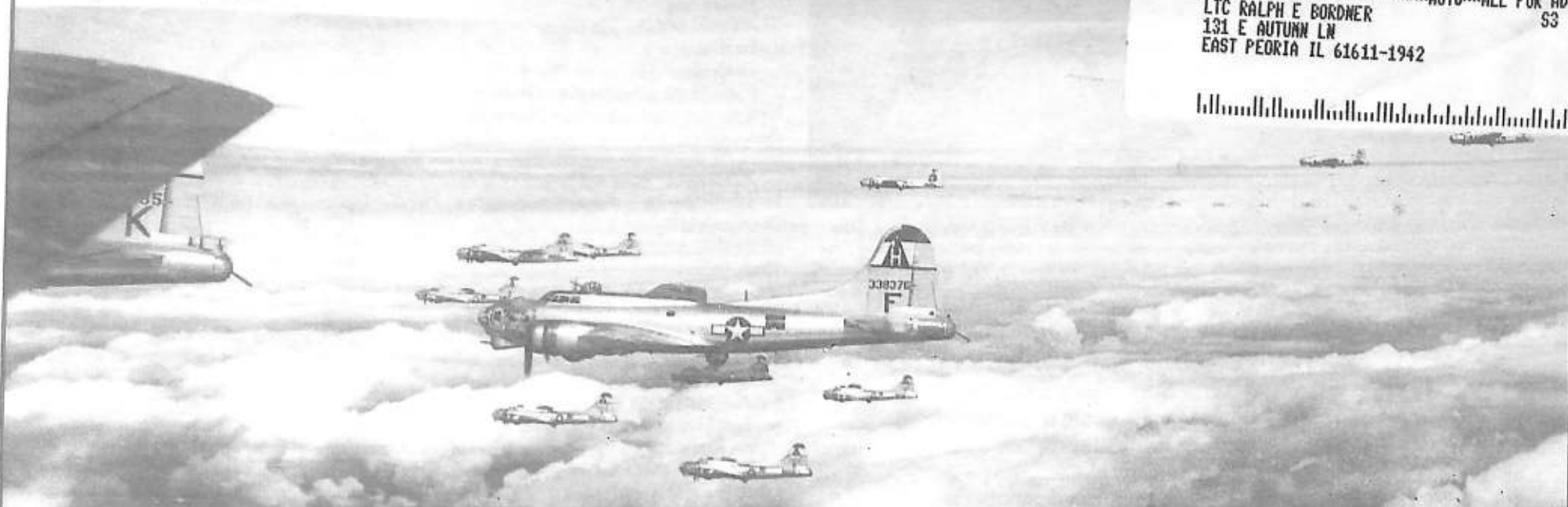


306th Echoes

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53 P13



This is considered by the editor to be one of the finest formation pictures of B-17s he has ever seen. It came to light recently when Billy Casseday, 369th, loaned a group of pictures to the editor, and the latter was able to make copies of them on an Eastman machine at a nearby Wal-Mart store. The plane in the foreground is a 423rd aircraft, which has a wide yellow band across the area where the triangle H is located, and the tip of the tail is blue, the identification color used for 423rd planes. No other planes could be identified with the magnifiers available.

Jeep Among First Items For Museum

The picture accompanying this story shows Ralph Franklin sitting in a newly reconditioned Jeep which will be one of the first items placed in the new museum at Thurlleigh. Standing at the right is Ralph's brother, Bryan, who has an automotive business in Bedford, and who made possible the complete overhaul of the vehicle.



But the success of the Museum display will be in large measure determined by those items which you still have "squirrel-reled" away, or may be displaying and with which you are now ready to part company.

Ralph has assured us that they will not need any more Jeeps, but there are many other pieces of equipment which they would like to receive from you in the months and years ahead. As I went through the final officers' inspection of luggage before leaving I felt that anything you could get in a large zippered bag could be taken home without difficulty.

So, it is time to go through those now rare things you may still have around the house, or still have in your apartment or condominium, and stored any other place. If you want a good home for them, send them to Ralph.

Photographs can be copied at either end of the venture, by you with the current Eastman equipment available in many stores, or at the British end.

Bridegrooms and their British brides at the chapel on base, or at a church in Bedford or elsewhere. We once ran a set of wedding photos in Echoes.

- So, here's your check list:
- A-2 jackets B-10 jackets and leggings
 - Leather jackets and leggings
 - Flying boots
 - The heated inner boots
 - One piece and two-piece heated outfits (blue & green)
 - Oxygen masks
 - Gas mask containers
 - Navigator's briefcase
 - Navigator's hack watch
 - Navigator's chronometer
 - Navigator's stop watch
 - Dividers, air speed computers, etc

turn to page pg. 2

Obituaries

Matthew J. Argento, section leader in the Medics and assigned to the 368th, died 29 Dec 99 in New York City.

LTC Robert B. Armstrong, 369th co-pilot (Ethan Allen crew) and pilot, died 7 Apr 98 in Sarasota, FL, where he had lived and taught since his USAF retirement in 1972. He flew in the Berlin Airlift and with SAC. Armstrong graduated from the Univ. of Omaha. He leaves his wife, Linda, 3c, 4gs.

Wilford N. Bergener, 367th pilot, died 29 Oct 99 in Gilbert, AZ. He joined the Group 16 Feb 45 and flew 19 missions by the end of the war. He retired as a manager for United Airlines. Wilford leaves his wife, Nan, 3c, 4gc.

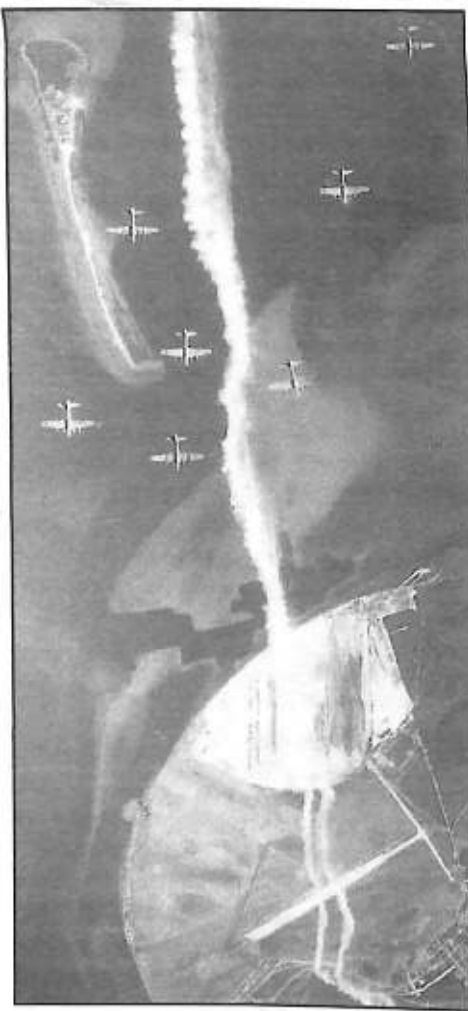
Joseph M. Casino, 367th radio operator (Kenneth Stark crew), died 18 Nov 99 in Chicago, IL, where he had made his home for many years with a sister. He was a mechanical engineer and at one time taught at the University of Chicago. He was also a frequent reunion attendee.

Clyde G. Collier, 369th fuel truck driver, died 31 Mar 99 in Pikeville, TN. He joined the 306th 3 Apr 42 in Wendover, UT, and continued his service until after the end of the war. He leaves his wife, Roberta, 3c, 7gc, 3ggc.

Harvey L. Cox, 369th tail gunner (John Howard crew), has been reported deceased by the Postal Service. He was with the original group and became the 29th EM to complete a combat tour. Cox transferred out of the Group en route home 1 Aug 43. He was credited with one German a/c shot down. He leaves his wife, Zelma.

Olin O. Dobbs, who went from intelligence clerk to the 367th as a ball turret gunner, died 9 Sep 99 in Sonoma, CA. He flew 32 missions in 43 and 44. He leaves 4c, 6gc.

Richard C. Grimm, 367th radio operator (Leonard Smith crew), died 9 Sep 99 in Southboro, MA. He came to the 306th after a tour with the 303rd BG and then finished



Smoke trails from bombs marking the target at Peenemunde in North Germany and 306th planes crossing the Baltic Sea are evident in this photo taken 18 Jul 44, and saved in Billy Casseday's picture collection.

his second tour of 25 missions 11 Apr 45. He left the Group 19 May 45. Grimm retired as a senior engineer with Raytheon Corp. On 10 Jul 91 he received a DFC, the awarding of which had become lost in the crush of paperwork at the end of the war. Grimm leaves his wife, Ingamay, 5c, 5gc.

turn to page pg. 2

San Diego on Schedule for '00 Reunion

San Diego sits on the southern coast of California, just slightly north of the Mexican border, and your target is the Sheraton San Diego Hotel which is on Harbor Island Drive. From many rooms and aspects of the hotel you will have a considerable view of the Pacific Ocean.

People will begin to arrive on Tuesday, 5 September, and program activities will begin on Wednesday, says John Endicott, 369, chairman for the reunion, along with Robert Dodge, 369, co-chairman, and Robert L. Vaughan, 449th.

Also joining the committee for the first time are members of another generation of 306th people: Danny Houghton, son of Hoot Houghton, 368th; Michele Reioux, daughter of Paul Reioux, 423rd, and Lee Ann Landt, daughter of Endicott. Reunion groups of the 8th are enthusiastic about having such people helping because of their enthusiasm, energy, and in this case, their knowledge of San Diego.

Already we have placed a reservation on the top floor Bayview Room, which has an excellent view of the harbor and all of the activities taking place there. That will be our reception area, our hospitality area, and the place where round tables will encourage nonstop conversation from morning 'til night.

The hotel reservation form will be found on page 8 of this issue of Echoes, but Endicott says it will be April before the activities are well set.

Opportunities for tours and all kinds of entertainment abound in the San Diego area, says Endicott, and most of them are in close proximity to the hotel. Among those being considered now are city tours, the world famous San Diego Zoo, Sea World and the Old Town Trolley. The San Diego Padres may also be in town.

The San Diego Zoo, for instance, has a trolley running through the zoo that permits one to get off at any area you want to view afoot and then reboard the next trolley through. This can work quite well for anyone whose walking is limited.

The Zoo's Wild Animal Park is also interesting, but is about an hour's bus ride

turn to page pg. 2



In the event you hadn't noticed, we are beginning to see more great-grandchildren among the survivors of our 306th warriors. The editor recalls a year or two ago citing the number of 12 for one man. The editor and his wife receive quite a number of Christmas cards from all over, which we very much appreciate, but the one sent by Ed Hennessy this past Holiday season caught our eye. The 80-year-old great grandfather in the center plays host to his five ggc. Front, left to right: Sidney Reese and Cassandra Clark, and in the back row: Chad Clark, Brittany Clark and Morgan Reese. Ed and his late wife had two children and four grandchildren.

Casey Jones Books Ready

Our reprinting of the Casey Jones Project has been a popular item, and we still have some copies available from the second printing we made. Curiously enough, several orders have come in from 305th men who also participated, and some of whom may have been interviewed by Robert Boyd, the SAC historian who researched and wrote the account of this rather unusual mapping project.

Send your \$10 check to the Secretary to get your copy of this 64-page study.

Obituaries cont.

Howard M. Hodges, a member of the flare path crew at Thurleigh, and assigned to the 4th Station Complement Squadron, died 29 Mar 99 in Roscommon, MI. He died following surgery related to his lung cancer. His wife of 52 years, Frances, survives.

M/Sgt. William E. Kellum, 367th ball turret gunner (John Ryan crew), died 8 Dec 94 in Spokane, WA. He was one of two survivors 5 Oct 42 when William Ely's plane went down on a gunnery mission prior to the 306th's entry into combat. He flew a total of seven missions before his transfer to Bovingdon as a .50 calibre machine gun instructor. He retired USAF in Nov 67 after 24 years of service. He leaves his wife, B.M., 3c, 3gc.



Wallace Boring, president; Paul Reixoux, vice president; Russell A. Strong, secretary; Robert N. Houser, treasurer; Leland Kessler, Frederick Hudson, Donald R. Ross, Claiborne Wilson, directors; Alfred J. Switzer, past president; John J. Endicott, 2000 reunion chairman; Ralph Franklin, British representative, National School Cottage, Keysoe, Beds., MK44 2HP, England; Telephone from U.S. 011-441234-708715.

306th Echoes is published four times annually: January, April, July and October, and is mailed free of charge to all known addresses of 306th personnel 1942-45. Contributions in support of this effort may be remitted to the treasurer.

SECRETARY/EDITOR:

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Russell A. Strong, 5323 Cheval Pl., Charlotte, NC 28205. Phone 704/568-3803.

TREASURER:

Send money to:
Robert N. Houser, P.O. Box 13362, Des Moines, IA 50310, 515/279/4498.

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

San Diego from pg. 1

north, so will be available to those who want to drive or take other forms of transportation.

Non-tour events that are nearby are Tijuana, Mexico, and Viejos, an Indian gaming center which also has fine restaurants and an outlet shopping center on its site.

There are also harbor cruises, a seaport village, gas lamp area, Balboa Park which includes the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center, a natural history museum and an art museum; Harbor Front Maritime Museum with the sailing ship, "Star of India" moored there.

There may also be an evening harbor dinner cruise. For this the boat docks at the hotel dock to make boarding an easy experience.

Endicott also says if the Navy has one of its carriers in port while we are there tours of it will be arranged.

Now you should check out the Hotel Reservation Form on page 8, fill it out and return it as soon as you are ready, and then be ready in April to work on the event Registration Form.

John Maziariski, 367th armorer, died 2 Aug 99 in Bayville, NJ. He retired as an electronic technician for Bendix Corp., in 1987. He leaves his wife, Ann, 2c, 2gd.

Harold L. McKenney, Group radar technician, died 5 Feb 98 in Cheyenne, WY. He graduated from the Univ of Denver in 49 and retired from IBM in 85. He joined the Group 8 Aug 44 and departed in Nov 45. McKenney leaves his wife, Patricia.

Virgil S. Mitchelson, 368th tail gunner and POW (John Sasser crew), died 18 Sep 99 in Taylorville, IL, where he had lived much of his life. He retired from Georgia-Pacific Corp. in 1986, and leaves 3c, 6gc, 1ggc.

Eldon G. Rimmer, a 369th mechanic with the original group, died in Jul 98. He leaves his wife, Mary.

Carl R. Thompson, 368th copilot (John Gasser crew) and pilot, died 23 Nov 99 in Denton, TX. He had retired from Ford Motor Co., 1 Mar 88. Carl flew his combat missions between 16 Nov 43 and 23 Mar 44. He leaves his wife, Martha, 4c, 8gc, 1 ggc.

Philip A. Tomasella, 368th navigator (Charles Trigg crew), died 31 Dec 99 in Rochester, NY. He flew his combat between 13 Apr 44 and Jul. Survivors include 3c, 7gc.

Emil R. Wilke, 369th tail gunner (Roy Trask crew), died 25 Jun 99 in Bradley, IL. He joined the Group 1 Sep 44 and left after 35 missions 16 Jan 45. Emil retired as an assistant manager for Illinois Bell in 1983. He leaves his wife, Emily, 2c, 4gc. His twin brother, Elmer, also on the Trask crew, died in Wisconsin in 1975, leaving 2c.

306th Family

Jane Odle, widow of Elbert G. Odle, 368th pilot and squadron operations office, died 23 Oct 99 in Cicero, IN. He had died 14 Apr 81.

Museum from pg. 1

- Aerial Octant
- Norden Bomb Sight
- Various insignia, patches, rank badges
- Enlisted uniforms
- Officer uniforms
- Hats of all kinds
- Leggings
- Blankets with the U.S. insignia
- Flight bag
- Musette bag
- All kinds of shoes and boots
- Footlocker
- Duffle bags

If you decide to send items of clothing, have them cleaned or laundered before packing them carefully and putting them in the mail. Shine the shoes, if they require that.

As to medals, there will be plenty of Air Medals, Bronze Stars, Purple Hearts and Distinguished Flying Crosses, which were the principal medals distributed to the men of the 306th. Others also earned included the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Legion of Merit and Soldier's Medal. In order to complete the collection at the Thurleigh Museum it may be necessary to buy some of the above from dealers. Other decorations seen at Thurleigh were the ETO ribbon, pre-Pearl Harbor medal, WWI and WWII Victory medals, Good Conduct medals. There may be a few we've overlooked, but surely someone will also send along the "Ruptured Duck" that was handed out on discharge from

the Armed Services.

Escape maps are interesting items for framing, and maybe someone will donate an escape kit, although they were supposed to have been carefully inventoried at the end of each mission. Many people also had special items, such as knives or pistols that they may have carried on a mission.

Also, during the war the "backyard" craftsmen were busy making and selling cigarette lighters and other such items that might fit into the display.

Now, how do you get it to England and into Ralph Franklin's hands? Taking it yourself is the best way, or sending it along with a friend who is going over the pond and into Bedfordshire in pursuit of the 306th. Arrangements have also been made for you to ship it over at domestic postal rates, using the address listed below:

The Historian
HQ, 3rd Air Force
Historian's Office
Attn: Dr. Sleight
APO 09459

Such contributions will be picked up periodically by Franklin or Walter Albertson, a 369th mechanic, who has lived in England for years.

So you have no such souvenirs, but want to participate? Send your checks to our treasurer, Robert Houser, and he will transfer funds periodically to England in the most advantageous way. Note on your check "Thurleigh Museum".

306th MAIL ORDER MEMORABILIA

Send this form and check to 306th Bomb Group Association to:
Jack Frost, PO Box 13362, Des Moines, IA 50310.

Squadron Golf Shirts		
Embroidered B-17, Squadron, Group (circle size)		
367th red	M, L, XL	\$20.00
368th white	M, L, XL	\$20.00
369th green	M, L, XL	\$20.00
423rd blue	M, L, XL	\$20.00
306 Cap, Grey, Embr. 306 BG & B-17		\$10.00
B-17 Gold Color Pin, Lapel or Hat		\$5.00
306th Patch 2-1/4 in. without First over Germany		\$5.00
306th Patch 3 in. with First over Germany		\$5.00
306th Patch 5 in. Group Logo		\$5.00
367th Patch 5 in. in Full Color		\$5.00
368th Patch 5 in. in Full Color		\$5.00
369th Patch 5 in. in Full Color		\$5.00
423rd Patch 5 in. in Full Color		\$5.00
306th Decal with First over Germany		\$0.50
306th "Black Thursday" Photo in Full Color		\$3.00
Shipping and Handling - Up to 2 lbs. per package		\$3.00
Shipment via Priority or 1st Class Mail		

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306th PUBLICATIONS

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

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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.

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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.

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- 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
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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

BRITISH FOUND OUR PLANE

Full Text of Official Report of a Ditching
by Robert Smith's Crew

FORTRESS B.17.F 229666 - DITCHED ON 21/5/43 at 1421 HOURS APPROXIMATELY 100 MILES EAST OF GRIMSBY Air/Sea Rescue #74//Air Sea Rescue Directorate, Royal Air Force

1. This aircraft was briefed to bomb Wilhelmshaven. The attack was made at 20,000 feet. Bombs were released on target, when, while turning away the aircraft was hit by a burst of flak under the wing which appeared to damage the superchargers of #1 and #2 engines. The subsequent loss of speed made the aircraft drop both below and behind the formation. By cutting across they managed to catch the formation again, but could not keep up, once again falling behind. Fighters immediately attacked, apparently in relays, as a running fight developed which lasted from approximately 11.00 hours to 14.00 hours as fresh waves of fighters came in to the attack. They were losing height at approximately 300 ft. per minute. At 20,000 feet #4 engine was hit by a burst of 20 mm. shells; #2 engine was also hit, the cowling being shot away and a fire started. The propeller ran away and caused such vibration that the IFF detonated after three minutes. At 17,000 ft. the oxygen system and the intercommunication failed.

2. Still losing height, they managed to get a little more power from their #4 engine, but could not maintain it. By now there were several holes through the nose, many through each wing, several flak holes in the bombbay doors, 10 or 12 20 mm. holes from *ball turret back*, although only two of these, one near the tail wheel and one in the tail gun compartment, were of great size. A two ft. square was also blown out of the port elevator (or left horizontal stabilizer) near the fuselage. It was quite obvious that it would be impossible to reach friendly shores and a decision had to be made whether to ditch the aircraft or to turn back over hostile territory and bail out. The decision to ditch was highly commendable in view of the fact that the IFF had detonated and the radio had been shot to pieces.

3. Weather conditions: The sea was calm, wind less than 10 m.p.h.; there was no swell and visibility was excellent.

Preparation for ditching

1. The fuel tanks read as follows:
No. 1 tank-95 gallons.
No. 3 tank & feeder-approximately 100 gallons.
Nos. 2 and 4 tanks-nil.

2. All guns and ammunition, with the exception of those in the top turret were now jettisoned. The crew then took up ditching stations, eight in the radio room, pilot and co-pilot in their positions at the controls. Height was now approximately 350 ft. At this moment another fighter came in to attack. After the first attack the co-pilot climbed into the top turret, and, waiting for the fighter to come in for a second attack, it closed in to point-blank range and put in a burst which shot it down immediately into the sea, making the 11th fighter claimed to be shot down by this aircraft that day. He resumed his place at the controls and strapped himself in again.

Ditching

By the time the height was 350 ft, the only serviceable engine was #3. The approach was made with about one-third flaps, the air speed falling steadily from 135 to 95 m.p.h. The engine was left on full only a split second before hitting, when it was completely retarded, throttled

back and the aircraft was touched down to the sea slightly tail down at 95 m.p.h. The captain stated his only difficulty was in judging the height, and in consequence he touched down about a second before he expected to.

Dinghy Drill

The crew members in the radio cabin were braced in accordance with the positions laid down by D.D.A/S.R., namely in two lines of three and one of two, the positions being altered by the captain in order to ensure that the heaviest men were up against the bulkhead. There was a heavy initial shock as the tail touched, followed by a lesser shock with considerable deceleration as the aircraft came to rest. It floated with water covering about three feet of the trailing edge of the wings. The tail surfaces were sitting well on the top of the water.

2. The crank handle of the bomb loading wrench, which had been left on the wall of the radio cabin, was wrenched off by the shock and hit two of the crew and rendered them unconscious, but the surge of water through the floor fortunately revived them.

3. The crew, which had carried out a dinghy drill on exactly these lines prior to every mission, quietly and in an orderly manner got out in their appointed order, through the radio room hatch which was already open, each man taking out the equipment with which he had been detailed. The pilot and co-pilot came out through their respective cockpit windows. The pilot unfortunately slipped and fell into the sea. He held on to a cannon shell hole in the left wing which had been ripped open to about twice its original size. He was pulled on to the wing very quickly. The dinghy release had been operated several times but the doors only partially opened, and were therefore in consequence pulled off by hand, the dinghies (rafts) were dragged out when they inflated at once, satisfactorily. The rear gunner was the last to leave the radio cabin and handed out two "K" type dinghies. Considerable difficulty was experienced in breaking the painter of the starboard dinghy. The captain had a knife which cut the painter just as the crew despaired of breaking free the dinghy. The crew got into the two A-2 rafts, secured them together, and paddled completely around the aircraft which was still floating well. After approximately three minutes, the tail went up and the aircraft gently sank.

Rescue

1. The crew was in very good spirits, so much so that one of the members took photographs with his camera, which he had salvaged. The pilot and the navigator were the only two who had been completely immersed, but all were drenched up to the knees. Water falling through the top of the radio room had made the rest of the crew fairly wet. The sun on the first afternoon was not hot enough to dry the clothing, although the crew partially stripped and rubbed down. This was later aggravated by the splash of the waves against the dinghies which tended to break over and wet them still further. As night came on, several began to shiver. Everyone spent a pretty bad night. The navigator suffered most and could only



Dan Barberis is at the lower right in this picture taken aboard the RAF Air/Sea Rescue craft that picked up Robert H. Smith's crew on 21 May 43 approximately 96 miles north of Thurleigh and 140 miles east. Smith is in front and to the right of Barberis, while Robert McCallum, the copilot is directly behind Smith, wearing a white turtleneck.

keep warm by cranking the emergency radio or rowing with the dinghy paddlers. When daylight came there was a dense fog which condensed on the clothing of the crew, and ice was tending to form on the hair and in the eyebrows of them all. This condition existed throughout the day and although no one became seriously ill, the pilot's opinion was that had they spent another night on the sea at least the tail gunner, and probably others, might have succumbed to the effects of exposure. The hood and aprons from the "K" type dinghies proved invaluable. These were cut off and used as head covers. All emergency equipment was stowed in these dinghies which were secured to the main rafts and the crew huddled together as closely as possible to keep warm. This was found to be of great assistance.

2. The equipment available was: i) The emergency radio and all the ancillary equipment for use with it. ii) Flare pistol and 12 parachute flares. iii) Four cans of fluorescent powder.

One escape kit was divided among the crew later the first afternoon, two were divided the next morning and two more early that afternoon. Shortly before being picked up one "K" ration unit was opened up for each life raft, which was eaten together with one box of "D" rations (chocolate) and the first drink of water was taken. When they were picked up that had left five "K" rations, three escape kits, and 14 pints of water.

3. Soon after getting into the dinghies the hydrogen balloon was filled to a diameter of three feet and an attempt was made to launch the aerial. This went up only 15 feet and so was pulled down again and inflated further to a diameter of approximately four and one-half feet. This time the aerial went up to about 150 feet and transmissions were commenced. They were made at the hour and the half hour for five minutes and often between these intervals. About midnight on the first night, an aircraft believed to be a Wellington passed over at approximately 1000 feet. The flare pistol was not ready and much fumbling ensued in getting it out and fitting the flare. The aircraft had passed overhead before the flare was fired, but fortunately it was seen by the aircraft which was from (RAF) 6 Group. It turned and circled as another flare was fired and an S.O.S. was made from the transmitter lamp.

4. The aircraft flashed something with its code lamp but this was not read because of the propellers and planes passing in front of the light. A landing lamp was put

on but never found the dinghies. After circling twice, the aircraft continued on course. It had obtained a "Gee" fix. The transmissions from the dinghy radio were picked up by shore stations and an approximate position was obtained, which, coupled with the "Gee" fix from the bomber aircraft returning from operations, enabled a search to be instigated.

5. The heavy fog developing over the area precluded the use of search aircraft. Surface craft, however, were instructed to proceed to the position given and to home on the dinghy transmissions.

6. The following morning the crew heard what they thought to be an aircraft, the motors would get louder and then die out. As they became louder the crew would shoot a flare in the hope of it being seen. This happened on several occasions throughout the day, once three bursts of gunfire were heard nearby. Thinking that these might have come from a ship, the crew blew whistles which were carried. Later it was discovered that the motors heard were those of the rescue launch and the shots were those fired at an old lifebuoy by the ship's crew. However, the fog was so dense that even though the whistles had been heard, the Royal Motor Launch was unable to find the dinghy for a considerable time.

During this time they were afloat, rationing was commenced. No one felt particularly hungry or thirsty.

Remarks

1. The crew emphasized particularly the fact that the captain of the aircraft had insisted on constant ditching drill. Prior to each mission each member of the crew, when time permitted, carried out a complete drill. On the morning of the mission, when time was short, the crew was called into the radio room while each member pointed out his position on the floor, and told the pilot what he had to do when the ditching order was given. Also at this time all "Mae Wests" were checked for holes and all the ancillary equipment was checked over.

2. As a result, ditching was entirely successful and the crew abandoned the aircraft without the slightest difficulty and succeeded in getting out all of the equipment.

3. The use of the dinghy radio can be considered to be the main factor in the success of the rescue, especially in view of the dense fog that developed.

Cont. on pg. 7

Rare Record Highlights Archives' Problems

In researching the 306th, one becomes well acquainted with the collection of materials housed at National Archives in Suitland, MD. Huddled just inside the southern loop of the Washington Beltway, the Archives building is a vast storehouse of arcane information about our government and its myriad branches.

What is of interest to the 306th Bomb Group personnel is that in this vast reservoir filled with paper are those records of the 341 missions flown by the 306th between 9 Oct 42 and 19 Apr 45. Or, that was the way it was planned. For reasons known to no person today several of these mission folders are missing. Were they stolen, were they dropped in the wrong box upon being returned from the reading room, or did they fall behind some shelving or a cabinet and are known only to those furry little creatures which may inhabit dark corners, under cabinets, etc.

Some are just missing, and no one at Archives seemed unduly concerned, not because they are not vigilant in their duties, but because today they have not the slightest idea as to where to search.

We do know that the 306th personnel at the end of the war followed directives from Washington and were

careful in trying to assemble all of the pieces which should have been accumulated over the complete span of missions. Each new folder as it was created and filled with the data that came to it from Intelligence, from Operations, from Engineering, from Personnel, and from other offices on the base was thereafter closely guarded to assure that pieces were not borrowed and not returned.

At the end of hostilities the Intelligence staff took seriously the problem of completing all files, packing them properly and shipping them off to Washington. As 306'ers of long service left the unit, it often fell to those who came after us to follow up on this function. Again, evidence indicates that they were indeed vigilant.

But what we have today is an incomplete record of the 306th, with various bits and pieces not running consistently through the collection. In a few cases there is only a single sheet of paper, and in a dozen or less there is nothing. This author believes that theft in years between probably 1950 and 1975 by writers or others who may have been given access to these classified documents, accounts for much of the leakage.

Having worked in these documents between about

1975 and 1990 on a number of occasions I found that things I saw early were not always there when I looked again to verify some fact or to seek to expand the 306th collection, which is now contained in some 35 three-ring binders. It is the heart of our ability to provide Mission Reports on your request, and to furnish data for publication in 306th Echoes. It is very inconsistent.

Now, all of this is a very long lead in to a piece of data which I only ever found about one mission. This is for the trip to Rubland, Germany on 12 September 1944, and is the report on men Wounded in Action or Killed in Action, and who returned to Thurleigh. (The subject of Missing Aircrew Reports is handled by a separate office at National Archives and has also had problems in retaining its files inviolate.)

So, as a part of this issue of Echoes we are including that single report, which is almost entirely of Gordon Donkin's 367th crew, with only the last two names being men of the 423rd. Tuers, Colvin, Morrow, Bonem and West are on our mailing list, while Donkin, MacDonald and Jagnow are known to be deceased.



Donkin's plane still "too hot to handle" at Manston 12 Sep 44

Name	Position	Diagnosis	Analysis of Wounds, Disposition
Gordon L. Donkin, 1st Lt.	Pilot	WIA - Laceration, rt eyebrow, moderately severe	Incurred wound on return from operational mission. Plane crash landed due to mechanical failure caused by enemy action. Hospitalized at station dispensary, Manston, Kent.
Donald C. MacDonald, 2Lt	CoPilot	WIA - laceration of flexor tendon, rt. hand 5th finger, moderately severe.	Incurred on return from operational mission. Plane crash landed due to mechanical failure caused by enemy action. Hospitalized at station dispensary, Manston, Kent.
Gerald A. Weiler, 1 Lt	Navigator	WIA - Puncture wound left buttock. Lacerations right palm & right side of forehead. First two moderately severe.	Same as above
Arthur Hostetter, Capt	Bombardier	KIA - 3rd degree burns entire body surface.	Incurred during crash landing on return from combat mission due to mechanical failure caused by enemy action.
Clarence B. Tuers, S/Sgt	Engineer	WIA - Shell wound (cannon). Multiple left shoulder, left & right chest. Moderately severe.	Due to 20mm cannon burst from enemy fighter aircraft. Hospitalized at Ramsgate Convalescent Hospital.
Willard H. Colvin S/Sgt.	Radio Operator	WIA - Wounds from flak, multiple back, hip and neck; slight	Due to flak from enemy anti-aircraft guns, incurred while on combat mission over Germany. Hospitalized at station dispensary, Manston, Kent.
Lawrence G. Jagnow, Sgt	Waist Gunner	WIA - Bruises, generalized, moderately severe.	Incurred when patient bailed out of plane which caught fire on return from operational mission. Hospitalized at station dispensary, Manston, Kent.
Norman Morrow, S/Sgt	Ball turret	WIA - Bruises, generalized, moderately severe.	Incurred when patient bailed out of plane on return. Hospitalized at station dispensary, Manston, Kent.
Eppler, Jack B. S/Sgt.	Tail gunner	KIA - Shell wound (cannon), puncture upper chest thru the sternum, bilateral, bronchial, thorax, fatal.	Due to 20mm cannon burst from enemy aircraft in Berlin area.
Joseph F. Bonem, Sgt.	Tail gunner	Anoxia, moderately severe.	Cause of anoxia: Mouth piece of oxygen mask freezing up. Hospitalized at station dispensary, Thurleigh.
West, Henry C. S/Sgt	Radio operator	ITA - Sprain, right ankle, severe.	Due to evasive action during enemy fighter attack. Hospitalized at station dispensary, Thurleigh

Tell us who we see here...



These photos were furnished recently by Billy Casseday, 369th pilot and squadron operations officer, thus we are sure these are all 369th crews. The pictures were taken between Mar '43 and mid year '44. If you can recognize anyone in any of the pictures please let the editor know which picture(s) and who the person(s) might be. Then, perhaps, we can work on the total identification. Working from the top left, 5th pix includes Edward Murphy, Trygve Olson and Malcolm Phillips; the sixth picture includes Andrew Kata, Wally Siner and Duane Esper; In the 8th picture, the captain in the middle of the back row is William Thompson. These are the idents Casseday had put on the backs of the three pictures.

New Directory Ready

A new directory dated 10 Jan 2000 is now available, with the 306th mailing list updated to that date. This continues our practice of producing a new 306th Bomb Group Association Directory as each printing of 50 copies is exhausted. We note that addresses are changing at a furious rate, and that our old practice of producing a directory every two years was expensive and was very quickly going out of date. The new directory is available from the Secretary, and will be mailed to you immediately upon receipt of your check for \$10. This is the fourth directory produced since this change in production

policy. One of the problems we are now facing is that of keeping up-to-date on changes in telephone numbers and Zip codes. We ask your cooperation on both of these items, and would ask that you verify your present mailing label, and if you have changed telephone numbers, your Zip code or your marital status in the past year or to fill out the coupon at right and return it to the Secretary. If at the same time you want a new directory, just attach your \$10 check and we will respond to everything.

name _____
 address _____
 city, state, zip _____
 telephone # _____
 wife's name _____

Mail to the Secretary
 5323 Cheval Place
 Charlotte, NC 28205

Mission Critiques Often Prepared by Col. Putnam

Col. Claude Putnam, third commanding officer of the 306th (17 Feb-20 Jun '43), was an outspoken man, and one who had no fear of provoking his own commanders in comments and recommendations on the future conduct of combat missions. He provided these unsolicited directives on several occasions until told to cease.

19 May 1943

1. It is recommended that the cancellation or postponement of takeoff for combat missions be decided on and so coordinated between control officers with the information available to them, that the message may reach the operational stations at least a few minutes before the scheduled takeoff time. On this mission 12 ships of the 94th Bombardment Group (H) had already taken off before the word was passed down to this station that the takeoff had been delayed a half hour. Owing to the peculiar weather conditions, it was impossible to bring them back into this field, and they had to be sent to Bassingbourne for refueling before another takeoff. This caused no little confusion both here and at Bassingbourne.

2. It is recommended that more consideration be given to the difficulties and hardships encountered when several different loadings are sent down, previous to a mission. In this case our ships were about 80% loaded when the final change of ordnance personnel worked far into the night, undoing the work they had so assiduously performed previously, resulting in dangerous loss of sleep to these men, and, what is more important, a definite drop in morale. This is only a natural psychological reaction to these conditions, and the men themselves are not to be blamed for it.

3. On this mission the poorest piece of headwork was done by the leader of one of the other Groups. He attempted to get into our Combat Wing formation, and though he was not entirely successful, he needlessly exposed one Group to attacks from fighters, as well as raising havoc with the bombing run of the Composite Group of the 101st Combat Wing.

The leader of this offending Group brought his formation up alongside the Composite Group which was flying high off the lead Group. He fired a flare and attempted to move into the position

occupied by the Composite Group, but was not allowed to do so until after several attempts, he accomplished his purpose.

The two Groups then played a game of aerial tag, while lustily shooting flares to indicate that each knew the other was wrong. We are convinced that we were not wrong, since the leader of the Composite Group was one of our Squadron Commanders, flying near enough to the Lead Group to identify the planes in the high squadron as belonging to his own Squadron. During this jockeying the Composite Group was thrown far enough out on the turn at the I.P. to cause considerable difficulty on the bombing run.

The problems presented by this incident are many. In the first place, the present use of flares, with the coordination and knowledge displayed, does not seem to have solved the problems of Group identification. Secondly, a better quality of "battle thinking" must be developed in order that such a thing is not allowed to happen again. Thirdly, a closer coordination must be developed between the Combat Wings, and among the individual Groups, so that a rendezvous may be affected without any possible chance of a recurrence of this incident. In connection with this last, it is felt that the choice of Leicester as one end of the rendezvous line was not too well made, since it involved a concentration of unassembled Groups and Combat Wings at such a position that such a thing as did happen could happen, which is really at the root of the whole trouble.

4. Again members of the 92nd Bombardment Group abandoned their assigned positions in the Combat Wing formation at a crucial time. It is again recommended that this Group not be required to participate in Combat missions until such time as they demonstrate proficiency in maintaining the Combat Wing formation.

5. It is recommended that the present available incendiary clusters not be carried into enemy territory until ballistic data is definitely established which will allow precision incendiary bombing with confidence commensurate with demolition bombing. This Group feels that the risk involved in carrying such a load into Germany is all out of proportion with the results attained.



367 Ordnance Men

In our 306th picture collection it is difficult to find three photos of groups taken at different times, and for which identifications exist. Broadus Burgess recently submitted three photos of the 367th Ordnance unit, which he had collected, and which he identified, dated and sent home from Thurleigh.

Top picture taken in Aug 43, left to right: standing: Alex Balacki, Warren Grey, Bernard Dyball, Donald Siewert, Broadus Burgess, John Gorman, Everett Roush and Stanley Poplawski. kneeling: Darrell Elkins, Nick Devereux, Gus Kramarsic, John Elko, Hubert Blessinger, Walter Lenart and Joseph Poprocki. sitting: Joseph Wallace, Joseph Barber, Milton Miller and John Chaperlo.

Middle picture taken in Dec 43, standing: Roush, Dyball, Gorman, Siewert, Wallace, Burgess, Balacki, Blessinger, Poplawski, Poprocki, Laddie Benes. kneeling, Elkins, Kramarsic, Elko, Grey, Devereux, Lenart, Waldemar Theefs, Miller, Barber, Chaperlo.

Bottom picture, taken 25 Feb 45, front: John Foulkes, Arnold Scheer, Miller, Wallace, Lawrence Holt, Roush and Elkins. middle row: Chester Dygus, Grey, Harry Warn, Siewert, Chaperlo. top row: Dyball, Blessinger, Gorman, Elko and Poprocki.



There are five living members of Paul Martin's 1944 crew from the 367th, and four of them gathered this summer at Burns Roper's home on Cape Cod for another reunion. Roper is at the left, and onward are Art Trimble, navigator, George Bachmann, waist gunner, and Frank Whitney, radio operator. Roper was the copilot. "We didn't realize how special our crew was until we got back together in 1982," writes Trimble.

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 Bomb Group Association
P.O. Box 13362
Des Moines, IA 50310

DATE _____

Ming Rose Looks Back at '42-3 Days

Ming Rose is now 88 years old, but his mind is sharp, and he writes interesting historical notes on the 306th. He was the Group's first finance officer, arriving in June '42 at Wendover, UT, and served until Jun 43 when he was transferred to First Bomb Division. Here are edited snippets from a December letter to the editor:

Nice article on Father Poletti. I went to Thurleigh at the same time he did and I was the first finance officer. He had taken his poverty vows and had allotted all of his pay, as he was advised that everything was furnished overseas. They were wrong. Some of us had to finance him for several months until we could have the U. S. straighten out his allotments. There were costs for Club dues, PX, etc.

When we were at Ft. Dix, NJ, getting ready to ship out I went through their warehouse and took boxes of pay forms and an old typewriter. Good thing, as nothing was in England when we arrived.

Col. Overacker, when he retired sold real estate on my Godparents' Spanish Land Grant in Marin County, CA. He contacted me when he moved to Denver. He reminded me of when he set up a Prophylactic Station in Bedford, and the city fathers made him remove it.

I was at Thurleigh until George Robinson took command, and they sent me up to Division headquarters to establish a fiscal office, where I stayed until Dec 45. Gen. (Howard M.) Turner "froze me" as he wanted me to go to Germany for the air occupation. But in Dec Gen. (James H.) Doolittle issued orders deactivating the command.

I remember Ray Check and all the rest of those great guys. I ran into Ray's brother in Hawaii in 1962 and he asked all about him.

When the war wound down, I played lots of golf with Gen. Turner. He was a scratch player and I had been a caddy in my younger days for five years. We took an old C-47 from Alconbury and went to Scotland and Liverpool.

Doc Shuller was my roommate at Headquarters for the last two years of the war. We still keep in touch. Our other roommate was Marvel Davis, who had been a pilot in WWI. He ran against Truman for senator of Missouri and lost. After the war he ran as Republican candidate for governor of Georgia and lost. He was a prominent attorney in Kansas City.

Pardon the errors, as I am partially blind.

Can You Find These People?

We've lost a few, mail being returned, and the secretary has tried but failed to trace people to their new haunts. Can you help? We've listed the name, unit, and the last known address we had. We attempted to contact each person by telephone but could not reach them. If you succeed, send new information on to the secretary so that they can be re-entered on our mailing list.

Ted Bush GP
PO Box 83
Olustee, OK 73560

Ralph F. Clark 423
182 Industrial Way, Ste 16
Redwood City, CA 94063

Robert E. Cory 423
17430 N 124th Ave
Sun City West, AZ 85375

Charley Dikmak 367
111 Greenwood St
Dedham, MA 02026

Leland A. Dowden 369
3400 Wagner Heights Rd, #259
Stockton, CA 95209

Stan Henceroth 367
8917 E Palm Tree Dr
Tucson, AZ 85710

Frederick C. Hocker 369
4 Fisher Dr
Bloomington, IL 61701

Sidney S. Miller 367
20 S 3rd Ave, Apt 202
San Mateo, CA 94402

Charles W. O'Connor 367
11 Hop Brook Rd
Brookfield, CT 06804

Odis G. Pearson 423
1218 E Cleveland Ave, Spc 63
Madera, CA 93638

Alfred E. Simmen 368
4866 James Ave
Castro Valley, CA 94546

Mrs Louis J. Thomas 367W
96 Mendota, St
Mansfield, OH 44903

Mrs. Gerald Walezak 423W
3117 W. Dousman St
Milwaukee, WI 53212

LTC Romulus R. Roberts 423
1709 NE 15th Ave, #1
Ft Lauderdale, FL 33305

RAF Liked Our Efforts

"More planes over the target on more days of the month" was the constant demand from Washington addressed to Gen. Eaker and the Eighth.

In mid October 43, Gen. H. H. Arnold wrote Sir Charles Portal: "...we are not employing our forces in adequate numbers...On my part, I am pressing Eaker to get a much higher proportion of his force off the ground and put them where they will hurt the enemy..."

On 21 October Portal took a different tack from Arnold: "The U. S. Eighth Air Force has earned for itself during the past weeks a reputation that the Royal Air Force will never forget. The Schweinfurt raid may well go down in history as one of the decisive air actions of this war, and it may prove to have saved countless lives by depriving the enemy of a great part of his means of resistance."



Aldo Romanin's 369th Crew

Front, left to right: William C. Barr, Edward J. Sadkowski, Richard M. Kutz and Lyle E. Gill; back row: Milton E. Hanson eng, Thomas P. Carney N, Bill Lewis ro, Aldo Romanin P and Arthur Tordoff CP.

Two Days at Sea (from pg. 3)

4. The captain stated that immediately after ditching they were sighted and orbited by another B-17, at 100 feet. If this aircraft transmitted, and no signals were received, it would have been too low to have sent an effective signal.

5. The pilot did not inflate his "Mae West" until after he had fallen into the water. This may have led to serious results. Four "Mae Wests" would not inflate (possibly faulty maintenance).

6. In spite of the fact that the camera hatch doors had broken in on impact and water flooded into the radio cabin, the aircraft floated for three minutes. Empty fuel tanks no doubt greatly added to the flotation quality.

7. The distress of the crew on the first night suggests that weather covers would be a good addition to the A-2 raft.

8. The Royal Motor Launch radio operator stated that he had difficulty in taking bearings on the automatic signals from the dinghy radio transmitter. When transmitting, constant speed should, if possible, be maintained to ensure as far as possible a satisfactory taking of D/F (direction finding) bearings. If constant speed is not maintained there will be a tendency for the signals to become unreadable due to fading out of the signals.

cont. on pg. 8

The Crew	E/A	Dec.	Dispositions
Robert H. Smith, Pilot		DFC	Tour; K 10/9/43 U.S.
Robert McCallum, CoPilot	1	DFC, PH	KIA 14/10/43
Dan Barberis, Navigator		DFC, PH	(18), POW 28/7/43; Living
Wayne J. Gray, Nose Gunner	2	AM,PH	Tour; Deceased 8/9/83
Hendrick Kale, Radio		AM,PH	(5); Living
Bennett F. Buchanan, Engineer	2	PH	Tour; Living
Arthur R. Adrian, Ball Turret	3	AM,PH	KIA 26/11/43
Zygmund C. Warminski, Waist Gunner		AM,PH	Tour; Deceased
Clarence W. Durham, Waist Gunner	1		Tour; Unknown
Billy Lamb, Tail Gunner	2	PH	POW 24/7/43; Deceased 1984

E/A - Enemy aircraft credited for this mission; Dec. - Decorations awarded for this mission only; Dispositions as far as is known: Tour was 25 missions; () - Total missions flown by individual



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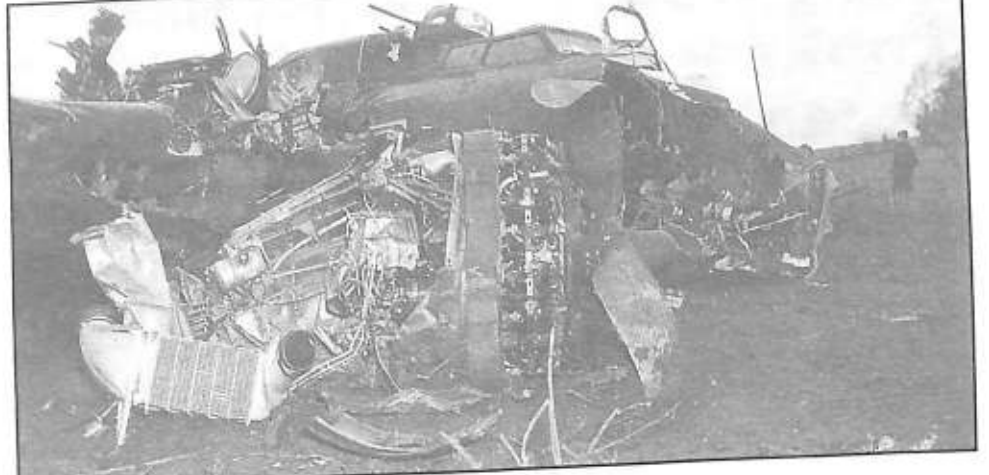
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The end of 'Liberty Belle' 42-5889, crash landed on 9 Oct 43, returning from Gdynia, Poland. Gustave Holmstrom was the 369th



Long way back from Halberstadt 11 Jan 44. Checking damage, Bill Young CP, Ken Dowell P and Dennis Sharkey N.



C. O. Smith crashed 31 Dec 43 in bad weather landing. 367th.



Two planes crashed at Thurleigh 26 Mar 44. This is Clifford McBride's 369th plane.



Lost brakes on landing in early 44. Big repairs to have it back flying until 21 Mar 45. 368th.



May have been Bill Tarr's 369th plane 11 Apr 44 when both navigator and bombardier were KIA.



A crash landing at Thurleigh, late 43 or early 44.

306th Officer Inventories

	Col.	LtCol	Maj	Capt	1Lt	2Lt	WO Chief	JG	FO
1 July 42	1	-	7	6	31	200			
10 Jan 43	1	2	7	38	105	82	3		
1 Jan 44	1	5	21	55	129	228	3	7	
1 Jul 44	1	4	22	55	173	195	1	1	6
15 Jan 45	1	5	17	76	137	219	1	1	32
1 May 45	1	5	18	65	154	185	1	2	58

Additions

- Mrs. Robert Armstrong, 112 Granada Ln, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082 369W
- Frank N. Childers, 683 St Rt 141, Gallipolis, OH 45631 449
- Michael Greene, 7615 Crawford Ct, Alexandria, VA 22315 369S
- Loring Kutchins, 785 Tree Ln, West Chester, PA 19380 369S
- Arnold Sherman, 1071 Otisparagon Ct, St. Louis, MO 63146 449
- Lemuel L. Sibley, 7220 Pine Dr, Denham Springs, LA 70726 423

from pg. 7

9. After the aircraft submerged a quantity of wreckage floated to the surface. The crew did not inspect this although the sea conditions were such that it was quite easy to paddle back to the spot. It may well be that some articles of use might have been retrieved.

The wreckage of a B-24 bomber was seen on the sea. The aircraft is left behind floating on the sea.

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306th Bombardment Group
Sept 5-10, 2000

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