

GROUP



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

## SECOND BOMBARDMENT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER "Second to None"

WING



Volume 20, No. 2

July 2004



### President's Corner

The following was the headline in the June 1989 2nd Bomb Newsletter:

#### "Tucson - Our Final Fling"

This of course, was a challenge from then 2nd Bomb Assoc. President John Collens. A call to arms. And boy did it work. The group did not play the army game of one step back. Stepping forward were Luke Bivins, Kemp Martin, Bob Amos and Ed Hodges who were destined to be the next four 2nd Bomb Assoc. presidents. Far from a final folding fling, the organization pulled together and went on to set records of worthwhile accomplishments.

What are some of the things that have happened in the last 15 years. Let's take a look.

Our semi-annual newsletter, with Rudi Koller and now Earl Martin as editors, has expanded to 16 pages with many first person accounts of battle experiences and association news. A complete member roster is included in even numbered years.

WWW.2ndbombgroup.org - our website was created and nursed along to its outstanding current status by webmaster Dave Carlock. It contains a wealth of information about the association and in addition many stories and photos of our history. It has had almost 52,000 hits since being inaugurated in March 1999. If you haven't tried it you will be amazed by its versatility and flexibility. One of the welcomed benefits of the website is that we are receiving a great many inquiries from the second generation asking for information "about my Dad who was a waist gunner" or "my uncle who was with the 429th."

The largest reunion took place at Dayton, OH Sept. 12 through 15, 1991 when the 2nd Bomb Assoc. dedicated the 2nd Bomb Group/Wing monument at the Air Force Museum on Wright Patterson, AFB. The

monument was designed by architect and current association member, Chuck Beecham.

As we write, Dick Radtke is making ambitious preparations for the 2005 reunion. This gala will be held in St. Louis, Missouri September 29 - October 2, 2005. Put it on your calendar. This will be the eighth biennial reunion since 1989.

Scholarship funds have been awarded to dozens of the offspring of the 2nd Bomb Wing, our successor organization that has carried on the great traditions established by the 2nd Bomb Group.

History. Perhaps the most important accomplishment of this period was the publication of two masterful books of our history.

"Defenders of Liberty" is the history of the Bombardment Group from 1918 to 1993. It was researched and written by the team of Bob Amos, Rudi Koller, Earl Martin and Al Lloyd. It is regarded as one of the very best unit histories in all of the Air Force.

"The Second Was First", by Chuck Richards, who single handedly did the digging and the research. He wrote personal letters to hundreds and hundreds of men who had survived being shot down while on missions with the 2nd Bomb Group in WWII. He painstakingly reconstructed the stories of every crew and aircraft shot down to compile the stories of selfless devotion to duty by men, almost all of whom had been POW's.

Preserving our history. The next phase is to electronically record and store the thousands of stories and photos in our archives. Historian Paul Skalny also envisions the opportunity to record oral histories of everyone we can reach.

As you can see, the epitaph of the Second has yet to be written.

*Loy Dickinson*

### Please retain your issue of the 2nd Bomb Roster

Additions, changes and deletions will be in the form of supplements in the next few newsletters.

Due to dwindling resources, the decision has been made that the next full roster will be published along with the July 2006 Newsletter.



## The View From The Farm

As we move into the last few months of this election year, some of the political types seem to delight in using any device they can obtain to denigrate their opponents. This spills over even to the point of talk that might aid the enemies we are fighting in a World Wide war against the Terrorists of the World. This old veteran is deeply pained by this sort of thing that, seems to me, borders on Anti-American activity.

Of course, we all appreciate the right of every American to express themselves openly, even to criticism of their government. We placed our lives on the line to maintain that right, however, when anyone speaks publicly in a way to help our enemies in any way, my blood pressure begins to rise. The soldiers, marines, airmen and sailors of our present day are doing what we and their ancestors have done for many generations, defend the United States of America from its enemies. We have been attacked and our enemies are out there trying to find ways to attack us again.

The numbers of WWII veterans in our organization continue to diminish as 60 years or so have rolled by since we did our part to defeat the Axis. However, we are seeing a healthy interest among the younger generations, our children and grandchildren and other younger people who have an interest in the war for one reason or another. One youngster had an uncle who was a member of the group. Another (group of Italian High School boys) wanted to find out about the air battles over their country. The website, shepherded by Dave Carlock, is a valuable tool to those looking for information not only about the 2nd Bomb Group, but about the air war in general. Many inquiries lead historians and others to communicate with officers of the association. We try to answer all and offer any help we can. Having younger people interested in the war history is encouraging and helpful in making more of the true history available.

We have received a goodly number of letters and stories. They are all good and we will publish as many of them as we can. Keep them coming. We never have too many. Each individual who participated in the war effort has a story and it needs to be told. Once we pass to our great reward, those stories will need to be on paper (or on a computer disk). Tell your story to your children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. If you are not good on the computer or typewriter, be assured they are and they will type it out in a hurry.

Reunion master, Dick Radtke is hard at work on the 2005 reunion. He will work up a good one you may be assured. The place will be St. Louis, MO. The dates will be Sept. 29 - Oct. 2, 2005. You don't want to miss this one. We will have more specific information in the January 2005 newsletter.

Coincidentally, the association reunion in 1995 (10 years have passed), was held in Kansas City. If you remember, we visited Whiteman Air Force Base and we

learned about the B-2s before they had ever been committed to combat.

Keep those cards and letters coming.

*Earl Martin, editor*



### Tony Fuscaldo

Antonio Frank Fuscaldo, everyone knew him as "Tony", died March 6, 2004. He was a long time member of the association and held office for many years as member at large and auditor. He was a member of the 20th Squadron during the time it was in North Africa and Italy during WWII and worked in communications. He was discharged shortly after the war.

Tony was an accomplished accordionist. He started playing at the age of 9 and made his first professional appearance at age 14. Throughout his life he played with many prominent accordionists and received many honors and awards.

Tony operated his own accounting firm and taught at the University of Arizona and Cochise Community College. He lived in Tucson, AZ and spent summers at his home in Connecticut.

He was predeceased by his wife, Maria Green Fuscaldo, and is survived by three sisters who cared for him in Connecticut during a long illness.

Tony and his hard work for the association will be missed by members and others to whom he was always a helpful friend.



## Ed Hodges, Auditor

Tony Fuscaldo served the association for many years as auditor. His death early this year left the position open. To fill that important position the board of directors has confirmed Ed Hodges as Interim Auditor.

Ed has been a member of the association since it came into existence and has served in many positions of leadership. His last leadership position was Immediate Past President, after he served a term as President ending in 2001.

To Ed, a hearty welcome back to membership on the board, with an assurance that the job of auditor will be well done.

## Our Business Addresses

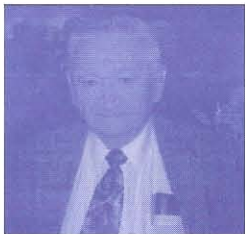
### President

Loy A. Dickinson  
16685 Cielo Ct.  
Parker, CO 80134-3592  
(720) 851-9663  
(480) 895-9212  
loy@denvertest.com



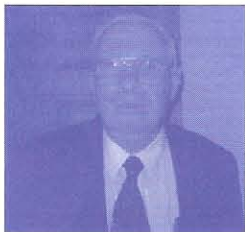
### Vice President

John D. Sisson  
The Dam Site Box 242  
Mill River, MA 01244-0242  
jsisson242@aol.com



### Secretary

Frederick V. Rice III  
8842 Darby Dan Ln.  
Germantown, TN 38138-8258  
(901) 847-0531  
fricel@midssouth.rr.com



### Treasurer

William A. Parson  
813 Frost Rd., Suite 301  
Streetsboro, OH 44241-4732  
(330) 653-8684  
wparsonsl@alltel.net



### Auditor

Edwin (Ed) Hodges  
9201 La Serena  
Fair Oaks, CA 95628-6612  
(916) 967-5678  
ehfairoaks@2extreme.net



Historian  
Paul F. Skalny  
56340 Copperfield Dr.  
Shelby Township, MI  
48316-4808  
(586) 781-8486  
secondhistory@yahoo.com

### Web Master

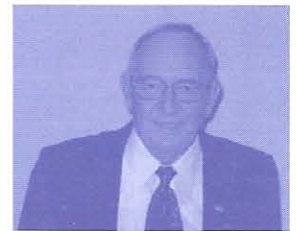
David F. Carlock  
6620 S Jamestown Ave.  
Tulsa, OK 74136-1423  
(918) 492-9239  
dfcarlock@cox.net



News Editor  
Earl W. Martin  
508 Mountain View Rd.  
Williamston, SC 29697-9601  
(864) 225-4605  
ewebmartin@aol.com

### Immediate Past President

Richard K. Radtke  
60 Villa Heights Ct.  
Algoma, WI 54201-1463  
(920) 487-3343  
ektdar@charter.net



## In Memorium

Weldon K. Bailey, 49th & 20th Sq.

February 27, 2003

Glenn L. Baker, 49th Sq.

November 6, 2003

Enoch E. Broyles, 29th Sq.

December 5, 2002

Albert D. Byrne, 96th Sq.

November 21, 2003

Tony Fuscaldo, 20th Sq.

March 6, 2004

Wayne G. LaPoe, 96th Sq.

Mathew G. Miller, 429th Sq.

August 17, 2003

James R. Slay, 429th Sq.

Dominick B. Tomaro, 20th Sq.

Walter H. Vetter, 49th Sq.



## E-mail Addresses

Lawrence L. Jenkins . . . . .Ljenkins1946@aol.com  
 Lyman F. Worthington  
 . . . . .lymanworthington2873@msn.com  
 Donald W. Applegate . . . . .Dwapple@aol.com  
 Lewis H. Waters . . . . .enon2212@sbcglobal.net  
 Rolland C. Kelley . . . . .rodlikel@earthlink.net  
 John D. Sisson . . . . .Jsisson242@aol.com  
 Gaither A. Speaks . . . . .GAPS@SC.rr.com  
 Jack M. Norwine . . . . .polly26@charter.net  
 Vincent S. Werner . . . . .Sterlmyrt@aol.com  
 Loy A. Dickinson . . . . .loy@denvertest.com  
 Frederick V. Rice III . . . . .fricel@midsouth.rr.com  
 Bill Parsons . . . . .wparsons1@alltel.net  
 Paul Skalny . . . . .secondhistory@yahoo.com  
 David Carlock . . . . .dfcarlock@cox.net  
 Earl Martin . . . . .ewebmartin@aol.com  
 Dick Radtke . . . . .ektdar@charter.net  
 Gen. Charles Robertson, Jr. .reach01@earthlink.net  
 Thomas R. Cochran . . . . .tchochra7@bellsouth.net  
 John Carlson . . . . .jcarlson83@comcast.net  
 Edwin Hodges . . . . .efairoaks@2extreme.net  
 James L. Howell . . . . .jhowell1@airmail.net  
 2nd Bomb Web Site . . . . .www.2ndbombgroup.org  
 Heavy Bombers . . . . .www.heavybombers.com  
 Army Air Forces . . . . .www.armyairforces.com  
 National Archives . . . . .www.archives.gov  
 Peterson . . . . .www.psln.com/pete/pow.htm  
 Victor Metz . . . . .mvmtz@aol.com  
 Robert Underhill . . . . .underh@iastate.edu  
 USAF . . . . .USAF.com

## Return to Blechhammer

In a recent letter to Dick Radtke, association member Robert Underhill tells of his recent trip to Poland to visit the area and the people where his crew came to Earth when their Group Lead aircraft was shot down December 26, 1944.

Bob kept a diary and the story of that mission and the adventures of the crew are well told in "Defenders of Liberty" and "The Second Was First." His impressions from his 2004 trip gives a look at the present day situation in Poland.

Thanks Bob, for your up-to-date information about that unfortunate country.

We were shot down over South Blechhammer on 26 December 1944 and became official "evadees, i.e. in enemy territory but never captured. When we finally got back to Italy, we reported that we had crash landed at Rzeszow, a town 90 miles east of Krakow. Actually, on this latest journey I discovered we had crash landed not at Rzeszow but in a field near the village of Trzebonisko, about three miles from Rzeszow. Pre-war Rzeszow had a population of 135,000. Now I suppose it is well over 200,000. At the city hall in Rzeszow we learned that the

Polish lady who helped us in translating English into Polish and into Russia when Russians took us over had passed away several years ago in Trzebonsiko.

On this trip in 2004 we were not able to find the dugout where Russians kept us nor the field where we crash landed, however at Auschwitz we had seen a schematic map showing that Blechhammer was a sub-camp of the main camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau. Furthermore, Blechhammer was near the town of Kosel, so we drove there.

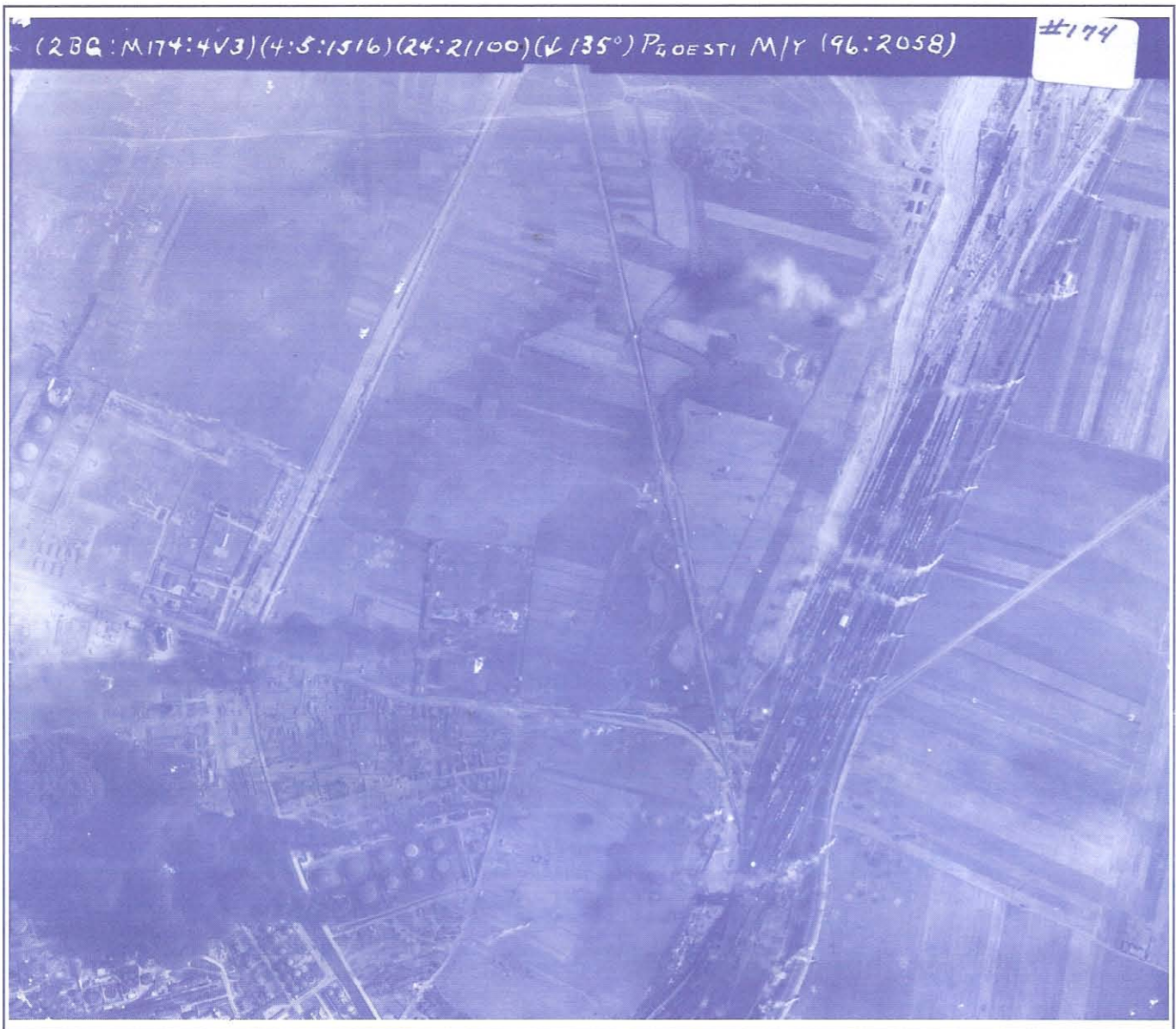
We found an abandoned three story brick building on grounds all enclosed by an eight foot high fence. On its outskirts was a Polish chemical works with an English title "Air Products," and there we found a young girl who could speak English. She called a reporter from the local newspaper who was knowledgeable about Blechhammer. The girl's name was Anna and she and the reporter took us on a three hour tour. They told us that after the raid on December 26, 1944, Blechhammer was never reopened, so our huge raid must have been successful. The Blechhammer property had been owned before the war by Poles and after the war it was returned and only parts of it are now leased out. We were able to take a few pictures of damaged buildings of South and North Blechhammer. Then Anna and the newspaper reporter drove us to Blechownia, a kilometer and half distant from the oil plant. Blechownia was a slave labor camp that supplied workers trucked every day to the oil depot itself. When the oil plant was finally destroyed the workers were put to other labors.

The work camp has not been restored and the guard towers about twenty feet high are still standing. Enroute to the camp we saw twelve or more craters left from bombs (undoubtedly errant ones dropped by Groups other than the 2nd.) At the former camp, the crematorium is still intact and the single oven with its carriage intact with a twenty foot vertical chimney reaching upwards are grim reminders. The crematorium is not nearly as large as the ones at Birkenau where Jews were routinely exterminated. Outside the crematorium in Blechownia is a sign in Polish reading, "This memorial is sanctified by the victims of fascism who died in the years 1939-1945."

There were several large underground bomb shelters around, and the reporter told us that on December 26, 1944 one hundred and eighty two residents were killed. They had come out to watch the large armada of American planes and were unable to get back into the shelters quickly enough when bombs started dropping. For two days after the raids, residents used wheelbarrows to carry away the corpses.

From Blechhammer we went 1/2 kilometer to Kosel where our two guides insisted we visit a small museum. On the first floor were plastic models for WWII vehicles, including airplanes. There is an annual competition for prizes. Then we went to the second floor where we were really surprised. There were many mementos from the raid of 26 December. The director of





the museum brought out a yard long plastic model of a B-17 and to my astonishment the model had our familiar 2nd Bomb Group logo, a Y in a circle, on its fuselage, but the Y in the circle had to have been copied from a downed airplane.

There was an easel containing pictures of a Lt. Lindell and all members of his B-24 crew who were shot down and perished on that fateful day in December. Other mementos included German smoke pots, parts of a German anti-aircraft gun, parts of downed aircraft, etc. When we came outside again, a small crowd of about a dozen had gathered. The museum director made a short speech and then presented me with a ten inch trophy with a piece of shattered metal from Lt. Lindell's B-24 at its top. The inscription reads "B-24 Liberator - NR 42-50486."

As you will surmise, it was a very emotional moment.

## Our First Mission to Ploesti

*(See photo above)*

Mission number 174, April 5, 1944. Note the crowded marshalling yards just before our bombs fell on them. Many hundreds of rail cars there, hopefully all filled with oil. Also note the smoke pots just getting started. The enemy at Ploesti was good at hiding things with smoke.







The Verbruggen Crew

Front row: Richard Bartell, Co-Pilot; George Verbruggen, Pilot; Dave Baris, Navigator; Robert Tiffany, Bombardier  
Back Row: Benedict Tieniber, Upper Turret; Art Jobin, Tail Gunner; Edward Snall, Radio; Earl Hunt, Lower Turret; Paul Yanushis, Left Waist; Joseph Casano, Right Waist.

## Tieniber Journal

The journal of Benedict Tieniber is quite lengthy and our intent is to run about half of it in this issue and the last part in the following issue.

Arthur Jobin, another member of the Verbruggen crew, is providing an additional story of the adventures of this crew and we will have it in the next issue as well.

*Editor's note:* The text of T/Sgt Tieniber's journal has been copied as closely as possible from his writing 60 years ago. Only some of the punctuation has been changed. The stories of Lt. Verbruggen's crew when they were shot down may be found in "Defenders of Liberty" and in "The Second Was First."

We are indebted to Melody Tieniber Sciacca who sent a copy of the journal of her father, Benedict R. Tieniber.

Her father was Engineer/Top Turret Gunner on the crew of George J. Verbruggen A/C number 42-3189, 49th Squadron. The airplane and crew were shot down on the famous mission to Steyr, Austria, Feb. 24, 1944 when the group lost 14 airplanes and crews. All of the crew became prisoners of war.

Tieniber kept a journal describing each of his 41 missions beginning with group mission number 90, October 29, 1943.

Following is Benedict's journal.

T/Sgt Benedict R. Tieniber 32439369

49th Bomb Squadron

2nd Bomb Group

Italy, Foggia

Tunis, North Africa

Engineer - B-17-F

Missions in North Africa, Massicault Field, Tunis

Mission I - Target, Genoa, Northern Italy

Expected heavy flak guns and about 90 fighters. Ship 623, Oct. 29, 1945. Pilot, Lt. Cooper, A.D. When over target one B-17 in front of us went down in flames. Five men bailed out, other five believed lost. At that moment, I thought we were next. No fighters, the rest of us returned back safe. The target was hit. Mission was complete.

North Africa, Tunis

Mission II - Target, Turin, Northern Italy

Expected heavy flak and 40 fighters. Ship 646,



Pilot Lt. Spinning, Oct. 30, 1943. We flew a long time. It was getting very cold up there, 40 deg. below zero. Near Alps. When near target there was an overcast. We turned around and went home. No fighters. We was credit for a mission for we passed over sortie line. Used 500 lb. bombs, 12 of them.

North Africa, Tunis

Mission III - Target, Recco, Italy railroad bridge east of Genoa

Expect little flak and some fighters. Took off 08:49 landed 15:41. Bridge destroyed. No fighters some flak from Genoa but out of range. Pilot Verbruggen. We got a ship 408 an old make. The ship that a Me-109 hit and tail was fixed. Now we have it. It seems to be the fastest ship in squadron. We all like it. Bomb at 19,500 - had - 500 lbs bombs - 12. Nov. 26, 1943 - 6 hrs 52 min. in air.

North Africa, Tunis

Mission V Air Medal Target Reno, Italy, railroad bridge.

Expect 35 fighters and no flak. Take off 08:52. Landed 15:34. Milk Run. Missed target and destroyed small town. 10 ships got lost in overcast and turned back. It was 100th mission for our 2nd Bomb Group. Ship 408 - Pilot Verbruggen. Bombed at 15,000. Had 500 lb. bombs 12. 6 hrs, 42 min in air. November 27, 1943

North Africa, Tunis

Mission VI- Target, Fiano Romano, Italy. Troop and supply concentration.

Expected 50 fighters and some 88 mm's. Take off 08:18 - landed 14:40. Target heavy overcast. No bombs dropped. Nov. 29, 1943. Ship 408 Verbruggen 6:22 in air.

Italy, Foggia

Mission VII - Target, Turin, Italy, Ball Bearing Factory.

Expect heavy flak and fighters. Take off 08:50 - landed 16:45. Bombing altitude 23,000. We were attacked by 6 FW-190s just before and on bombing run. They came in at 6 o'clock high. It was flak alley. But was busy with the fighters. When attacked from rear echelon from 5-7 o'clock high and peeling off at 400 yds. I threw about 80 rounds at them, but don't believe any hits. At the same time the P-38s were in a dog fight with some of them at 3 o'clock high. No B-17s lost and didn't see any fighters go down. Our radio operator was hit in left calf by flak. Had big hole in bomb bay. Went through radio door. Radio man in hospital and doing fine. We had five holes in ship - 408 - Verbruggen. Dec. 1, 1943 - 7 hrs 55 min in air.

Italy, Foggia

Mission VIII - Target, Bolzano, Italy Railroad Bridge.

Expect flak and 70 fighters. Escort of P-38s. Take off 09:00 land 15:30. Flak alley, but no fighters.

Navigator was out 15 min. for lack of oxygen. No ground men over here. Had to load our own bombs. 500 lb. bombs 12. We moved from Tunis to Foggia, Italy. Was raining as usual. One plane got lost when landed in a small airfield at night. Overshot field and ran into brick wall. Engineer killed, bombardier, broken leg and waist gunner injured. Plane, a mess of wreckage. At Amendola. Dec. 15, 1943 Ship 408, Verbruggen. 5 hrs 50 min in air.

Italy, Foggia

Mission IX - Target, Padua, Italy, Railroad Bridge Yards.

Expect 50 fighters no flak. Take off 10:15 landed 13:00. Milk run except for few bursts of flak (unreadable). Dec. 16, 1944. Pilot, Verbruggen - 408. We ran over target twice before we bombed it. People think we own the plane. 500 lbs. 12 of them;

Italy, Foggia

Mission X 1st Oak Leaf Cluster for Air Medal. Target, Augsburg, Germany, Me-109 factory and test laboratory.

Expect 230 fighters and 168 flak guns. Take off 08:32, landed 14:52. We bombed Innsbruck, Germany instead, because our primary target was covered. Got flak from Venice and some other places on the way up and back. We saw the flak guns bursting but no flak ??? We were attacked by Me-109s and 110s - about 30 fighters. Two attacked our tail. Tail gunner fired at one, we shot at the other. Shot about 90 rounds believe tail gunner hit one but didn't go down. Two B-17s shot down in flames. 6 chutes from one bailed out and 2 chutes from the other plane bailed out. 6 holes in ship. Our main wing spar hit. Ship grounded, but fixed in couple days. Dec. 19, 1943 - 6 hrs, 20 min. Verbruggen. 500 lbs, 12 of them.

Italy, Foggia

Mission XI - Target, Udine, Northern Italy.

Take off 9:25, landed 14:25. December 25, 1943, Christmas Day. Time of target was 12:15. 408, Pilot Verbruggen. We didn't like to bomb today. For it being Christmas. We went over target but didn't bomb. Heavy overcast. So we flew around looking for one. We finally went home. No bombs dropped, we were glad in one way. So that made my eleventh mission. We got donuts and coffee from Red Cross. We got all the turkey we wanted and lot of mail. G. Pretty good day. No flak no fighters. 5 hrs in air. It was cold up there, 40 below zero. Almost froze my hands off. Had to keep pounding them. We also had a max escorts P-38s - P-47s. 500 lbs. 12 of them.

Italy, Foggia

Mission XII - Target, Rimini, Italy - North Italy - M/Y

Take off 9:50 - landed 14:50. December 28, 1943 - 408, Verbruggen. Hit target, and head for home. Had P-38 escort. Mission was a Milk Run. 5 hrs in air. 500 lbs, 12 of them.



Italy, Foggia

Mission XIII - Target, Ferrara, M/Y. North Italy.

Target was hit. Take off 9:55 Land 15:30 - 414 Verbruggen. December 29, 1943. Flew way in Northern Italy, then bombed target on way out. Expect 12 flak guns and 109 fighters. But received nothing. Milk Run. We missed target and hit a race track. P-38 escort. Landed with bomb bay door down. Couldn't crank them up. The whole day was windy. Blew few tents down. 500 lbs, 12 of them.

Italy, Foggia

Mission XIV - Target, Villa Perosa, N. Italy Ball Bearing Factory.

Near Turin. Expected 240 fighters and 40 flak batteries. Take off 08:00 landed 15:05. bombs away 11:45 bombing altitude 22,000. We got fighters out of Rome. Two came into the formation and the P-38s took care of the rest. Heavy flak, altitude good, deflection good. In air 7 hrs 5 min. Two attacked the 49th Squadron FW-190 and shooting 20 MM cannon at them but no ships went down. 408 Verbruggen. Had 1,000 lb bombs, 6 of them. Did a good job on target. January 3, 1944.

Italy, Foggia

Mission XV 2nd Oak Leaf to Air Medal

Target, Skopje, Yugoslavia. Take off 8:50 landed 15:45. Bombs away 12:47 - 408 - Verbruggen. Before target had some flak and two fighters. P-38s took care of them. No flak over target. Our first target was the Capitol, but had an overcast so we bomb Skopje M/Y. Hit town also. 6 hrs 55 min in air. 500 lbs, 12 of them. January 4, 1944

Italy, Foggia

Mission XVI - Target Maribor, Austria

Take off 07:37 - landed 13:47. Bombs away 11:06. Expected flak and 105 fighters. We passed through Yugoslavia. It was covered with snow. It was a death trap for anyone who had trouble in that area. We got no flak, but two fighters. P38s took care of them. 408 Verbruggen. 500 lbs 12 of them. Hit the target, an aircraft factory. In air 6 hrs 10 min.

Italy, Foggia

Mission XVII - Target, Pola. Northern Italy Shipping Yards.

Take off 8:45 landed 13:15 - Bombs away 11:37. Expected flak and fighters. We got flak, not accurate and was low. No fighters. 414 Verbruggen. Bombed at 17,000 feet. had a base overcast. Hit target hard. Had 500 lbs 12 of them. January 9, 1944.

Italy, Foggia

Mission XVIII - Target - Sofia, Bulgaria, Capitol of Bulgaria.

We just blew it to bits. Take off 9:35 landed

14:30. Flew 623 - Verbruggen. We had flak and fighters. The flak was spread around moderate but not as accurate. Had a P38 escort. Seen 9 fighters. Seen two fighters, 109s, go down in flames. January 10, 1944. Bombs away 12:21. We took pictures from the camera in the plane. In 429 Squadron, a ball turret gunner got his head off from 20 MM shell from fighter. In air 4 hrs, 55 min.

Italy, Foggia

Mission XIX - Target, Guidonia Airdrome, Italy

Take off 9:20 Landed 14:15. 408 Verbruggen - Had some flak but not near us. Had fighters. Some 20 MM came near our tail. The lead ship bombardier went nuts. We didn't drop our bombs - or our Squadron. January 13, 1944. had P-38 escort. In air 4 hrs 55 min. *(Ed. note: Date may be in error)*

Italy, Foggia

Mission XX, Third Oak Leaf Cluster

Target - Mostar A/D in Yugoslavia.

Take off -09:45, landed 13:15. Bombs away 12:01 - 408 Verbruggen. Had little flak no fighters. Hit the target with frag Bombs, 144 of them. Had a bad tire after landing taxied to place our tire blew out. Had a new wheel put on. January 14, 1944. In air 3 h. 30 min..

## Did You Know?

1. That the flight of the first jet powered airplane in the US was of the Bell XP-59A on Oct. 1, 1942, three months after the first jet powered flight in Germany of the Me-262 on July 18, 1942.

2. That the first flight of the Wright Brothers second airplane "Flyer II" was made at Huffman Prairie, the world's first airport (now Wright Patterson Air Force Base) on May 26, 1904. Orville Wright was the pilot. He flew 25 feet at an altitude of 8 feet.

3. That Frank Knox, Secretary of the Navy during WWII, was a Rough Rider in Theodore Roosevelt's organization during the Spanish American War?

4. That Joe E. Brown was one of only two civilians who received the Bronze Star. (The other was Ernie Pyle). Brown traveled more than 200,000 miles at his own expense to entertain troops during WWII. (Pictures in DOL show him visiting the 2nd at Amendola).

5. That the German JU-52, 3 engine transport, was originally a bomber. It was too slow and was used extensively as a transport. (Their C-47). It was called "Iron Annie."

6. That the Germans had complete drawings of our "Top Secret" bomb sight in 1938 due to a Nazi sympathizer in the Norden plant. (We still used it to blow up their ball bearing factories, though, didn't we boys?)





Part of ground crew with combat crew:

Front row: Warren Mignes, Unknown, Clarence Giacommetti, John Mahnken.

Back row: Lloyd True, Two ground crew, unknown, Henry G. Lorenz, I.K. Dodman, Phillip Wilson, Russel Johnson, L. A. Thomas, ground crew unknown.

## My Baby

Association member and 20th Squadron member Lloyd True sent some pictures and stories about his crew and the airplane they flew during the middle months of 1944. Thanks Lloyd.

The naming of a B-17. All stories have a beginning, this one began on March 5, 1943 when "Dee" and I were married. I was going to radio school at Scott Field, Ill.

Crew number 142 was formed on September 22, 1943 and took first phase training at Rattlesnake Bomber Base at Pyote, TX. On October 17 we got an eight day delay enroute to Dyersburg, TN where we took second and third phase training. Like most of the others, I went home. I spent a few days at home in Indianapolis. It was during those few days that "Dee" came to be in a family way.

On March 15, 1944 we arrived at Amendola. We flew our first mission on March 22. We were assigned to 231473 which had no name. On June 24 I was called to report to Master Sgt. "Tiny" Atkerson. When I got there, he was holding a telegram and said "Sgt., how long have

you been overseas?" Tiny liked to make jokes. The telegram informed me that our son, George Henry True, (named after the pilot, Henry C. Lorenz), was born on June 15.

On June 26, as we were getting ready to go to Vienna, the flight crew were kidding me about being a father. The ground crew members were taking all this in. Right waist gunner John Angelosanto, made the comment that we should name the plane "My Baby."

The next day as we prepared to go to Budapest, we found that the ground crew had painted "My Baby" on the ship. That mission was my 45 and 46. I got number 50 and 51 on July 7. She was a good ship and it hurt to learn later that she was lost on August 29 with the whole squadron.

## Strange Things Happen

Some strange things happened to us after we became a crew at Pyote, TX.

After we completed our training at Dyersburg, we went to Kerney, Nebraska and were prepared and waiting to go to the 8th in England. Before we were called to take off, they changed our orders and sent us to Langley Field where our navigator took radar training.



For the life of me I cannot remember his name. On the way to Langley, someone on the train came down with the measles or chicken pox or something and we were quarantined when we arrived. After the training was completed, we were given a brand new plane (radar equipped). It was #297640. On March 1 we took off for Italy via the Southern Route. There was the pilot, co-pilot, navigator, chief engineer, chief armorer, and myself at radio. We also had two radar mechanics and the ship was jam packed with other radar equipment. Lt. Thomas and the other three crewmen went by ship.

When we landed at San Pan Crazio, we were directed to taxi way out in the boondocks. Soon a high ranking officer came out, told us to get our personal belongings, took the keys and locked up the plane. then he and the navigator left. Later, the rest of us were picked up. Four days later the five of us were ferried to Amendola by a B-24. It was a B-24 base where we landed. We were to become replacements.

Meanwhile, Lt. Thomas and the other three wound up somewhere in Italy and were to be replacements also. But Lt. Thomas was insistent that they be sent to join the crew. They bounced around from place to place and eventually wound up in the 2nd, but in the 49th Squadron. At this point it was no problem to get us all back together. Minus a navigator, we all completed our tours of duty and returned home.

On April 30 we were sent to Capri for R and R. Lt. Wilson, who had been assigned to us shortly before that also went with us. Of course he had several missions to go when I left Amendola. I hope he made it safely home too.

Maybe John Angelosanto could write a story about their trip to Italy and their bouncing around from place to place.

*Editor's note: How about that, John?*

## A Trip to Russia

On June 2, 1944 we took part in the Shuttle Raid to Russia. We were one of the first to land and Pilot Lorenz was delighted that we were able to park on a brick revetment. Unfortunately, it rained and rained. Finally, the weather cleared and we were going on a bomb run and return to the base in Russia. However, when we arrived at the plane, it had broken through the bricks and was stuck. They tried to get it out with a motor vehicle, but were unable to do so. Finally, Lt. Lorenz asked everyone to move out of the way and he gunned the engines and rocked the ship back and forth until he got it out.

We joined the line of ships waiting to take off, but one of the engines was acting up (possibly due to the rocking of the ship back and forth with engine power). We were told to move out of the way so the others could proceed. We taxied out in the grass and apparently into a hole. One wheel went down and we had bent props, and I think, a broken engine mount. (Page 233 of "Defenders of Liberty")

On June 11, when we returned to Amendola, we had to leave our ship and we were split up to ride back with other crews. The plane was repaired and returned to Amendola. Eventually, we got it back.

*Lloyd True*

Prior to shuttle to Russia:

Front row:  
Sgt. John Angelosanto, waist;  
Sgt. Lloyd True, radio; Sgt. Clarence Giacometti, top turret; Sgt. John Mahunken, ball turret; Sgt. Warren Migués, left waist.

Back row:  
Lt. L.A. Thomas, bombardier; Lt. E.

K. Dodman, co-pilot; Lt. Henry G. Lorenz, pilot; Sgt. Russell F. Johnson, tail; Lt. Phillip Wilson, nav.





## A Czech to Remember

Mojmir Baca greeted me shortly after I parachuted into Czechoslovakia on 29 August 1944. He took me to the family farm house for the night. This was to be the beginning of a friendship that has endured the last 60 years. He was a mechanic, builder and inventor. Many years ago we sent him a subscription to Rotorcraft Magazine. Little did we realize that he would build and fly an "L-13B" motor glider in 1979. He worked as a mechanic for the Czech Airline for many years. He was able to visit us in Colorado, with airline reciprocity, at the time when his country was communist dominated.

When he was just 15 in 1939 a Russian pilot, Lt. Kovalenko, was shot down near their town. Mojmir and his dad guided the pilot over the mountains to safety. He searched for him after the war but was only able to learn that he had not survived.

During all the years under communist rule he and his historical society friends collected and refurbished aircraft memorabilia and kept it hidden until after the Velvet revolution of November 1989. In 1991 they dedicated the Slavcin Museum when Karol and I were there on a visit. It has recently been enlarged and has an interesting and diverse collection. One item is the engine from a Messerschmitt fighter aircraft. It was discovered many years after the war as it had embedded itself deep in a bog. Just last fall, another similar find is the #2 engine from Bill Tune's B-17, #159.

In February of this year the City of Slavcin and the Slavcin Historical Society conferred on Baca the title of "War Veteran" in recognition of his fight against communism and war. Mojmir and Elishka, his wife of 56 years, have four daughters and ten grandchildren. This August I will make my fifth pilgrimage to Moravia and Slavcin and to pay my respects to Baca and his fellow Czech's who know the real meaning of the word "freedom".

*Loy Dickinson*

## WWII Memorial

FINALLY, May 29, 2004 the WWII Memorial in Washington, DC was dedicated to the "Greatest Generation" and all you did to preserve our freedom. My husband, my children and my mother, Lorraine Crane (age 83) attended the dedication with me to stand in for my father, 1st Lt. Newton Storey (Pete) Blackford who was killed with his entire crew on July 16, 1943 in Ain M'Lalia, Algiers when his plane crashed right after take off. I was only one month old and he had never even seen me. He was a B-17 pilot with the 429th Bomb Squad. I know he would have been at the dedication if he had lived. It was an honor to stand for my father. I also stood for all of you that could not be there as you were all very much in my heart as I heard the President,

Tom Hanks and Bob Dole express the gratitude of this nation to all of the sacrifices you guys and families had made.

I have found a group of other war orphans named American WWII Orphans Network (AWON). This group held their biannual conference in DC at the same time as the dedication. In the spring newsletter, I issued an invitation to all of the 2nd Bomb Group to attend a reception this group held for any veterans. The only member of your group that accepted the invitation was Walter Ershaw from New York. He flew with the 20th Squadron in Italy. It was wonderful to visit with him and I really appreciated the chance to honor him. There were 800 attendees at the conference. Bob Dole took time out of that busy weekend to come be the keynote speaker.

This was an incredible experience for my two children, Gretchen Ferreira, 33, and 1st Lt Josh Hellums, (31). For years they have heard stories about my dad, but they proudly wore his pin picture button and cried with me and my mother as we laid a memorial to him at the wall of gold stars. There are over 4000 gold stars on the wall, each star representing 100 men who died. This star wall was a project of AWON to honor our deceased fathers. My children confessed to thinking of WWII as pretty ancient history until this wonderful weekend. As it really came alive for them, they started stopping vets they saw and thanked them for all they had done for our country.

The memorial lies between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial on the Mall. In the center is the reworked fountain that has been there for years. As you enter the Memorial (at 6 o'clock) there are bronze plaques around the base of the flag pole recognizing each of the services involved in the war. Along the side entry walls are bronze renderings of various scenes of the war. I particularly liked the ones depicting the B-17 with a crew and another scene showing medics at work with the wounded. Continuing into the Memorial, on the left (at 9 o'clock) is a tall tower with Pacific written on it. Surrounding this tower are pillars carrying the names of the states and territories in the order that they were admitted to the United States. Across from the Pacific tower is the Atlantic tower (at 3 o'clock). This tower is also surrounded by the state pillars. Below each of the towers are granite slabs commemorating the various battles and theatres of operations in the war. There are also numerous famous quotations carved into the granite. At 12 o'clock is the beautiful gold star wall.

I encourage all of you that can; to go to Washington to revel in the thanks from this nation. I salute you all.

*Bonnie Crane Hellums*



## Notice

Mark Mountjoy informs us that his father was Thomas R. Mountjoy, most people called him Tom Bob. He was an engine mechanic in the 49th Squadron. Mark would like to know if anyone knew his father. Mark has 500 photos his father took while in Africa and Amendola. He would also like to know if anyone can identify any of the people in the pictures.

Mark says his dad was a passenger on the airplane that crashed at Palermo during the move from Africa to Italy. The story is in DOL. Mark can be reached at [mtjoy@mac.com](mailto:mtjoy@mac.com). 1295 Burger Knob, Junction City, KY 40440 (859) 854-6565.

## Frank E. Gartz

Linda Gartz would like to know if anyone remembers her uncle, Lt. Frank E. Gartz, a navigator and a member of the 49th squadron. He was in the group in 1944 and 1945. He died in Italy in October 1945.

If anyone can be of help to Linda, please contact her at [lgartz@ameritech.net](mailto:lgartz@ameritech.net). You may also contact the editor with any information.

## Fifteenth Air Force Association

The Fifteenth Air Force Association has made the difficult decision to dissolve. The effective date is set at January 1, 2005.

Many 2nd Bomb Association members (including your editor) are members of the 15th and that very active and vital association has been a great source of information over the years.

Sorry to see the Great Fifteenth Air Force Association come to the end of the line.

## B-17 DVD Flying Legend

A new DVD about B-17s is available from Janson Media. The DVD is about the B-17s that are still flying along with interviews with veterans that flew them. It also includes the 1944 documentary "Memphis Belle" and flying footage from the war.

The DVD may be ordered by telephone or by contacting Janson's website.

Telephone: 800-881-4066 or 201-784-8488  
[www.janson.com/videos/history/b17.html](http://www.janson.com/videos/history/b17.html)

## An Interesting Statistic

During World War Two, 36,670 U.S. Army officers lost their lives in combat. Of these 23,897 were air crew members who fought in the sky. 12,773 ground officers gave their lives. Of the 34,578 Army officers missing in action (MIA), 83% were Army Air Forces members.

## A Chuckle or Two

A student became lost during a solo cross-country flight. While attempting to locate the aircraft on radar, ATC asked, "What was your last known position?" The student's reply. "When I was number one for takeoff." (*From The Sortie*)

## Oral History Update

By late July, all members of 2nd Bombardment Association should receive a packet of information in regards to "preserving the legacy" of 2nd Bomb Group by capturing oral and written histories. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please contact me either by email at [secondhistory@yahoo.com](mailto:secondhistory@yahoo.com), by phone at (586) 781-8486 or by mail at 56340 Copperfield Drive, Shelby Township, MI 48316.

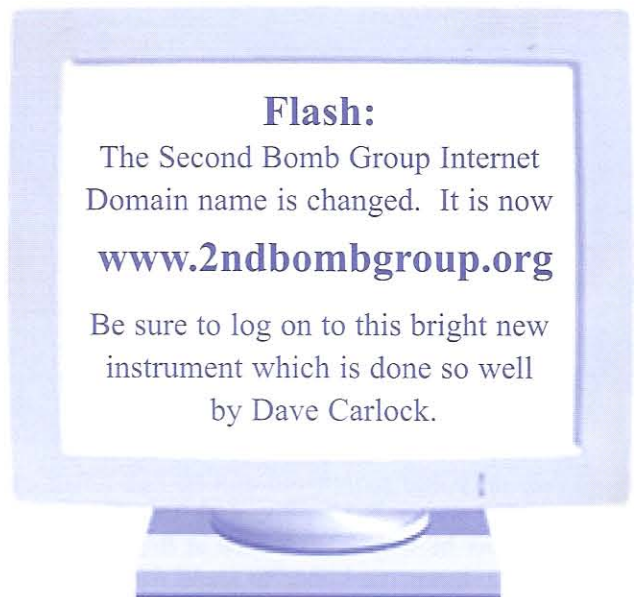
*Paul F. Skalny  
 Historian*

### Flash:

The Second Bomb Group Internet Domain name is changed. It is now

**[www.2ndbombgroup.org](http://www.2ndbombgroup.org)**

Be sure to log on to this bright new instrument which is done so well  
 by Dave Carlock.





## The Aviator Man

Day after day  
He was smooth and cool  
Never afraid  
To break a rule

He was running the race  
And climbing the hill  
Conquering his fears  
And feeling the thrill

He was on his way up  
And moving fast  
Never doubting  
That it would last

A boy, a child, a man  
Who made himself a name  
He reached for his dreams  
And finally found his fame

But, in one simple moment  
This picture did fade  
All was quiet  
And a legend was made

He sailed the skies...  
He followed his plan...  
He earned his wings...  
For he was...

The Aviator Man

(from USAF.com)

### 2005 Reunion

September 29 - Oct. 2, 2005

St. Louis Renaissance Hotel, Airport

St. Louis, Missouri

## 2nd Bomb Bank Statement

### ACTIVE BUSINESS CHECKING WITH INTEREST

Member FDIC

Account Number 1-534-0185-9902

U.S. Bank National Association

#### Account Summary

Beginning Balance on Apr. 1	# Items	\$	9,064.13	Interest Paid this Year	\$	1.40
Customer Deposits	2		50.00	Number of Days in Statement Period		30
Other Deposits	1		0.33			
Checks Paid	2		40.58			
<b>Ending Balance on Apr. 30, 2004</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>9,073.88</b>			

#### Customer Deposits

Number	Date	Ref Number	Amount	Number	Date	Ref Number	Amount
	Apr. 12	5836094365	25.00		Apr. 26	5738097227	25.00

**Total Customer Deposits** \$ **50.00**

#### Other Deposits

Date	Description of Transaction	Ref Number	Amount
Apr. 30	Interest Paid	3000004260	\$ 0.33

**Total Other Deposits** \$ **0.33**

#### Checks Paid

Check	Date	Ref Number	Amount	Check	Date	Ref Number	Amount
1440	Apr. 7	4232430039	24.95	1441	Apr. 1	5834384219	15.63

**Total (2) Checks Paid** \$ **40.58**

#### Balance Summary

Date	Ending Balance	Date	Ending Balance	Date	Ending Balance
Apr. 1	9,048.50	Apr. 12	9,048.55	Apr. 30	9,073.88
Apr. 7	9,023.55	Apr. 26	9,073.55		

Balances only appear for days reflecting change.



## Second Bombardment Association

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

No. \_\_\_\_\_ (For Assn use) Renewal ( ) Date \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ last \_\_\_\_\_ first \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

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CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

9 digit, please

Telephone # ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Unit(s) Served with, or serving with Sqdn? \_\_\_\_\_ GP? \_\_\_\_\_ Wing? \_\_\_\_\_ AF \_\_\_\_\_

Where \_\_\_\_\_ When \_\_\_\_\_

Air Force Specialty \_\_\_\_\_ Rank \_\_\_\_\_

(Please check appropriate boxes below)

Active \_\_\_\_\_ Retired \_\_\_\_\_ Separated War Vet? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ POW \_\_\_\_\_

Membership: 2 years = \$25.00 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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**THE FOLLOWING ADDENDUM ARE ALL CORRECTIONS TO THE ROSTER**  
**Part 1 - Minor Changes    Part 2 - Changes of address.    Part 3 - Listing of New Members.**

**Part 1 - Minor Changes**

John Angelosanto    Telephone (781) 665-7082  
 Mrs. Carl F. Bray    Telephone (937) 525-5323  
 Margaret Hanley    Area Code (631)  
 Gene E. Kurz    25553 Pincreek Lane, Wilmington, CA 90744-1834  
 Lew Waters    Telephone (937) 629-0897    email: enon2212@sbcglobe.net  
 Edward S. Yablonski    Telephone (814) 864-6622

**Part 2 - Change of Address**

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Street Address</b>	<b>City, State, Zip Code</b>	<b>Phone</b>
	Charles BEECHAM	321 Clay St. #101	Ashland, OR 97520-7319	(541) 482-0318
	Robert R. KELLY	316 Hickman St. Apt H14	Bridgeville, PA 15017	
96	Robert N. McDUFFIE			(918) 299-2705

15

**Part 3 - New Members**

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Spouse</b>	<b>Street Address</b>	<b>City, State, Zip Code</b>	<b>Phone</b>
429	M L Marty CHILDRESS		903 N Main #32	San Angelo, TX 76903-4083	(325) 655-4944
49	William J COOK		4917 Ravenswood Rd. #1200	San Antonio, TX 78227-4342	(210) 670-9624
	Pat FUSCALDO		SCU Athletic Dept. 1801 E Cotati Ave.	Rohnert Park, CA 94928-3613	(707) 664-2110
49	James Anthony (Tony) KNOEBEL		1488 Rosewood Dr.	Charlestown, IN 47111-1648	
	James W. MARTIN	Neva	108 8th Ave.	Charles City, IA 50616-2304	(640) 228-1579
429	James A. PFEIFFER	Rosemary	2201 Crestwood Dr.	Glenwood Springs, CO 81601-4331	(970) 445-1136
429	Clair H. SCHMITT	Betty	333 Pennsylvania Ave.	Delaware, OH 43015-1519	(740) 362-1512



Second Bombardment Association  
A Veterans Organization of the  
2nd Bomb Group & Bomb Wing

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