



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



# SECOND BOMBARDMENT ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER

*"Second to None"*

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

Volume 28, No. 2, Summer 2012



### President's Corner



Greetings from the "Old North State". This letter is dedicated to my Dad, Earl Webster Martin, who left this world for heaven on May 2, 2012. He was the best man I have ever known and a patriot to the end.

As many of you know he was a writer and author. He was one of the four who researched and wrote "Defenders of Liberty" and had several others of his words published. I am enclosing one of his musings, written accounts of various subjects and personal experiences. This is one I think most of you will relate to. It demonstrates his courage and style of leadership to me.

#### "THREE TONS"

"Yea", I know I've got three tons of boomers back there. Sometimes I wonder what we would look like if the boomers went off. We would make a pretty good hole in ground at the take off position. OK, there goes Ken with his load of boomers. He is starting out and I am next. Better run up those engines to be sure they are operating the way they should. Those engines are doing fine and we are moving down the runway. "Damn", there is that hole in the runway that always slows us down. When are we going to get it fixed? Gear and flaps up as we come close to the end of the steel mat runway. Hold her down to build up some speed. That power line is coming close. That

will scare the crew, but I've got to hold it down 'til we build up enough speed to maneuver.

The guns all checked out when the boys shot a few rounds at 10,000. We will probably need them later on. The old man leveled off at 18,000. Thought we would go to twenty. Be a little better for flak there. But it feels good when the three tons of boomer drop away. The old ship handles a lot better with that weight gone. Descending again. There is the Adriatic. Not long now, we will be on the ground."

In closing, I would like to share a poem he wrote during his time as a POW in the German camp called Stalag Luft III.

#### LOAVES OF BREAD (BLACK)

Hard and woody, course and rough,  
Mealy, cracked, hard baked stuff.  
Tough and sour, doughy and damp,  
The heaviest food in the whole damn camp.

Slice it thin, slice it thick,  
They say it's food – we shouldn't kick.  
When we build a house on the old homestead,  
We'll use it for bricks – this German bread.

By POW Earl Martin as recorded in the wartime log of 2nd Lt Edward S Wodicka, Stalag Luft III (Courtesy of Edward Wodicka)

Nancy Martin

## Editor Notes

I would like to say a few things about some great guys who passed on recently.

Charlie Beecham had his 90th birthday last January. He completed a full tour with the 20th Squadron, 2nd Bomb Group, flying 'Snafuperman' while earning five Air Medals. Later he commanded a C-54 during the Berlin Blockade of 1948-49. He and his crew flew 212 missions carrying coal and food to the people of Berlin. Charlie retired from the Air Force as a Lt Colonel in 1969. In 1971 he earned a Master of Fine Arts at the University of Northern Colorado. Beecham then set out on his second career as an artist, teacher and actor. He and Norma made a home in El Reno, Oklahoma for 26 years. During this time he became involved in numerous civic projects, including preserving the history of Fort Reno. Charles Beecham died on March 7, 2012.

B-17 Pilot Earl Martin was shot down over Győr, Hungary on April 13, 1944. He survived 12 plus months as a POW. After the war he took up civilian life as aircraft mechanic. Then, for 15 years he was Flight Engineer with Eastern Air Lines. In 1963 Earl became a Burger King Franchisee and

moved his family to South Carolina. After his wife passed away he turned the businesses over to Nancy and her brother Rod. This gave him time to devote to writing his history and to give living history lectures to students at college, high schools and middle schools. Earl, of course, endeared himself to us with his dedication to editing our Associations Newsletter for more than ten years. Earl died on May 2, 2012.

Burton Thorman, 429th Squadron, was a navigator on the very first mission the 2nd Bomb Group flew in the war. Mission #1 was to be over the harbor at Terranova, Sardinia on April 28, 1943. 18 B-17's took off, only to run into bad weather and return to base with all their bombs. Burton flew 52 sorties, the final over Toulon, France on Mission #98, November 24, 1943. Thorman died on July 4, 2012.

Last Call: Now hear this, our Reunion takes place in Omaha September 12 to 15. Get your registrations and room reservations before you finish reading this Newsletter.

Loy Dickinson

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## ROBERT B PILCHER, NAVIGATOR



Pilcher's crew trained at MacDill Field, Tampa. In September 1944 they picked up a new shiny B-17G at Langley, Virginia and flew it Europe by way of the North Atlantic. We flew to Bangor Maine, Gander Newfoundland, Terceira Azores Islands, Marrakech Morocco, Oran Algeria, Tunis, Tunisia and then to our base at Amendola, Italy. New crews were initiated by having crew members fly with experienced crews for three or four missions. We lost our pilot, Bob Draper, when he went POW on an early mission. After that, we continued to fly with different crews. My most serious injury was frostbite of the toes on November 11th. Weather was so bad we dropped our bombs on the secondary target at Salzburg, Austria, on our return leg.

My closest direct encounter with flak came when a one inch piece came within a split second of tearing my head off. I had just turned my head to the right when this piece of flak came through the bottom of the plane between my legs, through the table, past my head and out the top of the plane. I was on the December 2, 1944 mission over Blechhammer (which Mel McGuire describes in *Bloody Skies*, chapter 25). We attacked Blechhammer again on December 12, 17 and the 19th which we were shot down. We crash landed in Hungary. I did not fly another combat mission until February 13, 1945. In the interim I was able to spend a week in Rome. Most of our original crew did well receiving promotions and awards. In retrospect, I feel that I've been a very lucky person for many reasons.

*Robert Pilcher was born June 26, 1919 and died April 18, 2006.*

This account was contributed by his son Mark Pilcher.



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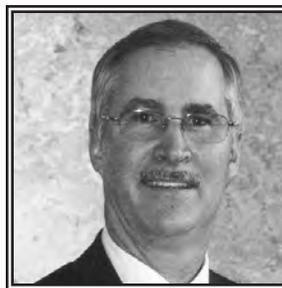
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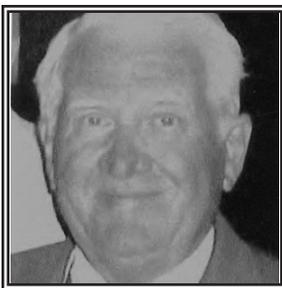
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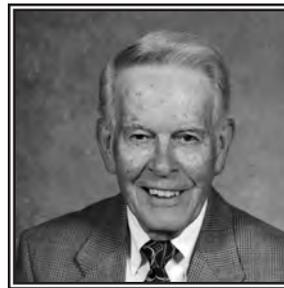


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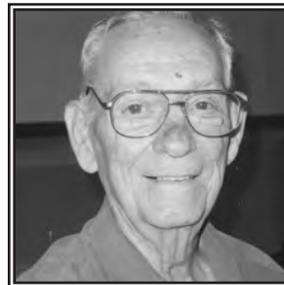
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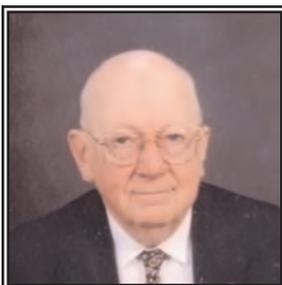
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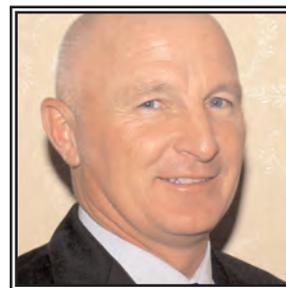
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## MEMBER REMEMBERED

**BY RON MORRISSETTE, SECRETARY. DALLAS AFA SEIDEL CHAPTER 232**

My very good friend, Alva Flowers, passed away January 17 and made me realize how much we owe to our World War II veteran members. He told his story like this.

Do you remember the Forties? There was music like, "In the Mood", "Chattanooga Choo-Choo" and names like Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey and Glenn Miller. They are all wonderful memories. I graduated high school in the early 1940's. The war in Europe was on and all of my friends were joining the Army. What better way to stay in touch with your friends but to go with them. In Basic Training it was tough getting used to taking orders and all that physical stuff. One day after Basic I saw an old friend and that he had been promoted to Staff Sergeant. I asked him how he had made rank so fast. He said that if you volunteer for gunnery school, that when you complete school, they promote you to Staff Sergeant.

That's for me! I volunteered and went to gunnery school, which I have to admit was fun. Then before I knew it, I was headed for North Africa. General Patton had cleared the area and was on his way to Sicily and the Italian boot with the Third Army. I had been assigned to the 2nd Bombardment Group, 15th Air Force. That would be flying regular missions all over Europe as a gunner on a B-17. Soon enough we were in Italy. Imagine looking out of the back of the aircraft as it flew to as much as 25,000 feet altitude. Boy, it's cold up there and you need to breathe from an oxygen mask to stay alive. Our suits were electrically heated to keep us warm. That looked like fun. On our first mission it was pretty easy, but it definitely got worse. The flak we had to fly through was dangerous. We regularly came home with lots of holes in our aircraft big enough to put our hands through. One day my suit was torn by a piece of flak and that woke me up good. I yelled.... "They are trying to kill us!"

The missions got worse as we progressed to more

targets in Germany, Romania and Italy. The conditions we flew under were horrible, but it was our job. Needless to say, the crews sometimes spent their days in the NCO club talking about the last mission and letting off a little steam.

On December 3, 1944, on tail number '48381', I was on my next to last mission, number 49, when all of a sudden the pilot gave the order to 'bail out'! Our plane had been hit a deadly blow. We were over Linz, Austria. My luck was not good that day because I came down right into the hands of the German Army.



I was an instant Prisoner of War. I had broken my leg on landing and they put me into a field hospital before sending me off to the prison camp. I was sent to a large room that was white almost everywhere. I'll never forget the very large lady who put a rag over my mouth and I was out like a light. My leg was reset and I could rest for awhile, but eventually found my way to a German Prison Camp for Non-Commissioned Officers. I wrote my parents a postcard that I was okay and when I got home, my Mom gave it to me as a keepsake. I

still have it today. After the war I went to college and got a degree in Petroleum Engineering. About ten years after the war I was pleasantly surprised to see that the German doctor in Linz, that had set my leg looked me up in Saudi Arabia where I was working and invited me to be his guest in Austria to revisit the past. I accepted. We had a wonderful time and we kept in contact for years after that. I stayed in the service and retired from the Air Force as a Lt. Colonel in the 1970s.

I am grateful for all of my friends that came by to visit and talk about the olden days. Please find a World War II veteran that is in need of some company and perhaps help getting around. They won't be around forever.

Alva L. Flowers

*Life Member, Air Force Association, Dallas Seidel chapter 232 and 2nd. Bomb Group Association.*

# CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE

For my message this week I should like to quote to you a part of a sermon "God, My Co-pilot which was given by Dr. James W Fifield, of the First Congregational Church in Los Angeles, at a service of the 97h Infantry Division, Camp Cooke, California.

"Christ's gospel is the pattern for cultivating the presence of God and for understanding His will for your life. You will have a new Testament...read it. Jesus was a red-blooded, two-fisted fellow who went places and did things. The power which enabled Him to conquer came from God. Through prayer and meditation, he brought the infinite resources to the point of his personal need. So can you. Through clean living, genuine faith and personal prayer, you can live abundantly and eternally whatever may happen to your body, for you only live in your body. You are a spirit, a soul, a personality which can never be destroyed."

"If you have made mistakes, there is a plan of redemption which any of your Chaplains will discuss with you or which you can discover for yourselves in the

Lew Waters

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## FOOTBALL SPECIAL NEBRASKA VS ARKANSAS ST.

Saturday, September 15, 2012 at Lincoln, Nebraska not far from Omaha where we are celebrating our Bomb Group Reunion. A terrific opportunity arranged by Bonnie Hellums and Carel Stith. (Carel is a member of the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame). We will car pool from the hotel to the game. If you have never been to a football crazy place, this will be your best shot. Lincoln is one of the most important football towns in America. Tickets are \$55.00 – Make out your checks to Bonnie Hellums and send them to her at: 3030 Eastside St. Houston, TX 77098.

Exact details about tickets will probably not be known until July 2012.

### PAST REUNIONS

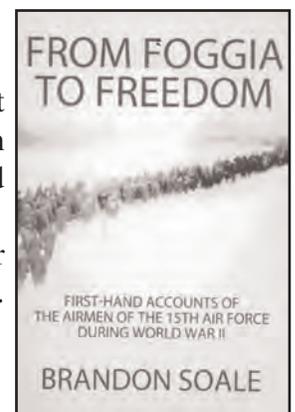
1983 – San Antonio, TX	2001 – Omaha, NE
1985 – Sacramento, CA	2003 – Covington, KY
1987 – Norfolk, VA	2005 – St Louis, MO
1989 – Tucson, AZ	2006 – Dayton, OH
1991 – Dayton, OHX	2007 – Houston, TX
1993 – Houston, TX	2008 – Washington, DC
1995 – Kansas, MO	2009 – San Antonio, TX
1997 – Las Vegas, NV	2010 – Tucson, AZ
1999 – Orlando, FL	2011 – Colorado, CO
	2012 – Omaha, NE

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## FROM FOGGIA TO FREEDOM

Soale is a bright young historian in Camden, Ohio. He has published a fine book about aspects of the 15th Army Air Force in and around Foggia from 1943 to 1945. Brandon still seeks interview opportunities with bomb group veterans, both flyers and ground crewmen.

He can be reached at P.O. Box 12, Camden, OH 45311 or phone - (937)-733-7188 or email soalebm@yahoo.com Contact Brandon directly if you wish to purchase his book. The paper bound edition - priced at \$12.00 + \$3.00 s & h.



## THE UNFRIENDLY SKIES OF NORTHERN ITALY

It was a fine clear spring day in Southern Italy as pilot 1st Lt Edward Wronkoski lifted their B-17G off the Amendola air field. The target that day was to be the marshaling yards at Turin in northwest Italy. It was the 25th mission for Staff Sgt. Maurice La Rouche, ball turret gunner, 25, from Detroit, Michigan. His parents had immigrated to the U.S. from Grande Mere, Quebec, Canada when he was one and a half years old. It was March 29, 1944, a day he would remember for the rest of his life. La Rouche was 123 pounds dripping wet and was uncomfortable in the most difficult stations on the bomber crew.

All was well until Lt. Norman Stockwell announced 'bombs away'. Wronkoski thought that one of the bombs had exploded but then realized that enemy flak had hit engines one, three and four. Three and four could not be feathered and were running away. Lead pilot, Col. Ryan slowed the group down so as allow them to keep up. They had been attacked by Italian fighters. Then 'bail out' was ordered. Nine of the crew were captured but Sgt La Rouche was befriended by partisans. One of the ground witnesses was a ten year old boy, Giancarlo Garello who later became an Airline Pilot and close friend of the 2nd Bomb Group.

La Rouche eventually met up with a partisan group that was being trained and supplied by the British SOE. A journalist, Paul Morton and La Rouche became close friends. Morton wore military type clothing but no sign of military grade. La Rouche was suffering from strong diarrhea that forced him to stop frequently on the trail. Aldo Clerico had a solution. He sent companions to his mother who had flour and had her make 'focaccia', so that he could eat something dry. He was able then to carry on.

At another time a B-17 crashed near the partisan camp after its crew had bailed out. In their salvage operation they removed intact three .50 caliber machineguns and a thousand rounds of ammunition. Once, when a supply drop brought dozens of new .50 caliber machine-guns to the partisans, La Rouche made himself useful. They were able to remove heavy grease encasing the guns by using boiling water, a solution that had not occurred to the partisans. Staff Sgt. Maurice La Rouche and Paul Morton would eventually make their way through the mountains and by rowboat back to France. War correspondent Paul Morton's writings about La Rouche's activities in support of the partisans lead to a Silver Star for La Rouche.

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## WILLIAM E BOEING

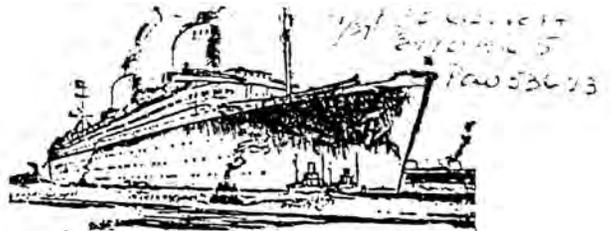
Boeing was 35 years old, when in 1916, he incorporated Pacific Aero Products. Previously he had made a fortune in lumber. During WWI he sold airplanes to the US Navy. After the war used military planes flooded the market and many in the business went under. Not Boeing, he went on to sell furniture, counters and whatever. 1935 Boeing started an airline which later became United Airlines. It rolled out the Boeing 299 also designated the XB-17.

In 1939 the B-17B became the first production model with maximum speed of 295 mph at 25,000 feet. The B-17C and B-17D were to see action following Pearl Harbor. In September 1941 the B-17E was fitted with tail turret and lower ball turret. In 1943 Tokyo tanks, wider blade propellers and molded plexiglass nose were added to the B-17F. This model had air speed of 160 mph. The B-17G

became the most produced Flying Fortress with over 8,600 being built. It featured the addition of the power chin turret, new tail turret with range of 2,000 miles and a 6,000 pound bomb load.

By March 1944 production had scaled up to 350 planes a month. The Boeing designed B-17 was assembled also by Lockheed Aircraft Corp. and Douglas Aircraft Co., while the B-29 was assembled by Bell Aircraft and Glenn L Martin Company. After the war bomber contracts were cancelled and 70,000 Boeing people lost their jobs. The company aimed to recover by selling its Stratocruiser, a luxurious four-engine commercial airliner developed from the B-29. Later in the 1940's and 50's Boeing developed military jets such as the B-47 Stratojet and B-52 Stratofortress bombers. Boeing died in 1956.

# BARTH



# HARD TIMES

Vol 1 No. 1 LAST 1 SATURDAY MAY 5<sup>th</sup> 1945 PRICE 1 D-BAR.

Editor: FIL E. R. INKPEN Assoc: 1st Lt N. GIDDINGS Publisher: 1st Lt D. MacDONALD Printing: FILT J. D. WHITE

# RUSSKY COME!

As seen by LOWELL BENNET, I. N. S. War Correspondent.

## RELIEVED!

Colonel Zemke intended to write this appreciation of the relief of Stalag Luft 1, but unfortunately necessary duties have made this impossible. He has, in his own words, "taken a powder" to make final arrangements with the relieving Soviet forces.

It is therefore my privilege to introduce this Memorial Edition of the BARTH HARD TIMES. During the successes, reverses and stagnant periods encountered during this struggle, our newspaper has faithfully recorded the German war communique and expanded upon them in capable editorials.

With the redemption of a continent, our exile is ended. Our barbed-bound community will soon be a memory. So, on behalf of Colonel Hubert Zemke and myself, to all our fellow-kriegies: GOOD LUCK!

G. C. C. T. Weir



WHAT D'YE KNOW- JOE!

## BRAITHWAITE FINDS UNCLE JOE

Contacts Russian Infantryman at Crossroads Five miles South of Stalag One.

Major Braithwaite and Sgt Korson, our Stalag scouts, raced out to a cross-roads 5 miles south of Barth with the order, "find Uncle Joe". This was 8 p. m., May 1. They searched southward, defying a rumored Russian curfew which was about

as brief and emphatic as their own order: "EVERYONE stay put; anyone seen moving will be shot on sight."

Meanwhile, Wing Commander Blackburn's telephone crew were ringing numbers in Stralsund, hoping a Russian would

answer the phone and we could break the big news of our presence. "Try the mayor," they asked the girl (who was still working Barth's phone exchange). "Not a chance," said she. "Barth's mayor poisoned himself and Stralsund's mayor has sprouted wings."

Scouts Braithwaite and Korson pushed on 3 miles. The scenery: thousands of people everywhere, sitting down, waiting.

# LIFE AND DEATH OF A GERMAN TOWN

## TENSE MOMENTS WHILE ALLIES TAKE CONTROL

An air of tension hung over the camp for many days. The presence of the English and American armies on the Elbe and the Russian encirclement of Berlin made everyone feel that the end must be near. The commencement of a new Russian drive across the lower Oder toward the Baltic ports finally increased the tension to an almost unbearable pitch. Panic reigned in the Vorlager. No German had any more interest in guarding the prisoners, but only in saving his own life. Confidential reports were hurriedly burnt — and copies of "Mein Kampf" went to swell the flames.

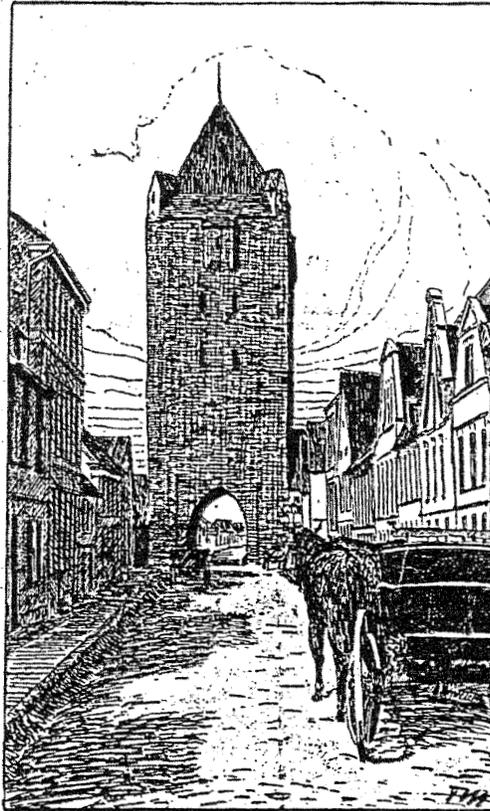
### Conference with the Kommandant

Finally, late in the afternoon, the Senior British and American officers were called to a conference with the German camp Kommandant Colonel Warnstedt. They were told that orders had been received to move the whole camp westward. Colonel Zemke stated he was not willing to move at all, and asked in that case what the German attitude would be. The Kommandant replied that he would not tolerate bloodshed in the camp; if we did not intend to move, he and his men would evacuate themselves and leave us in sole possession of the camp. When the Germans left it would be up to us to take over the camp peacefully and assume full control.

At approximately 1 A.M. on April 30 Major Steinhauer informed Group Captain Weir and Colonel Zemke that the Germans had evacuated the camp, leaving it in our charge. When the camp woke up in the morning it was to find itself no longer under armed guard and comparatively free.

### Where are the Russians?

Our next problem was to establish contact with the Russian forces. It was decided to send out something in the nature of a reconnoitering patrol. An American Major, a British Officer speaking German, and an American Officer speaking Russian, set out with the German in the auto which was equipped with an American flag on one fender and a white flag on the other, to investigate the real situation in Barth and then proceed to the main Stralsund—Rostock road, some 15 kilometers south of the camp, to wait there for any signs of Russian spearheads or of the proximity of the front line. The first patrol returned in the early evening. Still no sign or news of the Russian Army, but they were coming!



**Russian Contact (con. from Page 1)**  
Every house draped with red flags (who said the Germans weren't chameleons?). Suddenly, there was Uncle Joe — or one of his ambassadors: a chunky little Dead End guy who loomed up and flashed a variety of lethal weapons and a cacophony of Slavic language.

"Engliski", shouted the scouts.

"Never mind the words", said Joe's man, "this isn't Dulag" or something like that in Russian. And, without ceremony they went to the nearest Russian officer. It was 1st Lt. Alec Nick Karmyzoff, infantryman from Tula (you oughta see that written in Russian!). He'd fought his way from Stalingrad — three years across Russia, Poland and Germany — to the relief of Stalag Luft 1.

### Toasts are Drunk.

Karmyzoff came in the main gate. Commanding Officers Zemke and Weir received him. Schnapps, seared kriegie throats — glasses smashed Hitler's picture, the barracks jiggled with cheering and back-pounding. Toasts were drunk: "To the destruction of Germany — she will never rise again! And to our solid and enduring friendship." Karmyzoff went to the Russian barracks (our co-kriegies) — told them about himself, their army and the new life that was beginning. Thus the first contact. Karmyzoff bedded down on the floor — "Rather the floor than a German bed," said he. BBC announced Hitler dead; kriegies heard the "Hit Parade" from home; the excitement was exhausting. — But what an experience!

## QUAKING BARTH BURGHERS BOW BEFORE REDS

As Russian tanks rumbled Northwards on the cobblestone roads from Stralsund, as Russian cavalry and guerilla troops tore hell bent for the Baltic, as the spluttering German radio flashed a staccato of place names that had gone under in the Red rip tide, Barth became an open city and an open grave. The few Americans who had been in town on camp chores from Stalag I knew that the life of Barth was a living death. We had seen the streets peopled by children and octogenarians, we had noticed that all males were either lame, halt, or blind; we had stared into empty shop windows, and we had seen the soldiers of the master race straggle back from the fronts dazed, whipped, harbingers of the ruin that stalked the streets of German towns. By April 30, this year of grace, the good burghers of Barth turned their faces to the wall and stopped hoping.

### LET 'EM EAT CAKE

Life had not been good. In the bakery shop where the camp brot was made hung a sign; cake is not sold to Jews or Poles. It failed to explain that cake was not sold to the supermen either. There was no cake. But there were good things to eat in the larders of Barth, baking powder requisitioned from Holland, Nestles milk commandeered from Denmark, wines looted from the cellars of France, spaghetti and noodles hijacked from Italy, Worcestershire sauce which had trickled through mysteriously from England, olive oil drained from Greece, in short, all types of blood from the turnip of Europe. If Mussolini considered the Mediterranean his sea, Hitler considered the world his oyster and was trying to serve it up to the Reich on the half shell.

### A House of Cards

As the first explosions from the flak school reverberated under the sullen Baltic sky, the new order toppled on Barth like a house of cards. Red flags and white sheets began to appear in the windows of the ginger bread houses. Flight was futile and the old stood querulously on their door steps, wringing gnarled hands and weeping. Pictures of Hitler were torn down and scattered like confetti. Two German children came wailing into the bakery shop. They had heard American airmen ate little boys and mother said the day of reckoning was at hand.

Barth, like the whole of Deutschland-über-alles Germany, was on its knees in terror. But mayhem did not materialize. Wine, not blood, flowed through the streets. We got drunk.

## HOW TALL IS THE FLAGPOLE?

Two Minnesota mechanical engineers were standing at the base of a flagpole, looking up. A woman walks by and asks what they were doing. "Ve're supposed to find da height of da flagpole," said Sven, "but ve don't haff a ladder."

The woman took a wrench from her purse, loosened a few bolts, and laid the pole down. Then she took a tape measure from her pocketbook, took a measurement, announced, "Eighteen feet, six inches," and walked away. Ole shook his head and laughed. "Ain't dat just like a woman! Ve ask for da height and she gives da length!"

Sven and Ole are currently serving in the United States Senate!

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## UNIT PATCHES & 'THE SECOND WAS FIRST'

Lew Waters has ordered small quantities of the unit patches for each squadron (20th, 49th, 96th and 429th Squadrons), and the - 2nd Bombardment Group patch as well. At press time prices were not available.

Regarding 'The Second Was First', Lew was hoping that the book would be less than \$40 inclusive of mailing cost. Contact Lew for pricing.

Send an email to Lew at: [enon2212@sbcglobal.net](mailto:enon2212@sbcglobal.net) or phone him at 937-629-0897  
Mailing address is: 1909 Wedgewood Circle, Springfield Ohio 45503

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## DFC REQUEST

Lawrence Carastro is seeking a person who can verify his account of an incident on 2nd Bomb Group's mission #134 on January 27, 1944. This is Carastro's account of what occurred.

"When the pilot, Lt Frank Glass did not receive a confirming response on a routine crew check from Radio Operator/Gunner, Vincent J. Pesature, he requested one of the waist gunners to check on him, and I volunteered. I removed my parachute, disconnected my oxygen, ran into the radio room and reconnected my oxygen. Pesature was slumped over his radio table and his oxygen indicator was not moving. I turned his oxygen to 100% and he came right up. I turned it off and he slumped down. I tried this three times with the same result. I notified Pilot Glass, and he responded that he would abort the mission. In the meantime Top Turret Gunner, George Hawk came through the bomb bay and gave me an oxygen mask that he found in the cockpit. I took off the defective mask from radio man and replaced it with the other mask. Pesature was revived and, the

mission was not aborted which would have put our airplane in extreme danger. The overhead panel had been removed so that we could point the machine gun outside and the air was extremely cold (minus 40F degrees). I had removed my gloves to assist Sgt. Pesature. After a few minutes my hands began to feel stiff and turned white and wrinkled. I was in the slipstream under the overhead panel; frostbite was setting in.

My story must be corroborated by a witness or someone in authority in order to confirm my eligibility for the Distinguished Flying Cross (aka 'DFC'). If anyone can provide help, which will confirm this incident, it would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,  
Lawrence Carastro

Phone: 904-261-4929  
Email: [jcarastro@yahoo.com](mailto:jcarastro@yahoo.com)

# AROUND THE CRACKER BARREL

by Corporal Abe Krakoff

There is always a great misunderstanding throughout the various departments of the bomber squadron, because every department believes its work to be the most essential. An Engineer thinks an Armorer is the next thing to a rest camp; a cook thinks that a clerk is continuously on furlough; and a communications man believes that a Truck Driver is always "out on a good time."

For instance, a man works on an airplane crew. With a fair amount of luck and with good maintenance, the average airplane, four out of five days, needs very little maintenance. If the weather is good and missions are successful, the mechanic can spend most of the day "in the sack". Of course, there are times that a mechanic may put in three or four days steadily... fifteen or so hours a day.. getting his ship ready for combat, - but then again, this is not an every day occurrence.

Take the clerk for instance. Ninety percent of his evenings are free. He doesn't have to get up at 0300 hours for briefings, but his ten-hour day is generally packed with continuous and dull work. His work is as essential as any, for he is the "morale" guy of the squadron. During the day, the majority of the Armorers lounge around and only in certain circumstances do they ever do much during the day,

but their nights are complete. Night after night, loading and many times unloading bombs, in all types of weather. It's as valuable and essential a job as any. Cooks may be "fortunate" in having every other day off, but remember that their work day consists almost always of eighteen hours. If anyone thinks they can go eighteen hours a day regularly without a day off, let me know and I will have a carpenter make you a six foot box.

These are but a few examples which illustrate the point that no one job is harder or more essential than another. Each has its own difficult situations as well as their soft spots. Just remember this, some night at midnight, when you are putting in an extra bit of work, saying to yourself, "some guys have all the luck!" This situation may be and probably will be reversed at any time.

The above is reprinted from a much earlier Bomb Group newsletter; at that time the newsletter was called "THE FORTRESS" – Vol. 2 No. 3New Testament. God is a loving father who is eager to forgive if there is true penitence in your heart and if you propose to cease all wrong. There is NO unpardonable sin except continuance of sin. This is an ideal time to make a commitment to Christ as your Lord and Master.

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## IN MEMORIUM

Alva L Flowers - 20th Squadron - January 17, 2012

Charles A McEwen - 429th Squadron - January 27, 2012

Charles A Beecham - 20th Squadron - March 7, 2012

Earl W Martin - 20th Squadron - April 2, 2012

William E Falder - 429th Squadron - April 12, 2012

John F (Jack) Kellogg - 96th Squadron - May 18, 2012

Freburn R (Buddy) Jones - 429th Squadron - June 24, 2012

Burton R Thorman - 429th Squadron - July 4, 2012

### SPECIAL NOTE:

We receive returned newsletters marked variously;

- No forwarding address
- Not at this address
- Unable to deliver

Please, if you have knowledge of the passing of a veteran or member please let us know about it with a note.

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