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Planes come home from the 300th mission of the 306th Bomb Group

306th Echoes

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JANUARY 1998 • Vol. 23, No. 1



Rosky's tie collection started with his own crew, and legend says that it even included the cravat of a visiting general.



Memorial Site Now Property of 306th BG

Papers have been signed, and money has been exchanged, out of which has come the memorial site in England specifying that it now belongs to a group of trustees of the 306th Bombardment Group. The money was £10, or \$16.

Its really a tiny plot, but sufficient to accommodate the marker which was placed by a group of nearly 200 306th veterans who met there 5 October 1982 for the unveiling of a plaque honoring all those who served with the 306th from 1942 through 1945.

But the largest group to see the memorial came in September 1992 when 400 people joined in a reunion at Thurleigh, where ceremonies were once again held at the monument.

The legal document which has been executed is from The Secretary of State for Defense, conveying a "part of the former officers mess site, Thurleigh Airfield Bedford" to "The Trustees, 306th Bombardment Group Association."

These trustees for this special place are currently Ralph Franklin, our official representative in the Bedford-Thurleigh area; Raymond M. Franklin, Bletsoe, Beds; Graham J. Franklin, West Keysoe, Beds; Walter H. Albertson, Heacham, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, and Russell A. Strong, Charlotte, NC.

Franklin's two sons currently assist with the maintenance of the site, and will be able to provide for our Memorial well into the next century; Albertson was a 369th mechanic who has lived in England for a number of years, and Strong will provide the liaison between this group and the 306th organization in the States.

A date for a symbolic transfer of the site from the British Government to the 306th Bomb Group has not yet been set.

Get Ready Now for Trip to Savannah

Savannah, one of the oldest cities in America and a treasure for visitors, will be the site of our 1998 reunion, scheduled from 3 to 5 Dec in the Savannah Marriott hotel, a new and splendid hostelry right on the river.

The hotel itself is scenic both inside and out, and its setting makes it a great stop for tourists and for the throngs of convention and reunion visitors who come to Savannah often. It is only one of three hotels in Savannah, which complicated our arranging space and facilities when it came time to schedule our event.

In fact, if our schedule had been moved up a few months it would have been shown in earlier dates. But, 1998 had been selected several years ago as our reunion site as soon as we knew the new 8th AF Heritage Museum would be open. Both the Museum and the hotel are first rate and are sure to please visitors.

Clayton Ridge of Atlanta is the chairman for the reunion, and has been long at work on arrangements. Helping him is Albert J. McMahan, who lives in the Atlanta suburb of Norcross. Because of their work with the Georgia chapter of the 8th AF Historical Society, and now with the museum, they are frequent visitors to Savannah.

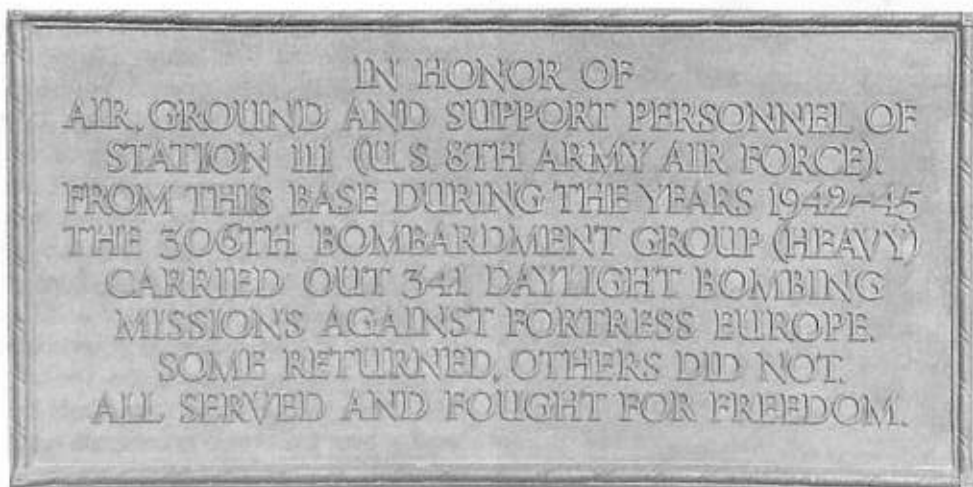
Registration and housing materials for our reunion will appear in the April issue of Echoes.

Early in its history, Savannah was planned around 16 squares downtown. While the city has grown rapidly, its early planning has shown up well, imparting a charm to the city that is hard to find across America. It has also been written about often and extensively in travel magazines, and is the locale for the acclaimed novel of two years ago "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil."

If you are coming to the reunion you may want to read this in advance, and then go looking for Chablis and other notables remembered or imagined by Author John Berendt.

We expect that many people will want to use Savannah as their major travel stop for the end of 1998 and the early part of 1999, so this is your chance to get into town, take a tour, visit our museum, and

-----continued page 4



-----continued page 2

Mike was born 20 Aug 22 in Fayette City, PA, one of 11 children his Russian immigrant parents produced. After leaving school he had little time to pursue a career before enlistment but, would later tell an American newspaperman that his desire was to study law. Enlisting before Pearl Harbor and Germany's subsequent declaration of war on America, he was detailed to Scott Field, IL, radio school in Sep 41 to commence 20 weeks of training to become a radio operator-mechanic gunner. He completed his studies in Feb 42 and was shipped to Wendover, UT, where he was assigned to the 423rd Squadron. Activated 1 Mar 42, the Group began flying training 6 Apr 42 at Wendover, then leaving on about 1 Aug 42 for England.

Michael flew off with the air crews to Westover Field, MA, as a radio operator for Maj. James W. Wilson's 423rd crew. Wilson was the squadron commander, but did not have a crew when they left in early September for England, and by then Roscovich had been assigned to Lt. Pervis Youree's crew, his "home" throughout the 25 missions of his combat career. Once across the water the 306th planes landed at Prestwick, Scotland, and from there flew on to Thurleigh, minus two of the 35 planes with which they had left Westover.

On 9 Oct 42 the Group flew its first combat mission against industrial targets at Lille, France, with the loss of one aircraft and one damaged beyond repair. Mike flew during a period of heavy losses, and crew members were given less than a one-in-three chance of completing 25 missions over Festung Europa.

He soon acquired the title of "The Mad Russian" amongst his comrades, not least of his habit of producing a pair of scissors and cutting off the tie of anyone, regardless of rank, who entered his aircraft to fly a mission. On some occasions he took a K-20 handheld oblique camera on board his

Flight to Scotland One Too Many for 306th Vets

by Gerard May

On the morning of Friday, 4 Feb 44, the roar of three Wright Cyclone engines reverberated about the grass strip at RAF Drem as a lone B-17 G Flying Fortress bomber of the 306th Bombardment Group was prepared by its crew to return south to its base, Thurleigh in Bedfordshire.

The fourth engine of the Fortress was refusing to start and the crew made the difficult decision to attempt a takeoff on three engines in the hope that the fourth could be coaxed into starting by allowing it to windmill in flight. It was cold, near the freezing point, but weather conditions were good, with light winds and visibility excellent as the silver B-17 began to taxi out.

The aircraft began its takeoff run well, but as it took to the air disaster struck, a wing dipped and caught a fighter abutment wall; this caused the B-17 to crash immediately and catch fire. Tragically, all six men on board were killed.

Francis Waugh, 306th photographer, was wakened early the next morning and flown from Thurleigh to Drem with instructions to photograph the crash scene. When he had carried out this duty he went on to the mortuary to photograph the crew for identification purposes.

By this time it was established that two of the men killed were not from the 306th; one was a RAF airman based at nearby Dirlerton radar station and another a Royal Naval radar mechanic from the Royal Navy's 784 Squadron, which shared the base. Two of the four American air crew were experienced pilots: 1Lt Arthur G. Moseley and 2Lt Edward D. O'Malley. A third officer was Bombardier Woodrow S. Ellertson.

Waugh was horrified on his arrival to be told that at the mortuary the fourth American was his close friend, 2Lt Michael Roscovich, 423rd gunnery officer and the first man in 8th Bomber Command to complete a tour of 25 missions over occupied Europe. Waugh was then left the unenviable task of photographing his friend and comrades before returning to Thurleigh to confirm the losses to his unit.

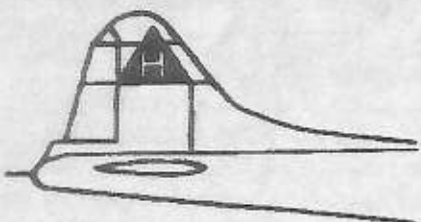
Tech Rep Now On Our Roster

An interesting addition has been made to the 306th roster.

Lawrence H. Smith, now of Minnetonka, MN, spent considerable time with the 40th Combat Wing, serving as a technical representative for the Honeywell, Inc.

His particular interest was the use of the automatic pilot (AFCE) and the Norden bombsight. He worked with pilots and flight engineers on the use of the automatic turbo control, and with the bombsight and ground crews in repair and maintenance of these systems. He came to the 40th at some time after having arrived in England in Aug 43. He was billeted with George Pratt, Nat Walton and Jerome Sears for a period.

In May 1944 he was transferred to the 9th Air Force to teach precision bombing with B-26 and A-26 aircraft. In Feb 45 he came back to England from France on TDY and Col. James S. Sutton arranged for his reassignment to the 40th. This time he was billeted with ground officers in the 423rd area.



Robert W. Seelos, president; Joseph R. Hathaway, vice president; Russell A. Strong, secretary; Robert N. Houser, treasurer; Sheldon Beigel, John K. Hickey, Russell Houghton and Wallace Peckham, directors; M/Gen. James S. Cheney, past president; Clayton Ridge, 1998 reunion chairman. Ralph Franklin, Keysoe, Bedfordshire, England, is our British representative. (Mill Hill, Keysoe, Beds MK44 2HP, England).

Telephone from US:
011-44-1234-708715,
In England 1234-708715.

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515/279/4498.

The 306th Bomb Group Historical Association is a Federally tax-exempt organization and as a veteran's group is classified as 501 (c) (19).

Flight to Scotland



Roskovich, often used a camera instead of gun; as did Fran Waugh, seen at right with headset and camera.

plane during a mission to take snapshots of attacking Luftwaffe fighter planes, a practice which upset other crew members, who preferred that he shoot with the machine gun which hung from the top of the radio room.

But beyond his affectionately bestowed title, he was known as a brave and determined airman who was liked and respected by those around him.

On 20 Dec B-17s of the 91st, 303rd, 305th and 306th Bomb Groups together with the B-24s of the 44th Bomb Group struck an air depot at Romilly-sur-Seine, southeast of Paris. The Luftwaffe was up in force and half of the mission's entire losses fell to the 306th, with three down and another 12 damaged out of 19 dispatched. The Group claimed 12 Luftwaffe fighters downed and six probables. Credit for the destruction of two heavily armed FW-190s went to Roskovich. (Ed. Note: It appears more likely that the 306th was credited with two destroyed and one probable).

Early in January Col. Frank Armstrong took command of the 306th. He had had considerable experience and had flown the lead a/c during the first 8th AF raid on Rouen, France, 17 Aug 42. Now at the 306th, Armstrong on 27 Jan 43 led the first raid to Germany. On this occasion the 306th despatched 16 B-17s and escaped any loss of planes or personnel, with 11 Forts damaged. The change of command on 4 Jan 42 has been immortalized in the novel and movie, "12 O'clock High", an event which took place among four men: Gen. Ira Eaker, Col. Armstrong, Col. Charles Overacker and Lt. Col. Bernie Ley. Later Ley and Sy Bartlett, a writer, combined their talents to write the novel. The 1949 movie is still a staple on late night TV.

On 5 Apr 43 field orders directed the 306th to attack the Eria Works at Antwerp, along with five other groups. General Eaker had recently announced that a tour of duty had been set as 25 missions over occupied Europe, and there was a sense of anticipation amongst the crew of Capt. Pervis Youree's Fortress because their radio operator, T/Sgt. Michael Roskovich, would be flying his 25th.

Fran Waugh, Rocky's friend from the photo lab, joined the crew to record the mission, only to be sternly warned by Capt. Youree that he "better not foul up on oxygen or anything else and cause an abort", even if the results were fatal! The mission was a disaster, particularly for the 306th, which lost four planes, and with heavy damage to six others. (Ed. Note: Mission was extensively covered in Apr 86 issue of Echoes).

Most of the 306th bombs fell inadvertently on the Belgian town of Mortsel, killing 943 and injuring 1300 others. JG 26, featuring 26 FW 190's pushed its headon attacks, eventually downing four 306th Forts at a heavy cost for the Germans, as Hauptmann Fritz Geisshardt, III/JG26 commander, an ace with 102 victories, was mortally wounded by 306th defensive fire. Capt. Youree's a/c was severely damaged by fighter attacks, knocked out of formation and forced to salvo its bombs, but was able to make it home. Once in the Thurleigh area, Mike had to be dissuaded from bailing out over the airfield to celebrate his 25 missions.

Continued from page 1



Puzzle of Lost Names Resolved

What's in a name?

Well, not much if all you have for a person is a last name. That has been true in the 306th historian's files since his research work began in 1975 for the enlisted personnel who were killed in the only air crash suffered in early training at Wendover, UT.

On the night of 7 Jul 1942 we lost the plane of Lt. Arthur L. Birleffi on the desert within about 10 miles of Wendover. He and the other officers' names showed up in the early records of the Group. But the four enlisted men were only shown by last names.

Finally, in mid-1997 when Russ Strong and his wife spent several hours in the offices of the American Battle Monuments Commission in Washington did he find that two of the men missing were Eugene P. Holsey and Homer Emswiler, both of the 369th.

Recently the historian received the technical report of the Aircraft Accident Classification Committee, that contained the other two names: Jessie S. Swann and Kenneth Gillies.

The other two officers had been Van Vanderbie and Floyd R. Reno.

What lies ahead? A continued search for the first names of 30 to 50 men of the 306th for whom the historian has found only last names. Some of these names have appeared years ago in an early edition of Echoes. That resulted in identification of three or four. These are not necessarily from any special period of 306th history, a number having come from photos of various groups taken late in the war and which are identified in the squadron histories only by last names.

We'll take any further help we can get.

England Trip Cancelled for '98

During the November reunion at Orlando, several persons expressed a wish that we conduct one more tour of England—and perhaps Scotland. Following up on that information, a brief questionnaire was mailed to 165 306th members, seeking guidance on what we might do.

Less than 15 people replied, and not more than 8 registered any interest in such a tour.

With that guidance in mind, President Joe Hathaway and Russ Strong decided not to pursue the matter further at this time.

If there is a ground swell of concern for another trip, we would take it under consideration, but it would take a serious commitment of 30 or more people to get any action started.

306TH PUBLICATIONS

Published materials now available from the Group will help you follow the 306th through the combat period, 1942-5:

Combat Diaries of the 306th Squadrons

Day-by-day diaries kept by intelligence officers, of the Squadrons' combat activities. More than 150 pages, also including plane and personnel rosters. Plastic bound.

306th Echoes, on microfiche

Now available from 1976-1994, with a 41-page index covering those years. Can be viewed at any library.

Men of the 306th, on microfilm.

A roll of 16mm film duplicates the 306th card file of nearly 9,000 men, including data extracted from various 306th records, and personal data on some of the men. 1995 edition.

Mission Reports

Copies of official reports on each mission you flew, including intelligence summaries, track charts, formations and crew interrogation reports. Data for some missions may be missing from the files. Three missions for \$5.

ORDER FORM

367th Combat Diary	\$17.00	_____
368th Combat Diary	\$17.00	_____
369th Combat Diary	\$17.00	_____
423rd Combat Diary	\$17.00	_____
306th ECHOES' Microfiche: 1975-1994	\$15.00	_____
1992-1994	\$ 5.00	_____
Men of the 306th	\$20.00	_____

Make check payable to 306th Bomb Group Association (prices quoted include postage and packaging charge).

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Send to: Secretary, 306th BGA, 5323 Cheval Pl., Charlotte, NC 28205

Deaths.....

James L. Avitt, 367th navigator (William Turner crew), died 6 Oct 97 of cancer in Des Moines, IA. His residence was in Berwick, and until retirement he had been a foreman for the Meredith Corp. He arrived with the 306th 18 Oct 44 and completed his 35 missions in early Apr 45. Avitt was also on the '94 reunion committee at Des Moines. He leaves his wife, Phyllis, 3d, 1s, IOgc.

Michael J. Baranowicz, 423rd radio specialist, died 20 Jun 97 in Brooklyn, NY. He was first afflicted with Parkinson's disease in 1969 and at the age of 46 was totally disabled. He leaves his wife, Marion, Id.

Clifton R. Barber, 423rd engineer, died 3 Dec 97 in the VA Medical Center, St. Cloud, MN. He lived in Webster, WI. He was MIA 8 Oct 43 at Bremen (w. Dean Rodman) and was a POW at Stalag Luft 17B. This was his first mission. He leaves his wife, Marian, 3c, 4gc.

Joe Bowles, 369th ball turret gunner and later Group gunnery officer, died 15 Nov 97 in Roanoke, VA, where he had lived since WWII. He joined the Group in Jul 42 as an armorer, but soon transferred to flight status as a ball turret gunner. He also flew some as an engineer. After completing his 25 missions he accepted a commission as a second lieutenant 16 Jul 43. On 17 Sep 43 he became Group gunnery officer and 13 Oct 43 was transferred to the States. His combat work brought him five oak leaf clusters to the Air Medal, and was probably the earliest person in the Group to receive this number. He was well known in the Roanoke/Salem area as an automobile salesman. His wife, Frances, died some years ago.

John P. Burr, 1628th Ordnance Co., died 1 Jun 97 in Ixonia, WI. His wife had died at an earlier date.

Everett Daniel, a 369th crew chief from the beginning, died 9 Sep 97 in Carroll, IA. He was one of several crew chiefs honored at the '96 reunion in Las Vegas for having crewed a plane that completed more than 100 missions, in this case "Steady Hedy." He returned to farming after the war and then retired to Lidderdale, IA. He and his wife, Martha, seldom missed a reunion, and he also leaves 4c, 14gc, 3ggc.

Vincent W. DeVos, 369th copilot (Willard Lockyear crew) and POW (w. Keith Conley), 29 Jul 43 on a mission to Kiel, died 22 Jun 97 in Glenshaw, PA. He suffered a massive heart attack. He leaves his wife, Grace.

Eric J. (Dick) Edwards, 367th engineer (Ken Starks crew), died 18 Oct 97 in Rotan, TX, where he was a farmer and had been manager of the Rotan Cotton Gin Co. He was a member of its board of directors for 29 years. A late arrival with the 306th, he flew in the Casey Jones project. Edwards leaves his wife, Leota, 1s.

Capt. William E. Futchik, and one of those responsible for the development on the engine change facility at Thurleigh, died 31 Aug 97 in Waldorf, MD. He began as a crew chief, left the 306th to attend OCS, and returned to the 401BG as a maintenance officer. He retired USAF 31 Dec 66 as a maintenance officer. He received the Legion of Merit while with the 306th. He leaves his wife, Mabel.

John J. Hopta, a fuel operator with the 306th, died 29 Mar 97 in Leetsdale, PA. He leaves his wife, Eileen.

Hillis S. Israel, 369th navigator (William Denton crew), died in Feb 95 in La Habra, CA. He arrived 29 Aug 44 and ended with 35 missions 21 Jan 45. His wife died in May 97.

Harry Jang, 367th navigator (w. George Mapes), died 24 Dec 97 in Sacramento, CA. He arrived with the Group 9 May 44 and finished his tour, departing 6 Sep 44. Jang and his wife, Ruth, were regulars at

"The Ball

The ball turret was a crowded place,
About forty inches wide.
It hung below the bomber,
A gunner flew inside.

And we won't forget that gunner,
But I guess we'll never know.
How alone he really was,
The guy who flew below.

Not only was it crowded,
But it was lonely too.
The man who had to fly there,
Was the man who really knew.

Now there are only memories,
For those who did come back.
We won't forget those fighters,
We won't forget that flak.

He had a pair of "fifties,"
One on either side.
The way he manned those "fifties,"
Filled us all with pride.

Dedicated
to Bob Lavery
by:
R. V. Miller
367th
Sqdrn.

He could be attacked by fighters,
Or he could be hit by flak.
That's why there were so many,
Who never made it back.

He'd line up those guns,
By swinging left and right.
He'd keep working with that Sperry,
Till his target was in sight

That gunner fought a lonely fight,
As he hung there down below.
Some things happened up above,
That he didn't even know.

Then you'd hear those fifties chatter,
You'd feel the bomber shake.
We were depending on that gunner,
Our lives were all at stake.

He flew all his missions,
Beneath the bomber, on his back.
As he fought off those fighters,
He was alone in all that flak.

Turret"

reunions.

Leslie J. Johnson, an original medic who joined the flying crews in 44, died in Feb 97. He was a ball turret gunner and POW 26 Mar 44 on a mission to the Pas de Calais (w. Barney Price).

Jerry W. Knowlton, 369th copilot (Edward Sandini crew), died 31 Aug 97 in Canton, MN. He flew 18 missions, having arrived 2 Mar 45. He leaves his wife, Nelda.

The Rev. Fr. Aleck A. Lazek, 368th waist gunner and POW (Warren Lutz crew), died 16 Aug 97 in Waco, TX, where he had lived since retirement as a Roman Catholic priest. When Lutz' plane came apart on the 29 Apr 44 mission to Berlin, Lazek was thrown through the rear door, one of two men to survive from that crew.

Harold M. Lemmer, 367th D/F radio operator, died 1 Apr 96 in Tacoma, WA. He joined the 306th 23 Jun 42 and departed in Sep 45. He leaves his wife, Roberta.

Kenneth H. Luckham, 368th ammunition worker, died 16 Sep 97 in St. Petersburg, FL. He was an original member of the Group, and departed 28 Aug 45. He leaves his wife, Anne, a war bride.

Albert F. Masters, 423rd radio operator (Thomas Hedley crew), died 10 Jul 91 in Lexington, KY. He arrived with the Group 28 Nov 44 and completed his combat with the end of hostilities. He leaves his wife, Phyllis.

Lawrence M. McDaniel, 369th navigator (Edward Sandini crew), died 24 Oct 97 in Jackson, TN. He arrived at Thurleigh 2 Mar 45 and flew through the end of combat.

Henry V. Percic, 367th armament worker, died Nov 97 in Lakeland, FL. He was one of the earliest men to arrive with the Group in Utah and left 17 Dec 45. At retirement he was maintenance superintendent for the city of Kissimmee, FL. He

leaves his wife, Lucy.

Donald L. Presti, 367th radio operator (John Conlin crew), died in Jan 97 in San Gabriel, CA. He finished his 35 missions 17 Jan 45. He leaves a sister, Roz Kloss, Lake Havasu City, AZ.

Robert H. Reck, 368th radio operator, died 15 Sep 97 in Mendota, IL, where he had been a practicing attorney. Reck came to the 306th 15 Feb 45 from the 34th Bomb Group. He leaves a son, Brian, in Murrieta, CA.

Charles O. Reynard, Jr., 367th pilot, was killed 22 Apr 42 while in transition training at the Jack Fry School of Aeronautics, Albuquerque, NM. He was on a crew of a B-24. Reynard was a 42-B pilot graduate at Mather Field, CA.

Claude R. Romine, 423rd engineer (John J. O'Brien crew), died 9 Jun 97 in Denver, CO, from heart problems. He flew his combat in mid-44. Romine leaves his wife, Edith.

Lewis F. Warren, 368th engineer (Ned McKinny crew), died 20 May 97 in Orlando, FL. He flew his combat Feb/Apr 45, and left the Group 7 Oct 45.

Soloman Werlin, 423rd pharmacist, died in 1997 in California.

306th Family

Anne Hansen, wife of Leif Hansen, Gp intelligence, died 10 Sep 97 in Frederick, MD. She leaves 2d, 2gc.

Lucille Leedy, wife of Taylor Leedy, 423rd pilot, died 26 Mar 97 in Corvallis, OR.

Thelma Schimmel, wife of Vernon R. Schimmel, 423rd pilot, died 4 Feb 97 in Medinah, IL.

Ann Tanno, wife of Norman Tanno, 368th tg, died 15 Sep 97 in Mentor, OH. They had been married 56 and one-half years.

Evadees Hitch A Ride Home

Three early evadees from the 306th found friends at Gibraltar who helped get them back to England in Spring 1943.

Then Capt. Robert P. Riordan had taken his crew on a jaunt to North Africa to deliver a large number of maps for use by American troops after the invasion there.

Picked up by Riordan's crew were Capt. Richard Adams, 369th pilot, who became MIA 8 Nov 42 and was Evadee #26 to escape from German-occupied territory; Lt. John S. Trost, 367th bombardier for Danton Nyaard. He was MIA 20 Dec 42 and became Evadee #28. Lt. Howard Kelly was also waiting for a ride. He was the 367th copilot for Lt. Joseph A. Downing and had been MIA 16 Feb 42. He was Evadee #30.

Each one had great tales to tell once they returned to England, and their first opportunity was with S-2 interrogators in London. Riordan had landed at Portreath after skirting the French coast on the trip north, and then let these three off at Bovingdon, along with another flyer from another group.

Your Books Help Museum to Grow

I recently cleared 10 titles off my book shelves, packed them and sent them off to the Mighty Eighth AF Heritage Museum, Savannah, GA, clearing a little space for new titles that keep coming.

Three of these books were rare items that one does not find on most library shelves, and the Museum wrote: "Your contribution included high-quality titles that will be valuable additions to our collection of works on the Air War and on military aviation."

We receive new materials almost daily. Each item enhances our ability to serve our patrons with their research needs."

If you bought books in England or in the decade following the end of WWII, you may want to consider sending them along to Savannah. Where your gift provides a duplicate to one already on the shelf, it provides the library with the means of replacing a worn-out book at some later date, or guards against loss by other means.

COOKIES ANYONE?

Charles O. Smith, 367th pilot, relates that his plane never had its name, "The Cookie Box," painted on the nose. But they had acquired the name when upon making a forced landing at an RAF base, the first thing they were asked was "Did we have any cookies aboard?" They must have looked puzzled, and a Brit immediately explained was that they were inquiring about the presence of any bombs on the plane.

AREA CODES BIG PROBLEM

Your secretary has a problem that can best be solved if many of you' 306' ers will pitch in and give him better information.

Its the Area Code changes on telephone numbers that confound us, and we have great trouble catching up. I appreciate very much those of you who have helped be sending your own area codes. But, I need more help than that.

If you received a communication from your phone company with the new area code listings, send me a copy of it. or, if you have a recent phone directory, copy out one of the pages in front which lists the new area code and the numbers of all of the exchanges it includes. This is the second set of three numbers in your directory listing.

The real importance of it all is that 1998 is the year for a new 306th Directory, and we'd like to have all of your information correct. Check your own listing in the current directory and correct it, if necessary, and then give us all of the area code information you can find.

We Brought A War Weary Plane Home

Some flew their planes all the way to Thurleigh from some place in the States. And, some flew somebody's old plane home again.

Tom Hedley and Cliff Steiger, a flight crew for the 423rd late in the war, were some of those who flew home. A recent picture of their crew in Echoes got Steiger to reminiscing over his trip home.

This intrepid pair picked up a B-17F that had been used for towing gunnery targets at Snetterton Heath. With no armor plating, no turrets and no bomb load, it was fast, but certainly had little resemblance to the B-17Gs we had been flying in combat.

"We were also supposed to bring back 15 passengers, but the plane had only three fairly good engines and the passengers were scrubbed," recalls Steiger.

Goodbye, De-icers.

On 19 October 45 we took off, bound for Marignone, France, carrying a crew of six. We still had the de-icer boots on the wings. While crossing the Channel, I hit the switch to see if they still worked. The one on the right wing was o.k., but the left boot blew up, popped and started flapping against the wing.

We removed the boots at Marignone, and also learned that #3, the bad engine, had used far too much oil for a four-hour flight. Leaving for Casablanca in North Africa the next day, we got along fine, except for the excessive oil consumption on #3.

Delayed a day by bad batteries, we left Casablanca on 22 Oct for Dakar, French West Africa. This leg took eight and one-half hours, and our bad engine had barely enough oil for feathering, if that became necessary. Air Transport Command would not clear us for Natal, Brazil, unless we had an engine change. They informed us it would take at least 30 days to get a new engine.

We were on our way home, there was no way we wanted to spend 30 days waiting for that replacement.

Hedley conned ATC into allowing us to pull the cowl, wash the engine down, tighten all clamps and hoses, test fly it and see if the engine was within limits.

Problem Solved!

It took a whole day to install new batteries and clean up #3. The following day we took it up for four hours of spotting animals in the jungle and fish in the ocean. As soon as we were out of sight of the field, we feathered #3. Before landing we unfeathered it, and of course, oil consumption was within limits.

ATC cleared us for Natal on the morning of the 25th. We had a new SOP for the rest of the way home: Feather #3 after takeoff and unfeather for landing. This we did all the way to West Palm Beach, Florida.

In our case, #3 was the spare engine the rest of the way home. We knew we could get six to eight hours out of it we needed it. We used it actually only one hour on each leg: Natal to Belem, Brazil; on to Georgetown, British Guiana; then to San Juan, Puerto Rico, and finally to West Palm.

The crew of six headed west by train, taking those on the coast six days to get there. A crew was sent down from Dayton, Ohio, to pick the retired target tug and take it to Kingman, Arizona, where it met the fate of most WWII aircraft.



While the national WWII memorial languishes in partisan bickering, the State of Iowa now lays claim to the only State WWII memorial in existence. One of the leaders in this effort to complete the above memorial was our own Robert N. Houser, 368th navigator and now serving his seventh year as 306th treasurer.

Additions to Roster

Bergman, Bertram G. 31800 Riverview Dr. Parker, AZ 85344. (520)667-4856 369
Burger, David, 230 Ocean Pkwy #D10, Brooklyn, NY 11218. (718)435-4114 368
Campos, Epifanio P. 16243 Chatsworth St, Granada Hills, CA 91344. (818)366-6678 423
Colonel, Horace, 704 S. Tyndall Pkwy, Panama City, FL 32404. BW
Dougherty, Joe, 31306 Nelson, Warren, MI 48093. (810)264-8357 BW
Hallmark, Peter, 634 Dobbins Mill Rd. Griffin, GA 30223. (770)227-9383 BW
Kirk, William S. 2956 Hathaway Rd #601, Richmond, VA 23225. 367
Lasch, Ed, 4311 Kasper Dr. Orlando, FL 32806. BW
McCrae, Dave, 6608 Voltaire Dr. Orlando, FL 32809. (407)851-3757 BW
Newman, Steve, 411 Zimmerman tr, Orlando, FL 32839. (407)855-0228 BW
Paul, Artice 3865 Willshire Dr. Saratoga, FL 34238 FR
Scharg, George, 3426 Black Willow Tr, Deland, FL 32724. (904)738-5245 GP
Stevenson, Prof Robert E, PO Box 689, Del Mar, CA 92014. (619)481-0850 368

306th Family

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Oplinger, Helen (Henry Hanson), 420 Thermo Village Rd #4, New Stanton, PA 367W

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1628W
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Our B-17 Captivates A Daughter

We stood at the fence, searching the sky, on a crisp blue November afternoon. Surprisingly, a large group had gathered and were quietly waiting. I'm not certain what I expected to see; she had been a vision carried around in my head for so many years.

Suddenly, without warning, as a ghost of the past, the B-17 was circling the field. I wanted to applaud, to yell; an immense pride began to swell up from my toes. She was, truly, a grand old lady—so much more than I had ever imagined!

It had been 50 years since my Dad flew his last mission as a tail gunner on a B-17. His plane, the Skylark, had gone down, and Dad ended up in the North Sea. A German patrol boat found him in the icy water, and Dad became a statistic of war for over two years.

In awe, I watched as the B-17 gracefully taxied down the runway and stopped. My mind was filled with stories—stories of those war time days that I could never seem to get enough of as a child. How many times I must have asked Dad the same questions and asked him to recount the same events.

There were so many people! Why had they come to visit a veteran of World War II? Like me, did they share a kinship with the past? I imagine that many of them did.

In a short while, we were able to climb aboard the B-17. Creeping over and under, bumping my head, I made my way. Dad explained as we went. It was as if 50 years were yesterday, and he had made it safely back from that fateful mission. With a twinkle in his eyes, he pointed out the different parts of the plane, remembering friends and crew members from his past.

As we walked away, Dad instinctively reached for his pocket—his cigarettes, a habit given up years before. It was then I knew; he was there, amidst the good times and the bad—a young tail gunner with the Flying Fortress. And, for a brief moment, I was there too—grateful and proud. Thank you B-17.

This nostalgic piece was written by Maureen Tunstall Stewart, daughter of S/Sgt. Donald Tunstall, 367th, who was MIA 6 Mar 43 with Earl Tunnell's crew on a mission to Lorient, France, and then a POW for more than two years.

Get Ready..

Continued from page 1

settle into one of the most gracious municipal settings in the land. Its been a favorite of ours for a long time.

Friday at the Museum

Friday will be the big day at the museum, with buses leaving early for the museum and returning late. Lunch there will be a part of the total tour package that day, as will be tickets for entrance to the museum, and transportation both ways between the hotel and museum.

Incidentally, for early arrivals, the museum is located at exit 18 on I-95, and the building itself is within a quarter mile of the exit.

There are motel accommodations near the museum, but participation in the various events of the reunion will require your payment of the registration fee.



Continuing Our Combat Deaths

	R/G	Sqd	Cemetery	Date	Pos		R/G	Sqd	Cemetery	Date	Pos
Teston, Welton P.	SSgt	367	Neth	11/01/44	wg	Wenzel, Elmer E. Jr.	SSgt	367	Brit-WM	01/05/43	wg
Thomas, Dock G. Jr.	Sgt	423	Neth	26/07/43	bt	Westcott, John A.	TSgt	423	NatCem	09/11/42	ro
Thomas, Marcum E.	2Lt	367	Neth	11/01/44	bt	Wharton, John R.	SSgt	369	Okla.	08/05/44	wg
Threlkeld, Joseph E.	Sgt	369		22/02/44	CP	Wheeler, Jack M.	SSgt	367	Camb-WM	09/11/42	wg
Tinsley, Alvis W.	SSgt	367	Arden	08/10/43	wg	Wheeler, Jesse O. Jr.	SSgt	367	NoCaro	29/07/43	tg
Tipton, Charles R.	SSgt	369	Neth	13/01/43	wg	Wheeler, Ralph H.	TSgt	423	Neth	22/02/44	e
Tomlin, Harry H.	1Lt	369	Arden	05/01/44	B	Whitaker, Wilbur A.	SSgt	367	Italy	12/09/44	tg
Toney, George Jr.	SSgt	367	Lorr	14/10/43	tog	White, Douglas H.	1Lt	367	NatCem, FtMcPherson, NE	14/09/43	P
Toombs, J. P.	1Lt	423	Neth	22/02/44	P	White, Sanford E.	2Lt	423	Alabama	23/05/44	CP
Tortora, Leopoldo	SSgt	367	Arden	22/02/44	ro	Whitman, Bernard L.	Sgt	367	Ohio	03/02/45	bt
Tracy, George A.	TSgt	367	Calif.	06/08/43	bt	Whittaker, Edgar G.	Sgt	369	Brit-WM	03/01/43	tg
Tranself, Willard A.	2Lt	367	Camb	26/04/44	N	Whitten, Harris R.	TSgt	368	NatCem, Vicksburg, MS	13/11/43	e
Trelford, Albert J.	2Lt	369	Texas	15/08/44	N	Whittle, John T. Jr.	2Lt	369	Arlington Cem, VA	11/01/44	B
Troup, Nelson R.	1Lt	423	Calif.	23/05/44	P	Wichmer, Louis H.	Sgt	367	Brit-WM	01/05/43	tg
Uhrin, Michael	SSgt	369	Camb-WM	14/10/43	ro	Wickham, Charles R.	Sgt	367	Florida	22702/44	CP
Urman, Harry	1Lt	368	Neth-WM	03/11/43	B	Wigginton, Bart	1Lt 423		Camb-WM	01/05/43	P
Utley, Lewis H.	1Lt	423	Brit	16/02/43	N	Wigton, Robert W.	2Lt	367	NatCem, Rock Island, IL	22/02/44	N
Vallorani, John L.	SSgt	423	Brit-WM	30/12/42	wg	Wilder, Truman C. Jr.	SSgt	367	NatCem, FtMcPherson, N	09/10/42	wg
VanSickle, Reuben A.	TSgt	367	Brit-WM	01/05/43	ro	Williams, Buren C.	TSgt	423	Camb-WM	01/05/43	ro
VanTroyen, Joseph J.	2Lt	423	Neth	13/06/43	CP	Williams, Leon	TSgt	369	Epinal	13/01/43	bt
Vlahos, Michael L.	1Lt	368	Arden	26/08/44	B	Williams, Maxwell W.	SSgt	369	Georgia	22/02/44	wg
Voehringer, John L.	2Lt	368	NoCaro	02/10/43	N	Williams, William E.	SSgt	423	Brit	16/02/43	tg
VonderLieth, Charles E.	SSgt	423	Brit	09/11/42	bt	Wilson, Charles R.	SSgt	423	Camb-WM	09/01/42	tg
Wadley, Donald L.	1Lt	368	Neth-WM	03/11/43	P	Wilson, Lewis L.	2Lt	369	Camb-WM	01/01/45	N
Waine, Anthony J.	TSgt	367	Illinois	05/01/44	e	Wilson, Paul A.	2Lt	367	Camb-WM	05/12/44	CP
Walker, George B.	SSgt	369	Neth-WM	29/04/44	e	Wilson, Ray Y.	SSgt	367	Neth	22/12/43	wg
Wall, Charles S. Jr.	SSgt	369	Brit-WM	03/01/43	wg	Wilson, Thompson E.	SSgt	367	Lorr	14/10/43	tg
Wallace, Ralph W.	Sgt	423	Camb-WM	01/05/43	tg	Winter, James E.	1Lt	367	NatCem, Corinth, MS	22/12/43	P
Walsh, Edward D.	Cpl	423	New York	20/06/44	tg	Winters, Donald R.	1Lt	369	Kansas	29/07/43	P
Ward, Ray Y.	Sgt	368	Texas	29/04/44	wg	Wolfe, Sidney	2Lt	369	Conn.	05/01/44	P
Ward, Roy Y.	Sgt	368	Texas	29/04/44	bt	Wood, Elbert S. Jr.	2Lt	369	Missouri	34/10/43	N
Ware, Richard K.	2Lt	369	Texas	08/05/44	B	Wright, Widen I.	Sgt	423	NatCem, St Louis, MO	09/11/42	wg
Warheit, Carl H.	Sgt	367	Epinal	20/12/42	bt	Wright, Eugene E.	SSgt	367	Neth	08/05/44	wg
Warner, Wayne A.	SSgt	367	Illinois	11/01/44	e	Wright, Richard D.	2Lt	367	Neth	11/01/44	N
Warner, William H.	Capt	423	Brit	16/02/43	P	Wylie, Charles E.	SSgt	368	Arden	17/04/43	wg
Weed, Almond A.	SSgt	423	Arden	24/02/44	wg	Young, George W. Jr.	2Lt	367	Ohio	14/10/43	N
Wehrmann, Henry R	Sgt	367	Ohio	08/05/44	wg	Younger, Floyd G.	SSgt	367	NatCem, Ft Leavenworth, KS	13/12/43	tg
Weiland, Alfred H. Jr.	Sgt	367		14/10/44	bt	Zaban, Eddie	SSgt	423	Brit-WM	01/05/43	bt
Weinstein, Bernard F.	2Lt	369		13/09/44	N	Zabawa, Edward J.	SSgt	367	Brit-WM	01/05/43	wg
Weller, Charles E.	TSgt	367	Ohio	26/04/44	e	Zeck, Frank M	SSgt	369	Ohio	08/11/42	tg
Wells, Leo D.	TSgt	369	Ohio	04/02/44	e	Ziegler, Robert H.	Sgt	369	Illinois	05/01/44	wg
Wells, Paul L.	TSgt	369	Kansas	20/12/43	bt	Zimmerman, Philip J.	Sgt	368	Camb-WM	21/05/43	ro
Welton, Paul N.	2Lt	369	Missouri	14/10/43	N	Zubov, Charles	TSgt	369	Arden	04/02/44	ro
Wempe, John R.	1Lt	368	Neth	03/11/43	CP	Zumpf, Frederick W.	SSgt	423	Neth	14/10/43	wg
						Zymanek, Joseph T.	Sgt	369	New York	10/01/45	bt

Others Killed

306th Bombardment Group (H)

Editor's Note: The legend at the top of the columns indicates: R/G, rank or grade; Squadron assigned to; Cemetery of final burial, or the State to which the body was transferred; Date is the date of death, and Pos is the crew position for the individual.

	R/G	Sqd	Burial	Death	Pos		R/G	Sqd	Burial	Death	Pos
Baughman, Mont D.	Sgt	367	Camb	09/03/45	e	Scott, Shelby W.	2Lt	367	Lorr	29/12/45	P
Bickston, Robert A.	Cpl	367	Camb	10/09/44	##	Searles, Walter D.	Sgt	367	Camb-WM	09/03/45	ro
Birleffi, Arthur L.	1Lt	367	USA	07/07/42	P	Shannon, Frank L. Jr.	2Lt	423	NYC-WM	05/09/42	B
Blakesley, William	TSgt	423	Camb-WM	05/09/42	e	Smalczewski, Chester F. S	Sgt	367	NatCem, Arlington, VA	14/04/45	ro
Butterfield, W. Bradley	Capt	367	Camb	14/04/45	P	Starbuck, William C.	TSgt	367	NatCem, San Bruno, CA	14/04/45	tg
Cameron, Robert P. Jr.	2Lt	367	Camb	10/02/42	##	Swann, Jessie C.	Pvt	369	USA	07/07/42	g
Caserta, Carlo	Sgt	367	Camb-WM	09/03/45	bt	Upham, Hudson H.	Col	GP	USA	01/11/46	P
Carlton, Charles H.	SSgt	367	NYC-WM	05/09/42	g	Vander Bie, Van	2Lt	369	USA	07/07/42	P
Clasys, Richard H.	Capt	368	NatCem, Arlington, VA	19/08/46	P	Vieille, Robert A.	2Lt	367	Camb	14/04/45	P
Cubberly, George E.	Capt	4th	Camb	14/04/45	##	Wiley, James A.	Pvt	423	NYC-WM	05/09/42	e
Ellertson, Woodrow S.	2Lt	423	Utah	04/02/44	B						
Ely, William W.	1Lt	367	Camb	10/02/42	P						
Emswiler, Homer R.	Sgt	369	USA	07/07/42	g						
Fife, Robert C. Jr.	1Lt	369	Camb	10/29/44	P						
Fuller, Dudley E.	TSgt	367	Wisc.	10/02/42	e						
Gallion, Earnest E.	TSgt	367	Camb	14/04/45	e						
Gillies, Kenneth M.	Sgt	369	USA	07/07/42	g						
Goller, Clinton M.	Cpl	367	NatCem, Long Island, NY	02/10/42	##						
Harrison, Robert L.	Sgt	367	Florida	09/03/45	tg						
Holsey, Eugene P.	Pvt	369	USA	07/07/42	g						
Hover, Thomas S.	Pvt	367	Camb	20/11/42	##						
Hoyt, Andrew J.	2Lt	423	NYC-WM	05/09/42	N						
Jones, Derrell S.	MSgt	367	Camb	14/04/45	##						
Kuhlman, William H.	2Lt	367	Texas	02/10/42	N						
Landry, Robert H.	2Lt	423	NYC-WM	05/09/42	CP						
Leaby, John T.	1Lt	423	NYC-WM	05/09/42	P						
LeCompte, Howard F.	F/O	367	Maryland	14/03/45	N						
Liersch, Collins E.	2Lt	367	Camb	14/04/45	CP						
Long, Merle D.	Pfc	423	Camb	18/08/42	##						
Lubojacky, Alfred S.	TSgt	369	Epinal-WM	15/02/46	tg						
Miessler, Wilfred E.	2Lt	367	Camb-WM	09/03/45	P						
Moseley, Arthur C.	1Lt	423	Florida	04/02/45	CP						
Oikle, Roland L.	SSgt	423	NYC-WM	05/09/42	g						
O'Malley, Edward D.	2Lt	423	Camb	04/02/44	CP						
Osborne, Bryce J.	Sgt	369	Camb-WM	19/06/43	##						
Pappas, John S.	2Lt	367	Camb	09/03/45	N						
Parrish, Austin J.	1Lt	367	Camb	14/04/45	CP						
Patterson, Edwin F.	1Lt	367	NatCem, Arlington, VA	02/10/42	P						
Pettyjohn, Leslie R.	SSgt	423	NYC-WM	05/09/42	g						
Poulan, Rush	1Lt	423	NYC-WM	05/09/42	##						
Reno, Floyd P.	2Lt	369	USA	07/07/42	P						
Roskovich, Michael	2Lt	423	Camb	04/02/44	ro						
Rubenstein, Charles	Pvt	367	NatCem, Farmingdale, NY	15/10/42	##						



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368th: Front, Frank Alston togg, unknown, unknown, Leon Curry ro, Roland Payette bt, Carmen Jackson wg, Alvin Riedel wg. Back: Harold Altshuler P, Robert Forsyth CP, Al Remal N.



367th: Top, Arthur Crapsey P, Michael O' Grady CP, Richard Wright N, William S. Smith B, Donat Heon eng. Bottom: Martin Kilcoyne ro, George Amoroso bt, Samuel Sin wg, James Allie wg and Roger Collins tg.



369th: Left, Albert Marenholz eng, Alfred Jacobs N, George Bates ro, Ralph Brand wg, Jack Blum B. Right: Glen Bryant CP, Clifford McBride P. Albert Fedorka tg, and Robert Maloney bt.

368th: Front; Unknown, Norman Sansom B, J. Bruce McMahon P, W. Dale Reed CP. Back: Joseph McConnell bt, John Gemborski wg, Albert Schaeffler wg, Warren Cole tg, Sidney Gomez ro and Orian Owens eng.



366th: Front: Charlie Hardesty eng, Hubert Champlin tg, Edmund Drost bt, Deral Stewart wg, Joseph Pureglio ro. Back: Jack Marshall B, Harry Wilson N, Frazier T. McDevett CP and William Reece P.



369th: Anthony Santoro eng, Albert McMahan tg, Ray May wg, Charles Davis bt, Robert Dwiggin wg, Gerald Rotter B, George Spelman N, Robert P. Riordan P, and Rogers Littlejohn CP.



367th: Front: Beryl Harris, mechanic, Peter Perelli bt, Ray Sensenbrenner N, J. Biscup, mechanic, Richard Frost tg, Richard Holland wg. Back: John Gearity B, Bartlett Smith CP, Eric (Dick) Edwards eng, C. Kenneth Starks P. Joseph Savino ro and Verl Thornock tg.



367th: Front: Shelby Scott P, Noris Nelson CP, Howard Parker N, unknown. Back: Paul Swartz eng, David Nye ro, Bertram Wilkins togg, Otto Huettig tg, James Blanchard bt, Emmett Brown wg.

More Than Half of Crew Pictures Have Appeared

In six years, beginning with the Apr 92 issue of *Echoes*, we have run 228 crew pictures, probably the most popular feature we have used in the paper. We believe it was even more popular than the long running group of aircraft pictures.

As you may have guessed, pictures of individual planes and of the various combat crews, were not high priority at Thurlough. No budgetary provision was made for it, and there often didn't seem to be time to do it. About the time of Second Schweinfurt there was a flurry

of activity photographing crews, but there was never a program to routinely photograph these people. Remember, some crews only stayed around a day or two.

At a far distance one can see all kinds of remedies to the problem, which certainly now is only of concern only to historians. As one key officer told the historian some years ago, that we must remember the only activity that counted at Thurlough was getting the planes in the air and dropping bombs on the selected target of the day.

Be that as it may, we are working against a list of 446 combat crews—there were probably

more, because the loading lists changed every day, and many of us flew with our own crew on Monday, a different crew on Thursday, back with our own crew Friday, and someone else the next time out. Some of our crews flew almost their entire tours with the same crew.

I often wondered then about the vagaries of crew assignments. Why I was taken from my crew one day and flew as navigator with another crew, while their navigator might be with my crew. I did refuse to fly with one crew after an horrendous experience which needn't have happened, and my request was honored for the remainder of my tour.

Sometimes I think pilots deserted crews, and in other cases crews deserted pilots. I think most of us would agree that sometimes some of our crewmates were really strange and different, talented or totally inept. But, we won!

So, if your crew has not appeared, please renew your efforts to find a picture. Or, perhaps you can reconstruct a crew picture as Arthur Crapsey did on the top right corner of this page.

A few more pictures await to be used, and we will renew our efforts to identify those crew pictures which have no names on them.

3-Engined Takeoffs Can Be Thrillers

Three-engined takeoffs in the B-17 did happen, but were frowned upon by operations and command people. Pilots who survived such experiences early on were sometimes addressed rather sternly, but in later periods of the war were apt to be dealt with more severely.

John Regan, a 368th pilot and much later squadron commander, probably holds something of a record for having completed the hazardous maneuver twice within three days using the same battered airplane (Sons of Fury, 41-24493).

Flying on the mission of 17 Nov 42 to St. Nazaire, the 306th returned to Southern England a bit the worse for wear. Regan's a/c suffered flak damage to the #2 engine in the target area and could not feather the miscreant. Fighting severe buffeting from the windmilling prop, he and his crew hedgehopped across France to the Channel, and then made their way as far as an RAF Membury.

After staying overnight there, and without consultation with anyone, he gathered his crew on the following morning, had them remove all remaining ammunition and other weighty items, and then moved everyone as far forward as possible. Without any clearance he taxied out, fired up the three remaining engines, and took off without difficulty.

Arriving over Thurleigh he found the field obscured by fog, and settled for a landing at Poddington, never having been able to start the fourth engine in the air.

They were trucked back to Thurleigh, and the next morning Regan was approached by Robert C. Williams, 423rd operations officer. Williams said he would go to Poddington with Regan and together they would fly the plane back to Thurleigh.

These two "hot" young pilots got back to the plane at Poddington, fired up the three engines and taxied out for takeoff. With power as high as they could get it, they pulled the plane off the runway. Regan recalls now that there were trees on either side of the runway at one point, and airborne they began veering towards the trees on the left. With an heroic effort by both pilots, and probably more than a little luck, they got it back on course and within minutes were on the ground at Thurleigh.



Membury airfield, like many others in Britain, is almost gone from memory. Today the M4 superhighway runs through it southeast of Swindon

Fewer Guns in '45 Saved Fuel

(Ed. Note: Borrowed from *The Mighty Eighth War Diary* by Roger Freeman.)

The value of some defensive gun positions on Fortresses had long been in question, particularly when considered against the performance advantages that removal would provide. The tail guns had always been the most useful defence point and became more so with the introduction of jet fighters whose high speed demanded an attack approach on the rear of the bombers to better the chance of hits.

In March 1945 1st CBW instructed its three groups to experiment with the following deletions: 91st Group to fly one squadron without waist guns—and gunners; 381st Group to fly one squadron with ball turrets removed, and the 398th Group to fly a squadron without chin turrets.

On the 16th of the month the 3rd Division instructed 94th Group to remove from all its B-17s the chin and ball turrets, with a hand-held 'tunnel' gun substituted for the latter. Sixty-five 94th B-17s had been modified by the end of the month.

The benefits derived were: an average saving of 35 US gallons per hour on fuel consumed, five inches less manifold pressure for average performance giving a saving in engine wear, an improvement in take-off and general flying characteristics, 2,200 lb saving in weight, crew reduced from nine to eight men, and less maintenance for ground personnel.

8th Museum Surprised by Gift of Medal of Honor

Susan Snow and her husband were in a big hurry. They were on their way down I-95 from their home in Wilson, NC, to Florida. But they just "had" to stop at The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, if only for a few minutes.

Jack Burton, the Museum's operations officer, happened to see the couple as they rushed in only 45 minutes before the closing hour. They told Burton of their hurry, but had to see as much of the Heritage Museum as possible before resuming their journey. Burton sensed their urgency and took them on a whirlwind tour that usually requires four to five hours.

As they reached the end of the tour and were passing through the Hall of Heroes, Susan Snow suddenly stopped and exclaimed, "There's Dad's picture!"

For several long minutes Susan Vosler Snow stared at the picture of her father, Medal of Honor recipient Staff Sergeant Forrest L. Vosler. Then she said with understandable pride, "I have some things that belonged to my Dad, Would the Heritage Museum like to have them to display?"

"Of course," said Burton, the museum would be pleased and honored to receive your father's artifacts." With that taken care, Snow and her husband hurried out to continue their journey.

Forrest Vosler had received the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions aboard a 303rd BG B-17 during a mission on 20 Dec 43. While wounded in both legs and later in the chest and eyes, he continued to man his gunner's post, firing at enemy aircraft and taking care of another wounded crew member. As the crippled B-17 managed to remain airborne, Vosler repaired damaged aircraft radio by touch, and sent the distress messages to Air Sea Rescue.

Several weeks later Mrs. Snow mailed a box to Burton. Museum officials excitedly opened the box, hoping that it might contain a hat or jacket, or some other small item that had actually belonged to Vosler. To their stunned amazement the first thing they saw in the box was Vosler's Medal of Honor. Also included was the original citation for the medal and a photograph of President Franklin D. Roosevelt making the presentation in a White House ceremony.

This Medal of Honor was one of only 17 presented to 8th AF personnel during the war, and was the second to go to a 303rd gunner. Of course, the first 8AF Medal of Honor for an enlisted man was that presented to our Maynard H. Smith for his actions of 1 May 43. It was presented to him at Thurleigh by Secretary of War Henry Stinson, as pictured below.

Flying WWII Aircraft

From time to time 306th members discuss once again flying in WWII plane, preferably a B-17, perhaps to revive the thrills of 55 years ago in England.

All it seems to take is money. The New York Times in recent issue answered a query rather completely, we offer a bit of the information here.

Experimental Aircraft Association, Oshkosh, WI. (800) 359-6217. B-17G, \$590 for an hour.

Collings Foundation, Stow, MA. (978) 562-9182. B-17G, \$300 for 45 minutes.

National Warplane Museum, Elmira-Corning Regional Airport. (607) 739-8200.

The Planes of Fame Museum, Chino, CA. (909) 597-3722. B-25J. \$525 for five passengers, plus \$30 membership each. 20 minutes.

Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum, Mount Hope, Ontario. (905) 679-4183. Does not yet have permission for such flights, but is pursuing a permit. B-25 and Lancaster.

RAF Coningsby in England has a Lancaster which gives rides, but only to

RAF personnel.

The FAA does not permit the sale of rides on WWII era planes, but a few exemptions are granted to owners whose maintenance and operations plans have been approved.

The 306th Assoc. has followed a policy of not permitting such flights at its reunions because of insurance problems, etc.

Memorials

George S. Horner in memory of Harold E. Gaslin, 423rd.

Geneva M. Paisley in memory of Dwight C. Paisley, 367th.

Martha Danuel in memory of Everett Daniel, 369th.

Gifts may be made by anyone in memory of 306th veterans or family, by sending your check, so designated to the 306th Memorial Fund, to the Association Treasurer. All gifts made during the preceding quarter will be listed in Echoes. Expenditure of these funds is at the direction of the Board of Directors.





This is the only picture the editor has of the 1997 reunion at Orlando. He forgot his camera, others did as well, and several veteran "shooters" weren't at Orlando. If you want to submit any photos, identified if possible, please do so for the April issue of Echoes. Shown left to right are: Bill Mutz, Tina Mutz, Foncyne Mapes, George Mapes, Charles W. (Bill) Cain and Peggy Beene. Mapes was the pilot of this 367th crew.

367 Attend Reunion at Orlando FL

A final tally by Chairman D. Luke Jacobs shows 367 attended the very successful reunion in Orlando last November.

The schedule away from the hotel was busy, with the many entertainment attractions in the Orlando area keeping people on the buses darting hither and thither. One of the more unusual stops was that at the Warbird Restoration Museum in Kissimmee, where people saw aircraft in various stages of overhaul.

In fact, in many cases it was not just overhaul, but the complete rebuilding of B-17s and other vintage and contemporary planes, which had come as a pile of junk parts, and then are slowly making their ways back to reality. It is the ultimate goal of this venture to return the planes to flying status. Of the three 17s to be seen, none seemed very close to roaring down the runway in the foreseeable future.

Another feature which offered whatever variety you might want was the evening at Church Street Station, which had a great variety of food, several entertainment venues, and lots-of places to wander in and out of.

The hotel itself, the Adams Mark, opens on to the Florida Mall, which offered a great variety of eating, movies, all of the typical shops of a large mall, plus some larger stores. There was plenty for anyone to do here, and many took advantage of the time for shopping.

M/Gen. James S. Cheney served as the co-chairman for the reunion, and with Jacobs teamed to put together a good show. One of the advantages of this hotel was the second floor mezzanine area which easily accommodated those who came to visit old friends, and next door was Jack Frost's PX, which sold the usual variety of memorabilia that some need to replenish their collection of 306th hats, golf

You Can Add to Our Impact At Museum

"The 306th Bomb Group Historical Association has provided considerable assistance in ensuring the long term well being of The Eight Air Force Heritage Museum," Lt. Gen. E. G. Shuler, Jr., recently wrote our president, Joseph R. Hathaway.

"The board of directors and staff join me in expressing our sincerest appreciation for the most generous check of \$25,000 that we recently received. This significant contribution afforded me the opportunity to give the Chatham County Commissioners a favorable report recently on our fund raising efforts."

Since this letter of 11 November, our treasurer has forwarded another \$5,000 to the museum, as voted by the officers and directors of the 306th Association at our Orlando reunion, with these funds coming from accumulated memorial funds in our treasury.

Robert N. Houser, our treasurer, reports that there is more than \$2,000 now in the treasury from later completed pledges, and almost enough yet remaining in outstanding pledges, to pay the Museum another \$5,000 at an early date.

If any of the membership wishes to assist in this effort, Houser will be happy to receive your checks. Thus far 14 men have contributed \$1,000 each, and another 18 men have given \$500 each to assist in reaching the initial \$25,000 goal. That total was designated by action of the 1996 board to go toward the liquidation of the outstanding debt of the museum, which totaled about \$6,000,000 when the Museum opened a year and a half ago. The remaining \$25,000 to come from the 306th is designated for the endowment fund which will assist the museum in future years in meeting its annual obligations.

..... shirts, and other items.

And once the events of Saturday night had closed, the early risers on Sunday were to be found waiting for transportation to the airport, or loading their cars for the trip homeward.

Some of the attendees at Orlando also took advantage of travel along I-95 to stop in and view the 8th AF Museum at Savannah, which will be a major feature of the 1998 reunion.

Country's Last WWI Vets Die

By D. G. Martin

This front page headline shouldn't have moved me as much as it did. After all, the war ended in 1918. Its youngest participants could not have been born much after 1900. Those still alive have passed, or are fast approaching their hundredth birthdays.

How do I explain why this is so important to me? Maybe this way: When I was a young boy there were still a few Civil War veterans alive. They were just about as rare as a World War I veteran is today.

You are thinking, aren't you, that this is just another way of saying that World War I is about the same distance back in time now as the Civil War was in the early 1940s?

You are right, I guess. But for me there sure is something more. Back in the early 1940s when the Civil War veterans were fading away, most veterans of World War I were in their prime—just moving into middle age. Some were still young enough to go to war a second time in World War II. But mostly, for me, they were the men who ran things when I was growing up. The store owners, barbers, church leaders, and government officials came from the World War I generation.

They and their generation formed the "people-scape" in which my young life was set.

They were nothing special—just everything and everywhere. Now, I keep thinking, they are mostly gone—and if they are alive, they are as old as the Civil War veterans were back then.

Do you think that I have been caught up in a circle of the passage of time—confused and without a real point for this column?

If you have any sense of history, maybe the point is that we are at the moment of the very last chance with veterans of World War I.

If you know, or can find, one of them, take a young person or a child to see him and talk to him. Give that child a memory to connect that veteran all the way to the end of the next century. You will have done something worthwhile.

All this gets me to thinking about the Second World War, its veterans, and the hard cold fact that in 25 or 30 years we will be reading this headline: County's Last World War II Veteran Dies.

It is hard to think of the World War II veterans as a dying breed. They surround us now. They are still everywhere—still so much our "people-scape".

One of them ran for president last year. Another, former President George Bush, showed us his vitality and courage the other week by jumping out of an airplane, freefalling for thousands of feet and then parachuting to earth-smiling all the way.

We are in the middle of a great national debate about a proper national memorial for the World War II veterans. Maybe you have heard about it. The questions deal with the appropriateness of its design and whether its proposed location compromises the precious openness of the mall between the great monuments in our capitol city.

However, the true monument to the veterans of World War II will be nothing we construct.

It will be what they did. Over there in winning the victory, of course.

But it will be more what they did here when they came back. Their real memorial is what they made of this country, boosting it from the financial depression and poverty into which most of them were born.

They came back from the war with more maturity, energy, confidence, practicality, open-mindedness, discipline, love of country, and competitiveness than any generation our country has ever seen.

Then the country gave them advanced educational opportunities never available to so many Americans before.

With that mixture of healthy traits and education, they caused an explosion of economic growth that underpins our country's continuing prosperity and success.

The veterans of World War II are a generation to cherish, to thank and to learn from.

Now. Before they, like the veterans of the Civil War and World War I, just fade away.

D. G. Martin is vice president for public affairs at The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

There may be no dues, BUT

It does take money to keep the 306th Association flying. Those who are able are asked to make an annual contribution to keep everything running smoothly. No one is dropped from the mailing list for non-payment! Your gift is tax deductible.

Please accept my gift to the 306th BG Association: \$ _____

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306TH UNIT

DATE

EIGHT AIR FORCE HERITAGE MUSEUM ARCHIVAL DATABASE

VETERAN'S NAME _____

POSITION (MOS/AFSC) _____ RANK _____

GROUP/SQUADRON _____ SERIAL NUMBER _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____ PLACE OF BIRTH _____

NAME OF BASE _____ AAF NUMBER _____

DATE OF DEATH _____ PLACE OF BURIAL _____

SCORES (FIGHTERS & GUNNERS) _____ RECORD SOURCE (SELF OR DOCUMENT) _____

AWARDS _____

EXPERIENCES: _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO: 8AFHM ARCHIVES, P.O. BOX 1992, SAVANNAH, GA. 31402