

GROUP



*** We were the 1st, and still serving ***

WING



SECOND BOMBARDMENT ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

"Second to None"

www.2ndbombgroup.org

Volume 27, No. 1, January 2011



President's Corner

Happy New Year to everyone! I am sure the old adage is still true – that the older one gets the faster the months and years go by, and 2010 was no exception. But it was a very fine year for the annual reunion. The Westward Look Resort was as extraordinary as advertised. The accommodations were exceptional, the resort grounds were gorgeous, and the resort staff was very gracious and accommodating. An example of that is the complimentary reception they had for us on Thursday afternoon. The association experienced a good turnout, considering that Tucson is somewhat remote from the center of the country. I would be remiss if I didn't publicly thank Penny LeGrand and Loy Dickinson for their efforts to make our reunion special for the attendees. Penny worked closely with Loy and the resort staff in planning our meetings and dinners, arranging the transportation for the tours and the shuttles to and from the airport, etc. Her past experience with the resort was invaluable.

Our tour of the Pima Air and Space Museum was most interesting. The museum advertised there are 300 aircraft on the premises, and I can vouch there were at least 100 of those that many of us had never seen before. We had lunch in the 390th Bomb Group Museum, with the B-17 "I'll Be Around" in the background. Unfortunately, we were unable to tour the interior of the plane because it is not individually owned and is on loan to the museum. On that Friday evening Colonel Timothy Fay, Commander of the 2nd Bomb Wing, was our guest speaker. His talk was very inspiring. Colonel Fay was most appreciative of the personnel in his command, who are prepared for any eventuality, and his respect for their efforts was quite evident. We were honored to have him take time out of his schedule to meet with us.

On Saturday we toured the quaint and historic town of Tubac. We were fortunate to visit on a day honoring an early Spanish resident, so there was a parade, many additional tourist attractions, entertainment and a lot of shopping – at least for my family, and I have the Visa bills to prove it!

Next year we will gather in Colorado Springs, home of the Air Force Academy. Information regarding the 2011 reunion will be described elsewhere in the newsletter. I'm really looking forward to visiting the Academy and the surrounding area.

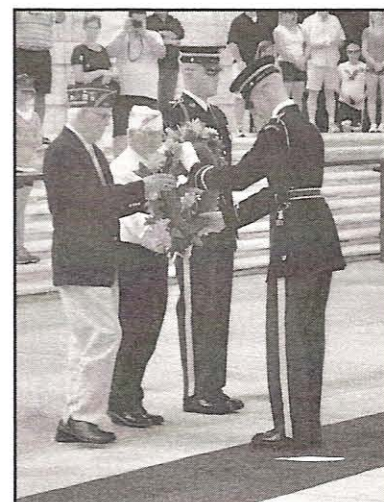
To reminisce for a moment, on August 7 this year I had the honor and privilege to assist in laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery. Dave Bauer, the current Commander of Chapter

620 of the **Military Order of the Purple Heart**, was my partner. We were presenting the wreath on behalf of M.O.P.H. Chapter 620. After approval was received from cemetery officials to lay a wreath, Dave and I were able to join a group of W.W. II veterans from the Springfield/Dayton area flying to D.C. via the Honor Flight network. We had the additional privilege to have as our host, Earl Morse, founder of Honor Flight. Pictures of the event appear later in the newsletter. Having been to Arlington a few times, I never gave any thought that someday I would have the opportunity to participate in such an inspiring ceremony. Playing of Taps as we were saluting was an extremely emotional moment. Rules of the cemetery do not allow participants to recite a prayer or make a statement, etc., so silently I said, "Rest in Peace".

There are just two changes in our lineup of officers and directors for the coming year. Chuck Childs, of Rapid City, SD was elected a Director at Large. Loy Dickinson has offered to take over as Newsletter Editor, replacing Earl Martin, who expressed the desire to retire. We owe a real debt of gratitude for the many years Earl has served as editor. His contribution to the success and continuity of the association is unparalleled. Earl's tenure is no doubt one of the primary reasons our group has been so viable. The nominating committee approached a few members to serve as president, and each individual had a legitimate reason for refusing the opportunity, so you will have to put up with me for at least one more year. All of the other officers agreed to continue in their present positions.

Best regards,
Lew Waters

*President Lew Waters,
MOPH chapter 620
Commander David Bauer,
Commander of the Guard
and wreath bearer at the
point of accepting the
wreath to be placed at
"The Tomb of the
Unknowns", Arlington
National Cemetery, August
7, 2010. The face of the
tomb reads thus: "Here
Rests In Honored Glory An
American Soldier Known
But To God"*



THE VIEW FROM THE FARM

More than ten years ago I had been listed as the Assistant Editor of the Association Newsletter. Rudi Kohler had been editor of the newsletter for several years but indicated that he would not be able to carry on and I became Editor. During the years that followed, some twenty issues of the Newsletter have gone out to the membership. A great deal of help has come from members and other sources. It was our goal to keep everyone informed. To that end, we have presented stories and articles that shed light on our member's experiences and the history of the 2nd Bombardment Group.

Now, it is time to bring forth others to keep the newsletter fresh. I wanted someone to take over the editing position and Loy Dickinson has agreed to take on this responsibility. Linda Gartz will remain as Assistant Editor. Loy has been helpful in producing the Newsletter and he and Linda are experienced in writing and editing.

Since I live in a rural area of South Carolina, I have used the column entitled "The View From The Farm" to put forth some of my personal views and observations.

I hope that I have not stepped on too many toes along the way. It is my hope that I will be permitted to submit a short bit to these columns from time to time.

My thanks go out to every member of the Association and to all those who have helped along the way. Best wishes to all!

Earl Martin
Editor Emeritus



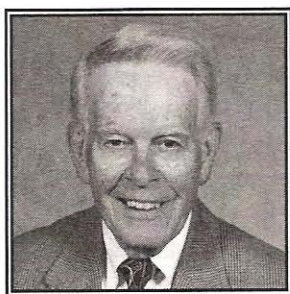
This photo shows the portion of Earl Martin's studio/office which housed the Second Bomb Association records, photos, albums and Newsletters. Approximately ten cartons of materials relating to the Newsletter are now housed at the home of Co-Historian Donna Conway.

"NEW - OLD" GUY ON THE BLOCK

For the time being, we will go without a name for this column. (suggestions welcomed) It is with great humility that I take the helm from the redoubtable Earl Martin. He has faithfully and capably hoisted the banner two times every year for the last ten. Earl has reported the doings of our outfit with candor and a straight forward style. Many of you knew that Earl piloted his crew expertly until on the eighth try they went down on a sortie near Gyor, Hungary. He was to be a guest of the German government for 13 + months. He and they survived to go on to better things in civilian life. Now that he's retired in Williamston, South Carolina, his forever partner, Anne, may be seen composing lists of 'honeydos', of which, many will get done! Earl's highly esteemed predecessor, Rudolph "Rudi" Koller was one of the 2nd Bomb Group early pioneers. He flew 52 missions from North Africa, and the very first for the Group, on April 28, 1943 until his final on October 24, 1943. This was only a week before the 15th Air Force came into being.

This fearless journalistic report had its beginnings in 1983. It has been sustained by contributions from veterans, spouses, children, other relatives and assorted parties of interest. We would like to suggest another idea that could broaden the horizon: If you have a question of interest or a subject that could be explored, we would endeavor to pursue same. Web Master Sid Underwood and Historian Todd Weiler have been helpful in this way and have a strong interest in searching out new and valuable history of the Second Bombardment Group, aka "The Second Was First". It would be greatly appreciated if all sources would continue to contribute items of interest and to add vitality and credibility of our newsletter. Stories, memories, accounts unearthed from attics and photos with captions will receive loving care by your devoted staff.

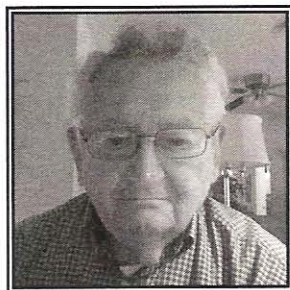
Have a great twothousandeleven!
Loy Dickinson

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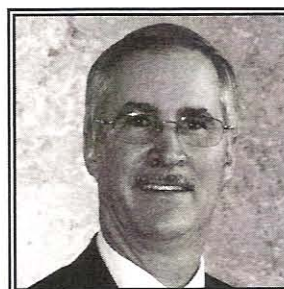
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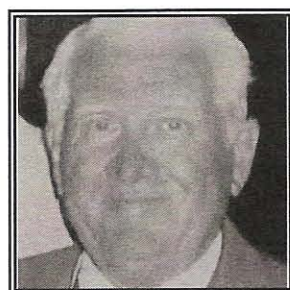
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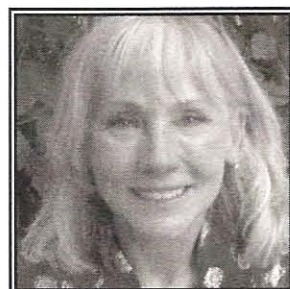
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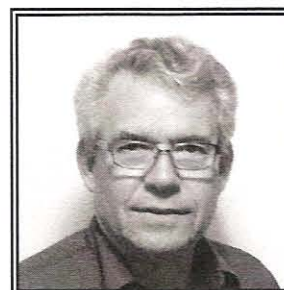
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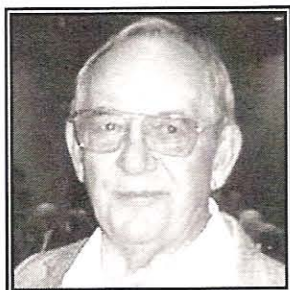
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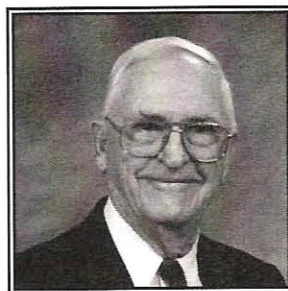
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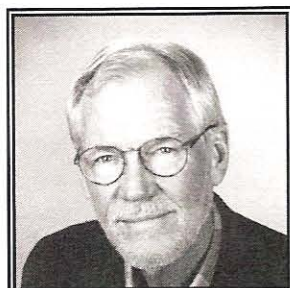
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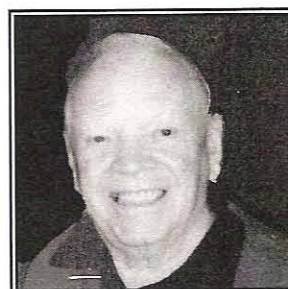
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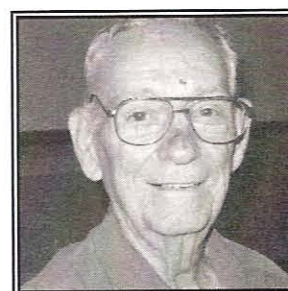
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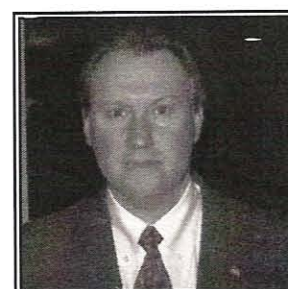
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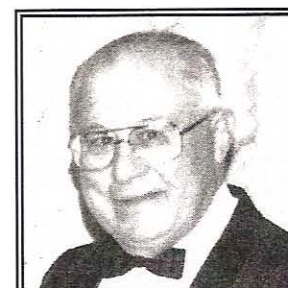
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Charlie & Chuck

Charlie Beecham and Chuck Childs

This story is about two pilots who would never quit. Charlie Beecham flew a full tour, with the 2nd Bomb Group, from April 5, 1944 until August 24, 1944

Chuck Childs did the same from November 1, 1944 until shutting down on April 9, 1945. They both stayed in the service and in 1948 were among a wonderful group of airmen and who flew the Berlin Airlift.

The BERLIN AIRLIFT along with the Marshall Plan, remain as two of the most significant peace time actions of the twentieth century and directly attributable to President Harry S Truman. It took place from June 1948 until May 1949. The defeated Germany had been divided among the victors, the U.S., Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union. By early 1948 it was obvious that the aim of the Soviet Union was to control East Berlin as part of their empire. This included roads, rail and waterways. The blockade cut off all transport of life sustaining food, coal, steel and equipment of every kind and Berliners were already suffering from Soviet suppression. For the duration of the blockade, allied airplanes delivered 2,325,800 TONS of desperately needed food, clothing, coal and supplies. 277,569 flights made the strategy a success. Stalin finally backed down and lifted the blockade, but only after the bravery and sense of duty of those young heroes had bought the allies enough time to create a new West Germany. The Berlin Airlift changed the world!

Beecham made 212 round trip flights in his C-54 carrying ten tons of coal on each trip. The flights were one hour 15 minutes, each way, from his base at Fassberg Flughafen Germany, an old Luftwaffe base. The coal load was in 100 pound sacks (200) bags of charcoal briquettes and the German workers set up 'bucket brigades' at each end of the trip. One major hazard was the source of several accidents. It was a small, tree covered, hill 1/2 mile off the end of the runway. In those days lighting was not adequate for your approach. Charlie explained that the aircraft became so permeated with coal dust that it could never be used again for any purpose. Their destination was Tegel Airport in the French Section which was northwest Berlin. Tegel was built by German men and women and literally by hand using the rubble from destroyed buildings. The only heavy equipment used was a steam roller, cut in half and flown in by two C-54's and welded back together. Tegel became the primary international airport serving Berlin. It will be closed and succeeded by Brandenburg International in June of 2012.

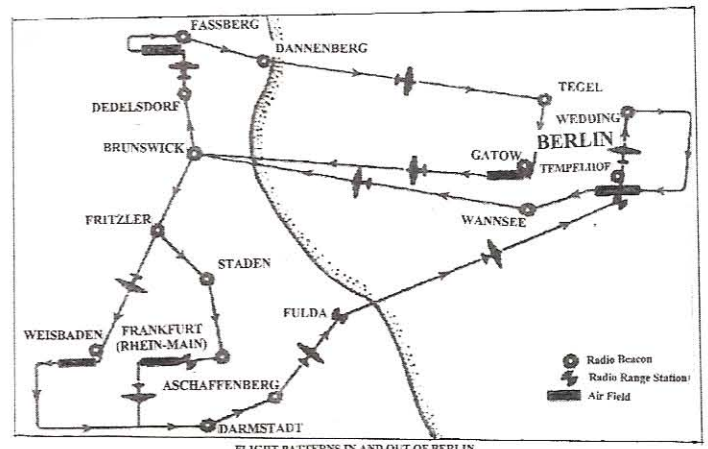
Chuck Childs flew his C-54 out of Frankfurt and into Tempelhof Army Air Force Base that was in the American sector of Berlin. At this point we want to take you to Chuck's account of the pilot experience flying into Berlin. "We arrived at the plane, met the engineer, inspected the plane and boarded for our flight.

The airplane was already loaded and tied down for a safe flight. We called the tower, who contacted Frankfurt Flight Control Center for our time of departure and altitude assignment. This control was essential to see that aircraft were properly spaced so as to avoid a collision. We embark on a flight where aircraft are flying just three minutes apart. We taxied out to the runway and were cleared for takeoff. I applied the power and the ship groaned as we left the ground. The plane was heavy with 10 tons of dog food and full of fuel. At 200 feet we entered the overcast and begin flying on instruments. We followed a predetermined pattern which we always adhered to with great precision.

Our first beacon was the Darmstadt Beacon at 900 feet altitude then we turned to a heading of 085 degrees for Ashafenburg Beacon and we arrived there at our assigned altitude of 6,000 feet. We turned into a heading of 033 degrees to reach the Fulda Range. As we flew toward the Fulda Range we listened for word from the aircraft just ahead of us. Each pilot reported his time when he was directly over Fulda Range. I reported our time over Fulda so that the pilot behind us could check his spacing so as to keep that interval at three minutes. We now headed down the corridor, which was bound by the Russian Zone. From this point we had no beacon to guide us, as we flew by what is called dead reckoning. This means that we held our heading, correcting for wind drift and exactly 170 miles per hour. If we drifted off course we would end up in the Russian area outside the corridor, we had to fly a perfect course.

Exactly 40 minutes after we left Fulda Range we tuned our radio to Tempelhof Control in Berlin from which we received an altitude check and time check. We were then directed to proceed to the Wedding Beacon where we reduced our air speed to 140 mph and started our descent, passing over Wedding Beacon at 2,000 feet. We were directed to turn on the down-wind and to 1,500 feet. We then turned on our final approach. At this

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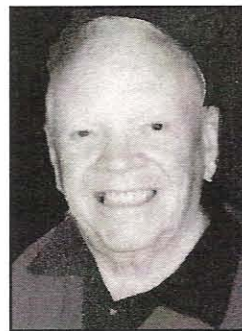
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time we were seen on the Tempelhof Control Radar Scope. If the weather was fine, 6 minutes before the final approach the Tempelhof Tower would pick us up and guide us into landing. In case of bad weather, which was the case on this flight, and a ground approach landing was necessary, we were picked up by the GCA operator. We were now spotted as a blip on the GCA precision scope. We were in a very heavy overcast and flying on instruments. The rest of the flight was like this: the radar control name is Jigsaw and I am Baker Easy 34. 'Baker Easy 34 this is Jigsaw, your final controller, how do you receive?' - 'Jigsaw, this is Baker Easy 34, I read you loud and clear.' - Jigsaw says, 'Roger, you need not acknowledge further instructions. Now turn to a heading of 260 degrees, you are slightly left of azimuth (azimuth - a line on the final controller's scope, directly in line with the runway), now your heading will bring you back on azimuth, now correct back to 265 degrees, you are now 6 miles east of the runway, approaching the glide path. Start your rate of descent at 55 feet per minute, your azimuth is good, rate of descent is good now correct left to 261 degrees. You are now coming back on azimuth, correct right to 264 degrees. You are drifting above the glide path, you are 50 feet high, increase your rate of descent. Your azimuth is good. You are three miles from touchdown, adjust your rate of descent to 550 feet per minute, your azimuth is good.' We now put our gear down and adjust our flaps preparing for landing. "You are on the glide path; you are two miles from touchdown. You have been cleared by the tower for landing. You are now a mile and a half from touchdown, your azimuth is good. You are drifting slightly below the glide path. You are 25 feet low. Adjust your rate of descent. Now turn left

one degree. Heading is now 263. You are back on the glide path. Resume normal rate of descent. You are one mile from touchdown. 263 is a good heading. Your azimuth is good. You are on the glide path. You are now 3/4 miles from touchdown. Your azimuth is good. You are 1/2 mile from touchdown. You are 1/4 mile from touchdown. You are on the glide path. Your azimuth is good. You are now approaching the end of the runway." By now we start seeing the glow of the runway lights through the fog. "You are on the glide path, you are 50 feet over the runway. Take over and land.

We flare out and the tires screech as they hit the runway.

The mat runway clitters and clatters as it buckles from the weight of the landing plane. "Baker Easy 34 QSY (change frequency) to Tower frequency." We had to have complete confidence in the GCA operator, which I did, as they were the best. We also had to keep our eyes on our instruments. Their calm voice made it easy for you - if they were to sound excited, we would have had to pull up our gear and flaps and head back to Weisbaden, as we would not have trusted them.



Chuck Childs lives in Rapid City, South Dakota and recently was inducted in the North Dakota Hall of Fame. Chuck is also the newest member of the 2nd Bomb Association Board of Directors. Charlie Beecham and his wife Norma live in Ashland, Oregon and he is an honored member of the Oklahoma Hall of Fame.

Both of our Retired Lieutenant Colonels deserve our warm congratulations and well earned respect!

NUMBER THIRTEEN

- The number '13' in most hotels is not used to designate floor number.
- Superstition suggests that Friday the 13th is an unlucky day.
- Earl Martin was born on October 13, 1920.
- This was also the first year that his mother was allowed to vote. (you can look it up)
- Earl was shot down over Hungary on April 13, 1944.
- He was shot down on his THIRTEENTH mission.
- His room number in the POW camp, Stalag Luft III was "#13"
- Martin was held prisoner for THIRTEEN months.

President Lew Waters wanted full disclosure on the 'thirteen' matter. Well, here it is. Yes, it's true, I was born on October the 13th. It happened that through the years that many of the 'thirteenth' birth days fell on the dreaded Fridays. I never remember any thought being

given to a given day until my crew and I were assigned to fly with the 20th Squadron on April 13, 1944. At that time many sorties were counted as two missions and if we had flown that one to completion, it would have been our thirteenth. We were shot down by German fighters on our 13th mission, (Wednesday) 13 April 1944. Although seven of my crew was rescued by Partisans, two gunners and I became POWs. I ended up assigned to room number 13 in one of the barrack buildings in Stalag Luft III. Very near the end of the war my comrades and I were liberated by Patton's 14th Armored Division during my 13th month of captivity.

Some in western cultures believe Friday the 13th means bad luck or 'friggatriskaedekaphobia'. If you've got it, take something for it. As for the 4,695 Fridays I have been around, something on the order of 142 have been on the 13th of the month - give or take!!

~ Earl Martin



2nd Bombardment Group Reunion

August 17 - 20, 2011
The Academy Best Western Hotel
Colorado Springs, CO

Welcome to the 2011 Reunion of the 2nd Bombardment Group! We know you will have a great time renewing friendships from the past and making new 'old' friends. Colorado Springs is the ideal place for getting together and enjoying the unique sights of the area.

The Academy Best Western Hotel is conveniently located at I-25 & Academy Blvd - the south entrance to the United States Air Force Academy. Guests of this newly renovated Colorado Springs hotel are invited to enjoy a **free hotel breakfast buffet** each morning. **Be sure to call the hotel directly for your reservations.** Tell them you are with the 2nd Bombardment Group Reunion to get the **discounted rate of \$89 (standard) or \$99 (executive tower)**. Check the website at www.theacademyhotel.com for more information about the property.

The hotel address and reservation phone number is:

The Academy Best Western Hotel
8110 North Academy Blvd.
Colorado Springs, CO 80920
Phone: (719) 598.5770



Hotel Reservations must be made prior to **July 13, 2011** to guarantee space and rate. Reservations made after this date will be on a space available basis and the discounted rate will not be guaranteed. Rates are good 3 days before and 3 days after the reunion. We're looking forward to seeing you!

TRANSPORTATION:

Several airlines fly into Colorado Springs including Allegiant Air, American, Continental, Delta, Northwest, and United. Shuttle service is available to the hotel at \$12 per person. Make reservations for the shuttle when you make your reservations with the hotel or as soon as you know your arrival date and time. **Reservations must be pre-arranged through the hotel using the code "2BG".**

Cancellation Refund Policy: Complete refunds will be sent 30 days before the reunion minus \$17 of the registration fee per person. **NO REFUNDS WILL BE GRANTED AFTER July 13, 2011.** All tours must achieve the minimum number (20) in order to complete the tour. Gratuities for the driver and guide are at the discretion of those on the bus. We need all attendees to understand that the cutoff date of July 13 is primarily to assure the minimum number for tours. **IT IS NOT A CUT OFF DATE THAT MEANS YOU CAN NO LONGER SIGN UP FOR THE REUNION.** Please be aware that if you decide on-site that you want to take a tour, it will be based on space available on the coach.

The hospitality room will be open starting Wednesday evening and continuing throughout the reunion.

Agenda

All tours include transportation, guide (when applicable) and entrance fees. Meals are included only if indicated. Tours will board approximately 15 minutes prior to the departure times listed here. Check signs available at the registration desk in the event of changes.

Wednesday, August 17

4:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Registration desk open

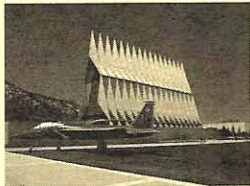
***Registration desk will be open as needed throughout the rest of the reunion

7:00 pm - ???

Hospitality room open

Thursday, August 18

9:00 am - 2:00 pm



Tour #1 Air Force Academy & Garden of the Gods

\$49 per person (includes lunch)

***see registration page

Enter through the North Gate with a brief stop at Diamond Lil, the B-52 Bomber. Spend time visiting the Chapel (if open), the Visitor Center and other points of interest on the Academy grounds. There will be a memorial ceremony at the gravesite of General John Dale Ryan, the former Chief of Staff, at the Academy cemetery. From the Academy, continue on to a drive-through of the Garden of the Gods, the most photographed site in the United States, with stops for 'photo ops' and finishing with lunch at the historic Garden of the Gods Trading Post.

6:00 pm - 10:00 pm



Tour #2 Flying W. Ranch

\$43 per person (includes dinner & show)

The Flying W Ranch is an actual working mountain cattle ranch located in the foothills of Colorado Springs, Colorado. We have been specializing in authentic western food and western style entertainment since 1953. In our high season we entertain and serve dinner to over a thousand people nightly. When you attend the Chuck wagon Supper at the Flying W Ranch, you'll catch a glimpse of the Old West, a meal typical of one that might have been served on a cattle drive of years past, cowboys singing and an atmosphere that will beckon you to escape for awhile and enjoy an evening long to be remembered.

Friday, August 19

9:00 am - 2:00 pm



Tour #3 Peterson Air Force Base

\$49 per person (includes lunch)

***see registration page

Spend the day at Peterson Air Force Base, home of the 1st Space Wing, Air Force Space Command, United States Space Command, and North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). Visit the museum located in the original terminal for the airport/airbase. The Museum's Airpark collection includes sixteen aircraft and six missiles. Enjoy lunch at the Base Club before returning to the hotel.

Enjoy free time during the afternoon and evening. Spend time in the hospitality room or explore the area.

Saturday, August 20

8:30 am - 12:30 pm



Tour #4 Pikes Peak via the highway

\$44 per person

The tour ascends America's mountain by way of the Pikes Peak Highway with a stop mid-way for photo opportunities and acclimating to the altitude. The view from the top of the mountain was the inspiration for Kathryn Lee Bates' famous *America, the Beautiful*. On a clear day you can see from the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to the Continental Divide and east to the amber waves of grain. Do bring a jacket or sweatshirt as it is 30 degrees colder on the top than in town.

5:00 pm

Photographer will be available for pictures

You will be able to choose the pictures you want, they will be printed on site and you can take them home with you. She will do group pictures and you will also have the option of couples or small groups.

6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Banquet (choose between the following) (Cost includes tax and gratuity.)

Grilled Sesame Chicken at \$33 per person

London Broil at \$38 per person

DUE July 13, 2011

Registration

2nd Bombardment Reunion Group

August 17 - 20, 2011

DUE July 13, 2011

This name will be used on your name badge

First Name _____ Last Name _____
 Spouse _____ Guest(s) _____
 Address _____ City _____
 State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____
 Email _____ Squadron Number _____

	Number of Persons	X	Cost per person	=	Cost
Tour #1 Air Force Academy	_____		@ \$49.00	=	_____
Tour #2 Flying W Ranch	_____		@ \$43.00	=	_____
Tour #3 Peterson Air Force Base	_____		@ \$49.00	=	_____
Tour #4 Pikes Peak	_____		@ \$44.00	=	_____
Banquet					
Choose: Grilled Sesame Chicken	_____		@ \$33.00	=	_____
London Broil	_____		@ \$38.00	=	_____
Registration	_____		@ \$17.00	=	_____

* Each attendee must pay this registration fee

TOTAL _____

*** If you registered for AFA or PAFB tours provide the following information for each person:

Date of Birth _____ Driver's License # _____ State of issue _____
 Date of Birth _____ Driver's License # _____ State of issue _____

Please identify any special accommodation you may need:

Physical support _____ Special Meals _____

Other _____

SEND THIS FORM AND A CHECK (PAYABLE TO CTCM) FOR THE TOTAL AMOUNT TO:

We suggest you make a
copy of this form for
your records

2nd Bombardment Group Reunion
c/o CTCM-ACR
PO Box 25806
Colorado Springs, CO 80936

Contact Sherry or Kaitlyn at 719.380.1412 or email us at info@ctcm-acr.com

Refund Policy:

Cancellations before July 13, 2011 will receive full refund less a \$17.00 processing fee. There will be no refunds after that date. All tours must have a minimum number of people per tour. If you register for a tour and do not attend you will NOT receive any refund.

You will receive a confirmation letter detailing your selections within 7-10 days of us receiving it.

GEOMETRY OF THE SPIRIT

The Air Force Academy Chapel combines the soaring forms of Chartres with the imagery of fighter jets aloft

By JOEL HENNING • Colorado Springs, Colo.

A camel," goes the saying, "is a horse designed by a committee." Imagine, then, how that creature might look if its design had to pass muster by Congress, the secretary of the Air Force, the General Commission on Chaplains in the Armed Services, The National Jewish Welfare Board and the Roman Catholic Military Ordinariate.

Skidmore Owings & Merrill architect Walter Netsch (1920-2008) recalled in an Art Institute of Chicago oral history how his first design for the U.S. Air Force Academy Chapel in Colorado Springs was greeted in 1955: "All of a sudden the senator from South Carolina said, 'Everything looks fine, except that chapel. I don't hear the rustle of angels' wings.' And some senator from North Dakota said, 'It looks like a bunch of tepees to me.' All of a sudden the earth fell in on that poor little chapel design. I was in tears."

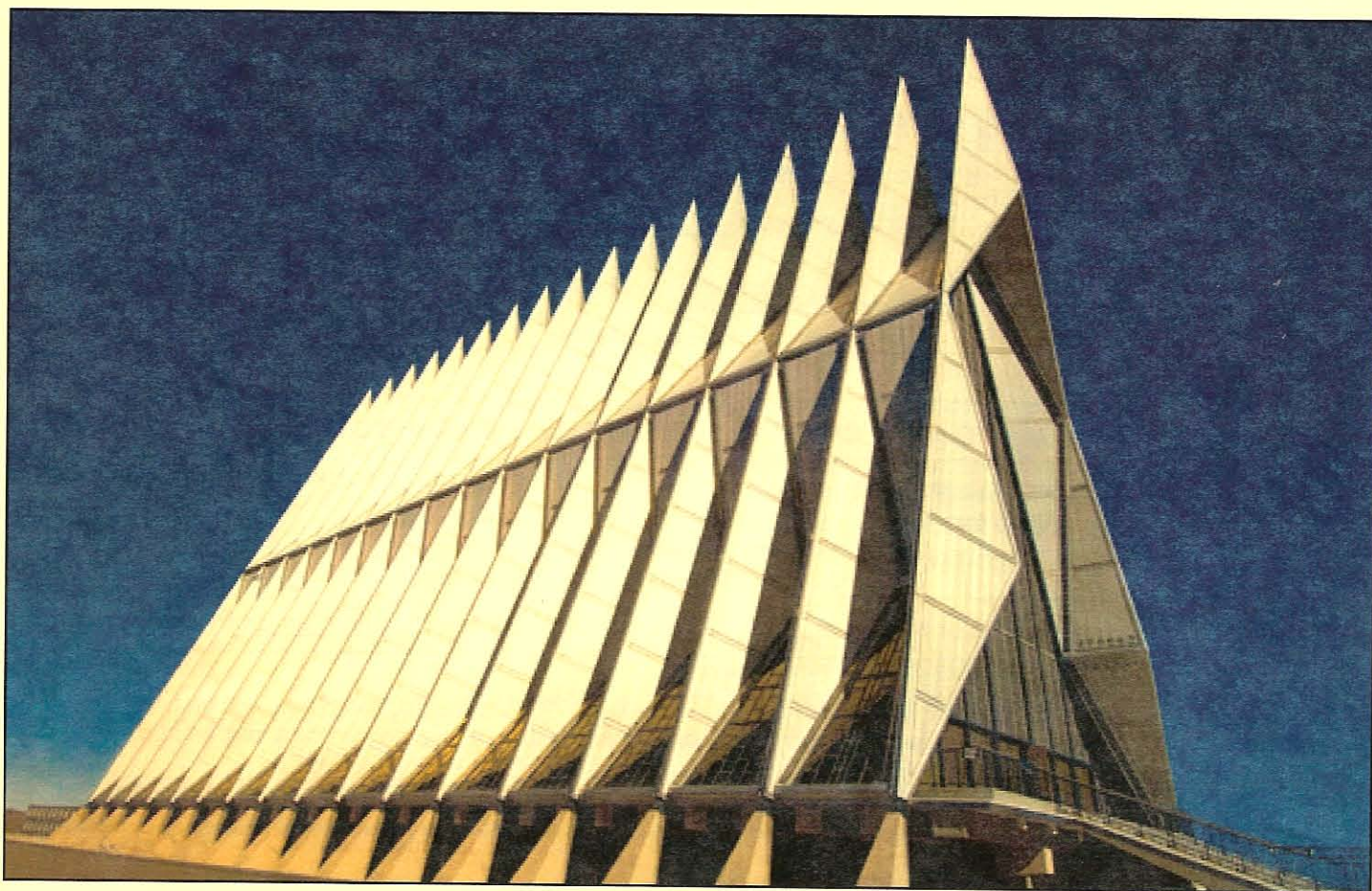
Netsch had never been to Europe, so his mentor, Nat Owings, told him to go before venturing another chapel design. Approaching Chartres by car, Netsch saw it appear in the distance: "It had all the guts and strength that I didn't see in Notre Dame. . . . I just

thought, how can I do this in Colorado?"

Netsch and his colleagues designed the entire Air Force Academy campus but his chapel, completed in 1963, soars above the horizontal and vertical lines of the boxy buildings on the 17,500-acre site and has become a popular and critical success. It is Colorado's most visited man-made tourist destination, and received the American Institute of Architects' 25 Year Award in 1996. The AIA citation reads: "This icon of cleanly articulated structure connects earth to heaven. . . . Artistically ahead of its time, the Cadet Chapel continues and will continue to inspire worship and awe."

As I approached the academy, the chapel inspired me much as Chartres had struck Netsch: "soaring form, complex geometry, order." Its 17 spires glistening in the bright sunlight of a sparkling Colorado day rise like the towers of gothic cathedrals, but also suggest fighter planes in steep ascent.

*Article continues on page 7 of the
Second Bombardment Newsletter,
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Geometry of the Spirit

The Air Force Academy Chapel combines the soaring forms of Chartres with the imagery of fighter jets aloft

By JOEL HENNING • Colorado Springs, Colo.

Article continued from page four of the 2011 REUNION registration package.

Netsch framed his chapel with 100 75-foot-tall, five-ton tetrahedrons covered with aluminum panels—the material used in jet planes. Those constituting the spires reach 150 feet from the building's base. Gaps between the tetrahedrons are filled with colored glass that creates much the same tranquility as Notre Dame's Rose Window.

Unlike the designers of Europe's great cathedrals, Netsch had to deliver a place of worship for Protestants, Catholics and Jews. But rather than creating a "supermarket cathedral" to serve all three faiths, he designed within his one structure three splendid and distinct chapels, and even a fourth that now houses a Buddhist chapel.

The Protestant chapel, which seats 1,200, is the largest, reflecting the academy's demographics. Tetrahedrons, separated by stained-glass ribbons, constitute the walls reaching 99 feet to the pinnacled ceiling. Light shimmers from the gray-white terrazzo floor. Behind the altar is a colorful ornamental screen in Italian marble set with semiprecious stones from Colorado, representing the outstretched arms of God. The altar is a 15-foot marble slab in the form of a ship, behind which is a 46-foot-high aluminum cross set against the wall of windows. On the rear wall, the 4,334 organ pipes bring geometric variety to the otherwise horizontal and vertical lines of the choir loft and narthex.

The Roman Catholic and Jewish chapels are one level down. In the Catholic chapel, a glass mosaic mural in blue, turquoise, rose and gray squares portrays the heavens; 10-foot-tall marble figures of Mary and the Archangel Gabriel depict the Annunciation. The altar is a large, simple table of polished marble mounted on a cone-shaped pedestal. A soft brown cast of light emanates from the amber glass panels and strips of multicolored glass set in the side walls, complementing the walnut

pews, trimmed in stainless steel, that seat 500.

The foyer surrounding the Jewish chapel is paved with delicate brown Jerusalem stone. A round wooden screen leaving no structural elements visible encircles the chapel itself, which seats 100. The circular walls are panels of translucent glass separated by stanchions of mellow Israeli cypress.

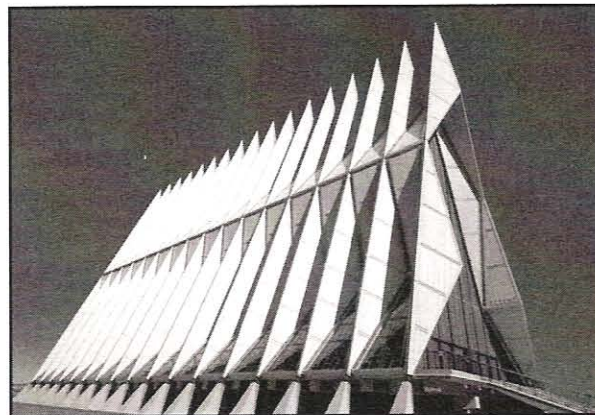
The academy and its chapel were not Netsch's first important work. Earlier, he was the co-architect, with Skidmore partner Bruce Graham, of Chicago's iconic Inland Steel Building, built in 1958—an internally column-free high-rise constructed of stainless steel. It was this building, Frank Gehry told the Chicago Tribune in 2005, that had "turned me on" to sculptural steel building designs, leading to such structures as his Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain.

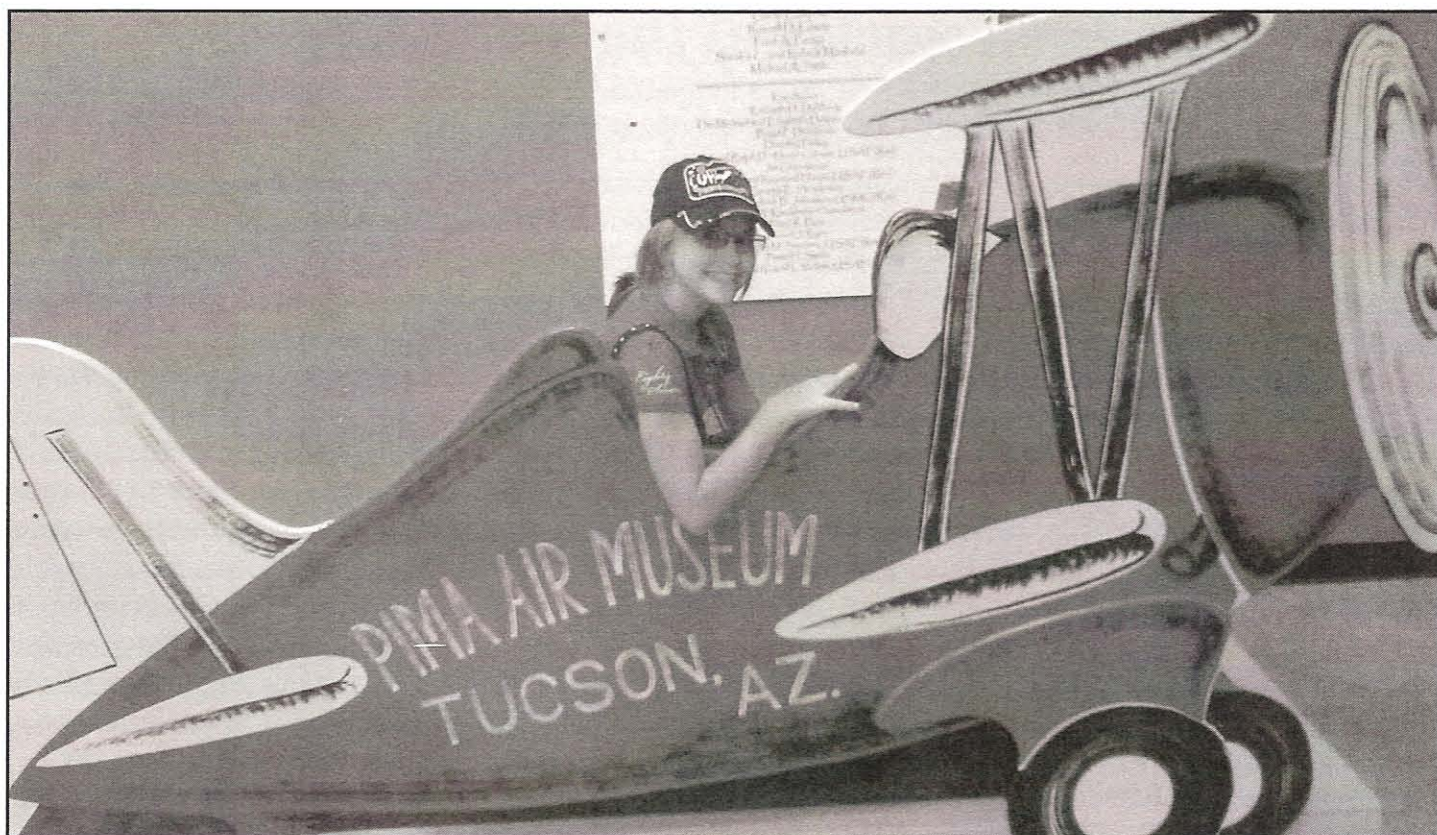
Netsch became one of the first Skidmore, Owings & Merrill architects to be individually recognized outside of the firm's cloak of corporate uniformity. He was deemed a maverick for his chapel design.

Later in his career, he designed the Chicago campus of the University of Illinois, the principal libraries for both of Chicago's major universities, and many other academic buildings nationwide, developing his highly controversial "field theory" along the way. Instead of creating conventional interiors, he rotated basic squares into geometric elements that radiate out from utility and stairwell cores, elaborating his designs with increasing complexity. Critics and daily users screamed that his field theory made navigating his buildings almost impossible.

Not so his masterpiece, the Cadet Chapel. It is as functional as it is beautiful. On Netsch's death, at age 88, a former Air Force cadet posted this comment to the Chicago Tribune's obituary: "I spent countless hours in this man's incredibly well-designed chapel. . . . I savor those moments of peaceful tranquility. . . . Mr. Netsch's work of art uplifted my spirit."

—Mr. Henning writes about the arts and culture for the Wall Street Journal.





Hannah Bryner warms up the "PIMA AIR MUSEUM" mini airplane for a spin around the 2nd Bomb Group Veterans. Hannah is the daughter of Association Treasurer Matt Bryner.

IN MEMORIUM

Francis W Flynn	July 9, 2010	20th squadron
Lawrence T Ashley	July 21, 2010	429th squadron
Edwin C Wade	August 28, 2010	49th squadron
Joseph P Owsianik	November 1, 2010	29th squadron
John F Fitzpatrick	September 14, 1970	429th squadron
Raymond P Erpelding	December 19, 2010	20th Bomb squadron

DID YOU KNOW?

1. 12,731 B- 17's were built and 12 are still airworthy. 16,188 B-24's were built and one is still airworthy.
2. George H W Bush, as Navy pilot, was shot down on September 2, 1944 in the Pacific Ocean. He was subsequently picked up by Air Sea Rescue.
3. President Eisenhower's 'Air Force One' was a C-131 Constellation.
4. The first hot air balloon flight (in Paris) was in 1783.
5. The longest flight of the Wright Brothers on December 17, 1903 was 852 feet and lasted 59 seconds.
6. Milton Zamboni was born on September 10, 1918 also the date 'The First Day Bombardment Group' was organized. Later it would be redesignated the 2nd Group Bombardment
7. 99er's is the name of the International Organization of Women Pilots.
8. The first class of the Air Force Academy was sworn in on July 11, 1955 at Lowry Field in Denver Colorado. The Colorado Springs campus opened in August of 1958.

Joseph P. Owsianik

Joseph P Owsianik, Left Waist Gunner/Cameraman on B-17 #159 'Jersey Joe' passed away on November 1, 2010. He is survived by his wife Josie. Early October 2010 Joe was visited, while in his hospital bed, by Roman Susil, a young Czech historian and his Czech friend Anton. They first met Joe and his grandson, Vic Mevoli, when they visited the Czech Republic in 2005 and again in 2007.

Following is his account of being shot down on Mission No 263, August 29, 1944.

"Being a cameraman of the 2nd Bomb Group, 20th Squadron, we were briefed early and driven out to the air-plane. Upon arrival I was greeted by the ground crew chief in charge of Airplane #159. He asked me where we were going and I told him that I couldn't tell him. His answer to me was, "that's all right, but if I were you I wouldn't go today as this plane is going down. I asked him for an explanation and he said that he had been working on B-17's since North Africa and that every one of his planes had gone down after having been shot up on its previous mission. No. 7159 had been shot up a few weeks earlier. (We took off without me saying a word of this to anyone until now, some 51 years later.)

While we were flying to the target, Axis Sally broke in over her propaganda radio program and said, "Good morning to you men of the 2nd Bomb Group. Today's your lucky day. Today you get shot down, but before you do get shot down, I want to play you a song." It was "Franklin D Roosevelt Jones." You could have knocked me over with a feather when I heard that after, hearing what the ground crew chief had said.

I was at my position in the radio room as we arrived at our "IP" (initial point) and started our bomb run. Reading the large Camera that took pictures of bombs falling and bomb strikes, I heard through the intercom, "There they are at 6 o'clock. I looked out of the top gun of the airplane in the radio room and saw 6 or 7 lines of fighters lined up ten abreast (60 to 70 FW-190's). I soon heard the upper turret start firing and I started to fire my gun. After the second wave I fired and could have sworn I got one (FW-190) as it started to

burst into flames. On the third wave, I saw a shell go right through the radio

bank and on through to the bomb bay door. I saw flames from our burning plane going past the radio window. I then felt my arm which was wet with blood. I didn't realize until then that I had been hit in my right arm just above the wrist.

I soon heard the pilot, Lt Tune, give the command, "Get ready to bail out, we're going down!" At that moment my thoughts instantly went back to the crew chief's prediction. After looking in the bomb bay and seeing a full load of bombs, I went back to the waist to bail out. On the way, I tried to crank the ball turret up but found it was jammed. As the call to pull the emergency door was heard, Sgt. Joe Sallings was shaking his head as if to say "no". The words then came to "bail out" and out I went. I could see Sgt Bob Donahue coming out of the tail and waved to him as we fell.

My fall was at least 10,000 feet before I pulled the rip cord. As the chute opened, I looked up and saw a FW-190 coming directly toward me. As it passed me I could feel the heat from his burning plane and the slip stream almost collapsed my parachute. I have to say that I blessed myself just before he went by.

On the way to the ground, I could see people running toward me from three different directions. I landed between four apple trees in an area with cabbage growing underneath. After unhooking my chute, I ran to a wooded area where I thought it would be safer.

As I ran down the hill to the woods, I heard "Halt! Halt!" Looking up I saw seven or eight Czech civilians. They saw I was hit. One of them made a tourniquet from my chute and put it on my upper right arm. The Czechs kept pointing toward the woods saying, "Comrade". I went into the woods and met another civilian who directed me to Lt. Francis Flynn who was bleeding very badly from a back wound. I tried to get the bleeding to stop but was unsuccessful. The young Czechs make shifted a stretcher and we headed toward a church. On the way I heard someone call out "Hey Joe! Hey Joe!" He asked me where I was from in



America. I told him I was from New Jersey and he responded that he was from Patterson, New Jersey. He wanted me to go with him and he would get me something to eat and a shot of whiskey. I told him "no" since I felt that I should stay with Lt Flynn.

When we got to the church in the village of Petruvka, I got out my escape maps and tried to find out where I was. I remember being told if you were shot down to try to make your way to Romania. While we were looking at the maps, the door opened and in came some German youths and one older man about 25 or 30. He started yelling at me "Pistolie – Pistolie!" I motioned that I had none. He yelled more and started ripping my clothes off my back and pulled my pants down. I was stark naked. He hit my head with his gun and inspected me thoroughly. Finally, they motioned for me to put my clothes back on. They took all my belongings and later gave back my dog tags. As I stood there, I heard Lt Flynn say "I guess this is it." Shaking with fear after the beating I could hardly stand. Two of the youths came to help me on my feet and I said 'goodbye' to Lt Flynn as we walked out the door.

We walked past a graveyard. My legs were so weak the youths had to hold me up and I thought surely I would be shot. Two of the youths handed me a t-shirt with my belongings. We walked for what seemed like a couple of miles and I motioned to one of the youths that I wanted a smoke. They took out my pack of cigarettes and handed them to me. I took one and gave each of them one. That's when I felt like the worst of my ordeal was over.

Further along I saw a building which I guessed would be a POW camp. It turned out to be a building which housed German soldiers and the Hitler youth. I was put in a cell and had nothing to eat for at least three days. I was let out of the cell only to go to the toilet.

About the third or fourth day a German fighter pilot entered my cell. He told me in broken English that he had shot down our bomber. He asked if I had anything to eat. I told him "no" – not for three days. He ran out of the cell and yelled loudly in German. Pretty soon they came with food – pork chops, potatoes, bread and coffee. I was amused at how nice he was and how good the food tasted. He even gave me four German cigarettes and lit one for me. He told me that when I see the blonde Czech girl who brought the food, I should ask her to light the other cigarettes.

While we talked he told me how good he thought the American B-17's were. But, he assured me that the FW-190's were even better. When he left, he stood at attention, clicked his heels, put his arm out and said, "Heil Hitler!" I stood and gave him a G.I. salute. He reached out, shook my hand and out the door he went. I never saw him again. I can only say that no matter what or why, I have deep respect for him for doing that. (Especially the food)

I had thought I was the only American around, but after several days they herded us out and there stood Sgt. Tom Coogan, the crew chief. He asked me for a medal from my dog tags, being Jewish he wanted a Christian medal and I gave him one of mine.

We were taken to Brno by bus and from there to Vienna, Austria. From Vienna we were taken to an interrogation center near Frankfurt Germany. I was in solitary confinement for several days. After refusing to answer any questions other than name, rank and serial number, the interrogating officer told me "Joe, you are a good soldier, but I will tell you what I will do." He opened up his book and told me that I was a camera man, I was with the 2nd Bombardment Group of the 15th Air Force, stationed at Foggia Italy.

He took my dog tag and compared my name with his record and gave it back to me. I was sent to another room to have my picture taken. I then had a German dog tag with POW #3164. I could go on about Stalag Luft and life threatening times there. The 650 mile forced march in February, March and April but I will never forget when the men of the 101st Infantry Division liberated us on April 26, 1945. The name of the German town is Dommitzch, just five miles from where American and Russian troops met a few days later at Torgau. That 35th mission did a number on me and affected my life ever since!

Ed note: Pilot Bill Tune was hospitalized for three months and later was sent to Stalag Luft I. Waist gunner Joe Sallings was hidden out by a Czech family until the end of the war; Tail gunner Robert Donahue was flown out of Slovak territory by an OSS operation on Sept 17 1944. Co-Pilot Francis Flynn was hospitalized in Germany until the end of the war. Crew Chief Coogan was captured and interred at Stalag Luft IV. They were to learn later the Lt Russell Meyrick, bombardier and Sgt Joseph Marinello, ball turret gunner were KIA.



Veteran photo - 2010 reunion

Group photo of Veterans at the Tucson Reunion – October 2010.

Picture taken by Rebekah Clark-Bryner at 390th Bomb Group Museum - B-17 "I'll Be Around"

Standing L – R Howard Johnson, Tex Binford, Harold Kronenberg, Ben Carnes, Milton Zamboni, Ray Tuwalski, Lew Waters, Robert Fredericks, & unidentified.

Seated 2nd Row – Ron Dittrich, John Roberts, Loy Dickinson, Kingman Loomis, Earl Martin, Chuck Childs (top of head) Richard Forst, John Bryner, Art Winkler.

Front Row – Preston Bransky, Vic Metz, Lloyd True, John Sisson, Jake Killian

VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

Web site: www.loc.gov/vets • Toll Free: 888-371-5848

A few years ago we published an item about the Veterans History Project. This is to remind any veterans who have not been interviewed for this project - to get with it! !

The Library of Congress was charged by the US Congress the mission to collect oral histories, interviews, memoirs, photographs, letters, diaries which bring wartime experiences to life in a very personal way. Veterans are sought from WWI through current conflicts. The VHP is also a repository for the personal histories of non-combatant wartime civilians, including war industry workers and medical volunteers whose valiant work supported our Armed Forces.

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A Veterans Organization of the
2nd Bomb Group & Bomb Wing

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