



# CERIGNOLA CONNECTION

*455th Bomb Group Association Newsletter*

SPRING 1990

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

This is my first opportunity to discuss 455th activities with you since I became President of our Association on 1 November, 1989. I am an organization oriented person and have always maintained that strength comes from the membership. I will be working closely with the Executive Committee and Board of Directors for developing new programs and implementing those started under past Presidents and Executive Secretaries.

I am emphasizing a program to find new members and those of you who have not joined the Association to do so. Bob Armstrong has agreed to continue to find new members and help bring them into our Association. For those of you who do not have a 455th roster of members, I am asking you to order one from Louie Hansen, our Executive Secretary. The roster has over 500 names now, arranged alphabetically by squadron with addresses and telephone numbers. It costs \$7.50, including future updates as new members are added or members lost. Review your roster and send Bob the names of those you remember but not included. He will take it from there to find them but give him all the information you have, e.g., full name, last known or induction address and squadron. I have found the roster very useful and have started searching for old friends of the 740th Squadron I remember but not now members of our association. Bob's address is: 2600 Littell Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50321. You will find a form included for your use in paying your dues. If you have not already done so, send your check to Louie Hansen, his address is shown on the form.

Our bylaws emphasize perpetuating the history of the 455th to honor the members who were wounded, killed or missing in action; to educate for posterity, both the public and airman's loved ones, of the great sacrifices made by the flight crews, administrative and operational staffs, aircraft maintenance and armament/ordnance support, medical, supply and other personnel. Further, its purpose is to establish edifices and/or monuments to honor the members of the 455th Bomb Group. I will be emphasizing these areas.

Louie Hansen has been in official contact with the Air Force Academy about the installation and dedication of our 455th memorial, announced in our last newsletter. We have received acceptance and a schedule of 10:00 AM on October 4, 1991 for the dedication. We will be working with Ross Strode for the manufacture of the plaque. You will be kept informed.

The writing of the history by Hugh Graff is a monumental task, but worth doing. He is making good progress but will need help from all of us. Tom Ramey has agreed to lend his expertise in formatting, layout and methods of publication. Hugh is calling for information from the membership, especially for pictures--see other parts of this newsletter. I know you will respond.

By the time you receive this, you will have received a brochure for a trip to Italy next spring. I know I can represent our membership in thanking Louie for making all the trip arrangements; it was a lot of work. Naomi and I look forward to seeing many of you on this excursion.

A big thanks is extended to Tom Ramey for publishing a most interesting newsletter, the Cerignola Connection. It was particularly imaginative to include pictures of early 455th Bomb Group reunions in our first publication. Some of you have questioned why it took so long to find you and bring you into our Association. These early reunions were organized in the post World War II years. The reunions were discontinued in 1951 after a small group meeting in New York City because the busy lives and family responsibilities made it difficult for people to attend. Things remained dormant until at a 1983 reunion by the 15th Air Force where 11 members of the 455th attended. Bob Armstrong was one and he took the names and addresses of the others. By the 1985 reunion of the 15th, Bob had some 75 names and addresses of 455th members. On 11 November 1986, we became incorporated in Iowa as a non-profit Association, principally through Bob's efforts. James E. Bates and John J. Van Lent met with Bob in Iowa to sign the incorporation papers. Following this, Louie Hansen and John Davis developed our bylaws which were approved by the membership at our Association reunion held in Colorado Springs during October 1987, the first one since 1951. We all owe these members a vote of thanks for their early pioneering efforts to make us a viable organization.

BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR  
ALFRED ASCH, President

FROM STARS AND STRIPES - Second Citation for 455th:

With the 15th AAF, April 18 - The 455th Bombardment Group, commanded by Col. William L. Snowden, Denver, Colo., received its second Distinguished Unit Citation this week when Brig. Gen. William E. Hall, Deputy Commanding General of the 15th AAF, pinned the blue battle streamer to the group's standard. The ceremonies took place at the 455th's base in Italy. The veteram Liberator group was cited "for outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy" while leading its wing on a mission against the Moosebierbaum oil refinery, Austria, last June. While enroute to the target, the formation was attacked by more than 80 twin-engine fighters and approximately 60 single-engine fighters. Despite great odds, the group stubbornly held formation and battled its way across the target for a successful bombing run. Several planes exploded in midair after dropping their bombs. During the air battle, one of the fiercest in 15th AAF history, the 455th's gunners destroyed 34 of the attacking fighters while holding their own losses to 10 Liberators. The group received its first citation for its successful attack on the Steyr Walzlagerwerke, vital enemy ball bearing plant in Austria, last April. It destroyed 27 Luftwaffe fighters. To date, the group has flown 235 bombing missions during more than 14 months of combat operations.

None of Our Aircraft is Missing

Somewhere in an Italian valley,  
Somewhere in mud, wind and rain,  
Somewhere the sun has forgotten,  
Somewhere the master is pain.

The sun breaks forth in its radiance,  
It's a day for which we have yearned,  
The stand-downs bow in reverence,  
All Baker-Box has just returned.

Out from the gray ceiling  
Seven - yes, seven ships appear.  
And gone are the meterological trumpets,  
And vanished are worry and fear.

FO Paul Silverman, AG