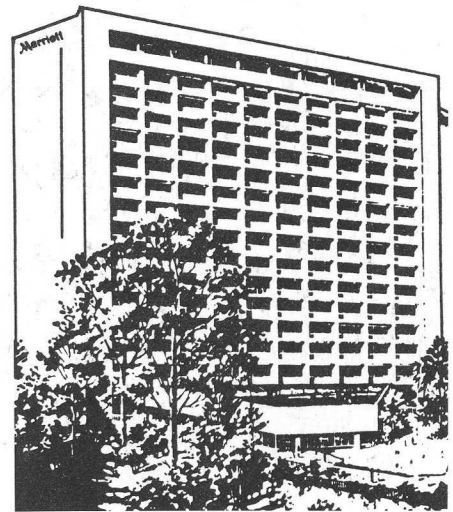


The Torretta Flyer

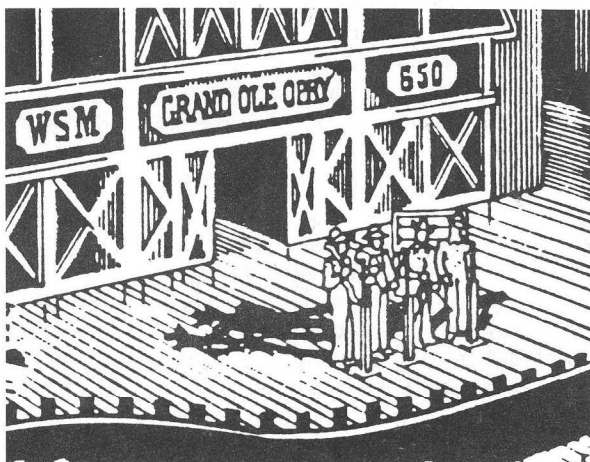
Torretta Flyer No 18 Redondo Beach, California Winter 1989-1990

**1990 REUNION SET FOR NASHVILLE,
TENNESSEE**
**October 12 to 15, 1990 at the Nashville Marriott
Hotel**

See page 3 for details



In this piece of original art by Randolph Advertising, the ramp at Tempelhof in Berlin is packed with C-54s. Soviet authorities, conditioned by the relatively small Luftwaffe lifts in WWII, apparently never expected the lift into Berlin to be as big or as successful as it turned out.) Courtesy the United States Air Force Art Collection. (See page 7 Berlin Airlift)



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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

NOT to be outdone by the nation's press, we are including in this issue a historical piece about the changes taking place in Eastern Europe. The Berlin Airlift story starts from the time when our relationship began to deteriorate with the Eastern Block nations. It was our staunch determination not to be forced out of Berlin that brought on the Airlift, to the great surprise of the Russians. They underestimated us, they didn't think that air shipments could supply a city of three and a half million people, and they didn't think we had the guts to stick it out. Well, history proved them wrong. What is interesting to conjecture is: If the airlift had not taken place would the Russians be so anxious to retreat from Eastern Europe now? The article first appeared in "Air Power History" the journal of the Air Force Historical Foundation. It is reprinted by permission of the author Dr Roger D Launius Ph.D Command Historian, Military Airlift Command, Scott AFB,IL.

Dr. Launius earned his Ph.D. in History at Louisiana State University in 1982, following an MA. in History from LSU and in History from Graceland College, Iowa. He was the Chief, Office of History, at Ogden Air Logistics Center before assuming his present post.

Because of the length of the main article on the Berlin Airlift. The regular stories sent in by members will appear in Flyer No 19 which is planned for Spring 1990 release.

The Last Mission list is a bit long as compared to previous issues because of a back log of unpublished notices and the increased rate of members passing, no doubt, as a result of our advancing age.

This issue was originally set for fall publication, but because of the pressures of outside activities it was delayed. When it became apparent that the political upheavals in Eastern Europe were going to be more than temporary, we looked for a story that would tie-in a very important event in Air Force history with 'today's news'. This further delayed this issue.

In the last three quarters of the 1989 we have received many interesting letters that we are sharing with you in this issue. The one from Fred Roessler regarding the Allison powered B-17 (B-38) is most interesting in that this version, had it been put into production, would have been faster than our beloved B-24. Luckily for us the P-38s, P-40s, and early P-51s had a higher demand for the Allison, and the B-17 had to keep their clunky Wright 1820s.

NEWS OF THE ASSOCIATION

New Members New memberships are the life blood of any organization. While the Association does as well as other similar veterans' groups the potential of undiscovered members is too large to ignore any longer. As an example we have 3000 names on our data base without addresses. We know there are at least another 3000 or more out there that we have no information on at all. Some of these names appear on micro film records that are in our library, but require funding to print out.

The main goal of the Association is to bring members together. We have never been funded adequately to give serious consideration to a large scale search for new members by using paid publicity. This fall, Beatrice and I attended a Veterans Meeting Planners Conference in Washington. DC. During the course of the meeting, we met the representatives of several companies that provide locator services for a per person fee.

We need funds to pay for this type of locator service as well as funds to pay for advertisements (publicity) in the print media.

Micro Films The Association has in its library sixteen each 16mm microfilm reels of 2000 pages each from Maxwell Field. This represents 32,000 pages of documents dealing mainly with the WWII history of our 461st and 484th units, the 49th Wing, and the 15th Air Force. At the time these reels were purchased, the Association had the loan of a 16 mm reader-printer which had to be returned. A 16MM micro film reader printer is priced between \$3000 to \$6000 depending on model and discounts. At a bulk rate of ten cents per page, printing out the reels to 8 1/2 by 11 inch pages would represent a budget of \$3200 plus the cost of covers and bindings. These costs are beyond the present operating budget of the Association.

Bequests to the Association We have received notification from one of our long time members, Emmet S Goff (484th BG 825 Squadron) indicating that he has included instructions in a letter to the executor of his will that his various Air Force memorabilia be donated to the 461st & 484th Bomb Groups Association. This is in addition to materials previously sent to the Association.

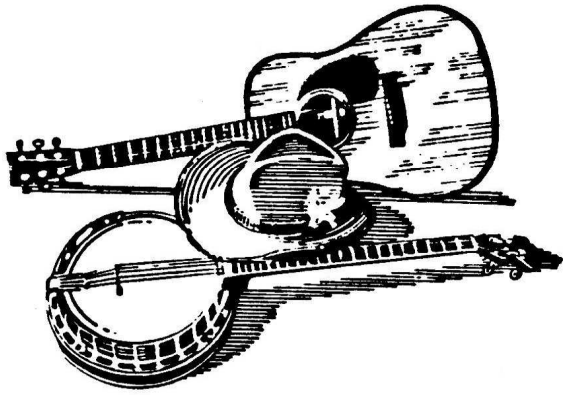
He has suggested that we invite other members to make similar bequests to the Association. This is an idea worthy of all of our 461st and 484th members for the build-up and preservation of the documents, and photographic exhibits we have been assembling to record the history of the two groups. We applaud his most welcome bequest in carrying out one of the stated purposes of the Association and ask all our members to do the same.

Scholarship Grants An important event in the history of the Association took place when the scholarship grants were increased from three to four students in 1989. The awards ceremony this fall in Cerignola took an unexpected turn as you will read about in the Report of Scholarship Committee member, Chris Donaldson.

Modem Our thanks and gratitude to member Leon Usher, 825 Squadron, for the very timely gift of a modem. The Association can now receive electronic mail, information from data banks, institutions, and commercial services. Members wishing to send in stories using MacIntosh compatible programs may do so via modem also.

ITALIAN TOUR

We have had requests from members on the possibility of a new tour to Italy. A suggested tour has been planned that visits the major attractions of the country. The suggested all inclusive tour price for 1990 departure will be in the range of \$2600.00 to \$2800.00 for a 13 day all escorted tour. (Tour prices for 1991 will be slightly higher). Cities visited are: Venice, Florence, Pisa, Rome, Pompeii, Sorrento, Capri, Foggia, Cerignola, and Bari. The price includes air fare from New York, all ground transportation, transfers, continental breakfasts, 9 Dinners, First Class hotels with private bath, English speaking guide, and all taxes and service charges. To set the tour in motion a minimum of 30 persons need to participate. No dates have been set for this year, or 1991. Members interested in this tour should fill out the tour portion of the tear slip included in this issue. More information can be obtained by calling the office at 213/316/3330.



NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE SITE OF 1990 REUNION OCTOBER 12-15, 1990

Nashville Marriott Hotel

The Nashville, Tennessee Marriott Hotel will be the headquarters of the 1990 reunion. Room rates are \$65.00 per night, single to quad. The rates also apply three days prior and three days after the reunion October 9, to October 18, 1990. Because this is prime time in Nashville, members and guests are urged to make their hotel reservations before the deadline date of **September 20, 1990**. The reunion rate after that date cannot be guaranteed. Use either the tear slip part of this Flyer or if phone reservations are preferred, use the direct hotel number only: **(615) 889-9300**. The Marriott has an airport shuttle bus for use of guests.

The **Grand Old Opry** is the major tourist attraction of the city, and is the prime showcase for Country & Western music. The popularity of Country and Western music grew first from radio and later television broadcasts from the Grand Old Opry stage. It spread this music across the land where it has been received by many receptive ears. As its popularity grew, the demand for tickets to live performances has grown also, to the point that performances a year in advance are sold out. We were able to purchase a block of 150 tickets last year, right after the New Orleans reunion, for the 9:30 performance on Friday evening, October 12, 1990. The Saturday performances were already sold out at that time. We need to know how many of our guests will want to go to the Opry. You can help us by using the enclosed Grand Old Opry tear slip to send in your money. This will help us determine the planned attendance by allowing us to either obtain refunds on unused tickets or to try and arrange for additional ones. Remember the tickets will be assigned to the first 150 members and guests on tear slips that will be dated when received at the Association office. **Do send in your check and tear slip now.**

The schedule of past reunions is changed by moving the Squadron dinners to Saturday evening October 13 and the Banquet to Sunday evening October 14, 1990. The annual meeting is set for Saturday AM October 13, and the memorial service and brunch has been moved to Monday AM October 15, 1990.

Nashville History Nashville was once an outpost on the western frontier and its many historical attractions draw thousands of visitors. The first city limits encompassed nearly an acre within the confines of Fort Nashborough, a pioneer settlement established in 1779. These early citizens left the fringes of western North Carolina (now upper East Tennessee for fresh land in the valley of the Cumberland River. The fort is named for Revolutionary War hero General Francis Nash. In 1784 the settlement's name was changed to Nashville. Tennessee became a state in 1796, and Nashville was made its capital in 1843.

A replica of old Fort Nashborough stands in the middle of downtown and is open for tours. East of downtown is the Hermitage, the home of President Andrew Jackson and one of the nation's most visited historical sites. This fine old Southern plantation home with tall Doric columns was built in 1836, and has many furnishings from Jackson's era. Personal effects, rifles, swords, and copies of Jackson's letters are on display. Other historic sites in Nashville include romantic Belle Meade Mansion known as the queen of Tennessee plantations, Cheekwood, a magnificent Italian Renaissance mansion, and Belmont Mansion, a 19th century home. One of Nashville's unique landmarks is the Parthenon, an exact replica of the ancient Greek edifice (that stands in ruins above the city of Athens, Greece). A wooden version, originally built for the centennial celebration of Tennessee's statehood was replaced with stone to accommodate the new statue of the Greek Goddess Athena. The Tennessee State Museum offers an extensive collection of Civil War memorabilia, and the Cumberland Museum and Science Center allows children and adults to discover the world of science through hands on experiments. Opryland offers riverboat cruises on the General Jackson, and tours of the country music stars' homes are available.

Statewide sightseeing As for statewide sightseeing Tennessee abounds with attractions that will appeal to all tastes and appetites. They vary from the oldest town in Tennessee; Jonesborough, Davy Crockett's birthplace, Cumberland Gap National Historic Park, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Chattanooga Railroad Museum, Gatlinburg Aerial Tram, American Museum of Science and Energy in Oak Ridge, Museum of Appalachia, to Graceland (Elvis Presley's home) and Blues Alley in Memphis.

Do plan to be with us this fall, you won't regret it.

The Torretta Flyer

The Torretta Flyer is the official publication of the 461st & 484th Bomb Groups Association, and is published for members of the Association.

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Editor Bud Markel
Associate Editor Bea Markel

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Ysabel St. Redondo Beach, California, 90277.
Phone (213) 316-3330

1989 NEW ORLEANS REUNION

There was over 350 members and guests at the New Orleans reunion. The New Orleans Marriott Hotel was the official site for the 1989 reunion. Sitting on one edge of the French Quarter, across Canal Street from the St Charles streetcar, and only three blocks from the Mississippi River, the hotel was walking distance from the main attractions of the city. The site of the recent New Orleans World's Fair, at the foot of Canal Street, was visited by many of the attendees. It has been converted into a regional shopping and eating complex. Completely air conditioned, it provided a comfortable environment for enjoyment of leisure activities such as relaxing at the Cafe Du Monde for cafe au lait (New Orleans style coffee) and beignets (little pillow donuts dusted with powdered sugar that are unique only to New Orleans). The attendees enjoyed the oyster and shrimp bars, that seemed to be everywhere, the world famous restaurants, the antique shops of the French Quarter, and, of course, Bourbon Street, the Jazz music that poured out of the saloons and bars, and the drinks fashioned out of hurricane glasses.

On Friday members and guests piled into busses for a tour of Keesler Air Force Base, where many of the engineer-gunners learned their military occupational specialty (MOS). For some engineers it was a trip back in time to the moment when they first met with the venerable B-24. The nostalgic theme was carried out by the guest speaker at the banquet who presented a slide show talk on the history of Keesler Field. We would like to thank all of the helpers for their assistance in making the New Orleans reunion most memorable: Doris and Clark Ecton, Caryl and Ralph Carr, and Joe Ercole.

Annual Business Meeting Report New Orleans, Saturday, September 3rd at 10 AM. At the business meeting, on Saturday morning, after the minutes of the last meeting and financial report were approved, and the Scholarship Committee's report was given, the election of directors for the coming year took place. The directors are: Bud Markel, Bea Markel, Frank Valdez, Tom Javaruski and Chris Donaldson.

Scholarship Committee The Scholarship Committee report was given by Ed Goree, and after some discussion by the members present on the recommendation made by Professor Umberto Albanese, who heads the Italian staff in making the annual selections, to increase the number of students selected for awards or to increase the dollar amount of the awards, the members voted unanimously that the amount and number of students selected for awards be left to the discretion of the members of the Scholarship Committee.

Important Matters Some other matters of importance to all of our members were dealt with at the annual meeting. A report on the current membership status of the Association, indicates that while the total paid-up membership (currently 800 members) remains stable, there is an imbalance of membership and attendance at the annual meetings between the two Groups, with the 484th BG in the majority. Members of both groups in attendance made no recommendations for any changes.

Needy Fund A report was made on the Assistance (or Needy) Fund to help members of modest income to attend future reunions which was established just prior to the San Francisco reunion. After a great deal of discussion, it was the concensus of the membership, although no formal vote was taken, that the amount of monies contributed to the fund over the two year period was not sufficient to warrant continuing the funding program. The monies contributed to the Assistance or Needy Fund will be transferred to the Association General Contribution

fund. The question of the site for the 1990 reunion was brought up for discussion, with a hand vote taken on either Washington DC or Nashville, Tennessee, the two most popular of the sites listed in the questionnaires. Nashville was the winner! The membership also agreed that the time of the year most desirable was the last week of September and the first two weeks of October, irregardless of the higher room rates during these peak seasonal periods.

Prior to leaving New Orleans, the Reunion Committee (Bud and Bea Markel) contacted the Nashville Marriott Hotel and finalized negotiations, with the result that the 1990 reunion of the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups Association will take place October 12-15, 1990, in the city of Nashville, Tennessee, at the Nashville Marriott Hotel.

Midwest Location Chosen for the 1991 Reunion.

The discussion of a site for the 1991 reunion was brought up, and a Midwest location was recommended. Indianapolis, Dearborn (Michigan), Chicago, Kansas City, are under consideration.

Contributors to the Memorial Scholarship Fund from March 1989 to January 1990

Arthur Aldene 827	Leo V Matranga 825
Albert K Borcharding 824	Val R Miller 765
Joseph C Bott 825	Edward J Morris 766
<i>In Memory of Don Reid 825</i>	John L Mulligan 827
Walter L Bruesch 826	<i>In Memory of Bob Fetter 827</i>
Clarence L Bush 824	E Forrest Nance 824
Kelton G Bush 767	Barrow F Neale 826
James T Chafin Jr 825	Vincent W O'Shea 826
George Christie 765	Louie W Odom 826
Fred Dierksmeier 826	Sidney Ostrovsky 827
Joseph Dondero 826	John B Paine 826
Hal Draper Jr 766	Carl H Peter 767
Peter Drill 484	Louis A Peterson 826
Clark W Ecton 825	James D Pool 825
Franklin S Ennis 824	Edward Prendeville 766
Joseph J Ercole 824	Harold D Pressel Jr 825
Angelo L Ferrara 767	Claude F Schroeder 827
Dorothy Fetter 827	Edward Schwartz 826
<i>In memory of Bob Fetter 827</i>	Arthur T Shak 824
George S Flamand 825	Nicholas Sidovar 766
Ellsworth Goodell 826	Richard A Sites 824
Edwin T Goree 764	Hubert W Souther 764
Tillman J Gressitt 827	Telford V Stradley 764
Donald G Hanson 826	Stanley Szemreylo 827
Robert V Hayes 766	George Thullesen 767
Mike Hendrickson 824	Charles E Trinkle 826
John Hicks 826	John L Underwood 764
Harry K Hubertz 824	Leon Usherson 825
John D Iconis 461	Carl H Voss 826
Theodore T (Ted) Janes 825	David R Ward 826
Mike Karwoski 824	Harry R Watkins 825
Paul W Kerr 826	Lawrence P Weakley 824
Edward J Latal 767	Edward J Whalen 827
Joseph F Malloy 827	John A Whitacre 825
Adolph Marcus 824	Norbert Wholeben 824
<i>In memory of George Bouras 824</i>	Orville L Wildman 826
<i>In memory of John B O'Neill 824</i>	John H Williamson 766
	Ross J Wilson 824
	Bernard Young 827

1989 SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS

REPORT OF THE PRESENTATION OF 1989 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS CEREMONY

CERIGNOLA, ITALY MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1989,

BY CHRIS DONALDSON (765TH SQUADRON) OF THE
SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The ceremony was held at 6:30 pm at the Agricultural Institute of Cerignola, not far from the Grand Hotel Della Nazione where my wife, Jean and I, and my crew member Alex Azary and his wife, Jan were staying while in Cerignola for the awards ceremony. About 50 people were in attendance.

Remarks were made by the presidents of the Agricultural Institute and the Technical Institute (where Prof. Umberto Albanese teaches) and by the Papal Representative, (a young-appearing Monsignor from

Foggia). A longer address was made by the regional educational official from Foggia. All were eloquent and extremely congratulatory of the Association. An interesting thread that ran through all the remarks had to do with the fact that the Association's recognition of students in the Cerignola area gave particular honor to a part of Italy that is thought of by its own residents as being deprived of the wealth and prosperity that characterizes other regions of the country. The value of our scholarships for students from this area, it was observed, is measured by the feeling of hope and pride that they represent for the students themselves as well as for the entire community. There was much comment, too, about the reaching out over many miles and many years by Americans who had feelings of generosity and affection for the Italian people they had met so many years ago.

Scholarship Winners Three of the scholarship winners, 1) Umberto Massafra, 2) Tiziana Gentile and, 3) Maria Sgararella were present and were given their checks by Professor Albanese. A fourth scholarship check was presented to Mr.

Matteo Davenia, on behalf of his daughter, Assunta Davenia, who was unable to be excused from her high school in Milan. Matteo Davenia is a former laborer at the 764th Bomb Squadron area during the war years, who now lives in Milan, where he has done well as a wine merchant. He had written to Bud Markel, at the Association address, earlier in the year, after reading about the Association in one of the national newspapers. In a dramatic sequence of events, Mr. Davenia requested that he be permitted to hand over his daughter's check as a gift of his family to the Cerignola community where they had lived

many years earlier, and that it be dedicated for educational purposes. I, of course, indicated approval, whereupon the check was endorsed and given to the Monsignor who announced that it would be applied to Cerignola's school program for orphaned girls.

All of this was unpredicted and spontaneous, but the effect on the audience was demonstrably one of enthusiastic approval

and gratitude for Mr. Davenia's generous act. This added to the genuine warmth and good feelings so evident throughout the entire occasion. I wish it were possible for me to convey in these words the pervasive aura of love, joy and good will so profoundly apparent during the ceremony. The Association's members, had they been there, would have been gratified and fulfilled beyond measure at the effect of their scholarship gifts.

Plaque Presented Professor Albanese handed over to me a beautiful silver plaque from the City of Cerignola to be sent on to Bud Markel for display at our Association reunions, as well as letters from the students expressing their gratitude for the awards.

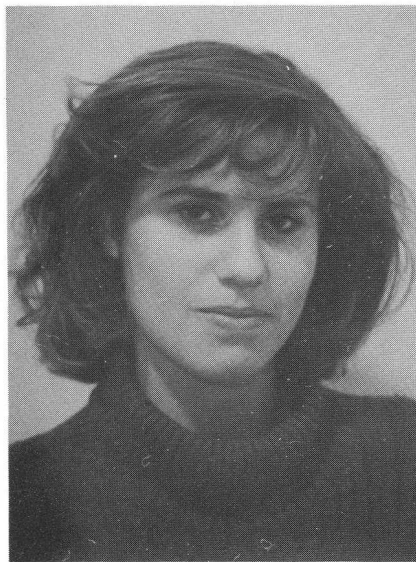
Future Scholarships With regard to dates for future scholarship presentations, Professor Albanese suggested that more appropriate times would be in November, or even more preferably, in the spring of each year, beginning with the spring of 1991.



The Association office received the letters printed below from three of the four Italian students who were chosen to receive the scholarship grants for the year 1989. Each year the Association has been giving grants of \$500.00 each to students whose families lived in the vicinity of the airfield at Torretta, Italy. Professor Umberto Albanese chooses the finalists from applicants who must meet strict academic criteria. The fourth finalist was Assunta Davenia. Her father, Matteo Davenia, a former resident of Cerignola, who was a laborer and houseboy at the 764th Squadron area during WWII, accepted the award on her behalf, as stated by Association Scholarship Committee member Chris Donaldson in his Official Report.

The request by Mr. Davenia that he be permitted to hand over his check as a gift of his family to the Cerignola community and that it be dedicated for educational purposes was approved by Chris Donaldson acting on behalf of the Association.

Tiziana
Gentile,
Via Gubbio No. 3,
71042 Cerignola
(Foggia) Italia:



Dear Friends:

I'd like to express all my gratitude to you for the honor of receiving so important a grant to me and my admiration for this noble and useful initiative. I'm really happy to have had the chance of meeting some friends as you, coming from so far.

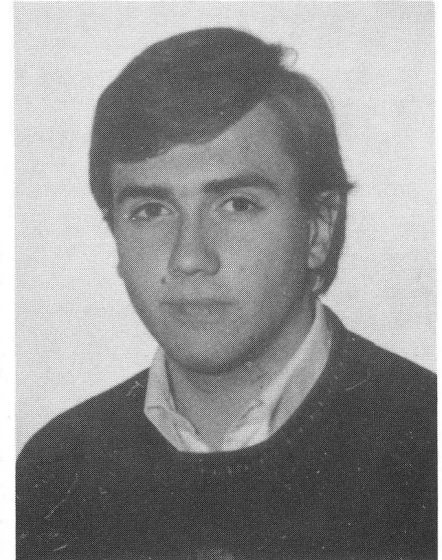
I think that this link that you have established with the city that saw you young and friendly soldiers is very nice and makes me feel full of warmth and gratitude. This award is very important for me, it has given me immense stimulus to continue with more interest and constant diligence in the future too.

Letters From Students,

Letters From Students

Letters From Students

Umberto Massafra,
Via Dante Alighieri 4,
71042 Cerignola
(Foggia):Italy



Dear members:

I'm very happy for the honor received from your association. This recognition is very important for me. In fact, it's difficult to work always with no gratification. You have given me an important satisfaction and your confidence gives me more self-confidence. I hope always to be worthy of this scholarship. In fact, I'm still very young and today's life is difficult, but your confidence will help me to face my future problems in school and in other areas of life. I don't know now what profession I'll start but I want and hope to be a good man like your predecessors who fought against Germany in my city. They were exemplary men and you and I must be their worthy successors. I thank you very much and I shall not forget your confidence in me. Thanks.

P.S. I'm sorry for my errors.



Maria
Sgaramella
(Foggia)
Cerignola,
Italy:



Greetings

I'd like to thank all the persons who have made possible this my new, unforgettable experience. It is because of them that some other boy and girl will be able to meet persons as our American friends who organize and promote these initiatives, keeping the vivid memory of their friends who died during the terrible war.

CONSTRUCTIVE AIR POWER

The Story of the Berlin Air Lift

by Roger D. Launius

Editors Note : With our relations with the Soviet Union relaxing as a result of the dramatic changes in the governments of Eastern Europe, the story of the Berlin Airlift is quite timely. It deals with a time when the United States and the Soviet Union almost went to war over control of a narrow strip of land connecting Berlin with Western-held Europe. It is a story of tenacity and determination that in retrospect preserved the free world up until this day. The Airlift undoubtedly stiffened the resolve of our western allies and played a big part in preserving democracy. It is appropriate also because some of our members participated in the airlift.

When the United States entered World War II, it was "with only the basic types of military aircraft, the bomber and the fighter," said Maj.Gen. Robert M. Webster, Commander of the Military Air Transport Service (MATS), to a National War College class in 1947. He added quickly, "I feel that we have come out of that war with an additional type, the transport plane, and that we should think in terms of bomber-fighter-transport since they are all equally important--and they must be properly balanced to each other if we are to be prepared to conduct successful war operations." (1)

The importance of airlift capability that Webster and most other Army Air Forces officials recognized during World War II was reinforced during the first years of the Cold War in Europe. During that period, the flexibility of airlift as an instrument for the execution of United States foreign policy, short of actual combat operations, was demonstrated repeatedly. This flexibility to respond to challenges without armed response was never better accomplished than in breaking the Berlin Blockade in 1948 and 1949.

Origins of a Crisis

The airlift to break the Berlin blockade originated because of the unique situation in Europe at the end of World War II. Agreements between the allies had divided Germany into four zones, one each for the French, British, American, and Soviet allies. These agreements allowed the Soviets to occupy German territory well to the west of Berlin, while Berlin itself was placed in the hands of the four allies with each receiving a zone in the city .(2)

The creation of a western allied presence in a city outside its normal zones never worked well, although during the immediate postwar years the spirit of allied cooperation made the supply of the various sectors of the city possible. The western powers' right of access to Berlin was never expressly agreed to by the Soviet Union but was implicit in the agreement that established four-power military forces in the city. The only understanding reached on this issue involved a verbal commitment between

Marshal Georgi K. Zhukov, the Soviet commander in Germany, General Lucius D. Clay, and Sir Robert Weeks, representing the American and British governments. Marshal Zhukov promised in 1945 that the western powers would have the use of a major highway and a rail line. (3) General Clay had not pressed for a written commitment from the Soviets, although tempted, because he believed that it would imply limitations on American rights in Berlin.

On 30 November 1945, the Allied Control Council in Berlin approved the only written agreement for transportation to the city from the west. It provided for three 20 mile-wide air corridors between Berlin and the western part of Germany to be dedicated to French, British, and American aircraft. Flights in these corridors



Airlifters (above) rejoice at news the Berlin blockade has ended. Airmen of US Navy Squadron V6 greet an R-5D (C-54) crew as it returns to Rhein Main from delivering supplies to Templehof in Berlin. (USAF photo)

could proceed without advance notice at all altitudes below 10,000 feet. The agreement also set up a "Berlin control zone, extending 20 miles in every direction from the center of the city, which, in effect, allowed air access to any part of the city although it might have been part of the Soviet sector." The airspace over Berlin was controlled by a four-power Air Safety Center, which was also mandated in the agreement. Representatives of the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain, and France agreed to this air transport accord because of the importance of regulating air traffic over Berlin.(4)

Soviet-American relations at the highest diplomatic levels deteriorated throughout 1946 and 1947, largely because of differences over the type of governments to be established in post-war Europe. Some of these manifestations spilled over into the governance of Berlin. For example, in early 1948, Soviet deliveries of coal to the western controlled zones of the city were temporarily halted. (5) In April, American, British, and French trains were intermittently stopped at Soviet guard posts and their commanders harassed by military officials. (6)

The full-scale Soviet blockade of Berlin began on 24 June 1948. The stated reasons for this cutting off of the western world's access to Berlin were "technical difficulties" on the railroad and highway. At the same time, the Soviets announced that "severe shortages of electric current" forced them to limit electrical power to only two hours daily in the western sectors of Berlin. (7)

From the Soviet perspective, the blockade of Berlin represented an opportunity to gain a genuine prize--the city itself--with little risk. Holding the western sectors hostage would force American, British and French occupation forces from Berlin. All of the alternatives open to the western allies appeared inadequate to meet this challenge. If they stuck it out in Berlin the allies would be unable to supply their respective sectors of the city. If the western allies tried to force supply convoys through the Soviet zone to Berlin the result could be war for which they would be responsible. Finally, if the allies tried to airlift supplies to the blockaded city, the Soviets--as well as many western observers--believed that the needs of more than two million Berliners could not be met by air transport, for the western zones of the city were importing 6,000 tons of coal and hundreds of tons of food everyday. Soviet leaders concluded that the allies could never win this confrontation in Berlin. (8)

A Makeshift Airlift

From early in the confrontation, however, General Clay anticipated the use of airlift to support any blockade efforts in Berlin. When the Soviet officials first started harassing military trains and vehicles bound for Berlin from the west in March 1948, he directed that an interim airlift be instituted to meet the needs of the American presence in the city. (9) When access to Berlin was slammed shut in June, Clay, as well as several other strategists, including former British Prime Minister Clement Attlee, suggested that a larger airlift be implemented to supply the entire city of Berlin until the crisis



Left: Brig Gen. Joseph Smith was the first commander of the Berlin Airlift. Later he commanded the Military Air Transport Service, 1951-58.

Below: Rations are loaded aboard a C-47 in the early days of the airlift. (USAF photos)



could be resolved through diplomatic channels. Seen as the most resourceful approach, Clay's request for this larger airlift was approved by American officials, and was quickly ratified by the British. (10)

On 25 June 1948 General Clay called Lieutenant General Curtis E. LeMay, Commander of USAFE, to discuss the prospects for an airlift to resupply the city with coal and food. "Curt," Clay asked abruptly, "can you transport coal by air?" For a moment there was silence on the line. "I beg your pardon, General," LeMay said, "but would you mind repeating that question?" Clay did. This time LeMay answered promptly, "Sir, the Air Force can deliver anything." (11) He was told to establish an airlift. His orders stated: "utilize the maximum number of airplanes to transport supplies to Tempelhof Airdrome, Berlin Strict adherence to existing air corridors will be maintained." (12)

Then Clay and LeMay considered the resources needed and those on hand to conduct an airlift. Headquarters USAFE had at its disposal 102 C-47 transports, with about three tons of capacity each, and two of the larger and more modern C-54s, which could carry about ten tons of cargo. The British also had at hand some C-47s, which they called Dakotas, that would be available for the airlift. (13) General Clay predicted that these aircraft would be incapable of airlifting into Berlin sufficient tonnage to supply anything more than the needs of the American and the French troops. Nothing would be available for the civilian population. (14)

Obviously greater airlift capability would have to be obtained. On 26 June 1948 General LeMay sent a personal message to Lieutenant General Lauris Norstad, Headquarters USAF Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS) Operations, discussing the airlift's requirements. He advised making available immediately about 30 C-54 aircraft, each with two crews to augment the forces already on hand. He promised to make arrangements for the reception of such a force. "I further recommend," he wrote, "that serious study be given to the possible conversion of the two troop carrier groups in my command at earlier dates that..." had been programmed in the USAFE planning documents. (15)

General LeMay's request received a prompt response; on 28 June the Air Force Chief of Staff informed him: "Approximately 39 C-54 Skymasters, passenger and cargo carrying aircraft, from the Alaskan, Caribbean and Tactical Air Commands of the USAF have been ordered to the Frankfurt area of Germany at the request of the Theater Commander, Gen. Lucius [D.] Clay, for increased air facilities to supply Berlin. When they arrive in Germany the airplanes will be under the operation control of Lt.Gen. Curtis LeMay, CG [Commanding General] of the USAF in Europe. The airplanes will begin leaving their bases within 24 hours, singly or otherwise as they become operationally ready for the mission. The Squadron from Alaska will fly [by the way of Westover AFB [Air Force Base], Mass. [Massachusetts], the Azores and the Frankfurt area. the Sqdn [Squadron] from the Caribbean will fly to Bermuda, the Azores and the Frankfurt area. The Sqdn from Bergstrom AFB, Austin, Texas, (TAC) will fly to Westover AFB, the Azores and the Frankfurt Area." (16)

These three squadrons carried both aircrews and support personnel, approximately 825 of them in all. Additionally, a fourth squadron of 13 C-54s from Hickam AFB, Hawaii, was sent to Europe. This move involved another 425 individuals, later augmented by additional C-54 aircraft and personnel.

At Wiesbaden Air Base, where USAFE headquarters was located, General LeMay and his staff worked resolutely to create a vi-

able airlift structure. He appointed Brig.Gen. Joseph Smith, commander of the installation at Wiesbaden, as the Berlin Airlift Task Force Commander, but he was to perform these duties in addition to his other tasks. He did not even know of his appointment until the airlift had commenced, being told of it over lunch on Sunday, 27 June 1948. Smith was responsible for the designation of the airlift as Operation Vittles because, as he said, "We're hauling grub." The British chose to call their part of the airlift Operation Plane Fare, a pun (17) that must have given airlifters around the world a chuckle. At best, they planned that the operation could be sustained for 45 days. American crews flew the first formal missions on Saturday, 26 June, airlifting 80 tons of milk, flour, medicine, and other high priority cargo to the city on 32 C-47 flights. By Monday, the sustaining airlift was in full swing, but General Clay was not optimistic. He told Department of Defense officials that "with this airlift, we should be able to bring in 600 or 700 tons a day. While 2,000 tons a day is required in normal foods, 600 tons a day (utilizing dried foods to the maximum extent) will substantially increase the morale of the German people and will unquestionably seriously disturb the Soviet blockade." Even so, this would not provide coal for heat, raw material for factories, or fuel for engines.(18)

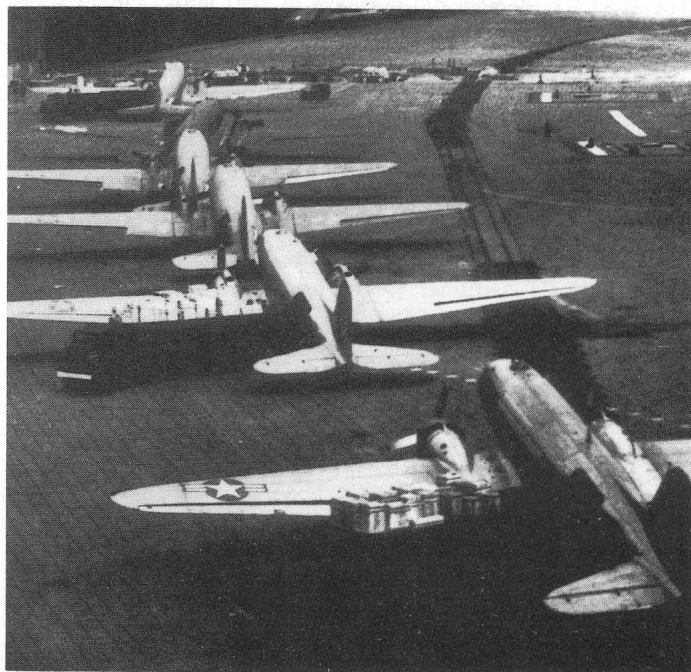


German loaders (above) wrestle cases of supplies into position aboard a C-47. An air crew member (left) checks the placement. Venerable C-47s carried freight in the airlift early days, until supplanted by the C-54 as the main lifter.

General Clay did not believe, as he saw what was happening, that a long-term airlift was possible to support the entire city. Airlifts had never been tried on such a large scale before, and the scrambling, hastily thrown-together organization operating it could not continue to function for long with any degree of efficiency. His choice of action was to use an armored column to break through to Berlin, but this idea met with mixed reactions in Washington, (19) probably because officials there did not share Clay's lack of faith in the airlift. There was some disagreement even in Washington, however. Assistant Secretary of the Air Force Cornelius V. Whitney told the National Security Council in mid-July that "the air Staff was firmly convinced the air operation is doomed to failure." (20) Notwithstanding, Under Secretary of State Robert A. Lovett noted that President

Truman and his chief advisors were determined to take any action short of war to hold Berlin. He commented, "We decided to stand firm in Berlin and not be thrown out, confident that we could do the job ultimately by the same techniques that we used in lifting approximately 70,000 tons in one month over the hump from India to China at very high altitudes."(21)

These government officials, regardless of the efficiency of the airlift, agreed with General Clay that it was only a stopgap measure. The long-term options they outlined were withdrawal from Berlin, some belligerent action that could mean war, or a negotiated settlement. The airlift was attractive, even as a stopgap, because it provided the bare essentials needed to supply Berlin's daily requirements. It allowed American policy makers the luxury of taking an "unprovocative but firm stand," all the while seeking a resolution to the blockade through diplomatic channels. (22) Relying on the airlift bought time, but if a settlement could not be reached by winter, many of President Truman's advisors thought that the nation would have to withdraw or risk war by ground resupply. Robert Lovett and James V. Forrestal, Secretary of Defense, agreed that a definite decision had to be reached by the time the German weather turned bad in mid-October. (23) Thus, although there was a question about its long-term viability, the airlift's early success ensured that Truman could pursue his diplomatic solution through the summer. Brig.Gen. Smith's command of the Berlin Airlift Task Force at Wiesbaden AB lasted approximately one month. During that time he was instrumental in implementing several basic decisions about the way the airlift would be conducted. The first of these was a landmark for airlift management. He directed that the airlift fleet managers aim at a goal of flying 65 percent of the possessed aircraft every day. This would allow, his maintenance and operations personnel suggested, proper management of the fleet and ensure it was adequately maintained.(24) Second, Brig.Gen. Smith directed that each aircraft in commission



A line of C-47s (above) being unloaded at the semicircular ramp area, Tempelhof AB Berlin. Unloading took a long time; cargo had to fit through the small side door and be wrestled by hand from aircraft into truck. (USAF photo)

make three round trips to Berlin daily. Third, he established the "block" system of dispatching C-54 and C-47 aircraft in groups at specified times so that like aircraft with the same cruising speeds could travel together. Finally, he implemented a centrally controlled Air Traffic Center in Frankfurt to schedule airlift flights. (25)

General Smith also organized his resources as best he could; developing an organization divided into two main sections: Operations and Supply and Maintenance. He relied directly upon Headquarters USAFF for all other support he might need. The operating units under Brig. Gen. Smith were stationed solely at Rhein-Main and Wiesbaden ABs. The 60th Troop Carrier Group, under the command of Colonel Bertron C. Harrison, flew its C-47s out of Wiesbaden AB. The 61st Troop Carrier Group, commanded by Colonel Walter S Lee, operated C-47s from Rhein-Main AB. All of these units flew strictly to Berlin's Tempelhof Airport. Later these resources were expanded and reorganized for more efficient operations. (26)

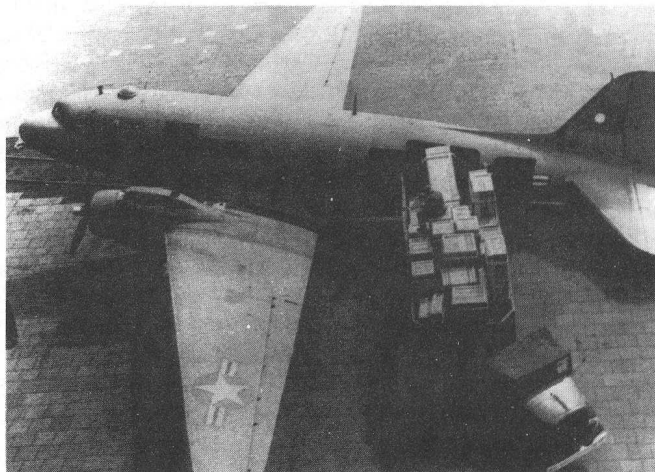
The MATS Connection The Military Air Transport Service (MATS) had been created only a few weeks prior to the beginning of the Berlin airlift, but its leaders were anxious to become involved in Operation Vittles. Their entrance came early in the operation; on 30 June 1948, 35 of MATS' C-54s arrived with augmented crews at Wiesbaden to assist the airlift. Maj.Gen. William H. Turner, MATS deputy commander for operations and architect of the World War II Hump airlift, wanted to go, too. Turner marched into then Maj.Gen. Lawrence S. Kuter's office at MATS headquarters and told his commander that MATS should take over Operation Vittles and that he would be happy to command it. Kuter, more politically savvy than the brilliant but volatile Turner, responded, "that's not the way to do it, Bill, ... Let's just sit tight and see what happens." (27)

The MATS leadership did not have to wait long. On 23 July 1948 Headquarters USAF directed MATS to take over the provisional Airlift Task Force Headquarters at Wiesbaden, plus maintenance facilities, air traffic control equipment, and personnel to support an expanding airlift operation. (28) Operating under the operational control of Headquarters USAF, Maj. Gen. Turner was placed in command of this headquarters and given authority to recast the airlift for more efficient operations. He arrived at Wiesbaden with his staff and a well-thought-out approach to the airlift on 29 July.



From the Rhein Main control tower, a mixture of C-47s and C-54s stand on the ramp. Trucks are from 67th Truck Co. Giessen.

The letter appointing Maj. Gen. Turner as commander of the Airlift Task Force mandated his personal direction of Airlift personnel and equipment at the three bases where Brig. Gen. Smith had centered his activities: Rhein-Main, Wiesbaden, and



Closer view of C-47 (above) unloading at Tempelhof AB, Berlin. Arrival of C-54s in quantity meant more cargo per sortie and more efficient use of ramp space. (USAF photo)

Tempelhof. (29) He was also told to assume control of these elements:

1. Oberpfaffenhofen, a maintenance depot in Germany, and any other depots which might be engaged in heavy maintenance of airlift planes.

2. The Frankfurt Air Traffic Control Center and other such centers which might facilitate the mission of the Airlift Task Force Headquarters.

3. All aircraft operations in the air corridor between Berlin and Frankfurt. (30)

These forces were expanded as he began to build the airlift toward greater efficiency in the fall of 1948.

Turner's approach, therefore, was to coordinate carefully each aspect of the airlift, develop detailed sets of procedures, and execute each flight from onload to return in exactly the same way. Aircraft, maintenance teams, aircrews, and supply personnel, as well as all the thousands of lesser-known activities involved in any flight were regimented, all jobs being conducted strictly according to predetermined directives, and tracked on statistical charts and tables. Turner referred to it as a rhythmical cadence to the airlift that allowed no excess or unplanned action. "This steady rhythm," he wrote, "constant as the jungle drums, became the trade-mark of the Berlin Airlift, or any airlift I have operated." He added, "I don't have much of a natural sense of rhythm, incidentally. I'm certainly no threat to Fred Astaire, and a drumstick to me is something that grows on a chicken. But when it comes to airlifts, I want rhythm." (31)

General Turner also approached the airlift with an emphasis on how to get more tonnage to Berlin in a single day consistent with safety and resources. (32) He calculated that there were 1,440 minutes in a day, and his ultimate goal was to have an aircraft land every minute. That would have been an impossible rate in 1948, but he still emphasized operations at three minute intervals almost every day. Perhaps the best analogy to Turner's approach toward airlift would be a conveyer belt. A belt, the corridor between western Germany and Berlin, had equally spaced along it carriers for the commodity, aircraft transporting

materials for the city. As on the conveyor belt, all carriers (the aircraft) moved at equal speeds, executed whatever actions were preplanned at specific locations, and never deviated from the predetermined method of operation. The conveyor could be slowed or sped up as necessary, but it was absolutely inerrant in its regimentation. This approach, Turner discovered, brought the most efficient type of operation. Such an approach, it should be added, earned him the nickname of "Willie the Whip," for he demanded unerring precision. (33)

Turner also emphasized the intangibles that he believed would increase airlift efficiency. For instance, he encouraged competition between organizations involved in Operation Vittles. He maintained a huge board in the Airlift Task Force Headquarters that tracked the tonnage of every unit, sponsored a newsletter that listed efficiency of units and sent kudos to those with the greatest records of achievement. He was also quick to prod officials who seemed pleased with their units' accomplishments by pointing out greater efficiencies elsewhere. For example, during a push to deliver a record amount of tonnage on Easter Sunday 1949, known as the Easter Parade, the airlift made a record 1,398 flights and hauled an unprecedented 12,941 tons of cargo to Berlin in one twenty-four hour period. During this drive Turner visited a unit at Fassberg where the commander told him he was running ten percent ahead of his quota. Turner was unflappable and always prodding for greater effort. "That's fine," he replied, "but of course it's not up to what they're doing over at Celle [another airlift base]. They're really on the ball over there." Those were just the right words to foster more effort. Turner remarked that the commander immediately returned to his "flight line and cracked his whip." (34)

The Headquarters Element

The Berlin Airlift's ability to function with anything approaching full capacity required a well-developed and efficient airlift headquarters. Turner established his headquarters at Wiesbaden, Germany--after meeting with General LeMay and receiving his directive, "we expect you to produce"--which coordinated the many specialized military and civilian services that kept the airlift operating smoothly. His headquarters was officially established through General Order 61, Headquarters USAFE, on 29 July 1948, as the 7499th Air Division. This task force was a special unit reporting directly to Headquarters USAFE. (35) The Airlift Task Force broke down functionally into eight major divisions: personnel, communications, airfields, plans, supply, maintenance, cargo handling, and operations. Under the operations function were two critical specialties, weather and navigation. (36)

Each of the functional parts of the headquarters was handled by one of Turner's hand-picked officers whose duty required both execution of his function and liaison with the unit of the Air Force that provided the service to the airlift. In so doing the airlift headquarters functional head worked closely on both plans and expansion projects. For example, the Air Field officer was required to keep abreast of conditions at all airlift installations and ensure that the proper authorities at the Pentagon were aware of the requirements for runway repair or any other work that needed to be done. In the same way, the maintenance functional manager thoroughly monitored field level maintenance, depot maintenance in theater and in the United



States, and worked closely with officials at the Air Materiel Command, the predecessor of Air Force Logistics Command, to ensure proper support in terms of both spare parts availability

Maj. Gen. William H. Turner (left) "Willie the Whip" who applied and refined his techniques to turn the Berlin Airlift into a smooth machine.

and services provided. (37) In addition to the functional managers for the American airlift effort, there was a close working relationship from the start with the British. Early on, three Royal Air Force (RAF) representatives were permanently attached to the task force headquarters to act as a liaison with the RAF and they coordinated carefully the efforts of the two nations. Later, on 14 October 1948, the RAF was brought more directly into the airlift headquarters when the United States and the United Kingdom created the Combined Airlift Task Force (CATF). This merged the efforts of the two nations and placed the CATF under a single commander, Turner, with RAF Air Commodore J.W.F. Mereer acting as the Deputy Commander. (38)

The provisional and the Combined Airlift Task Force Headquarters documented carefully, with statistics, the performance of the airlift. Turner used the statistics extensively to determine required goals and whether the objectives were being met for virtually every aspect of the operation. An entire room in the airlift headquarters was set aside for the purpose of displaying charts and statistical information, so that performance for every function could be displayed, analyzed, and compared. Not satisfied only with tonnage figures, airmen used a complex array of statistical measurements to show at a glance assigned aircraft; daily missions flown; utilization rates of aircraft; flying hours by type of aircraft, by unit, and by several other breakdowns; trips per assigned aircraft; aircrew status; flying times; unloading times in Berlin; ground time in Berlin; block time in Berlin; percent of aircraft in 200-hour inspection; locations of aircraft at all times; and daily tons airlifted. (39)

One of the most important aspects of operating a successful airlift, the airlift managers believed, was establishing a series of effective maintenance and supply facilities. He made this a matter of highest priority when he took over command of the Airlift Task Force. The airlift fleet required constant maintenance on an "as needed" basis. There were also periodic checks every 25 hours of flight up to 200 hours, after which aircraft were sent to a depot for a major inspection. At 1,000 hours, an airplane was returned to the United States for a comprehensive overhaul. (40) All of these maintenance activities were painstakingly planned, executed, recorded, and controlled at the airlift Task Force Headquarters. Whether a transport was in the air or on the ground, there was constant information flowing between the headquarters and the field on its maintenance status.

The majority of maintenance for the airlift occurred at squadron level. Turner directed the equal distribution of maintenance technicians to the various bases used for the Berlin Flights. There were 148 maintenance personnel attached to each squadron. They worked in three shifts, 12 hours on and 24 hours off duty. As much as possible the airlift concentrated expertise for similar types of aircraft at the same base. This was so successful, for instance, that the 50 and 150 hour checks were reduced

to an average of 5.5 hours, about half the time normally given to a C-54 in the United States during that period. (41)

From the outset, Berlin airlift maintenance personnel saw the necessity of placing back into operation a major maintenance depot at Burtonwood, England. Such a depot had been located there during World War II, and it seemed logical to restart it for the extensive 200 hour inspections required for the C-54. Turner made this an item of emphasis when he first met with General LeMay and the USAFE staff and received their support for the move. Unfortunately, the depot could not be readied immediately, so he had to make other arrangements. Turner described what he did to solve the 200-hour inspection problem in a 3 August 1948 letter to General Kuter, MATS commander: "I am putting a maintenance detachment in the USAFE Depot at Oberpfaffenhofen, near Munich, at least temporarily. this will relieve the operating bases considerably, as they will only do intermediate and pre flights. Oberpfaffenhofen will do four 200 hour inspections on each C-54, after which they will return to Oklahoma city for 1000 hours." (42)

This was, at best, a short-term solution, for Oberpfaffenhofen had neither the space nor the facilities to support the additional maintenance activities of the large and ever growing C-54 fleet. (43) Stuart Symington, Secretary of the Air Force, and General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, visited the theater in mid-August 1948. Turner took the opportunity to discuss with them the maintenance snag. They "inspected Burtonwood," he wrote to Kuter in a back channel communication on 16 August, and agreed that it had "the potential required for a long-term operation." He asked and received their support to press for the outfitting of Burtonwood by 1 October 1948. (44)

They fell a bit short of that schedule. Only on 2 November 1948 was Turner finally able to activate the maintenance facility at Burtonwood. (45) Maj.Gen. Fredrick Bosum, a logistics officer with Air Materiel Command, promised to complete seven 200 hour inspections per day. Using the production line maintenance (PLM) procedures that Turner had pioneered for the Hump, each 654 was towed through a series of checkpoints where experts in specific components worked on the aircraft. (46)

A Pattern of Operations

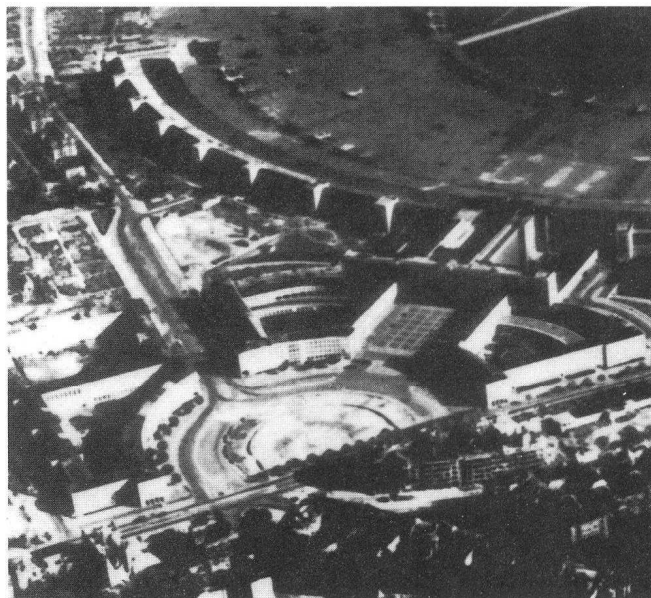
By the fall of 1948 two airfields in Germany fed American planes into the air corridors to Berlin: Rhein-Main and Wiesbaden. Immediately, Turner recognized that limiting operations to these bases hampered efficiency. He urged expansion of American operations into bases in other zones because of their closer proximity to Berlin, the relatively easy terrain they overflew, and the opportunity to maximize the number of aircraft inbound at any given time. Preliminary planning to expand American operations to RAF Fassberg, in the British sector, therefore, began on 4 August 1948. This base was chosen for three reasons: it was close to the Bremen Port of Embarkation; the flying time was 55 minutes instead of the two hours from Wiesbaden and Rhein-Main; and the weather and terrain were somewhat more attractive. An agreement was reached on the use of this base early in August, and on 21 August 1948 C-54s from the American contingent began to use Fassberg for airlift operations. Later the Americans expanded operations to nearby RAF Celle. Both actions materially increased the ability of the task

force to resupply Berlin. (47)

The increased flow of aircraft into Berlin necessitated expansion of the Airlift Task Force's operations in Berlin as well. In August 1948, Turner's airlift aircraft began to use the RAF field at Gatow in the British sector of Berlin in addition to Tempelhof. On 2 August 1948 the Airlift Task Force's Operations and Communications Section began to develop procedures whereby cargo aircraft coming into Berlin could be directed either to Tempelhof or Gatow, depending on which base had less traffic at the time. (48) About 20 August active flights into Gatow began. Later, the airlift began using a third airfield in Berlin, the hastily constructed Tegel Airport in the French sector.

The aircraft flow was set up to operate initially at five different altitudes, starting at 5,000 feet. All of the transports at the same altitude were 15 minutes apart. The next layer of aircraft was 500 feet above them and this form was repeated until reaching the fifth level at 7,000 feet. Later the stacks of aircraft were reduced to three for the sake of simplicity; however, the frequency of the flights remained the same with the intervals reduced to mere minutes. The airplanes at all levels then converged on Berlin at a rate of one every three minutes, the optimal working rhythm of the airlift, provided that the takeoff and landing times of all aircraft were precise. (49)

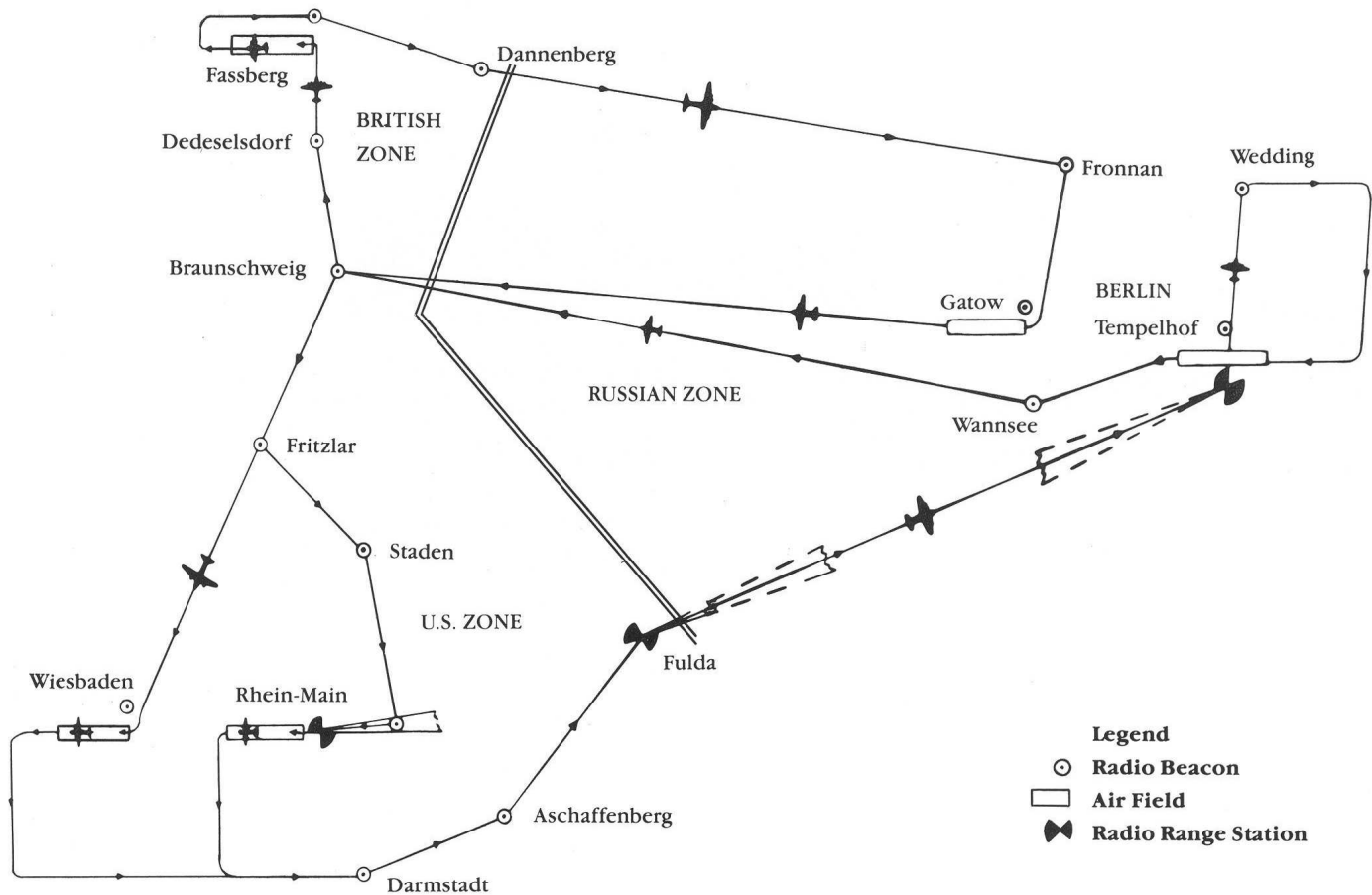
To ensure that everything from takeoff to landing in Berlin went smoothly, Turner had instituted by 7 August a rigid set



Tempelhof in the middle of Berlin was convenient for distributing the arriving supplies, but a tough approach for the pilots. It is a US Army airfield now.

of procedures through the Airlift Task Force Operations Monitoring Control Center. For aircraft flying from Wiesbaden or Rhein-Main in the American Zone of Germany, air traffic control originated at Rhein-Main. The southernmost air corridor was used only for inbound traffic, necessitating that aircraft be dispatched through Rhein-Main air traffic control at regular intervals and put into a stack through the corridor. At takeoff, the pilot was given the numbers of the three airplanes ahead of him and the two that followed. Each pilot knew his exact location in the flow.

Every takeoff commenced at a precise time and flew a precise

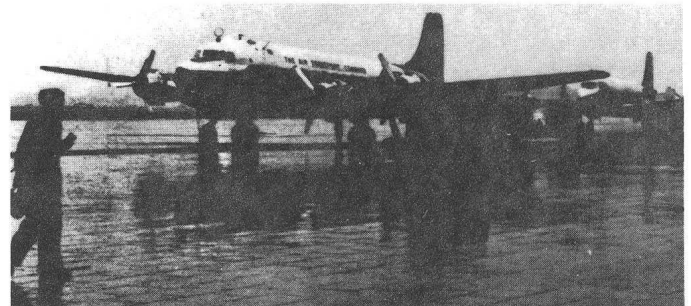


pattern at a fixed altitude and speed over location markers, so that they entered the corridor at precisely the moment planned. When a pilot entered the corridor his time was broadcast so that all of the crews in the formation knew the location of each aircraft. Jack O. Bennett, one of the pilots on the airlift recalled the close monitoring of these flights: "The radar coverage from the ground was incredibly accurate. If our airplane crept up or fell back, even a few feet, on the aircraft preceding us, radar would warn us to adjust our airspeed by a minuscule knot. We couldn't believe it was possible to fly this accurately....Viewed from the radar screen on the ground, the aircraft appeared as individual green pearls, as perfectly spaced as on a woman's necklace, all moving with metronome regularity to Berlin." (50) Turner described the flight pattern into Berlin after the crossing of the Fulda range station: "From there on it was a straight flight up the corridor, chugging along at 170 miles per hour. Over Berlin the pilot turned left at a beacon a few miles on the right side of Tempelhof, proceeded directly across the airport at right angles to the runway, and started making his descent. He made three right turns, flying a box flight pattern, simultaneously lowering down to fifteen hundred feet. He would now be lined up with the runway and would come in at 120 miles per hour, lowering slowly until he was at four hundred feet. If the ceiling was over four hundred feet and visibility a mile or better, he would come in." Any weather below those minimums would require the pilot to return to his home station, via the center air corridor which was used only for returning flights, without delivering the transported supplies. (51)

Once on the ground at Berlin the aircraft was brought into an unloading area. Turner noted on his first visit to Tempelhof that there was a lot of dead time on the ground. Although air-

planes were being unloaded swiftly by ground personnel, the aircrews spent a great deal of time in the operations office, at the snack bar, or learning about weather or other issues. He acted quickly to get airplanes turned around faster: "On the thirty-first of July, the third day on the job, I put out an order to the effect that no

Coal-hauling C-54s (below) based at Fassberg in the British Zone unload at Tempelhof in the early morning. Coal residue was swept into piles and re-bagged; none was wasted. (USAF photo)



crew member would leave the site of his airplane at Tempelhof and Gatow...

Even as an incoming pilot was cutting off his engines after taxiing to the unloading ramp, a big truck with an unloading crew aboard was walking up to the cargo door to transfer the load. As the pilot got down from the plane, an operations officer roared up in a jeep and handed him his clearance slip. If there was anything at all the pilot should know--an accident at the other end of the corridor, for example--the Operations officer passed along this information with the clearance slip. Then the weather officer came up in his jeep, to



The lessons learned from the Berlin Airlift were applied to USAF aircraft development, refining of airlift techniques, and ultimately into formation of the Military Airlift Command (USAF photo)

give the pilot the latest word in that department. The third jeep to arrive was fitted out like a snack bar, literally stocked with such items as hot coffee, hot dogs and doughnuts, and equipped with a canopy that could be extended in case of rain." Other jeeps brought out other items of use to the aircrews. (52)

Turner also put his staff to work on ground crews. Motion study experts analyzed every aspect of the unloading method with stopwatches and statistical charts to streamline the process. They were successful. For instance, they implemented procedures which allowed one crew of 12 men to load ten tons of bagged coal into a C-54 within six minutes. On the other side, unloading techniques were instituted which allowed crews to complete tasks in five minutes which previously had required 17. Additionally, refueling time was cut from 33 to eight minutes using the procedures of Turner's staff. All of these efforts paid off; the airlift turnaround time at Berlin was reduced from an hour to 30 minutes. (53)

Germany's harsh winter weather constituted the greatest single threat to the airlift's transports. As summer 1948 turned to winter, the Airlift Task Force had to take many actions to ensure that tonnage and safety rates remained at the levels desired. For instance, the complement of weather personnel in the region grew from 308 to 570 by the end of the year to support the increased operations. These individuals undertook several programs designed to achieve forecasting precision as the dreary winter months approached. They brought into use new types of measuring equipment. On some occasions weather observers were posted at the approach of the runway to count and report the number of runway lights that could be seen when visibility dropped to less than a mile. Weather reconnaissance flights were also stepped up to increase forecasting knowledge. For a time, every seventh C-54 was required to have its radio operator report weather conditions at four points along the air corridors. A weather officer also served on Turner's staff in an effort to bring to bear as much weather information as possible to the airlift planning process. The weather officer held daily telephone conferences with weather personnel at other sites and produced a composite forecast for the airlift managers.

Although the winter of 1948-1949 was one of the worst on record, the airlift was able to overcome it sufficiently to keep a reasonable amount of tonnage flying into Berlin. (54) Turner sounded his support of the Air Weather Service's opera-

tions, noting that its "forecasts were as good as possible, being limited only by the current status of progress of the science of weather forecasting. More certainly could not have been expected." (55)

With total instrument flying and poor weather conditions the standard in Berlin Airlift operations, excellent air traffic control (ATC) was a requirement for any hope of relieving the blockade with an airlift. Unfortunately, the experience level, the quality of equipment, and the ATC personnel strengths were insufficient at first to meet the demands of the massive operation. Turner complained about this problem to the MATS commander, writing on 21 August 1948: "One fact that their operations have brought out very forcibly is that there appear to be no traffic controllers in the Air Force. We had some during the War in the ICHD, but they have apparently all got out and are now with the airlines or CAA. MATS has developed Flight Advisory Centers over here in Europe, but they are traffic followers rather than controllers. The magnitude of this operation and the tight schedules which we must maintain with split-minute timing have showed how critical this lack is. I think you would do well to have your people study the problem and then start training a specialist corps of traffic controllers. I foresee great difficulty if we are not furnished with some competent traffic controllers soon." (56) Turner equated many of the operation's difficulties at that stage of the airlift to inadequate ATC and believed the situation would only get worse once winter set in.

Airlift power, represented here by a line of C-54s, kept Berlin alive and broke the Soviet blockade. In the process, Berlin became a symbol of resistance to Soviet expansion.

Action was forthcoming. Turner noted that the Army Airways and Air Communications Service (AACS) commander on the scene was "aware of the inadequacies of some of the GCA [ground control approach] controllers, and he now has some people coming over from the States who should be better trained." (57) Kuter also informed Turner on 2 September 1948 that additional GCA personnel would be available soon: "Another good example of the type of cooperation that we are getting is that USAF, acting on our request, has recalled to active duty for 90 days twenty CAA traffic controllers.... Their papers are now being hand processed and the first contingent will leave here for Rhein-Main today, 2 September, on Priority One. This group of experienced personnel should be of real assistance to you." (58) So fast did one of these controllers re-enter active service that he was notified on a Saturday of the

90-day call-up and by the next Friday he was in the control tower at the Tempelhof Airport. At peak operation, the Berlin Airlift was requiring the services of 90 AACCS officers and 700 enlisted personnel.(59)



Muscle power, (above) not forklifts, moved those sacks of cargo from the C-54 floor onto the Army truck. (USAF photo)

As the number of ATC personnel rose, so did the reliability of their activities. They were aided by state-of-the-art electronic and visual landing aids that contributed appreciably to the airlift's success. A new area control radar was installed to track incoming aircraft 60 miles down the air corridors. Other modern radar handled closer traffic, particularly the difficult approach to Tempelhof. That airport possessed one of the worst flight paths imaginable. Placed in the middle of Berlin, and surrounded by encroaching hills, it required pilots to approach the runway between two rows of seven-story apartment buildings. It taxed the CGA personnel and the aircrews on every flight. But operations officers kept searching for the right combinations. By the winter of 1948-1949, they had created a system which allowed for operations into Berlin under most situations with a remarkable degree of safety. During the entire airlift only 17 American and seven British airplanes were lost, although there had been 276,926 airlift flights. Turner said of this effort: "Without the wholehearted support, cooperation, and technical assistance of the Airways and Air Communications Service, the success of the Berlin Airlift would never have been possible." (60)

One of the most important operational aspects of the airlift, from the perspective of maintaining the morale and support of the Berliners, was what has been called "Operation Little Vittles." It began at the initiative of Lieutenant Gale S. Halvorsen, a pilot on the airlift who decided to supplement the meager diet of some of the city's children with candy dropped by parachute from his C-54 as it approached Tempelhof. At first Lieutenant Halvorsen was concerned that Turner would disapprove, but the Task Force commander immediately grasped the morale benefit it held both for the aircrews and the Berliners. He institutionalized the "Little Vittles" airdrops by establishing collection points for candy and handkerchiefs and setting up special flights for Halvorsen to circle the city dropping candy, even to children in the Soviet sector. It was a tour de force as a morale booster, unifying force, and public relations undertaking. (61) All of these diverse elements came together to establish the Berlin Airlift as not just a juggernaut with

the ability to sustain the city on a long-term basis, but as an operation that could continue indefinitely. Several milestones were important as indicators of the airlift's success. First, on 7 July aircraft exceeded 1,000 tons delivered in one twenty-four hour period. This was especially important because of the seemingly insurmountable objective of 10,000 tons per month that had been the goal of the Hump airlift in 1943. On 30 July 1948 the airlift set another tonnage record by delivering 1,918 tons in a single day. That record, however, was surpassed by the following day and nearly every day thereafter until winter set in. But the harsh weather did not end the airlift. By 5 November 300,000 tons had been hauled on the airlift and no end was anticipated.

All of the tonnage records led up to what has been termed the Easter Parade of 16 April 1949, which was designed to stretch the potential of the airlift force and to send a message to the Soviet Union that the blockade could succeed. Turner directed maximal effort for 24 hours. His goal was to complete one mission for every one of the 1,440 minutes of the day. They did not quite make this goal. The airlift flew a total of 1,398 missions delivering 12,941 tons of food, coal, and other supplies. The aircraft flew 78,954,500 miles during the day. There had been no aircraft accidents and no injuries. It was an impressive effort, all the more so after Colonel William Bunker, an Army Transportation Officer, told them, "You guys have hauled the equivalent of six hundred cars of coal into Berlin today." He added, "Have you ever seen a fifty-car coal train? Well, you've just equaled twelve of them." (62)

The End of the Airlift

All the time that the airlift was underway, American diplomats were feverishly working to resolve the blockade with their Soviet counterparts. At first they had little success in forcing a settlement. The Soviets were convinced they possessed a strong position; that the airlift would fail; that Berlin would starve or freeze, or both; and that the western allies would be forced to vacate the city. Soviet experts, as well as some allied strategists, believed no airlift could support a city of better than 2,000,000 people by itself. All previous attempts at a total aerial resupply had failed. The Luftwaffe had failed to supply the German army adequately by air and had been cut off by the Soviets at Stalingrad during World War II. There the requirement had been for transporting only 300 tons per day, but it had failed. Turner suggested that the German airlift failure at Stalingrad "was one of the factors in the early Russian reaction to the American-British Airlift into Berlin. The Russians had never had an airlift themselves, and they didn't take ours seriously until it was too late."(63)

When they realized that the allies had the capability to deliver quite a lot of tonnage, the Soviets still refused to negotiate in good faith. They believed the airlift could not be sustained permanently, especially over a hard German winter. To be on the safe side, they began harassing airlift flights in the corridors by dashing in and out in fighters, firing anti-aircraft weapons, and taking a variety of other actions of harassment. A total of 733 incidents took place between 10 August 1948 and 15 August 1949, as shown in Table 1. These incidents became increasingly common as the airlift progressed. For instance, only 11 harassing episodes were reported through October 1948. In November, 17 more took place; the number grew rapidly until March 1949 when 146 harassing incidents were reported. After this, incidents began to decline. Fortunately, none caused any

damage to airlift transports.(64)

The Soviet resolve began to weaken over the winter of 1948-49, since the airlift appeared to be succeeding. It was broken with the Easter Parade. On 25 April, nine days after the big push, the TASS news agency revealed that the Soviet Union was willing to lift the blockade. On 4 May the delegates who had been negotiating over the blockade announced that it would be lifted effective 12 May. As promised, on that day the rail lines and highways to Berlin from the west were reopened. But the airlift did not end immediately. Fearing that the Soviets might reinstate the blockade after the allies had dismantled the Combined Airlift Task Force, General Clay continued the operation through the summer to lay in a reserve of commodities. On 30 July 1949 allied representatives officially announced the date for the termination of the airlift as 31 October 1949. During August operations began to wind down and C-54s were released for service elsewhere. Effective 1 September 1949 Turner's Combined Airlift Task Force was inactivated. On 30 September, one month ahead of schedule, the last C-54 left Rhein-Main for Berlin.(65)

In terms of sheer numbers, it would be an understatement to call the Berlin Airlift impressive. It delivered a total of 2,325,509.6 tons of food, fuel, and supplies to Berlin in 15 months and transported a total of 227,655 passengers either in or out of the city. See the tally depicted in Table 2 for a full breakdown. The flying hours, missions, and safety of the operation were also most impressive, as shown in Table 3.(66)

One of the keys to the successful delivery of so much tonnage was the large number of aircraft involved in Operation Vittles. Turner ultimately was able to assemble some 441 aircraft, comprising 309 C-54s, 105 C-47s, 21 R-50s, five C-82s, and a lone C-97, for the airlift. It should be noted, however, that 106 C-54s were normally assigned to airlift duties between European bases rather than corridor flights to Berlin. The RAF contributed another 101 aircraft: 40 Dakotas, 35 Yorks, and 26 Hastings. During the summer months, the British also supplied occasional amphibious aircraft which landed on waterways in the city. These were especially useful in bringing in salt because the amphibious aircraft were resistant to salt corrosion. (67)

TABLE I
SUMMARY OF HARASSMENT INCIDENTS IN AIR
CORRIDOR TO BERLIN
10 August 1948- 15 August 1949

Buzzing 77
Close Flying 96
Flak 54
Air-to-Air Fire 14
Flares 59
Radio Interference 82
Searchlights 103
Air-to-Ground Fire 42
Ground Fire 55
Ground Explosions 39
Rockets 4
Balloons 11
Chemical Laying 54
Bombing 36
Unidentified Objects 7
Total 733

SOURCE: Memo, 1st Airlift Task Force Intel, to 1st Airlift Task Force Comdr "Summary of Corridor Incidents," 2 Sep 49, Berlin Airlift Files, Ofc of Hist, MAC; news release, USAFE Office of Information, n.s., n.d., MAC Hist Ofc.

TABLE 2 CARGO TRANSPORTED DURING BERLIN
AIRLIFT 26 June 1948-30 September 1949
(All Figures in Tons)

CARGO INBOUND			
Food	Coal	Misc. Commodities	Total
U.S. 296,319.3	1,421,118.8	66,134.6	1,783,572.7
U.K. 240,386.0	164,910.5	136,640.4	541,936.9
Totals			
536,705.3	1,586,029.3	202,775.0	2,325,509.6

CARGO OUTBOUND TO U.S. AND BRITISH ZONES

U.S.	45,887.7
U.K.	35,843.1
Total	81,730.8

PASSENGERS FLOWN

	Inbound	Outbound	Total
U.S.	25,263	37,486	62,749
U.K.	34,815	130,091	164,906
Total	60,078	167,577	227,655

SOURCE: News Release, USAFE Office of Information, "Berlin Airlift Status," n.d.

TABLE 3 BERLIN AIRLIFT FLIGHTS
26 June 1948 - 30 September 1949

TOTAL FLIGHTS

U.S.	189,963
U.K.	87,606

TOTAL HOURS FLOWN

U.S.	586,827
U.K.	Unknown

TOTAL AIRCRAFT MILES FLOWN BY C-47s AND C-54s

C-47	7,584,009
C-54	84,477,853
Total	92,061,862

U.S. FATALITIES DURING BERLIN AIRLIFT

USAF Officers	22
USAF Airmen	6
U.S. Navy Petty Officer	1
U.S. Army Private	1
U.S. Civilian Employee	1
Total	31

U.S. AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS

Major	70
Minor	56
Total	126

(Aircraft miles flown by USAFE's 5 C-82, 1 C-97A and 1 C-74 unavailable.) SOURCE: News Release, USAFE Office of Information, "Berlin Airlift Status," n.d.

Assessment

The Berlin Airlift was significant for a multitude of reasons. At the level of foreign relations it demonstrated the resolve of the United States to meet a challenge from the Soviet Union. American allies around the world witnessed the airlift as a triumph of will, and among Berliners it raised morale and built resistance. According to Phillips Davison: "It changed people's attitudes toward the western powers, raised their esteem for western strength, and reassured those who were anxious. It contributed toward a feeling of partnership, and served to establish a bond between Berlin and the West. It represented a blow struck in the cause of peace, freedom, and democracy. Above all, it made people feel that resistance could succeed."⁽⁶⁸⁾ Its value as a morale booster to allies cannot be overestimated.

Neither can the value of the Berlin Airlift as a tool to impress the Soviet Union be exaggerated. At no time in its history up to 1948 could the Soviets have mounted such an extensive operation. The sheer size and extent of the airlift, the requirement of close coordination, and the resourcefulness of allied leadership all impressed the Soviet leadership. Soviet leaders in the late 1940s respected strength, and the airlift was an outstanding example of allied muscle flexing. Stalin was amazed.

At the Air Force doctrinal level the Berlin Airlift had several ramifications as well. It demonstrated, for example, that if proper support were available any amount of tonnage could conceivably be moved by air anywhere in the world with minimal consideration for geography or weather. The airlift had been a further proving ground for air transport. It brought valuable experience in operational techniques, in air traffic control, and in the maintenance and reconditioning of aircraft.

Current airlift doctrine stems from the Berlin Airlift on many points. The airlift also highlighted the important fact, which has become so commonplace since 1949 as to be trite, that military airlift is an instrument for achieving foreign policy objectives not only in wartime but also in peacetime. The editor of Air Force Magazine reflected upon this fundamental truth in September 1948 by writing, "For the first time in history, the United States is employing its Air Force as a diplomatic weapon." He continued: "Today, in keeping with its coming of age as the nation's first line of defense, the USAF has taken on two big assignments in international affairs....One is what has been called 'the return of the American Air Force to Europe,' the arrival of two groups of Strategic Air Command B-29s in England....The second is the Berlin Airlift... The first chapters of the 'role of air power in diplomacy' are being written here."⁽⁶⁹⁾ That airlift was a more flexible tool for executing national policy than either bombers or fighter aircraft became apparent for the first time during the Berlin Airlift.

From the twin perspectives of organization and hardware, Operation Vittles contributed new insights as well. Turner thought that the organizational structure of the airlift was not the best for efficient execution. He remarked, "Far more successful than the Russians in hamstringing the Berlin Airlift were the same old bugaboos I had experienced in India--divided command for one, and conflict between senior officers dedicated to the technical and strategic functions of the Air Force and those of us who had built up some expertise in air transport."⁽⁷⁰⁾ He advocated for the remainder of his career the importance of designating a single major command as the sole manager of airlift for the Air Force.



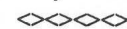
This C-54 left Rhein Main at 1845 on 30 September 1949. Sister aircraft flew overhead in salute. The success of the Berlin Airlift proved the efficacy of air power in support of national objectives without the use of force. (USAF photo)

Impetus for this idea gained momentum over the years, with Turner always an able and forceful advocate of the concept.⁽⁷¹⁾ It was later achieved on 1 December 1974 when all Tactical Air Command airlift resources were consolidated with those of the Military Airlift Command.

Airlift personnel also ended their role in the Berlin Airlift with a commitment to the procurement of large transport aircraft that could carry more tonnage in fewer missions. By the end of the operation, Turner noted, he had as many aircraft available as could be accommodated in the flow. "There was a limit to the number of airplanes you could get into an airport in one day," he recalled, "so the answer to that was larger airplanes." he worked to obtain larger transports for the rest of his career and observed in his memoirs that the C-124 was conceived during the Berlin Airlift as a means of hauling more cargo in fewer trips. Its 25-ton capacity far outstripped any airplane involved in Operation Vittles. With 100 of them and an 80 percent in commission rate, he thought an airlift could deliver 8,000 tons daily to Berlin without breaking a sweat. The cause of more effective airlift had to be lobbied for, he thought.⁽⁷²⁾ This philosophy has prompted additional airlift acquisition programs up to the present.

Operation Vittles was thus a magnificent effort. It accomplished its mission of totally supplying the needs of a major city for more than a year. It defeated the Soviet Union's blockade in one of the first major confrontations of the Cold War without leading to war. It taught Americans untold lessons about the way to establish and manage a large-scale airlift. Since the Berlin Airlift's conclusion, there have been numerous examples of the use of airlift in achieving foreign policy objectives in a noncombat setting. One of the most dramatic was the airlift to support the Israelis in the Yom Kippur War of 1973.

Whenever the United States does not want to become a combatant but wants to support a given foreign policy objective, military airlift has been present for use. More than any other legacy, the Berlin Airlift helped teach U.S. leaders the value of airlift to project a presence anywhere at any time.



FOOTNOTES TO AIRLIFT STORY

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15. Msg, USAIE/CC to USAF/DO, n.s., 28 Jun 48, Ofc of Hist, USAFE, "USAFE and the Berlin Airlift, 1948," p 11.
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19. Ibid, 2: 604-607.
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Lessons Learned, Berlin Airlift by Roger D. Launius

Airlift possesses the versatility to be employed usefully in environments other than combat. The Berlin Airlift was the first large-scale demonstration of the use of airlift in executing national policy. It set the stage for using airlift in the daily execution of US foreign policy objectives. This has been a major noncombat use of airlift since 1949, and has ensured Military

Airlift Command's (MAC) peacetime humanitarian support in times of crisis (Berlin) or natural disaster (Soviet Armenia); the support of science and technology (as in the DEEP FEEZE missions to Antarctica); or the deployment and support of UN peacekeeping forces (as the multinational force and observers in the Sinai Peninsula.

Rigorous Organization Needed

The airlift illuminated the need to throw off the milk-run mentality of the airlines and earlier military air transport operations. It proved the need to organize all aspects of the airlift operation with utmost care, and to execute with exceptional precision, in order to deliver large cargo tonnage in short time periods. Procedures, reporting systems, and communications networks so critical to the success of the Berlin Airlift have set the standards for airlift since.

The airlift demonstrated the need for larger transports able to maneuver in tight corridors and airfields. The demonstrated need for moving the most goods in the least number of missions led to the USAF search for better transport aircraft. It led directly to the C-124 Globemaster development, and indirectly to the modern transports of today.

As a corollary, the airlift also demonstrated the need for developing aircraft solely as military transports, designed for easy loading and unloading of people and goods. The C-124, with its capacity for oversize cargo and its clamshell doors permitting roll-on, roll-off capability, is an example. So are its successors, such as the C-130, C-141, C-5, and C-17.

Additionally, the airlift demonstrated the need for efficient materials handling equipment (MHE) in the aerial ports, and procedures designed to streamline the loading and unloading processes. Also, packaging techniques were shown to be ineffective. The C-54s on the airlift were loaded by hand. The creation of pallets, special MHE, and procedures to increase efficiency overcame those shortcomings. The development in the 1950s of a rigid pallet, side guide rail system was the genesis of the current 463L system.

Control by Professionals

The requirement for well-defined and tightly organized air traffic control and ground controlled approach (GCA) was realized as a result of the first hectic weeks of the Berlin Airlift. Flow patterns, rigorous enroute procedures, and the elimination of stacking over the airfield all resulted from the problems of hauling cargo into Berlin. Since then, policies and priorities have constantly sought to create smooth airlift flows and efficient terminal operations.

Finally, dedicated airlift professionals are required to control airlift assets and manage airlifts. The lack of airlift professionals contributed to early inefficiencies on the Berlin Airlift. Maj. Gen. William H. Turner contended that employment of airlift resources must be left to airlift professionals if the objectives of major airlifts were to be met. This led to the eventual establishment of MAC as the single manager for airlift, and its designation in 1977 as a specified command with worldwide, rather than theater, commitments. This necessity ultimately fostered the creation in 1987 of the US Transportation Command to consolidate all transportation organizations in a single umbrella command.



Soviet View of the Berlin Airlift

Editor's note: the text which follows is extracted from the book, West Berlin by V. Vysotsky, published in Moscow by Progressive Publishers in 1974. The book deals with postwar developments in and effecting West Berlin. In his coverage of events in the late 1947 and up to mid-1948, Vysotsky maintained that the Western Allies were intent on splitting Germany. The Soviet authorities favored a single united Germany and a single currency. On 19 June 1948, the Western Powers enacted the currency reform in their occupation zones. The extract from Vysotsky begins on page 82.

Western Provocations The acts of provocation perpetrated by the Western Powers aggravated the situation still further and forced the Soviet authorities to adopt additional measures on communications between the Western zones of occupation and Berlin. The movement of boats along the waterways between Berlin and the Western zones was suspended on June 23, 1948, and that of trains on the following day.

Vysotsky then discusses the effects of the separate currency reform, claiming it brought interzonal trade to a standstill and indicated that the Western Powers had openly scrapped the agreement on joint control and administration of Germany and Berlin. He continues on Western actions in response to the suspension of movement.

Pointing the Fingers

In order to continue their presence in Berlin, the United States and Britain resorted to a bitter political struggle- "the battle for Berlin" as they called it, and declared that they would strive at any cost to retain the city as "their advance position." At a meeting held from June 25 to 27 in the White House to discuss the situation, the US president, ignoring the opinion of the majority of his advisers, decided to remain in Berlin and send B-29 bombers to Germany.

In response to Soviet countermeasures the Western Powers raised a tremendous ballyhoo about "increasing aggressiveness from the Kremlin," "blockade of Berlin," and so forth. Finally at the end of June 1948 they announced that an air lift (Luftbrücke) had been organized from the Western zones to Berlin to supply its Western sectors with food, fuel, and raw materials. However claims about the "increasing aggressiveness of the Soviet Union" and its intention to "seize the whole of Berlin" were nothing more than fabrications characteristic of the Western propaganda machine.

All the restrictive measures introduced by the Soviet authorities on the demarcation line and on the communications between the Western zones and Berlin were forced upon them and were only of a "temporary nature." They were undertaken in response to the separate currency reform and designed to prevent the flow of depreciated banknotes into the Soviet Zone, including Berlin, and to safeguard the economy of East Germany and the interests of its population.

Just as farfetched were the assertions about the "blockade of West Berlin by the Russians." Even many Western scholars maintain that all the measures taken by the Soviet authorities to strengthen the guard and tighten control on the demarcation lines and the boundary with the Western sectors of Berlin, were directed against the separatist moves of the Western Powers and

not against the West Berlin population. (pp. 83-84)

Vysotsky mentions that the Soviet authorities offered to assume full responsibility for providing food and fuel to the entire population of Berlin. He writes:

Self-created Blockade

The Magistrate (of Berlin) and the US, British, and French military authorities, however, rejected all the Soviet proposals as a "propaganda maneuver." In other words, the "blockade" of the Western part of Berlin was artificially created by the Western Powers themselves. They used the ballyhoo about the protective measures on communications introduced by the Soviet Command and the organization of the "air lift" to step up the "cold war," fan war hysteria, and complete the split of Berlin and the country as a whole.

Operation Luftbrücke was a provocation designed to camouflage the divisive activities of the Western Powers and neutralize the resistance of the German people against the West's aggressive plans. (pp. 84-85.)

Vysotsky covers political maneuvering among the great powers through the remainder of 1948 and into early 1949, contending that action by the Allies, led by Washington, completed the split of Berlin and led to a crisis atmosphere. To ease tensions and deprive the USA of a pretext for aggravating the situation, he said the Soviet government took measures to encourage the Western Powers to negotiate directly and to reestablish the unity of Germany. Through indirect signals via UPI journalist Kingsbury Smith and via direct contacts at the United Nations, the USSR and USA began negotiations that ultimately led to a settlement. Vysotsky resumes with a question to which he provides the answer.

Why did the Western Powers decide to negotiate a settlement of the "Berlin Crisis"?

Why the Allies Negotiated The primary reason was that the United States and its allies failed in their attempts to undermine the economy of the Soviet Zone and force the Soviet Union out of Germany. Just as futile were their hopes of splitting up the united front of the socialist states. The Western Powers were also seriously concerned about the steadily worsening situation in their sectors where the lack of raw materials, especially those which could not be brought in by air, was having a detrimental effect on industry. According to the Magistrate, by the end of 1948 an estimated 5,712 industrial enterprises (out of 62,500) had been closed because of the absence of raw materials, while 12,937 were operating on short time. In March 1949 the number of unemployed reached 144,944, not counting those who worked a short week.

Disturbed by the mounting tension in Berlin, world public opinion, like the Germans themselves, insisted that the Western Powers get down to negotiations with the USSR and bring to an end the steadily intensifying conflict. (p. 98.)

Agreement was reached on 4 May and the blockade ended on 12 May 1949. The editors are grateful to Dr. Daniel F Harrington Historian of the Air Force Weapons Laboratory, for access to Vysotsky's book. Doctor Harrington's article, "The Berlin Blockade Revisited," is recommended for further reading. (International History Review, Vol. VI No. 1, February 1984 pp. 88-112.) His cogent analysis challenges the conventional wisdom about events leading to the blockade and top-level decisionmaking on both sides from June 1948 through May 1949.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

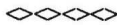
Dear Editor
Torretta Flyer

We are searching for the identity of a pilot who served with the 15th Air Force. No squad, group, or wing number is known. We do not know if he was a fighter or bomber pilot.

His personal profile was described in late 1945 as follows: He was born in New York in 1922. He has brown eyes, dark brown hair, attractive and handsome, height 5' 10". He may have resided in Indianapolis, Indiana, prior to his military service and may have returned there shortly after his discharge. He was acquainted with the Kreuzer family. After graduating from high school, he attended college for one year before entering the Army Air Corps to be a pilot. His military experience was described in the late fall of 1945 as a "distinguished hero of this war. . . he was the fair haired boy and received much publicity. He was wounded while overseas and received a 3/4 disability discharge. Evidently because of his injury, it was indicated that he has a very decided readjustment to make in his life. His parents and 17 year old sister were alive in in 1945. Religion: Presbyterian.

If you recall anyone who might possibly fit the above description, please contact

Mrs. Colleen Gwynn,
358 East 750th South, Farmington, Utah 84025



Salt Lake City, UT
Dear Bud:

MY AMULETS

We flew our new B-24 H "Salvo Sally" (826 Squadron #63) across the Atlantic in late March 1944, and landed in Dakar French West Africa (Now Senegal). Because security was still tight we had Black French Army Soldiers guarding each one of our planes. While standing in front of our plane one day, one of these soldiers pointed to my white undershirt and indicated he would trade one of his exquisitely made 2 by 2 by 1/4 inch calf leather amulets for my undershirt. He spoke only French but we communicated. I said yes, and went back to my barracks bag for another shirt which I traded for another amulet. It seemed the women in his tribe liked men with white undershirts which they wore one on top of the other. He was a very happy man.

A few years ago I learned the amulets have Muslim prayers written in Arabic sewn inside and are believed to ward off evil spirits. I am wondering if any other crew member who stopped at Dakar had a similar experience. I still have the amulets.

I am still looking for Lt Stone-Pilot, Lt Bartleman-Bombardier, Lt Ripple-Co-Pilot

Have a Happy New Year
Joe Hebert 826 Squadron

Chicago, Ill
Dear Bud

I thought you and our members would enjoy the little piece below:

RETIRED

After a Christmas break the teacher asked his small pupils how they spent the holidays. One small boy's reply was like this.

We always spend Christmas with Grandma and Grandpa. They use to live in a big brick house, but Grandpa got retarded, then they moved to Florida.

They live in a place with a lot of retarded people. They live in a little tin hut. They ride three wheel bicycles. They go to a big building they call the wrecked hall. But if it's wrecked, it's fixed now. They play games there and do exercises, but they don't do them very good.

There is a swimming pool and they go to it and they just stand there in the water with their hats on. I guess they don't know how to swim.

My Grandma used to bake cookies and stuff, but I guess she forgot how. Nobody cooks there. They all go to fast food restaurants.

They eat prunes every morning and Grandpa says they're good for what ails him-but I didn't even know he was sick.

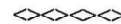
As you come into the park there is a doll house with a man sitting in it. He watches all day so they can't get out without him seeing them.

They wear badges with their names on them. I guess they don't know who they are.

My Grandma says Grandpa worked hard all his life and earned his retardment.

I sure wish they would move back home, but I guess the man in the doll house won't let them out.

Happy New Year to All
Raymond M Strand 827 Squadron.



Milan, Italy
Dear Editor
Torretta Flyer

(Last summer the association office received a letter from Milan, Italy, handwritten by Matteo Davenia, formerly a resident of Cerignola during 1943-1944. His letter was written in Italian and has been translated as follows):

I heard about the Association from the Scholarship Awards publicity in Milan.

I was a laborer at the air-base assigned to the 764th Squadron, and was issued an ID badge, a (copy of which was enclosed and is duplicated here). Although I have resided in Milan for the past 15 years, I still have very warm feelings and strong remembrances of the friendships made at



the airbase and would like to hear from any of the members who might remember me. I cannot remember any specific names except for one Nelson Biaggio, who was of Italian descent, and was originally from California. My address is: Davenia, Matteo, Via Savona W 108, Milan, Italy.



Chula Vista ,California
Dear Bud

I ran across some interesting information pertaining to our WWII experiences.

When I read the article about George McGovern it struck a bell. I looked into my records and sure enough I had a flimsy for the mission and the date listed in the article. I flew most of my missions as Group Staff.

The process of elimination would indicate that McGovern may have flown with either the 451st or 484th. Please check your records.

(Editors Note: We did check the records and found that McGovern flew with the 455th Bomb group that was based at San Giovanni just a few miles north of Torretta. See the book by Robert Sam Anson, " McGovern, A Biography)

The McGovern Article

Former Senator George McGovern said in a talk at the National Air & Space Museum May 18, 1989 that he was haunted for 40 years by the fear, which proved unfounded, that he had killed an innocent Austrian farm family when he jettisoned a loose bomb from the B-24 bomber he was piloting near the end of World War II.

McGovern, who was defeated by Richard Nixon in the 1972 presidential election, flew 35 combat missions against Nazi German industrial targets as a pilot of the "Dakota Queen" a B-24 Liberator with the 455th Bomb Group 15th Air Force.

Returning to his home base from a bombing run over Austria on March 14, 1945, McGovern said that his crew reported that the plane still carried a live bomb which had caught in its rack and was dangling from the bomb bay. The crew finally succeeded in dislodging the bomb before the plane landed.

"We saw it fall and hit in the middle of a farm yard just as the clock showed 12 noon," he said. "The house, barn and other buildings flew in all directions. I envisioned a young farm family sitting down for their noon meal blown to pieces. "

"When I landed back at our base in Italy, I was handed a cable saying that Eleanor had given birth to our first child, our daughter Ann. The thought went through my mind that we had brought a child into the world and that same day I had killed someone else's children."

In 1985, while he was a guest professor at the University of Innsbruck in Austria, he said he recalled the incident, "that still haunts me many years later" during a taped interview for an Austrian television documentary about World War II.

After the interview was broadcast he said, "an elderly Austrian farmer telephoned the TV station and said that the farmhouse I had described bombing was his. "He saw the bomb coming and sought safety," McGovern continued. "No one was hurt. We hated Adolph Hitler' the man said, ' and if bombing our farmhouse helped in anyway to bring him down, tell Senator

McGovern we are grateful.' "So after 40 years I was exonerated from the incident that had bothered me since World War II."

Earlier in the war, McGovern's plane lost two of its four engines during a raid on the Skoda ammunition works at Pilsen, Czechoslovakia. The 22 year old pilot nursed the crippled plane to a safe emergency landing, despite flames in a third engine, on a short runway on an island in the Adriatic Sea. That feat earned McGovern the Distinguished Flying Cross.



Montrose, Colorado
Dear Bud

For all those interested, I received a note from Bob Picken, 764 Squadron, telling me that Rockford, Illinois has a combat fliers club which meets monthly for breakfast with about 190 attendees. Members living nearby can drop in and perhaps meet an old buddy

TV Stradley 764 Squadron



This letter was recently sent to the editor of Smithsonian Air & Space Magazine by one of our members, John H Williamson 766 Squadron, regarding the effects of oxygen starvation.

Lebanon, New Hampshire
To the "Letters" Editor:

"The flight of the Bumblebee," (October-November issue) is of significance to me for two reasons. First, it provides me with the name of a 332nd fighter pilot to whom four and half decades later I can extend my thanks for making those rendezvous with our B-24 formations on the far side of the Alps. Even though German fighter activity had declined by the time I arrived in Italy in late 1944, the sight of those beautiful little P-51's gave such reassurance to everyone inside those lumbering Liberators. So to Louis Purnell, and perhaps other members of the 332nd, here is a belated salute from one of those you protected so well.

Secondly, I have the dubious distinction of also suffering loss of oxygen on a combat mission. Louis reports that he heard music, so did I and I remember humming along with it. I also remember trying to touch our wing tip to that of the lead plane in our box, a feat that seemed inordinately amusing to me. When the euphoria suddenly stopped, something made me glance down. I saw the nose of my oxygen mask dangling free, hit the other pilot and passed out.

A savage burst of pain in my head accompanied by a simultaneous bright red flash were my next sensations as the engineer gave me oxygen from a portable bottle. I assume that the difference between Louis' recovery and mine was due to his gradual re-oxygenation as opposed to my "quickie."

At the recent 461st & 484th Bomb Groups Association reunion, the Association president and I talked about inviting members of the 332nd to a subsequent get-together. I am sending a copy of this letter as a reminder. During the war, there were many in my unit who wanted to meet the guys who flew the fighters. I am sure they still do.

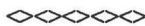
Dear Bud:

Sorry to have taken so long to take action on your last letter. So far as my "oxygen blackout" mission is concerned, it is difficult to provide much information since I did not mention it in my pilot's log at the time. It probably did not seem especially significant at the time. John Boyd, I am sure was the pilot. John was with the 766th only a short time before he was moved up to Group, but we shared a number of hairy moments beginning with a take off from Gander in a blizzard and ending with an inadvertent wheels down bomb run over Fiume.

Herman Weidower was the flight engineer and undoubtedly saved me from some serious problems, (like instant death) by his swift action. He hailed from Oklahoma, but I am afraid I've lost touch with him and the other enlisted men. Paul Jensen-tail gunner, and Swank-upper gunner, were both from Minnesota. Albert Kozlowski-nose gunner, Emerson Burr-radio operator were both from Connecticut, and William "Shorty" Dixon-ball gunner from California. Tom Forsyth-Bombardier, and Ed Callahan-Navigator were the other two officers of the crew. We still keep in touch.

I have forgotten both the date and target, but it was one of the early missions for our replacement crew. Since we were a few hours out from Torretta, the target was probably Regensburg, February 5, 1945, or Vienna February 8, 1945. Both were well defended targets and we were lucky that the weather at both was too bad for German fighters to operate. Our formation was led by the relatively new "mickey ship" which permitted bombing by radar. All of the planes in our squadron returned safely, as I recall.

With best wishes for a happy and successful 1990.
John H Williamson 766 Squadron



Hastings, Florida
Dear Bud Markel

Thanks for printing the two versions, one official and one personal, of the bombing mission by the crew of Ruben Kaiser on December 11, 1944, to targets in Austria, in the last issue of the Torretta Flyer, as that was the way I thought they should be published.

Ruben Kaiser has been in and out of the VA hospital in Madison, Wisconsin for surgery on his right leg due to insulin complications caused as a result of diabetes. (Editors Note: Ruben has recovered sufficiently to attend the New Orleans reunion with his wife Petronella. He managed to get around with the aid of a walker even on rain slick Canal Street, New Orleans.

For anyone who doesn't remember Ruben, he appeared at several reunions wearing his uniform (still trim and fit.)

Charles J Shanklin-engineer on Ruben Kaiser's crew has been found and was not killed as everyone thought but is alive and well and living in the house he and his wife bought over 30 years ago.

I am enclosing a picture of "OL' 45." When Harold D "Bud" Pressel Jr 825 Squadron wrote that he was on the last flight of "OL' 45" in Flyer No #16, I started to thinking that I had a photo of this old B-24. Before I knew it Flyer No#17 was re-

ceived with the letter by Roy R Lee Jr reporting that his crew flew their first mission on August 24, 1944. The photograph (right) was taken January 31, 1945 after a 4 & 1/2 hour high altitude training flight. From left top row: Ruben Kaiser-pilot, Charles Laster - bombardier, and Chester Jones-co/pilot. Bottom row from left: Calvin R Teel-radio operator, and Charles Shanklin-engineer.



With best wishes
Calvin Teel
Radio operator on Ruben Kaiser's crew



Roscommon, Michigan
Dear Bud:

Enclosed please find a photograph of our crew that was taken down in Cuba in 1944. We went down there to complete some training flights because of poor weather in Massachusetts. I have also included a photo (right) of the clock at our rest camp showing the exact hour we heard that the war in Europe had ended. Everyone brought out cases of vino to the town square that day to celebrate.



In reading Flyer No 12 on page 9, I ran across a picture of one of our planes #63 that we flew on our last mission on April 25, 1945 with nine 500 pound bombs. We hit the main marshalling yard at Linz, Austria. It was one of the worst missions. We saw more flak than ever before. We had three holes in the nose turret, Sam E Church, the nose gunner thought he was hit. He had powder burns on his vest. Everyone on board said their prayers.

Our left wing men and ships were blown apart by direct hits. Being the ball gunner, I was quickly out of the turret sitting on the rear hatch looking out the lower windows to watch for our bomb hits. When the two wing men and ships were blown out of the sky, I went to the left waist and saw only three chutes come out.

After the bomb run, I went back and sat down on the rear hatch and noticed to the left an egg size flak hole and also on my right. The shrapnel had come in one side and went out the other. If I hadn't moved to the waist window I would have been speared from one side of my hips to the other. At the expense of the two wing men, our lives were spared.

We had plenty of holes in the ship. The nose tire was in shreds. Doc briefed us for a tail heavy landing. He was going to drag the tail. All windows and hatches were open to help slow the landing speed. What we didn't know was that the right main tire was also flat. We skewed off to the right and plowed into a ditch tearing off the right landing gear, part of the wing severely damaging the ship's nose and bottom plates. The tower reported that all they saw was a cloud of dust and 10 men jumping out of the ship at the same time and running like hell away from the wreck. We all thought the ship might blow up, but it didn't because the co-pilot killed all of the switches before he left.

Doc was praised for the landing, but I don't think it flew again. It was #63, "Sweet Ginny Lee." I didn't see the name of the ship in your picture. I hope it was the same airplane, because at least now I have a picture of it.

I hope others will enjoy this story as much as I enjoy reading their stories in the Torretta Flyer.

I hope to get to one of the reunions in the future.

"Good Luck and God Bless All,"

Ernest M Ryan Sr 826 Squadron

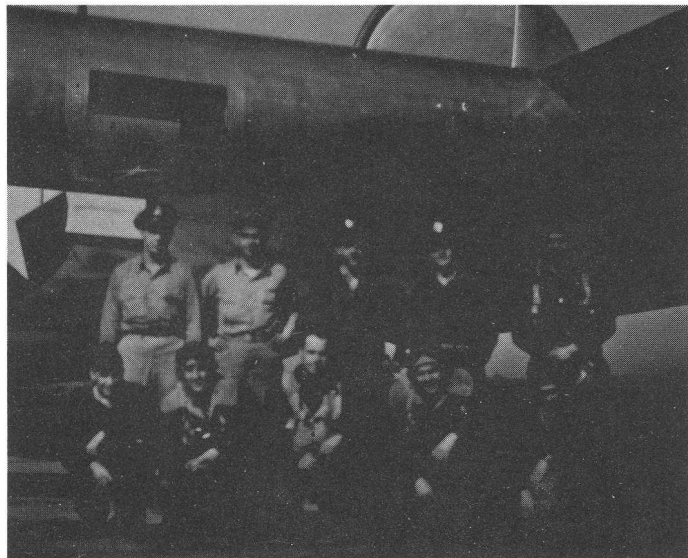


Photo (above) The crew of William D "Doc" Savage, Back row from left: Edward J "Bud" Paul-Navigator, Vincent G "Vince" Myerchin-Bombardier, Edward A Meeker-Co/Pilot, and Charles E Jines-Upper Gunner. Bottom row from left: Clair C Stebins-Engineer, Arthur F Mc Carthy-Tail Gunner, John F Galvin 3rd-Radio/Operator, Ernest M Ryan-Ball Gunner, and Samuel E Church-Nose Gunner.



Mercer, Wisconsin

Dear Bud:

I have been reading with interest the reports of plane #81 "Knockout" I flew several of my missions in it including one in

which we made an emergency landing in Yugoslavia with two dead engines.

We were still in Italy at the end of the European war and ferried #81 back to the states with my original crew plus two ground crewmen. The plane was left at Bradley Field, Connecticut.

Al Halweg 827 Squadron

Photo 1(left below) Ship # 81 Over the Adriatic Sea. Photo 2 (Below right) The two unknown groundcrewmen passengers who flew home with us. Photo taken at Bradley Field, CT..

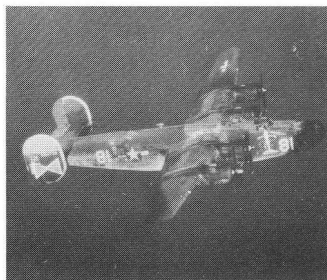
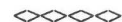


Photo 3 (above) Crew of Albert H Halweg 827 Squadron. Top row from left: Robert D "Bob" Fleck-Navigator, Nicholas "Nick" Kinda-Co/Pilot, Robert D "Bob" Davis-Gunner, Raymond M "Ray" Davis-Gunner, and Roger D Opheim-Gunner. Bottom row from left: Albert H "Al" Halweg-Pilot, Francis DeGennaro-Engineer, Arthur D Giovonine-Radio/Operator, Raymond A "Ray" Ballard-Bombardier, and Edward A "Ed" Denzin-Gunner.



Santa Maria, California

Dear Bud:

Regarding our earlier correspondence about the Lockheed B-38 (Boeing B17E modified with inline engines) I am sending you some more detail and some color on this one of a kind aircraft.

I met Bill Harshbarger at the local cardiac rehab center where all us old wrecks work out and socialize. He worked at the Lockheed-Vega plant in Burbank, California, during WWII and

was the crew chief and flight engineer on the XB-38 during its construction and testing from July 10, 1942 to June 16, 1943.

Bill tells me that the Lockheed Corporation felt that the performance of the B-17 could be improved by installing the Allison V-1710-89 liquid cooled engines instead of the conventional Wright R-1820s. They also wanted to check out a possible alternative power source if the shortages of the widely used R-1820 should develop. The Army Air Force at Wright Field, Ohio was looking for a place to use all of those Allison's coming off the assembly line so they gave Lockheed a contract for one aircraft with the proposed configuration and, according to Bill, pressured Lockheed to hustle the project along.

They started with the airframe of an existing B-17E which had been assigned to Lockheed-Vega as the "pattern aircraft." This was the plane that had been used in the manufacturing start up phase to check the parts manufactured at the plant to be sure that they would fit.

They hung the new engines on the Wright engine mounts, but it is obvious that the nacelles resemble those of the Lockheed P-38. They also installed fuel cells in the wing tips. The B-38 first flew on May 19, 1943 and made nine flights altogether. The pressure was on to complete the tests quickly. The last flight was made on June 16, 1943, they were to climb to full power to 37,000 feet as they flew up the San Joaquin Valley. The pilot was Bud Martin, the co/pilot was George P MacDonald. Frank Osberg was the engineer up front and two more crewmen Shannon and Byrnes were in the radio compartment. As they climbed out at 25,000 feet the number three engine ran out of oil and seized, pulling a fuel line loose in the process. A fire started which spread to the fuel tanks so the crew bailed out.

Cruising speed of the B-38 was 226 MPH, about 25 MPH faster than a standard B-17E. When Martin and MacDonald hit the silk they neglected to wait for the count of 10 so that air resistance would slow them down. Instead, they immediately pulled the rip cords. They were wearing parachutes with cotton shrouds and risers which couldn't take that kind of stress. Both chutes failed. Mac Donald was killed and Martin seriously injured. The others got down in good shape although Shannon and Byrnes couldn't get the rear door open until they were pretty close to the ground.

Bill Harshbarger didn't make the flight that day. He was busy becoming a father. I think he named his new son "Lucky"

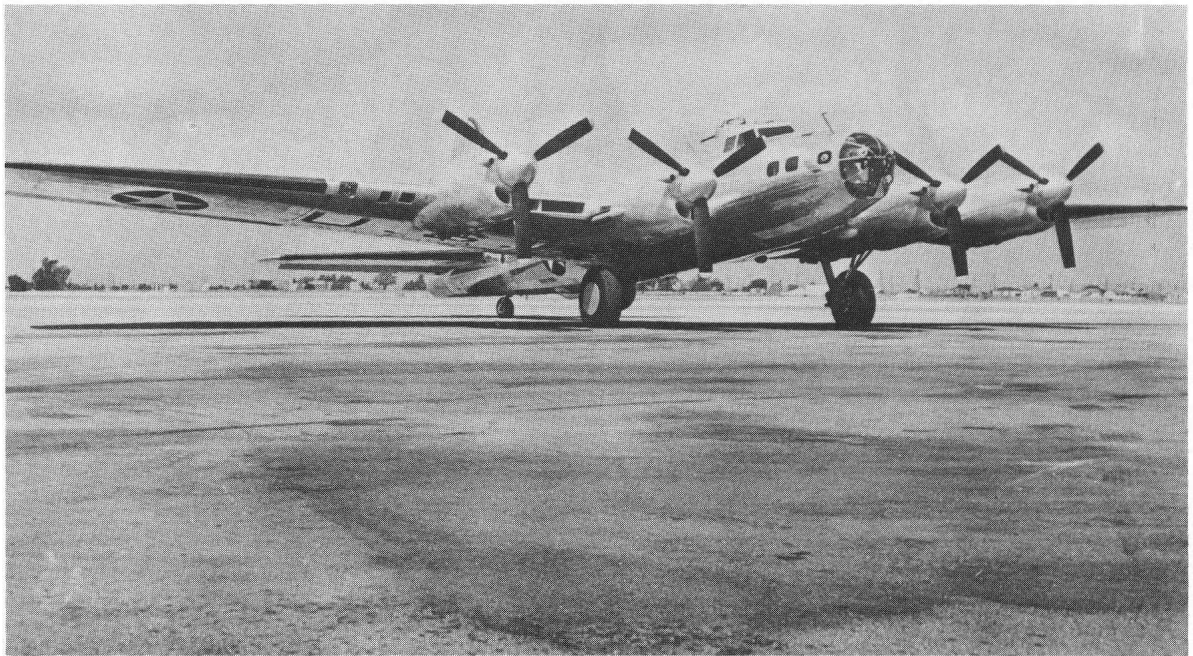


Photo (above) Lockheed B-38 (USAF photo via Bob Waag)

Woodbridge, NJ
Dear Bud

I am including several photographs with my membership application.

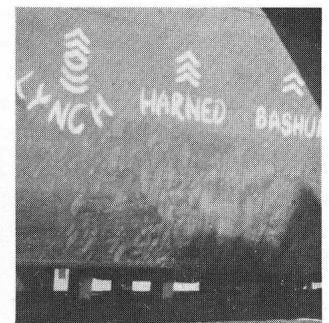
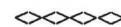


Photo 1 (above left) Wilson B Wilkes center, congratulates one of the ground crew of ship #25 "The Century Limited" Photo 2 (above right) Names of the ground crew of ship #25 painted on the bomb bay door. They are from left: M/Sgt Harold Lynch-Crew Chief, William L Harned-Assistant Crew Chief, Corporal George Bashara.

William L Harned 824 Squadron



Shreveport, Louisiana
Dear Bud.

In reference to the picture of ship #35 on the back cover of Torretta Flyer No 17, it was indeed flown by Lt Bob Wester, Co/Pilot. This plane was our original for crew #35. To the best of my knowledge the gremlin was painted on it back in Fresno, California before we headed overseas. I am enclosing



an old photo of Lt Wester (above) in front of #35 and I believe the crewman bending over was Lt Abe Abadi-Bombardier. I do not remember the hexagon design on top of the rudder, but I don't think it was a borrowed plane. I vaguely remember that some of our ships were loaned to another squadron before we started flying missions, also one our pilots ferrying a ship flew so low he almost hit a stone wall.

Ship #35 had about 35 to 40 missions on it when we were forced to land on a Spitfire strip on Corsica while returning from Southern France. We heard it crashed on the way back to our airfield. At Rome we had been picked to continue flying missions in another plane while several engines were being replaced on #35.

I enjoy the Torretta Flyer very much, please keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Ed Stevenson 765 squadron



Redondo Beach, CA
Dear Ed:

In regards to your remarks on ship No 35 James Hardee of the 764 squadron reminded me in a recent letter that the 461st BG was assigned originally to the 55th Bomb Wing, hence the six sided design with the number 2 below probably signified one of the groups making up the 55th wing. When the group was reassigned to the 49th Wing, the logo was not changed immediately to conform to the 49th Wing standard. This leads me to believe that you are correct in stating that the ship in question was not borrowed.

Bud Markel, editor

Atwater, California

Dear Bud:

In reference to Torretta Flyer No #14, page 32, the Fred Hill collection unknown GIs.(top left) I would think Fred would have known them, they worked in the intelligence section of operations. The unknown S/Sgt (right 2nd from the bottom) is Sgt Brown of the armament section and later flew as a gunner. He played on the baseball team and he and his friend Sgt Biaggie from the armament section always greeted each other with "San Jose," I assume that one or both came from San Jose, California.

Torretta Flyer No#17 back page. I'm sure ship #35 belonged to the 765th squadron while they were assigned to the 55th Wing. This is confirmed by the soft cover book "The Heritage of the 15th Air Force 1943-1980," page 38.

I was assigned to the 764th Squadron Ship #13 "Chippie Doll" and can remember painting the signs on her.

James L Hardee, 764 Squadron



Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Dear Bud:

This is the fate of the crew of 2nd Lt Joshua R Hooper, Milford, NJ, of which my younger brother Jim, was the tail gunner.

They arrived in Italy December 1944 and were assigned to the 461st Bomb Group, 766 Bomb Squadron.

On February 21, 1945 on a mission to Vienna, South Station Area, was missed by the pathfinder method. The formation overshot the IP Michelback and ran into the Mossbierbaum flak area. The second section did not believe the first section had corrected far enough to the right on the bomb run and left the formation.

The first section turned out to be correct but wrong on rate. The second section over corrected and bombed the Wiener Neudorf Aircraft engine factory near Modling, Austria. Seven of the planes in the first section were hit hard by flak and three of them failed to return to base. All three of these planes headed for safe territory east of the Russian bomb line.

The following is the letter we received from the Department of the Army April 18, 1950:

This office desires to furnish you the information concerning the final determination which has been made in the case of your brother, the late Sergeant James DeLanzo.

In order that you may be fully advised as to the basis for our determination the following is a resume of the pertinent facts of your brother's case as revealed by Department of the Army records.

Your brother was one of ten crew members aboard a B-24G type of aircraft, serial number 42-58408, which departed from Torretta, Italy on February 21, 1945 on a combat mission to Vienna, Austria. According to statements made by personnel from other planes on this same mission, your brother's ship began losing altitude while over the target area. The plane had one engine feathered and was falling away from the formation when it was observed that another engine was on fire. When last seen, the aircraft was still under control but heading in the direction of the Russian lines. All members of the crew were subsequently reported missing in action.

In June, 1945 during the course of an investigation at Feher-varscurgo and Bodajk, Hungary, our Graves Registration personnel learned that during the winter of 1945, probably at the end of February a four motored bomber crashed between these two villages. Inhabitants of the villages stated that a tenth man had perished in the crash, but at the time of the investigation no one was able to find the grave.

A few days after the investigation, however information was received that a grave believed to be that of the missing airman had been located. Upon disinterment of this grave, a body was found together with two identification tags belonging to "C.A. MacDonald III." Official Army records reveal that Second Lieutenant Charles A MacDonald III was the Co/Pilot of your brother's plane at the time it became missing in action. This is the only member of the crew whose remains have been recovered.

Further investigation of the case was conducted by Major Lawrence Mitzen, one of our Graves Registration investigators. In September 1945, a synopsis of the case, based on Major Mitzen's investigation was received in this office from our overseas Command. An excerpt of this report is quoted here-with.

"According to reliable sources, the nine missing crew members of aircraft 42-58408 parachuted safely near the village of Bodajk, Hungary. According to Captain Derestey Sandor, GSC, the nine were first interrogated by two Hungarian officers, Colonel Karoly Merenyi Artillery, and Sandor's superior a Colonel Vitez Zandor. Interrogation was held in the pastorate of Bodajk. According to Sandor the prisoners refused to talk, were shortly thereafter taken by truck to the CP of the SS 3rd (Totenkopf) Panzer Division, then stationed in the castle of the Countess Korolyi at Fehervarscurgo, and were last seen in the presence of the Commanding Officer Brigadefuehrer - General Major Fnu. Becker."

"According to the caretaker of the castle, Imre Csizmadia, they were still alive about one hour after landing and claims he saw at least one of the American airmen dressed in an old torn German uniform. The caretaker goes on further to say that he did question some SS soldiers afterwards as to what happened to the Americans and was told they were transferred to Szekesfehervar. According to Major Mitzen this could not have been possible, since the Order of Battle indicates that Szekesfehervar was already in Russian hands."

After consideration of the above report, it is logical to conclude that your brother and his eight crew members were taken prisoner after parachuting from their aircraft and that their captors took them to an unknown location. The fact that our investigations have been negative and that there are no unidentified remains on record recovered from this area which may be associated with these nine men would tend to substantiate this conclusion.

After full consideration of the foregoing information, the Department of the Army has been forced to determine that the remains of your brother are not recoverable. I wish to assure you that, should any additional evidence concerning your brother's case come to our attention, you will be informed immediately.

William J Delanzo, 827 squadron.

Editors Note: There was more than one occasion where brothers served in both the 461st BG and the 484BG. Also twin brothers served together on one crew in the 484th BG.

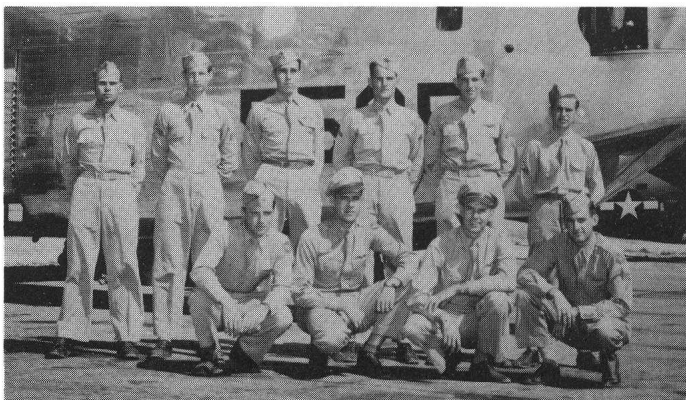
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Photo (right) Jim Delanzo left, Bill Delanzo right. Photo taken winter 1944/1945 at Torretta, Italy.

◇◇◇◇◇

Dear Bud
Lewiston, NY

Here is the photograph (below) of our Crew #31, 484th Bomb Group, 825 Bomb Squadron, "The Bona Venture."



Standing left to right, Harold D Winkler-Ball Gunner, Arnold P Nagelhout-Nose Gunner, Robert M McCormick-Upper Gunner, and Albert O Shipes Jr-Engineer. Kneeling left to right: Christopher J O'Halloran-Navigator, Richard C Helms-Pilot, William G Blackburn-Co Pilot, and Gerald H Johnson-Bombardier. Arnold P Nagelhout 825 Squadron photo.



Valley Stream, New York
Dear Bud

Thank you so much for your letter welcoming me as a new member of the Association. I recognized quite a few names in the membership roster that was included in my membership packet. You will find enclosed my crew photo.

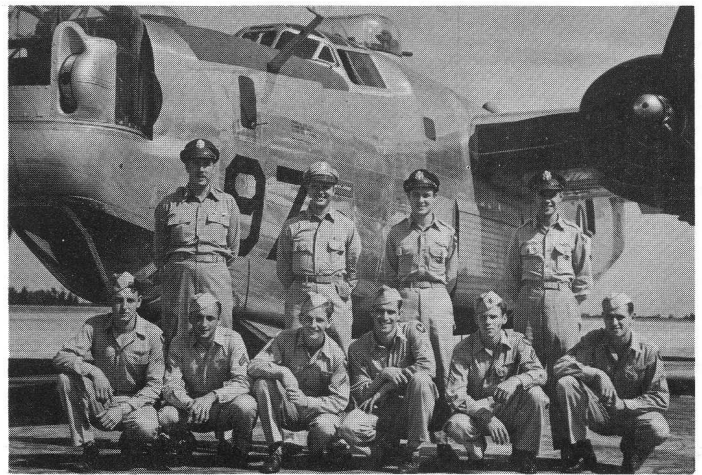
Photo 1 (above) Front row left to right: Banwell-Navigator, Frazier-Pilot, Waterman-Bombardier, and Harry Hubertz-Co Pilot. Back row from left to right: Lane-Tail Gunner, Dils-Engineer, Barr-Nose Gunner, Gregg-Upper Gunner, Myers-Radio Operator, and Baczewski-BallGunner.

Harry K Hubertz 824 Squadron

Niagara Falls, New York
Dear Bud

Please find enclosed a few photographs taken in Italy.

Photo (below) Our crew, front row left to right: J O Pratt-Radio Operator, A F Corbin-Ball Gunner, J J Lyman-Tail Gunner, and Ralph W Carr-Engineer. Back row: J A Williamson-Gunner, A O Lyjnen-Nose Gunner, J F McMahon-Bombardier, and F A Berhrle-Pilot.



Dear Bud

Photo 1 (above) Our crew photo is enclosed. Standing left to right: Charles Marshall-Pilot, John Gross Jr-Co Pilot, Al De-neault-Navigator, and Robert F Anderson-Bombardier. Kneeling left to right: Charles A "Al" Harford-Engineer, George Joe Cataldo-Radio Operator, Robert D "Bob" Powers-Upper Gunner, Pete Regelman (D)-Nose Gunner, Bob Sorenson-Ball Gunner, and Rollo Richmond (D)-Tail Gunner



Photo 2 (left) Unknown, may be flight crew members.

Bob Powers 825 squadron



St Matthews, South Carolina
Dear Bud

Here is our crew photo.

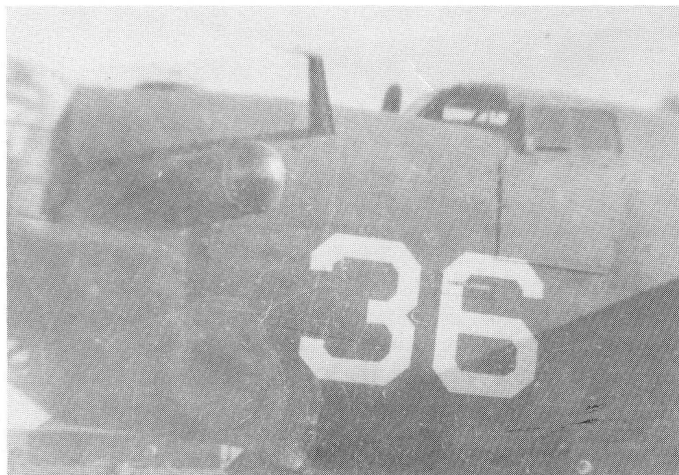


Photo 1 (above) Standing left to right; Joseph Natoli-Co Pilot, Richard K "Dick" Coburn-Bombardier, Gussie L Willett-Pilot, and Mike Magdic-Navigator. Kneeling left to right: Hasse-Nose Gunner, Charles L Brackett-Radio Operator, Becker-Tail Gunner, Hyman Beckman-Upper Gunner, Alexander J "Red" Wise-Engineer, and Charles M "Chuck" Goodaker-Ball Gunner.

Ralph W Carr 825 Squadron

Alexander J "Red" Wise 827 Squadron
North Andover, Massachusetts

Dear Bud

Carm and I took off for a mini reunion in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.



Photo (above) There we met Mike Karwoski (top left)from St Louis, Joe Ercole (top center) who came in from New York, myself Charlie McKew (top right), Bill Harned (bottom left) and Jake Grim (bottom right) in the enclosed photo.

Bill and Jake brought their wives also. We stayed in a small, but comfortable motel and just enjoyed being together once more. We talked a lot and agreed to meet again at the forthcoming reunion.

Charles McKew 824 Squadron



Oquossoc, Maine
Dear Bud

Here are a few of my personal stories.

Steel Mat Runway

One a very hot day while waiting for our planes to come back from a mission, I sat on box shaded by the tail of a B-24, I spotted a red and white German plane.

The German plane flew very low (about 12 feet) above our steel mat runway. He dropped a bomb to destroy the runway and subsequently cause destruction of our planes returning from a mission and could not land safely. The bomb was torpedo shaped about 4 feet long and about 9 inches in diameter. It hit the mat and bounced about 6 feet up and exploded with not much of a noise. It did no damage to the runway. The plane kept right on going. I heard it was shot down later.

My Flight to Mt Vesuvius

One day while riding my motorcycle around the base, I stopped at a lone B-24. A flight crew of pilot, co-pilot, two gunners approached the plane for a flight to Naples. They were from another squadron. They refused to take me along. When I told our crew chief Sgt Jones, he grounded the plane. So they allowed me to accompany them.

While in the air, the gunners informed me that three genera-

tors were not working. I knew the Ford shafts must be broken. I tried to start the APU (Auxiliary Power Unit) It had no fuel. It was necessary to obtain fuel from one of the bomb bay sump drains. Then it started OK.

On this flight I was able to look down on Mt Vesuvius. The sight was awesome, then I was once again called to the bomb bay to fix a hydraulic leak. When we were ready to land I had to fix the nose gear, it came down jamming the door. The noise level was too great to hear voices so I communicated with the pilot by pulling his pant leg to raise the gear, as the nose wheel came up I cranked the door open, then the nose wheel came down normally and locked.

This old olive drab ship never flew again and was scrapped shortly after landing. I really earned my flight ticket that day.



Photo (above) Mt Vesuvius

G I Shoes

Sgt Walter Mann from New York lived in our tent. He was a flying photographer and was shot down. Somebody who knew of his winnings at card games took his money, about \$150.00. I took Walter's candy bars. About thirty days later Walter returned. I said, " Holy God Walter, where have you been? I'm sorry about your candy, I ate all three."

How Walter got home was top secret, but he did say his "G I" shoes saved his life. You don't walk very far in flying boots and as a evadee he walked much of the time he was away.

In civilian life he had shown his athletic endurance by participating in six day bicycle races. He also continued to develop his artistic talents by attending art school.

One day near graduation from art school, a restaurant manager requested art students to create menu designs for his restaurant. He offered employment to the artist creating the best menu. When washing his paint brush after completing his menu design, Walter found he had sprayed a number of spots on the newly finished work. Walter painted each little dot into a star. The star menu landed Walter the job.

An Italian Farmer

I once visited an Italian farm about two miles from where I was stationed. I naturally wanted to see his entire house. When I wanted to go upstairs the farmer grew very nervous and insisted that I could not go upstairs. This bothered me greatly as I returned to my squadron area.

I encouraged another soldier named Alvin to go back with me to find out what was up there. I took my 30 caliber semi automatic carbine. (In field tests, rapid fire I could get five bull's eyes out of five and was listed as an expert. I still do this as a hobby). The farmer knew I meant business when we arrived at his farm. Once upstairs we found twelve pairs of highly polished G I shoes ready for the black market. Alvin and I had anticipated finding a German radio station and were relieved to find only the shoes.

The Perfect Plane

We had a plane that never needed repair. After each mission nothing was written in the log book. I once overheard the mechanic come out of the plane stating that the plane had made nine missions and there was nothing written in the log book. The crew chief instructed him to at least change the oil.

When this plane returned from the next mission there still was nothing written in the log. The ground personnel couldn't believe this, so they decided to take it up for a ride. Surely they would find something wrong with the plane.

That night in the chow hall, we heard the plane had cracked up near Cerignola. I went up to salvage some parts from the perfect plane.

Happy New Year to you all.
Ray Surette 826 Squadron



Editors Note: The following letter was received by the United States Embassy in Hungary and was forwarded to us. We found the letter of great interest and hope by publishing the story of "Jackie" in the Torretta Flyer, he can be located. From the incomplete discription we are unable to determine if the pilot was assigned to either the 461st or 484th Bomb Groups. We would appreciate hearing from any reader who may know more of this story so that the information can be sent to the author, Dr Peters.

JACKIE

by Dr Savolyne Alice Peters
Budapest, Hungary

I am looking for a US pilot by the name of Jackie, the last name I do not remember.

He was shot down about the end of August 1944 over the city of Esztergom, Hungary during a great air battle between the Liberators of the Amercans and the German Airforce. Parachutes were seen falling from the sky.

I was 15 years old at the time attending a Church school. The city of Esztergom was occupied by the Germans, and overrun with terrorist youths belonging to the "Nyilas" or local "Nazis". My brother, myself, and other students helped the Red Cross in hospitals and aided wounded soldiers.

I ran out of the city with my brother following close behind toward the direction of the air battle, I judged it to be about 2 km from Esztergom in a mountain forest. We wanted to find any downed airmen before the authorities arrived.

We found an unconscious pilot hanging from a yellow parachute stuck high in a big tree. It was very difficult to cut him loose from his harness as we were clinging to the branches of the tree ourselves. We worked for a long time easing him down to the ground. We covered him up and I ran back to the hospital where I worked. A Red Cross ambulance came back with me to where we had hidden the pilot. He was taken to the hospital with terrible leg wounds. The staff took little notice of me as I was a familiar sight in the hospital. I was able to visit Jackie often.

Jackie was about 22-24 year old, black hair and light blue eyes and had a kind and quiet personality. I learned that his pilot friend was dead. I was able to visit him every day. In his third day in the hospital Jackie got a world radio (short wave) from the Swiss Red Cross. A Hungarian electrician, a Mr Szabo repaired the set so it would work.

Jackie stayed in the hospital about three to four weeks. I gave him books from the priest "Kanonok Mr. Giegler" with messages from the Swiss Red Cross as I was the contact between Mr Giegler and the pilot. Even though I was 15 years old, I looked 7 or 8 because of the poor war rations so nobody really took much notice of me. One day Jackie did fly away with the help of the Swiss Red Cross in a private airplane.

In Jackie's hospital room an injured Hungarian officer had seen a message from one of the books I had brought and secretly reported me and my brother to the secret police stating that we had saved a US enemy pilot. My brother was arrested by the SS police and was beaten very badly. I was saved by the Church.

After Jackie departed I was in constant fear of being taken by the police. It was not safe to go home. My city was occupied and changed hands between the Germans and the Russians three times. It was a very dangerous time for civilians with the constant identity checks, and search teams. Every one was in constant danger of being reported to the authorities for little or no reason at all. Many of my little friends died in the battles.

Jackie would be about 67 or 68 years old now. The little Alice of today is a happy 61 year old grandmother. My brother Ladislaus is deceased.

I would like to find the pilot Jackie just to say hello from the little Alice of Esztergom. I now live in Budapest.

Note: Esztergom is about 50 km Northwest of Budapest. The pilot was shot down in a wooded area about 2 km due east from Esztergom.

Notice

The following names were inadvertently omitted from the 1989 New Orleans Reunion Attendance List of Members and Guests: Bess Miller, Johnson S Miller's wife 765 Squadron Robert Doud 765 Squadron Eunice Doud, Robert Doud's wife 765 Squadron

THE LAST MISSION

The following statement by the Flyer staff expresses their sentiment regarding the loss of comrades and family, and the increasing frequency of these passings. It is best said by the belief that through memory we live on for those that have gone before us. What we want to emphasize is that these individuals existed and were part of our lives for awhile and should not be forgotten,

When you notify the Association of deceased members you should write of what you remember of them, their habits, their wants, desires, and dislikes, Write of their accomplishments and disappointments. Write about their families, their losses and gains, and always emphasize the positive. The loss we suffer is only of the present and future, the past cannot be taken away.

This is expressed by the survivors of Robert Kime's crew 824 Squadron who wish to remember their departed comrades with the following quote attributed to 'Ettienne De Grollet.

*"I shall pass through this world but once,
any good that I can do
or any kindness that I can show
to any human being,
Let me do it now.
Let me not defer it or neglect it,
For I shall not pass this way again."*

Dr George Bouras

Dr George Bouras 64, 824 Squadron, the Navigator on Robert Kime's crew, and a Philadelphia ophthalmologist passed away March, 21, 1989. He was born in Newmarket, New Hampshire. He was wounded in action receiving the Purple Heart, and also was awarded the Air Medal, and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

He graduated in 1955 from the University of Vermont College of Medicine, moved to the Philadelphia area and opened a private practice in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, after serving as a volunteer ophthalmologist in Honduras.

He is survived by his wife, Evelyn, a sister and two daughters Jane and Elizabeth Bouras.

John P O'Neil

John P O'Neil, 824 Squadron, Tail Gunner on Robert Kime's crew, John had been in poor health in his later years and had been living in a rest home at the time of his death. George Bouras prior to his death, and Adolph Marcus kept in touch with John over the years and visited him at the rest home on many occasions.



John B O'Neil (left) and George Bouras (right) Photo taken in New York, 1946.

Walter L Bruesch, 826 Squadron, the Bombardier, on Bob Meyer's crew, said it too with his own tribute to his Co/Pilot Bob Meyers.

ODE TO BOB MEYERS

He was the co-pilot on a B-24 named 'Miss Fire.' and the Germans learned during the war not to raise her ire. Robert flew with 'Old Hat' precision and never lacked the right decision.

He flew on missions to Wiener Neustadt, Friedriechaven, and Ploesti and believe me, the later was no cup of tea.

After combat, he returned to civilian life, but was called back to duty during the Berlin strife.

Bob returned to everyday life and raised his three children with his lovely wife.

Now that most of us are now about ready to go, Robert, the crew wants you to know, get in your old seat on 'Miss Fire'.

Start the engines get up her fire and fly us up high to that beautiful spot in the sky.

(See Bob Meyer's obit in Torretta Flyer No# 16 page 31)

Arthur W Bettinger

Arthur W Bettinger, 765 Squadron, Crew #90, passed away September 12, 1989. Art attended the 1986 reunion in San Antonio.



(Photo above) Art was the Radio/ Operator on Arthur L Hughes crew (#2 top row) :Arthur W Bettinger-Radio/Operator (4th from left bottom row), Bates Boles-Bombardier (#3 top Row), Wayne W Boyce-Nose Gunner (2nd from left Bottom row), Joe R Bryant-Tail Gunner (2nd fom right bottom row), William C "Bill"Hart-Navigator (not pictured), Arthur L Hughes-Pilot (No #2 top row), Dewey E Large-Upper Gunner (right bottom row), Douglas "Bud" Meifort-Ball Gunner (left bottom row), Robert L Scanlon-Engineer (3rd from left, bottom row) Wes Wager-Co/Pilot (#1 top row). This was the crew per Special Order 141 HQ 461st BG September 2, 1944 when the crew had finished its tour and was being rotated back to the States.

Edward H Eibs Jr

Edward H Eibs Jr, 827 Squadron, pilot, passed away on June 13, 1989, exactly 45 years to the day of June 13, 1944, when he landed old # 71 at Dubendorf, Switzerland. The determination he showed on that fateful day of June 13, 1944, earned him a DFC. At the squadron dinner of the San Francisco reunion all of the members in the 827 squadron dining room got up in turn and told of their wartime experiences, the one told by Ed Eibs was one of the most memorable:

Narrative Mission 31 Innsbruck

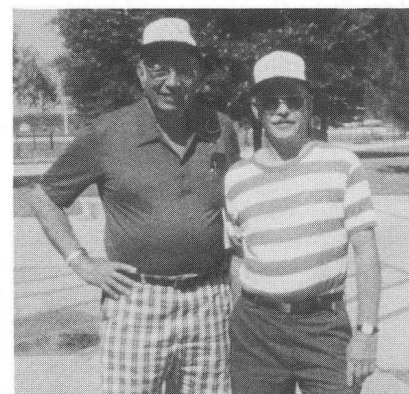
The 484th Bomb Group was hit hard by enemy fighters on that day June 13, 1944, but persisted in bombing the target despite mounting losses. The 484th Bomb Group was awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation for this mission (#31) One of these bombers was the B-24 H, #71 (43-52661) Piloted by Ed Eibs. It too was attacked repeatedly by a very aggressive fighter force. The following narrative was written by one of the gunners S/Sgt. Anthony A Giammettie who was credited with shooting down one ME-109 on this mission.

Enroute to the target and already deep in enemy territory, the supercharger on number four engine went out. All efforts to remedy the trouble were in vain. We fell behind very slowly and were still at the tag end of the formation approaching Falenbach. As we turned and headed for the IP we saw the first formation of enemy fighters slide alongside the main body of the formation. We passed through a deep cloud bank. Suddenly the sky was full of enemy fighters. The attack started with an air to air bombing attack from one force overhead. At exactly the same time the force at the side, still out of range of our guns, fired their rockets. Most of the fighters were twin engine jobs and now they attacked from almost every angle. They seemed to be all over the formation and single ships were diving from every direction. then they would form up again and come in in waves of three abreast. I was on the raid to Girugui three days before and I thought they were aggressive, but these planes came within less than 25 yards of the formation. We saw four of our bombers ahead twist out of control and away from the formation and we saw eight or nine enemy fighters in flames or plunging, smoking to the ground. All of this time we had been counting ourselves lucky. The entire attack was being concentrated on the main body and though we

were definitely out of the formation and struggling we still hadn't been hit. But we knew we might be at any minute and we were alert at our guns when the first fighters bounced us. Either two abreast or singly we were hit by seven ME-109s and ME-210s at the same time. In the first pass we caught an ME-109 and saw it explode in mid air. They kept after us and were getting some hits. Then we caught an ME-210 and in the next few seconds got another one. They were both in flames and we watched one go down and hit the ground. The remaining four stayed for only a few minutes before they turned off, which was very lucky for us. We couldn't have taken much more. The hydraulic system and a second engine had been shot out. The strain on the two remaining engines was finally beginning to tell. We dropped eight thousand feet in a shallow dive and our pilot (Ed Eibs) warned us to be ready to hit the silk. The navigator suggested we set course for Switzerland. We jettisoned everything we could tear loose and shut the waist windows to reduce air resistance. In this way the plane was kept flying until Swiss fighters arrived to escort us to a neutral field. The landing was successfully made by emergency procedure and before the Swiss guards arrived we were able to destroy our IFF and other secret equipment.

Ed Eibs is survived by his wife, Dorothy.

(photo right) Edward "Eddie Eibs" (LH) Gene Stover (RH) Photo taken at the Orlando Reunion.



(Drawing left): ME-210's drop bombs on the 484th Bomb Group formation in an attempt to break up the attack on the marshalling yards at Innsbruck, Austria June 13, 1944. Nevertheless, the target was bombed successfully, resulting in the awarding of a Presidential Unit Citation.

See also Torretta Flyer No. 11 Winter 1984 back page for the picture of Old 71 landing at Dubendorf, Switzerland.

Major General Albert H Shiely Jr

Albert H Shiely Jr, 68, 826 Squadron, retired US Air Force Major General died February 27, 1989. He was born in St Paul, Minnesota. He graduated in 1943 from the U S Military Academy at West Point and was an aircraft commander with the 826 squadron. He earned the Distinguished Service Medal and the Legion of Merit with three oak leaf clusters. He later served as director of operations Air Defense Division, developing the DEW line early warning radar system.

He was commander of European Air Force Communications Service from 1967 to 1969 and vice commander of the Air Force Communication Service until 1971. General Sheily was commander of the Electronic Systems Division at Hanscom Field Air Base, Bedford, Mass. from 1971 until his retirement in 1974. He is survived by his wife, Edith, a son Albert H Shiely III, two daughters, two grandchildren, a brother and two sisters.

Lynn L Britton

Lynn L Britton, 764 Squadron, ASN 0-747200, Co-pilot on Ed Vieluva's crew and a good friend of Jerome R Roth, 764 Squadron (Jim Johson's crew)

Wayne K Hinkle

Wayne K Hinkle 71, 824 Squadron, of cancer after a two year struggle. He was born February 27, 1918. After earning a bachelors degree in 1940, he went on to receive a masters degree from Stanford University, Stanford, California in 1949.

He served in the US Air Force for 30 years retiring in 1970 with the rank of Colonel. Commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in 1942, he served as an instructor in pilot training and then flew 35 combat missions over Europe during World War II.

Among his many decorations for meritorious service were the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal, with three Oak Leaf clusters, and the Air Force Commendation Medal. He held a command pilot rating with more than 4,000 flying hours. From 1949-70 he served with the Air Force auditor general's office as both staff auditor and regional chief. His last post included responsibility for 245 supervisors and auditors at 40 Air Force bases in the 11 Western States and the Pacific, including Vietnam and Thailand.

He is survived by his wife Elizabeth, two sons, four grandchildren and a brother Lee Hinkle, Scottsdale, Arizona.



Robert B Fetter

Robert B Fetter, 67, 827 Squadron, passed away June 17, 1989, flag day. He was born in Chicago, Illinois, April 22, 1922. He served in WWII as an aircraft armorer from April 18, 1944 to June 7, 1945 earning the EAME Ribbon with 9 bronze stars, Distinguished Unit Badge, and Good Conduct Medal. He qualified with the Carbine Calibre 30, and was Marksman on the 45 Automatic Pistol and the M-1 Rifle.

He is survived by his wife Dorothy, three daughters Diana, Gail, and Carole, and two grandchildren. Association member and friend of Bob and Dorothy Fetter, John Mulligan, 827 Squadron, in making a contribution to the Scholarship Fund in Bob Fetter's memory, had this to say: "Although we had overlapping tours with the 827th in Italy, we did not meet until we became members of the Association. I believe that our friendship developed from a shared perception that we marched to the same drummer in our appreciation of the happy times we shared."

(photo right) Bob Fetter, Rome, Italy 1945



Harold N Wells

Harold N Wells, 824 Squadron, passed away June 11, 1989 from a coronary, in Murphy, North Carolina. He established and operated Wells Construction Company for over 40 years in Murphy, North Carolina, where he was also active in many civic organizations.

He received his pilots wings on November 3, 1943, from Stuttgart Flying School, Stuttgart AAF, Arkansas. He flew his first 25 combat missions as a co-pilot on crew #23 piloted by John E Trechter. He flew 25 missions as first pilot on crew #11 with Alan McGill C/P, Bill Priess-N, Orville L Fisher-B, Harold Smith-E, Arthur Wolf-R/O, Vernal Tuttle-N, Henry Bugajaki-U/G, Norbert Wholeben-B/G, Russell H Jones-T/G. Among his awards are the Air Medal, and the DFC. He is survived by his wife Katherine, one daughter, three sons, nine grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

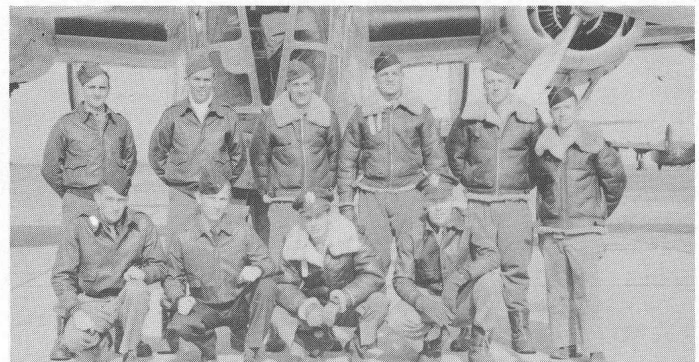
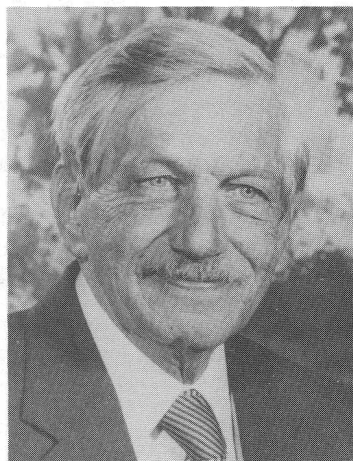


Photo (above) John E Trechter-Pilot (left front row), Harold N Wells (2nd left front row), William S Sanner-Navigator (3rd from left front row), Orville L Fisher-Bombardier (right front row), Harold J Smith-Engineer (2nd from left) top row), Arthur A Wolf (Deceased) -Radio/Operator (left top row), Norbert V Wholeben-Ball Gunner (3rd from left top row), Vernal D Tuttle-Engineer (5th from left top row), Henry Bugajaki-Engineer (4th from left top row), Russell H Jones Tail-Gunner (right top row).

Vernon Garrison

Vernon Garrison, 67, 765 Squadron, passed away September 3, 1989 after a long illness due to cancer. He was born August 25, 1922 and was a decorated veteran of World War II and Korea. A command pilot for 28 years, he flew the B-24 Liberator with the 461st Bomb Group. He and his crew were identified with ship #28 "Plastered Bastard". He ended his Air Force career flying B-52's in 1968.



Upon his retirement he returned to college on the GI Bill receiving a masters degree from the University of Texas at Austin and then launched a second career as a senior counselor with the Texas Rehabilitation Center. He was honored by his peers upon his retirement in 1987 with the naming of the "Vernon Garrison Workshop" in Houston.

For the past 20 years, Vernon was an avid genealogist making several contributions to the Clayton Historical Library and many other genealogical libraries, as well. A member of the National Genealogy Society, and the Illinois Genealogy Society, his love of his hobby took him around the country and Europe, chronicling Garrison family history.

As a member of the 461st & 484th Bomb Groups Association, he supported the Association, the scholarship program, and attended many reunions with his wife Edie. He first became a member in 1982.

Vernon was preceded in death by two sons, Charles Mark Garrison in 1959, and Larry Wayne Garrison in 1969. He is survived by his wife Edith Larie, one daughter, two sons, 11 grandchildren, and twelve great grandchildren.

Clarence C Young

Clarence C Young, 827 Squadron, passed away September 18, 1989 due to a heart attack. He had not been ill up to the time of his death.

He served as a Bombardier on Aaron Scharf's crew. His crew departed the United States in July of 1944 to deliver aircraft B-24J 42-30970 to Gioia, Italy. Other members of the crew are: Arron Scharf-Pilot, Donald S Rogers-Co/pilot, Leslie H Kummer-Navigator, William A Rau-Engineer, John H Nicolai-Radio/Operator, John J Jennings-Gunner, Robert E Gilley-Gunner, Oran Patillo Jr-Gunner, and Robert L Meinhold Jr,-Gunner.

He contributed many documents, photographs, negatives and maps to the Association's library. He and his wife, Helen, attended many of the earlier reunions. He was soft spoken with a ready smile, and exuded a joy of life.

Joel Moe

Joel Moe, 825 Squadron, We were notified on February 8, 1989 by the United States Postal Service that Joel was deceased. He was the 825 squadron commander and flew Moe's Meteor #300

Photo (right) Joel Moe.



Photo (below) a late model B-24L, one of the squadron "mickey ships" so called because it was equipped with H2X radar navigation/bombing electronics.



James David Gunnels

James David Gunnels 64, ASN 38441436, 824 Squadron, passed away March 8, 1989 from complications following eye surgery. He was born in Big Lake, Texas on February 1, 1925. He grew up in McCamey, Texas, where he worked as a projectionist at a local movie theater. Immediately following graduation from high school, Jim was called to service in World War II.

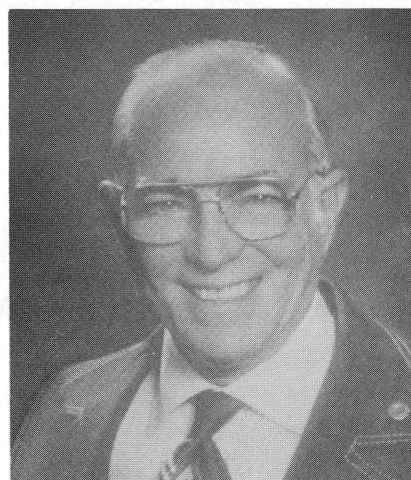


Photo (above) Jim Gunnels

He joined the Army Air Corps hoping to become a pilot, but washed out because he was color blind. He became a radio operator on a B-24 bomber crew with the Italian based 484th Bomb Group at Torretta, just outside of Cerignola, Italy.

The pilot of Jim's crew was J E White, (now Col Ret USAF/Ret) who conducted Jim's funeral service. Jim flew 24 combat missions and he and his crew had their share of close calls but the entire crew came home together unscathed.

Jim joined the Air Force reserve following his release from active duty, and in December 1954, the Air Force tapped him to help with the implementation of its new general accounting system. The recall was for two years, but at the end of that

time, Jim opted to continue on active duty and served honorable and faithfully for 28 years until his retirement as a Master/Sergeant in April 1973. He resided in San Angelo, Texas until his death.

He was an Elk, Moose, member of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, and the Air Force Sergeants Association.

Jim was a thoughtful, caring man who dearly loved his family and his fellow man. He is survived by his wife Helen Louise and a daughter Linda Louise, a brother Grover, a sister Hazel, and two grandsons Robert and Bradley.

His crew: J E White-Pilot, Elmer B McCully Jr-Co/Pilot, Robert Heath-Navigator, William R Gifford-Bombardier, Claud E Griffin-Engineer, James D Gunnels-Radio/ Operator, Theodore R Gressen-Gunner, Thomas F Parker-Gunner, Thomas Reynolds-Gunner, and Richard Sites-Gunner.

Darlene Doppee

Darlene Doppee, 827 Squadron, daughter of Maj Don Haldeman 827 Squadron Commander, KIA May 29, 1944, (See Torretta Flyer No 15 page 10) passed away September 14 1989 due to complications of pneumonia. She was born October 4, 1941, at Stanford Hospital, Stanford, California. She remembered little about her father being almost three years old before his death. She was very anxious to learn more about her father. She joined the Association in June 1987 and attended the Colorado Springs and San Francisco reunions. It was at the reunions where she met members who knew her father. The evenings of the squadron dinners were very emotional for Darlene. As each person who knew Maj Haldeman got up and spoke of her father, Darlene hung on every word and nuance. She almost glowed with excitement as the missing parts of her life were revealed. The experiences of those two squadron dinner nights were especially meaningful for Darlene. It was the gift of someone else's memory, an intangible, wonderful gift of immeasurable value that meant so much to her.

She was preceded in death by her father, Don Haldeman, her stepfather, and her brother Barton. She is survived by her husband, Jim Doppee and sons, Tim and Victor, and her mother, Lois Locke (widow of Don Haldeman).



Darlene and father (below) Don Haldeman, Hastings, Nebraska winter 1944.



Photo (above) Jim and Darlene Doppee taken on cruise to Alaska, 1989.

Hugh G Baker

Hugh G Baker ASN 34720251, 765 Squadron, passed away December 4, 1989, from lung cancer. He was the engineer on crew 22 piloted by Robert E Arbuthnot. They called their ship #22 "All American."

Hugh flew his first mission from Torretta on April 15, 1944 to Bucharest, Rumania, a double mission, and the last on August 17, 1944 to Ploesti, Rumania. He accumulated 264 combat hours before completion of his combat tour of 50 missions.

He is survived by his daughter, Lynn Christensen.



Crew Photo: Robert E Arbuthnot-Pilot (Front row L), Jack T Gunn-Co-pilot (2nd L front row), Leland J Harp-Navigator (R front row), William E Patterson Jr-Bombardier (3rd from L front row), Hugh G Baker-Engineer (2nd from R top row), Eric C English-Radio Operator (3rd fr L top Row), Elza S Massie-Gunner (L top row), Warren H Moss-Gunner (4th fr L top row), Roy M Walkama-Gunner (R top row), and Robert L Molyneux-Gunner(2nd fr L top row).

Norman Dion

Norman Dion (Age 71) 826 Squadron. The co-pilot on Vincent W O'Shea's crew has died. As a pilot for the 484th Bomb Group he flew missions over Germany, France, and Italy. He was wounded on his 39th mission and awarded the Purple Heart. He received the Air Medal with Oak Leaf clusters and a Commendation of Valor for his service in the Mediterranean, and was placed on the Honor Roll of Flying Officers Courtland Army Airfield, Alabama.

He was born in New Haven, Connecticut and was a student at Northeastern University before joining the Army Air Forces. After his army service he went into business in Waltham, Connecticut before retiring in 1975. He was a member of the Disabled Veterans Association.

He is survived by his wife Emilie, two sons, three daughters, and ten grandchildren. He was buried in Cavalry Cemetery, Waltham.

Telsa I Johnson

Telsa I Johnson ASN 0-712406, 824 Squadron, died suddenly October 13, 1988, of heart problems. He was the Navigator on William F Gaskill's crew. He was shot down on a mission to Augsburg, Germany, November 4, 1944, and spent the remainder of the war as a POW at Camp Sagan. He attended the San Antonio and Colorado Springs reunions. His hobbies are listed as Tennis, Tractors, and Travelling in that order. He was retired at the time of his death. He last lived in Berry Creek, California.

He is survived by his wife Carole and three children.

His crew was: Marcus D Armfield-Ball/Gunner, Arnold M Bree (D)-Bombardier, William F Gaskill-Pilot, William H Hiller-Engineer, Telsa I Johnson (D)-Navigator, Donald L Olson-

Gunner, Marshall D Preston-Gunner, Harold A Saxe-Radio/Operator, Eugene C Stamm-Co/Pilot.

William E Waggoner

William E Waggoner ASN 0-680778, Pilot, 765 Squadron, passed away September 28, 1988 of cancer. He was shot down on October 4, 1955, over Munich, Germany, and was made a POW at Stalag Luft 1. Edward J Klepper, the crew engineer also became a POW.

He last made his home in Little Rock, Arkansas.

He is survived by his wife Dorothy

Roland Stevens

Roland Stevens, 764 Squadron, is reported to have passed away in the Fall of 1988. In civilian life he was a optometrist. At the time of his death, he was survived by his wife Martha.

Raymond Grenz

Raymond Grenz 824 Sq passed away October 20, 1986. At the time of his death he was survived by his wife Florence.

We also acknowledge the passing of family members of Association members and extend our sincere condolences.

Randal A Bray

Randal A Bray, 37, passed away of Lou Gehrigs disease in the Spring of 1989. He was the son of Robert H Bray, 826 Squadron.

Continued from page 30

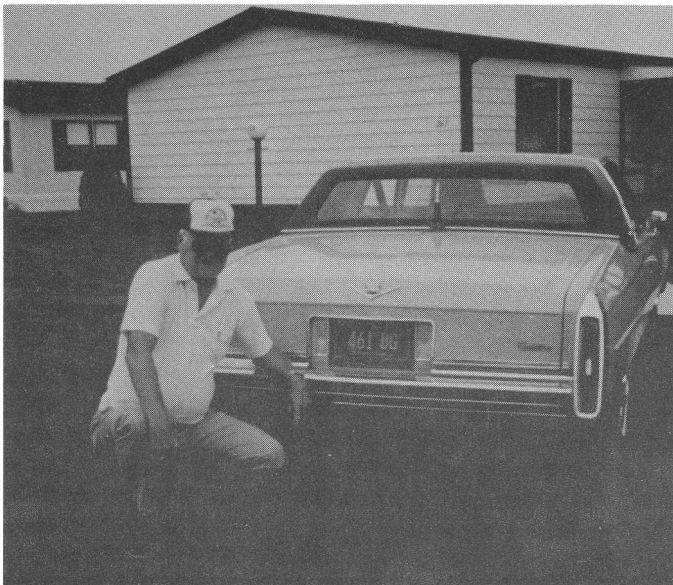


Photo (above) Dave McQuillan, 767 Squadron show his special 461st Bomb Group license plate.



Photo (above) Leon Usherson, 825 Squadron shows his 484th Bomb Group license plate.

**1990 Reunion Nashville, Tennessee, October 12 to 15
Nashville Marriott Hotel**

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 Wife's Name _____
 Address _____
 State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____
 Duty (ASN) _____ C/O _____
 Name of Pilot _____

Tickets for the Grand Old Opry
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 Dues (\$15.00 per year) 1990 _____ 1989 _____ Amount _____
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 Misc. Donation _____ Amount _____
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 Check No _____ Total enclosed _____

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Reservation Request

To make your room reservation we request that you either: 1) Enclose a check or money order covering the first nights stay, or 2) fill in the *entire* number of; your credit card, AMERICAN EXPRESS, DINERS CLUB, VISA/BANK AMERICARD, MASTER CARD, or CARTE BLANCHE. (Don't forget the expiration date and your signature)

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 Please reserve _____ Rooms for _____ People _____
 Names of person(s) sharing accommodations _____
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Plan Able

Plan Able arrived from Wing headquarters about midnight. The target was the Bucharest Chitilia Marshalling yards. The staff looked it over and began planning the mission. The lead crew which could picture the entire trip from memory were to have another chance, the fourth group effort to put the marshalling yards on the dead list.

Lt Elmore had the late weather report in hand. His prediction for the trip was bad enough to cancel the mission. But it looked like the big planners meant business concluding that the 15th would have to take weather losses if there was still a chance of destroying the vital target.

Not much time lapsed between planning and crew awakening hour. It was wet and dark when the trucks rolled out of the squadron area filled with crews bound for the briefing shack. The mission was still on as the long black ribbon indicating the mission route still stretched across Albania, Yugoslavia thru Rumania almost to the Russian front lines. Two hours remained before take off and most of the crews hoped that the bad weather would cause the mission to be cancelled.

However, two hours later, we took off. The low clouds covering the base prevented a normal group assembly. The crews were improving quickly with each mission so the assembly above the stratus overcast was effected on schedule. But looking out trouble could be seen out toward the Adriatic Sea as we started for the Wing rendezvous area. The high cloud build up at cruise altitude and the low cirrus below predicted a rough journey.

The lead crew had been to Bucharest twice before under extremely poor weather conditions so this mission did not pose any great problem.

Lt Veiluva, the Lead Pilot and Capt. Goree the Group Commander for the mission traded off on the controls at frequent intervals because instrument flying was more tiring in this haze which eliminated the horizon and a poor view of the surface. There was one mile visibility that allowed the Wing men to hold position. Lt De Witt did a superb job of navigating us through the flak areas enroute. The overcast below was still solid.

As we reached the Danube, the undercast began to climb to 20,000 feet. The lead group of the Wing was too low to make it, so they turned the lead over to us and left for an alternate target and home base. About the same time the radio was jammed by other groups advising they were abandoning the mission too. Someone in our group called up and asked if we were going to give it up. When they received our negative reply, he answered, "I don't go for this hero ____."

We went on feeling very lonely. Like the break of a cloudless day, the weather cleared about the middle of Rumania. We were to have a clear shot at the target, the reward for hanging on a little bit longer.

A few fighters began to appear but they weren't aggressive. After their first pass we assured them that we could defend our formation as we didn't have the aid of friendly fighter cover. The target was coming into range and we still had 30 miles to

go.

Rotten luck hit the lead ship. The target was almost discernible, 12 minutes to and the nose section oxygen supply failed. Sgt Puss rushed two large walk around bottles up through the bomb bays to the nose section. This gave new life for Lt. Iconis and Lt. De Witt. It was the zero hour on the bomb run, when Lt Iconis discovered that the pilot's direction indicator wasn't working. He gave Lt. Veiluva, who was flying the ship at the time several oaths over the intercom that sounded like, "Left, God Damnit, Left." What looked like dark clouds ahead turned out to be barrage flak.

History of a Successful Mission

April 7, 1944 by

Ed Goree

764 Squadron

"Bombs Away"

The sweetest words ever spoken, "Bombs Away" followed the last course correction from little Ike. Then we started a gentle roll or the maneuver called, "Let's get the Hell out of here."

The flak was near now and the familiar sound of hail was in our ears as the spent shrapnel bounced off the skin of our plane, but it seemed we were successfully evading the worst part by our horseshoe turn. (Or was it luck?)

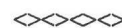


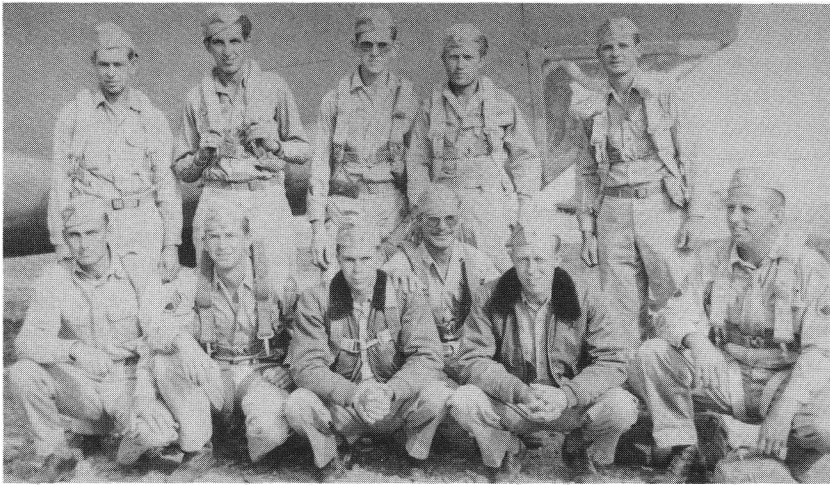
Sgt. Kurawe called in from the tail to advise us to slow down for cripples. Sgt Zimmerman began reporting that the bombs were knocking hell out of the yards. He could see our first pattern, then the second which filled in all spare openings. With these words of encouragement, the dark trip home seemed unimportant for a minute. There was a solid feeling that comes from being under attack with the target well hit and the cripples all successfully covered.

As we approached the Danube, thunderheads began to take shape once again. This time the problem was in reverse. The group had to get down through the weather and back to the base. McQuillan dropped behind the second section. I could see Koska take B flight out wide as soon as he was called. The flight loosened up and about one hour later we were over the Adriatic in the clear. Everyone was accounted for and it looked as though the work was done for the day.

When we checked the ditching channel on the radio the Mayday calls came in all too clearly, and the long count for the radio fix and then another Mayday call. We contacted Big Fence and they gave us a heading from our position in the middle of the Adriatic to a point due south and 30 minutes away. We told them we could stretch our fuel and take up the search, we turned 180 degrees and started for the indicated spot. We had a hunch it could be no more than an oil slick on the smooth rolling sea. Within one minute of our ETA we spotted something. As we circled low we could make out two rafts with ten men. That was the most successful hunt we had ever been on. A spitfire came out to relieve us and mark the location before heading back to lead the rescue launch. One hour after first spotting the rafts, the launch pulled along side and took the men aboard.

With our fuel low, we headed straight for the field to end a most successful day for all of us.





Leon Usherson, 825 Squadron, needs help in identifying the men in this photograph who were on their way to the Naples area rest camp. Leon is 2nd from left standing. His crew was piloted by Arthur M Watts-Pilot, Gordon W Darling-Co/pilot, Kenneth V Scott-Navigator, Robert J O'Rielly-Bombardier, Percy O Mead-Engineer, Andrew Toth-Radio Operator, Thomas B Falcigne-Gunner, David Miller (D)-Gunner, Merritt C Shaw-Gunner



Co-Pilot of Usherson's crew. Judging from the position of the throttles, manifold pressure and RPM gages the engines are set for climb power.



Photo Sent in by Robert Swinehart, 767 Squadron. Standing from left: Larry Dixon (D), John Van Riette (D), Art Kenorski, Russell Landis, unknown, and Jacob Herman (KIA). Kneeling: Frank Chema, Charles Westfall, Dick Roberts, Harry Place, and Robert Swinehart.

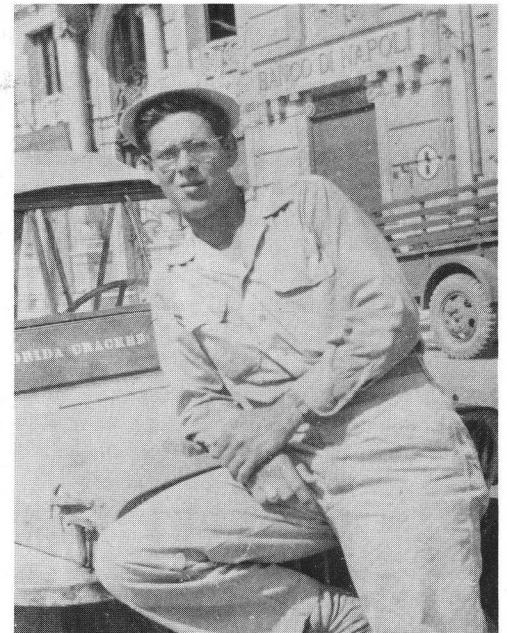


Photo taken in Cerignola near the Red Cross Service. Club. He is unidentified. Leon Usherson photo.

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