



*The 461st*

# Liberaider



Vol. 9, No. 1

JUNE 1992

SOMEWHERE IN THE USA



## “WARPLANE’S ICY DEATH BRINGS NEW LIFE TO FOURTH GRADERS’ LESSONS”

Editor’s note: The following story is a compilation of information printed in “Air Classics” magazine, the “Fresno Bee” and provided by Lyman Delameter.

World War II has given us many strange stories about missing aircraft which have in later years, through unusual circumstances, been found in remote regions. Possibly, one of the strangest and most interesting incidents happened in California during December 1943 when intense B-24 training missions were flown by the U.S. Army Air Corps out of Hammer Field, Fresno, California.

The basic story surrounding this incident, now well publicized, was about a long-missing B-24 bomber found in an unnamed lake in the California High Sierras on 17 July 1960 by a park service ranger leading a survey party. This particular B-24E, serial number 41-28463, carrying a crew of six departed Hammer Field, Fresno CA at 0850 on 5 December 1943 and headed east on a routine training mission piloted by 2nd Lt. Charles W. Turvey. Later that day the pilot reported by radio he thought his position

was around independence, CA. No further word was heard from the aircraft.

The next morning as daylight broke, now 6 December, Capt. William H. Darden and his crew of seven, also in a B-24, took off from Hammer Field to search for the missing plane. Darden’s B-24 droned on through the overcast sky. Then, without warning, the hydraulic pressure began to fail and air turbulence started to increase. The B-24 was being buffeted by a large winter snow storm near the area of Huntington Lake. Evidently things were going from bad to worse on the B-24 as Capt. Darden elected to land on what seemed to be a high, open mountain meadow. He gave his crew members the choice of staying with the aircraft or bailing out before the B-24 headed for an emergency landing. The co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Marion Settle and the radio operator, Sgt. George Barulic elected to bail out. They both landed in the forest some distance from the snow covered lake. That was the last they saw of their ailing B-24.

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The 461st LIBERAIDER  
461st Bombardment Group (H)  
Activated: 1 July 1943  
Inactivated: 27 August 1945  
Incorporated: 25 November 1985

CORPORATE HDQRS: 1407 W. 4th St. P.O. Box 5160, Spencer, IA 51301

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Publicity: Looking for a volunteer!

#### LIBERAIDER

George D. Dickie—Editor—PO Box 615, East Sandwich, MA 02537  
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A concentrated search in the area near Huntington Lake by civil and military authorities failed to locate the aircraft. After many weeks of searching, the hunt for the B-24 bomber was called off. The time passed. World War II ended. Many years passed. Then, in August 1955, the water level in Huntington Lake was lowered to allow repair work to start on the local dam. There, among the rotten tree stumps previously underwater, rested the remains of Captain Darden's B-24. Military salvage operations commenced immediately and at least four bodies were recovered from the wreckage which had been underwater since 6 December 1943.

More time passed. It was now 1990 and Huntington Lake was again lowered exposing Capt. Darden's B-24 named "The Exterminator". The seventeen members of the fourth grade class at Big Creek, CA Elementary School visited the lake site and decided to start a class project to research the crash of the B-24 under the guidance of their teacher Bob Crider. Ini-

tially, they wrote 31 letters of inquiry seeking information on the incident and it's survivors. In addition, the students made a pictorial display which they showed at school functions in the area to raise money to erect a memorial to the crew of the B-24 (see the centerfold of the December '91 issue of the "Liber Raider"). The students also hope to have the name of Huntington Lake changed to Darden Lake. If they can't accomplish this, they hope to have the area where the plane went down called Darden Point.

A donation from the 461st Bomb Group enabled the students to complete the memorial to the crew. Frank O'Bannon, Lyman Delameter and other members of the 461st living in the Fresno area attended the dedication ceremonies on 7 December 1991 just 48 years after the crash.

The picture on page 1 of this issue was taken at the dedication ceremony. A close up picture of the plaque can be seen on the centerfold.

\* \* \* \* \*

### COMMUNICATIONS FROM OTHER ASSOCIATIONS

The Aviation Cadet Alumni Assoc., now in its sixth year of operation, has over 20,000 members and is looking for more. This non-profit, no dues, no fees organization exists for the sole purpose of providing those who were pilot cadets with current address lists of flight school classmates.

Former pilot cadets are eligible for membership by submitting their flight class, the name of their primary, basic and advanced schools to either of the following retired officers (who most certainly are gentlemen for providing this service).

Harry Bradshaw  
RFD #1  
Newmarket, NH 03857

Bob White  
54 Seton Trail  
Ormond Beach, FL  
32176

If you want a listing, send postage.

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TO VETERANS OF THE KOREAN WAR  
IN THE AREA AROUND TUCSON, AZ

A few people met on 16 November 1991 to establish a chapter of the Korean War Veterans of America. They feel that the Korean veterans need a voice in support of their efforts and recognition in Washington for the Korean War Memorial (which has been rejected 3 times since 1989).

Korean War veterans are requested to join the group to help accomplish the goals. Any veteran who served honorably with the United Nations force in Korea between 25 June 1950 and January 1955, any American serviceman serving honorably in Korea since February 1955, and Gold Star mother or wife of a Korean War veteran killed in action, missing in action or who died as a prisoner of war is eligible for membership.

Contact: M. R. "Dick" Wainwright—Pres.  
Helen "Pat" Robertson—Treas  
No addresses given

Through:

KWVA-Tucson  
9001 E. Rosewood St.  
Tucson, AZ 85710-2659

\* \* \* \* \*

SELMAN FIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Any person who served at Selman Field as pilot, navigator instructor, student navigator, ground personnel, etc. are cordially invited to join this association. The dues are \$10 annually, \$60 life or \$100 charter member. The next reunion will be held in April 1993.

The association is in the process of obtaining a building from the local government to house various artifacts associated with or generated by Selman Field personnel. A newsletter is published four times a year and a membership list is issued annually.

If interested, contact:

Selman Field Historical Assoc.  
P.O. Box 14962  
Monroe, LA 71207-4962

MAIL CALL

Dear Mr. Dickie,

I just received a letter and copy of the December 1991 issue of "The Liberaider" from Frank O'Bannon.

My generation's war was Vietnam ——. I lucked out and spent 18 months on Okinawa instead of a year in the rice paddies.

Since 1988 I have been doing research on a 764th bomber crew commanded by Kenneth B. Smith. Last October I had the honor of attending their reunion in Indianapolis. For two days I reveled in the stories these "eagles of WWII" told. Their aircraft, #12, lost a turbo-supercharger, then flak and FW-190's hit them. They went down near Trencin, CZ about 11:45 AM on 17 December 1944.

George, on page 18 of the December issue, you asked what happened to #67 of the 767th Squadron. I have microfiche copies of all the 451, 461 and 484th aircraft lost on mission #151 on 17 December 1944. AAF #41-28913, B-24H, 767th, with #67 on the fuselage was flown by 1st Lt. Robert A. Galvan.

Co-Pilot: Eldred H. Helton

Bomb: Edward A. Kussler

Nav: Frederick C. Smyth

Ball: Albert G. Gones

Tail: Arthur C. Piccoli

Upper: Thomas S. Lyons

Nose: Thomas E. Stevenson

L. Waist: Roy B. Wilhite

R. Waist: Purvis L. Stacks

About 10 minutes south of Muglitz, S/Sgt George R. Taylor, upper gunner on the lead ship flown by Capt. Miller, reported, "#67 was flying #2 position in our flight, roughly 200 ft. out. She got hit in #3 engine and peeled off to right with the engine smoking. The FW-190 which made the pass at #67 continued on to attack us and was shot down by our tail gunner". Aboard #67 Sgt. Piccoli, though wounded, smothered a fire in the tail section with his body. Right waist gunner, Sgt. Stacks was hit 4-5 times by gunfire and was paralyzed from the waist down.

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Lt. Galvan made a successful (with a B-24!!) crash landing at Roszyne, Hungary—no one was hurt or killed—the entire crew returned to the States.

Sorry about the loss of your bird, but she didn't kill any of the crew.

George, have you got any idea where I could get my hands on a photo of Ken Smith's aircraft #12?

John Bybee  
RR #2, Box 16  
Vermont, IL 61484

Editor's note: John, thank you for sending the above information. It fills a void in my records.

As far as your question is concerned, I can only assume that you have not been able to get a picture from the crew. Therefore my only other suggestion is to ask the membership if anyone has a picture of aircraft #12 from the 764th Squadron? Did any members of the ground crews take or get any pictures of this aircraft?

Jim Van Norstrand, 765th, since you were an aerial photographer, is there anyone you might know from the photo lab that could help?

As a footnote to the above letter, I will comment on another letter I received relative to aircraft #67. It came from Leroy Waning, Box 195 Nobleboro, ME 04555, who was armor gunner on Capt. Miller's crew.

Leroy, thanks for you letter. However the dates and missions you mentioned do not fit the official record that I received with the above letter. You did fly the mission on 17 December but not in #67. As noted above, your top turret gunner, George Taylor, reported the loss of #67 that was flying deputy lead on your right wing. Your counterpart on #67 should have been Arthur Piccoli.

Leroy, you should have received your info on the 1992 reunion in Dayton, OH, from Sept. 23-27. Hope you can make it.

## ANOTHER DAY, ANOTHER MISSION

It was 12 July 1944. Another mission, one more step toward rotating to the States. The target: Marshaling Yards at Nimes, France. At pre-launch briefing, intelligence advised moderate-to heavy flak. The only fighters in the area were being flown by cadets at a nearby air base. I was flying #4 aircraft in the #6 position. As we turned on the IP, the flak began. It was heavy and accurate!! My aircraft sustained some heavy hits. The #4 prop was hit and had to be feathered. We were surrounded by extremely accurate flak. Nothing I had seen before or after approached it. Our nose gunner, Sgt. Huermerich, called to report fighters at 11 o'clock, level. The yellow noses closed in string fashion. I figured we had had it! As they dived through the flight below, they took out 4 B-24's. At this point my engineer discovered an "88" flak shell had pierced the wing behind #3 engine. Why it did not explode only God knows. Fuel loss finally forced us to shut down #3. The nose gunner was wounded in the calf of his leg by the flak.

The aircraft was difficult to control due to unbalanced power. The efforts of co-pilot Les Hayden were crucial in maintaining control. Les was powerful and was able to maintain directional control while I stabilized the aircraft with trim adjustments and power variations. It was a terrifying flight. Since I couldn't stay with the group on two engines, we headed home. The bombardier, George Beedle, tried to jettison the nine 500 lb. Bombs. The hydraulic line to the bomb bay had been cut and the doors wouldn't open. He tried the manual crank, but the cable had been severed. Fuel loss, time, etc. dictated that we get rid of all excess weight so the bombs went through the doors. Finally we got to Ajaccio, Corsica and alerted the tower about our problems. The landing gear was not down and locked. I advised the crew I had enough altitude to make one pass near the field and for them to bail out if they wanted to. Nobody did. As I turned on the downwind leg, engine #2 quit due to fuel starvation. At

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this time the bomb bay walkway and the are around the APU were awash in fuel. I unscrewed the turbo stop on #1 engine and used full throttle. I don't know how many inches the engine was pulling, but an observer on the ground told me later that a flame torch of 30-40 feet was coming out of #1. I touched down on the right gear first and she held. Hallalujah! Unfortunately, a connection on the nose gear had been cut and it collapsed! Tore up quite a bit of PSP but got off the runway so as not to block it. Everyone evacuated the aircraft, some while it was still moving. My engineer, S/Sgt. Robertson, using his knowledge of the aircraft, wisely did not turn on the APU for emergency hydraulic power. One spark and we would have blown up. A real thinking pro!

So, chalk up one more milk-run! Subsequent trips to Ploesti were a piece of cake compared to a little city on the southern coast of France.

“A D” Carter  
7611 Songbird Lane N  
San Antonio, TX  
78229

Editor's note: “A D”, let me tell you about Ploesti, 22 July 1944. “There I was ———, wishing I had a piece of cake”. Only kidding!!! We all had our “12 Julys” and they make fantastic reading. Thanks for telling us about yours. As editor, I hope more members send in their “abbreviated stories” (we have limited space, but it is good to put a few into each edition).

\* \* \* \* \*

### THE DAY THE 765TH STOOD DOWN

Wake-up time was 3:30 on a very cold damp and overcast day in 1944. The date has long since faded from my memory but the event can never be erased.

In the barn that we used for chow hall, there was one sleepy bunch of G.I.s trying to down enough coffee and S.O.S. to be able to function.

Chow over, we stumbled into the six-by-sixes for the ride to the line. Almost all of us went sound asleep sitting upright. We were always tired.

Probably we could have gone to sleep standing up. Dawn came upon us softly as we began our preflight routine. This was a maximum effort, and the 765th was to put up twelve planes loaded with 12 500 lb RDX's. We were to preflight the engines and then top-off the tanks. The target was at maximum range, so we needed every drop of gas we could get in. One preflight job was to drain the sumps in the bomb bay. This was done to get rid of any condensation in the system. This is where the story begins and unfortunately ends.

The crew chief was responsible for the condition of the aircraft regardless of who worked on it. He had to know at all times who was in the aircraft and what was being done. This was very important as we learned that morning. About two hardstands north of us a radio technician slipped into an aircraft through the nose wheel door and onto the flight deck without the knowledge of the crew chief. The crew chief went into the bomb bay to drain the sumps. At the same time the radio tech. Activated the laster switch on the flight deck. This closed the main solenoid in the bomb bay. Since these solenoids arc when energized, guess what happened? The next thing we heard were screams of “FIRE, BOMBS, FIRE, BOMBS”. Those screams must have been a hundred decibels above the siren. Every G.I. On the line heard them and broke Jesse Owens' record for the hundred meter dash. We must have, because when plane and bombs blew, not a soul was hurt. How we could escape without injury is beyond belief. There was a 12 foot crater where the plane had stood and holes of various sizes in ten of the twelve planes. A landing gear was found a hundred and fifty yards from the crater. Pieces of the plane were as far as twelve hundred feet away. Most of the ground crews were running when the explosion occurred. The blast picked us up and hurled us fifteen yards further. A few skinned elbows and nothing else. As you would expect, the 765th stood down that day.

Bill Kuhatschek  
10400 Marsh Lane  
Dallas, TX 75229

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Dear George,

Your editorial comment in the June '91 issue of the "Liberaider" requested pictures and other material for use in the newsletter. I am enclosing two pictures taken in the 764th Squadron area during November-December of 1944.

The group picture was taken shortly after Major Marion C Mixson arrived to succeed Major Edwin T Goree as commander of the 764th Squadron. Major Goree had very successfully completed his tour of duty. The picture shows the adobe building that Major Goree and flight surgeon Emil Koenig had built as their place of residence. It was located in the tent area behind the operations and mess buildings.

I trust you will be able to use these pictures in the newsletter.

Respectfully,  
William G. Garrett

Editor's note: Thanks for the pictures, Bill. How about a story or some anecdotes next time?



Left: Lt. Robert A. Harold, 764th Squadron Bombardier

Right: Capt. William G. Garrett, 764th "A" Flight Commander



Left to right:

Capt. John D. Iconis, navigator  
 Capt. Emil J. Koenig, flight surgeon  
 Lt. Clark Barritt, bombardier  
 Major Marion C. Mixson, commander  
 Major Edwin Goree, ex-commander  
 Capt. Roy W. Wyllie, pilot  
 Capt. Leroy Russell, operations officer

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MEN RETURNING DEOM DETACHED SERVICE—SINCE AUGUST 1991

<u>SQD</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>NAME</u>
HDQ	Frank, Rollyn, W.	Norins, Hanley M.	Trier, Arthur H.
	Lane, James H.	Pressley, Thomas J.	Wiscovage, Walter J.
764	Anderson, Lerald R.	Findeisen, Charles	Nevin, Richard
	Balfour, Sanford B.	Foss, Charles F.	Ostrowshi, Harry J.
	Batenic, Jules M.	Furiosi, Nazzarene J.	Otero, John F.
	Bauder, Thomas M.	Gilbert, Robert G.	Panagiotopoulos, John C.
	Bearden, Sidney R.	Gotham, John E.	Parrish, Stewart S.
	Bertrand, Robert	Green, Harris H.	Parsonson, Ernest C.
	Biladeau, Richard J.	Harbort, Harold E.	Poe, Marcus H. Jr.
	Bock, Robert K.	Hissom, Robert C.	Rathfelder, Marvin W.
	Bombard, George A.	Hodgson, George H.	Rautenberg, Bernard R.
	Brasch, Benjamin F.	Hoffman, Paul A.	Robertson, David D.
	Brey, Robert E.	Hradek, Wilbur R.	Savage, Francis Y.
	Brown, Lionel J.	Huszai, Joseph E. Jr.	Sawyer, Gene L.
	Brus, Vincent F.	Inskoop, Warren E.	Schiller, Elmer G.
	Bushee, William F.	Josephson, Abraham	Scogins, Oscar L.
	Carnahan, Robert P. Jr.	Kehr, Glenn L.	Shumaker, Riley L.
	Cashon, Charles A.	Klein, Paul F.	Sovil, Albert H.
	Chal, Robert J.	Kranson, Louis S.	Strickland, Douglas E.
	Conn, Charles B.	Kursel, William J.	Sweezy, Robert C.
	Conners, Robert F.	Maier, Cletus E.	Troup, Merle A.
	Culver, Marion F.	May, Robert C.	Vasquez, John
	Denton, George S.	Merkel, James R.	Volini, Julius A.
	De Nunzio, Charles J.	Mianer, Roger L.	Vollins, Edward
	Diehl, Nolan	Mikelson, Waldo L.	Walker, Wilfred W.
	Doerr, William H.	Morrell, Douglas W.	Wallace, Robert S.
	Dycus, Robert W.	Moss, Edward A.	Woodruff, Wesley N.
		Muskus, Frank J.	
765	Atkins, Robert F.	Fenzl, Earle A.	Mahlock, Eugene E.
	Atran, Sumner D.	Ferland, Maurice J.	Marion, Joseph F.
	Barison, Albert A.	Fitzgerald, Byron J.	Mc Carney, John C.
	Baumbardner, Nathan L.	Fragyglia, Pio R.	Mc Gillen, John G.
	Beldon, Lonnie D.	Friederichs, George L.	Mc Kenzie, William A.
	Bell, Maurice R.	George, Walter B.	Mc Learn, John J.
	Birks, Donald W.	Goldberg, Hersh	Monie, Donald J.
	Bizzari, Eugene L.	Goldstein, Jerome B.	Montgomery, Noel R.
	Bock, William J.	Grayson, Bernard L.	Moore, Wilton
	Bowen, Jack A.	Gribble, J. B.	Mycek, Frank J.
	Brown, Jack E.	Gribble, James K.	Nash, Roy L.
	Burke, A. Patrick	Hardenbeck, William R.	Nickels, Ronald O.
	Butler, Fenton H.	Herling, Harold H.	Partridge, Charles L.
	Charron, John A.	Heyman, Mark S.	Phillips, Rollen L.
	Clark, Richard O.	Hill, Albert G.	Pickering, Orville W.
	Clyburn, Wesley D. Jr.	Household, John	Plummer, Donald I. Jr.
	Colvin, Don E.	Howe, Sidney P. Jr.	Porch, Stanley P.
	Craig, George N.	Kanik, Frank J.	Powell, David T.
	Day, Milton J.	Kershaw, William A.	Pritch, Noris
	Devore, Ernest W.	Knetkowski, Peter	Reznicek, Donald T.
	Donaghue, James	Laynor, Charles V. Jr.	Rockhold, Ken
	Dubal, Robert	Light, Otto T.	Rubenstein, Harold L.
	Ehrenfeld, Sherwood	Lukens, John P.	Sadowski, Edward R.
	Ender, Loel E.	Lundl, Arthur	Samson, Gerald E.

MEN RETURNING DEOM DETACHED SERVICE—SINCE AUGUST 1991

<u>SQD</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>NAME</u>
765	Schafer, William C.	Sonaggera, Tony C.	Turner, Robert W.
	Seene, Charles F.	Stauffacher, Ray H.	Weatherly, Thomas J.
	Shawcross, John H.	Tamea, Conrad D.	Woodruff, Lawrence O.
	Small, Joseph W.	Thackston, James E.	
766	Ace, Keith F.	Griffin, William D.	O'Steen, Paul E.
	Anania, Louis A.	Grossinger, Herbert	Oczkus, Michael
	Assante, Philip A.	Harper, William T. Jr.	Padilla, John M.
	Baier, Frank O.	Hartman, Gilbert H.	Petty, Joy R.
	Balle, Lawrence	Hickey, Morrison F.	Ponzani, Benny
	Batgtelle, Richard K.	Hunsicker, Byron A. Jr.	Powell, Aubrun L.
	Bayles, Charles W.	Hutchison, Stanley O.	Proud, David E.
	Bellmer, Herbert H.	Ingram, Logan L.	Puckett, Gilroy A.
	Berenson, Howard S.	Joines, Joseph C.	Radziminski, Edwin
	Bessen, Roy A.	Kilburn, Elihue	Rutter, Sheldon M.
	Birnbaum, Louis	Knox, Walter L. Jr.	Schumacher, William R.
	Blake, Walter S.	Lanouette, Alfred W.	Shaw, Leland D.
	Bolland, Donald	Leach, Danzel	Short, Herman E.
	Booth, John W.	Leslie, Ray E.	Slaven, Archie R.
	Brannan, Peter N.	Lieblang, George W.	Snell, James A.
	Bretillet, Guy J.	Mac Eachern, Russel C.	Sparling, George W.
	Bridewell, Walter A. Jr.	Mac Kenzie, Emmet G.	Stewart, Walter H.
	Bridges, Carl D. Jr.	Mahoney, George W. A.	Stockler, Joseph A.
	Butch, William R.	Mailhot, Bertrand R.	Stuart, Glenn L.
	Campbell, Kenneth U.	Malosti, Zellie J.	Templin, Gerald L.
	Caron, Frank P.	Massie, Frederick D.	Thistle, Ernest F.
	Carpe, Joseph	Mc Kee, Robert R.	Timmerman, Elmer T.
	Carr, Rudolph C.	Mc Mahon, Joseph H.	Tison, Eugene F. Jr.
	Ciesielski, Harry S.	Megara, Joseph A.	Tregre, Nolan C.
	Coats, Junious F.	Member, Rolland E.	Tucker, William F.
	Davidson, Herb L.	Milby, Wilbur H. Jr.	Tulpan, Theodore F.
	De Perry, Joseph E.	Miles, Oliver B.	Ulrich, Edward G.
	Dixon, Roland J.	Monaco, Sebastian J.	Wagner, Lawrence M.
	Dyment, Robert K.	Morris, Edward J.	Weber, Robert D.
	Fernsten, Claude D.	Mulberg, Hans	Whitman, Claude E.
	Fetbroth, Ira L.	Mulhern, Thomas	Wilde, Norman M.
	Frontera, Joseph	Naujalis, John A.	Wolfe, William S.
	Gear, Murray C.	Nilson, Walter	Yates, Thomas L.
	Genser, Max	Nix, George E.	Zive, Samuel M.
767	Allen, James E.	Bucko, John T.	Erwine, Robert C.
	Amos, Miles E.	Busey, Donald R.	Estrada, Raymond P.
	Barber, John T.	Callenberger, Kenneth R.	Fenn, Dan H.
	Beegle, Charles F.	Celso, Bernard J.	Friedman, Lester M.
	Belcher, Harold B.	Cordella, David P.	Fruchter, Louis
	Bilan, Louis J. Jr.	Culbertson, Henry G. Jr.	Garrison, Albert E.
	Bonshoff, Lawrence	Dace, George W.	Gary, Howard V.
	Boushell, Edward P.	Dearnell, Thomas D.	Gaskill, Robert E.
	Brehmer, Lawrence J.	Dilworth, William G.	Gershberg, Jack M.
	Bryson, Houston S.	Dragone, Olindo	Giesemann, Erwin K. Jr.
	Buchanan, Harvey G.	Dykes, Gerald Y.	Godek, Anthony C.
	Buckheit, Leonard R.	Elliot, Edward A.	Graham, Sam A.



MEN RETURNING DEOM DETACHED SERVICE—SINCE AUGUST 1991

<u>SQD</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>NAME</u>
767	Harvey, Donald W.	Lucas, David E.	Rezendes, Gerald A.
	Heflin, Irvin S.	Lyons, Thomas S.	Rowh, Linn M.
	Henry, George T.	Malfeldt, John R.	Rush, Martin A. Jr.
	Hershiser, Charles A.	Mc Clung, Elbert	Safe, Carl A.
	Herzig, Joseph F.	Mc Daniel, Donald S.	Sargeant, Leonard P.
	Hoffmeyer, Carl L.	Mc Ginnis, Charles D.	Shaw, Robert J.
	Holder, Harvey K.	Miley, Harold B.	Stone, Stanley A.
	Huchzermeier, Harlow R.	Mitchell, Gus T.	Thuemler, George A.
	Innes, Ian R.	Monahan, John G.	Toppin, Charles R.
	Johansson, Hjalmar O.	Mosiniak, Richard D.	Tuck, Paul L. Jr.
	Johnson, Dwain C.	Nantovech, John J.	Vandenheuvel, Clarence
	Keifer, Lowell D.	Nourse, William F.	Venturi, Guido (Jo)
	Kerr, Graham S.	Olsen, Jack W.	Vivian, Earl R.
	Keuziak, Michael	Olson, Myron F.	Warren, Ralph E.
	King, Jack B.	Pearis, Cyril	White, Arlin G.
	Kunkes, Herman J.	Phillips, Robert P.	Wilson, Bernard W.
	Langan, Aloysius E.	Pike Edward W.	Witek, George
	Leese, Frank M.	Purcell, Robert M.	Wittman, John W.
	Leeth, George D. Jr.	Rathell, Ben S.	Woodson, Riley A.
	Long, Halsey H.	Rawchuck, Nicholas	Workman, Nathan T.
	Lorenz, Karl F.	Reitnauer, Cedric A.	

Welcome back!! See you at group briefing in September

*(Continued from page 6)*

Dear George,

About a week ago I received a phone call from Lil Santo notifying me that her husband, Frank had passed away due to a heart attack. Frank and I were armorers in the 766th Squadron since the 461st was activated in 1943. We had corresponded regularly over the years, and I will miss his ready wit and good nature. Please honor his name in your "Taps" column.

Leslie E. Toleen  
 315 Elmwood Rd.  
 Hoyt Lakes, MN 55750

\* \* \* \* \*

Editor's note: In the December 1989 issue (on page 5) I asked for info on the pilot that ramed his nose turret into the tail turret of the plane in front of him on the mission to Munich, 22 November 1944. On page 2 of the July 1990 issue I printed a letter from Jim Van Nostrand (765th Squad.) who was in the plane that got hit in the tail.

Here is first hand information on the incident from the bombardier, George Mahoney, who was in the plane that got hit (or vice versa depending on your point of view).

The event started when our pilot's windows fogged up early in the mission. We had to drop out of the #3 slot in the second section and fill the #7 slot that had been aborted. Our pilot, Jack Yetter, had called in our change before we made the move. It was a "maximum effort" mission with extra planes to fill in for any aborts. Our nose gunner, Buck Bridewell, was the first to report that an "extra" from the lead section was dropping back. As bombardier, I picked up the plane as it stopped directly under us. Then the pilot started to pull up into the "vacant" position we occupied. The whole crew yelled at the pilot to pull up. Yetter said he would call and tell the other plane we were getting too close. Too close was an understatement! Our co-pilot, Ralph Misius, looked down to see what was happening. He found the other plane

*(Continued on page 10)*

*(Continued from page 9)*

was only inches from our props. He jerked the controls from Yetter and pulled up into a near stall just as the planes hit. He held the plane as long as he could to avoid a stall and then dropped the nose to gain flying speed. We missed the other plane by 100 feet on the way back down. If Jim Van Nostrand wants to sit and thank someone, thank Ralph Misius.

When I saw the collision was inevitable, I tried to fasten my chute harness only to find my mae west was partially inflated and I couldn't hook my harness together. If I could, I'd have been out of there for my first parachute jump.

The rest of the mission was just as weird. We flew in the "soup" over much of Austria and Germany, soup so thick that we could only see our wingman at times. The ridiculous part of it was that the mission had been recalled, but our Group had missed the recall. We made a one-group attack on Munich that day and apparently clobbered the target. We were put in for a unit citation for the raid.

Interestingly enough, we had a photographer with us that day too. I understood that he was so shaken that he didn't fly again until March 1945, even though he only had two more missions to go before being sent home. Needless to say, we all gave thanks that Thanksgiving Day.

George W.A. Mahoney 766th  
624 Ute Avenue  
Stillwater, OK 74075

Editor's note: George, since you just returned from Detached Service, you may not have seen the letter from Jim Van Nostrand. I'll buy you a drink if that aerial photographer on your plane was not Jim! Speaking of Thanksgiving, here is the menu served in the 765th Officer's Mess at 1800 on 23 November 1944:

Cream of tomato soup—cranberry sauce—roast turkey—bread stuffing—mashed potato—buttered peas—pineapple cheese salad—bread and peanut butter—mince pie—apples-oranges-nuts-coffee.

President O'Bannon,

Thanks for sending all the information about the 461st. I wrote Ed Chan with offer of some pictures and maybe a record or two (if I can find them).

When our 461st was broken up and members were shipped back to the States in August 1945, our HDQS. Photo lab was chaotic! However, before I was shipped out I grabbed a couple of bombing run strips of 9" x 9" aerial film and a couple dozen aerial photos of planes on bomb runs plus bombing records of our 50th, 100th, 150th and 200th missions from Italy. Also some pictures of General Twining and Colonel Lee. So for your promotions, news information or history I can provide a number of these pictures. —————.

Answering your question about the MOS number 945, this I believe was limited to our Group's photo people. During the 19 months I was at the base near Cerignola, the photo lab setup went as follows:

- We built a "sort-of" photo lab in the stone barn about 150 yds. From the headquarters building.
- Once the 461st was ready to operate, all 17 photographers (called photo lab technicians) were assigned to Group HDQS. Each Squadron had 4 technicians, and Earl Evans, from Group, headed the lab. After several months, Earl was relieved and for about the last year I was unofficial lab chief under Capt. James Clark, officer in charge of the lab.
- From March 1944 to August 1945 we remained assigned to Group. We all lived in tents out in the field about 500 ft. from the HDQS. Bldg.
- I can't remember the names of all technicians, but the lab staff consisted of:

1 Officer	MOS	8503
1 Lab chief	MOS	945
16 Technicians	MOS	945

One of our technicians volunteered to fly with a crew as aerial photographer and was accepted.

Walter H. Stewart  
2636 14th Avenue Ct.  
Greeley, CO 80631

*(Continued on page 11)*

*(Continued from page 10)*

Dear Friends,

The December 1991 "Liberaider" carried a story by John Haberman that brought back memories—the story about Doc Demmond's plane dropping a wheel when the landing gear was lowered after the 25 April 1945 mission to Linz, Austria.

We were on the same mission and had just landed when we got word that one of our planes had lost a wheel. ————. Demmond did a beautiful job of easing the belly down on the gravel runway and holding it straight on the left of the twin runways until it slid off gently just beyond the steel mats.

At critique, we learned that Toothman's plane had been hit and went down. None of our fellows saw parachutes, so we didn't know anything about the fate of the crew. Some twenty-three years later I ran into a young man in Virginia by the name of Toothman. I told him that was an unusual name and asked him of by chance he had a relative who flew in the 15th Air Force. He said he had an uncle that was shot down over Austria near the end of the war. I told him we had never learned the fate of the crew and he informed me that his uncle had parachuted out and was captured by the Germans. ————.

I remember two other things about the critique that day. Two planes in our box had dropped out of formation and had bombed "targets of opportunity" in the area. The pilots had gotten "chewed out" (Editor's note: see letter below) because the battle lines at that time were indistinct and nobody knew where General Patton was. The other "chewing out" was directed at me for retracting my gear too soon on takeoff. For some crazy reason, they always tried to get us to ease back on the wheel when our takeoff speed got to 110 MPH and let the plane fly off by itself. I decided very early that the B-24, at best, was underpowered and sluggish, so I always held it on the ground until 120 MPH and then yanked it off, knowing that a gust of wind wouldn't slam me back on the ground. At the critique, however, I knew better than to offer an explanation and just chuckled to myself.

We were on the last official mission of the 461st, which was a supply drop beside a POW camp at Wolfsberg, Austria. That was a fun trip flying low up the valleys of beautiful Austria, seeing castles and colorful little villages by the streams. We took six guys from ground crew personnel along to give them a look at Austria. Some of the British came up to Cerignola to outfit our bomb bays for a cargo drop (no parachutes). We were to make our drop onto a field marked by yellow panels. The only critical aspect of the trip was throttling down to 145 MPH at 200 ft. for the best ballistics with minimum breakup of the parcels. That wouldn't have been so bad except for the narrow gorge and the hairy u-turn at the end of the gorge beyond the camp. I have since wondered whether Toothman was there and whether he saw the red bar tail markings of the 461st as we passed by.

Guyon Phillips  
4406 Graham Road  
Greensboro, NC 27410

Dear George,

I did not attend the 1991 reunion at Rapid City, but the December issue of the "Liberaider" describes it as a very interesting one, particularly the remarks by Chaplain Hansen, reminders of how much we owe to the heritage of Washington, Lincoln, et al, ———.

John Haberman's letter about the mission to Linz, 25 April jogged my memory and made me look up the old log book. I can add some recollections.

Linz was indeed a heavily defended target ———. Disorganization resulting from it (bad weather) apparently caused the 461st and 451st to make the bomb run in line abreast, on merging courses. Their left wing men at one point were closer to our right wing men than we were to each other. The 451st seemed to veer off after a near burst under one of its planes, off my right wing, tossed it up into a whip stall attitude from which it fell off in a hammerhead stall, slowly turning with the bomb bay a roaring fur-

*(Continued on page 22)*



Wally Robinson's Taurus (767th)



Don Lundberg's RV (764th)

Dave McQuillan's plate reads "461ST (767th)"



Cerignola, Italy, 1944



Italian Wheat Field



Marina Grande Da Casina, Isle of Capri



Marina Grande Da Casina, Isle of Capri





Who flew "You Bet"? Any Stories?



L-R: Ed Rose, John Smith, Jim Affinito of the 764th



Is this Wayne Pifer, 764th?



Debriefing, 461st Bomb Group



Standing, L-R: Joe Donovan, 767th, Ed Goree, 764th and "Doc" Sullivan, 767th, hosting gals from the Red Cross.



L-R: Unknown, Unknown, Col. Hawes, 461st Bomb Group, General Twining, 15th AF, Col. Lee, 49th Bomb Wing, at the presentation of the Unit Citation.



## MISSIONS

Editor's note: In Vol. 7 No.2 of the "Liber Raider", dated December 1990, I reported on Mission #7 which was flown to the Duna (Tokol) A/C Factory, Budapest, Hungary on 13 April 1944. Part of this report copied telegrams received from General Twining, Commander of the 15th Air Force, and Colonel Lee, Commander of the 49th Bomb Wing. The following is offered as a further indication of the excellent mission flown by our fledgling group.

### HEADQUARTERS 461st BOMBARDMENT GROUP (Hv) AAF

APO 520 c/o PM NY NY  
8 November 1944

Subject: Unit Citation

TO: All Concerned

1. The 461st Bombardment Group (Hv) was cited in General Orders 4115, Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, APO 520, US Army, Dated 23 October 1944, for outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy on 13 April 1944. This citation was approved by classified letter 330.13 AAP/WG/mr Subject: Unit Citation, Headquarters United States Army Air Forces Mediterranean Theater of Operation United States Army, APO 650, Dated 2 November 1944. Whereupon pursuant to authority contained in War Department Circular 33(1943) the inclusion of Unit Citation in War Department General Orders becomes automatic. The plain blue streamer was presented to the 461st Bombardment Group on 6 November 1944 by Major General Nathan F. Twining, Commanding General Fifteenth Air Force.
2. 2nd Lt. William J. Abriatis, 0-695846, was assigned to this Group on 13 April 1944 and is, pursuant to authority contained in Par 4a (1) War Department Circular 333(1943), authorized to wear the Distinguished Unit Badge.

By Order of Lieutenant Colonel Hawes

R. Foster Scott  
Major, Air Corps,  
Adjutant.

(Look for the blue streamer on our Group colors at the Dayton reunion)

\* \* \* \* \*

#### MISSION #15 29 April 1944

Target: Submarine Pens, Toulon Harbor, France

This mission took the Group on its first trip to France and to a target in the sixth country of Europe which the Group bombed during the month of April. This was the first mission on which the 451st, 461st and the 484th flew as the groups of the 49th Bombardment Wing. The mission provided another new experience for the Group in that the

target had been previously obscured by a perfect smoke screen from smudge pots located both on land and on ships in the harbor. For the first time the Group used 1,000 pound bombs. Results were unobserved, but no bombs were believed to have hit the target. The Group Bombardier, Capt. Leffler, who was the lead bombardier and who had already turned in five successful missions during the month, both laughed at and cursed the clever krauts.

*(Continued on page 15)*

(Continued from page 14)

Mission #16  
30 April 1944

Target: Alessandria Marshalling Yard, Italy

For the last mission of the month the Group was back in Italy and to its marshalling yard targets. The target, a large one, was hard hit, but the bombs were scattered across a long area. Col. Glantzberg was most unhappy when the pictures showed that only 17 percent of the bombs had hit the aiming point of this easily identified target, especially since the weather was CAVU, and there were neither flak nor fighters to interfere with the bombing.

Mission #17  
1 May 1944

Target: La Spezia Harbor, Italy

The primary target was Parma Marshalling Yard, Italy. Alternate targets were any active marshalling yard in north Italy except Florence and Rimini. Col. Glantzberg led the Wing. The formation ran into overcast at 21,000 ft. short of the target. After dropping to 18,000 ft. to get under the overcast, the Colonel lost part of his own Group formation in making a 360 degree turn at 15,000 ft. The Colonel reassembled the 18 planes left in his formation and bombed La Spezia with fair results.

20 other planes of the Group bombed a total of 8 other targets in northern Italy. Despite the fact that this was the second mission within a month on which the Colonel had lost his formation in weather, had reassembled above the weather and had gone on to bomb an alternate target, he was worried as to what the 15th Air Force would think of the Group and Wing accomplishments for the day.

All was forgiven and forgotten when later reports showed that pilot Keith L. Fuller and his co-pilot Mac L. Lucas, making a single plane attack, had sunk their target of opportunity, a warship in the harbor of La Spezia. The navigator on the plane was

2nd Lt. Thomas E. Daly Jr., and the bombardier was 2nd Lt. Rogue Gonzales.

Mission #18  
5 May 1944

Target: Ploesti Marshalling Yard, Roumania

Major Knapp led the formation on the first mission this Group ever flew to Ploesti. About 30 enemy planes were seen, and a few were encountered. There were no claims. Flak at the target was intense, accurate and heavy. Crew members were surprised at the amount of flak coming from guns placed in open fields outside the city limits.

Seeing that his target had been hard hit and was completely obscured by smoke, the lead bombardier, Lt. King, swung from his briefed target to the large south Marshalling yard which was hit with fair results. The decision by Lt. King brought repercussions from the Group Commander, the 49th Wing, and the Fifteenth Air Force.

On the return route, the formation passed over the defended Bor mines area and was shot up badly by flak. As a result of this flak, the Group came back with its first man killed in action, 2nd Lt. Joseph F. Meyers, a bombardier. Two other men were wounded, and every airplane in the formation was hit.

\* \* \* \* \*

PLEASE LISTEN UP!!!

Your Editor fumbles around the best he can to put out two issues of this newsletter a year. That is all he can handle!!! He has no authority nor responsibility for address lists or changes thereto, nor does he delve in financial matters. Therefore:

1. In matters pertaining to addresses or obituaries, contact Frank O'Bannon, Pres.
2. For financial matters such as dues or expenses, contact G. "Pete" Peterson, Treas.

Their addresses are on page 2.

# TAPS

## MAY THEY REST IN PEACE FOREVER

<u>SQD</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DECEASED</u>	<u>HOMETOWN</u>	<u>DUTY</u>
HDQ	Delany, James H.	1985	Seguin, TX	Duty Soldier
	Fairchild, Charles M.	1982	Baltimore, MD	Radar Tech
	Hand, Sylvan D.	1989	Tampa, FL	Sqdn CO
	Hisey, Claude W.	1992	Milwaukee, WI	Gp Sgt Major
	Russey, Richard B.	1992	Winter Park, FL	A/C Maint. Off.
764	Abbotoni, Gaetana	1987	Belfast, ME	A/C Prop Mech
	Ahl, William J.	1990	Lima, OH	Adm Spec NCO
	Bernstein, Harris R.	1989	New York, NY	Pilot
	Berry, Matthew J.	1975	Terre Haute, IN	A/C Armorer
	Black, Eber T.	1982	Bristol, VA	Cook
	Boozer, John W.	1980	Graham, NC	Pilot
	Bruehl, Martin J.	1967	Oklahoma City, OK	A/C Prop Mech
	Buell, Thomas W.	1983	Pilot Point, TX	Auto Equip Mech
	Buscho, William T.	1981	Morton, MN	Cook
	Charland, Donald G.	1992	Lansing, MI	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Crowe, Charles D.	1992	Eads, TN	A/C Mech/Gunner
	Davis, Gordon O.	1971	Austel, GA	Duty Soldier
	De Bergh, Alfred J.	1959	Passaic, NJ	Cook
	DeBates, Earl E.	1967	Garretson, SD	A/C Armorer
	Dobiesz, Daniel G.	Unk	Buffalo, NY	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Dzikowski, Chester	1991	Bayonne, NJ	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Genoff, James E.	1990	Dunedin, FL	Radio Oper/Gunner
	Greenberg, Hyman	1974	Pittsburgh, PA	Mail Clerk
	Griffin, Thomas B.	1983	Newberry, SC	Auto Equip Mech
	Groch, Frank J.	1977	Trenton, NJ	A/C & Eng Mech
	Guindon, Robert E.	1984	Bogota, NJ	Radio Oper/Gunner
	Harris, Charles T.	1977	Louisville, KY	A/C Mech/Gunner
	Headrick, Charles J.	1982	Unk	Mail Clerk
	Hermanson, Donald W.	1991	San Diego, CA	Bombardier
	Kicmal, Stanley J.	1985	Chicago, IL	A/C Armorer
	Kline, Cyril L.	1992	Charleroi, PA	Pilot
	Mackler, Harry	1989	Kansas City, MO	Bombardier
	MacMullin, Clifford H.	1964	Hudsonville, MI	Cook
	Malone, Francis P. Jr.	1979	Salem, MA	Engine Mech
	Martin, Wylie K.	1964	Washington, PA	Navigator
	Mathis, Walter E.	1990	Roaring River, NC	Cook
	Messa, Frank	1982	Cranston, RI	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Mihich, John	1991	Merrillville, IN	A/C & Eng Mech
	Morris, Roy G.	1986	Unk	Duty Soldier
	Mosora, John	1973	Merrillville, IN	Motor Trans NCO
	Novick, Joe G.	1991	Broompark, OH	A/C Armo/Gunner
Phillips, Billie L.	1991	Geneseo	Cook	
Rakow, Martin A.	Unk	Unk	A/C Armo/Gunner	
Regan, Charles P.	1973	Unk	Crew Chief	
Reynolds, John F.	1991	Madison, WI	A/C Mech/Gunner	
Rhines, Allen	1985	Alliquippa, PA	Unk	
Rozen, Victor R.	1982	Chicago, IL	Pilot	
Sherritt, Donald R.	1983	Unk	A/C Armo/Gunner	

# TAPS

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<u>SQD</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DECEASED</u>	<u>HOMETOWN</u>	<u>DUTY</u>
764	Short, Orville G.	1991	San Clemente, CA	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Spinoso, Peter S.	1991	Staten Island, NY	Clerk-Adm & Tech
	Srader, John K.	1960	Luke AFB, AZ	A/C Armorer
	Trope, Richard A.	1989	Lakewood, OH	Radio Oper/Gunner
	Tufts, Jack M.	1962	W. Memphis, AR	Crew Chief
	Wheeler, Schuyler J.	1966	Houston, TX	A/C & Eng Mech
	Williams, Bernard L.	1984	St. Cloud, FL	Draftsman
	Woodruff, Joseph H.	1976	Casper, WY	Teletype Oper
	Zeldin, Bernard M	1991	Teaneck, NJ	Bombardier
765	Agazzi, Albert J.	1983	San Francisco, CA	Auto Equip Messenger
	Beeken, William T.	Unk	Unk	Sup Tech NCO
	Bentzen, Lloyd	1961	Utah	Unk
	Bomberek, Raymond S.	1972	Lamont, IL	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Chalupa, Joseph Jr.	1980	St. Paul, MN	A/C Armorer
	Cornett, William J.	Unk	Unk	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Cox, Melvin L.	1981	New York, NY	Cook
	Davis, Orrie E.	1978	Grand Rapids MI	Draftsman
	Dawes, Albert E.	1970	Camden, NJ	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Diamond, George	1991	New York, NY	Radio Oper/Gunner
	Duree, John R.	1989	Fairfield, CA	Navigator
	Fennessy, William M.	1981	Santa Maria, CA	Radio Oper/Gunner
	Foster, Oliver G.	1987		Auto Equip Mech
	Fowler, Richard E	Unk	Texas	Bombardier
	Garnes, Andrew L.	1982	Tacoma, WA	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Gold, Wilbur G.	1980	Atlanta, GA	Pilot
	Goss, Arthur S.	1983	Orange CA	Sheet Metal
	Green, Curtis G. Jr.	1987	Garland, TX	Pilot
	Grimm, Walter Jr.	1972	Unk	Auto Equip Mech
	Grogan, Benjamin H.	1977	Kemah, TX	Cook
	Handley, Victor H.	1979	Tacoma, WA	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Heaps, Clarence G.	1958	Yuma, AZ	Auto Equip Mech
	Heikkinen, Urho	1988	Chassell, MI	Munition Worker
	Hicks, James A.	1983	Unk	Cook
	Holly, William M.	1990	Boling Spring, PA	Pilot
	Huber, John J.	Unk	FL	Bombardier
	Hudson, Atlas M.	1985	Albemarle, NC	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Hudson, John C.	1987	Windber, PA	A/C & Eng Mech
	Iberer, Joseph	1977	Union City, NJ	Mail Clerk
	Keatley, Perry T.	1982	Pahrump, NV	Navigator
	Keiser, Warren J.	1991	Lansdale, PA	Unk
	Lanigan, John H.	1958	Milton, MA	Bombardier
	Lowe, Daniel R.	1975	Savannah, GA	Cook
	Mahuta, Eugene A.	1958	Milwaukee, WI	Radio Oper/Gunner
	Martinez, Jesus	1974	San Antonio, TX	Duty Soldier
	Medelis, Algird A.	1989	Farmington Hill, MI	Clerk Adm
Melton, Roy F.	1979	Nashville, TN	Cook	
Mills, Byron D.	Unk	Hudson, FL	Radio Oper	
Morvec, Curtis M.	1985	Monroe, CT	Bombsight Mech	

# TAPS

## MAY THEY REST IN PEACE FOREVER

<u>SQD</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DECEASED</u>	<u>HOMETOWN</u>	<u>DUTY</u>
765	Pavletich, Jack P.	1979	Jacksonville, TX	A/C Armorer
	Planty, Glenford R.	1989	Potsdam, NY	Cook
	Porter, Ira A.	1989	Unk	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Powers, Eli	1984	Hydro, OK	Munition Worker
	Price, Stanley	1989	Bloomington, IL	Am Sup Tech NCO
	Raetz, Vincent L.	Unk	Shelbyville, IL	Radar
	Rapp, Francis G.	1948	Washington, DC	Pilot
	Ridzy, Frank	1981	Cleveland, OH	Auto Equip Oper
	Riedel, Alvin A.	1985	Hays, KS	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Riggles, George	1963	Unk	Cook
	Sasvay, Steve E.	1965	Cleveland, OH	Draftsman
	Sheeto, Paul W.	1990	McAdoo, PA	A/C Armorer
	Smith, Harry B. Jr.	Unk	Unk	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Starnes, Charles J.	1986	Denver, CO	Auto Equip Messenger
	Summers, Harry G.	1967	Indianapolis, IN	Cook
	Szewczyk, John A.	1987	Johnston, PA	Cook
	Tribe, Reginald V. Jr.	1988	Unk	Pilot
	Turbin, Michael	1978	Donora, PA	Cook
	Tyre, Marvin E.	1982	Staunton, VA	Unk
	Veselenak, Steve	1991	Byesville, OH	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Vidovichk, Elmer G	1991	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	A/C Armo/Gunner
	White, John B.	1983	Reading, PA	Cook
	Yashinski, Albert A.	1984	Shamokin, PA	Auto Equip Messenger
766	Ashworth, Robert G.	1991	Bridge City, TX	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Austin, Joseph A.	1990	Greenville, SC	Munition Worker
	Battros, Edward F.	1985	San Antonio, TX	Cook's Helper
	Beckman, Verner R.	1970	Belle Vernon, PA	Bombardier
	Bennett, John W.	1974	Sapola, OK	Mail Clerk
	Calgocy, Louis G.	1989	CA	A/C Mech & Gunner
	Chessman, Walter R. Jr.	1969	Dayton, OH	A/C & Eng Mech
	Clutts, Marcus E.	1990	Cobden, IL	Cook
	Crownover, Roy K.	1990	Knox City, TX	Duty Soldier
	Del Giorgio, Leo	1957	Unk	Cook
	DeStefano, Peter F.	1988	New Hartford, NY	A/C Armo/Gunner
	DeWelles, Theodore R.	1991	Rochester, NY	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Doran, Donald J.	1973	Unk	Radio Oper/Gunner
	Farbacher, Joseph K.	1981	Glenshaw, PA	Motor Trans NCO
	Frank, Morris S.	1989	Lewisburg, KY	Auto Equip Mech
	Galloway, Charles B.	1960	Unk	Cook
	Gilliland, Cecil H.	1991	Los Angeles, CA	Aerial Photo
	Gravener, Harrison D.	1982	Philadelphia, PA	Duty Soldier
	Hacker, Robert M.	1971	Denver, CO	Bombardier
	Hankins, Richard W.	1969	Unk	Duty Soldier
	Hoffman, Robert L.	1983	Unk	Bombardier
	Kettleman, Albert B.	1966	Unk	Auto Equip Mech
	King, Veria B. Jr.	1989	Murfreesboro, TN	A/C Mech & Gunner
	Knievel, Jack W.	Unk	San Diego, CA	Bombardier
	Loux, Alvin L.	1972	Unk	Mail Clerk



# TAPS

## MAY THEY REST IN PEACE FOREVER

<u>SQD</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DECEASED</u>	<u>HOMETOWN</u>	<u>DUTY</u>	
766	Luttazi, Phillip S.	1984	Dover, MA	Navigator	
	McAdams, Cecil L.	1989	Sandy, UT	Med Adm Spec NCO	
	Miller, Earl L.	1973	Spokane, WA	Mail Clerk	
	Mougianis, Emanuel	1991	Brockport, NY	Radio Oper/Gunner	
	Naujalis, John A.	1992	Mesa, AZ	A/C Armo/Gunner	
	Neal, Leo	1981	Freemont, NE	Cook	
	Ortiz, Angelo	1988	Bronx, NY	Cook	
	Panneck, Leo L.	1989	Taunton, MN	Clerk, Adm & Tech	
	Patton, Robert W.	1989	Wichita, KS	Navigator	
	Perz, Jack R.	1971	Mt. Prospect, IL	A/C Armo/Gunner	
	Reaney, George	1984	Torrington, CT	A/C Armo/Gunner	
	Redden, Joseph J.	1971	Denver, CO	Exec Off	
	Reiland, Thomas J.	1982	Floral Park, NY	A/C Mech & Gunner	
	Ridenour, James M.	1991	Huntington Beach, CA	Pilot	
	Rula, Joseph J.	1972	Somerville, NJ	Auto Equip Mech	
	Schwing, August J. Jr.	1991	Muskegon, MI	A/C & Eng Mech	
	Tynan, Eugene J.	1986	Kingstown, RI	Bombardier	
	Wager, Howard H.	1984	Elmont, NY	A/C Mech & Gunner	
	Weger, Joseph M.	1971	Kennedy Hts, WI	Cook's Helper	
	West, John	1982	Nashville, TN	A/C Armo/Gunner	
	Wiercinski, Casimer J	1987	Unk	Cook	
	Williams, William H.	1986	Fayetteville, NC	A/C Armo/Gunner	
	Winne, George W.	1965	Butler, NJ	A/C Armorer	
	Zagraniczny, Walter A.	1984	Erie, PA	Cook	
	Zannetti, Raymond O.	1989	Youngstown, OH	Radio Oper/Gunner	
	767	Astukewicz, William	1982	Worcester, MA	A/C & Eng Mech
		Bell, John W.	1982	Walsenburg, CO	Auto Equip Mech
		Bombardier, Gerald A.	Unk	St. Albans, VT	A/C Mech & Gunner
		Broderick, Edward T.	1977	Philadelphia, PA	Munition Worker
		Buyze, Edwin K.	1987	St. Clair Shores, MI	Bombsight Mech
		Carefoot, Russell F.	1988	Brookings, OR	A/C Armorer
		Caruso, Frank V.	1985	Newark, NJ	A/C Armo/Gunner
Cash, Leonard P.		1963	Burdett, NY	Pilot	
Catana, Anthony M.		1990	Port Charlotte, FL	Bombardier	
Clark, Stanley E.		1968	Unk	Cook	
Davignon, Norman L.		Unk	Unk	A/C Mech & Gunner	
DeKay, Paul		1986	Springville, NY	A/C Refuel Oper	
DeLong, Richard R.		1978	Okron, OH	Mail Clerk	
Dinnetz, George M.		1965	Spokane, WA	A/C Crew Chief	
Druesedow, Charles H.		1987	Cambridge, OH	Air Gunner	
Ellis, Donald E.		1992	Wycombe, PA	Radio Oper/Gunner	
Faherty, Patrick J. Jr.		1979	Quincy, MA	Bombardier	
Faherty, Somin		1991	Wollaston, MA	Photo Lab Tech	
Ferguson, Bobbie E.		1986	Unk	Radio Oper/Gunner	
Hennety, James O.		1982	Unk	Cook	
Hess, Robert W.		1946	Forksville, PA	Opers Off	
Hopkins, Earl E.		1979	Huntington, WV	Cook	
Horn, Truman L. Jr.		1990	Nacogodches, TX	Pilot	
Howard, Edward L.		1966	Unk	Cook	

# TAPS

## MAY THEY REST IN PEACE FOREVER

<u>SQD</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DECEASED</u>	<u>HOMETOWN</u>	<u>DUTY</u>
767	Hutton, John P.	Unk	Marysville, Tn	Pilot
	Ignizio, Thomas	1979	Akron, OH	A/C Maint Tech
	Jackson, James	1987	Frank, NC	Cook
	Koistinen, Raavo A.	1959	Linden, NJ	Pilot
	Leggio, Sebastian R.	Unk	Unk	Navigator
	Lund, Raymond C. Jr.	1992	Canton, OH	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Manning, John H.	1990	Unk	Cook
	May, Olen	1990	Bakersfield, CA	Cook
	Meadows, James W.	Unk	Unk	A/C Mech & Gunner
	Minden, Bernard L.	1945	Dubuque, IA	A/C & Eng Mech
	Minsberg, Samuel S.	1989	Van Nuys, CA	Pilot
	Morgan, Merlon G.	1965	Beaumont, TX	Pilot
	Morris, Max G.	1968	Hollis, OK	A/C Crew Chief
	Newsome, Thomas W.	1989	Suffolk, VA	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Pedrevita, Nicholas J.	1988	Enfield, CT	Munition Worker
	Peterson, Carl B.	1992	Riceville, IA	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Pinta, Jack	1982	N. Hollywood, CA	Unk
	Platz, Constant V.	1949	New Orleans, LA	Navigator
	Riley, Francis J.	1991	Madison, AL	Pilot
	Rinko, Peter J.	1975	Unk	Cook
	Rogoskos, Stephen P.	1988	CT	A/C & Eng Mech
	Scheja, Aldolph E.	1990	Unk	Cook
	Sellers, Woodrow W.	1972	Memphis, TN	A/C Elec Mech
	Shipman, Leonard S.	1989	St. Libory, NE	Unk
	Skwirsk, Harold A.	1979	Lapeer, MI	A/C Inst Mech
	Swentkosky, William	1970	New York, NY	Cook
	Swingholm, James	1987	Arapahoe, WY	Auto Equip Mech
	Thomas, Marvin W.	1967	Jonesboro, NC	A/C Crew Chief
	Tomlin, Ralph J.	1991	Leavenworth, KS	Unk
	Vaughn, Dwaine J.	Unk	Omaha, NE	Pilot
	Vernooy, Kenneth H.	1983	Middletown, NY	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Weber, Clyde W.	1991	Kirtland, MO	A/C Armo/Gunner
	Wingert, Frank H.	1981	Unk	Cook
	Zewe, Robert J.	1976	Pittsburgh, PA	A/C Armo/Gunner
766	Santonstaso, Frank S.	1992	Medusa, NY	A/C Armorer

(Santo, Frank S.—See "Mail Call" note from Les Toleen on Page 9)



### IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO SERVED

Air Force Academy  
Memorial Day 1991

The Memorial Plaque from the  
461st Bomb Group (H) honoring  
those who served during WW II



### THE LAST FLIGHT OS AN AERIAL GUNNER

The twilight has slipped away; the sun has set on the career of the aerial gunner. The last official flight of the aerial gunner has been completed. The aerial gunner has flown heroically into the pages of history, aboard a B-52G bomber number 62595. This flight took place on 30 September 1991 at Castle AFB, California. The unit: The 328th Bombardment Squadron, of the 93rd Bombardment Wing, 15th Air Force.

The era of the aerial gunner began for the United States, in 1917, during WWI. The country will never again see the heroism, the valor, the exploits, the love of country, exemplified by the aerial gunner during the era just past.

At 1100, on 30 September 1991, the crew met at base observations for a final bit of mission planning and a check of the weather along the route. Two gunners were chosen for this flight: student gunner, Airman First Class Patrick J. Torres, who was on his ninth training flight. His instructor gunner was the 93rd Bombardment Wing Gunner, Senior Master Sergeant John T. Stanton. Next it was off to intelligence, then to personal equipment (life support) to pick up helmets and finally to the aircraft B-52G #62595, which had seen service in the Persian Gulf War.

After a routine preflight, the aircraft taxied and departed Castle AFB at 1345.

The final landing came at 1703 Pacific Daylight Time (fittingly, it was twilight time). The aircraft was parked on the ramp with the tail facing to the west. The sun had just set, the sky was a beautiful red with a few wispy clouds. The silhouette of the actual "sunset" for an elite, gallant group of men, aerial gunners.

At 1100, on 22 November 1991, a ceremony was held at Castle Air Force Base, CA to honor aerial gunners and to remove the guns from the B-52

#624595, in order to take their place in history in the Castle Air Museum. The 50 caliber guns were then dedicated as follows:

Serial #2306842, dedicated to all gunners, past and present for their stead fast vigilance.

Serial #232065, dedicated to all maintenance people for their never ending support.

Serial #951804, dedicated to all KIA, MIA and POWs. We will never forget you.

All Americans would certainly do well to remember the contributions of the gallant men who served as aerial gunners and of those who died, were missing in action, or taken prisoners of war. They fought in defense of their country, making sure the bomber got to the target.

Editor's note: The next reunion of the Air Force Gunners Association will be held in Washington, DC, July 15-19, 1993. If interested, write Air Force Gunners Association, P. O. Box 844, Denair, CA

#### REUNION 1992

September 23—27  
Marriott Hotel  
Dayton Okio

You all should have received the reunion package. If you have not already sent in your registration form, DO SO NOW!! Hotel room and tour space is going fast and is on a "first come, forst served" basis. The "drop dead" date for registraions is 20 August. No late registrations will be accepted at the door.

#### FOR YOU CAMPERS!

The Montgomery County Fairgrounds is recommended. RV hookups include water, electrical and trash pickup.

Address: 1043 South Main St.  
Dayton, Ohio 45409  
Phont: (513)224-1619

(Continued from page 11)

nace. I failed to notice its further fate in that hectic situation.

There was a lot of early toggling, which was not necessarily a waste because the Goering Tank Works was in the vicinity of the marshalling yard.

I had the camera ship that day and got back to Torretta early. It was like a “snowfall” of parachutes in the area when the group returned. Doc Demmond did belly in his plane beautifully, but some of us pilots and flight engineers groaned in frustration. It was aircraft #35 which had a reputation for “acting up”. One of its tricks was that graveyard spiral on staple’s crew not long before. We had hoped for class 26!!

I wish there had been a video of the critique that evening. It was a riot of charge and counter charge about poor formation, weather, toggling short and so forth. One of the pilots had aborted just before the Linz area and had bombed a nearby target of opportunity. Major Crider told him he was not getting a mission credit because General Patton might have been there. The furious pilot jumped up and yelled, “Then why the hell was he shooting at me!”

Pickering was B/N for me on the Linz mission. It was to be his 25th and last one. I can still hear him (on the intercom) giving “Mark Twain” steering instructions to group lead during withdrawal evasive action, “Left! More left! No, right! Right! Ri—No, left! Etc.”

Keep up the good work, George.

Bob Kelliher, 765th  
14201 S. Stewart Ave.  
Riverdale, IL 60627

\* \* \* \* \*

### SO MUCH FOR LINZ

25 April 1945

It makes for a great story but there has to be many more out there. Let’s hear about them!

## FINAL RESULTS

461st Bomb Group (H)  
2 April 1944—26 April 1945

Combat hours flown	46,203
Aircraft over targets	5,298
Bomb tonnage on target	10,885

Enemy Aircraft	Destroyed	129
	Probables	44
	Damaged	16

461st aircraft lost	108
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Casualties	Total	925
	Killed	98
	MIA	399
	MIS returned	210
	POW	213

Decorations awarded	Distinguished Unit Citation	2
	Battle Star	10
	Legion of Merit	4
	Silver Star	15
	Distinguished Flying Cross	396
	Soldier’s Medal	15
	Bronze Star	78
	Air Medal	7,825
	Purple Heart	279

Editor’s note: I have no source for the above data, so I can not vouch for its accuracy or authenticity, but...

On page 6 of the original “Liberaider” there is a picture of Sgt. Malcolm Cowley being awarded the Legion of Merit from Col. Hawes, Group Commander. This is the nations fourth ranking medal and the group’s top award. Sgt. Cowley, where are you? There has to be an interesting story behind that award! Will you tell us about it?

Is there anyone else in the group that remembers the incident and can tell us the story behind the award? Four Legion of Merit awards were made. Does anyone know who the other three were?



## CONNIE'S CAPS ARE CHARMS FOR LIBERATOR CREW

Unscathed U.S. fliers credit luck to the Philadelphia Athletics' headgear.

The Ten-Men crew of a B-24 Liberator who came through 15 sorties into the heart of Germany without a scratch are quick to disclaim any credit but rather point to some blue-and-white athletics' caps as solely responsible for their record.

How these B-24 crewmen have regarded the headgear with increasing fondness and superstition, and how the loss of a cap over Austria prompted them to put in a hurried call for a replacement, makes an interesting anecdote from World War II.

The superstition that the A's caps owned protective qualities above those of government issue was spawned following a near fatal crash during training. It was enhanced over Linz, Austria on 25 July 1944 when their squadron, the 767th of the 461st Bomb Group, was attacked by fighters and their ship was the only one to return to base that day. Though flak and bullets by-passed it, the liberator wasn't unscathed. One of the gunners lost his cap out the waist window.

For "the rest of the story" talk to the crew members at our reunion in Dayton, Ohio, 23 to 27 September 1992.



Sgt. Herbert S. Weber  
He wrote to Connie Mack for caps.  
See response on back page.



Standing (L to R)

Lt. John W. Mc Cauley, Co-Pilot  
Lt. Robert J. Luebke, Pilot  
Lt. Miles E. Amos, Bombardier

Kneeling (L to R)

Sgt. Donald R. Hilgart, Gunner  
Sgt. George A. Iubelt, Radio Op.  
Sgt. Herbert S. Weber, Tail Gunner  
Cpl. Lee J. Fitzpatrick, Ball Gunner  
Cpl. George H. Hart, Nose Gunner  
Cpl. Graydon E. Dahlen, Top Gunner

The Navigator, Armand Bottiglia,  
was not present for the picture





**AMERICAN BASE BALL CLUB  
OF PHILADELPHIA**

TWENTY-FIRST STREET AND LEHIGH AVENUE

June 9, 1944

Cpl. Herbert S. Weber, Jr. 32857717,  
Detachment G. Section 2,  
Davis - Monthan Field,  
Tucson, Arizona.

Dear Cpl. Weber:

Received your letter of June 5th.

Have instructed the firm that furnishes  
our club with caps to send you the ten that you  
requested if they can possibly do so.

Wishing you every success, I am

Very truly yours,

*Connie Mack*  
CONNIE MACK  
President

CM:P

See the previous page for the story behind these caps.

Are there any other crews that have similar stories to tell?

\* \* \* \* \*

**461st BOMB Group (H) 1943-1945, Inc.**  
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East Sandwich, MA 02537-9998  
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E. SANDWICH, MA  
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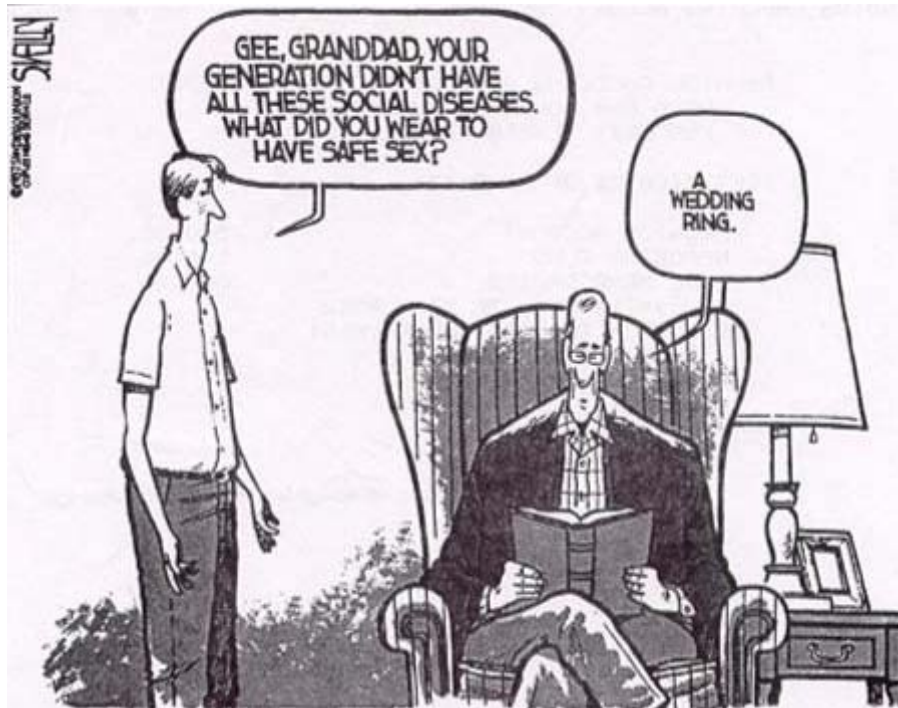
“All American” B-24 Summer Tour

The Collings Foundation has published a tentative summer schedule for their B-24, the “All American” and their B-17, “Nine-O-Nine”. The two aircraft will tour together unless mechanical problems interfere. I have not seen the B-17 but would guess the two aircraft, traveling together, make an impressive sight. Double check the location and date before traveling to see them. You can call the Collings Foundation at (508) 562-9182 for current information.

	<b>DATE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
June	18-20	Rapid City
	20-22	Scottsbluff
	22-24	Grand Isle
	24-26	Lincoln
	26-28	Quad-City Airshow
	28-30	Waterloo
June 30—July 2		Winona/Lacross
July	2-4	St. Paul
	4-8	Minneapolis
	10-12	Muskegon
	24-28	Westover A.F.B.
Aug	8-9	Ft. Wayne
Sept	26-27	N.E.E Airshow
Oct	1	485th B.G. Reunion Hanscom A.F.B.

\* \* \* \* \*

For what it’s worth!



Financial Statement  
 461st Bomb Group (H) 1943-1945  
 For year ending December 31, 1991

Beginning checking account balance 1-1-91 \$7,354.70

Receipts

Dues	\$12,050.69	
PX Sales	2,872.11	
Interest earned (checking)	212.47	15,135.27
		\$22,489.97

Disbursements

Treas. Office supplies	402.50	
Printing Liberaiders	2,200.83	
Pres. Office supplies	5,033.59	
Reunions	4,518.99	
PX supplies, postage	2,565.50	
CPA 1990	475.00	
Computer and furniture	1,083.99	
Memorial, Fresno, CA	500.00	
Hospital for Blind	2,766.40	
Life Memberships	2,000.00	21,546.80

Ending checking account balance 12-31-91 \$943.17

Reunion checking account (used for advance payments for next year's reunion)	\$2,150.13	
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Certificates of Deposit:

Reunion account	\$7,500.00	
Memorial Fund	500.00	
Life Memberships	3,000.00	
(\$4.61 will be disbursed from this CD for payment of dues each year for each life member.)		