



CERIGNOLA CONNECTION

455th Bomb Group Association Newsletter

Winter 1995

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Our reunion of 1995 in San Antonio, Texas was a tremendous success. Once again Lou and Frances Hansen did an outstanding job in arranging for the registration, tours and menu's. We are also indebted to the Committees who selected San Antonio. Lou Hansen, Ross Strode and Jim Smith not only arranged for the reunion at the Airport Holiday Inn but worked every day of the reunion to insure that all the details concerning bus tours and banquet arrangements were completed and that we all had a good time. Many people commented on the Shuttle Bus Service from the hotel to downtown San Antonio. It was an expensive luxury for us but it certainly made it easy to see all the sights of a wonderful city.

I am sure that you will all agree the "Grand Finale" of the 1995 reunion was two fold. First, the wonderful address and introduction of our guest of honor by our own Senator George McGovern. Second, the fantastic presentation by the "Astronaut" Colonel Terrence Tom Hendricks USAF. As a veteran of three space flights he has logged over 620 hours in space. He was the Shuttle Commander on the NASA space flight of July 1995. His film, slides and description of the July flight gave us all a special insight of what a space flight was all about. I understand that he answered more questions in the hospitality room until very late hours after the banquet.

In closing I want to congratulate Colonel Ed Riggs our new president as well as the new Board of Directors on their election for the years 1996/97. Please give them your full support in the coming months. It has been a great honor for me to serve both as your Vice President and President over

the past four years. I want to thank you all for your tremendous support. I hope to see each and everyone of you at our 1997 reunion.

God bless you all.

Eugene L. Hudson

FINAL FLIGHTS

Our hearts are with and sympathies go to the loved ones of the 455th members

T/Sgt. William R. Beard (04/16/95)
Radio Operator/Gunner, Myles L.
Walter's crew, 741st B. Sq.

S/Sgt. Charles O. Conrad (11/17/93)
Radio Operator/Gunner, Lloyd
Beacham's crew, 743rd B. Sq.

1st Lt. Jack A. Carpenter (01/07/94)
Navigator, Jack Saine's crew, 740th B.
Sq.

M/Sgt. John J. Corrigan (02/01/89) MOS
502, assignment at 455th Bomb Gp Hq.

Cpl. John C. Holdeman (06/24/93)
MOS 502, assignment at 455th Bomb
Gp. Hq.

Capt. George Trbovich (10/28/72)
Armament/Safety Officer, 455th Bomb
Gp. Hq.

T/Sgt. Frank J. Muller (03/29/86) MOS
502 assignment at 455th Bomb Gp. Hq.

T/Sgt. George Janettas (10/89) MOS 502
assignment at 455th Bomb Gp. Hq.

S/Sgt. Vernon D. Adcock (03/05/84)
MOS 502 assignment at 455th Bomb
Gp Hq.

S/Sgt. Chester K. Miller, Sr. (01/17/91)
Flt. Engineer/Gunner, Victor
McWilliams' crew, plane "Knock Out",
741st B. Sq.

S/Sgt. Harold O. Galee (11/94) Tail
Turret Gunner, Frank Hosimers' crew,
741st B. Sq. plane "Ten Hits and a
Miss."

REMINDER

Many are sending in the incorrect amount for annual dues, or forgetting entirely. 1996 dues are due, November 1, 1995, in the annual amount of \$15.00. Send payment to **Lou Hansen, 455 Bomb Group Association, Inc., P.O. Box 286, Spencer, IA 51301**

ADDRESS CHANGE!

**455th Bomb Group Association, Inc. P.O. Box 286
Spencer, Iowa 51301**
Please mark your records accordingly.

History Publication Rerun

Consideration is given to an updated "Flight of the Vulgar Vultures," history rerun. If you have noticed any errors or changes that should be made, please bring these to the attention of your editor, Tom Ramey, 1211 Montclair Ct. Appleton, WI 54915. New or corrected crew pictures include crews of Kolberg, Griffen, Kirkland, Ellis, Bethune, Moore, Crawford, Moreman, Adams, Dolinsky, Baker, Wendt, Jack Montgomery, Brunson, Higgenbottom, Mc Cord, Don Montgomery, Rusty Dusty crew (unidentified), Hart, Brimage, Hope, Wrightston, Keil, Hoctor, Nichols, Shott, Beachman, Blankenship, Young and Anderton. If you are aware of others that are not included, send these to your editor, identify crew member legibly on a separate sheet of paper, and placing your address mailing label on the back of the photo so that it may be returned to you after printing. If there are insufficient

requests for the history rerun, we'll then publish crew photos on a continuing basis, in the Cerignola Connection, over a period of time. You will hear from Lou Hansen when you should make a history purchase commitment.

Poem Writing Is Catching On!

M/Sgt Bill Francis is on active duty at Kelly Air Force Base. He was working as the head table waiter at the reunion banquet and was caught up in the spirit of the event. He asked if he could read a poem that he wrote, while there, this on the back of a Holiday Inn memo pad. He received a standing ovation from our group.

455th Bomb Group

Fifty years have come and gone
through your victories
we're free, safe, strong.

When men were called
You didn't cry no!
Freedom threatened
you had to go.

You took up arms
and defended me
Though my life was yet to be.

But in your hearts
all proved true
though worn and weary
you all came through.

We offer you thanks
for all you went through
We wouldn't be free
if not for you.

Bill Francis

M Sgt, USAF 9/30/95

ED RIGGS IS OUR NEW PRESIDENT

To date I haven't been able to find out much about our new president. I remember his name from the big briefing board at Cerignola, Italy. He's an amiable, soft spoken southern gentleman who lives at 3415 S. 85th East Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 74145. If you ever would want to talk with him, you can reach him at 918-627-5912. Overseas Ed served with the 455th

Bomb Group, 743rd Squadron.

In continuing my research I came upon a poem, submitted by a friend, commemorating Ed's 50th wedding anniversary.

"Goodbye and Good Luck!" was all she could say
At the ceremony on their graduation day. Ed Riggs was in Juco and Marge in Senior High
And she, at least, knew separation was nigh.

They had eyed each other for quite awhile
But being brazen was just not her style.
So all she could say was, "Goodbye and Good Luck!"
That piqued his interest and he was stuck!

He called Marge soon to arrange for a date
And all that ensued was up to fate.
Marge soon went to work in a neighboring state
And Ed was off the Air Force; no time for a mate.

For twenty-five months the letters flew
Keeping him company while up in the blue.
He came home when his missions were fifty
And seeing each other again was nifty.

Ed popped the question...Marge's answer was "Yes!"
As to what events followed, you don't have to guess.
That was 50 years ago.

Good luck Ed, the next two years are in good hands.

YOUR NEW OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The following officers and board members have been nominated and elected:

President: Lt. Col. Clarence Riggs
Vice Pres: Lt. Col. Winfield Bowers
Secretary: Lt. George Defenbaugh
Treasurer: Col. Louie Hansen
Past Pres: Maj. Gen. Gene Hudson

Directors:

Lt. Col. Clarence Riggs
Lt. Col. Winfield Bowers

Lt. George Defenbaugh
Col. Louie Hansen
S/Sgt. Robert Armstrong
T/Sgt James Bates
Col. John Davis
S/Sgt David Frawley
Capt. Earl Howsam
T/Sgt Carl Loiocano
Maj. John Nash
Capt. Harold Schuknecht
Capt. James Smith
Lt. Col. Lincoln Townsend

Members extended a motion of appreciation to Col. Louie Hansen for his continued outstanding service on behalf of the 455th Association.

By a unanimous vote, Col. Louie Hansen is to continue as Executive Director of the Association.

COLONEL HENDRICKS HOLDS REUNION GROUP SPELLBOUND!

Colonel Tom Hendricks, NASA Astronaut, thrilled 455th BG reunion banquet with an out of this world speech vividly illustrated with film and slide. Colonel Hendricks commanded the Space Shuttle Discovery, STS-70, July 13-22, 1995 which deployed the sixth Tracking and Data Relay Satellite. Hendricks is a veteran Astronaut with three previous space flights and has logged over 620 hours in space. Accompanying Hendricks on the flight were Astronauts Thomas, Weber, Currie and Kregel.

At the end of his presentation Hendricks presented to the 455th Bomb Group a plaque titled the Heroes of the 455th Bombardment Group from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the crew of Discovery, STS-70. The plaque shows full color photographs of the shuttle and space view. Also there is a miniature American flag and the Astronauts shoulder patch which actually flew with the crew in space. A reproduction of the plaque is done in black and white. If reproductions can be made in full color we'll advise you at a later date.

AL ASCH REMEMBERS



*L to R: Major Alvin C. Coons, Group Intelligence Officer.
Colonel Kenneth A. Cool, Group Commander.*

This is an "I Remember" article. It seems most appropriate to write this year as it marks the 50th anniversary of WWII war's end, VE day, 8 May 1945. Of course, major efforts remained to defeat the Japanese which occurred soon after with the dropping of the atomic bomb. There was much rejoicing throughout the world with the end of the war.

Our Group Commander, Colonel Kenneth A. Cool.

I was sorting through my pictures a few days back and found a picture of Colonel Kenneth A. Cool, our first Group Commander, and Major Alvin (Al) Coons, our Group S-2 Intelligence Officer. I remember the great leadership and staff work by these two which helped make us an outstanding Group of the 15th Air Force in Italy during WWII. Colonel Cool was already a seasoned combat pilot from his experiences flying B-24's against the Germans from England in late 1942, early 1943.

When our Group started flying combat on February 16, 1944 from

Italy, Colonel Cool was in the lead airplane on the early missions to insure the Group's performance was established at a very high level. This did not fail. The "big" one to Steyr, Austria to bomb the Daimler-Puch Aircraft Factory came early, 2 April 1944. Colonel Cool said "This one is for me!" He strapped himself in the Headquarter's airplane "BESTWEDU" and the Group had very good bombing results. There was considerable enemy opposition from both fighters and flak and we lost four airplanes and crews. Much of the target was destroyed which severely set back the production of German aircraft. The mission was part of the POINTBLANK campaign to destroy the Luftwaffe prior to "D" day by the Allies. Colonel Cool received a much deserved Silver Star for his leadership and the Group received the Unit Citation. During our first 100 missions, he was almost always in the lead airplane to fly the tough one's which were generally the heavily defended targets in Germany, Austria and, of course, Ploesti.

Colonel Cool left the Air Force prior to the end of the war to take over the family defense business when his father passed away. A few years ago, we (Naomi and I) contacted Mrs. Cool (Marge) and learned that Colonel Cool had a most difficult time giving up flying. He took up sailing but it wasn't the same. In thinking back about the times I had the pleasure of flying with him, I conclude he was the best pilot I have flown with. I base this from my experience as a pilot for over 26 years in the Air Force. I flew with him when we were in England, North Africa and the Middle East in 1942 and 1943, in training for going to Italy in 1943 and flew at least two combat missions with him from Cerignola, Italy. I always thought that his flight instruments were caged in that they never moved while flying straight and level. He was always way ahead of the airplane. Colonel Cool passed away a few years ago and Marge is no longer with us. She frequently said that the few months Colonel Cool served as Group Commander were the most satisfying time of his life.

Getting back to the Steyr mission, we not only demolished the aircraft factory but played havoc with the German fighters that attacked our formation. Our Group always stressed flying close formation to provide mutual fire power protection from enemy fighters. This mission was no exception. We got credit for the following; 27 destroyed, 17 probably destroyed and 3 damaged. These were ME-109's, FW-190's, ME-210's and JU-88's.

Our S-2 Officer, Major Alvin C. Coons.

Major Alvin (Al) Coons, our great Group Intelligence Officer, was respected and admired by

everyone. What a great job he and his S-2 staff did in developing and presenting intelligence information to the combat crews for each mission briefing. The assimilation and presentation of the information was indeed outstanding. He covered the enemy opposition from both fighters and flak we could expect. We also received thorough briefings on escape and evasion and how to make maximum use of the rescue capabilities of the Theater if one should go down over enemy held territory or into the sea. His post mission interrogations were unequalled. The information received from the combat crews was quickly assimilated and sent to the Wing Headquarters to update the enemy data for subsequent missions. All one needs to do is review S-2's critique of the Steyr mission (Page 61 of our history book) to conclude that the intelligence work was outstanding. Our Group receiving two Unit Citations; one for the Steyr mission and the other for destroying the Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Moosbierbaum, Austria. We lost 10 airplanes and crews on the Moosbierbaum mission. Al and his staff were primarily responsible for developing the written material that was sent to the 304th Wing to justify the two citations. He and his staff also processed recommendations for individual decorations. In doing this, the S-2 staff worked with the Squadron Officers for proper preparation of the citations. I lost track of Al after the war so if any of you readers know what happened to him, I would appreciate hearing from you. We will all agree that our Group was most fortunate for having Colonel Cool and Al Coons.

Al Asch, Colonel

Night Flight

**Submitted By John Smidl
743rd Squadron**

Higher than the eagles flight
Beneath a dome of Stellar light
Exists a state of in-between
Where space and time suspended seem
To merge and touch – Eternity.

Ahead the blackness seems to grow
White towers reach from down below
My wings are strong, my engine drones
But trepidation gnaws my bones
And festers with – Uncertainty.

Somewhere deep down the feeling grows
The origin from which it flows
Is veiled from my consciousness
My mind no longer is at rest
But grapples with – Anxiety.

Those clouds ahead that loom so black
Aren't clouds at all – It's Flak – It's Flak!
My ears are full of sounds long dead
BANDITS! BANDITS! – dead ahead!
Gone is all semblance of – Reality.

Fear – then panic grows and grows
My heart bursts, my head explodes
There is no corner in the sky
To run for cover – no place to hide
A fountain of terror consumes all – Sanity.

There's no hope now – wings are gone
The rush of wind is death's own song
I can't die now – I'm still too young
There's much – too much – I haven't done
I'm not ready to accept – Finality.

Sweet blackness overcomes the fight
It's just a dream — the soothing night
Is back to wipe away the tears
The nightmares of the yesteryears
My mind returns to – Serenity.

The city lights are growing brighter
The air is filled with traffic chatter
Familiar sights come closer, closer
We're home again – I call the tower
All's well – on final – Security.

It's over now – those days long gone
But youthful faces – forever young
At times appear recalling when
Men were boys and boys were men
The faces fade – Obscurity.

The stars alone record the scene
There are no graves – all's bright and clean
That battlefield has marked no past
Of death and blood and holocaust
The sky knows only – Tranquility.

Dan Daniels Made My Day, Today!

Thanks for the Spring '95 issue of the Cerignola Connection, 455th Bomb Group Newsletter. WOW! 24 pages and this newsletter keeps getting better and better and more interesting on every issue. I for one appreciate your good work as I'm sure others do too.

Enclosed are my dues and although my plans were still up in the air regarding the 1995, 455th reunion, at San Antonio, Texas, the last issue of the Cerignola Connection has inspired me to write, and I hope others, to write a Digest of War Stories as so adeptly put by John Smidl, page 4. We knew when it happened. Let's write about it now and tell it the way it really was. When we are gone, who else can tell the story.

* * *

**God and a soldier all people adore
In time of war but not before;
And when war is over and all things
are righted,
God is neglected and an old soldier
slighted**



15th Air Force Memorial



*They keep them flying! Left end, M/Sgt Frank Stewart, Crew Chief.
Right end, Donald Moore, Asst. Crew Chief.*



Hard workers! 742nd Ground Crew. Bill Davis, Lt. Bryson, Reeve Cummings, Tilden Fleming, Bob Dotson.



*742nd Ground Crew, Front L to R: Ed Revena, Ray Mackeasy.
Back L to R: John Lester, Charles Rein, Melvin Lindberg, Andy Ramirez, Bill Merrick.*



742nd Ground Crew. Wilson, Wallace, Littleton, Pearson.



UNKNOWN



*Headquarters, 455th Bomb Group,
743rd Squadron.*



*741st Armament Section. James D Mehegan, Jr. is in the
straw hat.*



Maggie's doughnuts!



*Pop Ewing Howlett, 743rd Squadron,
heading home.*



*Left: Jim Mehegan, 741st Armament
Officer. Right: Jim Ross, 741st
Communications Officer.*



*The old olive grove, 743rd Squadron Tent Area
looking south.*



Ray Butler and the ALL AMERICAN!



Glammer Gal-see page 10!



Will the 1995 Lady pilots put men in their nose art?



Me! John Smidl, 742nd Squadron.

ED: Keep your photos and war stories coming. Be sure photos have your address label on the back so these can be returned to you immediately after printing.



15th AAF in Italy – Major General Nathan F. Twining, Commander of the 15th Air Force, smiles as though pleased with the day's proceedings, after the ceremony in which he has presented the War Department Unit Citation to the 454th and the 455th Bombardment Groups. Hand on hips, he stands among high-ranking officers from both of the cited units.

On the left is Lt. Colonel Large, Deputy Commander of the 454th and on the right is Brigadier General Fay R. Upthegrove (back to camera), Wing Commander, congratulating Colonel Kenneth A. Cool, former Commander of the 455th.



ED: Identity step forward! Somewhere along the line I have come into possession of one of the 743rd Officer's Club pieces of original art. If anyone knows who he is, let me know and I will see that after all of these years it arrives home. Let me know at: Tom Ramey, 1211 Montclair Ct., Appleton, WI 54915

EXCERPTS FROM THE 741ST NEWSLETTER

Italy, December 11, 1944

I AIN'T ONE TO GRIPE, BUT—

Course, I ain't one to talk, but, it jus' seems like about the time I begins to know some of the fellers that they take off and go back to the states. Now, mind you, I ain't griping exactly, but if I'm goin' to stay over here, why in the Hell don't somebody stay with me. I came over on the Liberty tub with the original outfit, I never will forget that. The boys all said that they came by boat, but I guess that I'm about the only one that came by RAIL. Yes, I spent most of my time on the boat at it. One night I was standin' there leaning over the rail when Lieutenant Carowicz came by and said, "Hello Soldier, has the moon come up yet?" I said, "I don't know Sir, but if I let it, its up." Then after we landed I was among the boys that slept on the ground and argued with the cooks when they wouldn't give me but one piece of bread. We didn't have a mess hall, so we'd jus' stand out in the rain and eat. One day I was in a sort of nasty mood so I walked right up to the Mess Sgt. and said, "Hey, when are we goin' to get somethin' to eat. I'm gettin damn sick of soup everyday." He looked at me for about a minute and then said, "That's not soup, its dehydrated potatoes and if you're smart you'll get outta the rain." In those days the latrines were just oil drums cut in two, turned upside down and a hole poked in it. Well, we finally got set up. The guy that had the best tent and the best stove was the one that could steal the most. After we got set up nice, that was when they started goin' home. I don't see why after we got a nice camp that everybody wants to leave it. Why, I remember the day that I got the shock of my life. I came walkin' into the tent and one of the boys said, "Did you know that Hales went home?" Well Bub, that floored me. Then just the other day I found out that Pvt.

Hales had written one of the Officers in the outfit and he is now a civilian. THAT'S WHAT GRIPES ME! I never saw a clam chowder in my life that was any good if it only had one clam in it, and if this keeps up, I'm goin' to feel mighty silly settin' over here in Italy and every time somebody comes by and says, "Where is the 740th Bomb Sqdn." Then some EYETie raises up and points at me. YES SIR! THAT SURE WILL GRIBE ME!

By — Pvt., Compound Cathartic Pill

BLUEGRASS BOUND

I will shortly be leaving for the states and I want to take this opportunity to say, "Goodbye" to everyone. It's good to be going home, however, I regret leaving an excellent outfit and the fine people who have made it so. You can all be proud of your share in the war and the outstanding record this squadron has made. 740th bombs have knocked plenty of cogs from the Hun war machine.

If at times your work becomes dull and monotonous, if the difficulties and discomforts of your working and living conditions get the upper hand, just stay and trace the relations of your own particular job to those bombs blasting the assigned target and be convinced that, without you, they wouldn't get there. For many of you, the work you are doing now is the most important of your entire life, because your whole future, the future of your children, and your children's children depends on the outcome of this war. Be confident and proud, keep your eyes on the horizon and to hell with the trivial obstacles.

Goodbye and good luck, may the 740th always be on top.

Lt. Col. D.W. Harp, Jr.

VALIANT IS THE WORD FOR "GLAMMER GAL"

Not so many days ago, December the third to be exact, a half silver and half olive drab B-24

rolled out of the Service Squadron and down the landing strip and rose gracefully into the skies.....upon which hangs a tale.

She had just undergone a stripping that would cause Gypsy Rose Lee to don her robes and hang her head in disgrace. Minus her turrets, oxygen system, bombs, etc., she resembled some sort of secret weapon.

It was on another December 3rd, that she made her first appearance in the 740th Squadron. The year was 1943; the place was Langley Field, Virginia. There, ship Number 198, as she was known then, was placed in the capable hands of M/Sgt. L. O. Bolken.

Sgt. Bolken crewed her to Italy, and for that matter has been crewing her ever since. It was on or around April 2nd, 1944 when she was laid up for repairs following the raid on the Steyr Ball-bearing factory that she was christened, "Glammer Gal". When she returned from the Steyr mission, her pilot brought her in for a landing with daylight showing thru her fuselage in dozens of places. The Jerries had thrown every thing they had; but once again "Glammer Gal" limped back home. However she flew again, and now after her 77th mission over enemy territory, she was tagged, "Battle Wary" and the stripping process began.

It would perhaps, make a novel ending to our tale if we would say that "Glammer Gal" was almost traded off when she first arrived in Italy because of super-charger trouble. We kept her, however, and now after 740 some odd hours she has the same super-chargers and also the very neat picture on the fuselage. Her fighting days are over now but I'll bet that if "Glammer Gal" could talk, she would tell some very exciting tales of dog fights and her experiences in flak valley. Goodbye to Combat "Glammer Gal" — You and the crews you carried have done a grand job. We'll say, "Good Luck" for Sgt. Bolken too because we know full well of the deep affection he has for you.

Sgt. E.S. Gear



OUR GROUP COMMANDER COLONEL KENNETH COOL

Colonel Cook was a native Ohioan, residing in Cleveland. He attended flying school at Randolph Field, Texas in the late twenties following graduating from Rutgers University. After receiving his commission, he flew the US Air Mail as well as being a member of the Ohio National Guard during the thirties. In 1941, Colonel Cool was called to active duty to serve his country for command duties as a senior pilot. He served in command positions with the 93rd Bombardment Group and flew combat missions in B-24's from England, North Africa and the Middle East during the latter part of 1942 and the first half of 1943. Colonel Cool was then selected to return to the United States to assume command of the 455th Bombardment Group. He led the Group through training, equipping and deployment to Italy where he remained in command through more than 100 combat missions. Colonel Cool was transferred to the 304th Wing Headquarters as Operations Officer on 28 September 1944.



In the last issue of the Cerignola Connection John Smidl wrote how 743rd pilot art in the officer's club was left behind all in the rush of getting home. John had taken photos of the art but because of the darkness of the club and no flash, many did not turn out. Pictured here are those that can be distinguished.



THEY DON'T LOOK FEARLESS...but they are!
 Front row, L to R: Richard Humphrey, Robert Betsinger, Crew chief.
 Back row, L to R: Leroy Seum, Sheldon Towle, John Merkle.

Dick Humphrey sent in this photograph. He states that Towle was a combat crew member and then later a mechanic, and an excellent one at that.



I CAN HEAR BOB TANK SINGING...

In the past issues we have enjoyed poem excerpts from the Fogia Red Cross book, these submitted by Bob Tank. Now Bob has sent your Editor a collection of Air Corp and military songs. Thanks, Bob. These will appear in this and subsequent issues.

CALLING BIG FENCE

High in the sky
 With my head up and locked

On my way back to home
 And the weather's so thick
 That I can't see the stick
 And my instrument 'card's at home
 And the Bombardier
 Didn't even come near
 As he dropped his bombs
 On the target so clear
 Oh my back - I see Flak
 Will I ever get back
 15th Airforce what now?
 I'm calling BIG FENCE!
 15th Airforce what now?

ON THE ROAD TO BUCHAREST

(Tune - On the Road to Mandalay)

On the road to Bucharest
 Where the Luft Waffe has its nest
 And the flak comes up like thunder

From the North, South, East and West.

On the Road to Bucharest
 Where the Focke Wolf's at its best
 And the flak comes up like thunder

From the North, South, East and West.

TWO RED FLARES

(Tune - Three Blind Mice)



Two red flares, two red flares
 See how they shine, see how they shine
 They shoot them out from the tower,
 They blossom out like a flower
 You're back in your sack in an hour
 With two red flares.

FURLOUGH IN PARADISE

From all cares grief and strife
 I came down from the blue in the skies
 To a calm easy life
 Twas my FURLOUGH IN PARADISE
 Time stands still, peace serene
 Gives me visions of old shoes and rice
 Will she say she'll be mine
 On my FURLOUGH IN PARADISE

She said Io ti amo capisciamico
 I love you so
 The wind through the old olive tree
 Whispered to me - she's yours
 Can't you see
 I must leave - please don't grieve
 I've a date with the stars in the skies
 Then I'll fly back to you and forever
 We'll make it true -
 Our FURLOUGH IN PARADISE.



WHERE WAS THE BIRTHPLACE OF FLAG DAY?

On a state marker at Waubeka Stoney Hill School, Waubeka, Wisconsin, it is written:

Birthplace of Flag Day

Here at Stony Hill School, Bernard J. Cigrand, 19 year-old teacher and his students held the first recognized observance of "Flag Birth Day" on June 14, 1885, with a flag ten inches high, carrying 38 stars, standing in a bottle on the teacher's desk. After thirty-one years of crusading by Dr. Cigrand, President Woodrow Wilson on June 14, 1916, proclaimed the national observance of Flag Day.

...And So It Ended

Well, that's that! It's done with and the days of waiting are over.

The fence is down, gashed and torn with a hole big enough to drive a truck through.

Now what? The expectations and the dreams have flattened like a pancake; they've gone up in smoke.

It's the end of the seventh day and the resting time is finished.

We begin the new day of a new week of a new life; we're out of the womb of stagnancy; we're out of the tomb of exile: we're free!

And time takes on a sharper cadence; the seconds and the minutes are shining with a newness that stuns the eyes but the shoulders are hunched and the steps are slow; it takes a little while to get re-acquainted with Miss Freedom when you haven't seen her for a long time.

Lt. John M. Coppinger, POW

REMEMBER THE DAZZLIN DUTCHESS?

Most beautiful lady that ever graced the nose of a B-24. I would know her anywhere. Maurice Fuller sent me the print of her airborne, also a crew picture. I checked back through past issues of the Cerignola Connection, and also the history book and she wasn't there. Hence we'll enshrine her in this issue of the Cerignola Connection.

Front row, L to R: Maurice Fuller, Jacob Sadler.

Center row, L to R: Albert Klinek, John Markell, Vernon Floyd, Warren Levasseur.

Back row, L to R: Roy Schott (pilot), Roy Cheesman, Phillip Bock, Don Geraty.

TALK HEALTH

Talk health. That dreary never-ending tale

Of mortal maladies is worn and stale;
You cannot charm or interest or please
By harping on that minor chord,
disease.

So, say that you are well and all is well with you
And God shall hear your words and make them true.

455th Chaplain

IT HAPPENED TO ME

Be afraid of Flak
Duck when the sky turns black
It could happen to you
Tuck it in or you may stumble
Someone lags behind and down he tumbles
Keep your flak suits tight
Til the spur's in sight
It could happen to you
All I did was remove my helmet so I could see
And it happened to me



"THE TOE"

Submitted by
Jim Scott



Returning from combat in October of 1944 and being bounced around from place to place and base to base, I finally was attached (unassigned) to Brooks Field in San Antonio, Texas. Myself and seventy-nine other returnees were sent there to await whatever future assignments we had applied for. As for me and my room mate Gene, we had requested transfer to the paratroops. Gene was an aviation cadet classmate and had been with one of the B-24 groups near Foggia. At Brooks we had no regular duties, so in order to maintain some semblance of discipline, the C.O. gave each of us a temporary job. Gene and I were appointed as custodians in charge of the W.A.C.s and officers swimming pool adjacent to our barracks. One interesting item of this was that two of the officers assigned to us as lifeguards could not swim. This would not have any bearing on this story except that while teaching diving to the non-swimmer lifeguards I injured the big toe on my right foot. After several trips to the base hospital I was told the toe would require surgery and removal of the toenail. A few hours after the operation that toe began giving me fits. I tried napping in the barracks; I tried walking around outside the barracks; I tried a few hands of poker at the O club. Nothing stopped the throbbing pain in that toe. Finally I drove into town figuring a cool dark movie theater might help my sad situation. It didn't. Within thirty minutes after entering the theater, including two hikes to the snack bar for munchies, I was out on the sidewalk. By this time I knew the best relief for that miserable toe was walking. To avoid the chance of someone bumping or stepping on my sore foot, I headed down to the San Antonio river walk. Back then that area of town wasn't the

crowded tourist attraction it is now. Hobbling along with practically no one around I was feeling almost human again. That's when the stuff hit the fan, or so I thought. Rounding a turn on the river walk I bumped head on into two of the biggest Army sergeants I had even seen. At that time I was about six feet tall and weighed approximately 190 pounds, those two made me look and feel like a 90 pound weakling. Not only were they big; they were mean looking, partially drunk, had chests full of brag-rags and wore at least size 14 combat boots. The two immediately proceeded to voice their opinion of me. According to them I was officer trash, a scummy Air Corps person and worst of all I was a mangy fly boy. While they were debating my fate I sat down on the grass. That was a big mistake. That old toe put on it's worst pain of the day. I began moaning to be helped up and told the two N.C.O.s to beat me, throw me in the river, whatever. Just do it and let me be on my way. As I was being helped to my feet, one of the guys spotted my E.T.O. ribbon and asked where I had done duty. It turned out they had been involved in the Anzio Affair. We proceeded to swap a few war stories. I told of one day I had hitchhiked up north and bought a 9MM Luger from some grunts. They assured me it was probably some of their outfit. Becoming instant combat buddies, the two sergeants were concerned about my bandaged foot. Being an old hardened veteran, I declined to divulge the details of my wound. I did say I figured it would be months before receiving my Purple Heart. My new friends decided that booze would be the best medicine for my aching toe, so off we went to "Mad Tony's" on Austin Highway. I remember getting there and buying the first round of drinks. After that the whole evening is a blank. The next morning I awoke on my bunk, my blouse hung on a chair and my left shoe was off. My room mate Gene

said that was how he found me when he came in about two A.M. My car keys were on the chair with my blouse. My billfold was intact except for a few missing dollars which I probably spent on the first round of drinks. Although my car was not in it's usual parking slot, it was neatly parked, locked and in the same condition as when I last drove it. The best thing of all was that my toe felt better than it had in weeks. Later I contacted the person who had gate duty that night. He remembered the two sergeants, with me asleep in the back seat, and gave directions to the returnees barracks. A short time later the two passed back through his gate on foot headed back toward downtown San Antonio. I've always wished I could have found those two guys and thanked them for a lovely evening.

Al Asch Writes—

"We visited the Arlington National Cemetery this week and I visited the grave of one of my crew members I lost in 1942, flying out of England. He was killed 18 November 1942. It brought back memories and Naomi and I both got a warm feeling at the site. If others of our Association want to look up the place of burial of those lost in combat, I can provide names and telephone numbers to contact. —**Al Asch, 6205 Meadow Court, Rockville, Maryland 20852.**

If You're a Fighter Pilot — Blame Bob Tank!

You can tell a Bomber Pilot
By the size of his big rear.
By the ring around his eye
You can tell a Bombardier.
You could tell a Navigator
By his maps, sextant and such.
And you could tell a Fighter Pilot
But you couldn't tell him much.

Chet Hosac Writes:

Tom, page 4 of the last issue you again have an article that mentions the "Teepee Time Gal." In the past I've sent you several pictures of this plane along with her crew names.

Our first plane was "Menacing Messalina." On our 6th or 7th mission we were so shot up we barely made it to a fighter field in Rome. I remember this very well as the plane collapsed in landing. We were in Rome two or three days until a truck took us back to base.

During our stay ground troops from the 5th Army were in town for R&R after having spent the winter in fox holes in the mountains.

In our air force uniforms, wings, crushed hats and all, you can bet we got off the sidewalk when we would see them coming.

Again here are pictures of "Menacing Messalina" and also of "Teepee Time Gal." We were her first crew and finished our missions in her. Brooks was our pilot and we flew most of our missions with him.

Brooks was a hell of a pilot and I

suppose you could say that about any of them that got us home!

Just remembered a time when a bunch of us flew an old B-17 to Bari Italy for a track meet. Brooks had run the mile for the University of Nebraska so entered the race. We were all pretty well tanked up on wine and didn't think he had a chance yet he won the race easily.

I lost track of Brooks but did hear he had passed away in California.

Sincerely,

Chet Hosac



L to R: Eddie Johnson, Bombardier; Laurens Anderson, Pilot (original crew); Samuel Ginsberg, Navigator; H.C. Brooks, Co-Pilot (finished missions as 1st Pilot); Chet Hosac, Waist Gunner. Max Winn, Radio Operator; James O'Boyle, Tail Gunner; Francis Winn, Top Turret Gunner; Omer Gluck, Belly Turret Gunner; Paul Taylor, Nose Gunner; Frank Paige, Photographer.



MOOSBIERBAUM

Anton Handelsberger, Kleinfeldgasse 3, A-3435 Dumrohr, Austria is writing a book about the Moosbierbaum raid. Anton served in the German army on the Russian front. His father was killed during the raid, as he worked at the Hydration Works in Moosbierbaum. Anton has been in correspondence with Dave Brothers, Al Asch and other members of the 455th gathering data on the raid, plus the research he has been doing from the Austrian side of the raid. Anton states that he has microfilms of Missing Air Crew Reports and can try to locate them with the local authorities. He states that members of the 455th Bomb Group who would like to send him personal details of the raid, and their addresses, would make his search and research much easier.

"By corresponding with American friends I have managed to obtain the Missing Air Crew Reports of the Bombers of the 455th Bomb Group who were shot down on June 26, 1944. With the help of these documents and further research I have after almost 50 years been able to find out the following details on the fate of these crews:

Ship nr. 771 - B-24 Liberator with the nr. 42 - 52.230 with 1st Lt. Robert Montgomery of the 742nd squadron as pilot (this is your aircraft): There is a German anti-aircraft-unit report containing the following: "The third close-formation wave, which followed the second one in an interval of 4 1/2 minutes, was sighted outside the affected area (about 10 km) and fire was opened at 9:44 a.m. One of the unit's rear aircrafts showed a strong trail of smoke, broke formation, described a curve ingoing down, caught fire and crashed at 9:50 a.m. south of Tulln near Frauenhofen." (report of the anti-aircraft sub-unit Moosbierbaum, anti-aircraft unit 6916, July 19, 1944)

In fact, on its 68th mission on June 26, 1944 over Moosbierbaum, the F-Box of the

2nd section of the 455th Bomb Group was already waited for and attacked in close formation by about 30 Messerschmitt Bf 109 G-6 of the I./JG 300 from Unterschlaibach/Bavaria and 30 more armored Focke Wulf FW 190 A7-8 of the II./JG 300 from Herzogenaurach/Bavaria during its approach from the initial point (Wetzleinsdorf 48 0 29 north - 16 0 22 east). These German fighter units from the air district VII - Munich were requested in order to reinforce the fighter units of the 8th fighter division. The units stationed in Austria already attacked the bomber units over Bratislava.

They attacked the 455th Bomb Group coming out of the sun and within 5 minutes shot down 6 B-24 of the F-Box with the aircrafts nr. 261, 230, 771, 570, 238, and 292. All of the aircrafts were in the 742nd squadron. At the same time most outside aircrafts nr. 249, 241, and 462 of the D-Box of the 741st squadron were shot down.

(In a letter to Dave Brothers) I think your ship was also hit by the German fighters and didn't crash because of the flak. Your details in MACR nr. 6.516 do not state clearly if the plane was hit by the anti-aircraft guns, but the report by Lt. Montgomery makes it seem like it. Lt. Kelly (ship nr. 989) was the only plane of the 742nd squadron that returned from the attack. He reported that 4 planes were hit within 5 minutes. His report is with your MACR nr. 6516, but from it you can't make out whether he saw your plane or not.

Anyhow, your crew comrades G. Henry Smith/grave nr. 3, T/Sgt. James B. Mason/grave nr. 4, T/Sgt. Edward Pritchard/grave nr. 8 have been identified as certain in the picture."

Lt. Sensenbrenner's ship (nr. 261) and Jack Montgomery's ship (nr. 230) were already hit in the first attack, began to burn and exploded in the air. Lt. Sensenbrenner and his co-pilot were able to bale out and were taken captive in Michelhausen (3 km south-east of target). Three sergeants (Jastrzebowski, Scott, Renner) were recovered dead and buried in the cemetery in Michelhausen (I was able to identify them because of witnesses' statements).

Lt. Jack Montgomery, ship nr. 230:

"After the first attack of the German fighters, the 2nd motor broke down at once and because of a hit near the 3rd and 4th motor, the right wing began to burn. The instrument panel had also been hit and the installations for oxygen supply broke down. Lt. Montgomery desperately tried to keep the ship under control. As he was hit and fell forward against the control column, the plane turned right and onto its back, just barely missed a collision with the leader - aircraft and exploded in the air." (report by C-pilot P. Sims in MACR nr. 6405)

He himself was picked up after landing by a farmer and taken to the nearest air-base. Navigator Lt. Louis Friedberg was recovered dead from the ship. The ship's place of crash is located behind the house Ober-Absdorf Nr. 1 (about 10 km north-west of Tulln).

Lt. Keogh, ship nr. 462:

According to reports by eye-witnesses, Lt. Keogh's ship was attacked from above in the position 4:30 o'clock at 9:38 a.m. by a German Focke Wulf FW 190 A 8. The German FW 190 was hit during the attack by the crew of ship nr. 462 and got out of control. It collided with the wing with the motors 3 and 4, in which the propeller and part of the wing broke off. After that the plane pulled strongly to the left, lost height and glided down quite steeply. All crew-members were able to bale out before the plane exploded in mid-air.

According to German sources, the German pilot Uffz. Horstkötter of the 2nd squadron of the JG 300 collided with the bomber. He also managed to get out of the damaged plane by parachute and landed in Rohrbach (about 5 km south of Baden near Vienna). He flew a Messerschmitt Bf 109 G-7 though.

Lt. McCarthy, ship nr. 241, MACR nr. 6400:

Lt. McCarthy's ship nr. 241 was hit at 9:40 a.m. over Moosbierbaum and swerved to the right. He was attacked by two fighter planes directly above the left tail. About a minute after the attack the ship got out of control and went down burning. According to the report by

armorer gunner S/Sgt. Donald M. Kerr, he and all the others left the plane at 10:19 a.m. The navigator broke a leg and all suffered burns while they were still in the plane. They landed securely in a corn-field and were taken prisoner. The witness thinks that the pilot, the co-pilot and the flight engineer were still in the plane as it crashed. The plane crashed about 200 meters east of Dürnrohr (1 km west of target). The pilot and co-pilot were seen to be in the plane by inhabitants of the village. Flight engineer Carl W. Stover is buried in grave nr. 5 in the cemetery in Tulln. It's very likely that pilot 2nd Lt. Paul McCarthy and co-pilot 2nd Lt. Walter Anderson are the unidentified in the graves nr. 2 and 6 in the picture.

Lt. Jordan, ship nr. 249, 741st squadron:

According to the MAC Report nr. 8956 there are contradictory details on the shooting-down of this B-24 Liberator, as to whether the plane was shot down during an air-battle or crashed because of flak.

A statement by Sgt. William T. Dixon, 741. Bomb squadron (not a crew-member – he doesn't appear on my "loading list" of June 26, 1944) contains the following: "At about 9:44 a.m. on June 26, 1944 as I was over Moosbierbaum, I saw the B-24 Liberator nr. 249 flown by Lt. Jordan being attacked by a Messerschmitt Bf 109, missile impacts in the fuselage and the right wing. One of the right side motors caught fire. Lt. Jordan's ship gained a little height and then crashed. Just before the crash you could see two parachutes opening."

Details by navigator 1st Lt. Richard Halle give the following information: "At 9:50 a.m. on June 26, 1944 our plane encountered heavy flak-fire near Vienna. Motor nr. 2 broke down because it had been hit by flak during our bomb attack. The ship then became the target for several attacks by enemy fighters. The plane was badly hit and caught fire. Over radio I was in contact with the bombardier until our bombs were dropped. After that the radio broke

down. The nose of the plane was badly hit and as far as I know, so was Lt. Newby. I don't think the bombardier was able to get out of the ship. It exploded right after we jumped."

In his statement Lt. Jordan says: "On June 26, 1944, Lt. Newby was the bombardier in our crew. We had just reached our target as we were attacked by 70-80 enemy fighters. My two wing-men were already k.o. as we started to attack our target. Lt. Newby dropped the bombs. All this time there were attacks by enemy fighters. My 2nd motor had broken down and also the rudder control and the trim-instruments, fire was spreading in the bomb-bay as well as in the ball-turret and in the flight deck. I gave order for all men to bale out as the fire was really spreading quickly. Just as I was about to leave the ship, a series of 20 mm missiles hit its nose and destroyed my instrument panel. I guess in the course of this Lt. Newby was killed. The nose turret gunner came out of the plane quite well, but his parachute didn't open. This I found out in talks with the Germans. His name was Sgt/ Russel. Sgt. Robert W. Loud was killed as we were about to abandon the ship, Sgt. Edgar Sherrick, John Edwards and Mahlon suffered injuries from 20 mm and 30 mm missiles. Most of our crew got away with minor injuries and wounds."

Sgt. Froit and Sgt. Mahlon were picked up in Kirchstetten on June 26, 1944, were taken to the reserve-hospital in St. Pölten on June 27, 1944 and on August 1, 1944 transferred to the stalag in Oberursel. Sgt. John R. Edwards got out of the hospital on June 27, 1944 and was taken to a prison camp by the Danube (probably Gneixendorf near Krems b. t. d.) There are no details as to what happened to Sgt. E. Sherrick after he was in hospital.

2nd Lt. Merl F. Newby Jr. crashed with the plane. Sgt. Robert Loud was killed in the plane, which follows from a board-talk after an attack by two German fighter planes from the position 6 o'clock (that is from behind). The waist gunner saw him above target as he was about to jump. About this crash there is also a

German flak report which I put into my book ("Der Luftkrieg 1944/1945 über dem Tullnerfeld" in den heimatkundlichen Mitteilungen VII des Arbeitskreises Tulln, page 42; in English: "The air war 1944/1945 over the Tullnerfeld" in the reports nr. VII by the research group on local history of Tulln). It says the following: "The following fourth wave (approximately 30-40 B-24 Liberators) flew with a height of 6.200 m and a speed of 100 m/sec at 9:48 a.m. into the flak zone Moosbierbaum. After changing target from the third to the fourth wave, the batteries again opened fire. At 9:49 a.m. one plane showed flames and a dark smoke trail, went to a height of 6000 m and lost the connection to the wave flying away. According to a witness it was attacked by a twin-engined German fighter plane. The plane thus exploded and crashed in several pieces within the area of the town Böheimkirchen (about 25 km west of Vienna). According to other German reports a fighter plane was not involved and the crash was caused only by flak."

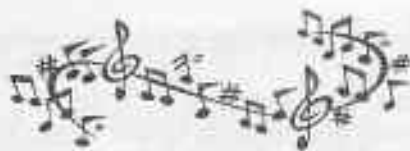
So far my research up to now on the fate of 10 shot-down ships of the 455th Bomb Group.

If you are in contact with your comrades in the 455th Bomb Group, please use my details and look if they are correct. It matters a lot to me to find out about up to now unknown fates of missing American crew members, as I try to clarify what happened even though 50 years have passed.

I want to clear up the tragic fates of as many as possible American crew members, as I myself, as a victim take part in the fates of these men unknown to me – my father lost his life in the hydration works in Moosbierbaum.

I'm looking forward to hearing from you soon and remain yours sincerely,

*Anton Handelsberger
Kleinfeldgasse*



SING ALONG WITH BOB TANK!

AS FLAK GOES BY (Tune: As Time Goes By)

You must remember this
The flak can't always miss
Somebody has to die
The odds are always too damn high
As flak goes by.
And when the fighters come
You hope you're not the one
To tumble from the sky
The odds are always too damn high
As flak goes by.
One-tens and two-tens
knocking at your gate
Sky filled with fighters
Get to kill that rate
Bombs don't go way
Salvo don't be late
The target's passing by
It's still the same old story
The eight gets all the glory
And still someone must die
The odds are always too damn high
As Flak Goes By!

IN A PRISON CAMP

Across the Adriatic
Through spacious skies of blue
There came 1,000 bombers
With airmen tried and true
We headed for the Balkans
And straight to Bucharest
But when we hit flak alley
The gunners did the rest.
Chorus –
But we all landed safely
With parachutes galore
And now we're in a prison camp
A sweating out the war.

A train pulled into Bucharest
One warm and sunny day
As we passed through the city
We could hear the people say
You murderers, you gangsters
You bombed our city fair
You just knocked out our
marshaling yard
Which is beyond repair.

Chorus–

Now you may think this ends our
tail
We though the war was over
But the bombers they still flew
We heard the bombs a whistling
And we dove beneath our beds
As we lay there a trembling
And praying very hard
That they would miss our city
And hit the marshaling yard.

Chorus –

I WANTED WINGS



I wanted wings till I got the gosh
dam things
Now I don't want them anymore.
They taught me how to fly, then
they sent me here to die –
I got a belly full of war.
You can save those Zeros for the
g– d– heroes –
But this flying X's will not compen-
sate for losses.
Chorus –
I wanted wings till I got the damn
things, now I don't want them any-
more.

I'm too young to die in a damned
old PBY
That's for eager not not for me
and I
Don't trust to luck to be picked up
in a Duck –
After I've crashed into the sea.
Oh I'd rather be a bell hop than a
flier
On a flat top with my hand
around a
Bottle not around a g– d– throttle.
Chorus–
They wake us up to fight in the
middle of the night –
Breakfast at quarter after four,
You crawl out of the sack and
Just think about the flak,
That's what's
So rough about the war.
As you take
The truck to briefing you can hear
a lot of beefing. If the target's not
A milk run you'd better go on Sick
Call.
Chorus –

THE FLAK-HAPPY BLUES

(Tune: Blues in the Night)

The Major done told me
When I was at briefing
The Major done told me – Son
The mission's a milk run
I know you will have fun
I'm sure he know what he says;
But now that we've been there
And seen what they have there
I know he's wrong so I'm singing
this song, The Flak Happy Blues.

Now the planes are coming
Hear the engines humming
Whoopee, the Major done told me
Pull these four men in there
Captain's got his gray hair
Whoopee, the Major done told me
The "Flak" was sure there
It's a worrisome thing that leads
you
to sing, The Flak Happy Blues.
From Ferrara to Asti
Magenta to Patma,
Wherever the four winds blow,
There might be some milk runs
There's plenty of rough ones,
And there's one thing I know
The next time I go there
I'll end up with gray hair
Flak's a worrisome thing that leads
you to sing – The Flak Happy
Blues.

TROOP CARRIER COMMAND

(Tune: The Marine Hymn)

From the fields of Sacramento
To the shores of Sicily
We fly our country's transports
Over land and over sea
From Casa up to Cairo
From Bizerte on to Rome
We haul everything but the damn
latrines
But still we can't go home.

We're the bastards of the Air
Corps
No one knows we're over seas
For every sortie that we fly
Credit goes to A.T.C.
Two years in their NATOUSA
A thousand hours each has flown
Two trips through each invasion
And still we can't go home.

WHY! OH! WHY!

Why must one who knows not why
He was born or when he will die,
Have to fight desperately for his life
and that of his family, perhaps a
wife?

Why must a man – young and gay,
Be wrenched from his so recent play
And suddenly taught to fight, to kill,
A common enemy at his will?

Why should this man – this glorified
youth
So blindly encounter a military Sleuth
Whose meager knowledge has long
since
Been dominated by a barren hole, a
trench?

Why should this man fight or even
die
Before he as had ample chance to
philosophize
On life's greatest problem, alike to
all,
The ever prevailing mystery – the
soul?

Why must a person who has never
known fear;
Who has never had true cause for
tear,
suddenly become a wretched bundle
of nerves
Without having had a chance "to
obtain what he deserves?"

Why must a man be so dreadful of
tomorrow,
Of some possible pain, of death, or
sorrow?
Why does a man also live and die?
Oh, that I could but answer this ever-
lasting why!

Jerry Lester

TO MY MOM AND DAD

A few years back, when just a lad,
I recall the words of my dear Dad,
"Son", he said, life is a game,
And win or lose it's all the same;
The thought I hope you'll always
share,
Be honest, loyal, play the game

square.

My mother too had words with me,
She often said some days will be'
A trial, a burden, you must bear;
But trust in God and He'll take care,
For He alone knows what to do,
When you're all alone and feeling
blue.

Now those few years have passed
away,
And in their place has come this day.
Across the seas, and far from home;
I find that now I'm on my own;
But I have no doubts, I have no fear,
For God I know is with me here.

We've a land to free, a home to
save,
And though we may be scared, our
hearts are brave.
For we know we're right, our tack is
ONE;
And we'll fight this WAR, 'til the job is
done.
So we trust in God and nightly pray,
For Peace on Earth to come and
stay.

So I want to thank my Mom and
Dad,
And say to them, You've made me
glad,
You've showed me life, its joys, its
grief;
How to trust in God and have belief.
And though we now are far apart,
You're always near within my heart.

Capt. Marvin L. Germain

MORE RESEARCH FROM AL ASCH

Tom, I have been doing research for
relatives to learn what happened to
their fathers, brothers, uncles, etc.
for those missing in action. I found
two offices in the Washington, D.C.
area that have all the records of the
MIA's and they are very cooperative.
These are:

**American Battle Monument
Commission**
20 Massachusetts Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20314
Tele: 202 761-0537

Another good service:

**U.S. Total Army Personnel
Command**
Attn: TAPC-PED-F
2461 Eisenhower Ave.
Alexandria, VA 22331-0482
Tele: 703 325-5300

For example, there was always con-
cern about whether or not the bod-
ies were found from a mid-air colli-
sion over the Adriac from the 740th
Squadron. The pilot on one ship was
Lt. Lundwald. His fine son, Arnold,
wants to learn more about what
happened to his father. I learned that
his body was never found and his
name is engraved on the granite
wall, along with others, at the
American Cemetery in Italy. A tele-
phone call to the American Battle
Monument Commission gave me
this information and they are sending
Arnold and me photographs, maps,
etc. for verification. Also, the Army
Command will call up records from
their archives about those missing in
action. The Army Personnel
Command has information about
where MIA's and others who were
killed in action are buried. For exam-
ple, I found the grave of one of my
crew members at the Cambridge
American Cemetery in England
while Naomi and I participated with
the English people to commemorate
the 50th anniversary of VE day. Tom
you may want to publish something
in the CC so that others may use the
service. It helps if one has the serial
numbers of the missing.

We, the 455th, received permission
from the Superintendent of the
Arlington National Cemetery to install
a plaque and plant a tree in living
memory of those who paid the ulti-
mate price with their lives during
WWII. The location is the best in the
cemetery for visitors to see in that it
is located next to the Unknown
Soldier and President Kennedy's
grave.

*Ed – We should raise the nominal
funds necessary and get this worth
while project going.*



U. S. ARMY
AIR FORCES

Hundreds of Hours



U. S. ARMY
AIR FORCES

CHOW CALL

2/11/44



WARREN G. MILLER



U. S. ARMY
AIR FORCES

7 AM 2/11/44
Snuffy's table



The above picture postcards were sketched for Warren Miller, back in Italy, 1944, by Joe Mike Hunt of the 740th Squadron. Warren sent these to your Editor plus a copy of the 740th newsletter. If you kept your squadron newsletters, send copies to your Editor, **Tom Ramey, 1211 Montclair Ct., Appleton, WI 54915.** It's excellent reading for all our members.

TAPS



With its roots in the American Civil War, the origin of the bugle call we know as "Taps" clearly springs from the Virginia battlefields of 1862. Union General Daniel Butterfield is generally credited with composing the music for the tune signifying rest and peace in a soldier's life, be it at the end of the day or the end of his life. In July 1862, just after the Seven Days Battle, the countryside of Virginia was strewn with the bodies of thousands from both sides of the conflict. The losses were dramatic and severe, reflected in the general mood of the Union encampment just east of Richmond. General Butterfield sensed the morose, pensive mood prevalent among his troops. While the whole Army of the Potomac was in this mood, Butterfield used the time to pursue his chief hobby, writing music. As an accomplished musician, Butterfield had already written a number of original compositions, including several bugle calls.

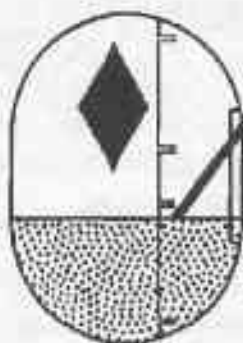
The brigade's bugler, Pvt. Oliver Wilcox Norton, recalled his experience with Butterfield in memoirs written years later. "One day in July...Gen. Butterfield summoned the writer (Wilcox) to his tent, and whistling some new tune asked the bugler to sound it for him. This was done, not quite to his satisfaction at first, but after repeated trials, changing the time of some of the notes, which were scribbled on the back of an envelope, the call was finally arranged to suit the general. He then ordered that it should be substituted in his brigade for the regulations "Taps" (lights out) which was printed in the Tactics and used by the whole army."

The popularity of the new "Taps" spread fast. Wherever it was heard, it stirred listeners to endorse its use throughout the Union armies. Its use passed from army corps to army corps. At last, by general orders, the new bugle call was substituted for the old colorless "Lights Out" call, and the new "Taps" appeared in the official United States Army regulations in 1891.

TAPS

Day is done...Gone the sun
From the lake...From the
hill...From the sky
All is well...Safely rest
God is nigh

*TVC Journal -
November/December 1994*



455TH GROUP TAIL MARKING

Each group and squadron had distinctive tail markings for their airplanes. This was coordinated by the 304th Bomber Wing. The 455th had a black colored diamond shape on the upper half of both vertical stabilizers and yellow painted lower stabilizers and rudders. The squadron symbols were on the upper rudders - black rectangle 740th, black four leaf clover 741st, black diagonal stripe 742nd, black horizontal stripe 743rd. The aircraft numbers were in black on

both sides of the rear part of the fuselage. These markings were especially useful during rendezvous to insure joining the proper group formation when flying a mission.



Vulgar Vulture - GROUP EMBLEM

The origin of the Group emblem, the Vulgar Vulture, is not known for certain. It is believed that Tom Mitchell, Intelligence Officer for the 743rd Squadron, came up with the creative idea and wrote the specifications. These were given to the Walt Disney Studios who accomplished the final art. Tom, now deceased, is remembered for his early work in finding 455th Group personnel for the establishment of our Association. He organized the first meeting that was held for the Group following WWII. The emblem, sometimes referred to as a "patch," was worn on the left breast of flight jackets by crew members and on other clothing by the support personnel. It was a distinctive item that helped give everyone a sense of belonging and pride in the organization.

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THE 455th BOMB GROUP IN COMBAT

(a continuing series...)

Our first 100 missions represented a milestone of achievement. There were major successes in destroying enemy targets but not without losses. Each mission is numbered and briefly described for each month starting in February 1944. At that time, the 5th Army was bogged down in southern Italy. They were having problems advancing against Kesselring's Army, poised on the high ground looking down on the Allies. The 5th Army had been bottled up on the Anzio beachhead since January 24th.

The 15th and 12th Air Forces were called on to bomb troop concentrations and supply areas to ease the pressure. We had briefed four or five times to bomb targets in the Anzio beachhead area but weather held us up until the 12th of February when we were able to get the planes off the ground.

FEBRUARY 1944

Mission 1, February 16 Forty-four B-24's took off to bomb targets in the Anzio area. We were to bomb troop concentrations around Campoleone, Italy. The target was completely covered by clouds and Colonel Cool decided it was too risky to bomb that close to our own lines without visual sight of the target, so we brought our bombs back to base.

Mission 2, February 17 Our target was still the same and this time the entire 15th Air Force was out to help the Armies pinned down on the Anzio beachhead. Twenty-three of our B-24's bombed the area near Frescati, Italy. Flak was light and inaccurate, and all of our planes returned without casualties.

Mission 3, February 22 Our target was the docks in the harbor of Zaro, Yugoslavia. Thirty-nine B-24's took off with ten 500# GP bombs each. Two aircraft returned

early, leaving 37 which dropped 92 tons of bombs in the target area. Flak was light and inaccurate. All aircraft returned without casualties.

Mission 4, February 25 Thirty-one B-24's took off to bomb the Talerhof Airdrome in Graz, Austria. Each aircraft carried ten 500# GP bombs. Flak was very heavy and accurate at the target area; 15 to 20 enemy fighters made repeated attacks. One of our aircraft was shot down with ten men missing in action. We were fortunate as the neighboring Group, the 454th, reported 50 men missing in action.

Our first month of combat was over. We flew a total of only four missions because we had only ten days of flyable weather. During the month, we flew 132 aircraft over the target while dropping 228 tons of bombs. We lost two aircraft and had ten men missing in action. We received credit for one enemy aircraft destroyed and one probably destroyed. This was a good start for a new Group.

MARCH 1944

March began with a spell of good weather. With it we were back to helping the 5th Army troops at Anzio. This was in keeping with Air Force policy of assisting our ground forces wherever possible. The Stars and Stripes Mediterranean edition on the 17th of February reported air support was at a new high. They reported the Air Arm put their full power against the German forces attacking the Anzio Beachhead. In that light, many of our attacks against marshalling yards were in direct support of the ground forces as we cut the enemy's supply lines.

Mission 5, March 2 Thirty-nine of our B-24's, loaded with fragmentation bombs, took off to bomb the enemy troop concentrations around Cisterno, Italy, for the continued support of the Anzio beachhead. Six of our planes returned early and only 33 aircraft were able to bomb. They dropped 35.5

tons of bombs in the target area. Flak was moderate to intense and accurate. The crews came away with more respect for the danger of flak since four planes suffered flak damage. All planes returned to base safely.

Mission 6, March 3 Thirty of our B-24's dropped 75 tons of 500# GP bombs on the airdrome at Fabrica Di Roma. Little damage was done to enemy aircraft, but a string of bombs ruined one of the runways. Flak at the target was light and inaccurate. Enemy fighters were observed but they did not make any attack. All planes returned safely.

Mission 7, March 7 We returned to the Fabrica Di Roma airdrome, this time 36 B-24's with the same bomb load. Our aircraft dropped over 89 tons with a good concentration on the airdrome. Flak again was light and inaccurate. None of our aircraft received damage and all returned to base.

Mission 8, March 15 After many stand downs due to snow and rain, we managed to get 40 B-24's loaded with 1,000# BP bombs off the ground. They were to bomb the town of Cassino where our ground forces were held up by Kesselring's forces. Thirty-four aircraft bombed the primary target but five bombed the town of Vallarotonda by mistake. There was no flak at the target. Our only claim to fame today was that we dropped 120 tons of bombs. All planes returned to base.

Mission 9, March 17 On St. Patty's day we sent 34 B-24's to bomb the aircraft plant at Bad Vaslau. The primary target was cloud-covered so they bombed the alternate, Vienna, Austria, by offset methods. The flak at the target was moderate to intense and accurate. It was easy to tell when you were near Vienna, since the flak increased in intensity. The Group dropped 62.5 tons of 100# incendiaries on the target. All planes returned safely.

FROM YOUR EDITOR

I am sorry that I missed the San Antonio 455th reunion. Even if I wasn't there physically I was there in spirit and hope that the reunion turned out to be all that you looked forward to. Meeting old friends, making new friends, and looking back over the years, to the service and to our time in Italy.

I've enjoyed editing your newsletter, the Cerignola Connection and hope to continue to do so. As time passes and issues are produced, I feel that I have a personal relationship with all who contribute and that I write about.

Keep sending in your war stories and other contributions. I'll get as many in the next issue as possible. Remember, too, if you're sending photos, put your name and address on the back so these can be returned to you.

I've collected quite a few crew pictures that did not appear in the history nor in previous issues of the Cerignola Connection. I will begin with the next issue printing as many of these that I possibly can with each issue. Cost of halftones are skyrocketing and I have to juggle the dollars against the contents in order to come out even on the printing budget. I'm sure, too, that there will be errors in names and other legend data.

We all do not write as legibly as we used to and it's difficult to make out the spelling of some of the names.

While overseas the Group and also the Squadrons published newsletters. If you have copies of these, send them on to me. This is interesting reading for all members of the group. I'll return originals after printing.

SPEAKING OF DUES... I do this every issue and you're probably getting tired of hearing about it. But we don't send out dues notices (and even I was late this past year). Dues for 1996 are due November 1, 1995. If you haven't already done so, get your check for \$15.00 to Lou Hansen ASAP.

After this issue goes to press we'll be into the holidays with great enthusiasm. With this spirit your Editor wishes you and yours the best of the holiday season.

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***The Cerignola Connection is published usually twice yearly, occasionally more often. All mistakes, errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, names and references are strictly the fault of the computer and not of the Editor.*

CHAPLAINS CORNER

Consider adding a Christian Preamble to your will. When planning a will, we can grow so preoccupied with how to distribute material blessings that we may fail to share our true wealth: The Good News of forgiveness of sin and eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ. Here's a sample Christian Preamble for your consideration:

"First I commit myself to God's care, secure in His love for me and trusting in the salvation purchased for me through Christ's suffering and death. I leave those who survive me the comfort of knowing that I have died in this faith and have now joined my Lord in eternal glory.

Second, I commend my loved ones to the protecting arm of God, knowing that He will continue to provide for them despite my absence; and I encourage them to place their faith and trust in Him alone"

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