

Flight of the Vulgar Vultures

1943-1945

740th Squadron



First Squadron Commander Lt. Col. William Keefer.

The following consists of quotes and excerpts from historical records prepared by our fine 740th Intelligence Officer, Leroy A. Crum, and personal accounts of experiences by squadron personnel during the combat months in Italy. Leroy not only served as the Squadron Intelligence Officer, but taught courses in business management, advertising and salesmenship to the officers and men who wanted to further their education while in the combat theatre.

Combat Begins

Each squadron had its own flight surgeon and medical staff. They diligently worked to keep the health and well-being of the squadron personnel in top condition to meet the rigors of the environment, long working hours and flying combat. This is a description of the duties of the medical section as defined by Captain James S. Gosman, our fine squadron flight surgeon: "In view of the necessity for absolute physical fitness required in high altitude flying, it was necessary to hold two periods for routine sick-call in order to accurately determine those not qualified for flying on the following days. It was found that these periods did not suffice and that constant attendance at mission briefings was necessary to meet the demands placed on the medical section. Early morning briefings had to be attended in order to ascertain the reactions, processing and habits of the personnel during these periods. Following these briefing periods, last minute medical attendance was always in demand. The ambulance staff covered all takeoffs and landings and emergency treatment of battle casualties returning from operational missions. Instructions in the physiology of flight, use of oxygen and its equipment and other high altitude flying equipment were given. Advising the removal of personnel from flying when it became apparent they were not psychologically adjusted to continue in this capacity were problems met by the medical section."

Our first several missions, starting 12 February 1944, were relatively easy with little flak and no enemy fighters which gave us a little more time for training and seasoning. This soon changed on the 25th when the target was the Graz-Thalerhoff Airdrome in

Austria defended by both flak and enemy fighters. We lost Lt. Cleland and his crew that day, our first combat loss. There were somber faces that evening.

The decorations started early. Captain Alfred Asch, Squadron Operations Officer, was first to be recommended for an Oak Leaf Cluster for the Air Medal. He had completed 28 missions in the 8th Air Force before being assigned to the squadron, and completed two more missions during the month of February, making a total of 30. Captain William E. Keefer, Squadron Commander, also completed 20 missions in the 8th Air Force before joining the group at Clovis when it was activated. He had received the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal with three Clusters and several campaign ribbons.

On 19 March the mission was the Graz-Thalerhoff Airdrome, Austria, a very heavily defended target. All squadron planes were returning home with the main formation when there was a midair collision over Tremiti Island in the Adriatic Sea. The pilots were Lt. Albert A. Lundwall and Lt. James (Jimmie) Pidcock. Lt. Lundwall was flight leader of "F" box with Jimmie flying on his right wing. The collision was severe and tore both airplanes apart in midair with debris floating through the formation causing considerable damage to other aircraft of the formation. No one knew the cause of the collision and there were no parachutes seen leaving the airplanes. Their crews were part of the original complement and well-liked by everyone. It was indeed difficult for everyone in the squadron to recover from the tragic accident.

A Small Diversion from Combat

On 31 March, it was pay day. The PX had chocolate bars for the first time, two to each man. Donations were made at the end of the pay line for building an enlisted men's club. A total of $1,593.18 was collected, demonstrating the willingness of the men to help themselves make life more pleasant.

The Combat Crews Never Gave Up



T/Sgt. W. Lipps, "Too close for comfort!"

These are accounts of the experiences of three combat crews that flew on the mission to Steyr, Austria on 2 April 1944 to bomb the important German ball bearing and aircraft factories. The first account is of Lt. John L. Bethune and his crew. On the way to the target, several of the B-24's of his flight did not take off or dropped out of the formation before reaching the target. Bethune kept moving up in the formation to where he was leading the flight with only three airplanes rather than the normal six. This left the flight more vulnerable to fighter attack. Bethune knew he should not turn back as it would leave the main formation more vulnerable to attack with fewer airplanes.

Bethune started having trouble on #2 engine but was able to hold his position in the formation. About one and a half hours before arriving at the target, the crew noted a terrific dog fight off to the left between German fighters and

our P-38's. Those little airplanes were all over the sky. Then some of the German fighters started attacking Bethune's flight. The plane received no damage with their first pass but Harry Prosser's airplane flying on Bethune's right wing had his right rudder ripped to shreds. Nevertheless, he was able to hold his position in the formation. With the next attack, all hell broke loose in Bethune's airplane. The interphone system was shot out and the radio operator, Riley, was told to go to the back of the airplane and have everyone switch to the command channel. He found "Pop" Bodley, the left waist gunner, sprawled out bleeding heavily from wounds in the chest and right arm. Vick, the ball turret gunner, was struggling to free himself as the power to his turret was shot away and Brown, the right waist gunner, was suffering from a wound in his right ankle. Nevertheless, Brown was using a canvas cloth to extinguish a fire burning around Pop's oxygen mask. Churchill, the tail turret gunner, was wounded in his right leg and was struggling to get out of his turret.

Riley adjusted Pop's oxygen mask after the fire was out and made him as comfortable as possible after insuring he was getting oxygen. Brown, with his wounded leg took up the waist gun position and continued to fire at incoming fighters. Vick, who had freed himself from the ball turret, helped Churchill from the tail turret and put him on oxygen from another position. He then got into the tail turret and fired upon the incoming fighters. Lt. Adkisson, the co-pilot, left his position with a walk-around oxygen bottle and assisted the wounded crew members by administering first aid and insuring they were getting oxygen. Bethune fought to keep the flight in formation with the rest of the group, bombed the target and brought the badly damaged airplane and wounded crew back to the base. All recovered from their wounds and flew another day. Harry Prosser also got his airplane back to base and landed safely with his right rudder shot away and with other damage.

Lt. John J. Power, Jr. was first pilot on the same mission. Just before the target, the fighters hit his left wing and one engine and they caught fire. Their guns kept blazing and finally eight men were seen to bail out and their chutes opened just before the airplane crashed into the nearby mountains. All the men lost were on their first mission except Power who was a seasoned combat pilot.

Lt. George Scrimshaw's crew also flew the Steyr mission and their airplane received considerable damage from fighter attacks. It had numerous holes from flak and 20 mm guns from enemy fighters. One engine was damaged and feathered. Oil was coming from another and gasoline was leaking from one of the fuel tanks. They had used up all their ammunition in the battle that raged for more than an hour against enemy fighters. Scrimshaw got his airplane back and landed safely. After each crew member received his shot of booze, doughnuts and coffee, debriefing and supper, the crew came en masse to the operations tent asking for a replacement airplane to fly the mission the next day. This was a great display of dedication and leadership by Scrimshaw and his crew. The crew finished their combat tour in record time without an abort and returned to the States.

On 3 April the squadron provided nine B-24's for the mission against the Budapest main marshalling yard where heavy flak and fighter attacks were encountered. Flak holes in four of the airplanes were repaired so efficiently and speedily that they were available for

the next day's mission. On this mission, the fine aerial engineer on Harry Prosser's crew, T/St. Samual F. Austin, escaped serious injury when shrapnel broke his goggles. During a previous raid, Sgt. Austin missed injury when his flying boots stopped shrapnel from lodging in his foot.

A Day Off for the Crews

On 8 April, the mission was "scrubbed" and it was declared PX day. Beer was sold to the men for the first time since the PX was open for business.

On 16 April, the African-European Theatre Campaign ribbon with a Star for the Italian Campaign was given to the squadron.

A piano was given to the squadron by the 15th Air Force Special Services Office and it wasn't long before Sgt. George Heibel was playing "Boogy-Woogy" music over the "ivories." The men were lulled to sleep that night by a real "Boogie Beat."

Missed Communications

On the 28 April mission to the Bucharest marshalling yards, Lt. Willie Moore's airplane was badly damaged in the nose section by flak and fighters. The bombardier and navigator in the nose section lost their intercommunication system with the pilot and were concerned about the plight of the B-24. One stuck his head in the navigation bubble to see the pilot, and Willie gave him the "thumbs up" signal. This was taken as an order to bail out so both the navigator and bombardier parachuted out over enemy territory. Willie was able to get his damaged airplane as far as Lake Verona, Italy where the rest of the crew bailed out. They had been given up for lost when at midnight we received a telephone call from the 5th Army that they were safe.

The Improving Living Conditions



Tenting tonight!



740th Squadron area.

Corporal Walter Mislik gave a piano accordion recital over the squadron's loudspeaker system. It was mighty good music!

On 15 May the combat crews were given a first-hand lecture on escape and evasion by an officer who recently escaped from enemy territory after eight months of evading the enemy.

On 16 May there was another stand-down. It seems as though where there is a G.I. there is a dog. It looked like a dog town instead of a squadron area. Even the photo section had a pup named Fido. A few other names given to the dogs were Teenie, Tar, Rogers, Petesakes, Sally and Wumpus. Not only were there dogs as pets to relieve tension, there was a monkey, parrot and even a lizard.

Pfc. John Macario was dumfounded when his Dad suddenly popped his head inside his tent. Pop flew all the way from Africa to Naples, hitchhiked from Naples to San Giovanni to see his son for the first time in 18 months. Pfc. Macario was given a pass so both father and son could visit their grandparents in southern Italy.

On 18 June, the new mess hall opened for the first time for a breakfast meal. No one could believe it but everyone was pleased. It was described as luxurious, palatial and comfortable.

At a short squadron meeting, the 1st Sergeant stated that the new enlisted men's club would officially be opened in eight days. The squadron historian of the club, Sergeant Mastroleo, in charge of the employment of Italian labor, promptly hired ten more men to speed up the construction. At its opening, wine, cognac and soft drinks were served.

On 28 June, the squadron had a very rare delicious fried chicken supper. Major Coons from Group Headquarters smelled it and followed his nose to our mess. We were pleased to have him as our guest. On the following night, the squadron was served ice cream and American canned beer was sold at the enlisted men's club for the first time. As canned beer was new to the men, they did not know how to open the cans. They finally jammed holes in the cans by using their knives and the warm beer squirted in their faces. It, nevertheless, was enjoyed.

On 21 July, the new officer's club was opened. The interior with its modern bar and fine furniture brought home comfort to the officers.

A Crew Limped Home

On 25 July the group bombed the Herman Goering Tank Works at Linz, Austria. Lt. Riley's airplane was hit by flak over the target and he had to feather two engines; he gave the "stand-by" signal to his crew for bail out. He managed to bring one engine back to life and to reach the coast of Italy when the engine had to be feathered again. Once more the "stand-by" signal was given. Suddenly, the other two engines stopped for lack of gasoline. All bailed out and landed safely in the vicinity of San Severo and were greeted by the neighboring civilians who kissed the crew's hands and exclaimed: "Thank God you are safe!" It wasn't until late that night that the crew arrived home. Lt. Clowery, a fine bombardier, was one of those who bailed out. What a way to complete his last (50th) mission.

There is Always Training

Seems like the personnel were getting back to their old Army school days when link training, turret, bombsight and navigational classes, and night flying were scheduled. For night flying, the planes usually took off around 2300 hours and landed at 0400 hours.



Party time!

Time Out for Social Activities

The officers had a dance at their club with music furnished by the group band. As for girls, Red Cross Hostages, British WAF's and a few local Italian girls who were employed by the Allies

were guests. Everyone had an enjoyable time. The mission the next day was a long one, to Lyon Port Herriot Oil target in France. Captain Ohlmeyer, bombardier, Captain Gross, navigator, and Major Asch led the Group; 93% of our bombs fell within 1,000 feet of the aiming point. It was the highest accuracy achieved up to that time.

Some Clothing Arrived Late

It's better late than never! On 20 August, some of the original crew members received their duffel bags just in time to take them back to the States as they had completed their tours.

Crews Were Injured in Strange Ways

The target was the Moravaska Ostrava Tank Works in Czechoslovakia. Lt. Felder was flying in one of the diamond positions in the second section. He was forced to make an early return as a spent .50 caliber casing from one of our planes crashed through his windshield and severely wounded Felder in the head. In landing, his right wheel collapsed and the plane swerved to the right, severely damaging the right wing and two engines. The B-24 was scrapped for spare parts. The crew scrambled from the plane unhurt except for Felder who recovered in the hospital.

Above and Beyond the Call of Duty

In September, S/Sgt. Albert Alt, one of the original squadron crew members, completed his 50th mission and earned the long cherished "ticket" home. He had been wounded twice and each time was grounded but Ault requested to participate in further combat flights. For his extraordinary achievement and heroism, Sgt. Alt was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

A Surprise Inspection

The squadron had a surprise tent inspection and as a result, approximately 50 enlisted men participated in close order drill. They were warned of future surprise inspections so after that, the tents were maintained in "tip-top" order.



Squadron Staff. Front row, l to r: Ohlmeyer, Compton, Gross. Back row, l to r: Asch, Keefer, Miller.

Distinguished Accomplishments

Captain Harold Ohlmeyer, former squadron bombardier, received his orders to return to the United States. As the squadron bombardier, he achieved one of the highest bomb scoring percentages in the Air Force. Fred Gross, the fine squadron navigator, deserves some credit for Harold's accomplishments. Fred was an outstanding navigator and he always brought the formation exactly over the IP and the briefed heading to the target. Very few course corrections had to be made from the IP to the target. Fred made it easy for the bombardiers and pilots through his precise navigation.

Captain James Gosman, squadron flight surgeon, was awarded the Legion of Merit for exceptionally meritorious

conduct in the performance of outstanding service for a most conspicuous record of medical achievements. This was the only record found for the award of the Legion of Merit within the squadron.

The 740th had the distinction of having the only flying First Sergeant in the Air Corps. First Sergeant Charles Adams was placed on flying status and he distinguished himself as a flight crewman. After completing five missions, he received his battlefield promotion to a commissioned officer.

S/Sgt. Max C. Lewis received his T/Sgt. stripes for his efficient and courageous work as a crew member. The Sergeant completed 88 combat missions and two combat tours in the Theatre; 53 missions on his first tour, flying from North Africa and 35 missions with the squadron on his second tour. He was credited with two enemy fighters destroyed on his first tour and was awarded the Air Medal with 13 clusters. He also earned several campaign ribbons and the Good Conduct Medal.

Improvements Continued

The engine change building was completed at the line, another great gain in aiding the Allies to victory. The building held eight engines for storage and two more for assembly..

A large number of improvements were made by Captain John Davis, the Squadron Adjutant, particularly as to meals. Soup started to be served for noon chow every other day and the quality of meals improved. The Italian mess workers improved their building to make working conditions much better. Captain Davis also implemented procedures to keep the pay line moving at pay call to save time and improve morale.

Changing Squadron Commanders



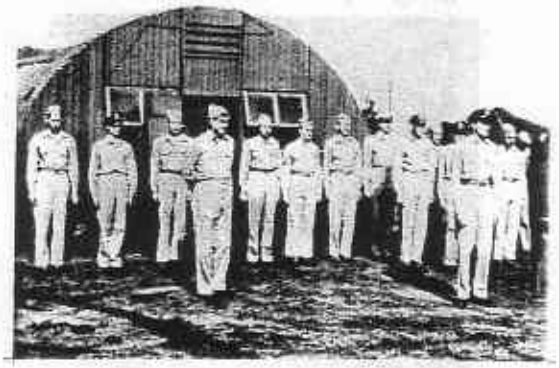
David Harp, second 740th Squadron Commander.

Lt. Col. David Harp, who had replaced Major Keefer as Squadron Commander, completed his missions and was ordered to the States. Before leaving he "buzzed" the field twice with a B-24. Everyone was outside their tents to watch him say "Good-bye" by brushing the dust from the tent tops. Major Francis C. Doring, a former member of the Flying Tigers in China, replaced Col. Harp as Squadron Commander. He was most welcome with his combat experience.

Another Change in Command

On 3 March 1945, Major Smith was relieved of his command and transferred to the 743rd as Commanding Officer. Captain Betke was relieved as Operations Officer and assumed command of the 740th Squadron.

On 1 March, Major Herbert A. Meyer became the Squadron Commanding Officer. The war was over and the squadron turned its energies toward making things ready for the occupation forces.



Decoration Awards Ceremony.



740th Squadron staff administrative headquarters. Front row, l to r: L. Ward, J. Villemez, C. Adams, M. Post. Back row, l to r: Unk, Unk, J.B. Goodrich, E. Koch, B. Furlow.



Riding in style l to r: J. Brown, R.L. Spires, A. Burke.



"I'm only going to tell you once, this is a prop." L to r: Smith; Betsinger.



740th Squadron maintenance personnel.



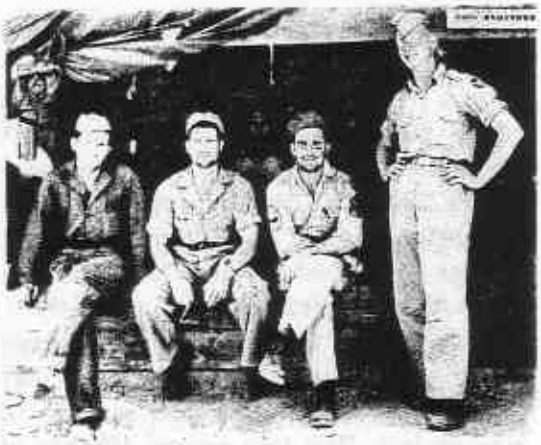
Just relaxing! l to r: P. Harrell, P. Cramer, J. McGowan, Unk.



740th Squadron headquarters staff.



740th Squadron operations. L to r: Ohlmeyer, Asch, Gross, Miller.



740th Squadron engineering. L to r: Spires, Brown, Foith, Ringsted.



Falkowitz hard at work.



Down by the old line shack...

741st Squadron



741st Squadron Commander Lt. Col. Horace Lanford.

The 741st squadron crews followed the same route to Italy as the others except five were ordered to land at a small field with a dirt runway at Chateaudun, Algeria. All other airplanes landed at Djedeida. Although the two airfields were only 50 miles apart, neither the squadron nor the five crews knew the whereabouts of the other. There was a service squadron in charge of maintaining the airfield at Chateaudun but were in the process of moving out. The two senior officers of the 741st, 1st Lts. Lawrence F. Liberty and Louis L. Nangeroni, convinced the service squadron commander, a captain, to stay a few days until the lost crews could find their squadron. The crews needed tents, cots, blankets and food. Liberty and Nangeroni organized a radio watch to monitor the interplane frequency of the squadron to determine their whereabouts. On the fourth day, contact was made and it was learned that the five crews should have gone into Djedeida. During the four-day delay, there was a shortage of food so the crews bargained with the local Arabs for almost everything they ate: chickens, bread, wine, etc. One tent caught fire and burned to the ground with bedding and clothing lost. On the fifth day, the crews started leaving for Djedeida. Their airplanes were in bad shape yet flyable. Lt. Eugene Hudson could not get his airplane started as the auxiliary generator (putt putt) would not run and provide electricity for the engine starters. They took a putt putt from another airplane that had been started and installed it in Hudson's to get his B-24 running. It worked and all five airplanes took off and joined their squadron at Djedeida.

When the squadron flew into Cerignola, Italy on 1 February 1943, one could see from the air that much would need to be done to provide the basic comforts for the men and acquire the minimum supporting equipment and facilities for the maintenance of our B-24's. After landing, all the airplanes had to be lined up wing-tip to wing-tip because there wasn't enough pierced-steel planking for hard stands and taxi ways. This presented a most inviting target for an air attack which, fortunately, never came. Eventually, enough planking was obtained for each hard stand which improved working conditions for the maintenance engineers and better dispersal of our aircraft against air attacks.

Although the basic character of the

squadron had developed during training, its development continued under combat conditions but at some cost. For example, the four officers of each combat crew were quartered in one tent and the six enlisted men in another. The Squadron Commander, Horace Lanford, adopted a policy of having the operations sergeant on duty wake the crew commander scheduled for a mission that day. The crew commander was then responsible for waking the rest of his crew, the officers and airmen, and getting them to the group briefing on time. The penalty for violating this policy consisted of fining the crew commander $50 (to be placed in the officer's club fund) if he failed to get his crew to the briefing on time. There was an alternative, the off-track crew commander was given the choice of a court martial if he refused to pay the fine. One such officer refused to pay the fine and chose the latter. Because a court martial procedure would have taken the time of many people away from the combat objectives, the pilot was denied a promotion and transferred to a fighter squadron where he became successful. There were no more crews late for briefing!

Personal Flying Equipment

Captain Harold F. Schuknecht, the fine squadron flight surgeon, provided an evaluation of the personal flying equipment for the first three months of operational flying: February, March and April of 1944. The temperatures during these months at 20,000 feet ranged from -20°F to -50°F. The gloves and boots of the electrically heated uniforms were entirely inadequate, both in quantity and quality. Twenty cases of frostbite were treated of which three were hospitalized. Frost bite of the fingers and toes was a major problem. With care, all persons recovered. Quantity deficiencies were slowly remedied by the use of British equipment. The use of silk liners in gloves was found especially effective and the use of a pair of light-



Capt. Schuknecht's medical staff.

weight cotton socks covered by heavier woolen socks provided increased protection against cold. Ball and tail turret operators received first priority on electrical clothing.

Environmental Conditions

Captain Schuknecht's observation of the quality of food during February 1944 was as follows: "Caloric content of diet is adequate, however, excessive amounts of gas-forming foods are being issued to this command." All combat crews could vouch for the gas-forming aspects while flying at high altitudes where pressure is reduced and the gas expands, making it rather uncomfortable during a combat mission.

By March, many activities had been underway to improve living and working conditions. For example, the new mess hall began to shape up; the new public address system gave the men music at night; the officer's and airmen's elaborate canvas-covered latrines opened for business; a sum of $1,100 was spent for furniture for the officer's club; one could order flowers for mothers on Mother's Day; floor tile was procured for the clubs; marble was procured for the officer's club; furniture was bought for the enlisted men's day room; the "swank," new officer's club officially opened 29 March; and on 30 March, Coca Cola was served for the first time since leaving the States; the enlisted men's day room opening was set for 8 April; and by the 10th, work was completed on the roof of the new mess hall. By the end of April, all clubs were open for business. Since it was pay day, the enlisted men's club was packed and the money flew thick and fast across the bar and the card tables. Some won and some lost!

Combat for the Squadron

On 3 April 1944, the squadron suffered its first casualty while bombing the marshalling yards (M/Y) at Budapest, Hungary. First Lieutenant Paul T. Condra, the pilot, and Technical Sergeant Verl D. Maxson, engineer, were seriously injured and their bombardier, 2nd Lt. Ernest J. Ackerman, was killed by flak over the target. The co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Harold Gorski, was awarded the Silver Star for his extraordinary achievement in bringing the crippled B-24 back to base with the first pilot severely wounded. The plane was repeatedly hit by flak, fire broke out in the cockpit, two engines were rendered inoperative and another was badly damaged, forcing the B-24 to drop behind the formation. Immediately taking over the controls, Lt. Gorski brought the plane back into the formation and at the same time, the crew was battling the fire until it was extinguished. The stricken B-24 was safely returned to base without further damage. This first loss of life gave everyone a profound realization about the perils of combat.

There were several awards of the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) during June 1944. Major Russell J. Welsh, Squadron Operations Officer, was awarded the DFC for leading an attack unit 28 March against the Verona M/Y in northern Italy. Although the weather caused part of the group formation to return to base, Major Welsh skillfully maneuvered his section into formation with another group and followed it across the target. Despite intense and accurate anti-aircraft fire and strong enemy fighter interceptions in the target area, a successful bombing run was completed without loss of an airplane. With his determination in leading the section, a large measure of success was achieved on a mission that might have proved abortive.

On 21 April 1944, 1st Lt. Louis L. Nangeroni served as flight leader on a mission against the Bucharest M/Y in Rumania. His B-24 was attacked repeatedly by enemy fighters and sustained severe damage. Heavy damage from flak shattered the plexiglass in the pilot's compartment with a fragment striking Lt. Nangeroni and wounding him in the head. He, nevertheless, maintained his position in the formation, holding the flight together until safely out of hostile territory. Then, with his fuel supply rapidly running low from leaks caused from flak and with the danger of fire, he made his way to the home field and a successful landing.

On the same mission over Bucharest, 1st Lt. Eugene (Gene) L. Hudson's B-24 was attacked repeatedly by enemy fighters, damaging one of his engines. Flak completely destroyed the hydraulic system. Despite the crippled condition of his airplane, Gene maintained his position in the formation, affording maximum protection against further enemy fighter attacks. Without use of brakes or flaps, he circled the home field until the rest of the formation landed before bringing his plane in for a successful landing. Gene had a distinguished career in the Air Force, becoming a Major General before retiring.

Major Horace W. Lanford, Jr., Squadron Commander, was also awarded the DFC for extraordinary achievement for leading the mission on 17 March 1944 over the Vienna Industrial Center. The formation encountered adverse weather conditions and finding the target cloud obscured, Major Lanford led the formation to the secondary target. Despite continued adverse weather conditions and determined enemy resistance, he maneuvered the group to the objective for a highly successful bombing run.

Corporal Robert E. O'Mara, an ambulance driver, received the Soldier's Medal for risking his own life to save others. The medical personnel were always the first to arrive at the scene of an airplane accident to assist airmen from the wreckage.

The Missions Over Germany and Austria Took Their Toll

On 13 June 1944, the target was Munich, Germany, a real tough one with many enemy fighters. One B-24 piloted by Lt. Gustav Wendt straggled in late after the rest of the group planes returned. It had been presumably lost, but it came back with engines feathered and its hydraulic system shot up. By the use of parachutes deployed from the waist windows, a safe landing was made. Lt. Wendt was awarded the DFC.

Another B-24 piloted by Lt. Robert C. Christensen flying to the same target was also badly damaged from enemy action. Bob flew "tail end Charley" that day and was attacked by fighters as the formation crossed the Adriatic into Yugoslavia and from this, S/Sgts. Gordon F. Swann, a waist gunner, and Leo C. Padgett, the ball turret gunner, were killed. Despite being mortally wounded, S/Sgt. Swann continued to fire at the oncoming fighters until he died. S/Sgt. Hubert L. Townsend, the aerial photographer, took over the dead men's guns and personally accounted for two enemy fighters. T/Sgt. Casimir Bialas also claimed an enemy fighter. With the plane badly crippled, Lt. Christensen showed lots of "guts," judgment and skill in maintaining his position in the formation and proceeding to the target over 100 miles away. He realized full well it would have been suicidal to leave the protection of the formation provided against enemy fighters. Further damage was inflicted upon the

airplane over the target from heavy and intense flak and the crew had to fly at high altitude for a long period of time without oxygen. Bob brought his B-24 back to base with the wounded and fatalities, and made a skillful landing without the service of his nose wheel. There indeed were some "shaky" crews in the squadron that evening. Lt. Christensen was later promoted to Captain and received the Silver Star for gallantry in action. All his crew received the DFC as follows: S/Sgts. Leo C. Padgett and Gordon F. Swann (posthumously), Jack E. Abbott, William Bowles, Jr. and Hubert L. Townsend. The officers included 1st Lt. Sam Bakanauskas and 2nd Lts. Robert M. Crowley and Paul A. McCarthy.

The mission on 16 June 1944 against Vienna was another tough one. Lt. Nelson A. Wurtz's airplane was seen going down over the target after receiving direct hits from flak on the forward part of his plane. Some parachutes were seen to open. The crew was one of the original ones and all members had 45 missions each, only five short before returning to the States. The fine squadron navigator, Lt. Robert C. McWilliams, was on the airplane. He survived POW camp as did others of the crew.

First Lt. Harold Gorski received the DFC for bringing his heavily damaged B-24 back to base from the mission over Moosbierbaum, Austria on 26 June. His formation was under repeated attacks by enemy fighters. His crew destroyed three enemy fighters, probably one other and damaged two. Harold's plane was badly damaged and some repairs were made during flight to get it back to base. A successful landing was made without further damage. All of Harold's crew were awarded the DFC as follows: 2nd Lts. William R. Crim, Bill L. Disbrow and James W. Scott, Jr.; T/Sgts. John E. Merfield and Stephen Vicinski; S/Sgts. Raymond R. Beauvais, Dale F. Magnuson, Kenneth J. Vincent and James E. Weeks; and Sgt. Mark S. Blackman.

Quotes from the Records

The squadron historical diary for 1 July relates the following: "The new dispensary is ready for occupancy, located in the olive grove amid the tents, close to the men. Chief pain-soother, Capt. Schuknecht, has a real palace to work in now with all modern improvements, including hot and cold running water. No missions to start the month. Replacements are sorely needed as our status at the moment could aptly be called quasi-operational." The losses were high since starting combat flying in February 1944. The squadron could put up only six crews on 28 June. Only four of the original B-24's and three out of the original combat complement of 18 crews were left.

The Squadron Commander is Lost in Combat

Major Lanford had the misfortune of being shot down on 21 July 1944 on a bombing mission against Brux, Czechoslovakia. This is his story: "I had accepted Major David (Rock) Thayer's assignment as deputy group leader for the mission. (Rock was the commanding officer of the 743rd Squadron.) Brux was a relatively lightly defended target with about 72 flak guns according to the intelligence briefing.

"I agreed to fly one of the B-24's of the 743rd Squadron. I recall the airplane was not in very good condition but not bad enough not to go on the mission. We did not lose the airplane because of its poor maintenance status. The takeoff and en route flight was uneventful. Upon turning at the IP, the

flak bursts were heavy over the target and seemed like a lot for just 72 guns. I remember thinking that no one would get through the barrage but we were the only B-24 lost that day.

"As we approached the target, before bomb release, a flak shell went through our right wing, just behind the number three engine. The hole was large enough for a man to crawl through and that was no imagination! We had to apply climbing power to maintain level flight.

"After bombs away, knowing we could not return to base because of fuel consumption at climb power, we slowly lost altitude, dropping from one formation to another. Eventually we were down to 12 or 14,000 feet of altitude and alone!

"We passed over what I judged to be a mobile flak gun or perhaps a flak battery. We heard flak exploding near our B-24 and received additional damage. Sam Bakanauskas, the bombardier, was hit in the hand. The control cables were severed. Although being the airplane commander, I was flying in the right seat, normally the co-pilot's position, with Lt. Nixon flying as pilot. When I felt the flak bursts, I grabbed the controls and attempted a hard right turn. The control wheel spun like a roulette wheel! We put the airplane under automatic pilot control and were able to fly straight and level but we faced another problem. There were cumulus clouds forming over the mountains at our altitude and we did not want to fly through the turbulence on instruments with a crippled airplane. I turned the airplane by pulling back two left engine throttles to turn left or two right throttles to turn right. All seemed to be under control. Approaching a cloud, I pulled back two right throttles to turn right but the B-24 flipped abruptly to the left. I returned the right engines to climb power and gave the order to abandon the aircraft. All crewmen successfully bailed out.

"I landed facing into the wind on a small patch of ground at the foot of a mountain. The force of my backward fall caused me to hit and cut my head slightly and with enough force to knock me out momentarily. I still had the rip cord in my hand. A woman and small child approached me and I gave them my parachute as a peace offering. I made them understand that I was an American and wanted to see Tito, the head of the Yugoslavia Partisans. She took me to her home, hid the parachute, and gave me a refreshing drink, perhaps vodka. The lady then took me to a small shack just inside the surrounding forest where an old man gave her instructions for taking me to safety. We proceeded up a mountain trail and were stopped by a Partisan hidden in the fork of a large tree with a rifle pointed at us. He understood our intentions and sent a message ahead by a hidden field telephone. Just prior to darkness, we entered a clearing where there were pup tents and one large tent as the headquarters of a Partisan camp. I was fed and had to share a small pup tent with two Partisan soldiers for sleeping. They slept with their rifles and they banged my head through the night as the soldiers thrashed in their sleep.

"In the morning, the camp commander took me to see Lt. Crim, our navigator, and told us the Germans were offering barrels of fuel for downed Americans but since they were assisting in our escape, the Americans were paying a higher price. In the afternoon, we went to our plane crash site to see if any of the guns could be salvaged for their use. There were none. Others of

our crew had more problems evading the Germans and were in Yugoslavia two weeks until falling in the hands of the Partisans.

"On the third day, 23 July 1944, we set out for the 'Big Stop.' This was a gathering area for Partisans and Allied evaders wanting a ride back to Italy. We began our journey following our Partisan guide named 'Benny' who could speak some English. We hiked through the forest for awhile, then crawled on our stomachs across an open area, descending into what was, presumably, a safe part of the valley and hitched a ride in a horse-drawn wagon. During this part of the journey, some shots rang out and Benny dove from the wagon into a ditch at the side of the road. Of course, Crim and I followed with some haste. After awhile, Benny decided it was safe to proceed; it must have been other Partisans engaged in target practice.

"We came to a small hamlet of five or six houses and stopped for lunch. The lady of the house was in her early 30's, well dressed with make-up and silk stockings. Her husband was a physician serving the Partisans in a hospital in Italy. At another house, we met three British soldiers who manned radio equipment. The equipment could be packed, removed and the house dusted down in 20 minutes to hide from the Germans. The soldiers radioed messages to Italy about the presence of downed airmen.

"We then set out on an uneventful trip to the 'Big Stop' where we were to be evacuated by air. Archie Markoski, our tail gunner, joined us. We were well fed and after dusk, we were escorted down to the landing strip for a night pick-up by a C-47 airplane. The landing strip was the result of a British sergeant whose job it was to parachute from a C-47 at night into a designated area in Yugoslavia and prepare a landing strip. As a matter of human interest, the sergeant had a small pet dog who traveled with him at all times – including the parachuting at night. The aircraft would fly at about 500 feet altitude when the sergeant made his jump. He would then enlist the aid of friendly Yugoslavs to assist in rolling the big stones out of the path for a landing strip.

"We were told that six C-47's to be flown by South African Air Force crews would arrive that night to take downed airmen and others to Italy. About 15 minutes before the aircraft were due, a bonfire was started in the hills surrounding the area marking the two ends of the landing strip and direction for landing. At five minutes before arrival time, the Yugoslavs lighted flare pots down the two sides of the strip to enable a safe landing. This activity took place within 20 kilometers of a German headquarters. We were told the Germans just couldn't believe that landings such as these were being conducted on a routine basis and under adverse conditions. I have always been thankful the Germans would not believe this.

"Three aircraft arrived loaded with supplies and personnel to relieve people who had been in Yugoslavia for a while. The Yugoslavs loaded wounded Partisans on two of the C-47's and a load of evaders on the other one. The British paratrooper and his dog returned to Italy to prepare for the next evacuation. There were three American weather observers returning from a tour in Yugoslavia. These people had to play 'hide and seek' with the Germans in the same fashion as the British radio people. They had difficult and harrowing experiences which showed the strain of duty on their faces. Twenty-eight of us came out that night.

"We took off without lights, landed in Naples and were taken to a hospital for a good night's rest and physical examinations. From there, I went to the 15th Air Force Headquarters and had dinner that evening. I surprised Major Welsh, my former operations officer, by sitting at his table. He exclaimed, "My God, I thought you were dead!" Since I wasn't, I joined him for dinner."

Horace joined his squadron and within a few days, he was back flying combat. He later completed his combat tour. His crew members on this fateful mission told similar stories.

Another Crew Returns From Yugoslavia

On 22 July, 2nd Lt. Harley D. Snider and his crew returned from Yugoslavia with help from the Partisans for the escape. They had been missing since 16 June from a mission over Ploesti. The crew praised Lt. Snider for his coolness in getting everyone out of the airplane before leaving it. Although injured, Lt. Snider was the last to leave the stricken B-24. The crew told of being picked up by Tito's men, hikes over hills and mountains at all hours of the day, backtracking, passing through enemy-held territory and finally arriving at a secret airfield where they were evacuated in a C-47. In all, they walked about 300 miles in their escape.

Award for the Engineering Section

The engineering section was recognized early by the award of the Legion of Merit to the squadron Engineering Officer, Lt. Elmer Watters, for the outstanding performance of the engineering section under his leadership. Without the outstanding performance by all maintenance activities, the group could not have achieved the high level of combat operations.



741st engineering section.

Landing at the Isle of Vis

The Honorable George McGovern, United States Senator, was a Lieutenant in the 741st as a first pilot. His crew's airplane was named the "Dakota Queen." On one of his missions, Lt. McGovern had engine problems and had to land at the Isle of Vis on two engines to save his airplane and crew. The target was the Skoda Munitions Works at Pilsen, Czechoslovakia and the date was 20 December 1944. Lt. McGovern had an engine fail prior to reaching the target and decided to stay with the formation to drop his bombs. Having to use excessive power on the remaining three good engines, another failed and lost all its oil so that the propeller could not be feathered. The propeller's windmilling caused additional drag on the B-24 and later, one engine caught fire just before reaching the Isle of Vis. Lt. McGovern displayed a great deal of pilot skill by landing the crippled airplane on the short runway at Vis, saving it and his crew. The crew was flown to Italy within a short time after landing. Lt. McGovern was awarded the DFC for his achievements.

The Last Few Months of the War

Starting the New Year, living conditions had greatly improved, including the food. Canned C-rations started to become the exception. There were many recreational facilities with inter-squadron games such as baseball, volleyball and softball which were most useful for the combat crews to take their minds off flying the combat missions.

The squadron's last mission was flown on 25 April 1945 over Linz, Austria. It was a rough one! Almost all the planes returned with flak holes. Lts. Oleson and McGovern both had to land using parachutes out the waist windows because their hydraulic system was damaged from flak and they had no flaps or brakes. Sgt. Ashlock received a serious flak wound in his thigh and Lt. Cooper sprained an ankle on landing. Both were on Lt. McGovern's crew.

The war ended on 8 May 1945 and the squadron started processing the personnel for shipment back to the States and preparing the resources and area for the Allied Occupation Forces.

The Squadron Commanders

The following were the squadron commanders of the 741st Squadron:

Horace W. Lanford, Jr. — July 1943 to September 1944

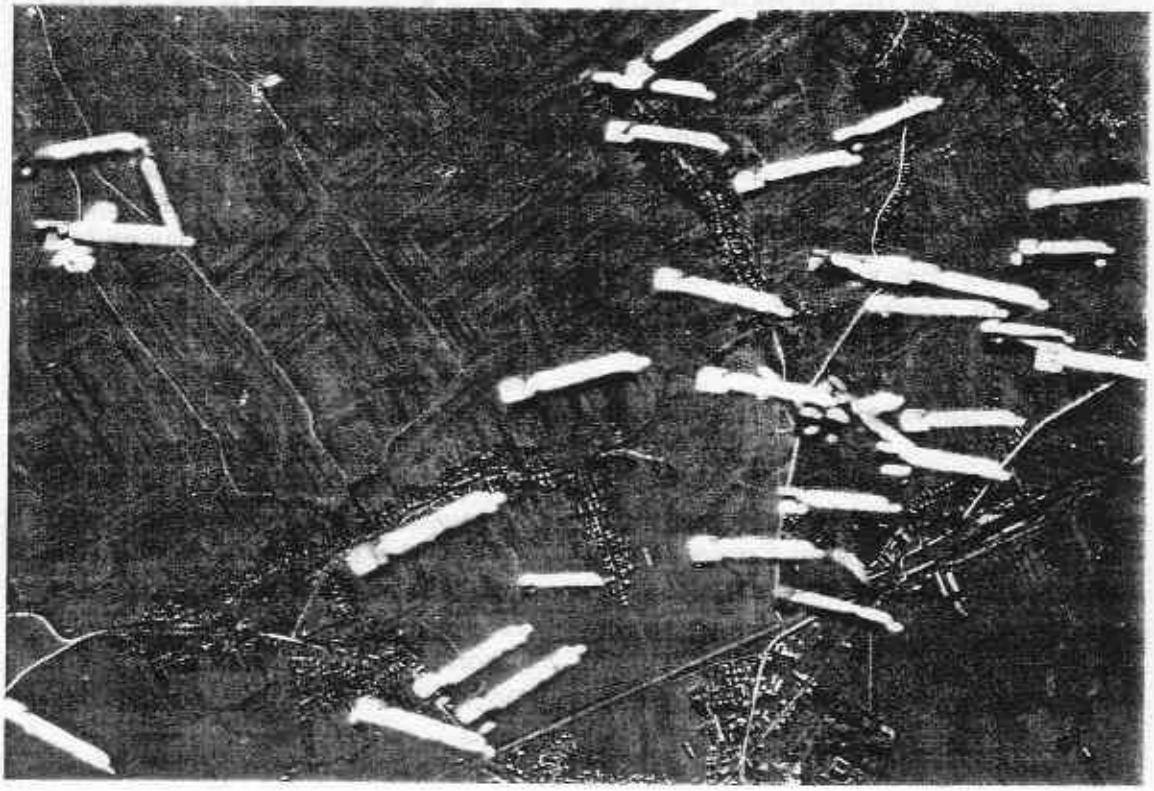
Jack D. Reeder — October and November 1944

Russell J. Welsh — December 1944 to February 1945

Francis C. Doring — March 1945 to June 1945

Gordon R. Anderson — June to 9 September 1945

(From 31 July 1944 until 1 January 1945, the war diary of the 741st Squadron was missing from the historical records at Bolling AFB. The months of February and March 1945 were also missing. Therefore, there is this gap in the Squadron history.)





741st operations.



741st in formation.



741st medical section.



741st armament section.



Squadron mess hall – finally completed.



741st intelligence section.



Tent city!



Snow falls on the 741st Squadron.



First Sgt. Friedland and company clerk Miller hard at work.



Line section ready to install a new engine.



Time out at the 741st Squadron officer's club.



741st Squadron dispensary.

742nd Squadron



742nd Squadron Commander Lt. Col. Edwin Ambrosen.

The original Cadre for the 742nd Squadron came together in Clovis, New Mexico in early June 1943. Most of the personnel came from the 357th Squadron of the 302nd Bomb Group. The key personnel were: Squadron Commander Captain E.C. Ambrosen, Squadron Executive Major Bob Horton, Squadron Adjutant Lt. William Berg, Operations Officer Lt. Bernie Keogh, Squadron Bombardier Lt. Ross Strode, Squadron Navigator Lt. John Tyvkila, Flight Surgeon Captain Fisher, Engineering Lt. Dean Griffith, Assistant Engineering Officer Lt. William Brydson, and Supply Officer Lt. Mort Elfenbein. It must be stated here that when Captain Hugh Graff, C.O. of the 357th Squadron, learned that he was assigned to the 455th Group, he provided the 742nd Squadron with many of his key personnel. This proved to be a deciding factor in the squadron compiling an excellent airplane-in-commission record.

Early Training

As with the other squadrons, the air echelon went to Orlando, Florida on 15 July to attend the AAFSAT (Army Air Force School of Applied Tactics). It was an indoctrination to combat conditions. After the classroom portion of the school, we were sent to Pinecastle Air Base in the mosquito belt of Florida to fly practice missions with the few airplanes we had. None thought combat conditions ever got that bad. After three weeks we moved to Alamogordo AAB in New Mexico. The conditions there were worse than Florida but without the mosquitoes. Very little training was accomplished there and on 9 September, the squadron was transferred with the group to Salt Lake City, Utah where several aircrews were picked up and the remainder of the ground echelon was received. Our training began in earnest as these personnel were mostly new to the Service.

Coming Together at Langley

On 29 September the squadron was transferred to Langley AAB, Virginia where final training was accomplished. We flew our old, weary B-24D's to the east coast from Salt Lake City. These airplanes had all seen better days and were the "dregs" of the training groups of the 2nd Air Force. Two months of intensive training got the squadron in fighting shape or at least what we deemed necessary at the time. Our

experience level as far as combat was concerned was nil but we were ready and the Air Corps seemed to agree as we were sent to Mitchell Field in New York for final staging on 1 December 1943.

The Flight Overseas

With staging completed, the squadron was assigned 16 new B-24's and almost all the pilots had new planes to fly overseas. Each airplane carried 14 people as the ground crews and essential personnel for operating the aircraft were taken with the flight echelon along with the crew members. The long flights began in December 1943 and would finally be completed by some in January 1944. The route led from Mitchell to West Palm Beach, Trinidad, Belem and to Natal in Brazil. From there, the long overseas flight would take place at night so that the pilots would be landing in the daylight at Dakar on the Gold Coast of Africa. It was usually a one night layover in Dakar, then the flight would continue to Marrachech. As soon as weather permitted, the remainder of the flight was made to Dejeda outside of Tunis. Here we regrouped, "counted noses" and flew practice missions while we awaited orders to fly to Italy which would be our permanent base for the remainder of the war.

Making Home in Italy

On 1 February 1944 we flew in formation to our new base at San Giovanni near the town of Cerignola, Italy. What awaited us there was the ground echelon who had endured a long and eventful boat ride to Italy. They had set up a camp of sorts but it was now time to get to work and see to the welfare of all the personnel of the 742nd. It would be a tremendous job and one that would take time. It was one that all squadron C.O.'s had to do so we all pitched in and things began to improve very rapidly. One of our biggest problems was food. In some respects the food was satisfactory. However, we received so much salt pork that we were hard pressed to figure what to do with it. Finally, we thought it a good idea to peddle it on the black market in exchange for fresh vegetables and eggs. In order to do this, Ambrosen signed a note authorizing the men to trade the salt pork. As luck would have it, the Inspector General (IG) while looking into black market activities, picked up the note signed by Ambrosen (actually initialed). They came to him saying they had this note but could not figure out who had signed it. Ambrosen told them he had, and that they were getting fresh vegetables and eggs for the squadron and the salt pork we were being issued was useless to begin with. After the IG was convinced that no one was making money, he said to forget it. So the squadron continued to get fresh vegetables and eggs, and life in combat became a little more bearable.

Maintenance Engineering

The maintenance section of the 742nd was one of the best in the 15th Air Force and their in-commission rate was outstanding. A number of times they had provided extra airplanes for missions when others could not furnish the number they were supposed to provide. One time "Pappy" Zeinert, our line chief, was ordered from the flight line to get some rest as he had been working for over 36 hours without a break. It was this kind of dedication that made them all so great.

Flight Equipment

Personal equipment, such as heated flying clothing, worked fine when it was new but with the wear and tear on the

equipment it became increasingly difficult to keep all the body parts warm at the same time. The squadron began to swap equipment with the British as their flying suits had been time tested and it added another dimension to our own equipment. After a time, we had to pool all the equipment and issue it to those who were flying that day. There were certain positions on the plane that had first priority; the waist gunner, and the tail and ball turret gunners who were most exposed to the cold blast of air at high altitudes.

Recreation Activities

Recreation and athletics were an important part for the morale of the squadron. It joined a softball league and the games were quite well contested. With Squadron Commander Ambrosen as the pitcher and "Shorty" Fornier as the catcher, the squadron team became quite formidable. Movies and USO shows put in sporadic appearances to help with the morale problems but athletic games provided one of the best outlets for the men and it also kept them out of trouble in town.

Improving Living Conditions

The living conditions kept improving with time. Those who were fortunate enough to replace crews that had completed their missions, or were lost in combat benefited from the improvements their predecessors left them. Not that the living quarters were that great at any time but the ingenuity of some crew members and others made the accommodations very livable. The improvement in heating was a real help in getting through the cold months without burning up one's possessions. When we arrived in Italy, a tent fire was almost a nightly occurrence. Showers were the next order of business as these were rigged as soon as weather would allow, it beat going into Cerignola to take a bath.

Small accommodations that were taken for granted in the States were all but unheard of here. It wasn't long before everyone that needed laundry done found someone in town that would do it, but dry cleaning took a little longer. In time, a few good tailors were found and outside of delivery service, the work was almost as good as in the States.

One thing that became apparent was that your tent mates and crew members were your family and the squadron was your home. This feeling helped develop a very strong sense of pride in the squadron. Each squadron tried to outdo the others in every respect, from flying formation to who had the best baseball team and the best clubs.

Rigors of Combat

In combat we were always prepared for most anything that would occur, but on 26 June 1944 the squadron was hit with its worst loss with the shooting down of seven of our airplanes and the loss of 69 crewmen. It was a devastating loss and one that took us some time to get over but in a few days with new replacement crews we were back in the air with a full complement of planes. (The squadron account of its losses was included as part of the description of Mission 68.)

The ground crews took it as hard as anyone as they felt a close relationship with the air crews that were flying their airplanes, it was a very personal loss to them.

The Loss of "Flak Alley Sally"

This B-24 had become the favorite of the squadron staff and was a good flying airplane, easy to trim and fly and

was kept in excellent flying condition by a proud ground crew. One day while being flown by Ambrosen, his hydraulic system was destroyed by enemy fire. On his return to base, he was faced with the problem of landing without brakes, wing flaps and the nose wheel. The crew "kicked out" the nose gear and lowered the main landing wheels to make ready to land. They attached parachutes to the waist window gun mounts and were ready for all contingencies, they thought. The chutes were opened too soon by the rear gunners and were ripped from the mounts or shredded. The deployed parachutes were intended for braking action as the loss of hydraulic pressure made the wheel brakes ineffective. The result was that the airplane could not be stopped before reaching the end of the runway. Thus, the B-24 proceeded beyond the runway and into the gully. The landing gear was torn away and the airplane was a total loss. Luckily, all crew members escaped unhurt to fly another day. Good-bye "Flak Alley Sally," the lost B-24. The squadron continued to set impressive records throughout the remainder of the war.



Flak Alley Sally.



Mission debriefing. (Dick Gosline in the dark glasses.)



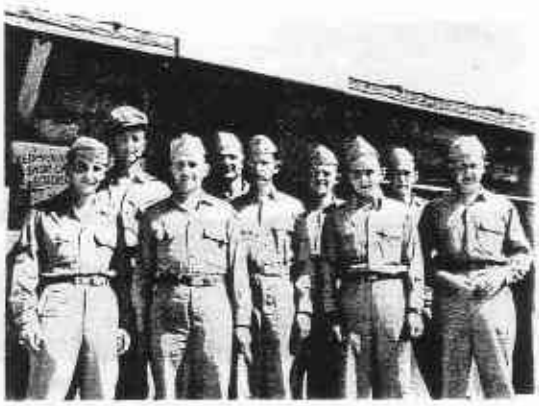
742nd Squadron motor depot.



742nd Squadron operations.



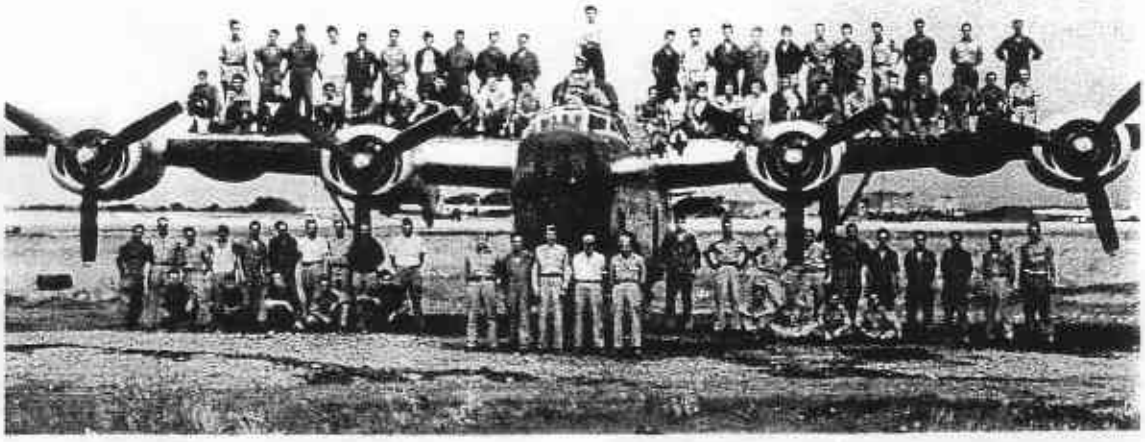
742nd Squadron intelligence section.



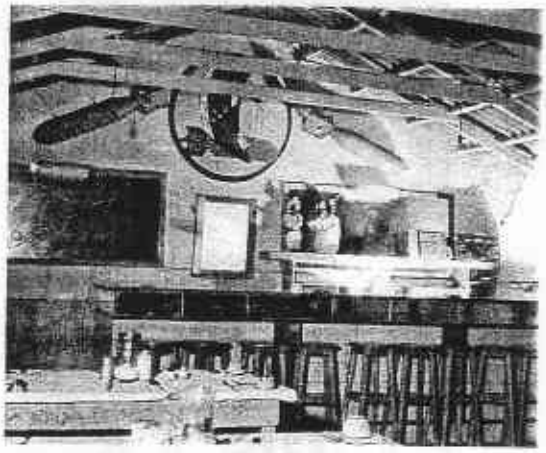
742nd Squadron orderly room.



742nd Squadron communications.



742nd Squadron maintenance section.



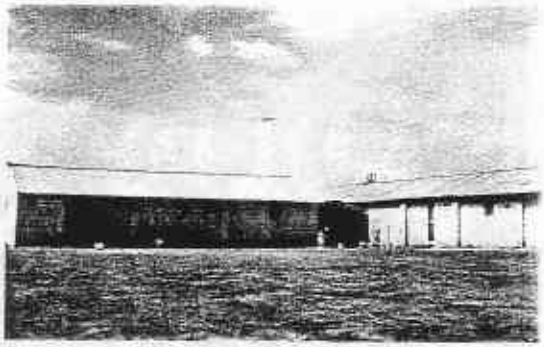
742nd Squadron spa!



Where all the rumors started.



742nd Squadron headquarters.



742nd Squadron mess.



742nd Squadron dispensary.



742nd Squadron supply.



742nd Squadron armament section.



Clean up your mess kit!



742nd Squadron mess – Langley Field, Virginia.



We even had music at Cerignola. L to r: Stapleton, Antonson, Harkey, Robinson, Ambrosen.



742nd Squadron area.

743rd Squadron



743rd Squadron Commander Lt. Colonel David Starr Thayer.

Lt. Colonel David Starr Thayer was the Commanding Officer of the 743rd Squadron but to all who knew him, he was the "Rock." He reminded one of a big shaggy dog, always smiling and a friend to all, officers and enlisted men alike. When flying with him, he never touched the controls but left one to work out his own problems. A native of Houston, Texas, Rock attended the University of Texas where he was a member of Beta Theta Pi and played center on the Texas varsity football team. He enlisted as an Aviation Cadet in July 1941, was commissioned a Second Lieutenant as a pilot in March 1942 and served with a B-24 group for nine months overseas in 1942 and 1943. Flying combat from the United Kingdom, he participated in such historic raids as Vegesack, Breman and Wilhelmshaven. His group was ordered to North Africa and the Libyan Desert in December 1943 to provide air support to defeat Rommel's African Corps. While there, he participated in successful bombing attacks on Sfax, Tunis, Bizerte and Naples in early 1943. Returning to the States from England, Rock injected his experience and ability into the 743rd Squadron as its original Commanding Officer when the group was activated at Clovis, New Mexico in July 1943. He led numerous bombing raids against the enemy over Europe from Italy and was awarded the DFC and Air Medal with numerous Oak Leaf Clusters.

The Squadron Beginning

The squadron first saw light at the Clovis AAB, New Mexico 6 July 1943. It then transferred to Alamogordo, New Mexico 13 August and remained there until 11 September 1943. This embryonic beginning saw only two crews and one B-24 for the squadron. Then it was on to Salt Lake City for additional equipping and training. By 5 October 1943, the squadron B-24's, crews and ground personnel arrived at a home of their own, Langley AAB, Virginia where extensive training was conducted. On 13 December 1943, the ground personnel departed the port of embarkation (POE) for Italy. The air echelon followed later.

The squadron ground support personnel departed the POE on the Liberty Ship Herbert Brantly Aycock. Gibraltar was sighted 1 January 1944. First anchor was dropped in Augusta Bay, Sicily 7 January where fresh fruit was taken on. The squadron debarked at

Taranto, Italy 14 January thence arriving at its new home at San Giovanni Field, Cerignola, Italy 15 January.

The ground personnel initially bivouacked in pup tents. Before finally settling down, the squadron location was moved on 18 January, again on the 24th and finally came to rest 27 January 1944 in an olive grove.

In the beginning, the water supply was inadequate. It had to be hauled in a 25-gallon trailer provided by headquarters. In many instances, water was available only for the mess hall with little for drinking and certainly none for bathing. Later, water became abundant and was made available in sun-warmed lister bags scattered throughout the area. In time, there was tentage and the enlisted men climbed out of their pup tents to take over pyramidal tents. Floors and home-made stoves, obtained by "midnight requisition," found their way into most quarters. Latrines were constructed from salvaged fuel drums and packing cases. Later, fly-proof canvas buildings came into existence. The mess hall and kitchen were the first permanent buildings to be completed. Following this, the various squadron sections were assigned building space with the medical personnel (medics) being the last to move out of tents. An enlisted men's club was opened, followed by an officer's club a few weeks later. While the clubs were crude in the broad sense, they were functional and well attended.

The air echelon of the squadron was the last to leave Langley for staging at Mitchell Field, New York. The first planes began leaving 2 December 1943 and it was mid-December before all B-24's proceeded for staging. For nearly a month, all squadron planes were seldom at the same place as they were scattered en route to Italy. The squadron flew the same route as the other squadrons through South America, Africa and arriving at Djedeida near Tunis, Algeria. The trip was marred by one sad occurrence, the crash on takeoff of one aircraft at Dakkar, Africa with two men killed and three injured. The 15th of January saw all planes together again and training missions proceeded for the remainder of the stay in Africa. Camp life was a bit "rough" with only a few ground support personnel to support flight training. The highlight of the stay was the first mail flown down from Italy. In February, the entire air echelon flew the last leg of the journey to Cerignola, Italy.

Significant Events and Dates to Remember

- First promotion list for enlisted men was published in September 1943.
- First issue of the squadron newspaper was published in October 1943.
- First promotion list for officers was published in December 1943.
- Ground personnel left for overseas 13 December 1943.
- Air echelon started leaving for overseas 24 December 1943.
- Mess tent burned to ground 6 February 1944 at San Giovanni.
- Squadron shower opened 25 February 1944.
- A total of 98 enlisted men received the Good Conduct Medal 2 March 1944.
- Fried chicken was served for the first time on 10 March 1944 and doughnuts and coffee were served by the Red Cross girls — what a day!
- First snow of the winter fell 16 March.
- New enlisted men's mess hall was used for the first time 1 April 1944.
- Squadron ambulance crew performed rescue efforts for the first time at a crash scene 15 April 1944.

• First official list of enemy aircraft destroyed in the war was released 16 April 1944 with the 743rd accomplishing the remarkable record of downing 17 out of the total of 30 shot down by the entire group.
• Lt. Taylor designed and had built on 1 May 1944 a special truck-mounted sprinkler system to hold down the dust throughout the area. On this same day, a jeep parked on the hill above Major Thayer's tent rolled down the hill and crashed into his tent. The tent was badly damaged but nobody was seriously hurt.
• Ice cream was served for the first time in the squadron mess on 8 May 1944!
• First ration of beer arrived on 9 May 1944, a blue ribbon day indeed!
• Officer's club was opened 10 May 1944 and everyone was pleased with the excellent job done by Lt. Howsam and his committee.
• Special perimeter guard squadron took over aircraft security on 20 May. This relieved the maintenance crews of night duty, leaving them more time to perform aircraft maintenance activities.
• First combat crews finished their missions and left for home 25 May 1944.
• Another ration of American beer on 29 May 1944.
• Enlisted men's day room officially opened 31 May 1944.
• Enlisted men's club was formed 9 June 1944.
• Enjoyed entertainment by a USO unit 29 June 1944.
• Aircraft "CENSORED" completed 50 missions with a total of 548 combat hours 30 June 1944. T/Sgt. Stuckey and crew did a great job keeping the B-24 in flying condition.
• American beer arrived again with five cans issued to each man on 9 July 1944.
• Lt. Richards and five members of his crew returned to the squadron from Russia on 20 January 1945. They had been missing in action since 17 December 1944. The crew crashed in Russian occupied territory and they reported they were treated very well.

Unfortunately, squadron historical records could not be found covering the period from 10 July 1944 to 3 January 1945. Events, operational activities, memories, personal and amusing happenings remain as only memories in the minds of all who served during this period.

The PX

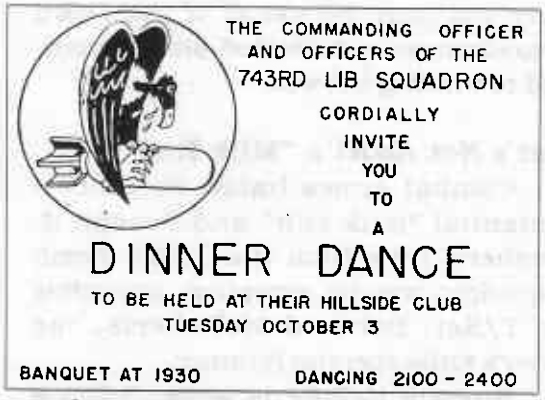
The first squadron PX was located in a small tent in the center of the enlisted men's living area. While not overstocked with merchandise, it managed nearly from the start to meet the basic necessities of life with Ipana toothpaste, Life Buoy soap, writing paper, envelopes, pencils, pens, razor blades, sour lemon balls, and shaving cream. One could buy a pack of cigarettes for 15¢. Much later, there was cold soda, an occasional ration of beer and even gifts one could send home. Late in March 1944, there were chocolate bars, a refreshing change from the box rations in the planes provided for the aircrews. But no matter how bare, the PX met the needs.



In the early days we ate outdoors – rain or shine!



New mess building!





Dinner Dance at the officer's club. South African nurses were bussed in for the occasion.

Flight Surgeons Brew

Only the flight surgeon was authorized and capable of putting together that undisclosed amount of canned grapefruit juice, orange juice and alcohol. When served in the officer's, NCO and enlisted men's clubs, tepid warm due to insufficient ice, it took the place of the better known Hennessey, Beefeaters or Wild Turkey. The "brew" had many names throughout the squadron and the formulae varied due to supply availability. It was always known as Doc Kohler's "Witches Brew."

Firsts

• Flight crews missing in action were Lts. Brunson and Cheesman over Steyr, Austria 2 April 1944.

• DFC to 1st Lt. William Arnold, pilot, for bringing his severely damaged aircraft with crew safely back to base on 2 April 1944 following the raid on Steyr.

• DFC to 1st Lt. Robert Cook, pilot, for bringing his severely damaged aircraft and wounded gunner safely back to base following a raid on Monfalcone, Italy 20 April 1944.

• DFC to 2nd Lt. John Greco, bombardier, for getting his bombs away and then administering first aid and comfort to a wounded gunner and probably saving his life on 20 April following a raid on Monfalcone, Italy. Although Greco's regular duty was a navigator, he served the bombardier's functions on this mission.

• Silver star to T/Sgt. Abraham Aziz, aerial engineer gunner, for staying at his guns with the turret partially blown away and then by making temporary repairs to the damaged airplane, enabling it to return to base from the target flown on 20 April against Monfalcone, Italy.

• DFC to S/Sgt. Leslie Stockdale, tail turret gunner, for staying at his guns when the turret was partially blown away, and accounting for two enemy aircraft, one destroyed and one damaged, despite the fact that he had received flak and shell fire wounds during the raid on Monfalcone, Italy 20 April.

• Sgt. Harold C. Berg was the first member of the squadron to receive a Purple Heart for wounds received from a mission over Budapest, Hungary.
• Soldier's Medal to T/Sgt. Bernard Przybylski for heroism while rescuing crewmen from a crashed airplane.

Many members of the squadron received recognition and decorations for heroic and meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight over enemy territory. Unfortunately, incomplete and missing records make it impossible to give credit to those individuals in this history. In our hearts, we recognize them for their achievements.

From the Daily Report

"The target today was the harbor of Monfalcone, Italy. Bombing was done through an overcast thus making observation of results very difficult. Lt. Cook's ship crashed on landing due to lack of hydraulic pressure because the system had been shot away by flak. The entire crew was removed from the burning ship with the help of Captain Bechtold, 743rd Operations Officer, and the medical officer of the 741st Squadron (Capt. Harold F. Schoeder) who were the first on the scene. None in the crew were very seriously injured.

"M/Sgt. McCarty is still leading the rest of the crew chiefs in keeping his plane in the air. Mission Bell now has over 300 hours over enemy territory.

"Lt. Schoene had one engine go out forcing him to fall behind and was viciously attacked by enemy fighters which knocked out another engine. Forced to land at Finella Field, Penna Point, Italy, he blew a tire and the aircraft crashed, injuring two crew members. Several had flak wounds. Major Thayer immediately flew up to return the crew to base with the exception of two crew members who were hospitalized. Lt. Schoene subsequently was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Replacement Crews

Since the battle of Clovis, the combat personnel of the squadron turned over two or three times. The original crews either finished their missions and went home or were MIA. The "old boys" were missed but the squadron welcomed the "new boys" who, in time, would become "old boys" too. To everyone who served, it was their squadron and their memories and, down to the very last man, personnel of the 743rd Squadron were dedicated and committed to winning the war.

Let's Not Abort a "Milk Run"

Combat crews hated to abort a potential "milk run" and Joseph J. Dreher's crew from the 743rd Bomb Squadron was no exception, according to T/Sgt. Bernard McRoberts, the crew's radio operator/gunner.

Sergeant McRoberts wrote, "I flew a mission in a B-24L, Miss Dorothy, and used a glove for an oxygen mask. It was a milk run and the navigator had forgotten his oxygen mask. As the radio room was above the bomb bays in the "L" model, the pilot, Captain Dreher, could not see us and to this day does not know about it. The rest of the gunners kept an eye on me.

"The flight engineer, T/Sgt. George Champeau, helped fix the glove – cut the thumb out, hooked on the oxygen hose and, with a piece of string, tied the glove over my mouth and nose. I cracked the oxygen a little and away we went. Because we were flying lead, I didn't have to leave the radio room. I think if the pilot had known, we may have turned back." McRoberts said they got the idea for the glove oxygen mask from "Yank Magazine."

Squadron Sections

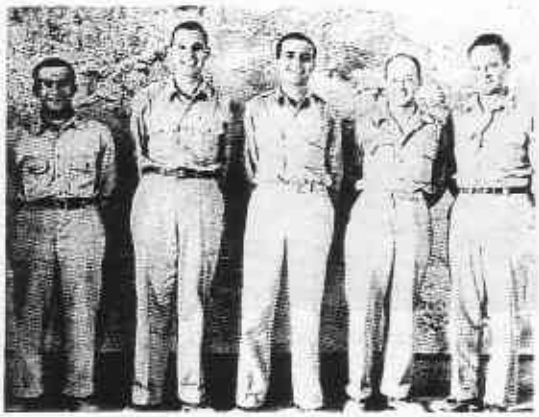
Photographs could not be found for all squadron sections that supported the air operation. Each section contributed immensely to the successful record attained by the 743rd Squadron.



743rd Squadron orderly room.



743rd Squadron operations.



743rd Squadron intelligence section.



743rd Squadron armament section.



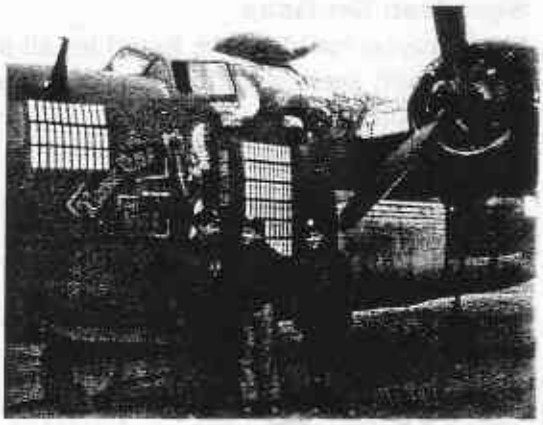
743rd Squadron engineering.



743rd Squadron communications.



743rd Squadron aircraft coming home from a mission.



TeePee Time Gal -- over 100 missions and still flying. L to r: Shumard, Zane, Koslewa.



743rd Squadron building area.



743rd Squadron mess and service area.



What's a shower overseas? A five gallon can hung in a tree!



Sgt. Brewer served them up at the 743rd officer's club.



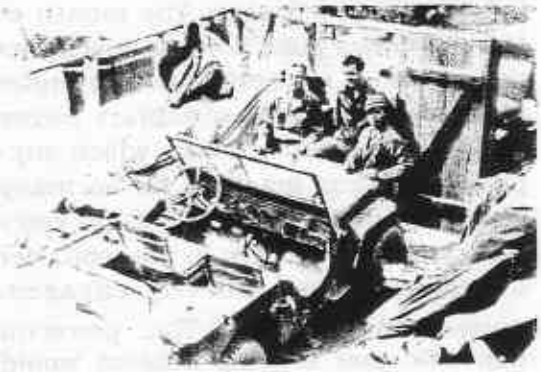
Lt. Colonel Thayer, Squadron Commander, presents the squadron.



C.J. McArthur going home after 50 missions.



Tom Mitchell, Squadron S-2, briefs crew at the flight line. Note: white scarfs made from parachutes.



The jeep that went through Thayer's tent!



743rd Squadron lines up for a mission.



743rd Squadron crews wait their turn for after mission debriefing.

Epilogue

The war with Germany and Italy, the Axis Powers, that the United States entered 11 December 1941 was over. For three years and five months we hammered away at the Axis armies of Fascism and Nazism. Since hostilities ceased in Europe, all that remained was the crushing of Japan. Germany and Italy had been beaten and brought to an unconditional surrender. The same fate awaited Japan.

The Italian military forces were defeated soon after the invasion of Sicily and Italy before the 455th Bomb Group left the United States. The month of May 1945 has gone down in history as the month of unconditional surrender of the mighty German military forces and its economic structure which supported the war machine for so many years. The Nazis were beaten on every front and at every turn in the road. Her armies were encountered, engaged, routed and beaten. The powerful Luftwaffe that Goering boasted would never let German cities be bombed was systematically destroyed. The great supply system that Germany once had was destroyed and her industries were bombed until production was a thing of the past. The once proud, arrogant and well-disciplined armies that Nazi Germany hurled against a peaceful world became just millions of POW's.

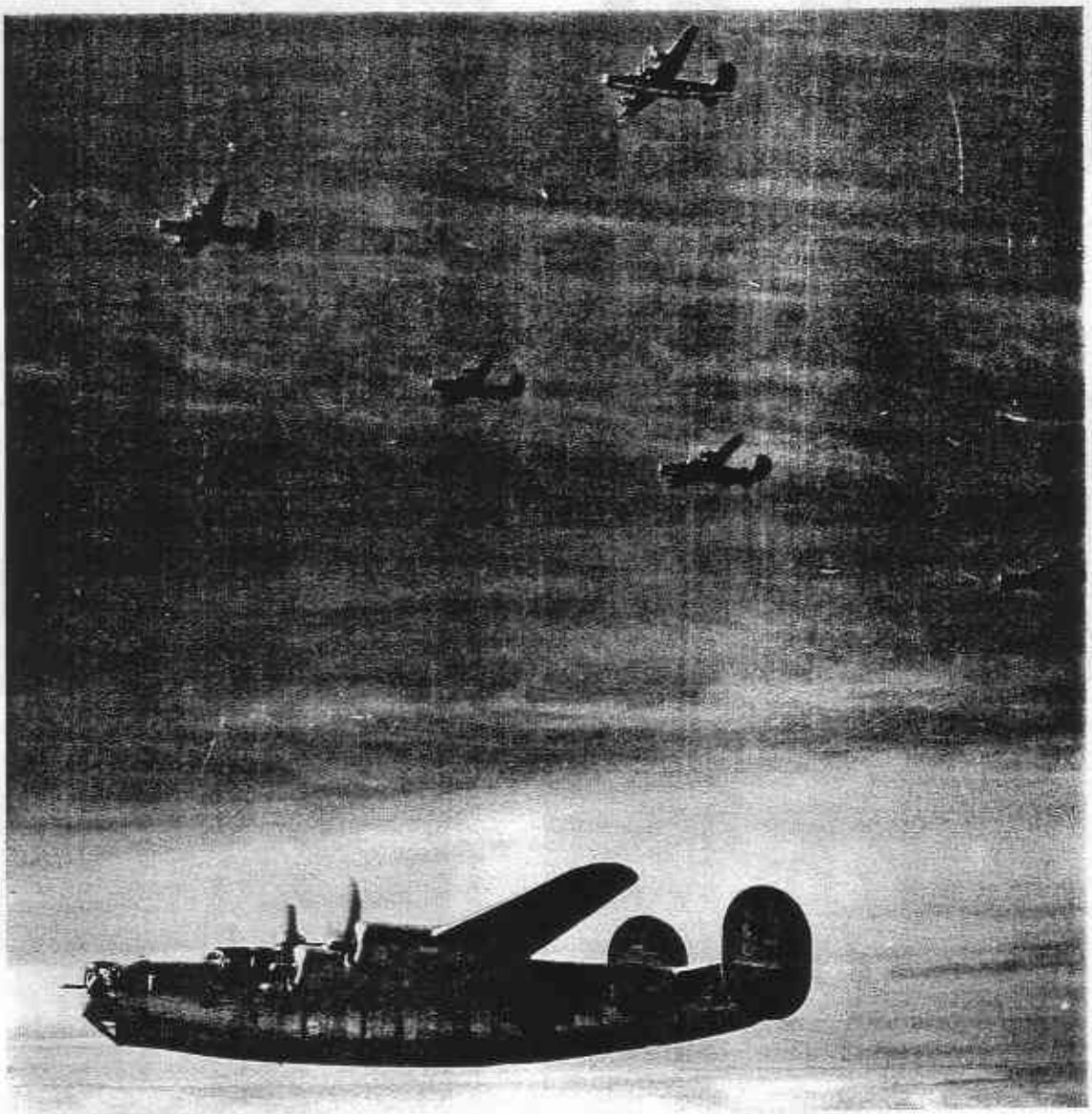
The destruction of the German infrastructure, industry and her cities by bombardment is legend. Several times during the last month of the war the group was called upon to bomb in direct support of our advancing ground troops in northern Italy. In fact, all through the history of the war the Air Forces were called upon to soften the enemy before a push by our ground forces. After the 15th Air Force heavy bombers pounded the dug-in German Army at Cassino, Italy on 18 May 1944, a letter of commendation came from Lieutenant General Ira C. Eaker stating that on that date, it was the best support bombing that had ever been accomplished by any Air Force. The last strategic bombing that the group did against ground forces was in support of the advancing 5th Army near Bologna on the Italian front. It having been inactive for a long time, doing mostly patrol work, decided to move. It was the 15th Air Force that pounded the German ground troops, gun emplacements, tanks and other support vehicles that helped the 5th Army advance and defeat the German Army.

It would take more than this book to relate all the tales of heroism, bravery, dedication and, in some cases, horror. Scores of crews did their tours with little fanfare. They returned from missions with holes in their airplanes from flak and fighters, engines damaged and feathered, flat tires, gasoline leaks, hydraulic pressure gone because of fluid leaks resulting in landing without brakes and flaps, hoping to get stopped with parachutes popped out the waist windows before going over the cliff at the end of the runway; and holes in propellers from fighter attacks as well as some from our own gunners firing their guns during the heat of air battle. One crew returned with a live 88 mm flak shell embedded in their number three engine. The demolition men carefully removed it, the airplane was repaired and flew another day. The crews took their turns flying "tail-end

Charlie" without complaining. The rule was usually working long hours, seven days a week, many times in inclement weather, with the maintenance and other support personnel to keep the airplanes flying.

Memories linger of the takeoffs and landings at Cerignola with three airplanes on the runway for takeoff with one breaking ground, one half way down the runway and the third releasing brakes after applying power. On landing, the coming in of the formation on a low approach with each B-24 peeling off in turn for a landing with one at the far end of the runway turning off, one rolling halfway down and the third touching down. The counting of the returning aircraft were anxious moments by personnel on the ground who did not fly that day.

With the war at an end, our occupation forces were assigned the difficult task of establishing democratic governments and restoring the destruction that was caused from the ravenous war.



From the Picture Albums













CERIGNOLA













CERIGNOLA





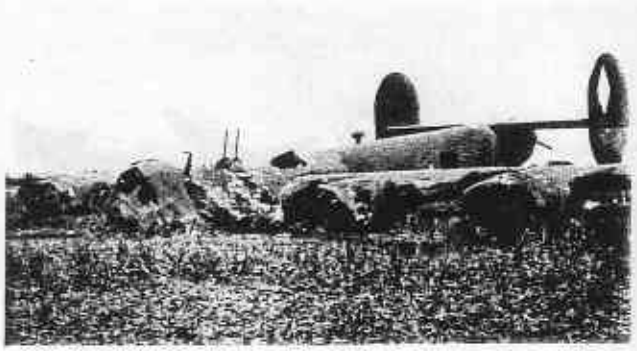


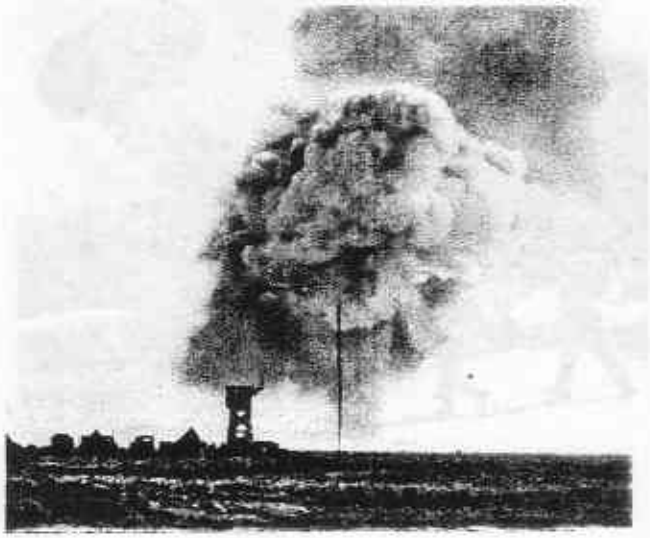


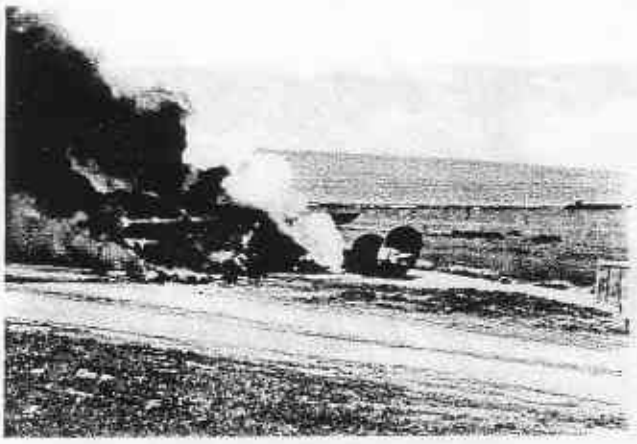


CERIGNOLA













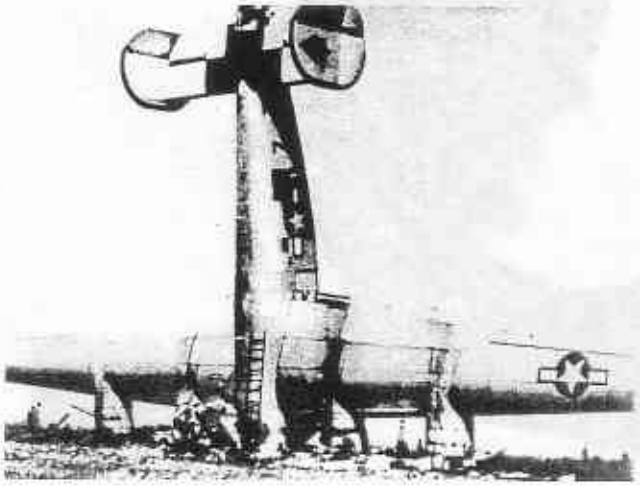
LEST WE FORGET...

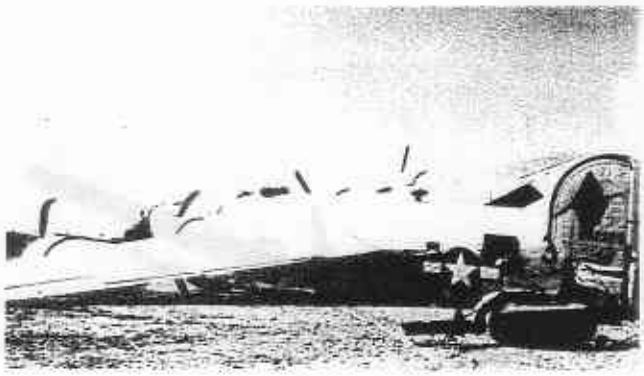












LEST WE FORGET...

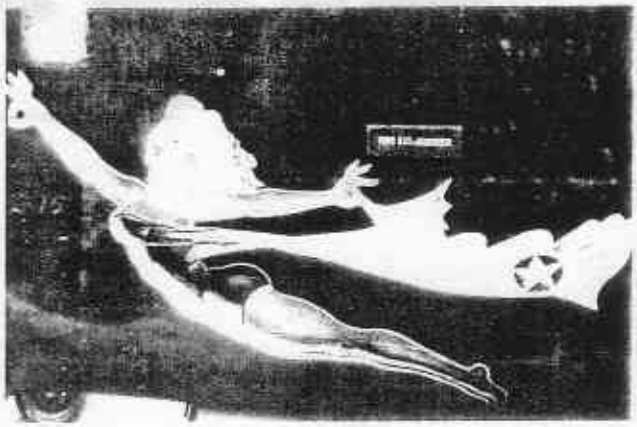
A Can of Paint, a Brush and a Lot of Imagination





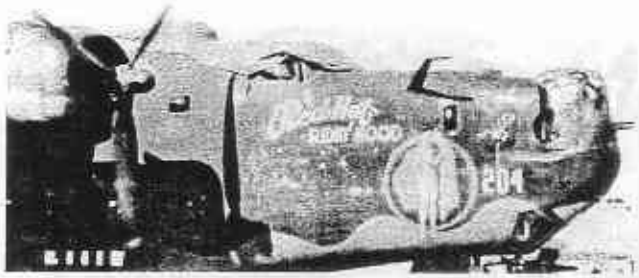







OLE SOLDIER

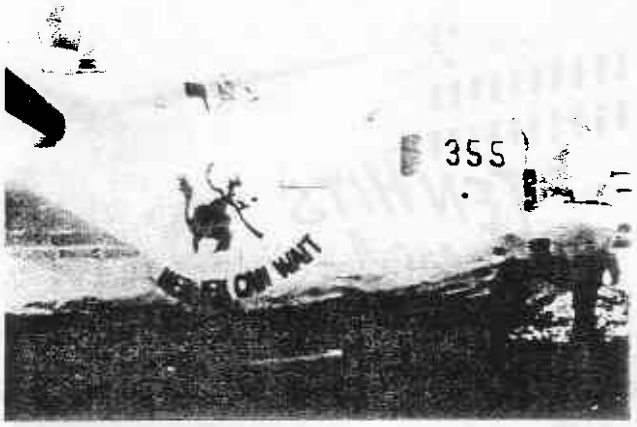

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STINKY

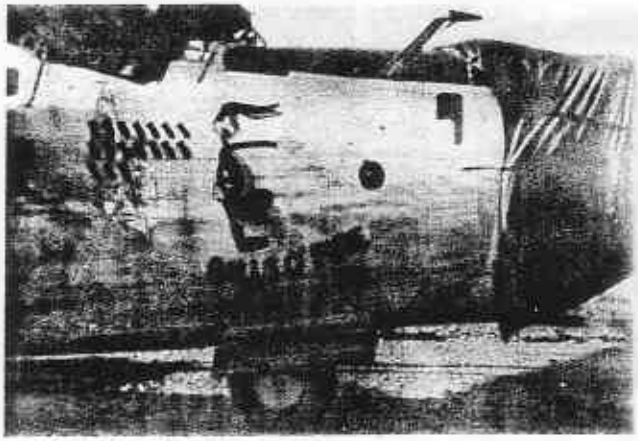



KEETER


355


TRAIN
HECK


GARGANTUA



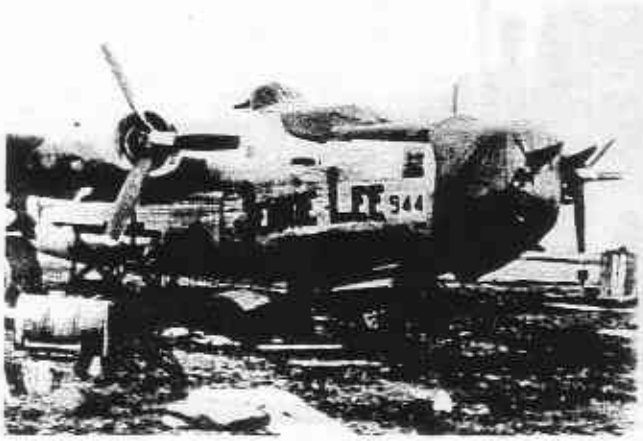

PEEL
OFF


Beatweedu


TWIN TAILS


"TEN HITS
AND A
MISS"


HEAVENS



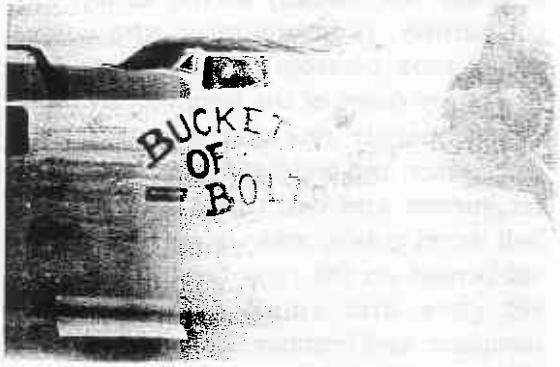

EASY
TAKE-OFF

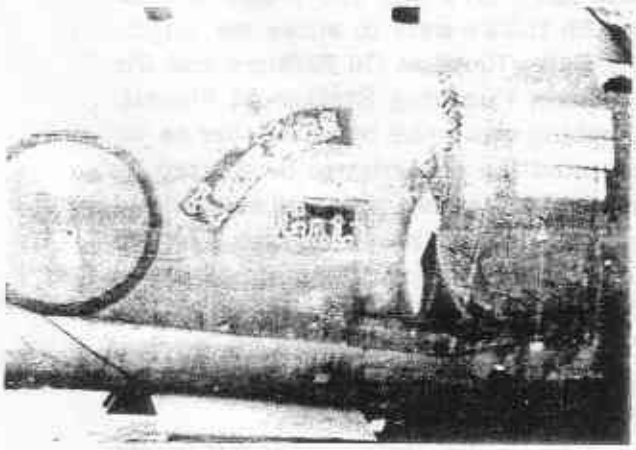



"MULTA BONA"


Easy
Maid


MISS-I-HOPE
62


BUCKE
OF
BOL





455th Bomber Crews

WWII was a long time ago! Available records today are not complete, pictures not available and handwriting difficult to decipher. This section reflects only a few of the valiant crews that flew with the 455th BG. If your crew picture is missing, misidentified or names misspelled, we are sorry.

Crew Composition

The crews were made up of a pilot, co-pilot, navigator, bombardier, aerial engineer who usually served as top turret gunner, radio operator who sometimes took photographs through the bomb bay doors of the bomb strikes and could operate one of the guns in an emergency, two waist gunners, a tail turret gunner and ball turret gunner. The ball turret gunner was usually the smallest person on the crew because his turret gave him small quarters. The navigator and bombardier would change off operating the nose turret guns. However, a special gunner for the nose turret would be sent along in the Group's lead airplane. When a pathfinder mission was flown, a mickey operator was added who worked with the bombardier and navigator in the use of radar to hit cloud covered or smoke obscured targets. Sometimes news reporters and cameramen went along on a mission. They would ride in the back part of the B-24 or sometimes on the flight deck to get their pictures and news items.

Mission Lead Crews

Group and squadron commanders and operations officers did not have crews per se. The commanders and operations personnel, including the group and squadron operations officers, navigators and bombardiers invariably led the missions in the lead airplane. They would select a crew of enlisted men from the squadron to man the guns and perform other functions. The officers of that crew, the pilot, co-pilot, navigator and bombardier remained behind that day. A mission flight is described by Alfred (Al) Asch for the crew in the lead airplane.

"It was 15 July 1944 with emphasis continuing on the destruction of the German oil production facilities. Colonel Powers, who later became the Commanding General of the Strategic Air Command (SAC) as a four-star General, was assigned to the 304th Bomb Wing for a little combat seasoning prior to taking a B-29 Wing to Saipan in the Pacific to launch bomber attacks against Tokyo and other parts of Japan. He was in turn assigned to our Group for this indoctrination. The squadrons took turns leading the group and on this day it was the 740th of which I was the operations officer.

"Colonel Powers was assigned to my crew as the co-pilot. The target was Ploesti and our group was to lead a maximum effort by the Wing of 165 B-17's and 542 B-24's. Our fighter escort was 231 P-51's and 153 P-38's. A total of 155 B-24's were to strike our target, the Dacia Romano Oil Refinery and the Telejean Pumping Station at Ploesti. Bombing was to be by pathfinder as we expected the refineries to be covered by smoke from smoke pots and some cloud cover. The lead navigator was Captain Gross and the lead bombardier was Captain Ohlmeyer, both a part of the 740th Operations. We had a fine mickey operator and the well-trained crew of Wayne Smith of the 740th.

"The briefing was uneventful except

for a few shudders about the heavy flak and fighters to be expected. I introduced Colonel Powers to the crew and nothing more was needed as each man knew the importance of the mission and the responsibility of leading the Wing. Also, everyone was on his best behavior because of the Colonel. After takeoff and arriving at our departure point, Colonel Powers asked me what he was to do. I asked him to use the command radio to manage the bomber stream behind us, to keep them in their proper position as it would mean more if a Colonel was giving the instructions rather than from me, a Major at that time. Our tail gunner advised that a group was getting out of position by overtaking us. This would cause a mix-up at the target. The Colonel called the group leader and said: 'Get your ass back into position or you will hear from me when we get on the ground.' Nothing more was needed! The weather was clear all the way to Ploesti but the target was covered by some clouds and smoke from the smoke pots. Short of the I.P., we donned our flak jackets and steel helmets. The Colonel asked me what I wanted him to do on the bomb run. I told him to signal me when the upper flight on our right drops its bombs so that we can make a right descending turn as soon as possible to get away from the flak. Prior to reaching the target, I gave the course control to the bombardier and mickey operator through the automatic pilot and Norden bomb sight. I maintained the proper altitude and air speed with the elevators and throttles. It was a nice, smooth bomb run as our heading from the I.P. was exactly as briefed; our navigator did his job. The Colonel signaled 'bombs away' for the upper flight immediately after our bombs were dropped and we turned away from the target. The flak was extremely heavy and we bounced around a bit from the exploding shells. The Colonel asked if it was always this bad. I responded that it sometimes gets a little worse, but not often. His eyebrows raised a bit! He asked about the fighters and the tail gunner responded that they were hitting another group that had a few stragglers and that there were a few dog fights going on from our friendly fighters. Our Group received no fighter attacks that day!

"The flight home was uneventful except for the reporting from our gunners that we lost at least two of our airplanes from flak. They also excitedly reported a large number of fires and smoke arising up to 25,000 feet from the targets struck by the wing formations. (Later evaluations from photography showed that the wing was most successful in damaging the oil refineries in and around Ploesti.) At landing, we had a flat tire and other flak damage which did not impact the flying of the airplane. We kept the B-24 on the runway until we stopped, then used engine power to get it off the runway to permit the remainder of the group to land. We had to stay there until all the airplanes landed as a vehicle had to use the runway for pickup. We got out of the airplane and watched the others land and were prepared to run if an airplane was in trouble and couldn't stay on the runway. All landed without incident.

"At debriefing, Colonel Cool asked Colonel Powers about the mission. His response was 'Great crew, smooth as silk.' He said he would make good use of the experience received while with the group from the several missions he flew and that the key to a successful mission is well-trained and disciplined crews and good functioning equipment. The records show that Colonel Powers' B-29 crews did an outstanding job of bombing Japan."

740th Squadron



Front row, l to r: Walter Bielinski, radio operator; Sylvester Eckler, waist gunner; Tom Lavin, engineer; Winston Vaughn, armorer; George Thursby, waist gunner; Larry Schultz, tail turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Richard Huber, pilot; Milton Crawford, co-pilot; Ronald Dias, bombardier; John Sutcliffe, navigator.



1st Lt. Lundwall's crew. Albert Lundwall, Leroy Ellerbrook, Charles Stepanpan, Robert Bastow, John Dixon, Richard Veley, Lettino Sapia, Bruce Mahoney, Fred Beatty, Howard Hughes.



Alvin Fisher's crew: Owen Lafley; Ralph Allen; Murray Blocker; rest unidentified.



Front row, l to r: John Dixon, Richard Veley, Lettino Sapia, Bruce Machoney, Fred Beatty, Howard Hughes, Back row, l to r: Albert Lundwall, pilot: LeRoy Ellerbrook, Charles Stepanpan, Robert Bastow.



Front row, l to r: R. Dan Lauer, tail turret gunner; Bill Graham, ball turret gunner: Ben Jozefowitz, waist gunner; Warren Schoene, engineer; J. Hollinsworth, waist gunner. Back row, l to r: Jack Swanson, bombardier; Doc Emery, navigator: Ed Russell, co-pilot; Pat Murphy, pilot.



Front row, l to r: Stu Sobel, navigator; Richard Jenkins, pilot; Chet Colby, co-pilot; Charles Loaring-Clark, bombardier. Back row, l to r: Al Le Cuyer, gunner; Bob Taylor, gunner; Jim Jepson, engineer; Harry Eaton, tail turret gunner; Ralph Holdsworth, radio operator; Frank Ferencz, gunner.



Front row, l to r: Sanford Jones, nose turret gunner; Dean Goll, gunner; Walter Donaldson, gunner; Richard Wojcik, gunner. Back row, l to r: Richard Stevens, engineer; Harold Pine, co-pilot; Steve Petersen, pilot; John Bagan, radio operator.



Front row, l to r: William Metrik, Harold Fortson, Vincent Imberg, Ralph Deselms, Douglas Crysel, Faut. Back row, l to r: Compton, John Annala, Johnson, Crawford, pilot.



W. Wallick's crew: Jack Hager, bombardier; Ben McInturff, co-pilot; Michael Constantino, navigator; M. Loge, engineer; Moore, radio operator; Ablick, ball turret gunner; Gaynor, waist gunner; rest unidentified.



Front row, l to r: Eugene Scerbo, gunner; Arthur Boucher, gunner; Charles Crowley, engineer; Paul Brown, gunner; Henry Belcher, gunner; Dana Kellener, gunner. Back row, l to r: Walter Gunn, pilot; Walter Barton, co-pilot; Allan Johnson, bombardier; William Fresco, navigator.



Front row, l to r: G. Johnston, tail turret gunner; R. Strohmeier, radio operator; G. McKnight, engineer; H. Kolbe, ball turret gunner; R. Rushmore, waist gunner: R. Windsand, waist gunner. Back row, l to r: E. Burke, co-pilot; G. Bercik, bombardier; J. Whidden, navigator; C. Riggs, pilot.



Front row, l to r: M. Pyle, radio operator; Raymond Dubowicz, engineer; George Martinchek, top turret gunner; Jacque Dezee, tail jturret gunner; Van Allen, ball turret gunner. Back row, l to r: C. Cherry, nose turret gunner; Bob Tank, pilot; Curt Cardinal, co-pilot; Bob Hawke, navigator; Lee Bressler, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: Jules Junker, pilot; Marion Eppler, co-pilot; Robert Messina, navigator; John La Grotta, bombardier. Back row, l to r: Pryce, eingineer; James Rademaker, gunner; Walter Yienges, tail turret gunner; Rudolph Choy, radio operator; Roland Bessell, nose turret gunner; Lowell Kuehn, tail turret gunner.



Front row, l to r: John Logan, radio operator; James Kelly, pilot; W.O. Gustafson, navigator; Melvin Kruse, nose turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Dino Franceschini, armorer gunner; H.J. Bischoff, ball turret gunner; John Balogh, tail turret gunner; J.B. West, engineer.



Front row, l to r: J. Nelson, bombardier; Albert Cuptka, co-pilot; T. Reynolds, pilot; S. Golden, navigator. Back row, l to r: R. Bordner, top turret gunner; D. Brutvan, engineer; R. Crooks, waist gunner: M. Eyster, tail turret gunner: E. Rhodes, radio operator: Frank Ciulla, ball turret gunner.



Earl Fitch, Norman Ball, Robert Ball, Frank Bozek, James Brown, Jack Brazil, Howard Furbish, Giles, James Kiernan, Willis Hastings.



Front row, l to r: William Taylor, engineer; Walter Lipps; A.E. Beauchemin, nose turret gunner; Craig King, waist gunner; Arthur Colton, ball turret gunner; Francis Lashinsky, tail turret gunner. Back row, l to r: R. Von Schriltz, pilot; S. Iverson, co-pilot; C. Brazelton, navigator.



George Scrimsha's crew: Renzo Paci, co-pilot; Cliff Stelle; Max Blanco; rest unidentified.



A make-up crew from the 740th. Front row, Wayne Smith's crew members. Back row, l to r: Compton, Ohlmeyer, Keefer, Asch, Gross.



Front row, l to r: Anthony Dalimonte, nose turret gunner; Frank Nelson, belly turret gunner; Nickolas Roscigno, radio operator. Center row, l to r: Edward Spencer, waist gunner; Edward Hulewicz, tail turret gunner; Herman Nichols, engineer. Back row, l to r: Herman Gammell, pilot; Donald McConnell, co-pilot; Everett Jenkins, navigator; Joseph Imrisek, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: Lawrence Danielson; Denver Johnson; Robertson; Newton Thigpen. Back row, l to r: Jack Johnson; Jack Freeman; Regis Johnson; Ernest Fry; Virgil Merrill. Ground crew, far left and right, back row unknown.



Front row, l to r: Dale Nudell, radio operator; William Moon, top turret gunner; P. McCarthy, nose turret gunner; Dallas Patterson, tail turret gunner; Bill Mazur, engineer; Max Lewis, ball turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Bill Ludden, bombardier; Roy Busch, navigator; Clark Kolb, co-pilot; J.C. Ellis, pilot.



Front row, l to r: Hershel Hardison; Martin Potash; John Machuga; Herbert Buschung; Waldo Jacobson; David Valuska. Back row, l to r: Jack Szerlip, pilot; Bill Fane; Harry Backman; Nathan Polsky.



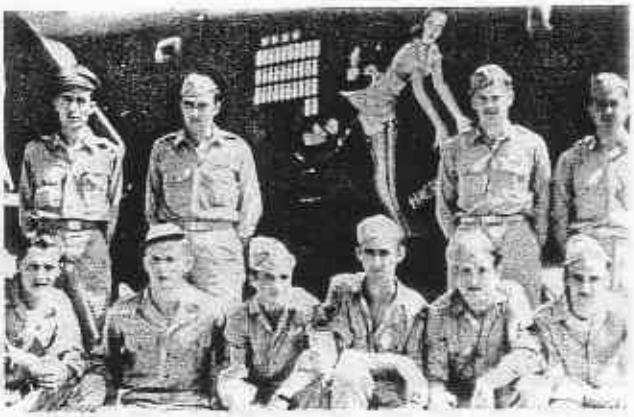
Front row, l to r: Fred Collins, waist gunner; R. King, waist gunner; Al Hubsch, ball turret gunner; Sam Austin, engineer; Al Alt, tail turret gunner; Louis Marhenke, radio operator. Back row, l to r: Harry Prosser, pilot; Jack Compton, navigator; J.A. Kelly, co-pilot; R.D. Kratz, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: M. Goldarisi; G. Mairona; D. Berquist; L. Barbieri; R. Helms; K. Bondy. Back row, l to r: A.R. Winter, pilot; Don Walrod, co-pilot; Sid Schoengold, navigator; Ed Lewis, bombardier.



Robert Beckner's crew: Jack Campbell, bombardier; John Brandstetter, navigator; Ernie Ensminger, co-pilot; Phillip Johnson, radio operator; Bob Beck; John Hayes, waist gunner; Sumeske, waist gunner; Ed Symkowiez, tail turret gunner; Albert Harris, belly turret gunner.



Front row, l to r: Donald Kaplanek, waist gunner; Julian Counts, engineer; Richard Keen, radio operator; William Groome, waist gunner; David Goble, tail turret gunner; Gerald Adams, ball turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Abram Pendleton, pilot; Robert Millar, co-pilot; John Pramik, navigator; Israel Katz, bombardier.



Hank Houser's crew: Meyer Levin; B. McNamare; Dick Deppisch; rest unidentified.



Front row, l to r: Robert Zook, pilot; Robert Miller, co-pilot; Cecil Ash, bombardier; Seymore Waterman, navigator. Back row, l to r: Francis Peyeri, radio operator; Theodore Pinkos, waist gunner; Vern Ussery, engineer; F.W. Link, tail turret gunner; J.A. Rositano, belly turret gunner; William West, nose turret gunner.



Front row, l to r: George Spencer, flight engineer; Robert Ross, radio operator; Steve Gajewski, gunner; Lloyd Kestner, gunner; Arthur Schultz, gunner; Edward Kerley, gunner. Back row, l to r: Orris Kirtley, pilot; Robert Hagen, co-pilot; Howard Michel, navigator; John Lamia, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: J.B. Wert, engineer; John Logan, radio operator; Melvin Kruse, nose turret gunner; John Balough, tail turret gunner; Dino Franceschini, armorer waist gunner; Herman Bischoff, ball turret gunner. Back row, l to r: William Gustafson, navigator; Louis Callabretta, pilot; John Powers, co-pilot; Bill Butler, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: Gennaro Amoruso, engineer; Charles Bolling, ball turret gunner; Oscar Carlson, waist gunner; James Barrons, radio operator; Francis Donahue, waist gunner; Dan Sievers, tail turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Jack Compton, navigator; Jack Saine, pilot; John Ward, co-pilot; Joseph Asip, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: Bob Engle, tail turret gunner; Fred Post, nose turret gunner; Bob Cleveland, waist gunner; George Lucas, engineer; Jack Caufield, radio operator; Bob Burkholder, ball turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Fred Stockem, co-pilot; Ken Hosterman, navigator; Dick Hollrock, pilot; Lew Riley, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: Bright, navigator; Robert Biro, co-pilot; John Preston, pilot; Daniel Mason, bombardier. Back row, l to r: Wayne Fullbright, ball turret gunner; Donald Huntley, armorer gunner; Ray McClure, radio operator; Richard Peterman, waist gunner; Claude Forbes, tail turret gunner; Clifford Lutes, engineer.



Front row, l to r: Joe Hughes, co-pilot; George Jensen, pilot; Tony Costa, bombardier; Jack Kalajian, navigator. Back row, l to r: Jim Fedewa, nose turret gunner; Jim Walsh, tail turret gunner; Ernie Dandria, nose turret gunner; Gene Ryan, engineer; Max Harper, belly turret gunner; William Carey, radio operator.



Front row, l to r: Lazarus Wolk, radio operator; John Good, ball turret gunner; Cloyd Carringer, tail turret gunner; William Conlin, waist gunner; Ruben Nyquist, armorer gunner; Roy Cassidy, engineer. Back row, l to r: Grif Griffen, co-pilot; Alex Draghi, navigator; Wayne Smith, pilot; James Clowery, bombardier.

741st Squadron



Front row, l to r: Leonard Jessett; Alfred Jefferds; James Heiskell; William Matthews; Lucian Hale; Daniel James. Back row, l to r: Michael Callen, pilot; Alexander Emmons, co-pilot; Guy Kuntz, navigator; Richard Callen, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: G.G. Barnes, navigator; B.J. Hutton, pilot; J.L. Haass, co-pilot. Back row, l to r: I.J. Benjamin, ball turret gunner; P.J. D'Amilio, nose turret gunner; F.J. Brenan, radio operator; J.D. Culver, waist gunner; D.J. Hester, tail turret gunner; N.H. Dawkins, flight engineer.



Front row, l to r: Arnold Mitchell; Robert Loud; Stanley Pascavage; John Edwards; Edgar Sherrick; Russell Morris. Back row, l to r: Leon Jordan, pilot; Arja Adair; George Moore; Charles Loercher.



Front row, l to r: Robert Darling, radar; Robert Foernsler, co-pilot; Ed Soderstrom, pilot; George Goetz, navigator. Back row, l to r: Frank DeMarco, radio operator; Robert Probst, engineer; Donald Lonergan, waist gunner; John Tessier, tail turret gunner; Kenneth Latzka, ball turret gunner.



Front row, l to r: Chester Miller, engineer: Daniel Ragnsky, ball turret gunner; Joseph Rifinsky, tail turret gunner: Robert Hardy, waist gunner: Harry McDowel, waist gunner: Victor Eggemeyer, radio operator. Back row, l to r: Anthony Fogel, bombardier; Roscoe Wilkies, navigator: Glenn



Front row, l to r: James Weeks, waist gunner; Raymond Beauvais, belly turret gunner; Robert Caldwell, tail turret gunner; Herbert Cornell, radio operator. Back row, l to r: John Merfield, engineer: Bill Disbrow, pilot: Don Keegan, bombardier/navigator: Kenneth Vincent, waist gunner.



Front row, l to r: Phillip Clark, waist gunner; Virgil Hankins, tail gunner; Robert Armstrong, armorer/ball turret gunner; Leonard Cole, nose gunner; Kenneth Strohbusch, radio operator; Herman Bundy, engineer. Back row, l to r: Thomas Hassen, navigator; Joseph Walsh, bombardier; Robert Morgan, co-pilot; Harry Grosser, pilot.



Jerome Slater's crew: Jack Montgomery, co-pilot; William Johnson, navigator; Gordon Reese; Olin Chrisawn, top turret gunner; John Harber, radio operator; Selmer Brathall, waist gunner; Daniel Connel, tail turret gunner; Louie Von Achen, waist gunner; Grover Barron, ball turret gunner.



Front row, l to r: Clarence Moser, ball turret gunner; Milton Demosh, waist gunner; Hubert Townsend, waist gunner; Frank Fox, engineer; Richard Pendleton, tail turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Melvin Evenson, navigator; Benjamin Paige, co-pilot; Winfield Bowers, pilot; Nat Bailen, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: Henry Hutchings, nose turret gunner; J.W. Alford, engineer; Francis McPartlan, belly turret gunner; Earl Toll, radio operator; Richard Bales; Ira Nutter, waist gunner. Back row, l to r: Henry Moreman, pilot; Kenneth Pearson, co-pilot; Anthony Corsello, navigator; Russell Di Mattieo, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: Michael Valco, engineer; William Ashlock, waist gunner; Isadore Seigel, tail turret gunner; William Mc Afee, ball turret gunner; Robert McConnell, nose turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Ralph Rounds, co-pilot; George McGovern, pilot; Bill Eames, navigator/bombardier; Kenneth Higgins, radio operator.



Front row, l to r: David McBryde, top turret gunner; Stan Hargadino, tail turret gunner; John Wright, engineer; Ben Welfley, ball turret gunner; Arthur Confer, nose turret gunner; Edward Ossa, radio operator. Back row, l to r: Charles Painter, pilot; Joseph Walsh, bombardier; Harold Peters, navigator; John Hammond, co-pilot.



Front row, l to r: Jack Abbott, tail turret gunner; Leo Padgett, ball turret gunner; Orval Mayfield, radio operator; Casimir Bialas, engineer; Gordon Swann, waist gunner; William Bowles, waist gunner. Back row, l to r: Robert Christensen, pilot; Thomas Heathcote, co-pilot; Charles Taber, navigator; Paul Young, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: Arthur Bergmann, nose turret gunner; John Hartman, engineer; Harold Jenkins, waist gunner; Clinton Bautz, radio operator; Troy Myrick, ball turret gunner; Albert Cratch, tail turret gunner; back row, l to r: Clifford Norgard, pilot; Theodore Stiner, co-pilot; William Demas, navigator.



Walter Hinton's crew: Harley Snider; Emil Sobylak; Carl Wiskirchen; Olin Chrisawn; Selmer Brathall; John Harber; Joseph Fisher; Grover Barron; Terry Andrews.



John Brashear's crew: Gordon Muth; Robert Regnier; William Demas; Weston Koen; Dale Fortson; Edward Korzoniewski; Victor Kirby; Charles Whitmire.



Front row, l to r: George Simons, tail turret gunner; Billy Miller, top turret gunner; Harry McDowell, radio operator; Jese Guerrero, nose turret gunner; Jesse Schaeffer, engineer; William Saydek, ball turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Joe Dosenbach, navigator; Gordon Cummings, co-pilot; Victor Beehlor, pilot; John Kelly, bombardier.



Julio Locatelli's crew: Douglas Rezin; Robert Cahill; Theodore Steiner; Charles Karney; Richard Dakin; Frederick Schultz; James Anderson; Waldon Kinnick; Warren Heer.



Front row, l to r: Eliot, waist gunner; Beeler, engineer; Melvin Wolfe, ball turret gunner: Marvin Wolfe, tail turret gunner (brother of Melvin); Karl Mose, radio operator. Back row, l to r: Sam Bakanaskus, bombadier; Humphrey, navigator; Eugene Hudson, pilot; Jerry Smith, co-pilot; Hamilton, waist gunner.



Front row, l to r: Edward Pietruszewski; Verl Maxson; Dale Magnuson; Eugene Woodward; Louie Van Achon; Dexter Sandefer; Back row, l to r: Ernest Ackerman; Harold Gorski; Paul Condra; Roy Jones.



Front row, l to r: H. Gales, tail turret gunner; Burton Hewitt, nose turret gunner; Donald Daniel, waist gunner; Marvin Kuhn, waist gunner; Lorrain Despain, belly turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Charles Fisher, top turret gunner; Charles Thatcher, bombardier; Richard Armellino, co-pilot; Stan Vogelfang, navigator; Francis Hosimer, pilot.



Front row, l to r: Fred Francis, gunner; A.F. Hollaway, radio operator; George Hofer, engineer; A. Marcotrigiano, radio operator; Lou Kent, engineer. Back row, l to r: J.L. Clark, navigator; W. Jirschele, pilot; Lloyd Reynolds, co-pilot; Norman Stewart, bombardier.



Myles Walter's crew: Claris Stroman, navigator; Richard Hart, bombardier: Dean Woodley, co-pilot; William Beard, radio operator: Angus Lewis, engineer; Eugene Bennett, gunner: Harry Davis, gunner; Leon Hamby, engineer: Robert Carson, gunner.



Front row, l to r: Fred Dendy; Stanley Lindquist; Harold Watson, William Logue; Alfred Pusiat; Fred Huggins. Back row, l to r: Harry McCraken; Arji Adair, pilot; Howard O. Vralsted, co-pilot; Raymond Hewit.



Front row, l to r: Frank Squires, waist gunner; Marvin Wise, ball turret gunner; Robert Averill, radio operator; Webb Patterson, engineer; Ernest Pearson, tail turret gunner; J.B. Vanaman, nose turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Frank Pokora, navigator; Charles Hammond, co-pilot; Richard Deeble, pilot; James Eturd, bombardier.



Nelson Wurtz's crew: Allen Sutera, co-pilot; Walter Slocum, navigator; Kels Laws, bombardier; William Draper, engineer gunner; Frank Ashley, gunner; Hugo Gross, radio operator; Emanuel Klein, gunner; William Newman, armorer gunner; Bernard Kampa, gunner.



Front row, l to r: James Duncan, ball turret gunner; Edward Yankovich, radio operator; John Madden, nose turret gunner; Warren Bucanan, tail turret gunner; William Dickinson, waist gunner. Back row, l to r: Francis Donahue, engineer; Rudolf Benson, pilot; James Provoni, navigator; Robert Goodman, bombardier; Frederick Hill, co-pilot.



Front row, l to r: John Curtis, pilot; Ken Fetty, co-pilot; Don Picken, navigator; Richard Higgens, bombardier. Back row, l to r: John Rickey; Frank Kowley; Fredrico Coriddi; Robert Davis; James Bain; Daniel Connell.



Front row, l to r: Edward Howell, ball turret gunner; Norman Andrews, waist turret gunner; Paul Roadman, radio operator; John Straw, engineer; Russell Fry, tail turret gunner; Arthur Johnson, nose turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Louis Nageroni, pilot, George Klinke, navigator; Jack Blum, bombardier, William Whittman, co-pilot.

742nd Squadron



Front row, l to r: A. Macedo, navigator; Paul Adams, bombardier; George Daschner, co-pilot; William King, pilot. Back row, l to r: Robert Hardy, engineer; Earl Shollenburger, radio operator; James Sumner, waist gunner; Spaulding Lockard, armorer gunner; William Doyle, tail turret gunner.



John Nash, pilot, taking picture. Front row, l to r: Knox; William Gross; Granell. Back row, l to r: Tommy Pelkey; Reggi Bennett; Joe Romano; Charles Brock; Wilbur Hoffmeister; Dave Frawley.



Front row, l to r: Bert Mullen, engineer; William Sly, ball turret gunner; Paul Wasserman, nose turret gunner; Robert Redman, waist gunner; Walter Anderson, radio operator; Ora Adams, tail turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Seymore Rosenthal, bombardier; William Maley, navigator; Sol Mazels, co-pilot; Andrew Graham, pilot.



Front row, l to r: Paul Lecomte, waist gunner; Wayne Swarts, co-pilot; William Graves, ball turret gunner; James Reese, tail turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Cleo Grossman, nose turret gunner; Max Talkington, waist gunner; David Brothers, bombardier; Chester Wantuck, top turret gunner; Harold Gorecki, pilot; Lenny Giovannitti, navigator.



Robert Montgomery crew: Robert Mason, engineer; George Guido, bombardier; Tommy Smith, waist gunner; Edward Pritchard, radio operator; Frank Kyle, ball turret gunner; Edward Sabo, co-pilot (not shown); Tommy Leithauser, tail turret gunner. Photo taken at Isle of Capri with Italian guide.



Front row, l to r: Leo Bricker, gunner; George Sheehan, gunner; John Brown, armorer gunner; William Gysan, gunner. Back row, l to r: Henry Fisher, radio operator; George Laur, pilot; Benjamin Hagan, co-pilot; William Glase, navigator; Albert Gertia, engineer.



Front row, l to r: Kristal, tail turret gunner; Richard Mitchell, radio operator; Forrest Varnell, ball turret gunner; Johnson, engineer; Red, nose turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Warren Hoagland, bombardier; Ray Klotz, navigator; Ken Sheridan, co-pilot; Bill Alder, pilot.



Front row, l to r: Henry Epstein; John Haffner: William Lance; Richard Baxter; Kenneth Lyon; Lester Minnick. Back row, l to r: James Scramlin, pilot; Bucky Buchanan, co-pilot; Robbie Robinson, navigator; Fred Slominski, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: James Bush, pilot; Harold Dale, bombardier; Raymond Kieffer, navigator; Russell Eddingfield, engineer. Back row, l to r: George Frank, radio operator; Herbert Vochatzer, nose turret gunner; Victor Karstens, waist gunner; Charles Morris, waist gunner; Hipolis Kosinski, tail turret gunner. Co-pilot Dayton Starnes not pictured.



Front row, l to r: Billy Hayes, pilot; Peter Kanz, co-pilot; Robert Brandt, bombardier; Arnold Lotus, navigator. Back row, l to r: Melvin McClain; William Courtney Files; James Whittle; William Baumgartner; James Lathan; David Terry.



George Tanner's crew: Elmer Taylor, co-pilot; Bill Wachtendonk, bombardier; Bill Satina, navigator; Paul Herman, navigator; Clyde Brown, bombardier; Stanley Nizell; Edward Enghaus; Jean Waugh; Robert Chase; Harry Duval; James Jackson.



Front row, l to r: r: Carl Turner; Russell Plowman; Edward Renner; Harry Sellars; Rollin Scott; Longin Jastrzembowski. Back row, l to r: Lloyd Wilson; Ted Powell; Ralph Sensenbrenner, pilot; Bernard McCrane; William Jackson; Buren Nerren.



Front row, l to r: Robert Truex, ball turret gunner; Sam Rosenberg, engineer; Sam Cristances, nose turret gunner; Sloper, waist gunner; Domminick Cristinos, tail turret gunner; Fred Beitz, top turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Bill Jackson, pilot; Bob Ahrens, co-pilot; Smith, navigator; Tolar, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: P. Hines, waist gunner; R. Sisterman, engineer; P. Watson, waist gunner; L. Atwell, ball turret gunner; O. Hanley, tail turret gunner; A. Krenzke, radio operator. Back row, l to r: W. Rhett, pilot; O. Tinzmann, co-pilot; H. Little, bombardier; navigator, name unknown.



David Barbour's crew: Charles Dodril; Thornton Jackson; Robert Hamilton; Carl Stover; John Burnett; Paul Baker; Hugh Moore; Donald Kerr; Michael Rishko.



Front row, l to r: John Brinley, navigator; John Parish, pilot; George Braugh, co-pilot; August Seefluth, bombardier. Back row, l to r: James Balkovec, radio operator; Paul Bertram, tail turret gunner; John Mason, engineer; Raleigh Linn, nose turret gunner; Harold Vestal, waist gunner; Charles Harnish, ball turret gunner.



Front row, l to r: James Ryan; George Balmer; Robert Keller; Dale Dearing; Charles Clapsaddle; Joseph Paknick. Back row, l to r: Howard McGuire; James Cowden; James Knight, pilot; Matthew Dowling.



Front row, l to r: Clark Dudley; Leo Weston; Eugene Villani; Richard Lewis; Joseph Romako; Philip Sabatine. Back row, l to r: Bill Doyle, navigator; Ed Milchak, pilot; Karl Anderson, co-pilot; Franz Gerber, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: John Pearce, armorer gunner; David Steadman, radio operator; Dilabatino, engineer; Malcolm Burr, ball turret gunner; Jack Eggert, tail turret gunner: Contratto, waist gunner. Back row, l to r: Hutchins, bombardier; James Adams, pilot; Hodgins, co-pilot.



Front row, l to r: William Przbysz, bombardier; Frederick Funk, co-pilot; Theodore Tronoff, navigator; John Greenman, pilot. Back row, l to r: Donald Bechen, nose turret gunner; Robert James, waist gunner; John Dominey, armorer gunner; Cleo Anderson, tail turret gunner; George Bruyere, radio operator; Erskine Blankinship, engineer.



Front row, l to r: Willis Pardoe, pilot; Thomas Patterson, bombardier; L.W. Gottlieb, navigator. Back row, l to r: Robert Lenhard, ball turret gunner; Edward Kimberly, nose turret gunner; Robert Black, waist gunner; John Warren, engineer; Robert Matthews, tail turret gunner. Not present for picture: William Costello, co-pilot; William Roberts, waist gunner.



Front row, l to r: W. Barnard, bombardier; E. Ezell, navigator; S. Archibald, pilot; R. Ramstad, co-pilot; W. Madzik, gunner. Back row, l to r: J. Abdondondello, waist gunner; J.R. Hachey, waist gunner; H. Seiler, radio operator; D.R. Teisinger, ball turret gunner.



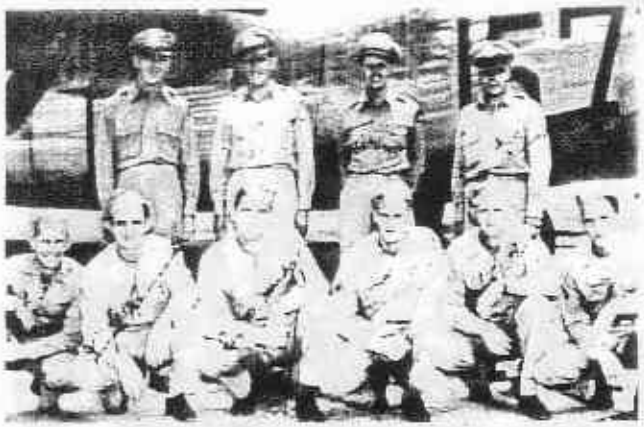
Front row, l to r: Ken Hampton, bombardier; James Peterson, pilot; Richard Anderson, co-pilot; George Grok, navigator. Back row, l to r: Cleve Anderson, top turret gunner; Frank Burge, tail turret gunner; Arnold Goldberg, engineer; Ray Root, nose turret gunner; James Doty, ball turret gunner; Phillip McCleeary, radio operator.



Front row, l to r: Paul Lanouette, waist gunner; Jerry White, radio operator; Bill Carver, engineer; Dick Milligan, nose turret gunner; R.B. Meyerson, tail turret gunner; Dean DaVee, ball turret gunner. Back row, l to r: M.L. Tinkham, co-pilot; Pat Desanctis, navigator; M. Wernick, bombardier; Ben Abney, pilot.



Front row, l to r: Robert Knox, bombardier; Robert Hespeller, co-pilot; Arthur Geleen, pilot; Walter Edge, engineer. Back row, l to r: F. Wingert, gunner; Arthur Briggs, gunner; George Dressel, radio operator; Donald Ames, gunner; Lester Peterson, gunner.



Front row, l to r: Gerald Friend, ball turret gunner; Joseph Raimond, radio operator; Rex Handy, top turret gunner; Ralph Renil, engineer; John Tolbert, nose turret gunner; Everett Johnson, tail turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Pat Clear, pilot; George Underwood, co-pilot; Alden Heighton, bombardier; Leonard Backman, navigator.



Front row, l to r: R.F. McCoy; L.W. Latham; C.P. Chance; N.L. Latham; G.C. Miller. Back row, l to r: R. Tuck, co-pilot; A. Ariff, navigator; J. Bastin, bombardier; H.O. Nelson, pilot; Cody Skelton.



Ambrosen's make-up crew: Richard Gosline; John Tyykila; Ross Strode; Kelly; Eugene Antonson; Merle Harkey; Robinson; Homer Stapleton; Earl Wedin.



Front row, l to r: George Underwood, pilot; Paul Donlan, navigator; Jean Fitter, co-pilot; Bruce Carlson, bombardier. Back row, l to r: Glenn Anderson, engineer; Harry Boone, ball turret gunner; Arnold Walter, radio operator; E.R. Myles, tail turret gunner; Marion Mason, nose turret gunner; Maurice George, waist gunner.



Front row, l to r: Richard Mitchell, top turret gunner; Marlin Brown, nose turret gunner; Frank Schuster, tail turret gunner; D.E. Timms, radio operator; Bernard Parker, ball turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Charles Conn, bombardier; Clark, navigator; Marshall Chambers, pilot; James Mastopietro, engineer; Vernon Wetzel, co-pilot.

743rd Squadron



Front row, l to r: Don Rawls, pilot; Earl Evans, co-pilot; Lewis Mathe, navigator; Dean Ross, bombardier. Back row, l to r: Raymand Lohnes, waist gunner; Thomas Smith, radio operator; John Donahue, engineer; Jack Kennedy, engineer; Billy Paris, tail turret gunner; John Laptewicz, belly turret gunner.



Front row, l to r: L.M. Moenk, gunner; L. Martin, gunner; L.S. Grefkowicz, radio operator; R.J. Ashton, engineer; E.D. Flieg, gunner; J.T. Mac Kinnon, gunner. Back row, l to r: R.A. Goodell, navigator; R.M. Finn, co-pilot; Dan Gill, pilot; W.R.. Miller, bombardier.



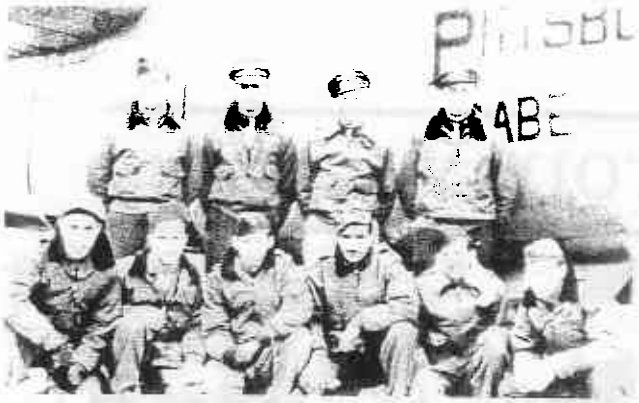
Front row, l to r: Rawls, co-pilot; Wolf, bombardier; Vandergriff, pilot; Walker, navigator. Back row, l to r: Turner, gunner; Wilson, tail turret gunner; Gunnerson, radio operator; Hill, engineer; Gryszniyrski, belly turret gunner; Domanski, nose turret gunner.



Front row, l to r: Emil Kirchbaum, tail turret gunner; John Wade, engineer; George Winkelman, radio operator, waist gunner; Gerry Graham, waist gunner; William Hess, belly turret gunner, armorer; Charles Van Doren, nose turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Robert Helbrig, pilot; Ed Keefner, navigator; Martin Schwab, co-pilot; Walter Heidmous, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: Waldo Cushing, waist gunner; Floyd Palmer, ball turret gunner; Lendon Lumpkin, engineer; Harold Berg, tail turret gunner; James Bates, waist gunner. Back row, l to r: Ralph Davis, bombardier; Darin Coleman, co-pilot; Horst Schoene, pilot; Rinord Haywood, navigator.



Front row, l to r: Ed Baldikoski, top turret gunner; George Garton, tail turret gunner; George Champeaux, engineer; John Buric, gunner; Bernard McRoberts, radio operator; Wayne Amdor, ball turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Joseph Dreher, pilot; S.H. David, co-pilot; Ed Wilbert, navigator; Orlo Webster, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: Walter West, tail turret gunner; George Commerton, ball turret gunner; Casmier Rogalski, radio operator; Bob Hodges, armorer gunner; Shelton Fife, engineer; Neal Wilson, nose turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Jack Dekker, bombardier; Norm Anderson, navigator; Joe Dumesnil, pilot; Frank Campbell, co-pilot.



Front row, l to r: David Thayer, pilot; make-up crew: Howard Helfer, co-pilot; Joe Gross, navigator; Frank Randall, bombardier. Back row, l to r: James Catt, ball turret gunner; Ben Owen, tail turret gunner; Vic Murray, radio operator; Duane Bush, armorer gunner; Duane Vance, engineer; Robert Ingalls, top turret gunner.



Front row, l to r: Clyde Brunson, pilot; Atlas Molnar, co-pilot; Robert Bigelow, navigator; William Parker, bombardier. Back row, l to r: A. Peterson, nose turret gunner; T. Johnson, waist gunner; Arthur Powers; Elmer Shulz, gunner; Edward Coslett, engineer; Wesley Moore, tail turret gunner.



Front row, l to r: James Catt, ball turret gunner; Robert Ingalls, engineer; Ben Owens, tail turret gunner; Duane Bush, armorer gunner; Victor Murray, radio operator; Duane Vance, engineer. Back row, l to r: LeRoy Brown, bombardier; Beverly Brookshire, navigator; Wilbur Bechold, operations officer; David Thayer, squadron commander (make-up crew).



Daniel Neuman, pilot; John Cayea, co-pilot; Thomas Hardman, bombardier; Wylie Smith, navigator; Emmett Ledbetter, Jr., engineer; George Kloos, radio operator; Clyde Kennedy, gunner; Marshall Hilgendorf, gunner; Reid Peck, gunner; Ernest Phillips, gunner.



Earnest Turner's crew: Clarence Davis, bombardier; Leonard Hines, navigator; Andy Oven; Jack Rudolf; rest unidentified.



Front row, l to r: Earl Howsam, pilot; Ray Sterling, co-pilot; Leo Stopa, navigator; Roy Gumundson, bombardier. Back row, l to r: Anthony Todora; Lawrence Kapitzke; Robert Wiesler; William Cochrano; Raymond Baird; Ernest Dandenault.



Front row, l to r: Ralph Jacobus, waist gunner; Louie Hansen, tail turret gunner; Ewing Howlett, top turret gunner; Raymond Page, radio operator; William Knight, ball turret gunner. Back row, l to r: John Smidl, pilot; Arthur Jurado, co-pilot; Thomas Goode, navigator; John Smith, bombardier.



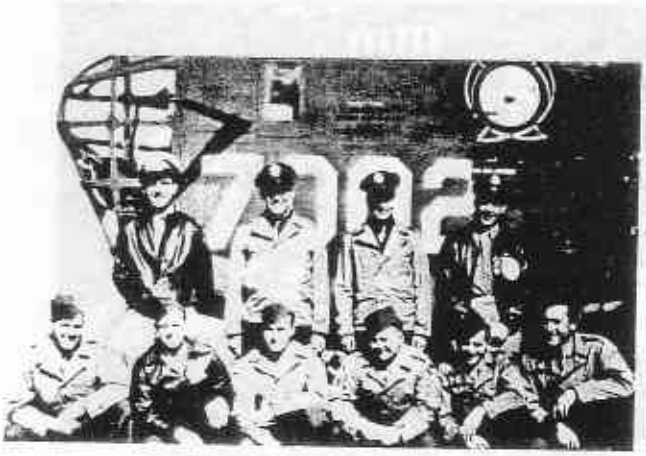
Front row, l to r: J.J. Herlihy, waist gunner; George Burkhardt, wasit gunner; John Shallow, radio operator; Don Peterson, ball turret gunner; Carlyle Ramsey, tail turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Dale Balls, engineer; Bernard Grossman, navigator; Jack Thomas, pilot; Bob Rose, co-pilot; Steve Verketis, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: Thurman Simmons; Robert Marx, Harry Sepura; Scotty Spurlock; Lee Mercer; Leland Hong. Back row, l to r: Edward Dahl, pilot; Carl Stracka, co-pilot; Garland Douglas, bombardier; John Bratt, navigator.



Front row, l to r: Lawrence Bruni, bombardier; Ned Paul, navigator; James Shuster, co-pilot; S.W. Siegel, pilot. Back row, l to r: Charles Fusilear, radio operator; George Kerr; Claude Rausch; Wayne Russell.



Front row, l to r: Carlos K. Smith, waist gunner; Richard Wilson, tail turret gunner; John C. Bathe, ball gunner; Robert E. Weiland, waist gunner; Leonard J. Sicilian, radio operator; Wesley Woodrow "Woody" Wilson, engineer. Back row, l to r: Jack R. Phillips, bombardier; Alan B. Shaw, navigator; Richard E. Rasmussen, co-pilot; William R. Zane, pilot.



Markham's crew: Wesley Poore; Bill Loffer; rest unidentified.



Front row, l to r: Richard Skagenberg, ball turret gunner; Michael Werfel, waist gunner; William McLendon, tail turret gunner; Royce Hilliard, nose turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Charles Reed, radio operator; Lee Smith, navigator; Charles McHugh, co-pilot; Eugene Bassett, bombardier; William Zimmerman, pilot; Gerard Metzdorff, engineer.



Harold Brooks, pilot; co-pilot, unidentified; Ed Johnson, bombardier; Seymour Ginsburg, navigator; Paul Taylor, nose turret gunner; Francis Winn, top turret gunner; James O'Boyle, tail turret gunner; Omer Gluck, belly turret gunner; Frank Paige, photographer.



Front row, l to r: Dick Haney, co-pilot; Bob Cook, pilot; Dave Woodlock, navigator; Paul Guild, bombardier. Back row, l to r: Abe Aziz, engineer; Ralph Friese, waist gunner; Clayton Brewer, radio operator; Leslie Stockdale, tail turret gunner; Henry Paris, ball turret gunner; Gover Jenkins, waist gunner.



Front row, l to r: William Arnold, pilot; Richard Dunscomb, co-pilot; Ingar Anderson, navigator; Stephen Drasco, bombardier. Back row, l to r: Matthew Spencer, ball turret gunner; Roland Keith, top turret gunner; Donald Petrie, nose turret gunner; C.J. McArthur, tail turret gunner; Alex Herbert, waist gunner; Sebastino Manzitto, waist gunner.



Front row, l to r: Ralph Shoemaker, gunner; Hubert Vreatt, gunner; Edward LaPointe, radio operator; James Merritt, gunner; John Elek, gunner. Back row, l to r: Roy Bamburg, engineer; Carroll Sorenson, navigator; John Brown, bombardier; Thomas Delaney, co-pilot; James Shumard, pilot.



Front row, l to r: Alvin Goldblatt, gunner; Lewis Megleo, engineer; Vasil Belas, tail turret gunner; Miller, top turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Irving Rubin, pilot; Hirsch Kravit, co-pilot; Rudy Krueger, navigator; Owen Ireland, bombardier; Michael Scavarda, radio operator.



Front row, l to r: G.W. Oliver, engineer; J.C. Hughes, waist gunner; K. Metz, nose turret gunner; H.D. Hall, radio operator; M. Theriot, ball turret gunner; C. Quigley, tail turret gunner. Back row, l to r: T.B. Gorman, bombardier; C.W. Rohler, navigator; G.W. Frayne, co-pilot; L.G. Stath, pilot.



Front row, l to r: Robert Feris, navigator; George Defenbaugh, bombardier; Robert Wolter, co-pilot; Bill Loffer, pilot. Back row, l to r: Robert Hicks, ball turret gunner; Paul Elsen, radio operator; Robert Riley, waist gunner; Stuart Bemis, engineer; Maurice Murphy, nose turret gunner; James Connelly, tail turret gunner.



Front row, l to r: Eugene Potucek, pilot; Charles Buchholz, co-pilot; C.B. Fredrickson, navigator; John Hawkins, bombardier. Back row, l to r: Thomas Brown, engineer; Arty Gray, top turret gunner; J.C. Andrews, belly turret gunner; Richard Boster, tail turret gunner; George Kaleck, nose turret gunner; Edwin Brown, radio operator.



Front row, l to r: Andrew Spewock, nose turret gunner; John Cotter, bombardier; John Eis, navigator; Robert Robards, pilot; Eckhoff, co-pilot. Back row, l to r: Albert Crocker, radio operator; Luther Minyard, tail turret gunner; Vernon Schrader, engineer; Richard Keene, belly turret gunner; Raburn Anderson, radio operator.



Front row, l to r: James Goostree, radio operator; John Murray, engineer; Eldred Specht, gunner; Harry Middleton, gunner; Kenneth Roegner, gunner; Dorin Reener, gunner. Back row, l to r: Timothy Swearingen, pilot; Donald Metz, co-pilot; Carl Barr, navigator; Herman Zagoria, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: Martin Maurer, pilot; Harold Tigert, co-pilot; Roger Caple, navigator; Wilton Frieheit, bombardier. Back row, l to r: Joseph Ferbanis, engineer; Raymond Chlan, waist gunner; John Vojtko, waist gunner; Charles Gulley, nose turret gunner; Ernest Olsowsky, ball turret gunner; Henry Everhart, tail turret gunner.



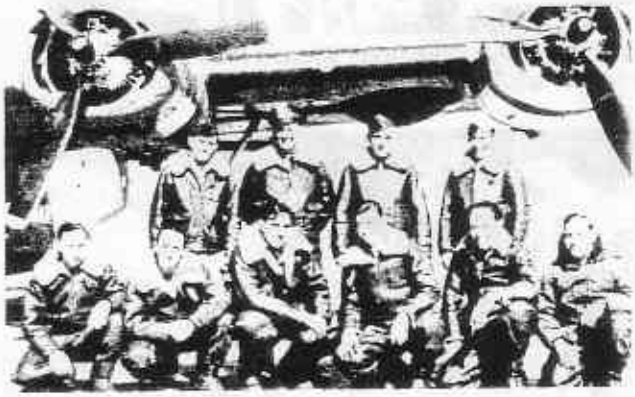
Front row, l to r: Art Mattson, waist gunner: Earl Bodenhorn, ball turret gunner; Bob Skinner, tail turret gunner: Gust Mazoros, nose turret gunner. Back row, l to r: Bill Lycan, radio operator; James Paurice, co-pilot; Bob Greenquist, navigator; Al Catlin, pilot; Irv Singer, bombardier; Hal Lienneweh, engineer.



Front row, l to r: Peter Payant, co-pilot; Harvey Hewitt, bombardier; Jack Baltzell navitor; Bill Richards, pilot. Back row, l to r: J. Cramer, tail turret gunner; Fred Czerwionka, engineer; Leo Roberts, nose turret gunner; Gerry Papia, ball turret gunner; Elden Amundson, radio operator, Roy McGuire, waist gunner.



Front row, l to r: Tom Ramey, pilot; Hal Gendron, navigator; Tony Tavernit, co-pilot: Andrew Celovsky, bombardier. Back row, l to r: Edgar Pine, waist gunner: John McGee, waist gunner; Paul Franzelas, tail turret gunner: Harold Pastner, engineer; Perry Corley, radio operator: Wesley Trinko, ball turret gunner.



Front row, l to r: James Mauney, engineer; Ernest Boyer, radio operator; Robert Rolfe, ball turret gunner: James Kinnally, nose turret gunner; James Siegrist, top turret gunner; Harvey Gosen, tail turret gunner. Back row, l to r: James Brush, pilot; Julius Ratterman, co-pilot; Robert Hairston, navigator; S. Hoffman, bombardier.



Front row, l to r: Samuel Ferris, nose turret gunner; Ralph Helmers, ball turret gunner: George Ellis, engineer: Frank Dougher, radio operator: Thomas Nazarchyk, tail turret gunner: Richard O'Connor, waist gunner. Back row, l to r: William Prince, co-pilot; Glen Garber, navigator: Thomas MacCauley, bombardier; Richard Himes, pilot.

Make-Up Crews

GROUP



Colonel Snowden makeup crew: Richard Carens, bombardier; Joseph Pierce, navigator; rest unidentified.



L to r: Colonel Kenneth Cool, William Keefer, Frank Reinhart, David Thayer, Alfred Asch: flew with make-up crews to lead missions.



Hugh Graff, makeup crew consisting of: Horner, Lanford, McWilliams, Moeller, Boster, Hudson, Libby, Swales, Kennington, Moran, Boasi.



Group Commander Col. Ken Cool's makeup crew: Horace Lanford, 741st Squadron commander; Jack Horner, group bombardier; James Moeller, group navigator; Robert Kennington, tail turret gunner, Ernest Swales, radio operator; Irlen Hudson, engineer; Thomas Moran, ball turret gunner; Donald Libby, waist gunner; John Boasi, waist gunner.



742nd Squadron make-up crew: Besler, radar operator; Epperson; McGriffer; Koch; rest unidentified.