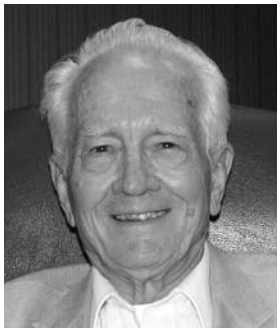
CERIGNOLA CONNECTION

455th Bomb Group Association Newsletter

Spring, 2012 Editor, Craig Ward, 813 Peterstow Drive, Euless, Texas 76039
phone: (817) 540-1068 ***email***: aphp@tx.rr.com ***website***: www.awardphp.com



Final Flight of the President

Carl A. Barr (743)
(1925 - 2011)

BOSSIER CITY, LA.

Services to honor the life of Carl Aaron Barr, 86, were held November 26, 2011, at Bellaire Baptist Church, officiated by Dr. Randy Harper. Interment, with full military honors, followed in Centuries Memorial Park.

Carl was born on March 24, 1925, in Louisiana, MO. to the late Frank and Pauline Barr. He left this life on Tuesday, November 22, 2011, following a brief illness.

Carl was an honorable man who loved the Lord and his country. He served his country proudly in the U.S. Air Force and fought in three wars, including WWII, Korean Conflict and Vietnam. He ended his military career as a B-52 pilot.

He was a member of the American Legion, serving as Chaplain, and a member of the Forty and Eight. He was also a faithful member of Bellaire Baptist Church where he served as a Sunday school teacher.

Carl loved his family dearly, and proved it each Sunday afternoon for more than thirty years with a home cooked dinner. He was a loving father, grandfather and great-grandfather who will be deeply missed.

Carl was preceded in death by his wife, Annette Raymond Barr; brother, Bill Barr; and his parents. Left to cherish his memory are his children, Karla Hardaway and husband, Steven; Karen Wodke and husband, Ken, and Candy Roby and husband, William; sister, Betty Broughton and husband, Don; grandchildren, Brian Smithson, April Dunn and husband, Pat, Shannon Dowling, Michael Dowling, Jr., Kim Flint, Kiley Stedman, David Wodke and wife, Sandy, Laura Caudill and husband, Jeremy, Kate Abshire and husband, Andrew, Jessica Roby, Luke Roby, Nicole Kanoy and husband, Anson, and Ashley Dedekind and husband,

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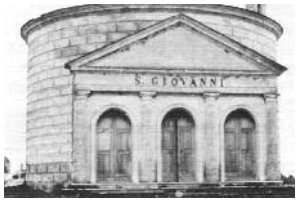
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Back Page - Message from the Executive Director

Brenden; and twelve great-grandchildren.

Pallbearers were grandsons, Brian Smithson, Michael Dowling, Jr., David Wodke, Luke Roby, Pat Dunn, Jeremy Caudill and Andrew Abshire.

You may offer condolences and sign the on-line guest book by visiting **www.centuriesmemorialfh.com.**



A Note from the 455th BG Association Executive Director

Much has happened since my article in the Fall, 2011 newsletter. Of primary importance to the Association, our President and my personal friend, Carl Barr, passed away in November, shortly after our annual Board of Directors meeting.

Carl's passing is a personal loss to many of us, and it is a professional loss to the Association. According to our bylaws, I have assumed the responsibilities of President until a new President is elected. That process has begun and must, according to bylaws, be completed no later than our next annual meeting in November, 2012.

If you have an interest in serving on the Board of Directors in any capacity, including as President, please contact me within a couple weeks of receiving this newsletter.

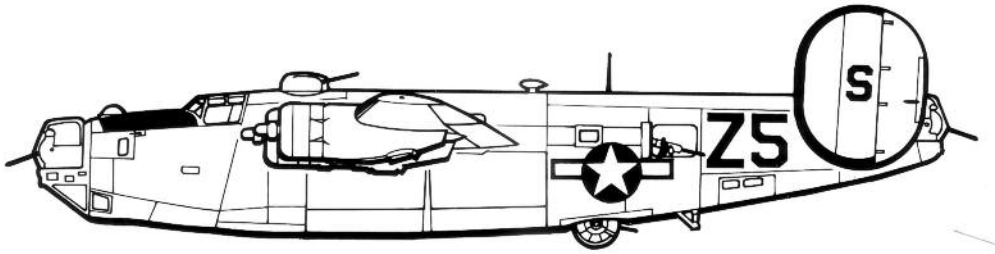
Email may be directed to 455bg-h@austin.rr.com.

U.S. mail may be addressed to:

455th Bomb Group Association
P.O. Box 93095
Austin, TX 78709.

Thank you.

Greg Riggs
Executive Director



[redacted] CONSOLIDATED B-24J LIBERATOR

The Consolidated B-24 was the most widely built bomber aircraft of World War II and one of the most versatile. With its high loading efficient wing this graceful looking warbird could carry enormous loads at great range and saw service on all fronts.

In June 1942, B-24s carried out the daring raid on the Ploesti oil refineries in Romania. In the Pacific the B-24 was unchallenged as the backbone of the whole Allied bombing campaign. In every Theater during World War II, the Consolidated B-24 Liberator served with distinction.

SPECIFICATION

Type: Long range heavy bomber.
Crew: 8-12
Powerplant: Four 1200hp Pratt and Whitney R-1830-65 radial piston engines.
Performance: Maximum speed: 300mph at 30,000ft.
Cruising speed: 215mph.
Service ceiling: 28,000ft.
Maximum range: 2100 miles.
Climb rate: 25mins to 25,000ft.

Dimensions: Length: 67ft 2ins.
Height: 18ft 0ins.
Wing area: 1048sq.ft.
Wing span: 110ft 0ins.
Weights: Empty: 36,500lbs.
Maximum take-off: 71,200lbs.
Armaments: Ten 0.5in Browning machine guns in nose, dorsal, ventral, tail and waist.
Normal bomb load: 5000lbs (12,800lbs maximum).
Total production: 18,482 (all variants).

B-24: Whereas the Boeing B-17 formed the backbone of the U.S.A.A.F. offensive in Europe, the B-24 played an equal role in the Pacific throughout most of the war, where Liberators served with both the U.S.A.A.F. and U.S.N. as well as the R.A.F. and R.A.A.F.

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Editor, *Cerignola Connection*
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ASSOCIATION HISTORIAN
John Rohrer



CELL PHONE FOR SENIORS

455TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Member Information

Name: _____ Squadron: _____

Spouse's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____

E-Mail Address: _____

May we publish your e-mail address in the newsletter? _____Yes _____No

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

A Brief History of The 455th BG

World War II

Constituted as 455th Bombardment Group (Heavy) on 14 May, 1943. Activated on 1 June, 1943. Activated as a B-24 Liberator heavy bombardment unit; assigned to II Bomber Command for training.

Primarily trained in New Mexico and Utah, received deployment orders for the Mediterranean Theater of Operations (MTO) in November, 1943.

Moved to Langley Field, Virginia, where the group flew long-range convoy escort missions over the Mid-Atlantic, October-November, 1943 while the base in Italy was being constructed.

They departed Langley in December, 1943 and flew to Tunisia by way of Brazil, arriving in January, 1944. They remained in Tunisia until completion of their airfield at San Giovanni, Italy, about five miles west of Cerignola, and 20 miles southwest of Foggia.

The group moved to San Giovanni in February, 1944 and flew its first combat mission (Anzio) on 16 February, 1944 as part of the 304th Bombardment Wing, Fifteenth Air Force.

The 455th BG was engaged in very long-range strategic bombing missions to enemy military, industrial, and transportation targets in Italy, France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia, bombing railroad marshalling yards, oil refineries, airdrome installations, heavy industry, and other strategic objectives.

Received a Distinguished Unit Citation for a mission on 2 April, 1944 when the group contributed to Fifteenth AF's campaign against enemy industry by attacking a ball-bearing plant at Steyr. They lost 4 of 40 aircraft -- 40 comrades. In addition to successful target damage, they were credited with 27 enemy aircraft destroyed and 17 probables.

Steyr was their first heavy loss in two months of combat.

Although meeting severe fighter opposition and losing several of its bombers on 26 June, 1944, the group proceeded to attack an oil refinery at Moosbierbaum, receiving another DUC for this performance. Thirty-six planes took off with only 26 returning. Six of the ten losses were from a single squadron.

Several of those crews were on their 50th mission.

The figure for combined causes includes collisions, ditchings, and crashes attributable to AAA. As time passed, the fighter opposition decreased, but the Germans concentrated their anti-aircraft guns around the fewer remaining targets, so the threat from flak remained intense.

In addition to strategic missions in the Balkans, the group bombed troop concentrations, bridges, marshalling yards, and airdromes during the fall of 1944 to hamper the enemy's withdrawal from the region.

The group also supported ground forces at Anzio and Cassino in March, 1944; knocked out gun positions in preparation for the invasion of Southern France in August 1944; and assisted the final Allied drive through Italy in April 1945 by hitting such targets as bridges, gun positions, and troop concentrations.

The group flew its last mission (Linz, Austria) 15 months later on 25 April, 1945. The mission scheduled for the following day was canceled, and the group began preparations to return home.

The group lost 118 aircraft, 31 directly to fighters, 36 directly to flak, and 51 from all other causes combined. They suffered 147 KIA, 268 MIA, 179 POW, and 169 wounded in action. On the other hand, the group is credited with 119 enemy aircraft destroyed and another 78 probables.

Unit personnel were demobilized throughout the summer of 1945. The 455th BG was inactivated in Italy on 9 September, 1945.

Cold War

Re-designated 455th Bombardment Group (Very Heavy). Allotted to the reserve. Activated in the US on 25 March, 1947 as a B-29 Superfortress unit. Inactivated on 27 June, 1949. It is unclear if group was ever equipped or manned.

Assigned to Tactical Air Command. 455th Fighter-Day Wing established in 1953 but never activated.

455th Fighter-Day Group activated with assigned fighter squadrons and assigned to 342d Fighter Day Wing at Myrtle Beach AFB, South Carolina on 25 July, 1956 but never manned or equipped. Inactivated on 18 November 1956 along with 342d FDW with all assets being absorbed into 354th Fighter-Day Wing activated that date.

Reassigned to Strategic Air Command as the 455th Strategic Missile Wing and prepared for operational capability with LGM-30B Minuteman I ICBMs from 1 November, 1962 to March 1964 at Minot AFB, North Dakota.

The component 740th Strategic Missile Squadron was also activated on 1 November. During the following 2 months, the 741st and 742nd Strategic Missile Squadrons administratively came into existence.

The first Minuteman missile arrived on 6 September 1963, and was replaced three days later. The 150th and final missile was replaced on 26 February, 1964, and by late March the wing became combat ready. The 455th SMW maintained combat readiness.

To preserve the continuity of units with distinguished histories, on 25 June, 1968, the 455th SMW was redesignated as the 91st Strategic Missile Wing in-place, without movement of personnel and was inactivated. The 91st had senior organizational roots dating from World War II and had gained recent fame as a B-52 wing operating over Vietnam. The operational strategic missile squadrons, however, were not re-designated but simply assigned to the 91st SMW.



The 33 Greatest Lies in Aviation..

1. I'm from the FAA, and I'm here to help you.

2. Me? I've never busted minimum's.

3. We will be on time, maybe even early.

4. Pardon me, ma'am, I seem to have lost my jet keys.

5. I have no interest in flying for the airlines.

6. I fixed it right the first time, it must have failed for other reasons.

7. All that turbulence spoiled my landing.

8. I'm a member of the mile high club.

9. I only need glasses for reading.

10. I broke out right at minimum's.

11. The weather is gonna be alright; it's clearing to VFR.

12. Don't worry about the weight and balance -- it'll fly.

13. If we get a little lower I think we'll see the lights.

14. I'm 22, got 6000 hours, a four year degree and 3000 hours in a Lear.

15. We shipped the part yesterday.

16. I'd love to have a woman co-pilot.

17. All you have to do is follow the book.

18. This plane outperforms the book by 20 percent.

19. We in aviation are overpaid, underworked, and well respected.

20. Oh sure, no problem, I've got over 2000 hours in that aircraft.

21. I have 5000 hours total time, 3200 are actual instrument.

22. No need to look that up, I've got it all memorised.

23. Sure I can fly it -- it has wings, doesn't it ?

24. We'll be home by lunchtime.

25. Your plane will be ready by 2 o'clock.

26. I'm always glad to see the FAA.

27. We fly every day -- we don't need recurrent training.

28. It just came out of annual -- how could anything be wrong ?

29. I thought YOU took care of that.

30. I've got the field in sight.

31. I've got the traffic in sight.

32. Of course I know where we are.

33. I'm SURE the gear was down.

Final Flights

Donald J. Anderton (743)

of Morgan, UT. took his final flight on October 4, 2011.

Donald J. Anderton was born July 20th, 1923, in Henefer, Summit County, Utah, to John Fredrick and Cheltina Elizabeth Jones Anderton. He died on October 4, 2011 at his home in Morgan, Utah, surrounded by his family.

He graduated from North Summit High School and LDS Seminary. Don loved sports and had fond memories of playing quarterback for North Summit High School, and catcher for the Coalville American Legion baseball team. He possessed a keen intellect. He excelled in his studies and was awarded a full scholarship to Utah State University.

He elected to forfeit his scholarship and serve his country in World War II. He flew 35 combat missions as a B-24 pilot in the European Theater. He was stationed in Cerignola, Italy, as part of the 15th Air Force, 455th BG. He was awarded the Air Medal with three Oak Clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

During his pilot training in Florida, he became engaged by mail to his high school sweetheart, Afton Boyer. They were married in Lawrenceville, Ill. on February 3, 1943.

He was hired by United Air Lines in 1945, and flew for 38 years and over 23,000 hours before retiring in 1983.

Don was a journal keeper. He made daily entries for more than fifty years. His writings have become a family treasure. He also left an oral-recorded history of his childhood years. He loved family history and has collected the written histories of most of his ancestors.

Don's greatest joy was his loving and caring family. Don and Afton loved to travel, especially if it was to visit and serve family members. Treasured memories included many family camping and fishing trips.

Family gatherings were numerous and memorable, especially during his last few years of declining health. He delighted in the successes and accomplishments of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

He endured well his final months of declining health and mobility. He loved and prayed for his family as they untiringly cared for him in his home. He often expressed his great appreciation for the doctors, nurses, and aides who lovingly cared for him.

George Carlisle (743)

Dear Editor,

My Dad, George Carlisle (743), who was stationed in Cerignola, Italy with the 455th, passed away January 22, 2012. He was a communications officer, and reached the rank of Captain.

Best Regards,
Dave Carlisle
dcarlisle@scsk12.org
901-756-2300

William Groome (740)

Dear Editor,

The following is a belated "Final Flight" notification on my crew mate, William Groome.

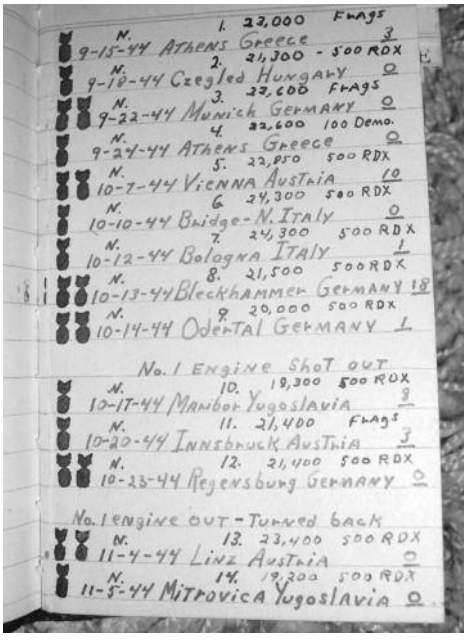
Bill was a member of the 740th Squadron, with Captain Abram Pendleton's crew. The picture of crew and plane, *Magnetic Molly*, on page 229 of the 455th Bomb Group History.

Bill was a Waist Gunner and a fine crewmate. He left a wife, son, and daughter. Bill died 6-19-2010, and was 89 years old.

Regarding the logbook entries on page 13 of the Fall 2011 CC newsletter (see below), the two bombs stand for double-credit missions. This logbook would read - #14 sorties = 14 single flights + 6 double credits = a total of 20 missions; 30 to go for a total 50 missions!

The underlined on far right - I don't know.

Keep up the good work.
Gerald W. Adams
532 E. Alder #10
Walla Walla, WA 99362-2062



Final Flights

Walter Dragich (740)

took his final flight June 24, 2011.

He wrote a WWII memoir, *"The Uninvited",* about his experience in the raid on Moosbierbaum in June, 1944.

Ernest 'Bud' Turner (743)

born October 21, 1921 passed away on February 26, 2011. He had been a pilot with the 743rd squadron.

Bud carried on with this life-long hobby of photography following the war, and traveled widely in the US and Canada with his wife Mimzi. His favorite subjects were birds and other wildlife, as well as historic covered bridges, and of course, family. He picked up a second hobby after the war, HAM radio, and became extremely proficient in low-power broadcasting.

In later years, he spoke a good bit about his experiences during the war, especially his time as a POW. He is sadly missed by family and friends, and his service will not be forgotten.

Dear Editor,

My father in law was Ernest ('Bud') F. Turner, Jr.

He was a pilot with the 455th BG (743). He passed away in February, 2011 (see Final Flight notice above).

I have been doing ongoing research about his service, and am trying to find some missing details about his unit.

He had written up a wonderful memoir a few years before his passing, but all I can find in it about his unit is that he was with the 15th AirForce, 455th BG, 743rd squadron.

Any pointers or help you could give would be much appreciated. I'm trying to get as much information as I can to add to the family history, and to preserve as many details as I can of this one airman's amazing service.

Thanks in advance for any help you can give.

Best Regards,
Bill Krill
(814) 932-7078
krillco@gmail.com

Editor's Note:

Mr. Krill,
You can access the complete 455th BG history, as well as all previous editions of the Cerignola Connection, online at the following address:

www.awardphp.com

Patriot Guard Riders

I have walked in the fields of stone, where families cry and heros sleep.

Felt the thundering rumble of a hundred motorcycles, as *The Patriot Guard Riders* bring another hero home to rest.

I have seen riders cry for someone they don't know,

Stand in a Flag Line by the side, in 100 degree heat, or in freezing cold, for hours,

Just to show support for the family as they pass.

And to say goodbye to an American Hero, that has paid the price for our freedom.

Editor's Note:

One of my hobbies and passions, since the age of 14, has been motorcycles (see photo below of your Editor with my beautiful wife Marsha on our Harley-Davidson).

Several times per year, I have the priviledge of participating in a Patriot Guard Ride (PGR). PGRs, upon request from the veteran's family, escort our military heros (all branches, all wars) to their final resting place.

This show of support, by sometimes up to 100 motorcycles, is awesome to behold.

God Bless our Veterans.



Final Flights

Ralph R Reinl (742)
took his final flight on August 23rd, 2011.

He was a proud member of the 455th Bomb Group and always spoke with fond memories of the brave men he served with in the War.

I had the pleasure of attending the 50th anniversary reunion at Dayton in 1997. I was so impressed with you all.

I was never as proud of my dad and all of you brave gentlemen for what you did for your country and the world. They had great fun with dignity during the whole event.

I also got the pleasure of having dinner with my dad, their co-pilot George (later became a pilot on another plane), tail-gunner, and navigator

Thank You all for your service in WWII. My dad could not have had better company than all of you.

Sincerely,
Tony Reinl
arenil@nycap.rr.com

Samuel J. Wyrosdic, Jr. (740)
of Mobile, AL, died on May 4, 2011, at age 87.

Sam was our tail gunner / armorer on Lou Dolan's crew in the 740th Squadron. He flew 35 missions between October 4, 1944, and April 2, 1945.

After the war, Sam made his career in building, serving as a construction superintendent for many years.

Our crew came through our tour of duty with no injuries. We often flew lead, and I remember once we had Colonel Cool as our pilot.

Toward the end of our tour, Lou Dolan was promoted to Captain, and made Squadron Operations Officer.

Sam and I were the last two survivors; now that he's passed on, I'm the only one of our crew left alive.

Yours truly,
T/Sgt. Charles B. Wills
Radio Operator
CBWILLS@COMCAST.NET

Richard Milligan (742)

Dear Editor,

My father, Richard Milligan, served with the 455th BG, 742nd Squadron, based in Cerignola. He flew on the B-24 named *Stinky*. (Photo below.)

My dad, who passed away October 27, 2010, has an album of pictures from his time served in Italy. I wanted to know if anyone would be interested in having copies of these pictures.

Thank you,
Brian Milligan
bcmilligan1@yahoo.com

Air Power Quotes

I am the Bomber, proud
machine, sleek and powerful,
Made by man to kill his foe,
Made of steel and wood and
metal, Built to fight,
and drop destruction . . .
--- Robert Cromwell, *Skyward: A Ballad of the Bomber*

Airpower has become predominant, both as a deterrent to war, and — in the eventuality of war — as the devastating force to destroy an enemy's potential and fatally undermine his will to wage war.
--- General Omar Bradley

Another popular fallacy is to suppose that flying machines could be used to drop dynamite on an enemy in time of war.
--- William H. Pickering, *Aeronautics*, 1908

I wish for many reasons flying had never been invented.
--- Stanley Baldwin, on learning that Germany had secretly re-built their air force, 1935



The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner

The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner is a five-line poem by Randall Jarrell published in 1945. It is about the death of a gunner in a Sperry ball-turret on a World War II American bomber aircraft.

From my mother's sleep I fell into the State,
And I hunched in its belly till my wet fur froze.
Six miles from earth, loosed from its dream of life,
I woke to black flak and the nightmare fighters.
When I died they washed me out of the turret with a hose.

Jarrell, who served in the Army Air Force, provided the following explanatory note:

"A ball turret was a plexiglass sphere set into the belly of a B-17 or B-24, and inhabited by two .50 caliber machine guns and one man, a short, small man.

When this gunner tracked with his machine guns a fighter attacking his bomber from below, he revolved with the turret; hunched upsidedown in his little sphere. The fighters which attacked him were armed with cannon firing explosive shells. The hose was a steam hose."

Due partly to its short length, *The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner* poem has been widely anthologized. In fact, Jarrell came to fear that his reputation would come to rest on it alone.

The poem inspired the play, *The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner* by Anna Moench, which premiered in New York City at the New York International Fringe Festival in August, 2008, and was extended to play at The Space in Long Island City.

A nod to the poem can also be found in John Irving's 1978 novel *The World According to Garp.* The protagonist's father died after sustaining fatal injuries, a "rather careless lobotomy", due to flack while serving as a ball-turret gunner in World War II.

Air Power Quotes

There are a lot of people who say that bombing cannot win the war. My reply to that is that it has never been tried. We shall see.
--- Arthur 'Bomber' Harris,
Royal Air Force, July 1942

Above all, I shall see to it that the enemy will not be able to drop any bombs.
--- Hermann Goering,
German Air Force Minister

No aircraft ever took and held ground.
--- US Marine Corps Manual

From now on, we shall bomb Germany on an ever-increasing scale, month by month, year by year, until the Nazi regime has either been exterminated by us, or torn to pieces by the German people themselves.
--- British Prime Minster Winston Churchill, 14 July 1941

Final Flight

Joseph V. Imrisek (740)

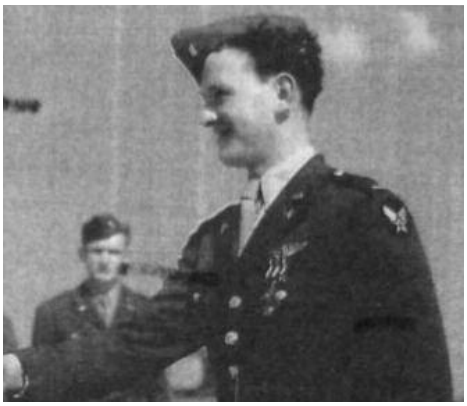
1st Lt. Joseph V. Imrisek took his Final Flight, appropriately enough, on June 6, 2011.

He was a bombardier. Dad didn't talk about the war unless pressed, but never lost his love for both aviation or the B-24.

He thought it was better than the B-17, for speed or bomb load, and defended it's reputation more than once. During the war he earned both the Air Medal and DFC.

Regards,
Steven Imrisek (USN Ret)
wingsofgold007@yahoo.com

(See photos below)





455th BG E-mail Roster

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Sports Quotes

“I make my practices real hard because if a player is a quitter, I want him to quit in practice, not in a game.”

Bear Bryant / Alabama

“I never graduated from Iowa, but I was only there for two terms - Truman's and Eisenhower's.”

Alex Karras / Iowa

“My advice to defensive players: Take the shortest route to the ball, and arrive in a bad humor.”

Bowden Wyatt / Tennessee

Dear Editor,

It was very thoughtful of Mario Capocefalo to mention my interest in the airfields surrounding Foggia. Mario stayed with us back in 2007. He is still a live wire.

When I visited Cerignola, I was amazed at the personal collection of memoribillia and historically significant material that he has amassed. That painting of the Liberator with all the signatures of the 455th B.G. deserves to be in a museum, along with all the other material.

I plan on submitting an article to you about a dear, departed friend, LTC. WILLIAM H. HOLLOMAN III, a *Red Tail* Tuskegee Airman of the 332nd Flight Group. Bill was stationed at Ramitelli, and attended mass at San Giovanni Batista many times.

An interesting event happened when I was privileged to travel with Bill to the National WWII Museum in New Orleans. Who should we meet? None-other than Capt. George McGovern! They sat down together and signed their respective books.

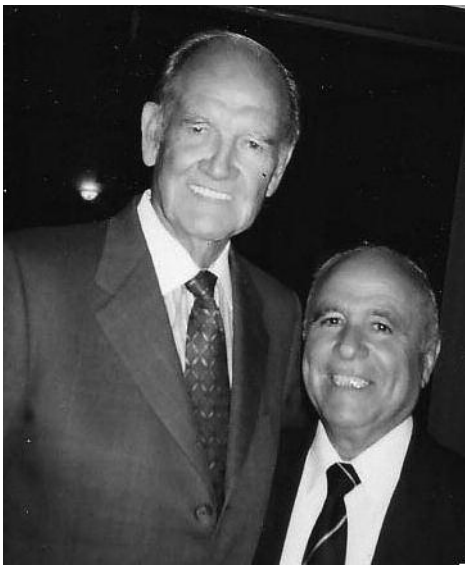
What transpired during that meeting was a heart-felt story. It could only have gotten better if Mario was there to greet his good friend, George McGovern.

Regards,

Gene M. Fioretti, PLLC
Chemical Engineer, B.S., M.S.
9500 S. 198th St.
Renton, WA. 98055-4108
206-427-8800



Gene Fioretti with Mario



Sen. McGovern with Mario

Air Power Quotes

Air power may either end war or end civilization.
--- Winston Churchill, House of Commons, 14 March 1933

We are going to scourge the Third Reich from end to end. We are bombing Germany city by city, and ever more terribly, in order to make it impossible for her to continue the war.
--- Arthur 'Bomber' Harris, Royal Air Force, July 1942

Old Paths

I like the old paths,
when Moms were at home.
Dads were at work.
Brothers went into the army.
And sisters got married BEFORE having children!

Crime did not pay;
Hard work did;
And people knew the difference.
Moms could cook;
Dads would work;
Children would behave.
Husbands were loving;
Wives were supportive;
And children were polite.

Women wore the jewelry;
And Men wore the pants.
Women looked like ladies;
Men looked like gentlemen;
And children looked decent.

People loved the truth,
And hated a lie.
They came to church to get IN,
Not to get OUT!
Hymns sounded Godly;
Sermons sounded helpful;
Rejoicing sounded normal;
And crying sounded sincere.

Cursing was wicked;
Drugs were for illness.
The flag was honored;
America was beautiful;
And God was welcome!

We read the Bible in public;
Prayed in school;
And preached from house to house.

To be called an American was worth dying for;
To be called an American was worth living for;
To be called a traitor was a shame!

I still like the old paths the best!

Editor's Email to the Son of a 455th BG Veteran

Dear Arnold,

My late father, Lt. J.T. Ward (passed 1986), was a co-pilot in the 455th BG, 740th sq. He was credited in 1944 with his 50 missions, and went home in late 1944.

In my youth, I remember my dad speaking of a few instances during his combat experience. One thing that really stuck with him was witnessing the collision of those two bombers that took the life of your father. My dad's plane was in formation, behind and below the two Liberators that collided. When the planes exploded, my dad's plane was almost knocked out of the sky by the falling debris. He said he lost many very good friends on those planes, including your dad.

My late mother (passed 2008) told me years ago that she received a telegram a few days later from the widows of two of the men killed in the collision. I believe one of the widows may have been your mother.

The telegram was informing my mother that these men had been killed in action, and asking my mom if my dad had survived the mission.

I'm quite sure my mom mentioned the name Lundwall. I believe my dad was good friends with your dad, and that my mom knew your mom in 1944.

If any of your mom's or dad's papers, correspondence, or other documents from the war mention J.T. Ward or Mozelle Ward, that's my parents.

Our fathers and their comrades are heros. God Bless the US military and our veterans.

Best Regards,
Craig Ward
Editor, *Cerignola Connection*

The Response

Dear Craig,

I mailed some items to you yesterday that I believe you will find of interest, concerning our dads. I now believe that they, and our mothers, were good friends, and may even have "roomed" together for a short time while they were at Langley.

That, of course, would explain the telegram apparently sent by my mom to yours after the mid-air collision.

My best to you,
A. Arnold Lundwall
Son of Lt. Albert Lundwall (740)
aalundwall@hotmail.com



Words of Advice

A very successful businessman recently gave the following advice to a group of students about 11 things they may not learn in school.

Rule 1: Life isn't fair.
Get used to it!

Rule 2: The world won't care about your self-esteem. The world will expect you to accomplish something BEFORE you feel good about yourself.

Rule 3: You will NOT make 40 thousand dollars a year right out of high school. You won't be a vice-president with a car phone, until you earn both.

Rule 4: If you think your teacher is tough, wait till you get a boss. He doesn't have tenure.

Rule 5: Flipping burgers is not beneath your dignity. Your grandparents had a different word for burger flipping. They called it opportunity.

Rule 6: If you mess up, it's not your parents' fault, so don't whine about your mistakes, learn from them.

Rule 7: Before you were born, your parents weren't as boring as they now are. They got that way from paying your bills, cleaning your clothes, and listening to you talk about how cool you are. So before you save the rain forest from the parasites of your parents' generation, try delousing the closet in your own room.

Rule 8: Your school may have done away with winners and losers, but life has not. In some schools, they have abolished failing grades, and they'll give you as many times as you want to get the right answer. This doesn't bear the slightest resemblance to ANYTHING in real life.

Rule 9: Life is not divided into semesters. You don't get summers off, and very few employers are interested in helping you find yourself. Do that on your own time.

Rule 10: Television is NOT real life. In real life, people actually have to leave the coffee shop and go to jobs.

Rule 11: Be nice to nerds. Chances are you'll end up working for one.

World War II Statistics

By the Numbers

Number of Americans who served in World War II:
16 million

Average amount of time each U.S. military serviceman served overseas during World War II:
16 months

Estimated number of people serving in World War II worldwide:
1 billion

Estimated number of U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines killed in battle during World War II:
292,000

U.S. troops who perished outside of battle during World War II:
114,000

U.S. troops wounded during World War II:
672,000

Total deaths sustained by U.S. forces during World War II:
405,000

U.S. military deaths as a percent of the total United States population:
0.4%

Estimated number of deaths sustained worldwide during World War II:
70 million

European Jews killed in the Nazi Holocaust:
6 million

Deaths of Polish military forces during World War II:
123,000

Deaths of French military forces during World War II:
213,000

Deaths of British military forces:
373,000

Deaths of Chinese military forces:
1.3 million

Deaths of Japanese military forces:
1.3 million

Deaths of German military forces:
3.5 million

Deaths of Russian military forces:
11 million

British civilians killed:
93,000

French civilians killed:
350,000

Japanese civilians killed:
672,000

German civilians killed:
780,000

Polish civilians killed:
5.7 million

Russian civilians killed:
7 million

Can You Help?

Dear Editor,

I was looking over letters from my Grandpa, Robert K Knox, to my Grandma during the war. I am interested in learning more about the 742nd Bomb Squadron and the 455th Bomb Group.

In one of his letters, he mentioned a guy by the name of Ross Strode. Do you have any info about this gentleman? I believe he flew with my Grandpa.

Thank you,
Jeff Knox
knoxpox@yahoo.com

Can You Help? Response

Dear Mr. Knox,

I found your grandpa's crew photo on page 240 of our unit history. The 455th BG history can be found online at ***www.awardphp.com.***
The crew is listed as follows:

- Pilot: Arthur Geleen
- Co-Pilot: Robert Hespeller
- Bombardier: Robert Knox
- Engineer: Walter Edge
- Radio Operator: George Dressel

Gunner: F. Wingert

- Gunner: Arthur Briggs
- Gunner: Donald Ames

Gunner: Lester Peterson

Ross Strode is pictured on the same page as a member of Ambrosen's make-up crew. I have no current contact information about him.

He attended some of our reunions up to about ten years ago.

Dear Editor,

Greetings from Slovenia in Europe.

I have one very interesting piece of news. I have all the information about the crash of the bomber B-24 Liberator named *Rosalie Mae,* which on Wednesday, 20th December, 1944, crashed in Slovenia near my village.

On the way to Pilsen, one engine caught fire, and they had to skip the mission. The crew parachuted from a height of 5000 meters. I have parts of engines, and armament of the aircraft (see photos, right >>>>).

The bomber was totally smashed in the crash.





The crew of this bomber:
Bone, Donald L., Pilot
Bath, Rollin H., Co-Pilot
Phillips, Julius C., Navigator
Ginsburg, Howard A., Bombardier
Dalian, Allen M., Engineer
Kemp, Andrew J., Radio Operator
Boyd, Thomas E., Gunner
Darnall, Wayne L., Gunner
Doyle, Joseph W., Gunner
Lerch, Henry O., Gunner

I want to find the pilot's grandson. I know that they are very interested in what happened to this plane.

If you have more shots of the bomber and other data, please forward them to me.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Joze Povsic
Slovenia, Europe
joze.povsic@amis.net

Now Who Can Argue With That?

Sure, we want to go home. We want this war over with. The quickest way to get it over with is to go get the bastards who started it. The quicker they are whipped, the quicker we can go home. The shortest way home is through Berlin and Tokyo. And when we get to Berlin, I am personally going to shoot that paper-hanging son-of-a-b---- Hitler. Just like I'd shoot a snake!
--- General George S. Patton - Addressing his troops before Operation Overlord

We're going to bomb them back to the Stone Age.
--- General Curtis E. LeMay, USAF

My Worst Mission

by Frank Hosimer (741)

I was a first pilot on a B-24 bomber in the 15th Air Force, flying out of Italy on missions to Italy, southern Germany, Austria, Yugoslavia, Romania and southern France. (455th Bomb Group, 741st Squadron).

There's a crew of ten, four officers and six enlisted men. I was in a replacement crew from mid-July to December 1944. I only saw German fighters on two missions, although they may have been held off by the Tuskegee Airmen (*Red Tails*) in P-5I's above us.

The worst problem was flak, from ground gun protection. I heard about missions with high losses from two or three hundred fighters that happened before and after my 35 missions. Fortunately, the Germans didn't have enough gasoline to put fighters up often.

My worst mission was October 17, 1944 over Bleckhamer, Germany, site of an oil refinery. The mission before that was at nearby Odertal, protected by the same flak field, so we all knew this mission would be tough.

Each squadron has nine planes, in tight formation. The Bomb Group of four squadrons has 36 aircraft.

The flak was intense and accurate. We did get our bombs away. I was flying tight formation, but on my left side, I saw a nearby B-24 break in two at the Sperry ball.

The turret broke away from the plane; the gunner has no room for a parachute inside the turret, so he had a long time to think before hitting the ground.

I saw a pattern in the flak field of a fan shape, groups of four bursts. Then I saw that the fourth burst was going to be where I was, so I eased back on the wheel slightly to go up, since the bombs were already dropped. Then there was a loud sound, like a can of hard corn hitting tin roof.

At that point, there were only four of the original nine in the squadron, and one of the four had an engine out. The plane I was flying on also lost an engine, but I was still flying past him.

I had to slow down, so I dropped the landing gear, which caused me to drop about 1,000 feet. I then pulled up the gear, and pulled back up in formation.

The four of us made it back to base. We shot a flare to let the tower know we had problems, and would be coming in for a landing.

Our plane lost the hydraulic system, which meant we had to put the landing gear down manually. The engineer got one down, but had trouble with the others, so I put the plane on auto-pilot and headed out toward the Adriatic Sea. It would be disastrous to land with one wheel down! We would have to bail out in parachutes, or so I thought.

The engineer finally succeeded in getting the gear down, so we were clear to land, but would have no brakes.

The side-gunners already knew they would have to fasten their chutes to the side gun mounts, and open the chutes at the right time to serve as brakes. Otherwise, the plane would go down a hill at the end of the runway, and go into a stone wall! I had already seen that happen once.

The landing went well. The chutes opened, and slowed the plane down enough that I could use the engines to pull off the runway into the mud along side the steel runway.

My crew counted 39 holes in the plane when we landed.

No one was wounded.

Submitted by:
First Lt. Frank Hosimer
(aka Francis C. Hosimer)

Air Power Quotes

It is not possible to concentrate enough military planes with military loads over a modern city to destroy that city.
--- US Colonel John W. Thomason Jr., November 1937

Pershing won WWI without even looking into an airplane, let alone going up in one. If they had been of such importance, he'd have tried at least a ride. We'll stick to the army on the ground, and the battleships at sea.
--- John Wingate Weeks,
U.S. Secretary of War, 1921

Hitler built a fortress around Europe, but he forgot to put a roof on it.
--- Franklin D. Roosevelt

Internet Enables Emotional Reunion

WWII combat death remembered by friend and sister

Published: Oct. 14, 2011

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Jim Swift, Reporter

AUSTIN (KXAN) - The day a piece of anti-aircraft flak shrapnel ripped through the skin of a B24 bomber over Ploesti, Romania, and struck Lt. Jerry Thaxton (454th BG) in the head on May 18, 1944, hearts broke on two continents.

Back in Thaxton's hometown of Ingleside, Texas, the Army Air Corps navigator's kid sister was crushed.

"The day before, my cousin was killed," said Bette Davis, 84, who now lives in Baytown. "Then the next day we got the telegram that said Jerry had been killed.

"It was a terrible time," she went on. "It was a blur. It was a sad time. I was 17 years old; it was a lot to take."

What Bette Thaxton, as she was called then, did not know, what she could not have known, was that at San Giovanni airbase at Cerignola, Italy, where her brother was stationed, someone else was crying, too.

Thirteen year-old Mario Capocefalo was what was known as a "tent boy" at the base. He ran errands for the aviators and did chores for them. But this kid was not a meek servant type.

When new crews arrived at the base, he watched with amusement as the airmen struggled to erect their tents.

"I'd say, 'Do you have a carton of cigarettes?' the now 81-year-old Capocefalo recalled. "And they'd say, 'What?' I'd say, 'No, I don't smoke, but if you give me a carton, I'll show you something.' They'd give me a carton and I'd call over my friend and we'd build the tent up.'"

It didn't stop there; the kid was particularly hard on the bombardiers.

"I used to tease the bombardiers," Capocefalo remembered. "I'd say, 'Who's the bombardier?' They'd say, 'There's the guy.' So I'd say, 'I'm glad you're not sleeping.' He'd say, 'What do you mean?'

"You see, the bombardier never does anything," Capocefalo smiled. "He just has 20 minutes of work and then he can sleep for the rest of the mission. And he'd say, 'This guy looks for trouble.'"

In that way, the gutsy little waif from a poverty-stricken family worked his way into the hearts of the Americans.

"I'd give them what they needed to keep the place warm," he said. "And I told them, 'From now on, whatever you need, I'm with you. So I became the tent boy."

In April of 1944, just after pilot James Cavanaugh's crew showed up at San Giovanni, a plane crashed at the base.

"It jumped down and exploded," recalled Capocefalo. "As a kid, I never saw such things before, and I just watched the big fire.

The boy, standing on a wall near the crash site, was stunned.

"The gun bullets were exploding and after five minutes, two bombs, one next to the other, exploded. I heard a screaming in my ear and I didn't know what it was," he said.

A sergeant spotted the kid, and cursing, ordered him off the wall. That's when Capocefalo noticed a nearby tent that had been set afire by debris from the crash. With the help of the lanky Thaxton, he doused the flames. The two were immediately inseparable.

"It's hard to explain the way we love each other, Jerry especially," said Capocefalo. "He wasn't married, and he understood easily how poor I was. He told me, 'Mario, if something happens, all my belongings, you can have them,' but I never expected such things could be realized."

A month later, he would find out they can, the hard way. A bomber returning from a mission let loose a red flare indicating casualties on board. The boy didn't recognize the plane, and thought nothing more about it until he went to greet his returning buddies.

"When I went in my tent, there was only three," he said. "I was smiling, and asked 'Where's Jerry?'

"James Cavanaugh, the commander, he was an Irish Catholic. He told me, 'Mario, join

me and say a prayer with me because Jerry passed away."

The man's voice cracked heavily as he continued his story.

"I ran to the airplane, but they didn't allow me to see him," he said. "The ambulance was already there, and they were trying to take the flight jacket off. I lost Jerry, what can I say?"

After the war, Capocefalo stayed in contact with his friends. The decades passed, and when the former aviators died, he stayed in touch with their families, too. But the man never knew that Thaxton had a sister, and the absence of his best friend burned a hole in his heart every day.

Then the email came. Davis' son, Bill Davis, an Austin artist, had been doing some research on the Internet, and when he read about Mario Capocefalo and his friendship with a guy named Jerry Thaxton, he couldn't believe his own eyes. Davis went to work putting his mother in touch with the Italian, first by email and then by telephone.

Finally, Capocefalo made the long trip from Italy to Texas to meet the sister of his long-dead friend at her son's Austin home.

"Salute," he called out to her in Italian, wishing God's blessings upon her.

"There you are," she softly replied, "there you are," as they embraced in the entry hall.

There was brief moment of private connection in the home's den, and then the two sat down at a dining room table and started pouring over old photographs and old memories.

"It's been so good for Mario to tell me about camp life at the base, about how they lived, how many were in a tent, how they ate and how they did everything," said Davis.

"It's filled in some blanks; it's filled in some holes. When you're a kid and they go away, you don't know much; you don't have a good picture of it. And then when they die away from home like that, there's a big emptiness, and this is filling it in. I know now that there was somebody there, crying for him."

"Still crying," Capocefalo interjected.

"As I was and am," Davis went on. "And it's just a miracle to know that my brother's friend is now my friend, and will be for the rest of our lives."

It was one of those rare moments in life, a moment when the jagged and unending scars of war suddenly yield to the soothing balm of healing and grace.

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Dear Editor,

My father, Louis Betti, was featured in a photo in your Spring, 2001 newsletter issue. He was the flight engineer / top turret gunner on *Tepee Time Gal* on her 100th mission.

I have an original 8 x10 photo of that group portrait at my home, and my father built a wooden model of the plane, both of which were displayed in his office for many years.

I also have a small diary that he kept during his missions. It looks like it was written yesterday!.

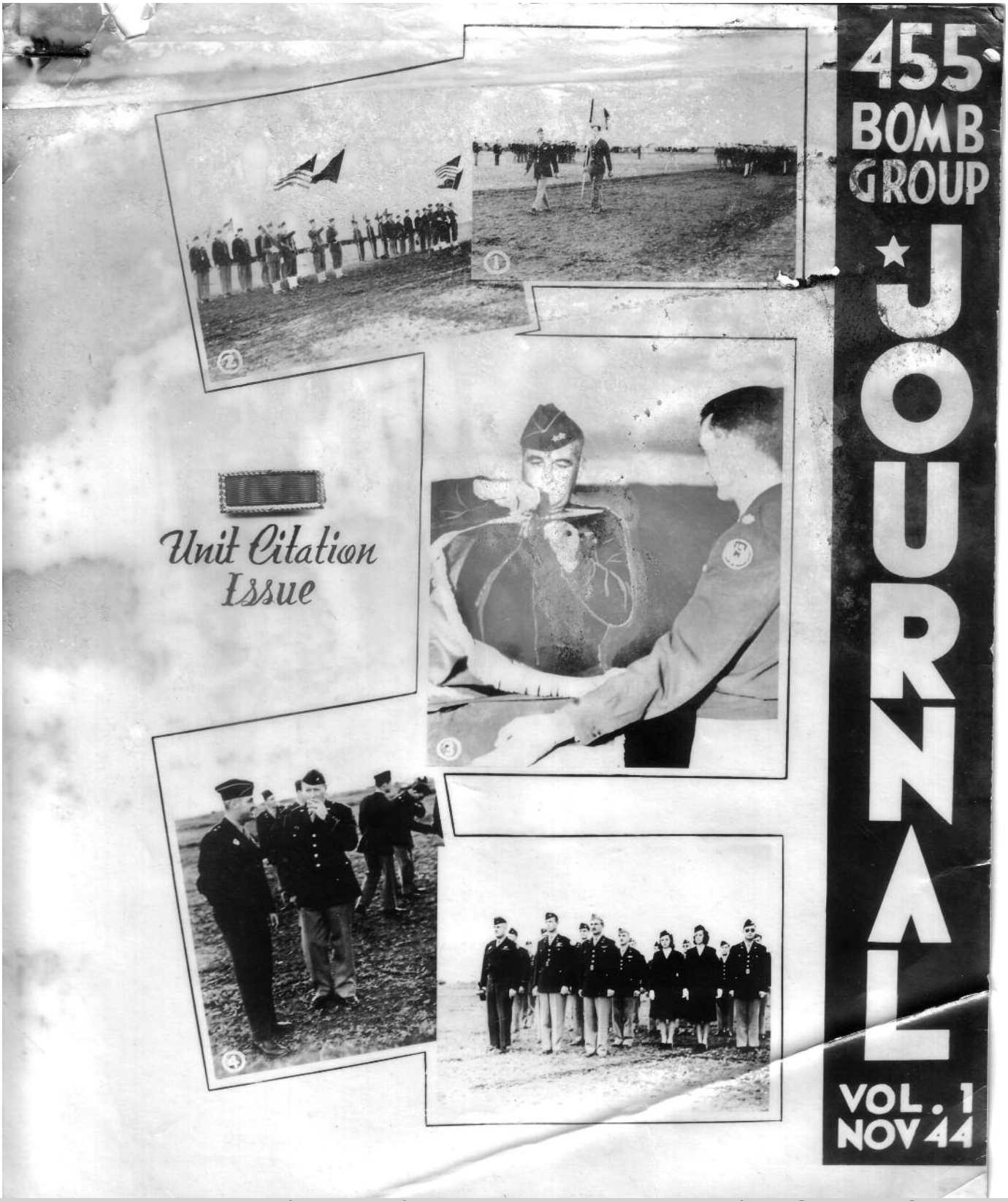
Perhaps I can find a way to share that with the group.

My father passed away in 1977, but I was happy that we both learned to fly together in 1975. He was not a pilot until then, but he bought us a lovely Piper Cherokee 235 that we flew together. He was a VERY smart man, and there is little doubt why he ended up as an FE on a B-24. He knew his stuff!

Much time has passed since then, and my father is long gone, but I continue to fly, having switched to a proper high wing aircraft, a Cessna 210 turbo.

My kudos to the many fine men who served during this difficult time in American history. If there are any *Tepee Time Gal* crew members still around who wish to contact me, whether they served with my father or not, I would love to hear from them.

With warmest regards and deepest respect,
Louis Betti Jr.
loubetti@earthlink.net



Editor's Note: *The cover of the very first, original, wartime version of the* Cerignola Connection *appears above. Does anyone remember receiving this edition in 1944 in Italy?*
This cover, and the attached pages, were kindly forwarded to me by Dave Carlisle, whose father, George Carlisle, passed away January 22, 2012 (see Final Flight notice on page 6).

I will be including excerpts of the contents of this 455th BG Journal in future editions of the Cerignola Connection *newsletter. I'm sure you will find it as interesting as I did. Thank you, Dave!*

LIBERATORS HUNTING GERMAN SUBS

In 1940, the British Royal Air Force purchased twenty B-24s from the USA.

The aircraft were delivered to Britain in mid-1941, and were sent to the Aeroplane and Armament Experimental Establishment at Boscombe Down, where they were intensively tested.

They were declared "unsuitable" for combat operations over Europe, given the lack of self-sealing fuel tanks, poor defensive armament, & weak performance ***(can you believe it?).***

The Liberator had, however, some important characteristics which could be very useful to the British prior to the USA's entry into the war.

Its long range and heavy bomb load made it an ideal maritime patrol aircraft.

They were passed to the Coastal Command, who was desperately looking for long range patrollers to counter the German U-boats.

An extensive conversion program started, installing ASV MK II radars and Leigh Light searchlights. Some aircraft were given a pack of four 20mm-cannons under the fuselage, while some others were equipped with 3 inch (76mm) rockets under each wing.

The first unit to receive the Liberator GR I was No.120 Sq., operating from Northern Ireland. Deployment of the four-engine bomber had great effects in the *Battle of the Atlantic.*

The Coastal Command reconnaissance force almost doubled its range capabilities and, for the first time in the war, it was possible to cover part of the "Mid-Atlantic gap".

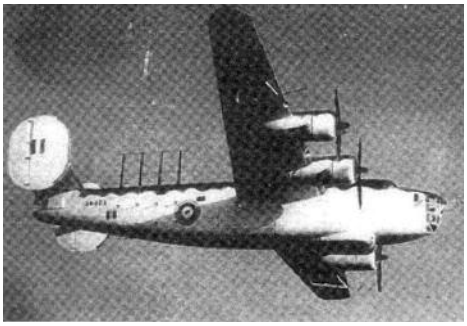
For almost an entire year, No. 120 Sq. was the only unit capable of supplying air cover for convoys in the previously un-covered area.

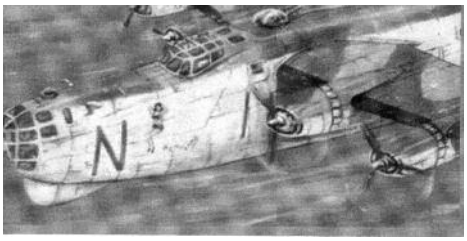
To further increase the aircraft range, armor and gun turrets were sacrificed in order to save weight and carry extra fuel. The new version was renamed VLR (Very Long Range). The Leigh Light searchlight gave the Liberator the capability to hunt U-boats also by night, where they had been safe and undisturbed for almost three years.

In the final months of 1942, four U-boats were sunk by No.120 Sq., and the more recently-equipped No. 224 Sq. The US Navy and the Royal Canadian Air Force also started to operate VLR Liberators on the other side of the Atlantic, and by mid-1943 they started to fly from the Azores, too.

The sudden and decisive turning of the *Battle of the Atlantic* in May 1943 was given to many factors, and the long range cover given by the Liberators was one of the most important.

At the end of the war, the B-24 Liberator VLR was credited with 72 sinkings (full or shared), making it the most successful aircraft to fight against the German U-boats.





If a Dog was the teacher, you would learn stuff like:

When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.

Never pass up the opportunity to go for a joyride.

Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy.

When it's in your best interest, practice obedience.

Let others know when they've invaded your territory.

Take naps.

Run, romp, and play daily.

Thrive on attention, and let people touch you.

Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.

On warm days, stop to lie on your back on the grass.

The Rest of the Story !

Dear Editor,

Ref: Picture on page 3, Fall 2011 *Cerignola Connection.*

See below, right

... now the rest of the story !

To me, this incident seems like yesterday !

I was assigned to the 741st squadron on Lt. Paul Contra's crew. He loved to buzz every chance he got, which was strictly against all rules.

This plane had been in maintenance for a serious over-haul, and required a test flight before releasing for service.

The C.O., Maj. Langford, had asked several pilots to volunteer, with no success. So Lt. Condra told him he would volunteer, only if Maj. Langford would give permission to buzz the camp.

In Maj. Langford's desperation, he said OK, but just one time.

Lt. Contra used a skeleton crew ... himself, copilot Lt. Gorski, and engineer Vern Maxon.

The picture does not show the final results of the plane passing over the squadron's H.Q. tent. After Lt. Condra buzzed the whole camp, he nosed the plane straight up, tail to the ground, while on top of HeadQuarters tent. The prop wash from those powerful engines blew the tent down, and a cloud of papers went flying everywhere!

Above the roar of the five thousand HP un-muffled engines, a few naughty words were spoken down there.

Regards,
Dexter L. Sandefer (741)

Dear Editor,

Ref: "Rest of the Story", <<<<<<<<<<<< left column:

My dad, Dexter L. Sandefer, has not shared much of what happened to him in that war. So when he saw this picture in the Fall, 2011 newsletter, it stirred something deep inside of him. He called and asked me to please send this message to you.

I hope that it awakens memories in others, as it did him.

If anyone wants to contact me to send a message to my dad, I would be honored to take that message to him.

Sincerely,
Clinton Sandefer
ccsande@comcast.net

Air Power Quotes

How could they possibly be Japanese planes?
— Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941

If we should have to fight, we should be prepared to do so from the neck up, instead of from the neck down.
— General James H. Doolittle

Adolf Galland said that the day we took our fighters off the bombers, and put them against the German fighters, that is, went from defensive to offensive, Germany lost the air war. I made that decision and it was my most important decision during World War II. As you can imagine, the bomber crews were upset. The fighter pilots were ecstatic.
— General James H. Doolittle



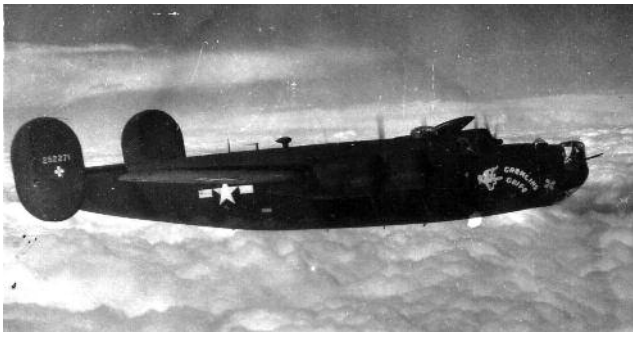
Dear Editor,

I was going through the latest *Cerignola Connection (Fall 2011)* and saw the identification on page 13 of the aircraft that *Sky Wolf* bumped into.

Actually the parked aircraft was *Heaven Can Wait,* tentatively identified as 42-78105, except that there doesn't seem to be an aircraft by this serial number in any aircraft references I've seen. In addition, there is another *Heaven Can Wait* in the 455th BG, specifically 42-78355.

I can give you pictures of both *Gremlin's Gripe aircraft*, which do not seem to resemble this nose art at all. >>>>>>>>>>

Best Regards,
John Rohrer
Historian, 455th BG Association
spartacpa@sbcglobal.net







Aviation Quotes

Why don't we just buy one airplane, and let the pilots take turns flying it.
— Calvin Coolidge, complaining about a War Department request to buy more aircraft.

If we maintain our faith in God, love of freedom, and superior global air power, the future of the USA looks good.
— General Curtis Lemay

If our air forces are never used, they have achieved their finest goal.
— General Nathan F. Twining

Turbines vs. Round Engines

Turbines start by whining for a while, then give a lady-like poof, and start whining a little louder.

Round engines give a satisfying rattle-rattle, click-click, BANG, more rattles, another BANG, a big, macho FART or two, more clicks, a lot more smoke and finally a serious low pitched roar. We like that. It's a GUY thing...

When you start a round engine, your mind is engaged, and you can concentrate on the flight ahead. Starting a turbine is like flicking on a ceiling fan: Useful, but, hardly exciting.

When you have started his round engine successfully, your Crew Chief looks up at you like he'd let you kiss his girl, too!

Turbines don't break or catch fire often enough, which leads to aircrew boredom, complacency and inattention.

A round engine at speed looks and sounds like it's going to blow any minute. They sometimes do. This helps concentrate the mind!

Turbines don't have enough control levers or gauges to keep a pilot's attention. There's nothing to fiddle with during long flights. We used to tell the newbies, "We'll let you sit up here, but don't touch anything!"

Turbines smell like a Boy Scout camp full of Coleman Lamps.

Round engines smell like God intended machines to smell.

The year is 1912 --- One hundred years ago.

What a difference a century makes!

Statistics for 1912

The average life expectancy for men was 47 years.

Only 14 percent of the homes had a bathtub.

Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone.

There were only 8,000 cars and only 144 miles of paved roads.

The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph.

The tallest structure in the world was the Eiffel Tower !

The average US wage in 1910 was 22 cents per hour.

The average US worker made between $200 and $400 per year ...

A competent accountant could expect to earn $2000 per year, A dentist $2,500 per year, a veterinarian between $1,500 and $4,000 per year, and a mechanical engineer about $5,000 per year.

More than 95 percent of all births took place at home .

Ninety percent of all Doctors had NO COLLEGE EDUCATION! Instead, they attended so-called medical schools, many of which were condemned in the press AND the government as "substandard."

Sugar cost four cents a pound.

Eggs were fourteen cents a dozen.

Coffee was fifteen cents a pound.

Most women only washed their hair once a month, and used Borax or egg yolks for shampoo.

Canada passed a law that prohibited poor people from entering into their country for any reason.

The Five leading causes of death were:

1. Pneumonia and influenza
2. Tuberculosis
3. Diarrhea
4. Heart disease
5. Stroke

The American flag had 45 stars.

The population of Las Vegas , Nevada , was only 30.

Crossword puzzles, canned beer, and iced tea hadn't been invented yet.

Two out of every 10 adults couldn't read or write, and only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated from high school.

Marijuana, heroin, and morphine were all available over the counter at the local corner drugstores. Back then, pharmacists said, "Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, regulates the stomach and bowels, and is, in fact, a perfect guardian of health." ***(What !?)***

Eighteen percent of households had at least one full-time servant or domestic help.

There were about 230 reported murders in the ENTIRE U.S.A. !

Try to imagine what it may be like in another 100 years!

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A MESSAGE FROM THE 455TH BOMB GROUP ASSOC. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I hope all of you are doing well.

At the annual Board of Directors meeting, the Directors asked me to present to the membership opportunities for giving to the Association. As many of you know, a few years ago we sold mugs displaying two of our group's bombers. That was not initiated as a fund raiser, but it actually raised funds because the company producing the mugs ended up reimbursing our purchase costs.

A few years ago, one of our members donated the squadron and group logo pins that many of you have enjoyed. Additionally, we have occasionally received unsolicited cash donations from members ranging from $5 to $200. Other than that, our income consists of the occasional purchase of a life membership and from the fifteen members who still pay dues on an annual basis.

The Association has very few expenses other than the printing and mailing of the newsletters. We pay for our post office box and for some mailing expenses. The newsletter, however, costs approximately $1,200 per issue to print and mail. At current projections, the Association can probably afford to produce four more issues of the newsletter.

Because of this, the Board asked me to inform you of the situation. At past reunions, several people have stated a willingness to contribute to the continued production of the newsletter, but that had not been necessary. Now is the time.

If you appreciate the newsletter, and would like to see it continue for more than another two years, now is the time to make tax-deductible contributions to the Association to further that cause. Checks can be made payable to 455th Bomb Group Association, and mailed to the same address listed above.

The newsletter is without question the most popular aspect of the Association. It is also among the very best newsletters you will find. Craig Ward does an absolutely superior job. If you are willing and able to lend support, the entire Association membership will be grateful. We will begin listing donors in future issues of *Cerignola Connection,* unless you let me know you wish to remain anonymous. Thank you for considering this.

One final item from the Board of Directors meeting: the next annual meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 8, 2012. Since the last reunion, we have been conducting these through conference calling. They are not closed meetings. There will probably be a special meeting before that to elect a new President. If you would like to listen in, or participate in the next annual meeting, let me know. I will pass any names and contact information to the new President, who can let you know specifically how to be a part of the annual meeting.

I enjoy my freedom every day. Thank you.

Greg Riggs
Executive Director