



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

SECOND BOMBARDMENT ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

"Second to None"

www.2ndbombgroup.org



Volume 21, No. 2

July 2005



President's Corner

Veterans History Project

This is urgent! I wrote last January "To Tell Your Story." The wish of our Historian, Paul Skalny, is to have as many oral histories recorded as is possible at our Reunion in St. Louis. There are ways to get this done now. In the year 2000 the U.S. Congress created the "Veterans History Project." Congress recognized the urgency of collecting wartime memories as the number of veterans dwindles by 1,500 every day. Please contact Veterans History Project at 1888-371-5848 or its website www.loc.gov/folklife/vets/ or by writing VHP, Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, 101 Independence Ave. SE, Washington DC 20540-4615.

Another avenue is to go to the above website, click on "partners", then click on "list of official partners" where you may click on your state to find an entity that will do your interview in person. Examples of what you'll find:

Veterans Medical Center, Birmingham, AL

Sedona Public Library, Sedona, AZ

Juniata College, Huntington, PA

Sons of the American Legion, Greenville, SC

There are literally hundreds of sites all over the USA. I have done it and it was practically painless. Please call me or write that you have done it or that your have scheduled to get it done.

2BA Reunion

We are looking forward with great anticipation to the 2BA Reunion in St. Louis. The Registration Packet you received last month may still be parked in the "To Do" file. This may be one of our last hurrahs!! Do get it out and mail your registration to Dick Radtke and send your reservation off to Renaissance Hotel by phone, fax or e-mail. In addition to the information in the registration packet we wish to alert you to the tentative

agenda for our business meeting on Friday, September 30. The meeting will be called to order at 8:10 AM. This will be followed by the Minutes of the 2003 meeting, Treasurers Report, Membership Report and the Historians Report. At this point we will have full discussion about 2007. Will we have, and where to have and when, a future reunion? Everything will be open for discussion. A few ideas about where have been suggested. Possibles: Branson, MO; Dayton, OH; Baton Rouge, LA, San Antonio, TX; Gettysburg, PA - the list is open for other nominations. We will conduct a survey later in the summer to test the sentiment. The meeting will conclude not later than 9:35 AM so as to allow boarding for the Friday tour which leaves at 10:00 AM. We'll be seeing you in St. Louis.

Loy Dickinson

The View from the Farm

April 29 of this year, some of the remnants of the former POW's from Stalag Luft III group gathered in Tucson, AZ. Not many were able to make the journey, but about 120 former "Kriegies" were there along with almost two hundred members of their families and their guests.

The celebration was to remember the time, 60 years past, when Gen George Patton's 14th Armored Division came to the gates of the camp in Mooseberg, Germany, chased the remaining Germans away, and declared us again under the control of our beloved United States of America.

Not one of us, liberated that day, will ever forget those events. I had been a prisoner a little over a year. Some, as Lt. Col. A.P. Clark writes in his new book, were behind wire for almost three years. Some of our British friends had been there since shortly after the war began almost six years before.

Regardless, we all had a good last gathering in
(continued on next page)

Notice: The Roster will be re-issued every other year only.
So save the Changes of Addresses and New Members listing in the back of this newsletter.

Tucson with many memories of those we had spent time with so many years before.

When old former POW's gather, you can be assured the common word among them, is and always will be, "We are the lucky ones." They will always remember those who were not fortunate enough to survive the trip from sky to earth in hostile territory.

Please pay attention to the announcements about the Second Bomb Association reunion Sept. 29 through Oct. 2, 2005 in St. Louis. A lot of work has been done by the officers, especially Dick Radtke, to arrange this meeting. It will be a grand affair.

You will, by now, have received a mailing with the details and application forms. Don't delay getting your reservations in soon.

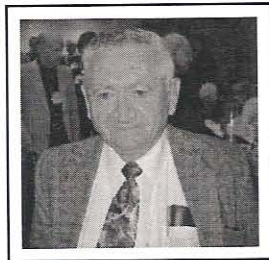
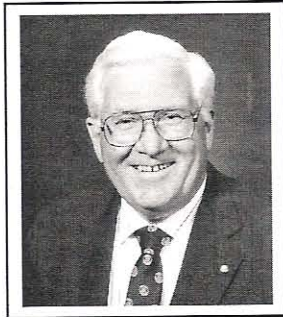
Thanks to those who have sent a note or a card about a change of address, death of a member, or any other change. And a special thanks to those who have sent stories and notes of events. Keep them coming and we will keep trying to keep the roster and mailing list up to date and the newsletter of interest to all.

Earl Martin, editor

Our Business Addresses

President

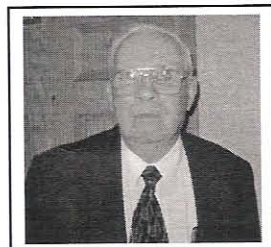
Loy A. Dickinson
16685 Cielo Ct.
Parker, CO 80134-3592
(720) 851-9663
(480) 895-9212
loy@denvertest.com



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

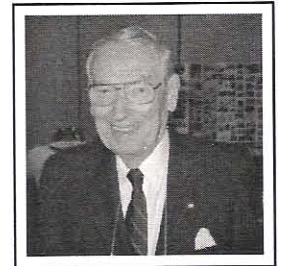


Treasurer

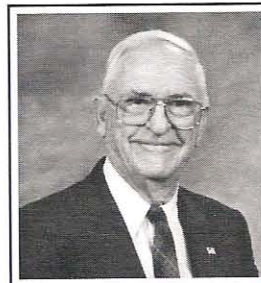
William A. Parsons
813 Frost Rd., Suite 301
Streetsboro, OH 44241-4732
(330) 653-8684
wparsons1@alltel.net



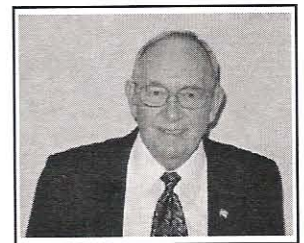
Historian
Paul F. Skalny
56340 Copperfield Dr.
Shelby Township, MI
48316-4808
(586) 781-8486
secondhistory@yahoo.com



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



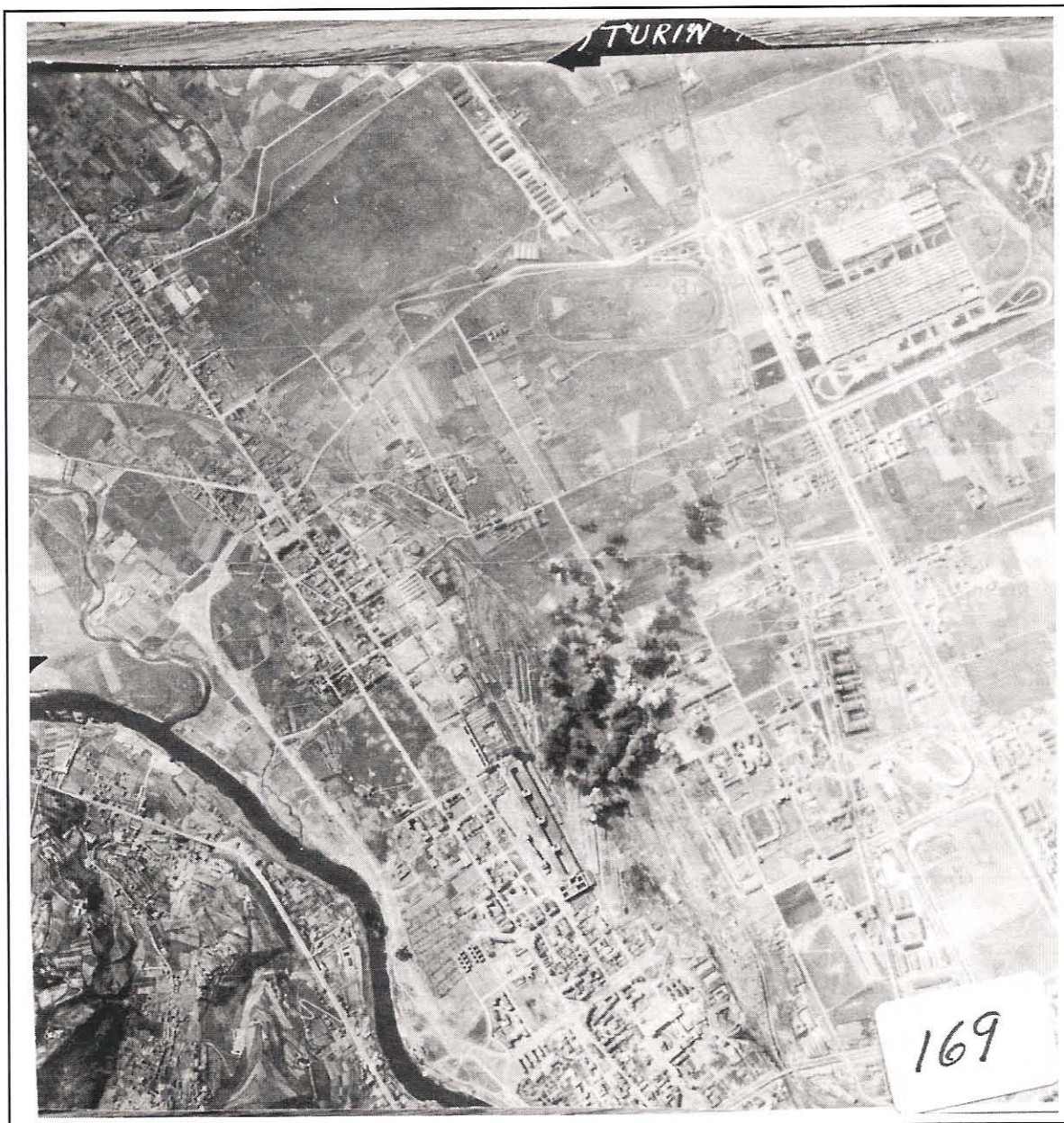
Immediate Past President
Richard K. Radtke
60 Villa Heights Ct.
Algoma, WI 54201-1463
(920) 487-3343
ektdar@charter.net

Mission 169

During part of the time the 2nd Bomb Group participated in combat in the Second World War, 1st Lt. later Capt. Joseph M. McCoid, Intelligence Officer of the 429th Squadron, wrote a daily history of the activities of the group.

This is McCoid's history for one day in the life of the Group, March 29, 1944. The mission is also described in some detail in *The Second Was First* and in *Defenders of Liberty*.

Turin, Italy - Mission No. 169. The other time, (December 1, 1943 - Mission 103) this group bombed in this city it was the ball bearing works and this time the target was the marshalling yards. Yesterday we struck in force on the enemy's communications lines with considerable success and this date we dealt another blow at a large and more vital rail and repair center. This yard



was one of the largest in northern Italy, it being next in size to Milan, the largest. March 26 reports showed there were 500 wagons and 23 locomotives there and the objective was to destroy that rolling stock as well as the adjacent repair facilities.

The flak over the target was intense and accurate and caused slight damage to twenty-three (23) planes. From six to ten fighters attacked just after bombs away for about ten minutes, from above, between 11 and 1 o'clock. They dove through the formation, went down under and made repeated attacks. These attackers, which were Me-109's and FW-190's did not appear to be after any one plane, except for stragglers. None were shot down by the gunners, however, these fighters shot down one of our planes after it had been hit by flak and was a straggler. Besides, the enemy fire killed one man, injured another and damaged two planes severely and another slightly.

The man that lost his life was James H. Taylor, S/Sgt., 38230861, Upper Turret Gunner 49th Squadron. Rt. 1, Box 176, San Angelo, Texas. Instantly killed by 20 mm cannon shell wound, left supra-sepular region.

The injured was: Robert H. Weiss, 2nd Lt. O-748484, Co-pilot, 96th Squadron. 4024 Tracy St., Kansas City, Missouri. Suffered lacerations of face and left knee, caused by shattered plexiglass. Treated at squadron dispensary.

The plane shot down was plane 42-97152 from the 20th Squadron and was last sighted at 1208 hours at 44° 20' N-08° 23' E, fifty-six (56) miles southeast of Turin. This plane had been hit by flak while over the target and was straggling when two or three fighters attacked it. It gradually lost speed and altitude and finally the men began to leave it. At least 7 or 8 were seen to go out before it disappeared into the clouds. The missing

(continued on next page)

men were:

Edward J. Wronkoski 1st Lt. O-145229 Pilot
1063 Johnson St., Elmira, New York
Francis A. Sanvito 2nd Lt. O-748256 Co-pilot
1304 14th St., North Bergen, New Jersey
Richard T. Zeugin 2nd Lt. O-694637 Navigator
RR #3, Leavenworth, Kansas
Norman J. Stockstill 2nd Lt. O-689554
Bombardier
521 Haug Ave., Picaune, Mississippi
Floyd A. High, Jr. S/Sgt 15324929 Upper Turret
1409 Neptune Ave., Akron, Ohio
Maurice R. LaRouche S/Sgt 36519214
Lower Turret
5537 Lincoln, Detroit, Michigan
George A. Lawrance Sgt. 11116092 Right Waist
Neck Road, Rochester, Massachusetts
Donald F. Genter S/Sgt 18169171 Left Waist
Haber Springs, Arkansas
Ernest I. Lipsett Sgt. 11091223 Tail Gunner
29 Second St., Medford, Massachusetts
Daniel (NMI) Weiss T/Sgt 12183225
Radio Gunner
569 Sutter Ave., Brooklyn, New York

The bomb strikes were recorded by four cameras and these showed a very good concentration of hits in the yards and on the adjacent work and repair shops. More specifically the damage included: four strikes of bombs carried centrally across the central section of the yards with direct hits on through tracks, goods sidings on both the east and west sides and on rolling stock: A few direct hits were scored on the small sheds adjacent to the Fiat Aero Engine Production building on the west and the through lines were at least partially severed: at least ten direct hits and several near misses made on a large industrial plant adjacent to the west central portion and a few direct hits and damaging near misses on buildings adjacent on the west: The Fiat Lingotto Works on the east side of the yards were further damaged by many direct hits, there being about four direct hits and several near misses on the Aero Engine Production Building, one direct hit and two damaging near misses on the Aero Engine Assembly and Test Beds Building and two hits on the west edge of the large unidentified building at the northeast corner of the production building: three direct hits or very near misses on the spur line to the airdrome and Fiat Mirafiori Works just to the southwest of the junction with the main lines into the yards: two near misses, possibly damaging, on the small three bay hanger and the west end of the Mirafiori airdrome, and a direct hit on the service building adjacent to the hangar on the north: and scattered hits on residential and industrial buildings to the south and southeast of the yards.

The 2nd bomb Group (H) lead the Wing that day and was followed by the 99th, 97th and 301st bomb Groups and all had P-47 escort furnished by the 325th Fighter Group. The bomber formation was about ten minutes early and therefore it's rendezvous with the

fighters was not at the place planned, which was at least part of the cause for the losses suffered. Twenty seven (27) planes (two others returned early) went over the target at 1151 hours at an average altitude of 21,450 feet and dropped 78 tons of 500 pound general purpose demolition bombs. One of these planes failed to drop it's bombs, due to a malfunction of the bomb bay doors. Lt. Col. John D. Ryan, Deputy Group Commander was the leader and his co-pilot was Colonel P.L. Barton, Commanding Officer of the 483rd Bomb Group (H).

The 20th Squadron received a new combat crew and the 96th a part of one, there being three officers and three enlisted men.

The present Group Operations officer, received word of his promotion today and is now Major Harold L. Chrismon. On him it looks good and he rightly deserves it, for his has been a strenuous, as well as a highly eventful tour of duty.

In the afternoon, the Group was honored by the presence of three high ranking officers, namely, Brigadier General Charles F. Born, Chief of Staff of the Fifteenth Air Force; Colonel Charles W. Laurence, Commanding Officer of the Fifth Wing (US) and Colonel Norman D. Frost, Chief of Staff of the Fifth Wing (US)

Two members of a combat crew returned to the 96th Squadron this date, who had been reported missing in action on January 31, 1994 on the mission to the Udine-Campoformido Airdrome in northern Italy (Mission No. 138). those that returned were the Co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Victor A. Brockman and the Bombardier, 2nd Lt. James W. Shea. For some time they had been in the hospital at Bari, Italy. Two days later, the Pilot, 1st Lt. Robert F. Kolstad, also returned; having been in the same hospital. Four men, 2nd Lt. John V. Harrop, Navigator; T/Sgt. Archie N. Hartgrave, Upper Turret; S/Sgt Joseph W. Gibson, Right Waist Gunner and S/Sgt. William H. Fleming, Jr., Left Waist Gunner were still in the hospital in Yugoslavia in friendly hands and were to be evacuated out of that country soon. Sgt. Hayden B. Speed, Lower Turret Gunner and Sgt. Thomas (NMI) Habib, Tail Gunner both parachuted into the sea and none of the survivors knew whether they were rescued or not. T/Sgt. Hilliard S. Parrish, Radio Gunner was suspected to be a Prisoner of War. All but the two mentioned, parachuted out over land and were immediately assisted by the Partisans. These men will all be sent back to the United States.

It being a moving picture day, the show was presented at the usual hours of 1400, 1800 and 2000 hours.

Editor's note: Two members of Wronkoski's crew that were shot down that day, who are present members of the Association are Norman J. Stockstill and Maurice R. LaRouche.

How about your stories of that mission, boys?

The Klimp File

Wilbur B. Klimp became a part of the 49th Squadron, 2nd Bomb Group as it was being reorganized in Montana for overseas assignment in 1942. Klimp was a waist gunner on the crew of Odus L. Kimberling. They flew their missions and Klimp received orders to return to the US October 19, 1943.

He remained in the Army and Air Force after the war and retired as SMSGT. Wilbur B. Klimp died June 11, 1992 but he left a collection of photographs and stories. Patricia Klimp has kindly placed them in the Association Archives

We have extracted some of the stories and some of the pictures of Klimp's war experiences for this article.

From the Journal of Navigator, Stanley M. Korell:

May 31, 1943 - Target, Foggia Railroad Yards, Italy, almost on eastern coast. Flew almost across Italy and back. Fighters jumped us as we hit coast and attacked all the way to target. Flak pretty rough over target. Could feel ship lurch from bursts underneath. Fighters attacked after target all the way out to coast. Pretty rough day. Bombs fell good.

July 5, 1943 - Target, Gerbini A/D No. 6 near Catania, Sicily. Flak still rough. P-38s took care of most fighters although some got to us. Our ball turret gunner shot down one. Bombs not too good.

July 19, 1943 - Target, Rome Railroad Yards, Italy. We were about the tenth ship to ever bomb it. There were ten ships ahead of us. The bombs had to be good. Didn't want to hit any churches. It should have been rough but the flak was terribly inaccurate. The bombs hit good and only six fighters were encountered. We did have a scare, though. We lost no. 1 engine on the run and

it could have been rough on us but we got by okay.

August 4, 1943 - Target, Naples City, Italy. All out and we were next to the last ship over the target. The Me-109's attacked our ship while on the bombing run. Tracers and 20mms were streaming by our nose. We were really afraid. That first attack knocked out an elevator trim tab and controls, all of our radio, hit the tail gunner and injured him, hit one waist gunner and hurt him, put a big hole in the vertical stabilizer and a huge hole through the right main wing spar and small holes in two fuel tanks and the other wing. By all rights we should have never stayed in the air. We fought them for forty-five minutes before and after the bombs went away. The flak was terribly rough. Two ships went down, one from flak and one from a 20mm in a gas tank. Something besides just that ship brought us back that day.

The airplane assigned to this crew was B-17F 229623. It was named Scragg Boys. The crew chief was M/Sgt. Paul G. Werner who wrote some of his thoughts about the airplane which follow.

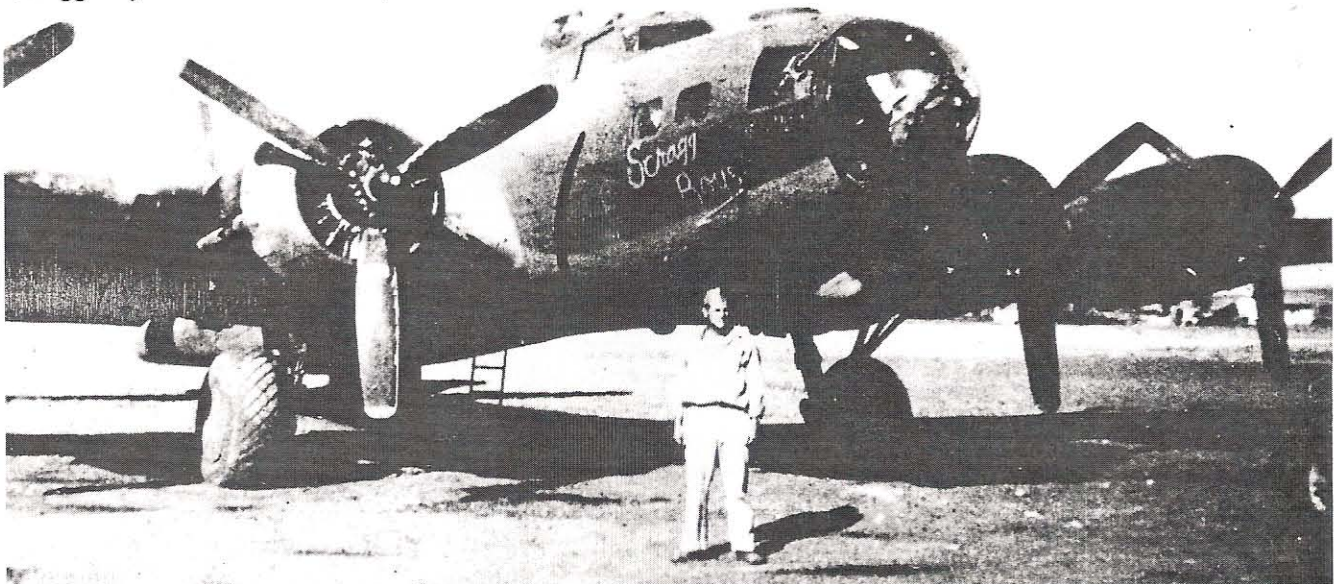
The 15th Air Force was formed in North Africa in Nov. 1943, Major General Jimmy Doolittle commanding. All the Heavy Bomb Groups formed the 15th, while the mediums, lights and fighters remained with the 12th Air Force.

On Thanksgiving Day, 1943, the 15th moved to Foggia, Italy and became operational the next day, flying support for the 5th Army.

Number 623 was used sparingly that winter because she did not have outboard wing tanks (commonly called Tokyo Tanks) for the missions into Germany, Austria, Romania, etc. It was during one of these sit downs, while routine maintenance was being done, that one of the planes, returning from a mission

(continued on next page)

Scragg Boys - Lt. John Mitchell, Bombardier



Aircraft Engines

Dedicated to all those who flew behind round engines.

We gotta get rid of those turbines, they are ruining aviation and our hearing!

A turbine is too simple minded. It has no mystery. The air travels through it in a straight line and doesn't pick up any of the pungent fragrance of engine oil or pilot sweat.

Anybody can start a turbine. You just need to move a switch from "off" to "start" and then remember to move it back to "on" after a while. My PC is harder to start.

Cranking a round engine requires skill, finesse and style. You have to seduce it into starting. It's like waking up a mistress. On some planes the pilots aren't even allowed to do it.

Turbines start by whining for a while, then give a lady like poof and start whining a little louder.

Round engines give a satisfying rattle-rattle click-click, bang, more rattles, another bang, more clicks, a lot more smoke and finally a low pitched roar. We like that. It's a guy thing.

When you start a round engine, your mind is

with its brakes shot out, turned off the runway and rolled into the beloved "Scragg Boys." She suffered a broken nose, but the worst damage was to the leading edge of her wing. She was repairable, but being war time (and like government spending today, very wasteful), it was decided to scrap her for parts so a replacement could be a new "G" model with chin turret, enclosed waist windows and outer wing tanks. Number 623 ended her career with 67 missions and 6 fighters to her credit. The scrap heap was not a noble way for a gallant lady to die!

A new "G" model was assigned, never named and her last three numbers were #525.

It was during "Big Week," the last week of Feb. 1944 that the 49th Squadron dispatched 15 out of 18 planes on a mission to Wiener-Neustadt, Austria. None returned. The 3 remaining planes were sent out the next day to the same target. None returned. The 49th Squadron had been wiped out.

The ground crew was then given all maintenance and repair of the Path Finders, planes whole ball turrets were replaced by radar equipment.



Scragg Boys Crew:

Top, left to right: Stanley M. Korell, Odus L. Kimberling, John W. Mitchell, John J. Tyler.

Bottom, left to right: Frank S. Konieczny, Daniel W. Bernd, George Bonovich, William H. Lewis, Marvin C. Harris, Wilbur B. Klump.



The Brass Get The Word

engaged and you can concentrate on the flight ahead. Starting a turbine engine is like flicking on a ceiling fan: useful but hardly exciting.

When you have started his round engine successfully, your crew chief looks up at you like he'd let you kiss his girl too.

Turbines don't break or catch fire often enough, leading to aircrew boredom, complacency and inattention. A round engine at speed looks and sounds like it is going to blow any minute. This helps concentrate the mind.

Turbines don't have enough control levers or gauges to keep a pilot's attention. There is nothing to fiddle with during long flights.

Turbines smell like a Boy Scout camp full of Coleman lamps. Round engines smell like God intended machines to smell.

Thanks to Bill Graft

12th and 15th Air Forces

From time to time an inquiry comes along regarding whether the 2nd Bomb Group was in combat as a part of the 12th Air Force during the North African Campaign. Most of the WWII members of the 2nd know that they were in the 15th Air Force in Italy.

When the Allies invaded North Africa from the west with what was known as TORCH in the latter part of 1942, the need for help from the US Air Forces and the British RAF had probably not been settled in the minds of the commanders.

In addition, the American 8th Air Force located in England was just beginning to be established. Most of the assets coming across the Atlantic were needed to build up this fledgling force.

General Eisenhower, Commander of TORCH, required a certain amount of air help, so some of the forces already in the 8th Air Force, and some of the forces destined for the 8th were relocated to the North African area. In Nov. 1942, two groups of B-17s (The 97th and 301st) were transferred from England to North Africa and two groups of B-24s (the 98th and 376th) were assigned to make up the heavy bombardment force needed for the invasion.

By the time the 2nd Bomb Group arrived and flew its first mission, April 28, 1943, part of the 12th Air Force was taking on the Strategic Bomber role and the 2nd was assigned to it. Most of the crews that accompanied the group on the transfer to North Africa, flew all of their missions from North Africa as members of the 12th Air Force.

During the fall months of 1943, the ground war had moved into Southern Italy and the British ground forces were able to push the Germans well up the peninsula to expose the Foggia Plain for use of the former German landing fields by the Allied forces.

Left to right: Maj. Gen. Nathan Twining, Col. Herbert Rice, Lt. Gen. Ira Eaker. (*Who brought the cigars?*)



At the headquarters of the Commanding General, United States Army Air Forces, Washington DC, a decision had been reached to supplement the CBO (combined bombing operation) of the US 8th Air Force and the RAF against Germany and her Allies. The decision required that a new strategic air force be created to operate from Italy. This would be the 15th Air Force. With better weather and a closer location to the targets, the 15th would be built up in size and be able to concentrate on strategic bombing attacks against CBO targets and other targets across Southern Europe and Germany which could not be bombed from bases in England.

The 15th Air Force was activated on November 1, 1943 with headquarters in Tunis, Tunisia and was commanded by Maj. Gen. James Doolittle. The headquarters was moved to Bari, Italy on December 1, 1943 and remained there until the end of the war. Maj. Gen. Nathan F. Twining became the commander January 3, 1944.

When the 15th Air Force was organized, combat groups were transferred to it from the 12th Air Force. Four B-17 groups and 2 B-24 groups as well as some fighter groups were among the strategic forces transferred.

The four B-17 groups, 2nd, 97th, 99th and 301st then in the theater became the 5th Wing of the 15th Air Force. The two B-24 groups became the nucleus of the B-24 forces which came to number 15 groups before the end of the build up of heavy bombers. Two more B-17 groups, the 463rd and 483rd were added in early 1944 to bring the 5th Wing up to a total of 6 B-17 groups. Seven fighter groups were added to the 15th Air Force.

The 12th Air Force was activated Aug. 20, 1942 and moved to England in Sept. then on to North Africa in Nov. 1942. It operated in the Mediterranean theater until

(continued on next page)

the end of the war. With the formation of the 15th Air Force as a strategic unit, the 12th Air Force became a tactical air force.

The biggest operational day for the 15th Air Force was April 15, 1945 when 1,235 heavy bombers were dispatched. Five hundred eighty-six (586) sorties were flown by the fighters that day. This was quite a change from the first mission the 2nd flew on April 28, 1943 when a few airplanes from the 2nd and the 301st went out but were unable to drop their bombs.



1943 - Drew Field, FL
Front left to right: Jost, Curions.
Rear left to right: Hamm, Martin

Reunion

By Earl Martin

George Jost and I shook hands after 61 years.

April 13, 1944, Mission number 178 was the last mission for my crew. The target was the Hungarian Railroad and Foundry Works at Gyor, Hungary.

After the German fighter attack, 42-97346 was on fire and we were barely able to get as far toward home as the Yugoslavian border. Lowell Hamm, bombardier, reported that Navigator, Robert Clark was wounded, so Co-pilot George J. Jost and I broke out our navigation skills to estimate where the Yugoslavia, Hungary border lay, knowing we might get help in Yugoslavia when we came back to Earth.

When George and I agreed we had reached that magic point in the sky, I rang the bail out bell and ordered bail out over the intercom. As near as we could tell, all the crew had bailed out before George went back to the bomb bay and dropped into space. I do not know how long I tried to hold the crippled bomber straight before I too went back to the bomb bay catwalk and stepped off. I looked carefully before I left and saw no one in the airplane.

As I descended I saw no other parachutes, but had a scare when the flaming B-17 I had just left looked as though it would run me down. It finally passed at good height over me and I continued to float down toward two riflemen who had me in their sights.

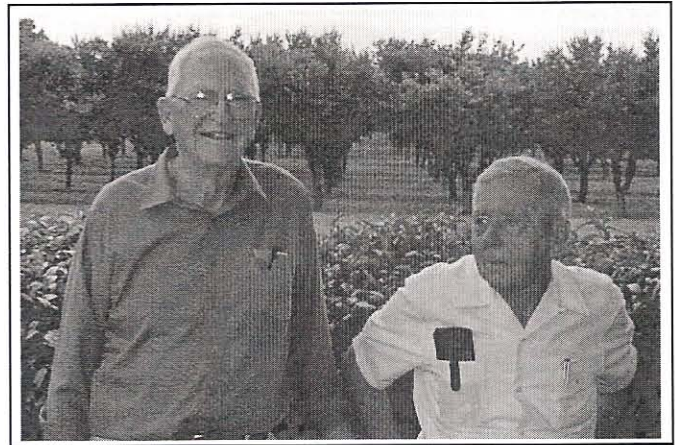
The result of all this action was, I was captured and made a POW along with badly wounded tail gunner Russell Durfee and waist gunner Frank Pyzanowski.

George, along with Hamm, Clark, engineer Ramond Howarth, ball turret David Cuniff, waist Franklin Gowans and radio gunner Tom Watkins, were picked up by the Partisan bands and after a month evading the German Army were taken back to the 2nd Bomb Group in Italy.

As happened with many POW's, contact with crew members was lost and George and I had not located each other until two years past. I live in South Carolina and he in California.

When my family and I made a recent trip to the west we were able to locate George and his wife, Louise, in Northern California and we had a grand reunion a little more than 61 years after leaving "346" as a pile of wreckage in Yugoslavia.

What a great privilege it is to meet old friends and companions after so many years.



Left to right: Martin, Jost, 2005 in Red Bluff, CA.

What is a Veteran?

America's war veterans come in a wide variety of shapes, sizes and ages. Their collective experience spans two World Wars and several other foreign conflicts. They have followed war mules through Flanders Field, dropped from landing barges onto the beaches of Normandy, faced the icy cold of Pork Chop Hill and trudged the rice paddies of the Mekong Delta. But, regardless of the differences in makeup and experience, all veterans share a common bond - a brotherhood of memory and hard won wisdom that helps define their character.

The veteran is the first man up as the flag passes

on the 4th of July and the last one down, for he has been a witness to the blood and tears that make this and all other parades possible.

A veteran is a man of peace, soft spoken, slow to anger, quick to realize that those who talk most about the glories of war are the ones who know the least about the horror. He never jokes about war, he's been there and still sees on memory's vivid screen, the wounded and dying, the widows and orphans; he knows first hand that no war is good and that the only thing worse is slavery.

He is a friend to all races of man, begrudging none; he carries with him the knowledge that it is not the man who is the enemy but enslavement and false ideologies. Those whom he once faced across battle lines, he now esteems as his brothers.

A veteran is at once proud and humble; proud of the fact that in 200 years no foreign enemy has set foot on American soil; humble in the realization that many of his comrades who helped him make this lofty aim a reality never returned.

More than anything else, a veteran loves freedom. He can spend a whole afternoon doing nothing more, just because it suits him, and just because he has paid the price to do what he wants with his time. He also takes personal pride in the freedom of others - in men and women attending the church of their choice; in friends voting how they choose; in children sleeping quietly without fear to interrupt their slumber.

A veteran is every man grown up a little taller - a person who understands the awesome price of life, intangibles of freedom, justice and democracy. His motto is live and let live.

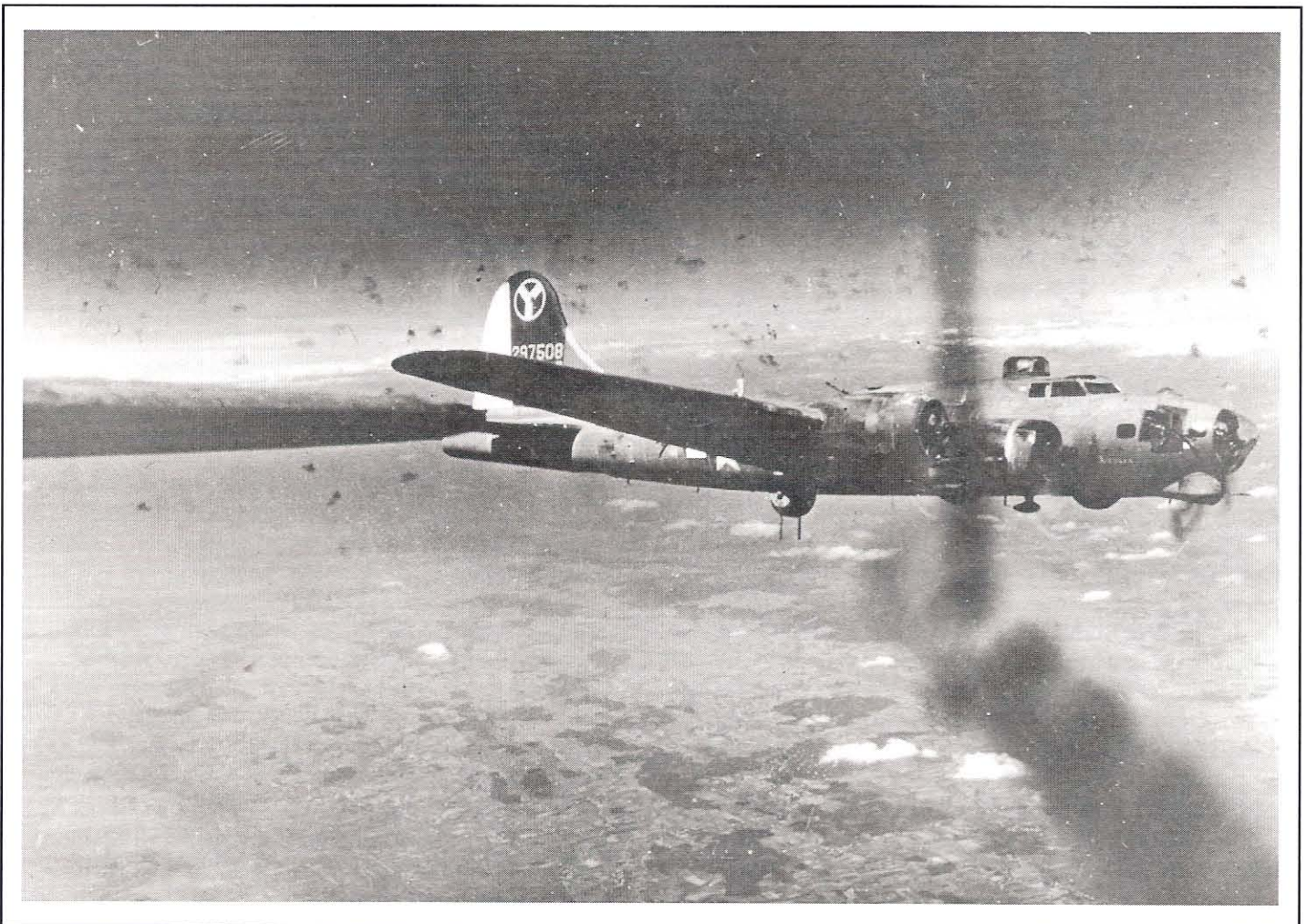
But, if he had to - if he had to choose between servitude and conflict, the veteran would once again answer the call to duty.

Because - above all else - a veteran is an American!

*Reprinted from B-17 Flying
Fortress Association
Newsletter: October 2004*

508 in Light Flak??

Over Munich 7-19-44



Memorial Day 2005 Memories

Memorial Day is always incredibly sad for me. I send flowers to decorate the grave of my father, 1st Lt. Pete Blackford, in Tunisia. He was with the 429th and his plane crashed in Ain M'Lalia on July 16, 1943 right after takeoff. His plane exploded on impact and he and his entire crew were killed. I always spend some time thinking about all of your buddies who did not return from WWII. Having grown up a war orphan with little or no knowledge of my father or what actually happened to him, I am comforted by having met several of you. It has helped me to picture what my father might look like today, had he lived longer than his short 23 years.

Last year was very special because I took my husband, my children and my mom, even though she has Alzheimer's disease, to Washington DC for the dedication of the WWII Memorial. It is my fervent hope that many of you will take the time to go and see the beautiful monument of thanks from a grateful nation. The group I belong to, American World War II Orphans Network (AWON) is responsible for the stunning wall of gold stars in the center of the memorial. Each star stands for 100 men who gave their lives for our freedom. It was one of the most moving experiences I have ever had when I placed a gold star with my dad's picture on it at the wall of gold stars. I thought perhaps I would never stop crying. When they sang "I'll Be Seeing You" they totally lost me and my poor mother.

This year was a little different. I was the only child my father had and I have been blessed with two fabulous children, so he has two grandchildren that he can be incredibly proud of. This last weekend, Memorial Day weekend, my son, 1st Lt. Josh Hellums graduated from the University of Texas Medical School and received his Masters degree in Public Health at the same time. As soon as all the graduates and their families left the convention center, Major Bradley came out and promoted my son to Capt. Josh Hellums on stage in front of the American flag. Somehow I pictured my dear father that I never got to know, standing there saluting his grandson, sharing the pride that I as a mother was feeling. I guess there will always be more tears for such occasions. My son will begin his residency in emergency room medicine at Darnell Hospital, Ft. Hood in Killeen, Texas in two weeks.

I am so hoping that many of you will come to St. Louis for the 2nd Bomb Reunion the end of September. Your numbers are dwindling and there are only so many places I can afford to go around the country to meet those of you who knew my dad or knew of him. Many of you flew with him and it is such a joy to hug you and thank you for sharing with me what happened back then. It is helping me piece together a man I will miss for as long as I live....but you are here and I will be there to thank you for your service.

*Judge Bonnie Blackford Hellums
Houston, Texas*

Russian Shuttle Inquiry

We have an inquiry concerning FRANTIC JOE, the Russian Shuttle Missions, June 1944.

Ian Mackersey would like to correspond with crew members that were on the ground in Russia and especially those who had some contact with the Russians while there.

He may be contacted at:

Ian Mackersey
12 Kakariki Avenue
Mt. Eden, Auckland 1003 New Zealand
e-mail: imp@ihug.co.nz
website: www.ianmackersey.com

Military Words of Wisdom

1. When the pin is pulled, Mr. Grenade is no longer our friend. - Marine Corps Journal
2. A slipping gear could let your M203 Grenade Launcher fire when you least expect it. That would make you quite unpopular in what's left of your unit. - US Army Magazine of Preventive Maintenance
3. Never tell the Platoon Sergeant you have nothing to do. - Marine recruit
4. It is generally inadvisable to eject directly over the area you've just bombed. - US Air Force Manual



Letter and Notes

Note from Stanley M. Korell:

I was in the original cadre, 49th Squadron, North Africa, Airplane 229623, crew 13, Odus Kimberling, pilot. I was his navigator, 50 missions. All the best.

(Thanks, Stanley)

Letter from Roman Susil to Loy Dickinson:

In August 28 I shook the hands with you after official ceremonial in Slavicin. Such a moment was a great experience for me, because I don't meet the people fighting for peace in past every day. I feel to the people as you are great respect. It's a pity that it was impossible to meet you and your friends earlier, because here was an

"Iron Curtain" between West and East 'till the year 1989.

Under communist domination was very hard to reach any information about the fight over Slavacin in 29th August, 1944. Because I was born in 1973, I just remember some photos located in our school. There were German soldiers, smiling and pulling Americans on the ground. When I asked my father what happened at that time, he just knew that there was a fight and some American and German aircrafts crashed down around Slavacin and that 28 killed American pilots have been buried in Slavacin cemetery. But my father was interesting in this event and I remember also that every year before anniversary of this battle there a message on radio "Voice of America" when and where will be the commemoration of Americans killed in action by attendance of American ambassador. When it was possible we participated on this actions. Then I would never believe that sometimes I will meet direct participants of this battle. But it happened - first time in August 1994, when you were here with your friends together (Mr. Zupan, Galand, Tune, Flynn). At that time I just asked you and your friends for the signatures and I participated on discussion with you. This year I met you personally. You can believe me, it was very emotional time for me also for my father.

I know that for young people it wasn't easy to leave their families and to go to war and to fight in foreign countries far from home. Therefore let me say thank you very much for everything you made for us and for our country.

I don't know when you will visit Slavacin again, but in conclusion I would like to ask you for one thing - as soon as you will know the term of your next visit of our town, let me know please in advance and it will be a pleasure for me to invite you for a lunch or dinner.

Attached you will find the pictures we made during your this years visit. On first picture I'm on your right side, on second picture is my wife on your left side.

I wish you good luck for next years and sorry for my English.

Best regards, Roman Susil, Czech Republic

From Bill Grider:

I recently went to your 2nd Bomb Group website. That's where I found your name and address.

I have enclosed a newspaper article that I wrote a couple of years ago about one of your members, Mr. Arthur Winkler. I've known Mr. Winkler, or Artie as I call him, for some 20 years or more. He and his wife, Leona, and my wife and I are members of the same church.

Even though I've known Artie for a long time and knew he was a WWII veteran, I didn't know that he was a gunner on a B-17. He didn't talk much about it.

We attended EAA in Oshkosh, WI in 2002. That's what sparked me to write the article about Artie. I sent it into the Sheboygen Press along with photos I took, and they printed it. I'm just a salesman, not a writer or photographer, but apparently Artie's history was worth

printing on Veteran's Day that year. I'm sending you an old copy of the original article. If you could post it at your next reunion, or anything you see as honorable that you would like to do with it.

Additionally, I want to take the opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to all those veterans, especially the ones like you and Artie from the "Greatest Generation" who made unquestioning sacrifices.

I'm not a veteran and don't know the proper protocol. I don't know if it's proper for someone whose never been in the armed services to salute a veteran, but I certainly can and do offer my thanks, admiration, and greatest appreciation to all of you who served in WWII. You've allowed my family and me to have the many freedoms and opportunities that we have today, and for that, I'm eternally grateful.

Thank you Mr. Grider: Be assured, your newspaper article will be posted in a conspicuous place at the St. Louis Reunion.



From Pat Evans:

The State of Florida now has auto license plates that represent all five military branches. I have enclosed a photo of my personalized license plate "2D BW" (2nd Bombardment Wing) for your perusal. The Wing logo is to the left of the plate.

Way to go in Florida, Pat.

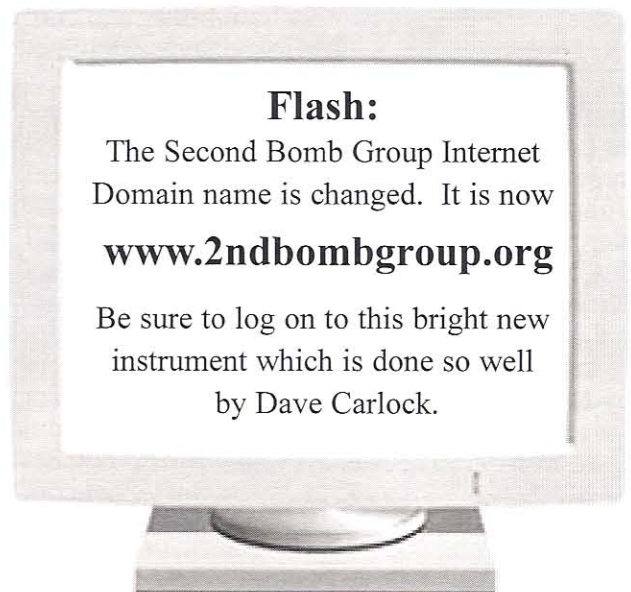
Flash:

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

www.2ndbombgroup.org

Be sure to log on to this bright new instrument which is done so well

by Dave Carlock.



Did You Know?

1. That it is impossible to lick your elbow. And that at least 75% of people who read this will try to lick their elbow.

2. That Sophia Loren, as a little girl, lived in Naples, Italy during the time the Allies were bombing the city. And that her sister married Mussolini's son.

3. That Joe Louis served throughout WWII as a sergeant. And that he is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

4. That the first B-17 (Boeing model 299) crashed and burned while being demonstrated to the Air Corps.

5. That sixteen P-38s flew a special mission to shoot down Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto on April 18, 1943, exactly a year after the Doolittle B-25 raid.

6. That Dinah Shore was made an honorary private first class by the Chico, California Air Force Training Base. She also had a B-17 named after her.

E-mail Addresses

All e-mailers: Please send us your e-mail address. We will add it to the list for more efficient communication.

David Carlockdfcarlock@cox.net
 John Carlsonjcarlson83@comcast.net
 Thomas R. Cochrantcochra7@bellsouth.net
 John Collensjohncol@directcon.net
 Jim De Lutesjdpphotos@earthlink.net
 Loy A. Dickinsonloy@denvertest.com
 Orv DoughtyOldmmd@cox.net
 Stephen D. EdsonSedson1@charter.net
 Giancarlo Garelogiancarlogarelo@virgilio.it
 Bill GarlandBillgarland@wildapache.net
 Sanford Goldingsangolding@hotmail.com
 Bill Grossw3tam.bill@juno.com
 Don R. Hayesb17assndhayes@bmi.net
 Bonnie HellumsBonnie_Hellums@justex.net
 Edwin Hodgesefairoaks@2extreme.net
 James L. Howelljhowell1@airmail.net
 Lawrence L. JenkinsLjenkins946@aol.com
 Bill Johnsonwjohnson@midssouth.rr.com
 Pat Kennellypatkennelly@adelphia.net
 Stanley M. Korellstan1919@webtv.net
 Vic Kreimeyervicroxakrei@verizon.net
 Gene Kurzenga20@aolcom
 Gerry Langeneggerlangenegger@yahoo.com
 Farley Mannfarleymann1@cox.net
 Earl Martinewebmartin@aol.com
 Kemp Martinkmartin1@pdq.net
 Victor Metzmvmtz@aol.com
 Tom Monroetmonroejr@charter.net
 Jack Myersjrsmysers@worldnet.att.net
 Willard NetzleyCCNETZLEY@aol.com

Jack M. Norwinepolly26@charter.net
 Joe Owsianikjerseyjoeows@aol.com
 Bill Parsonswparsons1@alltel.net
 Petersonwww.psln.com/pete/pow.htm
 Harold Plunkett@HHP10184@wmconnect.com
 Dick Radtkeektdar@charter.net
 Frederick V. Rice IIIfrice1@midssouth.rr.com
 Gen. Charles Robertson, Jr.reach01@earthlink.net
 John D. SissonJSisson242@aol.com
 Paul Skalnysecondhistory@yahoo.com
 Ed Smithaedsmith@msn.com
 Gaither A. SpeaksGAPS@SC.rr.com
 Joe Speightjohnyczar@cs.com
 Terry SullivanTmsul@aol.com
 Robert Underhillunderh@iastate.edu
 Sidney P. UpsherSPupsher@aol.com
 Lewis H. Watersenon@voyager.net
 Vincent S. WernerSterlmyrt@aol.com
 Lyman . Worthingtonworthington2873@msn.net
 Leo Zupanleoz@ccountry.net
 2nd Bomb Web Sitewww.2ndbombgroup.org
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 Army Air Forceswww.armyairforces.com
 National Archiveswww.archives.gov
 USAFUSAF.com
 B-17 Flying Fortress Assoc.www.airwarb17.net



In Memorium

John H. Clepper, 20th Sq.
 George P. Durney, 49th Sq.
 April 21, 1998
 Athol L. Gibson, 20th Sq.
 March 15, 2005
 John Lyons, 49th Sq.
 Sept. 4, 2004
 Joseph M. Roche, 429th Sq.
 Jan. 2004
 Paul Rochette
 Nov. 20, 2003
 Leland Waldie, 20th Sq.
 Nov. 2, 2004

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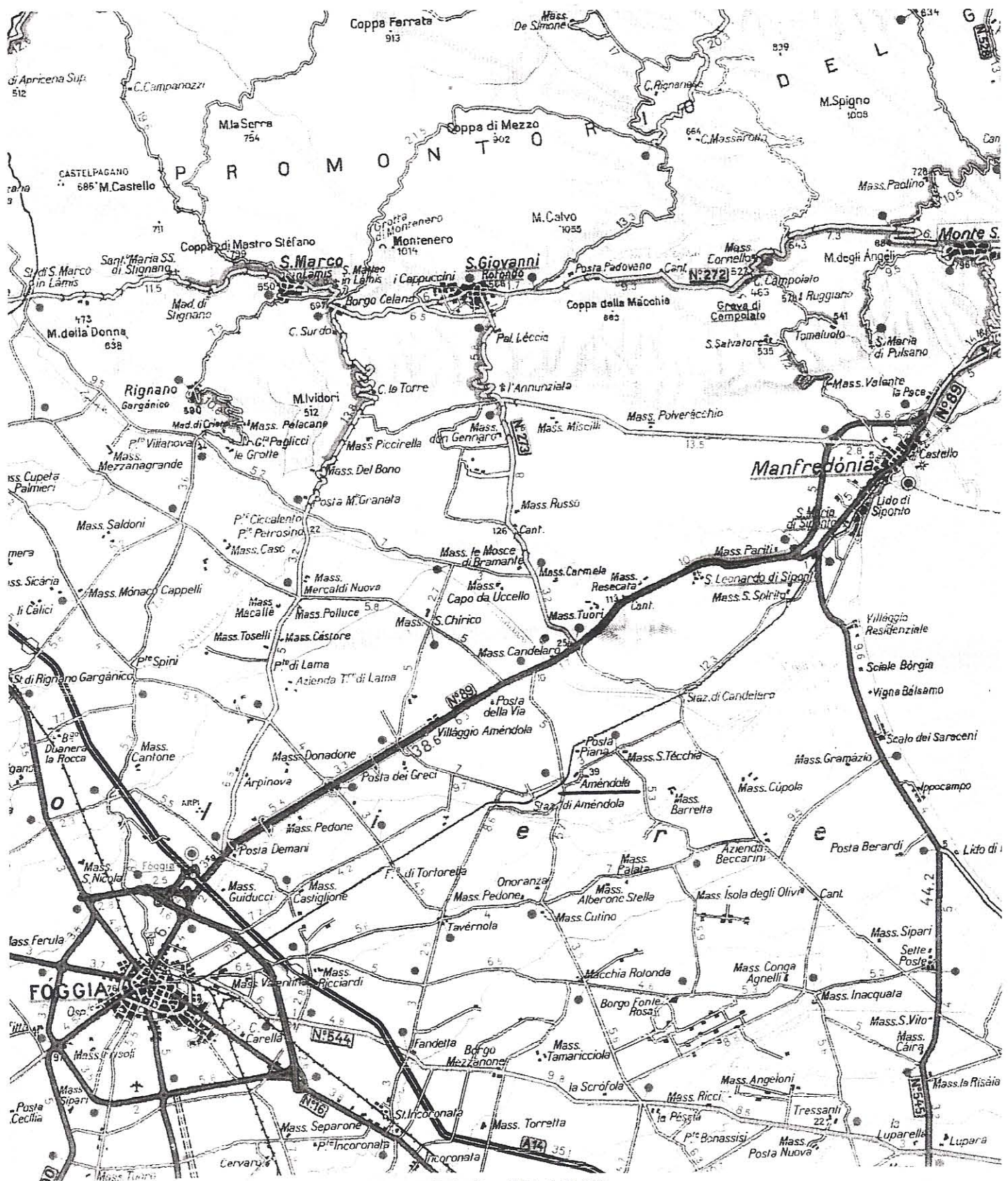
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STATUS REPORT 4/1/05 Through 4/30/05

Page 1

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4/12/05	1531	... Valentine Jeanne	Services	Consultant	-45.00
			Supplies	Postage-Ship	-57.72
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4/25/05	S	Dues Deposit B	California Sec State	Dues	280.00
4/26/05		Dues Deposit C	12 men + 1 woman	Dues	295.00
				Refund	20.00
				Dues	310.00
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		BALANCE 4/30/05			8,037.88
		TOTAL INFLOWS			1,020.00
		TOTAL OUTFLOWS			-136.09
		NET TOTAL			883.91



AMENDOLA, ITALY

Amendola Air Base, midway between Foggia and Manfredonia, was the base of the Second Bombardment Group from December 1943 until after the war. It serves today as an Italian Air Force base. Giancarlo Garelo, our member and good friend, tells us that there is no plaque or monument there to commemorate our place in history during WWII.



2nd Bomb Group

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

Earl Martin
Editor
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