the suspicious looks, the clenched hands and unwilling feet. Not the old habits that keep us in the straight way: but the new fashions that make us unmindful of those things which hold life together in the unity of good manners. Not the old friends who grow more beloved each year because their worth is better appreciated: but the new associations made from mercenary motives.

Let all blessed old things stay, but let the clutter of our heads and hearts be removed, that new inspirations and new affections may come in to gladden our lives.

Chester Burge Emerson

HAPPY NEW YEAR

ED:

Your Cerignola Connection Editor, Tom Ramey, would like to extend to you and yours most hearty best wishes for the new year. Working with you on the publication has been special to me and I appreciate the opportunity of renewing our friendships.

All Work and No Play



From the Picture Albums



Coffee while we waited



Waiting our turn



Lest we forget!



After mission briefing



Maggie - the "Coffee Girl"



It was either snow, dust or mud!



This sure beats combat!



I thought my ration would be more



Carewicz and Kaminski on leave



Going!



Bombs away!



Can you identify this foto?



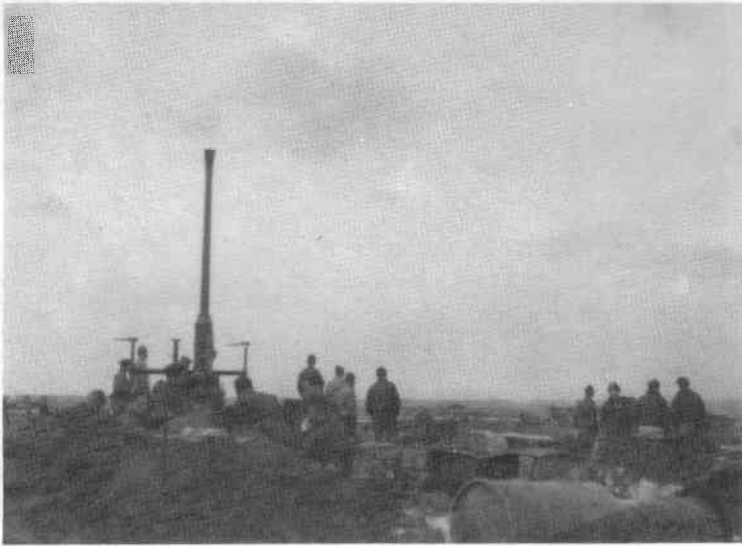
The winters were cold!



It's good to be back!



Roll call!



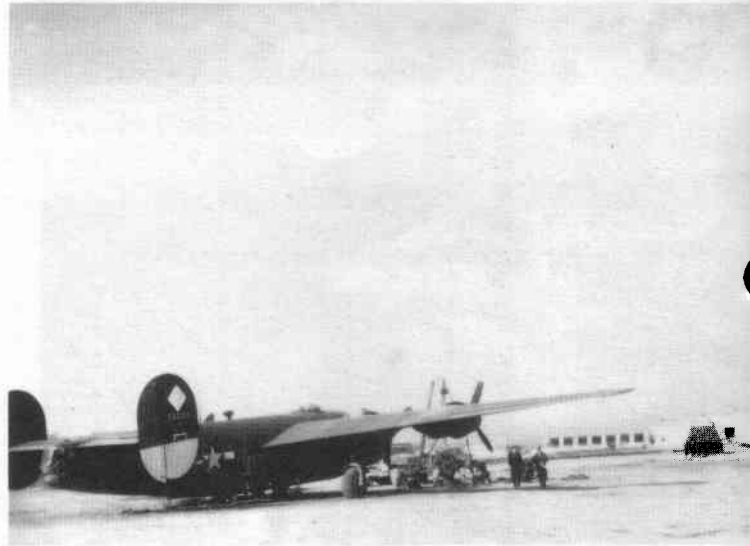
Our defense



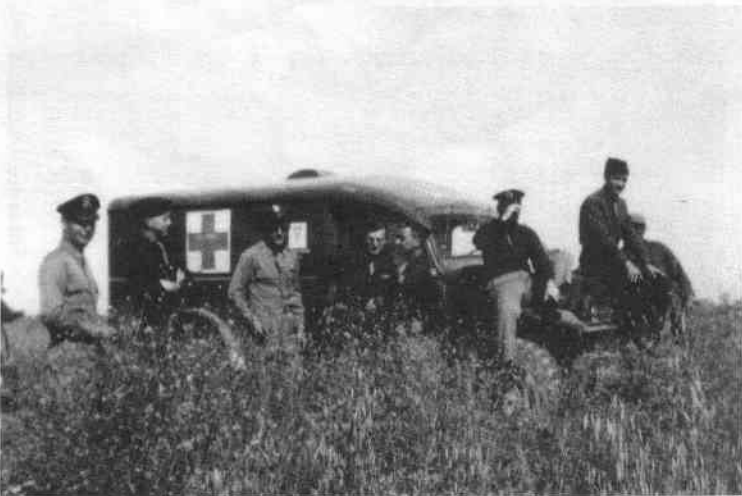
Ready to go



On the line



Lunch break



Waiting for the birds to come home

Where we lived...

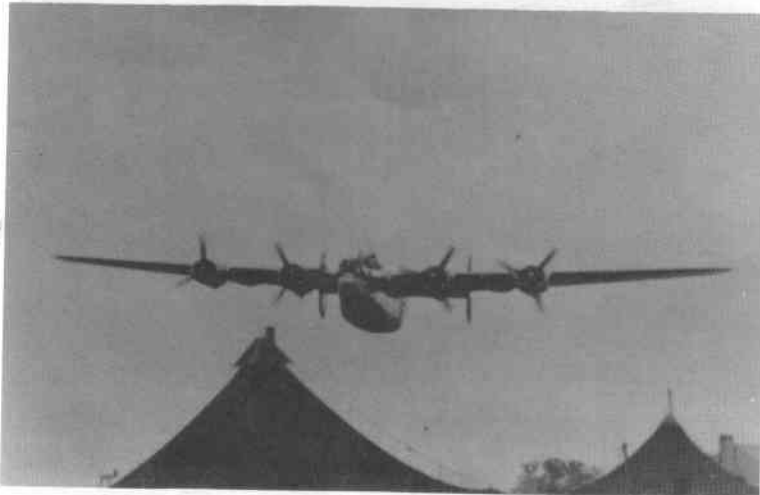
worked and played!







Marguerite Vralstad, widow of 1st Lt. Howard O. Vralsted, sent a photo and wrote saying, "I had the privilege of touring the restored aircraft at Lackland AFB in San Antonio, 8/25/92. I must say it was overwhelming as there sat a B-24 like my husband flew and was shot down in, 6/26/44 over Moosebierbaum, Austria, page 117, 455th History. It brought back a lot of memories!" She plans to attend the 1993 reunion.

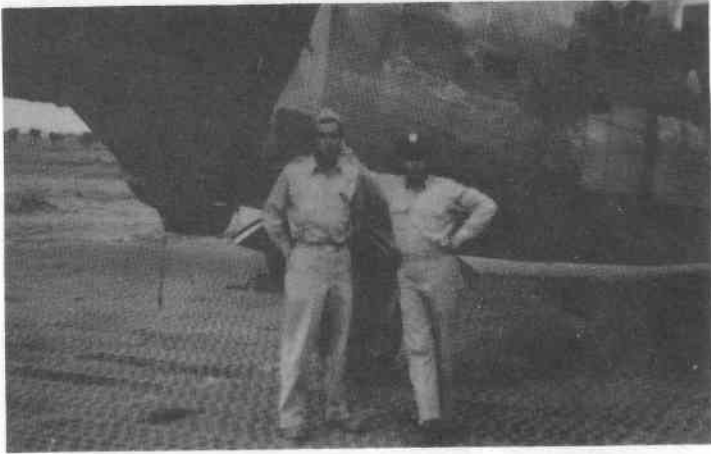


"Lt. Col. Edwin C. Ambrosen, Commanding Officer of the 742nd squadron since its activation in July of 1943, has completed his tour of duty and left for the States on December 2nd. The Colonel's final act in the squadron still has the boys gasping. His low level 'buzz' job outdid anything that the P-38 pilots have ever done around here. Probably the most thrilled man during the 'buzz' job was Lt. Edelstein, who came out of the 'sack' just in time to see the 'Big Bird' swooping through the tent area. Lt. Lemmey, on the ball as usual, got a picture of the ship on its second run."



The "Winter Home" of the enlisted men of Johnston Hart's Crew. OF SPECIAL NOTE: The good looking smoke stack on this winter home is the same piece of gas pipe being "requisitioned" by the fellows in the photo appearing on page 95 of the group history. The identity of the five enlisted men and one officer, plus cameraman, came to light last month.
(Louie Hansen)

Pictures from out of the past!



(1) Posing...James Mehegan on the left, Jim Ross on the right. 741st Squadron.



(2) I can see Coons, Snowden, Carens and Johns. Who did I miss?



(3) Seldom Miss - John Huggins on right, Raymond Hodgdom, left.



(4) 742nd Tech Supply: L to R, Bill David, William Brydson, B. Cummings, Tilden Fleming, Robert Dotson.



(5) The real workers! 742nd Ground Crew. L to R: R. Wilson, Wallace, Littleton and Pearson.



(6) LEST WE FORGET!

The 455th Bomb Group Association Has Roots!

(Continued from Summer, 1992)

From the October 29, 1949 Newsletter

Baker reunion was a tremendous success. This was held at the beautiful Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago. The stag party was a humdinger. At the business meeting it was brought out that the association includes all buddies of the 455th who want to keep in touch and maintain good fellowship. The \$2.00 dues covers costs of the mailings to members and prospective members, a membership card with a picture of the original *Vulgar Vulture*, publication of a complete list of names and addresses of members plus promotion of the next reunion. Also discussed at the business meeting was the possibility of publishing a picture-history of the 455th.

Charlie reunion will take place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1950. Sy Gaynes is in college studying law. Joe Hunter is a banker. Bill Zane is selling insurance. Rod Clarke is in the pharmaceutical business in Chicago. Frank "Pappy" Pappalardo is a C.P.A. with the IRS. Vern Taylor is stationed in Southern Germany. Charles Spicer is a lawyer. Earl Greaver is in recruiting in W. Virginia. Bechtold is now on duty in Washinton. Capt. Strode and Keefer are stationed at Castle AFB, Mercer, California. Jim Shumard wired from Wiesbaden, Germany. Dave Brothers writes that there is a 15th AF Association in Philadelphia. Maggie Curtis of the Red Cross and doughnut memories, writes from Maryland where she is farming. "The 455th Bomb Group has a special place in my thoughts, and often I have wondered what happened to everyone. Though I can't face a doughnut yet, I can look back on the dust, mud, lousy cognac, C-rations and plenty of heckling with a great deal of pleasure. In fact, I don't understand all these people that are wandering around the United States not realizing I had the pleasure of serving the best in Bomb Groups." Harry Horn is with Eastman Kodak. Earl Howsam is now Administrative Assistant for Senator Johnson of Colorado.

Christmas week, 1949.

Your membership cards are the generosity of Russ Felzer, Milwaukee, WI. Jean Batzell is a practicing lawyer. Ray Sterling is stationed at Barksdale as Aide-de-Camp to General Cullen, formerly C.O. of the 2nd Bomb Group, 15th AF. Kenneth Clark is a Field Investigator for the State of Illinois. Hal Schneideskamp is with the St. Louis Housing Authorities. Joe Craighead is a Representative for Swift's Plant Food Division. Jim Cullather is in graduate school. George Defenbaugh is practicing law in Oklahoma.

Dateline, February 17, 1950

Heard from Jim Cowden, a pilot in the 742nd. Jim joined the group at Langley and returned home in July 1944 without a scratch. Saw Jack Prathers...he was enroute to Craig Field, Selma, Alabama. S/Sgt Linnewah, 65th Bomb Sqd., Davis Monthan AFB, AZ tells us that TDY to England prevented him from attending the Baker reunion. The C.L. Pipers report a pleasant surprise visit by the Olsons, en route to California. They were in Toledo. The Hugh Graffs joined them for a delightful evening. "Pipe" is now Aviation Commissioner. Lt. Carl Barr, Lt. Ray Sterline and Capt. Paul Neff are now at Barksdale AFB in Shreveport, La. Hal Berman reports seeing several old buddies... Hamilton Frost and Fuller Harrington in Jackson, Miss. Jim Latham is Assistant Auditor for Travelers. Marcel Beaudoin is still working with electricity in Biddeford, Maine. Frank Fay sends interesting pictures of the annual wolf round-up at Harris, Kansas - they got 26. Walter Heidmous and Duane Bush are welcome newcomers to the *Vulgar Vulture* roster. Bush flew with Leroy Catt (not at Enid) and is now in soil conservation work. Was glad to see Ed and Betty Ambrosen of Montgomery recently. Murel Humphrey ex-Adjutant of the 742nd name has been added to our mailing list. Enjoyed a Chinese dinner with ex-PX maestro Joseph Levi. Joe's in the costume jewelry business.

Report from July 15, 1950:

Walter Heidmous is in the business of gas conversion burners. Captain Wilmer Warrick, 740th, who was shot down over Bucharest, has been serving with Leroy Crum at Lowry and is now at Elgin Field, Florida. Capt. Joe Gold is on active duty at Elgin, Major Patton is retired and with Mutual Life and living in Ft. Walton. Joe Oliverio is in the grocery business. Joe Gould is with Gould Motor Company in Brunswick, GA. Bill Hill is associated with Braniff

continued on next page

International Airways. Billie Taylor is with Owens-Illinois Glass Company. Ex-Pilot Harry Kohl of New York has joined our mailing list. Harry was with the 741st. Capt. Raymon Siegrist is now in Army Finance in Washington. Col. George Hansford is with the Judge Advocate General's Office in Washinton, D.C. Note that the registration fee has been increased to \$12.50.

Charlie Reunion is scheduled for September, 1950 in Milwaukee. Russ Felzer and his committee have planned a gala affair. Stag party with free beer, food and entertainment. Bridge party with prizes for the ladies. Saturday night dinner, dancing and entertainment at one of Milwaukee's top clubs. Saturday morning a bull and business session. Make your hotel reservations now at one of Milwaukee's finest hotels, the Schroeder. \$4.00 single and \$6.50 double. Lt. Rudy Krueger is in Portage Alaska. Our ex-dentist Dr. Walter Frankel is practicing in two offices, Peekskill and New York City.

December 15, 1950

Report on "Charlie" reunion. An outstanding reunion, perfect continuity of entertainment and good fellowship. Schlitz was our host at the "Schlitz Brown Bottle" Friday night. Cold draught beer was served in profusion at a delightful rathskeller rendezvous designed by Schllitz for entertainment and public relations. Saturday and Sunday we had club rooms at the Schroeder Hotel for informal bull sessions and there was an abundance of reminiscence, back-slapping and getting up-to-date on civilian activities. Saturday night the Felzers hosted the group at their home for cocktails and hor d'oeuvres. Later there was a banquet dinner and dancing in the ballroom at the Schroeder Hotel. The final brunch and bull session was held Sunday morning. Chairman Russ Felzer presided and Rod Clarke served again as Secretary. Leon Spires, formerly line chief of the 740th, was unanimously chosen as the 1950-51 Chairman of the 455th Bomb Group Association and "yours truly" was renamed "keeper of the nest" through continued newsletters of and for and about Vulgar Vulltures. Group, the 740th and 743rd were well represented at Milwaukee but in lesser numbers were the 741st and 742nd buddies. There was a 50-50 attendance of former officers and enlisted men.

Disrude was a 743rd gunner and is now an electrical contractor. Orville Lee was a 743rd pilot and is still on active duty. Arnold, 743rd pilot, is in the adding machine business. Rolfe, 743rd Engineer, is in lumber sales. Hinrichs, Engineer on Jenkins 740th crew, is now a decorator.

Shumard, 743rd pilot, SAC, Forbes, Preston's tail gunner in the 740th, manufacturing sales. Felzer, Hall's crew and 743rd Navigator, is in advertising. Jordan, 740th Navigator for Jenkins, a Chiropractor. Reinhart, 743rd Armament Inspector, is an engineer. Spires civilian transition from line chief of the 740th is in an automobile agency. Finn and Metz, both 743rd co-pilots, are now in display advertising and insurance, respectively. Froussard was engineer on Anderson's 743 crew and now has a machine tool business. Gustafson was bombardier for Anderson of the 743rd and is now in the food business. Heidmous was Helbig's bombardier in the 743rd and is now a layout engineer. Clarke is an industrial engineer and will be remembered as 743rd radar observer. Bercik was bombardier for Riggs in the 740th and now welcomes guests at his Chicago tavern. Bechtold is still on active duty and now anticipated change of station now that he is checked out in jet fighters. Bob Horton from Los Angeles traveled the greatest distance. Humphrey is in the automobile business. Capt. Barr is still stationed at Barksdale. Jack York lost his life at Selfridge Field when his Shooting Star failed to come out of a gunnery range dive. Frank Page is still on active duty in the Pacific. And so we close another newsletter.

This was the last news letter on record from Tom Lyle Mitchel.

ELECTION POSTSCRIPT:

The election is behind us, but did you know how important one vote can be? Consider the following:

- In 1645 one vote gave Oliver Cromwell control of England.
- In 1776 one vote gave America the English language instead of German.
- In 1845 one vote brought Texas into the Union.
- In 1868 one vote saved President Andrew Johnson from impeachment.
- In 1876 one vote gave Rutherford B. Hayes the presidency of the United States.
- In 1876 one vote changed France from a monarchy to a republic.
- In 1923 one vote gave Adolph Hitler leadership of the Nazi Party.

(Previously published by the American Forces Press Service)

The Second Ancona Landing...as Told by Jim Scott

All I Ever Needed to Know, I Learned in Kindergarten

"I was the bombardier on a B-24 with the 741st squadron returning from somewhere (target unknown). We had just crossed the coast at the top of the Adriatic when our final engines started pooping out. As we were dumping whatever we could to lighten the plane and discussing what else to do, the navigator said there was a fighter strip at Ancona, Italy. Hoping the strip was abandoned, we all agreed an attempted landing there was our best bet. Ditching was out of the question since our bomb bay doors were jammed open. I don't remember any talk of bailing out, perhaps because of our low altitude.

Barely making it to the strip, we set down fairly smoothly. When we ran out of runway, we plowed through a vineyard. We all got out of the plane and were discussing what to do next when artillery fire began from the north and shortly thereafter from the south. Also a man had emerged from a house we had narrowly missed going through the vineyard and was approaching us with very unfriendly gestures. I asked someone to try talking to the man while I went to shoot the bomb sight. When I got out of the place, one of our men was waiting for me. We made a mad dash for a ditch where the rest of the crew were waiting. Soon a jeep with a trailer manned by a major and a sergeant with U.S. Signal Corps insignia came roaring up from the south. We all piled in and off we went.

It turned out we had landed between the British and German Armies. Later we were trucked south to an airfield and the next morning flown back to our base.

Most of what I really need to know about how to live, and what to do, and how to be, I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate school mountain, but there in the sandbox at nursery school.

These are the things I learned:

Share everything.

Put things back where you found them.

Clean up your mess.

Don't take things that aren't yours.

Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.

Wash your hands before you eat.

Flush.

Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.

Live a balanced life.

Learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

Take a nap every afternoon. When you go out into the world, watch for traffic, hold hands, and stick together. Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the plastic cup. The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.

Goldfish and hamster and white mice and even the little seed in the plastic cup—they all die. So do we.

And then remember the book about Dick and Jane and the first word you learned, the biggest word of all: LOOK. Everything you need to know is there somewhere. The Golden Rule is love and basic sanitation. Ecology and politics and sane living.

Think of what a better world it would be if we all...the whole world...had cookies and milk about 3 o'clock every afternoon and then would lie down with our blankets for a nap. Or if we had a basic policy in our nation and other nations always to put things back where we found them and cleaned up our messes. And it is still true, no matter how old you are, when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together.

(from a book by Robert Fulghum)

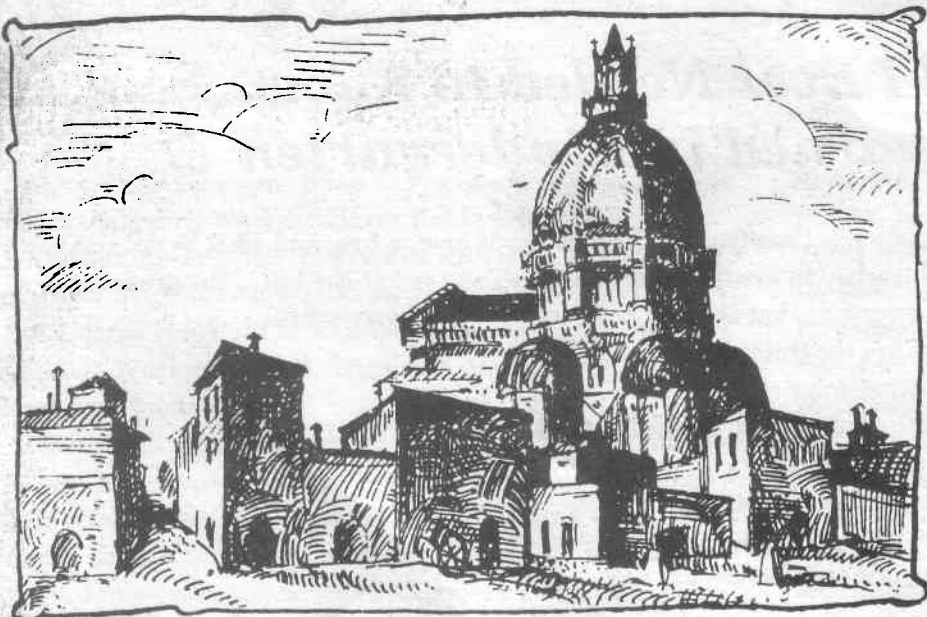
continued from page 3

January 1993.

To those who have allowed me to borrow photos (for an extended period of time), my thanks for your patience. I will disassemble the original copies of all 3 volumes after the next "run" of Vols. I and II in December, and the original and only "run" of Vol. III in December or January.

Vols. I & II are copyrighted. Vol. III will be, too.

Horace Lanford



"CATHEDRAL, CERIGNOLA"

Remember the dome on the cathedral at Cerignola? When returning from a mission and you saw the dome, you knew you were home once again. The line art of the cathedral was lifted from the 15th Air Force, 1944 calender.

455th Bomb Group Membership

Name _____ Date _____

Street _____ Squadron _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Telephone _____

Annual Dues	\$15.00	\$ _____
Life Membership	\$100.00	\$ _____
Membership Roster	\$7.50	\$ _____
	Total Submitted	\$ _____

Make check payable to: 455th Bomb Group Association

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