

J. R. LEWIS
964 Surrey Drive
Norristown, Pa. 19403

Sept. 17, 1987

Mr. Russell A. Strong
2041 Hillisdale
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

Dear Russell:

I was unable to attend the Reunion in Washington, and feel sure that everyone had a good time.

The July '87 Issue of Echoes asked that you be furnished with information as to the names of planes and etc. and since I was not at the Reunion I thought I'd send my recollections on to you by letter.

I believe that I flew 15 or 20 missions in #196 O for Oboe which was an Olive Drab 369th plane.

The crew chief's name was Anderson or Peterson, (My best guess) and he was from somewhere in North Jersey. He was short in stature and had light blond hair. This plane had the most flexible controls of any B17 that I ever flew.

Somewhere in your book you say that Trask (369th pilot) crash landed it on the Continent and that was the end of it. We were on a pass at the time.

You refer to Joe Chancey on pg. 299. Joe was our regular Co-Pilot from about the middle of Oct. 1944. The Co-Pilot we went over with was George Simons, who flew with Kada on a mission to Caen and bailed out per pg. 266 of your book. I flew as Joe Murphy's Co-Pilot on that mission, on which the Ball Turret Gunner was killed. Your records will show that Maj. Barnesfather went along on the mission as an Observer. On the mission to Caen 8/8/44, I believe we rode in "Bouncin Baby". I think it was #301.

Getting back to #196, we liked it a lot although it seemed to be sitting around a lot without a regular crew so we asked Billy Casseday to assign it to us and he did and we named it the "Extra Joker" and had a picture of a Joker from a deck of cards painted in the usual place.

Some of the planes I flew on missions were Satan's Lady Flack Shack and once in the Rose of York.

J. R. LEWIS
964 Surrey Drive
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Russell A. Strong

Satan's Lady was painted a very dark color and had extra armor plate in various places.

Since we lost George Simons early in the game, we were assigned many different Co-Pilots usually on their first mission, one of them being James McKinney, really a great guy.

On page 284, you describe a mission to Cologne and what happened to Doman and Ritter, I remember it well as I was flying in the slot or the hole and Doman was on one side of me and Ritter on the other, however, it seems to me that Davis was leading the 369th that day and not the Deputy.

I believe that you and I both shared the experience of 9/12/44 on the ride to Ruhland.

I went out 37 times and aborted once and got credit for 36 trips. I lead the 369th 2 or 3 times when we flew the low squadron and was Group leader once on 12/24/44 when the leader dropped out and being as I was the Deputy, we took the lead. I recall the Larry Carroll was the Bombardier and we had to make a Manual run as the Auto-Pilot etc was acting up and he hit the target well which I recall was an airfield and then on the return the weather was bad and we took the group to (I think) Molesworth, along with alot of other outfits and spent a couple of days there.

Anyway, it appears that I got off the subject somewhat in this letter.

Trust all is well with you and yours and enclosed is a little \$ to keep the show on the road.

Cordially,

Jack R. Lewis 369th



August 19, 1988

Jack R. Lewis
964 Surrey Dr.
Norristown, PA 19401

Mr. Russell A. Strong
5323 Cheval Pl.
Charlotte, N. C. 28205

Dear Russell:

With regard to your April 88 issue of Echoes, thought that I should report to you that I read the article on page 5 about Dodson and Jenkins with considerable interest since I was the Co-Pilot for Joe Murphy on August 8, 1944 on the Mission to Caen. When we cleared the target and Murphy asked the crew to "check in" over the intercom, I will never forget the voice of the Radio Man saying "he's dead, Sir". There had been no response from the Ball Turret and Murphy had asked someone to see what was going on. My recollection as to who answered Murphy could be wrong. It could have been the Waist Gunner. It was my third mission and I didn't know anyone of the others except Murphy. We also had a flat tire and we came back to Thurleigh ahead of the other planes and Murphy told me to land the plane and when I did, I soon pulled over on the grass so as not to wreck the gear with the flat tire and later got chewed out by Col. Raper, but he was not aware that we had the flat tire and we didn't want to obstruct the runway for the rest of the group that was soon to come in. As I further recall, another one of the crew was slightly wounded.

On that Mission, my regular Co-Pilot, George Simons, flew with Andy Kata. It was Simons second mission and they bailed out near the Orne River and luckily some of them returned to our base as described in your book. So Simons and I never got to fly a Mission together and we flew with a lot of different Co-Pilots until we got Joe Chancey assigned to us as our regular CP around the middle of October '44. He had never set foot in a B-17 before but was very quick to learn, and we became great friends and talk on the phone frequently.

I called Andy Kata on the phone on 8/8/44 to let him know that there was somebody that remembered the trip to Caen (billed as a MIK RUN) and he didn't recall that George Simons was his CP on that run but he did say that some of the crew jumped out too soon and ended up as POW's.

Thanks to the 306th Echoes, I was able to locate our Ball Turret Gunner, Fred Geitz (who was born in Wuppertal, Germany, and recently made a trip back there as well as to Thurleigh).

I will end this by saying that I had a big day on 8/13 as the phone rang and who was on but our Bombardier, Les Harrison who became a POW the day before I was to come home and he further put me in touch with Jack Bunn, our Tail Gunner so we had a great time on the phone. Harrison found me thru the POW group he had just joined who in turn put him in touch with you. Harrison and Bunn then called Joe Chancey and Fred Geitz. We could never locate our Navigator, Andy Silvasy (Crap Shooting Champion of the 306th) nor Fred Goetz the Waist Gunner. We had a Fred Geitz and a Fred Goetz.

The

Our crew picture was shown on page 13 of the original 306th book. I talked with Alton Kester recently and he sent me a copy of that book.

Of course, these wonderful contacts are primarily due to the fact that the 306th Group Association was formed.

Enclosed is a little donation to help the cause.

Kind Regards.

Cordially,


Jack R. Lewis

O-P-E-R-A-T-I-O-N-A-L S-O-R-T-I-E R-E-C-O-R-D

NAME: LEWIS, JACK R. RANK: Captain A.S.N.# 0-765271
 DUTY: Flt. Lt. GROUP: 306th. SQUADRON: 369th.

Date of Mission	Group Mission Number	Indiv. Mission Number	Geographical Location of Targets	Time	Total Combat Time
Aug. 5, 1944		1	DOLLBERGEN	8:00	
7		2	MONTBARTIER	9:00	
8		3	CAEN AREA	4:50	
13		4	ROUEN AREA	5:00	
14		5	FLORENNES JUZATINE	8:15	
15		6	FRANKFURT ESCHBORN	7:50	
25		7	PARROW	9:40	
26		8	GELSENKERCHEN	6:35	
30		9	KTEL	7:10	
Sept. 1		-	ABAND	5:10	
3		10	LUDWIGSHAVEN	8:15	
5		11	"	7:30	
8		12	"	8:25	
11		13	ETSENACH	7:55	
12		14	RUHLAND	9:50	
14		-	ABAND	1:10	
22		15	KASSEL	8:35	
25		-	SPARE	4:10	
28		16	MAGDEBURG	8:35	
30		17	MUNSTER	6:10	
Oct. 3		18	NURNBERG	9:00	
7		19	RUHLAND	9:35	
15		20	KOLN	6:30	
17		21	"	6:45	
22		22	HANNOVER	8:10	
25		23	HAMBURG	7:45	
26		24	MUNSTER	7:35	
30		25	"	7:00	
Nov. 5		26	FRANKFURT	9:10	
6		27	HAMBURG	8:20	
8		28	MERSEBERG	9:00	
16		29	ESCHWELLER	9:05	(SL)
26		30	MISBURG	8:00	
30		31	GTRA	8:55	(DEL)
Dec. 5		-	ABORT	6:00	
15		32	KASSEL	8:25	
18		33	KAISEESLAUTERN	6:00	(DCWL)
24		34	NIDDA	8:30	(GL)
28		35	KOBLENZ	7:00	(SL)
Jan. 7, 1945		36	UESKIRCHEN	7:40	301:00 (SL)
Feb. 1		-	WEATHER SHIP	8:35	305:35

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Thomas F. Witt

THOMAS F. WITT,
Major, AC,
Ops. Officer,
306th Bomb. Gp. (H)

LEWIS, J. R.

RECEIVED
FEB 23 1991
RECEIVED

2/4/93

Dear Russell:

Just got my January '93 Echoes.
Didn't know you had a 2nd
Edition of the 369th Diary.

Mine is dated 1991 and
pgs. 25 & 26 are in place.

Please send me a copy of
the 2nd edition and I'll get
a check of to you right away.

Sent Casey Jones a check today
as you pointed out the deficit
in Echoes.

Thanks for a great job of Regards.

Jack L. Lewis
964 Surrey Dr.
Blue Bell, Pa. 19422

Pilot Survey

Name JACK R. LEWIS

Cadet Class 44A

Adv. Trng. Location FT. SUMNER, N.M.

Combat Missions 36

Date leaving 306th 2/15/45

Rank on leaving 306th CAPT.

Did you fly with the Casey Jones
Project in 1945-46? No

Send to: Russell A. Strong, 5232
Cheval Place, Charlotte, NC 28205

Jack R. Lewis
964 Surrey Drive
Blue Bell, Pa. 19422

7/5/01

Dear Russell:

Thanks for all the good things you
do for the 306th

I have just learned that my West
Gunner, Raymond Goetz passed away on 5/24/01
in Hollywood, Florida. He was buried in
St. Anne, Ill.

He rode with me over 30 times.

He was 90 years old when he died.

Please enter his name in the "Taps"
section of Echoes. Thanks & Regards.

Jack R. Lewis, Pilot 369th BS.

Survived by his wife Rita and 4 children.

2/13/92

Dear Russell:

Thanks for the 369th Diary. You sure did a great job.

The reason you had trouble getting info on the 12/24/44 mission was that there was no De Briefing.

I don't remember who started out as the 306th Group leader that day but we all had to make Instrument Take-off at 500ft it was clear.

Part way along the route, the Group leader had to leave the formation and since we were the Deputy leader, we took over and my partner's list shows me as G/H for that mission.

Co-Pilot was Joe Chaney, Navigator was Al Kester and Bombardier was Harry Carroll.

Our Auto Pilot was not too smooth so we made a PDI run and Carroll said we made a good hit on an airfield at Midda.

When we got back to England,

it was all cloud cover and we were
told to take them to Berg St. Edwards
which wasn't too bad and we did
along with an awful lot of other
B-7's.

I landed pretty far down the
runway and really smoothed out
the tires but I didn't want to go
around in that mess.

We were given 2 RA7 gray blankets
because I assume they ran out of M.D.
blankets and they were superior to our
blankets.

We had a few drinks after dinner
and decided to ride around the base in
a vehicle that was handy and empty.

At an intersection, another vehicle
bumped us in the rear and we all
got out and took off fearing we'd
get in trouble. Frank Denton was
driving.

I believe it was the 25th

that Billy Cosseday and Hass came over from Thurleigh - to drag us home and we flew back together. I think Jim McKinney came too but I'm not sure. I remember I made a bad approach at Thurleigh and had to "go-around" and was somewhat embarrassed.

Al Kester paid me a visit a few months ago after the Pittsburgh convention and reminded me that he was our navigator that day.

Since this was my one and only Group lead, I'd like the record to reflect it.

Hope this note finds you in Good Health and Happy.
 Regards Jack Gress

(over)

Hester Harrison passed away in
September 1991. I got a Christmas
card from his wife Jayne.

hes was our Bombardier most
of the time. Your records always list
him as a Navigator.

He got a Strep Throat near the
end of our tour and got behind
us. Then as your records show,
he went out with Boylston Lewis the
day before I went home and they
ended up in Stelo's huff.

hes came to see me and said

3 FA finished them off.

Well, I'll sign off.

Jack Geron

THE CLARION HOTEL
COLORADO SPRINGS

2886 S. Circle Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80906 303-576-5900

9/7

Dear Russ:

Every time I see you, you're
busy - naturally!

I saw these pictures in a
magazine called Washington and
thought they might be of interest
to you.

Also, several weeks ago, I
drove down to Dover, Del AF Base
and looked over "Shoo Shoo Baby"
which is being reconstructed and
will be flown to Dayton, eventually

I think I won a Door Prize.
They gave me room # 306. Regards

Jack Lewis