

306th Echoes

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A 368th BS Model of Fortress Tailwind Brings a Final Story Back to Life

By Vernon L. Williams and Doug Peterson

"Tailwind" was on its 19th mission on September 12, 1944, a bombing raid on a synthetic fuels plant in Ruhland, Germany, when the bomb group came under attack by anti-aircraft artillery fire (flak) and enemy fighters near Berlin. Tailwind's engines were damaged in the attack and the aircraft fell out of formation. Since there were wounded crewmen on board who were unable to bail out, the entire crew elected to stay with the aircraft while the pilot, 1st Lt John Sasser, attempted to make it back to friendly lines. After Tailwind lost power in three of its engines and could no longer maintain altitude the pilot made the decision to attempt a crash landing. Just short of the intended landing site the last engine quit and Tailwind crashed in a field near Massow, Germany. Five of the nine crewmen (McStay, Banta, Carlino, Carroll, and Wilson) perished in the crash. Of the four survivors, one, Lt Sasser, (later promoted to Captain) died in a German prisoner of war camp. Sgts Mitchelson, Schultz and Revolti were repatriated and returned home after the war.



Robert Banta, Bombardier,
on the John Sasser Crew



The mission report and missing aircraft report give some idea of the chaos in the formation northeast of Berlin on that late September morning. At 11:27 am Lt. W.H. Macy flying northeast of Berlin in the lead aircraft in the element to the left of Sasser, saw Tailwind receive a flak burst directly under the right wing between Sasser's #3 and #4 engines. Macy reported
Tailwind continued on Page 27



BOEING B-17G "FLYING FORTRESS"
SERIAL NUMBER 42-97368
306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP
(HEAVY)
368TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON
THURLEIGH AIRFIELD, ENGLAND

Douglas Peterson researched and built the Tailwind model at left. He plans to display the model at the American Legion Post 222 in Lt Robert Banta's hometown, Soldiers Grove, Wisconsin.

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*The 306th Bomb Group Historical Association
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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:

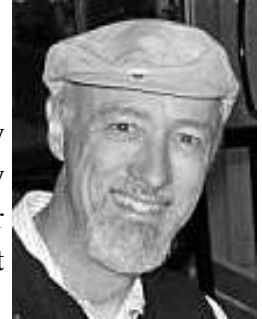
NOTE: Please send any further info re anyone listed with "No further info," via Secretary's contact info on p.2 of each issue.

- **Borchers, James R**, 368th flight engineer top-turret gunner (Albert Rehn crew), of Decatur, IN, died 8 Sep 12 at Christian Care Center in Bluffton, IN, at 91. He arrived with the crew 19 Nov 43. Post-war he married Wanda and was a member of St Mark's United Methodist, serving the local Christian community in various ways as a lifelong spiritual leader. He was a salesman for Brotherhood Mutual Insurance, retiring in 85, and later worked for Haggard funeral homes. Survived by Wanda, 2c, 6gc, 9ggc; buried at Decatur Cemetery; memorials to St Mark's UMC Food Pantry.
- **Campos, Epifanio P** (Perez), 423rd waist gunner (Kenneth Yass crew), who was born in NM, died 17 Apr 13 at his home in Granada Hills, CA at 92. With Yass, he arrived at Thurleigh 27 Nov-43. He flew 30 missions including D-day (6 Jun 44), when Campos was injured in the neck by shrapnel, according to Strong's *First Over Germany*. Post-war, he married his sweetheart Gregoria, and settled in Granada Hills (Los Angeles area) to raise his family and operate a successful gardening/landscaping business. In 11, Epifanio (then in a wheelchair), came to our San Diego Reunion (his first ever) with his son and caregiver, Rudolfo. Predeceased in 00 by his wife Gregoria at 73, and his first-born son, Ruben, he is survived by 2s, 5gc, 3ggc; buried at San Fernando Mission Cemetery in Mission Hills, Los Angeles Co, CA.
- **Dickenson, William 'Bud' Harold** 423rd navigator/bombardier (James H Sylvester crew), a native of Los Angeles Co, CA, who lived in Sherman Oaks, died 1 Sep 13 at 93. With the crew, he reported 8 Aug 43; completed 25 missions. The Secretary was notified by a gc, who'd read our email recap of the Oct 13 Reunion, and said Bud loved his crew mates and would have loved to have been at the Reunion. Survived by Donna, his wife of 70 years, 2s, at least 1gc. Buried at San Fernando Mission Cemetery in Mission Hills, Los Angeles Co, CA.
- **Erickson, 'Bill' William A Jr**, 369th tail gunner (Martin Newstreet crew), of Muskegon, MI, died at home 8 May 13 at 90. With the crew, he reported 16 Oct 43; he completed 35 missions over Germany, 2 on D-day. Post-war he married Yva Nell. He was a Tool & Die Maker, working at Clarke Floor Machine Co in Muskegon, retiring in 85. He enjoyed playing golf and was a member of Muskegon Church of Christ. Survived by his wife of 64 years, Uva Nell, 2c; buried at Murray City Cemetery.
- **Fields, Ray Norman**, 367th Original (B-17 mechanic electrical specialist), of Midwest City, OK, died 9 Jul 12 at 95 in the care of the Sienna Nursing Home and Crossroads Hospice. He had enlisted in Dec 41 as a Pvt with civilian occupation as a salesman. We learn from an Apr 87 Echoes article which attempted to solicit info re other squadrons' crew chiefs and other specialists, that at Thurleigh, S/Sgt



President's Column

This morning I woke up to seventeen degrees below zero in Park City, Utah but driveway clearing awaited. I dressed in my hi-tech clothing and headed out. Outside, in the cold, my thoughts turned to our WWII veterans who flew and did their dangerous work in much colder conditions with more primitive clothing. I am sure these men complained about the cold, but it did not stop them, they overcame obstacles and did what they needed to do.



The character of our WWII heroes is the greatest legacy they offer to those who follow.

Those of us in the subsequent generations who attend and support the 306th Bomb Group Historical Association treasure our time with the WWII veterans who attend our annual get-together and strive to support them and those who are unable to attend. I think it helps us to absorb their legacy and pass it on.

Today our annual conference is more than a reunion of veterans. For the past several years we have had more subsequent generation attendees than veterans. For many attendees "their" veteran is no longer with us; however, in New Orleans we had wives, children, nieces, nephews, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and friends of those veterans attend. By the way, those g-grandchildren were better than many at "flying" the B-17s on the computer flight simulators in the hospitality room.

Flight simulators? Yes, we had four computers setup that helped create interest for various generations of attendees; we had pictures, films, and many records; information we have collected regarding veterans that could be searched right there on the spot. It was exciting to see, and I expect it will be even better next year. I am excited to report that we invited Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association (SSMA) members to join us next year, and they accepted, more on that later. We have expedited reunion planning to give you plenty of time to make your plans to attend our meeting in Colorado Springs by the Air Force Academy.

Did you know the Air Force designated the 306th Training Wing at the Academy in honor of the 306th First Over Germany WWII unit? Cliff Deets, our vice president and reunion chairman, has met with Academy officials and they are enthusiastic about our upcoming visit. They believe it is a great opportunity to pass the legacy of our WWII veterans to current cadets. They will give WWII veterans special opportunities to meet with cadets.

I know there are frequently obstacles; however, I hope you can overcome them and join us in Colorado Springs. See pages 30-32 for additional information on the 2014 reunion.

Charles Neal
President



Jimmy Stewart's Finest Performance

By Col. Beirne Lay, Jr.

Editor's note: This article originally appeared in the Saturday Evening Post in 1945 following Colonel Jimmy Stewart's return from service with the Eighth Air Force. Stewart's experience proved to be unique as he qualified for command of a heavy bomber squadron long before his group departed the United States for combat. Colonel Beirne Lay, Jr, the author of the following article, was no stranger to the Eighth Air Force. As an aide to General Ira Eaker, Lay was present at Thurleigh when Charles Overacker was relieved and later wrote the screen play for Twelve O'Clock High, based on Lay's observations of the 306th Bomb Group and other groups during the war. Drawing on his firsthand knowledge of Stewart's service in the Second Air Division, Lay gives an extraordinary account of Stewart's early military career and his efforts to get Army headquarters to recognize his flying and leadership talents. The editor, as director of the East Anglia Air War Project, has interviewed a number of flight crewmen who served under Stewart, all of whom tell glowing stories of Stewart and his abilities as a combat pilot and leader during the war.

A little-known fact about the big bombing missions from England to Germany is that the chief obstacles to success were not German flak, fighters or unflyable English weather. The gravest threat to a successful bomber offensive lay in the inherent difficulty of the operations themselves.

A more complicated way to fight a war has never been devised. So high were the personal qualifications required of the air commanders who led the huge 8th Air Force formations, that success or failure of the air offensive against Europe hinged on the existence of, and the careful selection of, competent air commanders.

Yet in the spring of 1944 a Hollywood movie star named Jimmy Stewart sat



in the lead ship of a procession of more than 1000 heavy bombers, a maximum effort of the 8th Air Force for that day, bound for a savagely defended target at Brunswick, Germany. Stewart was not there for the ride, nor was he a special observer. He was in command in the air.

Was Brig. Gen. Ted Timberlake, Stewart's wing commander, crazy? Was Maj. Gen. Jimmy Hodges, his air-division commander, impressed with having seen a lanky actor kiss Lana Turner? Was Lt. Gen. Jimmy Doolittle, behind his desk at Headquarters, 8th Air Force, ignorant of the fact that a Motion Picture Academy Award winner, sitting at

(Stewart continued on page 6)



Secretary's Column

By Barbara Neal

(Secretary contact information on page 2)

PLEASE SEND ADDRESS CHANGES and DEATH INFO to me (Barbara). If you've moved, or know of one of our vets having died, please do not make a fugitive investigation necessary. All our vets earned the right to have an obit published for free so future generations and history lovers can learn about those who served our country.

A truly heart-warming benefit for many of us serving as volunteers with the 306th BGHA, is seeing connections being made among our vets, and with our vets' descendants and other family members. I've been able to connect 2nd-generation folk by phone with some of our willing vets who knew their now-departed vets (sometimes having served on the same crew) and/or to connect them by phone or in person with some of our vets who were in similar situations of internment or POW camps, and agree they'll talk with the person seeking to better know their own departed loved one. In Feb, I heard from a great-great-nephew of 423rd / 367th pilot Clarence E (Eugene) 'C.E.' Fischer, who had died in 57 with his entire immediate family, and thus left no descendants. During our emailing, this fellow talked with his grandmother in another state, seeking additional clues, and then visited her to retrieve items she found in her attic, thanks to his encouragement. His info and shared documents enabled me to correctly separate some info in the records that had been confused for years with that of our similarly-named 369th pilot and co-pilot Clarence E 'Bud' Fisher. Both Fischer and Fisher are now correctly listed in this issue's Not Recent obit column. Another example is how Cliff Deets, in the Reunion Hospitality Room in New Orleans, helped a fellow who dropped in at our Reunion while he was in New Orleans for his own work-related conference. He was born after his father had perished during the war in a collision of two 306th B-17s. From info Cliff was able to pull from some 306th material loaded on the Hospitality Room computer (which info is also available at our

website, 306bg.org, under the Archives tab), this fellow was able to learn about the father he never knew – info his mom, an Irish war-bride, had never known. He was so glad that he'd "finally found my father!" All of these connections, and many more from similar work, help to "bring alive" for younger generations the war experiences of their departed loved ones.

World War II Memorial Registry: Hundreds of our vets are still not listed at this free website. Any vet can be listed, at NO charge. Listings can be submitted by the vet himself, or by a family member or friend, who has the proper info about him: the vet's hometown at time of his initial enlistment; his first and last name; and his WWII service, which should PLEASE mention "306th Bomb Group (Heavy) stationed in Thurleigh, England" and if known, his squadron or other unit within the 306th. Dates when he served in England can be included by those knowing when he was there. PLEASE help get all listed:

go to <http://www.wwiimemorial.com>; scroll down to "World War II Registry" where it says "To search the electronic World War II Registry of Americans who contributed to the war effort, or add the name of a loved one, click here." Click, & you'll be at the "Registry" page. Do 2 things: (1) Use the "Search the Registry" section, to search for the vet's name. If he is listed properly, please let me know. (2) If he is NOT listed, or is listed improperly, and IF you know the proper info to submit, please use the "Register an Honoree" section at the top of the Registry. Vet info can be added online, or by printing a form to fill in and mail.

VET INFO AT NATIONAL ARCHIVES: I've learned from several vets and their families that info long ago indexed at the National Archives, now available online in their Access to Archival Databases (AAD) has some mistakes in it. Please help me to have accurate info in our 306th records of your service, by sharing with me (1) vet's year of birth; (2) vet's residence when originally enlisted, if known; and (3) for vets who were POW, their location(s) detained. All of this type info can help to locate the proper info among the numerous men who served and had the identical name to our 306th vets.



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23,000 feet with a throat microphone around his neck, was broadcasting lines which had a bearing on the fate of 10,000 skilled men and on the destruction of a vital German war plant? What criticism, if any, was leveled at the judgment of Maj. James Maitland Stewart, 0-433210, when he called to the other formations as the task force approached the enemy coast, and told their leaders that he was aborting the mission and returning to base? What the devil, in short, was Jimmy Stewart doing up there at all?

These questions would hardly be worth answering merely on the assumption that the war experience of a famous screen personality in uniform is automatically of interest. Other film figures have got their hands dirty in the fight too. Wayne Morris shot down his quota of Japs as a naval aviator; Director William Wyler stood in open bomb bays, with heavy flak coming up, to shoot motion pictures over the target for *The Memphis Belle*; Director John Huston shared bullets with doughboys to get the film for San Pietro; Stirling Hayden engaged in the dangerous pastime of filching downed Allied fliers out of Yugoslavia behind German lines; screen-writer Sy Bartlett flew every other mission to Japan as Intelligence Officer of a B-29 wing.

What makes Stewart's story worth examination relates to the single word "command." His story merged with the bigger story of the emergence in our critical hour of a handful of Americans endowed with a peculiar combination of mental, nervous and physical assets, topped off with a rare attribute called good judgment. What the Army Air Forces did with Jimmy Stewart when he was tossed into the Army hoppers of a piece with the story of all the other young men with every conceivable background who had to be sorted out of the mammoth grader and trained to explode the AAF to 100 times its prewar size.

The country was not at war in March, 1941, when Citizen James Stewart, age thirty-three, enlisted, but induction of eligible bachelors loomed in the offing. By voluntary enlistment, Stewart had forestalled the criticism that might have attended his continued enjoyment of a large salary in civilian clothes at a time when the sons of other families were learning their new Army serial numbers.

Like the other green soldiers unloading their bags in the barracks of the air-base squadron at Moffett Field, California, where they had been sent for basic foot-soldier training, Private Stewart had a problem. Only his problem was peculiar. The other boys had become numbers. He was still "Jimmy Stewart," actor. Simply being natural was no solution. He couldn't ignore the fact that when the guy on the next bunk looked at him he was thinking, "There's the reporter in *Philadelphia Story*. There's the patriot who fought the crooked politicians in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. Just think, that buck private has kissed the most beautiful women in Hollywood on the screen and gotten paid for it."

Everything he said or did was observed, and with that curiosity with which we stare frankly at a freak or a strange animal in a cage. Stewart saw the only solution. He must make people forget that he'd ever been a movie actor, or resign himself to limited usefulness. He had a talk with Col. George L. Usher, commanding officer of Moffett Field.

"How can I help you, Stewart," asked Usher, "To get off the spot you're in?"

"The biggest help, sir," said Stewart "would be no publicity. No interviews. No publicity stills. No radio appearances."

"I can fix that," said Usher. He was as good as his word, and better. Besides making Stewart unavailable to the press, he called him in for further chats, in which he drew on his store of service knowledge as a career Air Corps officer to build the interest of his "hot potato" in the Army Air Forces. He encouraged him to study Army extension courses and suggested that he build up enough flying hours to qualify for a commission in the Air Corps.

The going wasn't easy for the six-foot, three-inch hot potato. How could you discourage the fellow who wanted to snap your picture, without being thought a heel? But Jimmy stuck to his guns. He was willing to co-operate on any matter but publicity. Gradually he succeeded and people began to forget. Colonel Usher's advice gestated in Stewart's mind during the weeks in which he advanced from student soldier to drill instructor and won his corporal's stripes. Before enlisting, he had compiled about 200 hours flying in small planes, thanks to the contagious flying bug which infected his agent and friend, Leland Hayward. Jimmy decided to work in earnest toward the rating of an Air Corps pilot.

His civilian flying had been undertaken for no more serious purpose than relaxation, much as Bing Crosby played golf on afternoons off from the studio. The fact that he flew thirteen hours of dual instruction before soloing, although many apt students solo after eight hours, is less significant than a weird incident which occurred on a practice flight in 1936.

His instructor jerked back the throttle to give Stewart a simulated forced landing. Jimmy picked an emergency field and executed a power-off approach. As he glided toward a potato patch, he saw that he was going to hit it right on the button. He sat there grinning and waited for the instructor to give her the gun and climb. But the biplane continued to settle toward the ground. Finally Jimmy grabbed the throttle, but it wouldn't budge. He thought the other man was holding it back. They were skimming the grass, now, so Jimmy set her down in a normal landing on the rough furrows. The instructor was furious at Stewart for holding the throttle back, until he discovered that it had been jammed so that neither of them could

move it. The simulated emergency had become a real emergency without either man realizing it until they were safe on the ground. The incident was small, but the implication was allegorical: from make-believe to reality without dropping a stitch.

Corporal Stewart boned away doggedly at his extension courses, and built up his flying time at his own expense at the near-by Palo Alto airport. One month before Pearl Harbor he had logged the minimum 300 hours necessary to meet an Air Corps board of officers, who would pass on his proficiency as a pilot, and he had fulfilled the academic requirements for an Air Corps commission. His attitude when he arrived at San Francisco to meet the flying board, was confident but worried. He knew how to fly an airplane, but he also knew that the Army standard was high and that he was unfamiliar with the 400-horsepower BT-14 basic trainer in which he had to take the test.

An instructor allowed the loose-limbed corporal a half hour of familiarization, and the check flight was on. It proved to be a short ride – a few takeoffs and landings, some air work, and a simulated forced landing, which the corporal hit on the nose.

“Take me in to the line,” said the instructor. “You’re okay.”

While the wheels of the military ground slowly, Corporal Stewart sweated out his wings and commission in the G.I. barracks back at Moffett Field. The black month of December steeled him and his mates with the realization that they were in a real war and that a lot of Americans were going to have to do some fighting before the Japs and the Germans could be stopped. But standing guard to protect the big balloon hangar against sabotage was a far cry from the opportunities that might unfold before an Army pilot. Stewart prayed for the larger chance.

On the nineteenth of January, 1942, he was still sweating about that second lieutenant’s commission and those wings, and guarding the still-unmolested balloon hangar, when the lieutenant who commanded his guard company walked up to him with a broad smile and a long white envelope. The same day, after being sworn in, 2nd Lt. James Stewart paid a visit to the post tailor and ordered a uniform with wings on the chest.

He was ordered to immediate active duty, the first four weeks of which he spent at Moffett taking a refresher course in BT-13’s – forty hours of formation, night and instrument flying. There was a noteworthy absence of envy on the part of his old buck-private friends, who knew that Corporal Stewart had won his commission not by pulling a string in Washington nor on the strength of civilian prominence, but by the unspectacular method of meeting the official requirements.

A new world opened up. A world of military flying in

which, like other civilian pilots who had passed Air Corps boards, he was ignorant of those military fundamentals which are automatically assimilated by aviation cadets who start their training in Air Corps primary flying schools. Stewart studied with passionate purpose to lift his knowledge to his new responsibilities. He decided the best way to learn fast was by instructing others. Orders came through sending him to the instructor’s course at the advanced flying school at Mather Field, California.

Probably at no time before or since has Jimmy Stewart felt more on the spot than when he had completed the four weeks’ instructor’s course in advanced ground-school subjects and Curtiss AT-9’s-twin engine-that qualified him to instruct advanced students. He was a target for skepticism not only as a former film star but as a mail-order pilot who had never undergone the regular Army course of pilot training.

The possibility of damaging a wing tip while taxiing, ground-looping on a landing or some other minor screw-up which would have excited little comment if committed by another instructor gave him nightmares. He couldn’t afford to make a single mistake.

As the weeks slipped by, Lieutenant Stewart’s hours in the air piled up fast. He never scratched an airplane. More important, he became an excellent instructor. A fundamental trait of character helped him. He was conscientious – deliberately and painfully conscientious. Putting himself in the place of a student was easy because his own frame of mind was that of a student. From his own difficulties with some subjects, like navigation, he sympathized with the fellow who had to learn the hard way. Stewart learned. But he never became the type who talks when he should be listening. Only a tiny nucleus of officers who had grown up with the Air Corps carried within them the sound of air doctrine and military know-how with which the violently expanding AAF had to be inoculated in 1942. Stewart listened to these men and his attitude was humble.

One man to whom he listened was Gen. Kenneth McNaughton, who advised him to transfer to the newly activated bombardier school at Kirtland Field, Albuquerque, New Mexico, where valuable experience was to be had. His duties would consist primarily of flying bombardier students in twin-engine Beechcraft AT-11’s, but he would have ample opportunity to learn plenty about the Norden bomb sight and bombing techniques. He received his transfer in August, after being promoted to first lieutenant, and entered on a period of grueling flying.

Kirtland Field had been opened literally from scratch. Somebody had said, “Joe, you start a big bombardier school, fly day and night, and turn us out bombardiers – a cloud of them.” Joe was doing it. Stewart saw and marveled. And he was part of the show. His work began to partake of the desperation of those around him who fought against time. The war in Europe was apparently being lost, and the war against



Plan to Attend the Colorado Springs/ Air Force Academy Reunion in 2014

(For a sneak preview, see save-the-date information and photographs of our reunion site on page 32)

Cliff Deets
Reunion Chairman



Stewart appearing in the postwar box office hit, *The Glenn Miller Story*.

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the Japs seemed already lost.

First Lieutenant Stewart started thinking seriously about combat. The knowledge that instructors would be just as vital to the AAF as combat pilots didn't convince him that his best course was to fight the war on the home front, so that he could return someday with a whole skin to the big dough and brilliant career that he had left. Nobody had to tell him that lack of prominence didn't make it any easier for the other fellow to risk his neck. He made up his mind to get into the fight. Looking back, he gives his reason for that decision bashfully and reluctantly.

"It's too corny," he says, "but heck, what's wrong with wanting to fight for your country? Why are people embarrassed to use the word 'patriotism'?" He shrugs and gives up.

In December he went to see Colonel Hackett, his CO, who arranged for him to transfer to the B-17F transition school for four-engine pilots at Hobbs Field, New Mexico. Jimmy wanted big airplanes. The 100-hour course at Hobbs would qualify him to join a war-bound Flying Fortress outfit as an airplane commander. Falling in love with the big bombers at first sight, he checked out easily on the B-17 and graduated from the ground school and flying course in February, 1943.

He no longer needed to view himself as an actor in uniform. He was now a qualified B-17 airplane commander, with a lot more experience than some of his fellow graduates of the four-engine school who had entered fresh from advanced flying schools. The gap had been closed with margin to spare.

Fully processed for overseas service, in the matter of personal papers and equipment,



Stewart left Hobbs Field with a group of thirty eager pilots for the distribution center at Salt Lake City, where they were to receive permanent assignments to newly activated bomb groups scheduled to move overseas in three months. All the thirty pilots received orders quickly except Stewart. Jimmy had hit a snag, and it proved to be a bad one.

His initial misgivings when orders failed to arrive increased under the handling of the local public-relations officer, who was treating the actor as something special. Jimmy began to feel, "This is where I came in." An interview with an officer from Headquarters, 2nd Air Force, turned out awkwardly. The officer was puzzled.

"I don't quite get why you were sent here for assignment," he said. "Do you fly?"

Stewart's Adam's apple bobbed. He controlled his amazement. "Yes, sir," he said. "I fly."

The officer stared uncertainly at the evidence on Stewart's papers, still puzzled. "Okay," he said, "you'll get orders."

Stewart was assigned to the 29th Group at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho, as an airplane commander. The job lasted one week. His CO called him in. "There must be some hitch about your going into combat," he said. "I've got instructions to classify you as 'static personnel.' From now on, you're an instructor in first-phase training."

It seemed obvious that someone at headquarters didn't want to take the responsibility for sending the hot potato into combat as an expendable B-17 pilot. Stewart absorbed this bitter pill and went to work as an instructor. The disappointment was heartbreaking, but he dispatched no telegrams and made no long-distance telephone calls.

Equally heartbreaking was the pace at which air crews were being trained at Gowen Field. Under the relentless pressure being brought to bear by Brig. Gen. R.F. ('Big Bob') Travis, wing commander, crews flew on a twenty-four-hour-a-day schedule during the frigid winter days and nights of Febru-

ary and March, 1943. Turn out the crews!

The Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, who established overseas air commitments, turned the heat on General Arnold, who put the heat on Gen. "Jam" Johnson, 2nd Air Force commander, who put the heat on Bob Travis, wing commander at Boise, who blowtorched Col. Pop Arnold in command of the 29th Group, who passed the hat on to the instructors and crews. It was at this lowest level, where Stewart flew around the clock as an instructor, and soon in the tougher role of squadron operations officer, that the heat really turned white.

Squadron Operations Officer Stewart's face grew grim and tired as winter merged with spring and summer came. This was war. His roommate was killed in an instrument take-off with a student at the controls. In one of the group's bad weeks, Jimmy's squadron alone sustained three fatal accidents. And bomber accidents, involving large crews, are messy. The hovering mountains took their toll during instrument flying weather as students groped for the field in snow and haze.

Stewart's operations job was not a talking job only. Students had to be shown. Three-engine performance, two-engine performance, one-engine performance in a four-engine bomber. Emergency procedures in the air. It was physically exhausting work, and with students, dangerous work. One night Jimmy was up checking a new airplane commander. He had given his copilot's seat temporarily to the navigator, who wanted to see how things functioned in the cockpit. The navigator got an eyeful a minute later, when a blinding flash of light came from the No. 1 engine on the pilot's side, accompanied by a loud explosion. Somehow Jimmy got the navigator out of the co-pilot's seat, so that he could reach the N.-1-fire-extingusisher selector valve, regained control and set the bomber down safely on the twinkling runway at Gowen. It would be a disservice to Stewart to picture him during this period as an automaton before the altar of duty, who spent his spare time carrying baskets to the poor. A human sort of guy, he missed the bright lights and the beautiful gals of his old haunts, and he managed a short leave. But even on this brief holiday in Hollywood, he spent a whole day flying. Test Pilot Jimmy Mattern, at Chasen's Restaurant one evening, wondered pointedly if Stewart would care to fly the brand-new P-38 Lightning fighter which Lt. Col. Thomas G. Lanphier, also present, had parked down at Mines Field. Jimmy took the P-38 upstairs next day and wrung it out to the satisfaction of all concerned.



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By August, after six months of the grind at Boise, Jimmy had accumulated enough experience for bigger things. He had earned his captaincy, and in the Manner of Performance column of his Form 66-1 was the rating "Superior" – the highest an officer can receive. Throughout the rest of his service, no commander was ever to rate him lower.

He became restless and uneasy. His past had begun to catch up with him. He heard rumors that plans were afoot to use him in an Air Force picture to boost recruiting, which would put him in wraps and keep him out of the war. He believed that this would be the worst possible use to which higher headquarters could put him; that such special treatment would hurt the morale of other men in the AAF; that his desire to get into combat was worth a dozen public-relations pictures. He took his problem to his group CO, Pop Arnold.

Arnold's reply was to pick up the phone and call Sioux City, Iowa, where he knew Col. Bob Terrill, CO of the 445th Bombardment Group (Heavy) equipped with B-24's. Terrill needed a squadron operations officer, and he needed a good one, because the 445th was scheduled for overseas movement in less than three months. He agreed to take Stewart.

When Captain Stewart reported to Col. Bob Terrill at Sioux City, he felt like a new man. Soon he would be out of the country, in combat, and beyond the reach of those who might try to cast him in a picture. Here with the 445th there was a terrible immediate purpose to everything a man learned. He acquired an enormous admiration for Terrill – a man who never slept, who seemed to know everything there was to know about a heavy bomb group and precisely what was going on in every department of his own. Captain Stewart had learned a lot. But here was an officer who gave him the feeling of a novice. The idol of millions of picture fans took another long notch in the taught belt of humility he wore.

The humble attitude did not prevent Captain Stewart from demonstrating with confidence that he knew how to carry out the training of the 703rd Bombardment Squadron intelligently, handle a rugged gang of officers and enlisted men and put a B-25 through its paces. In exactly nineteen days, Colonel Terrill appointed the newcomer a squadron commander. Perhaps the assignment was more significant than any Stewart has received, when it is considered that no group commander faced with departure for combat would have promoted an officer to such a key position without cold-blooded appraisal.

An intangible change suffuses a man who has become a link in the chain of command. Jimmy Stewart was no longer an auxiliary, but as genuine a part of the striking power of the AAF as the 1000-pound demolition bombs exploding on German factories. Hollywood had lost an actor. The AAF had won a commander.

A few weeks later, in November 1943, a heavily loaded

B-24 groped at treetop level below the gray, drizzling clouds that pressed down on the eastern bulge of England. The pilot, haggard after the long flight from Florida to Brazil to Africa to England, strained his eyes through the haze for a glimpse of the airdrome at Tibenham, future home of the 445th Bomb group. Swarms of B-24's, returning to base from a mission into Germany, congested the foggy air space above the ancient English villages, creating the continual hazard of midair collision. The landscape was one great rash of airdromes, all apparently identical. Jimmy Stewart heaved a sigh of resignation and landed on the nearest runway. In his blood was the tingle that exhilarates all who come for the first time upon the arena of war. For a bomber crew, this was the front line.

He called up Tibenham, only six miles away, and was told to remain overnight where he was, on account of the weather. That evening he sat with his crew in a Nissen hut and listened to a foreign broadcast. Lord Haw-Haw came on.

"Good evening," said the politely sarcastic voice, "and allow me to be the first to welcome the Four Hundred and Forty-fifth Bomb Group to England." The ten mouths of Stewart's crew fell open simultaneously. What kind of racket were they into, anyway? A gunner finally spoke, "Rough," he said.

Probably that gunner didn't know how rough it was really going to be. For in that bloody winter of 1943-44 the growing 8th Air Force was finally locked in a death embrace with the Luftwaffe. On the Regensburg-Schweinfurt strike three months previous, fifty-nine heavy bombers had gone down, and on the more recent second Schweinfurt assault, the German rocket-firing fighters and dense flak concentrations had shot down sixty bombers. Friendly fighters still lacked the range to go all the way in to the target with the bombers. German fighter production was increasing and the deadly jet fighter was taking its bow. No man could predict the outcome.

The buzz of curiosity which always accompanied Jimmy Stewart's arrival at a new station died down quickly in England. To everyone preoccupied with the life-and-death business of laying on heavy-bomber missions, the presence in their midst of a screen star was interesting but unimpressive. The only talents likely to impress the air crews and staff officers of Brig. Gen. Ted Timberlake's 2nd Combat Bomb Wing would be Stewart's ability to work, learn, fly a B-24, conduct briefings and run his outfit.

A swarm of sharpshooters from wing headquarters descended on the freshmen 445th Bomb Group at Tibenham for the double purpose of prying into every nook and cranny of the group's readiness for operations and of orienting its personnel on the latest wrinkles of combat technique peculiar to the European theater. The boys listened attentively for the most part to the lectures they received from

battle-wise pilots, bombardiers, navigators, radio-communications officers and operations officers. One man listened to the experts so hard, so long and so well that in spite of his passion for anonymity, he was conspicuous. Jimmy Stewart became a dry sponge at his new fountain of knowledge. The wing communications office recalls how Stewart was the only man who sat twice through his talk on radio aids. What's more, Stewart bled him for more information afterward.

Within ten days, probably a record for a newly arrived group, the 445th put up a twelve-ship formation on a mission at 27,000 feet against Kiel, Germany, with no losses. Captain Stewart led the high squadron. On all the subsequent eighteen missions which he flew during sixteen



Jimmy Stewart during briefing for D-Day missions, June 6, 1944.

East Anglia Air War Archives

months of the mortal climax of the air fighting over Europe, he was to bear the responsibility of leading either a group – thirty-six airplanes – a wing – three groups – an air division – three or four wings – or the 8th Air Force – the whole works.

Like the star who is no better than his last picture, an air commander in the 8th was no better than his last mission.

On his first two missions – Bremen came next -- Stewart turned in a workmanlike job. He made no mistakes, but neither was he faced with any difficult decisions by which Colonel Terrill and General Timberlake could assess the judgment of the green commander of the 703rd Bombardment Squadron. They learned that he was thorough, deliberate, unspectacular and conscientious – important as far as it went, but not conclusive.

And then came Stewart's third mission, a strike against Ludwigshafen, Germany, which resulted a few days later in a letter from the commander of another group – a commander who didn't have any time to waste on chatty letters:

Headquarters, 389th Bomb Group (H)

13 January, 1944.

COL. ROBERT TERRILL,
COMMANDING OFFICER
445TH BOMB GROUP (H)

Dear Bob: Please allow me to express the admiration of the personnel of the 389th as well as my personal admiration for the splendid display of superb air discipline if the 445th on the mission of 7 January, 1944.

The good judgment of Captain Stewart, your Group leader, in maintaining an excellent group formation yet making every attempt to hold his position in the Combat Wing formation is to be commended.

Congratulations to you and the 445th,

Sincerely,
(Signed) MILTON W. ARNOLD,
Colonel, Air Corps, Commanding.

1st Indorsement

CAPT. JAMES M. STEWART
C.O., 703D BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)

1. It is extremely gratifying to me to receive letters of this nature. You are hereby commended for your good judgment and leadership ability as displayed on 7 January, 1944.

2. A copy of this letter will be filed in your 201 File and with your next regular efficiency report.

(Signed) ROBERT H. TERRILL,
Colonel, Air Corps, Commanding.

Scrutiny of the circumstances under which Captain Stewart had exercised "good judgment" and "air discipline" disclose a degree of professional understatement in the above commendation. After leaving the target area in a two-group wing formation, Stewart, in command of the 445th Group, discovered with alarm that the group he was following was thirty degrees off course. He immediately called its leader on VHF and pointed out the error in navigation. The latter insisted that Stewart was mistaken.

Two alternatives were open to Stewart, both of them bad. He saw another formation leaving Ludwigshafen on course, and knew that he could easily switch over and tack on behind it, thus insuring the safety of his own group. But this would have meant abandoning to its lonely fate the group which was blundering away from the main procession – and easy prey for the fighters which were sure to single it out on the way home. And yet if he continued, for the sake of wing integrity, to follow a leader who was heading for disaster, he must accept the certainty of sharing concentrated fighter attacks and extensive flak damage. Wandering even a mile or two from the briefed course often meant that, instead of coming home without a flak hole, you arrived all shot up and minus six or seven good crews.

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DAYTON, Ohio -- Brig. Gen. James Stewart's jacket is on display with the Celebrities in Uniform exhibit in the World War II Gallery at the National Museum of the United States Air Force. (U.S. Air Force photo)

It is easy to sit in comfortable chairs around a blackboard after a mission and say what a leader should or should not have done when faced with so awful a dilemma as confronted Stewart – a situation, incidentally, which illustrates perfectly the kind of decisions our air commanders had to face every day.

With a hollow feeling in his stomach and a heavy heart, Stewart called the other group. “Padlock Red leader to Padlock Green leader. We’re sticking with you.”

Fighter controllers of the Luftwaffe, eagerly plotting the track of the two groups that had become separated from the main force, vectored several fighter *Staffeln* toward the kill. Twenty-eight miles south of Paris, sixty Messerschmitts and Focke-Wulfs drove head-on attacks into the lead group. Jimmy Stewart grimly closed the 445th in for support.

Paying in for a navigational error with his life, the leader of the group was the first to go down under a fusillade of 20-mm, cannon shells. Other B-24’s of the lead group met the same fate. But the Focke-Wulfs which turned their attention to Stewart’s compact formation didn’t score any kills. Jimmy brought all his boys safely back to Tibenham.

At least one consideration which must have entered into Stewart’s promotion to major later in January was the fact

that he had already made a solid contribution to the Ludwigshafen mission to the sense of unity, hence combat efficiently, of the three groups in Timberlake’s wing. By risking his neck to protect an erring teammate, he had probably saved the 389th from annihilation. More important was the factor of air discipline. He had served notice that he possessed a cardinal virtue of the soldier: Persuade your leader out of his mistake, if you can, but follow him, right or wrong.

New confidence rode in the cockpit with Jimmy when he led the group to Bonnières, France, on January twenty-ninth. There was also a rising confidence in the men who flew behind him. Things seemed to go all right when Stewart was up front. He made free use of the radio, like an aerial quarterback, to advise and encourage the other boys during a mission, and here his experience in films gave him a novel advantage. Because of precise enunciation, people could understand him. It sounds like a little thing, but clear, quick communication between formations was of extraordinary importance.

During the month of February, 1944, in which the 8th Air Force smacked the German aircraft industry with hay makers from which it never recovered, Major Stewart was in the thick of it. He led the group to Nuremberg and the wing to Frankfurt, Galze Rigen and Brunswick. His reputation as an air commander steadily grew, receiving official recognition in the following citation for his work on the Brunswick mission:

AWARD OF THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS...

Major James Maitland Stewart, 0-433210, Army Air Forces, United States Army. For extraordinary achievement while serving as Deputy Leader of a Combat Wing formation on a bombing mission over Germany, 20 February, 1944. Having been briefed for instrument bombing with condition that should visual bombing be possible the deputy leader would assume command, the formation proceeded to the target, meeting heavy enemy fighter opposition. When the target was reached, it became apparent that visual bombing was possible and Major Stewart smoothly assumed the lead position. In spite of aggressive fighter attacks and later heavy, accurate antiaircraft fire, he was able to hold the formation together and direct a bombing run over the target in such a manner that the planes following his were able to release their bombs with great accuracy. The courage, leadership and skillful airmanship displayed by Major Stewart were in a large measure responsible for the success of this mission. Entered military service from California.

By command of Lieutenant General Doolittle.

Plan to Attend the Colorado Springs/ Air Force Academy Reunion in 2014

(For a sneak preview, see save-the-date information and
photographs of our reunion site on page 32)

Cliff Deets
Reunion Chairman

Fear is part of a normal man's make-up, but the fear that haunted Stewart and most other air commanders was the fear of failure – of messing up a mission by a bad decision. Only once during that month of February does he recall having experienced a more intimate fear, the fear of death.

He sat in the half-empty combat mess one night, eating alone, the tension within him mounting painfully. The mess was half empty because thirteen crews had failed to return from the day's mission to Gotha, Germany, during which 109's and 190's had knocked the hell out of the B-24's in a desperately fought two-and-one-half-hour air battle. The survivors pecked at their food without appetite, with bowed heads and with fatigue-bleared eyes, trying to forget their recent ordeal.

Jimmy knew that he was scheduled to lead the group to Nuremberg, over the same bloody route, the next day, if the weather held. Equally violent or increased fighter opposition could be expected on the morrow's deep penetration. He fought off the premonition that his number was up, that this time a guy named James Stewart wouldn't come back alive to Tibenham.

At 8:00 P.M. the phone rang. Tibenham was alerted for the Nuremberg mission. Jimmy laid down his fork, climbed into his jeep and drove down to the blacked-out operations block to begin the all-night task of engraving on his brain every scrap of information in the filed order that now began to feed out of the teletype machine.

The following afternoon, Gen. Ted Timberlake was waiting out on the airdrome at Stewart's hard-stand, as the B-24's returning from Nuremberg circled overhead. His face relaxed when he counted the same number that had taken off. Stewart taxied up and climbed wearily out of the bomb bay, eyes haggard and checks creased from long hours spent in the grip of an oxygen mask.

"How did you make out at the target?" asked Timberlake.

Jimmy managed a grin. "We clobbered it," he said.

Two weeks later, General Hodges was discussing the next day's strike against Brunswick with Ted Timberlake at air division headquarters. It was going to be a big show

and Jimmy Doolittle had called for a maximum effort.

"Who've you got leading tomorrow?" asked Hodges.

"Stewart," said Timberlake.

Hodges nodded approval. "I've got so I don't worry much when Stewart's leading," he said. "We always have a pretty good day."

Foul weather over England made a melee of the assembly on the following morning when 1000 heavies, with Jimmy in the lead, struggled up through swirling mists and set course for the enemy coast. Stewart found himself leading exactly two airplanes, one on each wing tip. The air was loaded with calls from squadrons that couldn't find their groups, and groups separated from their wings. Some wing commanders told Stewart that they had formed their wings in the clear but were several thousand feet above the briefed altitude, while others admitted that they were still fumbling around in the soup.

Jimmy strove doggedly to organize the long column, but terrible visibility and impenetrable wraiths of vapor trails rendered the task impossible. Near the hostile coast, with signal flares and throat muscles exhausted, he advised the other leaders that he was aborting the mission. A few minutes later, en route back to base, he heard the code word broadcast from headquarters recalling the entire task force on account of the weather. Jimmy, his judgment officially vindicated, breathed easier.

The weather was better for the next thrust at Brunswick, on March fifteenth, but as Stewart approached the target he was confronted with another one of those agonizingly tough decisions. His orders were to bomb the primary target visually. If the primary was obscured, he was to bomb a secondary target in the center of town, using radar. Because of a heavy undercast, he had been forced to the latter choice.

On the bomb run, he got the uneasy feeling that he was coming in slightly off course. Heavy flak was bursting on his level at 23,000 feet and about 400 yards off to the left. Those bursts were aimed at a group which had just passed over the target, so Jimmy figured that that was where he ought to be. Furthermore, the navigator was reporting that the radar scope was acting up and could they please make another run, since no enemy fighters were in the vicinity.

Question: Should he let the bombs go, probably missing the target by half a mile, and get out of there, or should he execute a complete circle and try a fresh run right into the warmed-up barrage of the dense and notoriously accurate flak batteries down below surrounding Brunswick? Would the radar scope quit misbehaving on a second run? Wasn't it almost axiomatic that a second run over a heavily defended target was suicidal?

He had only a few seconds to chew on this bitter wad of mental gum. He ordered a second run.

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During the next few minutes – and it takes almost eight minutes to lead three heavy bomb groups around in a full 360-degree circle – he had ample opportunity to experience that familiar, rueful conviction of having done the wrong thing that you feel, once the die has been cast. What would they say back in England if twenty bombers went down in the bursting fragments of the 88-mm. flak shells already hurtling skyward on their twenty-three-second trajectory from the ground? Would he ever see England again to find out what they thought? Stewart prayed.

The navigator reported good returns from the scope as they squared away for the target. The procession of three groups figuratively put down their heads and bored through the cloud of black smoke and sudden death that enveloped them as their bombs left the bays and showered down through the undercast toward the aiming point in Brunswick. Battered with flak damage, but still intact, the three groups reformed at the rally point and set course for home.

During March, April and May – and in April alone the 8th lost nearly 400 bombers – Stewart led missions to Berlin, Oberpfaffenhofen, Siracourt and Troyes without getting into serious trouble. But on the Troyes mission he finally messed one up. At least according to him. Between the initial point and the target, a railway marshalling yard, Stewart noticed that they were ten degrees off the briefed heading. He called his bombardier and navigator, but they were sure they were heading right for the target. While Stewart was busy talking to the navigator on the interphone, his deputy leader tried to contact him on VHF and tell him he was going for the wrong target – a marshalling yard a few miles from the assigned target at Troyes, surrounded by misleadingly similar terrain features. But Jimmy, busy on the interphone, didn't switch back to his VHF channel in time to hear him. His bombs erased the wrong target that day.

At a subsequent wing critique during which commanders were called upon to review the missions they had led, Stewart took all the blame for the turkey at Troyes. No mission that Stewart ever flew did more to win the respect of his colleagues than the one mission on which he missed the target and refused to alibi about it.

Jimmy was now group operations officer of the 453rd Group, to which he was transferred in March after the 453rd sustained such heavy losses in the experienced personnel that Timberlake was compelled to bolster it with strong reinforcements from the two other groups in the wing. The lion's share of the actual work of rebuilding the shattered 453rd went to Stewart, for Col. Ramsey D. Potts, its commander, believed that the group operations

officer should be the main bearing of his organization. Jimmy had to see that new crews were properly trained, and supervise or personally plan and lay on each mission.

At briefing crews, of paramount importance in the success of any mission, he excelled. He talked clearly. A professional showman, he knew how to rivet the attention of every man in the room and hold it. But there were no dramatics in the message he put across – the concise, detailed facts about the coming mission. Even on D Day, when every briefing room in England was the scene of tense, unforgettable emotion, with many group commanders unable to control the urge for heroic pep talks to crews who cheered with unprecedented abandon, Stewart conducted three matter-of-fact, unemotional briefings.

Gradually the 453rd got back on its feet, but its group operations officer had come near to the point of complete exhaustion. Yet somehow Jimmy stayed on his feet.

Shortly after a hard-earned promotion to lieutenant-colonel in June, he received an Oak Leaf Cluster to his D.F.C.

In July came the promotion to full colonel that had little to do with rank, but everything to do with accomplishment.

He was assigned as chief of staff of the 2nd Combat Bomb Wing, in which capacity he became Ted Timberlake's right-hand man. The fact that so crucially responsible a job did not go to a West Point graduate, a regular Air Corps officer or even an Air Corps reserve officer – and there were many of each available – is evidence that Stewart had learned his tactical operations cold.

Timberlake explains his choice briefly.

"Stewart was the best man available," he says.

Two blots on Stewart's record should not escape mention. When it came to driving a jeep, he was the worst navigator in England. Once he got lost driving from Tibenham to wing headquarters, a distance of five miles. On a more ambitious effort, from London to Norwich, he finally pulled up in Birmingham.

The other blot concerns his technique in a Cub airplane, used by the wing staff to hop short distances from base to base, and known as Fearless Fosdick. Jimmy was paying a visit to one of his stations and attempted to land the tiny ship in a twenty-five-mile-per-hour breeze, but Fearless Fosdick wouldn't adhere to the ground in a twenty-five-mile wind. Stewart finally succeeded in making the airplane stay put by flipping it over on its back, from which inverted position he was extricated by several willing and untactful pilots. He was lucky then, but it wasn't dumb luck that Stewart flew nineteen combat missions without injury to himself or to any member of the crews who occupied his airplane.

On May 10, 1945, Stewart assumed command of the wing in which he had served so long. It was somewhat of a nominal honor, since his chief function was to dispatch

crews to the United States instead of Germany. Nevertheless, he was filling a vacancy which called for the rank of brigadier general.

His job in England finished, he returned with little or no fanfare to America last September, with a sprinkling of white hair to show for the most eventful months of this thirty-seven years.

A terse factual evaluation of Stewart's services in the 8th is contained in a letter he received from Timberlake's successor:

HEADQUARTERS, 2ND COMBAT BOMB WING (H)
8 May, 1945

SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO: Colonel James M. Stewart

From July, 1944, to December, 1944, and from February, 1945, to May, 1945, you were assigned to the 2d Combat Bomb Wing (H) of the 8th Air Force as Chief of Staff. In this capacity, as in the other positions in this Command which you held, including squadron commander of the 703d Bombardment Squadron from August, 1943, to March, 1944, Group Operations Officer of the 453d Bomb Group (H) from March, 1944, to July, 1944, and Operations Officer of this Wing from December, 1944, to February, 1945, your performance of duty was outstanding.

You were responsible for the administrative organization and the efficiency of the many component parts of this Command and their co-ordination into one of the greatest striking forces of the entire Air Force. Throughout the period of your incumbency as Chief of Staff of this Command the bombing efficiency of this Wing, according to figures published and released by ORS, 8th Air Force, and the figures prepared separately and released by the 2d Air Division, improved until for the period from August, 1944, to May, 1945, the 2d Combat Bomb Wing was first of all Wings in the 2d Air Division in the 1000 and 2000 foot circles. This in itself is a direct reflection on your work and efforts as Chief of Staff.

Through the time you have been associated with this Command you have displayed the most intense loyalty and patriotism as evidenced by your own participation on 19 important combat missions and encounters with the enemy in addition to your staff work. Your initiative, sound judgment, personality and sincere devotion to duty has contributed immeasurably to the smooth operation of this Headquarters and the mo-

rale and efficiency of the men of this entire Command. Your keen interest and unselfish devotion to duty has been exceptional, and I desire to take this opportunity to commend you for an outstanding performance of duty. It has been a sincere pleasure to serve with you and to be associated with you.

(Signed) MILTON W. ARNOLD
Colonel, Air Corps,



Obituaries continued from page 2

Fields was an electrical specialist. He continued in the service, serving in the Korean War and retiring from Tinker AF Base after 27 years. Honored online at the WWII Memorial Registry by his son. Predeceased by his wife of almost 60 years, Alma, he is survived by 2c, 3gc, 5ggc; buried at Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens in Oklahoma City.

- **Gutierrez, John**, 423rd waist-gunner (Stephen W Peck crew on Peck's Bad Boys), of Houston, TX, died 8 Oct 12 at 88 after a brief illness. He apparently arrived at Thurleigh in Spring 43; with Peck he was downed 28 Jul 43 (Kassel); held at Stalag 17-B. Post-war he earned his Mechanical Engineering degree from Univ of Houston. Over the course of his career as a Certified Professional Engineer, he was a guest speaker at numerous lectures and seminars in the US and Latin America. After 40 years of service for Houston Natural Gas (later Enron) he retired as Superintendent over the Corrosion Control Dept. He then taught English as a Second Language for Houston Community College/American Assoc of Medical Assistants until he became ill, about a month prior to his death. Survived by his wife of 67 years, Clara, 3c, 1gs, 2ggc; buried at Forest Park Lawndale Cemetery.
- **Haendler, Charles H**, 423rd waist-gunner (William H Morgan crew), of Bethel Park, PA, died 27 Mar 12, at 89. With the crew, he arrived at Thurleigh 25 Sep 44. As a single man, he'd enlisted at Pittsburgh, PA as a Pvt in the Air Corps in Dec 42 with 4 years of high school and civilian experience as a general office clerk. Post-war he married Margaret and was a proud member of the American Legion. Survived by Margaret, 2s, 2gs, 1ggs; no further info.
- **Hannum, Patrick J**, 368th waist-gunner / 423rd togglier / armorer gunner, (crews of Joe D Marsh & Herbert Cohn), of Crooksville, OH, died 24 Jun 12 at Genesis Hospice Morrison House in Zanesville following a brief illness. He reported 22 Sep 44 as waist-gunner with crew of Joe Marsh. On 7 Mar 45, Pat was togglier on Cohn's 368th plane in the mid-air collision with Cliff Steiger's 423rd plane, after the IP heading to the target (Geissen, Germany), which collision was covered in the Echoes Jan 90 issue articles on p.3 by both pilots. Pat's 35 mission tour was completed 24 Mar. Post-war, he was a dispatcher for Neff Trucking in Zanesville and Nicolozakes Trucking in Cambridge; bookkeeper and payroll clerk for Rose Hill Mines; and then for 13 years was Perry County's Veterans Service Commission officer for Soldiers and Sailors Relief, before he retired. He served as Democratic Central committeeman; sat on the Perry Co, OH Board of Elections; was a member of Church of The Atonement Catholic Church and American Legion Post 222, both in Crooksville; of VFW Post 9090, Crooksville-Roseville; Crooksville Eagles Aerie #1979; AMVets Post 51; and DAV in Zanesville. Survived by his wife of 62 years, Marybelle (married 28 Dec 49), 6c, 10gc, and 9ggc, he is buried at St Joseph Cemetery near Crooksville.
- **Hanson, Seth M** (Millington), 352nd Services Sq, 39th Services Gp, of Martinez, CA, died 10 Oct 12, at 92. He was born in ID; he enlisted in Mar 42 at Los Angeles with civilian occupation of machinist apprentice. Survived by his wife, Ada, who was his war bride, and 1s, both of whom enjoy Echoes. Buried at Sacramento Valley National Cemetery.
- **Hawley, Alfred D**, 367th pilot, a native Texan who long lived in San Antonio, died 26 Apr 13, at 91. He reported 27 Nov 43 and departed Jun 44, having completed his tour. He had attended TX A&M, class of 43, and after flight school at St Mary's, joined the Army Air Corps. Post-war, for a time he flew P-51s with the TX Air National Guard at Kelley AB, San Antonio. Al was a parishioner at Christ Episcopal; an active member of the San Antonio A&M Club; and long-time member and director of the San Antonio golf association. For many years, he worked with his father in commercial construction including the foot bridge across the San Antonio River behind the Palacio del Rio and the original renovation of Christ Episcopal's Carriage House. He then spent many years as a commercial realtor. In retirement he dedicated himself full-time to golf. Predeceased by his wife Jean in Jan 00 at 76; survived by 2s, 12gc, 16ggc; buried at Ft Sam Houston National Cemetery, San Antonio.
- **Hovey, Ernest P**, 369th waist-gunner & POW (Harold Brown crew), of Mesa, AZ, died 30 Sep 12, at 89. He reported 17 Jul 44 with Brown; the crew was downed 9 Dec 44 (Stuttgart); Hovey was held POW at Dulag 12. Post-war he continued in the USAF at least through Korea. Survived by his wife of at least 68 years, Mary Louise, and at least 3gc, 3ggc. M/Sgt Hovey is buried at Prescott National Cemetery, Prescott, AZ, where his son and fellow USAF M/Sgt was buried following his Aug 11 death at 66.
- **Jacobs, Dallas 'Luke' L Jr**, 367th pilot & flight commander, from Shelbyville, TN, died 7 Mar 13 in Orlando, FL at 89. He reported 11 Aug 43, and flew his first combat mission (Frankfurt) 4 Oct as co-pilot in Laek Robinson's crew. He took over the crew of Robert Ashley (KIA) 31 Dec. He was a veteran of Black Thursday, Big Week, and First-Over-Berlin. From his 25th mission, the Noball 'milk run turned sour' 26 Mar 44, he made it back to England but short of Thurleigh with co-pilot Phil Griswold wounded. He departed Thurleigh Mar 44 and in 45 flew a 2nd tour as squadron commander of the 414th 'Wing & a Prayer' Squadron based in Italy. Meanwhile, Betty, who Luke met and married post-war, had passed the civil service exam and in Feb 43 become the first woman to work on-site in TN at the Clinton Engineer Works – later renamed Oak Ridge. Though she met scientists and Nobel Laureates such as J. Robert Oppenheimer and Enrico Fermi who would visit "the Castle" where she

worked, the super-secrecy shrouding the project was her singular vivid memory. The project, of paramount importance to our war effort with its critical need for absolute secrecy while building the world's first operational scale nuclear reactor to enable producing the atomic bomb that ended the war, had her employed just 15 miles from her grandmother's farm where she'd grown up in austere farm conditions during the Great Depression. In 44 she enlisted in the Navy and worked in DC, but returned to TN after war's end. In 46, while attending U of TN on the GI Bill, Betty met and married Luke. He continued in the AF in Korea, and left the AF in 52. In 56 the family moved to FL, where Luke began a construction career. Betty retired in 82 as office manager of the FL Credit Union Guarantee Corp. In 92 Luke worked to restore the B-17 Liberty Belle to flying condition. While he co-chaired our 97 Orlando Reunion, Luke wrote the eloquent article for Echoes Oct-97, p.1, "Who Kept Pilots in the Air?" Predeceased by Betty in Dec 09 at 85; survived by 3c, 3gc; buried at Woodlawn Memorial Park, Gotha, FL.

- **Krenn, Gordon M**, 369th bombardier (Albert Switzer crew), of Milwaukee, WI, died 11 Jul 13 at 92. With the crew he reported 25 Mar 44. He was enlisted as a Pvt in Milwaukee in Jun 42, then single with a year of college and civilian experience as a cashier or bookkeeper. Post-war he earned his Bachelor and Master degrees in journalism at U of WI, motivated in part by Shirley delaying marriage until his diplomas were in his reach. He was a reporter and editor associated with news media in Madison and Milwaukee, and then moved on to write and edit a series of public health medical journals. He served in a series of roles related to Lutheran initiatives seeking the end of racial segregation in Milwaukee. Survived by Shirley, his wife of 66 years, 5c, 14gc, 4ggc; buried at Graceland Cemetery in Milwaukee.
- **Marlovits, Joseph C**, 368 co-pilot (Henry Dryar crew) & pilot, born in PA to parents who'd emigrated from Austria, and long-time resident of Sunol, CA, died 2 Apr 2013 at 90. With Dryar, Joe reported 28 May-44. He completed his tour of 35 missions, departing 29 Dec-44. Two weeks later, he married Gwen. Joe stayed in the service, leaving the USAF in Dec 54. He was an air traffic controller in Oakland, CA, retiring in 75. He enjoyed family; pursuit of golf as a scratch player; British history; classical music; and well-informed friendly disagreements. In 02 he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's and after a long decline, succumbed to pneumonia. Predeceased by Gwen in Oct 89; survived by 1d, 2gc, 2ggc.
- **Marshall, Samuel 'Sam' W III**, 423rd bombardier (Harold Miller crew), a native of Jacksonville, FL and resident of El Lago, TX, died 3 Aug 13 at 90. With the crew, he reported 28 Apr 44. He completed his 35-mission tour Aug 44. Pre-war he had 2 years at U of FL before joining the Air Corps; while training at Ellington Field as a B-17 bombardier navigator, he met and later married his wife 'Kem' (Katherine) in Houston. Post-war, he completed his engineering degree at TX A&M. He worked for Texaco, initially in Port Arthur, TX, and later in Houston; Lysekil, Sweden; and Palos Verdes, CA. Sam retired in 82, and they moved to El Lago, from where they enjoyed sailing with family and teaching gc to sail. They traveled often, enjoying 45 ocean cruises. He was a caring Christian; was for 15 years a volunteer driver for Clear Lake Meals on Wheels; and served on the Board of Trustees at Clear Lake United Methodist (to which donations were suggested). Predeceased by his eldest daughter, he is survived by Kem, his wife of nearly 70 years, 1d, 4gc, 9ggc.
- **Marvis, Theodore 'Eddie' or 'Ted' E**, 423rd Communications Offr, originally from Brooklyn, NY, died in Oceanside, OR, 12 Feb 12 at 91. Though Ted's date of arrival is not shown in Strong's Card File, he was listed in Strong's *First Over Germany* as 423rd Communications Officer between Jim H Specht (Original; transferred to US 16 Mar 43) and Isidore Sternberg (reported 18 Mar 43; to hospital 17 Jan 45). His obits in OR and CA note he had 13 combat missions over Germany in a B-17 during 3 years. Pre-war, with 3 years of college, he enlisted as a Pvt in the Air Corps at NYC, NY on 6 May 42, and entered the officer cadet program. Post-war in 47 he married Phyllis, a fellow UCLA student, and went on to medical school at NY Univ. He was a familydoctor in practice in San Diego for 25 years; and re-enlisted in the AF in 74, serving as medical chief-of-staff for hospitals in Germany, Spain, England, and Vandenberg AFB in Lompoc, CA until 78, retiring as colonel. He was generous, contributing to family members and friends in need, and numerous charitable organizations. He loved reading, music, sports, fishing, politics, history and travel. They visited numerous countries in Europe, Asia, and South America. Survived by his wife of 65 years, Phyllis until 16 Jul 13, 3c, 6gc. Memorial contributions suggested to Tillamook County (OR) High School Speech and Debate team.
- **Merrill, Bruce B**, 423rd co-pilot (Forrest Stewart crew) & pilot, of Englewood, FL, died 29 Jun 11 at 94. He graduated Syracuse U in 39 with BS in Forestry; arrived Thurleigh 25 Sep 44 with Stewart, completed his tour of 34 missions 11 Apr; served as Assistant Station Utility Offr and courier pilot after combat; and departed 15 May 45. His wife, Mary, a war bride, was a decoder during the war. Post-war he was Safety Assistant at Region 8 Headquarters of the US Forest Service, retiring 31 Dec 75. Survived by Mary, 5c, 3gc.

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- **Mitchell, William G Jr**, 368th co-pilot (John Curtis crew) & pilot, of Villa Rica, GA, died 8 Apr 12 at 91. He graduated college before enlisting in the Air Corps in Atlanta in Jun 42; arrived at Thurleigh 8 Mar 44; and departed Jul 44 having completed his tour. Dr William Grant Mitchell's memorial service was conducted 22 Apr 12, and a reception honoring him was held that day at the Williams-Mitchell farmhouse, on the edge of Villa Rica in Carroll Co. His family had held the farm since the 1890s, and he was instrumental in its preservation, working with graduate students at the Univ of W GA to preserve and help interpret its valuable history into the future.
- **Ramsey, Frank Wm**, 368th radio operator (Ben Olsen crew), originally of WV and later Ft Lauderdale, died 26 Jun 13 at 88 in Pompano Beach, where he'd more recently lived. With the crew he reported 13 Dec 44; he flew 35 missions and served as lead radio operator. Post-war he served in Korea and in the Air National Guard. For 35 years he was with Southern Bell Telephone Co in Ft Lauderdale, retiring from the Marketing Dept. Then he and Rosemary traveled 14 years in their motor home across the US. He enjoyed sharing stories of his family, his service, motorhome adventures, and Alaskan fishing trips. Survived by his wife of 67 years, Rosemary, 2d, 5gc, 10ggc. Services at St Elizabeth of Hungary Catholic Church; internment at So FL VA Cemetery.
- **Redd, Clifford A**, 367th waist-gunner (Milton Adam crew), who was born in OH, and long had lived in Avon, MA, died 16 Oct 11 at 87. He reported 7 Jun 44 and completed 13 missions, departing 30 Sep 44. Post-war, he was a baker for Continental Bakery in Natick 38 years, retiring as Head Baker. He enjoyed fishing and hunting. After his funeral mass, buried at St Michael Cemetery, Avon; survived by his wife Joann, 4c, 7gc, 6ggc, with memorials suggested to the American Diabetes Association.
- **Rodriguez, J 'Lou' Louis**, 368th navigator (J Ray Coleman crew) and Evadee, originally of NYC and later a long-time resident of Stamford, CT, died 29 Apr 13, at 92. He arrived 18 Nov 43. On 25 Feb 44 (Augsburg mission) in the push to complete the 'Big Week' with F/O J. Ray Coleman, his crew went down near Charleville, France. Strong's *First Over Germany*, pp.220-221, covers his evading capture, spending about a month with the French Underground, and then walking with 3 other Evadees to Switzerland, where they were placed in an American Evadee camp; he and 4 other Americans left searching for compatriots when they heard the 7th Army had reached the Swiss border. He graduated City College NY with a BS in Engineering. Post-war he served as a navigator for the Military Airlift Command in the AF Reserve operating out of Maguire AF Base, NJ, and Dover AF Base, DE. While in the Reserves, he flew airlift missions to Vietnam. He retired from AF Reserves in 70. In the meantime, he was a civil engineer for Diamond Int'l Corp for 28 years, retiring in 86 as Manager of Engineering at corporate headquarters in NYC; he served them as a consultant until Feb 88, when he began self-employ as a licensed surveyor and sole owner of North Stamford Surveyors. Lou was an active 306th reunion participant, and member of the 8th AFHS, and AFEES (Air Force Escape & Evasion Society). In 95, he was Grand Marshall for the Veterans Day Parade in Stamford, CT. For many years he was an active member of the North Stamford Exchange Club, serving as its president in 70-71 and was awarded its Man of the Year in 89. Lou was a Fellow and Life Member of the American Society of Civil Engineers, a Life Member of the Nat'l Society of Professional Engineers, and served the CT Society of Professional Engineers as Chapter President and State Director. He watching the NY Giants while growing up, and was a life-long loyal Mets fan. He enjoyed golf and time with family. Survived by his wife of 64 years, Rita, 3c, 8gc, 4ggc; buried at Willowbrook Cemetery in Westport. Memorial donations suggested to Vitas Hospice Care, in Stratford, CT, or to Long Ridge Fire Company, Stamford, CT.
- **Rucker, 'Bill' Wilborn B**, 423rd navigator & group radar officer, originally from Abbeville Co, SC, died 14 Nov 10 at 92 in Fayetteville, GA, where he had long lived. He reported to Thurleigh 30 Jun 43, apparently not with a crew; he was transferred to 8BC [?] on 1 Dec 43. Pre-war he'd completed college. He enlisted as a Pvt in the Air Corps at Ft McPherson in Atlanta. Post-war he continued in the aviation field as an engineer for the FAA, retiring after 43 years of service. Survived by his wife of 25 years, Dorothy, 1step-d, 4 step-gc. Buried at Forest Lawn Memory Gardens, near Calhoun Falls and Abbeville, SC.
- **Tackmier, William J**, 367th pilot and co-pilot (Gaylord Ritland crew), originally from MT, resident of Redding, CA, died 16 Jul 13, at 93. He reported 4 May 43; was 61st officer to complete a tour. He'd been enlisted at Los Angeles in Mar 41, as a single resident of Kern Co, CA with a year at Taft Community College and civilian experience in "Semiprofessional occupations." Before reporting, he'd married Dorothy in May 42. Post-war he worked for PG&E as a General Foreman in the Electrical Department in Vallejo, CA, retiring in 82 after 32 years. In 89, in Nevada City, CA, Dorothy died, and in 90 he married Mary. They were members of First Baptist, active in many church projects and the food bank. They enjoyed trailer-camping to visit friends and family. After Mary died at 88 in 07, in late 12 he moved to Redding to be closer to his family. A creative woodworker and handyman, Bill gave much help to family, in building a house and helping financially. He enjoyed his men's Bible Study

group; traveling to visit family in OR and MT; and watching tv games of the San Francisco Giants and Sacramento Kings. Survived by 2s, 4gc, 7ggc.

- **Therault, Bertrand 'Bert' J**, 423rd ball-turret gunner (Warren C B Koch crew), of Pawtucket, RI, died 12 Jan 13 at 91. With the crew, he reported 3 Dec 44; he flew 38 missions, and departed 31 Jul 44. Post-war he earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in education from Providence College. He taught high school and middle school, and served as a baseball coach in the Mansfield Schools for 30 years, retiring in 82. He never married; was devoted to his entire extended family and to St. Cecilia's Catholic Community; was an avid Red Sox fan, and member of LeFoyer for 50+ years. Buried at Notre Dame Cemetery, Pawtucket, RI; memorial gifts suggested to St. Cecilia School, Pawtucket, RI.

306th Family:

- **Banas, Carley**, wife of Charles Banas (369th pilot & co-pilot), of Evanston, IL, died 20 Dec 12 at 82. She was actively involved in a number of organizations in the North Shore community including Wilmette schools' PTAs, Wilmette Historical Society, Northridge Women's Club, a Women's Guild in Winnetka, and the Chicago Botanic Garden. She enjoyed Continuing Ed classes at Northwestern Univ and Univ of Chicago; was an avid bridge player, gardener and antique collector. She'd enjoyed world travel during her career as a manager and instructor at United Airlines, and welcoming new Wilmette residents through her real estate career. Survived by her husband, Charles, 3c, 3gc.
- **Elkins, Peggy**, widow and war bride of Darrell Elkins (367th bomb loader, who died 9 Feb 96), died 24 Mar 13 at Sanford Medical Center in Vermillion, SD, at 87. Born in 25 in Bedford, England; when the school had to close due to the war when she was 14, went to work at the chocolate factory which became a factory for ammunition and aircraft. In 45 she married Darrell; in 46 she and their first infant came to Ellis Island in NY on the Queen Mary. She and Darrell lived in Sioux City, IA, where she became a US citizen in Jul 50. She enjoyed speaking at area schools about life in England. They reared their family at McCook Lake, SD; in 66 they moved to a farm in Jefferson, SD. She worked in nearby Sioux City, until retiring in 96 to care for Darrell. A few years later she moved to Elk Point, SD. Nominated for Woman of the Year in Sioux City for her volunteer activities, she was a hospice volunteer for several years; member of the American Legion Women's Auxiliary, serving as its president several years; for years, volunteered weekly at Siouxland Center for Active Generations; was a member of Riverside Lutheran in Sioux City and its church circle; the Red Hat Society; and Dudes and Dolls Square Dance Club. Survived by 5c, 13gc, & 19ggc here, and extended family in England, she is buried with Darrell at Memorial Park Cemetery in Sioux City, IA, with memorials suggested to Riverside Lutheran.
- **Laitinen, Helmi**, widow of Rudolph Laitinen (an Original 423rd armorer, who died in Jan 01), died 26 Jan 13 at Assumption Home, Cold Spring, MN, at 91. In Sebeka, MN on 1 Jan 42, she married Rudie. During the war, Helmi went to OR, where she worked in the shipyards as a welder. Post-war back in MN, she was active in church organizations, the Fire Dept Ladies Auxiliary, TOPS, and as an election clerk. She enjoyed knitting slippers, singing at church, spending time with family; she was an avid berry picker, wine maker, and ultimate Twins fan. After retirement, she and Rudie traveled extensively. Survived by 4c, 6gc, 7ggc, they are buried at Lakeview Cemetery in Two Harbors, MN.
- **Montague, 'Sue' Anne B Allen**, 2nd-wife of 367th waist-gunner Garland Montague (who died Feb 08), died 7 Aug 12 in Raleigh, NC, where she lived her entire life. Sue worked at the Dept of Motor Vehicles until 56. After her first husband's death, she'd worked at the NCSU Dept of Forestry until retiring in 86. Survived by 3c, 2gc, 3st-d, many st-gc & st-ggc.
- **Nattier, Elizabeth Jean**, wife of Clayton A Nattier (369th pilot), died 31 Jul 13 in Lakewood, CO, at 92. Jean met Clayton in 42 while teaching in KS. They married 14 Jul 45, and she again taught kindergarten while he finished his degree at KS State College (now KSU) and he subsequently worked as a petroleum engineer. She became the quintessential stay-at-home mom for their children, and was actively involved in church activities in the many communities where Clayton's work took them – Chanute, KS; Evansville, IN; Ashland, KY; Denver; Houston; and again Denver when he retired in 90. She was a remarkable storyteller and talented writer, who made fun and meaningful presentations in many venues including most recently her own retirement community. Jean and Clayton attended our reunions through 08 in Little Rock, and he looks forward to that again now that Alzheimer's has taken Jean. Survived by Clayton, 3c, 4gc, 5ggc.
- **Strong, Jarvis A Jr** (long-time 15AF friend of the 306th, and founder of The Strong Family Assoc of America) died 30 Jul 13 at 95 at Vinson Hall, McLean, VA. Preceded in death by a son in 44 and first wife Carolyn in 80; survived by wife Molly, 5c, 6gc, 1ggs.

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- **Tate, Carolyn**, the ‘baby sister’ who accompanied Albert McMahan (369 tail & ball-turret gunner on crews of Riordan & Briscoe), resident since the 60s of Norcross, GA, died 13 Nov 13 at 84. Carolyn was a beloved long-time 306th Reunion attendee with Albert. Born in Old Hopewell, AL, and educated at Berry College in GA, Jacksonville State U in AL, and Mercer U in Macon, GA, she was a strong believer in education who went well beyond her Masters, completing all the course work for a PhD. She reared 3c by herself, working multiple jobs to somehow make ends meet. A strong, active church member, she taught at Norcross Elementary for 25 years, always promoting participation in one’s local school board, and encouraging all to get as much education as possible. She died just a few weeks after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer; while under hospice care she beautifully wrapped up details of her life, turning over her Treasurer duties for the local 8th AFHS Chapter, attending a great pot-luck meal thrown for her by church friends, and being assured that Albert will reside with the family of his nephew (her youngest son) in Lawrenceville, GA, where both Albert and Carolyn lived while she recuperated from a broken hip in 10. Survived by 3c, 2gc, 2ggc.

NOT Recent Obituaries (for long ago deaths)

Note to readers: In an effort to catch up on long ago deaths missed in earlier issues, this column covers (chronologically, not alphabetically) deaths from 1957-2004, for a number of vets represented by our current 306th followers. Many others still need to be covered in upcoming issues from 2005 to the more recent years, covered in Recent & Family column. bn

- **Price, William A**, 369th pilot, a native of Bastrop Co, TX, died 17 Jul 57, at 40, when Maj Price’s B-47 crashed at Dyess AFB, Abilene, TX. He arrived at Thurleigh 23 Apr 43. He was one of five pilots who had to abort the 28 Jul (Kassel) mission. On 17 Aug 43, the first Schweinfurt mission, he flew in the high squadron. He was the 47th officer to complete his tour. On 6 Sep 43 (Stuttgart), his 25th mission, he crash landed short of the runway at New Romney on the south coast in Kent when his plane ran out of gas. Buried near his parents at Crown Hill Memorial Park, Dallas, TX. No further info.
- **Fischer, Clarence Eugene**, 367th pilot & POW, a native of TX, died 9 Aug 57 in the East Bay area of the San Francisco region of CA at 39. Fischer, with 2 years of college, had enlisted in San Antonio, TX 15 Dec 41 as an Aviation Cadet. With his crew he reported to Thurleigh 15 Feb 43. Flying ‘L’il Abner’ they were downed 5 Apr 43 (Antwerp mission); he was POW initially at Stalag 3 & later Stalag 7A, with last report of 30 Jul 45 indicating Liberated or Repatriated. The Secretary appreciates info from Fischer’s great-great nephew, re then Castle Air Force Base squadron commander Lt Col Fischer, with his wife Fae Aileen and their 3 children (born in 47, 48, and 56) being killed in a head-on auto accident about 6 miles east of Livermore, CA; the accident also killed the couple in the oncoming car. All were killed instantly except Fischer’s middle-born child, who lived until the following day, dying on the child’s 9th birthday. All are buried at Ft Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio, TX.
- **Prout, James H**, 368th radio operator (crews of William Nash & Robert E MacDowell) & POW, a native of the Boston, MA area, died there 1 Dec 57 at 35. With Nash’s crew he reported to Thurleigh 15 Mar 44; downed on Oberpfaffenhofen mission of 24 Apr 44 (MacDowell pilot was KIA); POW at Stalag 17B. James is buried at Milton Cemetery in Milton, Norfolk Co, MA, just south of Boston, the same cemetery where his brother Roy, Navy vet of WWII and Korea, was buried following his 11 Nov 10 death. No further info.
- **Compton, Henry B**, 367th ball turret gunner (Clarence Eugene Fischer crew) & POW, of Floyd, VA, died 10 Jul 58 at 43. He arrived at Thurleigh 15 Feb 43 with Fischer, with him he was downed 5 Apr 43 Antwerp; POW at Stalag 3. His wife Pauline survived him to 8 Apr 06; they’re buried at Lee Cemetery, Floyd Co, VA. No further info.
- **Emery, Robert F**, 368th gunner (crews of Fred A Puckett Jr & Robert E MacDowell) & POW, a Maine native, died 9 Dec 62 at 38 in Houlton, ME. With Puckett, he arrived at Thurleigh 18 Mar 44; downed on Oberpfaffenhofen 24 Apr 44 (MacDowell pilot was KIA; Puckett co-pilot). Echoes Apr ’01, p.2 article, prompted by Robert’s much-younger (then-retired) brother, Edward, compiling info on his combat experience for Robert’s 5c, mentioned Robert was 1 of about 10 men who escaped Stalag 17B, though not the one who successfully made it to Allied hands and back to England; the others were not named in the article. In 62, survived by 5c; no further info.
- **Jirgal, Rudolph M**, 423rd radio operator (Curtis Oakes crew), died in Feb 66 at 42. He arrived at Thurleigh 27 Mar 45 with Oakes. Born in IL of parents from Austria, he had been enlisted in Cook Co, IL. As T/Sgt in WWII, Jirgal is buried at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, San Diego. No further info.

- **Hawthorne, Frederick M**, 369th flight engineer top-turret gunner (Alvin G Schuering crew) & POW, a NJ native, died 9 Feb 69 at 49. With Schuering, he arrived at Thurleigh 1 Dec 43; downed 29 Mar 44 (Brunswick mission). POW at Stalag 17B. When enlisted in Sep 42 at Camden, NJ, he was a married resident of Mercer Co, NJ with a grammar school education and work experience in "Semiskilled occupations in mechanical treatment of metals (rolling, stamping, forging, pressing, etc)." His vet marker at Riverview Cemetery in Trenton, Mercer Co, NJ, has his birth and death dates with a Christian cross, and shows he was T/Sgt with Army Air Forces WWII. His Hawthorne family marker lists his apparent wife, Gena D, who survived him, living from 22 to 86, and an apparent son of his same name, for whom no death date is yet shown. No further info.
- **Michaely, George**, 423rd waist gunner (Virgil Jeffries & Charles Munger crews), originally from Philadelphia, PA, died 30 Jul 75 at the VA Hospital in San Diego, CA of cancer, at 51. Prior to joining the Air Corps as a Pvt in Los Angeles 20 Dec 41, he was in the US Army Cavalry in 39-40. He reported to Thurleigh 5 Jul 43, not assigned to a crew. He was promoted to S/Sgt 15 Sep and flew as waist gunner with Munger and Jeffries. With Jeffries for 2nd Schweinfurt mission 14 Oct 43 Michaely was severely injured, subsequently losing a leg. Post-war he was a machinist. Buried at El Campo Memorial Park, San Diego, CA, he was survived by his wife Jean to 2008, 3d, and now 5gc.
- **Sanders, William H**, 367th gunner (John McAllister crew), died 29 Nov 78, at 56 in San Diego Co, CA. He reported 15 Jun 44 with the McAllister crew. When he'd been enlisted at Los Angeles, CA on 23 Dec 42 he was a married resident of San Diego Co, CA. Sgt Sanders is buried at LaVista Memorial Park in National City, San Diego Co, CA with his wife, Pauline, who survived him to Apr 98. No further info.
- **Dickens, John Edwards**, 423rd co-pilot (Curtis Oakes crew), of Castalia, NC, died 11 Apr 82, at 57. He reported 27 Mar 45 with Oakes, and continued through the Casey Jones photo mapping project. Post-war he was the Finance officer at Nash Tech Institute in Nashville, Nash Co, NC. He was divorced; at death was survived by 1s; buried at Forest Hills in Nashville, NC.
- **Price, Barney R**, 369th pilot & co-pilot (Alvin G Schuering crew) & POW, died 12 Apr 82, at 61. He arrived with Schuering 1 Dec 43. The 28 Jul 43 (Kassel mission) reference in Strong's First Over Germany had a typo erroneously naming Barney instead of 369th pilot William A Price. Barney's crew was downed 26 Mar 44 (Pas de Calais mission), just 3 days prior to Schuering's downing. Barney was held POW at Stalag 1 Barth-Vogelsang Prussia, at which time he was listed as a resident of IN. Born in OK, in Sep 40 he enlisted at Tulsa as a Pvt in the Air Corps. After WWII, Barney also served in Korea. Buried at Ft Snelling National Cemetery, South Minneapolis, MN, where his marker lists him as Cpt (Reserves). No further info.
- **Piotrowski, 'Pete' Walter**, 423rd ball-turret gunner (crew of David A Steele & Ralph W Jones), died in Oct 82 at 69 in Hillsborough, NH. He arrived at Thurleigh 11 Dec 42 with the crew of Steele & Jones. Walter was the 31st EM to complete a tour, on 29 Jun-43 (25 missions). Post-war he worked in manufacturing until he retired. Survived by his wife of 35 years, Eleanor, plus (at death 5c, 5 gc) now 5c, 9gc, 3ggc.
- **Fisher, Clarence 'Bud' E**, 369th pilot, originally from IN, died at 64 on 1 Jun 83 in Mansfield, Wright Co, MO. He had enlisted 5 Jan 42 at Ft Benjamin Harrison, Indianapolis, IN, with a year of college and civilian occupation code "Accountants & Auditors." He arrived at Thurleigh 16 Feb 45, and flew 26 missions. Post-war he was an Eastern Airlines captain and retired in 76. His wife Faye survived him 11 years; she died of brain cancer 10 Jul 94 in Vinton, VA; survived by 1s.
- **Peters, Frank J Jr**, 368th Sq cook (A Mess) of Garfield Heights, OH, appears to be the man of that name who died 21 Apr 84, at 67. When his widow, Ruth M (owner of the small house where Frank had lived), died in mid-Jun 12, the funeral home listed her as "beloved wife of the late Frank J," she was buried at Hillcrest Memorial Cemetery in nearby Bedford Heights, OH; they had earlier handled Frank's arrangements. Frank was born 14 Oct 16 in OH; he was enlisted 23 Feb 42 at Ft Hayes, Columbus, OH; Russell Strong's Card File shows Sgt Peters reported to the 306th on 3 Apr 42. By Jun 12, Ruth had been predeceased by 1s; she was survived by 2s, 5gc.
- **Ernest, Merlin D**, 369th radio operator (Wallace 'Jack' / 'Wally' W Young crew), of MI, died 1 Oct 85 at 60 in Rochester Hills, MI. He reported with Young 23 Dec 44, and flew 30 missions before departing 7 Oct 45. Post-war he was an electrical engineer. Survived by his wife Virginia, until 3 Aug 97 when she died at 71 in Holly, MI; 1d, 2s. Buried at Greenwood Cemetery, in Vernon, Shiawassee Co, MI.
- **Pulcifer, Carl E**, 367th tail gunner (C Oliver Smith crew) died at 76 in Tyler, TX on 12 Oct 85, after a sudden illness. He arrived at Thurleigh with the crew 18 Nov 43. Carl grew up in Brooklyn, NY and Belfast, ME; he earned his Master's in art at Yale. In Maine he taught art and supplemented his income with odd jobs and in the shipyards before he was enlisted at 33 at Bangor, ME. At the end of his tour of duty, Carl married Dorothy, a Sgt in the Women's Army Corps and also an artist, while both were stationed in CA. She'd earned honors for her large floral mural in the mess hall at Ft Stockton. They moved to Bel-

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fast, ME, and taught art several years before moving to her home town of Tyler, TX. There they taught art for almost 30 years to hundreds of students from their home studio; both were famous in the East TX area for their art and teaching ability. War's close calls with death apparently left Carl somewhat reclusive and unwilling to drive because he felt cars were unsafe, but with Dorothy at the wheel, they toured TX making sketches and photos for future paintings. His other interests included reading, astronomy, music (especially opera), and he wrote two books, the first, "Through Hostile Skies" (unpublished) from his experiences as a tail-gunner; and a biography of opera singer Lillian Blauvelt, his maternal aunt. After Dorothy died 20 Oct 82 at 76, he returned to ME for a last trip in 84. Both are buried with USVA markers at Tyler Memorial Park & Cemetery, Tyler, TX.

- **Tunstall, Joseph L Jr**, 369th navigator (crews of Max William & Lowell Burgess), of Philadelphia, PA, died at 64 in Dec 85 in Havertown, Delaware Co, PA. His post-war work is unknown; he was honored online at the WWII Memorial Registry by a family member. His wife, Mary, survived him in Havertown to 30 Oct 10, at 87. Predeceased by 1d, they are survived by 6c, 16gc, 7ggc. Funeral mass held at Sacred Heart Church in Havertown; buried at Holy Cross Cemetery in Yeadon, Delaware Co, PA, with memorial contributions in her memory to Parkinson's Foundation.
- **Stevens, William D**, 367 bombardier (Louis F Matichka crew) & Internee Sweden, of Schenectady, NY, died 4 Dec 87, at 67. He was single, with civilian experience as "Clerks, general office" when he enlisted at Albany, NY in Jan 42 as Pvt in Air Corps. With Matichka, he reported 5 Apr 44, and on 8 May 44 (Berlin mission) he was MIA; that day he became an internee in Sweden after the plane (on 2 engines, low on fuel) broke in two when hitting the 32' waves, and all crew members were picked up by a Swedish fishing boat. Our Echoes Apr-07 (posted at our website, 306bg.org), p.3 has the 19 Jun 44 report Matichka submitted to the Office of the Military Air Attache, Stockholm, Sweden, re the ditching, and an article re the plane's .50 calibre machine gun donated to the 306th Thurleigh Museum. Echoes Jan 08 (also posted at 306bg.org) back page has an article about the 04 recovery of that gun and other items from the B-17 by a diver; the delivery of them to Thurleigh 9 Jun 05; and the visit in Dec 07 to Thurleigh by the diver who had recovered the items. Survived at least by 1s & 1d, who came to our 13 New Orleans Reunion.
- **Stoddard, David Louis**, 367th radio operator (crews of Fred A Puckett Jr & Rene Fix) & POW, a life-long resident of Elmira, Lane Co, OR, died 8 Nov 90 at 88. With Puckett, he arrived at Thurleigh 18 Mar 44. Downed in the LaRochelle mission 27 Mar 44 (with Fix), they were forced to ditch over the Bay of Biscay, where a German amphibian found them about dark, and took them to Bordeaux where the entire crew was hospitalized for several days. POW at Stalag 17B. Post-war, T/Sgt Stoddard re-enlisted @ Ft George Wright WA 19 Dec 45 "for Hawaiian Department." He married Wilma Kau on 9 Feb 46 in Elmira, OR. He spent most of his working years in the timber industry. A member of Noti Church of Christ, at death he was survived by Wilma, 2c, 3gc. Buried at Sunset Memorial Gardens in Eugene, OR.
- **Cain, David D**, 369th ground work (initial MOS draftsman; clerk typist May 44, perhaps in photo lab), a life resident of PA, died at 70 in May 91 of multiple myeloma, in Sunbury, PA, where they lived since 53. Post-war, he married Merle, who is also a PA native. His career was as manager of a local farm supply business. He was very active in their Presbyterian church, including as an elder. He always did gardening sufficient for all the family's vegetable needs. He enjoyed a wide variety of activities, even including quilting toward the end of his life when he could no longer be as active. Survived by his wife of 45 years, Merle, 2s, 3gc.
- **Smith, Charles Gene**, 367th ball-turret gunner (D Luke Jacobs crew), originally from Salt Lake City, UT, died 10 Aug 1991 at 71. He had enlisted as a Pvt in the Air Corps 3 Jul 41 in San Francisco, CA, and reported with the Robert Ashley crew 27 Nov 43. He flew his last mission in Jan 45. He also served in Korea. Later, he worked under Civil Service as an electronic technician on F-16s; he retired from USAF as a T/Sgt Jun 66. Buried at Southern NV Vets Memorial Cemetery in Boulder City, NV, he was survived by at least his wife Joyce; no further survivor info known.
- **Kata, Andrew P**, 369th pilot & Evadee, of Plainville, CT, died 23 Jun 92 at Bradley Hospital there, at 73. He reported to Thurleigh 27 Apr-44. Before Kata departed in Aug, on 8 Aug-44 (Caen mission) his B-17 'Dam Yankee' was hit over the front lines and all bailed out. Coming down near enough to the Brits were Kata and 5 more of the crew (co-pilot George C Simons; navigator Raymond E Bloker; togglier Philip Mundell; engineer top-turret gunner Joseph Brown; ball-turret gunner Cliff G Latta); they evaded capture, and were back at Thurleigh the next day. Falling into German hands and becoming POWs were 4 of the crew (waist gunners Horace F Kepler and John J Lawlor; tail-gunner Basil F Lowry; and radio operator Stanley A Endrusick). Post-war, he was a self-employed foundryman for many years, retiring in 81. He was member of the 49th Division of Air National Guard; the VFW Post in Plainville; the Elks Lodge of New Britain; and Our Lady of Mercy Catholic. Survived by 2s, 4gc at his death; buried at St Joseph Cemetery in Plainville.
- **Wade, Robert T**, (corrected info found re position & dod), 423 flight engineer (Curtis Oakes crew), died 7 Dec 92, at 67 in

Schaumburg, IL, which is 3 miles from Hoffman Estates, where his widow Carmela died at 82, in May 09. Though not indexed in Strong's books (photos of Combat Crews, or Echoes '75-'00), his name appears in both books with Oakes' crew, which arrived 27 Mar 45.

- **Riedel, 'W G' Walter G Jr**, 39th Services Group, of Ecletto, Karnes Co, TX, died 5 Jan 96 at 76. He reported 2 Feb 43 after having enlisted from Karnes Co in the Air Corps at San Antonio, TX in Jan 42 with 3 yrs college and occupational experience of semiskilled mechanics and repairmen of motor vehicles. Post-war he returned to Ecletto, and married Jody. No further info.
- **Frye, Donald J**, 368th waist/tail gunner (crews of Fred A Puckett Jr & Robert E MacDowell) & POW, originally from OH, died 17 Feb 96, while residing in Santa Rosa, Sonoma Co, CA, at 78. With Puckett, he arrived at Thurleigh 18 Mar 44. Downed 24 Apr 44 in the Oberpfaffenhofen mission (MacDowell pilot was KIA; Puckett co-pilot), he was POW at Stalag 17B. He had enlisted at 18 as a Pvt in the Army Air Corps at Newport, KY, just across the river from Cincinnati, in Oct 40, while a resident of Miami Co, OH. No further info.
- **Yehoda, Andrew**, 367th waist gunner (Roy Hoffman crew), apparently a life-long resident of Cuyahoga Co, OH who had long lived in Novelty, OH, died 16 Sep 96 at Hillcrest Hospital, Mayfield Heights, OH, at 70. When enlisted as a Pvt in the Army Air Corps at Ft Benjamin Harrison, Indianapolis, IN, 29 Jan 44, he was a single resident of Cuyahoga Co, OH, whose civilian occupation was "Semiskilled work in car manufacturing." With Hoffman's crew, ten months later he arrived at Thurleigh 28 Nov 44. At the time of his death, he was married; his death certificate listed his occupation as dispatcher in the railroad industry. No further info.
- **Matichka, Louis F**, 367th pilot & Internee Sweden, of River Edge, NJ, died 18 Dec 96 at 78. He reported 5 Apr 44, and on 8 May 44 (Berlin mission) he was MIA; that day he became an internee in Sweden after the plane (on 2 engines, low on fuel) broke in two when hitting the 32' waves, and all crew members were picked up by a Swedish fishing boat. Our Echoes Apr-07 (posted at our website, 306bg.org), p.3 has the 19 Jun 44 report Matichka submitted to the Office of the Military Air Attache, Stockholm, Sweden, re the ditching, and an article re the plane's .50 calibre machine gun donated to the 306th Thurleigh Museum. Echoes Jan 08 (also posted at 306bg.org) back page has an article about the 04 recovery of that gun and other items from the B-17 by a diver; the delivery of them to Thurleigh 9 Jun 05; and the visit in Dec 07 to Thurleigh by the diver who had recovered the items. Matichka's photo was posted by his wife when she honored him at the WWII Memorial online registry. When he was initially enlisted at Fort Dix, NJ in Feb 42, as a Pvt, "Branch Immaterial" he was a single resident of Bronx, NY with civilian experience in "unskilled occupations in slaughtering & preparation of meat products." He is buried at George Washington Memorial Park, Paramus, NJ; no further info.
- **Durham, Clarence Willard**, 423rd waist gunner (crews including David A Steele Jr & Robert H Smith), died 28 May 98 at 79, in San Jacinto, Riverside Co, CA. Pre-war he was single when he enlisted Feb 42 at Ft Oglethorpe, GA, near his home of Hamilton Co, TN (Chattanooga area). He arrived 7 Dec 42; was the 60th enlisted man to complete a tour; and 18 Aug was transferred to the 11th CCRC [Combat Crew Replacement Centre]. Echoes Apr-90 p.4 'Survival' tells of the Robert H Smith crew (including Durham) surviving ditching 21 May-43; p.5 notes Russ Strong had never located Durham. Post-Thurleigh, he also served in Korea, according to his marker at Riverside National Cemetery. No further info.
- **Love, William Alfred**, GP / 368th / armament maintenance, of TN, originally from Hampshire, Lewis Co, TN (SW of Nashville), died 17 Mar 00 at Mount Pleasant, Maury Co, TN (SW of Nashville), at 80. He reported 3 Apr 42. When he was enlisted in Feb 42 as a Pvt at Ft Oglethorpe, GA (just outside Chattanooga, TN), he was single with experience of "Semiskilled Mechanics & Repairmen." Buried at Polk Memorial Gardens in Columbia, TN. No further info.
- **Simons, George Calvert**, 369th co-pilot (crews including Andrew Kata), born in IN, died 7 Jun 00 at 90, as a resident of Helena, MT. He reported 26 Jul 44 with Jack Lewis; and was with Kata 8 Aug 44 (Caen) as 1 of 6 crew members who landed on the Brit side of the line (and were back at Thurleigh the next day) while other crew members became POW. Pre-war, he'd lived with his mother and father (a Presbyterian minister) in SD, and MT, before he was enlisted in Dec 42 as a Pvt, while a married resident of HI with 3 years college and work experience as "Salesmen and sales agents, except to consumers." Post-war he worked including as a director (unknown organization) while he lived in Riverside, CT, and traveled at least once to Brazil. His wife was likely Sara Lou, who died in Helena to May 07, at 94.
- **Sullivan, Mark M**, 368th armament maintenance armorer, who was born in WY, died 16 Nov 00 at 83. He was enlisted as a Pvt in the Air Corps in Dec 41 at Cheyenne, WY. As the war began, he met Beryl, a native of WA, while she was working in Seattle; they married in Wenatchee, WA in Mar 43. He arrived at Thurleigh 1 Jul 43 per the card file, which indicated he was an original, a corporal with the Group. His wife's obit said, curiously, that he served in the South Pacific campaign before his discharge in 45. Post-war, they first lived in Wenatchee, WA, where they were members of the First Assembly of God Church; his

Obituaries continued from page 23

post-war work is unknown to the Secretary. They lived in Tacoma several years before moving to Olympia to live near their daughter for their later years. Beryl survived Mark until 3 Feb 12, at 94. Buried at Tahoma National Veteran's Cemetery in Maple Valley, WA, where his vet marker indicates he was a TEC4. They're survived by 2c, 1gs.

- **Buehner, George A**, 1208th QM Co, of Schuylkill Co, PA, died 14 Jan 02 at 86. At Thurleigh he was S/Sgt in Clothing issue. Survived to 1 Nov 10 by his wife Emma, 90, who 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.
- **Parker, Orlie Jr**, 368th clerk, long-time resident of AR, died in the North Little Rock area 5 Jan 03, at 85. He reported to the 306th 3 Apr 42, having enlisted that Feb in the Air Corps after 4 years of college; he served through the war. Post-war he was a physician. Survivors include 1s.
- **Ramsey, Frank L**, 423rd navigator (crews of Geno DiBetta, & Virgil Jeffries) & POW, died in El Campo, Wharton Co, TX, 21 May 03, at 86. He reported on 1 Nov 43 with DiBetta; 26 Nov (Bremen) downed with Jeffries and became POW at Stalag Luft 1. He had enlisted 7 Apr 42 at San Antonio as a Pvt in the Air Corps, as a single resident of Wharton Co, TX with 1 year of college. Post-war he married Leola; no survivor info available; buried at Garden of Memories in El Campo, where his marker bears his wife's name and only year of birth so far engraved; it shows him as US Air Force Lt during WWII, with a medallion on the marker for "American Ex-Prisoner of War." No further info.
- **Lilja, George E**, 368th waist gunner (Joseph Gay crew) & POW, of Brooklyn, NY, died 11 Jun 03 at 79. He was at Thurleigh in time to have been downed 25 Feb 44 with Gay (Augsburg mission); POW at Stalag Luft 1. Born in NY, his carpenter father and mother had emigrated from Finland, and filed their papers for Naturalization by 40. He was enlisted 22 Oct 42 in NY as Pvt in the Air Corps with work experience as "Semiskilled machine shop and related occupations." Our Apr 01 Echoes noted him in the New Names article, p.7, with his Brooklyn address. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery. No further info.
- **Bressler, Earl L**, 367th waist gunner (Roy Hoffman crew), born in PA and long of Newark, DE, 80, died 29 Dec 03 at the Veterans Hospital in Coatesville, PA. With Hoffman's crew, he arrived at Thurleigh 28 Nov 44. He also served in the Korean

DONATIONS FOR THE 306TH BOMB GROUP HISTORICAL 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.

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Telephone No.

306th Unit

Email Address

Date

Make checks payable to:
"306th Bomb Group Historical Association"

Send to:

Judith Hermley, Treasurer
306th Bomb Group Association
5314 Bob Sikes Blvd
Jay, FL 32565

War. Post-war he was a maintenance foreman for Amoco Oil Co, for 20 years. He enjoyed working with cars and especially enjoyed spending time with his family. Survived by Ethel, his wife of 57 years, 3c, 6gc, 5ggc as of his death, he is buried at Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery, in Bear, DE.

- **Tolmachoff, Andrew William** [correcting May 04 obit], 369th tail gunner (various crews including Paul Jorgensen, who arrived 19 Nov 43 & departed in Apr 44) died 23 Jan 04 in San Luis Obispo, CA at 80, of Parkinson's after years of Alzheimer's. He arrived at Thurleigh 20 Feb 44 with a partial crew, and was wounded Mar 29 (Brunswick mission). After recovering from his injuries, he flew many missions. Post-war, he returned to Los Angeles. In Aug 45 he married Ruth, a high school classmate. Andy worked for a wood interior shutter company and became a small business owner of Louisiana Louvres Inc in 57. Despite many long days, often 7 per week, he never missed his children's school and sports activities, and served as a youth baseball coach. He enjoyed weekend trips to Las Vegas, holiday trips to the Kern River, and horse races at nearby Santa Anita. He eventually flew again, to Tampa for Super Bowl XVIII, and took the entire family on an Alaska cruise. After 58 years of marriage, survived by Ruth, 3c, 8gc; buried at New Molokan Cemetery, Commerce, CA.
- **Crossland, Bernard 'BF' or 'Tiny' F**, 368th flight chief, of Amarillo, died 24 Jan 04 at 87. He was enlisted 11 Oct-41 at Ft Bliss, El Paso, TX as Pvt in Air Corps. He reported to the 306th 3 Apr 42. He departed Thurleigh 1 Mar 44 for Peryatin, Ukraine during the shuttle-bombing 'Operation Frantic' (see Sec'ty column Spring 13); at end of that operation, returned to Liverpool for later transport to US. In London on 17 Feb 45 he married Eleanor; our vet William Drumm witnessed their wedding. Crossland's career was an oil field worker. They moved to Amarillo, near which he was born, in 55. Eleanor retired from SW Public Service Co, after 32 years as a secretary; she was a member of the Protestant Church of England. She predeceased him 26 Feb 03 at 80. Survived by 1d, 1gd, 2ggc.
- **Gregg, Richard T**, 368 co-pilot (William McCaulie crew), a native of Fort Smith, AR, died in Baton Rouge, LA 26 Jun 04, just short of his 80th birthday. Gregg reported with the crew 1 Sep 44; he flew 35 missions before departing in Feb 45. He had begun college at TX A&M in Fall 42 before enlisting in the Air Corps in Houston, TX a few months later. Post-war, he married Glynn, and earned his BS in forestry from Univ of MI Ann Arbor. He served as a park ranger at Yellowstone (WY) and Shenandoah (VA) National Parks. He did his master's coursework at Univ of MO Columbia, and earned a PhD in zoology at LSU, where he was selected for Phi Kappa Phi honorary fraternity. Following work at the LA Dept of Wildlife & Fisheries' Water Pollution Division, in 66 he accepted a position with the US EPA in Washington, DC as a senior biologist in the effluent guidelines division. In 74 he returned to Baton Rouge as an EPA consultant to the LA Dept of Environmental Quality. Upon retirement from federal service, he was an environmental consultant in the private sector. Survived by his wife of 59 years, Glynn, 3c, 9gc; interment at Resthaven Gardens of Memory in Baton Rouge; contributions suggested to the Parkinsons Foundation.



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INTERCOMBAT FORM
 SQUADRON #368 (368) #368 n/c Number 368 Lt. ar 0 Date 12-9-44

Bomb Load 10 x 500 H.E. ~~Altitude~~ Position in Formation 40th A
 Time Took Off 0614 Time Landed _____

1. HOT NEWS to be phoned in? Yes No
 Details: _____

4. *Wendwood says this a/c down 1135 hrs NE Berlin. #3 engine hit by flak. a/c spiralled down to clouds. No fire. Friendly n/c in any kind of distress: (Give position, time, altitude, full details)*

GRE.: Give rank and initials
 5 minutes observed. MIA

Flak - hit directly under right wing. Started down before fighters came there

- 1st Lt. J. W. Sasser Pilot
- 1st Lt. J. T. McStey Co-p
- 2nd Lt. A. J. Carline Nav.
- 2nd Lt. H. D. Banta Bomb
- T/Sgt. E. T. Carrell Radi
- Sgt. V. W. Mitchellson Top
- S/Sgt. A. C. Schultz Ball
- S/Sgt. D. R. Revolti R/W
- S/Sgt. R. M. Wilson Tail

2. TARGET ATTACKED:

Primary Time: _____

Alternate Height: _____

Last Resort Heading: _____
 (circle)

Duration Bomb Run: _____

Lt. Macy says this a/c hit by flak #2 & #4 engine out. Under control. No chute. 1127 hrs.

3. Number of BOMBS dropped on target: Jettisoned: Returned: Abortive:

4. Observed RESULTS OF BOMBING: (For this plane or others)

Own Bombs: _____

Any Nickels: Yes No
 Number bombs dropped _____
 Number Bombs returned _____

Other bombing: _____

5. Any PHOTOGRAPHS taken: Yes? No?

6. GROUND TARGETS ATTACKED BY GUNFIRE AND RESULTS:

7. ROUTE: (If different than ordered) (If APPROXIMATE give time, place, height of turn; reason for returning early, and Disposition of bombs.)

8. WEATHER: (If it affected mission)

9. FLAK: Encountered on way out, at target and on way home.

Time	Place	Height of	Type (light or heavy), intense,	Color of	Location of Bursts in re-	Accuracy
------	-------	-----------	---------------------------------	----------	---------------------------	----------

Tailwind continued from Page 1

later that the burst knocked Tailwind out of formation, but he saw no chutes as the plane began a controlled descent.

Meanwhile, another pilot recalled that Sasser started down after he was hit, "before the fighters came thru." No one in the air saw the last minutes of flight. Once the chutes were spotted, the formation continued on away from the life and death struggle taking place far below them. Later firsthand accounts from surviving crew suggest that the official reports drawn from debriefing crews were in error. Chutes spotted and attributed to the Tailwind were probably other crews bailing out of their aircraft. The losses that day saw a chaotic scene where confusion reigned and doubt contributed to a flawed interpretation of the Tailwind's last minutes over the German countryside.

But there were survivors and Esther Banta, Lt. Banta's sister, pieced together the story for the family:

"On September 12th at about five o'clock in the morning, the boys took off from their base near Bedford, England, in their B-17 (Tailwind). They had been briefed to bomb the Ruhrland in Germany. Their plane was the lead ship of the upper formation of B-17's. Whoever was leading the entire bombing mission was off about ten miles in navigation and brought the B-17s within range of flak from Berlin. Their plane was hit by flak and they had to pull out of formation because they couldn't continue to lead their mission when their superchargers and two engines were shot out.

"Suddenly German fighter ships came out of the sun. Sgt. Revolti said that ships were exploding all over the sky but that none of the fighter shots got them before they were able to drop their bombs. The ship was badly injured by fighter attacks but eight or ten fighters were shot down by our boys.

They turned back in an effort to make it to neutral country for crash landing. Fighters again attacked them and their gas line and the third engine was shot out. They flew west for about twenty to twenty-five minutes, looking for a safe place to crash land. All this time their No. 1 engine was pulling only 60 pounds which Sgt. Revolti said was hardly enough to keep the plane in the air, but the ship continued on an even keel and they thought they were going to make it. They found an open field for the crash landing and threw away or destroyed everything possible (guns, radio, bombsight, equipment, seats, etc.) to lighten the ship. When they found a field to land they were eight or ten thousand feet in the air, coming in with the ship trimmed up for a good landing at about 120 miles per hour. Sgt. Mitchelson was calling out the air speed and all the boys were at their crash landing stations. They were wounded but none of them were dead. Suddenly when they were about 100 feet to 150 feet off the ground, the last engine cut out and they dropped into a big oak tree on the edge of the field. It cracked the plane all to pieces and threw all of the boys out of the plane except Sgt. Schultz. Five were killed instantly and none of them suffered.

Sgt. Revolti said that everything was perfectly quiet after the crash, that he was semi-conscious but was able to see that Lt. Carlino, Lt. McStay, Sgt. Carroll, Sgt. Wilson and Lt. Banta were dead. He did not see the others for they were hurled to the other side of the plane. He thought that he was the only one living.

He said that in about four hours German civilians came and put him in a truck which they had lined with parachute silk. Later they put in Sgt.

Tailwind continued on Page 28

The East Anglia Air War Project is looking for old copies of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society magazine and other military aviation magazines.

**Contact Dr. Williams if you want to retire
these issues.**

CREW

Pilot:	1st Lt John Sasser Raleigh, North Carolina
Co-Pilot:	1st Lt James McStay Duluth, Minnesota
Bombardier:	2nd Lt Robert Banta Soldiers Grove, Wisconsin
Navigator:	2nd Lt Anthony Carlino New York, New York
Top Turret Gunner:	Sgt Virgil Mitchelson Taylorville, Illinois
Radio Operator:	T/Sgt Eugene Carroll Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Ball Turret Gunner:	S/Sgt Arthur Schultz Waterville, Minnesota
Waist Gunner:	S/Sgt David Revolti Milford, Massachusetts
Tail Gunner:	S/Sgt Raymond Wilson East Liverpool, Ohio

Tailwind continued from Page 27

Schultz, Sgt. Mitchelson, [and Captain Sasser], and my brother. They were all wounded but Captain Sasser worse than any of them. Sgt. Revolti said that the place where they landed had not been bombed by our Armies and for that reason, the German civilians who picked them up and turned them over to the soldiers were not cruel to them, and he feels that the boys who were dead were buried properly by the Germans.”



Sasser Crew Picture Sought

The 306th Bomb Group archives project is looking for a copy of the John Sasser crew picture. The archives is interested in photographs of any of the crew listed on page 27. Please contact Dr. Vernon L. Williams if you have photographs relating to any men in this crew.

vwilliams@acu.edu

(325) 280-3399



Group commander Colonel James S. Sutton and the “boys” at the “Sad Sack” Bar in the Enlisted Men’s Club. Can you name any of the men with Colonel Sutton? Johnny Schupp Historical Collection

Attend the Colorado Springs/Air Force Academy Reunion Set for September 11-14 2014

Reserve the dates. The Embassy Suites Hotel has been secured with room rates at \$95 per night for a suite with one king bed and \$102 for a suite with two queen beds. Contact with the U.S. Air Force Academy and the 306th Flying Training Group (the Academy's flight training group and the 306th Bomb Group's legacy) has been established and this should be a special reunion for our organization. For more information, see pages 30-32 in this issue and online at 306bg.org.

Cliff Deets, Reunion Chairman

Museum Notes

Thurleigh Airfield 306th Bomb Group Museum

Ralph Franklin Remembers Baseball and the Gremlins at Thurleigh

Editor's Note: Early in my travels across East Anglia, beginning over twelve years ago, I interviewed Ralph Franklin at his home in Keysoe, just north of Bedford. It proved to be one of the best and most important interviews that I did across the years that I spent in England collecting memories. Ralph remembered the baseball team and today the 306th BGA archival collection received a very generous gift of photographs and memorabilia relating to Otto "Johnny" Schupp's service at Thurleigh. This collection was sent by his son, Don, who is eager that his father and his service be remembered. And it surely will be, beginning here in this issue. Don not only played in the big band at Thurleigh, he also played left field for the Gremlins. You will learn more about Johnny Schupp in the next issue. I am planning a major article on him and the extraordinary work he did at Thurleigh on many different fronts. But first, let's remember the Gremlins.....

"Another aspect where we got pretty involved in was up on the baseball diamond. They had their own, well as most bases did, they had their own baseball team here. Never did get into the football team at all. That was further into the airfield. I didn't really know anything about that. But the baseball diamond was just off the public road and we always used to go up there and again, we got to know lots of the guys who were playing. And it became apparent that the Thurleigh team, known as the Gremlins, they became the UK champions for at least two of the years that they were over here. And apparently I have learned this since, they had three professional players playing for the base team. And this usually gave them the upper hand over the rest of them. But we used to get up there and they always got us boys, they could have easily done it themselves, but they got us boys to carry their clubs, the baseball bats across from the gymnasium, just across the road, just across to the baseball diamond. So we suddenly felt that we were part of the baseball team. I have often looked at photographs but have never seen a photograph of myself up there, but we were always there. This was my first introduction to baseball, because it was all cricket over here. I have a couple of baseball clubs up at the museum and once the handles were cracked, as they frequently did, they used to give them to us boys. And, of course, because we couldn't hit the ball so hard, we just used to tape the handles up and we used to play our own game of baseball. So that was our introduction to it, long before many of the kids, who were not in the close proximity of the base such as we were, so that is another slightly different aspect of how it all came about—what it was all about.."

*Ralph Franklin, as told to Dr. Vernon Williams,
September 3, 2003*

Top row, left to right: Burgess, pitcher; Koshetsky, pitcher; Rohmer, CF, Donahue, driver; Harkness, catcher; Clarke, pitcher; Check, driver.

Middle row: Savedge, manager; Grey, CF; Schupp, LF, Thompson, 3rd; Campbell, 1st; Buffington, infield; Renn, roofer.

Bottom row: Cothram, all over; Visconti, SS; Kantarski, pitcher; Reitmeier, 2nd; 1st Lt. Bill Artmann,

~~~~~  
*Up to July 1945: Won 26 — Lost 5*





### Registration Form

#### 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association and SSMA Reunion

September 11-14, 2014: Embassy Suites; 7290 Commerce Center Dr; Colorado Springs

Group rates (pre-tax) Sept 11-14: King-size bed suite \$95/night; two Queen-size bed suite \$102/night

**DEADLINE for Hotel reservations: Aug 20th or earlier if our block of rooms is full**

Please call the Embassy Suites direct at 719-599-9100, or 800-Embassy

Veteran (306<sup>th</sup> BG or SSMA) no registration fee (list name below)..... = \$ 0

Registration Fee (per person for all others except children 12 & under, list all names below and indicate 306<sup>th</sup> BG, SSMA or child if appropriate)..... x \$40 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Wednesday 10 September** – Arrival/hotel check in – dinner on your own

**Thursday 11 September** – Arrival/hotel check in and register

- Complimentary breakfast for reunion attendees booked in hotel (6:30 – 9:30 am); Hospitality Room, Roundtables and Lectures no charge (7:00 am – 8:00 pm); Complimentary Manager’s reception for hotel guests (5:30 – 7:00 pm)

Garden of the Gods Bus Tour (12:30 – 4:00 pm)..... x \$25 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Friday 12 September**

- Complimentary breakfast for reunion attendees booked in hotel (6:30 – 9:30 am); Hospitality Room, Roundtables and Lectures no charge (7:00 am – 8:00 pm); Complimentary Manager’s reception for hotel guests (5:30 – 7:00 pm)

United States Air Force Academy Tour (9:30 am - \_\_\_\_\_) bus fee..... x \$15 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(note the “Folded Wings” memorial service to be conducted in the Cadet Chapel)

First Over Germany Dinner (7:00 pm)..... x \$45 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Dinner (number of children 12 or under @ \$23).... x \$23 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- I will host Air Force cadets or junior officers for dinner..... x \$45 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Saturday 13 September**

Official photo taken of attendees & Cash Bar cocktail hour before Banquet

306<sup>th</sup> BG Banquet (7:00 pm)..... x \$49 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Banquet (number of children 12 or under @ \$25)..... x \$25 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- I will host Air Force cadets or junior officers for dinner..... x \$49 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL amount for this Registration Form** .....\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Full name of your family’s Thurleigh Vet \_\_\_\_\_ Circle one: Living Dec’d

His Squadron or base unit, if known \_\_\_\_\_ His duty at Thurleigh \_\_\_\_\_

**Every person attending for this registration; how related to Vet; date plan to arrive @ Reunion**

My name: \_\_\_\_\_ Day plan to arrive: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/14  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Day plan to arrive: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/14  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Day plan to arrive: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/14  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Day plan to arrive: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/14

Please add an asterisk \* by the name of anyone attending his/her first Reunion. Mark each person with 306<sup>th</sup>, SSMA, how related, & if child. Note any special requirements on back, i.e. wheelchair accessible room, special dietary needs, etc.

Make checks payable to “306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association”

On check memo line mark “Reunion.” Mail check & Registration Form to Treasurer Judith Hermley; 5314 Bob Sikes Blvd; Jay, FL 32565

## Colorado Springs Reunion Plans Taking Shape

### September 11-14, 2014

Plans are coming together for the 2014 reunion to be held September 11-14 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Colorado Springs, Colorado. We will be joined this year by the **Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association**. A great deal of advance planning has taken place with an emphasis on involving/connecting our **Veterans** with the **Cadets** of the **Air Force Academy**, and with the **306<sup>th</sup> Flying Training Group**, the command at the **Academy** directly responsible for screening all cadets for aptitude for flight, cadet training in glider and powered flight, and parachute training. Of course the **306<sup>th</sup> Flying Training Group** is the direct descendant of the **306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (H)**, having deliberately chosen the Group number "306" for ties to the **306<sup>th</sup> BG**, its historical significance, and to its relationship to the movie **12 O'Clock High** (they actually have a "toby" mug as was seen in the movie).



There are many details still to be worked out but the following are some of the events planned for the reunion:

- **Garden of the Gods** guided bus tour will be offered Thursday afternoon, September 11. This is a national park with free admission to the public and is rated as the top attraction in the Colorado Springs area. The 1350-acre park consists of numerous 300-million year old rock formations, beautiful scenery, and a visitor's center with more than 30 exhibits. There will be a charge to members to cover the cost of the bus, the bus tour guide, and to attend an HD multimedia movie

at the visitor's center. Visit their web site at [gardenofgods.com](http://gardenofgods.com).

- **Tour of the U. S. Air Force Academy** will be held on Friday, September 12. There is no admission fee to the public, but visitors are normally only allowed to take limited self-guided walking and driving tours of the **Academy**. We are working diligently to expand our tour to include some special events for the group and particularly for the Veterans. The tour will start at the **Cadet Chapel** where we will conduct our "Folded Wings" memorial service followed by a tour of the chapel itself. From there, we will observe the Cadet Wing assemble for noon meal formation and march off. Next will be a visit to **Arnold Hall**, named for General Hap Arnold, where there are various displays, and where a Subway Sandwich shop and Godfather Pizza will be available for those wishing to have a snack during the tour. Next will be a stop at the **Academy Cemetery** where we will place wreaths at the memorial plaques previously dedicated by the **306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group** and the **Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association**. Finally we will stop at the **Barry Goldwater Visitor Center** to view exhibits, attend a twenty minute movie, and browse the gift shop before retuning to the hotel. Details are still being worked out for other events to be included on the tour. Since there will be special access for our tour, it will be necessary to keep us assembled together through most events. Therefore we will be providing bus transportation to and from the hotel and the **Academy**, and from place to place on the **Academy** grounds. There will be a charge for the bus transportation.

- **Hospitality Room**-we will have most all of the exhibits available that were at the New Orleans reunion including archive research computers, the B-17 flight simulator computer, books available to peruse in the reading corner, and the movie corner with **12 O'Clock High** and other videos playing whenever the room is open. There will also be a **Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association** display table, and of course we will again be encouraging everyone to bring framed pictures of their Veterans for display. You Veterans don't forget to bring pictures of yourself, don't be modest, you really were handsome in uniform.

- **Roundtables**-we will again be scheduling at least two and probably three roundtables giving our Veterans a chance to tell their stories and answer our questions about their experiences. We are looking forward to including Second Schweinfurt Veterans on the panels.



*Denny Continued from page 5*

- **Presentations, Gatherings and Other Attractions**-the schedule will include our normal business meeting and board meeting and we are working on having a few presentations on general items of interest to all. We will be reserving a time slot for a **Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association** gathering and presentation. Daytime events on Saturday will be limited to allow you more time for informal visiting or for exploring on your own the other sights and attractions in the Colorado Springs area. Look for a list of other attractions in the next issue of **Echoes**.
- **Dinner and Banquet**-this year's Friday evening **First Over Germany Dinner** and the Saturday **306<sup>th</sup> BG Banquet** will again be buffet style with a variety of foods available on the serving lines. We also will be soliciting members to host an **Air Force Academy Cadet** or **306<sup>th</sup> FTG Officer** for the dinner and banquet, the goal is to have at least two cadets/officers at each table.

We are trying to make this a special reunion, particularly for our **WWII Veterans** who may attend, with the goal of honoring them, their service to our country, and their years of attending reunions. Therefore this year the registration fee for any Veteran attending (306<sup>th</sup> BG or SSMA) will be waived. Children 12 years of age and under will also have no registration fee. The registration fee will be **\$40** for all others adults attending.

The staff at the Embassy Suites, Colorado Springs has been extremely helpful and is looking forward to serving us. Group room rates before taxes are **\$95** per night for a one King bed suite, and **\$102** for a two Queen bed suite. All rooms come with a complimentary breakfast each morning that includes made-to-order eggs, omelets and breakfast meats, pastries, seasonal fruit, yogurt and beverages; a complimentary "Manager's reception" in the evening that includes select wines and drafts and light snacks; free WiFi access and free parking at the hotel. The hotel has an in-house restaurant and bar that is open 11:00 am to 11:00pm daily. Your room also comes with complimentary use of the hotel swimming pool, whirlpool, and fitness center.

We have blocked out a fixed number of rooms at our group rate. Help your reunion planning staff by making room reservations early to allow us to increase our block of rooms if necessary, call direct **719-599-9100**, or **1-800-Embassy** and ask for the 306<sup>th</sup> group rate. The Embassy Suites asks that all reservations for our reunion be made not later than August 20, 2014. Please let the reunion planning staff know of any special requirements you

may have such as a wheelchair accessible room or other special needs. Contact Cliff Deets at 619-405-7132, email address [cldeets@att.net](mailto:cldeets@att.net), or Barbara Neal at 435-655-1500, email address [barb306neal@gmail.com](mailto:barb306neal@gmail.com) or if you encounter problems making reservations. You may also contact our Embassy Suites representative, Elle Christensen, at 719-955-6807 if you cannot resolve problems making reservations.

There are a number of restaurants in the immediate vicinity of the hotel. In very easy walking distance (don't have to cross any streets) is an Outback Steakhouse, TGI Friday's, Hooters, and Chicago Pizza. A short drive, about a half mile away on the same street the Embassy Suites is located, is Las Palmitas Mexican Restaurant and a Zio's Italian Kitchen.

For those flying into **Denver International Airport** who don't have a connecting flight to the airport in Colorado Springs, you may want to book a trip on the **Colorado Springs Shuttle** company 13 passenger van that goes between the Denver airport and Colorado Springs five times daily. A one-way trip is \$50 (there are discounts for round trips, two persons booking together, veterans, seniors, etc). When making reservations, if you identify yourself attending the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group reunion, they will deliver you to the door of the Embassy Suites. Visit their web site at [www.coloradoshuttle.com](http://www.coloradoshuttle.com) or call 719-687-3456 for reservations. The trip from Denver to Colorado Springs is about two hours with local stops along the way. Gray Line buses may also be starting a regular shuttle soon. If we find out more details, we will include them in future issues of Echoes.

Airlines flying into **Colorado Springs Airport** include Alaskan, American, Allegiant, Delta, and United. We have heard from the Embassy Suites staff that if you are flying into **Colorado Springs Airport** it may be less expensive to take a cab from the airport to the hotel, about 16 miles, rather than the local shuttle bus service. A local shuttle costs about \$55 and the cab fare without a tip would be about \$40. Remember there is free parking at the Embassy Suites so you may want to consider a car rental that will facilitate seeing the other attractions in the area.

Reserve the dates! A detailed reunion schedule will be included in the next Echoes as well as more information about other attractions in the Colorado Springs area. We are looking forward to a great reunion and hope to see you all there, particularly all of you **Veterans!**



**Call Embassy Suites direct 719-599-9100, or 1-800-Embassy and ask for the 306<sup>th</sup> group rate.**

**Deadline for hotel reservations is: August 20, 2014**