

44th Bomb Group Veterans Association



8 BALL TAILS

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SAN ANTONIO ROSE/AKA LIMPIN' OLE SADIE

Before *San Antonio Rose* got her name, she was known as *Limpin' ole Sadie*. She arrived in Shipdham in May, 1944 and carried members of the 67th Sq. to Koblenz, where she was suffered heavy battle damage on 19 July 1944. Nevertheless, 1st. Lt. **John Honmyhr** piloted the plane safely back to Shipdham. She went to Woodbridge, Suffolk for repairs, returning to combat in August. She was transferred to the 68th Sq. on 20 February, 1944, and was hit by Flak on a mission to Magdeburg, 3 March '45. This time 2nd. Lt. **William L. Warner** was flying her under her new name, *San Antonio Rose*. A flak-attack was so damaging, Warner looked for the nearest safe landing field. Five of the crew bailed out at Volkel, Netherlands, but with

some repairs at B-80, was able to make it back to Shipdham. She survived the War and was returned to the Zone of the Interior in May '45.

Navigator on the Magdeburg mission, and one of those who stayed with the plane was none other the 44th's President-Elect, **Paul Kay**.

(Can anyone identify the airman standing in front of the plane?)

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HOWARD MOORE THE MAN THEY CALLED 'PAPPY'



Howard Moore in 1941

Howard Moore was a First Lieutenant when he was assigned to Barksdale, the first home of the 44th Bomb Group. He became Squadron Commander of the 67th. That was in 1942.

"We were a bomb squad, but there were no planes," he remembered. "After a few weeks they received one B-24. It was just sitting there two days, so finally I asked the Line Chief to 'keep me straight about the engine, and I'm going to fly it.' The Line Chief had just graduated from Maintenance School, but he helped me get it going. I took it up, circled a couple of times and brought it back down.

"Wow! Did I get in trouble! **Frank Robison**, my CO chewed me out because I hadn't been checked out on B-24s. Then, a

couple of days later, I was appointed Instructor Pilot."

Moore had joined the National Guard in 1940 and was already licensed as a commercial pilot. When the war broke out, he was assigned to active duty with the 153rd Observation Squadron in Meridian, Mississippi. America had very few pilots at that time, so Moore's commercial license was accepted by the Air Corps. Since he was a first Lieutenant in the Infantry, he retained the rank in the Corps.

From Barksdale the 67th went to Oklahoma City, got their equipment; and off they went across the pond, the first group to arrive in UK. "Preswick, Scotland was 'socked in', so we had to do an Instrument Landing. We missed the runway, and the Control yelled, 'Turn left, turn left. There's a mountain ahead.' We turned, and arrived safely. Then we waited for the rest of the planes...and waited...and waited. None came. The next morning we learned that planes were diverted all over England. Finally we got together and flew into Shipdham."

The RAF did all they could to help the new arrivals. Among other kindnesses, they fed them English food. That was one of many adjustments the airmen had to make—mutton & Brussels sprouts. By this time Moore was a Captain, having achieved that rank before he left the States. "Things moved pretty fast in those days," he laughed.

"When the missions began, the losses were horrible. We were losing planes and crews at an unbelievable rate. We were doing daylight bombing, and with no fighter support, Luftwaffe was slaughtering us. The RAF helped as much as they could. Finally, Frank Robison, our CO went to **Ira Eaker** to complain. They sent him back to the States

...continued on page 4

and put **Leon Johnson** in charge. Then when the P-47s came, it helped; and the P-51s were life-savers.

"On one mission our plane was battle damaged, and I couldn't keep up with the formation. I knew our best bet was to get to the Channel, and I was almost there when **Roy Klinger**, our Tail Gunner reported that there were fifteen fighters closing in. Just as the Gunner started aiming at the fighters, fifteen or sixteen RAF Spitfires came up. What I saw was the most dramatic dog fight I could ever imagine. There were so many contrails, it was like a great big ball of snow up there. We could see fighters going down, and hoped that they were German. We made it across the Channel and got back to Shipdham safely. Absolutely, the RAF saved our lives," he declared. "There was no way we could have survived that attack."

Moore was sad to remember that on a later mission to Kiel, Klinger was flying with another crew. Fighters shelled the tail turret which fell off, carrying the Tail Gunner to his death.

How did he get the lingering title, "Pappy Moore"? The answer, of course, is that he had attained the ripe old age of 28, which was amazingly ancient to his 18-21 year old crew members.

When the 44th went to Africa, Moore was part of the group that were bombing strategic areas in Sicily, in preparation for General Patton's assault on the island. When the Ploesti Raid was in the planning, he had already completed his missions. Having a wife and two babies at home, he opted to hitchhike to London on a transport plane, travelling via Marakesh. From there, he made it home to his family.

His next assignment was to be the personal pilot for General Mark Clark. This took him on flights in and out of Moscow, flying in a B-17; once into Vienna. At one point his skills became known to General Eisenhower, but Mark Clark was not ready to release his prize. When the situation changed, he was

assigned to fly a C-47 to the Presidio in San Francisco.

In 1947, when the Army Air Corps became the U.S. Air Force, Moore was transferred to Carswell in Washington, D.C. with the 7th Bomb Wing. By that time he had risen to the rank of Lt. Colonel.

Next he became Commander of the Base in Rapid City, South Dakota, later Base Commander on B-36s, later Wing Commander on B-36s. From there he returned to Carswell to become Commander of the 11th Bomb Wing. While he was there his Wing won two Fairchild Trophies in an International Bombing Competition. He later flew B-52s.



Brigadier General Howard Moore

His next assignment was at the National War College in Fort McNair in Washington, D.C. Then Wing Commander of Bergstrom AFB, Texas. He was there one year; then on to Altus, Oklahoma, where he was 816 Air Division Commander for two years. Then back to Carswell as 19th Air Division Commander.

Moore's next assignment was Guam, where B-58s were flying. An unexpected health problem arose, and he passed out on the job. They ushered him to the hospital, then informed him that he was grounded,

one of the most sobering moments of his life. From there he went to Ogden, Utah where he was Vice Commander of the Depot. However, with his flying days over, the allure of the Air Force was gone. He retired and moved back to his home in Ft. Worth, Texas. He was 52 years old at that time, and had risen to Brigadier General.

General Dynamics was working on the F-16; so he was a welcome addition to their operation. He was named Chief of Training, a job he held for the next six years.

His last occupation was to take up ranching. He joined a partner, and between them, they had 50 head of cattle. Being a rancher was not as much fun as flying, so he gave up that occupation, and currently enjoys retirement at his home in Ft. Worth with his wife of 72 years. Margaret Myers Moore had been his 7th grade sweetheart. The couple lost one child. Their son, Howard, Jr., followed in his father's footsteps and became a Captain on a major airline. He recently retired, and is now a private pilot for Ratheon.



Howard Moore & Lynden B. Johnson arriving at Carswell.

Howard Moore and Bill Cameron are the only two of the original 90 combat men to complete their tour of 25 Missions.

'The little farm boy from Indiana' has rubbed noses with many of the most powerful people of his era. He laughs that 'he was the only person who ever passed up dinner at the White House.' President Eisenhower invited him, but his friends from the War College were dining at the same time, so he joined them. Later, Ike requested his company at Bergstrom, and they reminisced about the War.



General Ira Eaker met B/General Howard Moore at Ogden, Utah, a great opportunity to exchange war stories, 1965.



Howard Moore and Margaret with John Kennedy at Carswell. 11/2 hours later, Kennedy was assassinated.

THE PRESIDENTS CORNER Roy Owen



After all of the times I have been through the 'passing of the gavel" process, one would think it would become rather routine. However, here it is once again, time to frame some words which will express both the gratitude I feel for again being afforded the opportunity to serve as your leader in this, the most beloved and proud organization, to which I belong. At the same time, I welcome the return to attending to the promises I have made, to continue as best I can, to ensure we hand over to our heirs, the most respected WWII Bomb Group Association in our nation.

The most significant event of this brief two year term we have witnessed is the affiliation of the 44th Bomb Group Veterans Association with The U.S. Army Heritage & Education Center at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. With the recognition of the Army of the 44th BGVA as the archival parent of the USAAF WWII 44th Bomb Group (H), we have finally found a proper historical home for the 44th Colors and Battle Streamers to fly, and the archival body of our official history to safely reside. For this, we should all be thankful to our Secretary/8BT Editor, Ruth Morse and her Tailgunner husband, Perry, for their diligent management in seeing this project become a reality.

I am really looking forward to our reunion in Tacoma. It is such a beautiful part of the country, and the center of a large part of the air transport production of our nation. Paul Kay has the Welcome Mat laid out for us. See you there!

Your President

(This is the last time)

Roy Owen



THE KIEL RAID REVISITED

Roy Owen wrote a well-researched report on the Kiel Raid in the Spring 1997 issue of the 8 BTs, Vol. 2 – Issue #2. A member of a third generation of **Douglas Myers**, Andrew Turner, his grandson, wrote a documentary on the aftermath, telling the story of the POWs who survived the mission to suffer the hellish consequences of imprisonment.

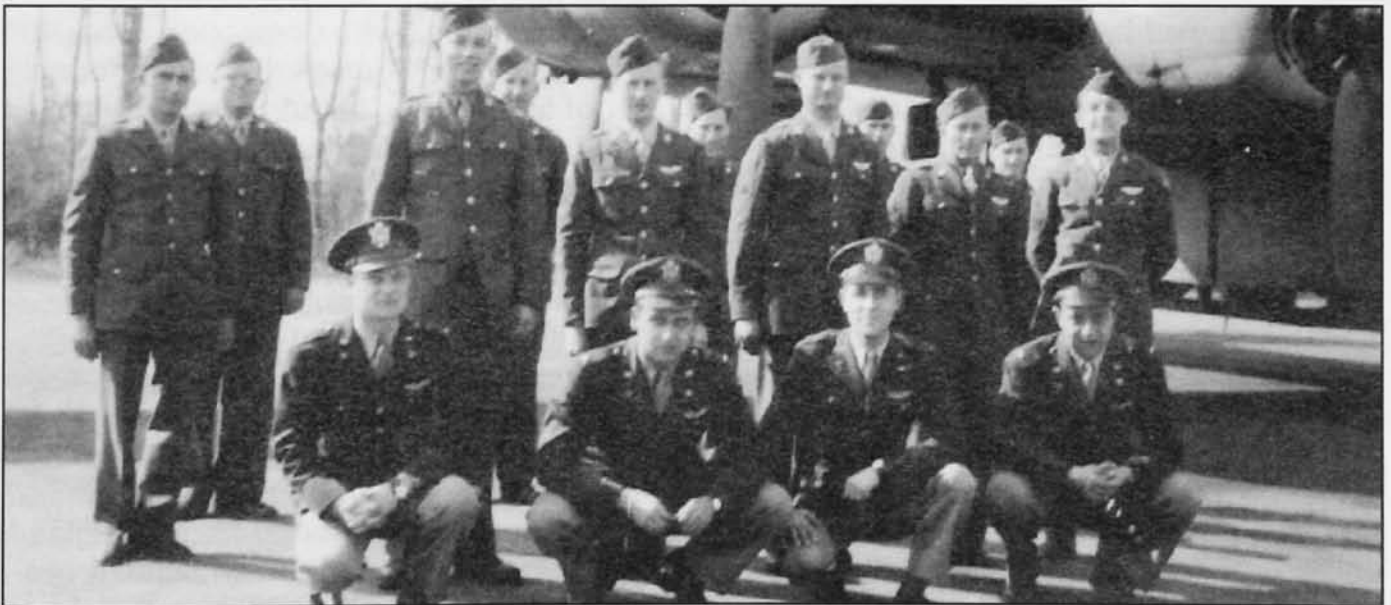
The mission, 14 May 1943, was to the Krupp Submarine Building Works at Kiel, one of the most heavily defended targets in Germany. Its value to the Reich was in production of U-Boats that were successfully attacking Allied shipping. The 44th, led by Col. Leon Johnson, had 21 aircraft following B-17 formations; their assignment, to drop high explosives. The Liberators were to bomb with 100 lb. & 500 lb. cluster incendiaries. The object was to set fire to the rubble created by the Fortresses. According to **Will Lundy's** report, it was the toughest test to date. Enemy Aircraft destroyed by the gunners: 21, 13 probable and 1 damaged.

The 66th Sq. lost *Scrappy*; 67th Sq, lost *Miss Delores*, *Annie Oakley* and *Little Beaver*; *Rugged Buggy* (68th) went down, *Margaret Ann* was not lost, but one gunner was KIA and three were seriously injured. 506th Sq. *Wicked Witch* went down. She had only a nine man crew.

The *Ruthless* was too battle-damaged to land at Shipdham; so she was directed to Ireland for repair. A total of six planes were lost, 25 men were KIA, 27 became POW. Many of the POWs who survived that mission were sent to Stalag Luft III.

Two years later, when the Russians were approaching, they were sent on the infamous Death March, described by Andrew Taylor. His grandfather, 2nd. Lt. **Douglas Myers**, Co-Pilot on the Captain **John W. Swanson** crew; Swanson, Myers, Schiefelbusch and Sidney Bank survived and became POWs. Wolf, Mears, Christensen, Duncan and Glemboski were all KIA. *Wicked Witch* was the second 506 aircraft and crew lost since joining the 44th in March.

For the success of this mission, the Group was awarded its first Unit Citation.



Crew of the *Wicked Witch*

Front Row L-R 1st. Lt. James C. (Curt) MacAtee, Pilot; 2nd Lt. Douglas B. Myers, Co-Pilot; 2nd. Lt. Richard L. Schiefelbusch, Navigator; 2nd. Lt. Sydney W. Bank, Bombardier.

Second Row L-R S/Sgt. Joseph B. Duncan, Left Waist Gunner; S/Sgt. George E. Christensen, Right Waist Gunner; S/Sgt. Stanley W. Gliemboski, Tail Gunner; T/Sgt. William J. Mears, Top Turret gunner; T/Sgt. Frederick T. Wolf, Radio Operator.

Back Row: Maintenance Crew. Names not known.

THE DEATH MARCH OF THE KRIEGIES

*As written by Andrew Turner,
Grandson of Douglas B. Myers*

On Saturday, January 28th, 1945, the prisoners of Stalag Luft III could hear artillery rumbling in the distance. The Russian army was advancing and was reported to be about 22 miles away from their camp in Sagan, Germany.

It was surmised one of three things would happen. The first was that the Russians would overtake the camp and the Goons (German guards) would surrender or flee. If this happened, the Kriegies (a short form of the German word for POW) expected their liberation would come without fear. The second option may be an order from a fervent Nazi official for the prisoners to be executed. If this were the case, the Goons were sure to have a fight on their hands. The last option would be a mass march across Germany. To this option, American Brigadier General Charles Vandermann said, "In that event we will suffer many casualties, and it will be a March of Death." This last option was soon to become a reality.

The men had been expecting something to happen for days, but on the evening of the 28th the announcement came. Orders were given to evacuate the camp post-haste, they would begin marching in one hour. In his 1960 book *Krieggie*, Kenneth W. Simmons describes the time directly after the order was given.

"The next forty minutes of accelerated activities surpassed all records for assembling and preparing for a mass-moving project. Closets were emptied, food divided, packs rolled, beds disassembled, kitchen stripped of food and dishes, tools and weapons were uncovered. Most of us dressed with two pairs of socks, two suits of underwear, two shirts, overcoat, hat and G.I. gloves. By ten-thirty most of us were ready and waiting to move out."

The situation was even more grim for the Goons who would be guarding them, than for the Kriegies themselves; there were about

8 guards for every 100 prisoners. The Goons were just as cold, just as hungry, and just as ready for the war to end as the prisoners. By 11:30, the Kriegies were beginning their march from Sagan toward Berlin. Simmons says:

"I had never expected to be marching from Sagan in the direction of Berlin...the mark made on us at Sagan would never be erased, and I knew it. We moved up the long hillside. The column slowed down as the climb grew steeper. Somewhere near the top I turned around and saw Stalag Luft III in flames. The fire covered several square miles, and the flames leaped high in the cold air. This was the end of Stalag Luft III and the beginning of the March of Death in Germany."

In *The Longest Mission*, a 1995 reunion publication by the Association of Former Prisoners of Stalag Luft III, the fire blazing below and the tremendous migrations is given greater definition:

"Over in the North Compound, Block 104 went up in flames, small retribution for murder of 50 Kriegies. It had been the origin point of the 'Great Escape' tunnel. The West Camp moved out at 12:30 a.m.; the North and Center at 3:45 a.m., and the East at 6:00 a.m. The great exodus was on, a line of men stretching for 20 miles."

The Kriegies were not the only reluctant travellers on the road. Lt. Richard Schiefflebusch had been a POW at Sagan for almost 2 years. In a World War II Odyssey, he describes the departure from Sagan:

"We had strange, mixed feelings – glad to be leaving the camp, but fearful about our future in the extremely cold, snowy night. After several hours of marching the German command arranged for us to stop for rest and to receive rations. Unfortunately, the stopping place was a windswept autobahn. The food supplied was black bread and white margarine. After about an hour we went on

with the march, much colder and less confident than before. One of the principal aspects of our march was the excessive number of civilians, especially old people and children, who were crowding the roads as we moved toward our still unknown destination. They were, of course, trying to escape the westward moving Russian armies that were over running their villages and their homes. The estimates were given in the historical account of this migration was 6,000,000 people. They were mainly Polish and German. It was the most abject, massive human tragedy that I have ever seen. The procession included people with small horse-drawn carts, wagons and people with sleds and people with backpacks, all trying to survive."

Vernon L. Burda writes about one incident during the first hours of the march in his composition *I Saw Ten Thousand Men Cry*;

"The column of men was terrifically long and we moved very slowly. Along the highway (Highway 99), we met the once mighty Wehrmach Ski Troopers, all in white – and these 'Supermen' were begging cigarettes from us as we passed. They were either about 40 or 50 years old or young kids – headed for the front."

Simmons' account of the beginning hours of the March of Death is very similar to Schiefelbusch's.

"Our travel along the highway was almost paralysed by the thousands of people moving in one direction. These civilians were bitter and demoralized, and many of them, I felt sure, would rather surrender to the Russians than continue. The civilians were, in fact, prisoners too, for the S.S. troops moved them by the force of rifles and bayonets. Every now and then some civilian would sit down and refuse to go on. A rifle shot allowed the civilian to sit there forever."

On the night of Sunday the 29th, The Germans allowed an overnight stop. Schiefelbusch was able to grab some sleep in a barn. Simmons and about two thousand

others spent the night packed into a small church. The Kriegies began to realize their situation was even worse than they had expected. Many of the men were becoming very ill. Simmons describes his night in the church:

"The church was packed so tightly that any man who found it necessary to move more than a few feet was almost certain to step on someone else. Toilets were set up outside, and there was a continuous line to and from them. With two thousand men in one small building, lines were moving all night long. Many men became desperately sick at their stomach and were never able to reach the door. Dozens of men rushed up aisles vomiting all the way. Others with dysentery stepped on hands, feet and stomachs, trying to get outside. Nerves were strained to the breaking point."

The next stop on the March of Death would be Muskau. After hours upon hours of marching in the freezing cold, sleet and snow, they arrived. The men were to be sheltered in an industrial area, in abandoned factories and plant buildings. This was somewhat alarming, since they would be targets for air raids, but as Simmons put it, "Most of us were too tired to care". Simmons and Burda were housed in brick buildings with heaters. Burda describes it as dry, warm and lit..."and best of all, we got German black bread and marge. We were too tired to do much but eat – and then we slept on the concrete floor."

Schiefelbusch's experience at Muskau shows the enormity of the March by the contrast in available shelter.

"On the last phase of marching, our group was on the tail end of the marching line. This meant that we would be the last group to be sheltered. After an hour we were herded into the only shelter left for us, an abandoned glass factory. A 30' x 20' massive iron slide door designed to close us off from the wind and snow wouldn't close. It was off the slide mechanism and couldn't

be moved. So we tried to make the best of it. We arranged those in the worst shape into a compact group on the cement floor of the huge enclosure and found blankets to put over them. We searched through their clothing and back packs to find something for them to eat. We reasoned that their bodies had simply run out of heat, and that we must help them to replenish it. Sleep for most of the helpers was out of the question until we got those in shock or those convulsing stabilized so that they could rest. We lit fires, but the smoke became so thick and dangerous that we had to put the fires out."

The next day, the Kriegies would make the march some 18 miles to Spremberg where the second phase of their nightmare would continue. Burda says:

"We saw plenty of signs that reminded us of home – Esso, Mobiloil, Kodak, Agfa and others. The Germans crowded us into the old French 40 and 8s', and I do mean crowded. There were 55 men and a guard in our car...I lay on the floor and several times I woke up with four men laying zig zag across me, so that I couldn't even move...we had gotten to the point where we didn't care where we were going, as long as we got there. The Germans gave us no water, and that was no fun. Most of the guys had loose bowels and were throwing up."

Somehow the Kriegies were able to find some sort of order in this chaotic environment. They would stand and lay down in shifts, organized areas of the cars for toilets, cared for the sick, and attempted to get along with each other. The major problem was the lack of water and the refusal of the Goons to provide it for them. Eventually it came to a breaking point, as Simmons explained:

"All of us started hollering 'Wasser, Wasser.' We had made up our minds we were either going to get some water or die. The station was crowded with civilians trying to board trains. There was a pond just

ahead of the engine, and there were water fountains in the station. We broke ranks en masse, and started for the pond and water fountains. Guards fired in the air, but all of us moved to the water. Men drank and filled their cans and jars with water. Until that moment I had never realized the value of plain water. It was the most valuable necessity of life. Without water, men became animals."

It would be four days before the men would arrive at Mooseberg and their new home StalagVII-A. The buildings at VII-A were meant to house 100 prisoners, but were now housing 300. The latrines were overflowing, and there was excrement all over camp. The fleas, lice, bedbugs and rats were rampant. Many of the Kriegies had not changed clothes or bathed in over a month. The Kriegies would spend the rest of the winter at Mooseberg in bad conditions. Schiefelbusch tells of the conditions:

"We came into a louse infested, crowded, hungry, under heated and confused environment. I honestly believe the Germans were doing their best, but their transportation system was breaking down. Red Cross supplies could not get in. The communication with our home folks was non-existent. The Germans literally did not have enough food and fuel for the camp, and worst of all, they did not have any clear-cut policy for running the camp."

On April 29th things were about to get better. Tanks were seen in the distance. A short battle ensued and ended quickly with a tank from Patton's Third Army crashing through the gates. The soldiers were throwing rations to the prisoners as if it were candy. Celebration ensued as the Kriegies knew that for them, the war was really over. Burda explain the moment very passionately.

"Then, suddenly, for no apparent reason, a hush fell over the compound, and all eyes turned toward the town in which stood two high church steeples...and then it occurred, a

scene, the happening of which brought tears streaming down the face of every American prisoner-of-war, and a sob from every throat – we saw the greatest sight, the most emotional moment we would ever witness – raised before our eyes and flying defiantly above one of the church steeples was the symbol of our beloved land – The American Flag. Yes, the tears flowed from over ten thousand faces that day – over ten thousand unashamed faces, as that flag shocked us back with memories of the place we all held most dear – our beloved land, our home.”

Many of the Kriegies in Stalag Luft III were airmen who had been shot down. They may not have fought the war on the front lines, but they fought a different type of war – a war in their mind. A war against discouragement, hopelessness and despair was their fight. They battled to keep their fellow Kriegies in high spirits, to make sure they all saw their homes again. A bond developed, a

bond allowing them to make the march from Sagan. A union enabling a man to carry a stranger on his back for days through the snow, and to never meet him again was not uncommon. There was an inner strength, empowering a sick man on the verge of death to march tough arctic conditions with only a vision of home to move his tired legs. Many of these men left Sagan and never completed the march to Mooseberg. However, many more did make it home to their families, careers and lives. They have a fascinating story to tell and one which needs to be remembered.

Ed. Note: This well-researched treatise was written by Andrew Turner, grandson of Douglas B. Myers, a co-pilot on the John Swanson Crew, 506 Sq. Their plane went down on May 14, 1943 on their 5th mission to the Krupp Submarine Works in Kiel, Germany.

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED

The 2nd Air Division is planning a huge turnout of veterans for the upcoming unveiling of the Air Force Memorial in Arlington, October 14, 2006. They are asking all Bomb Groups to be participants. Until now the Air Force has been the only branch of the service that has not been memorialised.

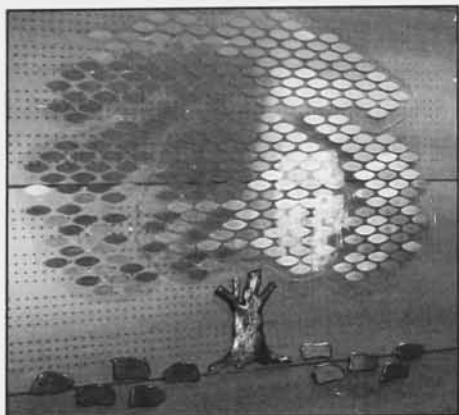
The Department of Defence recently released the final design for this monument which will be placed at the promontory of the Arlington Naval Annex Property, overlooking the Pentagon. The design is intended to evoke the soaring images of flight, while providing a spectacular visual gateway into the nation's capital.

Although the 44th held their Reunion in Washington two years ago, the Board is considering a return for this momentous event. The final decision will be made at the Tacoma Reunion, Labour Day Weekend.

Two members of the 44th, **Dick Butler** and **Roy Owen**, have been involved in the creation of this overdue edifice.

Any veteran is welcome. Membership in the 2 AD is not required.

THE SECOND AIR DIVISION AT SAN ANTONIO



The Donor Tree

More than 275 members of the 2 AD, eleven from England, gathered at the Hyatt Regency, front door to the Riverwalk, in the famous town where the Alamo was lost, but Texas was born. **Dick and Ardith Butler, Perry and Ruth Morse** carried the torch for the 44th. It was a gathering of happy remembrances and a strong determination to launch new initiatives.

The Heritage League brought photos of the Memorial Library in Norwich, among them, the Donor Tree which features the

names of those who have made contributions—bronze leaves, gold leaves and decorative rocks, each indicating the size of the gift. There are also dark leaves, awaiting donors.

Two generations of Anglicans enjoyed the Mexican treats along the Riverwalk and explored the shops at Market Square. Matthew Martin, Chairman of the Memorial Trust Board of Governors thanked the 2 AD for their generosity in establishing the Memorial Library, and reported on current activities. The current Fulbright Scholar has completed her commitment, and will be returning to the States. A new one has already been assigned.

David Hastings, a member of the Board of Governors, was effervescent in his gratitude for the fact that Americans came to England in their 'darkest hour', to bring defeat to the Nazis. A RAF Pilot, Hastings related his delight in once having the opportunity to pilot a B-24, Diamond Lil. This Liberator, owned by the Confederate Air Force, is one of only two that are still airborne, and probably the last that will ever cross 'the pond'.



Dick Butler stands by as Ardith shows her award, presented for her many years of dedicated service. Jean Hastings was also cited.



Howard Nesbitt (93rd), Earl Zimmerman (389th) and Perry Morse (506) light a candle for those lost in the Ploesti Mission.

LETTER FROM SHIPDHAM

Well, the wind has dropped and the rain is now warm; it has to be Shipdham in the summer-time. There is a good deal of flying going on and the club's new motor glider is working hard, getting its pilots through their check rides, and in some cases, their first full licenses.

Our hard working Museum Curator, Peter Steele, revalidated his power pilot's license a week ago. Not bad, when you think he was flying Mosquitoes over Germany, just a couple of years after you guys had been there with the B-24s. So we are not only getting the youngsters airborne again, but also returning some 'retired' pilots back into the air for a second go.

In the last edition I told you that the Aero Club was taking part in the Shipdham village fete to celebrate the VENJ 60th anniversary. Well, we did, and it was superb. Even the Shipdham weather held out for us, and the club put on a large display featuring one of the gliders from the Shipdham fleet together with a stall showing and selling items of memorabilia, together with badges and stickers of the Flying Eight Balls. We also did a double fly past with one of the club planes immediately after the opening ceremony. The Aero Club stand soon became the centre of attraction for all the visiting veterans, Army, Navy and RAF, who all wanted to pass by and share their memories of their WWII experiences. Obviously we also had several local villagers who also held fond memories of the air crews and ground crews who flew out of Station 115 back in the 40s. There was a lot of reminiscing!!!!!!!!!!!!!! With a traditional British 'Town Crier' keeping the whole thing going, it was a memorable day that only came to a close well into the early hours of the following Sunday morning.

We are planning a concerted working party to push along the work of the 44th museum as progress has slowed somewhat after Peter Steele damaged his arm quite badly, and was put out of action for many months. He feels that a good concerted push over this winter should get us back on track.

Thanks to all of you who made contact with words of sympathy and encouragement after the bombs that recently shook London. As you guys that were here in WWII know, a few bombs wouldn't shake Londoners that much, and certainly would not stop Londoners going about their normal business. It's just so hard to understand why anyone would be so set against the freedoms that you guys fought so hard for here in Europe all those years ago. Particularly as you and I know, they just won't win. 9/11 has told them that already.

Look after yourselves,
Love and best wishes from your English friends,
Peter Bodle



44TH MEMBERS HONOR CAPTAIN ROBERT KEYES

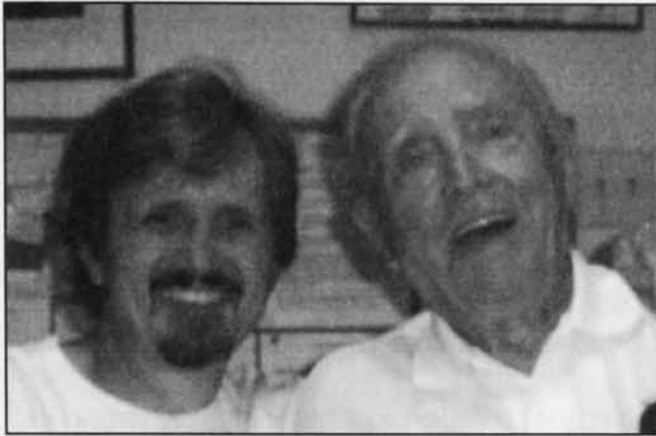


A Memorial Service held May 13, 2005 for Robert Keyes, co-pilot on the Spagnola crew (67th Sq.) was attended by L-R (rear) Lee & Mary Aston, Bernadette & John Gately; (front) Mrs. Marie Keyes, daughter Louise Rutky. Aston was Navigator on Keyes' crew; Gately was an aerial gunner.



Aston arranged a Flyover from Gabreski AFB, Long Island, NY for Keyes' Memorial Service. Keyes' cremated ashes were scattered over Peconic Bay by an AF helicopter near the Keyes' summer home on the Bay.

INTRODUCING THE WEBMASTERS



Guy Adams (Beverly's son) and Jerry Folsom

When **Jerry Folsom** was Treasurer of the 44th BGVA, his enthusiasm for the 44th BG history inspired his wife's son to suggest setting up a Web Page. Guy Adams, our first Webmaster, presented the idea to the 44th Board at the Barksdale Reunion. He was so inspiring and enthusiastic; the Board authorized him to proceed. Jerry provided the information, introduction to the 44th, brief history of the group, the front picture and other pertinent information; **Mike Mikolowski** supplied most of the personal pictures.

Guy set up a meeting for Jerry with a Salt Lake City computer company, X-Mission. They were

kind enough to accommodate this veterans group. The Web Page came into existence without cost to the Bomb Group.

Guy set up the Website with the intention of making it very simple to navigate; and as he describes, 'there were lots of 'bells and whistles' left out that are on today's 'fancy' websites.' This was a deliberate decision, as he felt that in time, someone would take the website to the 'next level', and include the military database and other more interactive parts.

With a full time job and being a scoutmaster plus a member of a very active family, Guy's schedule was extremely busy. However, the work he had done proved to be truly beneficial. People who didn't even know there was a 44th BG contacted Jerry, many joined, increasing our membership, some came to the next reunion. In fact, Jerry's computer was filled with hundreds of E-Mails, asking for information about missions and lost friends. Guy's life got busier; so when the 44th Board voted to transfer the Website to Arlo Bartsch, he was very happy to release the password to someone who he considered more skilled. He stated, "I wanted the Website to become much more than I could make it – and now it can be."

The 44th is truly indebted to Jerry & Guy for their dedication to this noble project. (Guy's occupation is Assistant Director for High Performance Computing System, University of Utah.)

Next in line for the title of Webmaster was Arlo Bartsch. Arlo knew a great deal about WWII—he had been a pilot on, *of all things*, a B-17, 379th Bomb Group, 525th Squadron, based at Kimbolton, England. He flew 37 missions.

After developing combat proficiency, flying as a Co-pilot for 20 missions, 1st Lt. Bartsch was assigned to fly as the Aircraft Commander, teaching new pilots how to handle combat. He can proudly say that in the nineteen different planes that he flew as Command Pilot, with 114 different crew members, not one was wounded or killed, none bailed out, none became POW. He was there in the latter part of the war, 1944-45, and was lucky enough to be spared attacks by enemy fighters. Flak was in constant supply.



Arlo Bartsch

Having survived the war, like most veterans, he went home and filled his life with marriage and family. Tragedies struck, and after the death of his second wife, he searched for new direction in his life.

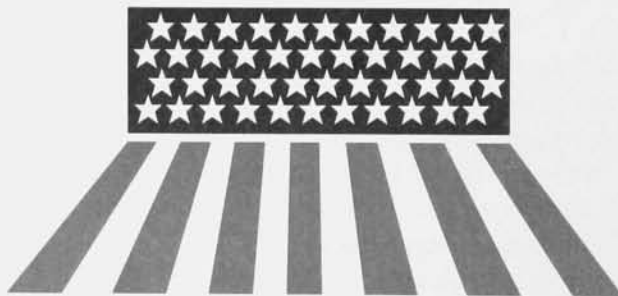
Forty five years had passed since he had climbed out of a Fortress. From an article in the local paper, he learned that Boeing was celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the B-17; so he attended, only to learn that he didn't know a single soul at the gathering. He went home and set up a simple spread sheet with all planes and all crews of his Bomb Group, and then decided the entire 8th Air Force should be on record. Unfortunately, it just didn't happen.

At that time veterans were interested in placing plaques and monuments to herald their activities, and creating a database was too new of an idea to attract their attention. Only his own group were supportive of the idea.

When Arlo ran into **Will Lundy** at a Second Air Division Reunion in Chicago, they found they had mutual goals. Will realized that there was a way to preserve and distribute all the information about the 44th Bomb Group which he was laboriously collecting. When the 44th BG met in Savannah, Arlo demonstrated his creation; and at last, Computer Generated Data Ltd. found a group of airmen who saw value in his work. Now, ten years later, almost all the data has been entered. Disks will soon be available for all members. Technology has made it possible for the details of three years of air war in the greatest conflict in human history, to be preserved in minute detail. Arlo hopes your children and grandchildren will put it into their computers, so the stories will never be lost.

In the Winter edition of 8 Ball Tails, you were given a lesson on accessing the 44th BG information from cyberspace. **YOUR DISK WILL HAVE MUCH MORE INFORMATION.** Do not put it in a drawer, to be dealt with at a later date. Share it with your children, grandchildren, local library, VFW, American Legion...any place that has a computer. This is your history. You helped win the War, so at this point in your life, there is nothing to gain by modesty. Here's an interesting bit of knowledge that you might enjoy—once you've installed it in your own computer, you can add anything to your own history that you wish. You can embellish your war experience to your own liking. How's that for a challenge? In your own office, you can even be a brigadier general! (Your disk will continue to hold the official record. Your computer can say anything you like.)

If you wish to contact Arlo, call (501) 922-5247; his e-mail address is afbas@aol.com. He will be demonstrating the use of the Database at the General Meeting of the 44th BGVA at the Tacoma Reunion over Labour Day. Come and get an education.



THE CONSOLIDATED LIBERATOR

(THE BOYS IN THE B-24)

By Christopher D. Clark

**The Consolidated Liberator w/the boys of the B-24,
From Ploesti to Berlin, they knocked on Hitler's door
In the days before 9/11, Al-queda, and Iraq
The boys of the B-24 dropped many an egg from
their bomb rack.**

**Off to fight on a distant shore, the roar that was heard,
was of the B-24
From the boys of 42 or 43, came the men
that set Europe FREE.**

**For all that they have done, we can't repay,
but thank God for the eggs they dropped
From their bomb bays,
for these men in the B-24,
all of their history is now folklore.**

Ed. Note: Chris Clark is a regular researcher of 44th history in the National Archives

From **George Washburn**, 44th Vice President to the 2nd Air Division:

The Second Air Division Association has opened a fund drive to support "Second to None: The Legendary Liberator Gallery" at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah, Georgia. Approximately \$87,000 is needed to complete this major centerpiece of the 2nd Air Division exhibit.

The exhibit centers around the nose section of "Fighting Sam" on loan from the Imperial War Museum in Duxford, England. It contains new exhibits and graphics and a B-24 Flight Simulator. A large screen will feature original B-24 combat footage.

I would encourage all 44thers to contribute to this exhibit. Donations may be sent to E. W. Nothstein, 2nd ADA Treasurer, who will pass the funds on to the Museum. Make your donation out to "2 ADA Second to None Legendary Liberator Campaign" and mail it to him at 40 Meadow Drive, Spencerport, NY 14559-1142.

THEY'RE ATTACKING OUR FRIENDS

July 7, 2005

From Kevin Watson (longtime friend of 44th BGVA): "I was at Heathrow Airport in a hotel when the bombs went off. I thought something was up, as all of a sudden my cell phone would not work.

"Something has got to be done about the religion that allows them to commit atrocities in the name of God."

The terrorist attack in London was shocking on both sides of the ocean. The close relationship between the two countries was evident at the 2 AD Reunion when **Perry Morse** and David Hastings met, each thanking the other for kindnesses extended in WWII and later.

Americans are cheering, everytime Scotland Yard catches another Terrorist.

Elizabeth Mills is conducting an ongoing search to locate Jack Holtzman, friend of Ackerman. He was the Bombardier on the Fineman Crew, 66 Sq. Any information about his whereabouts can be directed to the editor of the Eight Ball Tails.



David Hastings & Perry Morse



Elizabeth Mills of Eastbourne placed a cross for Edward Ackerman, her lost sweetheart; and James Bolin, her friend. The *Ruth-less* crashed February 2, 1944, carrying the entire crew to their death.



BUTTS BROW, CRASH SITE OF THE *RUTH-LESS* They said they would always remember, and they do. Butts Brow, 29 May, 2005

Warren F. McPherson Remembers When THE WILD BLUE YONDER TURNED BLACK

Flak! Ask any crew member to define flak, and you might get dozens of answers, because it meant many things to each of us. These meanings would include bitter memories, fear, anxiety, pain, frustration, despair and even determination. It usually meant terrifying nightmares which continued for years to come.

It was never hard to identify flak. The first time we saw it, we knew beyond question what it was. On our first bombing raid, the deeper our bomber got into Nazi territory, the closer we were to seeing our first burst of flak. We weren't disappointed!

Suddenly, just outside the window of the left waist position, it was like the burst of an artificial bouquet from a magician's sleeve. It announced its arrival with a roar like the violent clash of a mighty set of cymbals and an angry burst of flame which quickly clothed itself in a puffy cloud as black as an undertaker's shroud.

Each flak burst propelled scores of white-hot metal slivers scampering in every direction through the subzero atmosphere—searching for a bomber on which to hitch a ride. We never welcomed such hitchhikers, but many found their mark. Sometimes their mark was a vulnerable gas tank, an essential engine part, a control cable, or a fragile landing gear. Sometimes it was a pilot, navigator, bombardier or other crew member!

The first burst of flak meant we would see more, and how we hoped we would see it. On one raid we had dropped our bombs squarely on the target and were headed for home. Suddenly, the thing every airman dreaded happened. There was a violent blast like the shock of a hundred sonic booms all rolled into one. Our heavy bomber was pitched upward like an impatient pitcher flips the baseball, waiting for the batter to get ready for the pitch. We couldn't see the flak,

but we heard and felt it just under us.! We knew the next blast might not miss us—but it did! However, the plane flying just outside my window was not as fortunate. It caught a direct hit, and I watched it nose over, make a long dive to the earth below, and disappear in a ball of flame.

We feared flak much more than enemy fighter planes. Since we flew in tight formation with scores of other planes, and were in constant radio contact with them, hundreds of eyes analysed every inch of heaven and earth. When an enemy fighter was spotted, we all knew about it, and dozens of machine guns were prepared to welcome him. Most of the time our own P-38, P-47 or P-51 fighter escorts would swoop in and drive the enemy away. But the flak had no warning. Suddenly it was there, all around us. Sometimes the suspense was nearly too much to bear.

Flak meant a threat to survival, and this challenged us. The Air Corps provided flak suits made of overlapping metal plates sewn in canvas. Sections of these snapped together to form an armless and legless 20th century suit of armour. I always scouted around and gathered up any extra flak suits—or parts of them—and put them on the floor to stand on in the waist position.

We had another trick, too. On cloudy days the Nazi tracked us by radar, and we used chaff, which was shredded aluminium foil, just like the icicles we used for Christmas tree decoration. As we threw chaff out of the plane, it fluttered toward earth and reflected the Nazi radar beams back to them. This threw their calculations way off as to where our planes really were. We revelled in seeing their flak burst violently among the chaff, which floated far below us!

Warren F. McPherson (66th Sq.) was a gunner on the James N. Williams crew.

MAIL & E-MAIL



Ralph Becker (506 Sq.) wore his flight jacket to an air show in Dallas, Texas, 3 April 2005, and found some unexpected admirers. Brad Wallingford, nephew of **Thomas Lloyd Bartley** (506 Sq.) joined Glenn Bartley, son and nephew of the **Fount** and **Thomas Bartley**, (twins) on the **Hruby** crew. As members of the second-generation of 44thers they are delighted to see the Flying 8 Ball Patch and other memorabilia that reminds them of the colourful history of their family. Brian made this suggestion to the 44th: "Hit the PX; show those colors. You never know who you could run into." *Ed. Note: Becker was a Navigator on the Leo Crooks crew.*



Ralph Becker

Aviation Thoughts: If God meant man to fly, He'd have given him more money. Flying is the second greatest thrill known to man...Landing is the first!

Col. **Robert R. Gideon**, 15th Air Force, reports that during the air war there were more than 17,000 Americans and 1600 heavy bombers over Germany at one time.

Ed. Note: If Hitler had known those figures, he might have committed suicide sooner.

From the Fredericksburg Standard Radio Post Fredericksburg, Texas:

The first person to successfully pilot a fixed wing aircraft was not Orville and Wilbur Wright. It was Jacob Brodbeck, who, in his spare time, created an airship which he flew on September 20, 1865 in an area near San Antonio. A German immigrant, he was talented in many areas, his greatest in aerodynamics. Many of his basic designs are in use today. It is reported that his craft had wings, a propeller, a rudder and was powered by coiled springs. He gave up on the project when his plane crashed, even though he came through without major injury. *Can you believe this?*

From David & Carol Brubaker, Towanda, PA: The Pennsylvania State Police honoured a WWI, seven WWII soldiers and three civilians who had died in the service of our country, among them, **Frank Albert** (506 Sq.) a State Policeman. The Pennsylvania House of Representatives honoured the organization on the 100th Anniversary of their establishment as a law enforcement unit. Albert was pilot on the *A/C I'll Be Back*, which bombed an Aircraft Components & Assembly Plant in Friedrichshafen, 18 March 1944. Although the plane had already taken a hit in #4 engine, Albert continued to the target and dropped the bombs. Immediately after 'bombs away', the fire on #4 had spread to the wing, so he ordered the crew to bail out. By staying with the plane long enough for as many of his crew could escape, he lost his life, along with his co-pilot and three gunners. The State Police Hall in Wyoming, Pennsylvania was named in his honor. The Fraternal Order of Police Lodge plan to place a memorial on the Academy grounds, honouring all State Police who lost their lives after volunteering to serve our country in wartime.

Signs tell a story:

On a Plumber's Truck: "Don't sleep with a drip. Call your plumber."

In a Non-smoking area: "If we see smoke, we will assume you are on fire and take appropriate action."



From **Jack Francis** (68th Sq.): I recently checked the Database and realized that I have not been credited for two of my missions: April 5 & 7, 1945. I have the Flak Charts that we were issued for those missions.

On April 5 the crew was comprised of **R. C. Pitts**, Pilot; **William F. Cornelly**, CP; **Jack Francis**, Navigator; **Floyd McCracken**, Bombardier; **Thomas West**, Engineer; **Douglas Brown**, Radio Operator; and **Raymond Zgoda**, Tail Gunner. The Waist Gunners were either **Jack Waddle** or **Robert Miller**. I do not have the crew list for April 7. *Does anybody have any information about missions on those two days?*

Blessed are the flexible, for they will not get bent out of shape!

To everybody on the Internet: Do we have your current e-mail address? We have been fortunate that those who pay dues yearly keep us informed. The Lifetime Members do not fill out renewals, so we have no way of knowing their address changes.

Norman Nutt has undertaken the task of collecting those addresses that he is able to acquire. Please help him update his list. His e-mail address is norm7783@charter.net, and while you are at it, send it to Arlo Bartsch, also: abas@aol.com. He wants to keep everyone updated on the Web Page.

Are you thinking of moving? Give us your new address & phone number. **Got a new Zip Code?** Tell us. The post office has a lot of problems with bulk mail, but we have a better chance of getting your 8 Ball Tails to your mailbox if we have all the facts.



David Webster, an avid 44th historian, went to England, and was conducted on tours to Shipdham and Cambridge by Steve Adams. Steve gave David the honor of placing the 44th wreath at the Wall of Honor on Remembrance Day at Madingly.

David Webster honors the men of the 44th Bomb Group who gave all.



David Webster on Memorial Day



"Well, they make good razor blades." - Hermann Goring's opinion of American production capabilities.
Ed. Note: Obviously he still had a lot to learn.



Peter Bodle sent an E-Mail of the British commemoration of VJ Day: A Lancaster Bomber, escorted by a Spitfire and a Hurricane flew over Buckingham Palace. There were between 250,000 and 500,000 people in the Mall. The Queen and Royal Family were on the balcony of 'Buck House', just as she was with Winston Churchill in 1945. The bomb doors opened and a million poppies fell to earth to commemorate those who made the ultimate sacrifice for freedom and peace. The London Daily Mirror carried this powerful message: "65 years ago over the same summer skies, Spitfires and Hurricanes, and the young men who flew them, saved my little country, and in saving it, helped save the world from a terrible darkness.

So if those bloody cowards with their sodding beards, heads with tea-towels wrapped round them, and their 'jihads' against innocent women and children think they can do better than Hitler, or Napoleon or Phillip the Second of Spain or any of the rest of them, they'll be in for a surprise."

Ed. Note: *Hoorah for the Brits.*



FOR SALE

Mary Aston is selling lapel pins of WWII Medals: 8th Air Force, DFC, Air Medal, Purple Heart, POW, European-African Mediterranean Theater and WWII Victory Medal. The price of each is \$9 + 37 cents postage. Also, a leaded glass depiction of the Flying 8 Ball. Proceeds go to the 44th BGVA. Contact Mary at 830 Cardinal Drive, Elberton, GA 30635. Specify pin name and number of each type.

I'm back to AOL.
Please send my
messages to:
rdavismorse@aol.com
Thanks,
Ruth W. Davis Morse

44TH BOMB GROUP PX

- Flying 8 Ball Golf Shirts\$25.00 + 3.00 Postage
- Flying 8 Ball Caps (Indicate Squadron)15.00 + 2.00 Postage
- Flying 8 Ball Felt Patches (about 6 inches diameter)15.00 + 1.00 Postage
- Flying 8 Ball Squadron Pins (Indicate Squadron)5.00 + .50 Postage
- Blue Liberator Shirts (Light Blue with B-24 designs)30.00 + 3.00 Postage
- 44th Bumper Stickers2.00 (Postage Incl.)

Order From:

Sam Miceli

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6398 Dawson Blvd., Mentor, Ohio 44060-3648



From the Bob SeEVERS collection: "Returning to Shipdham"



Cartoon by Bob Stevens, "From the Ground Up":
Can anyone name the plane that came back from Ploesti with corn stalks in the bomb bay?

**SEE YOU IN
TACOMA
September, 4th
DON'T
MISS IT!**



At long last, and after over 10 years of efforts, the revised Roll of Honor Casualties book is completed, printed, and will soon be available for sale. It seemed that this time would never arrive, but I am very happy to advise one and all that 200 copies are now available.

The book is hardbound, contains approximately 467 pages and includes data covering all of the 44th BG's men killed in action and also several of our men who died in service through accidents and illness.

In some instances, men from other military services are also appropriately included when they were killed in association with our men. Included in this category is a Congressional Medal of Honor recipient and that story.

For those of you who will be attending our annual reunion over Labour Day in Tacoma, WQ, there will be a supply on hand there. The price will be \$45, but if shipping is involved, shipping and handling cost must be added. This extra will be in the \$5 to \$6 range.

With the completion of the work to revise and publish this book, I announced that I had selected the final repository for most of the material that I had accumulated over the past thirty five years. This was after visiting the new Army facilities, the United States Army War College in Carlisle, PA. At that time I felt that I should release most of this material as quickly as possible and "retire".

However, in the process of reviewing some of these items, I was reminded of several other facets of our 44th BG history, I have elected to temporarily put a hold on most of it. I felt that I would need much of it in order to write up a few of these stories or events that

I feel are important enough to warrant further coverage.

For instance, the D-Day story has never been adequately covered; we have not published any data about our 'fleet' of Grand Dames, as I call them. They include many Liberators that completed the war with 70 or more missions: Old Iron Corset completed 130 with no abort! Included in that category also is good old Lemon Drop, an original 'D' model, that had so many 'firsts' and records, including 31 months of flying by ending up as our 'Cowboy' lead formation aircraft.

Another subject near to my heart is the need to honor the many ground personnel who courageously volunteered for combat duty to fill the many vacancies in our combat crews due to injuries and deaths. At that early time in the war, absolutely no replacements were available.

These ground personnel bravely volunteered to fill those vacancies so that we could put all of our very few planes in the air. Many of them did not survive.

My plans remain the same. This collection will be placed at Carlisle. It will be delayed until I can compile a few of these untold stories.

Will



FOLDED WINGS

*There is no death! The stars go down
To rise upon some other shore,
And bright in heaven's jewelled crown
They shine forevermore.*

J. L. McCreery

Coleman, Underwood # 19796 506 Sq. 3 February 2005 S/Sgt. Coleman flew 29 missions on the **H.K.Landall** crew as Left Waist Gunner. His first flight was 8 April 1944. The Landall crew was among those assigned on 3 May 1944 to wipe out the V-1 sites at Wizernes, France, which had been striking Britain on a regular basis. On D-Day he flew to the Invasion Sites at Caen with Capt. **J. N. McFadden** as Command pilot. The crew flew in *The Banana Barge, Gipsy Queen, My Ever Lovin' Gal, Cape Cod Special, Passion Pit* and *My Peach*.

His last mission was 29 June 1944 to Magdeburg, the Krupp Aircraft Factory. They were hit with German fighters; four crew members were KIA; six became POWs at Stalag Luft IV.

News of this FW came from **Walter "Bud" Lawrence** who received this information from Landahl's nephew. Lawrence's plane had gone down on the same mission, and had shared the POW experience with Coleman.



Crawford, Peter # 19867 (506 Sq.) 24 May 2005 2nd Lt Crawford was the Navigator on the **Thomas McGuire** crew. Their first mission was 1 August, 1944. On their 8th mission to the Juvincourt Airdrome in France, 12 August 1944, they experienced engine failure from anti-aircraft fire. Three members of the crew were KIA; five became POWs; Crawford and one gunner bailed out, evaded successfully and with the help of the French Underground, returned to England nineteen days later.

Previous to the crash in *Ole Cock*, the McGuire crew had flown in *Flying Log/Pregnant Pig* and *My Gal Sal*. Crawford had been in the 44-4 Navigation Class in San Marcos. After the war, he became a chemist and a gentleman farmer, residing in Macon, Georgia. He was preceded in death by his wife of 53 years. News of his demise came to **Jack Francis** by his daughter, Ann Walton.

Daley, Wilbur Harry "Red" (68 Sq.) 11 May 2005 . Wilbur Daley was assigned to the armament section of the 68th. He was probably best known within the Squadron as one of the Squadron's two barbers. He flew home with the *Jack Comstock* crew after VE Day. He and his wife Lydia were active in the HMG and BGVA until his health failed. **Bob Lehnhausen** stated "We shall miss this fun loving redhead and his animated stories."



FOLDED WINGS

Gippert, Winfield Scott, Jr. #24699 (506 Sq.) 19 February 2005. 2nd Lt. Gippert was a co-pilot on the **Bernard J. Komasinski** crew. He was first in the Glider Program, then moved to Cadet Training, receiving his pilot's wings in 1943. On his 6th mission, 8 August 1944, his plane was disabled by enemy fire while bombing at the La Perthe Airfield in Romilly France. A runaway propeller in *My Peach* resulted in a fire which forced the crew to bail out. One member of the crew was wounded and evacuated; one became a POW. Gippert was one of eight who successfully evaded; and with the help of the French Underground, lived in wooded areas until 28 August when General Patton's 3rd Army came through the Marne area and liberated them. The Komasinski crew flew in *Ole Cock* and *My Gal Sal* in five of their six missions. Gippert was recalled to active duty in 1948 to fly the Berlin Airlift. He attended military school including Armament and Bombsight, Logistics and Supply, Jet Upgrading and Command and Staff College. He was an Instructor Pilot at Williams Air Force Base, Supply Officer at various bases, was on the Inspector General's team, Headquarters PACAF. He served tours in Italy and Viet Nam.

He and his wife of 60 years, Ann, resided in Tempe, Arizona with their son and two daughters. They had three grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

This information came from **Frank Schaeffer**, Flight Engineer of the Komasinski crew.

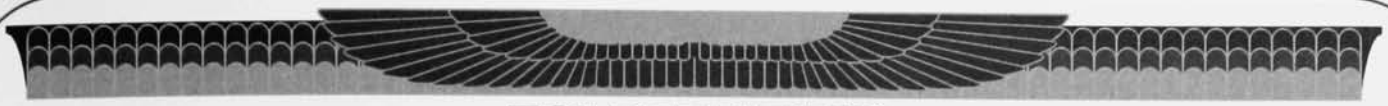
Graham, Alan Clark #20431 (66th Sq.) 15 June 2005. 1st. Lt. Graham was a pilot, arriving in Europe 21 February, 1945. In his nineteen missions before the War ended, he flew *Jail Bait*, *Jersy Jerk*, *Henry*, *King Pin*, *Loco Moto*. His last mission was 20 April 1945. Graham and his wife Dorothy resided in Newburgh New York.

McCracken, Floyd #21258 (68 Sq.) Date of death 1989 at age 66. 2nd Lt. McCracken was a Bombardier on the **Joseph Gillespie** crew, later with **R. C. Pitts**. On some missions he flew with Major **C. L. Lee** and Capt. **William Smythe**, Command Pilots. On some missions he was assigned Nose Gunner/Toggler. His first mission was 28 September 1944; his last was the last mission of the war, 25 April 1945. In his thirty one missions, McCracken flew in many different planes: *Phyllis*, *Flak Magnet*, *Gallavantin' Gal*, *Lili Marlene*, *Puritanical Bitch/Puritanical Witch*, *Lady Geraldine*, *Hellza Droppin*, *Scotty Mac*, *Louisiana Belle* and *Jose Carioca*.

Moore, Francis C. #21396 (506 Sq) 17 July 2005. T/Sgt. Moore was a member of the Ground Crew. He received A & E Mechanic Training at Chanute Field, Illinois and Inline Engine Repairs in Liverpool. He was Crew Chief on the *Bar W*, a plane that distinguished itself by flying 106 missions.

Moore and his wife Mary Lou lived in Hiawatha, Kansas. The couple had three children, two sons, (one who passed away) and one daughter.

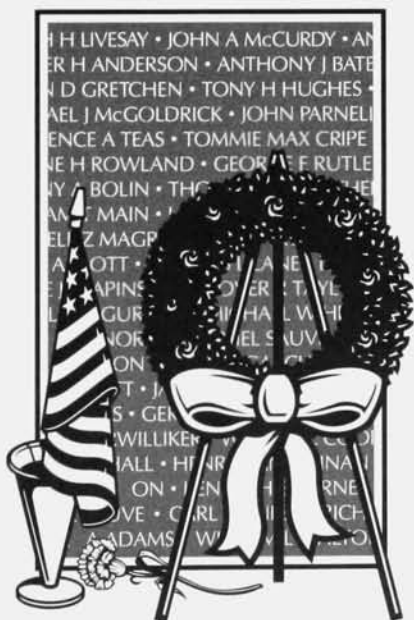
He returned to the states on 20 June 1945 aboard the Queen Mary.



FOLDED WINGS

Mueller, John J. #21440 (67th Sq.) 12
 November 2004. 2nd Lt. Mueller (later a Major) was a pilot, flying many unnamed planes from 1 April 1944 to 25 July 1944. Mueller joined the AAC immediately after the beginning of WWII. His 35 missions took him into German Occupied Territories, including Berlin. On D-Day and later, he was involved in halting progress of German Troops to the combat areas. After the war he flew C-54s in the Berlin Air Lift, later B-29s, C-47s, B-37s before retiring in 1961 with 21 years of military service. He completed his work career with the FAA and Civil Service, retiring after 20 years of government service. He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Ruth, one son, four daughters, 10 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren. He was interred at Barancas National Cemetery in Pensacola, Florida.

Shockey, Harold L. #22027 (68 Sq.) S/Sgt.
 Shockey was a Waist Gunner on the **Robert Hoisington** crew. His first flight was 26 August 1944. In the six months he was on combat missions, he flew in *Sierra Blanca, Consolidated Mess, Clean Sweep/Dragon Nose, Gypsy Queen, Sabrina III, Hairless Joe* and *Joplin Jalopy*. He flew most of his missions into Germany in support of the troops that were advancing eastward, bombing air-dromes and synthetic oil refineries. One mission was low level, dropping supplies to troops in Holland. His last mission (34th) was 6 February 1945. After the war, Shockey went into the plumbing and heating business. He joined the group that returned to Shipdham in 1979. He was a lifetime member of the Elks, American Legion and VFW. He leaves his wife of 58 years, Mary Margaret Minnick, 2 daughters and three grandchildren and one great grandchild.





The Queen Mary arrived in New York with 14,526 Veterans of WWII, 20 June 1945. The world was undergoing rapid change. Berlin had surrendered. Hitler was 'kaput'. President Roosevelt had died and Harry Truman was the new president. A few days later Mussolini was killed by his countrymen. Four months later the Atom Bombs hit Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan surrendered and everybody celebrated. It all happened sixty years ago.

**44th Bomb Group
Veterans Association**

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