



The 461st

Liberaider



Vol. 10, No. 1

JUNE 1993

SOMEWHERE IN THE USA

50TH Anniversary Issue 1 July 1943—1 July 1993



It is with a great deal of pride that we dedicate this issue of the “Liberaider” to

Frank and Millie O'Bannon

Their never ending commitment to the 461st Bomb Group Association, their untiring efforts in the initial organization and subsequent twelve years of leadership are gratefully acknowledged and appreciated by the 2300 members of the Association.

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

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

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OFFICERS

Frank C. O'Bannon, President, PO Box 36600, Tucson, AZ 84740-6600
Edward N. Chan, Vice-President, 1065 N. 5th St., New Hyde Park, NY 11040
G. "Pete" Peterson, Treasurer, 1407 W 4th St., P.O. Box 5160, Spencer, IA 51301

DIRECTORS—1992/1993

Nye E. Norris Hdqrs Sqdn 559 S Waverly, Columbus, OH 43213
John Trommershauser 764th Sqdn 2966 Golden Eagle Dr, Tallahassee, FL 32312
G. William Wilkins 765th Sqdn 820 Northborough, Lincoln, NE 68505
Theodore R. Ahlberg 766th Sqdn 8501 NW 9th Ave, Vancouver, WA 98665
Denothy R. Perkins 767th Sqdn 7128 Salizar St, San Diego, CA 92111

ALTERNATE DIRECTORS—1990/1991

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John Young 764th Sqdn 1049 Jamaica Ct., Aurora, CO 80010
Gino Pishione 765th Sqdn 850 Temperana, Clovis, CA 93612
Robert V. Hayes 766th Sqdn 31 Grand St., New City, NY 10956
Vacant 767th Sqdn

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Memorial: Edward Izzo, 296 Huntridge Way, Winter Springs, FL 32708
Membership: Ed Chan, 1065 N 5th St, New Hyde Park, NY 11040
Post Exchange: Wally Robinson, 3 E. Cardott, Ridgeway, PA 15853
Publicity: Looking for a volunteer!

1993 Reunion: The Marimac Corporation, 6790 E. Calle Dorado, Tucson, AZ 85715
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LIBERAIDER

George D. Dickie—Editor—PO Box 615, East Sandwich, MA 02537
The LIBERAIDER is published twice a year on behalf of the members of the organization. Permission is granted to use articles provided source is given.

FEATURE ARTICLE

THE CONFESSIONS OF A TREASURER

By Gail M. Peterson

A Saga on the delays in mailing the
1993 dues receipts

I hope, by now, everybody has received his dues card (to be carried in your billfold). The last mailing went to the post office 14 May. If you have not received your card, let me know. Every "life member" should have a new card.

This has been a bad season. First we purchased new cards; then found that the paper was too heavy to turn around the platen on the computer printer. Small problem. We then thought we might re-program the computer so the work would be faster and there would be fewer chances for error. There was a virus around every corner!! Finally we had printed the cards and mailing labels. Did you realize there were so many of you with the same name in the same squadron? - Fox, Jones, Ormiston. Finally, I made phone calls to get the proper lady's card to the correct address.

I still feel there are some errors. If your cards were

incorrect in spelling, the 9-digit zip code incomplete, or anything that could be better, send the card back with the proper corrections and I will print a new one.

I hope next year will be better and the cards will arrive at your house before you have forgotten whether or not you paid your dues.

Your humble servant, I remain,

Gail Peterson
P.O. Box 5160
Spencer, IA 51301-0860

Editor's note: That's a pretty sly ending, trying to get our sympathy with that "humble pie" business.

* * * * *

ATTENTION ATTENTION ATTENTION

NOW HEAR THIS LISTEN UP

CLEAR YOUR MINDS

This message is being repeated for the benefit of the men just returning to active duty and to chastise the older members for not paying attention to it when I first told you who to contact for certain items of group business.

President, Frank O'Bannon: takes questions on group operations and lost members, accepts notices of change of address (but send them to Treasurer).

Vice-President, Ed Chan: Ed is our top "tracer of lost persons". If you want to locate a lost crew member, talk to Ed. If you want to volunteer to assist in this important work, talk to Ed.

Treasurer, "Pete" Peterson: Pete gets all the money. All dues money should go to him. He is now also responsible for maintaining the official address list. He should receive all change notices (the President will assist him)

Editor, George Dickie: I accept nothing but articles for the "Liberaider". Do not send me address changes or money. Your humble servant, the Editor.

THE 461ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS

By Col. Frank O'Bannon

On 29 May 1943 General Order No. 78, HQ 2nd Air Force, Ft. George Wright, WA assigned the 461st BG to the 2nd Air Force and activated the group as of 1 July 1943 at AAF, Wendover Field, Utah. Squadrons also activated for service with the 461st Group were:

Headquarters Squadron
764th Bombardment Squadron
765th Bombardment Squadron
766th Bombardment Squadron
767th Bombardment Squadron

On 29 July 1943 the Group was moved, without personnel or equipment, to Gowen Field, Boise, ID. In August the "fleshing out" of the Group started. Men and equipment came from Gowen Field, Casper AAB, WY, Mt. Home AAB, ID, Kearns AAB, UT and Moses Lake AAB, WA.

On 29 September the Group was reassigned to Wendover AAB, UT. It received its first airplane for training purposes in October. The majority of the air crews were transferred from Mt. Home AAB to Wendover AAB. The morning report strength for October 1st shows 67 officers and 402 enlisted men. By October 31st the Group strength had grown to 264 officers and 1070 enlisted men.

During the month of October the Group trained at Wendover. Headquarters was housed in five tents in the middle of a tent area occupied by the enlisted men. Tents were also used by operations personnel on the flight line. Officers occupied five wood barracks. These building plus a Group dispensary, a Group briefing and interrogation room and two mess halls for the enlisted men were the only buildings at the disposal of the 461st BG.

Wendover is snuggled at the foot of the mountains on the state lines of Nevada and Utah where once the Great Salt Lake ended. As far as the eye could carry not a tree nor a blade of grass could be found. From the air one could see nothing but mountains to the

west and north and nothing but ditches of water running through the salt flats to the east and south.

Naturally, the officer's club and the bowling alleys became the centers of attraction for the officers. The service club, bowling alleys, theaters, PX and beer parlor were rendezvous for the enlisted men. With one forty-eight hour pass every two weeks the personnel of the 461st settled into a routine of long hours and hard work.

On 24 October, 1943 Col. Frederic E. Glantzberg was assigned to the 461st Bomb Group and assumed command on 25 October. Col. Glantzberg reviewed the facilities and flying conditions at Wendover and then proceeded to Washington where he received permission to train the Group at Hammer Field in Fresno, CA. Orders were issued on 28 October for this move.

The move to Hammer Field was made and phase training was intensified during the next two months. During training fourteen men lost their lives due to plane crashes and loss of oxygen during high altitude missions.

The ground echelon moved from Hammer Field to Camp Patrick Henry, Newport News, VA on 31 December 1943 on three trains. On 12 January 1944 the ground echelon left Camp Patrick Henry for the port of embarkation and were loaded on four "liberty ships" (the "Arch Bishop Lamy", the "George S. Hanly", the "William Rawle" and the "John Jay"). Thirty-one days later the ships made it to Naples, Italy. It was not until 23 February that all the ground personnel were in place at the Group's final destination.

On 13 January the air echelon started its move to Oudna, Tunisia, in North Africa. Taking the southern route across the Atlantic from Brazil, this movement was completed on 8 February with the arrival

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of the main group of planes. By February the air echelon was in place at Torretta, Italy.

Italy was Italy! The morning report showed 376 officers and 1620 enlisted men. The Group had fifty-one B-24H planes. The facilities consisted of one large airdrome with over 100 "soft" hard stands, ample but unusable taxi strips and one gravel landing strip with a long stretch of mud holes at each end and a big hump in the middle.

Training continued under questionable conditions. On 1 April 1944 the first combat mission was flown to the railroad marshalling yard at Behac, Yugoslavia.

The 461st Bombardment Group was stationed in Italy for sixteen months. Thirteen of these were spent flying almost daily combat missions against the enemy in ten southern and central European countries.

For the first three months the Group, under the command of Col. Frederic E. Glantzberg, maintained the highest average bomb score in the entire 15th Air Force.

A mission to the Duma Repolopezger Aircraft Components Factory in Budapest, Hungary on 12 April brought the Group its first Distinguished Unit Citation. A second Unit Citation was received in recognition of the 15 July mission to the Creditul Minier Oil Refinery at Ploesti, Rumania. The 461st dropped its bombs through a heavy chemical smoke screen laid down by the Germans as protective cover. The attack was the first "mickey" bombing done by the 15th Air Force. Its success meant that in the future neither smoke nor bad weather would protect targets from accurate instrument bombings. In all, the 461st planes visited Ploesti seven times.

The 461st met its stiffest aerial opposition on 25 July when Maj. William Burke, 766th Squadron commander, led the mission against the Herman Goering Tank Works at Linz, Austria. More than 150 fighters of Goering's own crack "yellow nose" Staffel attempted to protect the factory. Aerial gunners of the 461st destroyed 36 enemy aircraft. Of this total, the crew of the liberator "All American" was credited

with 14 aircraft destroyed. On another bomber a single gunner shot down four enemy aircraft. The "All American" has the distinction of destroying the most enemy aircraft on a single mission by a single aircraft in all the air wars to date.

During the southern France campaign, the group hit gun sites and fortifications before and on D-Day. Before this, on 2 August, bombers pinpointed the narrow span of the Avignon Railroad Bridge with such accuracy that the Group received a special commendation from Major General Nathan F. Twining, Commander, 15th Air Force.

When the rapid advance of the Seventh Army strained supply lines almost to the breaking point and threatened to ground air support for the lack of fuel and munitions, the 461st ground crews stripped their bombers of ball turrets and waist guns and installed extra fuel tanks in the bomb bays. For two weeks the heavies flew fuel, bombs and munitions to an advanced air base at Lyons, France. When normal supply lines were established and the crisis past, the heavies went back to flying combat missions.

As their early targets fell, on-by-one, to the fast moving Allied armies, the 461st bombers, then under the command of Colonel Philip R. Hawes, began to concentrate their precision bombing on the oil refineries of Blechhammer and the communications centers of Vienna. In the first 200 missions flown by the Group, 25 were flown to targets near Vienna and Moosbierbaum.

Beginning its second year of combat, the Group, then commanded by Colonel Brooks A. Lawhon, achieved the highest bombing score against the armament works at Brescia, Italy, 6 April 1945. The score of 95.5% was the highest ever made in the Wing.

Under command of Col. Craven C. Rogers, the 461st flew five missions in direct support of the Fifth and Eighth armies in Italy. They were beginning the closing drive of a long campaign.

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In 13 months of combat, the 461st had dropped 10,885 tons of bombs in nine countries:

Austria	Czechoslovakia
France	Yugoslavia
Greece	Hungary
Italy	Rumania
Germany	

Losses sustained by the Group were:

Killed In Action	198
Missing In Action	93
Killed in the line of duty	33

Since activation of the 461st Bombardment Group, over 5300 men served within its squadrons.

During its tour the Group lost 99 B-24's to enemy aircraft, flak and weather.

Gunners downed 129 enemy fighters, probably destroyed 44 more and damaged 16.

Group personnel were awarded the following military decorations:

4	Legions of Merit
11	Silver Stars
319	Distinguished Flying Crosses and 28 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters
66	Bronze Stars with one Oak Leaf Cluster
15	Soldier's Medals
2,806	Air Medals with 29 Silver Oak Leaf Clusters and 4,328 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters
271	Purple Hearts with 8 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters

On 17 May 1945 the Group was ordered to prepare for movement to the United States on 4 July. Work was immediately begun to clear the area, put all records, equipment and personnel in position for shipment. Actual movement to the Naples staging area was made on 29 June. On 8 July the men boarded the transport USS Mt. Vernon and arrived at Hampton Roads on 19 July. All officers and enlisted men were sent to various reception centers for processing and sent on 30-day furloughs. Men with high service points were scheduled for discharge and the remainder were ordered to Sioux Falls AAF for retraining into B-29's and deployment to the South Pacific.

The Group was inactivated 27 August 1945. All personnel were either sent to separation centers or to other bases in the 2nd Air Force.

The 461st Bomb Group was called back to active duty to defend our country during the Korean War and the Vietnam War. During the Korean War the unit was known as the 461st Bombardment Group (L) while for the Vietnam War it was known as the 461st Bombardment Group (H).

Epilogue

In 1980 a small group of men from the 461st and the 484th Bomb Groups decided to form a joint group for the purpose of remembering our lost comrades and to bring the survivors together once more. Joint reunions were held in Torrance, CA (1981), Dayton, OH (1982), Williamsburg, VA (1983) and Orlando, FL (1984). Attendance by members of the 461st were not recorded for these meetings.

In 1984 members of the 461st felt the need for having a separate reunion for members of the Group. As a result of a survey, sent to all known members of the Group, it was decided to have separate reunions every two years. In 1989 the group elected to have reunions each year since we were all getting a bit older and might not make it through the next two years.

Attendance has been outstanding since 1984. The cities hosting our reunions and the attendance at each have been:

1985	Colorado Springs, CO	220
1987	Tarrytown, NY	297
1989	St. Louis, MO	321
1990	Tucson, AZ	375
1991	Rapid City, SD	369
1992	Dayton, OH	581

Memorial plaques have been placed in the US Air Force Academy Cemetery in 1985 and in the Memorial Park, Wright-Patterson AFB in 1992. These plaques are in memory of all deceased members.

The group is working with blind centers of the VA to aide them in training blind vets. We have donated an extra large TV set to one unit and two exercise machines to another.

TAPS
MAY THEY REST IN PEACE FOREVER

<u>SOD</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DECEASED</u>	<u>HOMETOWN</u>	<u>DUTY</u>
HDQ	Dales, Homer H.	1989	Unk	Pilot
	Durham, Harry M.	Unk	Upper Lisle, NY	890 MOS
	Epstein, Theodore B.	1992	Delray Beach, FL	Class Spec.
	Smith, Robert E.	1992	Unk	Deputy Group CO
764	Ahrent, Thomas	1966	Unk	A/C Armorer
	Allen, Russell E.	1987	Unk	A/C Armorer
	Baroody, Milton B.	1988	Unk	Intelligence Off
	Beardsley, James G.	1974	Chicago, IL	Bombardier
	Begley, Jack J.	1983	St. Paul, MN	Pilot
	Bissell, Delmar	1987	Unk	A/C Armorer
	Boblasky, Joseph D.	1993	Springfield, PA	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Bowen, William T. Jr.	1989	Unk	A/C Radio/Gunner
	Brinkman, Phillip C.	1976	Unk	A/C Elec Mech
	Broder, Ralph	1989	Unk	Radio Mech
	Butenas, Leonard L.	1945	Unk	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Carroll, Edgar R.	1992	Margate, FL	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Casement, Alexander	1982	Troy, MI	Navigator
	Chivers, Joel R. Jr.	Unk	New Smyrna Beach, FL	A/C Refuel Oper
	Cline, William	1959	Unk	Clerk Adm Tech
	Courcier, Henry P.	1955	Wichita Falls, TX	Navigator
	Cramer, John C.	1987	Unk	Radar Observer
	Crown, Harry V.	1969	Jacksonville, FL	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Cubbison, James R.	1955	Harrisville, PA	Auto Equip Mess
	Davis, Neil E.	1988	Unk	Sheet Metal
	Deacon, John T.	1981	Bronx, NY	A/C Radio/Gunner
	Dewey, Paul E.	1973	Detroit, MI	A/C Armorer
	Dewitt, Earl E.	1993	Mc Allen, TX	Navigator
	Dillon, Robert E.	1978	San Francisco, CA	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Dinkle, Alfred A.	1973	Chicago, IL	Sheet Metal
	Duffield, James T.	1973	Camden, NJ	A/C Eng Mech
	Eades, Moses H.	1975	Unk	Cook's Helper
	Emery, Byron N.	1984	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Radar Tech
	Erickson, Carl A.	1959	Unk	Clerk Adm Tech
	Farris, Robert C.	1975	NC	Pilot
	Foley, Walter J.	1976	Springfield, MA	A/C & Eng Mech
	Fowler, Garvis O.	1988	Chicago, IL	Navigator
	Franklin, Earl J.	1992	Indianapolis, IN	Bombardier
	Fredericks, James J.	1977	Unk	Navigator
	Froot, Mark L.	1975	Eastchester, NY	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Fulton, Richard L.	1992	Bonita, CA	A/C Elect Mech
	Gagliostro, Rosario	1975	Unk	A/C & Eng Mech
	Gish, John C.	1975	Unk	A/C & Eng Mech
	Gord, Leland E.	1981	Denver, CO	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Goree, Edwin T.	1993	Prairie Du Chien, WI	Squadron CO
	Grantham, Leslie M.	Unk	Unk	Clerk Adm Tech
	Hager, Weston A.	1974	Unk	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Hanlon, Clifford E.	1987	Minneapolis, MN	Auto Equip Mess
	Harland, Lee B.	1969	Unk	Radio Operator

TAPSMAY THEY REST IN PEACE FOREVER

<u>SOD</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DECEASED</u>	<u>HOMETOWN</u>	<u>DUTY</u>
764	Harvey, William C.	1991	Chicago, IL	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Haveson, Charles H.	1982	Unk	A/C Refuel Oper
	Heller, Harvey A. Jr.	1988	Tulsa, OK	Navigator
	Hendricks, Charles J.	1982	Oakdale, TN	Unk
	Hill, James E.	1988	Unk	A/C Refuel Oper
	Hinrichs, Raymond W.	1984	S. Chicago, IL	Pilot
	Hough, John H.	1967	Baton Rouge, LA	Intelligence Off.
	Hubard, Floyd A.	1989	New Market, TN	A/C & Eng Mech
	Iverson, Clifford T.	1966	Unk	Pilot
	Jackett, James G.	1975	Snyder, NY	Control Tower Op
	Johnson, Luverne S.	1983	Crockett, CA	Pilot
	Kenyon, Albert S.	1944	Syracuse, NY	Pilot
	Kestel, Ralph R.	1956	Venice, CA	Line Chief
	Kirkland, Bill A.	1988	Alice, TX	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Kohlmeyer, Robert L.	1986	Sarasota, FL	Unk
	Kufta, George	1992	New York, NY	Radio Mech
	Lake, Harold G.	1957	Unk	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Lance, William W.	1982	Memphis, TN	A/C & Eng Mech
	Larsen, Avery C.	1976	Alpena, MI	Clerk
	Lewellen, Ira R.	1993	Paris, MO	A/C & Eng Mech
	Longa, Michael	1969	Unk	A/C & Eng Mech
	Marra, Joseph M.	1990	Bronx, NY	Auto Equip Oper
	Mausert, Arnold R.	1987	Unk	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Maxwell, Chester D.	1971	Unk	Motor Trans NCO
	McDonald, Gerald R.	Unk	Marengo, IN	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Mendonsa, Albert M.	1975	Lanesboro, MA	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Moore, Kenneth M.	1978	Unk	Clerk Adm Tech
	Morrison, Douglas A.	1983	Gainesville, GA	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Murphy, Johnnie R.	1981	Unk	A/C & Eng Mech
	Murphy, Thomas I.	1986	Tullulah, LA	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Nealon, Robert E.	1992	Winchendon, MA	Clerk Typist
	Nostrand, Richard E.	1993	Bradenton, FL	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Papadopoulos, Charles S.	1981	Unk	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Parker, Warren W.	1985	Unk	Unk
	Phillips, William	1985	Miami Beach, FL	Radio Operator
	Rappaneau, Wilfred L.	1992	New Bedford, MA	Radar Tech
	Russell, Ralph R.	1971	McAlester, OK	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Sargent, Marion C.	1990	Ogden, UT	Pilot
	Savick, John	1973	Unk	A/C Armorer
	Schreck, Florian F.	1980	Tipton, MO	A/C Refuel Oper
	Shepherd, Joseph F.	1986	Unk	Unk
	Shires, Ruben W.	1975	Beaumont, TX	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Stannard, Willis F.	1969	Guilford, CT	A/C Armorer
	Steinmentz, Robert E.	1987	Arcola, IL	Clerk Adm Tech
	Teague, Harold	1984	Unk	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Thompson, Robert J.	1945	Unk	A/C Eng Mech
	Turner, John L. Jr.	1983	East Orange, NJ	Pilot
	Turner, Leo M.	1947	St. Louis, MO	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Wilson, Dardanell E.	1980	Poughkeepsie, NY	Photo Lab Tech
	Zorn, William R.	1979	Detroit, MI	Surgical Tech
765	Battle, Ambrose J.	1983	Unk	Tele & Switch Op

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<u>SQD</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DECEASED</u>	<u>HOMETOWN</u>	<u>DUTY</u>
765	Boffalo, Edward L.	1988	Paramus, NJ	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Chadd, Calvin S.	Unk	Washington, IN	Parachute Rigger
	Cokrhame	1991	KY	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Connors, John F.	1991	Unk	Crypto
	Danielson, Carl O.	1945	Bennettsville, AR	Radio Oper/Gunner
	Decicco, Carmine	1987	Boston, MA	A/C & Eng Mech
	Del Vecchio, Francis J.	1977	New York, NY	Duty Soldier
	Dixon, William T.	1953	Methuen, MA	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Donnelly, William J.	1973	West Hempstead, NY	Bombsight Mech
	Dunn, Raymond H.	1992	Ft. Wayne, IN	Radio Mech
	Durand, Charles S.	1962	Unk	A/C & Eng Mech
	Dusell, Everett J.	1945	Aurora, IL	Navigator
	Evans, Hugh D.	1980	Deport, TX	Munition Worker
	Fink, Wayne C. A.	1986	Unk	A/C Refuel Oper
	Frank, William	Unk	Detroit, MI	Surgical Tech
	Freeman, Junius G.	1982	Concord, NC	Control Tower Op
	Goldstein, Jerome B.	1992	Deerfield Beach, FL	Clerk Typist
	Grasso, Anthony M.	1989	Unk	Cook's Helper
	Greenberg, James E.	1991	Dorchester, MA	Clerk Typist
	Gregory, George P.	1945	Oil City, PA	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Grochowski, Theodore G.	1991	Unk	QM Supply NCO
	Gross, Arthur S. Jr.	1984	Natick, MA	Sheet Metal
	Gullion, Alber L.	1979	Los Angeles, CA	Munition Worker
	Hartman, Arthur F.	1980	Youngstown, OH	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Hidley, Paul T.	1992	Bloomsbug, PA	A/C & Eng Mech
	Hines, Charles J.	1985	Ashville, NC	Gunnery Instructor
	Jackowicz, Edward J.	1971	Dickson City, PA	Decon Equip Oper
	Kareff, Samuel	1966	Unk	Crypto
	Kefaliotis, Nicholas	1983	Chicago, IL	A/C & Eng Mech
	Kershaw, William A.	1992	Oceanside, CA	A/C Armor/Gunner
	King, Herbert L.	1981	Rockingham, NC	A/C Armorer
	Lee, William F. Jr.	1972	Unk	Navigator
	Loga, John	1990	Unk	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Marshall, Clarence P.	1986	Pittsburg, KS	Pilot
	Mathers, George W.	1986	Tidoute, PA	Munition Worker
	McBride, Frank E.	1974	Sulphur, OK	Radar Mech IFF
	Peterson, Monard	1974	Unk	Mess Sgt.
	Phalen, Robert F.	Unk	Cortland, NY	Bombardier
	Platt, Willie M.	1975	Unk	Intelligence Off.
	Shamshak, Albert	1992	Boston, MA	Auto Equip Mess
	Sooy, Charley F.	Unk	Brookline, MA	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Sotak, Joseph A.	1962	Star Junction, PA	A/C & Eng Mech
	Stauffer, William E.	1978	Jersey City, NJ	Radio Oper/Gunner
	Steil, John B. Jr.	1993	Euclid, OH	Pilot
	Stroup, Thomas D.	1992	Warren, OH	Duty Soldier
	Tait, Paul	1964	El Monte, CA	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Tower, Thomas H.	1945	Rolla, MO	Bombardier
	Traetta, Rominick	1985	Brooklyn, NY	Pilot
	Turgeon, Armand R.	1993	Bounton Beach, FL	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Twist, Jack H.	1990	Dallas, TX	Pilot
	Van Slambrouck, James R.	1984	Monroe, MI	Navigator
766	Accobee, Oliver	1987	MN	Bombardier

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<u>SQD</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DECEASED</u>	<u>HOMETOWN</u>	<u>DUTY</u>
766	Beldon, Lonnie D.	1992	Valparaiso, IN	A/C Radio/Gunner
	Boyajian, Harold L.	1968	Brooklyn, NY	A/C Prop Mech
	Bracey, James M.	1970	Unk	Bombsight Mech
	Brief, Leonard T.	1969	Unk	Weapons Tech
	Broussard, Desire L.	1992	Council, ID	Intelligence Off.
	Brown, George E.	1985	Lancaster, PA	Bombardier
	Coe, Caanan C.	1956	Unk	A/C Armorer
	Cowley, Delmas W.	1986	NJ	Weapons Tech
	Cox, Thomas L.	1991	Unk	A/C Maint Tech
	Cumming, Robert D.	1987	Colorado Springs, CO	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Daniels, Elmer C.	1991	Newark, NJ	Unk
	Davidson, Robert R.	1971	Unk	Clerk Adm Tech
	Debauche, Lloyd K.	1981	Unk	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Douglas, Monroe	1982	Unk	Aerial Photo
	Fader, Donald E.	1991	Peabody, MA	Unk
	Feeley, James J.	1980	Unk	Auto Equip Oper
	Ferrell, Ralph W.	1983	Unk	Clerk Adm Tech
	Fine, Dale V.	1976	Drumright, OK	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Fite, Ewell M. Jr.	1966	Unk	A/C & Eng Mech
	Flynn, James J.	1982	Baisley Park, NY	A/C Armorer
	Foley, William J.	1961	New York, NY	A/C Refuel Oper
	Fondino, Joseph C.	1991	Unk	A/C & Eng Mech
	Fordyce, Melvin F.	1992	Borden, IN	A/C Mech/Gunner
	Fox, Eugene H.	1985	Unk	Cook's Helper
	Gauthier, Wilfred S.	1988	Unk	Clerk Adm Tech
	Gibbons, Arthur T.	1964	Unk	A/C Mech/Gunner
	Griffith, Joseph R.	1964	Unk	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Hall, William A.	1985	Kansas City, MO	A/C Instr Tech
	Hammonds, George W. Jr.	1992	Kinder, LA	Auto Equip Mess
	Hendricks, Oliver P.	1964	Miami, FL	Navigator
	Higgins, John E.	1980	St. Louis, MO	Adm Spec NCO
	Holland, Lanier F.	1985	Unk	A/C & Eng Mech
	Holland, William T.	1980	Atlanta, GA	Auto Equip Mess
	Hollingsworth, John V.	1989	Lexington, NC	Auto Equip Mess
	Horstmann, Donald G.	1992	Iowa City, IA	Pilot
	Hyatt, Henry J.	1971	Cambridge, MA	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Itkin, Ben	1991	Rochester, NY	A/C Radio/Gunner
	Jackson, Willie E.	1982	Hoxie, AR	A/C Refuel Oper
	James, Homer E.	1992	Jacksonville, TX	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Jannetta, Richard A.	1975	Duluth, MN	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Johnson, Frederick P.	1971	Unk	A/C Mech/Gunner
	Jones, Johnny W.	1987	Unk	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Kievit, Cornelius J.	1950	Passaic, NJ	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Kline, Charles W.	1987	Unk	A/C & Eng Mech
	Knoke, Norman E	KIA	Unk	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Lane, Robert G.	KIA	Long Beach, CA	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Lentz, Chester R.	1982	Unk	A/C & Eng Mech
	Lewis, Charles F. Jr.	1971	Bellerose, NY	A/C Armorer/Gunner
	Long, Donald W.	1980	Unk	Munition Worker
	Main, Earl L.	1991	Unk	A/C & Eng Mech
	Mathis, Thomas F.	1991	Silsbee, TX	Welder
	Matlock, D. E.	1981	Oklahoma City, OK	Pilot

TAPS
MAY THEY REST IN PEACE FOREVER

<u>SQD</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DECEASED</u>	<u>HOMETOWN</u>	<u>DUTY</u>
766	McCorkle, William A.	1978	Covington, VA	Munition Worker
	McClutcheon, David Jr.	1980	Unk	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Miller, James D.	1988	Unk	Aerial Photo
	Miller, Raymond E.	1971	Detroit, MI	Auto Equip Oper
	Moremen, Lee J.	1991	Seattle, WA	Pilot
	Moss, Thomas J. Sr.	1992	Universal City, TX	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Muse, Chauncy W.	1992	Tempe, AZ	Navigator
	Neal, Marcus A.	1980	Ringgold, GA	Supply Clerk
	Ortiz, Pasqual Jr.	1979	Guasti, CA	Clerk Typist
	Ostheimer, Lee H.	1989	Homeland, CA	Class Spec
	Ostling, Edward J.	1971	Unk	A/C & Eng Mech
	Pace, Wallace R.	1967	San Francisco, CA	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Paulson, Kermit L.	1980	San Francisco, CA	Radar Tech
	Phillips, Charles R.	1981	San Antonio, TX	Squadron CO
	Piatt, James W. Jr.	1976	Unk	Pilot
	Powell, Allison R.	1968	Unk	Munition Worker
	Prater, William A.	1990	Terrell, TX	Supply Clerk
	Pudgin, Anthony S.	Unk	Unk	A/C Armorer
	Rahl, Gerald	1992	Omaha, NE	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Rasmussen, Gwynethe	1989	Unk	Auto Equip Oper
	Reed, Wiley R.	1983	Kemah, TX	A/C Elect Mech
	Reiter, Robert E.	1960	Germantown, PA	Turret/Guns Mech
	Richards, David J.	1982	Unk	Bombsight Mech
	Riddle, Earl C.	1960	Chesapeake, OH	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Sanders, Robert M.	1989	Topeka, KS	Bombardier
	Sandler, Charles	1986	Unk	Clerk Adm Tech
	Schwartz, Murry	1989	Brooklyn, NY	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Scriber, Charles S.	1969	Albany, NY	A/C Armorer
	Sosnowski, Edwin W.	1989	Clearwater, FL	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Southard, Wesley J.	1980	Freehold, NJ	Sheet Metal
	Ulshaser, Roland T.	1977	Unk	Auto Equip Mess
	Walsh, James P.	1993	Centerville, MA	A/C Radio/Gunner
	Wedell, Harold H.	1981	Chicago, IL	A/C Radio/Gunner
	Wells, Victor F.	1983	Unk	Clerk Adm Tech
	Wharam, James E.	1991	Buffalo, NY	A/C & Eng Mech
	Wiemann, George F. 3rd	1993	Stuart, FL	Pilot
767	Baker, Elmer M.	1991	Unk	A/C Inspector
	Barger, Roy	1988	Unk	Medical Tech
	Belcher, Harold B.	1993	Huntington, WV	Auto Equip Oper
	Berliner, Nathan	1989	Cranbury, NJ	Navigator
	Blevins, Famon L.	1985	Springfield, OH	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Bonifay, Ormund U.	1989	Eastpoint, GA	A/C & Eng Mech
	Butler, Robert H. Sr.	1968	Unk	A/C Refuel Oper
	Catanzaro, Michael J.	1980	Brooklyn, NY	Radio Op/Gunner
	Connelly, Thomas J.	1980	Jersey City, NJ	Bombardier
	Cravit, Daniel	1991	Israel	Pilot
	Croley, Clifton F.	Unk	Unk	Munition Worker
	Danek, James W.	1976	IL	Navigator
	Daughterty, Cecil O.	1966	Unk	Unk
	Dooner, James P.	1983	New York, NY	Navigator
	Dougherty, Frank E.	1986	Chicago, IL	Turret/Gun Mech

TAPS
MAY THEY REST IN PEACE FOREVER

<u>SQD</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DECEASED</u>	<u>HOMETOWN</u>	<u>DUTY</u>
767	Duboff, Harold L.	1990	Las Vegas, NV	A/C Radio/Gunner
	Eaton, George F.	1993	North Andover, CA	Mail Clerk
	Farman, Hague	Unk	Los Angeles, CA	Clerk Adm Tech
	Fields, William H. Jr.	1990	Houston, TX	A/C Prop Mech
	Finley, William L.	1987	Houston, TX	Weather Officer
	Fulton, Kenneth A.	1966	Unk	A/C Armorer
	Gagne, Henry A.	1949	Unk	Parachute Rigger
	Greene, Henry P.	1985	Unk	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Hamilton, Jeff L. Jr.	1951	Murchison, TX	Bombardier
	Handly, Dewey D.	1973	Galion, OH	A/C Prop Mech
	Hughes, Arlo B.	1987	Chicago, IL	Navigator
	Johnson, Oran L.	1980	Johnson City, TN	Radio Mech
	Johnson, Silvester L. G.	1991	Unk	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Keily, Kevin J.	1989	Center Moriches, NY	A/C & Eng Mech
	Kenyon, Lloyd E.	KIA	Enid, OK	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Knox, Brice J.	1989	Champaign, IL	A/C Radio/Gunner
	Kornstein, Joseph	1985	New City, NY	A/C & Eng Mech
	Kuchinski, Robert R.	1989	Minneapolis, MN	Auto Equip Mess
	Kudla, Anthony J.	1992	Minneapolis, MN	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Ladato, Samuel	1989	Tampa, FL	A/C Radio/Gunner
	Laplante, Oren A.	1984	Brooklyn, NY	Navigator
	Leszczynski, Charles J.	1975	Buffalo, NY	A/C Instr Mech
	Linhares, Carl J.	1961	Caruther, CA	A/C Armor/Gunner
	McCombs, Emmett B.	1989	Kenna, MN	Unk
	McCrary, Edwin L.	1968	Valdosta, GA	Bombardier
	McDaniel, Paul E.	1978	St. Louis, MO	A/C Eng/Gunner
	McLean, John D. Jr.	Unk	Indianapolis, IN	Pilot
	Moore, Danny P.	1979	Unk	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Olesky, William C.	1992	Canton, MI	A/C Maint Tech
	Pettay, Willard G.	1983	Unk	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Pruitt, Elmer R.	1973	NC	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Radovsky, Milton	1993	Silver Spring, MD	Navigator
	Sampson, Howard G.	1983	Detroit, MI	Motor Trans NCO
	Sandow, David S.	1982	Chicago, IL	A/C & Eng Mech
	Savage, Charles E.	1983	Unk	A/C Eng/Gunner
	Smith, Neil O.	1974	WA	Cook's Helper
	Sorensen, Alma E.	1988	Unk	Med Adm Spec NCO
	Sullivan, Matthew E. Jr.	1981	Montier, MO	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Sumpter, Maurice E	1986	Unk	A/C & Eng Mech
	Sutton, Stuart L.	1989	Unk	Bombsight Mech
	Tarnowski, Earl R.	1992	Duluth, MN	A/C Armor/Gunner
	Thompson, Albert R.	1981	Highland Park, IL	A/C Eng/Gunner

Editor's note: In typing this list and the ones in previous issues, I noticed that there are a lot of "unknowns" (Unk) concerning the individuals. It occurred to me that many of you might be able to provide additional information about the men on your crews or your co-workers on the ground. Do your records show where they came from, what their jobs were? Please take time to look through the list of names in your squadron and if you can fill in some blanks send the information to Frank O'Bannon, P.O. Box 36600, Tucson, AZ 85740-6600. Thanks!

AFRICAN SAFARI

By Henry A. Jones, 764th Sqd.

Part 2

(Continued from the December 1992
Issue of the "Liberaider")

Now we were in Casablanca, an entirely different world than the one we were accustomed to — nothing at all like the good ole USA!!! One thing was for sure, this definitely wasn't paradise! On the way to camp we got our first look at where and how people lived. When I think of Casablanca or any part of North Africa, I get a "picture" of a tall skinny, long legged Arab riding on a little burro. The Arab is sitting on the rump of the burro and his legs are long enough to reach the burro's head. To motivate the burro to keep moving, the Arab constantly kicks his feet up and down alongside the burro's neck and the little animal keeps trotting along with his little short steps. I don't recall ever seeing a woman or child riding. They always seemed to be walking, a little behind the man. More often than not, the woman would have a basket or bundle balanced on her head. Men and women wore robes and sandals and the women wore veils. Small children were bare-bottomed and only had a shirt for a top—if they wore a top! Most of the dwellings that I saw were one room with a fire in the middle of the room. The buildings were of stone construction so there was little danger of fire.

Camp Don Passage was pretty normal, except that POWs did most of the work on the base, mess halls, barbershop, etc. This was where I got my first short haircut. Up until this time I wouldn't have been "caught dead" with a short haircut, but I began to realize that in order to stay clean and well kept, short hair was the only way to go. An Italian POW gave me my first GI haircut. I must have liked it because I've worn my hair that way ever since 1944.

We slept in pyramidal tents with five double decked bunks in them. Normally there would have been only five single cots. Ten men in one of these tents was uncomfortable for everybody. We ate

from our mess kits which gave us no problem since we were accustomed to using them. We ate outside, either standing or sitting on the ground. The fly population was terrible; it seemed that they covered everything. It was necessary to keep a hand waving over your food at all times or the flies would completely cover it. I have not seen that many flies anywhere.

I thought that sleeping in my sheepskin flying suit would keep me warm, but it didn't take long to find out that I was wrong. I found that by using them as a cover was much better. That way I could keep my feet together. Besides that, sleeping on a straw mattress has no warmth at all, especially when it has been slept on for a long time before. It was also about as soft as an oak plank.

From this point on we were to travel by train, and I'm not talking about a comfortable train. We were going by 40 and 8—that means the cars were large enough to carry forty men or eight horses. They were made famous during WWI in France. I suppose forty men could ride in one if they didn't mind standing most of the time. We weren't hauling that many men and we were not all that comfortable. To sleep we laid crosswise to the car with our head to the side wall. The men next to you on either side had their heads to the wall on the other side of the car. That meant you could get kicked from either side at any time during the night. In addition, if you had to get up during the night, the chances of losing your spot were great. We spent one night in these crowded conditions, but the next day we found a way to remedy the situation. By using some of our shelter-halves (pup tents), we made hammocks that were swung across the box-car. I don't remember how many men slept this way, but it was enough to relieve the crowded condition.

For food we had "C rations" which made up the main part of the "meal" (meat, beans, spam, etc.). Then there was a box containing candy, sugar, 4 cigarettes and instant coffee. The coffee was

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Henry Jones with a "crew" cut,
railroad yard in Tunis, 1944

probably the first attempt at making instant coffee. But whatever the case, it was not very good. The candy and sugar we saved for kids along the way. The kids would begin to run toward the train the minute they saw it was a troop train. Even if we had already passed, they would look all along the track for anything we might have thrown to them. In one town where we stopped in the station, a crowd of people gathered to watch. There was one little girl, probably eight years old, standing with her father. We motioned for her to come over, and when she did, we filled the skirt of her dress with candy and sugar. She ran back to her father holding her skirt up in front, showing him what she had. He went to his house, which was nearby, and came back with two big bottles of wine—they were glad to get those sweets! Likewise, we were glad to get some good French wine.

The CF%M was the railroad we were riding. It ran all along the Mediterranean Sea from Casablanca to Tunis through mountains most of the way. There were a great number of tunnels along the way, some of them quite long, especially when you're riding in an open boxcar. The smoke was pretty thick at times. At the beginning of the trip the train was being pulled by a wood burning steam engine used ordinarily to switch cars around in the yards. They had a lot of trouble pulling some of the steep grades with it. There were times when they had to make a second attempt to make it over the top, even with the Arab crewmen spreading ex-

tra sand on the track. Eventually we got a GI engine and crew who really moved us down the track. We went through the towns of Fez, Rabat, Oran, Tangier and others.

Anytime the train stopped, the guys would naturally get off to stretch, relax, go to the bathroom, etc. Well no sooner did the train commander (a major) even think the train was going to move he would begin to yell at the top of his voice, "Get on the God damn train!!" I'm sure that with the attitude he had, some of the guys took their sweet time. The poor man probably had an ulcer by the time he was rid of us.

The British were guarding the rail yards and bridges on our route, and I must say they did a good job. British soldiers were in the rail yards, and I'm not sure of the nationality of the troops on the bridges. They did not wear the conventional uniform of the British and their weapons were long barreled rifles with fixed bayonets. They wore white turbans on their head and wrap leggings on their legs. They looked strange compared to what we were accustomed to.

We had learned early on the trip not to leave things at or near the doorway because an Arab could run up to the door and grab what was there and be gone in no time. It was especially bad at night. The British soldiers who were on guard were always on the look out for such things. If the guard said "Halt", he meant just what he said. The Arabs were very aware of that because if they were caught, they were dealt with harshly.

We arrived in Tunis after more than a week on the train. There is no doubt that we were a sloppy looking bunch. None of us had had a shower since we were in Casablanca—and we probably smelled like it! Water was not plentiful here for some reason. However, we were allowed to take a shower with water on long enough for us to soap up and then it was turned on again long enough for us to rinse off good. From that time on we were allowed

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one helmet full of water a day to wash and shave with. We were, however, allowed unlimited drinking water that had been treated to kill bacteria. It had a heavy chlorine smell. We were advised to neither eat or drink at any place other than those approved by the military authorities—sanitary conditions were bad. From the train we had seen places where the people and their animals drank from the same well. There would be a stockade around the well, and the area surrounding it would be nothing but a “lob-lolly” of mud. The people and their animals lived, ate and drank in this same stockade.

At Camp Sevier in Tunis an infantry T/Sgt. was put in charge of our group of men. He, like our train commander, was a “gung ho” type person who was going to teach this bunch of Air Corps men a few things—so he thought!!! We all had as much or more rank than he did, but we went along with him to a great extent. He had roll calls, some of which were necessary, and then he attempted to put us through close order drill (back to boot camp). That went over “like a lead ball”, so he stopped that. Next he sent some of the men to the mess hall on “ration breakdown”. That was loading, unloading and sorting rations. This time someone stole a 25 lb. box of ground beef and brought it to the tent area. That night we built a big fire and had a “cook-out”. By this time he had “lightened up” a bit and began to get along better with the guys. I will say one thing for this bunch of men—we did not need close supervision. When left alone we did very well. Every time someone tried to push us around, he ran into trouble. During all of the time we were together, I don’t remember a time when there was any disagreement among the men in the group. All of us got along very well together.

There were many things the populations of Europe and Africa could not buy. Some of these were sugar, cigarettes, candy and shoes. If a man had a pair of silk hose he could almost name his own price. However, there were places where some items could be purchased, but the prices were very

high. That was the “black market”. Some of the men that carried on this type of business got a lot of their merchandise from the GIs. They would come to the fence around the camp and “haggle” with the guys for things they wanted to buy or sell. These men would buy anything!! One fellow I knew sold a pair of badly worn civilian type shoes to one of these “traders”. These men were usually in groups of four or five and each carried a long stick like a shepherds staff—in other words a club! One time when these men were at the fence, somebody got off to the side and talked him into raising the price he paid for an item. When the others found out what was going on, I thought they were going to beat him to death with their sticks. The last time I saw him, he was running for his life, and the others were right on his heels.

After more than a week in Tunis it was decided that we should be in Algiers, about 300-400 miles back the way we had just come. We loaded onto another train and off we went back to Algiers. This took another 2-3 days of traveling. In the meantime, the 15th Air Force learned where we were and sent planes to pick us up. We finally arrived at our destination on Sunday, 16 April, 1944!

To say the very least our trip was some kind of an adventure. It took us just three days short of three months to travel from Fresno, CA to Cerignola, Italy, a distance of at least 7,000 miles, and by all modes of transportation—except horseback! It’s a shame that I didn’t have total recall so that I could write about everything. I have just “scratched the surface”.

We rejoined our squadrons at Torretta Field, Cerignola, Italy on 16 April and took up our duties of maintaining the B-24 airplanes of the 461st Bombardment Group as if we had not had an “African Safari”.

Editor’s note: In a letter I got from Henry Jones, he indicated he hoped his story of the “Safari” would prompt other travelers to tell their side.

MAIL CALL

Editor's note: At the 1992 reunion in Dayton, Ohio, Col. Frank O'Bannon presented Trefry A. Ross, 765th Squad., with a Purple Heart he earned 48 yrs. Ago. Here's Trefry's story behind the event.

48/48

THE STORY OF A PURPLE HEART

By Trefry A. Ross, 765th Squad.

Well, it wasn't because I hadn't tried to get it before! It all started that fateful day 17 December 1944. I won't bore you with the details; they have been well documented (Editor: 461st mission to Odertal Synthetic Oil Refinery in Germany). I'm going to call my story "48/48". Forty-eight years and forty-eight hours.

I was at McClellan AFB in Sacramento, CA on 13 September 1945 about ready to be separated from service. I was told to read a fistful of papers and, if everything looked OK, I should sign on the spaces indicated, and I would be on my way; free at last! There was nothing on my honorable discharge indicating I was a POW nor any mention of a Purple Heart. I wanted out now and signed, assuming it would be straightened out later. Mistake number 1.

On several occasions I had reason to visit various service representatives and organizations over a period of about five years. All insisted I should apply for the Purple Heart as I was surely entitled to it. I had letters from people who were in the hospital with me, other POW's who saw my wounds, and a German document retrieved from the POW camp files after being liberated by the Russians. The German document listed all the details of 17 December 1944, aircraft type, time and date of capture and that I was "verwundet" (wounded). All these papers were submitted to proper authorities. The end result, which occurred several times, was a new set of medals from St. Louis stating these were the ones I was entitled to, according to the records. No mention of the Purple Heart or other action taken. My closet was getting full of medals, all in the original

boxes. I decided to say "the hell with it", so I did. The years passed and with each passing year I slowly began to forget about it. After forty eight years, I mentioned to Frank O'Bannon that I had never received my Purple Heart; can't even remember why I brought it up. Frank said "I think I can get it for you". I told him my tale of woe and said "Forget about it Frank, you'll never make it, and I don't want to go through all that again". Well, Frank persisted, and I wrote to the Bombardier who had been in the hospital with me. I had him write another letter. Frank wrote a letter and sent it along with the required documents to the review board at Randolph AFB, San Antonio, TX. Well, comes back a letter "Dear Trefry, you have met all the requirements; however you need to see a physician and have him certify your wounds". I said to Frank "You see, you see what I mean; it's always something. What good is it going to do seeing a doctor now? 48 years later there is no visible evidence, (expletive deleted). I ain't going to see any doctor (expletive deleted)". I told Frank how much I appreciated his work but the documents should have been enough. Frank agreed, but said he had an ace in the hole.

I promptly forgot about it. As far as I was concerned, it was all through, done, period!

Now comes the 48 hours part, incredible! I got another letter from the review board at Randolph stating I had been awarded the Purple Heart. This is a week before the Dayton reunion, mind you. I called Frank with the good news. I had three options. I could have a grand formal ceremony at Davis-Monthan AFB; I could have the Commanding General present it to me; or I could have them send it to me for a ceremony of my own choosing. I opted for the latter because I wanted Frank O'Bannon to present it to me. If it had not been for his perseverance and determination, I would not have received it.

Frank was leaving for Dayton in a few days. We had hoped to make the presentation at the reunion. I had received the letter on Monday. Tuesday morn-

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ing I mailed my request via overnight mail. Randolph got it Wednesday, processed it and mailed the medal to Frank on Thursday. Frank received it on Friday. 48 hours! I surely did not think that an arm of the government could act that fast. Many thanks to the review board at San Antonio and of course to Frank O'Bannon.

I finally made it! 48 years, 48 hours.



Trefry Ross and his medal

* * * * *

Editor's note: On the right hand side of page 22 of the December 1992 issue of the "Liberaider", Vahl Vladyka said he would write an account of the 22 February 1945 mission to the Kempten Marshalling Yards, in Germany. Here is that story.

31 July 1992

Dear George,

It was 22 February 1945, Washington's Birthday (the father of our country had his own day in those years), and we breathed a collective sigh of relief when we entered the briefing room and saw that our target was a benign marshalling yard at Kempten, Germany, 60 miles northwest of Innsbrook. It was my fifth mission, the fourth for most of the rest of my crew, and we already had enjoyed Moosbierbaum and Vienna, city of our dreams. So the prospect of a milk run was music to our ears, even though we had drawn the old war-weary, drab-painted 62 airplane.

At some point, my memory is a little fuzzy on this detail, our eight plane box became separated from the rest of the group because of weather, and we proceeded on as a single box, without fighter escort. Our assigned bombing altitude was 13,000 feet, but because of a layer of clouds at that altitude, we dropped to 12,000 for the bomb run which was completed without flak or other incident. According to strike photos, we pasted the target.

Our own private little air force then commenced a climb back to 19,000 feet for the return over the Alps. Within 15 minutes, we were jolted out of our complacency by an intercom report by our substitute tail gunner that we were being followed by a single German fighter about a mile to the rear. I reported this to our box lead, and everyone immediately came on edge. Moments later our navigator called me on the intercom and said, "That crazy bastard is taking us right over Innsbrook!" I reached for the switch to the radio to inform (in somewhat more moderate language) our lead. Then, as they say, "all hell broke loose". A salvo of flak, with fuses cut to our exact altitude (thanks to our German fighter friend) hit every plane in the box, wounding a number of people, including Cliff Hanel, our ball gunner, who took a piece of flak in his knee. Ernie Rota, our engineer, tucked an oxygen bottle under his left arm and went to the bomb bay to assess damage when a second salvo hit us. Part of it drove a fist-size hole through the oxygen bottle. During all of this, our box, in a superb display of discipline, scattered across the sky like a covey of quail.

Our elevator trim tabs were shot away and John McDonald, our co-pilot, and I had our feet on the instrument panel trying to keep our nose up. We got the gunners in the waist to move to the rear, improving our balance. We located three other planes from our box and joined them in the number four slot.

Our abbreviated box, with Stan Staples (bleeding from a foot wound) in the lead, made our way back to the field. Our hydraulics were gone, which meant

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we had only one application of the brakes, and the nose wheel was badly damaged. My offer to make a pass over the field if anyone wanted to bail out was declined by all.

Assistant engineer Ralph Benso, nicknamed "Moose" because of his size and strength, was by S. O.P. delegated to crank down the gear; but when Mac and I forgot to put the gear level in the "Down" position, he was trying to compress hydraulic fluid with a one-inch diameter steel bar. Something had to give, and Moose's adrenalin carried the day. He put a permanent bend in the crank shaft.

Before we started final, we had an arrangement that, once on the ground, I would punch the bailout bell each time our declining speed would cause the nose to go lower. At that time, another crewmember would dash to the tail. In this manner, we traversed the entire runway on the main gear, turning off and coming to rest on the nose wheel on the taxi strip. We had not needed our single application of brakes.

Seeing our red flare, our flight surgeon dashed to the plane, ducked under and up into the open waist hatch exclaiming, "Where is the wounded man?" At that precise moment, someone walked back into the tail and the entire rear of the airplane settled around a startled Captain Nathan. At the same time, it gave Mac and me, still strapped in our seats, a splendid view of the sky.

All eight planes returned safely, although all were badly damaged. Old number 62 had over 250 holes. Ernie said he quit counting at that number. After repair, it flew only once more, following which it was junked.

That day proved the old adage that "God takes care of fools".

Vahl Vladyka



Editor's note: I got this gem from Bill Kuhatschek, 765th Squadron.

FREE (?) ENTERPRISE—ITALIAN STYLE

If I begin with a tale about one of the 765th planes that didn't quite make it back to the airstrip, bear with me, because that plane played a vital part in the free enterprise system in Italy.

I don't remember the date or the mission that was involved, but I do remember that it was the first run for a new crew. And guess what... They ran out of fuel and had to make a forced landing in a wheat field on the north side of the 765th Squadron. The landing was beautiful; the B-24 stayed together and everyone walked away from it. Meanwhile down on the flight line, all hell broke loose. The mission had been a relatively short one, and the tokyos (outer wing tanks) had been filled. Or had they!! The engineering officer grabbed the line chief, the line chief grabbed the crew chief, the crew chief collared the assistant, and away they raced to the downed B-24. All eyes were on the trembling assistant as he untwisted the safety wire on the pet-cock. Can you imagine what his feelings were when fuel poured out and kept pouring until he shut it off? And the other tokyo was full also. Who was responsible? Well, as it turned out, no one on that crew knew how to transfer fuel from the wing tanks to the main tanks. I don't think any blame was placed. They probably settled for the fact that it was the fault of the overseas training back in the States. This way, everyone was off the hook.

Well, by now you are wondering what this little narration has to do with free enterprise in Italy. Well, since the plane was totaled, all that could be done was to remove the engines, radio equipment and armament. The fuselage was left to the elements. As in most cases, one person's loss is another's gain. So it wasn't long before some dark haired, brown eyed Italian maidens opened a salon, stocking the oldest commodity known to man. The shop did a land-office business for several months,

(Continued on page 18)

(Continued from page 17)

they never seem to run out of their commodity.

Well, as you know, nothing is forever, and so their little shop was doomed to fail. One day Colonel Glantzberg noticed from the air that the fuselage took on the appearance of the hub of a giant wheel with spokes radiating out in all directions. Over the months of operation, paths had been worn in the field. What must have been most disconcerting to the Colonel was the fact that the spokes pointed suspiciously in all directions, not just the enlisted men's areas. How could that be?

Well, in short order military police arrived and closed this capitalistic venture. Soon the paths were covered by new growth and a frontal nude picture of one of the maidens appeared on the bulletin board. Under the picture was the caption, "Anyone that has used this common receptacle report to medical".

At that time we all got a big laugh out of the event, but now, in my later years, I can't feel anything but remorse for the ordeal and humiliation this young victim of war was subjected to when that picture was taken.

Bill Kuhatschek

* * * * *

Dear George,

Enclosed is a snapshot taken in a mall in Madison, Wisconsin, showing a couple of old (?) tent mates. L to R: Robert Loomis, aircraft mechanic and me, Les Toleen, armorer—members of the 461st Bomb Group, 766 Bomb Squadron.

This meeting was made possible because Robert saw my address in a previous issue of the "Liberaider" and contact was made. Several hours were spent reminiscing about various events and personalities.

Robert had spent most of his working days farming and he also worked as a supervisor in a meat packing firm. His hobbies include fishing and watching horse and dog races. Both men hopefully look for-

ward to meeting again in the near future and hope to contact other tent mates known to be still alive: Wilfred Avery, of Mishawauka, IN; William Zastoupil, Sheboygan, WI; and Morris Gauchman, New York City. Maybe they will see this note and contact me at 315 Elmwood Rd., Hoyt Lakes, MN 55750



Les Toleen, 766th

* * * * *

Dear George,

I looked for George Wieman for 44 years. In August of 1989 I happened to be talking to a guy in Wilmington, VT when he said that he came from Newton, CT (George's war time home). I mentioned George, and he was this guy's uncle. He told me how to get in touch with George. We got together three times and really had a ball.

Just after his move to Florida, he developed pancreatic cancer (which is virtually fatal). I'm very sorry we did not get together years ago, as he lived near my late wife's childhood home. George died on February 3, 1993.

As we get older, this type of information is received at an increasing rate. I just turned 70, and at this age our speed toward that final event of our lives is increasing. Personally, I am on borrowed time. Have had a pacemaker '85, angioplasty '87, triple bypass '87, and new pacemaker '91

I have a nice second home in VT. Between there, Lyons Club, trips to GA and FL to see relatives, caring for kids and grand kids I stay busy. You're doing a great job.

Judson Moore, 266 Contour Dr., Cheshire, CT 06410

(Continued on page 28)

1993 ITALIAN TOUR
REVISITING CERIGNOLA AND THE 461ST GROUP SITES
By Col. Frank O'Bannon

On May 26, 1993 the waiting was over. We would reach the highlight of the tour, Cerignola and the 461st air base. Due to the political problems in Italy, we were not certain just how things would turn out in Cerignola, but our worries were groundless. We were met at the Cathedral by the Chief of Police and two of his men. The Chief and I recognized each other from our 1988 tour. The Cathedral has undergone considerable change since 1988. The inside has been completely painted and is lovely to behold.

We were also joined by two city officials from the Historical Section. While standing there getting our thoughts together, a man came up and introduced himself as having been a very young boy who worked in the 766th Squadron mess hall. A. J. Centanni recognized him. Sorry, I blew it and didn't get his name.

Our next stop was 461st Headquarters and the 767th Squadron areas. This was our first clue that things had gone downhill since our last visit. Most of the buildings are still there but do not appear to be lived in. A group of buildings in front of Headquarters were torn down. I did notice that some rusted PSP (pierced steel planking) were being used as part of a fence. Wonder if they came from our runway or one of the hardstands? Wish I could get a couple of pieces moved to the 15th Air Force Museum. Our next stops were to the 764th, 765th and 766th areas. All appear to be a bit more rundown than I remember.

On to Cerignola for a late lunch. We were met by Bishop Pichitter. He said he is coming to our Fresno reunion. Lunch was one to remember! By my count we had eleven courses interspersed with a few toasts. The Bishop presented the group with a colored lithograph pen and ink drawing of the Cerignola Cathedral. The Minister of History presented the group with an engraved metal plaque (see the picture below). From the Minister of Tourism we received a book on the construction of the Cathedral and another one of pictures taken in Cerignola from the late 1800's to 1936. They are in Italian, so get out your Italian/English language dictionaries for the reunion in Fresno.

The climax of the lunch was a large cake with icing made in the form of American and Italian flags. The cake was great, and the champagne to wash it down was not to be passed up. Just where the three hours went will be questioned for years to come.

Back to Foggia and our 2 start hotel. Not many even thought of an evening meal that night. It was a great day! One filled with old memories of the war days that many "grand pops" will tell their grandchildren about and show them where they lived in Italy.



Friendship Plaque
Presented to the 461st Bomb Group
By the City of Cerignola, Italy
April 26, 1993

The pictures on pages 20, 21 and 40 were taken on the 461st Bomb Group's tour of Italy, 1993. See page 19 for the details.



The Chief of Police, Doris Zobal, Frank O'Bannon and friends



Cerignola officials and their gifts to the 461st Bomb Group



Group Headquarters



764th Bomb Squadron Area



765th Bomb Squadron Area



766th Bomb Squadron Area



767th Bomb Squadron Area

Editor's note: Either there is nothing left of the 767th Squadron area or we of the 767th didn't get equal representation by the "shutter bugs" on the tour.

MISSION #22

12 May 1944

Target: Marina Di Carrara Marshalling Yard, Italy

In anticipation of this mission, Col. Glantzberg, Lt. Col. Hawes, Maj. Lott and Maj. Burke attended a special conference held by Col. Lee at Wing Headquarters on 11 May. There they learned the following facts:

1. "H" hour for the Italian front had been set for 2300 o'clock 11 May.
2. All heavy bomb groups in the 15th Air Force were assigned to fly two missions against marshalling yards in the Po River valley area, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, on 12 May.
3. The route out for these missions was planned in such a way as to take nineteen groups over south-central Italy to within sight of the bomb line, then west along the bomb line, then north on the Anzio Beachhead.

In executing this mission, many of the groups including the 461st did not fly the afternoon mission because of bad weather.

The target of the morning mission for our group was the Castel Maggiore Marshalling Yard. Alternate targets were any active marshalling yard in north Italy except Florence and Rimini. For the third time since the group became operational, Col. Glantzberg, leading the group, was forced to hit an alternate target because of bad weather at the primary target. He made five 360 deg. Turns in an effort to find the target. Finally a run was made on the marshalling yard at Marina Di Carrara. Not much damage was done to the target, but an aluminum plant near the target was hard hit with a beautiful pattern by a flight led by Capt. Goree. Even more important, a concentration of enemy munition stores nearby was squarely hit with considerable damage resulting.

MISSION #23

13 May 1944

Target: Imola Marshalling Yard, Italy

Missions of the Fifteenth Air Force on this day followed the general pattern of those for 12 May. The target assigned to this group was the marshalling yard at Faenza. From the initial point at Marradi, the wrong target was picked up by the lead bombardier, Lt. Murphy. As a result, the group bombed the marshalling yard at Imola, which is but a short distance northwest of Faenza on the Remini-Florence railway line. A beautiful bombing pattern covered the target with 28 percent of the bombs within 1,000 feet of the briefed aiming point. As was the case on the previous day, no enemy aircraft were seen. This was the first mission the group had flown without one or more early returns.

MISSION #24

14 May 1944

Target: Padua Marshalling Yard, Italy

The whole Air Force was still hammering away at the marshalling yards in northern Italy. The target for this mission was Padua which was heavily defended by anti-aircraft guns. The lead bombardier, Capt. Leffler, turned in a superior job with 60 percent of the bombs dropped falling within 1,000 feet of the aiming point. Again no enemy aircraft were seen, but thirty-two of the thirty-six planes over the target were hit by flak and one man was injured.

MISSION #25

17 May 1944

Target: Porto Ferrajo Steel Mill and Harbor (Elba Island)

Continued good weather and good bombing marked this mission. From a coordinate in the Tyrrhenian Sea as an initial point, the bomb run resulted in a splendid pattern and a score of 29 percent. The steel mill and some of the harbor installations were hard hit. Lt. Stiles was the lead bombardier.

MISSION #26

18 May 1944

Target: Belgrade Zemun A/D, Yugoslavia

(Continued on page 23)

(Continued from page 22)

Strategy of the Fifteenth Air Force suddenly switched the bomb groups on this date from marshalling yards in northern Italy to the oil refineries at Ploesti. Bad weather prevented the group from getting to their primary target, Xenia Oil Refinery at Ploesti, Rumania. The target selected for bombing was the now familiar alternate and last resort target, the Belgrade Zemun Airdrome in Yugoslavia. Above a solid undercast, Col. Glantzberg led the group in such a way as to make it possible to drop the bombs on the center of the most concentrated flak area. Results were unobserved.

MISSION #27
19 May 1944

Target: Recco Viaduct, Italy

The Recco Viaduct, on the main railroad line from Genoa to Rome, was the first bridge attacked by the group as a primary target. Part of the bomb load for this mission was 2,000 pound general purpose bombs. This was the first time bombs this large had been used by the group.

Crews were briefed to hit this target by flights. When they arrived at the target area, they found the viaduct obscured by a 9/10 undercast. No flak at the target permitted the flights to circle and make repeated bomb runs on the target. Lt. Col. Hawes, who led the formation, made eight passes at the target, the last from 3,000 feet. Some flights abandoned the target in search of targets of opportunity. No hits were scored on the bridge. Enemy fighters in northern Italy were still conspicuous by their absence.

MISSION #28
22 May 1944

Target: Piombino Harbor area, Italy

Against the supply dumps and harbor installations at Piombino the group carried incendiary clusters for the first time. The weather over the target was CAVU. Maj. Burke, the formation leader, maintained his record of leading highly successful missions when the crews laid down a superior formation pattern directly on the target. Only two enemy air-

planes were seen on this mission. For the second time this month there were no early returns.

1st Lt. James T. Bennett, who was being checked out as a flight leader by 1st Lt. Edward W. Peterson and his crew, were lost on this mission. The plane left the formation near the initial point in the Tyrrhenian Sea and was not seen again.

MISSION #29
23 May 1944

Target: Subiaco Road Junction, Italy

The Group was assigned on a tactical mission in support of the ground forces in Italy who were pushing the enemy northward. The target was a highway junction at the foot of a steep hill in a deep narrow valley. Ground maps had to be used instead of target charts. Crossing over a series of mountain ridges, the group found its target despite an 8/10 undercast. Sixty seven percent of the bombs dropped on this target were within 1,000 feet of the center of impact.

MISSION #30
24 May 1944

Target: Wiener Neustadt Wollersdorf Airdrome, Austria

Another mission to Wiener Neustadt, this time with Col. Glantzberg leading the wing. The possible success of this mission was ruined by excessive cloud coverage of the target plus the fact that oil, which had leaked from a line on the nose turret guns, froze and obscured the vision of Capt. Leffler, lead bombardier. Overshooting the target on the first run, the group made a 360 deg. Circle, lost the other groups in the formation and made another run. Because of crippled planes in the formation, the lead ship dropped its bombs rather than make a third pass.

Again, there was fighter opposition and intense flak. Thirty enemy planes were encountered and the following claims were scored: two destroyed, one prob-

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able and three damaged. Twenty-three of our planes were hit by flak, and two were lost. Flight leader, 1st Lt. Robert S. Bigelow, with the 766th Squadron, Operations Officer, Capt. John W. Dickenson as copilot, was lost to flak over the target. 2nd Lt. William R. Diggs lost an engine over the target, dropped out of formation and wasn't seen again. The Wiener Neustadt target was rough!

MISSION #31
25 May 1944

Target: Carnoules M/Y, France

The Fifteenth Air Force suddenly swung to France for targets. In the absence of both flak and fighters, with CAVU weather, the group got 35 percent of its bombs within 1,000 feet of the briefed aiming point on the marshalling yard and roundhouse at Carnoules.

MISSION #32
26 May 1944

Target: Lyon/Vaise M/Y, France

Back again to France, this time to the Lyon/Vaise Marshalling Yard. Again the weather was CAVU, there was no flak, and only two enemy aircraft were seen. Maj. Burke turned in another excellent mission. The group dropped 54 percent of its bombs in a 1,000 foot circle.

On this mission, flight leader 1st Lt. Marion C. Mixon furnished a splendid example of the determined aggressiveness with which this group was handing out damage to the enemy. Flying as copilot, while checking out 2nd Lt. Robert G. Wester as a first pilot, Lt. Mixon was forced to turn back from the mission when he lost an engine over the Tyrrhenian Sea. Instead of dropping his bombs in the water or returning them to base, he went looking for a target of opportunity. After passing up two targets, the navigator, 2nd Lt. Paul Dietrick, saw a long convoy of enemy vehicles. The bombardier, 2nd Lt. James Colavito Jr., threw a road block in front of the convoy which was then strafed by RAF spitfires.

MISSION #33
27 May 1944

Target: Salon De Provence A/D, France

This mission to France was different from the previous two in that extremely accurate heavy flak greeted the group at landfall on the French coast. This time the target was the airdrome at Salon De Provence. A nest of JU-88 aircraft had been raiding shipping in the Mediterranean.

The score for the mission was 24 percent. 2nd Lt. Gerald Maroney's plane was damaged by flak and left the formation. When last seen, the plane was heading north over France.

Editor's note: See "The Odyssey of the Liberator" on the next page.

* * * * *

YOUR NEXT MISSION

(If you choose to accept it)

Will be on 29 September 1993

At 12:00 hours

Target: Fresno, CA
Initial Point (IP): San Francisco
Aiming Point (AP): Holiday Inn
Center Plaza

Group Lead: Col. Frank O'Bannon, pilot
Millie O'Bannon, co-pilot
Marimac Corp, Operations

Flight Altitude: ground level (or there
about—depends on the
fuel consumed)

Activity Anticipated: Incendiary, at
the very least.

Gentlemen, this mission is a must! Group headquarters says this is a 50 year mission and that it is imperative that the target be engulfed by the 461st Bomb Group.

Group operations has prepared a list of mission requirements. Turn to page 38 of this document. Fill out the form and get it to operations ASAP!

Good luck! With the proper "spirits" we will succeed. However, caution must be taken not to self-destruct.

THE ODYSSEY OF THE "LIBERATOR"

Translated from the French newspaper
"Grasse" (Nice-Matkin) May 27, 1991

Saturday, May 27, 1944, exactly 47 years from today, an American bomber "B-24 Liberator" crashed on the peak of l'Aiglo above the hamlet of Thorenc. Miraculously, the ten members of the crew leave uninjured from the accident. They parachute, but four among them were quickly seized by the Germans. The six others were hidden until August 1944, by the families of the region.

A page of history which was not talked about too much in the sector, but which completely fascinated one from Cannes, Philippe Castellano. This young man was smitten and unbelievably obstinate in the research of the event, pursuing with an iron will, not only interested in the "liberator" in ruin in Thorenc, he has amassed, with patient research, a great deal of impressive information on the eight U.S. bombers which fell in the Maritime-Alps in 1944. Three among them, besides belonging also to the 464th Bomb Group, had sustained the same fate just about two days before the one at Thorenc: one at the Croix De Gardes at Cannes; the two others at l'Esterel at Cap D'Antibes.

The drama reconstructed by a young man from Cannes, Philippe Castellano, with the mass of documents minutely collected, has already made a rough sketch of a book on the planes which fell in provence which he expects to publish in the near future.

REPORT—May 27, 1944, a bomber from the U.S. was cut down at Thorenc. To reconstitute, almost minute by minute, the mission and the grief of the giants of the air of the Second World War, Philippe Castellano did not hesitate, not only to make contact with Washington and the services of the U.S. Air Force, but also to investigate on the spot in the sector of the "crash", gathering the testimony, refining documents, digging meticulously the facts.

FORTY-SEVEN YEARS AFTER REPORT: The aircraft of Thorenc had the number 42-52399. It belongs to the 767th Squadron of the 464th Bombardment Group of the Air Force. Based at Torretta, 40

kilometers to the south of Foggia (southern Italy), it took off Saturday, May 27, 1944, at six o'clock in the morning, with 37 other "Liberators", to bomb the airfield of Salon De Provence where several German Bi-motor Junker—JU-88 were based. The bomber formation was to fly over La Corse (Corsica) and then divide into two parts at Cap D'Antibes in order to continue due west towards the objective. The planes were at about 7,000 meters and were finalizing their left turn when the shells of the German DCA of the Cap (88 flak) burst in the heart of the formation. Several aircraft were hit. One of them was the 42-52399 which took a heavy blow of shells under its right wing.

FIRE AND DESCENT—Here is what was reported by the pilot, Gerald Maroney, when he returned to the U.S. after the war: "A shell hit us under the right wing. I immediately left the formation and released our bombs (*) for a fire broke out in the right motors. The bombardier, the Second Lieutenant Warren Mudge, avails himself of the small amount of hydraulic pressure left to release the doors of the bomb bay. I attempt then to go toward Switzerland but abandon this route because we are losing so much altitude. Moreover, the fire had spread and the tail gunner informed that the flames had reached the tail of the aircraft. The propellers of the two motors were malfunctioning. We were losing about 230 meters per minute at the speed of 260 kilometers per hour. It is, at that time, that I gave the orders to evacuate. The navigator, Second Lieutenant Paul A. Golden and the bombardier jumped through the nose wheel well. Sergeant Leon Zinner, gunner at the waist window, Sergeant Donald E. Ellis, radio, Sergeant Alvin Raines, tail gunner and Sergeant Owen B. Streeper, gunner at the ball turret, evacuated by the left waist window. They were followed by Lieutenant Winston J. Lawrence (co-pilot) and Sergeant Harold C. Steele who had crossed over the closed bomb bay. Sergeant Benjamin H. Norrid evacuated through the front escape door. After they had all jumped, I left my seat and parachuted out the nose trap."

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The bombs were dropped in the sea near the Iles De Lerens and Cap Roux. This done, the pilot went north over the plains of Seagne and over the first mountains above Grasse.

SPIRIT OF SOLIDARITY—The aviators had abandoned their aircraft at about 4,000 meters of altitude. The ten white chutes were unfurled and flowing scattered in the sky of the mountainous countryside of Grasse. The four motor, in distress, in a tailspin, heads for the ground and crashes, almost at the summit of Pic De l'Aiglo (1,644 meters) northeast of Thorenc. It was then just a little after 10 o'clock in the morning. Already, some German soldiers were heading on foot, in side-car or other vehicles in many directions to seize the aviators.

But that will be difficult, the Americans having fallen, for the most part, in the heart of the forest. Four men only were captured; Mudge, the bombardier, near Plan Du Peyron, at 1400 hours; Raines at 2100 hours by the French police near Cipieres; the flight engineer, Zinner, who had a broken leg was captured on June 1; the fourth man, Sergeant Norrid, was caught July 30 near Puget-Theniers.

The pilot Maroney, co-pilot Lawrence, the navigator Golden, mechanic Steele, radio operator Ellis and gunner Streeper had better luck thanks to the help of Mr. And Mrs. Parmelin (from Sausses), Mr. And Mrs. Pommier (from Mas), Mr. Gastaud and his son (from Thorenc), the priest from Gregolieres, Captain Courtant and Mrs. Clemence. The wonderful spirit of solidarity was proved by more than one hundred people in the sectors of thorenc, Saint-Auban and Gregolieres. The American aviators were able to end the war in security and come out of hiding in September 1944, at a time when to find food or clothing for six men was not an easy task.

As for the four prisoners, after having been taken to Germany, they were freed in April 1945 by troops of General Patton.

THE FLAG OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT—Almost

half a century has passed. Today, only four of the ten men of the crew of the plane that fell in the high country of Grasse are still living. They have been found thanks to the wonderful help of two persons: Mrs. Betty R. Karle, historian of the Veterans of 464th Bombardment section who directed Philippe Castellano towards Frank O'Bannon, president of veterans bombardment association, section 461st, to which belonged, at the beginning, the "B-24" of Second Lieutenant Maroney.

Forty-seven years later, the four surviving aviators were surprised to learn the wreckage of their plane still existed on the peak of l'Aiglo.

The first aviator who was contacted was the radio operator Donald E. Ellis, followed by tail gunner Alvin L. Raines, nose gunner Benjamin H. Norrid and ball gunner Owen B. Streeper. The six other members of the crew are no longer living. The co-pilot William J. Lawrence died in 1946; the flight engineer Leon Zinner in 1968; the bombardier Warren R. Mudge in 1978; the mechanic Harold C. Steele in 1981; the pilot Gerald J. Maroney in 1983 and the navigator Paul A. Golden in 1984.

Radio operator Ellis wrote to Philippe Castellano, "We have never forgotten the risks that were taken by the French families in order to save us and hide us during a time when life was very difficult for them. Almost a half century later, we are forever grateful."

In the month of August 1945, an American delegation led by Col. Pugh, stopped at Thorenc to honor the French who had given aid to the aviators. Maecel Pommier and Antoine Gastaud received from the American officer a large American flag, symbol of the act of bravery and heroism which at that time could have cost them their lives.

Editor's note: Where mentioned I believe the 464th is meant to read the 461st. Don Ellis died during 1992. As far as I know Alvin Raines, Ben Norrid and Owen Streeper are still living, Philippe Castellano is still investigating the loss of other aircraft on 27 May.

MEN RETURNING FROM DETACHED SERVICE

From 11-1-92 to 5-31-93

HDQ	Billhart, Charles S. Burk, Thomas J. Ellenbaum, Frank H.	Gregory, Charles E. Hallen, Jesse Poznecki, Andrew W.	Sabin, William A. Wells, John R.
764	Aran, George W. Barefield, William S. Bevington, Herbert L. Bradish, Earl W. Brash, Joseph Britton, Roy S. Cain, Alfred Jr. Chabin, Harry Condit, Richard R. Dillard, Fred H. Dillmon, Keith S. Field, William S. Gilley, Allen L. Jr. Goodwin, Gene Grooms, John W.	Harrison, Norman R. Hunt, Thomas Johnson, Howell C. Keeler, S. D. Keller, Charles V. Kingsley, Billy J. Lomberg, Max Lovin, Everett E. Marshall, Oscar B. Martinez, Robert M. McLaughlin, Leland I. Miyares, Angel W. Moody, George W. Nittel, Karl W. Nuzum, Albert L.	Olson, Edgar B. Perich, Samuel Pitt, William V. Raleigh, James F. Rapp, Stuart D. Revis, Rex W. Rowe, James J. Shue, David J. Skalomenos, Alcibiades Tarr, Warren T. Turlington, Mark Vanderstoep, Claude Voorhees, Harry W. Jr. Whitlock, Raymond C. Wolff, Earle R.
765	Alford, Chester R. Allen, Harold R. Berry, Willie E. Blalock, Clyde D. Block, Jack L. Board, James M. Boyd, Harry B. Briles, Jesse O. Cento, Peter A. Clough, Louie A. Courtney, Richard Crider, Robert E. Custer, Corwin C. Dale, Robert H.	Dalton, Robert R. Engbrock, Glenn H. Farris, John L. Glaser, Alvin W. Goodoak, Robert Hensley, Orville J. Hodges, Carney V. Hunnicut, Ben C. Jr. Jamail, Joe N. Jones, Emory O. Kahn, Raymond T. Jr. Michaelis, Donald W. Oster, Albert (Herb) Poindexter, Jesse C.	Potter, Joseph H. Protasel, Andrew Rhodes, Donald J. Snuggs, Thomas C. Solstein, Marvin Steinberg, Calvin S. Steinhouser, Warren S. Stratton, Hugh J. Summers, Leslie L. Turner, William N. Van Riper, Warren A. Verity, William J. Waitherwerch, Felix J.
766	Baker, Edward E. Blais, Richard D. Boddie, Lane C. Sr. Boyle, John T. Jr. Brothers, Charles L. Brown, Roger R. Butler, James D. Campbell, Orbie V. Carr, Curtis T. Cumming, Issac T. Diver, Clifford F. Draths, Richard M. Duerstine, Russell L. Dumont, George W. Eisen, Carl Jr.	Galvez, Guadalupe Jr. Gordon, Donald G. Hawkins, Wiley R. Horning, Harold C. Hovancik, John A. Kaplowitz, Sol Lambert, Richard N Lelii, Donald Lucas, Lloyd J. Lundquist, Donald D. Mahlum, Conrad E. Mason, Earl Jr. Meyers, Roy G. Nicholson, Thomas M.	Rea, Armand Rimer, Karl D. Roberts, Joseph N. Schmidt, Robert N. Severns, Harold F. Silva, Ignacia Singbiel, Elmer E. Souza, Joseph J. Starbuck, Samuel T. Vencil, Clarence C. Willis, Jack A. Wilton, Carlos E. Woodard, Otto L. Young, John D. Zebroch, William
767	Batt, Jay Cancro, Frank J. Carey, Edward R. Cheshier, Elton E.	Havanec, Stephen R. Hudnall, Bennett H. Inman, Jack K. Jesneck, Howard F.	Preziosi, Allen Richardson, Charles F. Ritchell, Russell H. Romero, Walter P.

767	Cohen, Bernard	Lucina, Lawrence R.	Ruttenburg, James J.
	Couch, Franklin W.	Lackey, Tilley C.	Scott, Warren A.
	Crawford, George G. Jr.	Lubinsky, Albert	Shaw, Morgan A.
	Feinstein, George	Malian, Diran D.	Silverstein, Hyman
	Gallington, Robert L.	Marcincavage, George R.	Spencer, Harry D.
	Geary, Norman J.	Marlowe, James P.	Stadalman, Carl R. Jr.
	Glenn, Royce B.	Mattson, John J.	Steele, William B.
	Goldman, Leonard Y.	McCulley, Neil W.	Straetman, Edmund L.
	Hammond, Richard S.	Morse, Alfred P.	White, Roger F.
	Hanna, James E.	Paparatto, Dominick	Wires, John W.
	Harris, William	Paysen, James Z.	Witmer, Lawrence D.
		Poturalski, Harry E.	

(Continued from page 18)

Editor's note: I have had the following letter since January 1992. It is fairly lengthy which is why I held on to it so long. I have decided to publish it in two sections. It is from Ben Haller who was transferred into the 767th Squadron from the 376th Bomb Group, 514th Squadron. The first section describes his experiences in being shot down and crash landing in Yugoslavia prior to being transferred to the 461st. The second section describes his missions with the 461st and will be published in the next issue of the "Liberaider".

January 15, 1992

Dear George,

—— I, too, was one who was transferred with our crew from the 376th Bomb Group into the 461st Bomb Group on or about April 16, 1945. I flew only three missions with the 461st until the top German brass signed the unconditional surrender effective 0001 May 9, 1945.

Because I was a trained journalist, I kept a diary of my 16 missions with the 376th and my three with the 461st, although I recall some directive stating that was a "No-No".

Our crew (Joe Ballinger, pilot) was shot down February 7, 1945 on a mission to Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery along the Danube just west of Vienna. We bombed from 26,500 feet. Because we disappeared in flames and smoke beneath cloud cover at 7,000 feet and no one had bailed out, we were reported on squadron records temporarily as KIA.

However, we had gotten the fires out and were just limping along on one good engine (#3) and a damaged one (#1 was a runaway with the governor shot off). We were finally ready to bail out at 2,000 feet when we lost #1 completely and started down fast. Before we could regain control, #3 quit; so we braced for a crash landing, although we had seen nothing but mountains, valleys, trees and rocks. Just then we looked out and God had put a snow-covered field out there in front of us on a mountain mesa, about a mile or two away.

With all four engines out, Joe nursed that sucker in a world-setting glide. I was soaked in gas and hung up in the bomb bay on a bomb shackle due to the violent shifting of the plane. We hit the tops of trees lining the edge of the field, bounced in with the gear down (which we had cranked down by hand) and landed on what turned out to be about 15 inches of snow with mud underneath. The shock tore off our left landing gear to the root of the wing, but Joe held that wing off the ground miraculously. When we had rolled a few hundred feet, we were about to hit a row of poplar trees at the far end with a small, brick farmhouse behind them. At the right moment, after losing our speed in that heavy snow, Joe flipped the controls left and we spun away from the trees, snapped the nose wheel off and came to a jolting stop. We evacuated that plane in world record time! Believe it or not, there was no explosion, no fire and all 11 men got out safely. Two had been hit by flak but were OK.

God really took care of us, for we then found out we had landed 400 yds. south of the Drava River (?) and

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that the Ustachi Guerrillas, who took no prisoners and had killed the B-24 men who went down in that area just 48 hours earlier, were hiding in the woods across the frozen river. That's where we were ready to go hide until we were stopped by an old man and two older women from the farmhouse. We stayed with them until Ivan Antoncic, an interpreter (*) and Partisan, came to take care of us. He was from McKeesport, PA, not far from where our tail gunner, Byron Brought, lived in Harrisburg. He and his people took care of us. We moved up and down mountains, hiding in different small villages until we were able to escape about March 4th and return to Italy. I have a lengthy diary about our days in Cazma, St. Stefanje and Grabonica. It was frightening, but it was an experience none of us will forget and will treasure. Incidentally, this area is where heavy fighting has been taking place in recent months with Serbs against Croats. When we were there, they also fought each other but declared amnesty at the same time we were hiding there as MIAs.

Didn't mean to write all this when I started, but it's hard stopping as old journalist and an old WWII guy when memories start flowing. I was editor, then later publisher and owner in my 43 years with our bank magazine publishing company here in Des Moines before I sold the company in October, 1988. I've been writing history books and other types of stories for the past three years and enjoy all of it.

Best wishes as you continue publishing your interesting newsletter, "The 461st Liberaider".

(*) Ivan came to the U.S. in the mid-1930s, worked in mines and steel mills to earn enough money, then returned to Yugoslavia to marry his childhood girlfriend. Before they could leave after the wedding, Germans invaded Yugoslavia, and he was trapped. Ivan (John to us) and his wife, worked undercover as Partisan and Allied spies the rest of the war. He rescued dozens of American and British airmen.

Ben Haller
1117 24th St.
Des Moines, IA 50265

Editor's note: As an epilogue to Ben Haller's letter, I will contribute the following article I copied out of the 460th Bomb Group newsletter "Black Panther" January 1993. Our thanks to Duane L. and Betty J. Bohnstedt.

Missions to Vienna were costly in terms of men and planes. Vienna and its extended area had an elaborate aerial defense system, which was divided into 3 flak districts: Wiener Neustadt, Vienna and Moosbierbaum. The fighters could be brought into action from the various airdromes, depending on the direction from which the enemy approached. Also, Vienna had a unique warning system. As our planes would approach Yugoslavia, their radar would pick them up. The information would be passed from one radar system to the next. In Vienna, it would be broadcast by radio. The programs would be interrupted by a female voice announcing, "Attention! Attention! Enemy bomber formation approaching the Yugoslavia area." The next statement might be, "Enemy bomber formation over Lake Balaton." At the early warnings, women and children might go to the flak towers, the safest shelters. A cuckoo's call would be heard when the attack appeared likely, followed by 3 high and 3 low pitched sounds. If the formation kept coming, sirens would sound 12 times high and 12 times low. At this time most would go to their cellars. After the final siren, radio programs would be terminated, and messages would be broadcast in coder. With a map and a grid, these messages could be decoded. The grid was a huge circle, divided into 16 zones, like pieces of a pie, with 10 segmented and numbered regions within each piece, with a small circular district in the middle of the grid. By laying the grid over the map of Vienna and the extended area, position and direction of the formation could be determined from the coded messages. A final warning might be issued when the planes were 15 min. away, but sometimes planes and warning came at the same time. Unless there were more than one wave of bombers, the raid would be over in 20 minutes, and the sirens would then emit a continuous sound for about a minute, signifying the attack was over.

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With this warning system, their fighters could be deployed to intercept the bombers before they reached the Vienna area. If the planes evaded the fighters the people on the ground were prepared to seek shelter, to send up a barrier barrage from the flak towers, or to fire projectiles from the anti-aircraft artillery. They knew the bombers were coming, and they were ready!

* * * * *

Editor's note: The following letter is typical of a lot of the correspondence we get. We don't print all of them, but this one has a couple of comments that might warrant discussion at Fresno.

Dear Frank,

——— December is always a great month because of Christmas and many special activities attendant thereto. But, an added, much looked forward to event is the arrival of the "Liberaider"! I enjoy that publication very much, and I appreciate the terrific job that George Dickie does with it. Such a job requires great dedication and commitment, and his efforts are really appreciated.

Plans didn't work out for us to attend the Dayton reunion. Both Edna and I had one of our lousiest years health wise. But, thank the Lord, our ailments turned out to be treatable and curable and as of now we are both "ship shape". I certainly intend to be at the Fresno affair in 1993.

Had a great treat in early October. David Feldman, navigator on my crew, and his wife, Bell, came through southern California, and we had lunch together. First time together in 47 years! We were together about three and a half hours, and we talked fast and furious to get it all said after so many years. It was truly wonderful. I have to give credit to the 461st for getting us together. Since I "found" you a couple of years back, your roster supplied me with Dave's address and brought on correspondence resulting in our lunch.

Incidentally, in regard to the "afterglow reflections"

on page 4 of the December 1992 "Liberaider", I inform you that I did use the GI Bill to get my college education which led to my 30 year career in public education as school administrator. Without the GI Bill, I couldn't have done it.

To close this off, I would be highly in favor of having an updated roster and would really support (1) increased dues to finance it, or (2) leave the dues alone and assess a fee to pay for the updated roster.

Also, I studied the mission reports over and over. Is there any way to get easier-to-read mission reports? Even my magnifying glass doesn't bring the last page of missions to a readable state. Again, if more readable reports were available, I'd gladly pay for the cost.

Keep in good health, both of you!

Bob Barnhart, 766th

* * * * *

It's me again, your editor. I feel as though I have to make a few introductory comments on some letters so you know a little of the background and can pull some of these experiences together. The following letter is, I think, interesting and was prompted by a letter from Fred McGrath, 766th, that I printed in the December 1991 issue of the "Liberaider" (pages 14, 15 and the back cover). The current letter from Mike Milby is a little jumbled in places but is an attempt to determine if Fred and Mike were shot down together and were together in Odessa.

January 7, 1992

Dear Fred,

I read your letter to the editor in the December 1991 issue of the "Liberaider" and wondered if we were in the same group of MIAs, maybe even the same crew. I flew on March 26, 1945 in another crew whose bombardier was ill. The pilot's name was Randall Webb (tall, Gary Cooper type) from Iowa. The co-pilot was Walter O. Reil from Connecticut. We made a forced landing at Pecs, Hungary, because of engine problems and, after leaving the plane, were

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not allowed to return to it to radio the returning crews.

We were added to other crews until the group numbered 90 men. We were "deloused" and spent the night at a French school run by nuns in Bucharest, hoping to be flown back to Italy from there. The American legation had a brigadier general who was powerless to do this because the Russians had stopped the practice. We spent an enjoyable day there and then left for Odessa.

The train was made of boxcars with a crew on each end, with a loft sleeping 5 men up and 5 men down on straw. Each time the train pulled onto a siding, which was often, we would trade parachute silk to the peasants for ham, wine and eggs. When they found out we were "Amerikanski", they couldn't help us enough. The Russians issued us a case of canned pork fat (from USA) and a box of black bread. The crust was like concrete with a soggy inside.

The train group was made up of 3 nurses and a group of amputees. Their beds were nailed sideways on the walls of the boxcars. Webb, Reil and I appointed ourselves as the drinking representatives of the train and ventured into each town to do that duty. I can remember one afternoon performing that duty with a Russian major in charge of the little town. We called for raw eggs and did not let him see us break a second hole in the shell so the yoke would slide down unbroken. At the end of the session his tunic was a slimy yellow. We each commandeered a horse and buggy and rode back to the train in style.

We learned to take nourishment without having to cook by sucking raw eggs and drinking the wine. Its main drawback was the excessive amount of flatulence it caused.

The train commander was an oberlieutenant who was indeed a "good Joe". He could speak no English whatsoever, so we proceeded to teach him American greetings. Needless to say, they were vulgar. Bet he was surprised at the American reaction to it after the war.

It must have taken a couple of weeks to get to Odessa where we were put in a two story school building that had been bombed or shelled. Our latrine was one of the bomb holes with hewn half logs over it. They were treacherous to venture out on. A wall of rubble 2 feet high was thrown up around it. The buildings surrounding that block had apartments with little balconies. The women came out on them each morning to shake rugs, to drink coffee and to wave at whomever happened to be using the latrine.

The colonel in command finally managed to get a 3 or 4 holer latrine with walls built. The carpenters were so proud of it, they would watch us put it to use the first day after it was completed.

There was a lady barber who came each day, and we all got frequent haircuts. There were about 500 British soldiers quartered there, most of whom had been taken prisoner at Dunkirk. I traded a watch to one of them for a little 32 cal. (7.65 mm) automatic pistol. The men were very friendly and gregarious and shared freely with us of their chocolate bars and strong hot tea. We received white bread and occasionally cakes from the American freighters unloading at the Odessa docks and shared this with the British. The "pickle" soup and brown bread offered by the Russians had no substance or sustenance, but it was all they had. Each night a group of us bribed the guards and went down to a little cabaret which had an orchestra. After a few hours of imbibing, someone coerced them to play "Lilly Marlene" which was hated by the Russians. One night this happened, and a little portly Russian major threw a chair into the orchestra pit. This infuriated the large British sergeant-major who floored the Russian with a right and ran. The Russian major ran into the street and emptied his pistol at the Irishman, to no avail. The sergeant-major either outran the bullets or the "russky" was a poor marksman. The next morning the same Russian officer had charge of roll call formation and, with a mean demeanor, astonished those men who had

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been sneaking out and causing these international incidents. These incidents must cease! That night he was the first to arrive at the cabaret.

I remember going in groups of ten men or so down to a bathhouse a couple of blocks distant. On one of these excursions, a drunken Russian sailor taunted us, and Randall Webb flattened him. It was in this bathhouse that we first heard of the death of President Roosevelt. One of the elderly women who moved among us naked men, bringing pails of warm water, came in screaming (with tears coursing down her cheeks), "Rooseveltski kaput! Rooseveltski kaput!"

We were taken on two occasions to the large opera house to an opera and to a ballet. Guess it didn't rub off on this Texas redneck as I haven't attended one since. It was fun to watch the inept Russian crane operators unload the American liberty and victory ships. They inadvertently or perhaps for fun dropped about every fifth dodge truck about ten feet. We finally were shipped home on a British ship. We stopped at Constantinople long enough for the American Consul to come out to address us and pass out tokens of little blue Turkish prayer beads (which I still have along with the German mauser automatic). The food on the ship was good, although I didn't care for the fish and porridge served for breakfast. The Indian waiters and the cabins were nice, though.

We arrived back at the 766th in early May after six weeks absence. All were packed and ready to go home, having turned in their side arms. I kept mine but was talked out of it shortly after returning home. I also brought home the red star off the Russian commandants fur hat or tunic. While in Odessa, I traded cigarettes or American money to a guard for a black leather billfold and bought a pair of black leather square-toed boots. These were the largest pair they had but proved to be too tight for me, and Reil (co-pilot) got them. I had my first fresh milk overseas from an Odessa store. It was in a conical shaped, cardboard bottle. One of the Russians traded me a

watch with a good stretch band for my afall hack watch. He seemed so insistent I didn't resist long. Do you remember how some Russian soldiers had eight or ten watches on their arms, some as big as pocket watches with bands?

The two men named Webb and Reil were the only crew members whose names I can recall. The navigator must have been a teetotaler or at least didn't appreciate crude company. I remember one of the crew kept a diary and he wrote in it daily. I wish I had that day-by-day account of the journey. I remember a town where all the officers went to breakfast with a large contingent of Russian officers. The vodka used to toast dozens of persons was truly potato and had a lingering taste like lead. The captain next to me couldn't drink his so, not wanting him to be embarrassed, I drank his. By the time the eggs were brought, I was neither hungry or stable. One of the orderlies who "guarded" us truly wanted and American 45 automatic, but he said he'd be shot if he "lost" his old Russian revolver. I don't think he ever succeeded in his quest. We also left the train a few nights to sleep in barns on more hay. Don't know why!

After getting back to base we went to Rome for a week of "R & R". My original crew #59 consisted of:

Pilot—Robert M. "Barny" Barnhart (*)
Co-pilot—Andrew "Andy" Danko
Navigator—David Feldman
Bombardier—Michael "Mike" Milby
Radio—Myles Hamrick
Top turret—Stephen "Steve" Lubianetsky
A/C mechanic—Vern S. Lund
Tail gunner—Lester F. "Dutch" Yiengst
Nose turret—.... O'Toole
Ball turret—Henry "Hank" Martin

The squadron officers were quartered in tents, and the enlisted men were in a large stone barn. Steve Lubianetsky who was the patriarch and mentor of our crew procured a sack of concrete and put the squadron insignia on the wall of the barn in the corner where we all slept. It was two bombs with a skull design.

I suppose the who group flew an old battle weary

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plane home. We did. Spent a night in Algiers because of supercharger trouble. "Barny" thinks Lund and Lubianetsky rigged it. I was glad, for it was a fun night. Flew from there to Dakar, French West Africa. We then flew to Natal, Brazil where we spent a week sunbathing and drinking Brahma beer while waiting on the supercharger to come in. Spent a night in Belem, Brazil then on to Puerto Rico for a night, thence to Georgia. I was released from active duty at Sioux Falls, SD right after VJ Day.

If you were in my group, you would have remembered by now. If you weren't, forgive me for rambling on, but I have enjoyed the recollections.

Mike Milby
606 S. Bailey St.
Electra, TX 76360-2841

(*) Editor's note: I didn't connect the two letters until I typed the crew list. See the letter from Bob Barnhart on page 30.

* * * * *

OUR KYDOS TO TOM NOESGES 765th Squadron

After a lifetime of challenges, including being held prisoner of war in Germany during World War II, Tom Noesges faces a different challenge today that he finds very rewarding.

He is a retired 70-year-old who has volunteered to tutor first- and second-graders at three different schools in Palatine Township, IL.

"When the plane was shot down, we lost six of our crew", Noesges says of his war years. "God saved me to do something. I'm just giving something back."

What he's giving back certainly is appreciated by students and teachers. "The extra help and the extra self-esteem that he gives these kids is wonderful," says Judy Lindsey, second-grade teacher and Noesges' next door neighbor. "He is a real grandfatherly type, and he really has an effect on the kids."

Noesges works with two second-grade classes two

days a week and one first-grade class one day a week. "Whether it's reading or spelling or whatever, the teacher knows when I'm coming, and she tells me what to do," says Noesges.



Tom Noesges goes over a lesson with
Melissa Capistrano, 8.

Noesges first became interested in volunteering at the grade schools through the "generations exchange program" at the Palatine Township Senior Center. This program is made up of a committee of principals, teachers and parents of the Palatine Elementary Schools. They meet once a month to develop programs that mutually benefit both the seniors and the juniors in the area.

Noesges tells of a full life that includes his wife, Lucille, three children and two grandchildren. He was an accountant for over 30 years and says he wishes he had been a teacher.

"You couldn't pay me to do this," says Noesges. "I'd pay them to do because I enjoy it so much."

Editor's note: That's Tom's story from the Daily Herald, June 27, 1991.

What's yours? Let's hear from you!

Tom Noesges was a bombardier in the 765th Squadron. I assume from the article by Hugh Hanley in the February, 1987 issue of the "Liberaider" that Tom (and Hugh) were shot down on mission #151 to Odertal, Germany on 17 December 1944. Ten aircraft were lost primarily due to enemy aircraft.

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Dear George,

This is in answer to your request in the June 1992 "Liberaider" for stories about and who flew the airplane "You Bet!". I didn't realize that it was plane #27 until reading Vahl Vladyka's letter in the December 1992 issue.

I flew "You Bet!" on five missions in April 1945: on 9 April and again on 10 April to bomb troop concentrations northeast of Lugo, Italy (Venice); on 24 April to Rovert, Italy; and on 26 April to Linz, Austria (the last combat mission flown by the 461st Bomb Group).

April 9th was D-Day on the Italian front. The 461st missions on the 9th and 10th were to support a spring offensive by dropping fragmentation bombs on enemy troop concentrations and gun emplacements just across the front line.

On the bomb run, we were on the left end of a single line formation of twenty planes. The planes were flying wing-tip to wing-tip to make sure no frag bombs were dropped short on friendly troops. Immediately after the bombs were dropped, the formation rallied steep left towards us. We went into a steep left turn, throttled back and put down full flaps, but couldn't hold our position. We dropped far below the formation. The planes next to us had the same trouble. All planes got through the turn without any mid-air collisions, but for a few seconds I wasn't sure everyone would make it.

Bob Doud, my flight engineer, was operating a strike camera in the waist of the plane. He told me later that the sky was all that he could see through his camera lens when we tried to make the pictures.

When we got straightened out, we were below and some distance from the formation. Never did catch them (didn't try very hard). Second day the same story, except this time we were on the left end of a 21 plane formation.

I flew 19 missions and made 40 non-combat flights

24 March 1993

between December 1944 and May 1945. Landed with all engines running on every flight and never had an early return. I realize it was partly luck and partly being there late in the war. But I think it was mostly good maintenance and I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the ground crew members for an outstanding job.

Below is a picture of crew #37R of the 765th Bomb Squadron.

Johnson Miller
310 Ridgewood Drive
Richardson, TX 75080-1912



Back row: Johnson Miller, pilot; Gordon Gilmore, co-pilot; Bill Hill, bombardier; and John McCormick, navigator.

Front row: Ray Horton, ball turret; Marion Bradley, tail turret; Bob Wahl, armament; Bob Julyan, radio; Bob Doud, engineer; and Worth Barber, nose turret.

* * * * *

BOMBARDIERS BOMBARDIERS BOMBARDIERS

"BOMBARDIERS: THE REAL STORY"

This video tape highlights the life and times of the bombardier in WWII. It included footage from the national archives, newsreels of the 40's and interviews with bombardiers Tom Ferebee (Hiroshima) and Hyman Goldberg (Distinguished Service Cross). Price is \$20.00 each if we buy ten or more. If interested let me know, I'll order.

George Dickie—address is on page 2.



A B-24J fuel tanker from the 461st Bomb Group burns on a runway.

There must be a story behind this picture! Who remembers and will tell it?

Editor's note: Frank O'Bannon has sent the following notice to other groups asking them to publish it. How can I refuse?

I have just returned from a tour of Italy and to the areas that my group inhabited during WWII.

Upon our arrival in Cerignola, I was approached by Cannone Savino, via Bradano, 2, F1042, Cerignola (85), phone 0885/423415, requesting help in locating the man that saved his life on or about January 12, 1945. From the newspaper clip it would appear that five young men were lost when a scaffolding on a bridge across the Ofanta River (just south of Cerignola) collapsed. One of these men was Cannone's brother. Thru an interpreter, I was told that Cannone was also thrown into the river but was saved by an American, believed to be a major and a bombardier. Mr. Savino would like to find this man to thank him for saving his life.

Any 461st men remember this incident?

* * * * *

ELECTION POSTSCRIPT

The election is behind us, but did you know how important one vote is?

In 1645 one vote gave Oliver Cromwell control of England

In 1776 one vote gave America the English language instead of German.

In 1845 one vote brought Texas into the union.

In 1868 one vote saved President Andrew Johnson from impeachment.

In 1876 one vote gave Rutherford B. Hayes the Presidency of the U.S.

In 1876 one vote changed France from a monarchy to a republic.

In 1923 one vote gave Adolph Hitler leadership of the Nazi Party.

* * * * *

BACK HOME AGAIN IN BUCHAREST

We understand from "The Association of Former POWs in Romania" newsletter (7/92) that Princess Catherine has returned to her homeland. Word received from her daughter Tanda of Paris is that she has an apartment at St. Catherine's Orphanage, which was founded by her family in 1877. She will forever be remembered by her POW friends for her kind help when needed.

The Association is looking for new members. If interested write to:

Association of Former Prisoners
Of War in Romania
C/o John M. McCormick, Esq.
501 E. Church St.
Orlando, FL 32801

* * * * *

UNDERAGE VETERANS SOUGHT

A national veterans association is seeking veterans who falsified their age and served in the U.S. military under the age of 17. A reunion will be held in October 1993. A free handbook on government policy on underage veterans will be sent on request. Contact:

Allan C. Stover
3444 Walker Drive
Elliot City, MD 21042

461ST BOMB GROUP PX

The PX has several new items and we are now fully stocked with squadron pins. The license plate frames are free but because of the special mailing envelopes and postage we have to charge for handling.

ORDER FORM

NAME _____ SQUADRON _____
 ADDRESS _____

		<u>PRICE</u>	<u>QTY</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Pins				
	15th Air Force	\$3.25	___	___
	461st Group	3.00	___	___
	Headquarters	3.00	___	___
	764th Squad.	3.00	___	___
	765th Squad.	3.00	___	___
	766th Squad.	3.00	___	___
	767th Squad.	3.00	___	___
	B-24	3.25	___	___
Shoulder Patches				
	15th Air Force	3.00	___	___
	461st Group	3.00	___	___
Decal				
	Lightning/Bomb on shield	2.00	___	___
Caps				
	Men's	6.50	___	___
	Women's	6.50	___	___
Frames	License plate 461st Bomb Group	3.00	___	___

Total order includes shipping

Make checks payable to 461st BG 43-45 Inc.

Send to: Wally Robinson

3 E. Cardott St.

Ridgeway, PA 15853

FRESNO REUNION ARTICLE FOR "LIBERAIDER"

For the benefit of all new men (and those that have forgotten) the general policy of your editor is that he does not write "Liberaider" articles. It is your newsletter, if you want it to continue, send me the material.

The 765th BS is responsible for writing up the Fresno reunion. Volunteers, contact your Director, Bill Wilkins.

DID YOU KNOW?

The custom of rising and standing at attention when the "Star Spangled Banner" is played was started by Daniel Webster who stood at attention at a concert in 1850 when Jenny Lind, the "Swedish Nightengale" sang the Anthem on a national tour.

* * * * *

President Abraham Lincoln slept in a bed 9 feet long and 6 ½ feet wide.

BOOK REVIEWS

Jim Van Nostrand, 765 Squad., sent this notice of a book he bought at an aircraft museum in Mesa, AZ. He says it is great to have if you travel around the country.

Guide to: 500 Aircraft Museums

217 city-displayed aircraft
38 restaurants with aircraft
6 World War I landmarks
11th edition

By Michael A. Blaugher
Price \$6.00

Ask your library for ordering info.

* * * * *

The Other Capri By Col. Kelly F. Cook

The Other Capri will entertain anyone who enjoys an exciting war-time tale about American aviators and their flying machines. This is the story of a bomb crew that flew combat missions from Italy in World War II.

While The Other Capri is fiction, within a few pages, you will know it's based on first hand experience. The author was a B-24 pilot during World War II and became a career Air Force officer.

To order, send \$11.25 (includes postage and handling) to:

Tennessee Valley Publishing
Dept. H-1
P.O. Box 52527
Knoxville, TN 37950-2527
Or call (615) 584-5235

* * * * *

Flight to Black Hammer The Letters of a World War II Pilot

By Ted Withington
465th Bomb Group, 780th Bomb Squadron

In the sky over Blechhammer, Vienna and Maribor in 1944 and 1945, Lt. Ted Withington faced the most critical testing of his life. His letters chronicle a journey that begins when he leaves college and

boards a troop train in Boston to join the Army Air Corps. Flying in the 15th Air Force from a base at Pantenella, Italy, Withington and his crew fly their B-24 on mission after mission to German held Europe, on "milkruns" and "rough" ones, ending being shot down twice.

Price: \$12.00 plus \$2.00 shipping
Send check payable to:

Biddle Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 1305 #103
Brunswick, ME 04011

Or call (207) 833-5016

* * * * *

MIA-World War II By F. N. Kautzmann

MIA-World War II is the story of a young man who experiences the loneliness of war, the terror of being shot down and the desperation of prison camp. Underscoring his story is that of his family back home—the uncertainty, the despair and faith.

Kautzman was in the 376th Bomb Group, 15th Air Force during World War II. Interned in two separate prison camps his family was not notified of this information for five months, during which time they only knew he was "missing in action". During his internment, he kept a diary, recording it on the back of cigarette packs. This diary, and letters kept by him, his mother and sister, lend poignancy to his book.

MIA-World War II retails for \$14.95 and is available for review.

Write: Frank Kautzmann
Austin Press
95 Elizabeth Street
Delaware, OH 43015

* * * * *

A Wing and a Prayer

The "Bloody 100th" BG of the U.S. 8th A.F. in action over Europe in WWII.

By Harry H. Crosby
WWII's most decorated navigator
Price: \$27.50

Write: Harper Collins Publishers, 10 East 53rd St.,
New York, NY 1022-5299

461st Bomb Group (H) 1943-1945, Inc. Reunion
 29 September-3 October 1993
 Fresno, California
 Headquarters: Holiday Inn Centre Plaza

Please fill out and mail this registration form with check to:
 461st Bomb Group, c/o The MariMac Corporation
 6790 E. Calle Dorado
 Tucson, Arizona 85715

Enclosed is my check as payment for the following:

Registration Fee	_____	@ \$10.00	_____
	# of persons		Total Amt
 Dinner Theater	_____	@ \$38.00	_____
30 September	# of persons		Total Amt
 Yosemite Tour	_____	@ \$40.00	_____
30 September	# of persons		Total Amt
 Taste & Sample Tour	_____	@ \$24.00	_____
30 September	# of persons		Total Amt
 Air Museum Tour	_____	@ \$26.00	_____
1 October	# of persons		Total Amt
 Dedication Service	_____	@ \$10.00	_____
2 October	# of persons		Total Amt
 Banquet	_____	@ \$27.00	_____
2 October	# of persons		Total Amt
 Memorial	_____	@ \$12.00	_____
Breakfast	# of persons		Total Amt
3 October			

NAME _____
 (As you want it on your name tag)

Squadron _____

SPOUSE _____

Children/Guest _____

Your Address _____

State _____

ZIP _____

Phone _____

Arrival Date _____

Departure Date _____

Form of payment for hotel _____

Check or Credit Card Name, #, Expiration _____

Total Amount Submitted _____

If you send a check for the hotel, the rate is \$84.00 per night.

461st Bomb Group Association Jackets50th Anniversary

White Nylon Windbreaker
for men and women

Large 50th Anniversary logo design in two colors on the back and small 461st logo on the left chest. These handsome windbreakers are fully lined with elastic sleeves, snap front and drawstring bottom. They have two slash pockets.

To order

M	38-40	\$31.00
L	42-44	\$31.00
XL	46-48	\$33.00
XXL	50-52	\$33.00

Mail your check in the appropriate amount to:

The Marimac Corporation
6790 E. Calle Dorado
Tucson, AZ 85715

Jackets will be delivered to you at the Fresno reunion. If you choose, add \$2.00 per jacket for mailing and they will be shipped to you.

To keep costs down, jackets will be ordered in groups of 25, so you may not receive your jack immediately.

A portion of all proceeds from the sale of jackets will go to the 461st Bomb Group.

Clip Here

NAME _____

PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>SIZE</u>	<u>PRICE</u>	<u>SHIPPING</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
_____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____



461st Bomb Group

1993 Italian Tour

Florence, Italy

Kneeling L-R: Doris Zobel, Al Schran, A.J. Centanni, Paul Nicholas, Elaine Shevin, Marietta Mc Canse (tour escort), Enrico Monti (driver), Anna Dilegge (tour guide).

1st row L-R: Marge Schran, Ruth Clippert, Ruth Sweezy, Marge Shoemaker, Bess Johnson, Hazel Anne Barber, Eunice Doud, Mary Shields, Nini Berumen, Sybil Centanni, Betty Ettinger, Iris Sage.

Second row L-R: George Zobel, Gerald Huizenga, Emory Clippert, Alvine Lehr, Bob Sweezy, Johnson Miller, John Barber, Paul Rollman, Bob Doud, Bill Shields, Iris Miller, Fernando Berumen, Ruth Connolly, Sue Glaser, Bud Connolly.

Back row L-R: Sarah Fernstein, Dan Fernstein, Bill Huizenga, Archie Slaven, Phyllis Slaven, Val Miller, Phil Mc Canse (tour escort), Frank O'Bannon (Associate President), Al Glaser, Joe Sage.

* * * * *

461st BOMB Group (H) 1943-1945, Inc.

P.O. Box 615

East Sandwich, MA 02537-9998

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