

1998 REUNION

Boston, Massachusetts

Thursday, August 20, 1998

The 1998 reunion of the 461st Bomb Group had finally arrived. There were over 200 of us who checked in and registered at the Raintree Sheraton Tara Hotel. After visiting with friends we loaded a bus for Boston's Quincy Market and Faneuil Hall. Many of us enjoyed a delicious seafood dinner at the Famous Durgin Park. For the remainder of the evening we shopped and browsed through Faneuil Hall and Quincy Market and were entertained by the many street performers.

Friday, August 21, 1998

We loaded two big buses and had a half hour ride to the Plimoth Plantation in Plymouth, Massachusetts. We walked around the plantation and experienced authentic country living in 1627. The local "citizens" were garbed in period costumes and talked with us as if they were actually Pilgrims. It was there that we had our All-American Barbecue for lunch, consisting of hot-dogs, Boston Baked beans, corn on the cob, and more. Next we went to see Plymouth Rock and the Mayflower II. The ship is an exact replica of the Mayflower and is kept in sailing condition with crewmembers dressed as Pilgrims.

That evening we enjoyed visiting with each other at the Squadron Dinners which were well attended and the meal was delicious.

Saturday, August 22, 1998

After a continental breakfast at the hotel we again boarded our buses for the Historic Tour to Lexington and Concord. We were divided into three groups and gathered on the Lexington Common to listen to costumed Patriots and Militia Minute Men tell about Paul Revere and other events that occurred on the night of April 18th, 1775 with the British Regulars. We again boarded the buses and listened to a narrative of the events that occurred on the way as we followed The Battle Road past Emerson's, Thoreau's, and Louisa May Alcott's houses to the North Bridge in Concord. There we were treated to an outstanding narrative by Park Ranger Jessica who described the events that lead to the start of the Revolutionary War. At the end, she asked the question, "Exactly where and when did The Revolution start?" and then gave us several possibilities based on events that took place as the British marched from Lexington to Concord.

We stopped at a park along the road and ate a box lunch either sitting on a rock or on the grass.

Then we were off to Boston to tour the city on Duck Boats (Restored WWII Amphibious Landing Craft). We boarded the three boats at the Prudential Center Downtown and drove up and down the streets looking at all the sites. Our Duck Boats then entered the Charles River and sailed through the old locks and up the river a few miles. It was a unique and thoroughly interesting experience.

The annual business meeting was held in the afternoon and was well attended. It was announced that next year's Reunion would be held in early October in Omaha, Nebraska. As this was the last year that Frank O'Bannon would be President, Bob Hayes was elected President, Pete Peterson, Vice President, Bob Casey, Treasurer. Frank O'Bannon volunteered to be the official Group Historian. The Directors and their alternates, who were elected at the Squadron Dinners Friday night, are as follows:

Group Headquarters	Len Cole with Nye E. Norris alternate
764th Squadron	Paul Bella with John Young alternate
765th Squadron	Hank McCann with Walter Fries alternate
766th Squadron	Gerald Huizenga with Gene Brock alternate
767th Squadron alternate	Kelton Bush with Socrates Delianedis

A large crowd attended the annual Banquet on Saturday evening. Prior to the dinner the Colors were presented by members of the Continental uniforms and marched in step with a Company Drummer. It was very impressive. The Drummer, see bottom photograph on page 7, is a Past National President of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Frank O'Bannon arranged for their participation as an officer in the Tucson Area Sons of the American Revolution. The Prime Rib dinner was delicious.

George Dickie presented Frank O'Bannon, "Founding Father" of the 461st Bomb Group Association, with several interesting and innovative gifts in appreciation for his many years of service. The main gift was a desk top sized cast pewter model of a B-24 painted the same way as the B-24 Frank flew from California to Italy. Thanks again, Frank!

Unfortunately our disc jockey had to compete with the wedding reception rock and roll band next door. We were able to get in a few tunes for dancing.

Sunday, August 23, 1998

We were up early for the Memorial Service led by Rev. Dr. Finley M. Keech. We then enjoyed a very nice buffet breakfast. As some of us bid farewell to friends at the close of another very successful Reunion, others got ready to tour the JFK Library that was one of the optional tours available.

George Dickie and his co-director Janet Kirsch from Al Ways Travel in Sandwich, Massachusetts are to be commended for an outstanding Reunion. The tours were very enjoyable and informative and all the accommodations and meals were splendid. George, we thank you for an excellent Reunion and look forward to seeing everyone again next year at Omaha.

Submitted by,
Thad Farris, 765th Squadron
with the assistance of Barbara Alden,
Daughter of Jay Garner, 765th Squadron