



CERIGNOLA CONNECTION

455th Bomb Group Association Newsletter

Spring, 2014 Editor: Craig Ward, 813 Peterstow Drive, Euless, Texas 76039
phone: (817) 540-1068 **email:** aphp@tx.rr.com **website:** www.awardphp.com



Message from the President

By
Norman Crum

Some of us were able to attend a wonderful event last October in Phoenix. The 455th was very graciously invited to attend a 15th Air Force reunion hosted by the 451st Bomb Group, which was also attended by representatives from several other groups.

The meetings were well-organized, the speakers were interesting, the exhibits were impressive, and the obvious feelings of friendship and camaraderie were touching.

I'm going to do everything I can to bring my sons to the next meeting which, I hear, will be in Oklahoma City next fall.

Stay tuned for more details.

As fewer veterans remain to tell their stories and to remind us of the sacrifices they made, we members of the "Second Generation" must rely on written accounts of their experiences.

Many of you are lucky enough to have personal histories, diaries, and picture albums to refer to. Most of us need to draw from published accounts found in books, magazines and online.

To those of you who have not yet read Stephen E. Ambrose's book, *The Wild Blue: The Men and Boys Who Flew the B-24s Over Germany*, I highly recommend it.

It chronicles especially the 741st Squadron of the 455th Bomb Group. Ever hear of those guys?

Ambrose is famous as the author of "Band of Brothers" and other WWII accounts. You'll find your time well-spent curled up with this book in hand.

Please allow me to quote at-length from his prologue:

The B-24 was built like a 1930s Mack Truck, except that it had an aluminum skin that could be cut with a knife. It could carry a heavy load far and fast but it had no refinements.

In This Edition

Pages 1 & 2 ... Message from the President

Page 3 ... Contributors

Pages 4-6 ... Final Flights

Page 7 ... Can You Help ?

Page 8 ... Omiakinbak

Pages 9-10 ... Email Roster

Page 11 ... Reflections on Pearl Harbor

**Pages 12-13 ...
The Final Mission**

Page 14 ... Dear Editor

Page 15 ... 2013 Joint Reunion

Page 16 ... Friday Mornings at the Pentagon

Page 17 ... Giant B-24 Model

Pages 18-19 ... Can You Help ?

Page 20 ... Flak or Fighters ?

Pages 21-23 ... 2014 Joint Reunion Information & Registration Forms

Back Page ... Message from the Executive Director

Steering the four-engine airplane was difficult and exhausting, as there was no power except the pilot's muscles. It had no windshield wipers, so the pilot had to stick his head out the side window to see during a rain. Breathing was only possible by wearing an oxygen mask - cold and clammy, smelling of rubber and sweat - above 10,000 feet in altitude. There was no heat, despite temperatures that at 20,000 feet and higher got as low as 40 or 50 degrees below zero.

There were no bathrooms. To urinate there were two small relief tubes, one forward and one aft, which were almost impossible to use because of the heavy layers of clothing the men wore. There were no kitchen facilities, no way to warm up food or coffee, but anyway there was no food unless a crew member had packed a C-ration or a sandwich.

There was no aisle to walk down, only the eight-inch-wide cat-walk running beside the bombs - and over the bomb bay doors - used to move forward and aft. It had to be done with care, as the aluminum doors, which rolled up into the fuselage instead of opening outward on a hinge, had only a 100-pound capacity, so if a man slipped he would break through. The seats were not padded, could not be reclined, and were cramped into so small a space that a man had almost no chance to stretch and none whatsoever to relax. Absolutely

nothing was done to make it comfortable for the pilot, the co-pilot, or the other eight men in the crew, even though most flights lasted for eight hours, sometimes ten or more, and seldom less than six.

The plane existed and was flown for one purpose only, to carry 500 or 1,000 pound bombs and drop them accurately over enemy targets.

It would be an exaggeration to say the B-24 won the war for the Allies. But don't ask how they could have won the war without it.

In this edition of the Cerignola Connection, we continue to tell the story of the men who flew and serviced these awesome war machines. They were brave, intelligent men, and we're awfully lucky that they did their duty and preserved our freedom.

Thoughts About Golf

Don't buy a putter until you've had a chance to throw it.

Never try to keep more than 300 separate thoughts in your mind during your swing.

When your shot has to carry over a water hazard, you can either use one more club or two more balls.

If a pilot is wrong, then just beneath the clouds lies eternity.

- Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Dear Editor,

You and I communicated back in 2011-2012. Thank you again for publishing my letter in the Fall, 2011 Newsletter.

I am still trying to find some pictures of my Dad, or someone who can tell me what duties Dad performed while stationed in Italy.

It was wonderful to receive a call from 455th BG veteran Frank Ferenz, who did know my Dad.

Frank told me that my Dad was a member of the ground crew. I also received a call from veteran Danny Durkee who didn't know my Dad but had read my letter.

I communicated with Carole & Bill Gemmill, and was sad to learn that Bill took his final flight in June, 2011. His Final Flight tribute was published in the same newsletter (Fall, 2011) in which my first email request to you was published. I continue to communicate with Bill's wife, Carole.

Dad was known mostly as *Danny*, as he had a great personality. and I understand Dad loved playing cards with his buddies on pay day !!

Are there any pictures of the ground crew?

I would appreciate any information that may come across your desk.

Thank you.
Jeanne O'Sullivan
Daughter of Diego "Danny"
Salerno
444 Lewis Place
Mineola, NY 11501
516-680-7284

**455TH BOMB GROUP
ASSOCIATION, INC.
P.O. BOX 93095
AUSTIN, TX. 78709-3095**

PRESIDENT

Norman Crum

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR /

TREASURER

Gregory E. Riggs

Col. USAF (Ret.)

P.O. Box 93095

Austin, TX. 78709-3095

SECRETARY

Ted Tronoff

PAST PRESIDENT

Roderick W. Clarke

Col. USAF (Ret.)

DIRECTORS

John F. Davis

Col. USAF (Ret.)

Ormond H. Buffington

T/Sgt. USAAF

Carl Loiocano

T/Sgt. USAAF

Craig Ward

Son, Lt. J. T. Ward

Editor, *Cerignola Connection*

REGISTERED AGENT

John F. Davis

Col. USAF (Ret.)

ASSOCIATION HISTORIAN

John Rohrer

**The 455th Bomb Group Association, Inc. would like
to thank the following Association members for their
generous monetary contributions (*cumulative listing*):**

Taxi (\$25-\$99)

Loraine McGinnis, in memory of Joseph McGinnis

Gerald W. Adams

John Kay McBain

Victor E. Murray

Lloyd C. Kestner

Takeoff (\$100-\$199)

L. Harvey Hewitt

Charles V. Vandoren

Francis G. Hosimer

Charles H. Rosenberg

Elmo J. Henske

Anonymous

Richard C. Skagenberg

Helen A. Worster, in memory of Lt. Col John R. Worster

Dorothy Wood Cloud, in memory of T/Sgt Robert D. Cloud

Bombs away (\$200-\$499)

Karen R. Schoene, in honor of Lt Col Horst R. Schoene

Virginia Corsello, in memory of 1 Lt Anthony (Tony) Corsello

Catherine Spewock, in honor of S/Sgt Andrew Spewock

Robert W. Rohler, in honor of 1Lt Charles William (Bill) Rohler

Mission complete (\$500 or more)

Norman Crum, in memory of George W. Crum

Robert O. Foernsler, in memory of Capt Ed Soderstrom & crew

455TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)

Member Information

Name: _____ Squadron: _____

Spouse's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: (____) _____

E-Mail Address: _____

May we publish your e-mail address in the newsletter? ____Yes ____No

Current members may retain this form and use it to report a future change of address or other contact information. The form can also be given to anyone interested in membership. Please return completed forms to: 455th Bomb Group Association, P. O. Box 93095, Austin, Texas 78709-3095.

Final Flights

Richard Hollrock (740)

died Sept. 23, 2012.

www.hampdengilpatrick.com/obituaries/richard-h-hollrock.html

James Latham (742)

passed away July 11, 2012.

James Daly (741)

took his final flight on November 24, 2013.

Dayton A. Starnes (742)

Lt. Col. (Ret)

took his Final Flight, Feb. 27, 2010, in Charlotte, NC.

Col. Seymour "Sy" Gaynes (743)

Dear Editor,

I am writing to inform you of the passing of my father, Col. Seymour "Sy" Gaynes, Esq., October 7, 2013.

Notification of his passing has been delayed until now, as I can also report that he, and my mother, Jacqueline, will be interred at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors on March 27, 2014.

Sy faced his declining health with dignity and courage, retaining his sense of humor through it all, as even his last word was uttered in jest.

Throughout his long and full life, Sy used his keenly analytical mind, powers of observation, compassion, and his amazing inner discipline to fully enjoy life by learning, understanding, and appreciating all around him, especially during his travels to six continents.

He was a loving husband

to his wife of almost 60 years, Jacqueline Gaynes, a war-bride of French descent, until her passing in 2010. Together, they raised three children with much love, understanding, and patience.

He was commissioned as an Officer, and served as a navigator in the 455th Bomb Group. He was credited with 55 combat missions over Occupied Europe in the B-24 bomber, *Tepee Time Gal*, on which was painted the Star of David by his fellow crew members to demonstrate their solidarity with him, and all Jews, in the struggle against Nazi persecution.

He flew a further 50 combat missions in Korea in a B-26 bomber where he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Force's highest honor, for conspicuous bravery and coolness under fire. During the Cold War he served in the Army Reserve for a further 25 years as a JAG and Civil Affairs officer.

He loved the service almost as much as he loved flying. He flew to every state in the nation, and traveled the world, from the jungles of the Amazon River to the desert of North Africa to the North Pole.

He was stationed in places as diverse as Japan, Italy and Greenland.

Sy practiced law in Chicago, and in his almost 50 year career as a litigator, he tried over 330 jury trials, an unimaginable number today.

Throughout his career, he was known for his honesty, integrity, and for being one of

the nicest guys to ever enter a courtroom. As a lawyer he was known for his generosity of spirit, reliability, comprehensive knowledge, and his abilities as a communicator. After moving to Arizona in 1984, Sy continued to practice law until he retired to Miami, Florida in 2004. Sy returned to Chicago in 2011 and resided there until his death.

Sincerely,
Marc Gaynes (son)
fortdearborn1@yahoo.com

Can You Help?

Dear Editor,

I just discovered your website (www.awardphp.com) and was overwhelmed to find a picture of my late father, Arthur Miller, on it.

He is in the bottom photo on the page in front of the *Multa Bona* (Fall, 2013, Page 19), that was contributed by Paul Deion.

When I saved the photo, it came up as "LaFazia", which is in reference to Ray LaFazia.

I have a rather interesting photo of my dad with Ray LaFazia. I would love to share with his relatives. I am hoping that Paul Deion can direct me to them.

Do you possibly have any contact information for him? Also, I would like to join your Association.

Thank you,
Linda Miller Jennings
ljennings1@gmail.com

Editor's Note:

Paul Deion's phone number:
401-413-4849.

Email: wayback110@cox.net

Final Flights

Maj. Bill L. Disbrow (741) **USAF (Ret)**

peacefully passed away on June 8, 2012, in Wildomar, CA., at age 96.

Bill was born on September 23, 1915 in Oakland, California. He had his first airplane ride in a Jenny as a young boy and decided flying was his passion. He joined the Army Air Corp in 1943, and was flying B24s with the 15th Air Force in World War II, completing 50 missions.

He survived seven missions to the Ploesti Oil Fields in Romania, the graveyard of the 15th Air Force. He also flew in the Korean War, was a test pilot, and squadron commander.

Bill retired after more than 21 years of active duty. He was an investigator, and high school mechanics teacher, creating the first high school aeronautics program for the Los Angeles School District. He was a world-class snow skier and skied into his 90's, and also loved ballroom dancing. He also wrote his autobiography titled, *On the Edge*.

He is survived by his four daughters, ten grandchildren, and 17 great-grandchildren. He loved his family. He will be interred at the Riverside National Cemetery, with full military honors.

Edward C. "Ed" **Soderstrom (741)**

passed away on Thursday, September 27, 2012,

at age 89. 1st Lt. Soderstrom joined the Army Air Corps and piloted the fabled *Yo-Yo* through 35 combat missions, winning the Distinguished Flying Cross.

True to their motto, "We Always Come Back", *Yo-Yo's* crew came home intact without suffering a single casualty.

The exploits of Lt. Soderstrom, Senator George McGovern, and the rest of the 455 Bomb Group's *Vulgar Vultures*, were chronicled in Stephen Ambrose's last book, *The Wild Blue*.

Upon returning from the war, Ed completed his Engineering Degree from Michigan State College. Along with his brother, Chuck Saur, he co-owned Johnson Brothers Hardware in Sparta until the late 1960's.

Always active in the community as a member of the Lions Club, leader of Mamrelund Lutheran Church and a volunteer fireman, Ed served as a town councilman and, then, mayor of Sparta for 20 years.

He was a life long outdoorsman who loved to hunt, fish, play cribbage and enjoy happy hour on the deck of his cottage that he built with his father-in-law.

Joseph P. Dumesnil, Jr. (743)

age 86, took his final flight November 26, 2008.

A Louisville native, he was the son of the late Joseph Peterson Dumesnil and Mary Craig Hobbs Dumesnil.

During the war, he served

in the Army Air Corps as a 1st Lieutenant, and was stationed in Cerignola, Italy.

After enlisting in the Army Air Corps, he married the former Barbara Burge Rodes on February 6, 1944. In 1994, they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

After the war, he joined his father at the family business on Main Street, Carter Dry Goods Company, where he worked until its closing.

In 1959, following a life-long interest in horse racing, he began an apprenticeship as a thoroughbred horse trainer and became a licensed trainer. Mr. Dumesnil was a member of the Louisville Country Club and remained an avid golfer until late in his life.

James E. Bates (743)

passed away in 2006.

Pearl Ramey

widow of Tom Ramey, former editor of *Cerignola Connection*, formerly of Appleton, WI, passed away January 31, 2014, in South Bend, IN.

Born July 2, 1920, she was the daughter of the late Walter and Louise (Schmieder) Mueller. On June 26, 1943, Pearl married Thomas A. Ramey. He preceded her in death. Left to cherish her memory are their three children, nine grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Pearl was a loving and caring wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She was giving to everyone she met and will be

remembered for being a great friend. She was a lifelong avid bridge player. She loved reading, roses, cats, and played tennis into her late sixties. Pearl was a member of Faith Lutheran Church in Appleton, WI, and was active in volunteer services, Red Cross, Put & Take Shop, and Valpo Guild. She lived a long and fulfilled life, and will be missed dearly.

George Lee Liddle, Sr. (742)
took his Final Flight on November 15, 2011, at age 87.

George flew in 49 B-24 missions over German-occupied territory in WWII, was decorated six times, and spent 20 years in the USAF.

George was a pioneer COBOL programmer for NASA & Chief Systems Analyst, retiring in 1982. He spent his final years in Sun City, CA playing pinochle, watching Jeopardy, & traveling to fish for walleyes. A life-long New Deal Democrat, he was always generous, honest, and loyal.

John LaGrotta (740)
passed away on July 9, 2008, at age 83. John was a resident of Guerneville, California.

Stephen E. Miller (742)
took his Final Flight, May 6, 2013.

Eldon G. Amundson (743)
passed away March 22, 2013.

Earl Van Allen (740)

Melvin O. Pyle (740)
died November 21, 2012.

Dr. Stanley Vogelfang (741)

took his Final Flight on March 31, 2014, at the age of 90.

As a navigator, he completed 35 missions, and was twice awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Stan was very proud of this time in his life. He enjoyed his participation in the 455th Bomb Group (H) Association, and was a life member. His plane was *Ten Hits and a Miss*.

A Doctor of Optometry in Houston for 44 years; he was a past president of the Harris County Optometric Association.

His kindness, curiosity, interest in others, easy wit, and sharp intelligence engaged everyone he met in every stage of his life. His lively eyes and quick smile were ever-present.

Stan lost his wife of 65 years, Jeanne, three years ago. He is survived by his three daughters, their spouses, one grand-daughter and one great-grand-daughter, who will miss his wisdom and guidance.

Sincerely,
Ken Giroir
713-516-1583
kdgiroir@comcast.net



Dr. Stanley Vogelfang (741)

Editor's Note:

I have posted this yarn (below) in a previous edition of the newsletter, but it is so profound, I thought I would post it again.

Veterans' Reunions

I now know why men who have been to war yearn to reunite. Not just to tell stories or look at old pictures. Not just to laugh or weep.

Comrades gather because they long to be with the men who once gave their best, men who suffered and sacrificed, men who were stripped raw, right down to their humanity.

I did not pick these men. They were delivered by fate. I know them in a way I know no other person. I have never given anyone such trust. They were willing to guard something more precious than my life. They would have carried my reputation, the memory of me.

It was part of the bargain we all made, the reason we were so willing to die for one another.

I cannot say where we are headed. Ours are not perfect friendships; those are the province of myth and legend.

A few of my comrades have drifted far from me now, only sending back an occasional word. I know that each day some of these fall silent.

Some of the men will stay close, a couple, perhaps, always at hand. As long as I have a memory, I will think of them all, every day. I am sure that when I leave this world, my last thought will be of my family and my comrades...such good men.

As for those of us who have been to war and fought for freedom, our gift of Life has a special meaning. It is a meaning that the protected will never know, and most will never understand.

Can You Help?

Dear Editor,

I am looking for any information about my father, Gregory (a.k.a.: Barney) Eickhoff, M/Sgt. USAAC. I believe that he was attached to the Hq section of the 742nd Bomb Squadron (he could type).

He went to EAMETO on 22 Feb 1944, and returned on 18 Sep 1945. His discharge papers show him as being discharged from the 742nd out of Shelby, Mississippi in October, 1945.

His overseas time coincides with the time that the 742nd was in Italy.

Dad passed away 7 Dec, 1994. We did not find his military papers, DD214, Honorable Discharge and a request for VA assistance for school, until cleaning out our parent's home many years later.

I have requested his military records from the eVetRecs in St. Louis, MO. I am probably hoping against hope because of the 1973 fire.

Cheers,
Greg Eickhoff, Jr.
geick51@sbcglobal.net

Can You Help? Response

Dear Greg,

I have searched my database of names, and I cannot come up with any reference to your father. I was able to find him in the enlistment records maintained at the National Archives, but other than that I am drawing a blank.

His period of service in Italy coincides with the presence of the ground echelon at Cerignola, and in the microfilms of the 455th. There are rosters of personnel on station at various times. But, again, I did not encounter his name in any of these.

Hopefully, when your request is published in the *Cerignola Connection*, it will elicit a response from someone.

Sorry I cannot be of greater help,
John Rohrer
spartacpa@sbcglobal.net

Profound Thoughts

"The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional as to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated by their nation." ~

George Washington

"Nuts!" ~ *General Anthony McAuliffe's response to the demand of surrender from the Nazis during World War II.*

"Wars aren't won by dying for your country. They're won by making the other poor, dumb son of a b***h die for his country." ~

Gen. George Patton.

"American soldiers in battle don't fight for mom, apple pie, or the American flag. They fight for one another." ~

Lt. Col. Harold Moore, Jr.

Can You Help?

Dear Editor,

I am the son of Donald Fredrick Rehkamp. I am researching information on my dad and his service in WWII. I found his picture listed on the 455th BG website.

Is there a way to receive the 455th BG history book PDF file? I would like to get this for my son, who is currently serving in the US Air Force. Thanks.

Dan Rehkamp
drehkampd@gmail.com

Editor's Response:

Dan, just navigate to www.awardphp.com using any web browser.

Click on the "History Book" tab. You can save each of the six chapters of the history book as they appear on the website (***The Beginning, The First 100 Missions, The Second 100 Missions, The Final Missions, The Squadrons, and Roll Call***). The six chapters are already saved onto the website as PDF files.

All you have to do to save them onto your own computer is to place your cursor arrow onto the first page of each chapter, right click the "Save As ..." button, and then indicate which folder and drive you want to save it to.

You can then email them to your son, or place them on a flash drive and take them to your local copy shop to print them out.

Just email me (aphp@tx.rr.com) if you need any more assistance.

Please thank your son for his service to our country.



Dear Editor,

I wanted to show you a print I'm having done for my father, who is 90 years old.

My dad, Robert Caldwell (741), trained with another crew, but flew nearly all of his missions with Capt. Julio Locatelli (741) on this plane.

By the way, I am still working on the movie about Ploesti, and hope to have some definite news very soon.

Here is a link to the movie "trailer" I made:

<http://vimeo.com/66938051>

Kind regards,

Shawn Caldwell

scaldwell@visionbuildersgroup.com

NO MORE

No more hurried wake-up calls. No more oxygen masks. No more facial frost bite.

Massive bomber formations no longer group to fly the flak-filled skies.

The Luftwaffe no longer hunts us. Contrails no longer mark us. Flak shells no longer kill us.

Continental air is quiet. The cold is but a dream.

I have finished my quota. I have flown my missions.

I have only my memories.

455th BG E-mail Roster

Harry W. Anderson (740)
San Antonio, TX.
pomganny@aol.com

Dave Bathie (assoc. 740)
davidbathie@yahoo.com

Joel Beauvais
Son, Raymond Beauvais (741)
jmb1958@att.net

1st. Lt. Thomas A. 'Tom' Bell
840 Kimberly Ct.
Lander, WY 82520
tsalix@yahoo.com

Jack Blum (741)
jblum15677@aol.com

Thomas Boyd
vbrewster@gmail.com

Ormond Buffington (741)
obuffington@charter.net

Mario Capocéfalo (Italy)
mario.capocéfalo@alice.it

Rod Clarke (743)
Alexandria, VA
rory@his.com

Howard Cooper (740)
howcoop@sdlifestyle.com

Robert D. (Bob) Collette (740)
South Pasadena, FL 33707
dotybob@verizon.net

Bill & Joyce Crawford
printsvs@earthlink.net <or>
Westerner01@earthlink.net

Albert E. Cratch (741)
fishn928@cox.net

Janet & Russell Crocker
Janetcrockerfr@cs.com

Norman Crum
President, 455th BG Assoc.
Son of Cpt. George Crum (742)
norman.crum@vpps.net

John Davis (741)
Davisjfdavis@gmail.com

Jack Dekker (743)
jdek457@att.net

Theodore Deppe (741)
tdeppe@indiana.edu

George Defenbaugh
crusin_dordo@hotmail.com

John Devito (assoc.)
jmdevito@verizon.net

Curtis (Curt) Diles, Jr. (740)
cdiles@woh.rr.com

Paul H. Ditchett (742)
vacationstogo@yahoo.com

William M. Doyle (742)
wdoyle5184@bellsouth.net

Robert Emick (741)
elbo2@earthlink.net

William E. Fredrickson
Son, Elwood Fredrickson (743)
1521 Woodgate Way
Tallahassee, FL 32308
wfredrickson@fsu.edu

Marc Gaynes
Son of Seymour Gaynes (743)
Fortdearborn1@yahoo.com

Ann Genge
Daughter of Allen Durkee (743)
fredfox263@yahoo.com

Vervin "Gil" Gilson (741)
gilmarner@aol.com

Lt. Col. R. J. Haney (743)
haneyrj@comcast.net

L. Harvey Hewit (743)
Haverford, PA.
Lhhew@aol.com

Robert Hilgendorf
serendipity@surry.net

Frank Hosimer (741)
fghosr@hotmail.com

Joe Kiernan (741)
280 Middle Holland Rd, #719
Holland PA 18966
(215) 396-7905
jokernan@comcast.net

Erling Kindem (742)
erlingk@aol.com

Viliam Klabnik
vkaquam@zoznam.sk

George L. Liddle (742)
oljorge@mchsi.com

E.J. Ledbetter, Jr. (743)
blayman@gmail.com

John L. Larma (740)
jnlarma@yahoo.com
913-712-8773

Dan Mason
danielboone@satx.rr.com

Mark L. Mason
Son of Robert G. Mason (742)
mlmason82@cox.net



455th BG Email Roster (cont.)

Frank Mastroleo
Masty419@aol.com

Dave Matheson (742)
ihatebugs@cox.net

Mike McFadden (Assoc. 743)
Son-in-Law of Austin Herrity
b24_455thbg@yahoo.com

Jim Merritt
Son of Lt. Jim Merritt (741)
merritt66@verizon.net

Vic Murray (743)
vemurray@CFL.RR.COM

Peter Payant (743)
pbpayant@cox.net

Roland J Pepin
327 Al Harvey Road
Stonington, CT 06378
virpep4400@aol.com

Wesley Powell (740)
wesjulia@gateway.net

Brenda Rayman
Daughter, E.J. Ledbetter (743)
blrayman@gmail.com

John Rohrer
Son of Carl Rohrer (740)
jrohrer@spartacpa.com

Charles H. Rosenberg (741)
chrose3@comcast.net.

Irving (Irv) Rubin (743)
321-514-3445

Sid Schoengold (740)
harsid123@netzero.com

Dr. Gary R. Schoene, son,
Lt Col Horst R. Schoene (743)
gschoene2001@yahoo.com

August R. "Gus" Seefluth (742)
gseefluth@gmail.com

Sgt. John E. Skelton
woodshed704@netzero.net

Michael Spewock
Son of Andrew Spewock (743)
spewocks@verizon.net

Charles E. Stark (740)
carbchar@comcast.net

Ted Stiner
Son of Lt. Theodore Stiner (741)
Ted.Stiner@gmail.com

Angelo Synodis (741)
angiesynodis@charter.net

Julie Summerfield
Daughter of Walter
Summerfield (743)
r1649@mac.com

Ted Tronoff (742)
TVTRONOFF@cs.com

John R. Worster (742).
haw72@aol.com

Craig Ward
Editor, *Cerignola Connection*
Son of Lt. J. T. Ward (740)
aphp@tx.rr.com

Leland L. Young (743)
llyoung@netzero.net
Paul A. Young (741)
pyoung04@tampabay.rr.com



Dear Editor,

My father, William Clinton Madaris, was a member of the 454th Bombardment Group, 737th Squadron. Though he died in 1993, my mother Ida Madaris continued to receive your newsletter for many years, and I happened upon a 2004 issue recently when going through some old mementoes.

My husband and I have the good fortune to be planning a retirement trip to Italy in the fall of 2014, and in addition to the usual tourist spots, I'd like to walk in his steps at Cerignola.

My father's time in Italy (Dec., 1943 through July, 1945) held some of the best memories of his life. He worked as a photo interpreter during his time in service. He talked about trading his ration of cigarettes (non-smoker) on a regular basis to local Italian families in exchange for a home-cooked meal. He picked up enough of the language to enjoy his interactions, and saw the time away from base as a treat, though he also spoke with high regard of his buddies.

In some of his notes, I learned that his commanding officer was Col. H. D. Aynsworth.

Is there any information you can give me that would help make this trip a meaningful connection to my father?

I would so appreciate any help. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Debra Madaris Efird
704-455-2510
debra_efird@yahoo.com

Reflections on Pearl Harbor

Sunday, Dec.7th, 1941

Admiral Chester Nimitz was attending a concert in Washington D.C. He was paged and told there was a phone call for him.

When he answered the phone, it was President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on the phone. He told Admiral Nimitz that he (Nimitz) would now be the Commander of the Pacific Fleet.

Admiral Nimitz flew to Hawaii to assume command of the Pacific Fleet. He landed at Pearl Harbor on Christmas Eve, 1941.

There was such a spirit of despair, dejection and defeat--you would have thought the Japanese had already won the war.

On Christmas Day, 1941, Adm. Nimitz was given a boat tour of the destruction wrought on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. Big sunken battleships and navy vessels cluttered the waters every where you looked.

As the tour boat returned to dock, the young helmsman of the boat asked, "Well Admiral, what do you think after seeing all this destruction?"

Admiral Nimitz's reply shocked everyone within the sound of his voice, Admiral Nimitz said, "The Japanese made three of the biggest mistakes an attack force could ever make, ***or God was taking care of America.***"

"Which do you think it was?"

Shocked and surprised, the young helmsman asked, "What do you mean by saying the Japanese made the three biggest mistakes an attack force ever made?" Nimitz explained:

Mistake #1:

The Japanese attacked on Sunday morning. Nine out of every ten crewmen of those ships were ashore on leave. If those same ships had been lured to sea and been sunk--we would have lost 30,000 men instead of 3,000.

Mistake #2:

When the Japanese saw all those battleships lined in a row, they got so carried away sinking those battleships, they never once bombed our dry docks opposite those ships.

If they had destroyed our dry docks, we would have had to tow every one of those ships to America to be repaired. As it is now, the ships are in shallow water and can be raised. One tug can pull them over to the dry docks, and we can have them repaired and at sea by the time we could have towed them to America.

I already have crews anxious to man those ships.

Mistake #3:

Every drop of our fuel in the Pacific theater of war is in above-ground storage tanks five miles away over that hill.

One attack plane could have strafed those tanks and destroyed our fuel supply.

That's why I say the Japanese made three of the biggest mistakes an attack force could make, ***or God was taking care of America.***

HE IS MY DOG

He is my other eyes that can see above the clouds; my other ears that hear above the winds. He is the part of me that can reach out into the sea. He has told me a thousand times over that I am his reason for being; by the way he rests against my leg; by the way he thumps his tail at my smallest smile; by the way he shows his hurt when I leave without taking him. (I think it makes him sick with worry when he is not along to care for me.)

When I am wrong, he is delighted to forgive. When I am angry, he clowns to make me smile. When I am happy, he is joy unbounded. When I am a fool, he ignores it. When I succeed, he brags. Without him, I am only another man. With him, I am all-powerful. He is loyalty itself. He has taught me the meaning of devotion.

With him, I know a secret comfort and a private peace. He has brought me understanding where before I was ignorant. His head on my knee can heal my human hurts. His presence by my side is protection against my fears of dark and unknown things. He has promised to wait for me... whenever... wherever - in case I need him. And I expect I will - as I always have.

HE IS MY DOG

Dog's Bedtime Prayer

Now I lay me down to sleep,
The king-sized bed is soft and deep.
I sleep right in the center groove,
My human beings can hardly move.
I've trapped their legs, they're
tucked in tight,
And here is where I pass the night.

No one disturbs me or dares intrude,
Til morning comes and "I want food!"
I sneak up slowly to begin,
And nibble on my human's chin.
For morning's here, it's time to play,
I always seem to get my way.

So thank you Lord, for giving me,
This human person that I see.
The one who hugs me and holds me tight,
And shares their bed with me at night.

Amen!

The Final Mission

Description of the documentary project

During the Second World War, 56 American bombers and 15 fighter planes from the 15th Air Force (USAAF) were shot down over the territory of Slovakia, which at the time was a satellite of Nazi Germany.

During their raids on strategic targets, mainly in Austria and Poland, these bombers were hit by artillery shells. Some of them blew up in the air, ejecting their aircrews, while others were shot full of holes, forcing their pilots to attempt emergency landings.

Many air crews were killed by shrapnel while still in flight. In many cases, crewmen came to the aid of their wounded, bleeding comrades and helped them to bail out of burning planes before they crashed.

The dead crewmembers were buried by Slovaks in local cemeteries. The local population expressed great sympathy towards the young Americans, which infuriated the Germans.

Those crewmembers who survived being shot down were either captured by the Germans, or escaped. Many of the latter group were concealed and fed by Slovaks, who in doing so risked their lives. There were some Slovaks, however, who betrayed them to the Germans.

In order to save the airmen, a mission under the Office of Strategic Services led by Lt. James H. Green was sent

to Slovakia (following the outbreak of the Slovak National Uprising in 1944) to get the young men back to Italy.

Not all of the men were able to be evacuated in time. The Uprising against the Germans was violently suppressed within two months, forcing the Americans to flee into the mountains and hide out with hundreds of rebels, impoverished civilians, and persecuted Jews.

The Germans were everywhere. The Americans were forced to flee to ever higher ground. They suffered bitter cold on their marches through snow storms, and they slept under the naked stars. Driven almost crazy with hunger, they survived on raw horse meat.

For some time, they traveled with the partisans. Whenever the Germans took them by surprise, they managed to escape the trap, but they lived in constant fear of being captured. They sent messages to Bari, Italy, begging for assistance, food, and warm clothing, but no aid arrived due to the bad weather.

Soon they were on the verge of collapse. They were filthy, infested with fleas, exhausted beyond endurance, and suffering from dysentery and frostbite. It was only a matter of time until they fell into a trap. A special unit of the Abwehr was hunting them as a "trophy capture".

In the end, the flyers decided to give themselves up, because they knew the

Germans would have no mercy on Americans from the OSS.

Lt. James Green's OSS group was finally captured on December 26, 1944. On Hitler's orders, they were cruelly tortured, and then executed, with a bullet in the back of the head at the Mauthausen concentration camp.

The fates of those Americans in Slovakia represent a stirring tale of a struggle for survival in an unknown country, and a struggle with fear and desperation that took all of their strength. It tells of their refusal to admit the hopelessness of their situation, as well as of their resolve to confront it with dignity and self-respect.

The last surviving airmen from that original group tell their stories in the documentary film. For them, it's as if the war never ended. It has been with them all their lives.

The film also tells of the lifelong friendships between the Americans and the Slovaks, whose consciences, unlike many others, would not allow them to stand by and let these young airmen die.

They came to their aid, even though they didn't know them. For their courage, they were thanked after the war by General Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Thank you.

Dusan Hudec, Film Director

The Final Mission

Email: dusan.hudec14@gmail.com

Link to Movie Trailer:

<http://vimeo.com/74353684>

** see next page for status of the film*

The Final Mission

Documentary Film Status

The idea to produce an independent documentary on the American flyers came to my mind in 2011.

In early 2012, our film crew visited and interviewed the 15th US Air Force flyers, the ones who bailed out from crippled planes before the bombers crashed in Slovak territory.

Since then, I have been contacting Slovak and Czech organizations, universities, private companies, all the Slovak Honorary Consuls in the USA, 15th Air Force bomb groups, Museums, grant and funding sources, etc.

My intention is also to visit the National Archives in College Park, MD and National OSS Museum in Falls Church, Va. in early 2014 to find photos and film footage for our documentary (for example, bombing missions of the US Air Force in the European theatre, and documents related to OSS activity in Slovakia).

Can you or your readers provide us some photos, or film footage / film reels / videos that your bomb group made in Italy, or during the bombing missions, which could be used in the film?

When the film is finished, we'll offer you a DVD copy for your cultural and educational purpose.

I plan to complete production in 2014, and broadcast our film on Slovak

Television in August, 2014, at the anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising.

I also plan to find the way to put our documentary on the air, on some American PBS televisions (especially in the cities where the film participants live), and also present it at the places where majority of Slovak and Czech population had settled in the USA. (Pennsylvania, Illinois, Florida, Texas).

The film will be a part of the continuing exhibit at the United States Military and Air Force museums in Ohio, Florida, California, Texas, Georgia, Washington, and Colorado.

I believe the film is important for the U.S. / Slovak relations today. They could be enhanced by a broader audience having knowledge of the fate of the young American flyers struggling for survival in an unknown country.

This documentary can help to build new bridges of understanding between Slovaks and Americans.

The American flyers have not been forgotten. Slovaks pay respect to fallen young Americans who didn't survive plane crashes. Many small crosses were built in honor of their sacrifice, at the places where they perished.

Thank you.

Dusan Hudec, Film Director

The Final Mission

Email: dusan.hudec14@gmail.com

Link to Movie Trailer:

<http://vimeo.com/74353684>

Can You Help?

Dear Editor,

Can you please help me find additional info on my father, Thomas C. Wilcox (deceased) 455th Bomb Group, 740th Squadron. He was shot down September 12, 1944, returning from the 115th mission of the 740th Squadron, flying out of San Giovanni Airfield.

The target that day was the airfield at Lechfeld, near Augsburg. This airfield had an assembly plant for German ME-262 jet fighters.

He crash-landed in the dry Tagliamento riverbed, near the village of Cornino, Italy.

My father was a POW for the last 9 months of the war at Stalag Luft 1, until liberation by the Russians.

I would like to find any and all info available, i.e. "nose art" (B-24 H Ser.#41-28939), etc.

Thank you in advance,
Mark Wilcox
wilcox-mg@sbcglobal.net

Can You Help? Response

Mark,

It occurred to me that I hadn't checked for any surviving crew. I'm still checking, but I found an entry by George W. ("Bill") Lehmeier on the American Ex-POW Website that includes a crew photo and contact information:

<http://www.axpow.org/lehmeiergeorge.htm>

It might be worth investigating!

Dave Ungemach
davetw1@cox.net

Dear American friends,

I have had a very pleasant, but busy, summer working on my book, and I have now completed the research for 21 chapters.

A few weeks ago, I finished researching the ordeal former President George H. W. Bush endured in the Pacific while over the Japanese island of Chichi Jima.

Because I had interviewed Sen. George McGovern, the 1972 Democratic party presidential candidate, I wanted to include a story about a prominent Republican. I thought including both Sen. McGovern's and President Bush's story in the book would show how united America was during World War II.

During the past few months, I have spent a lot of time learning about the publishing business in the United States. With my wife Jane Ann, I attended two writing conferences in New York City. The information I learned was certainly encouraging.

While in New York, I went twice to see the aircraft carrier *U.S.S. Intrepid* at the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum. The *Intrepid* is magnificent, and I can say that anyone interested in naval aviation would enjoy seeing it. I particularly wanted to see it because several of the veterans I have interviewed flew from carriers.

Readers in the Pensacola area might remember that the Pensacola News Journal published a story I wrote about Jack Raiser, who

was shot down over the Netherlands and became a POW at Stalag Luft III. Mr. Raiser told me when I interviewed him that his partner on the Forced March near the end of the war was Nick Ursiak, and Mr. Raiser wanted me to check some of the information he gave me about Mr. Ursiak.

Sadly, Mr. Raiser died last year, but, after a little research, I managed to contact Mr. Ursiak's family. I am delighted to be able to include some information about Mr. Ursiak in the book version of the story.

I was also very fortunate to be able to contact Margaret (Cutforth) Johnson, the niece of Charles "Cliff" Cutforth, who took a famous World War II photo. Mr. Cutforth took the photo of the *All American*, a plane that was flying despite being almost split in two. I interviewed Ralph Burbridge, a member of the *All American* crew, but I never expected to be able to contact the family of the airman who took the photo. Sam Silvey, a nephew of Mr. Burbridge, helped me to get in touch with Ms. Johnson.

I thought I had enough stories for my book, but just a few days ago, Peter Chamberlain, a Massachusetts resident, sent me some information about Robert Patterson, a member of a crew that was shot down over the English Channel.

I have a story in my Canadian book about a plane that ditched in the Channel, but I have had no similar story for the

American book.

I do now !

Mr. Patterson's daughter, Lynn, has said she will help me. Yes, I will always find time to research and write one more great story.

Cheers from Canada,
Ian Darling,
Website: amazingairmen.com
author@amazingairmen.com

Dear Editor,

I would like to know if there are any more *Vulgar Vulture* pins remaining in your inventory. My dad, T/Sgt. Adam H. Czarnatowicz, served in the 455th BG (473), as a top turret gunner. He passed away in 2010.

I would like to purchase four sets of the pins. I know my brother, sister and son would like to have them, as would I.

Bob Czarnatowicz
BOBCZAR@aol.com

Dear Bob,

I do have 455th Bomb Group pins left. However, I'm out of the individual squadron pins. Ordering several at once to be sent to the same address drops the mailing costs a bit.

If you want four pins sent to a single address, please send a check for \$30, payable to 455th Bomb Group Association, P.O. Box 93095, Austin, TX 78709.

I'm delighted that you're interested in the heritage of the 455th BG.

Sincerely,
Greg Riggs, Executive Director
455bg-h@austin.rr.com

Editor's Note:

The following photos were provided by Jim O'Boyle, Jr., son of James O'Boyle (743).

Jim and his wife attended the October, 2013 reunion of the 15th AF in Phoenix, AZ. Bomb Groups represented at the reunion were the 99th, 301st, 451st, and 455th Bomb Groups.

Thank you, Jim, for sending these pictures for our readers to enjoy.



James O'Boyle (743)



Dear Editor,

I was thrilled to see your 2010 edition of the *Cerignola Connection*.

Website: www.awardphp.com

My Father was Clyde J. Kennedy, a crewmember of the *Leakin Deacon* that flew countless missions in WWII. Although Dad died in 1956 @ 32 years of age, when I was 2 years old, I was excited to see the picture of the *Leakin Deacon* with its crew in this publication (see picture below).

One member of that crew is still alive (E.J. Ledbetter). I have had communication with his daughter, who has sent me some pics of my Father. These are treasures for me! Do you have any other info or pics available, such as the one in this publication? I would be so appreciative of anything your group might provide?

Sincerely,
Danny Kennedy
dkennedy@rocktenn.com

Friday Mornings at the Pentagon

They pass down this corridor of officers and applause, and then meet for a private lunch, at which they are the guests of honor, hosted by the Generals. Some are wheeled along. Some insist upon getting out of their chairs, to march as best they can with their chin held up, down this hallway, through this most unique audience. Some are catching handshakes and smiling like a politician at a Fourth of July parade. More than a couple of them seem amazed and are smiling shyly.

There are families with them as well: the 18-year-old war-bride pushing her 19-year-old husband's wheelchair and not quite understanding why her husband is so affected by this. The boy she grew up with, now a man, who had never shed a tear is crying. The older immigrant Latino parents who have, perhaps more than their wounded mid-20s son, an appreciation for the emotion given on their son's behalf. No man in that hallway, walking or clapping, is ashamed by the silent tears on more than a few cheeks. An Airborne Ranger wipes his eyes only to better see. A couple of the officers in this crowd have themselves been a part of this parade in the past.

These are our men, broken in body they may be, but they are our brothers, and we welcome them home. **This parade at the Pentagon has gone on, every single Friday, all year long, for more than four years.**

Editor's Note:

Did you know this ? I didn't, until recently. Perhaps the American media should do their job, and let the American people know of this parade honoring our wounded warrior heroes ... (information confirmed by snopes.com)



Dear Editor,

The model in these two pictures was designed and built by a gentleman named Mike Kottemann of Louisiana, whose father was a B-24 instructor pilot.

It has a wingspan of 108", and is powered by two Fox 35 engines for control line flying.

Mr. Kottemann uses the plane as a teaching tool for a scout-like group called the *Royal Rangers*.

He was so gracious as to place the 455th marking on the tail, when I mentioned that my grand uncle had flown with the unit.

The model does not have landing gear and takes off from a dolly and belly lands in. His 22 year old daughter (see picture) has actually flown the model, and she is a small lady!

She says it is more fun to fly than a monkey with a chain-saw !

He is wondering if his father might have trained B-24 pilots of the 455th.

Meanwhile, I am looking for any available information on my grand uncle, T/Sgt. Aime Boucher (742).

Thank you for your help.

All the best,

Mike Boucher

blubaron@optonline.net

therefore, some of the 455th Bomb Group pilots could have been his students.

He told me the students called him *Iron Ass*, because he was hard on them. He would tell them ...

"I'm going to make you THINK I will kill you, but when you get over Germany, they WILL kill you".

If any of the veterans did fly with him, I'd like to know.

He also told me he didn't like doing high-altitude work, because of the mask.

He would instead swap out the duty of low-altitude work that other instructors didn't like.

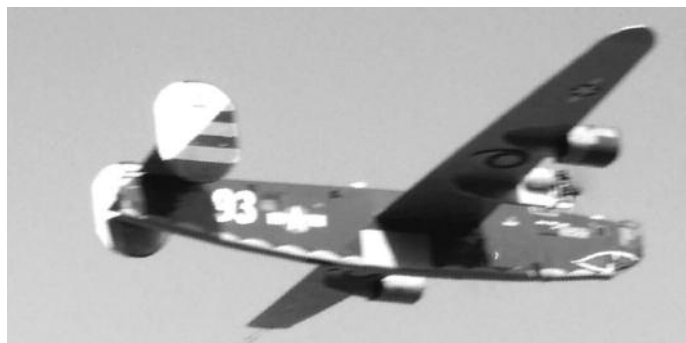
Sincerely,

Mike Kottemann

Editor's Note:

Please email your editor at aphp@tx.rr.com if you can help Mike with any information.

Angelina Kottemann, below, (call sign is *The Lt. Col.*) is only 5 feet tall. She is 60 inches tall, and the plane is 67 inches tall, to give you some reference of the size of this aircraft.



Dear Editor,

My dad, who passed away June 4th, 2013, was a B-24 instructor pilot at Smyrna, Tenn.

All of his students would have gone to Europe, and

Can You Help?

Dear Editor,

I am doing some research on my brother, 2nd Lt, Harold T. Bridgman, Jr. #0-718998, navigator, who was lost on July 27, 1944, along with his crew on a bombing raid over Budapest. He was with the 15th Air Force, 455th Bomb Group, 742nd Bomb Squadron.

I was 12 when we received the telegram that he was missing in action, and subsequently presumed killed in action. The only survivor was the bombardier, 2nd Lt. William R. Hiatt, #0-701602 of Bartlesville, OK.

I have the names of the other members of the crew. The remains of the plane were subsequently located, and the unidentified remains were relocated to a common grave in Santa Fe.

My parents did not speak about the matter much, as my mother believed that "Tommy" had somehow survived and one day would show up.

I am eager to learn as much as I can about him and his crew, their experience in Southern Italy, the targets for their missions, etc.

It is my understanding that this was one of the last missions for this crew prior to the standard leave. Their own plane was not operative (as I recall it was named *White Christmas*). This mission was in a different B-24, and the crew was not his usual crew. However, they pulled together.

The old story, as I remember, was that the plane had developed engine trouble. The plane dropped out of formation, making it vulnerable, and an easy target. One report states that they were attacked by a Nazi fighter, and exploded, just prior to arrival at their target.

The only one to bail out was the bombardier, who was injured. He was captured and taken to a POW hospital, where the Hungarian pilot of the plane that shot them down came to visit him, and to report that he saw no other parachutes.

I do not know the truth of this account. Nor am I aware if Lt. Hiatt recovered, nor what happened to him thereafter.

Tommy was born in China, where our parents were missionaries, and where five of their seven children were born.

I have recently been doing research on my father's life and work, and found in our denomination's archives, in Philadelphia, my father's papers, including papers concerning Tommy.

They include correspondence from the War Department regarding Tom's status, and his relocation to Santa Fe. They also included some of his personal effects, including his wallet with pictures of several of our family, and his girlfriend.

While I've been able to access a little data on the events surrounding his last mission, it has whetted my appetite for much more.

I just today found your website (www.awardphp.com),

and have downloaded many of the *Cerignola Connection* newsletters.

Is it possible for you to locate more details for me, and possibly pictures of the crew and / or his plane, etc.?

Gratefully,
David Bridgman
3321 Ashmount Drive
Orlando, FL 32828
dbridgman1932@gmail.com
Phone: (407) 382-3673
Cell: (407) 484-2965

Can You Help? Response

Dear David,

Do you have a copy of the Missing Aircrew Report (MACR)? Let me know if you need a copy.

I've attached a photo with him in front of *Glammer Gal* (this was not the plane he was on that day). See photo Page 19.

Back Row left to right:

Captain William C. Riddel; 1st Lt Henry C. Dunekack; 2nd Lt William R. Hocter; 2nd Lt Harold T. Bridgman Jr.; and 1st Lt Joseph A. Weiger Jr.

Front Row left to right:

Sgt Sam D. Lasser; Sgt David C. Guidroz; Sgt Stephan F. Collins; S/Sgt John R. Calvanese; Sgt Charles B. Bingham; and Sgt. B. Seaman.

The plane they were flying on 27 July 44 was a B-24H named *Raleigh H* (Serial # 42-94993). Unfortunately, I don't think I have a photo of that plane, but I'll double check. I don't have anything on an aircraft named *White Christmas*, but I'll check on that, also.

One suggestion would be to order the 293 File, a.k.a. Individual Deceased Personnel File (IDPF) for both your brother and 1st Lt Dunekack. These files usually have much more information about the loss and subsequent recovery of the remains. It's been several years since I've ordered one, but here are the instructions:

**293 file, Individual
Deceased Personnel File**

If the veteran you are researching was Killed in Action, you will definitely want to obtain this file. This file documents the activities of the Graves Registration Command and the Army to locate, identify, and provide a final resting place for the deceased.

US Army Human Resources Command
1600 Spearhead Division
Avenue, Dept 107
Fort Knox KY 40122
or via email (preferred):
hrc.foia@conus.army.mil

The requester should cite the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and provide, when known, full name of the individual, service number, and date of death (or whether the death was during WWII, Korea, or Vietnam).

We provide electronic copies of the IDPF in most instances in order to save money on reproduction and mailing. We do not charge for our service since the files are important links to the past and may aid in genealogical

research. We scan every file we retrieve from Archives so as to have a readily available copy for immediate release to a subsequent requester.

With all of the federal budget cuts, they may take some time to respond, but it is usually well worth the wait.

More to follow
(hopefully),
Dave Ungemach
davetw1@cox.net



More Thoughts About Golf

The Lord answers my prayers everywhere, except on the golf course.~ Billy Graham

If you watch a game, it's fun. If you play at it, it's recreation. If you work at it, it's golf.~ Bob Hope

While playing golf today, I hit two good balls. I stepped on a rake.~ Henny Youngman

**Gen. James Mattis, known to his troops as "Mad Dog Mattis,"
is retiring after 41 years of military service in the Marines.**

Here are some of his more famous quotes ...

"I'm going to plead with you, do not cross us. Because if you do, the survivors will write about what we do here for 10,000 years."

"Demonstrate to the world there is 'No Better Friend, No Worse Enemy' than a U.S. Marine."

"There are hunters and there are victims. By your discipline, cunning, obedience and alertness, you will decide if you are a hunter or a victim."

"No war is over until the enemy says it's over. We may think it is over, we may declare it is over, but in fact, the enemy gets a vote."

Editor's Note:

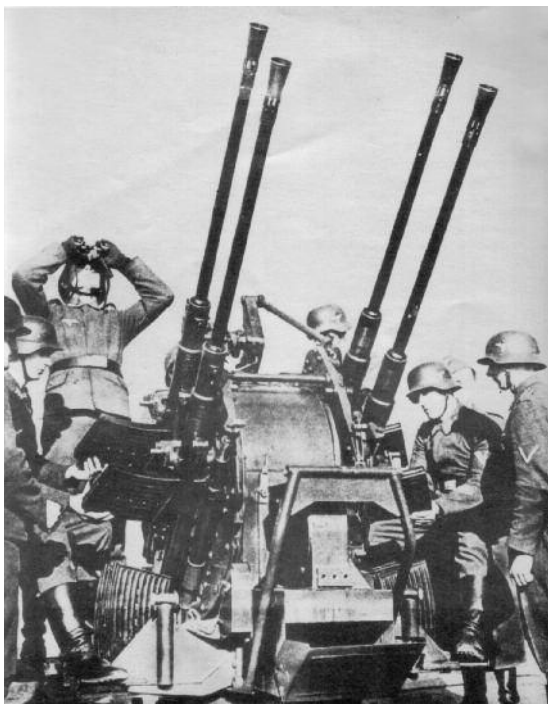
Last year, I received a computer disc with several dozen color photos that were taken by Major Lloyd M. Griffin (742) during his time in Italy.

Major Griffin's son, Wayne Griffin (email: wayne.griffin@att.net) generously sent these color photos to me, and said it would be ok to publish some of them.

Color photography was rare in WWII. I only wish I could publish these photos in color for this newsletter, but it cannot be done for several reasons. That's a shame, because the color resolution of these original photos is quite striking.

The photos as presented here are a little small, and I have to keep them small due to the resolution requirement of the print process.

I will publish several of these interesting photos in this, and in future editions, of the *Cerignola Connection*.



Editor's Note:

Please see the picture (at left) of the German Vierling 2cm flak gun. This gun, along with the German 88 heavy 20mm flak gun, was devastating to many allied bombers during WWII.

When I was quite young, my father (Lt. J. T. Ward, 740th squadron) commented that he dreaded flak even more than German fighters. His reasoning was that the bomber crews could fight back against the fighters, but the damage wrought by flak was completely random, and the bomber crews were helpless to stop it.

I was quite young when my father spoke about this, and I might be remembering his comments wrong. As editor of the *Cerignola Connection*, I would like to hear from any of our readers who have a similar or different take on the subject of "Flak or Fighters ... Which were the more fearsome German weapons?"

Please email your comments to aphp@tx.rr.com.



**Joint Reunion of the
451st and 455th Bombardment Groups (H) WWII
With other 15th Air Force Units
18th-21st, September 2014**



Wyndham Garden Oklahoma City Airport Hotel, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Reunion Activities

Thursday, 18th September

1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Early Registration

Friday, 19th September

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Registration

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Optional Tour* - Tinker AFB & 45th Infantry Museum with Lunch

6:00 PM - 9:30 PM

Evening Sit Down Dinner featuring 451st & 455th members,
informal speeches and entertainment

- 6:00 PM - Cash Bar *
- 7:00 PM - Sit Down Dinner

Saturday, 20th September

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Optional Tour* - Oklahoma City & National Cowboy and Western
Heritage Museum with Lunch

6:00 PM - 10:30 PM

Gala Banquet including 451st, 455th, 461st & 484th members

- 6:00 PM - Cash Bar*
- 7:00 PM - Sit Down Dinner

Sunday, 21st September

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Memorial Service

12:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Optional Tour* - Oklahoma National Memorial & Museum with
Lunch

6:00 PM - 9:30 PM

Optional Dinner

Registration Fee: \$100 per person (*Registration fee does not include the cash bars or the optional bus tours on Friday, Saturday or Sunday or dinner on Sunday)

Attire: Casual dress for all events with the exception of the Saturday Night Gala Banquet for which sport coat with or without tie is requested.

Travel: Hotel provides a free airport shuttle service as well as free parking for quests traveling by automobile and a free breakfast buffet.

Hotel:

Wyndham Garden Oklahoma City Airport Hotel
2101 South Meridian Avenue, Oklahoma City, OK 73108
Hotel Direct Line: 1-405-685-4000

Print your return address in the space provided on the right. Please print clearly in dark ink.

Return To:

From:

Winson Jones	
451 st Bomb Group	
18502 NW Montreux Dr	Telephone No.
Issaquah, WA 98027	E-mail:

Joint Reunion 15th Air Force Bomb Groups WW II
Oklahoma City Reunion: September 18th – 21st, 2014
Registration Form For 451st & 455th Bomb Group Attendees

Basic Registration Fee: Includes Fri & Sat Dinners	_____ X \$100.00 per person =	\$
Optional Bus Tour 9/19: Tinker AFB & Lunch	_____ X \$48.00 per person =	\$
Optional Bus Tour 9/20: Cowboy Museum & Lunch	_____ X \$62.00 per person =	\$
Optional Bus Tour 9/21 National Memorial & Lunch	_____ X \$52.00 per person =	\$
Optional Sunday Dinner 9/21	_____ X \$29 per person = (London Broil or Grilled Pork)	\$
	_____ X \$21 per person = (Penne Pasta)	\$
	Total	\$

(Make Checks Payable to: 451st Bomb Group)

Specify how name should be listed on name tag:

My Name Tag:	
Spouse's Name Tag:	
Guest's Name Tag:	
Guest's Name Tag:	
Guest's Name Tag:	
Guest's Name Tag:	

Name of Person Registering (same as Page 1): _____

Dinner Selections

For the dinner entrees, I/we have selected the following: (Select one entrée for each attendee)

Friday Dinner: Baked Tilapia _____ Vegetable Fajitas _____ New York Strip Steak _____

Saturday Dinner: Chicken Breast _____ Lemon Basil Pasta _____ Prime Rib of Beef _____

Sunday Dinner: Grilled Pork Tenderloin _____ Penne Pasta _____ London Broil _____

Hotel & Travel

Staying at the Wyndham Garden Hotel : Yes _____ No _____

Arrival Date: Thursday 9/18 _____ Friday 9/19 _____

I plan to arrive by: Plane _____ Car _____ RV _____

Bomb Group Association

If you are a Survivor of the air war in WW II, what was your group number? _____

List your duty position (pilot, tail gunner, mechanic, etc.): _____

If air crew member: Were you shot down: Yes _____ No _____

Were you a prisoner of war: Yes _____ No _____

Number of Missions: _____

List Medals awarded: _____

Attach your Air Force history (write-up) if available.

If not a Survivor, describe your relationship to a Bomb Group Member: _____

Required Information for Tinker AFB Tour

If you are going on the optional tour of the Tinker AFB Tour, for security purposes, the Air Force requires the following information for each person:

Name	Driver's License Number	Driver's License State of Issue	Date of Birth	DOD ID Card (Yes/No)

455th Bomb Group Assoc., Inc.
P.O. Box 93095
Austin, TX 78709-3095

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
GREEN BAY WI
PERMIT 460

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

A MESSAGE FROM GREG RIGGS,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE 455TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION, INC.

Reports from the 15th Air Force multi-bomb group reunion held in Tempe, Arizona, last fall were all positive. Check out the photo elsewhere in this newsletter and see how many of the 455th contingent you can recognize. Plans are well underway to do something similar in Oklahoma City, September 18-21, 2014. Registration forms are available herein, and online at <http://www.gordons.ws/reunion2014>. This website provides good information about the reunion and will probably continue to be updated. Check it now and check it again periodically. Get your great-grandson to help you out!

We are moving ahead with our existing board of directors for the foreseeable future. However, it would be welcomed if some second-generation members would step up and volunteer to serve. If you have an interest, please contact me at 455bg-h@austin.rr.com, or send a note to P.O. Box 93095, Austin, TX 78709.

Our thanks as an Association to those who have donated generously to prolong the financial life of the *Cerignola Connection*. Their names and cumulative assistance are listed elsewhere in the newsletter. The two biggest challenges facing the longevity of the Association are probably obvious: shrinking membership and dwindling finances. Sometime during the next year, I will begin exploring with Craig Ward the possibilities of moving to an online-only presentation of the newsletter to save printing and mailing costs. As a board, we will need to decide which is better for the Association membership: a shorter life with printed and mailed copies, or an extra three to five years by publishing only on-line. If you have preferences, please let Craig Ward or me know.

Today, I've enjoyed another beautiful day in a free country. Thank you for that gift!

"MANSIONS" SUCH AS THESE WERE SEEN THROUGHOUT THE 15th AAF STATIONS

