



CERIGNOLA CONNECTION

455th Bomb Group Association Newsletter

Spring 1997 – Editor, Tom Ramey, 1211 Montclair Ct., Appleton, WI 54915 (414) 731-2500

From Our President 1997 Reunion Dates Program Set!

The past year has gone by very rapidly. The long winter is now over and spring has finally arrived. Soon it will be time for our Group to rendezvous again.

Plans are being made for our next reunion in September in the Dayton Ohio, area. Col. Louis Hansen has recently been there, and working with Col. James Shumard and Lt. Col. Ross Strode, was finalizing plans. It promises to be a good time.

The past year has also brought sadness to our Group. Several members have made their Final Flights including two members of our Board of Directors. Robert Armstrong who was instrumental in getting our reunions started died suddenly in June. Dr. Harold Schuknecht, 741st Sqdn. Flight Surgeon, passed away in October following a short illness.

Another death was that of Richard Humphrey who was a mechanic in the 740th Sqdn. He was a quiet, unassuming individual and was probably not well known to many in our group even though he attended all of the reunions. He commenced writing me after the 1987 reunion about his experiences in keeping us flying. His letters were fascinating reading, and he should have written a book. A twenty-page letter was not uncommon and one was **seventy-eight** pages, hand printed. No one had more love for the B-24 and Richard Humphrey will be missed.

I hope you all have a good summer with good health. And we'll see you in September?

C.E. (Ed) Riggs

The 455th Bomb Group Association will hold its reunion September 24th through 27th, 1997 at the Holiday Inn, Dayton Mall, 31 Prestige Plaza Drive, Miamisburg, Ohio, 45342 (located next to Dayton). Tele: 513-434-8030.

One reunion you won't want to miss – surely our finest. It's an excellent opportunity to renew old friendships, make new ones. And tell a few war stories.

A complete reunion packet will be forthcoming in the near future.

How does the program shape up?

Wednesday, September 24, 1997.

9:00 AM – Registration

6:00 PM – Hospitality

Thursday, September 25, 1997

USAF Museum (via bus)

9:00 AM – Welcome Arrival

11:00 AM – Luncheon on your own

1:00 PM – IMAX Movie

2:00 PM – the last bus to hotel at

4:30 PM

+ 1st Board Meeting – 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM

Miami Valley Dinner Theatre "South Pacific" (via bus)

Arrive at Luncheon Theatre 10:30 AM

Depart after "South Pacific" 3:15 PM

"Get Acquainted Party", Holiday

Inn featuring Guy Bishop – a

"Honky Tonk" evening

6:30 PM – Cash Bar

7:00 to 8:00 PM – Buffet

Friday, September 26, 1997

Tour to Lebanon and the Golden Lamb

Depart 10:30 AM – Luncheon 11:45 AM

or

Depart 12:00 Noon – Luncheon

1:15 PM

Evening Hospitality – Crew Night

or form your own party

Saturday, September 27, 1997

8:00 AM to 9:30 AM – business meeting

10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon – Officers and board meeting

Dayton City Tour

9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon (four busses)

12:30 PM to 3:30 PM (four busses)

Banquet Dinner – USAF Museum

Busses depart Holiday Inn Hotel 5:30 PM

Cash Bar – 6:00 PM to 6:45 PM

Dinner – 7:00 PM

Guest Speaker, Col Robert L.

Tipton, Jr., U.S.A.F. 7:45 PM to 8:15 PM

+ Attention widows!

There will be a special get acquainted coffee for 455th widows at 4:00 PM, Wednesday September 24 at the reunion. Location will be posted at the registration desk.

May 6, 1997

Today I lost another very dear friend. To add Hal Gendron's name to the final flight column is most difficult. On this heavenly flight I'm sure that God has a very special place for a very special guy.

Hal was the Navigator on my original crew and was shot down over Steyr while I was in the hospital. He spent the balance of the war as a POW. After liberation Hal went on to pilot training, flying over 18,000 hours as a first pilot with the Air Force, retiring as a Lt. Colonel.

Each year as we wintered in Arizona, Hal and I, and our wives would get together. Always the conversation was dominated by war stories, flying and the 455th. There will be a tremendous void when we head west next year.

/s/ Ed

Memories - Eugene Nunnally's War!

Concerning my tenure of service in the Army Air Corps, I was inducted at Camp Robinson, Arkansas, about the last of July, 1943. I was given required shots and tests. I was told I could take any pick of service, including the Army, Navy or Marines. I asked for the Air Corps. I was told there was no way I could pass the Air Corps tests. I said, "Well, let me try it." They gave me a battery of tests and I finished them. My sergeant came down through the battery calling my name, and I asked him what he wanted. He said, "Nunnally, you're going to heaven." He said, "You're in the Air Corps." It sounded good to me.

The next day I was on my way to Buckley Field at Denver, Colorado. I took my basic there, and after basic at Buckley Field, I went to Montana State University College Training Attachment. At Montana State University they tacked us with the title of cadet aviation student, and our mission there was to fly, learn physical exercise such as judo, swimming and other things, but foremost, to obtain a degree of equal knowledge of a two year college student. It was here that I encountered the only fatality that was associated with my group in any of the training or combat that I was in. We lost a cadet to freezing weather, and this was error on the part of the cadet thinking he had the ability to go out into the mountains and come back in freezing weather.

We spent 16 weeks at Montana State University, and there I got a master lifeguard certificate, judo training, tumbling, and intense studies to get the two year college level.

After we passed our tests, we were shipped out for Santa Anna, California. There we took another battery of tests, got shots, and the cadets that passed the tests were ready to go to training areas. Things sure looked good until somebody came down through the

hall with my name, and they explained to me that I had had radio training and that they needed radio operators in the worst way. They were going to make an aerial gunner out of me. Well, I didn't like that too well, but after talking they said, "Well, if you have an average grade of 95 in radio school, we'll pull you and send you to communication cadet." Well, my average grade was 97 in radio school, so they pulled me out of my class three weeks early and sent me to Yuma, Arizona Gunnery School. It seemed that communication cadets had closed for a period of time, and that caused me to go on to gunnery school.

In gunnery school we had a minimum amount of paratrooper training to assure that we knew how to hit the ground when we came out of a plane. We also had training in use of small weaponry, such as qualifying with an Army 45 caliber pistol, the carbine 30 caliber rifle, and most of all, the 50 caliber air-cooled machine gun. This was our major combat weapon. We had to tear the machine gun down to various stages and put it back together in a specified period of time. We also had to do this blindfolded in a specified period of time. I qualified with the 45 ACP, the M-1 carbine, Thompson submachine gun, and the 50 caliber air-cooled machine gun. We did a considerable amount of air to air gunnery, and we did quite a bit of strafing. After we completed our gunnery school, we graduated, but we received no promotion. We had received a promotion out of radio school, but we did not get a promotion out of gunnery, no reason given.

We were sent to Casper, Wyoming for our overseas training unit. At Casper, Wyoming, I became a part of a B-24 bombing crew. There we worked together and kind of got the kinks worked out after some unusual happenings that I guess some of it happens to everybody. But we had a navigator and a spare ball gunner that ran out of excitement. We were flying

at 38,000 feet and they broke open some 50 caliber machine gun bullets and poured the powder out on the floor and set it on fire. Well, at 38,000 feet it didn't burn quite like they thought it ought to, so they got busy and broke up more 50 caliber machine gun ammunition and fired it off and put oxygen on it. Man, for a little while we looked like a rocket up there. But fortunately, it burned clean and didn't do any damage to the plane.

Our next incident was not planned, but I consider it far more dangerous than the first incident. We were taking off and just as we cleared the runway, we lost three gas caps, and were saturated with gas. I had to cut off my radio equipment, all except my low-powered air to ground audio, and used it for emergency signals and we headed back into the base. All we could do was just skim the trees and keep going, and we made it all right. I don't know how, but we did. The fire crew sure got a workout that day.

Another peculiar thing happened to me, and I believe at this particular time we had just the pilot, co-pilot and myself aboard. I was doing radio work and I just got through with my assignments when I heard a loud hissing in the bomb bay. I looked down at my oxygen meter and it went to zero. I called the pilot and asked him what his meter reading was. He slapped it a couple of times and said, "It's broke, it's reading zero." I said, "We just lost our main tank. I heard it blow." I didn't more than get that out of my mouth till that old boy had that B-17 that we were flying at that time on its right wing headed for mother earth. I had never seen that maneuver pulled before, but we got down to about 18,000 feet, maybe a little lower than that, he slid it out, just as slick as a button, and I would have sworn the wings would have torn off of it, but they didn't. So we came on in and landed. The next day I was talking to some of the other crews, and they said this old boy that was acting as pilot that

day was an ex test pilot. He was flying at 48,000 feet to see how the plane reacted and our ceiling was 38,000 feet. So I guess I was lucky to get out of that one. That old boy knew how to fly. I would have liked to have him as a pilot in combat.

The only other possible accident that I had there was coming out of the briefing room going to the plane, and of course, the planes were always set out with our motors warming up when they were going on a mission, and I almost got to the plane and somebody from the briefing room hollered at me. I turned around and talked to them for a minute and turned around and started to get in the plane. Something stopped me and I looked around and I was standing in such a way that had I taken the first step, I would have stepped into the number three prop. So I figure I had a pretty good guardian angel there looking after me, cause that sure would have cut my career short.

We graduated from the overseas training unit and guess what, no promotion. It seemed that they had plenty of staff sergeants, but we had to make the buck before we could get one. We couldn't skip a grade. So we left OTU corporals.

We picked up a new B-24 and went over to Andover Field in Massachusetts. We got there in a cold spell and couldn't get our engines started after we killed them, until they warmed up. We were there about a week, and other than cold, it was nice. Finally, we got warm enough we could start our engines and we flew down to Bermuda. Now that was some contrast. That was the first time, I think, since I had been in the Army that it was either so cold I was freezing to death or so much dust I could hardly breathe. But anyway, Bermuda was nice and we stripped off and went swimming, and this was the first time I ever saw a hermit crab, so I hadn't been around all that much, I guess.

We spent about a week on Bermuda, trying to pick up a tailwind to give us an extra 500 miles into the Azores, which we didn't have gas for, and we had to pick it up with a tailwind. We spent one afternoon and part of the night trying to take off. After we got onto the plane to take off, they had three planes come in trying to land, and while they were trying to land, we had the fourth one come in. We were setting right out in the middle of the landing field, quite uncomfortable. We had some come so close to us it felt like we had been airborne. They finally got one down. I haven't figured that out yet either, because the fog was so thick you could have taken a spoon and eaten it, and they shipped the other three on over to Florida. I don't know whether conditions improved over there or what, but that was the manner they used to get rid of them. By the time this was over it was too late for us to take off for the Azores, so they held us up some more.

Finally, the day came that we had sensible take-off weather, and we were given the real good news that out of four planes that had tried a couple of weeks ahead of us, three of them were lost at take-off at the end of the runway. This runway went out over the water and if you didn't keep real good track of where you were, you just didn't make it. You run into those kind of runways everywhere you go just about. We took off with no problem, and as far as I know, we were the only plane in that flight. We were supposed to pick up a front east of Bermuda that would give us a boost to get into the Azores. We were supposed to be going into a small front at about 8,000 feet, and when we got there we couldn't see the top of it. When we went to 18,000 feet we still couldn't see the top. When we went to 28,000 feet we still couldn't get over it. That altitude was about as high as we could try to go through a storm, so we went through it at 28,000 feet. We got into it three or four minutes and I

looked out my window at the leading edge of the wing and it was beginning to frost, so I called the pilot and told him we were icing. He turned the deicers on and they worked--quite unusual. Anyway, we got through the storm without any great incident. We got out on the other side and hit the warm air and the ice melted and came off in sheets. It cut the top half of the upper turret off, and we had kind of an airy ride from there on into the Azores.

We had another little incident that came up that was kind of aggravating. We got to our supposedly destination, and the pilot asked the navigator, "What's your ETA?" The navigator said, "We're here." Man, we couldn't see anything but water. Ol' Mike sat there a minute. He said, "Hell, the Germans have beat us to it and sunk it." Well, somebody chuckled, but there wasn't much to chuckle about.

They gave me a new piece of equipment in Bermuda and gave me some training on what they called a radio compass, and I had plotted that beam all the way. It showed that we were about 80 miles north of the Azores. I gave this information to Mike, and he said, "Will that silly thing work?" I said, "Well, have you got anything better?" Mike started a circle to the south, completed it -- nothing. He started another circle, completed it and nothing. He started a third circle. Down on the southern perimeter of the third circle we could see two small black dots. That was the Azores on the horizon. Mike radioed in that we were out of gas and came in for an emergency landing. We came straight in to the runways and set down, and about halfway down the runway we ran out of gas. All motors stopped. But I'd rather run out gas in the middle of the runway than in the middle of the Atlantic. I figure it would have gotten just a little bit wet out there.

We spent the night in the Azores while they repaired our plane and gave us a new martin

upper. The next day we flew over to Africa.

We spent the night in Africa and then we headed for Cerignola, Italy. When we got there the brass came out to meet us and told us that we had just delivered one million dollars worth of fighting equipment to the war zone. They said that was the average of what it costed to get a B-24 overseas for the United States.

After I arrived in Italy I did not fly anymore with my original crew. They pulled me out and put me with different crews according to who needed me the worst. That was policy because we were fairly scarce in the war zone.

I had a few peculiar experiences. We broke through some clouds on one mission and about 2:00 there was a squadron of B-17s making a strike and the Germans were shooting flank at them, but it looked like the sky was catching on fire and burning. I had never seen anything that looked like that before, so I called one of the other boys over and I said, "What in the world is this?" He said, "That's white phosphorus. The Germans use that and it will burn as long as it can get oxygen. It will burn right through your plane wings or anything. As long as it can get oxygen, it will burn." I looked that over and I thought, "That's just about as close as I want to get to hell."

There was one mission that I hated to go on and that was supplying the partisans with material. We had to land fully loaded on pasture ground, and you never knew when it was going to give out from under you. In fact, I guess every site I went to there were five or six B-24s that hadn't made it, that broke through. One of them was standing on its nose. So I didn't like those missions, but I guess we had to do them.

One mission that I was impressed with was April 9, 1945. That was the beginning of the Poe Valley offensive. We were told that everything we had in Italy that would fly would be there, and I

believe they were. We abandoned our box formation and went in wing tip to wing tip. We carried 240 20-pound frag bombs and it was timed so that every six seconds a wave of these planes would go over and drop their load of bombs. This was quite a sight to see. It looked like big blackbirds. You couldn't see anywhere there weren't any planes. There were planes everywhere.

One peculiar thing that happened on that raid -- apparently we had a 20-pound frag bomb that had a bent tail fin and after we turned it loose, it broke loose from the cluster of 12 and started spiraling. It spiraled about two miles off target, and it looked like it just picked out one of those little Italian cars and went right through the top of it. I guess that old boy was kind of surprised to get it that way. I don't know of any casualties suffered by our forces on this raid. The blackness lasted about 15 or 20 minutes, and they were gone. I didn't see an enemy plane anywhere and I didn't see any planes that had been scratched. So as far as I know, we got through this particular mission clean. I thought it was a real sharp piece of thinking to discourage those boys like that, because I understand they had all those 20-pound frag bombs they wanted.

We were supposed to have flown another mission on April 11, but I did not get in on that one. For some reason or other, they designated me to go over the hump into Burma and bomb Japan from there. So they pulled me out and sent me to Capri for rest leave. I spent three weeks on the Isle of Capri and did my very best to drink that island dry, but it didn't take me too long to find out they could ship it in faster than I could drink it.

While on Capri I met, I guess he was a celebrity. He once fought Max Mullins in the United States for the heavyweight championship of the world. Max beat him quite badly. I was sitting and watching a girl at this dance hall twirl by and

enjoying the music when this huge man came across the floor at me, and he was smiling. If he hadn't been smiling, I might have left. But he came over and shook hands and told me his name -- Primo Canaro. I remembered him as Prime Beef Canaro because of the beating that he took from Max Mullins. But anyway, he talked a little bit and asked me if I would like to dance with his girlfriend, and man, he had a good looking blonde French girl, a real doll. This happened to be the day that I had stepped through the boardwalk and tore my shins completely up to my knee and could barely walk, so I told him and showed him my bandages. He went and got her and brought her over, and we sat and talked, I guess 30 or 40 minutes, and then they went on dancing. I thought that was quite unusual to run into disassociated people that I knew and knew something about. But this ole boy was huge and he had the biggest set of hands on him I've ever seen. I've got big hands, but I could just barely grip his hand to shake it.

After Capri I returned back to Cerignola and took my official test to see if I was fit to fly the hump into Burma. I went into this barracks. There were seven doctors in this barracks and each one of them had a stamp in his hand. As I walked down past them, each one stamped passed. None of them touched me. None of them took my blood pressure. None of them took my heart beat or anything, but every one of them stamped "passed" on my exam. I got down to the last table and they said, "Well, you're ready to go." You know, I couldn't hardly help but feel that maybe I had been shanghaied. But anyway, I got the go ahead to ship out. Now the day before I was to ship out, they dropped the A bomb, and they put me on hold. We didn't take off. We stayed on hold until they saw what happened, and then, of course, the second day, I think it was, after the first one was dropped, we couldn't convince all those people for some

reason or other, but after the second day and they laid that big egg on them, man, it hatched out more peace loving Japanese than you'd ever believe. But I think it was a real smart move because it certainly saved and awful lot of lives for our side.

I didn't have to go to Burma and this put some time on my hands. While things were kind of getting moved out over the war in Europe, they assigned and shipped all of our planes back to the United States, and for some reason or other, they left me. I thought I took a perfectly good plane over there, but I didn't bring one back. Anyway, Mike, my pilot and Red Bennerman, my co-pilot, were still there. Three or four weeks after the last plane left for the United States, they asked us if we would fly a cripple home. This plane had made a raid over Berlin and didn't have enough gas to get back and they belly-landed it. They rebuilt it so it would fly, and they asked us if we'd bring it back. Of course, at that time we jumped on it like a duck on a June bug. We would have tried to fly a kite if they would have given us one. We spent about four weeks checking that fella out, and it seemed not to have too much wrong with it. We gathered our crew together and we got a Captain King for a navigator, and Mike and Red and myself were the only ones left of the original crew. I don't know what happened to the others. We had some miscellaneous passengers that were kind of hitchhiking a ride back to the United States. I believe we had 12 men on that plane and 10 is a full crew, so we had some hitchhikers. We took off for the Azores. We got in there and checked our plane out and the number three engine had run all the oil out of it. So they replaced that engine, and the next day we headed for Gander, Labrador. When we got to Gander and checked that plane again, its brand new number three engine had apparently vibrated most of the oil out of it, but it didn't appear

to be damaged, so we talked it over, filled it up and headed for Andover Field.

We got in there all right and got our equipment swapped out for stateside and caught a flat wheel freight train with a speed demon engineer headed for Chicago. This ol' boy was just what I said, he was a speed demon. He got into Chicago nearly 24 hours early. We were trying to find out when we were going to ship out, and the station master told us, "You're not leaving here until tomorrow afternoon." Well, that didn't go too well because we didn't have any gear or any place to sleep or anything. So we gathered together over to one side and were trying to figure out where to start taking that station apart. While we were standing there talking, Captain King came over. He was our navigator. He asked what the problem was and we told him. He says, "Well, give me about 15 minutes and if I don't get us out of here in a couple of hours, I'll help you tear this thing up." So he went over to the phone and called Washington, D.C. I don't know who he talked to, but he didn't talk but ten minutes or less, and hung the phone up. The phone rang and they wanted the station master. The station master came over and answered the phone, and he had a complete change of attitude. He lost his vocabulary, I guess, because all he could say was "Yes sir, yes sir." He must have said that 20 times. When that guy got through with him I think he would have carried us out of the station and put us on a train to get us out of there. By about 2:30 we were headed for St. Louis. That trip was uneventful.

In St. Louis we broke up. I caught a train for Wynne, Arkansas, which was my home. Captain King came over and gave me a note. He said, "I saw that you lived in Wynne and I'd like for you to give this note to my mother and tell her that I'm in the states and I'll be home in about three weeks." So I did, and then I went home on a

30-day leave--duty assigned to home. Man, I enjoyed that, and just before I got ready to head back to the base, I got a 30-day extension-duty assigned at home. Man, that was fine. You know I believe I could spend a whole career like that. With my 60 days gone I headed to Sad Sack Army Air Force Base at San Antonio. That was a nickname. The real name of the base, as I remember, was San Antonio Army Air Force Base. It was a nice place. They had good swimming pools. The temperature was great. I liked that base. If I had had the opportunity I would probably have stayed there. They were busy sorting veterans out and getting them medical extensions or discharges or whatever came up. Every time they interviewed me and asked me what I wanted, I said, "Out." So finally they understood that I wanted out. They said, "Well where do you want out to?" I said, "Belleville, Illinois is the closest place to my home. That would be fine." So they sent me up there and I guess I was there about two weeks and I got my discharge. I was discharged on December 5, 1945.

Precious Words—



Eugene Nunnally's personal story appears in this issue of the Cerignola Connection. He must have spent a lot of thought and time putting it together. Unfortunately he passed away before he could see it in print. Our hearts are with and sympathies go to his loved ones as they read and treasure these words.

Ed

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Arlington dedication, 27 September, 1996.



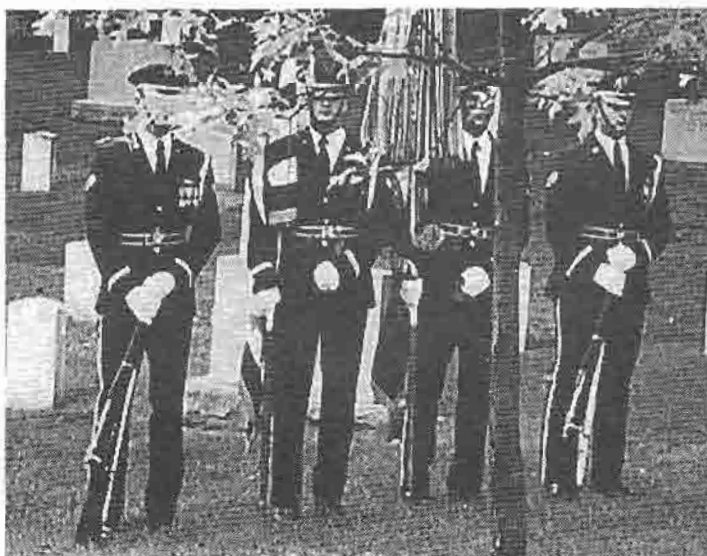
Unveiling of Memorial - Col. Lou Hansen and Ralph Holdsworth.



Presentation of Memorial to Tom Sherlock, Arlington Historian by C.E. Riggs.



L to R: Al Asch, Lou Hansen, Ed Riggs, Ralph Holdsworth, Tom Sherlock, Arlington Historian.



Arlington National Cemetery Colorguard, 27 September 1996.

50th Annual National Convention

American Ex Prisoners Of War
Tacoma, Washington ~ City of Destiny ~ USA
September 21th - 27th, 1997

Franz Gerber - 742nd Bombardier Still Swings a Heavy Bat at 75!



The manager, in street clothes and a baseball cap, ambles over to the fence along the first base line where an older man, in full uniform, is visiting with a fan.

"You wanna bat?" the manager asks the 75-year old man in a Murry Oldtimer hat, jersey and pants.

Harry Mapes is the manager asking the question, and knowing how his easy sense of humor shares equal time with signs from the coaching box, the casual fan would think this is surely another joke.

Does the 75-year old bespectacled man want to bat? Batting practice is over. Infield practice is over. The Independent Baseball League game has started.

But Mapes isn't kidding. "No, not now, Maybe later," says Franz Gerber, who returns to visiting, one of his game-time duties in this his 50th year of baseball.

Yes, Franz Gerber still bats and also takes his glove to first base for a few innings. But on Sunday in Haugen, where the Oldtimers took on the Haugen Knights, Franz didn't bat.

"Oh, I had this darn cold. I'm not able to shake it," he said.

But Franz promises to swing the bat when the Oldtimers visit the Rice Lake Merchants in a 1:30 p.m. game Sunday at the high school diamond. And the other older Oldtimers will also be there, including 63-year old pitcher Denny O'Melia, a one-time Triple A hurler, and

57-year old shortstop Barney Slowey.

The Gerber name is synonymous with Exeland baseball. Franz and his older brother Herman began playing in 1946 and helped Exeland baseball expand to two teams in the early 1960s, largely because the Gerbers' sons starting coming of baseball age. There are still two teams in Exeland, but it's with Murry, a few miles down the road from Exeland, that Franz now plays and shares managing chores with Mapes.

The Oldtimers were formed in the 1980s when, Franz jokes, the Exeland teams kicked him and his brother out. Heck, the Gerber boys were only in their mid-60s at the time. Herman retired about 5 years ago, but Franz hangs on.

When he pinch hit for his son, Ernie, against the Millers at Brill in early July, there was no loudspeaker, no fanfare to mark the moment of a 75-year old man stepping into the batter's box. The lefty promptly pulled the first pitch on a liner past the first baseman. But then the matter of getting to first base cropped up.

"Shucks, those kids play me so shallow and throw me out at first base. You think you're running to beat hell and you're hardly moving," said Franz, who was retired by the right-fielder's throw.

Franz forces one to listen closely for a possible punch line. There are players 40 years his junior who are just as likely to say the same thing about slowing down. But it's as if Franz doesn't think he should be slowing down. Not yet. In fact, he has three hits in seven at-bats this season, giving him the chance to end the season at .500 if he gets a hit in his next trip to the plate.

Forty years ago, Herman and Franz formed a left-handed hitting duo. Herman, a left-fielder, batted lead-off,

and Franz, with a bit more power, was in the third spot. Exeland advanced to the Wisconsin Baseball Assn. championship game in 1955. Franz, a first baseman, was the tourney Most Valuable Player, even though Exeland lost the title game to Marshfield.

Franz was always a tough competitor, but a diplomatic one who would beat you and make you feel good about it at the same time. Dick Koehler, longtime player and now manager at Weyerhaeuser, laughs when he's asked to share a Franz Gerber story.

"It was always fun playing his teams. He was always conniving, but he never connived so much to have such a team you didn't have a chance to beat them," Koehler said.

When Murry visited Weyerhaeuser on June 23, Koehler's team had a photo enlargement and cake ready for Franz, since it was his 75th birthday.

"And then it rained. I wonder what they did with that cake," laughed Franz.

Franz dearly wants to play in his final three games this season, joking, "After you turn 100, you don't know how much more you'll be able to play." And he still wants to take the field, even though after 50 years of country hardball, his wife, Phyllis, sees baseball games in her sleep, jokes Franz. If he does play next year, it may be with a pacemaker.

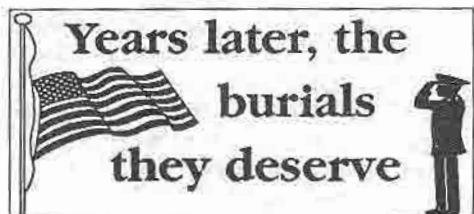
"I've had this darn goofy problem. I went to Mayo Clinic and they say I may need a pacemaker. But I guess other guys have them" said Franz.

But do other ball players have them? He's told he might be not only the oldest player in the league again next year, but also the only one with a pacemaker.

"There, well, now that's something to look forward to," says Franz.



Ed Micak, 742nd pilot and crew attend the Arlington Memorial dedication in strength. Crew members L to R: Karl Anderson, Co-pilot; Franz Gerber, Bombardier; Eddie Micak, pilot; Clark Dudley, Gunner; Bill Doyce, Navigator. Photo by Barney Gleeson.



For more than 50 years, the remains of World War II pilots Gilbert Hadley and James Lindsey lay beneath the sea off the coast of Turkey in the wreckage of their downed B-24 bomber.

And the crew members whose lives they saved carried with them only the tragic image of their heroic buddies struggling to get out of the sinking cockpit.

Now, thanks to the efforts of Leroy Newton, 72, of San Clemente, Calif., one of seven survivors of the crash, the pilots' remains have been returned to their hometowns for a hero's burial. Lindsey was buried in Gilmer, the Northeast Texas town where he spent much of his childhood.

"I am delighted," Newton said from Arkansas City, Kan., where he was attending a service in Hadley's memory. "Home is where these boys belong."

Earlier a memorial service for Lindsey, who was 22 at the time of his death, was held here. Dozens gathered along State Line Avenue beneath a heavy gray sky that threatened snow Wednesday to watch as area veterans pushed a caisson bearing the pilot's coffin six blocks from the railroad station to a downtown chapel.

Don Lindsey, who attended the service at St. James' Episcopal Church, said the return of his brother's remains brought him "closure" after years of uncertainty about the young pilot's death. He lauded the efforts of Newton and other veterans who succeeded in locating and returning the remains.

"The Army couldn't do it, but civilians could," he said.

Newton recalled that he was a waist gunner on the 10 man aircraft when it joined 176 others in a strike on the sprawling oil refinery complex at Ploesti, Romania, on Aug. 1, 1943.

"We had been together seven months," he said. "I believe that was almost seven months to the day. It was our seventh mission."

Already the crew had suffered

one crash in British Guiana (Now Guyana). "I thought that that's what flying was all about," Newton said.

Hadley and Lindsey struck their crew as fearless.

"Hadley always pushed to the limit, and then he backed off a little for safety," said Newton, who at 19 was the youngest member of the crew. "Lindsey wasn't afraid of anything. And he could fly almost as good as Hadley."

Even the pilots' considerable skill though, was no match for German defenses of the refinery complex, which supplied as much as 60 percent of Germany's need for petroleum products.

"They came in low, just above treetop level," said Dan Bookout, a Texarkana chiropractor and former commercial airline pilot who was instrumental in arranging memorial services. "They were hitting trees and antennas. The Germans had 88 mm guns. These were meant to bring down planes at 20,000 feet, and they were shooting at point-blank range."

Forty-one bombers were lost and 532 crew members were killed, wounded or taken prisoner.

Joseph Dawson, director of Texas A&M's Military Science Institute, said high-level air commanders were appalled at the loss of life.

"They did serious damage to the complex," he said, "but the commanders had not predicted how quickly the facility could be brought back on line. In a matter of a few weeks it was possible to put in major repairs. No matter what the destruction, you weren't going to knock it out unless you made three or four or five strikes. One raid wasn't going to do it."

Newton recalled that as the plane - dubbed "Hadley's Harem" - approached the Ploesti complex, its nose was struck by an 88 mm shell, killing the bombardier and injuring the navigator. A second giant shell wrecked an engine, and a third exploded beneath the plane's fuselage, buckling the frame.

The B-24 dropped its bombs short of the target and tried to retreat to a British base on Cyprus.

"We were scared as hell,"

Newton said. "We had air rushing through the nose, one engine was out, then we lost a second. We all knew that we were flying in a plane that technically was unflyable."

To lighten its weight, crew mem-

bers dumped everything they could find, including parachutes. Flying extremely low, Lindsey and Hadley struggled to control the crippled plane. Then, 25 miles over the Mediterranean, the remaining two engines lost oil pressure.

"We lost just what we were trying to deprive the Germans of," Newton said.

The survivor said Hadley attempted to return to Turkey, a neutral party in the war, but opted for a water crash when he determined the shore was strewn with large boulders. The plane went down about 750 feet from land and broke into three pieces.

Newton found himself hanging upside down from a cable that had wrapped around his foot. "I couldn't feel my foot," he said, "I thought I had lost it."

Then, as the wreckage carried him underwater, he drew a knife to amputate his foot. At that moment, the cable loosened and he bobbed to the surface.

Another survivor turned to see Lindsey and Hadley trying to free themselves from the cockpit as the wreckage sank. After three months of internment in Turkey, Newton, who had suffered two compound fractures, was returned to the United States.

After the war, he said, he put the ordeal behind him.

"I shut it off for 50 years," said Newton, who worked as a product designer. "I had education, marriage, family, paying taxes and mortgage to worry about, I never talked to my wife about it. I had pretty much soured on the military. War, I thought, was just a waste of life and money."

But in 1993, after his wife died, he stumbled onto an advertisement for a veterans' reunion. "I thought this might be something I would like to do," he said.

Conversations at the reunion ignited a desire in Newton to locate the remains of his long-dead comrades. In 1993, he made an initial trip to Turkey to wander the beaches in hope of finding the crash site. The sight of a crazy American walking the beaches intrigued the locals, he said.

In a later trip, Newton granted a newspaper interview, and shortly after returning to California, he received a letter from a man who

read the resulting article.

The writer told him he knew where the submerged plane was. In fact, he had used the wreck to teach his sons how to scuba dive.

"They'd use it for weekend outings," Newton said. With the assistance of other veterans, the plane's cockpit was brought to the surface in 1995, and the remains removed.

Word of the discovery was released - and families notified - only after the remains were positively identified at a military laboratory in Hawaii.

Lindsey was buried in the Gilmer Cemetery.

Hadley was buried in Arkansas City.

Windows For Rémy

The Rémy story begins on a day like many during World War II. The date was August 2, 1944 and the mission of the U.S. Army Air Corps 383rd Fighter Squadron was like many others they had performed. The eight Mustangs were sent out to search and destroy German trains and vehicles that were in position to counter the advancing Allied Forces. Just such a train was found in Rémy, France and had been literally hiding there for eight days. Under heavy camouflage, in its many freight cars filled with German soldiers, weaponry and ammunition lay just the target the 383rd was seeking.

The first four Mustangs flew cover at 10,000 feet, while the second section of four strafed the train. On the last of several passes, the number three aircraft hit a detonator on the munitions train and set off the biggest explosions ever experienced by the pilots. With this explosive force, the train ceased to exist and the railroad station was destroyed. Roofs were blown off the houses and buildings in the village. The windows for miles around were blown out. Sadly, the explosion sheared the tail off the number three aircraft, piloted by 22-year-old Lieutenant Houston Lee Braly from Brady, Texas. His aircraft mowed through a grove of trees, crashed through a brick wall and came to rest against a stone farm house where a young girl and her brother found him dead. They

removed his body from the burning wreckage and hid him. He was secretly buried by the villagers in their cemetery with honor and respect. By performing this act of extreme kindness, the people of Rémy were at great risk of discovery and invoking the German wrath.

For months after that mission, the members of the 383rd were not aware of the devastation of Rémy. They were not aware of the act of love and respect performed by the villagers. Also, they did not know that the French resistance had called for the destruction of that very train hiding so close to that small town. They only knew they had a mission to complete. They knew they had succeeded and they lost a comrade.

ED - Want to thank the underground? Join 364th Fighter Group members in restoring stained glass windows blown from ancient French church during the 1944 strafing near Remy. A pilot died; villagers buried him, keeping flow-ers on his grave despite reprisal threats. Tax-deductible contributions: Windows for Remy Box 644, Linden, CA 94236. Brochure available.

Can You Help?

Dr. Charles Wehrer, 1000 Village Green, Norfolk, Nebraska, 68701. Tele: 402-379-9655. Saved a crew of 10 from a 740th aircraft which crashed and burned at Cerignola on March 23, 1945. He would like anyone who knows the name of any of the survivors of this crash to contact him.

Did you ever notice...

- how quickly "pay later" comes when you "buy now"?
- that the first piece of luggage out of the airport chute never belongs to anybody?
- that the weaker the argument, the stronger the words?
- that the shortest line becomes the slowest line once you choose it?
- that the last key in the bunch usually opens the lock?
- that the first person who gets off a crowded elevator is always standing in the back?

George Krueger Writes -



I sent my group picture to you some time ago and after reading again the latest Newsletter, realized I did not put my return address on the back of it. There is a listing of all men on the back, by the numbers. If you can locate it would you please return it to me. It's the only one I have.

My pilot: **Donald W. Ammann, Capt., 1413 E. Division St., Decatur, IL.** I haven't had any contact with him since we were separated and I went to Tyndall from where I was discharged. I don't know if he is still alive. I am 81. It's a long time ago.

Ed. George's address is: George Krueger, 8278 High Point Blvd, Brooksville, FL 34613. Photos are returned ASAP. If no identification of original sender, I then try to identify any member of the crew and then send the photo on to him. If any of you out there has George's crew picture, forward it on to him. Thanks!

Chaplain's Corner



This is the beginning of a new day. God has given me this day to use as I will. I can waste it - or use it for good. But what I do today is important, because I am exchanging a day of my life for it! When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever, leaving in its place something that I have traded for it. I want it to be gain, and not loss; good, and not evil; success, and not failure; in order that I shall not regret the price that I have paid for it.

On the Passing of a Giant...

Submitted by Colonel Horace Lanford

Today is November 2, 1996. This morning, Joyce and I attended our third straight Saturday morning Funeral or Memorial Service. Shortly after noon, John Davis called with the word of Hal Schuknecht's death on October 19.

The priest conducting this morning's service was a Catholic, very young, very blond, very handsome, possessed of a marvelous voice, and a gifted speaker. He reminded us of the journey we make through life, as a group of tourists with our packed bags, as we pass through the different stages of life. He said, for example, "This morning I am conducting a funeral service, this afternoon early I am conducting a baptism of a grandchild of the deceased, and this evening I am conducting a wedding ceremony." "Thus," he said, "I am experiencing these three stages of life all in the period of one day. Death is inevitable. We all enjoy life, and we all must face the inevitability of death." As an add-in, I personally don't fear death — it is the thought of not living that bothers me.

Harold Schuknecht was the greatest man I have known personally. Hal was one of the staunchest friends I ever had. His exploits with the 741st Squadron have been documented. His contributions to mankind have been recognized by the Harvard Medical School, The Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, the Pope, and numerous world-wide gatherings. Hal's personal side has not been so well discussed. Let me try.

The 741st Squadron history has pictures of Hal examining Cpl Kripplebauer of the squadron medical detachment, a picture of the prefabricated, expandable latrines built by the squadron medical section in the States to take overseas with us, and a picture which I cut

out of a magazine of a lovely, nude lady clad only in a hat, reclining on a beach—which I, as a joke, attributed to the "Hal Schuknecht Collection." Anyway, Joyce, my wife, was given a laser stapedotomy by another brilliant ear surgeon trained by Hal Schuknecht. On one of our visits to Sarasota, this specialist told me that the Harvard Medical School was honoring Hal Schuknecht at their annual gathering and wondered if I had any photographs of Hal from his wartime experience.

I provided the above-mentioned photographs. Dr. Silverstein used the photos in this manner in his presentation to the Harvard Medical School Alumni group. First, he showed the photo of the prefabricated latrines. He added, "This is probably Dr. Schuknecht's greatest contribution to medicine." Dr. Silverstein reported this received a great laugh from the assembly. Then he showed Dr. Schuknecht examining Cpl Kripplebauer and stated, "...here is Dr. Schuknecht preparing for an internal examination." He stated the renowned members of the medical profession were rolling in the aisles with laughter. Hal was a good sport and merely said "I know where you got the photographs."

Hal was a regular attendee at all our Group reunions. He was a generous contributor to the 741st "Apron Wearers" who initiated the practice of a cocktail party and buffet, first for the entire group, and then for the 741st Squadron, for subsequent reunions.

Hal will be missed.

You remember the real America if you remember...

- When riots were unthinkable.
- When you left front doors open.
- When socialism was a dirty word.
- When the flag was a sacred symbol.

- When criminals actually went to jail.
 - When you weren't afraid to go out at night.
 - When taxes were only a necessary nuisance.
 - When a boy was a boy, and dressed like one.
 - When a girl was a girl, and dressed like one.
 - When the poor were too proud to take charity.
 - When the clergy actually talked about religion.
 - When clerks and repairmen tried to please you.
 - When songs had a tune and the words made sense.
 - When young fellows tried to join the Army and Navy.
 - When people knew what the Fourth of July stood for.
 - When a Sunday drive was a pleasant trip, not an ordeal.
 - When you bragged about your hometown and home state.
 - When everybody didn't feel entitled to a college education.
 - When people expected less, and valued what they had more.
 - When politicians proclaimed their patriotism and meant it.
 - When everybody knew the difference between right and wrong.
 - When our government stood up for Americans, anywhere in the world.
 - When you knew that the law would be enforced, and your safety would be protected.
 - When the law meant justice, and you felt a shiver of awe at the sight of a policeman.
 - When you weren't embarrassed to say that this is the best country in the world.
 - When America was a land that was filled with brave, proud, confident, hardworking people.
- (Borrowed thoughts that were written many years ago. Many of them fit America today.)*



BITS AND PIECES

Correction —

Page seven, Fall 1996 Cerignola Connection, caption for top left photograph should read: left - Ralph and Jean Johnson; Right - Curt and Inez Diles. Curt was a member of William Rogers crew.

455th BG Rescue

Chuck Wehrer was an AAF Captain on 27 March 1945 when he participated in the rescue of a 455 BG, 740 BS crew from their crashed B-24 near Cerignola, Italy. The plane crashed a short distance from his headquarters and he and his men rushed to the scene to help. They found the plane upside down with bleeding and wounded men trapped in the wreckage. It took over four hours working through the twisted metal and spilled fuel to finally free the last man. All the crew lived and his heroic efforts resulted in the belated award of medals 35 years later at SAC Headquarters in Omaha. He has been searching for the ten men who were rescued for many years. If you can identify the crew or help him locate them, you can contact him at: **Dr. Charles S. Wehrer, 1000 Village Green Dr #1, Norfolk, NE 68701-2272.**

Check Your Logs

Your editor talked to Bob Greenquist (Navigator, 743rd Squadron, 455th Bomb Group, member of Catlin's crew). Bob and crew went down on the Munich raid and were POW's at Stalag Luft III and Mooseberg. The crew gets together yearly and spin their tales of POW life and WWII. The problem is this - they celebrate on one day - our unit history lists a different day. Was the Munich raid June 8th or June 9th?

A Test of Yankee Ingenuity

The Cerignola Connection (CC) just seems to get better. I receive three newsletters from other WWII organizations and the CC is far the best. You handled the dedication ceremonies of our living memorial at the Arlington National Cemetery very nicely on the cover page.

What a great article by Lt. Col. Lawrence F. Liberty on pages 9 and 10 of the Fall CC. It was indeed a pleasure to hear from him after several years. I remember our early 455th activities with fond memories. Lawrence, however, did not include in his story that four ships landed at Chateaudunn, which was the incorrect field in North Africa. All the other ships of our group landed at Jadeida and we really became concerned about Lawrence and the other crews. I believe we got word to the four crews by our ship's radio that they had landed on the wrong field. When the lost aircraft prepared to take off to come to Jadeida, one ship would not start from low batteries and the crew couldn't get the putt putt started. Yankee ingenuity came into play. The crews took a good putt putt from a B-24 that was running and installed it into the one that would not start. All came into Jadeida without further incident. We were delighted to see the crews safely on the ground. To lose four crews that early would have been a disaster and hard to overcome. It would have been difficult and demoralizing to lose close friends that we trained with and yes, drank and partied with during the early days of our group.

Al Asch

Correction —

This one from Naomi Asch. The unidentified member, page 8, lower left, is her favorite bar tender, Dave Frawley. Naomi says she, Dave Frawley and Bill Green tended bar at the last reunion. She was the dishwasher.

A Time for Everything

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.

A time to be born and a time to die

A time to plant and a time to uproot,

A time to kill and a time to heal,
A time to tear down and a time to build,

A time to weep and a time to laugh,

A time to mourn and a time to dance,

A time to scatter stones and a time to gather them

A time to embrace and a time to refrain,

A time to search and a time to give up,

A time to keep and a time to throw away,

A time to tear and a time to mend,
A time to be silent and a time to speak,

A time to love and a time to hate,
A time for war and a time for peace.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 - 8 NIV

A Cheesehead Story!



At the NFL Championship game, Coach Holmgren noticed an empty seat in the front row, just behind the coaches' bench. The stadium at Green Bay is always sold out, so he was surprised to say the least. It bothered him so much that at half time he decided to speak to the woman sitting next to the empty seat, to see if she knew anything about it. "Pardon me, ma'am, but do you know who is supposed to be sitting here?" "Oh, yes," she said. "It was my husband's seat, but he died." "Well, you certainly have my sympathy." Replied Holmgren, "But don't you have a relative or friend you could offer the seat to?" "Sure, but not now," the woman responded. "They're all at the funeral!"

Elmo Henske Tells Us About the "Mickey Lynn"



On April 9, 1944, Leland L. Young and his crew picked up a new B-24 at Hamilton Field near San Francisco and started a flight across the country to Miami, FL. It was an Easter Sunday. Eventually the flights ended in Fortaleza, Brazil where the plane was given a final maintenance service. On April 26, 1944, they departed Fortaleza at midnight and headed for the west coast of Africa. The crew was warned that they would fly through a hurricane enroute which proved to be true. The plane was put on automatic pilot. While flying in the pitch-black sky in torrential rain, the plane suddenly went into a dive. Young was able to overpower the automatic pilot and right the plane. The balance of the flight was done using manual controls until landing safely in Dakar, French West Africa. After making their way across north Africa to Italy, the crew was ordered to report to the 743rd Squadron of Group 455 as the second replacement crew to be assigned to that squadron. The first replacement crew was lost in combat. The plane later was named "Mickey Lynn" after two crewmen's wives and was to be assigned to another unit, but because the crew had taken all the head sets with them, it was assigned to the 743rd squadron and completed more than 100 missions for two crews.

.....
A father was trying to teach his young daughter the value of money. After explaining the different kinds of U.S. coins, he lined up a penny, a nickel, a dime, a quarter, and a dollar bill on the table. He asked the little girl which one she'd rather have.

She pondered a moment, fingered each one thoughtfully, and finally looked up and said brightly, "I like the copper one, Daddy. But could I take that little piece of paper along to wrap it in?"

THE 455TH BOMB GROUP IN COMBAT (a continuing series)

Mission 70, June 30 Our last mission in June was to the Oterdal Oil Refinery on the Polish and Hungarian border. Thirty-seven B-24's loaded with 250# GP bombs were forced to turn back due to bad weather. They all returned to base safely.

During the month of June, the Group flew a total of 15 missions, putting 557 aircraft over the targets. The group dropped 1,247 tons of bombs on the enemy while shooting down 50 enemy aircraft with 15 more probable. On the other hand we have paid a frightful price for our efforts with the loss of 16 aircraft and 150 crewmen missing and two killed in action.

JULY 1944

July brought an intensive effort on the part of the Strategic Air Forces to continue knocking out the enemy's oil resources. In the next two months, the 455th Group would make 18 raids on the oil refineries or oil storage facilities of the enemy. Thirteen of these would be against the refineries at Ploesti.

Mission 71, July 2 The 15th Air Force sent 1,128 aircraft to the area around Bucharest, Hungary, 551 B-24's, 161 B-17's, 198 P-51's and 140 P-38's. The 304th Wing sent 149 B-24's to bomb the Shell Oil Refinery and of these, 32 B-24's of the 455th Group dropped 57 tons of bombs on the target. The flak was heavy and accurate in the target area, but we came through without any casualties. We did, however, lose one aircraft on take-off. Two crewmen were killed and one seriously hurt. All planes returned to base safely.

Mission 72, July 3 Twenty-four B-24's loaded with 500# GP bombs struck the Malaxa Locomotive works outside of Bucharest, Rumania. We ran into very little flak and no fighter attacks. The

bombing pattern was excellent with over 67% falling within 1,000 feet of the aiming point. All planes returned safely to base.

Mission 73, July 6 We sent 28 B-24's to bomb the North Oil Refinery at Trieste, Italy. It was a lucky day for the Group as the flak was light and generally inaccurate, and no enemy fighters were seen. All planes returned to base safely.

Mission 74, July 7 Our target for this day was the Odertal refinery on the border of Poland and Germany. Twenty-seven B-24's dropped 59 tons of bombs on the target. Flak was very heavy and accurate in the target area. Fighters were aggressive and pressed their attacks vigorously. We lost one aircraft to flak but none to enemy fighters. Ten crewmen were missing in action.

Mission 75, July 8 While the rest of the Air Force was attacking oil targets in the Vienna area, the 455th attacked the Airdrome at Munchendorf, Austria, just south of Vienna. Twenty-six B-24's loaded with fragmentation bombs had good results on the bomb run and did an outstanding job on the airdrome. Flak was not heavy or accurate. Enemy fighters were seen but did not press their attacks. All planes returned to base safely. One very happy crew finished their tour of duty with 50 missions completed.

Mission 76, July 12 We sent 29 B-24's to bomb the marshalling yards at Miramas, France. The flak was very heavy and accurate with almost all of the planes in the formation receiving damage. All planes returned to base safely.

Mission 77, July 13 We were briefed for the refinery at Trieste but found the target covered by clouds. Twenty-two of the 28 B-24's bombed the alternate target of Porte Marghera, Italy. Six aircraft brought their bombs back to base as they could not identify the target. All planes returned to base.

From the Personal Notes of Raider Ramsted 742nd Sqd.

26 June 1944. We suffered the hardest blow on a raid today, that this squadron has ever experienced. Six combat crews are lost—59 officers and enlisted men. Several were on their 50th mission and 21 were scheduled to go home soon. Many of our original crews went down. We had ten ships scheduled for a raid on a synthetic oil refinery at Moosbierbaum, Austria—about 20 miles northwest of Vienna. Lt. Watson did not get off the ground while Lts. Taylor and Nelson were prior returns. Of the seven remaining ships which reached the target, only Lt. Kelly and his crew returned safely. Escort was provided by P-38's and P-51's. Enemy aircraft were encountered at Bratislava at 0920. A group of ME-210's, ME-110's and JU-88's came up to meet the formation—the enemy aircraft succeeded in separating the escorts from the bomber formations. Then 50 to 60 twin engined aircraft made aggressive attacks from head on, diving to within 50 yards—then diving through the formation. Some of the enemy twin-engined planes stayed out of range and lobbed rockets at our formation—all were firing 20 millimeter ammunition. These attacks lasted until the I.P. was reached. Our planes were in F box with Lts. Kelly and Jackson in D-box, second section, and our planes bore the brunt of the enemy attacks. In the target area and after bombs away about 60 ME-109's and FW-190's attacked out of the sun. They dove into the formation and pressed their attacks aggressively to 30 yards! One enemy fighter crashed into a bomber—both ships going down. Attacks were made singly, in pairs and threes from all around the clock. As usual, flak was encountered—intense, accurate and heavy. Very little definite information is available about any of our crews who went down.

The following personnel are lost: Lts. Robert A. Montgomery, Edward N. Sabo and David C. Brothers plus T/Sgts. Edward J. Pritchard and James B. Mason and S/Sgts. Joseph M. Sutton, Thomas J. Leithauser, Henry C. Smith, Edward L. Kyle and S/Sgt. Francis M. Moore, photographer of the 743rd Squadron. No information on this crew except that they were lost in the target area as were all of our six ships. Lt. James B. Brown was last seen in the target area with his engines smoking. His crew included: Lts. Daniel C. McKee, Julian S. Santina and Sherman W. Ford, T/Sgts. Earl M. Shollenberger and George L. Balmer, S/Sgts. Martin J. Goldman, James A. Kimsey, Eddy D. Grauwiller and David (NMI) Yee. No definite information is available on Lt. Jack D. Montgomery's crew which included: Lts. Lewis P. Sims and Louis H. Friedberg, S/Sgt. William G. McCain and Sgts. Myron L. Ovens, Donald R. Michael, Phillip (NMI) York, Arthur (NMI) Amborski and Sidney (NMI) Weiss. No definite information is available as to the fate of Lt. Ralph D. Sensenbrenner and his crew which included: Lts. Raider E. Ramstad, Len (NMI) Giovannitti, Bernard F. McGrane plus T/Sgts. Longin J. Jastrzembowski and Buren M. Nerren, S/Sgts. Harry C. Sellars, Edward J. Renner, Rollin M. Scott and Russel W. Plowman. No news of Lt. William C. Jackson and his crew which included: Lts. Robert H. Ahrens, Thomas L. Smith and Samp B. Tolar, Jr., plus S/Sgts. Robert R. Sloper and Samuel S. Rosenberg, Sgts. Fred E. Beitz, Sam (NMI) Christianus, Dominick F. Citino, Robert L. Truex. Some information is available on Lt. Samuel A. Archibald and his crew. They were last seen in the target area with fire behind #2 engine. They went down gently—straight and level—then feathered #2 and went into a circle. One witness reported 6 chutes from this plane—another, five. Besides Lt. Archibald the crew included Lts. William (NMI) Ungemach, Jr., Elben B. Exell and William O. Barnard plus T/Sgts. Harry (NMI) Seiler and

William J. Madzik, S/Sgts. Joseph R. Hachey, Joseph A. Abbondondello, Miller D. Todd and Donald R. Teisinger. Lt. Henry Kelly, assistant operations officer, did a remarkable feat in bringing his ship and crew home—our only crew to return. His crew gallantly fought swarms of enemy aircraft—the following claims were made: Cpl. Anthony C. Brodeur, nose turret gunner, claims 2 FW-190's destroyed; Sgt. Howard (NMI) Blumberg, right waist gunner, claims one FW-190 destroyed; Cpl. James R. Thomas, tail gunner claims one FW-190 destroyed. Lt. Kelley's ship was savagely attacked—the enemy fighters coming as close as 30 yards. It is felt certain that our six lost ships accounted for a number of Nazi fighters before they were downed. Today's disastrous raid was a blow to morale in the squadron—so many of our original combat men were lost. We only have 9 planes after today's raid and by juggling men six complete crews are all we can put in the air. However, this evening, we received a new crew and another ship, number 325, named "Chiggiebofumbie", which means "Son of a B----" in Indian! The personnel of the new crew is as follows: 2nd Lts. James R. Bush, Dayton A. Starnes and Harold B. Dale, F/O Raymond L. Kieffer, S/Sgts. George W. Frank and Russell D. Eddingfield and Sgts. Hipolis P. Kosinski, F.V. Karstens, Charles H. Morris and Pvt. Herbert C. Vochatzer.

.....
A young boy leading a donkey passed by an airforce camp. A couple of soldiers wanted to have some fun by teasing the boy.



"Why are you holding your brother so tight, lad?" one of the men asked.

"So he won't join the airforce," the unabashed youngster replied.

.....

The National Cemetery System

In the United States, development of national cemeteries began as the Civil War was waged, trying and testing the very existence of a young nation.

During the early years of the war, the dead were buried in fields and church yards, or close to the hospitals and prison camps where they died. The number of dead soon exceeded that of any previous conflict on the North American continent.

President Lincoln on July 17, 1862, signed legislation which authorized the creation of 14 national cemeteries, "...for the soldiers who shall die in the service of the country." These cemeteries were the beginning of what is now known as the National Cemetery System. From 1862 to 1973, these cemeteries were operated by the department of the Army. Today the National Cemetery System of the Department of Veterans Affairs oversees 114 national cemeteries in the United States and Puerto Rico. Sixteen others are administered by the Army or the Department of the Interior.

At the end of the Civil War, search and recovery teams visited hundreds of battlefields, churchyards, and plantations where hasty combat interments had been made. More than a quarter of a million remains were disinterred. The reinterment process took five years to complete and resulted in the establishment of 50 additional cemeteries. Not surprisingly, many cemeteries are located in the Southeast, near the sites of Civil War battles and military hospitals.

Just eight years after the end of the Civil War, congress opened the national cemeteries to all honorable discharged veterans of the Union forces.

Legislation passed after World War I made burial in national

cemeteries (then administered by the War Department) available to American veterans of all wartime service. After World War II, Congress expanded eligibility for burial to all veterans of the United States Armed Forces, to American war veterans of allied armed forces and to veterans' spouses and dependent children.

In 1973, congress transferred responsibility for 82 cemeteries from the Department of the Army to the Veterans Administration, now the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). VA already had 21 cemeteries under its jurisdiction associated with its domiciliaries and soldiers homes. VA built seven additional national cemeteries by 1987 and three more were established by 1990. The newest national cemetery, San Joaquin Valley, opened in 1992 to serve veterans of Northern California.

As a nation, we collectively remember these men and women. Famous or obscure, recruit or five-star general, these veterans gave of themselves to protect the ideals of liberty. National cemeteries are enduring testimonials to that appreciation.

ELIGIBILITY

Who Is Eligible for Burial in a National Cemetery?

- Any U.S. Armed Forces veteran of active-duty service whose separation from service was not considered dishonorable.
- Members of the Armed Forces who die in active duty.
- Their spouse, remarried widow/widower, minor children and, under certain conditions, unmarried adult children.

Important Information for Those Desiring Burial in a National Cemetery

Have a copy of your military discharge certificate or DD214 available.

If you don't have these papers, contact the VA Regional Office, Veterans Services Division, nearest you for assistance in establishing eligibility.

After death your family or funeral director should contact the director of the national cemetery where you wish to be buried to schedule a committal service at the cemetery and burial.

The cemetery director will order a grave marker and verify the information to be inscribed on it with your funeral director or family

Copied from the 461st Liberator

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An army major was promoted to colonel and given a new office. On the first day when he arrived, a young soldier was waiting outside the office.

Wanting to impress the soldier, the officer told him to wait a while, as he had an important phone call to make.

The colonel walked into his office, closed the door, and loudly pretended to be speaking on the telephone: "Yes, General, I'll pass the message on to the prime minister at lunch."

He then stepped out the office and turned to the soldier. "Now, what is it you want?"

The young man replied, "I've just come to connect your telephone, sir."

U.S. AIR FORCE



1947 - 1997

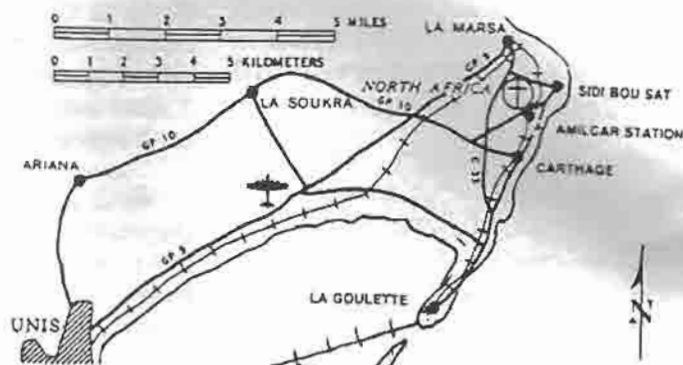
U.S. Cemeteries Overseas - Where 455th B.G. Members Are Buried



SICILY-ROME CEMETERY lies at the north edge of the town of Nettuno, Italy, which is immediately east of Anzio, 38 miles south of Rome. The cemetery can be reached by automobile from Rome along the Via Cristoforo Colombo which runs into Via Pontina (highway 148). Drive south approximately 37 miles and exit at Campoverde/Nettuno. Turn right to Nettuno, continuing 5 1/2 miles to the cemetery. There is hourly train service from Rome to Nettuno where taxicabs can be hired. There are numerous hotels in Anzio and Nettuno.

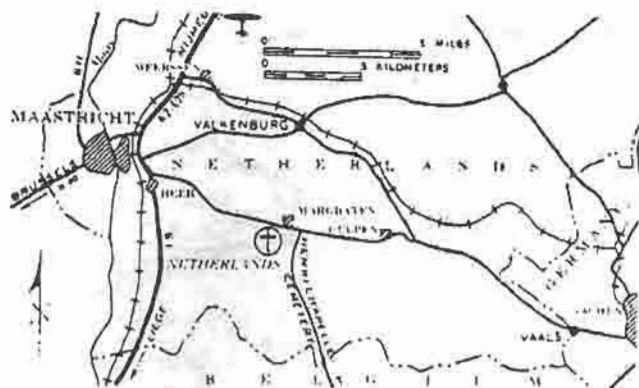
The cemetery site covers 77 acres, rising in a gentle slope from a broad pool with an island and cenotaph flanked by groups of Italian cypress trees. Beyond the pool is the immense field of headstones of 7,862 of our military Dead arranged in gentle arcs which sweep across the broad green lawns beneath rows of Roman pines. The majority of these men died in the operations preceding the liberation of Rome.

At the head of the wide central mall stands the memorial, a building rich in works of art and architecture, expressing America's remembrance of the Dead. It consists of a chapel to the south, a peristyle and a museum room to the north. On the white marble walls of the chapel are engraved the names of 3,095 of the Missing, whose remains were never recovered or identified. The museum room contains a bronze relief map and four fresco maps depicting the military operations in Sicily and Italy. At each end of the memorial are ornamental Italian gardens.



NORTH AFRICA CEMETERY is located in close proximity to the site of the ancient city of Carthage, Tunisia, destroyed by the Romans in 146 B.C., and lies over part of the site of Roman Carthage. It is near the present town of the same name, 10 miles from the city of Tunis and 5 miles from its airport. The "La Marsa" railroad runs from the center of Tunis to Amilcar station, a 5-minute walk from the cemetery; taxicabs are available at Tunis and at the airport. There are good hotel accommodations in Tunis as well as in the vicinity of the cemetery at Carthage, Amilcar and Gammarth.

At this cemetery, 27 acres in extent, rest 2,841 of our military Dead, their headstones set in straight lines subdivided into 9 rectangular plots by wide paths, with decorative pools at their intersections. Along the southeast edge of the burial area is the long Wall of the Missing with its sculptured figures, bordering the tree-lined terrace leading to the memorial. On this wall are engraved the names of 3,724 of the Missing. Most of these, like those who rest in the cemetery, gave their lives in the service of their country in military activities ranging from North Africa to the Persian Gulf. The chapel, and the memorial court which contains large maps in mosaic and ceramic depicting the operations and supply activities of American Armed Forces across Africa to the Persian Gulf, were designed to harmonize with local architecture. The chapel interior is decorated with polished marble, flags and sculpture.

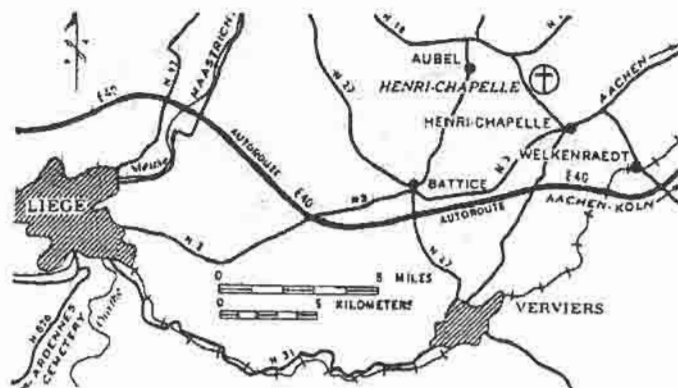


NETHERLANDS CEMETERY, the only American military cemetery in the Netherlands, lies in the village of Margraten, 6 miles east of Maastricht. Maastricht can be reached by train from Paris (Gare du Nord) via Liège, any city in Holland or from Germany via Aachen. A bus service runs from Maastricht railroad station. Maastricht airport with taxicabs is 5 miles to the north; service should be verified.

The tall memorial tower can be seen before reaching the site which covers 65 1/2 acres. From the cemetery entrance the visitor is led to the Court of Honor with its pool reflecting the tower. To the right and left, respectively, are the visitors' building and the museum containing three large, engraved maps with texts depicting the military operations of the American Armed Forces.

Stretching along the sides of the Court are the two Tablets of the Missing on which are recorded the names of 1,723 who gave their lives in the service of their country, but who rest in unknown graves. Beyond the tower containing the chapel is the burial area, divided into 16 plots, where rest 8,302 of our military Dead, their headstones set in long curves. A wide tree-lined mall leads to the flagstaff which crowns the crest.

The light fixture in the chapel and the altar candelabra and flower bowl were presented by the Government of the Netherlands and by the local Provincial administration.



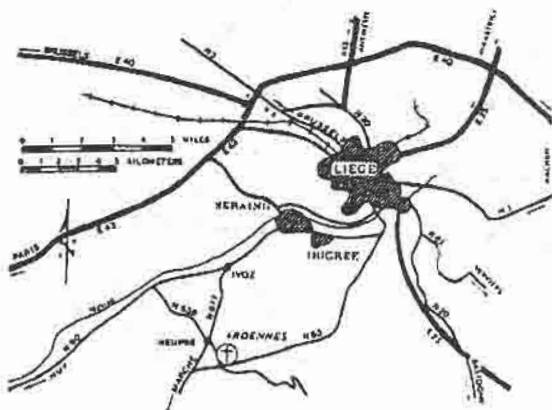
HENRI-CHAPELLE CEMETERY lies 2 miles northwest of the village of Henri-Chapelle which is 4 1/2 miles northwest of the Welkenraedt exit (7 miles from the German border) on the Aachen-Antwerp autoroute. Welkenraedt, the nearest train station with taxicab service to the cemetery, may be reached by train from Paris (Gare du Nord), Brussels and Aachen.

At this cemetery, covering 57 acres, rest 7,989 of our military Dead, most of whom gave their lives during the advance of the U.S. Armed Forces into Germany. Their headstones are arranged in gentle arcs sweeping across a broad green lawn which slopes gently downhill.

A highway passes through the reservation. West of the highway an overlook affords an excellent view of the rolling Belgian countryside, once a battlefield.

To the east is the long colonnade which, with the chapel and museum room, forms the memorial overlooking the burial area. The chapel is simple but richly ornamented. In the museum are two maps of military operations, carved in black granite, with inscriptions recalling the achievements of our Forces.

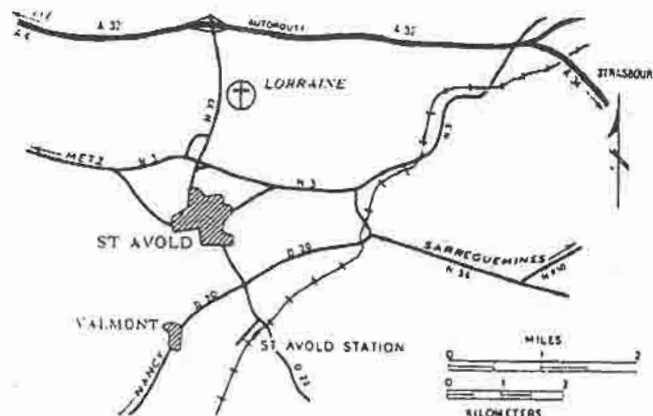
On the rectangular piers of the colonnade are inscribed the names of 450 of the Missing who gave their lives in the service of their country. The seals of the states and territories are also carved on these piers.



ARDENNES CEMETERY is located near the southeast edge of Neupré (Neuville-en-Condroz), 12 miles southwest of Liège, Belgium. The main highway to Marche (N-63) passes the entrance. Liège can be reached by express train from Paris (Gare du Nord) in about 5 1/2 hours, from Brussels and from Germany via Aachen. Taxicabs and bus service to Neuville-en-Condroz are available from Liège. There are several hotels in the city.

The approach drive leads to the memorial, a rectangular stone structure bearing on its façade a massive American eagle and other symbolical sculptures. Within are the chapel, and three large wall maps composed of inlaid marble, one on each wall depicting combat, supply and support activities. Along the outside of the memorial, inscribed on granite slabs, are the names of 462 of the Missing who gave their lives in the service of their country, but whose remains were never recovered or identified. The façade on the north end which overlooks the burial area bears the insignia, in mosaic, of the major United States units which operated in Northwest Europe in World War II.

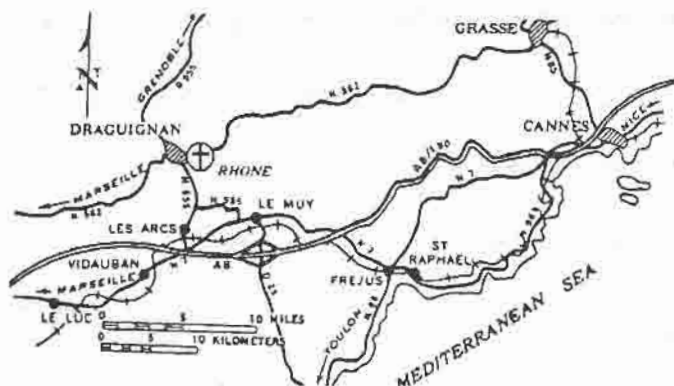
The cemetery, 90 acres in extent, contains the graves of 5,328 of our military Dead, many of whom died in the so-called "Battle of the Bulge." Their headstones are aligned in straight rows which compose the form of a huge Greek cross on the lawns and are enframed by tree masses.



LORRAINE CEMETERY is situated 3/4 mile north of the town of St. Avold (Moselle), France, on highway N-33. St. Avold, which is 28 miles east of Metz and 17 miles southwest of Saarbrücken, can be reached by automobile from Paris (220 miles) via toll autoroute A-4 in about 4 hours. Trains from Paris (Gare de l'Est) to St. Avold station, which is 3 miles from the town, takes about 3 1/2 hours. Taxicabs are available at the station. There are hotels at St. Avold, Forbach, Saarbrücken and Metz.

The cemetery, which covers 113 1/2 acres, contains the largest number of graves of our military Dead of World War II in Europe, a total of 10,489. Most of these lost their lives while fighting in this region. Their headstones are arranged in nine plots in a generally elliptical design extending over the beautiful rolling terrain of eastern Lorraine and culminating in a prominent overlook feature.

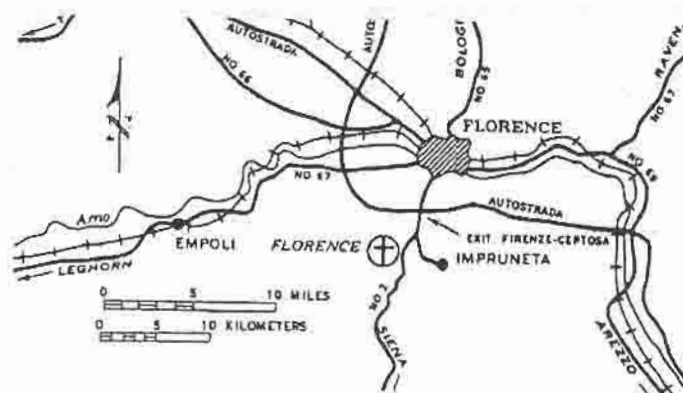
The memorial, which stands on a plateau to the west of the burial area, contains ceramic operations maps with narratives and service flags. High on its exterior front wall is the large figure of St. Nabor, the martyred Roman soldier, who overlooks the silent host. On each side of the memorial, and parallel to its front, stretch the Tablets of the Missing on which are inscribed the names of 444 Americans who gave their lives in the service of their country but whose remains were not recovered or identified. The entire area is enframed in woodland.



RHONE CEMETERY is in the city of Draguignan (Var), France, 28 miles west of Cannes and 16 miles inland. It can be reached from Paris-Marseille-St. Raphaël-Nice by Autoroute A6/A7/A8 (toll highway) by taking the Le Muy exit onto highway N-555 to Draguignan. From Cannes the cemetery may be reached via Grasse on highway N-85 and D-562 or highway N-7 via Fréjus and Le Muy or Les Arcs to Draguignan. Trains from Cannes, Marseille and Paris stop at St. Raphaël where taxicab and bus services are available to the cemetery (20 miles); some trains stop at Les Arcs where bus and taxicab services are also available in Draguignan and neighboring communities.

At this cemetery, 12 acres in extent, at the foot of a hill clad with the characteristic cypresses, olive trees, and oleanders of southern France, rest 861 of our military Dead, most of whom gave their lives in the liberation of southern France in August, 1944. Their headstones are arranged in straight lines, divided into four plots, grouped about an oval pool. At each end of the cemetery is a small garden.

On the hillside, overlooking the cemetery, is the chapel with its wealth of decorative mosaic and large sculptured figures. Between the chapel and the burial area, the great bronze relief map recalls the military operations in the region. On the retaining wall of the terrace are inscribed the names of 294 of the Missing who gave their lives in the service of their country and who rest in unknown graves.



FLORENCE CEMETERY is located on the west side of Via Cassia, about 7 1/2 miles south of Florence. The Rome-Milan autoroute passes near the cemetery; its Certosa-Florence exit is 2 miles to the north. There is excellent train service to Florence from the principal cities of Italy; it is also served by some of the international trains. The "SITA" bus station provides frequent bus service along Via Cassia; there is a bus stop conveniently located just outside the cemetery gate.

The site covers 70 acres, chiefly on the west side of the Greve "torrente." The wooded hills which frame its west limit rise several hundred feet. Between the two entrance buildings, a bridge leads to the burial area where the headstones of 4,402 of our military Dead are arrayed in symmetrical curved rows upon the hillside.

Above, on the topmost of three broad terraces, stands the memorial marked by a tall pylon surmounted by a large sculptured figure. The memorial has two open atria, or courts, joined by the Tablets of the Missing upon which are inscribed the names of 1,409 who gave their lives in the service of their country and who rest in unknown graves.

The atrium at the south end of the Tablets of the Missing serves as a forecourt to the chapel which is decorated with marble and mosaic. The north atrium contains the marble operations maps recording the achievements of the American Armed Forces in this region.

AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

UNIT: 740 Bomb Sq 455 Bomb Gp/H/

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Ser No</u>	<u>Sv State</u>	<u>Death</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Awards</u>
Ardennes American Cemetery						
Pierce John F	Sgt	32213774	NY	26 June 44	D 8 23	AM/2 OLC/ PH
Florence American Cemetery						
Kerker Barton G	Flt O	T-005656	NE	20 Dec 44	F 13 38	PH
Stanley James F	2 Lt	O-811783	NY	19 Mar 44	Missing	AM PH
Lorraine American Cemetery						
Brazelton Charles M	1 Lt	O-2058404	TX	12 Mar 45	A 22 44	DFC AM/2 OLC/ PH
Crowley Charles H	T Sgt	36033933	IL	26 Dec 44	C 8 60	SS AM/2
Gunn Walter L	1 Lt	O-827801	AL	26 Dec 44	D 42 20	DFC PH AM/2 OLC/
Leonard Thomas H	Sgt	17114554	MN	02 Apr 44	B 31 41	AM PH
Sicily-Rome American Cemetery						
Backstrom Ben L	S Sgt	39191641	WA	19 Mar 44	Missing	AM PH
Bastow Robert F	2 Lt	O-691215	MA	19 Mar 44	Missing	AM PH
Beatty Fred T Jr	S Sgt	14149519	NC	19 Mar 44	Missing	AM PH
Blackwell Wilbur D	2 Lt	O-833000	CA	12 Apr 45	J 6 10	PH
Brosz Buddy D	Sgt	15336306	KY	19 Mar 44	Missing	AM PH
Crain Virgil R	S Sgt	37546941	SD	07 Feb 45	H 12 34	AM/OLC/
Dixon John G	T Sgt	14056414	TN	19 Mar 44	Missing	AM PH
Ellerbrook Leroy W	1 Lt	O-666640	MI	19 Mar 44	Missing	AM PH
Hughes Howard F	S Sgt	39554948	CA	19 Mar 44	Missing	AM PH
Kellogg George D Jr	S Sgt	39119949	CA	19 Mar 44	Missing	AM PH
Kilian John	S Sgt	32280410	NY	19 Mar 44	E 4 51	AM PH
Lundwall Albert A	1 Lt	O-681445	CT	19 Mar 44	Missing	AM PH
Mahoney Bruce A	S Sgt	37655902	IA	19 Mar 44	Missing	AM PH
Nila Pete	S Sgt	39280753	CA	20 Dec 44	B 3 30	AM PH
Pidcock James F	1 Lt	O-748236	NJ	19 Mar 44	Missing	AM PH
Rathjen Herman F Jr	S Sgt	18105262	TX	25 Dec 44	A 8 34	AM PH
Stepanian Charles	1 Lt	O-811788	MA	19 Mar 44	Missing	AM PH
Tacy Elmer R	T Sgt	33721833	MD	25 Dec 44	C 14 42	AM/OLC/PH
Veley Richard W	T Sgt	37384992	MO	19 Mar 44	Missing	AM PH
Weissblum Joseph	S Sgt	36827555	WI	28 Feb 45	H 12 59	AM/OLC/

AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

UNIT: 741 Bomb Sq 455 Bomb Gp/H/

Name	Rank	Ser No	Sv State	Death	Location	Awards
Ardennes American Cemetery						
James Daniel P Jr	S Sgt	35580719	IN	27 July 44	A 31 55	AM/3 OLC/ PH
Loud Robert W	S Sgt	31066044	MA	26 June 44	C 6 22	AM/2 OLC
Morris Russell S	S Sgt	32555279	NJ	26 June 44	A 19 5	AM/4 OLC/ PH

Florence American Cemetery

Adams Charles S	1 Lt	O2062621	WI	12 Mar 45	Missing	AM/OLC/ PH
Agostino Albert V	2 Lt	O-722237	NJ	27 Aug 44	D 11 40	PH
Anderson Orin L	Sgt	36783456	IL	17 Nov 44	Missing	AM PH
Chaplin James B Jr	Flt O	T-003772	KS	17 Nov 44	Missing	AM PH
Elkertone Geroge P	2 Lt	O-688691	WI	24 May 44	Missing	AM/4 OLC
Franke Warren L	2 Lt	O-717023	MO	27 Aug 44	C 7 42	PH
Frase Harrison C	Sgt	36243165	WI	17 Nov 44	Missing	AM PH
Irby Donald M	Flt O	T-127857	WV	17 Nov 44	Missing	AM PH
Keen Weston K	S Sgt	19116376	UT	24 May 44	Missing	AM/4 OLC
Kirby Victor E	S Sgt	13120655	TN	24 May 44	Missing	AM/4 OLC
Korzeniewski Edward	T Sgt	36146532	MI	24 May 44	Missing	AM/4 OLC/ PH
Laws Kels	2 Lt	O-1703136	TN	28 Apr 44	E 3 21	AM/2 OLC/ PH
Rhodes Denver H	T Sgt	17071608	MO	17 Nov 44	Missing	AM/2 OLC

Lorraine American Cemetery

Ashley Frank A	S Sgt	35369411	IN	16 June 44	D 13 25	AM/4 OLC/ PH
Bain James K	S Sgt	34700527	AL	30 May 44	J 40 17	AM/3 OLC/ PH
Gross Hugo R	T Sgt	32669776	NY	16 June 44	E 35 22	DFC AM/2 OCL/ PH
Kampa Bernard W	S Sgt	37461572	SD	16 June 44	D 11 25	AM/4 OLC
Loercher Charles H	1 Lt	O-747597	PA	16 June 44	K 48 22	AM/2 OLC
Maxwell Bailey J	Sgt	19117082	ID	27 July 44	E 19 32	AM PH
Mello Arthur R	Sgt	31310961	MA	27 July 44	B 35 10	AM PH
Ruyter Edward W	2 Lt	O-776804	DE	14 Oct 44	D 45 21	AM PH
Shropshire Charles T	Cpl	20234097	NY	14 Oct 44	A 16 23	AM PH
Wurtz Nelson A	1 Lt	O-682937	MO	16 June 44	E 16 36	AM/4 OLC/ PH

Sicily-Rome Cemetery

Ackerman Ernest R	2 Lt	O-735152	NJ	03 Apr 44	J 4 60	AM PH
Kennedy Herman L	Cpl	38371527	TX	06 Apr 44	J 7 69	
Kripplebauer John D	Cpl	33489255	PA	06 Apr 44	G 9 26	
Rickey John W	T Sgt	16016969	IL	06 Apr 44	G 10 26	AM/OLC/

AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

UNIT: 742 Bomb Sq 455 Bomb Gp/H/

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Ser No</u>	<u>Sv State</u>	<u>Death</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Awards</u>
Ardennes American Cemetery						
Amborsk Arthur E	Sgt	42022017	NY	26 June 44	B 34 27	AM PH
Collins Stephen F	Sgt	35729473	KY	27 July 44	C 25 16	AM PH/OLC/
Guidroz David C Jr	Sgt	38488199	LA	27 July 44	C 7 55	AM PH
Jackson Roger W	T Sgt	39195519	WA	21 Apr 44	B 41 11	DFC AM/2 OLC/ PH
Jones Meriwether	1 Lt	O-448999	VA	21 Apr 44	D 11 45	SS AM/2
Lasser Samuel D	Sgt	18118532	TX	27 July 44	C 34 14	AM PH
Mason James B	T Sgt	11084773	MA	26 June 44	C 24 13	AM/5 OLC/ PH
Michael Donald R	Sgt	37676600	IA	26 June 55	B 34 17	AM PH
Montgomery Jack D	2 Lt	O-691149	VA	26 June 44	B 22 16	AM/2 OLC/ PH
Owens Ralph C	2 Lt	O-820044	NY	27 July 44	A 34 54	AM PH
Pritchard Edward J	T Sgt	33298006	PA	26 June 44	A 26 6	AM/5 OLC
Schroyer Ralph W	T Sgt	33574231	PA	17 Aug 44	B 36 29	AM/OLC/ PH
Stengl Louis	2 Lt	O-815583	WI	17 Aug 44	A 37 57	DFC AM/PLC/ PH
Zobel Robert E	2 Lt	O-704256	MN	17 Aug 44	D 11 47	AM PH
Florence American Cemetery						
Charles William S	S Sgt	15339377	WV	20 Apr 44	Missing	AM PH
Duncan Kenneth Jr	Cpl	15303783	IN	29 Dec 44	Missing	AM PH
Fabrizio Felice J	S Sgt	32718196	NY	20 Apr 44	Missing	AM./OLC/
Goss Walter F	2 Lt	O-721704	MA	29 Dec 44	Missing	AM PH
Hamilton Ross A	T Sgt	33399605	PA	20 Apr 44	A 6 24	AM/OLC/PH
Klotz Raymond L	1 Lt	O-717448	PA	05 Jan 45	Missing	DFC AM/3 OLC/ PH
Neil Warren	2 Lt	O-690965	CA	20 Apr 44	D 2 40	AM/OLC/ PH
Webb Charles R Jr	S Sgt	17076406	MO	20 apr 44	F 1 5	AM/2 OLC
Lorraine American Cemetery						
Balkovec James R	S Sgt	3347326	PA	27 July 44	K 26 15	AM PH
Harnish Charles K	Sgt	13068792	PA	27 July 44	D 46 26	AM PH
Mason John F Jr	S Sgt	31298022	MA	27 July 44	B 23 53	AM PH
Sicily-Rome American Cemetery						
Armstrong Homer C	S Sgt	13120850	VA	20 Dec 44	C 8 40	AM/OLC/ PH
Boyle Frederick J	1 Lt	O-2064394	NJ	27 Apr 45	Missing	AM/2 OLC/
Buchanan Harry H	2 Lt	O-2063908	LA	27 Apr 45	Missing	AM
Canter Morrett W Jr	S Sgt	13121522	VA	17 June 44	H 12 10	
Gregersen Norman	T Sgt	17114481	WI	20 Dec 44	E 8 55	AM/OLC/
Haffner John C	Sgt	36687310	IL	27 Apr 45	Missing	AM
Koblitz David C	Sgt	37255047	KS	26 Aug 44	B 3 37	AM PH
Larkin George N	Pvt	18057677	TX	20 Dec 44	J 9 54	AM PH
Lyon Kenneth L	Sgt	11111702	CT	27 Apr 45	Missing	AM
Scramlin James D	1 Lt	O-2062312	DC	27 Apr 45	Missing	AM
Slominski Frederick	2 Lt	O-2022920	IL	27 Apr 45	Missing	AM/OLC/
Epinal Cemetery						
Teisinger Donald R	S Sgt	15076251	OH	26 June 44	Missing	AM/4 OLC/ PH
Rhone Cemetery						
Blanco Adolph J	S Sgt	12168937	NY	17 July 44	D 11 10	AM/3 OLC/ PH/OLC
Morris Herbert W	Flt O	T-62342	MI	17 July 44	A 2 13	AM PH

AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

UNIT: 743 Bomb Sq 455 Bomb Gp/H/

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Ser No</u>	<u>Sv State</u>	<u>Death</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Awards</u>
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Ardennes American Cemetery

Harrigan Joseph J	Sgt	31362398	MA	22 Nov 44	A 38 57	DFC AM PH
Rockwell Francis X	Sgt	13054012	PA	22 Nov 44	A 34 56	AM PH

Florence American Cemetery

Bruni Lawrence A	2 Lt	O-706795	PA	26 Aug 44	D 8 43	DFC AM P
Kleeman Robert F	Sgt	13028086	PA	11 June 44	Missing	AM/OLC/

Henri-Chapelle American

Meyer Dorenz H	2 Lt	O-0925828	OH	13 Oct 44	Missing	AM PH
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Lorraine American Cemetery

Barnett Paul E	Sgt	15084466	IN	27 July 44	A 30 6	AM PH
Bigelow Robert E	2 Lt	O-811520	SD	02 Apr 44	D 7 35	AM PH
Brunsoh Clyde P	1 Lt	O-684263	IN	02 Apr 44	D 8 3	AM PH
Fedore John	Sgt	33055567	PA	22 Nov 44	B 23 17	AM PH
Franzela Paul J	S Sgt	32713395	NY	02 Apr 44	K 40 27	AM PH
Peterson Alfred R	S Sgt	17175599	KS	02 Apr 44	B 24 23	AM PH
Pine Edgar R	Cpl	18117916	TX	02 Apr 44	K 14 23	AM PH
Potucek Eugene D	1 Lt	O-696655	MO	27 July 44	K 15 25	AM/OLC/ PH
Trinko Wesley P	S Sgt	16024326	WI	02 Apr 44	K 42 36	AM PH

North Africa American Cemetery

Castagnoli Louis J J	Cpl	39039791	CA	06 Jan 44	H 13 1	
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Netherlands American Cemetery

Bartholow Ralph	Sgt	35755660	WV	13 Oct 44	Missing	AM PH
Bray George M	Flt O	T-003356	IA	13 Oct 44	Missing	AM PH
Fajans Walter T Jr	2 Lt	O-2272044	NY	13 Oct 44	Missing	AM PH

Sicily-Rome American Cemetery

Beard Thomas W	Sgt	38479805	TX	20 Dec 44	F 12 8	AM PH
Lewis William J	Sgt	33613584	PA	20 Dec 44	B 14 26	AM PH
Markham Thomas J	1 Lt	O-803340	PA	31 May 44	A 11 28	AM/1 OLC/ PH
Talkington Kenneth M	1 Lt	O-725004	AR	20 Dec 44	I 4 68	AM PH
Tier Charles A	Sgt	32314849	NY	10 Dec 44	F 6 5	
Vineyard Louis R	S Sgt	18004612	OK	20 Dec 44	D 5 37	AM PH

Rod Perrill Writes



On page four of the Winter 1995 issue of the Cerignola Connection there is a picture of Major Coons. I have fond memories of him and I want very much to correspond with him. Let me tell you why I want his address and/or phone number.

Major Coons, my co-pilot, Harry Hall, and I would sometimes get together to sing barbershop harmony songs in the 742nd Squadron "O" Club. One of Major Coons' favorite songs was "Love, Oh Love, You Careless Love." Occasionally when the club closed or ran out of cherry brandy and grapefruit juice while our voices were still mellow, Major Coons would invite us over to group quarters where the "medicinal" bourbon was stored. If I remember correctly, the Chaplin joined in with us at times. Then we sang "Rock of Ages" and the "Little Brown Church in the Dell". Those were good times between the missions during the slow months of December and January, 1945.

Jack Stewart was our 1st Pilot. The 8th Air Force did not like us so they sent us to the 15th Air Force in Italy. We were assigned to the 304th Wing, 455 Bomb Group, 742nd Squadron (Lt. Colonel Ambrosen) as a replacement crew. We flew in any plane that was ready and able to fly. Our first mission was on 9/17/44 to Budapest M/Y, Hungary. Our Sperry ball gunner was lost on the Augsburg mission. My 35th mission was to the Prague T/W, Czechoslovakia on 3/25/45. We flew squadron lead on most of our last ten missions. In between those dates we hit Vienna three times, Linz three times and Munich three times. We also hit oil refineries at Kolin, Cz.; Kralupy, Cz.; Blechhammer, Germany; Odertal, Germany; and Moosbierbaum, Germany (2/7/45).

Blechhammer was one of the toughest targets for us. It was an eight hour mission and it was flown on Friday the 13th of October, 1944. When we turned on our final heading from the I.P. to the target, we had a strong headwind instead of the planned strong tailwind. Consequently, instead of a 12 minute bomb run as planned we had about a 20 minute bomb run. It seemed like we would never reach the target. When those German 88mm gunners had that much time to lock-on, you know they did not miss. We thought the flak would never stop bouncing us around and tearing holes in our ship. From my bomb sight position, I saw a nearby B-24 go down in flames. After that I confined my vision to the lead ship's bomb bay. My maps were shredded by flak. The hydraulics were knocked out. An engine was on fire, etc. I heard one of the crew yell, "Let's get the hell out of here." Jack Stewart said, "Shut up and check your parachutes." I said a lot of prayers: something about "Get me back in one piece and I will make my life worthwhile." Then we lost the burning engine, but we were able to put out the fire. We threw out everything we could to lighten our load on the long trip home. We did make it back to Cerignola that day.

The next day, 10/14/44 we were scheduled to hit Odertal O/R, another long mission into Germany. After take off instead of gaining altitude over the Adriatic, we went up over Yugoslavia. On the way up I noticed a small factory belching a black plume of smoke. It looked like a strategic target to me, but no one shot at us from the ground. Later we lost an engine at 13,000 feet. We were unable to keep climbing with the group, so we were forced to abort. I immediately called our pilot, Jack Stewart to tell him about the potential target that I had

observed. After consideration of the possibility that we might get credit for the mission if this "target of opportunity" was something vital to the German war effort, Jack said, "Let's go for it." Jack asked Ed Eber, our navigator to give him a heading to the target. Jack told me that he would try to hold 8,000 feet while I set up the bomb site. At that altitude I couldn't miss. The target was destroyed. Ed Eber marked his map to show the target location.

When we got back to Cerignola, Major Coons was waiting to debrief us. He took copious notes. He told us that he would let us know on the next day regarding our mission and target. Next day when I looked at the mission map on the wall of the 742 Squadron Operations office, I saw a huge black, cardboard bomb and mission description pasted on the map where I had dropped our bombs in Yugoslavia. The description said, "PERRILL (my name) STRIKES MARMALADE FACTORY. This act deprives the Hun of one of his most prized possessions. Thus enemy moral will be lowered, and our victory is assured."

I haven't told many people about my bombing a marmalade factory in WWII, but after 52 years I feel that now the story can be told. Through Major Coons' efforts we got credit for the mission. So you can understand why I want to get in touch with Major Coons again.

On this happy note I'll end the letter and will look forward to receiving Major Coons' address plus the next copy of the Cerignola Connection.

I compliment you and all the others who have made the Connection such a fine newsletter.



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