

306th Echoes

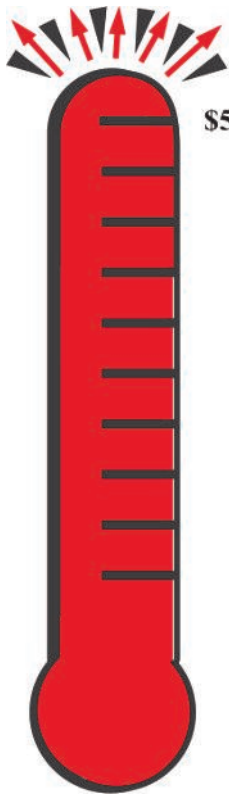


FIRST CLASS MAIL
PRESORTED
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 626
Abilene, TX

Return Service Requested

Mission Accomplished!

Rockwell Reports that 306th Families
Reach Goal to Move the Memorial



\$5,000 ~ Our Goal

At San Diego in October, the 306th BGA Board of Directors voted to fund the balance needed to move the 306th Memorial at Thurleigh. Plans are now underway to move the Memorial from its present location outside the former base location and position it at the 306th BG Memorial Museum complex. See the stories on this project in the last two issues of Echoes (April and July 2011).

In order to expedite the work to accomplish this move and assist Ralph Franklin in his management of the project, the Board voted to use treasury funds to complete the funding.

Rocky Rockwell suggested that families who have not done so by now, can still donate to the project, contributing to maintaining the Memorial at the new location. Send all donations to our treasurer, Joel LaBo. See page 2 for Joel's contact information.



God Bless America ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

An Atlantic Odyssey
By Philip L. Swift, 368th BS

I keep hearing the statement that "getting there is half the fun." "I didn't know where it came from, or when it was first said, but whoever said it was not talking about a time in the winter of 1944 when I and eight others tried to fly across the North Atlantic in a bright new B-17-G. The place we were trying to reach was Prestwick, Scotland, the destination of new aircrews and their planes, replacements for the U.S. Eighth Air Force, busy making daylight raids on Hitler's Germany. The Eighth, which lost more young airmen during those days than all the rest of the U.S. air forces combined, played the strategic role in the onslaught against the Reich, daily bombing rail centers, factories, bridges, oil refineries, anything that would cut into the war-making ability of the Germans. The Eighth Air Force paid a terrible price for less than three years of action—about 26,000 killed.

Much has been written about the mighty Eighth, its exploits still are seen on the television screen, Hollywood has made many movies about that fierce combat over Europe. In those movies, few of which are accurate, the aircrews are of sturdy stuff—handsome mature men, square-jawed and eager for action. There is John Wayne or Gregory Peck at the controls, fighting to keep aloft while engines smoke and sputter. In the back there is gallant Van Johnson, dying at his guns as he shoots another Focke Wulf out of the sky.

But in reality this air war was being carried out by a bunch of green kids, not far out of high school. Twenty-five was considered pretty long in the tooth. And so our little band of youngsters, ill-trained and inexperienced, but willing, set off in that bitter winter over the dark Atlantic in our new B-17.

We had trained as a crew for three months at El Paso, Texas. There were 10 of us at first. I was the tail gunner, turned 19 the month we went out there. Jim Burgess, the pilot, was 21 and Bob Bodenhamer, the copilot, was 19. There was Dean Sullivan, radio operator, 19; Joe O'Brien, waist gunner, 18; Loren Harter, ball turret gunner, 19, and three old guys—Keith Miller, engineer and top turret gunner, 23; Joe Dembowski, navigator, 24, and Joe Pinela, toggelier, 25. These were the ones who were aboard on the Atlantic crossing.

During the El Paso training we had with us a bombardier, but he was dropped from the crew before going overseas. The Eighth Air Force used very few bombardiers. Joe Pinela dropped the bombs but never looked through a Norden bombsight and wouldn't have known how the thing worked if he had tried to use it. He sat in the nose, watched the lead aircraft in the squadron, which did have a bombardier, and when bombs came out of it, he toggled a switch. Hence the sobriquet, "toggelier."

Over the New Mexico desert we practiced bombing, flew gunnery missions at 50 feet above the cactus, did some crosscountry work and at the end of three months, had a big graduation party with Stan Kenton's band furnishing the music. Then, by train, on to Lincoln, Nebraska, where we hung around for a few days getting new equipment, new flying suits to use at the 65 below temperatures over Europe, and a new airplane.

Now at this time we had no idea where we would be going. There was fighting going on all over the world, and we knew we could be sent to any theater of combat. So there was considerable speculation over one item in the equipment we were issued.

Continued on page 4

Digital Project Nearing Completion Final Work Underway and Schedule to Retire 306th Historical Collection Finalized

By
Dr. Vernon L. Williams
306th BGA Historical Project
East Anglia Air War Archives

Beginning on May 1st this year, the new 306th digital documents will begin to be added to the 306th website. The uploading and new web components will continue through the summer until the first part of October when the entire collection will be online. Click on the "What's New" button on the 306th website to see what has been recently added.

The schedule has been set for the transfer and dedication ceremony for the 306th Historical Collection as it moves from Abilene Christian University in Abilene, Texas to the Mighty Eighth Memorial Museum outside Savannah.

The following timeline has been established for the completion of all work in Abilene, the transport of all original materials in the 306th Historical Collection, and the dedication ceremony at the museum during the 306th annual reunion at Savannah in October:

- May 1—begin to upload new digital documents to the 306th BG website
- May 31—digitalization of documents completed at Abilene
- June 1—begin audits and inventories of the digital and original collections
- Oct 1-22—During this time frame, Marty Lenaghan will pick up the 306th documents at Abilene, Texas and transfer the collection to the Archives Division at the Mighty Eighth Museum at Pooler, Georgia
- Oct 15—Digital Collection online uploading completed
- Oct 26—Dedication and official transfer ceremony for the 306th BG Historical Collection at the Mighty Eighth Museum

For the foreseeable future, 306th veterans and families can continue to send additional historical materials to Abilene for scanning and website uploading. These new digital documents will be added to the 306th BG web archives. It is also not too late to send in materials now. Records and documents, movie film, photographs, letters, old Echoes, personal stories, correspondence, anything that relates to the veteran and WWII. All these items will be digitized. Send the materials to:

Dr. Vernon L. Williams, 306th BG History
ACU Box 28130, ADMIN BLDG 324
Abilene Christian University
Abilene, TX 79699-8130

SAVANNAH REUNION 2012 HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Marriott Riverside Savannah

Please call the hotel direct to make hotel reservations

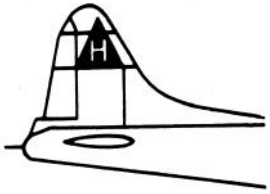
1-800-285-0398 or 1-912-233-7722

Ask for 306th Bomb Group reunion rates:

\$119.00 Single, Double Rooms—All One Price



Wayne Stellish at Thurleigh Guard Post, 1944. Stellish Historical Collection, 306th Bomb Group Archives.



Officers:

Donald Snook, President
president@306bg.org
 Walter Rozett, Vice-President
vice-president@306bg.org
 Barbara Neal, Secretary
secretary@306bg.org
 Joel LaBo, Treasurer
treasurer@306bg.org

Directors: Em Christianson, Walt Lubjacky; Charles Neal; Robert Rockwell, Allan Lawson, Vernon Williams.

Past President:

Walter Rozett, *past-president@306bg.org*

Long-Range Planning Committee:

Charles Neal, Chairman
Long-RangePlanning@306bg.org

Secretary:

Handles all changes of address, current records, obituaries, and correspondence.
 Barbara Neal
 P.O. Box 682530
 Park City, UT 84068-2530
secretary@306bg.org

Editor/Echoes and 306th BG Historian:

Dr. Vernon L. Williams
 ACU Box 28203
 Abilene Christian University
 Abilene, TX 79699-8203
vwilliams@acu.edu
 (325) 280-3399

Treasurer:

Send checks to:
 Joel LaBo
 875 S. Worth
 Birmingham, Michigan 48009
treasurer@306bg.org

British Representative:

Ralph Franklin
 National School Cottage, Mill Hill
 Keysoe, Beds MK44 2HP
 Telephone from U.S. 011-44-1234-708715
 306museum@nscmh.fsnet.co.uk
 Website: www.306bg.co.uk

306th Echoes is published four times annually: Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall. *Echoes* is mailed free of charge to all known addresses of 306th personnel, 1942-1945. Contributions in support of this effort may be remitted to the treasurer.

2011-2012 Student Interns:

Trenton Dietz (Russell Strong Intern)
 Jonathan Carroll (Thurman Shuller Intern)
 Randee Nelson (Peg Haapa Intern)
 Cortney Synder (Judge Donald Ross Intern)
 Becky Jeffries (Michael Roskovitch Intern)

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

Obituaries

Please send obits as soon as possible after the death, to secretary (see contact information at left on this page below).

The secretary has learned of the following deaths:

- **Akenson, John C.**, 367 assistant crew chief, of Oregon died 23 Dec 11 in Hillsboro at 92. John grew up on a homestead ranch near Roundup, MT and enlisted Dec 41 in the Air Corps at Missoula after two years of college. While at Thurleigh in 42-45, he met Ruth Gardie of Manchester, who had lost her husband in the war; they married in 45 and reared her son and two more sons they had together. Married 58 years (50 years in Cedar Mill, OR area), when Ruth predeceased him in 03. Survived by 3s, 7gc, 10ggc. No further info.
- **Bradbury, Albert "Brad" E.**, 4th Station Complement Flying Control officer, of Evanston, WY, died 4 Jan 11 at 93. A graveside service was held in Jan 11 at Mt Calvary (Catholic) Cemetery in Salt Lake City, and celebration of life and graveside services [sic] were planned for Evanston in Jun 11. Attended Stanford Univ; enlisted Jun 41 as Aviation Cadet at Moffet Field; Master's degree in Geology at Stanford. Position at Thurleigh is known thanks to Jul-91 Echoes' list of ground officers (no dates). He was shipped out for Thurleigh soon after his Feb 44 marriage in NY City to Shirley, who died in Mar 85. Sometime after Sep 44 (when the Allies had reached Belgium and liberated Brussels), he was sent as air traffic controller to an Army Air Corps base in Belgium (bases were operated through Spring 45), apparently having been transferred to a different Group. Post-war (honorable discharge as captain), he gave up a planned geology career to help his dad through a crisis in the family bank, First National Bank of Evanston, where he had a long career, as president for several decades. In Aug 87 he married Peg; they enjoyed trips with friends and several winters in Palm Springs, CA before she died in Apr 08. He loved fly fishing, bird hunting, golf, bridge, painting, operas, musicals, and Western music. He was a charter member of Evanston Rotary; helped create the Purple Sage Golf Course; was a member of the Salt Lake Country Club and the Desert Island Country Club in Rancho Mirage, CA; and commissioned the life-size bronze buffalo for Front Street in Evanston. Survived by 2d, 6gc, 6ggc, 3stepc, and stepgc.
- **Murr, George E.**, 367th co-pilot (Wilford N Bergener crew), of San Mateo, CA, died 20 Feb 11 at almost 87. The crew arrived at Thurleigh 16 Feb 45. George was survived by his wife of 59 years, Beverly, 4c, 5gc. Buried at Cypress Lawn Memorial Park, Colma, San Mateo Co, CA. No further info.
- **Phelan, Hugh E.**, 367th bombardier (Richard O'Hara crew) and Squadron bombardier, of Donaldson, AR, died 11 Feb 12 at Hot Spring County Medical Center, age 93. At Thurleigh from Jan, participating in the first daylight bombing raids over Germany, to Nov 43, he was the 60th officer to complete his tour. He was elected Circuit Clerk of Hot Spring County before serving as a rural mail carrier at Donaldson for 30 years. He served as 306th Board member '01-'08, and as our Little Rock Reunion Chairman in both '89, and, with his sons, Drs James and Dick and their wives, in '08; Hugh and many family members have been reunion favorites through the years. He was active in the construction of the current building of Donaldson Missionary Baptist, where he also taught Sunday School. His sweetheart bride of Dec 43, Evelyn, survives him, along with 2s, 5gc, 11ggc.
- **Rohan, Alton**, 367th (unknown duties) of W Bloomfield, MI, died 30 Mar 12 at 89. His memorial service was at Temple Shir Shalom, where The Lorraine and Al Rohan Madrichim Program is set up. His wife Lorraine predeceased him in 00 at 76. Survived by 3d, 6gc, 2ggc, and his special friend Lee Beck. No further info.
- **Sinn, Herbert E.**, 352nd Service Squadron admin inspection clerk, died 15 Dec 11 at 96. He was born in IA and was enlisted in Kankakee County, IL in Nov 41. He and his wife Carolianne were long residents of Hot Springs Village, AR. No further info.
- **Smith, "Ray" Reynold R.**, 369th Squadron (duty unknown), died 7 Apr 11 in Albany, NY at 95. Ray was a proud retiree of H. Horton & Company. Since '50 he was a communicant of St. Margaret Mary's Parish (All Saints) and a devoted daily eucharistic minister. He loved family and was an avid fan of all NY sports teams. Predeceased by wife Polly; survived by 4c, 4gc, 2ggc.
- **Stellish, Wayne**, 368th Flying Control section 'Caravan Operator' stationed at the end of the operating runway, died at 92 on 2 Feb 12 at Buena Vista Regional Medical Center in Storm Lake, IA, near his farm at Aurelia, IA, where he resided for the last 75 years. While stationed in England four of those years, he met Anne, from County Cork, Ireland; they married in 45 in England; Anne died in 01. They raised many hogs on the family farm before he retired from farming. Before '07 in a former farrowing house on his property, Wayne worked several years establishing a Memory Barn (which he opened by appointment for tours), filling it with three generations of farm and household items he'd collected. In nearby Cherokee, he was a member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Knights of Columbus, and VFW. Wayne enjoyed attending decades of 306th Reunions. His survivors include Margaret, who with her daughter Carol Petrucka, has been to many 306th Reunions, 4c (including 2 sons with him in '10 in DC), 9gc, several ggc.
- **Williams, Jess F.**, 369th waist gunner (Edward P Maliszewski crew), died 3 Oct 11 in San Antonio, TX at 87. He enlisted in Jan 42 and reached Thurleigh Sep 42, first assigned to G2 Map Office, an Intell unit providing maps of target areas to bomb groups. He was transferred to the 369th Sqd of the Group as waist gunner on 'Geezel' with Maliszewski, who had arrived 1 Mar 42. He flew 25 unescorted missions over France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany. Williams' first raid 3 Jan 43 (Nazaire mission) was one year to the day from his enlistment. He served in England 14 months. After the war he was self-employed, and later worked for Crown Central Petroleum as a Turnaround Planner for 37 years. Survived by his wife of 67 years, Lorraine, 2c, 5gc, 2ggc.

President's Corner



In a few months we'll be gathering for another reunion—this 2012 one in Savannah. A short time back there were doubts that we could continue into the present decade. But thanks to the interest and efforts of several old-timers, the involvement of next generation members as the Neals and LoBo, the administrative work of Vernon Williams and the inspirational support of the Franklins across the sea, we march on.

This reunion will be the 30th for the 306th BG meeting separately. It is a record for which we can be proud and one which many of our departed members helped bring about. Please add to the numbers of able-bodied 306ers coming to Savannah. It promises to be interesting and enjoyable and will help us recall and remember our old buddies from Thurleigh days.

Donald Snook
 President

Obituaries continued on page 3



Armored men wait for the next load.
 Wayne Stellish Historical Collection,
 306th Bomb Group Archives.

Obituaries continued from page 2

FAMILY:

Apology: The Secretary sincerely apologizes for having included in the Fall 2011 issue, information on the **wrong** Ruth Jang as a 306th-Family obituary for widow of Henry Jang (367th navigator, George Mapes crew, he died 21 Dec 1997). Our 306th Ruth Jang has emailed word that she is alive and well. She served in World War II in the Air Force, stationed at Moody Field, Valdosta, GA and then at Station Hospital at Mitchel Field, Long Island, NY.

- **Hickey, "Betty" Elizabeth J**, 89, died 16 Feb 12 in the Ft Belvoir, VA area, where they had moved in Oct 11, from complications of surgery. Many 306th widows and widowers were called by Betty in Summer 10, when she and others in Director Em Christianson's "Stay Connected" group, called to encourage Reunion attendance. All her life, Betty was a contemporary, active (& activist) person who managed to keep up with the times. Survived by her husband of 67 years, Col. John Hickey (bombardier, Dale Briscoe's 369th crew), who served as 306th President in 08-09. The day after Betty died, John had a stroke affecting his left side; he welcomes mail to his new address (since publication of our Sep-11 Directory): 9002 Belvoir Woods Pkway, apt 302; Ft Belvoir, VA 22060-2709] Also survived by 3c, 4gc, 6ggc.
- **Riordan, Miriam**, 91, died in Dallas 15 Feb 12 after a brief illness. In 04, after 59 years of marriage, she was predeceased by her husband, Col. Robert P "Rip" Riordan, 369th Squadron Commander and pilot; in 09 she also lost the eldest of their three sons, Robert, Jr, in 09. As the health of both had deteriorated late in their lives, her love was evident as she provided their care. She most recently attended our 2005 reunion in San Antonio, where she helped staff the registration desk. During her life she volunteered in various organizations and was an active participant in churches they attended, including St. Michael's All Angels Church in Dallas in these last 30 years. Survived by 2s, 9gc, 11ggc.
- **Stewart, Doreen M**, 88, died 10 Jan 11 at St Rita's Medical Center in Lima, OH. Her husband of 67 years, Harold T "H.T." Stewart (1208th QM Co; unknown duties) survives her in Lima. At Legacy.com (thanks to Dignity Memorial) by searching on her name, one can see what appears to be their wedding photo from Nov 43, and a lovely slideshow of photos of this wonderful woman and family through the years. She retired from Duff Truck Lines as an office worker and later worked for R.A. Flynn & Sons. She was a member of the Ladies VFW Aux Post 1275, St Rose Catholic Church, Allen County Women's Democratic Club, Daughters of Isabella, Our Lady of Fatima Circle 810, Lima Elks Lodge 54, Fraternal Order of Eagles Aux 370, and was a great bridge player. In addition to her husband, survived by their 9c, 22gc, 19ggc as of Jan 11.

Obituaries Not Recent; Not Previously Published (Arranged by Date of Death)

The Secretary thanks our remaining members from 1208th QM Co, for much help re their colleagues, a number of whom are in this column. If **YOU** have lists of your own Thurleigh colleagues that include hometowns, &/or Serial Numbers, &/or years/dates of birth, please forward copies to the Secretary to assist in her continuing efforts to identify all who served the 306th and to ensure the passing of each is reflected in the Echoes. (Secretary's address is on p.2 of every Echoes).

- **Arner, Willard C**, 1208th QM Co SSgt, of New Ringgold, PA, died 11 Dec 10 at Hometown Nursing and Rehab Center, Hometown, PA, at 90. He was a farmer from 48 until 96; a member of VFW Post 5069 Andreas; and an avid hunter. Helen, his wife for 60 years, preceded him in death 21 Feb 06. Survived by 2c, 3gc.
- **Toyek, Claude V**, 367th bombardier (Alden Mann crew & POW), originally from Milwaukee, WI, and longtime Southern CA resident, died 17 Jun 10 at 94 in San Dimas, CA. In the 15 May 43 Wilhelmshaven mission that hit secondary targets of Helgoland and Dune Islands, Toyek landed in the water and was picked up by fishermen north of Helgoland; POW Stalag 7A. In Oct 95, thanks to years of work by the widow of his co-pilot Kisamore (who died in the downing), Toyek and the crew navigator, Lawrence Wolfe, received their Purple Hearts. Toyek was predeceased in 96 by his wife Kay. Survived by 3c, 5gc, 3ggc. No further info.
- **Dorich, Leon B**, 368th pilot, of Great Falls, MT, died 30 Jan 10, at 91. He graduated from the Univ of MT in 41 before joining the Air Corps as a flying cadet in Jun 41 and graduating flight school in Feb 42. He served as a Flight Commander and Assistant Squad Operations Officer. At Thurleigh, Capt Dorich flew 19 missions before departing 7 Oct 45. In Nov 45 he returned to Great Falls and bought into a wholesale business which he sold in 53. He then had a 41-year career as a State Farm agent, retiring in 94. His wife of 33 years, Anita, died in Apr 81. Later he enjoyed the company of his longtime friend, Muriel. He was a 50 year member of VFW and belonged to many civic organizations. He was an avid bird hunter, fly fisherman, and golfer, playing in many tournaments, including MT State Seniors. Survived by 4c, 6gc.
- **Butler, Morris (nmi)**, 1208th QM Co, who had served as 367th Sqdn Adj and then EM Mess officer as of 31 Jan 45, making 1st Lt 16 Feb 45 and moving to 414 Air Services Gp 15 Apr 45, appears to be the man of that name who died 27 Oct 2009 in Oceanside, NY at 78. No further info.
- **Morgan, William "Bill" F**, 368th communications radar technician, long resident of Cumberland, MD, died 15 Aug 09 just across the state-line in Ridgeley, WV at 90. He arrived at Thurleigh 20 Nov 44. Post-war he attended business school and then worked at what is now Cumberland Concrete, where he retired as President and part owner in 81. He also was a bookkeeper and tax preparer for many contractors and business people. Over his life he was active in Methodist churches, the Chamber of Commerce, Western MD Contractors Association, LaVale Fire Dept, the September Singers, and at local nursing homes he enjoyed singing, and playing guitar, banjo, violin, mandolin and harmonica. His first wife Elizabeth died in 88. Survived by his second wife Marian in Cumberland, MD, and at his death by 1d, 2gc, 2ggc, 1step-s, 3stepgc, 6step-ggc.
- **Buttorff, Richard D**, 369th pilot, of Edmonds, WA, died 2 Sep 07 at 89. At Thurleigh from 12 Apr 44 to Aug, he flew 33 missions. After his active duty he continued in the AF Reserve, and had a 25-year career in the Dutch Boy Paint Division of NL Industries, retiring from both in 77. In a motor home, he and his wife toured the US, Canada, and Mexico, spending winter months in So CA. Dick was an avid golfer, tennis player, and enjoyed all spectator sports. A member of Christ Lutheran Church, he sang in the choir 25 years. He and his wife of nearly 60 years, Nelia, left no children; she preceded him in death in Feb 03.
- **Miller, Raymond Keith**, 368th flight engineer gunner (James A Burgess crew), of Seattle, WA, died 1 Mar 07 at 85 after a courageous fight against kidney, heart, and lung disease. The crew survived the crash of their B-17 in an aborted take-off on an icy runway, trying to leave Iceland en route to England. From Thurleigh, he flew 31 missions. Post-war, he and his wife Florence enjoyed life in the advertising and broadcasting industries in Los Angeles, New York, and back in Seattle, where they raised their children. In the 50s-70s he was very active in the local business community, the Seafair Commodores, Rotary, and Seattle Execs. They helped organize an all-Ballard High School reunion in 80, which then established the Golden Beavers alumni club. In 83 his beloved Florence preceded him in death. Survived by 3c, 8gc.
- **Courtney, Patrick A**, 1208th QM Co (1st Lt at Thurleigh) of South Boston, MA, died 4 Mar 06 at 95. His Thurleigh record indicates he also served in 1121st QM Co, and 1119th QM Ser Gp 10 Oct 43. Honored by his grandson at WWII Memorial, we learn Major Courtney was supply officer and served also with 305th BG, serving in England Jul 42 to Jun 45. Buried at Massachusetts National Cemetery, Bourne, MA with his wife Theresa, who predeceased him in Sep 99 at 91. No further info.
- **Weaver, Robert C**, 1208th QM Co (Pfc, unknown duties) originally from Fond du Lac, WI, died 29 Dec 05 at 81 in King, WI. In Dec 42 he enlisted at Fond du Lac as a Pvt in Air Corps with experience as a general office clerk. His vet marker is at the Central WI Veterans Memorial Cemetery in King. No further info.
- **Burch, Homer "Red" L**, 1208th QM Co, of Valley Mills, TX, died 3 Feb 05 at 80. At Thurleigh, he was quarterback of the football team. Post WWII, he stayed in the service serving in Korea and Vietnam, rising to MSgt. Survived by wife Nancy; no further info.
- **Petrishko, Joseph G**, 1208th QM Co (Sgt; unknown duties), formerly of St Clair, PA, died about 1 Jun 2004 in Lansdale, PA at 87. Born in 17 in PA, he was a single resident of Schuylkill Co, PA when enlisted at New Cumberland, PA in Feb 42. An obit was indexed for his death at Lansdale for the Williamsport, PA SunGazette 2 Jun 04. No further info.
- **Briggs, Glenn**, 1208th QM Co (Pvt, unknown duties), originally of northeast TN, is apparently the man of that name who died further up the Appalachians in Amherst Co, VA, 14 May 04 at 83. He enlisted in Jun 42 with civilian occupation as "Unskilled lumbermen, raftsmen & woodchoppers." No further info.
- **Reilly, John J "Jack" Jr**, 368th radio operator (Leon B Dorich crew, and earlier Joseph G Rethy crew), died 30 Jun 02 in Houston, TX where he had long lived, at 81. The crew arrived at Thurleigh 1 Dec 44 with Rethy, who was replaced in early Feb 45 by Leon Dorich. Post-war he graduated Univ of VA in 47, and moved to Houston that year where he had a long successful career in the welding supply business and was a long time member of St Michael Catholic Church. Survived by his wife of 52 years, Rose Marie, 4c, 6gc, 1ggc.
- **Buehner, George A**, 1208th QM Co (SSgt, clothing issue), of Schuylkill Co, PA, died 14 Jan 02 at 86. His wife Emma survived to Nov 10 at 90; she had been employed in the local garment industry and was a member of Zion Lutheran in Minersville. At her death, they were survived by 4c, 7gc, 5ggc. No further info.

PLEASE SEND IN YOUR ADDRESS AND CONTACT INFORMATION CORRECTIONS. WE NEED EMAIL ADDRESSES ON EVERYONE WHO HAS ONE.

Send corrections and additions to:
Barbara Neal, Secretary
P.O. Box 682530
Park City, UT 84068-2530
secretary@306bg.org

Atlantic continued from page 1

Each one of us was given a new parachute harness with a jungle pack attached. Mosquito netting, quinine, machete, the works. Someone at the Pentagon must have thought this would throw the Germans and Japanese into a terrible quandary—where are these guys going—Borneo, Guatemala, Congo? We were a bit puzzled, but I don't recall that we worried much about where we were going. With this jungle pack we didn't get summer uniforms.

The harness itself was the item we were more concerned with. No one had ever seen one like it. It was said to be British. It was so large that no one could adjust it down to his frame. And don't ever jump with a loose parachute harness. Instead of snapping a strap around each leg and one across the chest, this harness had a large buckle at the chest and all straps went into it. Hit the buckle while hanging from the chute and you would be instantly free of all hindrances. I never saw one before or after turning it in a month later. I never saw one again.

When it became apparent that we were flying to Europe, the harness was not a factor. We didn't need a parachute over the Atlantic anyway. Bail out there and you were dead in a few minutes. We all agreed that we would not jump in any case.

They had to tell us soon where we were going. There would be no need for mosquito netting and machetes, and after putting a few hours flying around Lincoln on the airplane, we were briefed and sent on our way. The route was to take us about 1,450 miles from Lincoln to Bangor, Maine on the first leg. From there it was on to Goose Bay, Labrador, where we would refuel for the long 1,500-mile trip over the North Atlantic to Keflavik, Iceland. From Keflavik there would be a shorter hop of 800 miles to Prestwick, Scotland.

These distances seem like a piece of cake for the jet travelers of today, but they were not that easy for a B-17. A jet-powered descendant of the Boeing bomber would make either of the longer legs of that trip in under three hours, cruising comfortably at 550 miles an hour. The jet, with its passengers sipping cocktails in a warm cabin would fly high over the weather at altitudes well above 30,000 feet. It would have an intensively trained pilot with thousands of hours of flying experience operating equipment so sophisticated that he could, on the ground before takeoff, program some flight course numbers, flip a switch and sit back and watch.

The B17, sleek as it may seem in photographs and on the television screen, was slow and had no cocktail bar. And the temperature inside was the same as the temperature outside. Cruising airspeed was about 150 and the average altitude flown on that trip was probably 8,000 feet, down there where all the clouds were. It took us probably eight and a half hours to fly from Lincoln to Bangor. Today a twin-engine Boeing 737 would fly that in two



Incoming personnel processing area, Goose Bay, Labrador, circa 1944. East Anglia Air War Archives.

and a half hours, getting a nice high altitude tailwind boost.

It was a night in mid-December when we left Lincoln Army Air Force Base and aimed northeast passing a little south of Chicago, close to Toledo and on to Maine. Daylight had arrived when we got to Bangor. We serviced the plane, stayed there overnight and left the next morning for Goose Bay, about 700 miles away.

It was cold in Bangor, very cold. But it was colder in Goose Bay, a bitter penetrating

cold. There was snow and cold like none of us had ever experienced before. Maybe Dembowski had. He was from Wisconsin. New York City has some pretty good snow storms

from time to time so perhaps Joe Pinela had gotten a brief glimpse of what we found in Goose Bay, and so too, perhaps O'Brien had seen hard winters in his town of Washington, Pennsylvania. But I was from Kentucky, Miller from Seattle, Sullivan from Arlington, Va., and the other three, Burgess, Bodenhamer and Harter, were from southern California.

We were high altitude fliers who operated in unheated planes at temperatures down to 65 below and we, of course, had warm clothing. It was state of the art stuff with fur collar and insulated lining. I was still cold. The barracks were cold, the mess hall was cold. What is my memory of Goose Bay? Cold. In the time we were there, I found one place which was warm enough to be comfortable. The base had a small library and it was heated. I spent a lot of time during the day reading.

Why did we stay at Goose Bay so long? Why didn't we just gas up and leave? The cold wouldn't let us go. Weather, of course, was a factor in determining when the planes would take off, but it wasn't too bad at that time, and we had a clearance to leave—an order to leave for Iceland.

The crew met at the airplane at about eight o'clock the night after our arrival, ready to start engines and depart. That's what we always did. Just get into the airplane, start the engines and go. But this airplane was tethered to the coldest ramp in the world. Someone said it was 40 below, and I believed it.

The wind was blowing and we were climbing around on the wings tying heaters to the engines and it didn't do much good. There were devices at the base called pre-heaters. They used kerosene and had a powerful blower. This pre-heater was placed on the ramp in front of the airplane and a long canvas sleeve was attached, one end at the engine, the other at the heater. This delivered hot air directly to the surface of the cylinders.

It seemed to me that our problem was in the number of heaters we could use. We had four engines and one heater. We would turn the heat into an engine and warm it, take off the canvas sleeve and put it on another engine, not an instant process, and heat that one. By the time we got to the fourth engine the first one or two were as cold as ever. It was a losing proposition.

After going through this heating procedure, Jim Burgess and Bob Bodenhamer climbed into the cockpit and tried to start the engines. They would hardly turn over. The oil in them was as thick as grease. They just wouldn't fire and following several more attempts and warming them, we gave up for the night after facing that painful wind for three hours.

The next night we were back. Same story except for a small success. We did get one started. You cannot fly to Iceland on one engine, though, so we went back to our frigid barracks.

I'm not sure why the third night was different. It certainly didn't seem any warmer. Maybe we had learned something. Maybe we kept the heaters on longer. Maybe Burgess and Bodenhamer had learned to prime a little more fuel into the cylinders. Whatever it was allowed the engines to start. They groaned and complained, they started without enthusiasm but they were running. A victory and our hearts were warmed. We sat there on the ramp with all four turning over, making some heat, the pilots waiting for instruments to indicate that all was well inside the churning crankcases, that cylinder head temperatures were coming up to green.

But the cold would not be denied. After taxiing out we taxied back in and took our old familiar place on the ramp. The oil was so cold and congealed the pressure would not go down to an acceptable level. We could not, with the oil pressure the gauges were showing, run the engines to full throttle for takeoff. It was back to the barracks after a night of near success, but ultimate failure.

On the fourth night we had to go through it all again. This night we won, if winning is achieving the ability to fly out into the black night over the stormy North Atlantic, feeling our way down a faint signal from a radio beacon toward the tip of Greenland and on to Iceland 1,500 miles away.

This night was Christmas Eve, 1944. I and the others had little time to think about Christmas while we crawled over that frigid airplane in the cutting wind. We went through the same motions we had been through the previous night and this time it started. Perhaps Burgess took a little longer this time, giving the heat a chance to build. But the oil pressure went down and we were able to lift the big bird into the night and turn east.

It was at about midnight, the time we took off. Nothing much for me to do for the next 10 hours. Dembowski had wanted me to help him navigate, but we were following a radio beacon and Joe didn't really have much to do either. We climbed to 10,000 feet and set our course on the low frequency beacon.

I thought about what I was doing just the year before and the year before that. The previous Christmas Eve, I had walked guard duty in a gentle snow at Montana State University where I was an aviation cadet. The Air Force had sent me there to learn some meteorology and physics and navigation and taught me to fly an airplane. I was to be a pilot, but someone suddenly realized there were far too many pilots being trained, and they washed out ten thousand. So I became a tail gunner. The year before that I was a senior in high school in Lawrenceburg, Kentucky. Here, I was a long way from Lawrenceburg. Whatever the measure, it was a long way from Lawrenceburg.

We wore on through the night. The cold turbulent Atlantic below, where death would come in 10 minutes should one be so unfortunate as to drop into it, really held no terror for me. I was young and, like most of the young, thought I would never die. Probably the others felt the same. Maybe not Burgess. He was flying the plane and was uncertain of his skills. Burgess, weighed with responsibility, had had little training for this sort of thing. To say that his instrument training was marginal is an overstatement. He told me 55 years later that when we crossed the Atlantic, he could barely fly by instruments. When we gathered in El Paso, Burgess was just out of flight school and B-17 transition, and had

Atlantic continued on page 5

Visit the 306th Web
www.306bg.org

Plan to Attend the Savannah Reunion at the Marriott Savannah Riverfront October 25-28, 2012

DONATIONS FOR THE 306TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Those who are able are asked to make an annual contribution to keep everything running smoothly in our Association. There are no dues—so your gift is needed to support the 306th operations. Your gift is tax-deductible.

Name

Street and No.

City, State & Zip

Telephone No. 306th Unit



Send to:
Joel LaBo, Treasurer
306th Bomb Group Association
875 S. Worth
Birmingham, Michigan 48009

Date

Atlantic continued from page 4

probably only 200 hours of flying time. That was not unusual. Most of the pilots were marginally prepared. Burgess loved flying, though. He never gave it up and after the war, pursued his craft, eventually becoming an airline captain. But today an airline looking at a pilot with the experience and training which Burgess had in 1944 would hardly let him peer into a cockpit, much less send him off across the ocean in charge of a new airplane.

Bob Bodenhamer, sitting at the controls next to Burgess, was even greener. He hadn't been sent through B-17 transition. He had just gotten out of flight school.

Not all the planes which left Goose Bay that night made it to Iceland. Some went down in the icy ocean, their crews never to be heard from again. But we made it to the island, although it was tough and go when we got there, fuel tanks nearly empty. We were at about 10,000 feet when land was seen below through a hole in the overcast. It was Iceland, of course. There isn't any other land around there.

When we made contact with Keflavik approach control we were advised that conditions at the field precluded landing, this after we had let down from 10,000 feet to about 2,000. The erratic weather was bringing periodic gales through every 15 minutes and to get on the ground one had to time the landing between those blasts. Keith Miller thinks that we then entered a period where we faced the most dangerous condition that we encountered during all our flying experiences. We were forced to begin a climb through the clouds to 14,000 feet, with heavy ice forming on the wings and engines. The airplane became almost uncontrollable as the ice changed the shape of the wings and it reached a point where pilot, co-pilot and engineer all thought we were going into a long spin into the ocean. At 14,000 feet we broke out above the clouds and the ice finally fell away. Nervous, with near empty tanks, we tried again and made it into the airfield at Keflavik.

It was Christmas Day, we hadn't arrived in time for dinner but the leftover turkey and potatoes and gravy seemed as tasty as my mother had ever made. The best thing about Iceland, we thought, was the temperature. It was warm, relatively so. The Arctic Circle passes through the northern tip of the island, and we hadn't thought of getting a respite from the bitter temperatures that we had endured in Labrador. But when we stepped out of the plane we felt as if we were in tropical heat. The temperature was above freezing.

Housing at the base for us transients consisted of a quonset hut with an oil stove and cots. We humble enlisted men were assigned one and the nobility of the crew, Burgess, Bodenhamer and Dembowski, all officers, were given another. They probably had sheets on their beds. No egalitarianism in the armed forces, although of the three branches, the air force is the most democratic.

Plans were to be on our way as soon as possible, but weather delayed departure for a day or so. There was little to do there, brief daylight at that time of the year (Keflavik is about 175 miles south of the Arctic Circle), and we were ready to get away when we fueled the airplane and started engines. This was to be a shorter leg—maybe four and a half hours, depending on the winds aloft. It is about 800 miles from Keflavik to Prestwick.

It turned out to be a very short run, for we were not to get off the ground that day. I settled down on the radio room floor, back to the bomb bay as we taxied out to the runway, pilot and copilot went through the usual engine checks and we were off at full throttle. The B-17 accelerated and began to get light, starting to bounce a little as a plane does when it nears flying speed and reaches for the air. The four 1,200 horsepower Wright engines were at full volume when suddenly they were silent. Burgess had abruptly pulled back the throttles and tramped on the brakes. Something was wrong, and he was trying to get this big heavy airplane stopped before we reached the end of the runway. He was successful. We stopped and taxied back to the ramp.

A B-17 can be pulled off the ground at about 90 miles an hour, depending on the load, but most pilots will prudently let it run to about 120 before lifting off the runway. In the case of this takeoff, Burgess had reached a speed of about 100 and eased the controls back a little when he realized that something was wrong with the ailerons. The plane was wanting to roll severely to the right and would not respond to correction. If he had continued the takeoff roll at full throttle and pulled the plane off the ground, we would have gone into a slow roll to the right and crashed. Better a few more days in Iceland.

But what had happened to the controls? The ailerons, the hinged control surfaces at the end of the wings, are moved by cables. The pilot turns the wheel to the left and the left aileron goes up, the right goes down. That turns the airplane to the left. So something was apparently wrong with the cables and that had to be repaired before another takeoff could be attempted.

The base at Keflavik was not well equipped for repairs and there were no real experts in adjusting B-17 control cables. A man was found, though, who could work on our plane and with his instruments did whatever one does to make the proper tension adjustments to the cables.

There has always been a mystery surrounding this mechanical difficulty, and the final judgment was that there was sabotage involved. The mechanic who worked on the cables apparently did not correct the problem and we were to suffer from that.

In the several days it took for the work on the cables, a new Icelandic phenomenon came on the scene. As we learned in our approach to Iceland, severe gales blow across the Atlantic during the winter of the year. There would be "wind warnings" posted. Such as "Notice—Wind Warning—70 miles an hour beginning at 1400." When we landed we tied our plane to the concrete with strong ropes and had piled sandbags on the wings and around the wheels. This was the only place I had ever seen that done.

But that wasn't enough. When the wind warning sign went up, someone was supposed to go out and sit in the airplane. So two of us drew that duty. We went to our B-17—two times, I think—and while the 70 mile-an-hour gale whistled, we sat there in the cold aluminum cylinder wondering what we might do if the plane escaped its tethers and blew away. As I recall, we were supposed to radio someone if this happened. But it didn't happen and we escaped the ignominy of crawling out of our wrecked aircraft. I am still wondering about what value we would have offered, caroming about inside a four-engine bomber, cartwheeling across an airfield in the grasp of a 70 mile-an-hour gale.

After several days of work by the technician, the authorities said our airplane was ready to go, cables taut, controls precise. After 56 years dates are a little foggy, but this must have been just at the end of December. The war news was good and bad. The Allies had the German army on the run, but the Wehrmacht and the Waffen SS suddenly launched a fierce attack in the Ardennes, and the Battle of the Bulge was underway. Another piece of news on the radio was that Glenn Miller, on a flight across the channel from England to France, was missing and presumed lost.

It was early in the morning when we went to our airplane and prepared for takeoff. The engines started and we taxied to the runway, ran the roaring Wright radials through their tests and were cleared for takeoff to Prestwick, Scotland. Again, I was sitting on the floor of the radio room as we started the roll down the runway. Dean Sullivan was sitting in his chair to my right. I looked up at him, and he crossed his fingers. He seemed to have some doubts about it all.

We were at full throttle, turbo-superchargers pumping 49 inches of manifold pressure for the cylinders to inhale. The plane moved toward takeoff speed—70, 80, 90—it began to bounce a little, seeking to free itself from the ground. Then suddenly, as before, the engines stopped. Power was abruptly pulled off and brakes applied. But this time the brakes didn't work and we were near the end of the runway.

From my position on the floor I couldn't see out. I knew what was happening through other senses but not from sight. So when the engines stopped, I thought the braking would not be a problem, and we would stop before reaching the end of the runway. I sat there waiting, my back to the door into the bomb bay. I first knew we had a problem, a big one, when we ran off the pavement and into the rocks at the end. I couldn't see this, of course, but when the plane began rocking violently and the noise of strained and tortured aluminum became deafening it was apparent that we were totally out of control and crashing across the rock-strewn ground.



Air crews and other Army Air Force personnel waiting for transportation, Transient Air Transport Terminal, Prestwick, Scotland, circa 1944-1945. East Anglia Air War Archives.

Then after four or five seconds of this violent and wild careening about, it was all over. All was smooth and serene. I thought: "Well, that wasn't so bad." I didn't know that we were at that time airborne. We were flying through the air. It was a very, very short flight.

The scene was this: As are nearly all runways, this one was built on what engineers call a fill. Dirt and rocks are pushed into an area to create a level plane on which to place the pavement. This usually means, and particularly on rough and hilly ground, that there is a substantial drop off at the end of the runway. Iceland has a rough, lava-strewn landscape, a mass of volcanic rock. At the end of this runway there was an abrupt drop of thirty to forty feet to the rocks below and it was through this airspace we were traveling when I, for two or three seconds, thought everything was okay.

It was a wild ride, albeit a short one, as we skidded across those rocks. The plane didn't go far, but when it stopped it was a total wreck. Why it didn't disintegrate into a huge fireball, I don't know. The landing gear was torn away and pushed into the fuel tanks. One hundred octane gasoline was all over the ground. The plane's spine was broken at the waist, the hot engines, broken from their mounts, drooped to the ground.

From the position where I sat I looked toward the rear into the waist. The ball turret, which protruded underneath the fuselage, was about eight feet in front of me. It hung from the top of the fuselage. The turret was electrically controlled and had a main power cable going down the column from which it was suspended. When we hit the ground the landing gear collapsed, allowing the belly to crash against the rocks erasing the ball turret, pushing its supporting column through the top of the fuselage. When that happened everything shorted out, and the scene in front of me was like a huge fireworks display.

There were five of us in that part of the airplane and four up front. Between us was the bomb bay, which had a narrow catwalk, and might slow one down a little. But the group in front lost little time in traversing the bomb bay. They thought they would have to scramble over us folks in the back on their way out. They said later that, as they charged through the door out of the bomb bay, expecting some hindrance from the crew in the back, there was no one in sight. We had left in record speed.

There are three hatches in a B-17, one near the nose just behind and below the flight deck, a small one under the stabilizer a little forward of the tail gunner's position and a large one in the waist. After skidding across the rocks, two of those were wiped out, so the waist hatch was our only exit.

Emerging through that hatch we saw that there was a peripheral figure involved in our dramatic arrival. About 30 yards away, just to the side of the path we had traveled, was a small building like a house trailer. It held radio navigation equipment and contained a gentleman who had the whitest face with the widest eyes I had or have ever seen. Not used to having a B-17 careening across his rocky patch, he was virtually speechless when we raced over there.

The plane must have made a deafeningly fearsome noise as it went by his front door, and when he got his wits back, he said it did. I told him, "You should have been inside." The noise, however, would have been much louder had spark touched gasoline.

The four from up forward arrived on our heels at the radio shack, and we stood for a moment looking at each other and back at the airplane. The interior of the shack was brightly lighted, but it was pitch dark outside. It took only seconds for it to strike me, and I think maybe Burgess, Bodenhamer and Miller all saw it at that same time. There was our crumpled bomber lying dead on the rocks in the Icelandic blackness. And the lights were on! Those little blue lights on the tail and the top of the fuselage gleamed as if nothing had happened for they were getting their full power. The main switch had not been thrown.

It is a basic doctrine in flying that in case of any accident, the main switch is to be turned off. This shuts down all power and prevents fire from electrical sparks. If the main had been off, when we hit the ground all the fireworks in the waist wouldn't have occurred. But there had been no chance to throw the switch before the ball turret struck.

We knew a crowd from flight operations would be on the way in a hurry. Fire trucks, ambulances, operations officers were sure to arrive soon. Burgess, against my judgment, although I remember saying nothing one way or another, determined to go back into the plane and turn off the switch. Miller volunteered to go with him, and the two entered the waist hatch, climbed through the length of the plane to the flight deck and shut off the power. In my view at the time it was a risky move, and I still believe it was. A thrown switch makes a spark.

And so we finished three-quarters of our journey, with a few cuts and bruises but alive. We had lost our airplane and were forced to turn to the Air Transport Command for a ride on to Prestwick. That wasn't to come for another two weeks so we settled in, the entire crew in a quonset hut. We had started our trip in 1944, it was now 1945. The day came when we boarded a freight-loaded C-54, took off and landed in Scotland, our fun journey over.

The crew was assigned to the 306th Bombardment Group near Bedford, England and many more perilous times were ahead. But that is another story.

Historical Work Nearly Complete

28,080 Hours Donated by ACU Interns & Dr. Williams

Since October 2007, Abilene Christian University history students have served as 306th BGA interns as Dr. Vernon L. Williams and his team digitized the massive historical archives that Russell Strong collected since the end of World War II. Total hours of work completed: 28,080. And more hours will be added to that total as the final work proceeds through May and the summer months, leading up to the project completion in October 2012. See story on page 1.

Obituaries continued from page 3

- **Dugard, William T**, 368th engineer (Leon B Dorich crew, and earlier Joseph G Rethy crew), of TN, died 15 Sep 2001 at 76. The crew arrived at Thurleigh 1 Dec 44 with Rethy, who was replaced in early Feb 45 by Leon Dorich. Post-war he stayed in the service, serving in Korea and Vietnam. Lt Col Dugard is buried at the West TN Veterans Cemetery, Memphis, TN. No other info.
- **Creasey, Frank Lee Sr**, 1208th QM Co (Cpl; unknown duties) originally from Stuart, VA, died 31 Oct 00 at 78 having lived for some years in Roanoke. Buried at Sherwood Memorial Park in nearby Salem, VA; about 3 years later his son, Frank L Jr, 57, was also buried there. No further info.
- **Peck, Warren G**, 1208th QM Co (Cpl, unknown duties) originally from MA, died 6 Sep 99 in FL at 79. Post-war he continued in the service through Korea and Vietnam. Lt Col Peck is buried at Bay Pines National Cemetery in Bay Pines, FL with his wife Gladys who survived to Nov 00. No further info.
- **Fink, Paul K**, 1208th QM Co (unknown duties), of Dearborn, MI, died 14 Jul 99. He had been a stenographer/ typist when enlisted in May 41 at Detroit as Pvt. He was in our Directories from 94 on; his wife Pauline survived to Oct 02 at 88. No further info.
- **Lakser, 'Max' Moses**, 1208th QM Co (Pfc; unknown duties) of Miami and later New Port Richey, FL, died 10 Feb 99 at 91. He enlisted in Apr 42 when not yet a citizen, having been born in Poland in 07. He is buried at Meadowlawn Memorial Gardens in New Port Richey, which later also handled the arrangements for his apparent wife, Hanna, who survived until May 04, at age 96; surviving were 2d, 4gc.
- **Rethy, Joseph G**, 368th pilot, died 21 Sep 98 at Orange, CA, at 76. Reported to Thurleigh with his crew on 1 Dec 44; at least by early Feb 45, Leon Dorich replaced him as the crew's pilot. Unknown whether he transferred to base due to pilot need or other reason. Survived by his last wife, Virginia; they married in Dec 83 in Orange. No further info.
- **Day, Norman Lee**, 1208th QM Co (laundry, TSgt) of Lockport, NY, died 12 Jan 98 at 79. He reported to Thurleigh 1 Nov 42. His widow Sarah survived to Nov 07 at 81; his daughter Jane Arsenault survived to Aug 05 at 58; his son Steve survived to Apr 07 at 67; all are buried at Long Lake Cemetery, in Adirondack Park, NY. No further info.
- **Boyles, Albert J**, 1208th QM Co, of Whittier, Los Angeles Co, CA, died 11 Dec 97 at 93. He arrived at Thurleigh 29 Aug 43 in 367th Sq; moved to 1208th 24 Feb 44; went to hospital 11 Apr 44; 15 Apr 45 moved to 414th Air Services Gp as T/5. No further info.
- **Maxwell, Robert L**, 369th bombardier (James Edeler crew), died 13 Dec 97 at 81. He arrived at Thurleigh 11 Jun-44 and completed his tour in Oct. In our '94 Directory he was listed as a widower in Newcomerstown, OH, where he is buried at West Lawn Cemetery. No further info.
- **Harris, Reginald G**, 369th & 367th gunner (original with William Casey crew & POW), of Houston, TX area, died 5 Dec 96 at 57. POW at Stalag 17B when downed (Alden Mann crew) in Wilhelshaven mission 15 May 43 that hit secondary targets of Helgoland and Dune Islands. Predeceased by wife Eileen. No further info.
- **Lillywhite, William H**, 1208th QM Co (Pfc; unknown duties), of East Hampton and later Southampton, Long Island, NY, died 7 May 96 at 88. When he enlisted in Apr 43 he was married with post-graduate education and the civilian occupation of railroad conductor. His apparent wife Helena survived him to Oct 96 at 86. Reportedly survived by at least 1d; no further info.
- **Bills, Eugene R**, 1208th QM Co (Pvt, unknown duties) originally from MO, died 19 Jan 92 at 69. He enlisted in Jan 42 at Jefferson Barracks, MO as Pvt in Air Corps, and is buried in Riverside, CA, at Riverside National Cemetery. No further info.
- **Threatt, Robert W**, 1208th QM Co (Pfc; unknown duties), originally of Chesterfield County, SC. Died 3 Sep 90, at 67. Post-war, he re-enlisted 2 Nov 45 as Pfc, undefined branch of service, for one year with his civilian occupation listed as "skilled occupations in manufacture of electrical machinery and accessories." A double marker at White Plains Baptist Church Cemetery in Jefferson, Chesterfield Co, SC, shows his wife Nell's name; she apparently survived him. Likely survived by at least 1s. No further info.
- **Dumenigo, "Don" Albert P, Jr**, 368th ball-turret gunner (Leon B Dorich crew, and earlier Joseph G Rethy crew) originally of NY, died 1 Apr 89 in Phoenix, AZ at 64. The crew arrived at Thurleigh 1 Dec 44 with Rethy, who was replaced at least by early Feb 45 by Leon Dorich. [Note: in Russell Strong's book of Combat Crews photos, p.177 in the back, non-indexed listing of non-pictured crews, an error for Rethy's 368th crew mistakenly listed the ball-turret gunner as Albert P Desrochers, who was instead on 367th crew of Joseph Hess. Per crew's tail gunner, Robert Schuberg, their ball-turret gunner's correct name was Albert P Dumenigo, Jr, known as "Don."] No further info.
- **Russell, John T**, 1208th QM Co (T/5, unknown duties), of Smartt, TN, died 3 Dec 88 at 71 in adjacent McMinnville, TN. His marker shows his rank as Cpl and middle name as Tillman. "J.T." was survived by his wife Sue R until Jul 92 when she died at 73. No further info.
- **Blay, Leo F**, 1208th QM Co (Pfc, unknown duties), originally from NH, died 21 Nov 88 at 65. He enlisted in Feb 42 at Manchester, NH. At Thurleigh after serving in 1208th, he was assigned to 414th Air Services Gp on 15 Apr 45. He is buried at Golden Gate National Cemetery in San Bruno, CA. No further info.
- **Meginley, James C**, 1208th QM Co (Cpl, unknown duties), of Dearborn, MI, died 1 Mar 87 at 68. No further info.
- **Wilson, William A, Jr**, 368th co-pilot (Leon B Dorich crew, and earlier Joseph G Rethy crew), originally from TX and who enlisted in Santa Fe, NM, died 19 Jul 86. He and the Rethy crew arrived at Thurleigh 1 Dec 44. Capt Wilson also served in Korea. He and his wife, Alta Ruth, are buried together at Ft Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio, TX. No further info.
- **Ross, Delmer O**, 1208th QM Co (Pvt, unknown duties), a farmer of Crockett, TX, who was enlisted in Jan 43 at Tyler, TX, is apparently the man of that name who died in Mar 86 at 64 in Henderson, TX, leaving his wife Leona, at least 4c, and some gc. No further info.
- **McGill, Frank R**, 1208th QM Co (SSgt, unknown duties) of Hoisington, KS, and longtime resident of Douglas, OK, died in Sep 85 at 68. When enlisted in Feb 42 he was a married general office clerk with a year of college. He returned to Hoisington after the war. There, sometime in the 50s, he married Kathryn Leeona, a widowed teacher, and in 57 they moved to Douglas, OK. She survived him to Dec 06, age 98. She was survived by 1d, 2gc, 3ggc.
- **Koziol, Joseph D**, 1208th QM (billeting office aide T/5), of Chicago, IL, died 1 Apr 85 at 70. He reported to Thurleigh 1 Nov 42. No further info.
- **DePasquale, "Nick" Nicholas**, 1208th QM (Pfc, unknown duties), died in Oct 82 in Ulster Co, NY at 57. Nick and his parents came to Brooklyn, NY from Italy soon after his birth. At enlistment in Mar 43 his civilian occupation was "Messenger, errand boys & office boys." At Thurleigh in mid-Dec 43 he was sent to Station 130. No further info.
- **Eberle, Atwood V**, 1208th QM (Pvt, unknown duties), of Burbank, CA, died 21 Aug 82 at 62. When he enlisted as Pvt in Air Corps in Nov 42 at Los Angeles he was listed as a skilled mechanic or repairman. No further info.
- **Turner, Coy A**, 1208th QM (Pfc, unknown duties) from the Commerce, TX area, died 7 Jan 82 at 71 while last living at George West, in Live Oak Co, TX. He had survived his wife Ruth, who died in Feb 65 at 54. They are buried in the Malakoff Cemetery, Malakoff, Henderson Co, TX. No further info.
- **Brooks, Horace J, Jr**, 1208th QM Co (1st Lt, duties unknown), died 1 Jul 1981 in White Plains, NY at 73. He was a statistician when he enlisted in NY City; he made 1st Lt 15 Sep 43 and was transferred from Thurleigh to Station 107 in Dec 43. No further info.
- **Freeman, Howard A**, 1208th QM Co (Pvt; unknown duties), lifelong resident of Asheboro, Randolph Co, NC, died 1 Feb 80 at 68. A married textile worker at enlistment 27 Oct 42 as a Pvt in the Air Corps; his post-war occupation is unknown. His wife Versie, a retired employee of Bost Neckwear and member of First United Methodist Church, survived him to 15 Dec 99, at 83. Family members surviving were not listed; no further info.
- **Warren, Lacy Franklin**, 1208th QM Co (S/Sgt, unknown duties), of Faison, NC, died 17 Jul 75, at 57. When he enlisted Feb 42, his civilian occupation was "Semiskilled railroad switchmen." His vet marker is at Faison Cemetery, where that of his apparent widow, Hilda, shows she survived to May 04, at 86. No further info.
- **Chambers, Gordon S**, 369th co-pilot (James Edeler crew), who was a single resident of Kenosha County, WI when he entered the service, died in Jun 75 at 58. He arrived at Thurleigh 11 Jun-44 and completed his tour in Oct. No further info.
- **Veth, Gerard**, 1208th (T/5, unknown duties), originally from the Bronx, NY, died in Jun 75 at 59 in East Islip, NY. He had enlisted at Ft Dix, NJ. No further info.
- **Stine, Clifton L**, 1208th QM Co (Sgt, unknown duties) originally from Sioux City, IA, died 1 Apr 75 at 72 in Freeport, IL. No further info.
- **Ely, Fernand H**, 1208th QM Co (Pfc; unknown duties) of Stony Point, Rockland Co, NY died at 50 on 1 Aug 73. He enlisted 30 Nov 42 at NYC, NY as Pvt in Air Corps. No further info.
- **Cutsler, Harry W Jr**, 1208th QM Co (Pfc; unknown duties), of Phillipsburg, Warren Co, NJ, died 4 Mar 72 at 51. Buried at Fairmount Cemetery in Phillipsburg. No further info.
- **Boatman, Antone**, 1208th QM Co, of Provincetown, Barnstable Co, MA, died 21 Feb 72, at 63. Enlisted Jun 42 Boston, MA; 15 Apr 45 moved to 414th Air Services Gp. Pfc Boatman is buried at Long Island National Cemetery in Farmingdale, NY. No further info.
- **Evans, Lester A**, 368th pilot, originally from NJ and later from OK, died 27 Feb 71 at 55. He arrived Thurleigh 27 Dec 44 and completed his tour in Apr. Buried at Fort Gibson National Cemetery, Ft Gibson, Muscogee Co, OK, where his marker indicates that after WWII he served with the AF 60th Troop Carrier Wing. He's been honored at the WWII Memorial Registry by his son Barry, daughter-in-law, and gd. No further info.
- **Stevenson, Gilbert**, 1208th QM Co (Pfc, unknown duties at Thurleigh) originally from Lansford, PA, died 11 Jun 70 at 64. When enlisted in Jan 43 his civilian occupation was "Stenographers & typists." His vet marker at Fairhaven Memorial Park, Santa Ana, CA, shows he was from PA, and in USAF through Korea, reaching T/Sgt. No further info.
- **Giballi, John J**, 1208th QM Co (T/Sgt, unknown duties), originally of IL, died 24 Nov 56 in Alameda Co, CA at 39. He reported to Thurleigh 1 Nov 42; served as 1st Sgt for unknown dates. Post-war he was a married resident of Franklin Co, IL with civilian work experience as "Engineers, electrical" when he re-enlisted 23 Oct 45 as T/Sgt in Air Corps for Hawaiian Dept. No further info.
- **Meadows, "Junior" Arthur, Jr**, 1208th QM Co (Sgt, unknown duties), of Ballard, WV, died 21 Feb 54 at 34. Buried at Ballard Church Cemetery. No further info.
- **Petrisor, Nickolas, Jr**, 1208th QM Co (Pvt, unknown duties) of Canton, OH, died 20 Feb 51 a month before turning 37. After Thurleigh he re-enlisted as a married Cpl in Air Corps on 17 Nov 45 for Hawaiian Dept and rose to Sgt with the 466th Air Services Gp. He is buried at Forest Hill Cemetery in Canton. No further info.
- **Lynch, Charles E**, 1208th QM Co (Pfc, unknown duties), of WV, died 10 Aug 1946 in Wheeling, WV at 38. He enlisted at Huntington, WV in Dec 42; he was single, with his 62-year old mother, Marie, as his dependent. Post-war he was still single, and working in Wheeling when he died. Buried at Mt Calvary Cemetery in Wheeling. No further info.



Visit the 306th Web

www.306bg.org

Registration Form – 306th Bomb Group Association
Marriott Savannah Riverfront – Savannah, Georgia ~ 25-28 October 2012
 DEADLINE for Registration & Hotel: Monday, October 1, 2012
 Toll-free number for hotel reservations: 800-285-0398
 Ask for 306th Bomb Group reunion rates: \$119 single or double

Mandatory Registration fee (per person)..... x \$35.00 = \$_____

Wednesday, 24 October Hospitality Room opens 7 pm—Free (*see schedule for details*)
Thursday, 25 October Arrival Day, Hospitality Room and Cinema Room—Free (*see schedule for details*)

Friday, 26 October
Mighty Eighth Tour, Lunch & Dedication Ceremony x \$35.00 = \$_____
 (10:00 am-4 pm) (Revised and updated 25 April 2012)

First Over Germany Dinner (7 pm)..... x \$45.00 = \$_____

Saturday, 27 October
Narrated Savannah River Cruise & Lunch (11:30-1:30 pm)..... x \$49.00 = \$_____
 (Revised and updated 25 April 2012)

Banquet (7 pm)..... x \$49.00 = \$_____

Everything else on the schedule is free!
 Total..... \$_____

**Make check payable to 306th Bomb Group Association Reunion,
 and mail to Joel LaBo, 875 S Worth, Birmingham, MI 48009**

Full name of your family's Thurleigh vet _____
 Is he living? _____

His Squadron or Base Unit _____ His duty while at Thurleigh _____

If he was on a flight crew, name of pilot &/or his B-17, if known: _____

<u>Every person attending for this registration</u>	<u>Every person's relationship to family's Thurleigh vet</u>
My name: _____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Please add an asterisk * by the name of anyone attending his/her first Reunion

My street (or Post Office Box) address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Email _____

Please call the Savannah Marriott Riverside Hotel direct to make reservations:
 1-800-285-0398 or 1-912-233-7722
 Ask for 306th Bomb Group reunion rates:

\$119.00 (plus tax) Single or Double Rooms—All One Price

**Deadline for registration and hotel reservations is 1 October 2012.
 Please help your 306th Bomb Group reunion planning,
 register and make hotel reservations early. Do it today!**

A full-sized hard copy of this form is on the 306th website: 306bg.org

Reunion Schedule At Savannah (Revised April 2012)

WEDNESDAY, 24 OCTOBER

- Volunteers set up Hospitality Room & Exhibits - Plaza Room (9 am - 5 pm)
- Dinner on your own (hotel restaurants and other food venues close by)
- Hospitality Room Opens – Plaza Room (7 – 9:30 pm)

THURSDAY, 25 OCTOBER

- Arrival - Pick up registration packets - Plaza Room (8 - 5 pm)
- Board Meeting – Mercer Room (10 am)
- Sign up for Oral History interviews at Registration Desk (8 am-5pm)
- Hospitality Room and Exhibits – Plaza Room (8 am - 5 pm; 7 - 10 pm)
- Eighth Air Force Cinema – Film presentations at 10 & 11:15 am – Savannah Ballroom DE (*See your packet for a complete reunion film schedule*)
- The 306th BG Archives Online—A demonstration of the 306th archives online, how to search it, and where to find documents--Dr. Vernon L. Williams - Savannah Ballroom DE (2-3 pm)
- 306th BG Veterans Roundtable No. 1, with 306th veterans telling their stories with a Q & A with the audience--moderated by Dr. Vernon Williams, Savannah Ballroom DE (3:30-5:30 pm)
- Dinner on your own (hotel restaurants and other food venues close by)

FRIDAY, 26 OCTOBER

- Arrival - Pick up registration packets - Plaza Room (8 am-5 pm)
- Oral History interviews (pre-scheduled by appointment)
- Hospitality Room and Exhibits- Plaza Room (2 pm-5pm; 7-10 pm)
- **Mighty Eighth Tour, Lunch & Dedication Ceremony (9:00 am-3 pm) – Mighty Museum at Pooler, GA (Revised and updated 25 April 2012)**

- Second Generation meeting - Savannah Ballroom DE (4 pm)
- First Over Germany Reception & Dinner (Reception in Pre-function C (6-7 pm), Dinner in Savannah Ballroom C (7-9pm))

SATURDAY, 29 OCTOBER

- Arrival - Pick up registration packets - Plaza Room (8am-5pm)
- Business Meeting, Savannah Ballroom DE (9-10:45 am)
- Memorial Service—Tribute to the Fallen and Folded Wings Memorial, Savannah Ballroom DE(10:45 am)
- Oral History interviews (pre-scheduled by appointment)
- Hospitality Room and Exhibits - Plaza Room (1-5pm)

• **Narrated Savannah River Cruise & Lunch (11:30-1:30 pm (Revised and updated 25 April 2012)**

- 306th BG Veterans Roundtable No. 2, with 306th veterans telling their stories with a Q & A with the audience--moderated by Dr. Vernon Williams, Savannah Ballroom DE (3-5 pm)
- Eighth Air Force Cinema – Film presentations at 2 pm – Savannah Ballroom DE (*See your packet for a complete reunion film schedule*)
- Cash bar, Prefunction C (6-7 pm)
- Veterans-only Group Photograph - Savannah Ballroom C (6:45 pm)
- Widows Group & Next Generation Photograph - Savannah Ballroom C (6:50 pm)
- Banquet, Savannah Ballroom C (7 pm)

SUNDAY, 30 OCTOBER

- Farewells
- Check out
- Travel Home — See you next year!



Museum Notes

Thurleigh Airfield 306th Bomb Group Museum



COMMEMORATING THE

306TH

Sunday 8th July 10:00 - 17:00

306th Bombardment Group Museum
Thurleigh Airfield Business Park
MK44 2YP



Celebrating the 5th
Anniversary of East Anglian
Air Ambulance saving lives
in Bedfordshire



Celebrating the 10th
Anniversary of the 306th
Bombardment Group museum



Rededication of the 306th
Bombardment Group
Memorial Stone

For more information contact:

306th Museum - Ralph Franklin 01234 708715 306museum@nscmh.fsnet.co.uk
Air Ambulance - Joanne Harris 01525 718517 joanne.harris@eastanglianairambulance.org
Military Vehicles - Richard Hall 01234 720723 richardandlynette@talktalk.net