

RECORD UPDATE

306th Bomb Group Association

(Please complete as much of this form as you wish, and return to
Russ Strong at the reunion, or mail to Russ Strong, 5323 Cheval
Place, Charlotte, NC 28205) Little Rock 1989

Date complete 9/23/89

LAST NAME: HENNESSY FIRST NAME: EDWARD J TITLE:
Street address: 2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE Telephone: (702) 362 0424
City, state, zip: LAS VEGAS NV 89102

Date of Birth: SEPT 11, 1919 Wife's name: DECEASED
College(s) attended: NOTRE DAME Degree(s): AB ECON Year(s): 1936-40
Last employment and job title: CARTAN TOURS, CHAIRMAN

Reunions attended: (by year or location)

NOTE ALL SINCE 1982 - I ALSO ORGANIZED THE FIRST ONE IN 1946 AT THE
MIDLAND HOTEL IN CHICAGO!

Serial #: 0-661836 Squadron: 369 Speciality: PILOT
Date joined 306th: JULY 1942 If combat, what crew: ORIGINALLY ISBEL (3)
OWN CREW (22)
Special duties or assignments w/306th: FLT COMMANDER
Number of missions flown: 25 Date of last mission: 29 MAY 1943 (SAN NICOLAS)
Date left 306th: 11 JUNE 1943 Highest rank/grade with 306th: CAPT
Other 8th AF units served with: CCRC #11 (BOVINGTON 11 JUNE 1943 - 1 SEP 1943)

Top service assignments after 306th: A SUPERVISOR OF FLYING, GULFPART AAB, B-17
TACTICAL TRAINING GROUP (1944-45)
USAF retirement date: RESERVE Rank/grade: MAJOR
5 MAY 1955

Copies of old 306th orders, either from the Group or Station 111, or any of the
squadrons or other units, will be welcomed by the secretary.

If you know of other 306th people who do not appear in the directory, please add
their names and current or former addresses to this sheet so that we may search
further for them.

RECORD UPDATE

306th Bomb Group Association

(Please complete as much of this form as you wish, and give)
 (to Russ Strong at the Las Vegas reunion, or mail to his ad-)
 (dress: 5323 cheval Pl., Charlotte, NC 28205)

Date completed

LAST NAME: *HENNESSY* FIRST NAME: *EDWARD J* Title:

Street address: *2031 PLAZA DEL PACE* Telephone: ()

City, state, zip: *LAS VEGAS NV 89102*

Date of birth: *SEPT 11, 1919* Wife's name: *DWCA*

College(s) attended: *NOTRE DAME* Degree(s): *AB ECON* Year(s): *1940*

Last employment & job title: *CARTAN TOURS*
CHAIRMAN OF BOARD

Year joined 306th Association: *?*

Reunions attended: (by year or location) *'82 TO DATE*

Serial #: *0-661836* Sqdn: *369* Speciality: *PILOT*

Date joined 306th: *10 JULY 1942* If combat, what crew? *INITIALLY ISBEL - THEN MINE*

Special duties or assignments w/306th: *FLT. COM.*

If commissioned w/306th, date & specialty:

Date departed: *?? 28 MAY 43* Highest rank/grade w/306th: *CAPT*

Other 8thAF units served with:

Top service assignments after 306th: *SUPERVISOR OF FLYING GOLFPORT AAB (B-29)*

USAF retirement date: Rank/grade: *MAJOR*

Most memorable experience w/306th: (use back of sheet, too)

SPUN OUT FROM INSIDE OF TURN DURING FORMATION IN SOUP. 3 TURNS AND 4000 FEET DOWN, RECOVERED ON INSTRUMENTS. FULL BOMB LOAD.

In the continuing search for 306th people, please inform the secretary as to any persons you know from the 306th who are not listed in the 1988 directory; con-

RECORDS UPDATE

306th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

(Please complete as much of this form as you wish to, fold and mail as per address on reverse side. Or, if obtained at a reunion, hand to Russ Strong)

LAST NAME: EDWARD J. HENNESSY JR.
2018 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NV 89102
FIRST NAME: TITLE: CHMN (RETIRED)
CARTAN TOURS

STREET ADDRESS: TELEPHONE: (702) 362-0424

CITY: STATE: ZIP:

DATE JOINED 306th ASSOCIATION:

REUNIONS ATTENDED: (Years) 82-3-4-5-6-7

WIFE'S NAME: DECD

LAST EMPLOYMENT: CARTAN TOURS 1946-1986

COLLEGE(S) ATTENDED: NOTRE DAME DEGREE(S): DATE: 1940
AB-EGN.

SERIAL #: 0-661 836 SQDN: 369 MOS: 1091 HB
1093 VHB

DATE ARR: 13 JULY 42 (DENVER) CREW:

DATE DEPARTED: 7 JUNE 43 HIGHEST RANK IN 306th: CAPT

SERVICE RETIREMENT DATE: 28 NOV 45 RANK or GRADE: MAJOR

DECORATIONS WITH 306TH: DFC, AM+3 OLC

TOP SERVICE ASSIGNMENT AFTER 306TH: SUPERVISOR FLYING: GOLFART AAB

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS WITH 306TH: ?? FLT CO. / SQ LEAD PILOT

QUESTIONNAIRE

CATERPILLAR CLUB - IRVING CHUTE COMPANY

NAME:

COMBAT JUMP DATE & MISSION:

HEIGHT WHEN BAILED OUT:

ANY PROBLEMS WITH PARACHUTE:

306th Bombardment Group, SQDN:



Memo

FROM THE DESK OF

E. J. HENNESSY

2/16/76

Russell - Thought you might get a kick out of this ad that appeared twice in Travel Weekly - the principal industry publication. Being did a series of "personality" ads - I was the only one with military background.

Oddly enough, Boeing was delighted with the results - got widespread reaction from airline presidents.

President

CARTAN TRAVEL BUREAU, INC.
108 No. State St., Chicago, Ill. 60602
312 - 263-7575

KNOCK IT OFF. HERE
COMES A MEMO FROM
ED HENNESSY

2/15/76



Printed in U.S.A.

Russell — Don't
usually so slow in answering
anything. I lost the questionnaire
for several months and just came
across it today.

A HISTORY OF THE 306th BOMBARDMENT GROUP - EIGHTH AIR FORCE
Russell A. Strong, 4900 Appleridge Ct., Dayton, Ohio 45424

I am endeavoring to put together a good history of the 306th Bombardment group, an idea which has been in my mind for some years. I am working diligently on the matter, collecting all kinds of data and working through the official history and records of the group. I served as a navigator with the 367th squadron from June through November, 1944, and currently as director of news and information services at Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio. I solicit your assistance in my project.

I am interested in any special materials which you may have, such as good photographs of personnel, battle damage, plane insignia, etc. I am also interested in commendations (other than the usual Air Medal and DFC) you may have received, special stories which you may have in your possession, letters that are highly descriptive of combat action, or any other documents. I would appreciate receiving xeroxed copies. But, if you do not have such facilities readily available, I would appreciate the loan of materials which I might copy and return to you immediately. I am also interested in manuscripts of memoirs which you may have prepared, particularly if they were done within a couple of years of the events. Again, I would appreciate copies or the opportunity to copy them.

Name EDWARD J HENNESSY
Address 501 So. BEVERLEY LAKE ARLINGTON HEIGHTS ILL 60005
Telephone (312) CL3-3556 Date 2/15/76
Occupation TRAVEL AGENT Employer CARTAN TRAVEL BUREAU INC
Address 108 No STATE ST CHICAGO 60602 Telephone (312) 263-7575

Service Record:

Before joining the 306th:

ENLISTED AVIATION CABOT SEPT, 1941
COMMISSIONED PILOT 3 JULY 1942
IMMEDIATELY ASSIGNED TO 306 TH AT WENDOVER UTAH

After leaving the 306th:

333rd COMBAT CREW TRAINING CTR DALLAM TEXAS
328th AAF BW RTU HB GULFPORT MISS
(PROVISIONAL GROUP COMMANDER HERE - AND SUPERVISOR OF FLYING
THIS CASE BECAME B-29 DURING MY DUTY TIME)

306th Record:

Arrival Date 17 July 1942 Squadron or other unit 369 TH
MOS 1041-1091 Combat Status 9 SEPT 1942 - 29 MAY 1943
Missions Completed 25
Promotions 1st LT 13 JAN 1943 CAPT 28 MAY 1943 MAJOR 14 APR 1947
Decorations 1 AM 3 olcs 1 DFC olcs SS DSM DSC MH SM
PH Battle Stars other

(OVER)

Other personal data:

Description of Air Missions:

(What were the highlights of your combat career? What was your role? What heroics did you witness? What events were there of which you have special knowledge?)

NEVER KEPT DIARY BUT SOME ASPECTS COME TO MIND ---
WENT OVER WITH ORIGINAL GROUP AS CO-PILOT BUT DEPARTED 1ST NOV 1944. PICKED UP "RAGTAS" VOLUNTEER CREW OF GROUND PERSONNEL RATED AT OUR BASE. MY CO PILOT WAS A LITTLE EX RAF BEAUFORT PILOT NAMED ROBERT D. LITTLEJOHN WHO NEVER LOST HIS HATRED FOR THE BIG BIRDS.

- * FLEW THE FIRST GERMANY MISSION TO WILHELMSTRAVEN.
- * NEVER FLEW A MISSION IN WHICH SOME BATTLE DAMAGES WAS NOT SUSTAINED
- * NEVER LOST A CREWMAN NOR HAD A SERIOUS WOUND ON BOARD
- * WAS THE FIRST (AND INDEED ONLY) PILOT TO FLY 25 ASSIGNED MISSIONS WITHOUT ADVERTING ANY.
- * NEVER HAD TO FEATHER AN ENGINE DURING COMBAT FLIGHTS - WAS KNOWN TO HAVE A T.L.C. ATTITUDE TOWARD ENGINES AND HAD SUPER CREW CHIEF NAMED BENNIE CAMPBELL WHO FELT SAME WAY. ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT GENTLE TOUCH ON ENGINE CONTROLS AND CLOSE FORMATION WAS BEST LIFE INSURANCE - PLUS GUNNERS WHO ~~WERE~~ ^{WERE} GUNS OPERATIONAL - AND A LOT OF GOOD LUCK. I FIGURED UNCONSCIOUSLY THAT WE LOST 89% OF THE ORIGINAL CREWS BY THE TIME I REACHED 25TH MISSION. MY ONLY "SUPERSTITION" WAS MY FEELING THAT, AMONG PILOTS, AT LEAST, THE ONES WHO GOT IT KNEW THEY WOULD. I ALWAYS ~~KNOW~~ ^{KNOW} I WOULD MAKE IT. (MOST BE EARLY EVIDENCE OF THE POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING) THERE WERE A FEW MOMENTS WHEN MY FAITH WAS TESTED RATHER SEVERELY ^{51 NOV 1944} BUT WE MADE IT. RETURNING, THE MOST SHATTERING EXPERIENCE WAS WATCHING THE MID AIR, UNEXPLAINABLE COLLISION OF MY SQ. LEADER AND HIS RIGHT WING MAN DURING MISSION AT ABOUT 24000'. ALL LOST AND NOT EVEN UNDER ATTACK AT THE TIME.

Russell - this tends to cut through the considerable BS that surrounded the first daylight Navy mission. Frank Armstrong was the leader - some of the publicity current at the time sort of lost sight of that fact (so did my Nov. 8 Bomb!). EJT

CHICAGO SUN

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 1943

Tel. AN

MANPOWER

Plan U-Boat Fi

Chicagoan Tells How He Piloted 1st Plane in U.S. Raid on Germany

Attack on Nazi Naval Base Came As a Surprise for American Fliers

First Lt. Edward J. Hennessy of Chicago piloted the first plane over Germany in the U.S. Air Force raid on Wilhelmshaven Wednesday, the first American attack on German soil. The following story was written for The Chicago Sun.

By Lt. Edward J. Hennessy.

Special to The Chicago Sun.

U.S. Army Bomber Station, England, Jan. 29.—They can't stop us from guessing, and usually there is some pretty good guessing the night before a raid. But this time it was different. Nobody had the slightest idea we were going to bomb Germany.

We were surprised as much as the Germans must have been. The first inkling we had was when we filed into the briefing room a little after 5 a.m. We looked at the big target map. There was a red ribbon stretching from our base across the North Sea to Wilhelmshaven.

I guess my thoughts were typical of the crowd. I thought, well, this is it. Here we go at last.

us told us to expect lots of fighter opposition, and after he outlined the course to the Nazi naval base and the defenses of the target, he asked, "Any questions?"

Usually, on raids over France, they tell us there will be hundreds of our fighters along and not to worry. The intelligence officer did

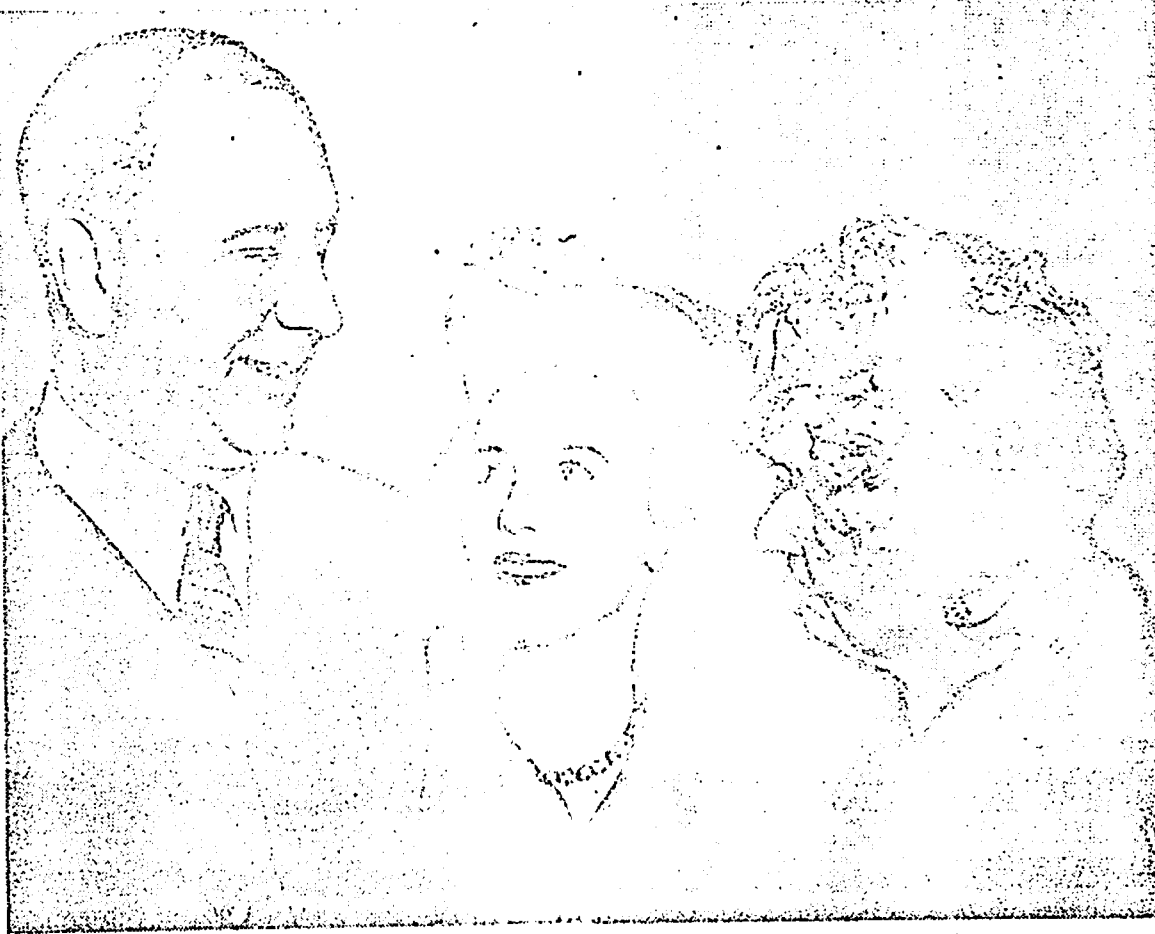


LT. E. J. HENNESSY

The intelligence officer briefing See CHICAGOAN, Page 3, Col. 5.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30, 1943

Parents and Fiancee of Chicago Air Hero



LT. EDWARD J. HENNESSY'S PARENTS, Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Hennessy of 6848 Constance st., met their son's fiancee in the Loop last night and were among the first to read Lt. Hennessy's dispatch in The Chicago Sun. The lieutenant's fiancee is Virginia Robinson of 1526 Washington st., Evanston.

SUN PHOTO.

Chicagoan Tells of Piloting Front Plane in Raid on Nazis

First U.S. Attack on German Soil Came As Surprise to American Flyers, He Writes

Continued from Page 1.

and direction. Either never this time, though by and by I naturally thought it was going to be our toughest, and I was surprised at "Why fighter?"

"When the navigation officer reached Munich, 'No,' we all shouted. In fact of course the terrain had

That before we could bring the first American plane into Germany was just a matter of time. It was just a matter of time. If you had asked me now on the way which we would follow, I'd say in my first act, 'Why not, here is how it happened.'

As our group gradually lined up I was surprised to fly in the last and "Charlie" position. But just before we took off, a member of the ground crew called across the field and stated that there was some doubt as to whether the German aircraft could be able to take off. Our navigation was leading the attack.

After we took off I saw a first time the ground's plane and saw that he was overcast on the right. So I turned up.

Now the air was coming up and we were heading over it. We thought that the weather was going to be tough, but the clouds started to break beautifully. That made us pretty happy. We would be able to see the target.

Was About Plane

Our only navigator was the plane. Our Fortress, Little Audrey, was prepared for military reasons. We were flying Bomber, Lt. Casey's Fortress, and a fourth one, but you know how it is. Everybody likes to think his own way, and everybody likes to fly his own plane.

I remember seeing Sgt. Hoesly, chief of the Bomber's ground crew, if everything was straight. He said, "Everything perfect, sir. After we took off we found it was

And we took off our way to fly. We were flying perfectly, in tight formation. As we were high over the North Sea we were wondering about the fighter opposition we had been told about. As we got closer the bombardier called off altitudes so we could adjust our oxygen apparatus properly.

When we were within striking distance of the German coast, with fully packed oil about floating beneath us, Casey (Hoesly's Chicago navigator, Lt. Casey Jones) called out our position on the instrument. He reminded the gunners to be especially cautious. I guess everybody squirmed in his seat a little.

'There's German, Boss'

Suddenly somebody was calling within in sight of the coast and Casey called out, "There's German, boss, on our starboard."

From our altitude it was not a green blur for the most part, but I remember lots of little islands when we were heading inland for Wilhelmshaven. Almost as soon as we entered the coastline we started getting flak, and it was darned accurate flak.

We started weaving, banking and banking—the pilot banking and the rest of us following. Our angle of approach to the coast was 45 degrees, and because I was flying on the "inside" right my plane was the first inland. And the fact that we were the first American air crew over Germany never occurred to any of us then. We were too busy.

The flak followed us right in to the target—big angry black holes of it that almost hid us during on the wings of waves. Then we started the bombing run for the naval base. I could see these dry-docks perfectly.

That is the most uncomfortable moment of all—when you are on the bombing run. You have to maintain a steady course to drop your bombs with accuracy, and the flak boys on the ground know it. When they see you coming in to the target they give you maximum intensity gun just a little and make it very accurate flak.

Bomb Squad Target

With three more in the air over us, but we didn't get hit. And, H. O. Doherty, our bombardier, told us we were really working into the target. After we bombed full and he never saw us really come full in with a

boom, I am sure, really got a push.

The whole naval base was blacked out with flak, and we started weaving again. We saw the first enemy fighters after we got out of it. They weren't good to get in it themselves. They weren't going to get themselves shot at any more than necessary.

Out of the darkness, though, they began to get close, but our gunners didn't have time to get a good shot. It was a good, heavy, and I saw only one die, but with stream showers trailing him away.

The pilot who was with the German came in to take a look and then away when the first burst fired at them. Our boys concluded that they were pretty good, and that was a pretty surprising to me.

On the way inside one of the gunners spoke up on the intercom and asked us how it felt to be with the first bullet in home Germany. Casey, who was sitting next to me, always is sitting back, said, "Well, and how does it feel to be in the first place of the first bullet to strike into Germany?"

Then Bill Caldwell started in, "How does it feel to be the first man of the first plane of the first mission?"

"Since I'm in the nose of the plane," Bill said, "I'll answer that one myself. It feels fine, boss."

Bill hit it right on the head. We all felt free. We were glad to drop the works on Germany.

Lt. Hennessy Figured In Heroic Rescue

Lt. Edward J. Hennessy, 23-year-old Chicago pilot of the Flying Fortress, Bomber, first American bomber to carry the aerial war to Germany, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Hennessy Sr. of 6011 Chestnut av.

His father is a member of the La Salle st. law firm of Boyce & Hennessy, and recently was appointed official attorney for Sheriff Peter K. Casey. He has two sons, Lance, 19, and Mrs. L. L. O'Connor.

Lt. Hennessy and Lt. Charles F. Jones, 22, of 845 E. 5th st., also an officer aboard the Bomber on Wednesday when it laid its eggs on Wilhelmshaven, had been in the crew before.

Last November they were officers of a Flying Fortress which figured in the heroic rescue of another American plane and its crew following a raid on St. Nazaire in France.

At the squadron was returning to its British base, a bomber was struck by ground fire. German planes aimed in for a shot, but Hennessy and Jones drifted out of formation and one German plane dove in flames and badly damaged another.

Hennessy attended St. Philip's Normal school, Lenoir High School, Notre Dame University and recently before enlisting an Armistice Day, 1941. He won his wings at Lockheed Field, Tex., and went overseas last August.

22 Seized as Spies In Spain, Says Vichy

London, Jan. 26.—(UPI)—The Vichy radio reported from Madrid today that 22 persons, including British and several Canadian and Belgian, had been arrested by Spanish police on espionage charges.

A British colonel was among the prisoners, the broadcast said. The names have not been named.

DON'T MISS . . .

—On pages of science dealing with Chicago's transportation problems, including tomorrow's Chicago Sun. Get the vital answers to what is being done—as it is not being done—in solving these transportation problems and the new answers and methods that industry people need. Read Anderson's articles . . .

Register in The Sun Tomorrow

Pleased by News Of Aviator Mate

Wife Thanks Reporter For Word from Libya

Special to The Chicago Sun

Memphis, Jan. 27.—Mrs. Roy Jay Kimball of Memphis today thanked The Chicago Sun for word that her husband had parachuted to safety after an air battle over the Libyan front.

"I never doubted Dick could come through," said Mrs. Kimball in a reply to an open letter from Chester Morrison, 4444 S. W. 11th St., Tulsa, Ok., and published in this morning's Chicago Sun.

Her letter follows:

"Dear Chester Morrison:

"Many thanks for your revealing letter.

"I have never doubted that in any emergency Dick would come through, and now he has proved himself. I have always recognized his level-headedness and ability, and an incident that he will continue to be a wonderful pilot. I know his heart and will have been in this work since the beginning of his training, and I'm sure that if some are proud of his doesn't half express our feelings.

"Yours in gratitude,

"Mrs. Roy Jay Kimball."

The Kimballs were married in May, 1912, and he left in June for active duty. He formerly worked in the engineering division of the Lockheed Douglas Aircraft Corp. in Los Angeles. Three years in the front he has always done more than 30,000 hours. Mrs. Kimball is 32 years old.

38,956,000 at Work, Says Miss Perkins

Washington, Jan. 27.—(UPI)—Secretary of Labor Perkins announced today in a press conference that total employment in non-agricultural work reached an all-time high in December of 38,956,000 persons. The total represented a 2,250,000 gain since December, 1941.



MAURICE L.

3 February 1977

Mr. E. J. Hennessy, Jr.
501 S. Beverly Lane
Arlington Heights, IL 60005

Dear Ed:

I recently got a large number of pictures of the 306th from Rudy Skalak. Among them I found the enclosed seven, and I rather assume that they were original crews.

I wondered if you might be able to identify them, not necessarily individuals, but at least the first pilots; and I can work from there.

In it there were also several of Don Bevan's cartoons of original crews, but I didn't find yours in it. Do you happen to have any of them?

Our search for people is going well, and I have made a lot of interesting contacts for my work. I'll appreciate any help you can give me on this

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong



Cartan Travel Bureau, Inc.

AN AFFILIATED AVCO COMPANY

ONE CROSSROADS OF COMMERCE • ROLLING MEADOWS, ILLINOIS 60008 • TEL. 312/870-2222 • TELEX 72-6363 • CABLE CARTANTRROMS

February 8, 1977

Mr. Russell A. Strong
Route 1, Scotch Meadows Drive
Laurinburg, North Carolina 28352

Dear Russell:


I received your letter of February 3 with the xerox (remarkably good ones) of the photographs of 306th crews.

I marked those I could identify and am returning them herewith. Much to my surprise my own original crew was pictured twice. I wasn't with those guys too long because I was grounded with a strep throat for a few days and the assistant operations officer filled in on the fatal mission. In the meantime Frank Jacknik had been moved up to squadron navigator so he missed that particular trip also.

The only other one that looked familiar was the individual under the number 2 engine whom I think is R.W. Jones of the 423rd squadron.

I don't have any cartoons, sorry.

Best regards,


E.J. Hennessy, CTC
President

EJH:ld

enclosures





(5)



E. J. HERNESSEY
THAT CO PILOT

BILLY BURDEN
BOMB.

(6)

CLAY ISABELL
PILOT

FRANK JACKNIK
NAV



RW JONES ?
#23 NAV

(7)



Edward J. Hennessy, Jr.
258 Island View Lane
Lake Barrington Shores
Barrington, Illinois 60010

6/26/78

Dear Paul -

On P3 of the Jan. issue you show "Crushee" -- that was Bill Casey's bird, but was also the one I flew on the first Germany mission to Wilkshaven.

"Little Audrey" was my regular bird, #124560, with Bill Colantoni's name showing clearly. Casey Jones was navigator and Rodgers D. Littlejohn was co-pilot. Stan Wylie was engineer, Billy Deenan - Radio, Pat Pellum, W6, Red Brown, W6, J. F. Eld - Ball turret, J. Conolly - Tail.

No two B-17s flew exactly the same way - our engineering officer always attributed it to "rigging". Claimed the tension on control cables gave "feel" in flight maneuvers that varied pretty widely between birds. Whatever the reason, I always liked the feel of "Little Audrey" and felt comfortable with her. My crew chief, Bonny Campbell, did an exceptional job that kept her operating unusually well. I never had to

feather on engine for mechanical reasons - which may have
been some kind of record at the time.

I enjoyed the issue - thanks for following
up on my move last October. I was under the impression
that I had sent a change of address card. Sorry.

Best Regards,

ED

17 May 1976

Mr. Ed Hennessey
501 S. Beverly Lane
Arlington Hts. IL 60005

Dear Ed:

Thanks so much for your early reply to my query in Chicago. In fact, you are the only one to reply so far.

Out of those orders you sent I found 26 names I had not previously located, so that in the past week I've added about a hundred names in all and must be approaching about 6000.

The orders were also helpful in pinning down some information about other persons. Did you know Bill Cassidy? He is one I'd like to contact, but have found no leads to yet.

Today I talked with Bill Keldum in Spokane, Wash. He was one of the two survivors of Ely's crash before the first combat mission was flown, and says he thinks he has some interesting items for me.

I also appreciated the three addresses you sent along, and will transfer them to Bill Collins with my next group so they will begin to get mailings also.

I've also written to Cavido, as he ought to have some interesting background on the 369th insignia.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

4900 Appleridge Court
Dayton, Ohio 45424

513/233-8735



NEW ADDRESS?



PLEASE

306th ECHOES

(Name of Magazine or Newspaper)

NOTIFY

2973 HEATHERBRAE DR

(Number and Street or P.O. Box)

YOUR

PUBLISHER...

POLAND, OHIO 44514

(Post Office, State, and ZIP Code)

PLEASE MAKE YOUR
MOVE COMF

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

LETTER

TO MAKE SURE YOU GET YOUR MAGAZINE OR NEWSPAPER

Mail this change of address notice to your publisher today

Paste your old address label from copy of publication (if available).

On it items 1, 2, and 3 above address label is furnished.

OLD ▶

1. No. and Street, Apt., Suite, P.O. Box or R.R. No.

E J HENNESSY JR

2. Post Office, State, and ZIP Code

258 ISLAND VIEW LANE

3. Show All Additional Dates and Nos. Included in Address Label
(Necessary for identification)

BARRINGTON, IL 60010

4. No. and Street, Apt., Suite, P.O. Box or R.R. No.

2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE

NEW ▶

5. Post Office, State, and ZIP Code

LAS VEGAS NV 89102

6. Name of Subscriber (Print or type)

7. Date of Address
Change

11/1/80

Memo
FROM

ED HENNESSY

6/2

Russ -

I'm going to the 306th Reunion
in England with Ed Maliszewski -
we'll fly out of Detroit, 10/3, on British
Airways.

Do you have an address for
John M. Howard, at 369th pilot?

Best regards.

Ed

Reply to me at

Arlington Park Hilton

3400 W. Cuckoo

Arlington Heights IL 60006

TRAVEL INDUSTRY CONSULTANTS, INC.

2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE, LAS VEGAS NEVADA 89102

702-362-0424

E. J. HENNESSY, CTC

PRESIDENT

5/29/82

Dear Russ:

I'm here for the weekend and found another copy of "First Over" autographed and waiting. In case the book we got of Calace here's another check. Thanks. I enjoyed reading about "my time" - Sept 9, 1942 to May 28, 1943 - especially.

Also enclosing a couple of historic snap shots from Oct., 1981. Palwaukee Airport, northwest of Chicago, in a friend's bright yellow T-6. We took around for an hour and a half. Like they say - you don't forget. Like riding a bike. Even at age 62. I managed a respectable coordination exercise, among other things.

I may be able to make it to Thurleigh in October. I have to be in Miami at the ASTA International Convention by Oct. 10 and could use BA from Chicago or LAX to London and then to Miami on Oct 10. Shall work out some of my usual quick trips. I logged 160,000 miles last year so my rear end has terminal numbness.

Best Regards,
Ed

**TRAVEL INDUSTRY CONSULTANTS, INC.
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NV 89102**

**E. J. HENNESSY, CTC
PRESIDENT**

702-362-0424

Nov. 1980

Memo
FROM

ED HENNESSY

5/23

Russ -

I took my daughter to India via
NY & London for a meeting in Delhi -
then did a little Nepal (Kathmandu)
and returned via Hong Kong, Tokyo and
Hawaii (for a wedding)

While in H.K. we had dinner with
one of your alumni - Torre Ossino - a
good friend.

Incidentally, that other name on my
check is my daughter. What a
coincidence. What a great
to jump to my conclusion.

EL

Cartan Tours

EDWARD J. HENNESSY JR.
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

5/31/83

Dear Bill -

Thanks for the patch - I never had
one before.

As I wrote the check I sent you
the phone rang - it was Charles Mace
Fetigati (this is how he spells it). We had
dinner at Caesar's the next night. First
time I had seen him since Thurleigh.

He flew with me on one mission - the
first Germany mission to Wilhelmshaven.

It was a nice evening - his wife,
Marie, is a real charmer.

He comes to Las Vegas 4-5 times a
year so I expect to see him occasionally. But
next time at Omaha.

Chers -

Ed

EDWARD J. HENNESSY JR.
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

2/5/84

Bill -

Here's \$50 for the association funds and another \$50 for the kitty to bring our English friends to Fort Worth. I left the "pyto" blank since I'm not sure how to make it -- please fill in the appropriate name.

Bill Colantoni (M.D.) is in town for a medical meeting - I had dinner with him and Marie last night. I twisted his arm about Fort Worth and he agreed to schedule it as mentioned so the hospital will have less chance to mess up his plans.

Best regards,

Ed

Memo
FROM

ED HENNESSY

1/5/85

Ross:

Did your committee come to a decision?

Hope you noticed the real advantage in Farnsey's proposal - the bulk air fares they can offer exclusively. Using Chicago as an example - the bulk fare of \$289 round trip is 38% under the convention fare which is itself less than regular individual fares. The savings are similar for all United cities.

In any case, do respond to Ron Heuer.

Ed

Cartan Tours

Memo
FROM

2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102
(702) 362-0424

ED HENNESSY

8/11

Dear Russ -

I'll bring the crew photo to
Colorado Springs - Colantoni, Jones and
Littlejohn (Bomb-Naw-Cop) will be there.
I'm having trouble with two guys who look
alike in the picture. Between us we should
get it straight for the record.

Ed

P.S. There is one gypsy in there -
Tony Santoro is 4th from left. Borrowed
from Riordan's crew for the occasion.

Cartan Tours

28 October 1985

Dear Ed,

My correspondence has gotten sadly in arrears in the last two months due to too many things to do and not enough energy to get them all done. But I think things are on the upscale now. The October Echoes will go in the mail in a few days, by the end of the week anyway, so I have a little time now to get some other things done.

Off the record, I must agree with the sentiments expressed by you in your letter, and I have spent considerable time working with Gordon Richards, Jack Ryan and others to try to get things back on an even keel again. I think we have resolved some of the problems.

Why the business meeting went the way it did, I am not sure. But there was not enough time to get things done that ought to have been taken care of, and we must remedy that another year. If we are to function as an organization the executive committee must have more time to work, and the business meeting cannot be so circumscribed as to rule out discussion. This I will make every attempt to get done.

I have some private thoughts concerning the whole thing that I'd rather not air to anyone, except perhaps my wife. But we do have to improve the handling of the whole affair.

I am going down to Dayton shortly on the planning for 1986 and hope to put into the schedule more time for deliberation than was allowed at Colorado Springs.

As you will note in Echoes, we are off the POW kick, and will honor ground crews at that meeting. There seems to be considerable romance attached to the POW's, which probably wasn't ever really there. Perhaps some of those who completed tours feel guilty for not having shared the experience. It should have been a onetime event at Fort Worth, and then on to other things. But that's what happens when a one-man gang refuses to work with a committee except when put under great pressure. And that is basically how the C.S. reunion was run.

Thanks for your clues for some good stories in the future. I will follow them up and see what we can develop along that line. It should be interesting.

And I very much appreciate your sharing your feelings with me on C. S. I hope that I can remedy most of the shortcomings another year.

9/12/85

Dear Russ -

The Colorado meeting was very nice in general, but I was appalled by the shabby treatment given Gordon Richards. After years of devotion and dedicated service given, he deserved enormous courtesy at the very least. I'm glad Mel forced some recognition at the final event. (My impression was that Monty welcomed the move.)

I was also amazed by the bulldozer tactics employed at the general meeting.

This brings up another peculiarity -- is this becoming a club for ex PDA's, rescues and readers?

Perhaps Echoes might refocus attention on the other members in future editions. It would be interesting to reveal how many of the original Woodson flight personnel completed their 25. In 1943, while instructing at Broompton, I roughly calculated that 11% made it.

It would also be interesting to count the ground crew and others who started there and kept us flying through those difficult early months.

Even the flight over from Westover (MA) via Gardner was full of wild and crazy incidents. Ask Pervis Force about his spectacular landing at Crestwick. Or Curt Melton about his "landing" off Ireland.

The take-off from Gardner was unique in my experience -- the only actual instrument take-off I ever made. A jeep led us slowly to the take-off position through a total white-out.

(2)

after lining us up through head signals we zeroed the gyro compass and took off by keeping it zeroed as we headed, hopefully, down the runway. Nothing but white outside.

Our "formation flight" over the North Atlantic was led by radio compass. Periodically the lead ship radio operator would hold down the key for 25 seconds while we "homed" on him. If our needle pointed forward, OK. If backward, bad news. We were in solid soup most of the way over.

I acknowledge that completing 25 in those deep was due to a combination of many factors, including some good luck. Of major importance was maintenance. Mine was provided by a then 19-year old Master Sergeant named Bennie Campbell. His boss was Capt. Frank Kelly, Engineering Officer of the 369th.

I roomed next to Kelly in the BOQ and was the beneficiary of his gratuitous advice on many occasions. He dwelt at length on the "preventative maintenance" that started in the cockpit. Having grown up with boats I had developed a feeling and respect for things mechanical. Kelly made a strong case for a gentle hand on the throttles and other engine controls. I was an apt pupil, having learned as a boy to respect the conveyance and its power unit. This was as basic as not jamming throttles forward suddenly while taxiing or in the air. Stay in close in formation to avoid the necessity of red-lining.

(3)

or worse, the engines while trying to catch up with a heavy bird in thin air.

The original prop^{and throttle} controls were very vulnerable to runway so I had to fly across the cockpit so I could steal an occasional glance at the engine instruments while flying formation. If the RPM needles started to waver, lag or surge I would back off on that throttle by adjusting my grip on the four-point center bar of the throttles. This let me operate that engine at reduced power. Better than feathering and advertising my problem to the Luftwaffe and far better than a runway, which always led to other problems, including fire.

It is significant that we never failed to take off on an assigned mission, never aborted and never feathered an engine - - until #25 on final approach. #2 Engine ran out of gas and I was not inclined to go around while transferring fuel. Come to think of it, I doubt if there was enough to transfer.

I think all of the original survivors did things like these. We all knew that our airplanes that functioned well would keep us alive and on active duty. Our formation flying provided the maximum concentration of firepower and the tightest pattern of bombs on the ground. Let's not overlook the point of these missions - hitting the target.

It was a total team effort and I would like to see more recognition of that aspect of the air war. The ground support was of utmost importance, but often underplayed in

the more exciting reporting of air battles. There must be hundreds of stories about ground crews working their brains off round the clock to keep those birds flying. And often cannibalizing a "henry queen" for the needed parts.

The mechanics could surely tell some strange and wonderful stories about things that happened at so many and about the special things that others relied on to convince themselves that they could survive and get the job done. After all the intervening years those stories should be tellable without giving away any secrets or violating ethical principles.

Here's a thought: the modern FAA would be hampered by our bad weather (when was it good?) approach system at Sharleigh - where we had no navigational aids, as such. We could notify the WAF balloon school at Balford that the cloud tops were at X feet. They would run a balloon up to become our marker buoy. We would let down straight north over the balloon, gauging the rate of descent to the thickness of the overcast. The bottom was usually about 500 feet or less with miserable visibility. If by some miracle you popped out near the field, good show! Then you circled to look for a familiar church, like Keysoe, 1 1/2 miles off the end of the main runway. Or for two others less favorably related to the runway - shorter runways. Not too worry much about which runway service winds were usually weak while bombing instincts were strong.

(5)

The biggest problem in those days was the lack of experience in this concept of war. There was a lot of experimentation among the groups - and a lot of fatalities. The first real game plan was written by Curtis LeMay. An analysis of mission reports from all the groups revealed that LeMay's combat-expensive discipline on the bombing runs was so far superior in results that it became the bible for the 8th. His tactics were adopted by all - sometimes reluctantly, since eyes and politics were involved. Those things never go away.

Enough. "Monty" was right when he said from the podium that the 306th spirit is unique. I suspect there a lot of undiscovered 306ers out there who could be inspired to come in out of the cold if the fire can be lit to attract them.

One of my guys made a pertinent observation about the reunion: "It's like an Irish wake. Everybody is remembering the good times, not the bad times".

Best Regards,



EDWARD J. HENNESSY JR.
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NV 89102

Memo
FROM

2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102
(702) 362-0424

ED HENNESSY

3/25/87

Russ -- two things --

1. I heard Gordon & Connie were losing their home. I hope others besides me opted to send their 300th Anniversary contribution to them, for all they have done over the years (I never heard if this was done.) It was \$100. in my case.
2. Barney Rawlings and I are willing to set up an ED reunion here in L.V., but need to know when. Barney was with the L.V. Convention & Visitors Bureau for years - I was in the tour business for 40 years.

Joos in Woodover for 2 nights
last week. Amazing.

ED

Cartan Tours

Memo
FROM

2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102
(702) 362-0424

ED HENNESSY

2/26/87

Gerry-

I spoke to Barney Rowlings
this morning and we agree that
the '88 Reunion ought to be here
in L.V. We will be glad to
put together a package if the
hierarchy is interested and can
give us the dates. (Alternative dates
would help.)

I called you when I was in
Austin but you evidently were still out
of town — ED

Cartan Tours

First All-American Air Raid on Germany Led by Chicagoan

BY SEYMOUR KORMAN.

(Chicago Tribune Press Service.)

(Map and pictures on page 2.)

AT A U. S. BOMBER BASE IN ENGLAND, Jan. 27.—Two Chicagoans—the pilot and navigator of a Flying Fortress—were the first Yankee airmen to cross the border of Germany today in the first all-American air raid on the reich. A Cicero, Ill., bombardier was not far behind in the attack on the German naval base of Wilhelmshaven and the industrial city of Emden.

The Chicagoan who piloted the first American bomber over Germany was Lt. Edward J. Hennessy Jr., 23 years old, of 6848 Constance avenue. His navigator on the Fortress "Ban-shee" was Lt. Charles F. Jones, 22 years old, of 843 East 89th street. The Cicero bombardier was 2d Lt. Frank E. Zasadil of 2305 South 62d avenue.

"Just Luck," Says Hennessy.

Of his distinction, Hennessy said: "It was just a piece of luck that I was there first. I do not want any credit for it. It was every group's show. When we reached the target—a ship construction slip at Wilhelmshaven—the entire group dropped bombs in fast runs."

"It was a very nice trip," Jones added, "altogether a cinch. We were surprised at the lack of opposition. The anti-aircraft fire was not intense. I saw only a few fighters. Those guys really had not expected us."

Bombardier Zasadil, who had participated in two raids on St. Nazaire, France, said:

"We really plastered the target. Our stuff landed smack on the construction center."

Flyers Call Raid "a Picnic."

Other Yankee pilots added:

"It was a picnic. We caught them completely unawares."

Other Chicagoans who participated in the raid were Lt. Robert Gossage of 5527 West Madison street and 2d Lt. Alexander Kramarinko of 1931 West Polomac avenue.

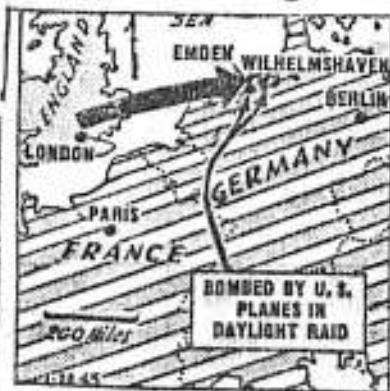
Other Illinois airmen in the attack included 2d Lt. S. T. O'Connor, Elmhurst; 2d Lt. Fort W. Lippe, Alton; Lt. Everett Clinard Jr., Rantoul, and Sergt. C. T. Courtney, Peoria, whose planes all shot down German fighters.

The flyers said the enemy fighter planes which tried to intercept them seemed to be "piloted by green flyers" who were uncertain how to combat the American bombers.

Tonight Air Marshal Arthur Harris, commander of the R. A. F. bomber command, congratulated the American airmen on a "well planned and gallantly executed operation which opens the campaign the Germans long have dreaded."

STUDENT AT NORTHWESTERN.

Lt. Hennessy was a student at Northwestern university law school



Points in Germany bombed by American airmen.



Lt. Edward J. Hennessy (left) and Lt. Charles F. Jones, Chicagoans who participated yesterday in American raid on Germany.

when he enlisted in the army air forces. He previously had graduated from Notre Dams university. He flew to England in August, 1942. Lt. Jones, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Jones, was a student at the Illinois Institute of Technology when he enlisted in the royal Canadian air force in February, 1941. After service in England and Egypt, he transferred to the American air force last November.

12 September 1988

Dear Ed:

Here is the mission data I was able to find pertaining to you. I have never been able to accumulate all of the mission data I would like to have on file because of the expense.

While I was working on the book I would pick up that which I needed, and have added some to it since then.

Another factor that plagues one in research is that some data is just plain missing, probably was lost at Thurleigh, and never made its way to Washington. There is also a great unevenness in data available from mission to mission.

In my own case I tried to find the interrogation reports for all of my missions but was never able to find about 25% of them.

If you would like to make it one of your charitable projects over the next two or three years, I would be able to identify and add to the group archives that mission data which I do not have. I would expect that this might cost from \$2000 to \$3000 dollars in copying fees at National Archives.

See you in Las Vegas.

PS: Tell your hat vendor that I cannot buy one to fit my head, which is 7 11/16 extra long oval. If he can provide one with a back strap to accommodate this I'll buy one new white hat.

10/9/87

Dear Russ -

I've gotten so into the 306th Raiders that I can't stop digging.

I was looking at your score sheet in the (Pratt) book on the original crews in the 306th. There are some interesting percentages.

	Completed%	Killed%	POW%
Pilots	22.9	34.3	17
C.P.	22.9	25.7	34.3
N	22.9	25.7	25.7
B	22.9	28.6	25.7
E	14.3	28.6	25.7
RO	25.7	22.9	37.1
G	15.7	22.9	20.7

One might conclude from the numbers alone that Pilots hung in there too long while the crew bailed out -- I can't believe the Germans were sharpshooting pilots. Copilots appear to be skilled at abandoning the plane and using the chute - lots of POWs. Radio operators are remarkable - highest in completions and highest in POWs. Gunners are strange - low completions, low killed and low POW - quite a few changes of status in there.

Note that Bombaimers & engineers were tied for second in killed - for B was first in the event of the trouble and E tended to hang in there with Pilot and keep suffering.

Now that I've done this "analysis" - what difference does it make, after all? Mainly, it reminded me what weird times those were during those first months - the blind leading the blind in many cases!

Ed



367th, 368th, 369th, 423rd Squadrons, and service organizations
Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England – September 1942-April 1945

306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 13, 1988

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1988 Reunion Co-Chairmen
Edward J. Hennessy
2013 Plaza del Padre
Las Vegas, NV 89102

G. Barney Rawlings
2617 Mason Avenue
Las Vegas, NV 89102

1988 Annual Reunion
30 October-3 November
Las Vegas, NV

Reginald L. Robinson
4009 Ranier Court
Fort Worth, TX 76109

Dear Reg:

The contretemps over the letter of greeting in the program has evaporated!

None of our four "candidates" responded in time for the printer's schedule, so we will do without a greeting in the program.

If, as seems likely, we get some response, we will probably display them on the big screen at the banquet.

The greeters could be the Queen Mum, General Galland, AF Chief of Staff, and the Secretary of the Air Force. The latter two were reported to have mailed theirs two days ago!

Unless we get a big late surge, it appears to me that we have stabilized at about 900. Cancellations and additions seem to offset each other. 900 will be a lot more comfortable in the ballroom.

Best Regards,

Ed Hennessy

EH/cp

9 December 1989

Dear Ed:

Many thanks for the two loaves of cornbread. I will enjoy them, I am sure.

News of your baking prowess has been bandied about before, so I am looking forward to twating your culinary efforts.

Our eldest son, a bachelor, is a great baker/ Two of his specialties are Saffron buns, a Cornish delicacy, and Moravian sugar cake. He also bakes a wheat bread that both he and his mother can eat, and often on family occasions arrives with rolls and French bread made with the wheat flower. For Christmas, he mails several relatives saffron buns and bread, which they guard with their lives.

Now, the problem is, that June would like to eat your bread as well as I will. But, she is confronted with some serious food allergy problems, and diligently tries to avoid things made with milk and/or cottonseed oil. I tell her she is the only person I know who medically certified as allergic to carp and catfish. A couple of times she has had blood studies done which show allergic reactions in varying degrees to about forty different things. One of the problems, as well, is that the allergic list changes from time to time.

Any clues you can provide for her will be welcome.

From the Carolinas to Nevada, we want to send our greetings for this most Holy season, and hope that you find great joy with your children and grandchildren in the weeks ahead.

Sincerely yours,

EDWARD J. HENNESSY JR.
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NV 89102

1/8/90

Dear Russ -

Here's a card with a copy of a letter I received from Johnny Fleming, a very handicapped RAAF vet. At various times I have sent him some photos and info on our LV reunion. Somewhere along life's path he became a fan of the 8th AF and, especially, the 300th.

Please respond to him in some way -- how do you like that 8x6 photo size he cherishes. He got a couple of 8x10's from me, 8x6 must be a bit size.

The Holidays must have been wonderful - I finished up with goat in both feet. Just had setting mobile again. I didn't want to go to the WC - too long a trip!

Happy New Year,
Ed

Edward J. Hennessy, Jr.

2013 Plaza del Padre • Las Vegas, NV 89102
(702) 362-0424

8/24
Lucas - I'm embarrassed! I did not
remember P. 292 and never thought
to look it up. Thanks. I don't think I was
on the list in 1980.

Interesting numbers - especially
those 13 "killed" (not in combat.)
Irate husbands?

My friend, Liz, just got a deal that
has her on Cloud 9 - goes 9/11 at the
Westward Ho with a great trio, 5 nights
a week - - for as long as people like her.
The group being replaced was there for 7 years.
WH has one of 2 or 3 of the best lounges in
town. Family owned property that has made
banker for years

See you in a few weeks -

Ed



EDWARD J. HENNESSY JR.
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NV 89102

8/10/90

Dear Russ:

The bridegroom is as etched as a schoolboy! We'll be going to the reception tomorrow night. Barney and Chris are advising me to pursue a younger lady!

Here's a thought I have had regularly over the years -- did you ever figure out what happened to the original aircrews in WWII? Such as:

- * How many left Wombourne for England -- by MOS.

- * How many actually completed a tour of 25 missions -- again by MOS (Probably should lump pilots & co-pilots since many CPs changed seats)

- * How many KIA's, POW's etc

- * What percentage of each specialty finished a regular tour?

Years ago, from memory only, I guessed that about 20% survived the experience without being shot down, although some were reassigned before completing a tour. I also guessed that about 11% actually completed 25 missions. That number gets

Spookier as I get older.

Our local TV teams are hard to take during the Iraqi mess. Channel 13 loves to conduct idiotic polls - call this number for "yes", another number for "no". Today they asked our 26% functionally illiterate population if our service people would get into a war in Arabia. They are all so well-informed! On the other hand, they probably know as much as the average Congressman. Wouldn't surprise me if one of our gaming entrepreneurs opens a Middle East War Book!

See you in San Antonio -

ED

EDWARD J. HENNESSY JR.

2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE

LAS VEGAS, NV 89102

12/1/90

Dear Russ:

I left a message on your recorder this morning about Terry's passing last night.

I spent two days with the Terrys at the end of October. He had lost a lot of weight and was permanently on oxygen. It was apparent that he was not long for this world.

The week prior to my visit he celebrated his 74th birthday. Hazel surprised him with his decorations beautifully framed. That was a sight to see! Where he had lost a lot of clusters she used miniature medals next to the original. It was like this - 3 silver stars, 5 DFCs, 8 Air Medals, British DFC, French Croix de Guerre, Chilean Medal Militaire (pocket), Commendation Medal (from Gen Donahue) 3 unit citations and about a dozen service medals. He mentioned that there probably should have been a couple more Air Medals, but records of 11 or 12 missions he flew were overlooked (not 30th)

I always thought he was a relatively unsung hero of the 8th AF. His great strength was leadership and motivation - witness the 42 mission without a loss in the 369th after he took command. I think that is the most remarkable record in the air war - especially during that period of terrible losses.

I told Hazel that his military record was legendary but his personality was unique - he was a kind and good man. That's the way I will always remember him -

Best regards,

Ed

EDWARD J. HENNESSY
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

3/19/92

Dear Russ:

Dede Briscoe's family is conspiring to produce a 50th Anniversary presentation to their "patriarchs"! I have been asked to contribute something appropriate for the Memory Book. The event will be on May 3 - so I do not have much time.

Dede reminded me a few years ago that he flew his first mission with me as my copilot. I can't remember the mission after all this time but it had to have been shortly after he arrived at Thurleigh - in those days of our caging mood we did not waste anytime getting this lab airborne.

Can you help me with this? Perhaps you could come up with the de-briefing report from this mission? Anything you can do to jog my memory will be appreciated. Once I have identified the mission I can fill in some details from Casey Jones' logbook - - which does not show crew names but has a lot of useful stuff otherwise.

Thanks - EL

23 March 1992

Dear Ed:

I'm not much help!

I can find that Dale flew his first mission on 22 March as a first pilot, but he didn't leave many tracks earlier.

He says, when I tried to do all his mission records, that he flew earlier than anything I could find. BUT, he can't remember the dates either.

Two dates I have nothing on: 2 Feb 43 I have only a list of the first pilots, gleaned from several records; 14 Feb 43, I have no records what so ever for.

On all other missions I can account for you, but you had a variety of copilots, and none of them named Briscoe. I'll keep working on the matter and may be able to resolve. Its either this week or not at all!

All the best,

25 March 1992

Dear Ed:

I checked with Dale as to his first mission, and he said it was the 14 Feb 43, with you as pilot flying with his crew except for Fred Sherman.

I have nothing in the Mission Reports, Group Diary or Squadron Diary about this mission. It is listed in the complete mission list and was to Bremen, with no one dropping any bombs.

That's the extent of my knowledge concerning it. Sorry I can't do any better on it.

Sounds like no one was interested in any record keeping that day.

All the best,

EDWARD J. HENNESSY
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

3/27/92

Dear Russ -

Thanks for trying -- meantime, I found out it was Feb 14, 1943. He flew as my copilot. By then I was a crusty veteran of 8 excursions - which put me in exclusive company.

Target was Hamm - solid cloud cover all over Europe, England too! We brought the Combs back 3:15 after T.O. The meteorologists did it again!

My recollection is that we let down over a Bedford balloon, broke out about 500 feet and found our marker, Keyser Church. The Group should probably give the church a bronze plaque expressing our gratitude.

Ed

EDWARD J. HENNESSY
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

5/15/92

Dearinos:

I took Casey Jones and Matt Taylor (Liz Damon's 9 year old son) out to the airport a couple of weeks ago to see the CAF B-176, "Texas Raiders". Matt thought it was "awesome", so did I.

The CAF handed out a poop sheet that included scale drawings of the bird. I copied it a few times, pasted up the formation, got Casey to type my copy and pasted that down. Then I used some typists' white-out to remove the scale lines.

Here's a copy of the clean result.

I first saw this formation perpetrated by Mack McKay and Earl Gurea in England - I sent a copy to Mack pointing out that he might have gotten us killed. He called me immediately to reminisce about this kind of stuff. And also asked

Why we only did it for 8-10 minutes. At Bullport, in that characteristically choppy air at low altitude, it was a thrill a minute. But what good is a demo if not at low altitude? In smooth air this was not too hard - you just have to focus your attention on that aileron -

It was a different world then. Today you could get court-martialed for doing anything like this in a big airplane.

Spence almost got it anyway - tucked in like this on a commercial DC-3!! Good thing we were headed overseas!

I pointed out to Mack that this was one other thing we could do well when we were young!

Take care,
Ed

EDWARD J. HENNESSY
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

1/29/93

Russ -

Here's the story of a little party for
2d I hosted at this great Pub - great
party.

Co Pilot Rogers Littlejohn was at my
house with Casey Jones and Chaotoni and Larries,
but June L. developed an eye problem and
he had to take her home before the big event.

Present were my daughter and son in
law, our LV roomie since, Liz Damon Taylor
with her husband and 10 year old son Matt
plus Barney Rowlings and Chris. Bill and
Kevin Cree (8th AF - he and Barney are both
Major General) Lou Macomber and Gene (Shes
Ed Maliszewski's sister and Mac was 8th AF
fighter pilot). Rex Drenner and Shel Beigel

and Hazel Toopy.

and Gloria: Special guest was Capt Ted Brewer and
Lestie - he's an instructor pilot at Nellis and heads
the Aggressor team in the Red Flag exercises. He holds
about every achievement award known to pilots. Was
Top Gun of the Allied Forces in '89, as I recall. He
loved it all - big history of military aviation buff.
(All the old ladies loved him) I also brought
Hazel Terry up for the event - she loved it all
too. The Pal delighted her.

If you want a glossy of the
photo of three old forts I can get one or
two next week from the R.I.

Take care,
Ed



Wayne C. Kodey/Review-Journal

Charles "Casey" Jones, left, William Colantoni and Edward Hennessy were crew members aboard Banshee, one of the planes that took part in the first U.S. air raid on Germany during World War II. The 50th anniversary of the raid was Wednesday.

Servicemen recall raid on Germany

By John Przybys
Review-Journal

It's been 50 years and Dr. William Colantoni still recalls it all. "I remember everything about that mission," Colantoni said. "Of the 25 missions I flew, I remember everything about that mission."

The mission that has so indelibly burned itself into Colantoni's mind is the first bombing raid by the United States on Germany during World War II.

Wednesday night, to mark the 50th anniversary of the event, Colantoni and a few of the others who participated in the raid met in the appropriately British surroundings of Las Vegas' British Bulldog Pub to share a meal, a Guinness or two and a few stories.

The bombing raid was particularly significant to three of the men at the pub, because the plane in which Colantoni of Rickeyville, Pa., and Charles "Casey" Jones of Henderson and Edward Hennessy of Las Vegas flew is generally recognized as the very first U.S. aircraft over Germany.

At the time, all three men were members of the 306th Bombardment Group at Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England. Just after dawn on the morning of Jan. 27, 1943, their plane — a B-17 dubbed Banshee — was one of 64 B-17s that left the base for Germany.

Daytime bombing raids were uncommon at that stage of the war, said Hennessy, the pilot of Banshee.



In this crew picture, William Colantoni appears third from the left, Edward Hennessy sixth from the left, and "Casey" Jones seventh from the left. The plane is the "Little Audrey," the crew's usual plane, which was being repaired on the day of the mission.

"The Brits tried daylight bombing and gave up. They went to nighttime bombing because their losses were terrible. They were sure we were insane, that this would not work."

Also, no U.S. bomber had yet flown a mission over Germany. In fact, Hennessy said, nobody even knew Germany would be that day's target until that morning's briefing.

When the map was uncovered, "everybody goes 'Ohh! Nervous excitement, you know?'" he said.

"You didn't know how the

(German) fighters would act, what the flak would be like," said Jones, who served as Hennessy's navigator.

Shortly after 11 a.m., the formation dropped its bombs on a city named Wilhelmshaven. "I can still remember looking over (bombardier Colantoni) and seeing all this smoke screen," Jones said.

But Hennessy said he can recall "just highlights" from that day.

"They all kind of run together after awhile," he said. "And I

think, particularly for pilots, pilots are busy flying in formation, so details tend to escape you."

The mission went smoothly and the group met little resistance. "I think we took them by surprise," Jones said.

The successful raid helped to break "a psychological barrier," Hennessy said. Daylight bombing runs became more common after it, and the mission proved that Germany was not impenetrable to air attack.

The historical impact of what the group had done "struck us on our way back from the mission," Colantoni said. "By the time we landed, it was electric, you know?"

"But we were glad to come out alive. That was the main thing."

Hennessy, however, downplays his own crew's fame as the first aircraft to cross Germany's borders.

"In fact, I wasn't even aware," he said, laughing. "Pilots aren't aware. You're busy flying formation, you never know where you are over the ground."

Besides, he added, "It was a meaningless distinction, because it was a group effort. We just happened to be (in the front of that formation.)"

For Hennessy, Colantoni and Jones, Wednesday's golden anniversary of the mission was a time to think back, but to focus more on the good times than the bad.

Such reunions, Hennessy explained, are "about what you might expect at an Irish wake. You remember the good times. You don't dwell on the bad times, because it's pointless."

Fort Fights Goering Squadron; One Lib Crew Gets Five Nazis

By Andrew A. Rooney
Star and Stripes Staff Writer

Five of the toughest Nazi fighters yet encountered shot down by the crew of one Liberator.

Three more, from Goering's prize squadron, blasted out of the sky by "Little Audrey," a Flying Fortress which came through it all with 50 to 60 holes in her streamlined body.

Overjoyed buddies welcoming home a crew that had been erroneously reported as missing.

These were the stories that came out of the homecoming of Eighth Air Force bombers that returned to their bases in Britain today after dropping hundreds of tons of explosives on St. Nazaire, one of the biggest Nazi U-boat bases, in a daylight attack. For the Liberators it was their second raid in 19 hours, following Monday's visit to Dunkirk.

Good-naturedly ribbing the Forts, the navigator of "Miss Dianne," a Liberator piloted by Capt. Clyde Price, of San Antonio, challenged the B17s to match their record of five enemy planes shot down.

The navigator, 2nd Lt. J. A. Augenstein, of Pittsburgh, also recounted the engagements:

How They Did It

"As we were flying in the tail-end formations, the Germans would attack Fortresses flying ahead and below us from the front, circle around, and then come at us from behind.

"The first plane we got," Lt. Augenstein continued, "was blasted from 200 yards away, exploded and went all to pieces in the air. The second stalled when it was hit, plummeted straight into the clouds below, leaving a trail of smoke behind."

Sgt. Balton L. Snell, of Marked Tree, Ark., top-turret gunner, and Sgt. J. C. Wyer, waist gunner from Clarksburg, W. Va., each got two of "Miss Dianne's" victims. Sgt. Lewis J. Fleshman, of Virginia, the tail gunner, got the fifth.

Fleshman's bullseye was scored on a plane that made the fatal mistake of exposing a vulnerable underside as it turned.

The rest of Capt. Price's crew were 2nd Lt. Robert E. Forrest, of Columbus, Ohio, co-pilot; 2nd Lt. M. P. Gross, of Denver, Colo., bombardier; Sgts. Kenneth Loughton, of Pine Grove, Cal., radio operator; Kenneth Erhard, Clearfield, Pa., waist gunner, and Earl W. Holton, Mulliken, Mich., rear-hatch gunner.

Crew members in "Little Audrey"
(Continued on page 4)

said that enemy planes they met had yellow noses, the markings of the notorious Goering Squadron, reputedly the crack fighter force of the Luftwaffe.

1st Lt. William Polantoni, of Fredricktown, Pa., accounted for two of "Little Audrey's" victims, while 1st Lt. Charles F. Jones, of Chicago, Ill., formerly attached to the RAF Coastal Command, shot down the third.

The plane, piloted by 1st Lt. Edward J. Hennessy, of Chicago, was hit by flak as she started her bombing run.

"The ship was jolted 15 feet by the concussion and flak scattered through the plane," Lt. Hennessy said.

S/Sgt. Allan F. Meaux, of Madison, Wis., was saved from injury when a large piece of flak struck the ear-phone in his helmet and stopped just short of his head. Sgt. Robert G. Adams, of Stephenville, Tex., felt a piece of flak tear into his parachute. His oxygen tube was also cut, but he crawled from his tail-gunner's position to the radio room before losing consciousness. Other crew members revived him.

In the nose, Lts. Polantoni and Jones were thrown to the back of the compartment. Lt. Polantoni recovered quickly, returned to his bombsight and made the necessary adjustments in time to get his bombs away accurately.

Meanwhile Lt. Hennessy and 2nd Lt. Rogers Littlejohn, of Spartanburg, S.C., co-pilot, were having their own troubles. The windshield in front of them was shattered and they had to guide the ship with the gale in their faces and the danger of flying glass present.

(Continued from page 1)

After the bombs were away the fighters appeared.

Of all the exchanges of congratulations, those received by Capt. William H. Brandon, of Nashville, Tenn., and his crew of the B24 "Avenger," were especially warm. They came from buddies who heard the erroneous report that the plane was missing.

1st Lt. C. S. Griffin, of Kansas City, Mo., co-pilot, who participated in five previous raids, said, "the flak was pretty terrible over St. Nazaire. For a while there was so much of it, smoke from shell bursts looked like clouds."

A contrary bomb-rack mechanism which refused to open the bomb bay doors didn't prevent 2nd Lt. William E. Hill, of Louisville, Ky., bombardier of the "Avenger," from taking a crack at the sub pens. He just released the entire bomb rack and the weight of the bombs tore the doors open. The ship came home with the bomb bay doors flapping in the breeze.

The German fighters, whose force was estimated between 30 and 50, were thought by many fliers to be the toughest opposition yet encountered, although others said it wasn't as tough as that on the Feb. 4 raid on northwest Germany.

"Looked like their top-notch men to me," said Capt. Clifton Pyle, of Marshall, Tex., pilot of a Fortress.

Just as Lt. Warren Anderson, of Lawrence, Kan., bombardier of the B17 "Butch" sat over the bombsight, a three-inch slug of flak put a hole in the transparent plastic nose of the ship right where his head had been.

London, England
Thursday, Feb. 18, 1943

306TH BOMBS GERMAN U-BOAT PENS AT ST NAZAIRE, 16 FEBRUARY 1943

Andy Rooney's article in the London edition of the "Stars and Stripes", 18 February 1943, was given to me by a friend several years later. It surfaced again two days after Christmas, 1993, during some long over-due file cleaning.

This story triggered long-buried memories that came back in a rush. With a bow to Paul Harvey, here is "The Rest of the Story".

This mission was my tenth with the 306th Bomb Group (H) and my fifth as pilot with my own crew. Losses had been so heavy during the first months of the Eighth Air Force combat operations that by January, 1943, I found myself with a make-up crew of wonderful American guys. My 19 year old co-pilot, Rogers Littlejohn, had transferred from the Royal Canadian Air Force; my navigator, Casey "GI" Jones, came from the Royal Air Force; the bombardier, Bill Colantoni, from a deactivated B-17 Group. The six gunners were mostly ground personnel who volunteered and became qualified as aerial gunners on our base because replacements from the U S aerial gunnery schools were slow in coming. I was part of the original group of 35 crews that came together from Wendover, Utah, in early September, 1942, but had dwindled to 7 surviving crews by mid-1943. So I headed a "manufactured" crew to help replace losses 8!

Our mission to St. Nazaire on 16 February 1943 was fairly uneventful until we reached the IP - the Initial Point - where the bomb run began. Typically, we flew into a flak barrage and then the swarms of Focke Wulf (FW)-190s with yellow noses - The Goering Squadron. As Andy Rooney reported, our flak damage was extensive - over 50 holes but none fatal. The frontal attacks that followed became the bigger problem. Glen Wyly, our top turret gunner, turned his 50 calibre machine guns over the cockpit - 3 inches over - to fire at the frontal attackers. We had already suffered some unnoticed damage to the windshield frame on the co-pilot's side and that, plus the heavy vibration from the guns, caused the right windshield to pop right into a suprised Littlejohn's chest. The outside air temperature at 20,000 feet was about -30° Centigrade (-22° Fahrenheit). The inward rush of frigid air created instant, heavy frost on the inside of all the other windows. I was flying on the leader's left wing, tucked in tight for the bomb run. My line-of-sight had been across the cockpit through the co-pilot's front and side windows. The leader was no longer visible because following the flak explosion I was momentarily busy determining whether we were still airworthy. In those few seconds of distraction I moved a few feet ahead, almost abreast of the leader, who would have been clearly visible through the side window until the frost suddenly blocked the view.

I alerted the crew via the intercom to give me verbal reports on our relative position while I slowed down about 5 miles per hour and held the course and altitude by instruments. Any deviation up or down could have resulted in a collision in the formation.

Gradually the lead plane sort of crept forward into my view through the missing window and I was then able to match his speed and stay in position for the bomb run. A stressful minute or so during that interval seemed endless.

Meanwhile, in the nose, Casey Jones, our navigator, was missed by flak twice, once when he bent over to pick up the target map and once when he lay down to point out the target for Bill Colantoni, our bombardier. The window frames around Casey's gun were punctured by flak about 3 inches on both sides of the window. Later when the FW-190s were encountered, a stray bullet from a FW-190 attacking a lower squadron hit the ammunition case behind him scattering ammunition everywhere before going through the center of his window, just missing him. When attacked by the FW-190s after the bomb run, Colantoni shot down two FW-190s and Casey got one. Good shooting!?!

Now the problem centered on the continuing FW-190 frontal attacks. Littlejohn was looking like a snowman as he held the inner layer of the windshield to deflect the intruding cold air to his right to keep it out of our faces. I was again flying formation across the cockpit by sighting through the open windshield frame. That gave me a field of vision about 10% of normal. My right hand on the four throttles was now numb from the cold and my left on the control column was not much better. Since Air Corps Supply could not fit me with a 44-long fleece-lined jacket, I was wearing a lightweight leather A-2 jacket with a sleeveless sweater underneath. On my hands, I wore unlined kidskin finger gloves since I could never "feel" the airplane through the available fleece-lined gauntlet mittens. If you imagine playing golf in such mittens you will understand my problem. Oh yes - - neither did Supply have any fleece-lined flying boots that would fit over my shoes. It was always too cold to go without them so I wore them over my socks. Luckily, I never had to bail out because they probably would have slipped off when the parachute opened. In any case, the impact with the ground would have broken my ankles because, of course, they did not have any 28-foot diameter parachutes for large specimens like me - only the 24-foot variety for lads under 180 pounds. I went about 205.

Fortunately, a bomb run is made straight and level so we were able to hang in there during the troubled times. We just had to tough out the cold through "Bombs Away" and the withdrawal. I could not drop down and out of the formation to a warmer climate in FW-190 territory. That would have surely been fatal - they jumped us fast enough after the flak episode, hoping to pick off a cripple. We hung in there for the relative security and the gunnery support of our squadron mates.

It was not until we headed home and were well out over the Bay of Biscay that the whole group dropped down to warmer weather and to take advantage of the curvature of the earth to stay under the German radar surveillance.

Then the frost softened and we busily scraped and wiped it off by hand. Now the numbness in my hands was replaced by a sensation of pinpricks and pain. They still hurt when we landed at our base about 2 hours later and they remained sensitive to cold for months. I often thought some of this sensitivity was psychosomatic but nevertheless they hurt just the same when exposed to cold again. This always reminded me that this was one of our most difficult missions.

Back on the hardstand where we parked our airplane, "Little Audrey", my 19 year old (!) Master Sergeant Crew Chief, Benny Campbell, and Captain Frank Kelly, the Squadron Engineering Officer, shook their heads sadly over her porous condition. The rehabilitation began immediately.

The next day Captain Kelly called me out to the hardstand and asked me to climb a ladder on the pilot's side of the fuselage to examine the bullet hole 6 inches from my seat and chest high. He told me to sight through the hole to follow the course of the armor-piercing bullet. It had entered at a very shallow angle from the left, passed through the top-turret, missing Glen Wyly, and had buried itself in the main wing strut on the left side of the bomb bay. This caused structural weakness so Kelly ordered the aircraft into the major overhaul hanger. The strut and the left wing were replaced including the two engines in that wing. Since this was a time of terrible shortages, the needed parts were cannibalized from a couple of "hanger queens" - - B-17s that had been so badly damaged that they were beyond repair but had some still useable parts. With around-the-clock operation, "Little Audrey" came out of the hanger in about four days as good as new. This was some other kind of non-combat miracle, but pretty typical of what ground crews were accomplishing in those days of critical shortages.

As Paul Harvey would say, that is "The Rest of the Story".

Edward J Hennessy, Pilot, "Little Audrey"

3/23/69

Dear Russ -

I have continued to try to figure out what the average loss rate was for the 306th overall. Without knowing how many crews were assigned over the years, it ain't easy.

From your Appendix A there were 341 missions on which 8629 aircraft dropped bombs. But on 19 missions no bombs were dropped. Since the average number of aircraft per mission was 25.3 (!) it can be assumed that 481 did not drop, making a total of 9110 aircraft that flew missions. Now the average is 26.7 aircraft per mission.

You identify 177 lost aircraft. It seems likely that these crews averaged 8* missions each by the time they went down. $177 \times 8 = 1416$ missions then. That leaves 7694 flown by survivors. So, how many missions did they fly per crew? Obviously, not everybody had finished their tour by the time the war ended.

I'll assume the survivors averaged 22 missions completed. $7694 \div 22 = 350$ crews, approximately. Add back the 177 and you get 527 total crews assigned to the 306th. $177 \div 527 = 33.6\%$ loss factor on average. It could be higher - like the original graph - or lower like at the end during the course of the war but the average would be 33.6%.

Not a pleasant environment but some times were better than others.

I am now tired of this exercise but it seems to fall within the bounds of reason. What do you think?

Ed

* 8th Bomber Command determined that most losses came in the crews first 5 missions - hardly any losses after 15 missions. Hence, 8 seems reasonable.

3/25/94

Dear Russ:

one more time. The last time.

Your Appendix A shows 341 missions in which 8629 aircraft dropped bombs. On 19 missions no bombs were dropped. If we assume an average of 26.8 aircraft ($8629 \div 322$) then we can add $19 \times 26.8 = 509$ aircraft on no drop missions. A grand total of 9138 combat missions flown by 306 A/C.

We lost 177 aircraft - that's 1.9% of 9138.

However, crews were flying tours of 25 to 30 missions. Assume an average of 28 over the years. $9138 \div 28 = 326$ crews.

The 177 downed crews probably flew 8 missions each for a total of 1416 missions. $9138 - 1416$ equals 7722. Divided by 28 = 276 crews. Now add back the 177 to get 453 total crews that flew 9138 missions.

But wait a minute -- 453 would be a perfect number, and we were not perfect. We put up an average of 26.8 aircraft per mission. If we assume the group strength averaged 40 aircraft, we left 13.2 on the ground each time. $13.2 \div 40 = 33\%$ on the ground!

So, increase 453 crews by 33% and you get 602 crews. $177 \div 602 = 29.4\%$

If we had 602 crews available over those years and we lost 177 of them the loss rate was 29.4%. Multiply 602 by 29.4% and you get 177 crews lost.

It's only an estimated percentage but it has to be close.

Ed

P.S. It was safer in the Navy.

P.S.2 Combat casualties for original group - 68.8%

306TH 4/EAR RECORD

AIRCRAFT →	DISPATCHED	ATTACHED	SORTIES(6)	NO DROP(2)	LOST(5)	ABORTED(3)	POINTS(4)
367TH	1206(100%)	937(78%)	1112(92.2%)	175(15.3%)	51(4.6%)	94(7.8%)	73.4
368TH	1331(100%)	1032(77.5%)	1231(92.4%)	199(16.2%)	27(2.2%)	100(7.5%)	75.5
369TH	1279(100%)	1033(80.7%)	1201(93.9%)	168(16.3%)	33(2.7%)	78(6.1%)	78.2
437AD	1200(100%)	1055(87.9%)	1195(93.3%)	140(11.7%)	30(2.5%)	85(6.6%)	80.0

- (1) ROUNDED AS MISSED BUT DID NOT NECESSARILY ATTACK TARGET
- (2) SORTIES MINUS ATTACHED = NO DROP
- (3) DISPATCHED MINUS SORTIES = ABORTED
- (4) ATTACHED MINUS LOST DIVIDED BY DISPATCHED = POINTS (EFFICIENCY)
- (5) LOST DIVIDED BY SORTIES = % LOST

TOTAL 306 MISSIONS	341
TOTAL 306 SORTIES	4742 (93.1% OF DISPATCHED)
TOTAL 306 DISPATCHED	5096 5096 5096
TOTAL 306 ATTACKS	4057 (79.6% OF DISPATCHED)
TOTAL 306 NO DROP	1039 (21.9% OF SORTIES)
TOTAL 306 LOST A/C	141 (3% OF SORTIES)
TOTAL 306 AIRMEN SORTIES	45049 (EST. 9.5 PER CREW)
TOTAL 306 AIRMEN DISPATCHED	48412 (EST. 9.5 PER CREW)
TOTAL 306 AIRMEN LOST	1340 (2.7% 2.7% OF SORTIES)
TOTAL 306 ABORTED	354 (6.9% OF DISPATCHED)

* * * *

ORIGINAL 35 CREW RECORD (315 AIRMEN)

SURVIVED 25 MISSIONS	8 CREWS (65 AIRMEN)	21.6%
KILLED IN ACTION/DIED OF WOUNDS	106	33.7%
KILLED IN AIR COMBAT	13	4.1%
REMOVED FLYING STATUS *	14	4.4%
TRANSFERRED FROM 306 *	15	4.8%
ROUNDED AND GROUNDED	10	3%
PRISONERS OF WAR	88	28%
UNKNOWN	5	1.5%
TOTAL CASUALTIES/DO NOT COMPLETE MISSIONS		78.4%
COMBAT CASUALTIES, ADJUSTED	218	69.2%

* CONSIDERED CASUALTIES OF COMBAT

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

3/5/94

Dear Russ -

I had to do a lot of marketing and sales analysis in the Tour business. I was inspired to message the 306th numbers - partly because Shel Beigel is so pro 369th and kind of anti 423 (didn't like their patch!) My numbers show that the 423'd did great! Overall.

Some might challenge my "efficiency points" - I admit it's pretty hard-nosed to adjust for "Lost", but any bean counter would tell you that "Lost" is not efficient! Besides, I couldn't think of any other way to get a good comparative number without a computer.

Since you did all the grubby research I thought you might be interested in the way I look at your numbers. If nothing else, they show that us originals got our butts kicked.

EL

I'm also throwing in a story I did for my crew on the 16 Feb 43 2nd Nazire mission.

3/24/84

Loss -

Still another approach -
assume 28 missions was the average
tour. 7684 aircraft survived 341
missions = 275 crews. But, with an
average mission strength of 26 ak there
were probably 14 on the ground - 35%.

$275 \text{ crews} \times 1.35 = 371$ plus the 177
lost = 548 total crews.

$177 \div 548 = 32.3\%$ Loss
rate from 1942-45.

Take your pick!

Ed

3/15/94

Dear Russ:

My crew and I are trying to reconstruct an eventful day in our 306th Life.

We have narrowed it down to Feb 2, Feb 4 or March 4 - all in 1943.

Do you have debriefing reports on my crew for those dates?

I can predict that you won't find one for March 4. ~~but~~ The S-2 diary does not show us as participating on that day. But my Form 5 shows 5 hours of combat time plus a separate 1 hour "local" flight on March 4. This suggests to me that we made a "pit stop" on the way home that caused us to arrive at Thurleigh some time after the main Group. This could explain why we were not debriefed - Top Gunner & Lew Wyle remembers that we were not debriefed and has always wondered why not. That failure could have resulted in S-2 concluding that we had aborted and never flew the mission.

Ideally, you might have a diagram of the 306th formation assignments for March 4 - the other two dates would be useful, too.

From this you will be able to see why I have a rather low opinion of the quality of the debriefings and the accuracy of the diary that S-2 kept. I wish now that I had kept one for myself!

My memory tells me that we flew on Richardson's left wing in the second element of the squadron - in other words, the low flight under the leader.

If you have formation diagrams we could very probably identify the date we are seeking.

I'll reimburse your expenses on this stuff, if any such exist.

Ed

3/6/64

Here is a statistical revision that is a little more logical. The changes are ---

1. A SORTIE is a mission but not necessarily an ATTACK. If the target was cloud-covered, making landing impossible, it was still a SORTIE.
2. SORTIES minus ATTACKED equals NO DEEP
3. DISPATCHED minus SORTIES equals ABORTED
4. ATTACKED minus LOST divided by DISPATCHED equals POINTS
5. LOST divided by SORTIES equals % lost in combat.

In the original 35 crew record there were 68 men who completed 25 missions - out of 315 men in the original group.

I considered those relieved and those transferred as combat casualties. Those relieved were overstressed and unable to function in combat. Those transferred, as I recall, were also overstressed but were transferred to non-combat duty but flying duty.

If you have a problem with considering those as combat casualties, it is easy enough to adjust by simply adding a special category - which I did - called COMBAT CASUALTIES. Subtract the 68 missions plus 14 relieved and 15 transferred from 315 and you get 218, or 69.2% of the original group remain.

Either figure clearly illustrates what happens in terms of less effective equipment, shortages of personal equipment and a total lack of fighter escorts over Europe. Not to mention political pressure that resulted in missions attempted under impossible conditions - to kill civilian morale. Never mind it cost too many lives of aircrews.

Ed Hennessy

EDWARD J. HENNESSY
2013 Plaza Del Padre
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

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LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

2/27/94

Dear Russ:

I have never seen a list showing dates of completion of 25 missions. I finished 29 May 43 - I only flew one in April - the 17th. Do you have such a record of completion dates? (Pilot, Co-pilot)

I also wish I had been more of an accountant or a diary keeper (more). Is there any record of who flew with each crew? Maybe the debriefing reports?

I flew missions # 1, 2, 6, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 35, 37, 38, 39, 42 and 43

If you have those reports, individually or as part of a collection, I'll buy them - to get the names of the guys who flew with me.

Ed

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

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2/26/94

Dear Russ:

Do you have anything that shows whose crews flew the ^{Primary} Hamm - ^{Sunday} Ormsback - ^{last run} Emben mission 2/4/43? I know I was there - my Form 5 shows 5:45 combat time. We put up three crews. At that time, Kirdan and I were about the only ones flying in the 369th. I would guess that Terry flew with Kirdan that day and I'm sure we ^{three} tucked in with some other squadron. Maybe your records show the group tie-up and the 369th's.

Incidentally, our intelligence diary was weird, to say the least. I also flew on Feb 2 and March 4 on Hamm missions that never got there -- 3:30 on Feb 2 and 4 on March 4 -- plus another 1:00 on March 4 which suggests we may have made a pit-stop on the way home. In any case, intelligence called March 4 our "first mission to Hamm". Wrong - it was the third time it was our primary target. Those guys must have scarfed down the post-mission booze. I never saw any during my time. Can't account for the

errors and omissions in their diaries! I remember two post-mission priorities in the early days - get into a warm tub at the original officers club annex and then get back to the club for a toddy or two. (Poisonous stuff - your head would ache before you got out the door!)

F.O.G. indicates that Hamon led a charmed life until April of '44 - looks like that was the first time the group got there!

Just occurs to me - if we do a book here in '96 we might be able to get Michael Jackson cheap by then!

Take care,
Ed

3/7/54

Dear Russ:

Further to the statistical sheet I sent to you -- I forgot to list 10 originals who were wounded and left combat. This doesn't change the total, which was correctly shown as 315.

I also see a possible point of controversy -- the categories of "relieved" and "transferred" could be considered as questionable casualties. Not to me, however. The ones I remember were so treated because they were coming unglued and were relieved or transferred to guarantee them, in a manner of speaking. I immediately think of two prominent pilot transferes who were so nervous in the service that they were sent back to the states to consult with manufacturers about modifications and improvements.

Then, of course, our liberable original C.O. ^(great) was so distraught by the decimation that he was abruptly relieved. He was barely able to talk understandably about the combat situation by the time he left.

My view is that both of these categories were combat casualties -- mind related, but casualties nevertheless.

I can think of some POWs who may not have been if they had not been hitting the bottle so hard between missions.

None of this is surprising -- I was as tight as a piano wire when I finished. I did not realize it until they sent me to Birmingham to instruct the replacement crews. For the first two weeks I slept 12 hours a night -- something I had never done before in my life. And even in later years I may have racked up 12-hour sleeps about once a year. My normal ration was 7 hours until I retired -- and there were plenty of 3 and 4 hour nights along the way.

As strange -- I thought very little about the

was until the last few weeks, when I started reviewing your book and my old Form 5 and Personnel file - It was surprising how much came back to me as I re-read and remembered -

Some incidents are vivid in my memory - the collision of Spaulding and Johnson for example. I was flying - actually - as copilot on his left wing when Spaulding failed to roll out of the left turn and flew right into him. It was like watching a slow motion movie. I always wondered if Jack's oxygen hose came off and he was in la-la land. Seems likely.

It's funny how things pop up. Only two days ago did I find out how Casey got in the RAF. He was playing hockey in Canada in ~~1938~~ 1939, when he was 18. The morning after a game he and two other lads signed on at the RAF Recruiting office across from their hotel. They were on a train before nightfall to their training base! --- When the Brits bailed out of Europe Casey was aboard an Avro Anson - 90 MPH was open - and pushed 4 250 lb bombs out over Dumbergen. On the Germans, of course. --- That airplane had a manually operated landing gear! RAF navigators did not have a union - not only did he push bombs out, he helped crank the gear up and down. No wonder he came back to us at Thurleigh!

Before I forget - the early losses were due to the new concept of daylight bombing, the Achilles nose of the B-17F, general lack of personal and technical equipment, and, most of all - - no fighter escorts. Never, in my experience over Europe, - - a vivid memory: Bremen, Feb 14, '43 - - About 90 minutes of fighter attacks. Went up to 27000 feet which made it hard for them to operate in thin air. Cold too, 9 guns frozen! Those were the days!

Ed

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

5/19/94

Dear Russ:

My Echoes came on 5/17 and rereading the St. Nazaire story made me wonder if my personal point came across — I was doing a lot of bitching about equipment shortages. After hearing about all the electric suits, flak vests, helmets, etc., from our successors I began to realize how primitive we were in the early months. The lack of nose guns was another problem but the "F" models flew a lot better than the "E"s — I became very aware of that during my two years in Tactical instruction later.

Donald Caldwell's report was kind of mean — I was not aware that we missed the pens but, in retrospect, what the hell difference did it make — an atom bomb would hardly have dented them. There may have been some nuisance value in those attacks but I never heard of any damage inflicted on them. Plenty on us, however. St. N. was a tough target in those days.

(2)

Most interesting were your observations about the roster project. I have a great curiosity about the lads who profess indifference when found. I can think of several of my contemporaries who could be expected to react that way. A number of them had to be relieved of their hazardous duties and could not be expected to enjoy the prospect of renewing old associations! On the other hand, extended ground duty must have been pretty grim at times. Bill Haulihan can tell some gruesome stuff about his tenure as a medic - very hard on the emotions and morale, that kind of work. Unpleasant memories.

I was guessing that you might eventually turn up about 3500 total but I can ^{now} see how the common names complicate the search. In any case, we should get a pretty big turn-out in '96.

One of the differences will be some alternative choices to signposting programs - good shows in-house and within a block or so. With or without T. & A.!

Do you have a new L.V. resident alarm of the 369th on your list? What's his name?

Take care,
Ed

1/19/94

Dear Russ -

I have answered my own question about aborted missions by reviewing my Form 5 file.

8 Nov 42 has a 2:45 hour flight. That was the day our target was Lilla. We could not have been flying that day unless we had started the mission. That was undoubtedly an abortion.

I am a total blank about the actual reason but I would guess it was due to turbo controls - until the electronic controls were developed the turbos were always a problem.

So, it was my only aborted mission, as co-pilot for Clay Askel. Later, as a pilot, I had a few chances to abort but decided that the problems were manageable. Neither did I want to prolong my tour!

Digging through the Form 5 revealed some other interesting - to me - history of my 306th experience. Here are my monthly flight times:

July 1942	Wardover	29:30	
Aug "	Wardover/Westover	37:00	
Sept "	Westover/Thurleigh	55:10	
Oct "	Thurleigh	29:50	1 combat
Nov "	Thurleigh	16:40	2 combat
Dec "	Thurleigh	53:45	Training
Jan 1943	Thurleigh	29:45	3 combat
Feb "	Thurleigh	30:50	5 combat
Mar "	Thurleigh	68:50	8 combat
April "	Thurleigh	52:15	1 combat
May "	Thurleigh	55:25	5 combat

The Form 5 also revealed that I completed the magnificent total of 460:40 hours in B-17s on 29 May 1943, my last mission. I also made captain on 28 May 1943, a little less than 10 months from my commission date. (My first solo flight as a cadet lasted 18 minutes on 11 Jan 1942.) Never a full moment during the following 15 months.

Research is wonderful. I had forgotten that the first Germany raid was also my first as pilot with my own crew. We started out as the spare in the hole. Whoever was in #2 position deserted, so I moved up to replace him. And happy to get out of the hole.

I was also surprised to note that I went to Wilhelmshaven 4 times. Ditto for St Nazaire, which made a bigger impression because it was always so heavily defended. On the 17 Nov 42 visitant #3 took a flak hit and had to be feathered. Sabot chose to hit the deck rather than fly the water route home. We exited France overland - about 50 feet over - and burst across the coastline, where I looked up to my right and saw Mont Ste Michel - a glorious and unexpected sight as vivid in my memory now today as it was then.

When we found the gap in the traffic pattern I discovered that our right tire was shredded by the flak that hit in #3. Sabot and I cooperated on the landing and were able to hold on the runway for about 600 feet - then the flak pulled us off to the right into a ground loop on the grass. We were out of business for a few days.

Take care,
Ed

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

1/5/94

Dear Russ:

I noticed something in the book that raised a question - on p 137, last paragraph. Marlen Reber flew his 25th mission on June 29, and was identified as the first pilot on the 8th to complete without an abort.

I was under the impression that I had a no abort tour when I finished on May 29 - the only one in the group at that time. In fact, I had never failed to take off on an assigned mission and had never feathered an engine until, on the final approach, May 29, I feathered #3 because it was running out of gas and I was not about to go around to transfer fuel. Reg Robinson reminded me of this at one of the reunions. He had just come into the group and was watching the landings specifically to see me because he had heard I had never aborted and never feathered. He

wanted to find out how this was done. (It was not a topic of conversation at the time.)

As a matter of fact, Capt. Zimmfalter told me, sometime in March 1943, that Terry had put me in for a DFC because I had made every flight - the only one who had - but Bomber Command turned it down because "we cannot award decorations to pilots who simply do what they are supposed to do. Such an award could reflect negatively on the others." (all the others, as a matter of fact, except Reber, as it turned out.)

I'm not trying to change anything but I'm curious enough to ask if you have any recollection of me aborting anything. It's also possible that I was not regarded as a pilot because I flew three as cop with Isbel and 2 with Flannagan - in which ^{as Flannagan's flight} I did virtually all of the formation flying. Marlon flew all of his as Pilot.

Take care - Happy New Year -
Ed

2/23/94

Russ -

Ref Echoes pilot list:

I was 42 F

and so were --

Eldredge

Hausker

Gillooly

Johnson, LP

Jones, JO

Jones, RW

Jones, RQ

Jude M

You missed him → Kramarinko, Alexander

Kachsteter

Kinney

Miller, RC

Sherman, Fred

You missed him → Mc Intire, Leo

Sherman and I were sworn in

Together in Chicago on 10 Nov 41.
The American Legion "adopted" us,
sponsored us and set out to follow
our careers. We never heard from
them again.

And they never heard from
us either. I have always thought
their only purpose was the pursuit
of benefit. Remind me of congressmen
and Chicago aldermen. *Ubi mea est.*

Take care,

Ed

Surprisingly attractive program for
Des Moines. That pork chop fondue
sounds good! Probably should have saved
that for the banquet entrée!

EDWARD J. McNESSY
2015 Plaza del Prado
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

PERSONNEL RECORD UPDATE

306th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Date: 4 DEC 94 . . .

Complete this form and return to Russell A. Strong, Secretary, 306th BG Assoc.,
5323 Cheval Place, Charlotte, NC 28205, to be filed with 306th records.

LAST NAME: HENNESSY FIRST NAME: EDWARD MI: TITLE: J.
 Street Address: 2013 PLAZA DEL CARRILLO Telephone: (702) 362-0424
 City, State: LAS VEGAS NV Zip + 4: 89102-3981
 Winter Address: N/A Telephone: ()
 City, State: Zip + 4: _____
 Date of birth: 11 SEPT 19 Wife's name: VIRGINIA (DECD) Oc 2
 Degree(s), & when: AB-ECOM 1940
 Last employment & job title & retirement date: CARTAN TOURS
 CHAIRMAN RET. 30 SEPT 79
 Serial #(s): 0-661836 Squadron: 369 Specialty: P
 Date joined 306th: 10 JULY 42 RECOVERED If combat, what crew? ELAY ISDELL
 Special duties or assignments w/306th: SQ AIR CORP'S SUPPLY OFF UNTIL WE
 REACHED THURGOOD. QUALIFIED 1ST PILOT EARLY JAN 43.
 No of missions flown: 25 Date of last mission: 29 MAY 43
 Date leaving 306th: 14 JUNE 1943 Highest rank/grade w/306th: CAPT
 25 MAY 43
 Other BAF units served with, and when: 11TH CGRC BOVINGTON 15 JUNE 43 TO
 1 SEPT 43
 Top service assignment after 306th: SUPERVISOR OF FLYING, GOLFPORT AAB
 3-1743-24 TACTICAL TRNG.
 USAF retirement date: 28 OCT 45 Rank/grade: MAJOR
 RES. RET 5 MAY 55

Copies of old 306th orders, either from the Group or Station 111, or any of
the Squadrons or other units serving with the 306th, are sought by the sec-
retary, as many of these do not appear in any collections of materials in
National Archives or the Air University.

If you know of others who served with the 306th and who do not appear in the
current 306th Directory, please add their names and current/WWII hometowns
or other addresses to the back of this sheet so that searches may be imple-
mented to add them to our present 306th roster.

(I did not want to cut up that fine issue of Echoes)

12/1/94

Dear Russ:

I received my Echoes a couple of days ago and I have to congratulate you on the most attractive issue in my memory. Those 4-color pages are terrific - and make everybody look remarkably healthy!

A couple of local "lads" asked me what I thought of the '95 England/Ireland tour - - a really nice itinerary! They seemed to be asking me if I thought it was an acceptable price so I told them I could not really tell without some specifics. For whatever it's worth, my company won many awards for clear, accurate and considerate presentation which eliminated most questions from prospects about tour content and value. Some of the "basic musts" were: number of nights in hotel, class of hotels and category of rooms, number of meals included with B, L, & D labels, number of bags allowed per person, specify if all baggage and all water tips are included with meals provided. Most important - specify if the price is per person sharing a double room. And then explain that the single supplement is high because in most hotels the single room rate is the same as the double rate thus putting the single traveler with the full room cost if he doesn't have somebody to share with.

For prospects who can read this approach removes all doubts and surprises that could really mar somebody's trip if he didn't understand the deal he had made. And just to make sure - we always specified exactly what was not included - - like tips to guides, bar bills, drink service and a la carte meal service (unless it was a really deluxe tour that allowed even those!)

OVER

Our theory was that full disclosure up front

weeded out the unrealistic and naive upfront and saved lots of problems later. End of sermon.

Received the Guidelines - Thanks. Well done - I was expecting more of a Field Order! However, there is a little uncertainty - - in U.V. you do not set the terms for deadlines, payment dates etc. Especially not when you don't have a group of high rollers. The standard convention conditions apply and they are not onerous. Hotels here have to practice C.Y.A. on group bookings - no exceptions - to avoid having rooms and service bumped at the "last minute". You may recall that in 1988 we had a few stated conditions re: late cancellations by our registrants. I suppose we could explore a cancellation policy but it might come pretty high for this age group.

For your edification I have enclosed a copy of two pages from one of the U.V. visitor publications, which also had ads for virtually every Etrip hotel. - - most of which are probably R.D.'d now that they have seen the copy on Pages 56 & 57! The publisher will have a hard time getting those hotel ads again!

Take care -

Ed

12/4/94

Dear Dale:

Today's R-I had an article about the passage of Question 7 in our recent election - it takes away the state tax exemption from charities and non profit organizations. This means that any merchandise sales made in NV by the 31st are taxed at 7%. There are no exceptions.

I suggested earlier this year that we dump the on-site sales at the 96 Room and simply pass out mail order forms. Samples could be displayed, I suppose - but no sales made during the Room. (It would be a technical violation if the FX person ever collected completed mail order forms on site and/or accepted payment - that would be a sale made in Nevada.)

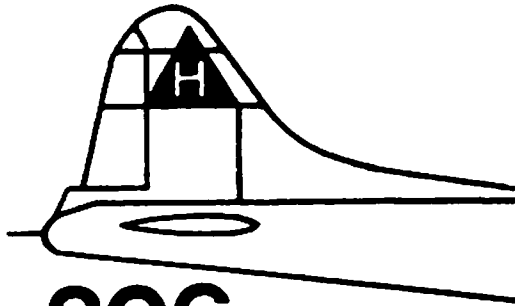
Of course I do not consider this change onerous - - I consider the on-site retail operation onerous. Not to mention inefficient. Like running

a 3 day branch office or store hundreds of miles
from your home base. I would guess that if sales
were to be made onsite that all prices should be
raised 25% to cover cost of inventory transportation
and staffing and security. All plus 7% finance.

I also think that just first should be
putting a shipping/handling charge on any order
over \$5. Since most of the stuff is light enough to
go Priority Mail for ^{in 2006} \$2.90, it could be \$3 minimum.
This could generate enough bookings to take care of
heavier orders.

Now back to the Dallas game.

Ed



367th, 368th, 369th, 423rd Squadrons, and service organizations
Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England – September 1942-April 1945

306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

2/15/95

President

William F. Cavaness
702 Cravens Avenue
San Antonio, TX 78223

Vice President

C. Dale Briscoe
7829 Timber Top Drive
Fair Oaks Ranch, TX 78006

Secretary

Russell A. Strong
5323 Cheval Place
Charlotte, NC 28205

Treasurer

C. F. (Casey) Jones
136 Coventry Drive
Henderson, NV 89014

Directors

M/Gen James S. Cheney
630 Cinnamon Court
Satellite Beach, FL 32937

Joseph R. Hathaway
1031 N. Meade Avenue
Glendive, MT 59330

Victor L. Rose
190 Knight Road
Vestal, NY 13850

Donald L. Snook
45 N. Turkey Hill Road
Westport, CT 06880

Past President

Forrest J. Stewart
21 Doe Run Drive
The Woodlands, TX 77380

1994 Reunion Chairman

Robert N. Houser
2412 48th Street
Des Moines, IA 50310

British Representative

Ralph Franklin
Mill Hill
Keysoe, Beds MK44 2HP
England

1994 Reunion
15-17 September
Des Moines, IA

*Dear Russ - Please send me
a few sheets of the current
letterhead - I can copy them here.*

*I signed the new deal
with the Riviera for '96 yesterday -
10/28 - 11/1/95 and plenty of rooms for
Sunday arrivals. \$58 + 8% per night
is over 12% less than their current current
rate.*

Ed

*after receiving your card, I wrote to Cyril Norman
and got a nice letter in return.*

EDWARD J. HENNESSY
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

5/8/95

Dear Russ:

The discussion about Kamin sales will probably have to be by phone. Take a look at the enclosure - the fare for Knoxville is \$545, because Knoxville has been an offbeat destination since time began. I worked for TWA for a few months after WWII and it was a by ticket era then. (For \$50 more I could go to London!)

For comparison - Nashville is \$240 and a more attractive destination. I have preached for years that fares should be a prime consideration in site selection. I even considered going to Nashville and driving 3 1/2-4 hours to Knoxville but the car cost is stiff, and inconvenient.

Casey suggested driving, but 2000 miles each way turns me off completely - 4 days each way! A lifetime.

My main regret about all this is that my

radio gunner, Bill Dreanani, turned up in Little Rock and will be going with his son, I believe. I haven't seen him since May, 1943.

On the family front - there are two more great grand children in the oven. That will make 6 for me. And #1 grandson asked me to help him expand his housing space in anticipation. So, that and my major medical experience in April makes it quite highly unlikely for me.

Angel Terry sent me a copy of "Combat - He Wrote", by one Charles Hudson who was the Group Bomb aimer for the 91st under Terry at Gossingbourne. This is undoubtedly the worst book I have ever read - of any kind. Beigel and Jones agree. (Example: he personally "modified" his Norden bombsight to improve it.)

Take care,

Ed

EDWARD J. HENNESSY
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

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Take care,

Ed

EDWARD J. HENNESSY
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

7/14/95

Dear Russ:

Thanks for your note about that month from California. I loved Jim Cheney's reaction. He shall see my copy, which now has marginal comments by me, Jones and Beigel. Pointed, rude comments.

Whatever you fellows want done about the Remmion sales will be OK with me - provided I don't have to look for volunteers.

I agree that displayed merchandise would work best - I'm not sure that fulfillment from Des Moines would deter anybody.

Back to "Contact" Hudson - hard to believe that he had a room in Terry's house at Garsington! The Group C.O. occupied the

Manor house on the base that came equipped
with the family butler, who kept things safe
and tidy. Since it was a big house, Terry
and Hazel had a couple of single guys living
there under their roof. I cannot believe
that Terry would have swallowed this line of
bull - Hudson probably waited for him to die
before publishing!

Take care,

Ed

EDWARD J. HENNESSY
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

10/24/95

Dear Russ:

In 1988 you loaned me a package of 306 th photos - mostly black and white. I would like to borrow them again.

I just discovered that my copy source can do a remarkable job on photos, so I want to use some for illustrations in the Reunion booklets. Their equipment is Xerox - late models, of course.

You'll get everything back, of course.

Ed

11/24/90

Dear Russ:

I was surprised and disturbed when I received your letter a couple of weeks ago about the gripe you picked from some disappointed crew chiefs about their perceived lack of recognition at the Reunion. Now I have a letter from Bill Herdman reporting the same reaction he picked up from some of them. I couldn't help noticing that one of Bill's lads had lost "8 or 9 ships" - - which had to have been hard to handle then and ever since. I would have expected losses like those to have generated some major self-doubts about the causes of these incidents. My own observations during my tour convinced me that you had to be lucky in a flesh barrage but you - and the crew - had to be functioning as a unit and compact during fighter attacks. It is also well-known that fighters almost invariably pounced on stragglers - if that had not been so, how come so few land aircraft were shot down? The next question is - why was the straggler a straggler? Either he was less than competent OR he was having trouble with his aircraft's performance - which raises questions about quality of maintenance and also about the operating technique of the pilot. Some pilots were a bit "kind" to the machinery than some others who were positively abusive, out of ignorance or panic. Our engines were not perfect but they could be "nursed" with TLC from the driver. It was one always kept one eye on engine instruments to get early warning of a possible problem. Feathering an engine was an imitation to the

fighters to close in. A badly or weakening engine could be kept operating at reduced power, a condition that would not be readily apparent to the attackers. I certainly had my share of problems as one of the original survivors but I like to think I did not make any of them worse and I never feathered an engine in combat and I always stayed in tight formation. Safety in numbers. 2 1/2 or 3 1/2 engines looked like 4 from the outside if the propellers were turning. There were things I learned in long conversations with Frank Kelly, the 369th engineering officer who occupied the room next to mine. He was not the most engaging personality but he knew his business and he knew there were too many heavy-handed and nervous pilots who were their own worst enemies.

But, I deviate. My impression for years has been that few people want to listen to dull speeches at a reunion. The aim is to keep speeches as a short rein. In this situation we aimed to keep the awards segment within a 15-minute time frame (I think it ran about 21 or 22 minutes). Barney, as producer of the Banquet Program, charted the whole thing, complete with detailed instructions to sound and light technicians with times, durations and cues included. When I suggested that he "script" Jim Cheney to cut down the ad-libbing or rambling, he demurred, saying he could not put words in his mouth - to do so would be insulting. Hence, the seeds of disappointment sprouted, although I have to consider them rather petty. Especially in view of the fact that this was

the first time we had ever spot-lighted our crew chiefs and it was done with some carefully crafted articles in our support books that were in all kits and we even "carved" their duty assignment ^{CREW CHIEF} in their (D) ledges. Firsts in the 306th Reconnaissance.

It is significant to me that the most "aware" comment on the articles came from outside the 306th. Ed Malozavski's sister is married to Lou Macomber, a former fighter pilot colonel and the retired CEO of Livermore Labs in his second career. I gave him a set of the books before the Reunion. He called me a couple of days later to say that he thought I had really nailed down the point - that the crew chiefs were critical to the bomber operation. And in language that any reader could understand. (Anytime you get a fighter pilot to acknowledge that any other M05 was ever useful it's a Win!) But Mac is a reader, and he got the message.

It is apparent that our crew chiefs - at this stage of their lives, at least - are not readers. Not a single one of them expressed a word to me about their publicity in the books and table cards. And, judging by the number and tone of questions I fielded from dozens of registrants during the Reunion, they have lots of non-reading company.

I did not go into this expecting thanks - my 40 years in the wholesale tour business taught me that you have to keep the communication clear and brief. Nobody

cares how a watch is built - they just want to know what time it is - and they want a smooth operation. Hard to do when so few read. Did they lose the ability somewhere along the road? Has did they ever get in the air corps?

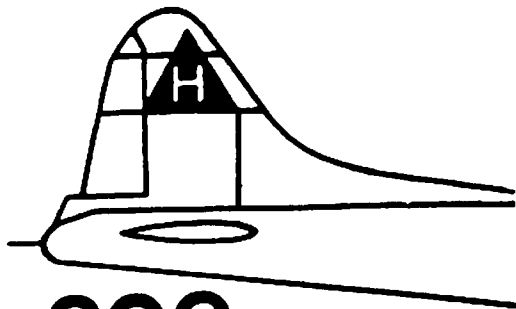
I have a serious suggestion: reprint the booklet articles in "Echoes" verbatim. Not necessary to identify the author, not important. It is important to let all of the members on the Echoes list know how we perceive the crew chiefs. Maybe someday the staff will get read in their "library" (inside or outside) and a few of the members (and some of the crew chiefs) will realize that our chiefs are held in respect and admirable awe. Especially for those 100-mission achievers. Truly extraordinary.

It's possible that there was resentment over the 100-mission attention from the lower achievers, human nature. On the other hand, the Summa Cum Laude's and Magna Cum Laude's at graduations are not subjected to this sort of thing. (I have some relatives who used to give presents at their children's birthday parties "unobtrusively" gifts so their little noses would not be out of joint. Is an yellow age syndrome the same kind of thing?

I'm not quite sorry I started this particular program but I am disturbed by the basic pettiness that surfaced.

PLEASE PRINT THE ARTICLES. (unsigned)

Ed



367th, 368th, 369th, 423rd Squadrons, and service organizations
Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England – September 1942-April 1945

306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

President

M/Gen James S. Cheney
630 Cinnamon Court
Satellite Beach, FL 32937

M/Gen James S. Cheney
630 Cinnamon Ct
Satellite Beach, FL 32937

November 4, 1996

Vice President

Robert W. Seelos
1458 Virginia Avenue
Glendale, CA 91202

Dear Jim:

It went pretty well except for a couple of glitches at the final event-due entirely to the idiosyncrasies of an aging! membership.

Secretary

Russell A. Strong
5323 Cheval Place
Charlotte, NC 28205

I would happily damage the miserable old member who slipped into the Ballroom a half hour early and moved a few table numbers around, that's how your seat vanished, apparently. A surprising number simply turned unannounced with money in hand to have dinner, complaining about back-of-the-room seating, of course.

Treasurer

Robert N. Houser
2412 48th Street
Des Moines, IA 50310

I have noticed for years that a shocking number of our very own have no conception of what problems they cause the Reunion staff because they do not read the material we give them and consequently mess up the programs or frustrate the Reunion Staff with off-the-wall questions and even indignation because WE erred or overlooked something! You will find that it simply is not possible to anticipate the ways that our people will blindly assail you from a position of incredible incomprehension and inattention.

Directors

Joseph R. Hathaway
1031 N. Meade Avenue
Glendive, MT 59330

I thought these things should have ended with the 50th celebration. I am more convinced than ever that I was right. Lots of luck and endurance with Orlando, practice forbearance. I would not go through this again under any conditions.

John K. Hickey
3340 Nantucket Road
Lexington, KY 40502

Wallace T. Peckham
420 Starborough
League City, TX 77573

Here are a few suggestions for whatever they are worth.----

Donald L. Snock
45 N. Turkey Hill Road
Westport, CT 06880

Past President

C. Dale Briscoe
7829 Timber Top Drive
Fair Oaks Ranch, TX 78006

1. Make them pay up front when they make their reservation. A deposit with final pay 30 days in front of the opening will explode in your face--that final pay date will turn out to be their cancellation date. In 1988 we had over 100 cancel at final pay time. This time we had a total of 36 throughout the preceding months-not a big flurry near the end.
2. Most hotels want reservations with money or credit cards 45 days before your opening (or customer's arrival on site). Room blocks are usually cut off from 30 to 45 days before your opening-to give the hotel a chance to sell your unused room from those blocked earlier.
3. For late bookings, within 30 days of the opening, charge \$25 extra-ditto for cancellations within that period. It figures that some professional convention service company will be handling the future reunions and they expect to be paid for what they do. You will find that the later the cancellation the higher your costs, so you have to anticipate those costs somewhere up front.

1996 Reunion Chairman

Edward J. Hennessy
2013 Plaza del Padre
Las Vegas, NV 89102

British Representative

Ralph Franklin
Mill Hill
Keysoe, Beds MK44 2HP
England

1996 Reunion
28 Oct - 1 Nov
Riviera Hotel
Las Vegas, NV

4. Be realistic about the Registration fee--whether it is exposed or buried in a package cost. Theoretically, it will cover your basic administrative costs and a couple of bucks for the Group Treasury. Those "administrative" costs can include anything you plan to surprise the veterans with--as with our License Frames and Videos, for example. Otherwise, your estimate what you will spend on postage, long distance, fax, printing, badges, official uninvited guests, signs, office supplies, administration fee paid to professional company, etc. Add it up, divide by anticipated attendance and get a per person number. Then add about 15% to cover contingencies and the Group. Out of that will come the number you live or die with.
5. Our members are terribly prone to booking late, changing late and cancelling late. You are likely to have a \$12-15 per person handling fee from a professional (could be higher), promotional costs, literature "to support the event, such as our History & Roster and our Gala Evening--plus the table cards further highlighting the awards.
6. Do not have an on-site PX unless you have retail professional handling it. Just getting the right stuff to sell is next to impossible because of the average age. It really should be stopped. Mail order, if you feel merchandise is necessary, but think about the possibility that they are at a stage of life where they are discarding, not gathering. Suggestion: let the cheerleaders for the on-site PX do the work or find the paid stuff.
7. They are not readers as a group. After 1988 I thought about half were functional illiterates. It seems like more than half this year. I did not field a question that was not answered more than once in the material they had received at home and here. I even gave them all a "first"--a pocket size program they could carry around for reference. Forget it--they did.
8. You would have to be extremely lucky to find any members who are capable of assisting in the organization of the program and are willing to do it. Virtually everybody does not want to be involved. More the reason to hire a convention services company to do the job. Corporations do it that way all the time--so should the 306th.
9. With your reservation form--a big, visible part of it--say that advance reservations must be made for everything in the program. We were being swamped and imposed upon by people who wanted to look book the bus as it was boarding, the Banquet at the door--like that. We are not set up to do that and we do not want to be--it is too hard on the staff. Not to mention your suppliers.
10. In this Reunion we had a lot of "no-shows" about 12. I suspect that they cancelled their hotel room but they did not notify us--nor did the hotel notify us. Why should they, unless asked to do so--the member reserved his room separately from his Reunion arrangements, as it has been done for years. In the current case they were advised in the pocket program they all received with the confirmation, that kits would be at the Front Desk after 6:00PM (when our Group Registration closed). The result was that several kits were there and remained there--so they "no-showed" Splash (no refund) and no-showed optional tours (no refund because we had to guarantee our numbers). I see no reason for the 306th to eat such penalties because members are too unthinking or too penurious to also notify the Reunion Staff if they are not coming. Quite a few did do it correctly--leaving voice-mail messages for us. Note: with this age group you can't win them all. One lady was critical to Christine because we did not have "coffee and" in the Hospitality area in the morning "as they did in Knoxville". Reason": in the Riviera the cost is \$8.50 per person plus 17% tip and 7% tax, both mandatory, totalling \$8.06 per person or \$4030 per day for the 306th. You can bet they would all be there if the "coffee and" was there! That would have added \$24 .24 to our per person cost. We opted for a cash bar in the afternoon--and survived by virtue of enough business to make the \$500 minimum every day.

Conclusion: as I have written this I have become more convinced that the problems get worse as the members mature. Nothing could induce me to take an such a chore again. I said up front that I was too old for this kind of hassle but I caved in to many pleas. No more, thank you all very much.

Ed Hennessy

cc: Russell Strong
Shel Beigel

/car



367th, 368th, 369th, 423rd Squadrons, and service organizations
Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England – September 1942-April 1945

306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

8/19/96

President

M/Gen James S. Cheney
630 Cinnamon Court
Satellite Beach, FL 32937

Vice President

Robert W. Seelos
1458 Virginia Avenue
Glendale, CA 91202

Secretary

Russell A. Strong
5323 Cheval Place
Charlotte, NC 28205

Treasurer

Robert N. Houser
2412 48th Street
Des Moines, IA 50310

Directors

Joseph R. Hathaway
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John K. Hickey
3340 Nantucket Road
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Wallace T. Peckham
420 Starborough
League City, TX 77573

Donald L. Snook
45 N. Turkey Hill Road
Westport, CT 06880

Past President

C. Dale Briscoe
7829 Timber Top Drive
Fair Oaks Ranch, TX 78006

1996 Reunion Chairman

Edward J. Hennessy
2013 Plaza del Padre
Las Vegas, NV 89102

British Representative

Ralph Franklin
Mill Hill
Keysoe, Beds MK44 2HP
England

1996 Reunion

28 Oct - 1 Nov
Riviera Hotel
Las Vegas, NV

Dear Jim:

I added a special presentation - one of the montages with the attached copy in the biography space at the top. I'm sure the Franklins will be delighted - they will be here in October.

Bill Baker registered last week - it's been a long time since he has done so - he ran the Reunion at Crystal City (Alexandria), a vivid memory from that one - Murray Klette was there and he told me he was terminal. He died about 2 months later. As the guy with the most missions in the 8th - 92 - he was introduced and said a few words in response. Including the score that Baker posted - 72, as I recall I assume a lot of those while C.O. of the 303rd BG Army, Bill was 2nd in number of missions in the 8th - a little known achievement.

We're at the 360 registration point today. It looks like we will have to get a lot of late bookings in September to get up to the 560 I created for - vs 915 in the 1988 Las Vegas book. If you'd age would reduce the number this year, but not that much.

One couple cancelled after the Tuff disaster - afraid to fly from Pennsylvania - they plan to drive to Orlando next year. (Terrible attitude for a 306th vet - must have been a proud-gripper)

By the way - I keep watching for your name on the registration list!?

Ed

11/1/96

Russ —

Helen Burwick told me you
supplied 8 copies of the book —
here is your check.

It went pretty well -- except for
the table mix-up. Turned out some SOB
with a 306th badge slipped in a half
hour early and switched some table signs,
not worrying about differences in number
of chairs. That's how Jim Cheney wound
up without a seat until Barney provided
one at his table.

at the "Top" we were supposed to
have a 24" high stage for the duo and

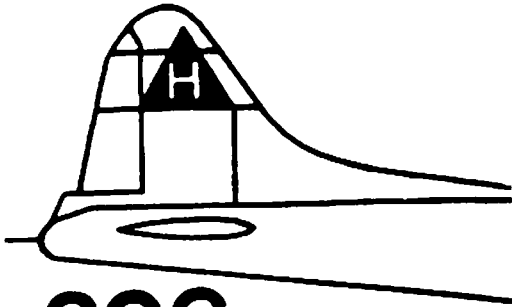
a small dance floor. Result was that Liz was frustrated by mindless old facts walking up to her and even bumping into her during her performance. Some even walked around her and all over a lot of sensitive wiring to get a view from the windows behind her. She thought they were a very nice audience but many were in their own little world and oblivious. However, I had warned them both that these were old people and often oblivious.

I think I wasted my time on the "literature". Hardly anybody read it. I could tell by the mindless questions they fired at me for 4 days.

Never again, thank God.

P.S. And MANY stupid suggestions about things I should have done!

ED



367th, 368th, 369th, 423rd Squadrons, and service organizations
Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England – September 1942-April 1945

306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

President
M/Gen James S. Cheney
630 Cinnamon Court
Satellite Beach, FL 32937

Memo To: 306th Officers
Reference: Late Cancellations
From: Ed Hennessy

November 4, 1996

Vice President
Robert W. Seelos
1458 Virginia Avenue
Glendale, CA 91202

We had 10 "No Shows" that cost us \$608.70 in unrecoverable "Splash" tickets and guaranteed optional tours.

Secretary
Russell A. Strong
5323 Cheval Place
Charlotte, NC 28205

Apparently these people cancelled the hotel rooms but not the separate reunion reservations. As we stated in the pocket-edition program that everybody received with their confirmation, reunion credentials were placed at the Front Desk at 6:00PM on Monday, (Oct. 28, for pick up when they checked in. (The hotel had no reason to notify us of room cancellations.)

Treasurer
Robert N. Houser
2412 48th Street
Des Moines, IA 50310

Directors
Joseph R. Hathaway
1031 N. Meade Avenue
Glendive, MT 59330

Things like this-among many other frustrations fortify my determination that this was my last Hurrah. It is simply too difficult to communicate with this age group and the only certainly is that they will upset the best laid plans. The vast majority do not have a clue about what it takes to operate a reunion and they **DO NOT READ.**

John K. Hickey
3340 Nantucket Road
Lexington, KY 40502

Wallace T. Peckham
420 Starborough
League City, TX 77573

Donald L. Snook
45 N. Turkey Hill Road
Westport, CT 06880

Many suggestions for "improvements" were laid on us. Like we should have had "coffee" ^{and rolls} each morning in the Hospitality area as "was done in Knoxville"! Of course, I considered it, but at \$6.50 per person plus mandatory 17% tip and 7% tax equalling \$8.06 per person it would have meant spending over \$4000 per day for this bunch. You can bet your bippie that if it were there, **THEY** would be there to partake. I opted for cash bars in the afternoon and we lucked out-they all reached their \$5,00 minimums and therefore cost us nothing.

Past President
C. Dale Briscoe
7829 Timber Top Drive
Fair Oaks Ranch, TX 78006

I would have preferred more bar service at the "Top of the Riv" reception but the cost indicated that it worked out--we were within 5 cents per person of our estimated consumption. A couple of more bars might have broken the bank--not to mention the over-indulgence problem.

1996 Reunion Chairman
Edward J. Hennessy
2013 Plaza del Padre
Las Vegas, NV 89102

British Representative
Ralph Franklin
Mill Hill
Keysoe, Beds MK44 2HP
England

1996 Reunion
28 Oct - 1 Nov
Riviera Hotel
Las Vegas, NV

Ed - I don't know how you keep your sanity with this bunch!

11/15/96

Dear Russ:

I was so engrossed in the logistics of the Banquet Program that I did not hear most of the words spoken. So, I was pretty defenseless when Geigel attacked me for being a terrible chairman who failed to get him the verbal recognition he deserved for his "incredibly difficult job" (as seating coordinator) which may be the greatest exaggeration of the decade. My 14 year old friend, Matt Taylor, viz. Danny's son, could have handled it quietly and efficiently but Geigel has to make an epic proportion out of a match hill job.

Until you told me, I was not aware of the personal slight to the majority of the crew chiefs - it certainly would have been in order to stand them up - but Barney balked when I suggested that he do a script for Jim Cheney - "I can't presume to put the words in his mouth - he would be insulted." He ^{simply} did not have a feel for P.R.

However we weren't all bad - I thought the crew chief articles in the books were complimentary and illuminating and I did have every crew chief's name badge engraved with "Crew Chief" and Squadron.

I must say I had no idea that there was such a craving to "get in the floor show" by so many people. It comes across to me as pettiness, so we can chalk up one more characteristic to go along with the widespread failure to read that I became aware of years ago. Perhaps even inability to read.

Maybe I'm getting them skinned on my old age but

I don't have much patience with pickiness from people who, for the most part, have never even participated in the past. However, I won't be involved anymore so I won't have to waste time worrying about it. But I sympathize with all future chairmen - the job gets harder and more thankless as the average age increases - which I have said since 1992 when I thought the whole thing should have been jolted up to avoid the inevitable deterioration. Just a big 50th and jolt up the tents and go home.

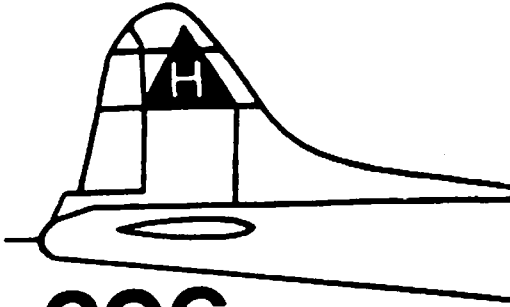
Joe said this before - we are starting to remind me of parks I saw as a little kid in Chicago that always had a few crazy old Civil War veterans on display. Does one pause, doesn't it?

Remember - Jim Venable pulled me to sponsor the 100-mission crew chief recognition to include his favorite mechanic pool that had specialists doing heavy maintenance that gave the 306th the fastest turn-around time in the 8th. I refused to take on any more and suggested that he volunteer to do it for the Orlando Battalion. (The pool was Henry Schmidt's creative concept that got him a bigger job in Bomber Command.) Jim never responded so I assume he is a fountain of ideas for other people to implement.

How you have managed to do what you do for all these years amazes me. I would have exploded long ago!

Take care,

Ed



367th, 368th, 369th, 423rd Squadrons, and service organizations
Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England – September 1942-April 1945

306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

May 29, 1996

President
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Secretary
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Las Vegas, NV 89102

British Representative
Ralph Franklin
Mill Hill
Keysoe, Beds MK44 2HP
England

1996 Reunion
28 Oct - 1 Nov
Riviera Hotel
Las Vegas, NV

Dear Russ:

I decided to point out some of the lesser known, but important, facts about Las Vegas. It seems likely that a lot of our members could be expected to have some misconceptions about Las Vegas, if not an outright bias.

Like my former Co-pilot, Rogers Littlejohn (reborn) and a non-member friend, Andy Rooney. Andy was on the verge of accepting my invitation to come to the 1988 Reunion and finally confessed that he just does not like Las Vegas and declined. I have always assumed that he was afraid the media would have reported such a visit as out of character for him. Whatever the real reason, which may simply be disapproval. I thought he would have been an interesting guest but I won't repeat the invitation this year.

However, I think I'll send him copies of the booklets, to show him the crew chief theme and a few other historic facts about the Group, after all, he was an EM and seemed to identify best with them during WWII. He might even do a piece about the 306th-who knows?

I am also asking you to find room in the next Echoes for the West Rim Story, which you must have lost in the shuffle. This is the most significant new tour that has come into being in my lifetime. I would like to get the message across that after all these years we can now offer a fine one-day surface tour to the Grand Canyon. It's the hottest program ever offered from Las Vegas but it's hard to get the message across to our people. It probably seems a little expensive for one day, but compared to the alternatives it's a good value-and that's why it is a hot item in the tour business. They save a full day and an overnight compared to the traditional South Rim (or North) tours-and a LOT of miles-3 hours each way vs 7-8 hours each way. It's a great opportunity for enhancing their Reunion experience.

I might add that we're "giving it away "at \$10 less than the regular price simply because it would be a shame to miss the chance to see this great wonder-we will make less than \$5 each on these tickets, if we don't get at least 25 to go we will lose \$10 each. Predictably, Hoover Dam/Lake Mead is the popular seller-even though the West Rim tour crosses the Dam twice and gets great views of Lake Mead each way.

Congratulations on your coming 50th Anniversary. You were like me-you didn't waste much time getting the knot tied when you got home!

Best Wishes,

P.S. I'll get a color shot from the Riviera and send it. The Las Vegas C. & V. is looking for a Strip map for us.

THE REAL LAS VEGAS REVEALED
Ed Hennessy & Barney Rawlings
'96 Reunion Co-Chairmen

Las Vegas; known universally as the "Entertainment Capitol of the World"; likewise, a Mecca of gaming, has many additional important attributes less well known.

Significantly, Las Vegas is rapidly gaining leadership as a family-oriented destination; complete with theme parks and youth/family attractions everywhere!

Las Vegas has nearly 200 primary and secondary schools in the eleventh largest school district in the U.S., with about 160,000 enrolled. UNLV has over 20,000 students with a Community College enrollment approaching 20,000.

The Las Vegas Metro area (known as Las Vegas) dominates Clark County, which is comparable in area to the state of Massachusetts. The State of Nevada, admitted to the Union in 1864, is the seventh largest state in total area.

In Spanish, Nevada means "Snowcapped", and our first time visitors are usually surprised to "discover" that we live in a spectacular mountain valley. Our ski slopes are only 45 minutes from the city and our mountain scenery is gorgeous at any time of the year.

There is also Lake Mead, 30 minutes away, with 550-plus miles of shoreline and every kind of water sport and activity. It was created by Hoover Dam which draws over 10 million visitors per year.

After a century of Grand Canyon tourism restricted to the North and South Rim visitor centers, two days and an overnight stay for surface travellers, the Hualapai Native Americans are now welcoming visitors to their spectacular West Rim location. For the first time there is a same day bus trip to the Canyon-one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Give Option E your serious consideration. It is a great opportunity!

The Riviera has everything necessary to satisfy the most discriminating visitor right on campus; 15 restaurants ranging from Burger King to Gourmet, 5 shows, and even has a resident Chaplain; an Air Force Reservist, who, by the way, is scheduled for the Invocation at our Banquet.

Your Reunion Committee has designed a program for you aimed at providing you with a very enjoyable Las Vegas experience - plus some optimal choices in and around the city demonstrating why 4,000 to 6,000 new residents per month have increased the metropolitan population from 28,000 to over 1 million in the last thirty years. Interestingly enough, **most of these newcomers are retired people - our generation, with a very high percentage of Military Retirees.**

Your Committee is proud of this community, and anxiously looks forward to sharing a marvelous Las Vegas experience with the fellow-"306ers"!

THE WEST RIM OF THE GRAND CANYON---
A NEW VIEW FOR OUR "96" REUNION

The Grand Canyon was designated a National Park in 1919 and soon became more of a tourist Mecca than ever. However, in over a century of visitation by explorers and sightseers the South and North Rims have hosted virtually all visitors. Quite recently, the Hualapai Indians started welcoming visitors to their reservation on the West Rim-a million acres stretched along 108 miles of the Colorado River. To put that in perspective: about half of the Grand Canyon.

Happily for us, the new approach can be utilized in a comfortable day-trip from Las Vegas via Grayline Motorcoach. It is only 120 miles to the Hualapai Mesa and the coaches are modern, air-conditioned and equipped with restrooms.

The route to the Grand Canyon traverses the Hoover Dam each way and provides spectacular views of Lake Mead. You will see Black Canyon and thousands of unusual specimens in the Joshua Tree Forest. Our Hualapai hosts were historically known as the People of the Tall Pines-"HUAL-BAY" was the original Indian word for these people.

Upon arrival at the reservation your Hualapai guide will assume the direction of your tour along the High Mesa. Don't forget your camera, because there are lots of photo-stops. At Guano Peak, the most spectacular lookout point, an Indian Barbecue lunch will be served. Here, you are 3,500 feet above the Colorado River winding through the bottom of the Canyon. If you are wearing your comfortable shoes you will enjoy walking to other near-by view points.

Before leaving the Reservation you will visit the Indian Craft and Gift Shop. If you are not a shopper you may enjoy chatting with some of the Indian Guides before starting back to Las Vegas.

Your Reunion Program offers this marvelous West Rim tour as an optional activity on Wednesday, October 30. Until this new tour was created, surface travellers needed two days and an overnight to visit the Canyon. Now you have a great opportunity to see one of the Seven Wonders of the World in a single day during the Reunion in Las Vegas. The cost, including lunch will be \$89 per person.

If you have never seen the Canyon you owe it to yourself to do so in 1996. Even if you HAVE seen it before, this is a new way and you will be seeing parts that, until now, have been almost the private purview of the Hualapai!

1/5/96

Dear Russ:

Jack sent me a very enlightening letter about the PX. I made the tabular sheet summary from his numbers. The right hand column shows my recommendations for LV.

The stuff does not sell the way it did 8 years ago. Knoxville averaged \$8 per registrant at best. In '88 we averaged over \$18 because the guys were younger and more into memorabilia then.

The Lipel pin sold best in Knoxville, but at \$5 retail it doesn't do much for the Treasury. None of it does in actuality. \$3237 gross sales probably means a 40% net of under \$1300 after paying all the bills. We'd do better passing the hat.

Note that Knoxville's average sale per registrant was about \$8 — in '88 it was over \$18 per, but that won't happen again at our average age in '96! It's like the old man said: "I won't even buy a green banana."

I'm willing to run a clearance sale and even restock a little on Golf shirts, caps and pins — maybe a few watches, but we still have 27 in stock since only 18 went away in Knoxville. I suspect that some of the more affluent rivercreek types would buy the patch montage if we make them up at whatever price.

As the King of Siam said in "The King and I" — "Is a puzzlement!"

ED

1/2/95

PRICE	ITEM	PREVIOUS INV.	MAX SALES	EST PROFIT (40%)	IN STOCK	% SOLD MAX	
10 ⁰⁰	T's - SA *	124	43	172 -	81	35%	CLEAR @ \$5
15 ⁰⁰	SP. SHIRT - 1ST OVER LOGO	10	2	12 -	8	20%	CLEAR @ \$5
20 ⁰⁰	GOLF SHIRT - ^{EMBROIDERED} B17, SA, GP	97	54	432 -	43	56%	
10 ⁰⁰	GAP - GRAY - ^{EMBROIDERED} 1ST OVER **	82	64	256 -	18	78%	CLEAR @ \$5
25 ⁰⁰	MEN'S WATCH	17	11	170 -	6	65%	ORDER A FEW
25 ⁰⁰	LADY WATCH	10	7	70 -	3	70%	ORDER A FEW
10 ⁰⁰	TIES	114	4	16 -	110	3.5%	CLEAR @ \$5
.50	RECALLS	1182	102	20 -	1080	8%	GIVE AWAY
5 ⁰⁰	PATCHES						
	306 1st	50	6	12 -	44	12%	CLEAR \$2
	306 only	29	2	4 -	27	7%	CLEAR \$2
	5" 306 only	24	1	2 -	23	4%	CLEAR \$2
	367	50	6	12 -	44	12%	CLEAR \$2
	368	30	2	4 -	28	7%	CLEAR \$3
	369	30	4	8 -	27	13%	CLEAR \$2
	423	27	6	12 -	21	22%	CLEAR \$2

NOTE: MAKE 20 FRAMES - 5" GROUP IN CENTER, 4 SDs IN CORNERS, SET IN MAT. POSSIBLE GRAPHIC CONDENSED STATE OF GROUP RECORD - PROBABLE PRICE ABOUT \$75 - COULD BE MORE!

5 ⁰⁰	LAPEL/HAT PIN 8-17	80	73	146 -	7	97%	REORDER
2 ⁰⁰	BLACK THURSDAY	292	8	6 ⁰⁰	284	3%	GIVE AWAY

* REWRITE BUT ADD: "MY GRANDPA WAS A MEMBER" OR "--- WAS IN THIS SQUADRON" OR CHANGE TO GROUP T WITH "--- WAS IN THIS BOND GROUP" (EASIER SELL)
 ** CAPS KEEP SELLING BECAUSE THEY WEAR OUT. CHANGE TO ROYAL BLUE WITH SCRAMBLE D EGG AND ORDER 100

ESTIMATED PROFIT IN MARCH MADE FOR SHIPPING INVEN IT SEEMS LIKE A THIS KIND OF EARNING. IN PROFIT. IN SALES ITS I WOULD LEARN TOO. WITH A MAIL ORDER CLERK. A LOT BETTER BY SIMPLY \$5 TO THE TREASURY.

2LES - \$1354.40 WITH ALLOWANCE TO AND FROM. TIME, EFFORT AND RISK FOR PAY OUT TO ABOUT \$3.50 PER REGISTRANT. \$8 PER REGISTRANT. PASSING OUT THE ENTIRE OPERATION SALE. STRIKES ME WE WOULD DOING THE MEMBERS TO CONTRIBUTE
 E J H

DONALD R. ROSS
9425 ZORINSKY FEDERAL BUILDING
OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68101-0307

January 27, 1997

Edward J. Hennessy
2013 Plaza Del Padre
Las Vegas, NV 89102

Dear Ed,

Thank you for your recent letter about the model airplanes that were sold at the last reunion. These planes were on the same table for at least 3 days of the reunion, and I assumed that the lady who was taking orders had permission to do so.

I ordered one of the customized B-17's and gave her a check for \$80, which has been cashed. I have tried to reach her twice but she does not return my call.

The name of the company is L'Shedon Enterprises. It is owned by Ed and Cora Leano and there is a flat line above the n. They claim to have a branch office in Las Vegas at 4309 Via Vaquerro Avenue, zip code 89102, telephone number 702-257-7135. Their principal office is at 844 East University Avenue, Fresno, California 93704, and their telephone number is 209-237-4557. I have tried to call her at that number and have talked to someone there who has agreed to have her call me, but she has not returned my call.

If there is anything further I can do, or if you need my cancelled check, please let me know.

Kindest personal regards.

Sincerely,



Jan. 31, 1997

150 Charles F. Jones
136 Coventry Drive
Henderson NV 89014

Crazy -

Here is a copy of the letter I received from Judge Ross which clearly illustrates the seriousness of the problem created by the unauthorized sale of models at the 30th Reunion.

It is obvious that full disclosure of the conditions of sale and delivery was not made during his transaction. Nor was it done in the case of Howard Hutchinson. These are the only two that I am currently aware of.

I feel very foolish because the enterprise was launched on my watch as Chairman without my knowledge or permission. I did, in fact, notice a model display one day on a table in the Hospitality area as I passed by but I assumed it was one of our members showing his collection - it has happened before.

This time was different in several ways shown in Judge Ross' letter - repetitive unauthorized presence and an unauthorized operation given the appearance of legitimacy by your apparent sponsorship. I know of these two cases of disappointed and angry customers - I assume there were others. Not only was this unauthorized, it was amateurish.

Another concern: the Group has an unexpected and unwanted liability in these cases because the operation took place on Group property in effect that was provided as a Reunion facility in the package of arrangements in the Reunion Contract.

2

This area was not open to the public and certainly not to an unauthorized vendor. It appears also that this vendor was cloaked in the mantle of our tax free organization. Clark County would object to an unlicensed business, the State would look for Sales Tax revenue and the IRS would surely be interested.

This activity points up the need for a Security Chairman at our future Reunions to protect the Group from such trespassing.

The proper procedure would have included an agreement with our on-site PX that would have put the control and supervision where it belonged -- in the PX area as part of the organizational structure of the Reunion.

You now have the obligation to make sure that your local partner and the principals in Fresno do in fact deliver the goods or make refunds. If they do not, the buyers will look to you and to the Group for relief. If there will be ongoing delays in delivery, you or the vendors must notify each buyer as to when the model will be forthcoming and why it has been delayed.

Please take care of these problems now to prevent further embarrassment, if not worse, to the Group.

E. J. Hennessey

12/19/96

Dear Russ:

I thought I had the flu for the last 3 weeks but it turned out to be pneumonia - "walking" variety. Hah! I was staggering around like an old drunk. I was ordered back to bed today, so who knows what I'll be able to do for Christmas.

However, the reason for this message was a request from Ralph Borkner, that came today, for a pair of prints of the Franklin Award. If you don't have any, let me know and I'll ask my granddaughter to go into the Cashman files and try to find the negative or negatives among the 400 plus in the 306th file. (She's willing but I hate to do it to her - she works and is raising two little girls.)

Anyway, let me know -

Happy Holidays,

Ed

P.S. Borkner is in FL until mid-January.

P.S. 2 - I did not get a card from Casey this year, although I sent him one with an olive branch message. Which was a hell of a lot more than the old music scandal after the way he tried to manipulate me for Speck's Russian registration.

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

2013 Plaza Del Padre
Las Vegas, Nevada 89102
(702) 362-0424

2/20/97

Dear Bob,

The 306th Montage with the special
dedication to Boeing is now in the custody
of:

Mr. Dennis Park, Curator
Museum of Flight

9404 E. Marginal Way So.
Seattle, WA 98108.

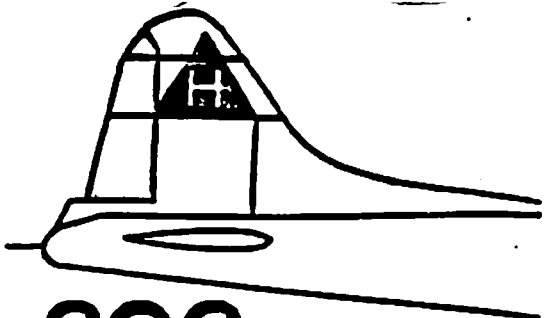
My son, Mike, was finally able to
get to him this week. You should probably
do an appropriate letter on the 306th
letterhead (current model, I trust!) and
mail it or FAX it to him. Maybe you'll want
to thank him out on your coming up there to
make an official presentation!

His FAX is (206) 764-5707
PH is (206) 764-5700

Take care,

Ed

cc: Russ Stang



367th, 368th, 369th, 423rd Squadrons, and service organizations
Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England - September 1942-April 1945

306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

March 6, 1997

President

M/Gen James S. Cheney
630 Cinnamon Court
Satellite Beach, FL 32937

Vice President

Robert W. Seelos
1458 Virginia Avenue
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Past President

C. Dale Briscoe
7829 Timber Top Drive
Fair Oaks Ranch, TX 78006

1996 Reunion Chairman

Edward J. Hennessy
2013 Plaza del Padre
Las Vegas, NV 89102

British Representative

Ralph Franklin
Mill Hill
Keysoe, Beds MK44 2HP
England

1996 Reunion
28 Oct - 1 Nov
Riviera Hotel
Las Vegas, NV

Mr. Dennis Pack, Curator
Museum of Flight
Dear Mr. Pack:

It was my son, Mike, who delivered the 306th Montage to your office recently. He then called me and mentioned that I should sign in as a single member, designated a "Navigator". I believe, after all the inbetween years since I was a pilot I want let that letter me - herewith my check for \$35.

You will notice the letterhead used while I was chairman of our Reunion last October here in Las Vegas I conceived, composed and laid out the Montage, designated "Heirloom Montage", in anticipation that some of our aged members would to leave one or more for their heirs - many did. We turned out 530 this time, not as good as in 1968 when 915 came. These 8 years inbetween reflected our current 76 years average age. By the way, that 915 was an all

Time read for a single Air Force unit.

In 1975, when I was president of Eastern Travel in Chicago, a prominent wholesaler company operating world wide programs, I was the subject of a biographical Broery ad done for the national travel trade media - 2 page spread in color with pictures and a final testimonial to Broery aircraft.

Harry been the fifth of the 8 original pilots to survive 25 missions - we went overseas with 35 in the Group - I developed a warm feeling for the B-17. However, not wishing to push my luck, nor my surprising method for survival, I opted to return to the US... marry my fiancee and finish out the war as a B-17 and B-29 tactical pilot instructor.

The 366th had a colorful and interesting history which has been well-chronicled in Russell A. Strong's masterpiece book, "First Over Germany" - some 300 pages of in-depth research and reporting. If you are interested I'm sure he would be glad to send you a copy. Let me know - he has been our permanent Group Liaison Secretary for years.

The Group is so old that I am often reminded of my boyhood in Chicago when the big holiday parades

3

in downtown Chicago often included a few wobbly survivors of the Civil War in full uniform! Not many in our Group showed up at Reunions in uniform, but we are getting pretty wobbly!

Incidentally, my regularly assigned B-17F was #124560. I believe that number is fairly close to the one on your restoration aircraft soon to be unveiled.

Very truly yours.

Ed Hennessy

99th 6124

Dec. 20, 1994

Dear Mr. Hennessey -

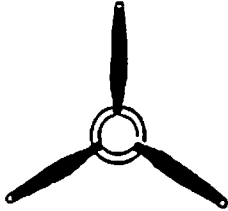
I received the enclosed information and thought you might be interested. I don't know whether or not he knew Frank personally - or any of the other men.

Unfortunately, I have little to tell him. Frank was a very private, quiet person. He felt guilty about the Brau and was very reticent about any explanation. I constantly tried to get him to open up, but to no avail.

Perhaps you might have something of interest for Mr. Duricev.

Hoping you have a happy holiday -

Sincerely -
Loretta Jackson



Sunday 4th of December 94

PHENIX

Dear Sir,

I am local historian in northern of France. I am very interested by the Second World War history and more particularly by the aerial war in the Lille area.

On the 13rd of January 1943, at 2.30 pm during the mission "8th AAF-BC-29" on Lille RR yards, two 306th Bomb Group B 17's collided after bombing and were lost. They were two aircrafts from the 369th Bomb Squadron; serial: 41-24471. Capt. James A. JOHNSTON and crew; and serial 41-24498 Lt Jack A. SPAULDING and crew. According to the information I own, the first A/C with the tail section cut off crashed at Marcq en Baroeul. The second exploded in the air, over Wambrechies/Marquette/Marcq en Baroeul. That's why I venture to write to you. Excuse me to remind you some bad memories.

I know you were aboard the A/C Sn:41-24471 and I would be happy if you would like to bring me your testimony about this incident and tell me your memories about it. Have you got a picture of your crew and of your aircraft? Had it got a nickname? What do you know concerning your comrades? What were their function on board? Any information concerning that will interest me.

I can say to you that your comrades in arms, dead on that day, have been buried in the cemetery of Marcq en Baroeul and nowadays lie at the Netherlands American Military Cemetery (Margraten)

-Capt. James A. JOHNSTON -Plot L, row 14 grave 5

-Sgt. Charles R. TIPTON -Plot B, row 10 grave 17

The remains of Capt. Doyle L. DUGGER were repatriated after the war at the family request.

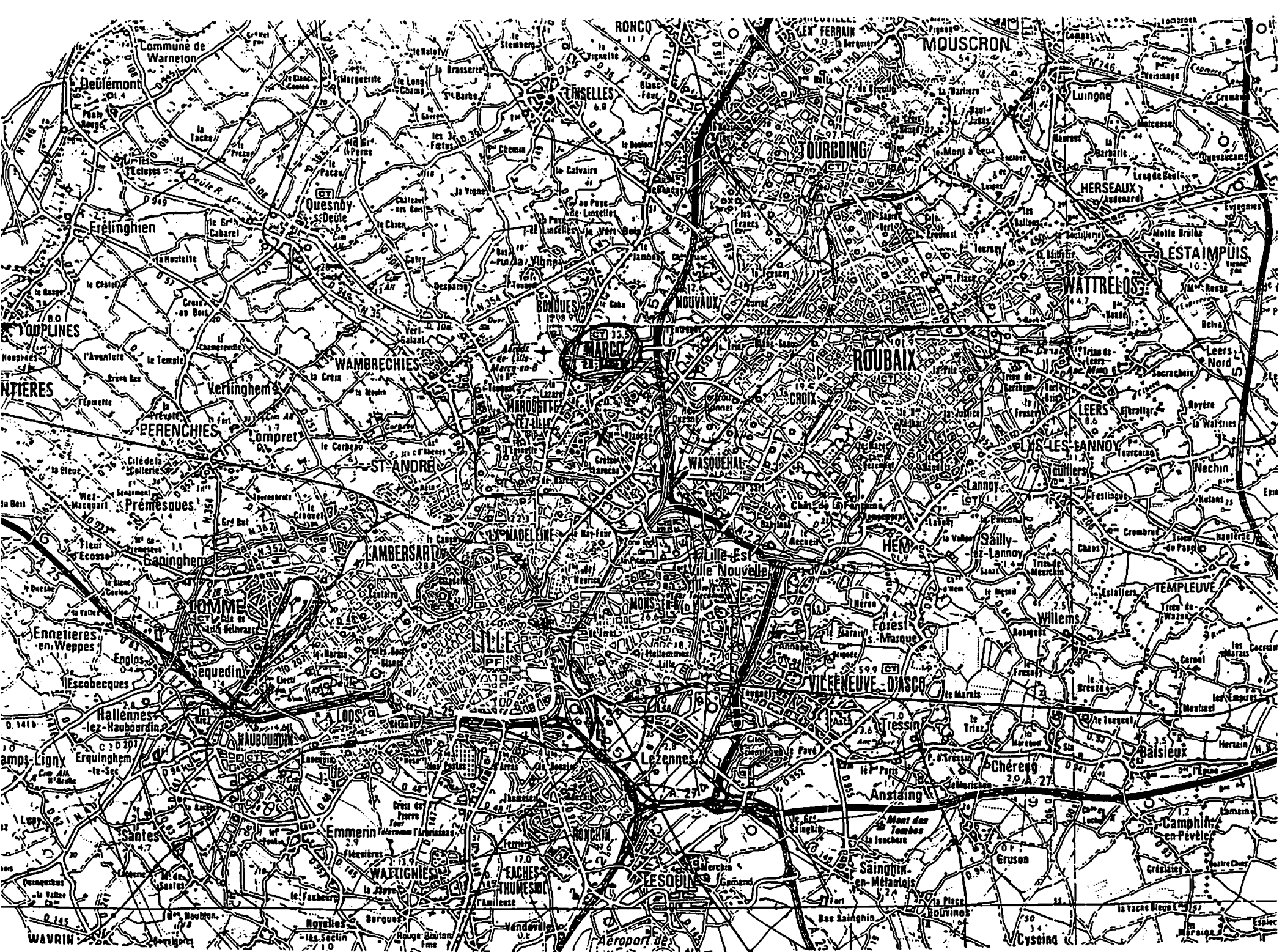
Would you help me in my historical work(it's for me a labor of love)
Don't hesitate to tell me how I owe you for the possible pictures fees.

I thank you in advance for your help.

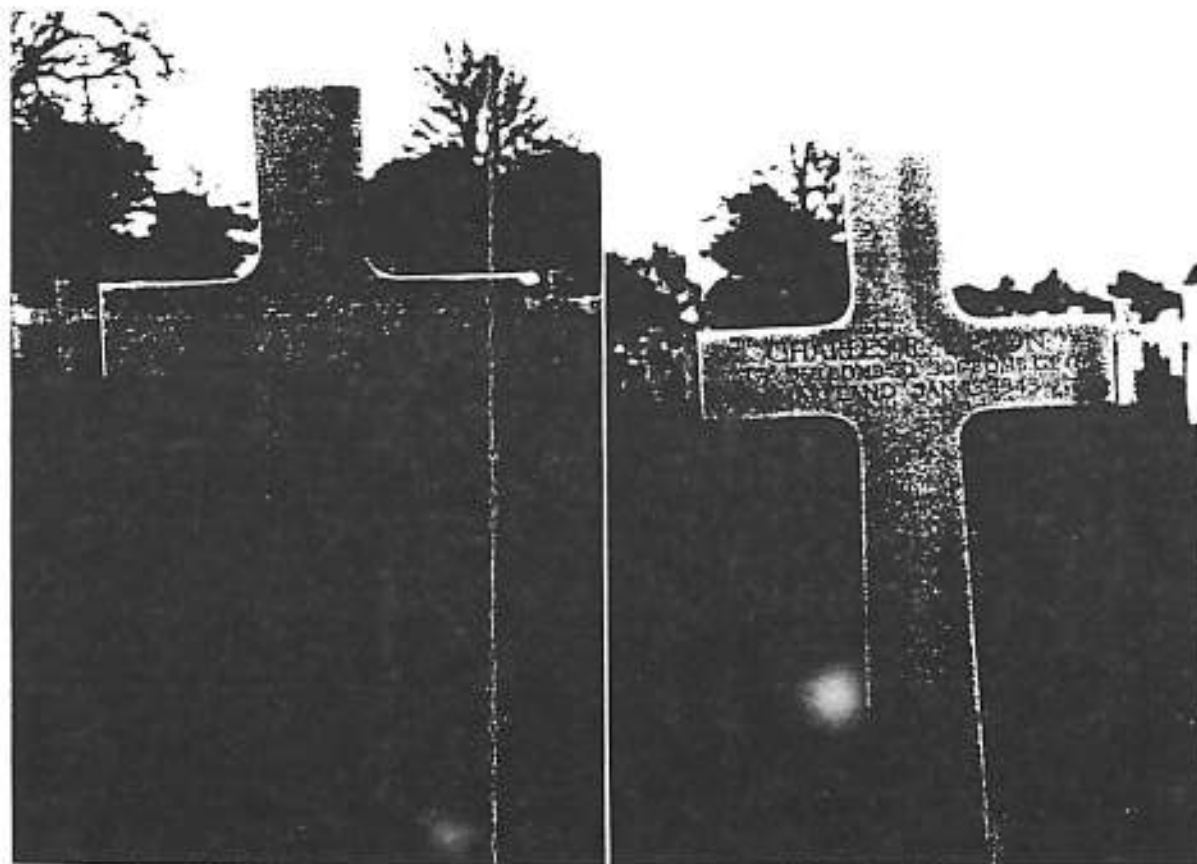
Sincerely,

ALAIN DURIER
6, CHEMIN VERT
F. 59115, LEERS, FRANCE

THE POSTMARK WAS:
IVS-LEZ-LANNOY



These did not photo copy very well because the original is very dark.
LH



JAMES A. JOHNSON
CAPT. 369 BOMB SQUAD
306 BOMB GR. (H)
OKLAHOMA JAN. 13, 1943

CHARLES TIPTON
S. SGT. 369th Bomb Squad 306 BOMB GR (H)
MARYLAND JAN. 13, 1943

EDWARD J. HENNESSY
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

3 January 1994

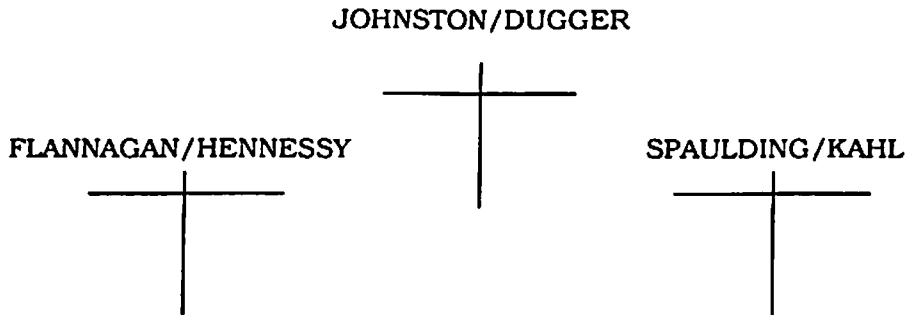
Dear Mr. Durier:

Mrs. Frank Jacknik sent me your letter of 4 December 1994 concerning the 13 January 1943 mission to Lille by the 306th Bomb Group (H). Frank and I were part of the same crew when we flew to England in September 1942. Frank died several years ago.

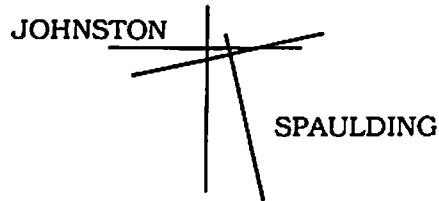
I have a vivid recollection of that mission over Lille because I had a close-in view of the accident. Lille was my fifth mission as a co-pilot and a few days later I was elevated to pilot and completed my 25th mission on 29 May 1943.

On 13 January, I flew as co-pilot for Charles Flannagan and, of course, occupied the right-side seat, the one with the perfect view of the accident.

Here is our part of the formation on that occasion:



As we left the target area the formation turned left and then straightened to our new course. To my dismay, Spaulding did not straighten to the new course but kept turning left, and, as if it were a slow-motion movie, moved across and barely over Johnston's plane. He was slightly forward of Johnston and his left wing barely cleared the leader's fuselage. Picture this:



Then Spaulding's left engine propellers chewed into Johnston's left wing. Spaulding's left wing then dropped further and was struck by the vertical stabilizer of Johnston's plane, which broke in half and then they were all gone in flashes of flames and debris. I had a perfect view from no more than 20 meters distance but was unable to do anything except observe the tragedy.

It was surprising that anybody managed to get out of the wreckage of either plane but most surprising was the survival of Johnston's tail gunner. Although the entire tail section was cut away when Spaulding's plane crashed through the fuselage that gunner managed to escape and parachute to the relative safety of German captivity. I believe that man was Sgt. Thomas McMahon, P. O. Box 502, Redway, California 95560-0587, telephone (707) 986-7606. You may wish to write him or call him and ask for his recollections.

I have often speculated about the cause of this accident since there was no apparent damage to Spaulding's aircraft during the bombing operation. My only conclusion was that Spaulding's oxygen supply must have been cut off. He was clearly visible to me as he sat in his left-side seat. Lack of oxygen

is not always noticed by the victim unless he happens to look at the oxygen gauge. He is more likely to fall into a state of rapture, as in "rapture of the deep", which is akin to intoxication. Although Spaulding appeared to be seeing what was happening he was unable to do anything to prevent it. He had always been a competent pilot which fortifies my belief that anoxia was the problem. It could have resulted from a prior movement in his seat that caused the oxygen hose to disconnect, a not uncommon occurrence with those early model systems.

That is all I can remember about the mission. I must tell you that I was amazed by the amount of detail you have unearthed prior to this. Jogging my memory as you did brought back some other thoughts that you might find interesting. The 306th Bomb Group (H) was the oldest operational Group in the Eighth Air Force. We formed in Wendover, Utah, in 1942. It is worth noting that almost six months from the time the activation orders were issued, the 306th flew its first mission on 9 October 1942, an amazing feat of organization, training and logistics.

Coincidentally, it was a Lille mission on the 9th of October. I was on this mission also. We lost one crew. Forty years later, at a small reunion at Thurleigh, England, we welcomed Al LaChasse back from that first mission. Al had been a prisoner throughout the war and finally made it back to the base in 1982!

As the oldest Group, we had our problems. Daylight bombing was a new concept for which all tactics were theoretical. Flight crews were young and inexperienced, equipment was new and untried, replacement parts were scarce and the German fighter resistance was fierce. And, they were experienced since they came from the Russian front. We had no fighter escort support for the first six months since our "little friends" did not have enough range in those early days. Besides these problems, we had winter weather to contend with plus the constant political pressure from Washington to attack the Germans and thus raise American civilian morale!

To give you an idea of how it went in the early months, I will list the statistics for the original 306th personnel of which I was one. It was easy to track these men because they came over as a unit. By January, 1943, we began receiving replacement crews and the Group became a fluid, ever-changing combat unit. Only the original crews could be identified as the basic 306th and they could be tracked until they completed their tour or were otherwise eliminated. As you will see, their losses were staggering. Not suprisingly, there were a number of psychological losses, or breakdowns, that reduced our numbers, see "relieved and reassigned" below. I do not remember a single mission without losses, for example. Hard on the nerves.

306th Bomb Group (H)
Thurleigh, England
1942-1945

35 Original Aircrews - 315 Airman
arrived Thurleigh on 11 September 1942

	%
8 Crews - 68 Airmen: Survived 25 Missions	21.6
93 Airmen: Killed In Action/Died of Wounds	29.5
88 Airmen: Prisoners of War	28.0
9 Airmen: Evaded Capture	2.9
13 Airmen: Killed in Training	4.1
10 Airmen: Wounded and Grounded	3.1
29 Airmen: Relieved and Reassigned	9.2
<u>5</u> Airmen: Unknown	<u>1.6</u>
315	100.0

I hope all this is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

CC: Loretta Jacknik
Thomas McMahon

Edward J. Hennessy
Pilot, 369th Sq, 306th BG (H)
Thurleigh, England
11 September 1942 - 10 June 1943



**"Little Audrey"
B17F, #124560
Call Letters: WW W
369th Squadron, 306 Bomb Group (H)
and
Crew**

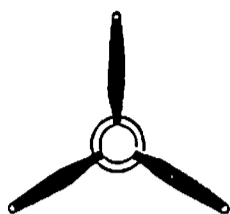
Photo taken in ^{MARCH} ~~May~~ 1943

Station 111, Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England

L-R:

T/Sgt	Billy Drennan	Radio/Gunner
S/Sgt	Robert (Red) Adams	Waist Gunner
1/Lt	William Colantoni	Bombardier
T/Sgt	Tony Santoro	Tail Gunner
1/Lt	Rogers Littlejohn	C0-Pilot
1/Lt	Edward J. Hennessy, Jr	Pilot
1/Lt	Charles F. (GI) Jones	Navigator
T/Sgt	Joe Bowles	Ball Turret Gunner
T/Sgt	Glen R. Wylly	Flight Engineer/Gunner
S/Sgt	Patrick Spellman	Waist Gunner

Catholic Chaplain, Father Adrian Poletti, blessing crew



PHENIX

15th of January 1995

Dear Mr Hennessy,

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I thank you very much for your letter. I didn't know that Frank Jacknik is deceased. Your memories about the mission over Lille on the 13th of January 1943 and the accident are very interesting. I am always pleased to have a good contact with Veterans.

In April 1984, I wrote to Mr Russ STRONG, 306th BG historian, about this subject, but I never received a reply; I'm a little disappointed. All I know about this story, I've known it thanks to people who saw the accident happen and saw crashes; I've also been helped by USAF HRA Maxwell and National Archives. Let me list all these information :

- The first A/C with the tail section cut off crashed on Marcq en Baroeul (see map A) at least one body has been found in the wreck, more precisely in the flight deck. The bodies of James JOHNSTON, Doyle DUGGER and Charles TIPTON have been buried in the cemetery of Marcq en Baroeul with a body of a fourth victim, identified by mistake as Thomas McMahon ? I must say that I still don't understand who he could be. Concerning Thomas McMahon, I know he landed at Wattrelos (see map B), near the Belgian frontier. He has been helped by two men who brought him to Roubaix. Later, he went to Belgium at Tournai but has been captured by the Germans on the 24th of April at Brussels.

I wrote to him in December but to Redway; PO Box 582 ! I hope he did receive a letter and he will be kind to answer to me. I also wrote to Mr Shedrick JONES, Mr Fred ZDOBYLAK, I hope I'll have an answer. My letter to Mr Robert STEVENSON came back and I've known recently that he is deceased.

- The second A/C exploded in the air over Wambrechies/Marquette/Marcq en Baroeul (see map C). The bodies of Jack SPAULDING, Gordon GRANT, Dale DAVIS, Thomas GILLILAND, Leon WILLIAMS have been buried in the cemetery of Wambrechies. Louis MORGAN, wounded, has been brought to Lille where he died and has been buried on the 18th. I can say to you that many witnesses assured me they saw the Germans shooting on the parachutists... The remains of Jack SPAULDING, Thomas GILLILAND and Louis MORGAN were repatriated after the war at the family request. The remains of the other crew members lie nowadays at the American Military Cemetery of Epinal (east of France)

Gordon R. GRANT Plot A Row 47 Grave 18
Dale A. DAVIS Plot B Row 17 Grave 38
Leon WILLIAMS Plot A Row 7 Grave 53

I've also wrote in December to Mr Wallace KIRKPATRICK, Russel G. KAHL and Earl SANTOS. I also hope to have a reply.

- You tell me about the mission over Lille on the 9th of October 1942. A few years ago, I've worked on the loss of the A/C 41-24510, Capt John OLSON and his crew (the crash site is 1 Km from my home (see map D)). A few years ago, I've been in relation with Albert LaCHASSE I was in good contact with. I've been sorry to know he deceased last year. As you took part in this mission, I would be pleased if you could tell me your memories about this mission.

- I've also worked on the loss of the A/C 41-24472 on the 8th of November 1942, Capt Richard ADAMS and his crew (see map E). I've succeeded in having a good contact with Julius LANDRUM who is the only survivor today.



Last year, a memorial plaque has been affixed near the crash site, indicating the names of the aviators dead on that day. Did you take part in this mission? If you did, I'd like to have your memories about this mission.

Do you know if the 2 A/C lost on the 13th of January 1943 had a nickname? Is there a photograph of these crews and/or of these aircrafts? I would be interested by any photograph about the following crews and A/C from the 306th Bomb Group, lost in my area:

41-24510 Capt John OLSON and Crew " Snoozy II "
41-24472 Capt Richard ADAMS and Crew " Grapes of Wrath "
41-24471 Capt James JOHNSTON and Crew ?
41-24498 Lt Jack SPAULDING and Crew ?

Any information about these losses would be welcome.

Do you remember the Serial Number and the nickname of the aircraft in which you were on the 13th of January 1943? Do you have its photograph? Don't hesitate to tell me how much I owe you for the eventual fees for copy.

Could you tell me when the A/C of the 369th BG began wearing the squadron codes WW on the fuselage, their call letter and also for the Triangle H on the tail?

Do you know that your A/C 41-24560 " Little Audrey " has been transferred to the 384th BG in September 1943 and then to a Base Air depot to return to the USA on the 15th of March 1944.

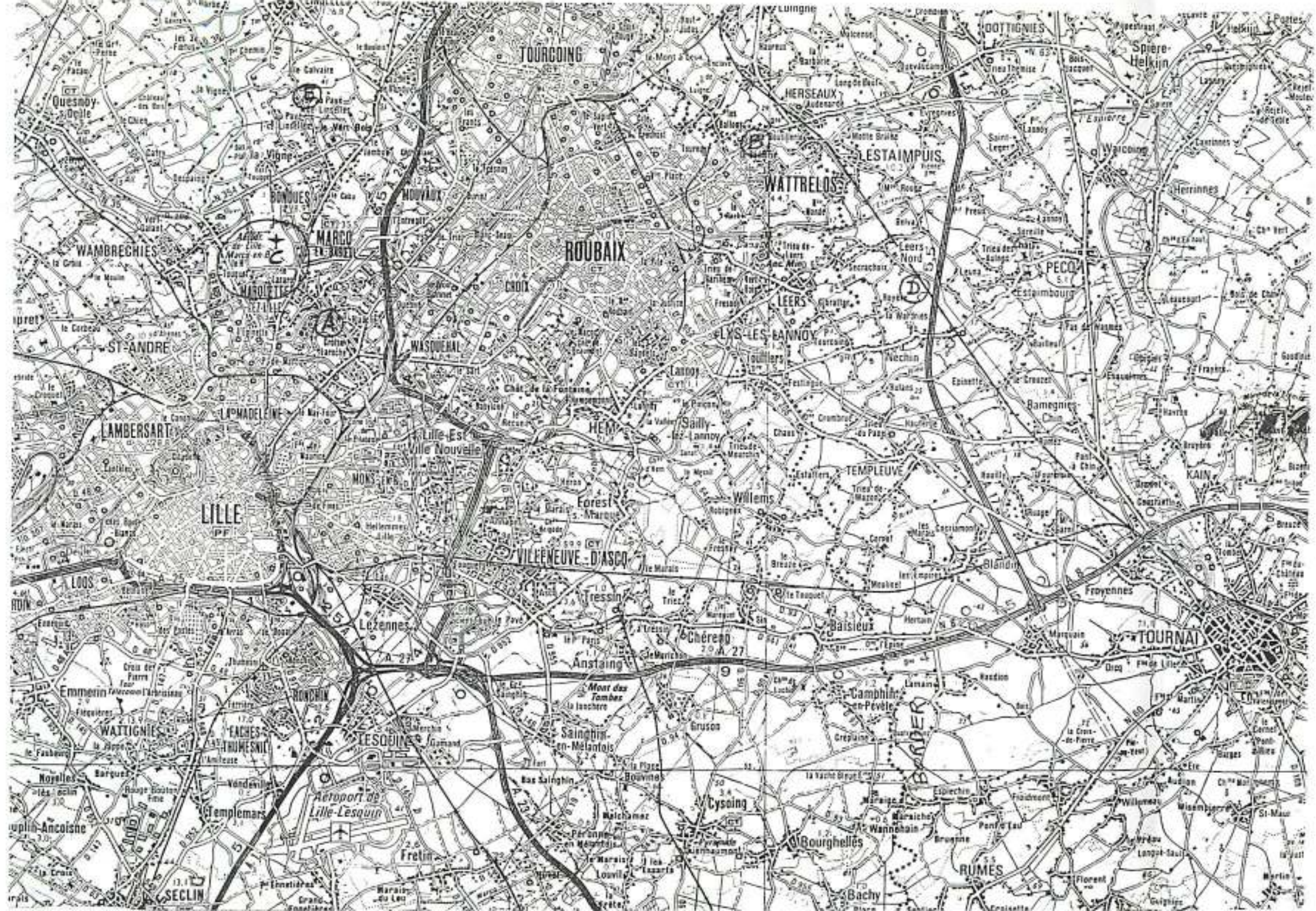
I hope I don't disturb you too much with all these questions. Thanks a lot in advance for the help you could bring me.

Hoping to hear from you again,

Sincerely,

Gene





3/13/96

Gene:

We had about 30 reservations as of last week - I don't expect much action until late April or May. Let me know when you want a list for "Echoes".

By the way - I would like to see the Grand Canyon article in the paper. I think it's the best trip to surface in years. It may seem a bit pricey, but it's a lot less than the alternatives - air or overnight. It's the hottest new trip for all of the operators.

I seem to have found another Jack First-Type correspondent. Jim Charey hasn't answered anything yet! Our "Banquet program" is on hold until he replies one way or another.

Ed

EDWARD J. HENNESSY
2013 PLAZA DEL PADRE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102

11/1/95

Dear Russ -

I'll keep the Mapes' suggestion in the file, but we are not thinking about a speaker. I seriously doubt if anybody comes to L.V. to hear a speech.

We also have a resident Chaplain at the Riviera - a retired Air Force Chaplain - who can be engaged for an opening prayer. Turnabout Barney has known him for years. He can say his prayer and sit down and we will get the show on the road!

Of course, I realize that Jim Cheney will have to say something as President. But not a Fidel Castro or Bill Clinton scramble, I trust, or we will get stuck with a lot of overtime in a Big Bank and the union tech people!

Best Regards,

Ed

14 November 1995

Edward J. Hennessy
2013 Plaza del Padre
Las Vegas, NV 89102

Dear Ed:

Wallace Peckham called me this evening, after having talked with Dellon Bumgardner recently at the Confederate Air Force Gulf Coast Wing meeting. Dellon was a 368th pilot and he has flown the CAF B-17 for some years.

Peckham urged Dellon and his wife to come to the Las Vegas reunion, and it seems likely that they will attend.

Dellon introduced Wallace to H. M. Hancock, who is operations officer of the Gulf Coast Wing, and he said it could probably be arranged. Of course, the matter intruded again as it did in 1987—that of urging 306th people to fly in the plane at the Las Vegas airport.

I told Wallace that the policy of the Association was not to become involved in the matter of passengers because of possible legal complications if an accident were to take place.

Now, I'll leave it in your hands as to whether the committee wants to communicate further with the CAF about bringing the A/C to Las Vegas, working within the stipulation that we will not participate in any promotion or Association sanction of the passenger flying promotion.

The operations officer is H. M. Hancock, 6706 Olympia Dr., Pasadena, TX 77505. His phone # is 713/998-7510.

I have talked with Jack Frost and he should have contacted you by the time you receive this letter.

All the best,

CC: Wallace PECKHAM, Gen. James S. Cheney

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

2013 Plaza Del Padre
Las Vegas, Nevada 89102
(702) 362-0424

7/3/97

Dear Russ:

Discovery Channel did a "Wings" segment on the 100th BG which was terrific. I think they had a rougher time than we did - 86% lost from original group which started in June 1943. Lost 80 crews in first 100 missions.

Lots of interesting revelations - mostly from historians, who are a lot more objective than war correspondents. Example: overall the 8th Bomber Command losses were 10% - infantry losses were less than 1% - 306th overall lost 29%.

The most casualties were due to front-line.

Back to the infantry thing: I always thought the hardest aspect of our war was the repetitive exposure to 25 or 35 battles. How many infantrymen engage in more than 2 or 3?

The loss statistics prove the point, which I

always suspected, but could never find any stats on infantry losses overall.

I always remember an NFL star saying the hardest part was "getting up" for the weekly games. (about 15 or 16 a I recall) That was the tough part of our air war - the relative peace and civilized living between missions and then the wake-up call and back to the war. A yo-yo existence.

Casey recalls that a 100th B-17 was badly hurt and isolated when an ME 109 drew up alongside with wheels down - the pilot signalled them to land. A mist gunner killed him at point blank range. Thus the 100th was marked as a prime target - and it certainly appears to have happened.

If you haven't seen the video try to get me -

ED

A WENDOVER CO-PILOT'S RECOLLECTION OF THE 306TH MOVE TO THURLEIGH, 1942

When the Group was activated 1 March 1942 at Gowan Field, Idaho, the aircraft assigned to the 306th were three twin-engine, already obsolete, B-18's plus one single-engine A-17, an aircraft with a singular characteristic — it took off, cruised and landed at a constant 100 miles per hour.

On 1 April 1942, the 306th was relocated by a variety of conveyances to Wendover, Utah, about 120 miles west of Salt Lake City at the Nevada border. Perhaps the kindest reference to the Wendover of 1942 was made by Bob Hope when he called it "Leftover". Today it is a thriving casino-resort community. The original runways are in remarkably good condition, but the remnants of the old base buildings better befit a ghost town. There is some private aviation activity and an occasional exercise by visiting USAF fighter units.

Wendover was a learning experience for everybody. B-17's were slowly accumulated. Tech orders were assiduously studied by ground and aircrews in unison as they shared a burning ambition to unravel the mystery of starting the engines and getting these high-tech dreadnoughts airborne. John Regan, with an enviable six hours in the B-17, was a designated pilot instructor!! There were some successes and many failures during these trying times. It is a tribute to the basic airworthiness and forgiving nature of those Boeings that the mission was ultimately accomplished.

The 306th began flying to Westover, Massachusetts, on 1 August 1942 to start an impromptu tour of anti-submarine patrols and ad lib training during this staging for assignment to the 8th Air Force. It was here that the Group was equipped with brand new B-17Fs. Slow delivery stretched an expected 10-day stay to over 30.

Starting on 2 September 1942, the 423rd Squadron was first off on the initial leg of the overseas movement. The first destination was Gander, Newfoundland. Radio silence was required and there were no high-tech navigational aids — the Germans could home in on such systems, too. Compass deviation caused by variable magnetic forces in this sub-Arctic region provided new and dismaying navigational problems for many. As a matter of fact, some were found wandering about in forlorn skies by patrolling Coast Guard PBYS which kindly, but condescendingly, LED them into Gander. Since the PBY might make 95 miles per hour wide open, our big birds skulked along behind with flaps and wheels down. A B-17 with its tail between its wheels is not a pretty sight.

After one of those Gander "white outs" of several days duration, when even the gulls were grounded, the Group took off in the blinding white, yet dark of night, on 10 September 1942. It was not widely reported that this was accomplished by having jeeps with flashing orange lights positioned about 10 feet in front of each #2 engine so pilots could follow them to the invisible takeoff position. This was a test of faith in itself since who could be sure that the jeep driver knew the way? Nobody could see even 30 feet.

The jeep team then hand-signaled the pilots into what they perceived as alignment with the runway, gyro-compasses were zeroed and at a given signal the pilots advanced throttles to full on. Staying on the runway was achieved by holding the gyro compass needle on zero with course corrections made by judicious use of throttle, rudder and brakes. A chilling and nearly cathartic experience, to say the least. Such "prehistoric" actual instrument takeoffs were definitely not SOP in 1942.

Since instrument flight conditions were correctly predicted for much of the transatlantic route, the pilots were well-advised to fly at precisely prescribed altitudes and airspeeds in order to maintain, hopefully, a 30-second separation from the justifiably nervous lads ahead and behind. Because of the need for radio silence, this imaginative but hazardous routine called for the Squadron leader's radio operator to hold down his CW key for 30 seconds every half hour. The followers had their radio compasses tuned to this frequency. As the signal was sent, each pilot could breathlessly check to see if his radio compass needle was pointing forward. If it did, joy and gladness. If it did not, gloom and despair --- he had overrun the parade and could not tell with any certainty where anybody was in the soup. Stress time!!!

It was 2100 miles to Prestwick, Scotland, in heavily loaded B-17's equipped with 800-gallon bomb-bay tanks, equivalent to a full bomb load. That was some exercise. This was about 900 miles beyond the normal range of the airplane. Remember, most of these lads were less than a year out of civilian schools!!!! Nevertheless, 33 out of 35 aircraft made it safely, to use the term loosely, to Prestwick. Weather there was below minimums but the Group had to land. Earl Youree was just flaring out when one of our Allies taxied across the runway in front of him. By this time Youree was below flying speed so his only hope was to use full power, slam the wheels on the ground, bounce over our Ally and mush down beyond him. He did it --- and had some pointed comments about the chap who nearly spoiled his landing.

Lt. John Leahy's B-17F exploded about an hour out of Gander, killing all on board.

Having flown most of the North Atlantic route on three engines, and partly on two, Bill Melton had run out of gas. He ditched the airplane and he and his crew waded ashore on a lonely beach on the west coast of Ireland. The rising tide soon swallowed the plane, including some "precious personal cargo," it is said. Some fast diplomatic footwork expedited the crew's on-going trip to Thurleigh.

This odyssey was not yet over. Getting from Prestwick to Thurleigh was complicated by bad weather --- so what else was new --- unfamiliar, confusing non-geometric ground patterns and a mind-boggling array of airfields too numerous to mention. The common complaint was "there are too many camouflaged fields --- how can we find our own?"

Of some significance was the fact that on 11 September 1942, when the 306th arrived at Thurleigh, 80 sections of concrete were still being poured by a bunch of nomadic, civilian Irishmen to finish the main runway --- a dubious piece of work that simply followed the contours of the land for all of its niggardly 5,910 feet! The other two runways were 4,200 feet each. Landing uphill or down dale on any of these was usually an adventure in itself. In the days and months that followed, our lives --- us lucky ones --- were an unending series of adventures.

Anything else you want to know about the Group can probably be found in Russ Strong's "FIRST OVER GERMANY", a history of the 306th Bombardment Group (Heavy). As you read through this book, you will realize how much the conditions improved as experience was gained, as war production turned out improved equipment and as formalized advanced training better prepared all the later arriving personnel for the missions that lay ahead. The greatest improvements were the addition of forward-firing nose guns in later B-17's and the arrival of P-51 and P-47 fighter escorts. The original group never had escorts.

Ed Hennessy, 54 years later.

Editor's Note: Hennessy flew the first 306th Bombing mission, 9 October 1942, as a co-pilot and then four more until he took over his own crew in January of 1943. He completed his tour of 25 missions on 29 May 1943 as a Flight Commander with the rank of Captain, not quite ten months after being commissioned as a 2nd Lt. Pilot. He was one of only 21.6% of the original 306th airmen to survive 25 missions and he flew the first mission against Germany, 27 January 1943.

Hennessy and Major General Barney Rawlings are co-chairing the 1996 Reunion in Las Vegas, Oct. 28 to Nov. 1st at the Riviera Hotel and Casino. This is an encore performance for this team, having done it in 1988, when over 900 turned out-the largest single air unit reunion on record.

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

2013 Plaza Del Padre
Las Vegas, Nevada 89102
(702) 362-0424

9/17/98

Dear Russ:

Please send a copy of "First Over Germany"
to one of my old friends from Cartan Towers:

Jerome M. O'Connor

284 So Kenilworth Ave.

Elmhurst, IL 60126

Do me a favor — autograph the
book.

Jersey is a great writer and is
currently doing an article in the ^{for WWII Magazine} sub-jens
we know so well — he already knows a lot
more than we did. I'm enclosing a rough
sketch he made of the construction. No wonder
we could never hurt them! (Use the address
on Kenilworth for the book)

EJH

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

2013 Plaza Del Padre
Las Vegas, Nevada 89102
(702) 362-0424

9/25/98

Dear Russ:

I still get 10-15 promos per year - including Fargo, ND, and Terre Haute, IN - but this one caught my attention - opening next March.

I am not entering the Sweepstakes simply because I do not consider the 306 th a viable prospect for a property as rareified^(?) as this one! Very elegant, but very big bucks. Note that its a "2 in 1" hotel with Four Seasons running 400 top floors, top priced rooms & suites.

This is a unique concept that resembles the old multi-class Trans-Atlantic ships that were so socially stratified in days of yore.

My guess is that Four Seasons clientele will not much like "swimming in the same pool" with Circus Circus customers - the unwashed, you might say. Really! I hope I live long enough to see how it works out.

I would hazard a guess that our typical member would find ^{even} the lower floor price beyond reach and their food and beverage budget blown the first day if they decided to go for a formal fling. I'm guessing the average age is about 76 or 77. And there is not a lot of affluence, nor sophistication. T-shirts and baseball caps will not be de rigueur in the joint!

However, it is a nice presentation and must be based on our turnouts in '88 and '97 — not on demographics of members.

As for me, I'm in luck tonight. My friend, Jessie, is springing for dinner at the Circus Circus Steak House. Still the best in the West — an opinion shared by many, including Dave Thomas, the Wendy Chairman. (This is a slightly late 79th birthday dinner.)

I hope you are in good working order —
Ed

5/22/98

Since WWII I have questioned a legacy of Ernie Pyle -- a general impression that the Infantry had the worst of it in WWII. With respect to creature comforts I have no doubts, and I readily confess that my enlistment in the Air Corps was prompted by French warfare stories told by my WWI uncles. I wanted no part of that.

Starting with the Oct 9, 1942, mission to Lille I accumulated 25 reasons for doubting the infantry legends. None of our missions were unopposed and each involved penetration into enemy territory. Those few references to "milk-runs" meant only that some were "easier" than others.

I was once asked by a civilian friend of the family if my aircraft was ever damaged. I replied that my aircraft was never not damaged, however light it may have been had we been less lucky my could have been serious, if not fatal.

People forget that each mission was an attack on the enemy over his own turf and, initially, our quota was 25 times. Was there ever an Infantry unit that launched 25 attacks on the enemy (that usually involved pitched battles in the early months before the time of fighter escorts and firepower in the noses.)

Public TV aired the story of the 100th PAB. (I believe) that arrived a few months after the 306th and had a terribly rough introduction. It's hard to imagine

an experience worse than ours - the original Wendenham contingent recorded 21.6% that completed 25 missions.

The TV documentary included commentary by three modern air war (USAF) historians doing reconovers. The results of their in-depth study (ies) were revealing and gratifying. Note that these were young-ish academics who did not have to contend with emotions during their projects. One of their revelations was that the 8th Air Force overall loss rate was 10%.

Overall, the 306th had one of 26.5% by my calculation. It could be plus or minus a few percentage points - no matter, really.

When that 10% rate was revealed, the Infantry overall (ETO) loss rate was also given -- 1%! I suspect that had the 8th's real loss rates been released during WWII, Congress would have pulled the plug on daylight bombing, as the British urged at the time.

Here is an attention-getting overview:

306th Original Group	- 18.4%
306th overall	- 26.5%
8th AF overall	- 10.0%
Infantry overall	- 1%

I was often asked what was the worst part of my experience; the realization that our loss rates make it statistically unlikely that anybody would survive 25 missions - that caused some psychological problems!

Ed Hennessy

Reader, No!

Disserter, yes!

C'est le genre, &
mess.

Ed Hennessy, c/o

Russell A. Strong
5323 Cheval Pl.
Charlotte, North Carolina 28205

RE: Article, 306th ECHOES, p.3, January 1999


It was better left unsaid.

It might even be true, but I doubt that your statistics will stand serious analysis.

I was not infantry, but I served (Artillery) with two infantry divisions, the 45th and the 3rd, Africa to the border of Germany. My service with the 306th was not important nor lengthy, but it was sufficient to engender my respect for the people in the 306th, both combat and support elements. The crews and support personnel of the 369th Squadron with whom I interfaced most returned in kind their respect for the modest role I had played in my journey through Sicily, Italy, and France.

The hardships of infantry combat service and those of air combat service are not even remotely comparable; they should not be compared. Further, voicing opinions such as your can be interpreted to diminish the service importance of the millions of our comrades who never heard a shot fired in anger; probably as much as 80% of all who served were in this category. We all went where we were sent and did whatever we had to do.

ALL GAVE SOME; SOME GAVE MORE.


Don F. Hanlen
67812 NSR 225
Benton City, Wa. 99320



Mr. Edward J. Hennessy Jr.
2013 Plaza Del Padre
Las Vegas, NV 89102

3/5/99

Dear Don:

Excuse the MS paper. I'm nearing 80 and do better with lines.

Russ forwarded your unopened letter - it arrived today. I guess my point was not clear enough in the "article". Actually, ^{I think} it was a letter to Russ that became an article I found in "Echoes". I did not even keep a copy of the original and he omitted a couple of my words - those voice-overs on the 10036 documentary were done by 3 credentialed WWII air historians.

Anyway, I did not mean the ground troops - just the reporters. They never change. General Schwartzkopf, in his televised Press Conference from his HQ was wonderful in the way he shut down the dummys on international TV when they pried for tactical answers. Their stupidity is monumental.

I thought the ground war reporting was far too subjective and uninformed - because the writers were not privy to the reasons for strategic decisions. Our air war reporting was pretty sparse, really, due to personal reservations correspondents had about participating in combat missions. Andy Rooney is the only one I think of who participated in about 5 of the 306th efforts - admittedly his favorite group - and then covered the ground from Normandy to Berlin in his jeep.

I have nothing but respect and sympathy for the ground combat troops, but their percentage of combat losses per unit were much lower than ours.

I'm enclosing a copy of my "Dear John" letter of 12/16/98 to Col John Regan, I know he's the last of the original 306th pilot (SQ. CO. (368th) and very probably the last of all the SQ CO's. Incidentally, I joined the 364th at Wendover, Utah as a CO pilot on July 10, 1942. We flew via Gander to England, arriving at Thurlough on my birthday, 11 Sept 1942. On 9 Oct we flew our first mission - for the first ten weeks our 2 English gas trucks had 1 inch hoses that needed 4 hours to fuel one B-17.F (no nose guns)

I flew 5 missions as a CO-pilot, 2 of the 5 with our operations officer who was checking my mission activity. We had lost 8 of the 10 guys in my original crew on their 4th outing. So, I headed a volunteer crew (no replacements yet) that included a CO-pilot from the RCAF, Navigator from the RCAF, Bombardier from the training group at Gorington, Top Gunner was an AM and certified air gunner. The rest were guys who got their training on the base after coming out to fill our desperate need. I headed this crew from early January, 1943, until I completed my tour on 29 May 1943 - the 6th pilot to do so in the 306th.

My numbers are correct, but I can understand your disbelief. You slept around in mud and misery so you got to live that and read about it.

I can tell you my Dad thought I was nuts when I enlisted as an Aviation Cadet in August 1941, I had 4 uncles who did WWI in the trenches and

were thereafter kind of strange birds. I wanted no part of that life. Turned out they all thought I was nuts, too. In those days most people were very reluctant to fly. Many still are! Anyway - recall my opening paragraph in "Echoes".

Having seen so many good friends go down - the 364th had 2 crews like mine and 1 original crew (Bob Rindlin's) flying for the first couple of months in 1943. The Group was lucky to get 16-18 B-17s up in those days. Those days, and in the years since - I have been amazed at the poor reporting of the real air war. Goering, by the way, admitted before his demise that it was air bombers that broke the German's back and their ability to fight. - (The bombers were relentless and were never turned back or away by German action. Can't say that about frustrating weather on some occasions but we were not dropping them on targets we could not see. The Brits were not so fuzzy - figured all Germans were targets.)

Also enclosing a copy of the 1996 Reunion Roster and Gala booklets. Pay some attention to facts and figures on Pages 4 & 5 of the white book. These numbers are real and startling.

Besides superior Base Living conditions the Group worked from a safe haven. Thurlough was never bombed, shelled, strafed, gassed or attacked in any way. The ground Division personnel were all within 12 miles of the front lines. - including support

troops. Not so with the air group - only the air crews were at risk - and it was a repetitive on going thing that was a terrible morale killer because the statistics were usually against us.

A rather counter side - the safe houses on the ground and the hell fire in the air. That's what the reporters missed.

* 369th

But not everybody missed the point - King George came out to Thuleigh in December of 1942 and took a look at Bob Riordan's* airplane that was badly shot up. He talked to Bob for about 40 minutes on the hardstand and then did something history completely overlooked. Riordan was invited to Buckingham Palace for our Thanksgiving and sat down with King George, Queen Elizabeth, Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret Rose for that small family dinner. Just the 5 of them.

Amazing and totally unique. It was never publicized - probably for fear of setting a precedent!

When I was a student at Notre Dame - in 1939, I believe, Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli, the Papal Nuncio was in campus for a week. My friend, Ed Dougherty, stepped into a special stall in the Administration Bldg and found Pacelli peering next to him. Pacelli became Pope Pius XII and Dougherty spent a lifetime telling fellow bar patrons about the time he peered with the Pope. Also an unrecorded event but relished by Edgar.

I did 3 months instructing new replacement crews at Birmington during the summer of 1943. Came back to the States, married my waiting fiance (I would not marry her when facing combat - she was too young to be a widow) and went through the pilot instructor's Standardization School at Columbus, Ohio. After that I was a tactical pilot instructor in B-17 and B-29's for the duration. Did a stretch as Supervisor of Flying at the Tactical School at Bueford, MS - where we had more 4-engine birds than the DC-3's commercial airlines had flying domestically!

I would not want to do it over again unless the alternative was getting assigned to a ground division. At least we didn't have mud in the air.

This is pretty long, but your misunderstanding of my words really rang my bell. I hope this sheds some light on where I'm coming from and where I'm glad I was not.

Take care,

Ed

I looked at a map - B.C. looks like a very scenic spot, even on a Rand McNally road map!

cc to Bigel

12/16/98

Dear John:

I recently read the Stephen Ambrose book about WWII from Normandy to the surrender in Germany. A good collection of battlefield incidents that is considered the best ever. I was getting jaded by the repetitiveness until he put in a few pages of statistics on that whole show that caught my undivided attention.

The 1st Division was the most experienced and put in the most combat days - I think the number was 220, at any rate it was a much smaller number than the 3rd combat divisions run by the 306th. I would certainly call those combat days since the ground troops spent a lot of time crouching in holes, sometimes for days on end, to keep out of sight and ~~out~~ out of the line of any fire. Actually, the enemy usually fired only when they could see something to shoot at. Thus if some lame-brain lit a cigarette in his hole at night the Germans would fire at the light and usually did him in.

The 1st had 14,080 at the start. The combat casualties were about 14,000 and the non-combat casualties (trench foot, frostbite, ^{jetting} VD) were about 15,000. Thus he cites a turnover* of 205. A strange figure to me. If you compute one for the 306th and similar that we had 35 crews to start and received 565 replacements by the end.

* turnover is replacement for many reasons - not just dead & wounded

1st Division was recognized as the most experienced and best rep bunch of WWII ETO

that comes to a turnover of 1614%! Our total crew losses were 177, or 7770 airmen. A small number compared to the infantry division strength in which even their support personnel were within a half mile of the front most of the time.

But if you look at it as a percentage of combat personnel our 1770 crew casualties (not counting the group who made it back to base where their combat days ended at once.) represented about 29.5% of the total crews assigned and 339% turnover if you simply divide 600 crews by 177.

With combat days = 341 for us, 220 for them. Their combat soldiers were replaced by 205%. Our combat airmen were replaced by 565 crews, or 1615%. Surprising?

From another source I learned that overall infantry & ground losses in the ETO were about 1% of the total involvement.

The 8th AF airman losses were 10% overall.

This is not to say that I would ever want to be on the ground - but I get puzzled by the general indifference to real loss percentages in the aircrews. Our numbers were certainly smaller but our casualty rates were tremendous by any measure.

We were all nuts, you know. Hard to believe we stuck to it. For the most part.

Merry Christmas, Ed

11/25/00

Dear Russ:

This is my personal "history" - note the bracketed groups/sequences shown.

- Mission #1 CP with Isbel, 1st 30th Mission, 10/9/42
- 2 " " "
- 6 " " "

[9] Isbel shot down - I had been medically grounded for a week because of sulfur treatment for strep-throat. Fulton Dyer was assigned in my place.

- 1/3 13 CP } in name only. I flew the combat formations.
- 1/3 14 CP }
- 1/3 15 Not assigned
- ↑ 16 P First Germany
- 6 in a row ↓ 17 P
- 18 P
- 19 P
- 20 P
- 21 P

22 not assigned

- ↑ 23 P
- 5 in a row ↓ 24 P
- 25 P
- 26 P
- 27 P

28 not assigned

- 3 in a row ↓ 29 P
- 30 P
- 31 P

32-3-4 not assigned

35 - P (319th flew in composite group - all 6 OK - 306 lost 10.

36 not assigned
 3 in a row in 3 days { 37 P
 38 P
 39 P

41 not assigned - after 3 in 3 days

5/29/43 { 42 P
 43 P 25th Mission to St Nazaire - my 4th trip - not happy to see that for my finale!

11/20-21/42

There was a medical gap of 7 days that spanned Isabel's fatal mission on 10/23/42. During the period from then until 1/3/43 I was a kind of utility impeller and getting a few check rides - the "final exam" was given by Jack Howard on a day when the crosswind gusts ran 20-25 mph. We were to shoot 3 landings. I crabbled in for the first one, level'd off, straightened as we settled to a swoosh @ 3 pointer, kicked opposite rudder to hold that big tail into the wind and Jack said: "That's enough - lets park it." So we cobbled together a makeshift crew with RCAF Transferee Littlejohn CP, RAF ex Casey Jones N, Bill Chantoni B from 97th, Glen Wylie E from mechanic school and 5 volunteers from ground jobs at Thornleigh.

We flew the 1/27/43 Wilhelmshaven mission in Bill Casey's "Bunchoe", so the 369th spare in, #7, "hole". I think it was Spalbing who aborted from #2 (right) position, so I moved up to close the gap.

As I have mentioned before, I never failed to take off on a mission assigned and never aborted, always

managed to keep 4 props turning - often with 1 or 2 at reduced power as an alternative to feathering. Until final approach as final mission when I ran out of gas. I feathered it and landed rather than waste time flying around while transferring fuel - which would have been foolish.

Earlier I mentioned that I always thought I was the only Pilot with no aborts and no scrubbed missions (caused by declaring the bird unfit to fly). This is more or less borne out by the continuity of mission flow - and the frequency, but I'm relying on memory. Maybe you can find something I overlooked. In my mind, I feel I established a clean record 2 months earlier than Markon Reber. Not to make an issue - just to verify my memory of what I always thought was unique about my tour. I am not looking for any publication of this - only for some reassurance that my perception was correct over 57 years ago! It is trivia that is only important to me - after all these years.

From my 1943 missions, you can surmise that I had a fine crew chief - 4/sgt Bennie Campbell, 19 years old! Big, tall - 6'5", red-headed Texan who could reach a lot of stuff without ladders or platforms.

I carved the turkey for my daughter - brought my own knife! A fresh, range turkey with a bosom like Dolly Parton's.

EL

P-5. My "research" revealed a "0" in "Bombard" column on # 23, Hamm. Terrible weather that day - I was flying left wing in the low flight of the 92. We were climbing in the overcast, hoping to find some open air. You had to stay close to see your leader. At the 18000 foot level - I was flying "across the cockpit" watching the flight leader in my sight, I could see him looking head of wildly upward because he had lost sight of his leader. We started a left turn - I was on the bottom of the turn and it felt very mushy. I glanced left ^{at the instruments} and saw we were in a 30° bank and the airspeed was falling through 105 - because we were on the slow side of the turn - the yoke started to buffet because we were stalling - and ~~we~~ ^{we} promptly fell off into a spin left - from 18000 feet - rate of climb was fall down and the gyros tumbled. We did about 3 turns while I centered the needle - centered the ball - and gradually worked back in the yoke to kill airspeed and level off - at 14000 feet in a shallower layer of open air. Reset the gyros, re-set them and started figuring out to do next. We were on the heading toward Hamm but there was no way we could climb and overtake the Grays, which we could not see in the clouds. So we went straight ahead to see if the weather would improve and restore visibility. Suddenly Colantoni spotted a marshalling yard with bridges at either end - he called it an opportunity, so we opened the bomb bay and I followed the PD1 as he sighted and dropped - while the camera was clicking away. We turned for home as he was declaring he had "walked through" the rail yard and hit one

bridge. Of course I could not see down through the
 nose. We got back in clouds and came back over
 England with no problems. We arrived home after
 the group - turned out they had called the whole
 thing off moments after we spun out. It counted
 as a mission because of the penetration but I believe
 we were the only ones to drop on a target. -- Here's
 the weird part: Colantoni was stone-walled and
 tried to cut out the B-5. He said he had turned the
 film in for lab-development so lets see the
 pictures. "What pictures? The lab has no pictures."

and so it died, apparently a fast cover-up to
 avoid group embarrassment (?) Colantoni has been
 steaming ever since because he was called a liar.
 With his legendary temper it's a miracle nobody
 got clobbered. Or worse. Anyway, there's always
 an untold tale. The squid bomb certainly fit the
 description and appearance of Hamm. We'd never
 know, and its ancient history now.

Just another of a lot of weird things that
 happened in the early days (of course I know who my
 flight leader was but I'm not blaming him for what
 happened in the group. At 18000 feet with a full load
 you stall a lot sooner than you would in a lighter
 and lower airplane. It's a tribute to the B-17 that
 we came out OK - surely the most forgiving airplane
 in our history

CFT

12/5/00

Dear Russ:

Your blue postcard did not surprise me -- the part about no charts or details, that is. I have known for years that record-keeping in the early months was, in a word, terrible. Not surprising that you did not find anything significant about that 27 Jun 43 Wilhelmshaven mission.

However, Gerry Potter - Pip's bombardier - called me and recalled that Vegapack was the primary, Wilhelmshaven secondary. From memory he thought we bombed from east to west - which makes more sense than my speculation about flying west to east on the run.

It now seems most likely that we flew over the Frisian AAs the Osterfries Islands before turning right and heading into the bay for Vegapack. We must have turned right again toward Wilhelmshaven and had no initial position that heading.

So, the mystery of who broke the plane at the German coast remains solvable, but still insignificant, except to trivia buffs, which I am not.

As I said before, none of the details have any historical significance. The real accomplishment was staying alive! And being on the winning side!

Ed,

11/18/00

Dear Slim:

I really enjoyed hearing your voice this morning - and learning of your concurrence with the "Echoes" story about "Middle" and such.

In fact, we saw eye to eye on a lot of things going back to the Thrushigh ship. I was always a devotee of the "snug" formation flying, and attribute my survival to that way of flying. It really bothered me to see so many of our guys drifting away for no apparent reason except laziness or stupidity. Many of them paid the price for isolating themselves out in "the back 40", so to speak.

And it DID require a lot of endurance to stay in tight for hours on end. In fact, during my combat tour my jacket size went from 40 to 44 because my upper body bulked up from hours of formation flying.

I may have mentioned this to you long ago, but in case I did not, here it comes. We were approaching Thrushigh on the way home from a mission when our group leader called on the command channel to "bring up" the formation for a low pass over the field to give the ground echelon a little show. This always appealed to most pilots, but there was always at least one who was, at best, inept. And so it was on this occasion. Cause the leaders said: "Number (whatever) close in - get in there when you belong." No response from the cockpit but a voice came on that I recognized as yours from the southern accent: "oosh - what an asshole!" My

exact thought, of course. There is joy in the memory!
I joined the Group at Wurtsboro straight out of train
engine cadet training at Lubbock. Had my first ride in a
B-17 as C.P. to Maj. Oliver on a night practice mission.
Thank God for check lists and Oliver pointing to various
switches. He also told me to keep a watchful eye for
mountains, and I asked how could I tell one from a cloud
in the darkness. "Mountains are hard. Very reassuring."

I was assigned to Clay Jibel's crew as C.P. and within
two weeks we headed east to Westover, MA, for "staging,"
where we would take delivery of new B-17Fs! This was
supposed to happen within a week, but took a full month
to happen as we flew sub-patrol over the Atlantic in the
E-models to practice navigation. I recall one exciting
night when our landing was somewhat off the mark and
we flew over the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Panic! Searchlights
and scrambled fighters found us in a flash to show
their concern - and alarm.

Anyway, fast forward, I flew three missions with
Jibel - Oct 9, Nov 7, Nov 17 (celebratory day, #3 shot out and
the tire shredded so our landing ended in a fine grass loop
in the grass so the flat tire pulled us to the right) just
noticed an interesting fact - missions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, & 9 were all
in sub-pens. I think - is La Pallica was so equipped. Persistent,
werent we? - On Nov 23 Jibel flew without me because
I came down with a strep throat which was treated with the new
miracle drug, sulphis. Then they realized that this required a
7 day grounding, because of the sulphis. Fulton Ayce, 1st ops. officer
in the 369th flew in my seat. His first and last mission. Only two

survived - Petereyer (W) and Burden (C). I was stunned, of course. I flew again on Jan 3 and 13 apparently as CP to a guy (let him be murdered) who was such an expert formation flyer that I slipped his hand off the throttle and moved us about 100 yards back into position even as we approached the French Coast and St. Nazaire. I never relinquished it until we were back over England. Report this scenario Jan 13 to Hitler, after which I had a couple of local area check rides and got my own pick-up crew in time for the first Wilhelmshaven raid on Jan 27.

These were busy times in which I flew 14 out of 16 ~~flights~~ through March 31. Then that with Bremen job on April 17 which cost me 10 birds, but none from the 369th! The 368th lost 5 that day so I was transferred over to them to help enlighten the replacements and finish out my 5 remaining missions. I finished on May 29, '43.

Oddity - Marleneke finished on June 29 and was credited with being the first 8th AF pilot to finish 25 without an abortion. I finished a month earlier, never aborted and never failed to take off on an assigned mission, never feathered an engine until on final approach on my 25th - #3 ran out of gas so I feathered it and landed - was not about to go around in circles while transferring gas for a 4-engine landing. You don't need it for that procedure.

3 engine take offs are chancy, however. (As a matter of fact, Terry put me in for a RFC in April, 1949, because I always flew and never aborted - a unique accomplishment at the time. BC would have been the recipient of the RFC.)

an award to somebody who is just doing what he is supposed to do." (No matter that he may have been the only one who had done so. Kind of like unions that never want to reward merit because it might raise standards for other union members!) Military minds work in strange ways. That is evident in the pages of history, but rarely evident while history is being made. The two modern historians who figured out, some 50 years after the War, that 8th BC losses were 10 times higher than any military unit in history! What they all overlooked was the fact that only 10% of air corps personnel was at risk - the aviators. Unlike other units in which all are exposed - infantry support is typically within 1/2 mile of the front and within reach of artillery, tanks and sneak attacks. That's what was typical - it was never endangered from 1942-45. The aviators took the war to the enemy in his own territory. This is the case from the others. And for us, actually every mission was a battle in which the odds were terrible, because we were on our own without air support.

Only the 100th BC had a rough time - lost about 90% of their original group personnel. This is what alerted the "young" historians (2 of them) to spot the earlier statistical oversight that included full complements in the casualty results in which 20% were at risk.

See what your phone call stirred up?

Take care, *Ed*

APR 2, 2001

11/23/00

Dear Russ:

The old memory works pretty well, if it gets a little nudge now and then.

The Keith Conley story in "Echoes" did just that. The revelation that the Luftwaffe Captain had lived in the Milwaukee area for 10 years rang the old bell. (Perhaps Marquette St.?)

I would bet he came from a family of Bundsmen. Very big movement when I was in college. Plenty of BUND activity in the Chicago area that greatly supported Nazi Germany. Figures Milwaukee had at least as many Germans as Chicago did. We had a few incidents over demonstrations that suggested the people were more German than American, in fact.

Fast forward to September of 1943: when I came home on a 10-day delay enroute to Lockbourne AAB where I would go through the B-17 Instructor's Standardization course. My family occupied a roomy 3-story home in the South Shore area. The third floor consisted of a bedroom, living room, bathroom and a couple of storage areas under the eaves - ^{two} unfinished attic rooms with flooring and electricity.

My parents had hired a live-in maid/housekeeper who occupied the top floor. She was a German immigrant named Helga, naturally, single, about 28 or 29. Her parents lived in an old German section of Chicago.

I was the first 8th AF B-17 pilot to come home from the War, so there was great fanfare with big coronation

by newspapers and radio. I was swept onto daily bond rallies (War Bonds - remember?) where I told them about the air war - easy duty in the sense that the audiences knew nothing so anything I said was hot news to them. But it really got in the way of the family time and quickly became an unwanted but inescapable duty - without orders.

Then came the ongoing publicity from the coverage of the rallies. A couple of days before I had to leave for this, Helga was a no-show in the family kitchen. My mother went upstairs to see what was going on - and found out. She had shot herself sometime during the night with a 38 cal. revolver. Her own, the family had no weapons.

Pretty shocking situation - a large squad of detectives from the Hyde Park Station were all over the house and her family, as it turned out. The Detective Lt. in charge felt sure that Helga's family - Bundsman - had armed her and ordered her to do me in as a protest against bombing Germany! By now, of course, Helga was like part of my family and the detectives theorized that she was 'so upset by her orders' that she shot herself instead. A fairly common German solution, traditionally.

It had a certain amount of logic, but it was never proven despite days of grilling her family while I was busy at Lockheed.

Needless to say, my family, including two sisters, were terribly upset. As for me, by this time I had

learned that a miss was as good as a mile
over Europe and I did ^{miss} some sleep over
it, even though it was tough in the family.

I must say that it sharpened the awareness of
a lot of Epicureans to imagine that the war had
moved into the neighborhood! I guess that was
the upside - after my "assassination" was diverted.

My Dad became very interested in Cuban situations
around Chicago - especially amazed at the strong
national ties it demonstrated.

Even as you look around the world today
it is evident that nationalistic and tribal feelings
are still the roots of a lot of trouble - AFTOL religion,
of course! "Love Thy Neighbor" was an idea that
came before its time, I guess. People get very upset
with people who hold different beliefs. We need more
common grounds, I am.

EL

Dear Russ:

5/7/61

Thanks for the extra copies of "Echoes" with the "Gerie Tale".

I mailed one to my niece in Chicago. Her mother, my sister Jean, is now 85 and living 2 blocks north of her in a grand old highrise (12) converted to apartment living, Great place - like hotel service, good meals.

I suggested to Maria that she use her own judgment about showing the story to Mom - who would undoubtedly let out a flood of rhetoric embellishing the story. I also suggested that this could result in Mom becoming a royal pain in a lot of sorry old asses in "The Admiral" (the name of the establishment.)

The incident really did give a lot of people a needed dose of wartime reality. Midwesterners, in general, did not have a clue except for such inconveniences as shortages and rationing.

In fact, I was shocked by the indifferent attitudes prevalent whenever I went out at night during that 10 day break. The war was something surreal and far away. No doubt the beginning of my perception that we are a nation well supplied with nutwits.

ER

5/11/61

Dear Russ

One of my community friends, a Ph.D. in Education, called to ask if I had ever heard of a Ralph Robinson from Kentucky, in the 70s. (Mr. Marshall Darnell is a Kentuckian, by birth.)

No Ralph in the "First Over" intel. He thinks he was an air gunner and probably about 80.

If you have anything on this lead, I'd appreciate hearing from you.

Marshall is a kind of late life comrade in my work with the HCP (Homeowners Union) - in Nat'l VP and Chmn of Security (10 min force) and Architecture (no creative changes in our architectural theme). Since I concluded years ago that about half of our 306 owners are demons, I have a sharp pain when they come at me with nonsense. Marshall soaks the sarge water, or whatever.

Homeowners tend to be like New Yorkers - they will try to chisel all kind of deals favorable to themselves and intolerant to others. This is why we never mind the NY market for our pattern - sure trouble in any town they join! (Nothing based about me!)

Ch. Hennessy

Dear Russ:

6/19/01

There is an aspect to the "Gerie Tale" that did not reveal, because it's my pet long-term peeve, even though it supports the caps theory. No harm done however, because they were fully aware of the First over Germany publicly that was in full-flavor as part of the then-current stuff about me and the Grand Pallies and my today in Chicago.

Casey and Bill Edartini (N. & B.) were the bearers of this tale, I believe. I was using Casey's ^(3.20) "Gambler's" that day, and spent a few minutes talking to his crew chief about some minor problems. Casey and Bill took off like rabbits for the debriefing site (and the swarm of journalists, as it turned out.)

When these guys whapped and rolled at the intercom that we had broken the plane over the German coast first - although I could not see any of this from my seat, I reminded them that the 423rd on our right was in a better position than we were. Def. err.

By the time I got into the debriefing the cat was out of the bag. My 2 still claim it was us. I did not believe it then nor now - and what difference does it make anyway? A non-event if there ever was one!

But I can see that the caps would perceive

me as a perfect target for the crazy Bundsmen,
beat on vengeance for their homeland!

Wouldn't it have been ironic that I came
through the first 9 months unscathed and then was
done in by a crazy in my own bed!?

This is not for publication please. I do
not want to stir up the old controversy after
all these years of living through my group's
fantasies — as I see it. Or them.

My story works just as well as it is. I'm
kind of curious about Craig and Bob's reaction to
it without the First Over ingredient!! I'm sure
I will hear something from them.

Let's face it, most people are not interested
in our ancient war, so just let it R.I.P. It's a
pretty good story as is. Thanks —

Ed.

5/25/01

Russ:

My younger sister called me yesterday, after reading the "Gerec Tale".

After all these years I learned that the family was very nervous about the Bond Rally appearance I was making — afraid some nut would shoot me! Amazing!

Just goes to show how the Bund activities had been worrying the non-German Americans.

Most of the Rabbits were in Irish neighborhoods. One was stayed at the Inland Steel Plant (I had a summer job there once) in East Chicago. Not to worry — those steel workers were almost all Polish!!

I recall a story about a company of Polish Marines on a British ship that flushed a U-Boat with depth bombs. As they bailed survivors aboard on one side, the Marines tossed them over the other!

During my duty at Corrington we lived in quarters that housed some Polish (refugee) "Typhoon" pilots — a really hot British interceptor. These guys could not wait for the 20 mm cannon shot that was their signal to get airborne now and chase down the German intruders! Gov. was close to London (They never climbed out on take-off — just sucked up the wheels and flew the tree tops to their prey!) Wild bunch.

EL

Jan 2002

6/27/01

Dear Russ:

The subject I have in mind is purely personal, in the sense that I'm trying to confirm or disprove a belief I have had since 20 May 43!

Since I never kept a diary in my lifetime I am simply recollecting some things that probably would have been in it.

I have felt all along that my flight record was clean - all missions assigned were flown, no mechanical reasons for not taking off - no aborted missions.

I recall three dates that might have seemed strange. On 23 Nov. 43 the target was St. Nazaire - the 306th only managed to get 8 airborne and 4 of them aborted! I made the bomb run, including Chg. Label with Fulton Dyer, asst. operations officer, sitting in for me as co-pilot. Only the bombardier, Curshaw, and Taylor, the navigator, survived. I had been grounded for a week because of a strabismic that was treated at about 2 AM a few mornings earlier by the Med. D.D. in the dispensary with sulfis - the new wonder drug. Neither he nor I were flight surgeons, nor I knew that this entailed an automatic 7 day grounding. So, I was never assigned to fly that mission and Dyer was the unlucky one. Thus I was an innocent survivor, in a manner of speaking. Rather Helen, as you would expect.

I was, I suppose, kind of a 5th engine for a while, but found myself doing a lot of odd jobs. One of

was flying one miserable night as Doyle Duggor's co-pilot on a weird test flight. Duggor was not the operations officer and the mission was to test some hooded blue runway lights that were put on our shortest one, east-west, as I recall. These blue lights could only be seen from a correctly aligned final approach at 30° angle of descent, I believe. (This was one of those typically half-assed things we tried in those primitive times - we had NO landing device at Thuleigh.) Well - - a clear enough night but black as pitch. The take-off was predictable, w/ instruments and we climbed out into the oblivion, became

I was busily timing our "pattern", designed to fly a rectangular path and come back, hopefully, to the desired alignment with those effing blue lights! Need I tell you that we did not find them?

So, we bravely queried at some adjustments in the timing of the legs of our pattern and came up empty again. Rather than bore you with details, in about the 40th minute aloft, over Salt Plains what, we made another let down and Duggor yells, "I see one line of blue lights - do you?" "Yes, but nothing on my right - jog left and right real fast" - he did and Duggor - 2 lines of blue and we make it down in one piece, sweet story properly. Duggor firmly announced to the tower channel, "This exercise is over", and we waited for a jeep to lead us back to the hubstand. What a stupid mission that was, we

debriefed in the club bar and reflected upon the shortcomings of where we dreamed up this piece. I did a lot of local flying with various 369th pilots (there weren't that many) and on Jan 3 I flew as co-pilot (designated) with Charles Flanagan to St. Vrain. Again on Jan 13 to Hills. I did a lot of control time on these flights and in retrospect they seemed to be check rides. For the next 10 days I sat in the left seat with 3 senior pilots in succession for local check rides. The last was with Jack Howard and we had a 20+ mph cross wind in the main runway for my first landing with fuel. It was one of the best cross wind jobs I ever did - like a really sweet golf shot you never forget - and that was it. "You could not do any better - let's park this thing!"

Next up was 27 Jan 43 to Wilhelmshaven. The "First". For some forgotten reason I wound up with Casey's aircraft, "Banhee", I assume he was off campus or incapacitated so I got the job with my make-shift crew. Naturally, we were assigned as a spare. However, where we started in #2 spot on G. Armstrong's right wing, aborted, so I climbed up to that spot and remained there. I have wondered if the watch in airplanes confused the records - which often were! (On 26 Feb 43, Casey flew "Banhee" to Wilhelmshaven with Andy Rooney in back -

who remembers this as the first Germany strike!)

on 4 March 43 we tried Hamm in terrible flying weather - climbing in formation ^{in clouds} ~~over~~ whatever at about 18000 feet, full load, I was in the lower flight on Rip's left wing. I could see him looking up and around rather faintly, it appeared, and I was able to raise left at the flight instruments - we were in a 30 degree left bank and a speed for me at the bottom of the turn, was moving under 110! - I felt the buffeting and wallowing when the gyros tumbled because so did we! Fell out, into a spin - hoping nobody was under us. I ground three turns later and 400 ft. lower & got out of it as the crew needle - but airspeed procedure and was able to restore order, got back on course for Hamm and contemplated what next? No way could we recover 400 feet lost - and the group was climbing - so we kept the heading and found ourselves in layered clouds with an opening to the ground level ahead - about 1400 feet now - and Clanton shouted "Marshalling yards straight ahead - do you want to follow the PD?!" why not - it was occupied territory at least, as we dropped, but - according to Bill - and several hours we got there about 40 minutes after the Group, which had started, unbeknownst to us. Frankly it was worth - Bill was treated like dirt and his strike photos were mysteriously lost in the photo lab - so it was a non-mission, specially,

but so was the boys effort, so we, at least, get credited with a mission, as did the others.

So, there are two things that might have clouded the issue. But there is a little more - in mid April '43 John ^{W. I.} Garrison father hauled me in front of HQ and say to tell me, we know that Terry had sent up a recommendation for a DFC for me. I was completely surprised - "What for - nothing wonderful happened." John said that I was the only pilot who had made every mission assigned in a time when abortions were too common. However, BC talked - said he cannot give an award to somebody who just does his duty. John was mad because ^{the duty,} it was totally unique, in his view. I thanked him for telling me.

So - 25 May 43 was my 25th and I believe my record was spotless - flew them all as assigned. I believe I was the 6th pilot to finish 25 and probably the only one who made all the flights. 25 assigned, 25 flown.

I am not looking for anything except a memory check. I'm glad I'm still around to remember anything, and I understand that I could have forgotten some things.

That step kept me off combat from 17 Nov 42 until 3 Jan 43 - and I was after flying 8 missions in March I got a rest in April, desert for that nasty Bremen job on 17 Apr 43. Then I was moved

to the 368th where we found replacement crews as the result of boredom, I imagine. I mixed my final 5 with the 368th.

I have learned more about WWII history from the Munnig & Mullett book than ever before. These two are absolute masters at cutting through the B.S. and finding truth!

Ed

P.S. When I reread this I suddenly realized that in war time you have to do something extraordinary to be noticed — and in many cases the extraordinary act resulted from a prior mistake that required a spectacular effort to correct. Like Snuffy Smith, who could not bail out because he forgot to bring his parachute pack on board. The real hero in this case was L. P. Johnson, who did hit the bailout switch and then found out that the hypotermal Smith was stuck in the waist with no where to go! So L. P. and his CP stayed with the flaming wreck and managed to drag it back for a rough landing. This probably explains why L. P. has never turned up at a reunion (to my knowledge). Probably does not want to be reminded of that miserable day and its bizarre sequel. Nobody who knew Snuffy was surprised that he got into the mess, because that was his style. A human anomaly! No less.

11/21/01

Dear Russ:

I enjoyed the telephone call and immediately following it I called Mac McKay. He confirmed my version of the Sully Smith story: "Exactly right!"

Appropos of nothing, I noticed this item in the Museum of Flight News - I was not aware until now that the DFC is the "national highest honor for military aviators of all service branches"

I presume that it ranks out of law at the usual Totem Pole because all the others were created for ground grippers, who are great protectors of their turf. No doubt it galled them to see aviators getting their awards from time to time - upstarts!

It's also interesting to see how the Navy tends to dominate the upper air war in government eyes. The Navy had great PR starting with FDR in WWII - they are the champs in blowing their own horns!

Stay well,

Ed

1/17/02

Dear Freeman

This article in U.S. News caught my eye. I was not really surprised because my own ideas and perceptions usually differed from his. My take was that he was not too wonderful at evaluating what his research revealed.

That sounds a bit pretentious it's probably because I came to some permanent conclusions during my tenure at Cominstan for three months following my 306th experience - Ed Maligeuski and Bill Colantoni were there with me. It was the "finishing school" for replacement crews coming into the 5th Bomber Command - a kind of final updating on the realities of the combat experience to come.

We put together a curriculum based on the secret strike reports supplied by Bomber Command. I found them very revealing because they did not always support the previous news releases. It became pretty clear what worked and what didn't.

In fact, the only leader who always displayed a pragmatic approach was Le May - and the 305th demonstrable results proved it. He was analytical and very disciplined - a rare combination in those days. Naturally, he remained controversial during his entire career - sort of a latter day Billy Mitchell, in fact. A no-nonsense realist. I always thought his superiors were about it him because he was so

so hard to feel and so quick to point out flaws
he perceived. He punctured a lot of balloons!

One of his strengths was his completeness as
an artist - he held every setting up to him in his day
He knew what was possible and what was not!
If my memory is correct, he led me of the Schucraft
mission - his choice. He was unique in his day.

I do have to think that Ambrose is unfortunately
like many modern writers - uses a lot of researchers
whose work he correlates and thus runs the risk
of getting credit for their insights. A guy like Lemay
brought out the personal best in his cohorts. Or else!

Observation: no doubt you are a bit like me -
my peers are fading away at an alarming rate!

Best regards,

EL

10/24/01

Dear Russ -

I had a recurrence of my trivia fixation.

Do you know how many B-17's were in
the 8th AF?

And how many were lost?

How see how many B-24's were there and
how many were lost!

I have always presumed that the B-24's
were more vulnerable because of the Davis Airfil -
very efficient wing but when damaged became
very inefficient. The numbers might reveal
that - or reveal they were always good!

In '42-'43 there was some comfort to be
had from the belief that we had wing areas to
spare - fortunately. Or so I thought at the time.

Was my faith justified? I cannot recall
ever seeing anything definitive in the subject.

Take care,
Ed

Ref incoming mail - iron it under a damp cloth
to steam the anthrax spores! (I doubt... yet.)

11/8/01

Dear Russ -

As you might expect, I have a large print of that 1943 photo of "Little Audrey" and crew (well - mostly crew) getting the blessing from Father Poletti.

Ed Maligowski's sister, Irene Macomber, has lived in nearby Henderson for years. Her husband was a fighter pilot - P-51's - in the 8th and later was C.O. at Luke AFB, Retired as a Col and was hired by Livermore Labs as administrator of a difficult group of Ph.D's who were big in political infighting. (You know how academics can be.) He probably for Mac - he could not be intimidated and was a big success.

Before he died, he and Irene came over on the first of many visits and had a good look at my den. When she found the Blessing picture she asked: "what is he doing giving you the Last Rites?"

A natural inquiry since she knew that Mal and I were 2 of the few who completed a tour in that first year.

Some time, if you reprint that photo, you might want to quote her. Use it as a caption: "The Last Rites - Provisional".

EH

3/2/02

Hear Russ -

My January "Echoes" arrived at 3:30 PM today!

(a) I read my own reflections I concluded that my logbook must be worse than it seemed already. There were are some fuzzy parts in the printed version that could confuse a reader who was paying attention!

P-4 is a case in point, on 23 Nov 42 I was grounded with a strap that that had been treated with the new stuff. Automatic 7 day grounding that was news to me and the Medical O.D., who was not a Flight Surgeon, he happened to have the Graveyard left in the Dispensary, where I arrived at 3:00 AM on the 30th, as I recall.

I never knew about the grounding rule until I showed up for the 23 Nov 42 briefing to find Roger was reflecting me.

So, I did not make that bomb run with Bob's crew - Roger did, and died.

P-4 reveals in a parenthesis that we had "no runway device at Thrusleigh" → in fact, no electronic device in those days. What we had was a reliance on dead reckoning and basic instruments. (The excuse for not even a non-directional radiobeacon was "The Germans might use it to find our field" (!)) Always seemed a risk worth taking to me. So, we were pretty primitive for the kind of weather we had.

Column 2 first P is fuzzy → years later Cindy Roering wrote, from memory no doubt, that he had flown the first Germany mission with Bill Casey in "Banache". No, no, no - I flew "Banache" on the first one, Cindy flew with Casey on "Banache" on the second Wilhelmshaven mission on 26 Feb 43, about a month

later. I never bothered to notify Andy of the slip - it was about 50 years later and did not alter the course of the war, so why spoil his story?

[Now, just between us, Aus]: IP 2, Col 2, talks about the Hamm mission. Bill Colantoni was sure we hit the Hamm yards because of the rivers at each end ^{as we approached} and "walked our bombs from one bridge to the other." We suddenly came upon a break in the clouds and he saw the yards ahead - "if you follow the PBI I can hit them!" There was no time to set up the autopilot so I followed the PBI manually. Bear in mind that pilots in B-17s cannot see targets below - the nose is in the way. Bill took pictures with the on board camera and personally took the film to the lab and saw the wet prints. He never saw them again and was, in fact, called a liar and has been mad as hell ever since. He thinks it was a cover up because the Group had aborted and we got home about 40 minutes after the rest of them, having hidden in clouds for the withdrawal. We apparently lucked into a temporary break in the clouds - we were about 600 feet below the Group after the spin out and instrument recovery. I guess we probably dipped about a mile behind the group during the recovery - you can bet I never would have resumed that heading to Hamm if I thought we might be under the North! But, unbeknownst to us, the Group had turned for home and I do not recall if they brought the bombs home for a refund or dumped them in the sea. None of this changed the outcome of

* RR bridges connecting approaches to the yards from either end, a very choice target!

of the war but it DID change our view of the commanders. Friends?" between us, Russ?

That it just before the album reminded me of a current TV ad for M&M's Mints, in which a very old geezer takes a bite and says with reverence: "I love the sensation - - - in fact, how glad I can still get a sensation!"

Meantime, Bill Keulihan sent me an old clipping from The Detroit Free Press, 2-1-83, about snuffs. How fortunate that he was a unique character for life - - thank God there is not a large population of snuffs! Xerox enclosed.

The same mail brought a warm-hearted message from Dolores Flanagan - Xerox enclosed. - - if she read this whole letter she might change to mind about my "kindness". I'm aware that there are some who think I'm a mean old bastard, I well, can't wait 'em all. (Note that Dolores got her Echoes on 2/27/83!)

My peculiar writing is due to an annoying numbness in my right thumb, forefinger and middle finger. Not feeling the pen makes me concentrate on the operation of writing.

Hang in there -

Ed

2-27-02

Dear Ed,

The January 2002 issue of the 306th Echoes arrived today. How wonderful that Charles' family made its front page - courtesy of you, a dear friend of Charles. He very much enjoyed seeing and reading it. In fact he communicated very little anymore, but seeing it did bring out several sentences. Great! Thanking you for all expended efforts, and wishing you the best in the days ahead, I am,

...a kindness that sets you apart.

Thank you so much for your thoughtfulness.

Sincerely,
Miss. Dolores Flannery
and Charles

Brian's new start

9

by REBECCA ROBERTS

Brian Smith, hit by a car at the age of 15, suffered a closed head injury that robbed him of his adolescence. It did not, however, rob him of his scrappiness and his desire to meet goal after goal he set for himself. Now he wants to find the kind of work that will enable him to live on his own and have a family of his own.



A fine mess

13

by ROBERT LABOUR

It all started with the broken toilet. Well, actually it started with a late-night reading of "My Life as an Explorer." Well, no, actually it started with the game of Old Maid. Anyway, it ended with bruises and police and water, water everywhere.



When this is not in

20

by JEANIE FRANZ

An innocent summer diet to lose a few pounds turned into a frightening bout with anorexia — the uncontrollable urge to lose weight. When her weight dropped to 96 pounds, Jeanie Franz finally got help.



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next week

A special section:
spring home fashion

Detroit

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DETROIT Magazine, 321 W. Lafayette, Detroit 48201. Call 222-6446.

5-1-83

Caro had Snuffy's number: They called him 'Hokey'



Forty years ago today, the kid from Caro did what was least expected of him. He became a hero.

A grateful government gave him the Congressional Medal of Honor and the heroism of Sgt. Maynard H. "Snuffy" Smith was official.

His name was spread across the pages of the newspapers to the delight of a country hungry for heroes in those early years of World War II. But legends are only as good as the stuff they're made of and, to the surprise of almost no one, the aura of military glory which surrounded Maynard Smith faded like bugle notes in the flat farm country of the Thumb.

Snuffy Smith was, for all that, still Snuffy Smith, and one silver medal wasn't really going to change anything.

In Caro, before the war, they called him "Hokey." The folks who knew him there softened their recollections of him in deference to his new status as hero. He had been a bit troublesome, they recalled on the day of Snuffy's triumphant return to Caro. More devilment than anything else. "A very lively boy," one Caro resident recalled. "Just bubbling over with heck."

They were willing to overlook the times he scattered the townsfolk by riding his motorcycle down the sidewalk or the day he rode his pony into Carl Palmer's drugstore to buy an ice cream cone.

In the Army Air Corps they called him "Snuffy," a predictable nickname for anybody named Smith and barely pushing 5 foot 7. And he was as unlikely a hero to his fellow airmen as he was to the folks back in Tuscola County.

In fact, the day Secretary of War Henry Stimson arrived to hang the medal around Snuffy's neck, Snuffy had to be pulled off KP for the ceremony.

And on the day he returned to Michigan to accept the accolades of the home folks, he was wearing borrowed sergeant's stripes. His flirtation with the privileges of rank, like so many other things in his life, had been transitory. Sometime between heroism and homecoming, Snuffy had been busted back to private.

But for one shining moment on May 1, 1943, the world belonged to Snuffy Smith.

The B-17s of the 306th Bomb Group were returning to their base in England following a raid on the German submarine pens at St. Nazaire, in occupied France. Snuffy was gun-

ner in the belly turret of Flying Fortress 649. It was his first combat mission.

Attacking enemy planes and anti-aircraft fire turned the waist section of the B17 into an inferno. Two of the crew were seriously wounded, three others bailed out to escape the flames.

Snuffy Smith fought the fire, wounded and, when he had no more, operated the guns to repel enemy fighters. When the extinguishers were empty, he fought the flames with his hands. The plane returned safely and Maynard H. Smith's life was about to change, but not utterly.

He made four more combat missions, married an English girl — his third wife — returned to the United States and was discharged.

In 1946, his second wife sued him for child support. There were lots of headlines and Snuffy lost.

In 1948, he pleaded guilty to selling a rejuvenation cream for men, called "Firma." He was told to refund

the money to his disappointed customers.

In 1952, Snuffy rescued a grief-stricken woman from the sixth-floor ledge of a Washington building. Two days later she told police that Snuffy had offered her \$500 to climb out on the ledge so he could rescue her. He was convicted and fined \$75.

Snuffy Smith lives now in St. Petersburg, Fla., quietly and out of the limelight. He will be 72 on May 19.

In 1981 he attended the opening of a restaurant at the Bradenton-Sarasota Airport called the "306th Bomb Group."

Ron Moden, the restaurant's assistant manager, remembers him: "He seemed like a guy who's had a rough life. Like a person who never really found his niche. He spent a lot of time by himself, that night, sitting alone."

But the pictures on the walls of the restaurant show another Snuffy Smith. Standing at attention in a rumpled uniform, accepting the country's highest decoration for valor.

Cocky, self-assured. A knowing half-smile on his face. A side trip in a life whose ultimate destination was probably determined at a time when people still called him Hokey.

Snuffy remembers Caro with something less than fondness. In 1966 he told a Free Press reporter:

"To tell the truth, I did a hell of a lot more for that town than it ever did for me."



Snuffy Smith was pulled off KP to receive his medal from Secretary of War Henry Stimson.

DETROIT FREE PRESS PHOTOGRAPHY (1983)

more Smith ↓

...and I can't always Italy — but I can hear the artillery fire. It just comes back once in a while now.
"Winning the medal has given me something to live up to. It's given me a chance to meet a lot of people and has taken me to places I wouldn't have gone to otherwise.
"But most of us feel that we're just representative. There are many other fellows who should have had it.
"When I got home to Foster City after winning the medal, I had to make far more appearances than I wanted to. That lasted about six months. Finally I left to study at Michigan State University.
"Even now, I wouldn't talk about the medal

...but I don't think anyone should regard it as a crutch.
"And as I and other winners know, there are many other people who should have had it."
One of the most peppery winners is Maynard H. Smith, of Albany, N.Y. At 68, he is a freelance lobbyist and former tax examiner who writes poetry denouncing hippies. Smith has been divorced three times. The medal was a factor in at least one divorce.
He won the medal for his actions May 1, 1945. He was on his first AF combat mission with nine crewmen in a B-47 Flying Fortress. They left their base in England to attack submarine pens at St. Nazaire on the west coast of France.



SGT. PETER LEMON

... a hero "stoned" on pot
"We were hit by antiaircraft fire which ignited 400 gallons of gasoline in our plane," he recalled.
"Three of the crew bailed out and drowned. I picked up four cases of ammunition and threw them out. They were on fire and the ammunition was exploding. Each case weighed 250 pounds. I weighed 135.
"I gave first aid to three men.
"The pilot was trying to keep the plane stable. We dropped to about 1,000 feet. It took us an hour and 40 minutes to get to England. The plane was smoking and burning when we landed.
"Only four of the 35 planes that went out made it back.
"The next day we went out again and it was worse. We were shot to pieces, Germany, where the flak was so thick we couldn't see where we were going. We lost about 50 of 100 planes that day.
"The first time you went out you were lucky if you got back. The second time, you weren't expected back.
"Hell, I wasn't looking for any medal — I was just looking to get out of the damned thing alive."
President Roosevelt sent his secretary of war, Henry L. Stimson, to England to present the Medal of Honor to Smith.
Smith says the danger of the missions didn't bother him.
"I've studied endocrinology and I think body chemistry has a lot to do with how people react under stress. There's no way to predict who will do what. I've seen many instances of people gaining out or planes before reaching France or Germany because of their terrible fright. Often they were the people you'd least expect to do that.
"I didn't have any nightmares after my missions, but I let off steam doing a lot of night-hawking and drinking.
"The medal has changed my life. It means a great deal to me. "It was a factor in my first divorce because my wife was born in a lower social level and couldn't adjust when we were thrust into a higher echelon of society.
"I've been divorced twice more," he said cheerily, "and I'm looking again."
He said the medal has changed the lives of all the other winners he knows. "There's terrific stress required to get the medal, whether it involves Army, Air Force or another service. Often that stress catches up with the men later on. It affects some people terribly, like that fellow in Detroit.
"Like anything else, public acclaim doesn't last. Most Americans don't have a valid idea of heroism and the medal."
The components of heroism are an endlessly fascinating topic to doctors of the mind.
Major Billy Jones is an Army psychiatrist who has spent a year in Vietnam.
"In a life-threatening situation, a man has to react in some way," he said. "In combat, he can either get himself out of it by flight, or he can fight. Once flight and anxiety are redirected into action, you have the kind of situation that produces Audie Murphy and Dwight D. Eisenhower."
Murphy, who died in a plane crash May 28, won the Medal of Honor.

Msgr. Maino says:

Principles of 4th worth remembering

By MSGR. HUBERT A. MAINO.
Pastor, St. Francis Catholic Parish

On old fashioned July 4th's we used to celebrate a kind of secular liturgy. We erected fires that nourished our love of country with parades, bands, oratory and fireworks. Nowadays, it seems, the holiday has been emptied of its solemn meaning. The 4th is now a weekend of outdoor recreation.



MSGR. MAINO

More serious than mere indifference is the growing, ominous rejection of the virtue of patriotism. Many young people seem unable to separate their abhorrence for the war in Vietnam from hatred for the government itself. The "establishment" is their minds is the embodiment of evil.

This attitude probably stems from the dedication to unlimited freedom and independence. Misled by false prophets in certain pulpits and in college classrooms, many of the young no longer recognize a distinction between liberty and license. So any organization — family, church, school or nation — which seeks to impose laws and regulations for the common good is ridiculed, lampooned and rejected. This is nothing but a form of anarchy.

At this critical point in our national history, there can hardly be anything more important than a revival and a re-dedication to our American civic philosophy — the truths enshrined in the Declaration of Independence — together with the Constitution, the twin charters of our national greatness.

There are three statements in that immortal document that constitute the core of our American creed. They are that all men are created equal, that they are endowed with natural rights, and that these rights come from God.

Thomas Jefferson got his immediate inspira-

tion from the Bible: for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Although we affirm the essential equality of all men, we are also mindful of our individual differences, our inequalities in talent, environment and opportunities. Since all men are equal in the sight of God they should be so in the eyes of their fellow men. We are therefore obligated to work for the elimination of these natural and man-made inequalities, so that all mankind may live in accordance with human dignity.

The belief in natural rights is an important bulwark against totalitarianism: If man's rights do not derive from his nature they must come from an outside source, which can only be the state. What the state gives the state can take away. We should eventually become as free as the Germans under Hitler, or as the Communists under their several dictators, if we were to adopt the view that freedom is the gift of government.

The rights of man are simply his claim to the unimpeded exercise of his freedom of choice. Man has the obligation to use his abilities — to publish, to associate with other men, to marry, to raise and provide for a family, to worship God. He is able to lead a truly human life only if he remains untrammelled in the use of these natural powers.

Finally, our nation's charter assumes the existence of God. Not only Thomas Jefferson, but the vast majority of Americans from his day to the present, share that view. We accept the Jewish-Christian conviction that God is the Creator and man is His creature, dependent upon Him and bound to do His will. As this fundamental principle erodes under the acids of modernism, our national identity and purpose are weakened, and we shall become a divided, purposeless, and powerless people.

It is not wise for us to attempt to impose our way of life, our social order, our political arrangements on other nations. But we should not hesitate to deepen our faith in them among ourselves. Then their value may be appreciated and our example perhaps emulated by others.

"chewed" — deliberately chopped up by gunfire.

Somting says the man told him, "I didn't know what I was doing. Something just snapped when I saw what they were doing to the body of my friend."

In the second instance, a GI was severely wounded during a heavy firefight. He was in an open area.

"The medic calmly stood up and walked over to the soldier and began treating him. He was instrumental in saving the man's life. He was under fire all the time. Others said they didn't see how anything could have lived, and yet the medic came away without a scratch.

"He said 'This was my job, and what I'm paid for — the man needed help.'

"This was a rational act, but with a highly

Joy Hakanson says:

Arts & Crafts show 'strong, innovative'

By JOY HAKANSON
Dance Art Critic

How does a 45-year-old art school rate a \$10 million expansion?
By turning out the kind of student exhibit currently on view at the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts.



MISS HAKANSON

This is the strongest and most innovative show in years by an all-time high enrollment of 940.

Since art schools rely on a student annuals to project their public image, it is a most appropriate that Mayor Gribbs picked the day before the show's preview to announce Arts and Crafts' \$10 million share of a \$28 million

Cultural Center expansion.
Director Walter Midener, who came to the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts to head the sculpture program 25 years ago, said the student body numbered 125 when the school left Watson street in 1958 to move into the walk-off building on Kirby designed by Minoru Yamasaki.

"We've spilled over into six annexes — five former residences and a garage on Kirby," Midener said.

"We're experiencing all the growing pains involved with turning a technical school into a degree-granting institution."

The expansion, which will begin early next year on a 5½-acre site bounded by Brush and John R and split down the middle by Kirby, will merge Arts and Crafts and the Detroit Community Music School into the Center for Creative Studies.

The complex of precast concrete, brick and glass buildings totaling more than 200,000 square feet is being designed by architect W.G.



Midener with show sculpture
Fabric design section from a department headed by D'Arco.

* He was on a previously scheduled trip — he was asked to take the 40th album and home 4 on Sep. 16

12/3/01

Dear Russ -

It strikes me that a trip to Washington to examine the Smith file is probably unnecessary. Although I was always annoyed by Smith's behavior, the aspect that really bothered me was how L.P. was kind of sweet talker, even though he decided to hang in there, in what appeared to be a doomed airplane, to try to save Smith.

I would wager that the ingrate never even thanked him, judging by the way he promoted his own performance in fighting the fire - including writing on it. Desperate ambitions call for desperate responses, no doubt. Then he exploited his "achievement" for the rest of his life.

Perhaps the fantasy became reality to him - a characteristic of crabs, by the way.

Bill Colantoni called me yesterday and sounded the way he did 10 years ago. Found out he had chest pains and recognized the problem - the cardiologist put in two stents and the change was remarkable.

I kidded him about being a Gemini man at age 85.

I encouraged him to come here during the Christmas period and stay in my guest room, have Christmas dinner with my family, etc. - I am the chef and will serve my *picco de resistence*, roasted Beef Tenderloin. My local progeny love it.

Incidentally, I gave up the tree routine - In fact, I gave a cartload of ornaments, lights, etc., to my

daughter to redistribute among the young wives — who happily received their shares. Thus saving me a decorating (and un-decorating) chore that was getting very tiresome. A few selected wreaths and Christmas plants do wonders by themselves. Ho-ho-ho!

I have not figured out exactly what is happening to the local economy — nor has anybody, apparently. Month of October showed a 12.5% increase in new home sales. Hotel occupancies are off about 5% to about 93% BUT the casino revenues are down about 10%. Foreign high rollers have chickened out on flying, apparently, and the high rollers in the past produced about 15% of the gaming profits. This is why the hotels have laid off about 15,000 people and tightened up on many people.

The Holiday (Dec 26 to Jan 2) will be interesting and will probably indicate what the new year will bring.

By the way — ^{LV} ~~the~~ has only 17% degreeed residents — the lowest in the US! We get oodles of tradesmen and laborers seeking their "fortunes" in our big job market. My opinion: we have serious traffic problems because so many drivers are illiterate — at least functionally so. (A year ago it was measured at 26% in Clark County!!) Guess the Islamic world is much worse off than we are in so many ways. Bizarre biblical life style they cling to!

Enjoy the Season!
EL

12/6/01

Dear Russ:

5:30 PM NBC Network News yesterday elevated my blood pressure alarmingly. Brokaw, using his always scornful inflections, challenged the viewer to guess what percentage of Gulf War casualties (ours) were caused by friendly fire --- 24%? 40%? 60%? (Used recollections on those last two.) Then the blonde lady - Colic? - came on to fan the fire. The answer is 24%.

HOWEVER - these misbegotten Liberal Democrats never once revealed that this paradoxical 24 was the percentage of our total casualties of about 100!!! Never mentioned that. Never mentioned anything about Iraqi casualties which, I believe, were about 10,000!!! in the Gulf War.

This is what angers me about our stupid journalists - my real worry is that they are not really that stupid - they are essentially unethical and are deliberately misleading the public.

All this became something went awry with a smart bomb and clobbered our position. This is the kind of crap you can expect from peaceniks who never served in their lives but hold themselves out as expert commentators on modern warfare.

One military analyst correctly pointed out that the targets are often within a couple of hundred yards of our people so any error in transmitting coordinates to the bombers can cause friendly fire casualties. It's

an ever-greater risk that journalists choose not to understand or accept.

We would be down the tube in seconds if these summaries were in charge! I guess they think modern war should be risk-free - like their jobs.

I wish I could know what Rumsfeld is saying privately about this kind of reporting!! The folks pretend to be factual but are not even close. No wonder the citizenry is so screwed up in their perceptions of the world scene!

New subject: today I met an active B-1 pilot at the transmission shop we were both fabricating. The manager introduced us and the B-1 lad was full of questions about my historic background when "you guys really flew the airplanes!!" He recently completed a 32-hour non-stop "mission" to a Turkish "target" - double crew, of course but terribly tiring and boring. (To my surprise, he was extremely gray haired at age 29!) I told him nobody could understand the truth about a 32-hour flight until they did one - I suffered through a lot of 16-hour flights in B-29, as an instructor, and I was pooped. (Don't forget to add in 2 hours pre and 2 hours post flight time -) But 32 is mind boggling in those tight quarters. Can I be unreasonable in my waning years?
Ed

11/14/01

Dear Russ:

My "Eldes" came yesterday - in recent times I suspect! It was an interesting piece despite my "initial" farewell! I have done a lot of proof reading as the partner of our travel folders. I always hated that part and cannot be sure that there ever was a perfect folder! I recall one patron who misinterpreted one phrase in a Canadian Rockies tour folder that had gone through five summer seasons and about 2500 tourists before this one took on the task - rather triumphantly, in fact. We changed one word and laid the case to rest.

I noticed a couple of slips in my farewell - not bad when using long-hand copy. In the 6th P, third line, the "formal" was actually "forward". No harm. A few lines further, "The original 25 inches was actually 35. My guess is that it won't be noticed, except by me & and now you, if you missed it.

* He has been attached to an oxygen supply for years. As Tiger Tom was

I was sorry, but not surprised, to learn from Bill Hurliman that Med McKay was out of breath.* I have been put on A-01412, which replaced 3 other inhalers and reduced my dosage from 12 to 2 per day! Works great - my long time Dr. P. said he thinks it's the most effective new medication in his 45 years in medicine! He then opened his eyes for a minute and came back with 3 serious good for 60 doses each -

and worth \$30 each at a pharmacy! He said the Sales Rep is so excited about his vocal support of the product that he gave him a whole case as "samples." (I can get them for \$25 each on my pharmaceutical coverage, but this is much better!)

I enjoyed the Thatching story, which I heard about from Ralph. He told me, when I asked, where the thatchers got the straw -- contract farmers grow it for them since the regular crops use a low-growing variety that modern reapers bundle readily. For thatching you need about 24" straw! I asked if old guys with hand-held scythes had to harvest it, but, no, the mowers were fine!

I'm getting a faint complex about Casey - he became more difficult, by far, and has to use an electronic uped chair, which rides on a rack on the back of his car. About 15-20 minutes, each way, to detach or attach. It goes at a speed about twice that of my walk! He likes to go to Casinos for lunch and video poker - pedestrian patrons are at high risk with Casey at the controls. So, I'm long overdue for another entry, which I need. (Don't print this, for God's sake!)

Dr. Hage is a godsend, indeed.

I enjoyed the Got Back book reviews - it

So happens that Northwest was our prime carrier for Hawaii in the 1970's. We used 3 747's each week-end from OPA/HNL and our load factors were so high that it was rare, indeed, to see any non-Eastern Time people on board. The tour conductors, however, were a blessing because we ultimately had over 100 agents working our Hawaii programs — all except 2 were haoles! I found that mainland agents coveted the Hawaii duty so much that they became very diligent employees. Hawaiian, by nature and culture, are very familial and social — when they get to the next island they tend to disappear for reunions with families, cousins, buddies, etc. While tour members wonder where their agent went. The contractors and retailers in Hawaii were unanimous in their praise of our agent staff. Of course, their diligence, and undeniable charm, resulted in very substantial gratuities from happy travelers. They were remarkably happy because our style was upscale, allowing virtually nothing to gripe about.

Yesterday, I received the letter (copy on file) from Lon Eister, which illustrates what I have been talking about: God Tonic for an old fart like me!

Aloha — Ed



Army of the United States

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

This is to certify that

EDWARD J HENNESSY JR O 661 836 Captain

328th AAF Base Unit Gulfport Mississippi

*honorably served in active Federal Service
in the Army of the United States from*

3 July 1942

to

28 November 1945

Given at SEPARATION CENTER Barksdale Field Louisiana

on the 28th *day of* November 1945

Russell C. King
RUSSELL C KING
Lt Col Air Corps

MILITARY RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL Hennessey Edward J Jr		2. ARMY SERIAL NUMBER 0 661 936	3. AUS. GRADE Capt	4. ARM OR SERVICE AC	5. COMPONENT ORC
8. ORGANIZATION 328th AAF Base Unit Gulfport Mississippi		7. DATE OF RELIEF FROM ACTIVE DUTY 28 Nov 45	6. PLACE OF SEPARATION Separation Center Barksdale Field La		
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES 6848 Constance Ave Chicago Illinois			10. DATE OF BIRTH 11 Sep 19	11. PLACE OF BIRTH Chicago Illinois	
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT See 9			13. COLOR EYES Blue	14. COLOR HAIR Brown	15. HEIGHT 6' 2$\frac{1}{2}$"
			16. WEIGHT 220 <small>LBS.</small>	17. NO. OF DEPENDENTS 2	
18. RACE WHITE		19. MARITAL STATUS MARRIED		20. U. S. CITIZEN YES	
21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO. Student Economics 60.997					

MILITARY HISTORY

SELECTIVE SERVICE DATA	22. REGISTERED YES	23. LOCAL S. S. BOARD NUMBER Unknown	24. COUNTY AND STATE Cook Illinois	25. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY See 9
	26. DATE OF ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY 3 Jul 42	27. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. Pilot V H B 1093		
28. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS Air Off-Europe GO 33 WD 45				
29. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS DFC GO 74 8AF 12 Jun 43 AM GO 19 8AF 16 Feb 43 W/3 OLC #1 OLC GO 30 8AF 13 Mar 43 #2 OLC GO 42 8AF 6 Apr 43 #3 OLC GO 22 8BC 20 Apr 43				
30. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION None				
31. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED Central Instructors School Lockbourne Ohio		32. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U. S. AND RETURN		
		DATE OF DEPARTURE 23 Aug 42	DESTINATION ETO	DATE OF ARRIVAL 6 Sep 42
33. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION Released from active duty under provisions of WD RR 1-5		3 Sep 43	U S	8 Sep 43
34. CURRENT TOUR OF ACTIVE DUTY			35. EDUCATION (years)	
			GRAMMAR SCHOOL 7	HIGH SCHOOL 4
YEARS 2	MONTHS 4	DAYS 10	YEARS 1	MONTHS 0
			DAYS 16	COLLEGE 4

INSURANCE NOTICE

IMPORTANT IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY-DAY GRACE PERIOD, INSURANCE WILL LAPSE. MARK CHECKER OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF THE U. S. AND FORWARD TO COLLECTIONS DIVISION, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.					
36. KIND OF INSURANCE Nat. Serv. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> U.S. Govt. <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/>	37. HOW PAID Assignment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct to V.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	38. Effective Date of Allotment Discontinuance 30 Nov 45	39. Date of Next Premium Due (also month after 38) 31 Dec 45	40. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH 6 50	41. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO Continue <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue only <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue <input type="checkbox"/>

RIGHT THUMB PRINT	43. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. D. Directives) Lapel Button Issued
	Qualified Sharpshooter 30 Cal M1 20 Sep 44

44. SIGNATURE OF OFFICER BEING SEPARATED <i>Edward J Hennessey Jr</i>	45. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Type name, grade and organization - signature) WALLACE G IVERSON 1st Lt AC <i>Wallace G Iverson</i>
--	---

Honorable Discharge



from the Armed Forces of the United States of America

This is to certify that

MAJOR EDWARD J. HENNESSY, JR., AO 661 836, AIR FORCE RESERVE

was Honorably Discharged from the

United States Air Force

on the FIFTH *day of* MAY 1955 *This certificate is awarded*
as a testimonial of Honest and Faithful Service

James T. Quirk

JAMES T. QUIRK
COLONEL, USAF

8/23/03

Dear Russ -

Here's a copy of my letter to Rogers Littlejohn, my Co Pilot, who saved the day!

My guess is that you received that photo, undated, from a ground person

I knew it had to be us because nobody would have done that kind of buggy job deliberately. You never fly at an obstacle - you have to keep vertical air between it and your airplane unless you're an idiot.

Thank God Rogers was standing watch while I was keeping my eyes at the bottom of Terry's airplane close above me. Lucky day!

If you have a print I would like to borrow it and have my local wizard do a clean enlargement - it's amazing what this lab can do with old photos! I'll be happy to send you a copy with the original when I return it.

Best regards -

Ed

9/6/07

Dear Russ -

Since you have not sent me the original print of the tower "bugging" I gather there is a problem. I had assumed it was probably a public domain thing since copyrights (if you held) are long dead after 60 years.!!

I assume that the photographer must know that my usage is not commercial - this is a family keepsake kind of thing. In fact, I never knew the photo was taken until I saw it in "Echoes" Surprise.

I have a hunch that your print could be very interesting when analyzed using current technology. Might even reveal the roseart and clearly defined spectators in the foreground!

It appears that somebody perceives some commercial possibilities that I do not! Why else would there be a problem?

My long held opinion is that the world in general has lost interest in WWII and those involved in it. This particular incident has no historical importance - only personal and family importance. "Family" includes 306TH vets.

I finally caught the History Channel 2 hour story of the WWII air war. It was everything as literal towered air as the ground troops were enroute toward ground operation!! However, it was refreshing to see the air force recognized as important.

I don't think that anybody would claim the grand
prizes could have done it without us!!

I do not recall sending you the copy I
have in mind as a kind of caption under the
enlarged photo, OR, as a sticker on the
back of it. It needs some explanation, so
I seized the opportunity to add the info in
P3 and P4. Either of which can be used
or discarded by the recipient.

I hope this project can be completed since
it is a colorful incident in my past history that
my family survivors will enjoy hearing. (Like those
old mementos from the Civil War!)

Aside: since the 369th had flown all day in
the 6-ship formation - which we did very well, of course -
when Terry called for the tower lagging I assumed he meant
to do it in the squadron box formation, and, he did not
call for an echelon of 6. I still like the idea of the
two V's of 3 each, one leading the "lower level" - would
have been a spectacular sight. Almost was even more
so!!

I hope it all works out, but the world won't
stop turning if it does not.

Ed Hamerly

8/23/27

Dear Rogers:

Tried calling but the computer voice told me that number has been cancelled!

In case you do not get "Echoes", here is a copy of a little photo from the July issue. Forget that erroneous caption - just take a good look at the picture. Think April 17, 1943, Brewer mission. The Group lost 10, including Bill Casey. Terry led the 6 from the 369th in a composite Group, as I recall, all six came back.

I have a vivid memory of Terry's voice in the Command Channel saying: "Let's bag the tower when we get back."

We were flying #4, in lead of the second element, underneath Terry. We approached Tharleigh nice and tight. I realized we were pretty low but I had great faith in Terry! (I have always thought he forgot we were underneath him.)

Fortunately, you were looking ahead, and suddenly you were pounding my arm and pointing, wild-eyed, at the tower ahead. We were right on course to hit it below the second floor!

I could not pull up until Terry moved ahead and could not veer left or right without hitting his wingmen. So I chopped the throttles and held my breath. I recall that you opened the cow flap to create some drag! Whatever works!

As soon as it was possible I pulled up and left - did not notice my prop wash - and flew past the tower. See pictures. That has to be me. The closest I ever came to getting killed. Thanks again for spotting the problem! Cheers!

Ignore the erroneous caption on the photo. Nobody else in his right mind would have done that. In fact, would have been in deep doubt if he had. Nothing was ever said to me - always assumed nobody wanted to embarrass Terry and nobody got hurt. Most people killed in busy jobs were doing that late pull-up thing. In fact, we had a nasty helicopter crash on a mesa edge near Grand Canyon - good weather, 5 out of 6 dead. I realized as soon as I saw a photo of the crash site that the guy had zoomed too late - a few weeks ago the accident board came to the same conclusion.

Amazing that it took 60 years for this Thrush photo to surface!

What say you? Cheers!

Ed Henning

16 NOV 1952

HEADQUARTERS TENTH AIR FORCE
Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan

SUBJECT: Appointment as a Reserve Officer in the United States Air Force

TO: MAJ EDWARD J HENNESSY JR AF RES
A0661836 2 52
501 S BEVERLY LANE
ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, ILL COOK CO


1. The Secretary of the Air Force has directed me to inform you that, by direction of the President, you are tendered appointment as a Reserve Officer in the United States Air Force, in the grade and with service number shown in address above, for an indefinite term, effective on date of acceptance.

2. There is inclosed a form for oath of office, which you are requested to execute and return promptly. The execution and return of the required oath of office constitutes an acceptance of your appointment.

3. This appointment is tendered in lieu of your current five (5) year term appointment and in no other way affects your current military status.

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL JOHNSON:

1 Incl:
Oath of Office
w/envelope


KEITH R. SMITH
Lt Colonel, USAF
Adjutant General

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

2013 Plaza Del Padre
Las Vegas, Nevada 89102
(702) 362-0424

2/1/04

Foylen -

after I mailed the long letter to you I noticed that I had erred in # 3 of the number who actually see combat duty - its 5% - NOT 1 in 5. That 5% applied to WWII and Korea and Vietnam. It was, coincidentally, the percentage of fighter pilots who actually engaged in aerial combat successfully. While on that subject, let me say that in the 8th these fighter engagements were over enemy territory and our lads had only one engine to get them home. The Germans could be, and were, very aggressive because they were over their own territory and were well armored. It was not uncommon for a German to get shot down and be back in business in another airplane in short order. There was one nut who was shot down four times in one day close enough to a base that could have him airborne immediately. 4 times in one day - latter stages of WWII - is surely above and beyond even Hitler's expectations. Many of their top aces had really high scores - a couple exceeded 400 - in the Pacific front. Dick ^{DONK} Bong got 40 in the Pacific in a P-38 - the US highest.
Ed Hennessy

2/10/05

Dear Russ -

Thanks for the expedited copy of 'Echoes' -
It's been a long time between front pages! Because
of my early experiences with the 306th I made
several in 1943 because the press coverage was
abundant and syndicated. However, yours was
the best in many ways featuring the Keyroc Church
story.

Great sharp picture of Rip with the King.
This was the meeting that got him invited to the
family table for our Thanksgiving - just Rip and
George VI, the Queen and the two princesses. A
well-kept secret. He is majestically took an interest
liking to Rip and kept him on his personal Christmas
card list for years, until he died.

The "Diary" piece belies the tale! He
was not very observant and seemed inaccurate
I checked my Form 1 for dates - we flew from
Westover to Dandor on 9/6/42, 6 hours and 2 minutes.
We suffered 4 days of whiteout - the random variety.
Couldnt see 10 feet. It was still like that on 9/10 but
we were touched to the plane about 2:00 PM and
were led by jeep teams - 1 for each B-17 - about
10 feet in front of #2 engine and a guy in the back
seat using flash lights to signal the pilot. They
lined us up in the middle of a really wide-ass (WWII
talk) runway, pointing, properly, straight ahead. We
sure as hell could not tell - we could not see the

outboard engines! Gyrocompass was set with the big "0" straight up. Part of both Cycl that "0" and we took off on actual instruments at 30 second intervals. Sq. Cd. led his group and would hold down his CW key for 30 secs. every half hour - those following had their radio compass tuned to the command frequency and prayed that their needle pointed straight ahead at the CO! As I recall, the squadrons were about a minute apart. This crossing was a first, by the way, of a whole group in a kind of formation on instruments all night. (The smartest thing the desert said was his his call to Holt to change his course by 4°!)

We were 1 1/2 hours enroute to Prestwick where we landed about first light in a drizzly rain with a ceiling of less than 500 feet and MAGBE 1000 feet visibility in mist. One your pilot - can't recall now if it was Jones or Smiley - nearly brought it at Prestwick. As he flared out in the 3-point position to land a Wellington taxied across his runway - he was below critical airspeed so he slammed the throttle to full power, 2500 RPM and also moved the yoke forward to slam the wheels on the runway. He pulled up during the bounce, cleared the Wellington and managed a decent 3-point landing on the other side. Amazing reaction that worked even below critical airspeed which you cannot climb out of, but you can bounce out, obviously!

4

until the 2 came along with the chin turret.

The bubble story shows how lucky 634 was in WWII — no attacks on our bases, and that peacefulness was an anomaly for the air crews! The contrast in environments was hard to handle.

George Will's take on bombing results was out of sync with the Bomber Command's classified data that we used in our replacement crew school at Broompton. Winter losses were verified by onboard cameras — LaMay's 305th was the best during 1943 with an average 350 feet — we were around 450 as a rule and some were out in the boomer at 1000 or more. It seemed obvious that we had to many "dump and run for home" people. Nevertheless, we did a lot more strategic damage than the Brits ever did — as Goering testified at Nuremberg when he said day strategic bombing made it impossible for them to continue. The Brits seemed driven by vengeance: kill as many civilians as possible to destroy morale.

The monthly 306 stats suggest that they did not count "combat fatigue" losses as combat losses. You know there were plenty of early cases of "throwing in the towel" that was no respecter of rank — from Col's to Cpl's that problem was constant — suddenly they were gone from the scene. Sometimes with rather

I figure Hermann must have mapped enroute because the pilots and co's were too tired for a night out. We took off from Pratwick to No. 634 on 9/11 - a 2 1/4 hour flight. We landed at Thurleigh soon as the British were finishing some runway work. I vaguely recall that a few went to Kipton Underwood. I always thought it was because they got lost! Nobody was prepared for these crazy - quilt English Midlands, which take some getting used to, unlike the square grids of Texas, for example. Of course, everything was camouflaged, too!

It was not too good on mileage - it was exactly 8 miles from Balford as the crew flies - a B-17.

The real truck problem at Thurleigh (634) was the virtual lack of gasoline trucks - all we had for weeks was 2 British tankers each with a 1 inch hose that took 4 hours to fuel one B-17! Somebody finally got us 2 American trucks, each with a 2 inch hose and fast pumps. That's what got us into combat on 10/9.

If my memory serves me, those F models we flew had 30 cal - 2 - in the nose for bombardier and navigator - two 50's in top, ball and tail, single 50's in the waist (2) and one in the Radio ceiling.

Those 30's in the nose could not fire straight ahead and the top and ball turrets could not fire into the same level airspace ahead. So - 9 50's and 2 30's

5

same, cover-up excuses for "transfers" - usually
to the states "for special duty"?

As far as I know I could be the only
Wendover pilot who never aborted a
mission assigned, or failed to take off (which
seems to have been regarded as a non-event
if they stayed on the ground. Let's face it,
any qualified pilot could probably find some
problem, real or imagined, that would keep him
on the tarmac) My feeling was - let's get this
over with. Get the 25 and go home and get
married. I gave Gini her ring when she visited
(with her Mom!) at Westover. I would not
marry her for fear of making her a young widow.
This was an incentive to finish the tour.

My other basic tenet was that all that "super
race" propaganda was pure B.S. If you believed
it you would lose. I always thought the guys
who were lost knew it would happen to them.
I always knew it would not happen to me
as Dr Manning said to me about 40 years
later: "Whatever work!"

I have the same attitude about my
current cardiac treatment. It's working so far!

Here's \$5 for the "Workers" - master it (9)
a gratuity for reading the Gospel - report it
in the Plate on Sunday!

OK

Also I would like to get a subscription to the 306th Echoes Newspaper. PLEASE let me know the COST and I will send it to you.

4/7/05

Dear Russ -

My DVD arrived and I had two of my descendants come over to walk me through the system - 3 controls - to see the show.

I was more than pleased with the results - I had been wondering what the producer would be to tie together a collection of old pictures - using the survivor interviews was very effective. Some were surprisingly lucid. Ralph Franklin seemed born to his role - a couple of the old boys showed signs of wear and fuzziness of memories but that added reality.

My attention was riveted to the parade of F-100s taking off at the beginning - I was not aware there was any color footage of F-100s and I wondered if they had used the coloring process that Hollywood has used on a lot of good old B&W film - causing much anguish among purists who considered it overzealous. Not me.

If I had been "consulted" I would have provided a couple of suggestions of general interest. Such as the actual instrument take off from London at night after a heavy "white out" that had shut down London until somebody ordered the jiffy take off on instruments (not by eye comparison zero and assume the ground crew had you pointed straight down the runway because you could not even see the edges! Pretty amazing success. Also, it is worth noting that

we were the first group to fly in as "make believe" formation across the North Atlantic in instruments for over 8 hours. At 5:00 was 30 seconds apart on take off and flew a prescribed course and arrived and all had a 50. leaders (24. were 1 minute apart) would have their radio position had been his CW log for 30 seconds on each half hour as follows were turned - radio compass - to his frequency. If the needle pointed straight ahead, rejoice - otherwise, nope.

As I recall we reached broken clouds at about daybreak west of Iceland and could see the Lancelotti Isle through the holes enroute to Thetford. Where it was continuous snow and low ceiling and terrible horizontal visibility.

all 33 landed - not the one ^{lenny} west end of Gardner, nor Melton, who had to ditch in shallow water off Ireland out of gas with 2 engines feathered. One of our crews, either Smiley or Joyce I think, had a close call on landing. As he flared out "land a Brit" he spotted across his runway when he was below critical air speed - he jammed in full power, slammed the uplock on the runway and yanked back on the yoke and cut the power to merge the Brit and when back 3 point landing just legal then. He should have gotten a medal for that maneuver!

The following morning we took off for Thurley in for single flights to our new base. That turned

out to be an adventure for many. The topography of England is nothing like the US west - a crazy quilt of fields and forests with few, if any, straight lines. A navigational puzzle in which dead reckoning was essential because visual piloting was next to impossible. Yes, there were lots of airfields, more than we know, in fact, because they were camouflaged and we were not acclimated yet! A few had had to land and ask, sheepishly, for directions to Thurleigh.

When we found it the Irish construction crews were still pouring cement on some runways. When we landed we discovered that the art of grading was not in vogue and so the runways followed the contours of the land. Think of Tournament golfers lining up long putts on undulating greens. When you felt sure your approach was on the mark, the runway would drop down and your 3-point landing would occur 2 or 3 feet up in the air. P.O.P! That was getting used to. Also caused a few drag links in the landing gear to snap, causing that wheel to collapse back into the nacelle. Hard landing or misshapen wheels could put fatal side stress on the drag links thus causing serious damage to the aircraft. And big problems for engineering.

Also lost in most memories was the refueling problem. Thurleigh had 2 reverse level lines

tank trucks equipped with 1 inch hoses. It would take 4 hours to "fill up" - do the math. A frantic search was organized that finally resulted in 2 US. tanks each with 2 hose-long hoses.

If you wonder why it took us about a month to fly the first combat mission it was the tank truck problem.

Another example of what Remsball was talking about at the Congressional hearing re/ inadequately armored bombers - "We fought wars with the equipment we have" It was ever thus! The 306th and the other early groups, were decimated by Luftwaffe nose attacks because the Funnels lacked forward fire power and we had NO fighter escorts until summer of 1943

A recent recall on fighter "escorts" in my time (I finished 23 May 1943) except once when our "little friends" turned back halfway across the Channel for lack of fuel! Terrible - we were enroute to the target, not from the target.

I have a classic artist's conception of a B-17F bombing mission. The formation is under attack by ME-109's - the sky is full of black flak bursts! No way would these 'SE's fly into their own flak - they lurked out of range and speared on B-17's damaged by flak and booted out of the formation. Artistic license? Dumb artist?

Enough already - it is a fine idea nevertheless.

Ed

Note: The armor on bombers. And the choice of heavy bombers, the Deep Engineer!

4/10/05

Dear Russ -

Thank for the "Rich Healers" book. I believe I sent you a copy of my earlier book report that I had sent to Bob Faulkner. CSM III did a lot of research and statistical fact finding to be sure. I was touchy about his perspective however.

I had no idea that Red Adams had a son! And my memory, good as it is, was not a treasure-house of personal histories.

However, I recall clearly that Red was a bit older than his gunner peers and was a kind of father-figure to them. He was far from a short stout type - in fact, at one mission he was knocked on his butt in the waist when a chunk of flak hit him on the banner of his parachute, ripped through several layers of the woven webbing and broke the skin on his chest where he developed a bruise. Typically, he made little of it and we had to insist that he describe it in the debriefing because it deserved a Purple Heart. If it had missed the banner he could have been killed!

My memory also tells me that he and Glen Nylly, my out-standing top gunner mechanic, signed on for second tours and both were shot down subsequently. Glen survived in a POW camp and became a long-haul semi-driver until he retired and died a year or two later.

I suspect that Robert Jr has "First Act" and

What you know his address or file (Perhaps you could send him a copy of this note.) On Page 96 - if it were numbered - is the "little landing" blessing pictures. Red Adams is second from left, next to Billy Munnar (Radio) and Bob B. Bill Celestine first on his ~~right~~ ^{left} and just over Fr. Pietto's shoulder. Roger Littlejohn is on Fr's right - son next, then Casey Jones, ~~Pit Spellman~~, ~~Wally Joe~~ Bowles, Wally and Pit Spellman. We borrowed Joe from Riordan crew "not done" - Between Celestine and Pietto's head is Tony Santoro, also borrowed from Riordan for the picture. (Incidentally, Tony remains one of the most congenial "originals" in my memory.)

If I had to pick out Red Adams' singular ability it would be his steady influence on his peers.

Every crew should be so lucky to have one like Red.

I probably have told you before that my admiration for gunners is timeless because they were the real defenders who had to trust the flight crew as first to get them back to base, hopefully intact. At a time when the odds were terribly bad.

Please excuse the cross cuts, changes, etc. I can't write as fast as I think, seriously.

Best regards,

Ed Henning

A WENDOVER CO-PILOT'S RECOLLECTION OF THE 306TH MOVE TO THURLEIGH, 1942

10/12
1001

When the Group was activated 1 March 1942, at Gowan Field, Idaho, the aircraft assigned to the 306th were three twin-engine, already obsolete B-18's plus one single-engine A-17, an aircraft with a singular characteristic --- it took off, cruised and landed at a constant 100 miles per hour.

On 1 April 1942, the 306th was relocated by a variety of conveyances to Wendover, Utah, about 120 miles west of Salt Lake City at the Nevada border. Perhaps the kindest reference to the Wendover of 1942 was made by Bob Hope when he called it "Leftover". Today it is a thriving casino-resort community. The original runways are in remarkably good condition, but the remnants of the old base buildings better befit a ghost town. There is some private aviation activity and an occasional exercise by visiting USAF fighter units.

Wendover was a learning experience for everybody. B-17's were slowly accumulated. Tech orders were assiduously studied by ground and aircrews in unison as they shared a burning ambition to unravel the mystery of starting the engines and getting these high-tech dreadnoughts airborne. John Regan, with an enviable six hours in the B-17, was a designated pilot instructor!! There were some successes and many failures during these trying times. It is a tribute to the basic airworthiness and forgiving nature of those Boeings that the mission was ultimately accomplished.

MA,
The 306th began flying to Westover, Massachusetts, on 1 August 1942 to start an impromptu tour of anti-submarine patrols and ad lib training during this staging for assignment to the 8th Air Force. It was here that the Group was equipped with brand new B-17Fs. Slow delivery stretched an expected 10-day stay to over 30.

Starting on 2 September 1942, the 423rd Squadron was first off on the initial leg of the overseas movement. The first destination was Gander, Newfoundland. Radio silence was required and there were no high-tech navigational aids --- the Germans could home in on such systems, too. Compass deviation caused by variable magnetic forces in this sub-Arctic region provided new and dismaying navigational problems for many. As a matter of fact, some were found wandering about in forlorn skies by patrolling Coast Guard PBYs which kindly, but condescendingly, LED them into Gander. Since the PBY might make 95 miles per hour wide open, our big birds skulked along behind with flaps and wheels down. A B-17 with its tail between its wheels is not a pretty sight.

After one of those Gander "white outs" of several days duration, when even the gulls were grounded, the Group took off in the blinding white, yet dark of night, on 10 September 1942. It was not widely reported that this was accomplished by having jeeps with flashing orange lights positioned about 10 feet in front of each #2 engine so pilots could follow them to the invisible takeoff position. This was a test of faith in itself since who could be sure that the jeep driver knew the way? Nobody could see even 30 feet.

The jeep team then hand-signaled the pilots into what they perceived as alignment with the runway, gyro-compasses were zeroed and at a given signal the pilots advanced throttles to full on. Staying on the runway was achieved by holding the gyro compass needle on zero with course corrections made by judicious use of throttle, rudder and brakes. A chilling and nearly cathartic experience, to say the least. Such "prehistoric" actual instrument takeoffs were definitely not SOP in 1942.

Since instrument flight conditions were correctly predicted for much of the transatlantic route, the pilots were well-advised to fly at precisely prescribed altitudes and airspeeds in order to maintain, hopefully, a 30-second separation from the justifiably nervous lads ahead and behind. Because of the need for radio silence, this imaginative but hazardous routine called for the Squadron leader's radio operator to hold down his CW key for 30 seconds every half hour. The followers had their radio compasses tuned to this frequency. As the signal was sent, each pilot could breathlessly check to see if his radio compass needle was pointing **forward**. If it did, joy and gladness. If it did not, gloom and despair --- he had overrun the parade and could not tell with any certainty where anybody was in the soup. Stress time!!!

It was 2100 miles to Prestwick, Scotland, in heavily loaded B-17's equipped with 800-gallon bomb-bay tanks, equivalent to a full bomb load. That was some exercise. This was about 900 miles beyond the normal range of the airplane. Remember, most of these lads were less than a year out of civilian schools!!!! Nevertheless, 33 out of 35 aircraft made it safely, to use the term loosely, to Prestwick. Weather there was below minimums but the Group had to land. Earl Youree was just flaring out when one of our Allies taxied across the runway in front of him. By this time Youree was below flying speed so his only hope was to use full power, slam the wheels on the ground, **bounce** over our Ally and mush down beyond him. He did it --- and had some pointed comments about the chap who nearly spoiled his landing.

Lt. John Leahy's B-17F exploded about an hour out of Gander, killing all on board.

Having flown most of the North Atlantic route on three engines, and partly on two, Bill Melton had run out of gas. He ditched the airplane and he and his crew waded ashore on a lonely beach on the west coast of Ireland. The rising tide soon swallowed the plane, including some "precious personal cargo," it is said. Some fast diplomatic footwork expedited the crew's on-going trip to Thurleigh.

This odyssey was not yet over. Getting from Prestwick to Thurleigh was complicated by bad weather --- so what else was new --- unfamiliar, confusing non-geometric ground patterns and a mind-boggling array of airfields too numerous to mention. The common complaint was "there are too many camouflaged fields --- how can we find our own?"

Of some significance was the fact that on 11 September 1942, when the 306th arrived at Thurleigh, 80 sections of concrete were still being poured by a bunch of nomadic, civilian Irishmen to finish the main runway --- a dubious piece of work that simply followed the contours of the land for all of its niggardly 5,910 feet! The other two runways were 4,200 feet each. Landing uphill or down dale on any of these was usually an adventure in itself. In the days and months that followed, our lives --- us lucky ones --- were an unending series of adventures.

Anything else you want to know about the Group can probably be found in Russ Strong's "FIRST OVER GERMANY", a history of the 306th Bombardment Group (Heavy). As you read through this book, you will realize how much the conditions improved as experience was gained, as war production turned out improved equipment and as formalized advanced training better prepared all the later arriving personnel for the missions that lay ahead. The greatest improvements were the addition of forward-firing nose guns in later B-17's and the arrival of P-38, P-51 and P-47 fighter escorts. The original group never had escorts.

Ed Hennessy, 54 years later.

*

Editor's Note: Hennessy flew the first 306th Bombing mission, 9 October 1942, as a co-pilot and then four more until he took over his own crew in January of 1943. He completed his tour of 25 missions on 29 May 1943 as a Flight Commander with the rank of Captain, not quite ten months after being commissioned as a 2nd Lt. Pilot. He was one of only 21.6% of the original 306th airmen to survive 25 missions and he flew the first mission against Germany, 27 January 1943.

Hennessy and Major General Barney Rawlings are co-chairing the 1996 Reunion in Las Vegas, Oct. 28 to Nov. 1st at the Riviera Hotel and Casino. This is an encore performance for this team, having done it in 1988, when over 900 turned out-the largest single air unit reunion on record.

8/1/00

Gene Russ:

Here comes the 145 paper again!

Ref. the Boeing ad - I cannot imagine Boeing objecting to such a usage and I certainly would not. It's 25 years old! Bob could see it as a space eater!

I saw the Bill Baker FREEDOM ad in "Air & Space" and dropped him a note mentioning that I saw the B-17 in the background first! I also told him he looks more British in his Golden years.

I hope the surgery works well - - - Always wonder why his amazing track record - 12 missions? - , the 2nd highest in WW2, 8th Bomber Command surfaced only once in my experience. At the Crystal City

Reunion when Manny Klette reminded the assembly. Manny was already terminally ill a few months later. I suspect that he was as surprised as anybody would be that Bill's number was like a secret.

Back to the ad - it was kind of a good will gesture to the travel business that they had would inspire agents to sell Boeing as a specific component of a trip. I got into the business in 1946 and have always thought that the general public does not know diddly-oo about aircraft. Nor does our current media crowd: an NBC News person observed a few days ago: "The Concorde had a pretty good track record up to now"! I guess 30 years of virtual perfection does not count.

And it goes on - - on ^{local} NBC channel declared

that the Brits ^{that} bled at Gardner because "gasoline" was gushing from the wing! Navotome, and a few others, I imagine. I began to get really upset with the journalists during the Gulf War when mindless reporters fired mindless questions at Gen Schwartzkopf on 24hr TV — and he would coolly shoot them down, bless his soul! The only guy who ever did it! Let's hear it for Norman!

I read your interesting Medal's story and have to say I tend to agree with Mack about the souvenir aspect. I have always thought the service medals and emblems were a very fuzzy area. One large Admiral thought so, too, and then discretely altered his uniforms when questions arose a couple of years ago.

Pres Unit Citations confused me. The stats clearly show that the original group personnel sustained the heaviest losses, but kept going. (75+ %!?) Yet, later on, those P.V.C. emblems appeared on the chests of those who seemed to be flying mostly cross-country while the early birds got their butts kicked nearly every time out. One adventure - 17 April 43 - comes to mind. 20 minutes of fighter attacks. Terry took the 369th to over 26,000 feet where the fighters could only get in one pass each — the only time my B-17 felt really, mushy in that thin air — and 10 guns were ever frozen. However, the 369th's 6 B-17s completed the round trip on a bad day!

No escorts

The point: this day was memorable, but hardly unique. Nevertheless, there was never a Unit

Citation during my time. I finished on 29 May 43. In retrospect, it seems as if the old group should have gotten a citation just for showing up for work!

Just between us, Gavinfather took me aside one day to confide that Terry had put me in for a DFC for being the only one who flew the mission assigned (as a pilot) and never aborted. I was truly surprised. But he went on to say that Bomber Command denied it "because you cannot award the medal to somebody who was just doing his job" — "it reflects badly on others."

I was pretty tickled, despite the outcome. Gavinfather was rather P.O.'d (as we say years later) because at the time that clean record was unique.

My feeling has always been that the surest way to get a major medal was to screw up so badly that only a heroic effort would extricate you. If a person with field grade rank screwed up they would relieve him, send him to Bomber Command, and soon he'd be two ranks higher, befitting a man with combat experience!

Do not look for bitterness in any of this — it's pretty amusing in retrospect and just highlights the peculiar thinking of the time. Hardly anybody saw the big picture during the excitement and the ones who figured it out the best were military historians 20-30 younger than us who really dug into the archives

and came up with some interesting facts, mostly overlooked here to free Computer analysis, I'm sure.

Like the Air Corps had the lowest percentage of people drawing combat duty - the aviators - but conventional historians calculated losses based on total emplanment when only 10% of that emplanment was at risk! A couple of the spangier historians declared that the 8th Bomber Command, in reality, had the worst losses of all the branches of U.S. service. Big about tumbled! Of course. Ask any of us!

It doesn't really make any difference to the world in general, but it does explain why there were so many mental breakdowns, desertions and reassignments. Going against heavy odds for a whole tour changes your outlook, blood pressure and digestive process!

Fibrillation of the anus was rampant - and we did not even know what that meant!

I did about the San Diego Reunion, as did my roommate, Ed Maligowski. He has more hardware than bone structure and probably should use an electric chair. Maybe if Harley-Davidson made one he would use it. -- I have reached the point where I have to plan my moves carefully lest, frankly, I fall and whack away. My pace is about right for a solemn High Mass. In a small church. I try to look thoughtful so observers may not perceive me as decrepit.

Take care, Ed

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

2013 Plaza Del Padre
Las Vegas, Nevada 89102
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2/8/00

Dear Russ:

You came up with the only record I have ever seen of that 11/8/43 "tail accident". In fact, I had forgotten about ^{it} until this reminder came my way.

The whole episode was a surprise. When the C.P. put the wheels down he checked his side usually, and I mine. We were getting a warning buzz and had the engineer go back to check the tail wheel. We got away and completed the landing, turned off the runway and the tail wheel collapsed, causing a clatter as our rear end dugged a few feet until we stopped. Hence the "tail accident" label.

Turned out that the threaded shaft that pushes the tail wheel to the down and locked landing position had not fully extended, so the gear was not locked in place. The discrepancy was not noticed on the visual check - as I recall it's about 18" long and came up short about 3 inches from full out. That was very evident when we examined it on the tail strip!

I never heard any more about it after signing

The report so I assume your document reveals how
the engineering officer cleared it off his books

However, the whole thing is pretty mystical -
Ed Matsuzaki and I got our orders to go back to the
States on 3 Sept 43 - and promptly did to enjoy
20 day leave. I then went to the Instructors
Standardization School at Dayton - ^{Lockbourne AFB} and got married
at the Base Chapel on 10/14/43, the day I finished
the course!

My guess is that the incident occurred in August -
I can't see anything relevant in my Form 1 files -
I guess it was treated as a new incident until
the paperwork was cleared up in November -
I flew 47:15 minutes out of Lockbourne in Nov.!

Very strange to me, but probably fairly
routine in those days. Keep the Faith!

Ed

9/25/00

Dear Russ:

You probably thought, as I did, that I had run out of statistical comparisons for the 306th. Wrong!

I was idly looking at the B-29 record against Japan in WWII - here is a copy.

B-29's dropped 171,060 tons on Japan

B-29 bomb load = 10 tons, therefore --

17,106 B-29's hit Japan.

306TH Bomb Group flew 341 Missions*

8629 Bombers with 2.5 tons = 21,572 tons

306TH tonnage was 12.6% of B-29 TOTAL tonnage.

I found that rather striking, to say the least, so I went a little further.

If we had been flying B-29's our tonnage would have been 86,290 on German targets*. Which is 50% of the B-29 total tonnage! Remarkable.

N'est-ce pas?

What will I think of next?? Major League Baseball, watch out.

Ed

* Not always Germany, but always German.

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

2013 Plaza Del Padre
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1/14/00

Dear Russ:

It strikes me that John Regan may be the last of the 50. C.O.'s, besides being such an early bird in the Group. Maybe he should be, or could be, singled out at the San Diego Reunion. Perhaps as a guest of the asson?

It's possible that J.W. Wilson may still be upright at that time, but I have the impression that he has never shown any interest in the Group since he left it. A strange bird - the only guy I know who got along with him was Ed Maliszewski, who was on his staff in Puerto Rico later in WW II. I think two threads bound them: tennis and golf. Exec in England!

I am still kind of bemused to find myself still operative in 2000!

Ed

11/17/00

Gene Russ:

I had forgotten about the Medal "Essay" but reading it again stirred up some additional thoughts - NOT for publication.

I do not remember if I ever told you how I got started - that cynical feeling about a lot of military medals. Spring, 1943, Tuskeigh - I was stopped while on foot to the Club by John Bairnsfather who thought I should be told what he proposed to lay on me. The revelation was that Terry had put in a recommendation for a DFC for me but it was shot down by Bomber Command. I immediately asked what was cited, since nothing sprang to mind. Turned out Terry had determined that I had never failed to take off on an assigned mission*, had never aborted a mission, never feathered an engine, always stayed in position in the formation etc. (A regular Eagle Scout!) He determined also that this was unique among my early peers and should be rewarded with a DFC. I was pretty pleased - like the kid in 3rd grade who gets a gold star on his paper. John continued - B.C. rejected it with a notation that "we cannot decorate people for doing what they are supposed to do - makes the others look lesser" - or words to that effect.

Of course I loved Terry for his effort and evaluation but I suddenly realized that B.C. was like a labor union - never reward merit, as such, because it pressures the others, by inference, that they should do better! Of course, the example of a screw-up reward was

* a surprising number never left the hangar - it was easy to find some kind of mechanical defect and it was usually a judgment call by the pilot - not called an abortion.

was our 1904 winner who remained a problem to the military for his lifetime by pushing to the limit for the differential treatment accorded the medal winners.

Just between you and me, I have suspected for years that L.P. Johnson, his pilot and my 42F cadet classmate, never paid attention to the 26th award because he was turned off by that scene.

Anyway — so much of our existence was complicated by the upper echelon politics! Come to think of it — like academia, in many ways. It was ever thus and probably will never change. I was urged to accept a regular commission as the war wound down but I just could not imagine a life time in that environment. Never regretted my decision and kept in touch with many who stayed in.

Never pursued civilian flying because I was so spoiled by the great equipment I used in the KC that I never got turned on by the civilian stuff I might afford! In fact, the only small airplane I ever fell for was the L-5, that had a good engine, wing slots and good flaps, which made it fun to fly. Tower at Saltport cleared me straight in on #18 in front of a group of B-39s entering the pattern (1200 foot variety) My nose was just approaching the downwind end when I cut the power, pulled up the nose, full flaps and came down, nose up, like an elevator. Dropped the nose for flare out at about 75 feet and easily turned off at the first intersection! Great little airplane — lots of fun, as it was not popular in the civilian market.

Nice pitch for the St Paul Reunion, '01. I will certainly keep it mind, but I'm like a guy my age who said, "I won't even buy green bananas!"

The Grandjean report verified one event that I saw clearly in my mind's eye. Only I envisioned a bunch of old wacks being hoisted aboard the aircraft carrier in cargo nets. It struck me that this would be too tough for the aged. Better anything involving a lot of walking or climbing in and off trams or buses etc.

Perhaps the St Paul meeting area could be equipped with La-Z-Boy recliners! Of course, a speaker would have to contend with snoring and also flatulence - no doubt.

By the way, I had absorbed the Keith Conley story before I noticed the "deceased" at the top. Great story and well written. Especially, again, the bond that exists between most airmen. I always was impressed by Ben Alolph Halland's presence - by invitation - at a couple of Air Force Association Conventions. In fact, Barney Rautins had an ongoing correspondence with "Dolph", spanning many years. - Halland was like LeMay in that they both flew regularly despite their rank - and understood the capabilities of the aircraft available much better than most.

Boss keeps me on my toes - and he's a good listener, too. Inclined to chew me out when things do not go entirely to his liking!

EL

11/16/00

Russell -

The 'medals' story inspired Slim Boring to call me, which inspired me to write to him about our common interests.

If you can wade through my "shot-hand" you may find a few surprises in the Xerox enclosed.

Like the Reber distinction (p. 137, Firstover). I am NOT trying to rewrite history and certainly do not want to disturb his record. I just happened to notice the anomaly, which is interesting.

I suspect that it may be rooted in the fact that real and/or imagined mechanical problems often caused pilots to stay parked on the hardstand as the Group took off. These did not count as abortions because the flight never left the ground. My awareness of this was due to my room adjoining Frank Kelly's (369th Eng office) in the Bldg. He often unburdened on me about his bad opinion of guys who scratched missions for reasons he considered frivolous, & I know I often flew with "quirks" that I deemed manageable - and I never wanted to prolong the agony of getting my missions behind me.

I always hated the prospect of lengthening the ordeal.

Had there anybody could find a plausible reason to out those engines on the hardstand? Kelly counted those as black marks on His record as engineering officer? Who could blame him?

I can tell you I learned a lot about engine

management from old Frank. There were a lot of adjustments in operating techniques that can overcome some under-performance in the engine in flight.

I never wanted to feather in enemy territory — that signals the fighters that you're crippled and easy prey. Feathering was a last resort in my book, so I managed to avoid doing it for the whole tour.

In fact, Reg Robinson pointed out to me as I shut down the engine after my 25th — he found out I had never feathered and he wanted to know how he could repeat this accomplishment before he ever flew his first mission. He had arrived at base while we were on the mission. He always joked about his amazement when he saw my #7 stop on the landing approach! But was relieved when I told him why. I recall a long session with him that evening in the club bar as he quizzed me about engine operation and hammering in close information. This must have been the start of my instructor career for the duration — which always included a lot of hammering on T.O.C. in the long engines were hobbled. These props had to turn if you had to stay aloft and alive. (Not a bad title: "Aloft and Alive"!)

Amazing how my money gets larger as my life gets shorter!

EA

11/9/00

Russell -

When I read numbers like the ones Gen. DeLoette cites I am reminded again of the major problem in that era that nobody reported in the media or in military histories later. Probably because the paranalists did not perceive the real problem.

With the kind of loss rates sustained in the first year operation it did not take a mathematic genius or an aircrew to figure out that surviving 25 missions was highly unlikely since we had no effective ground fire power, no fighter escorts, formations of 40-50 bombers going against the cream of the Luftwaffe with Russian front experience, high density flak barrages, terrible weather etc, etc, etc. We seemed to be reaching for an impossible number - 25. By normal calculations 19 or 20 seemed very optimistic. And so it was, in fact.

These damn prospects took a heavy toll - the stats show that 29 airman were relieved and reassigned - you do not have to have a degree in psychology to figure out why. We show 5 unaccounted for - seems fair to suppose that they headed for the hills!

I was often asked what was the hardest part of the duty. My answer was never acknowledged or quoted: the realization that you would go down, or keep going up, until you finished 25. 7 crews succeeded out of 35 originals. - - I shake my head every time I hear so many people today talking about their stress filled lives. It is laughable.

For the past few months I have undertaken - at 81 - an unpopular community project: persuading several hundred tight-fisted citizens that they have to cough up some serious money because they have shirked their responsibilities. My mission included a 5-page "essay" taking them to task - politely - and pointing out the path of virtue they must follow. Several friends assured me I would be attacked and ridiculed. My response was that my position was unassailable. Common sense was my ally and why in hell should I care what they might think of me personally? They were not likely to start shooting at me, which was something I have had some experience with. Well - surprise to many, but not to me: this was delivered to nearly 400 citizens and not a single one raised an objection, but many called to offer congratulations and thanks. Truth may hurt but it is usually irrefutable. And so it came to pass in the year of our Lord, 2000!

(Aside to R. Strong only: Sergei was sure I would be shot down for encroaching on news about money, but he was gracious - even though mortified.)

But back to the original point: there is no pressure worse than taking off on missions when you know you have used up your luck, statistically. You're borrowing time and you have no credit. However, the young tend to think they are immortal. Probably why there were not a lot of General Officers flying around with us! They know better.

EL

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

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5/5/00

Dear Russ:

Jerry O'Connor was a V.P. of Custom Travel, where I spent 40 years of my life. He is a gifted writer and researcher, as you will see when you read his history of the German U-Boat pens on the French coast of the Bay of Biscay in WWII. No doubt they will be there till the end of time.

This is the best report on the pens that I have ever read. Since they were on my bombing "itineraries" some times, I have had a great curiosity about them since 1942.

It is also a stunning revelation of the dogged determination of the U-Boat crews that decimated allied shipping in the Atlantic. Jerry notes that 70% of them were lost! I was with the 35 original crews in the 306th Bomb Group. 8 crews survived 75 missions, which means over 77% did not. Things improved as the war went on and from 1942-1945 the average loss rate became 29.5% of the 600 crews assigned during that period to the 306th.

Recruiters for the German submarine service must have been extremely persuasive in those parlous days!

EJ

2/9/00

Dear Ann:

Your headline photo in "Echoes" is indeed a great photo. Had to be a fine lens on a good camera. Sharp.

The formation is not so sharp, and clearly shows that too many of our pilots were lazy, inept - or both. If early survivors had a definitive characteristic it was the ability and the will to stay in position, as how LeMay intended. Hard work saved lives - a small price to pay.

The vertical shot over Paramecumb is another example of a scattered formation. Bores and ugly runs give circular error, too. How do you aware that the 305th, under LeMay, had a circular error about 300 feet better than number 2? On average.

I flew my 4th and 5th missions as co-pilot. In name only, in reality. The pilot (same on both) seemed inept. We were in range of German fighters and about 1/4 mile out in the boonies. That's when I rapped him on the arse and assumed control - until we were letting down over England again. Same scenario on the next mission. After that I had my own crew.

Rule of thumb was that you maintained nose to tail and wingtip clearance with your flight leader to avoid collisions if you over-ran him or skidded sideways. If you hung out in the boonies the Germans would pounce on you.

Formation flying is a discipline and hard work in manual airplane. Too many pilots were either lazy, or

shops or just empty tanks. As a tactical pilot instructor for two years in B-17s and B-24s, a prime objective was to teach good formation flying and prolong lives.

Instructors got lots of practice in the teaching process and took pride in their skill. Enclosed is a copy of a layout illustrating the demonstration formation we flew a few times at Goodport. That English air was always choppy below 10,000 feet - which is too high for a demo. We flew at 12,000' to give the viewers a good look. We did not have a photographer since this was, shall we say, an ad lib operation. So I made the layout to show how it was done. The discipline was to focus on the prop that you held at 3' above and 3' behind that aileron - that's how you get that locked-in look. Tail ship waist gunners got particularly nervous, but usually bravely waved. (Ironically "waving off", in all likelihood)

That rough air made it very hard to do - you had to do it in short bursts and then rest from the exertion. At high altitude it was easy, but too far away from spectators. On the other hand, in combat if you have to catch up or, God forbid, climb back up, you have to abuse the very engines that are your ticket home. Not smart to fly in the boomies in combat - too many losses from that kind of indifference, ineptitude or whatever.

Too many made it too easy for the Germans and paid a high price for that mistake.

Ed

12/15/99

Dear Russ:

The October "Echoes" turned up, and, as usual, Thurman Shuller, Bob Starzynski and Ralph Franklin (naturally - just a kid) look better than most. Time takes its toll.

I will make a maximum effort to deliver the old boxes to Sam & Dejo, with gear. And I pray that a reception operator will be used since dying in this job would not be regarded as line of duty for the chairman and "staff."

Did you notice how Jack Wood resembles Top O'Neill?

I had heard for years that Fr Photo did more than one B-17 new-blessing shot - this was the first alternative I have seen. I can't help thinking that some wise guy set him up for this one - ~ "Precisely Commando"?? Give me a break - the Chief of Chaplains must have had a stroke was that one. But I suppose the "spin" would be that they (the P.C.s) were God's children, too! And as PT Barnum said: "all publicity is good publicity" - or was that Jim Farley?

I have a large box full of Wot's Big Bombers. There were a lot of crudely decorated nose sections! It's a little embarrassing even today.

Congrat - Have a nice Christmas -
Ed

Russell -

11/30/00

A local friend gave me this 1999 publication enclosed.

I could not force myself to read it all because it seems so disappointed, inadequate and, I suspect, full of errors - at least of perception, but apparently of fact, too.

See page 2, "Early Strategic Mission", that turned me off instantly. He does not bother to identify the Group (97th) or their leader. But they were "heavily escorted by RAF Spitfires" - - - The heavy bombers and their escorts flew eight more successful missions before suffering their first casualty loss!! "Surprise!"

Amazing - we had Spit escorts a couple of tons who flew about halfway across the channel and then went home. Later, some early US fighters did so until they apparently realized that this was an extreme annoyance to the bomber crews and gave it up until the long-range fighters came along about mid-1943. After I finished on 5/29/43 without having seen any escorts - ever - in German defended skies! If there were any, I never saw them.

This strikes me as the most useless publication I have ever seen - unneeded and erroneous. They must have had some funding available and this guy got the assignment. It reads like a Freshman's first shot at historical research. I would have given him a "D" on this mess.

Perhaps I am too hard on him, so I decided to send it to you. Your research background should give you a fair minded judgment of this "work" - which seems mindless to me - a conundrum, in fact.

EL

11/30/00

Dear Russell -

Two non-combat events at Thurleigh often come to mind. In September of 1942 the pilots and copilots were assembled for an instructional briefing by an elegant RAF Wing Commander, on the British Flight Control procedures. He began by pointing out that British and American flight rules were quite similar, in fact. "For example, prior to landing we, too, circle the aerodrome to the left.

Except one rather small RAF base near Bourington - they circle to the right on Tuesdays after lunch. Been doing it for years, but nobody seems to remember why. One of those traditional things, presumably."

He was an instant hit with the assemblage.

The second event was somewhat related and definitely unforgettable. In December, 1942, our dinky little E-W runway was equipped with hooded blue lights on each side - only visible from a plane on the final approach, which gave pilots a peek under the hoods. Unless he saw blue lights on the left and right he had better go around again to avoid landing in the grass (which also contained aircraft parked at hardstands here and there). Doyle Duff was the 369th operations officer, and he picked me to come along as his co-pilot. This may have been part of a series of check rides I was getting to determine if I was ready for my own crew. Nobody on the base had flown in

The dark of night over blacked-out England. How dark you know it was extremely dark, solid across from about 4000 feet, nothing but BLACK because there was absolutely no light escaping from the ground. We made the take off run easily enough but the second we lifted off we were in a black void. I am intently watching engine settings between sneaky peeks at the flight instruments. Duggor is setting up a square sided pattern in what he hopes turns out to be close to a normal landing pattern. Because he is making a left hand pattern he has the best view of the blue lights, if and when we get lined up.

I was already doing the simple arithmetic that told me we could not fly seven hours until daylight!

He yelled: "Do you see ANYTHING?" I replied "Hell no - and if it weren't for these instruments we'd be gone already." After 45 minutes of repetitive pattern flying, Duggor yells:

"I see two rows of blue lights - dump the wheels and flaps and call out the airspeed and altitude for me -

I'm not taking my eyes off those lights." Well - it was not pretty but nobody could see it, so who cares?

That was the only time, to my knowledge, that it was ever tried in my time. I suppose if and when they got a working landing system for guidance it was used. Worthless without some electronic guidance which I never saw in use at Thornleigh.

However, they did get a primitive ILS set up in April or May of 1943, as I recall. You would come on a non-directional beam ^{beacon} and tell the ground controller in a truck, about a mile off the end of the main runway, that you were overhead.

When you got to try it out? So I report when I'm over the beacon and he says: "I've got you on my ~~screen~~ ^{screen} - and then began a series of turns he gave me to line up with the runway as he talked me down. When he gave me the turn off the base leg I did as was told but I also told him it did not look right to me. "I've got you on the screen, just follow my instructions, you're doing fine".

Only by now I am approaching the Junior Officers Mess and it occurred to me that he was watching some other B-17. So I told him he could believe what he wanted to but I'm believing my eyes and this experiment is over. Sure enough - he found on the wrong airplane when I crossed the homing beacon. Another fruitless experiment gone sour.

You know, the modern air Force has no conception of the weird things that went on during WW II. We were like Alaska Bush pilots poking around in the mountains and glaciers in the Far North! It was a pleasure to get back in the U.S. which was full of 4-legged Beams to help you get down - or up - in bad weather. And then came the B-29's with onboard radar which could lead you around thunderstorms and such - a glorious sight

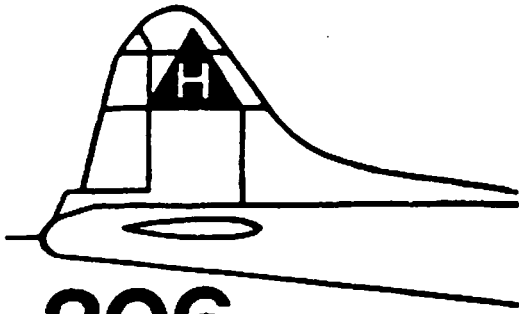
at night as you flew through lines of thunderheads that lit up like gigantic incandescent bulbs all around you! When you fly 3000-mile triangular patterns in the US in summer that radar was very reassuring because there were always thunder storms enroute.

Nevertheless, we lost a few B-29s - I suspect that the prevalence of static electricity around thunder storms sparked some vaporous fuel during the frequent fuel transfers needed to control weight and balance in the B-29. Ka! Boom. So the new SOP was to have an Instructor Pilot on every 3000 mile flight. During the personnel crunch in late summer of 1945 I flew 3 of those in one week - almost 48 hours of air time turned me into a zombie. Even then, 40 per month was the normal limit - and for good reasons!

Well, this got longer than it started out to be, one thing leads to another in these memory games.

Take care,

Ed



367th, 368th, 369th, 423rd Squadrons, and service organizations
Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England - September 1942-April 1945

306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

President

M/Gen James S. Cheney
630 Cinnamon Court
Satellite Beach, FL 32937

James F. Furay
5932 Garlow Rd,
Niagara Falls, NY 14304

20 November 1996

Vice President

Robert W. Seelos
1458 Virginia Avenue
Glendale, CA 91202

Dear Jim:

Secretary

Russell A. Strong
5323 Cheval Place
Charlotte, NC 28205

When the 1996 Reunion was all over I started to close up the "ship" and take care of some final details. My "Tickler File" had a note about sending you some of the things that would interest you. The call you had made about a month ahead of the opening to regretfully cancel because of your knee replacement stuck in my mind-I have a friend who has had six over a period of many years and he was walking around at the Reunion!

Treasurer

Robert N. Houser
2412 48th Street
Des Moines, IA 50310

Directors

Joseph R. Hathaway
1031 N. Meade Avenue
Glendive, MT 59330

John K. Hickey
3340 Nantucket Road
Lexington, KY 40502

Wallace T. Peckham
420 Starborough
League City, TX 77573

Donald L. Snook
45 N. Turkey Hill Road
Westport, CT 06880

We did a special program for our 100 (or more) Mission Crew Chiefs. Arthur Bove's book, "First Over Germany" devotes a special page to the listing of thirteen (13) who accomplished that many. In the years that I have used Russ Strongs' book for reference I never noticed the prose paragraph on page 292-a page dominated by some eye catching statistics-that reveals nine (9) who did it, including you, with 108! You were not shown on Bove's list. Russ did not show Tzipowitz, Hagen, Gaul, Gustafson or Cooley. Obviously there were 14 who made 100 or more! Live and learn!

Past President

C. Dale Briscoe
7829 Timber Top Drive
Fair Oaks Ranch, TX 78006

It must be sign of age that I missed the paragraph on page 292 in Russ Strongs book and then he did not catch the omission of your name on the list I used-and for which he supplied the nose art pictures of the airplanes assigned to the surviving chiefs.

1996 Reunion Chairman

Edward J. Hennessy
2013 Plaza del Padre
Las Vegas, NV 89102

So, we scrambled to locate the "Bouncing Baby" nose art, have it remade to 5"x7" and incorporated into your award matching the others already presented.

British Representative

Ralph Franklin
Mill Hill
Keysoe, Beds MK44 2HP
England

1996 Reunion
28 Oct - 1 Nov
Riviera Hotel
Las Vegas, NV

Another anomaly: Daniels and Tzipowitz did not seem to notice the omission either-no mention was made of it during the Reunion. Russ Strongs' theory is that you guys were so focused on your own aircraft that you did not pay a lot of attention to what was happening around you, even in your own squadron! Seems reasonable-it is obvious that those airplanes did not survive 100+ missions without a lot of T.L.C. from the chiefs assigned. There had to be a lot of concentrated hours to achieve those results.

Anyway, it took us over 53 years to celebrate the achievements-a little longer for yours. Hang it on you wall and enjoy it from now on. General Cheney, speaking from the podium, made it clear to the audience of 529 that "these were truly extraordinary accomplishments." You, your family and friends should be proud of what you did at Thurlleigh. We certainly are.

Very Truly Yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed', written in a cursive style.

Ed Hennessy

P.S. Your airplane was in the Group almost exactly 12 months-108 is a LOT OF MISSIONS in that time span, about 1 every 3 days! That should have kept you busy!

5/6/00

Dear Russ:

I found that I had kept a copy of the letter you called about. Having re-read it I think it's a pretty good example of "stream of consciousness" style. Loosely strung together!

One possible problem caught my attention - the reference to VBC reporting gasoline gushing from the Concord wing. Since the members are not exactly Rhodes scholars you might put a parenthetical line in: (get do not burn gasoline). The A.M.s and engineers and pilots, hopefully, will know that - and, most likely, the other aircrews. Don't bet on the others!

I wrote to Bill Haulman a couple of days ago and asked a P.G. that I copied a few times for future use. It is one of my all-time favorites, true stories! Enjoy your copy.

Also enclosed a Travel Weekly ad for Cruise West, featuring the newest - and grandest - addition. I find the small ships much more fun, and more friendly, than the small cities that are cruising around these days. The Chairman, Chuck West, is an old friend and generally recognized as the father of Alaska Tourism. He was a bush pilot before West, flew the King as a contract pilot in the CB1 theater (a DFC caught up with him last year, when he was 82!)

I have a feeling that you and your wife would really love the feel of the small ship cruising. Congrats should like the Oceanus - all routes!!

My first cruise was on the "Gante Park", one of a pair of Grace Line combination cargo/passenger gems. Max load was 130 - largest later on after that at that time and present time. My to Greece with only 4 islands visited. Perfect - the real fun is on board, after all.

The small ships tend to prep the elegance, but more than make up for it with amenities. Most of the modern shipboard elegance is low key style glitz and constant regimentation to avoid chaos with all these people on board.

You can tell I'm not a fan of the big ship concept. As one prominent travel expert remarked: "a great jail that might sink!"

Most do not even look like ships. More like a floating building on a raft.

So much for the cruise business!

Ed

P5. Apropos of nothing: I often recall the
partial opening of LAX International - which was "Open
House" all day - no flights operating until the next
day.

Great thought was given to crowd management
since people would be walking the ^{aprons} ramps and parking
areas (for planes) too. So they thoughtfully contracted
for a bunch of Port-a-Pots (little out-houses) and
placed them in strategic locations along the aprons.
At the end of the first hour the directors, in the
control tower, perceived that business was better in
some areas than others. So they beped the ground
crews and gave instructions to move some to higher
traffic areas specified.

A fork-lift raised one and moved it a half
mile to a place of need and set it down. Only
then did they find inside a man in a state of
extreme alarm whose business had been rudely
interrupted. !! (It was not recalled that he was given a
ride back from whence he came)

(You can see why I remember this
incident from time to time and forevermore!)

Could be a good E-Mail item.

2/16/01

Dear Russ:

Your call refocused my mind on WWII. This is a hindsight perception of THE big B-17 problem. It indicates that hindsight is always better than foresight.

That catchy name, "FLYING FORTRESS", conjured up images of our airborne tank - a kind of invincible fortress in the sky. The original, and early, 306TH crews, and the 100TH BG, quickly saw the bitter truth. It was a great flying machine with a lot of armament, but it had a thin skin - totally UNLIKE a fortress or a tank. Daylight missions, holding a steady course, made sitting ducks, so to speak. You had to be lucky, or you had to have fighter escorts to fend off the Luftwaffe, who outnumbered us and were very agile. Lucky, in the early days, meant that the fighters targeted somebody else. With flak you relied solely on luck because it came up in barrages, with no individual aircraft sighting. Low effort, the bombers had to miss the flak that was there to be flown through.

It seems as if only the bomber pilots realized how advantageous it might have been if the speed could have been varied abruptly and if quick maneuvers had been possible.

However we were stuck with the hands we were dealt. It became pretty evident that statisticians forecast loss factors quite accurately and the command staff decided what would be sustainable losses (I quote "sustainable losses" with ex-pando-able.)

In retrospect, I guessed that we might have fared a little better without Group identity on the aircraft. It was obvious at times that the Luftwaffe concentrated on particular Groups to try to shatter their resolve. The 100th B.B. is a prime example. 90% gone.

This is not intended as a condemnation of the commanders. This was, after all, a new and untested theory of warfare. The enemy was tough, seasoned and land-based with the advantage of defending their homeland. In the air their pilots could be more reckless because they were operating over their own territory. It was not uncommon for a German pilot to get shot down, bail a wide loop to base and rejoin the battle the same day. One did this four times in one day. An American shot down was soon captured, if he survived.

When our long range fighter escorts finally came aboard our "little friends" had an automatic disadvantage: they had to keep that single engine operating for the flight home. They could not be as reckless as the Germans were over German territory. Just look at the scores - the German aces had hundreds of kills - which does not mean they were more skilful pilots. Just more secure, because they were over their own territory.

Consider how much worse it would have been if Germany had "smart" weapons in those days! Kaput, 8th Dec.

And, there is always the basic fact that commanders make their place in history by innovative and successful wartime decisions that result in ultimate victory. It will

always be so, and the "troops" will pay the price in lives. It was ever thus.

And so it shall remain, because boys will be boys when there is a game, or war, to be won. As long as we have enough people who see themselves as invincible, or immortal, we will be able to engage the enemy and prevail, at a big price, of course.

The most disheartening aspect of this is the realization that the population in general will never have a clue about wartime realities unless it happens on their home territory. They are otherwise dependent on journalists and propagandists. Journalists rarely understand what the participants endured, or had. Andy Rooney probably came closest.

It was about 50 years after WWII when a few military historians determined that the 8th Bomber Command suffered the greatest losses in the history of warfare while accomplishing their objective. Herman Goering declared, at the time of his trial, that daylight bombing won the war in Europe by destroying transportation and infrastructure. They simply could not continue. At this stage of his life he had nothing to gain or lose - which makes his statement entirely credible.

But nevertheless, unique.

Ed Heermann

11/27/00

Dear Russ:

Periodically I meditate on that first Germany mission, 27 Jan '43 - My first excursion as the official A/C commander was memorable for a lot of reasons. There has been a lot of arguing over the years about who was "First Over". Never a doubt in my mind.

I started "in the hole" as the "spare". About the time we were over the North Sea the right wing man aborted, so I moved up to fill the vacancy. From my left side seat I had a fine view of Col. Frank Armstrong in the right side seat of the lead ship. (And you sure you know that a B-17 pilot has no view straight down. Not so for the bombardier and Navigator, who can see through the Plexiglas nose every which way, as you well know.

Nevertheless, I knew the 423rd SQ was on our right. When my "front-enders" joyfully proclaimed that we broke the plane over the German coast first, I reminded them of the 423rd positioned on our right.

When we landed back at Thurlough I was delayed for a few minutes on the hardstand as the crew went ahead to the debriefing, where they gave the news to a gaggle of reporters. By the time I got there, it was out of hand.

This has been a problem and an embarrassment from the outset. Pointless, too, because we were part of the Lead formation - right wing of the leader - and it was a Group achievement. A team effort. I spent a

a lot of time explaining that reality to people who were not hearing my words. Amazing how many journalists and editors bought the fantasy. It was even part of Roger Freeman's "The Mighty Eighth," published by James, no less, the pre-eminent military publisher. (They misspelled my name!)

I reviewed my recollections and examined my atlas to check the geography. Revealing. We headed toward the Netherlands, across the North Sea, and took a left over the Frisian Islands to an easterly course - I'll guess 80° - toward Germany. The Osterfries Peninsula was in front of us - separated from the Netherlands by a bay. We would have stayed north of Emden by about 10 miles and south of Norden about 10 heading for - guess - Aurich, or probably IP about 25 miles or come to Wilhelmshaven. You probably have stuff in files that would verify this. I did not keep a diary.

The point: if we were on a course of about 80° we would have crossed the German coast almost head on. That clearly reveals that the lead airplane was indeed the lead airplane!

My illustration shows this - without the aid of navigation instruments! "First over Germany" correctly reports the facts - a Group achievement.

That is precisely what I told reporters, including Walter Cronkite - who listened. He was the wisest in my

opinion - he did not take any foolish risks by going on early missions when the odds were terrible. Nor did he ever claim or infer that he had done so. Unlike our current candidate who covered Vietnam as a military reporter - son of a prominent U.S. Senator - and so was not put at risk. Like Elliot Roosevelt in WWI - his prime duty seemed to be attending Embassy parties in London, mostly. I believe he wound up as a Brigadier General. but I do not remember that ^{he} ever made a big thing out of his duty assignments. Well bred, no doubt.

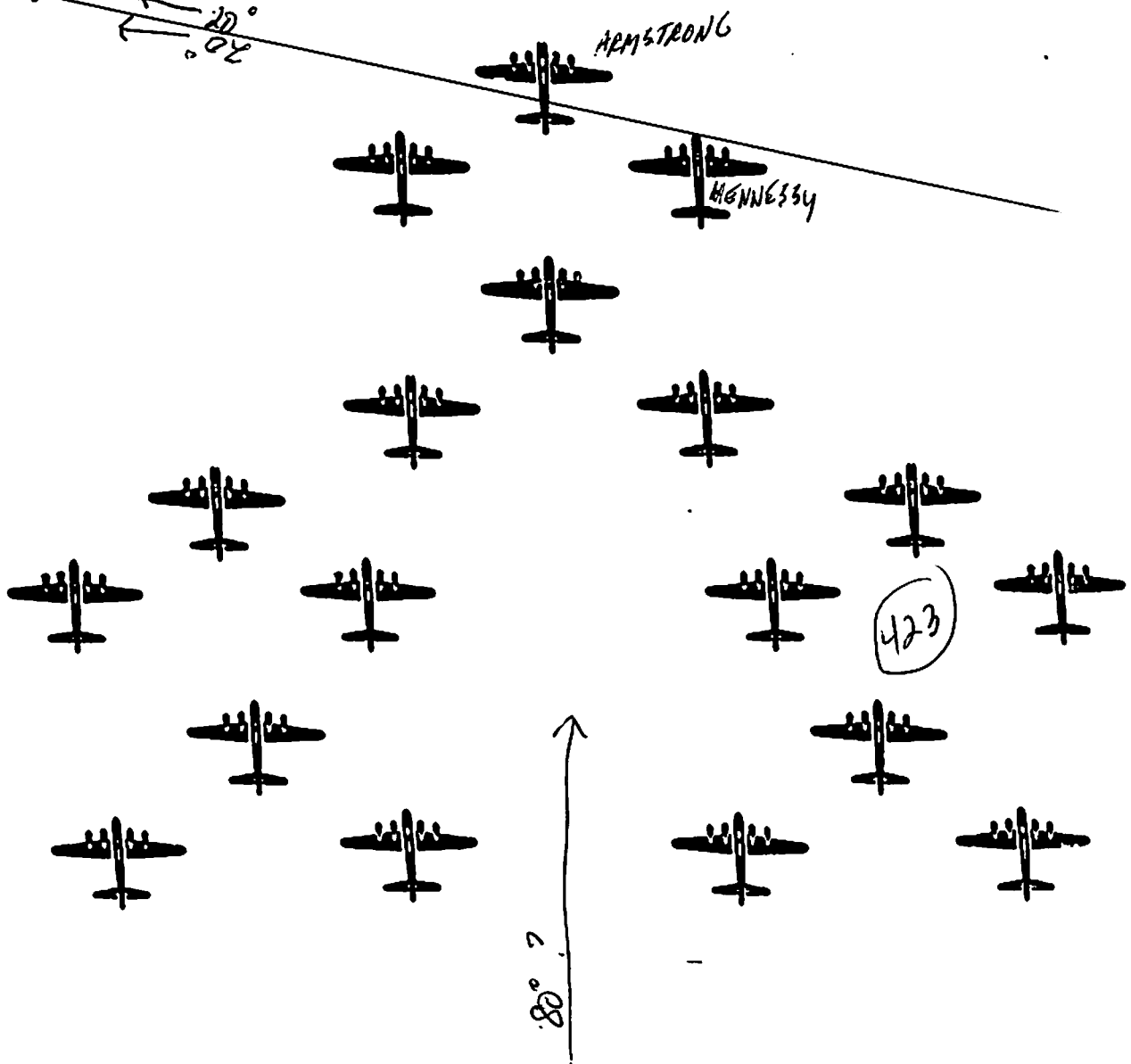
Well, there it is - as it was and as you probably knew from your own experience. It is kind of a non-story at this time of our lives, but it has always bugged me because it was so pointless and unnecessary. Not to mention demeaning, of course.

Almost 58 years later!

Ed

P.S. This should charge up your navigational batteries - dig out your maps and see if there is not so! I'd love to see the actual mission plan and navigator's log (the lead navigator's!)

I'm guessing this line
approximates the German coastline
of the Peninsula



N

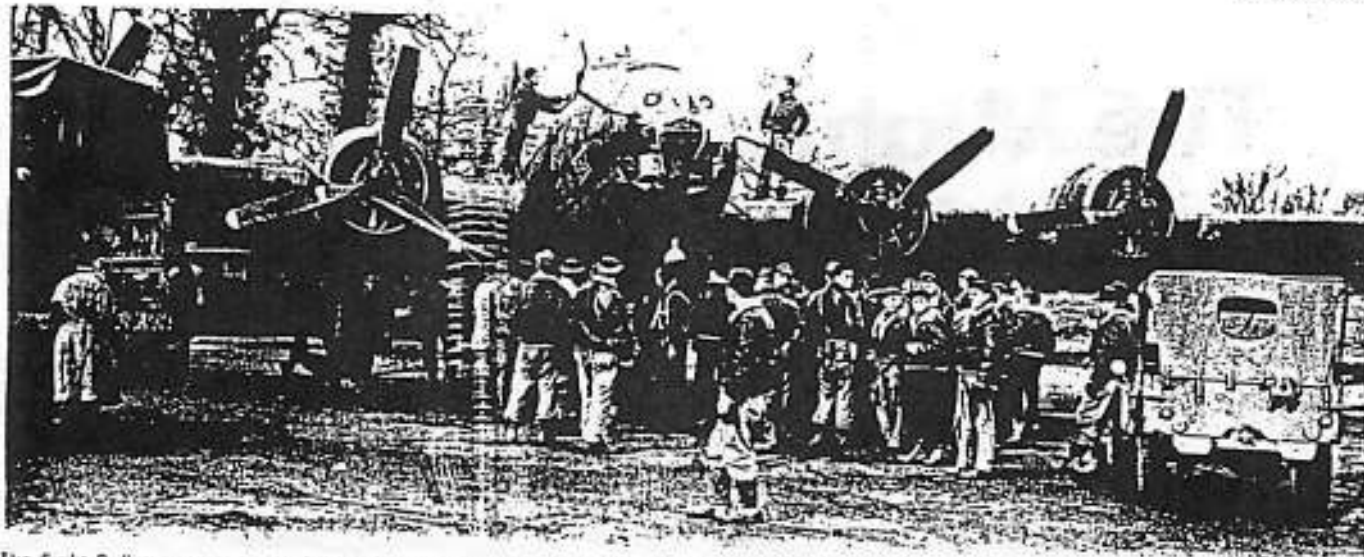
The Mighty Eighth Units, Men and Machines

(A History of the US 8th Air Force)

Roger A. Freeman

With colour drawings by
John B. Rabbets

JANE'S



The *Eight Ball* comes to rest on her Molesworth hardstand after the first raid on Germany, 27 Jan. 1943. Ground crew men gather round to hear how it went from 1/Lt Harold Stouse and his crew—(USAF)

to privates. Much of this equipment was counted a poor substitute, yet some was retained in preference long after deficiencies were made up from the USA. Above all, the few aircraft and crews reaching the Eighth in the closing months of 1942 were inadequate to replace operational losses. In consequence combat crews saw their units visibly shrinking with every mission, a situation not conducive to good morale.

All thirty missions so far undertaken by VIII Bomber Command were to targets in enemy occupied territories. There had long been a desire amongst all ranks of the Eighth Air Force to attack targets in the enemy's homeland. Apart from wishing to be on equal terms with the RAF whose bombers raided Germany almost nightly, the bombing of enemy targets in France and the Low Countries had often resulted in casualties among the local civilian population, occurrences that German propaganda agencies were quick to exploit. Inevitably bombs went astray and it was understandable that aircrews preferred this to happen over Germany. Additionally, the first offensive action by Americans against the enemy homeland would bring badly needed publicity to the Eighth's efforts.

Submarine building yards were number one priority on the target list and the officers in the Wycombe Abbey war room had long shown interest in a particularly promising target at Vegesack, situated on the Weser some thirty miles from its North Sea estuary. Here they planned to send their first bombers to Germany in a maximum effort. With a chance of variable weather in the area on January 27th the Field Order, with the significant word "Germany", was sent out to Thurlough, Molesworth, Chelveston, Bassingbourn, and Stipelliam. Led by the 306th, oldest operational group in the Command, 64 B-17s set off soon after dawn. In the leading aircraft was Colonel Frank Armstrong who had flown in the lead plane on the B-17s first venture to Rouen the previous August. Because of his experience, Armstrong had been returned by Eaker when the 97th Group was sent to Africa. Early in January he had been sent to Thurlough to command and shape up the battle-sore 306th.

To minimise the chances of interception the bombers' route was planned to take them far out into the North Sea, to avoid crossing the enemy coast. After turning towards Germany and climbing to bombing altitude, weather conditions deteriorated, and by the time the enemy coast was reached it became evident that cloud conditions inland would prohibit bombing. Consequently the force then turned for the secondary target, the port of Wilhelmshaven, which was only thinly veiled with cloud. At precisely 11.10 hrs. flying at 25,000 ft near the

island of Baltrum, the Fortresses crossed the coastal threshold of the hostile house of Germany for the first time. The honour of being first over Germany was disputed by returning crews. It appears that the B-17 piloted by 1/Lt Edward J. Hennessey may have been the first, as this flew on the extreme right of the 306th formation and swung in over the coast before the lead plane flown by the Colonel and the Group Executive, Major Putnam. Gaps in the thin cloud did allow 58 B-17s to bomb, though sighting was further hindered by a smoke screen. The resulting bomb patterns were spread over the dock area and damage to installations was not extensive. Two Fortresses unable to drop on Wilhelmshaven, unloaded over Emden on the return journey. Opposition was surprisingly ineffective. Flak was light and inaccurate, while the estimated 50-75 enemy fighters intercepting on the way home did not press their attacks with the skill and determination of the Luftwaffe units encountered over France. Additional to Me109s and FW190s, twin-engined fighters were reported for the first time, but they did not approach the bombers. Losses amounted to one B-17, and two B-24s of a small force which made an abortive attempt to bomb the same target. Gunners were credited with 22 victories; the Germans actually lost seven fighters which still amounted to a considerable success for the attackers.

The Fortresses did not escape so lightly in their next raid on Germany. Even more ambitious than the plan to attack Vegesack was that to hit the important rail marshalling yard at Hamm, deep in the stoutly defended Ruhr. After two false starts the bombers were first despatched on February 2nd but bad weather caused them to return. Two days later they were briefed for the same destination and 86 bombers set out on the long haul over the North Sea intent on striking down to the Ruhr area from the North German coast, thus shortening the period that they would be over hostile territory. Once again heavy cloud was found over north-west Germany and again the raid was abandoned. Over Emden 39 B-17s unloaded and others aimed for a convoy just off the coast. The somewhat straggling formations came under heavy attacks from fighters, including twin-engined machines, which pursued the Fortresses well out to sea and accounted for 4 of the 5 missing that day. An FW190 collided head-on with a 305th Group Fort. The 91st Group, led by Colonel Wray and Captain R. Morgan in *Memphis Belle*, experienced a new Luftwaffe trick when twin-engined aircraft dropped fragmentation bombs on the formation. 1/Lt James A. Verinis, described the experience: "As we started home over the North Sea, we began to see explosions high above us. We first thought it was flak, then

8/23/00

366TH BG(H) 8TH AF NWTF
 FLEW 50TH MISSION ON 29 JUNE 1943
 51 FLYERS HAD COMPLETED 25 MISSIONS EACH

	GROUP	369 %	423 %	368 %	367 %
TOTAL	51	*20.8 40.8	19 37.2	6.4 12.5	5 10
TOTAL WCO'S	32	*13.8 44.	11 34.3	4.2 13.1	3 6
TOTAL OFF'S	19	* 6.8 35.7	8 42.1	2.2 11.6	2 10.5

9 PILOTS HAD NOW FINISHED 25
 3.8* OF THEM - 369
 3 " 423
 1.2* " 368
 1 " 367

* After 20 missions in 369TH, ED HENNESSY, P, and his
 ENG. GLEN WYLY, moved to the 368th, They completed
 80% with 369th - 20% with 368th

1st col under 50 shows number of their flyers who
 completed 25 missions - next column shows squarson's
 percentage of group number.

If you simply total all the numbers in each 50's columns
 you get a kind of point score: 369 = 169.9, 423 = 157.6,
 368 = 50.1 and 367 = 36.5

Which clearly shows what an incredible job Terry did
 with the remnants of the 369th he inherited!!

Ed Hennessy

8/23/00

Ross:

Amazing what stats can be extracted from known quantities. For the '97 Remin & Howard you "First Finisher" tally for a feature in the Roster Booklet.

I had occasion to open it up today and it put me that my gut feeling about Terry's performance as C.O. was demonstrable from your tally. Game enough - he came up the winner, as I expected.

All the more amazing because we were down to 3 crews - Riebur, Malyszewski and me. He arrived, replacements trickled in and the 50 went 42 missions without a loss, as I recall. At the worst of times, too.

A lot of that success was due to people not wanting to be the one to break the string. Some terrible wrecks were brought home during that period - wrecks that really should not have made it. Inspirational leadership for sure. A memorable guy.

The 369th had the most pilots on that list when you count me as .8 for my 20 in the 369th - 3.8 vs 423rd's 3.0. (50 would have a fit over this bit of trivia!)

The 368th and 367th show how those early loss rates hit them hardest, before the fighter escorts and big numbers of B-17s with chin turrets improved the odds.

I have Xeroxed the pages from the Roster that illustrate my points.

I apparently picked up a bug this week so I used it as an excuse to get an overdue check-up. When I told the doctor I had stomach and lower gut discomfort as I

as I awakened in the mornings. "How would you describe it?" — "In England during WW II the orderly would pound on the door and yell "Wake up time (about 3:00 AM) Briefing at 3:30. On the double!" The old feeling showed up again." So he checked my arsenal of pills and suggested switching some from PM to AM — worked fine already. He also added: "I don't know how your group kept doing it — I could not have done it."

I'm pretty sure none of us could have, if we had been older and more prudent. It is significant that most involved in the active combat were too young to know the situation was impossible. They did a lot of things that must have surprised Boeing!



EDWARD J. HENNESSY

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The original photo was taken in mid-June, 1942, in Texas, at Lubbock Army Air Base, Advanced Twin Engine Flying School. My class, 42-F, graduated and was commissioned on 2 July 1942. I was ordered to report to the 306th Bomb Group, B-17's, at Wendover, Utah. On 11 September 1942, we landed at our combat operational base at Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England. We flew our first combat mission on 9 October 1942, and lost one crew.

On 28 May 1943, I flew my 25th combat mission and, coincidentally, was promoted to captain. During the preceding 10 months we lost 27 of the original 34 pilots in combat operations. Seven survived 25 missions—I was one of them.

Our missions were always daylight attacks on Germany's strategic targets—manufacturing plants and transportation systems and centers. We wasted time and lives on occasional fruitless attacks on the impenetrable and heavily defended Bay of Biscay Submarine pens—over 3,000 anti-aircraft batteries guarded that coast, plus hordes of fighter aircraft. I was there four times.

Field Marshall Herman Goering, commander of the Luftwaffe, testified during his trial that U.S. daylight bombing had made it impossible for Germany to continue the war by destroying so much of their productive capacity and means of distribution.

The Brits had tried and given up on daylight bombing because of heavy losses. They bombed at night—area bombing of German cities. In the darkness it was not possible to pinpoint just strategic targets, but the morale effect of area bombing was devastating. The RAF did not suffer unbearable losses at night.

Our 8th Bomber Command's early—first year—losses reflected the lack of forward firepower in B-17F models. German fighters quickly discovered the weak spot and attacked head-on, dead level, with great success. We had no long-range fighter escorts until mid-1943. By that time, B-17G models with chin turrets provided forward firepower. By then the build-up in bomber groups was explosive and we started to overwhelm the Luftwaffe. The 306th Bomber losses dropped to one-third of the first-year rate, from 78.5% to 26.5% for the duration.

Lost in the shuffle of historic records was a startling (not to us) fact: The 8th Bomber Command's losses in developing daylight operations were the highest of any military units in the world's history of warfare. By almost tenfold.

Remember, the Air Corps was part of the U.S. Army in WWII. We were never allowed to forget that, nor to distract attention from the major force that was the ARMY. That attitude still prevails, as the Gulf War clearly illustrated. The air offensive was actually slowed to allow the Army time to join in chasing the fleeing Iraqi's back to their borders.

Ironic that only the top German WWII air commander identified the true effect of the daylight bombing—which demonstrated the meaning of "strategic" in the context of bombardment in WWII.

Now I can tell you that when I look at the 1942 picture, and then into a mirror, I get a large jolt of grim reality. Sixty years does, indeed, make a difference. I have to admit it was interesting. But REALLY!!!

6/26/01

Dear Russ -

I read the Wolk story in the June issue and marvelled at Marshall's wisdom and perception. However, old traditions do not go away by edict.

Example: In some there was much tooth gnashing and outrage among the old grand grippers when Arnold got his 5th star!

A colorful traditionalist was Patton, who stuck to his cavalry "costumes" until the end.

You're just in time to get in on one of my favorite districts - the Egyptian ones! The firm of Jim and Mary Anne is a United Captain flying Jumbo jets - M.A. is my cousin's daughter, Tom is my oldest surviving boyhood friend. He was also a friend of Mary Anne's father!

You will readily see that I am not a great admirer of Arabs. For you, I will justify my position with this traditional Arab story about an elder in the village who was sitting at the side of the village square smoking his hubbly-bubbly. A bunch of teens were playing a noisy game in the square and disturbing his tranquility. However, he identified the leading teen and beckoned to him. When the lad came over to him the old man said: "Why are you boys wasting your time on this game? Free figs are being given away in the other square!" The lad quickly spread this wonderful news and the whole thing was off!

To the other square as the pilot contentedly
smoked his H-B. Until a thought occurred
to him: "Why am I getting here smoking my
knobby bubble when there are free fips in the
other square!" (Nicky Arabian.)

I also had the opinion that JFK Jr's
crash was just like the baby - totally disoriented
and not instrument rated (or competent). He never
should have taken off so late in the day. Private
pilots often over-reach their capability - as any
flight controller will verify.

No doubt it will occur to you that I'm doing
my old fart thing!

Ed

6/26/01

Dear Tom -

No doubt you will remember my early Nov. letter, 1999, giving my opinion about the Egypt Air crash on 10/31/99. Newsweek, 7/30/01, gives their last word. It's sticking to mine, because this looks like a big C.Y.A. move by the Egyptians, which fortifies my first and final opinion. I'll refresh your memory ---

As I recall, they were about 45 minutes out, climbing still, on auto-pilot, when the Capt. made a trip to the john, leaving Batouti to mind the store.

This Capt. was about 4 months away from retirement. I asked myself why was he kept on? Answer: he was popular among the aircrew, leading me to believe he was cranked along in the system by his friends - I think he could not pass the flight tests for a real C.P. So, here we have an Arab familiar with cannons and mortars, flying a jet and has it glued. It is dark, he is alone on the flight deck, on auto-pilot built by infidels is controlling the airplane! His uneasy feeling get worse and he is sure the airplane is out of control because that is how it feels to him. So, he shuts off the auto-pilot and manually shows the nose down, which brings the captain back sooner than he planned. But too late, because this C.P. is certain, Praise Allah, that he is saving the day for everyone and probably has the strength of ten!

I said at the time they should immediately review

This camel drives flight check records and quiz the hell out of the check pilots and simulator technicians. So, The Egyptians put up a giant smokescreen to hide their operational failures. But now the inspectors are saying the CP was committing suicide. B.S. - he was a Moslem and that's a no-no. He thought he was saving everybody's butt.

I think this stuff about sexual harassment is part of the cover-up - these birds are terrified and ended up this fairy tale to explain why a Moslem would turn to suicide. I don't believe a word of it. I have always thought this dude was incompetent and was being kept on to collect his retirement - How many airlines would keep a CP for life when they could be bringing up some fresh, young, competent blood?

I guess I just can't buy the legitimacy of a copilot almost 60 years old. Besides, I like the logic of my theory that recognizes the religious customs and beliefs of Arabs. Not to mention their well-known predilection to lying in their teeth, as demonstrated by Egypt's officialdom!

How's me sentiments!

Ed

6/28/01

Dear General Mary Anne -

I have never tried out my theory on a working airline pilot so I decided to send you a copy of my note to Tom Duffy, a friend since high school, retired lawyer, ex USMC Marine fire control officer. (Not a fireman - he called the shots!)

As you could guess, a lot of my thoughts were based on my own experiences, particularly as an instructor in B-17's and B-29's. I was often surprised at the unwillingness of some pilot pilots to believe the flight instruments or the reliability of auto-pilots. And that latter is pretty awful when you recall that the Norden bomb sight guided the course of the airplane via the auto-pilot.

The live pilot manually held the altitude and airspeed in the bomb run - in those days the auto pilot adjusted the attitude but was indifferent to altitude - a critical factor in bomb trajectory.

Congress - I'm fond of my theory about Camel Drivers and pathological lies! It is safest to disbelieve Arabs.

The case,

Ed

5/20/02

Dear Russ:

I finally noticed that your KIA count for the 306TH - 483 - appears in the Epilogue on p. 316. I had wrongly assumed that 177 B-17's shot down meant 1770 had perished. 27.3% perished, but 72.7% survived! Ah!

This was not nearly as bad as I had thought, but bad enough. 5.5% of the total 306TH personnel were KIA. In the entire history of US warfare only the Civil War had a higher KIA rate of 9.2%. (If you compute our KIA as a percentage of the airmen who were at risk it was 8.1% of the aircraft assigned.)

Jim young enough!!) to remember that my family, like so many that spawned WWI vets, wound up with members who became reclusive from "shell shock" in that war, which was less lethal than ours 1.13% vs our 1.81%.

I had not thought of this for years but I recall had thrilled my Uncle Dan O'Brien was when I came home unharmed from my 306TH experience. Dan had lied about his age and sneaked into the Field Artillery at age 16 in WWI. Grandpa almost had a stroke, but he did not give the game away. Uncle Tom, his older brother, became reclusive after the trenches, mustard gas and general mayhem that took its toll. Nevertheless, he too was overjoyed by my survival and emerged from his room to join the celebration when I visited my grandparents home

where he lived. He always made a comfortable living as a masonry contractor but remained socially withdrawn until the end.

Knowing those men was what inspired me to enlist in the Army's Aviation Cadet program. I wanted nothing to do with trenches and ground warfare. (All those deep ditches at Thurleigh reminded me of trenches whenever it rained.) Besides, I had set my sights on bombers with multi-engine - people my size were unlikely candidates for fighters with those crowded cockpits. And, I always knew in my heart that no matter how hairy it got aloft it was a hell of a lot better than trenches.

In retrospect it seems likely that my uncles were kind of awestruck because I was A Flyer - an experience that neither of them ever had in their lives.

Ref. the K.I.A. historical facts - this could make a dandy feature in "Echoes", under your by-line, as historian and editor. Could be a real eye-opener for those of us who are still upright and functional. To a degree, to be sure!

Take care,

Ed Hennessy

If you think the Uncle story would be a good human interest item, help yourself.

WWII: 1.81% of all US Forces KIA
 5.25% of 306TH were KIA - that is
 2.96 times the WWII rate. If
 you compare it on the 6000 airman
 who were at risk it is 8.1% or
 4.5 times the WWII average. *

In earlier computations I had assumed that
 177 lost B-17s meant 1770 men KIA. Wrong.
 Epilogue in "First Over Germany", page 316, shows
 453 KIA which is 27.3% of the 1770 men
 who went down. 1289 actually survived.

No matter how you look at it, the dks were
 pretty bad.

The entire history of US war is certainly
 interesting and showing how the 306TH
 compares should be very enlightening to many
 of our peers!

* There were 315 airman in the original
 Group from Wombour. 29.5% (93) were KIA or died
 of wounds. To put that in perspective, that KIA
 rate is 16.3 times higher than the total forces
 KIA rate in WWII! (One might say that early
 birds get the shaft.) My conclusion: surviving
 originals led charmed lives - I'm living proof.

4/16/02

Dad-

You probably know in your heart that I would think of another statistic for you!

The list of names of guys who finished 25 by the end of June, 1993, showed 37 total. 39% of them were 369th people - counting me as 369th when I flew 20 of my missions.

39% says a lot about Terry's leadership ability. For those who say "Luck" there are more who know that in situations like this you have to make your own luck happen most of the time.

It also accounts for the reunion tournaments that seem to be more 369th than other squadrons!

Ed,

5/15/02

Bear Pups:

You know how I play with numbers!

The 369th Citation^{P.199} reveals the characteristic that made the 41 no less struck possible — formation flying did it.

When the Group had completed 50 missions there were 51 lads who had finished 25.

39% of them were 369ers — the formation effect. (I counted myself as 369 although my final 5 were with the 368th. (If you want to purify it by ⁴⁹⁷⁹ I were 369th it comes out 38.8%))

In any case, it's easy to show the payoff for flying a better kind of formation to present the most formidable face to the Luftwaffe. They chose to hit the other guys.

Vincenzo Visconti quoted Tom Witt as telling some grumpy 367 aviators that if "you fled the kind of tight formations the 369th does, you would be lucky too!"

As a P-17 tactical instructor I was very demanding re: formations.

Ed Hennessy

8/19/62

Dear Russ:

This essay has been a long time coming and shall be my last words on the subject of the 306TH experience. Think of it as an - - -

EPILOGUE

The B-17 was a truly conceptual aircraft since there was no pool of experience in strategic bombing, nor, in fact, in 4-engine aircraft. It was built on speculation for use by that "branch operation" of the Army, whose leaders jealously protected their turf. They still do.

Billy Mitchell was pilloried by the entrenched majority of Army planners and leaders who believed that man-to-man on the ground was the only way to win wars.

Early Air Corps leaders had to negotiate a careful path through hostile military and political environments. Air visionaries had their wings clipped regularly by the opposition incogizanti or permanent guard against aerial encroachment on their domains. Billy Mitchell was an early martyr.

Aerial visionaries in the Mitchell mode responded with the concept of the "Flying Fortress", a legend before its reality, by incorporating traditional perceptions of forts and tanks. There was lots of armament, but impregnable they were not. Steel and stone are stouter than aluminum sheathing. They also underestimated the fixed gunnery on high flying enemy fighters - gum bolted to their airframes.

This created a very flexible platform that could be quickly maneuvered into the best aiming point against B-17s, for example, that flew without escort cover. Unsupported in combat, the bombers had to fly straight and level on the bomb runs. Imagine 4-engine ducks as moving targets in an amusement arcade.

B-17E and F models were extremely vulnerable to head-on, dead-level fighter attacks. There was no forward fire power in the vertical gap between top and ball turrets - creating a convenient tunnel of air for head on attackers. The Luftwaffe quickly found and exploited that weakness. This resulted in only 20% of the original 306TH aircrews surviving 25 missions. To make matters worse, the incredible combat erosion of the original 35 aircrews ^{were} were nearly on the survivors while their elusive quota of 25 had yet to be flown against terrible odds.

Later analyses showed that the chances for survival improved with successful experience - the heaviest losses came in the early missions and tapered downward thereafter. Small consolation to crews embarking on their last 5! It was a test of faith and spirit.

By mid 1943 B-17Gs with twin 50 calib turrets arrived and closed that vertical gap between top and ball turrets. P-51s and P-47s also came

To provide long-range escort cover, simultaneously the rapidly expanding US bomber and fighter forces were wearing down the Luftwaffe as relentlessly as the strategic bombing was destroying the Nazi industrial complex in daylight and the British were area bombing their cities at night.

Happily the overall survival rate of the 306,000 grew to 70.5% for the duration of WWII. - vs that 20% for the original, comparatively defenseless complements.

Even so, the 306,000 experience seemed to ignore perhaps a reluctance to believe the overall 29.5% loss rate was so much worse than the other military branches that averaged about 3.4%. Marines in the Pacific were seen as taking the worst losses - averaged about 4% - -- our airmen would have fared much better as Marines in the Pacific!

There was at least one top WWII commander who was impressed: Air Reichsmarshal Hermann Goering, head of the German Luftwaffe. When asked at his Nuremberg trial what made Germany surrender he said that the daylight strategic bombing had ruined their factory output and their distribution systems. "We could not continue."

Daylight missions cost many American lives, but they saved many more. Modern strategists recognize the true power of an modern Air Force, albeit grudgingly.
Traditions die hard!

Ed Henning

6/26/02

Dear Russ -

I guessed that CM Sgt Johnson would have lots of old records, and sure enough! His true copy of the 14 Feb 44, 60 44, corrected my misconception - the 41 mission streak rated a Commendation, which is a far cry from the ¹⁹⁴⁴ perceived Pres Citation. That came for the 100th mission to Halverstadt!

I'm still learning - until I read the Group Memo on the subject. I knew very little about the true significance of the Pres Citation. My God - the equivalent of an individual DSC, but for a large unit!

All of this reaffirmed my old belief that virtue is its own reward - the streak was regarded as duty well done. No more. Which seems to suggest that a lot of duty was well done in WWII. Gave to think of it - 9.2% of the original 306th aviators were relieved and re-assigned! Tell you something about conditions in that time. I wonder what Serge Patton could have said and done if it had been his outfit!

At least Tiger Terry came out ahead - got his own Group at Basingstoke, where he lived in the usual Manor House, complete with the old time Butler, left there to keep a watchful eye in the household, home to the CO and wife Hazel! That was certainly unique. Next a par.

Ed

6/26/07

MEMO TO: (Sent to my correspondents in 369th)
REF: 369TH 41-MISSION STRIKE
FROM: Ed Hennessy

I asked CMSgt Jack Wood if he could shed any light on the lack of notification to the addresses involved in the strike.

He sent me a copy of "A True Copy" of GO #44, made by Willie Williams in 1944, presumably. Note paragraph 1, immediately under No. 44 - UNIT COMMENDATION - mystery solved.

This is not a UNIT CITATION, which has Presidential authority via the Pentagon, from Gen. Marshall in WWII.

Other than a kind of "pat on the back" there are no symbols to be worn by the participants and we are, you might say, a footnote in history that only interests the participants themselves.

Bear in mind that we have much to be thankful for, if not quite as much as we hoped.

NOTE: The 306th received the Presidential Unit Citation for the 100th mission to Halberstadt, 11 Jan 1944 - see Group synopsis attached for a clear view of the meaning of such a Citation.

UNIT COMMENDATION -- 369th Bombardment Squadron (H)

GENERAL ORDERS)

No. 44)

Hq, 1st Bombardment Division,
APO 634,
14 February, 1944.

1. UNIT COMMENDATION ---Under the provisions of Army Regulations No. 600-55, 30 June 1928, the following organization is cited for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of duty.

THE 369TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H), Army Air Forces, United States Army, for outstanding performance of duty in action against an armed enemy of the United States in the European Theatre of Operations. In the aerial offensive against targets in Western and Central Germany, France, and other occupied territories, the 369th Bombardment Squadron (H), has established an exceptional combat record. Over a six months period, from the 23 January 1943 to 29 July 1943, this unit participated in forty-one (41) consecutive combat missions without loss of one of its aircraft over enemy or enemy occupied territory. In rendering this service the personnel of the 369th Bombardment Squadron (H) demonstrated a high degree of skill and courage. The exemplary conduct exhibited by combat personnel resulted in a spirit of teamwork capable of nullifying the vicious and determined opposition of the German Air Force to the extent that the integrity of formations was maintained without loss. The administrative and maintenance personnel of this squadron contributed untiring effort and efficiency in sustaining the continued attacks carried out by this unit. In these operations the 369th Bombardment Squadron (H), by extraordinary skill and great courage, has given evidence of an unswerving loyalty and devotion to duty of the highest nature which reflects great credit upon this organization, the Army Air Forces, and the Armed Forces of the United States.

By command of Brigadier General WILLIAMS:

OFFICIAL: /s/ ROBERTS P. JOHNSON, Jr.,
/t/ ROBERTS P. JOHNSON, Jr.,
Lt. Colonel, A.G.D.
Adjutant General.

BARTLETT BEAMAN,
Colonel, GSC,
Chief of Staff.

A TRUE COPY:

Willie S. Williams Jr.
WILLIE S. WILLIAMS JR.,
Capt., Air Corps.

BATTLE HONORS- Citations of Units - - - - - Sec. XI

XI. BATTLE HONORS.--1. As authorized by Executive Order No. 9396, (Sec. I, Bull. 22, WD, 1943), superseding Executive Order No. 9075 (Sec III, Bull. II, WD, 1942), citation of the following unit by the Commanding General, Eighth Air Force, in General Orders, No. 355, 11 May 1944, under the provisions of section IV, Circular No. 388, War Department, 1943, in the name of the President of the United States as public evidence of deserved honor and distinction, is confirmed. The citation reads as follows:

The 1st Bombardment Division (H), is cited for extraordinary heroism, determination, and esprit de corps in action against the enemy on 11 January 1944. On this occasion the 1st Bombardment Division led the entire Eighth Air Force penetration into central Germany to attack vital aircraft factories. After assembly was accomplished and the formation was proceeding toward Germany, adverse weather conditions were encountered which prevented effective fighter cover from reaching the 1st Bombardment Division. Taking full advantage of the relative vulnerability of the lead division, the enemy concentrated powerful forces against it. The scale of the enemy attack is graphically indicated by the fact that 400 encounters with enemy aircraft were recorded by units of the 1st Bombardment Division. The gunners met these continuous attacks with accurate fire, and the division continued toward the targets as briefed where bombs were dropped with excellent results. On the return trip the enemy continued to concentrate his efforts on the 1st Bombardment Division. Figures of enemy aircraft claimed by our gunners indicate that the heroism of this division inflicted heavy losses on the enemy in the air as well as on the ground. Two hundred and ten enemy aircraft, the largest number ever claimed by any division of the Eighth Air Force for any one mission, were confirmed as destroyed, 43 probably destroyed and 84 damaged. The division lost 42 heavy bombers and many of those which returned were heavily damaged. Four hundred and thirty officers and enlisted men failed to return, 2 were killed, and 32 others wounded. The extraordinary heroism and tenacious fighting spirit demonstrated by the 1st Bombardment Division in accomplishing its assigned task under exceptionally difficult conditions reflect highest credit on this organization, the Army Air Forces, and the armed forces of the United States.

By order of the Secretary of War:

G. C. MARSHALL
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

J. A. MUIO,
Major General,
The Adjutant General.

A TRUE EXTRACT COPY:

Roberts P. Johnson Jr /s/
ROBERTS P. JOHNSON, JR /t/
Lieut. Colonel, AGO.

UNIT

The 1st Bombardment Division has been awarded a Presidential Citation for "extraordinary heroism, determination and esprit de corps in action against the enemy on 11 January 1944." This award is the highest that can be given to a Unit. It is equivalent to the Distinguished Service Cross, which is the second highest award that can be given to an individual.

The targets of the 1st Division on 11 January were the Focke Wulf assembly plant at Eschersleben and the factory supplying parts for Junkers fighters at Halberstadt, both in central Germany, about 300 miles inside enemy territory. The 306th Group, flying its 106th mission with Colonel Robinson leading, led the attack on Halberstadt. The other Divisions were scheduled to hit aircraft plants in the same area.

Two hundred seventy five Fortresses, including 33 from the 306th Group, comprised the 1st Division. Shortly before the Division reached its target areas, a recall was sent out from headquarters because increasingly bad weather threatened to close the home bases. At that time some of the bombers of the other Divisions and some of the fighters which had been assigned to our force returned to their bases. The 1st Division Air Commander, however, because of the extreme importance of the assigned targets, decided to carry on the attacks. Both targets were hit visually with excellent results.

For two hours, from the target to the North Sea some 300 miles away, the Division, with its reduced fighter escort, fought its way through flak and unceasing fighter attack by FW 190's, Ju 88's, Le 109's, 110's, 210's and 410's. Of these, the Division is officially credited with having destroyed 210. This is the largest number ever destroyed by one Division on a single mission. Forty three more were probably destroyed and 84 damaged. These attacks knocked down 42 bombers of 1st Division, but there were five enemy fighters destroyed for every bomber which failed to return. The 306th Group was subjected to particularly savage attacks, during which we lost 5 aircraft in less than 10 minutes, including both of Colonel Robinson's wing men. This Group destroyed 17 fighters probably destroyed 4 more and damaged 14.

Practically all the 306th aircraft were shot up -- thirteen severely. Three were so seriously damaged that they were scrapped. One man was killed, 13 wounded. Many were recommended for and received special decorations for heroism against heavy odds and for their efforts in successfully returning damaged aircraft and wounded men to England.

This mission was one of a series of heavy and effective blows which finally broke the back of the German Air Force. Not only were a great many aircraft destroyed in the air, but manufacture and assembly of new fighters was critically curtailed. The spectacular and destructive advances by ground forces on all fronts would have been impossible without the work done by 8th Air Force heavy bombers. In these operations, the 1st Division, the oldest Division in the E.T.O., has been outstanding from the beginning. The 306th Group, one of the original Groups and the oldest in continuous combat, has played a major part in these successes, and every member of this organization, on the ground or in the air, can feel justly proud of his contribution toward the successful prosecution of the war in Europe.

A Distinguished Unit Badge identifying this citation will be issued to all individuals who are assigned or attached as members of the 1st Bombardment Division, to become part of the uniform as follows:

- a. Individuals who were assigned or attached to this command on 11 January 1944 are entitled to wear it as a permanent part of the uniform.
- b. Individuals who have been subsequently assigned or attached are entitled to wear the Badge as long as they remain with this command.
- c. This decoration will be worn with the class "A" uniform at all times on the right breast centered over the pocket.
- d. Authority to wear the Distinguished Unit Badge permanently will be noted in service records and Qualification Cards.

Although this is not dated or signed I think it came down to Squawnee from 1st Sq.

UN-Signed

6/6/09

The original 306TH Group had 35 crews with 315 total airmen. Their experience in WWII could be likened to the ancient Chinese water torture - drip - - drip - - drip - - drip - - Their replacements finally started coming in a trickle, creating a sharp awareness of the overwhelming number of "originals" remaining.

The realization that 7 crews - 48 airmen - were all that survived 25 missions took some getting used to. Bad as it was for survivors, it was very discouraging for newly arriving replacements who wondered what kind of meat-grinder they were in, and how long would they survive?

The 364th no-loss streak of 41 missions in very rough times from 23 January 1943 to 29 July 1943, was a great morale booster for them. Perhaps small consolation to the other squadrons, but at least it showed what was possible while also showing that Nazis were not the master race Hitler had proclaimed for years!

The huge industrial might of the US and the resolve of US airmen and ground personnel relentlessly set the stage for Germany's collapse by destroying their critical war industries and supply systems - an admission made by air Reichsmarschall Herman Goering at his Nuremberg trial - They were unable to continue.

This goal sometimes seemed unreachable in the early days when THEY had the numbers and the experience in the air.

Patience deeps, truly,

KILLED IN ACTION - KIA - ALL U.S. WARS

	IN SERVICE	KIA	KIA %
REVOLUTIONARY	217,000	4435	2.0
1812	254,730	2260	1.1
INDIAN WARS	106,000	1000	.009
MEXICAN	18,718	1737	2.2
CIVIL WAR - UNION	2,213,363	224,097	10.1
CIVIL WAR - CONF.	1,050,000	74,524	7.1
CIVIL WAR - TOTALS	3,263,363	298,621	9.2 !!!
SPANISH AMERICAN	306,760	385	.0013
WW I	4,734,991	53,402	1.13 ←
WW II	16,112,566	291,557	1.81 ←
KOREAN	5,730,000	33,686	.0059
VIETNAM	9,200,000	47,410	.0052
GULF WAR	2,372,332	148	.000064
ALL WARS TOTAL	42,348,460	650,954	1.54 ←
306TH TOTAL	9200	483	*5.5 ←

* 8.1% OF 6000 AIRMEN IN COMBAT

6/6/02

Dear Russ -

This attachment is not the Gettysburg Address but it is about the same length. It's a good, compact description of the core problems of the early days of our civil war.

I'm one of my calmer and more reflective moods, which are getting scarcer, & remembered some of the stuff that went on in the early months in the Civil War. There was a lot of blind leading the blind until Kelley made his case and the lights came on.

The Civil War stats were a shock to me - those guys were winning it most of the time. The overall KIA rate of 9.1% and more killed, by about 80%, than in WW 11, proves it.

Now lets hope that India and Pakistan cool it w/ nuclear war. I was shocked when one of India's leaders said his country could absorb a 5,000,000 kill - but Pakistan would be gone. I believe that.

For perspective, consider that the total KIA in all US wars since 1775 our KIA totalled 650,954. This man was talking 5,000,000 in one! That's progress!

Ed Hennessy

Dear Russ -

6/10/02

Here's a Xerox of A-36 (one page of Jerry's 6 page article) in "WWII, Home Issues". Borders and such carry it - \$4.99 in US! This picture has a life of its own! He missed a couple of points - "manned" Water from Mass to Maine and had us learning that on Nov 6, 1942 - It was September, but does not affect the story otherwise.

Keep in mind when reading about Omaha Beach that 5 1/2" in surf sand are somewhat slower than B-1's! However, we made a large target!

I figured out from counting the bombs on L.A.'s nose that the picture was taken on

March 23, 24, 25 or 26, 1943! We were on the 5/2/43 Wilhelmshaven mission - I just noticed that the jacket on First Lt. Berming is based on that mission my last with the 369th to Wilhelmshaven. Looks pretty hairy in the picture - some kind of reef sand formation, apparently!

Ed Henning



Above: Allied airmen, including American Captain Edward J. Hennessy (fifth from right), dreaded attacking the heavily defended U-boat pens. Right and below right: In addition to some of the heaviest concentrations of anti-aircraft guns in occupied Europe, the pens, such as those at St. Nazaire, featured special "bomb traps" on their roofs that were able to protect the facilities from even the most powerful Allied bombs.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ARTHUR W. ROSSIGNOL

fensive on occupied Europe. Some were stationed at Thurleigh, an American bomber base in East Anglia, England.

First Lieutenant (later Captain) Edward J. Hennessy was one of 315 airmen in 35 crews in the 306th Bombardment Group (H), Eighth Air Force. A 1940 Notre Dame graduate, he enlisted as an aviation cadet in Chicago on November 10, 1941. One year later, at age 23, Hennessy was on his third mission as co-pilot when flak took out one of his engines over the pens at St. Nazaire. Undaunted, he flew another 22 missions, most of them as command pilot in the Boeing B-17 *Little Audrey*. Five were against the dreaded St. Nazaire and Lorient sub pens. Unknowingly at the time, the crews of *Little Audrey* and thousands of other bombers in the 306th and other bomb groups were attacking the most heavily defended sections of Hitler's Atlantic Wall.

Six decades later, at 83, Hennessy recalled the missions vividly: "The first year's loss was high because daylight bombing was a new and untried concept. We flew without British or American fighter escort. Neither had long-range fighters in those early days. We tried everything against the sub pens without results. One time we loaded Navy 16-inch shells fitted with tail fins, hoping to hit the 'garage doors' on the pens, but they only bounced off the roofs just like the regular stuff. It convinced us that nothing was going to take them out. We had damage from the *Lufwaffe* or flak every time, so I was not happy to learn that my 25th and final mission was once more to the sub pens in St. Nazaire, but I made it."

After the German surrender, a survey counted 3,000 artillery pieces defending the Atlantic Wall, of which 300 heavy-caliber guns manned by 5,000 coast artillerymen were engaged solely in the defense of Lorient. This was at least five times more weaponry than the big guns that rained death on the GIs storming Omaha Beach in June 1944. In addition, hundreds of Focke Wulf Fw-190 and Messerschmitt Me-109 interceptors at numerous airfields in the area were ready to punish bombers that survived the flak. The defenses in Lorient and ringing the other U-boat bunker bases became a major factor in the punishment endured by the 306th Bomb Group. Of the original 35 crews who flew their B-17s on November 6, 1942, from Westover, Maine, to Thurleigh, England, only seven crews survived 25 missions, a horrifying 80 percent loss.

Attacking from 122 British airfields against the Biscay bunker bases and numerous targets in Germany, the 306th and other Eighth Air Force units launched 950 bomber missions with 10,600 aircraft and 430,000 total personnel. The battle raged for 459 days, from July 1942 to April 1945. In missions lasting from three to 11 hours each, the Eighth Air Force lost 30,000 men killed in action. Bomber crews suffered a loss rate second only to combat infantrymen. Nearly 4,000 are interred in the American Cemetery outside Cambridge, England. Their average age was 22. Despite the efforts,

the pens remained in operation until the Allied advance across France forced their evacuation or surrender.

In 2,160 days of increasingly desperate and often heroic combat at sea, the *Kriegsmarine* sank or damaged 2,781 Allied merchant ships and 192 warships, and almost won the war in the first year. Of the 1,159 U-boats commissioned, 781 were sunk, 215 were scuttled, 162 surrendered and only one, *U-505*—now on display at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago—was captured. Forty thousand German sailors served in U-boats. Twenty eight thousand were killed in action, a 70 percent loss. Their watery graves are unknown and unmarked. Their average age was also 22. □

Jerome M. O'Connor writes from Elmhurst, Ill. For further reading, try: Iron Coffins: A Personal Account of the German U-boat Battles of World War II, by Herbert Werner.

Learn more about Adolf Hitler's feared U-boats on the internet at history1900s.about.com/wwII.

5/17/02

Dear Russ -

Something bothered me about list of 57 who had finished 25 missions by June 30, 1943. Upon taking another look I realized that the 369th and 423rd were very close on that list of 57!

Here is what my longer look revealed --

	369	423	367	368
Officers	6.8*	8	2	2.2*
E4's	13.8*	11	3	3.2*
Total	20.6*	19	5	5.4*
%	42.4	37.3	9.8	10.6

* Hennessy and Wylly were moved from 369 to 368, where Hennessy flew his final 5 missions. Wylly may have flown more than 5 since he got a later start in combat.

The important part of this is the closeness of the 423rd and 369th in generating early finishers. The 367th and 368th really struggled, obviously - which is why I was moved to the 368th when they needed some experienced help - I insisted on Wylly coming along because he was my engineer-top turret and gunnery controller. He had the best view of attacks and I relied on him to tell me when to move a little - when it was evident to him that a German fighter had us in his sights, he'd say: "The system worked very well for us and was based on a suggestion by Bill Cleveland at the Club bar one night, from his background

as a fighter pilot prior to B-17's.

50-0-0 --- the 369th and 423rd made up nearly 80% of the early missions with about 20% from the 367 and 368.

Upon reflection, I recalled that my only (1943) impression of that era was that the 423rd and 369th were doing the best, but I also recall that the 369th hit a low that Tony was able to reverse in very short order. He took out with only Riden, Melisquah and me flying as spares on the other squadrons until replacements turned up.

* Hard named!

This all makes sense as I recall that Gen Wilson was anything but lovable* but never lacked courage. At a mandatory officers debriefing in May of '43 he chose to declare he intended to get me court-martialed for violation of an discipline. He was group leader - I led the 368th. We were paid but by fighters and I saw that I'd was not alone, with 1 wingman! I had 3 guys left, so I slid them over to make a full squadron of 6 with Gen still leading. Putnam spoke up and simply said: "Let's move on to another subject of mine - it sounds to me like he saved your ass." You can bet I am still on Gen's shit list because of that one! He was strictly by-the-book with no room for common sense, and has the purple hearts to show for it!

This, of course, is NOT for publication - the secrets are OK, but not the personalities!

Ed

Mrs. Harold J. Wilkinson
1723 Brookdale Avenue
Charlotte, NC 28210-5313

April 18, 2002

Dear Mr. Strong:

Mary Wiley thought you would be at the April 9 8th Air Force meeting, so I took this 306th Bomb Group file, with the note on it for you. The next day I called her for your address so I could mail the file to you. Oddly, only a very few minutes afterward I found a small piece of paper in my late husband's dresser drawer with your address and 306th Bomb Group, etc., on it. I hope you can use some or all of this material.

Harold (Willie), retired in 1986 after 35 years with Eastern Airlines and I, too, with 25. He was a B-17 Navigator; the 407th is on all his documents, though he must have been in the 306 for a time. How long? Please come to the May 25 meeting at Red Rocks! Sincerely,
Barbara Wilkinson

5/25/02

Dear Russ:

This is just my conclusion about the timing of the 14 Feb 44 Citation for the 369th - not for publication, although I am tempted to pass it on to Andy Rooney!

It seemed so strange that it took over six months to recognize the magnitude of the achievement in that time of heavy losses!

Bingo! These losses explain the dilemma at HQ. The reality of the losses was always masked by the flawed formula for determining the rates of loss - as a percentage of the entire complement when only 10% - at most - of the complement was ever at risk! Bombers are unique because they strike from distant bases - in the peaceful countryside of England, in our case. The contrast was a problem in itself!

For the entire history of the US military the KIA rate is 1.375% based on 650,954 killed in a total force of 47,348,460

Take a look at the original 306th personnel - 315 airmen, 93 killed = 29.5%. But the HQ folks figure it at about 2.95% of the whole complement of about 3150. It's hard to imagine how the ground echelon could have been safer than our men at Thuleigh. Actually, if you compute the loss of 27 original crews out of 34 that reached England (eventually) you get a great dose of reality in loss rates!

Remember also that the original bunch were rather

close knit and when the losses came before any replacements showed up we worried! Plenty of empty beds were constant reminders of our mortality.

Also - that strike was essentially made with F models I'm sure - which made it risky business for sure - no nose guns, no escorts. As the citation states "the integrity of formations was maintained without loss". It was that integrity of the 369th that was the heart of the achievement. Young Kent told me, at Correg's 80th birthday party, (April) that Tom Witt quoted a bunch of 367 airman who were talking about the lucky 369th: "If you flew the kind of formations they do, you might be lucky, too." (He got that right - and Ben LeMay would confirm it.)

But, to the point: they were afraid to cite the 369th lest the unchain and potential world might discover the reality of the loss rates and pull the plug on the daylight operations. The Brits always thought we were crazy - they had tried it and gave it up for night time area bombing that killed a lot of civilians - precisely as planned, in hope of working morale!

So they delay the order for 6 months until virtually all participants have finished and moved on. On to their ultimate reward.

Just on impulse, I called Fred Hansen on 5/22 (and found out he is terminal with lung cancer perhaps 5-6 months) and, not unexpectedly, Fred was

managed to learn about the Citation. He finished his tour in the 369th in late July - shortly before the string ended!

Precisely according to plan - wait until the participants have left the theater and there won't be much notice taken. Add the total failure to communicate the news to the participants and you have a well-kept secret.

I have not found anybody from that stretch out who knew about the Citation. I think I mentioned to you already that I am probably like the others - I read the paper in "First Over Germany" covering my duty time until I finished 29 May 43. By 14 Feb 44 I was long-busy chewing the butts off pilot trainees who were sloppy formation flyers. (Which I never was - always enjoyed that aspect of flying, in fact. Of course, there were times when there was nothing to enjoy except survival but I have never doubted that hanging in there tight was the key - it guaranteed maximum defensive firepower and, obviously, made the struggles ripe for the Luftwaffe plucking).

Fred observed up front that "and we never got to wear the unit Citation badge!" - which reminds me of Shel's displacement at Thurlup very late in the game and told me the Supply Sgt gave him his personal log and mail and tossed a couple of blue badges on top "to wear on your Class A's on the right side because your squadron was cited."

* Craig loves to point out that if we had done our job properly, he would not have had to come over at all! And he was wearing our postwar badge! Cost to spare!

I seriously doubt that any of the participating
airmen ever got to wear it. Possible exception
of Bob Borden and Charlie Flanagan, also were
still there in early '44.

By the way - Fred Sherman and I were sworn
in at Chicago Federal Court Bldg in early Nov, 1941,
and went through cadet training - 425 - together.
He turned up at Thurleigh with Brewer's crew -
as I recall Brewer and Magoffin and Wheeler
were our first replacements. Wheeler told me and
Mal a few years ago that he will never forget how
nice Mal and I were to him on arrival - got
him settled in the OD, bought him drinks
at the club - and had him airborne on
a mission the next morning! We had to admit
we were amazed to see him at Thurleigh because
Borden, Mal and I were the only crew flying
in the 79th at the time. Purple flew #1
mission with me - and still complains about his little
control time he had. Truth is, he was slightly
built and I was afraid he would not have the
stamina to hang in there constantly as I
needed. Littleton was my reg CP - very slight,
also, and always hated the B-17, being come out
of the PCAF as a Bearfighter pilot. I once made
Regen L. fly a whole mission to prove that he could.
Never forgive me - crippled for days after.

Take care,

Ed Hennessy

2/24/02

Dear Russ:

The US war figures from the VFW magazine (courtesy Bill Houlihan) really put the 306th numbers in perspective!

I have often thought that the marketing guy who came up with "Flying Fortress" for Boeing created a myth that went on forever. It was a "Fortress" in name only that sounded invincible to the average American. The original 306th crews and the 140th BG crews discovered the real truth.

It was a great airplane when properly used and supported by fighters that did not have to make bomb runs, straight and level.

The only time I recall seeing "events" was about halfway across the channel going and again returning. Talk about useless gestures! I certainly do not hold this against the fighter pilots but I always wondered what somebody was trying to prove! Cheer leader, maybe?

Here's a new copy of the numbers showing the KIA rates since 1975. The 306th only goes to the Civil War, which was anything but, actually. My older sister told me she thought I had a guilt complex for having survived when so many did not. Wrong - not guilt -- AWE!

When you consider these numbers the timing and the accomplishment of the 369th

4/ minimum no-los streak is even more remarkable.

I heard about the streak when it was in progress (while I was instructing at Grimsby in June, July and Sept, 1943) and I guessed that pilots were willing to be beat by B-17s to make it back to base because they did not want to be the one to break the streak! Whatever works! It certainly illustrates Tiger Terry's leadership ability!

FW did not have the KIA averages, but it was easy to figure them from the numbers given. They tell more about the war than the base figures do by themselves.

I often remember how quickly the Luftwaffe found the critical weakness in the E-7 F - no effective forward fire power! Nervous times for our bombardiers with great forward views! Talk about feelings of helplessness!

You could do worse than publish the numbers - if you think they would be interesting to our ancient warriors.

Terrible thought: call up an old crewman at about 3.30 AM and announce: "Briefing at 4.00 AM - in the double" lines.

Take care
ED

6/23/07

KILLED IN ACTION - U.S. WARS SINCE 1775

WAR	TOTAL INVOLVED	KIA	% KIA
REVOLUTIONARY	217,000	4435	2.0
1812	286,730	2260	1.1
INDIAN	106,000	1000	.009
MEXICAN	78,716	1733	2.2
CIVIL - UNION	2,213,363	224,097	10.1
CIVIL - CONFED.	1,050,000	74,524	7.1
CIVIL - TOTAL	3,263,323	298,621	9.2 ←
SPANISH-AMERICAN	306,760	365	.0013
WW I	4,734,991	53,402	1.13
WW II	16,112,566	291,557	1.8
KOREAN	5,720,000	33,686	.0059
VIETNAM	9,200,000	47,410	.0052
GULF WAR	2,322,332	148	.000064
TOTALS	42,348,460	650,954	1.54 AVE.

ORIGINAL 306 TH. 315 AIRMEN, 93 KIA 29.5
 TOTAL 306 TH 6000 AIRMEN, 453 KIA 8.0

6/4/02

Dear Russ -

Here is a change of pace for you - my only niece is married to a rather scholarly fellow with a broad range of interests from history, philosophy, literature, arts, theater and classic jazz, which is a great relief to me!

He sends me clippings from time to time - here is a copy of the most recent. This is a rare, pragmatic view of some of the all-but forgotten programmed in the US during WW II.

I vividly remember well-intentioned, but otherwise mindless, Mid Western hell-bent in pursuit of such lofty goals - it was ever thus! Probably would have been far better had they focused on War Bonds - forget the trash and other fruitless feel-good-work!

This would probably amuse your readers, a matter of fact!

Ed Hennessy

11/10/02

Dear Russ:

If you do indeed print any more of my "message" it might be appropriate to add a short BIO in italics. Hardly anybody would know where I was coming from unless we do this, which adds credibility. There is some copy you could use, or edit, as you see fit.

"Ed Hennery joined the 306th at Wendover after getting his wings at Lackland AFB on 2 July 1942. He flew his first 28 mission with the 369th and then was transferred to the 368th to help fill an experience gap. His 25th mission, 29 May 1942, was to St Nazaire, on the coast of the Bay of Biscay, where new 3500 anti-aircraft batteries guarded the sub pens - the heaviest concentration of firepower in the ETO. He was the 6th pilot in the 306th to complete 25 missions. Perhaps it was a sign of those dangerous times that he made Captain 10 months after being commissioned. Post-combat he was a tactical pilot instructor in B-17s and B-29s. He became a non-commissioned civilian in November, 1945. His highest rank was Major and he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with 3 Oak Leaf clusters.

Pax Vobiscum!

Ed

4/5/02

Memo To: Russ Strong
Reference: 369th Streak of 41
From: Ed Sheehy

By now you must be accustomed to my affection for statistical studies of "war". Now that I have finally "discovered" the citation given the 369th in G.O. No 44, First Bombardment Division, 14 February 1944, my curiosity is stirring again!

It is clearly evident that the squadron had and has exceptional spirit that has long outlived the war. I'm sure survivors of anything dramatic form a bond that lasts forever - and that might get wearisome to others outside the fold as time goes by.

The 369th people who were part of the streak have a strong bond. Some were part of the original group - another strong bond. But that streak of 41 no-loss missions in those incredibly ungraceful skies from 23 January 1943 to 29 July 1943 makes the participants blessed. Perhaps cursed from some perspectives. But, ~~damn~~ they were!

Having all of the credentials myself I have much to be grateful for, so what else is there? I marvel at Carroll statisticians for whom everything is sacred and memorable!

I imagine you would admit it would be interesting to see how many 369th crews were actually put at risk during that remarkable streak. It could

be "purified" if the study revealed how many of those assigned and briefed actually took off and completed the missions. In other words, the net number after abortions are subtracted.

My guess is it would be a fairly low about number for the 369th because it took dedication and special resolve to do those missions in those times. The worst of times by any measure.

If it turns out that the completion percentage was higher than the other squadrons that we have some cause to celebrate the accomplishments.

Just knowing how many 369th crews flew those missions during that period would be an interesting revelation. I realize we may never know. It would be a daunting task to dig out the numbers for the Group - perhaps less so for the 369th for that 6 month period.

My conclusion about GO No. 44 is it came down to Group in 1944 and was seen as part history and feel. None of the participants were special. Thus, I have been annoyed for 58 years because I know of the accomplishment. Charity suggests it was not seen as a priority - reality suggests it was buried but other squadrons should feel unappreciated. I had some personal experience with that as you may recall from earlier correspondence.

Give me food for thought in my dotage!

First over Germany
January-February 1944

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Day celebrated his final mission by downing an enemy plane. The 368th had three men wounded: Sgts. Harvey E. Easterly, Alphonse V. Leri and Hurl N. Millikin.

February became a month for decorations with an unusually large number of medals handed out to officers and airmen. They included one Silver Star, presented to Lt. Kenneth F. Dowell for Halberstadt, eighteen Distinguished Flying Crosses, one oak leaf cluster to the DFC, twenty-three Purple Hearts, 205 Air Medals and a record 383 oak leaf clusters to the Air Medal.

With more men flying more missions throughout 1944, the output of medals increased sharply, but seldom was there anything higher now than a Distinguished Flying Cross. Those who completed tours usually went home with a DFC, an Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters and the European Theatre ribbon. By 1945 there was a shift in policy and fewer DFCs were awarded than previously. Many more oak leaf clusters to the Air Medal were given to those men who flew the 35-mission tours that became the norm. Fortunately for all concerned, the Purple Heart appeared no more frequently than it had in the past and, when calculated in proportion to the man hours in the air, it was being awarded much less than in the first year of combat.

On 14 February 1944 General Order No. 44 of the First Bombardment Division was issued citing "The 369th Bombardment Squadron (H), Army Air Forces, United States Army, for outstanding performance of duty in action against an armed enemy of the United States in the European Theatre of Operations.

"In the aerial offensive against targets in Western and Central Germany, France, and other occupied territories, the 369th Bombardment Squadron (H), has established an exceptional combat record. Over a six months period, from the 23 January 1943 to 29 July 1943, this unit participated in forty-one (41) consecutive combat missions without loss of one of its aircraft over enemy or enemy occupied territory.

"In rendering this service the personnel of the 369th Bombardment Squadron (H) demonstrated a high degree of skill and courage. The exemplary conduct exhibited by combat personnel resulted in a spirit of teamwork capable of nullifying the vicious and determined opposition of the German Air Force to the extent that the integrity of formations was maintained without loss. The administrative and maintenance personnel of this squadron contributed untiring effort and efficiency in sustaining the continued attacks carried out by this unit. In these operations the 369th Bombardment Squadron (H), by extraordinary skill and great courage, has given evidence of unswerving loyalty and devotion to duty of the highest nature which reflects great credit upon this organization, the Army Air Forces and the Armed Forces of the United States."

intimacy without intercourse". Quotes of Bill Clinton:

"I did NOT have intercourse with that woman!"
 But get this - a public health doctor says he sees
 many cases of oral gonorrhoea (?). Figures -

(Seems like 1st degree murder would be forgivable
 in such a case.) The consensus seems to be
 that half of kids do oral - about 80% are into
 sex in general. These are scary numbers -
 Ted and Tom seem to be!

Carey had to postpone our lunch again -
 the papers came to do his street, so he is "painted
 in" for a couple of days while the sealor dries.
 Don't look forward to seeing how he drives that
 power-chair through a Curio!! I maybe afraid
 to look! More later!

Made big points with Liz yesterday - gave her
 a package of frozen ONO filets - every American's
 favorite fish (mine, too) These came from Singapore,
 to Trader Joe's freezer.

Jessie's grandson (21) Robbie is doing a
 10 day jazz concert tour in Japan with his UNLV
 group of 10. He's an incredible musician -
 tenor sax, clarinet and piano - composer,
 arranger - the whole bag! He's 6'4", blonde
 blue-eyed, handsome - These Nipponee chicks
 will melt!

Jessie and daughter, Pat, are using ~~the~~
 ocean front home down near Niven's rd. die's -

Jennie grew up on the shore and loves to just look at the ocean - and probably dream of youthful adventures. She once beat Estlin Williams in a swimming meet - high school.

x Reminds me we had a wonderful old man who worked for the travel company for years - best known Tour event in America. Retired to Coronado, "best climate in the USA". When he was 85, I stopped in to see him and he mentioned that his next door neighbor was a retired Great Northern Ry engineer and had lost his son in WWII in a bomber crash. "My God - is his name Check?" "Yes" - "Ray Check was a friend of mine" So his Mom and Dad were awed in a flash. (I did not give them any details of Ray's death, and I'm sure you know why.) It was the G.N. Ry connection that tipped me off - Ray spoke of his Dad's career as a locomotive engineer more than once.

Isn't it a small world?

Ed

4/24/02

Russ:

My late-life "discovery" of the 369th Citation, 14 Feb 1944, got my brain engaged in wondering how it happened so long after the fact. None of my crew - the 369th crew, that is - knew about it. (Victor told Ed Maliszewski (or is it "Joe" as Andy Kenny thought!) when I spoke to him Sunday, 4/21. Like me, they read 'First Crew' focused on their duty time, which was granted chronologically in the book. When the Citation showed up in the Jan-Feb, 1944, section we missed it. Not in our time!! Not chronologically, that is.

However, I always thought Terry was the guy who resuscitated the 369th when he came aboard in Dec, 1942.

In January, the squadron was putting up 3 crews - Kivling, Mals and mine - until the replacements started arriving we were the spare, filling in other squadrons. I noticed that the ^{ERT} flew 22 from 3 Jan 43 through 17 Apr 43 (Bismarck - luckily Terry got us up so high the Luftwaffe fighters were struggling to get one pass at us, which was lucky - - at war 26 air fuel 9 guns were frozen on my plane - - and we logged 90 min. total of fighters chasing us.) I flew 16 of those 22 and then was transferred to the 368th to provide some needed experience. I guess, my baptism with the 368th included 3 consecutive missions - 13-14-15 May 43 before working up missions with 29 and 29 May. I was not drilled to discover, at my final briefing, that the target was St Nazaire - my 4th visit - which was so fruitless

and what seemed like all the flak in Europe. However, I worked out but on my final approach into Thuleigh I finally feathered my first engine - #3 - which ran out of gas and I did not want to go around just to transfer gas. Reg Robinson had just arrived on the base that day and asked around for the identity of somebody - anybody - who had kept his engine turning. Somebody told him I had never feathered in combat so he was watching me approach the landing when #3 stopped turning. He was quite disappointed and kidded me about it at the E&E reunion in '61.

Did you ever notice this: you listed 57 names of people who had completed 25 missions by 30 June 43, when the group flew #501 --- 39% of those names were 369'ers (I counted me as 369 because I joined at Wendover and my final 5 with the 368th did not change my identity with the 369th. It was a conundrum.)

Something else - I seem to remember that 8 Wendover originals survived 25 and Perkins, Mad and I were survivors. Could it be that we were 39.5% of the pilot survivors?

Also, the citation specifically talks about the formation flying expertise, which had a LOT to do with the 369th streak of 41. I was always tucked in and always insisted that the group I instructed in tactical schools for the duration stay in close and live. Those who did not, paid the price in combat in the early drop.

The inevitable conclusion: A came to us

that there was no effort, apparently, to forward copies of GO No 44 to the group who participated in the streak of 41. I did 15 of them - 5 before it started and then the final 5 with the 38 Bets.

It does not strike me that it would have been a crushing load for the Group or Squadron. With today's computers it would be easy!

I have my awards and service medals pinned in my den - no blue citation of course. Nor will there ever be one - it's too much trouble to rearrange the display! And, after all, it happened 59 years ago - who cares?

Come to think of it, doesn't custom or regulation decree that the unit citation can only be worn during duty time with the unit - duty that was during the period covered by the citation or duty performed after the achievement but in the unit? (I don't think like "basking in reflected glory" ??!) My vague recollection is that when you leave the cited unit you can no longer wear the blue ribbon, because it's a unit award, not a personal one.

This whole episode is a human interest kind of thing and certainly does not call for any further raising of old coals - let the embers die in peace.

Speaking of a local friend, other than I am, I observed the other day that Americans really need a war about every 20 years to remind them of

4

what a mess the world is in because of tribal,
ethnic, religious and political differences that exist.
It strikes me that the religious differences are
the most troublesome, which is pretty weird, actually.

EL

5/30/02

Dear Russ -

I'm having trouble getting my mind off the things that came into sharp focus when I got into the historical records of all US Wars since 1775! The significance of the 30th experience became surprisingly clear with the realization that only the Civil War had a higher MIA rate!

It then occurred to me that a page from one of my booklets from the East LV Seminar may be the best attention-getter to the comparison of the 30th to all previous US wars. Copy enclosed.

Highlighting the original group is kind of a shocker that is somewhat tempered by the overall record of the Group. It would be hard to find another organization that suffered worse losses as a percentage of the unit size - possibly the 108th Bomb Group, which had a terrible introduction to the Nazis.

The basic problem, to me, was the number of scatterers among our ground leadership. The 30th Bomb Command about the effectiveness of bombing (ours) results. I seem to recall from the strike reports we studied at Borington showed the 305th (Lobray) had an average circular error of about 300 feet - the in those early days, prior to September, 1943.

As an critic, I'm shocked to find that our strategic force were large enough to suffer considerable damage & a near-miss. Given that to use bombing

of blacked out cities in the dead of night - the only strategy was to kill lots of German citizens and hope they would then surrender. It did not - in fact, many Germans are still furious about that tactic.

Whatever we did - 8th Bomber Command - was more damaging to the German war effort than that area bombing. German General Goring confessed that at his Nuremberg Trial when he admitted daylight Strategic Bombing with destroying their ability to continue the war - they simply could not go on!

That was the most meaningful thing anybody ever said about our "mokus goyanki"! Until then we were tortured with doubts cast by non-believers.

Inter-service rivalry is a constant and insidious problem that will probably never pass away. It is very hard on the morale of the actual combatants in the war zones. It is still going on, hot and heavy.

Teamwork is commonplace in individual units - rare in broad-scale, multi-service operations. Think about that. What that Gulf War recall! It was a fine demonstration of effective use of airpower - 148 total casualties! Yet it was made to appear to be a grand force victory. I would have a big bias - that is not the way to see it.

Edthamway

KILLED IN ACTION - KIA - ALL U.S. WARS

	IN SERVICE	KIA	KIA %
REVOLUTIONARY	217,000	4435	2.0
1812	284,730	7260	1.1
INDIAN WARS	106,000	1000	1.009
MEXICAN	18,718	1733	2.2
CIVIL WAR - UNION	2,213,363	224,097	10.1
CIVIL WAR - CONF.	1,050,000	74,524	7.1
CIVIL WAR - TOTALS	3,263,363	298,621	9.2
SPANISH AMERICAN	306,760	385	.0013
WW I	4,734,991	53,402	1.13 ←
WW II	16,112,566	291,557	1.81 ←
KOREAN	5,730,000	33,686	1.0059
VIETNAM	9,200,000	47,410	1.0052
GULF WAR	2,377,372	142	.000064
ALL WARS TOTAL	42,348,460	650,954	1.54 ←
306TH TOTAL	9200	483	*5.5 ←

* 5.1% OF 6000 AIRMEN IN COMBAT



**306th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
THURLEIGH, ENGLAND
1942 - 1945**

THE ORIGINAL GROUP RECORD

35 original crews - 315 airman
1 B-17F exploded enroute Gander-Prestwick
1 B-17F ditched off Ireland - 2 engines, 0 gas, crew ok
33 B-17F's arrived Thurleigh 11 September 1942

FIRST COMBAT MISSION, FIRST COMBAT LOSS, 9 OCTOBER 1942

27 original crews were lost	78.4%
7 crews - 68 airmen - survived 25 missions	21.6%
93 airmen killed or died of wounds	29.5%
88 airmen were prisoners of war	28.0%
9 airmen evaded capture by Germans	2.9%
13 airmen killed in training operations	4.1%
10 airmen were wounded and grounded	3.1%
29 airmen were relieved and reassigned	9.2%
5 airmen unaccounted for	1.6%

THE TOTAL GROUP COMBAT RECORD

The original group always flew without escorts over heavily defended territory in B-17F's that had no forward-firing nose guns. Initially, the Germans tried such creative tactics as dragging bombs on wires through our formations or lobbing rockets from beyond the range of our 50's. Then they settled on their favorite frontal attacks for fast closure against the Achilles "Nose" of the B-17F's. Also remember that our attacking forces in '42 and early '43 often had less than 50 bombers going against hordes of seasoned Luftwaffe fighter pilots.

The arrival in the 8th Air Force of long-range P-51's and P-47's for escort duty, the B-17G's with twin .50 chin turrets plus the huge build-up of the 8th Air Force resulted in a continuous improvement in the odds for survival. The Luftwaffe was being overwhelmed by the numbers coming against them.

During four years of combat duty the overall loss rate for the 306th-the oldest operational group-was 29.5%, or, 177 crews and aircraft. If the original group numbers are subtracted, there were 150 losses from 565 replacement crews-a loss rate of 26.5% that is a substantial improvement over the 78.4% losses suffered by the original group.

This illustrates the effects of escorts, chin turrets, huge numbers and effective training.

The 306th flew 341 missions with an average of 25.3 B-17's each time. That adds up to 8629 bombers from the 306th that attacked Nazi targets.

Everyman in the 306th should be proud of his contribution to this accomplishment. Remember it took about ten men in ground support for every airman flying. It was a remarkable joint effort.

I doubt if I ever mentioned this before, but a friend in the area, m/s Bill Creech (ret), holder of about a dozen records in boxes (that still stand!) was Terry's 50. CO in Panama - B-17 D's I had the two of them here for dinner several years ago. Talk about a mutual admiration society - Terry said Bill was the best CO he ever had for. I suspect they were two of a kind as CO's.

Terry was on an oxygen tank in his final years - I think his early smoking caught up with him. Hazel and I talk periodically by phone - often about our dogs, as old folks often do. She's a really nice lady.

Do not bury yourself in my work about the purity of the 304th accomplishment. If it's lurking in your records, fine. But don't bother to go further than your own records on hand. It's ancient history now.

Ed

4/5 or

Quess -

I spoke to Carey Jones a couple of times this week - His mobility is pretty bad. He has an electric wheel-chair that travels on a rack on the back of his big new Volvo. He also has a hospital bed on the first floor since he cannot manage the top upstairs to the MBR. Other than that he sounds pretty good.

We are in the middle of the Mulberry follow-up mission time that nearly did us in 6 years ago - I have been faithful to the preventative medicine routine my only minor problem this year is some hemorrhoids. That will ease up when the trees finish their spring in about 7-10 days.

Ref. de Memo item on second page about "my personal experience", it refers to the B-17 incident in April, 1947 because B-17 cannot give awards for the performance of duty (lest it appear that others were underperforming, which in fact, they were! Embarrassed looks of imagination may be declared a B-17 unaffiliated on a mission) I have to admit that the ground played was back to smaller and gave the engineering officers fits because it reflected on them unfairly and left us short handed in the air.

This should not be talked about now but it was a large problem then, so let it lie. The real strength of the 369th Army the streak was leadership (Terry) and the resolve he installed in his people.

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PI 12163

February 28, 2002

306th Bomb Group Association
Russell A. Strong, Historian
5323 Cheval Place
Charlotte, North Carolina 28205

Dear Mr. Strong:

Per our earlier correspondence, I am enclosing a copy of a crew photograph for your archives, found among the property of former 369th Squadron navigator Victor Lisec.

Lisec is pictured kneeling in the front row, second from the left. Unfortunately, I do not know who any of the other men are, although his file card indicates that he flew with Loren Hubbel's crew. I would like very much to identify them if there is any means of doing so.

The aircraft in the background is certainly not "Low & Slow", although since Lisec arrived in England several months before that particular aircraft, he was presumably assigned to a different plane. This looks more like a stateside photograph than one taken in England. Perhaps the tail markings on the aircraft in the background mean something to you?

I thank you again for all of your valuable assistance, and am certainly looking forward to receipt of those two photographs of Low & Slow when you have the chance. Please mark the envelope very prominently "Photographs, Do Not Bend", as my post office tends to cram and squeeze everything into my PO box, whether it fits or not. I have enjoyed reading the bound copies of Echoes, finding it an excellent, informative, publication.

Yours very truly



John A. Stevenot

JAS/j

LE LAC LEMAN - alt. : 375 m.,
le plus vaste des lacs alpins :
Longueur : 74 km - largeur : 14 km -
Profondeur : 310 m. ;
582 km² dont 234 pour la France.

Il est traversé par le Rhône et le phénomène
de la "bataillère" est une des curiosités du lac.
Site exceptionnel, il fait le bonheur des pêcheurs
et des plaisanciers.



4 LL 007



LIEU où S'EST

«POBÉ» TWIN BABY

DENNY BOY -



Weaver } 369th
Hammerley } returned
here, 10 Oct. so added their story
as follows:—

Had lost #1 engine; lost
formation. When we came out of
clouds we were below formation
we bombed, lost another engine #2;
then we headed about 280 or
300°. Hit by flak again at
Munich; lost our oxygen there;
descended & flew straight but
south, still over 10/10; over
Lake Geneva; then crash landed
in France near ~~Barinques~~
Barinques, Haute Savoie;
stay ed w. Wagner 24 hours;
into Switzerland; finally
returned to France in a

"official" escape arranged by
General Lepp.

B. H. P.

6/24/02

Addendum

The KIA percentage for the original 306th's 315 airmen is 29.5. However, 13 died in training accidents, 10 were wounded and grounded and 29 were relieved and reassigned.

That leaves a net of 263 who were at risk - 35.4% KIA!

If you take out 5 more "unaccounted for" the net was 258 at risk, 36% KIA.

That 258 may be as close as you can get to those at risk for a full tour of 25 missions! How pure do we get?

If you think about it for a while, it seems to be the purest possible figure! However, I am not a theoretical mathematician - are you, by any chance? In a way it explains the 29 "relieved and reassigned"! (9.2%!)

Ed

KILLED IN ACTION (KIA)

~ ALL U.S. WARS SINCE 1775

	NO. SERVED	KIA	KIA %
REVOLUTIONARY	217,000	4435	2.0
1812	286,730	2260	1.1
INDIAN WARS (est)	106,000	1000	.009
MEXICAN	78,718	1733	2.2
CIVIL WAR - UNION	2,213,363	224,097	10.1
CIVIL WAR - CONF.	1,050,000	71,524	7.1
CIVIL WAR - TOTAL	3,263,363	298,621	9.2
SPANISH-AMER.	306,760	385	.0013
NW 1	4,734,991	53,402	1.13
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KOREAN	5,720,000	33,686	.0059
VIETNAM	9,200,000	47,410	.0052
GULF WAR	2,372,337	148	.000064
TOTAL ALL WARS	42,318,460	650,954	1.54 TOTAL

5/27/02

MEMO TO: Russ Strong
REF: 306 Loss Rates - WW II
FROM: Ed Hennessy

Bill Haulshaw sent me the stats (appened) on America's wars and casualties. It took a while to sink in - look at the totals in the column on the right.

650,954 KIA out of 42,348,460 = 1.54% KIA!

The 306th shows 177 crews KIA in WW II out of an estimated total of 600 crews assigned. Assume no man crews: 1770 men KIA. Assume a permanent ground echelon of 3200 plus 6000 total women and you get a total complement of 9200. Divide 1770 KIA by 9200 = 19.24% KIA.

That is 12.5 times the historic average!

However, heavy bombers have a unique aspect: only the aircrews are at risk in combat, unlike most military branches in which support troops and combat troops are normally within about a mile of each other in battle zones. The bomb group support is not at risk in the English Midlands, for example. It stands to reason that expensive, heavy bomber-crews on the ground will not be based within easy striking distance of the enemy.

To put reality, the bomber KIA's should be figured as a percentage of the total aircrews assigned - they are the only ones likely to get killed. On that basis it gets pretty likely, indeed! Divide 1770 KIA

Note: if you separate the WW II figures the overall KIA rate was 1.81%.
Even so, the 306th KIA of 19.24% of full complement is 10.63 times the average for all WW II forces!

by 6000 aircraft assigned and you get 29.5% KIA.
THAT is 21.5 times the historic average for the U.S.

No matter how you figure it we were in
a very risky business compared to the rest of the
U.S. military throughout history!

My opinion has always been that the military
hierarchy scrambled to conceal such truths and
journalists never figured out what was going on -
that has not changed over the years.

Keep in mind that the Air Corps was a branch
of the Army - a perception that refuses to go
away. Take the Gulf War - the troops won that
one, to hear them tell it. Billy Mitchell's problems
seem eternal. The groundlings are great protectors
of their own turf and seem blind to the realities
of air operation and its value and dedicated to
ignoring, if not denigrating, the air accomplishments.

Please message these numbers and see if
you can contest them. I wonder what the likes of
Andy Benez would think of them!

Ed Hanaway

5/24/04

Kuss -

60 Minutes and General Zinni threw gasoline on the fire. I think he feels that the Pentagon has the mind power available but does not use it. My impression is that he expects the military to be all things to all men - a pretty scary thought if you look at past history. The imperious Douglas MacArthur springs to mind. (On the musical "Camelot", the Lancelot character, played by Gaule, sang "C'est Moi" so effectively that my wife nudged me and said: "Perfect casting!") Gen. Zinni's message was of the "should have, could have, would have" genre that leaves no doubt about his self-esteem.

Notably says that Iraqis have been at each others throats for 300 years and have never known freedom. Changing their mindset is next to impossible with those traditional Tribal differences.

And their concept of Jihad and the heavenly reward for soldiers who die "for the cause" is mind boggling: 72 hours reward for those heroes in their heavenly epittance! Seems more like hell to me.??

As the King of Siam declared: "Is a punishment!"

Andy Rooney was especially thoughtful and on the money in my opinion.

EA

60 MINUTES - 5/23/04 - CBS

5/23/04

General Zinni leaves the impression that the Pentagon direction is controlled by civilians who are not identified as Political Scientists and then seems to blame the military for dereliction in the areas of reconstructive activities that require the best in Political Sciences.

He condemns the military for not being such Political Scientists. He also ignores their astonishing success in the purely military operation - the U.S. 99.7% survival rate thus far in Iraq is phenomenal.

It appears to me that the political aspects of the Iraq war were not anticipated. Is this a military defect? Seems more like a Political Science defect which is unlikely to be corrected by professional politicians whose ultimate aim is getting re-elected and looking good to the voters.

The blame game is on, and the cry seems to be, "Blame it on George". Mary Truman said "The Buck Stops Here", but it appears that the Pentagon needs qualified Political Scientists to plan the rehabilitation process of any defeated country. That could be as monumental an undertaking as a shooting war. A daunting prospect that does not seem doable by a military organization as we know them. Maybe our separation of powers needs another

power component. Which is a really daunting concept!

Andy Kennedy asked the program wondering if the US was going the way of the ancient Greek and Roman Empires. (Virtual impositions?)!

Perhaps our system suffers from impotence until the top heavy structure collapses, as was the case with the Roman Empire - I believe I have had since 1937 when I was at college sophomore. Such things were remarkably clear to me at age 18.

Tyrant and dictators throughout history maintained order by the elimination of the opposition. A great time-saver compared to political persuasion which could take decades, or more, in a tribal society such as Iraq's.

The situation is disconcerting but not hopeless. Whatever method is used will require years to implement since repression or suppression are not acceptable, and the tribes are not exactly amenable to reason as the Western world understands it. And the scarcity of truth is endemic.

Ed Hennessy

6/23/04

IT SEEMS TO ME - - -

Freedom of speech in the U.S. is a RIGHT, but it is wrongfully abused by people of limited perspectives who have chips on their shoulder and see opportunities to launch verbal attacks on public figures knowing that the Right of Freedom of Speech will shield them from retaliation! All bullies should be so lucky!

Too bad there is no right to retaliate - perhaps with a punch in the nose, or a kick in the ass, at least, plus civil damage awards.

Under our laws assault can be verbal - it does not have to be physical to qualify. Thus Freedom of Speech has become the empowerment for assault. The scales of justice need balancing.

It is surely inevitable that politicians become private citizens, being in the public eye and most likely to try to sweep it under the rug without going public themselves. Damage control?

In our earlier history such assaults would result in duels. Not all bad, but sometimes fatal. A good alternative might well be a punch in the nose or a kick in the ass.

Either could be deterrents to bullies who fear any kind of retaliation. Verbal smugness sheltered by the right to Free speech suits them perfectly.

The most astute observers are spokespersons for Political Parties. No holds barred in their verbiage. Usually delivered with intonations that sound childish, girlish and gayish! They do not even sound credible to me, but the eager mass audiences eat it up because the words match their own half-baked perceptions.

The most vicious assaults come from the mostly Liberal Press selectively reporting only the news that suits their personal agendas. The average reader or viewer is too shallow to think through the bias. My favorite example is the utter absence of reports of the actual survival rate of our troops at risk in Iraq, which hovers around 99.6% at present. You will never see that in our media or hear it.

Now here is an example of DUMB reporting of the civilian space flight by a 5020 pilot of 62 years^{03?}! Staff reporter for the R-5 covered it, front page, since Moscow is only about 240 miles away. He MISSED the most remarkable aspect of the flight - the elderly pilot used all his fuel climbing to about 325,000 feet - 62 miles! His descent was totally "dead-stick", a perilous glide back to a safe landing at Moscow.

A "detail" the reporter missed entirely, but with a safe bet that 99.4% of the readers did, too! Typical. (Maybe that fact is buried, lest it scare away ticket buyers for future commercial space flights! Kind of a do or die operation because you can't go-around again if you miss the final approach.!)
Ed

Rise - my opinion of our
journalists could hardly
get lower, or higher,
either.

Ed Hennessy

5/26/04

Lemma - Ed Hennessy

Killed in Action (KIA) rate in
no U.S. troops have been placed
by basis, the average number

..... wounded by 250,000 at risk in
.0032% - about $\frac{1}{3}$ of 1%. This reveals a SURVIVAL RATE
of 99.68%. Easily the best record in our history.

Consider this ANOMALY: the U.S. Press corps including
all media, most citizens and even some retired and active
military leaders consider Iraq a military failure!! At worst,
it might be a political failure, surely a political problem.
But, the critics ascribe the failure to the Pentagon leadership.
Apparently they expect our military to be our Political Scientists
who should have a reconstruction plan in hand. In our free,
Democratic system the decision to wage war is not made by
the Pentagon, only the execution of the declaration is
their responsibility. In Iraq the execution has been amazing.

However, we have a national mind-set that seems
always intent on blaming somebody or some group. How
does the Pentagon wind up behind the 8-ball?

Where and who are these Political Scientists with a
blueprint for the reconstruction in a nation divided by
tribal differences and animosities for over 2000 years? A
people with a singular bond of hatred for Christians and
Jews - perhaps all non-Islamic infidels. DO consider an
endemic disregard or denial of any truth that does not
fit their sectarian, tribal or religious beliefs and values.

Pathological liars springs to mind. Plus the long
simmering Islamic ambition for World domination based
in their tradition.

Consider, also, the way our journalists ration
truth selectively to support their own agendas. Can
you cite or recall a single instance when our press
ever revealed the phenomenal SURVIVAL RATE in
Iraq for our troops? 99.68% survival suggests that
our KIA's have been terribly unlucky. Not inept
and not "cannon fodder", as press reports indicate.

Our military in Iraq has outperformed their
predecessors in our history many times over. They are
modern marvels, in fact. Which is even more remarkable
because they are volunteers, not "hand-picked" as in a
draft. This speaks volumes for their combat training.

The biased and flawed reporting published and
aired in the U.S. does monumental disservice to our
military AND to the significant mindless majority of
muddled citizens awash in reports of the "Carnage"
and escalating KIA rates which are never put in
proper perspective. God Forbid!

In WWI such reporting would have been seen
as seditious. What has happened to truth, ethics
and honesty in journalism? It seems more like
propaganda and obfuscation to me. A resurrection of
the Hippie culture?

6/23/04

Dear Russ -

The constant sniping by the liberal press and Democratic spokespersons inspired my take on Freedom of Speech.

The civilian space flight reporting - in general - reinforced my low opinion of most modern reporters who miss - or avoid - the best parts of the stories they write.

It occurs to me that you might use some version of my views on the space flight in a future "Echoes" item. Since our readers are even older than the pilot they can easily relate to his probable annoyance at the indifference to the power-off, do-or-die aspect of a dead-stick landing from 325,000 feet! It strikes me that prospects for seats to come in the future should include the likelihood of the paying passengers having a death wish or no perception of the danger inherent in that descent and landing.

Do you suppose any insurance company would underwrite that risk?

Ed

6/24/07

How it seems to me in drag ---

We have a U.S. press-all media - that seems to spread disinformation. I kept today, the Las Vegas Review-Journal ran a Washington Post report, bylined by Edward Lidy, on the front page and beyond. On 6/18/07, PFC Jason Lynch returned fire on attackers as he stuck his head and torso out of the roof of his Humvee. He was fatally wounded by a shot, just below his body armor, in Buhayin, a rebellious village about 35 miles from Baghdad, he died within an hour.

The revelation that followed in the report was, and I quote: "Of the 842 U.S. service members who have died in Iraq since the invasion 15 months ago, 622 were killed by hostile fire according to a Pentagon tally. (Apparently the Pentagon tallies were correct, but selectively used by the press.) The largest part of that combat death toll, 513, has come since President Bush's declaration in May last year that major combat was over. These troops died at the hands of Iraqis and a sprinkling of foreign Arabs fighting the U.S. occupation and seeking to derail the Bush administration plan to transform the country. (as if this is a terrible thing to do?)

It seems obvious that this dig was intended to divert readers attention from the actual KIA toll which the press has distorted for months by including 220 non-combat deaths in the KIA count. In fact,

this was a 26% inflation of the true KIA rate! Why? Probably to score political points and persuade the KIA families and friends that this is a terrible war (aren't they all?) and thus increase political pressure on our Commander-in-Chief.

SO - how bad is IT IN IRAQ? A look at the survival rate of our troops, which totalled 250,000 placed at risk thus far. On an average day the strength is 135,000 troops because there is a rotation of troops that sends units home and replaces them with fresh units from the U.S. Please note that this war differs from the past wars in which only combat units were truly at risk and engaging the enemy.

In Iraq, the entire country is a battleground, typical of tribal societies and their tradition. Now, all of our troops are at risk because this enemy is pervasive and fanatical.

The "new" figures that differentiate KIA and non-combat deaths reveal that our KIA rate on 6/18/04 was 622, not the 842 number that included 220 non-combat deaths.

This is the reality: 622 is .002488% of 250,000. which means that 1/4 of 1% were KIA! 622 KIA also means that the combat death rate was 1/4 of 1% and 99.75% survived combat. If you count the non-combat deaths - 220 - the rate is 99.663%.

Seems a small difference, but, it's a 26% distortion of the combat death reality.

The press seems bent on exaggerating the combat fatalities (KIA), until now. They would do themselves and the nation a service by applauding the astoundingly high survival rate in actual combat. Deaths due to illness or accident should not be attributed to combat when the deceased was so engaged - even though the inflated rate is also astounding compared to past wars.

Granted, the transition to freedom is fiercely resisted by, actually, a minority of the Iraqi population. Seems to me this minority fears the coming changes will raise women's status and also diminish traditional male prerogatives (in the Islamic tradition) - an attitude tainted by thousands of years of tribal, primitive traditions - which they rationalize as God's Will! Logic and fanaticism do not mesh easily. Especially when many Islamic clergymen feel the greatest fear to solidify their own Prerogatives!!

All of which makes the separation of church and state in Democracies appear very wise, indeed. The roots of these evils run very deep in Iraq. We have a long difficult road to hoe, so more blood will be shed. It is some consolation that it will be mostly Iraqi minority unless they slaughter the majority that hopes for Democracy, in fact, if not in our news coverage.

Ed Hennessy

11/28/04

Dear Russ:

I mail-ordered a CBS Video called "Air Power," the riveting stories of WWII air combat, narrated by Walter Cronkite. About 6 hours, all B&W. I watched it in segments.

The 8th Bf. action was mainly the bombing of oil fields and Schweinfurt and, typically, they revealed the strategic destruction of industry and distribution by bombardment but managed to leave the impression that the critical work was done on the ground!

A thought: if the allies had simply picked up and gone home in the latter stages, Germany would have starved to death.

The Pacific coverage was really well done and clearly reveals the Japanese military mind-set. It was fanatical by any measure. The generals controlled the Emperor until he could see it was hopeless.

To me, it clarified the US problems and strategy. In a way, it suggests that the destruction of the battle ships at Pearl ended the myth that the oceans were controlled by battle ships. Suddenly we had more, but more carriers were at sea and soon demonstrated that floating air bases really controlled the seas.

Because the Japanese were so fanatical it was evident they would try to defend the homeland to the

to the last man.

The B-29s had to fly too far until Guafina was taken to provide the badly needed landing place for homebound bombers in trouble. (Most B-29s were lost from running out of gas or engine failures which increased their gas consumption greatly.) Very few were actual combat casualties.

The taking of Iwo was critical and gruesome - the Japs knew it was the key to their survival. The battle was intense and the forces were huge. Crutcher's voice during this epic moment told of the carnage and the terrible losses in Marines, 1/3 one unit lost as many as 25%! No question that the total number of casualties was gruesome, but there were a LOT of people involved, which made the Marine average losses in the Pacific almost exactly 4%.

Which is why it can be said that the 706th aircrew would have fared better in the Pacific Marine position! Amazing how that fact has escaped notice for so long.

I also learned that the B-29s' terribly destructive fire-bombing was based on stripping down the bombs to virtual cargo planes that, unarmed, flew in low and caused more casualties in Tokyo than all the nuclear bombs up north. No B-29 losses that I recall.

Having been a pilot in-the-war B-29

instructor-pilot, & was surprised to see the harsh conditions those big birds endured in those islands of the Pacific. They were landing in the dirt before the runways were poured! Knowing that you never know how tough an airplane is until you have to do or die!

Of course, the Japanese said that we were a cowardly nation because we provided those terribly expensive airplanes full of creature comforts and safeguards 'just to save lives'. They operated on the old Samurai premise that your greatest honor was to die bravely for the Emperor and Japan. But, the Emperor finally realized that this was a no-win situation and over-ruled the military, forcing the surrender.

We tend to underestimate the resolve of fanatics throughout the world. It is pretty rare that Lemay was the most pragmatic of our generals and understood the problem far better than his peers did.

The tapes remind us of the incredible method of attaching the cores on Dup that Japanese hid in & the flamethrowers used by the Marines. I always thought that was our cruelest weapon.

DL

12/16/02

Dear Amy:

I noticed in your Epilogue, Chapter 24, you show 738 KIA in the 306th. I had already figured there were 600 crews assigned during WW1. Divide 738 by 600 crews and you get a 12.3% KIA rate in 306th personnel at risk.

You may know the actual, recorded number of crews assigned to the 306th in WW1 — it would be interesting to see what the possible percentage of KIA would be!!

I suspect it might be comparable to the Civil War numbers!

Love, subject for the Christmas season, isn't it?

Cheers,
Ed

6/23/03

Dear Russ -

As it turns out, I'm pretty useless in your quest for IDs!

I guess the paper work in the 306th was not really invented until 1943. As perhaps it never came my way until then. The first order with my name on it was dated 13 Jan 43 and promoted me to 1st Lt.

I wrote the officers names on the bottom of the picture. Brenke, coincidentally, is standing between the barrels of the top turret guns to the right.

I might be able to do better if I saw a real photo print - this contrasty xerox doesn't help much after all these years. (I had forgotten about that ^{my} much-too-small winter jacket until I saw this! I never did get boots I could wear over my shoes, so I did not wear shoes under the boots.)

My guess is that they never gave us copies of orders in the first few months. I confess that it did not seem important at the time - things got very correct during my Stateside duty starting in late 1943!

Ed

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

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2/29/04

Russ - My view probably
would not appeal to the
Thursday support troops,
but they do have a
safe haven for the
duration!

Ed

descriptions of WWII air losses were
wrong - specifically the 306th B.G.
It became increasingly aware that the
seemingly flawed became of the narrow
% between all the major U.S. forces,
losses did not reflect my own experience which
began at Wendover in July, 1942, and extended through my final
mission on 29 May 1943. We started out with 35 crews and
7 survival 25 missions. That 20% shrinkage makes a lasting
impression on me - as did the 90% loss record of the 100th B.G.
It has always struck me as odd that those numbers seemed to
fall through the cracks of history.

It finally came to me that statisticians seemed
always to focus on the total complement of each branch of service.
This may have suited statisticians and politicians but the left
a pretty unreal impression on Americans in general. If you do not
consider actual risk factors you ignore reality. Sustainedly, about 1 in 5
ever sees combat. To me, reality demands that you measure loss
rates by the number of those in combat. If you're going to put non-
combatants in the mix you might as well throw in families, politicians,
bureaucrats, etc. who may or may not support the cause.

On the 306th, and other 8th Bomber Command units, Base life

was remarkably peaceful in the wooded countryside of England. 10% airmen, 90% ground support, who were never actually at risk. Only airmen had combat duty in which lives were routinely lost.

It always struck me that the sharp difference between the peaceful base life and the reality of each combat experience made the anticipation of missions to come very unattractive. In fact, that was the hardest part of the experience. In my own family I noticed that only my elder sister grasped that aspect from the beginning and had a harder time than I did wondering if each mission would be my last.

I am aware that bomber groups in other theaters did not enjoy the peaceful base life that we did in England. They were exposed to air and ground attacks. However, my impression is that we always had the most difficult combat environments.

I am also aware that support troops in other branches are usually close to the action, if not actually in it. Like a half mile from the front lines - close enough to get killed.

Nevertheless, the statisticians never seemed to factor in the differences in risks, and thus the civilian world rarely understood the difference in stress for combat troops. We do politicians and journalists, in my opinion.

The situation in Iraq is a different kind of war in which our troops cannot easily tell the bad guys from the good guys. Most look remarkably Biblical and get lost in the crowd in an instant. Politicians and journalists seem to ignore this unique aspect of Iraq vs older wars. The reporting of the KIA

EDWARD J. HENNESSY

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rate in Iraq bordered on hysterical when it got over 500 - its now about 575, I believe. This is about 1/10 of 1% of the 132,000 troops US - in Iraq. The WWII rate for the 308th was 29.5%. apply that to 132,000 and you will get 38,940 KIA. I presume that the hysteria is fuelled by the fact that all 132,000 in Iraq are at risk - however the odds are amazingly good for their survival. War has changed dramatically, but the perceptions of journalists and politicians seem static in the WWII mode.

Now your 6 pointed inquiry in your letter to Russ would make a fine assignment for a modern military historian with a team of graduate student assistants for researching the archives opened in about 1992 by the Freedom of Information act. They might come up with some new numbers that give weight to risk factors. I'd avoid a documentary featuring the 100th B.F. experience - it included two modern "young" historians who came up with an overall loss rate of 10% for the 8th Airborne Command - highest in history of all branches. I have not seen any credible numbers on the whole 8th AF.

I guess my main concern is that nobody figures loss rates without a significant deduction by non-combat troops included in the calculations.

In 'First Over Germany', Page 138, we listed the first 20 officers and 33 F.O.s who survived 25 missions. I was the 6th pilot to do so - flew my first 20 with the 369th and final 5 with the 368th because they needed experience at that time.

I confess I have a low opinion of modern reporters in all media, but in TV I am alarmed by the anchor's skills at editorializing by innuendo, inflection and facial expressions on camera. I find myself muttering epithets at the screen as they mouth their versions of what is going on in the world.

During the first 9 months at Thuleigh we were hurt by the lack of forward firepower in B-17Fs and no fighter escorts. The Luftwaffe favored the head on, dead level attack - far more deadly than any flak barrage firing dumb weapons from far below. The Luftwaffe pilots were very good at their work but not the supermen Hitler claimed. Unlike flak they came at us one on one, wave after wave. They often flew in through our formations to shorten their exposure to defensive fire. If they had had heat-seeking missiles it would have been a different story. Only the overwhelming numbers we were able to put up later turned the tide - helped by long range escorts, of course. Post-war a Luftwaffe general recalled, ref the 8th Bomber Command, "No matter what we did, they kept coming."

Sorry I cannot help you with your 6 topics - which cover a very broad spectrum -

Smiles: Ed Hermann

See R-I clipping attached - really distinct 17/17 (ep)

① $700 \div 135,000 = \frac{1}{2} \text{ of } 1\%$
 $493 \text{ KIA} \div 135,000 = \frac{37}{100} \text{ of } 1\%$
(It appears that 207 deaths were not combat)

② It is hard to follow this report on Vietnam but it appears that the KIA rate reached 2910 in 1966 plus 752 in 1968 - seems to be a gap in the report - thus it appears that 4662 were KIA overall, with rates increasing sharply as US troops were added from 20,000 to 500,000 to 500,000 in 1968. 4662 KIA in a 500,000 force = $\frac{93}{100}$ of 1%!

③ This is the real difference in the Iraq war - if you are there you are vulnerable. Unlike most previous wars when only about 5% of the troops ever participated in actual combat. Only the designated combat troops were regularly exposed to actual combat. Not so in Iraq, and this is probably what disturbs the citizens most - the thought that the vulnerability is widespread. BUT, the likelihood of being a KIA is remote.

Examples: in Vietnam the survival rate was 99% - in Iraq it's about 99.5% one might wonder just what the reporters and critics think wars are all about - people do get killed but at rates FAR lower than in W'11 and earlier engagements — E.F.H.

U.S. FORCES

Death rate highest

87 Americans killed in Iraq in first half of April

By DREW BROWN

KNIGHT-RIDDER NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON — With fighting in Iraq now at its worst, the number of U.S. troops killed by enemy fire has reached the highest level since the Vietnam War.

The first part of April has been the bloodiest period so far for U.S. troops in Iraq. There were 87 deaths by hostile fire in the first 15 days of this month, more than in the opening two weeks of the invasion when 82 Americans were killed in action.

"This has been some pretty intense fighting," said David Segal, director of the

University of Maryland's Center for Research on Military Organization. "We're looking at what happened during the major battles of Vietnam."

The last time U.S. troops experienced a two-week loss such as this one in Iraq was October 1971, two years before U.S. ground involvement ended in Vietnam.

There are 135,000 U.S. troops in Iraq. Nearly 700 American troops have died since the beginning of the war. As of Friday, 493 had been killed by hostile fire. Another 3,630 have been wounded.

The Vietnam War started with a slower death rate. The United States had been

involved in Vietnam for six years before total fatalities surpassed 500 in 1965, the year President Lyndon B. Johnson ordered a massive buildup of forces. There were 20,000 troops in Vietnam by the end of 1964. There were more than 200,000 a year later.

By the end of 1966, U.S. combat deaths in Vietnam had reached 3,910. By 1968, the peak of U.S. involvement, there were more than 500,000 troops in the country. During the same two-week period of April that year, 752 U.S. soldiers died, according to a search of records kept by the National Archives.

U.S. officials say that

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2/9/04

Dear Russ -

This coin came my way from an elderly native Irishman who worked for my tour company for years. In fact, he became our manager of Hawaiian field operations based in Hawaii. We had about 100 escorts assigned to our Hawaii tours. He retired at 65 and remained in Honolulu. He came ashore on a junket last week for a few days in L.A.

Before he left on Saturday morning he gave me this commemorative coin - it struck me that it might be useful as some kind of prize at the next reunion - for some 70th veteran who is still upright. A kind of final reward for something you can invent. A kind of sentimental thing, actually.

I'll be frank, as usual: I could not think of anything that would be fitting except the broad concept of a sentimental remembrance. In somebody other than me. I have to wonder what the creator had in mind - it is an attractive package, probably in the order of commemorative decorated chin plates which seem never to go out of favor.

Anyway, here it is to do with as you wish.

ER

306 TH BOMB GROUP (H)

THURLEIGH, ENGLAND

17 APRIL 1943

On this day the 306 TH completed a very rough mission to Bremen, Germany. No B-17's were lost to enemy action. 6 B-17's from the 369th Squadron were led by their Commanding Officer, Major H.W. "Tiger" Terry. Lt. Ed Hennessey led the flight of 3 immediately underneath Terry's flight of 3.

All 6 of the 369th aircraft returned to Thurleigh and, at Terry's direction during the home stretch, buzzed the Control Tower.

Being lower than his leader, Hennessey was also lower than the Tower at Thurleigh - foreground in photo - but was just able to accomplish a nearer-than-planned miss, leaving the Tower intact. Also, the B-17F he was flying,

The photo was taken by a non-flying spectator who eventually sent a print to "Echoes" Editor, Russ Strong, who printed it in the July 2003 issue without specific identification.

The photographer had not identified the plane. Hennessey "discovered" it in the paper over 60 years after the fact! He was one of the 20% of the original flying complement who survived 25 missions over Europe.

The 369th Squadron, under Terry, established an unmatched record in WWII by flying

41 consecutive combat missions without a loss from 23 January 1943 to 29 July 1943. During this period our bomber losses reached their highest peak in the 8th Air Force.

Ed Hervey completed his 25th mission on 29 May 1943. Until the war ended he was a tactical pilot instructor in B-17's and B-29's. He then returned to civilian life as a retired Major. He was awarded 4 air medals and The Distinguished Flying Cross.

12/07/04

Dear Russ -

The "Claws" arrived and I started turning all of the pages until the end.

My first reaction was: they, by and large, look happier than they really were!

I also noticed a great lack of original crews and then I remembered that there was very little picture-taking in the early going. In fact, the "Crossing" picture was not a AT product, but that of a London newspaper! In April, '43, or I recall.

Most of the pictures were of people I never knew. Only one wrong ID caught my eye - P-177 - Tom Cantor is in top picture on left, first row. He shows up in bottom picture, far right as Norman Abbott! (Don't know he got stuffed by the King on the handshake - he would not have grasped the hand of an enlisted person. Not done y'know.)

It was also interesting to see the parity of "uniforms", or lack thereof in the case of Edward's crew sprawling in the grass on evening duty while showing a lot of pale skin!

I was reminded of a pay member of our tour company operating staff, Englishman, 3rd generation Coldstream Guardsman, who went home for a visit after being with us for over 5 years. I asked him how it felt to be back among his countrymen after a long time away: "I was shocked to discover what a scruffy lot they were!" It seems he found American to

to be spiffier deers than the Brits! Of course this was in the early '60s when Britain had not yet picked up all the commie pieces post war.

After Jeff (the Brit) and his wife Jerry met my Hawaiian friends just before a performance, Janice remarked, as they left for backstage, "I never realized Hawaiians were so charming!" — Jeff's comment to her was: "They're the ones who ate Captain Cook, you know." (The Hawaiians were convinced when this was passed along to them.)

It may take a while to get through the Boyd book, but I will read it, since Billy Mitchell was one of my legendary heroes. I'll return it after the Holidays.

You're to be congratulated on cropping the originals to free up the crews — some of the "improvements" we worked and lived in were not exactly the stuff of Archibald's Regent? And all that NOD and security of "sanitary facilities"! Nevertheless, it beat the hell out of trench warfare — which is why I enlisted in the Air Corps, figuring my size would determine me for large bombers.

Cheers!

Ed

5/31/03

Dear Russ -

I had to write to compliment you on your pitch for the Reunions - nice pros!

I'm tempted, but it's too soon to commit. I'll have to feel especially good before I buckle in for at least one change at Atlanta. Immobility is an ever-worsening problem. I might have to be extracted, at least at Atlanta!

Dr. Bill Colantoni, my 206th Comedian, is coming out in two weeks. At 86 he's newer than most - probably bored stiff, too, living alone in a 1316 county house in the country, in fact. The last time he flew back to PGH from here they had to carry him off to the hospital for 10 days - blood clot in his leg from the immobility on a circuml flight! I'll be interested in seeing how he fares on this trip!

Entertaining, but mountable, problems in Iraq, arabs are diverted thieves and liars and very 9/11 in their prehistoric ways. We should have come home and left the rehab to the French and Germans. Poetic Justice!

I cannot think of anything more frustrating

them trying to teach Democracy to bunch of ignorant Tribal-oriented landless and ego-maniacs! Nothing raised about me!

I noticed in the coverage of the Franklin's Museum that they have apparently used that picture of Fa Polletti blessing my crew - in April of 1943 - maybe March. Malaguerchi's sister, upon seeing it hanging on my wall, said "What is he doing, giving you the last rites?" Not a bad question when you consider the relative immortality us two Eds enjoyed.

I have been hoping to see some updated PR about an RF Captain "K.C.", Warthog pilot, good looking young, petite lady who was a hot pilot - only one who ever manually landed a damaged Warthog and kept it intact! The TV interviewer asked her if it would violate security if she told him what her "K.C." name tag stood for. Smiling demurely, she said: "Keller Chick"! Who wouldn't love her?! (A combat loaded Warthog weighs 40,000 pounds!) She loves it because it's a one-person operation - always solo, butsy girl.

Take care,

Ed

As I floated downward with the cloudy blue sky above, I noticed the beauty of the silence that surrounded me. Strating downward is special and again, beautiful. Below invitingly is a forest of fir trees. Unlike deciduous trees fir tree branches do not reach up to embrace your chute when you hit them, you bounce from branch level to branch level and about forty feet from the ground there are no more branches. Free FALL FORTY feet landing on your ankles, wrists, and bottom. All this time I'm thinking of getting to Switzerland some thirty to forty miles away. I lay on my back to discover looking down at me an elderly man and woman. They speak quietly for a time and then disappear. Switzerland awaits and I lift my head. Soon I realized that I ~~was~~ ^{was} paralyzed from the neck down. Switzerland will have to wait. Not being able to move, I wait quietly and soon a very young Tom-headed boy appeared but he too took off. Finally, ~~I~~ ^I hear a rumble of a motor and through the woods drives a Volkswagon - the beetle bug. Out of the Volkswagon come two elderly men. In time they lift me up and put me in the back seat of the vehicle and travel off to a square ⁱⁿ of a small village. After which they drive off with me to a German HE 109 airfield where I was placed on a small bed in a room at the airfield. For a time I lay there and ~~then~~ ~~went~~ through the door of the room, ^{entered} a young uniformed pilot. He introduces himself as the pilot who

who shot down my plane. His purpose of being there was to collect from me a trophy. I, naturally, chuckled and asked him what I could give him as a trophy. His answer was that he would like to have my silk scarf. When I told him that my mother had given me the scarf and, therefore, I would not give it to him, ~~His reply~~ ^{His reply} was that he would not take it from me, but he assured me that when I was taken to a prison camp, ^{there} someone would. He seemed so genuine that I took it off my neck and gave it to him. He thanked me, turned, and left the room. I never saw him again.

That evening of April 24, 1944 I was driven to the University Hospital in Munich. After being X-rayed and having a ^{full body} cast placed on me, a German doctor told me that my back was so damaged that I ^{probably} would never walk again. I proved ~~him~~ ^{him} wrong. Two days later I was taken to a Lazarette, a former Catholic Nunnery, in Freising, Germany. Seven months later, after a complete recovery, I was transported to a regular prison camp some ten miles away in Mooseburg, Germany where I stayed for the rest of the war until liberated by infantry and Patton's tanks.

P.S. - It should be clear that, George, a Yugoslavian soldier took all these pictures of Kriegsgefangenen, Mannschaften, Stammlager, VIIA, Mooseburg, Germany

Rec'd 3/5/04
from Russ Strong
(306th E.S.)

Allied Casualties in World War II (in approximate round figures)

NATION	PEAK STRENGTH*	BATTLE DEATHS	WOUNDED	CIVILIAN DEATHS	PRISONERS OR MISSING
Australia	680,000	23,000-26,000	3.8 39,000-180,000	—	32,000
Belgium	650,000	7,760-9,500	1.3 55,500	60,000-76,000	—
Canada	780,000	32,400-37,000	4.5 53,000	—	11,000
China	3,800,000-5,000,000	1,324,000-2,200,000	1,753,000	—	—
Denmark	23,000	3,000-4,300	—	2,000-3,000	—
France	5,000,000	200,000-400,000	4.6 400,000	200,000-350,000	—
Greece	414,000	17,000-73,700	47,000	325,000-391,000	—
India	2,150,000	24,000-32,000	64,000	—	—
Netherlands	300,000-440,000	6,500	1.8 2,800	200,000	—
New Zealand	157,000	10,900	6.9 17,000	—	10,550
Norway	45,000	1,000-2,000	3.3 3,000	7,000-8,200	—
Poland	1,000,000	123,000-600,000	36.2 530,000	5,000,000-plus	420,000
USSR	12,500,000-plus	6,000,000-7,500,000	Unknown	2,000,000-plus	5,000,000-plus
Union of South Africa	140,000	2,400-11,000	—	—	16,000
United Kingdom	5,100,000	244,000-264,000	5%+ 370,000	60,000-93,000	214,000
United States	12,300,000	292,000	2.4% 670,000	6,000	139,000
Yugoslavia	500,000	305,000-410,000	425,000	1,200,000	—

Axis Casualties in World War II (in approximate round figures)

NATION	PEAK STRENGTH*	BATTLE DEATHS	CIVILIAN DEATHS
Bulgaria	450,000	6,600-10,000	10,000
Finland	250,000	79,000-82,000	2,000-11,000
Germany (including Austria)	10,200,000	3,275,000-4,400,000	780,000-plus
Hungary	350,000	140,000-180,000	280,000-290,000
Italy	4,000,000	77,500-162,000	146,000
Japan	6,095,000	1,219,000-2,000,000	280,000-plus
Rumania	600,000	300,000-350,000	200,000

*Peak strength means the greatest strength reached at any one time during the war and is to be distinguished from total strength, which refers to total personnel in armed forces. Thus, the United States had a peak strength of 12,300,000 but a total strength of 16,353,000.

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3/9/09

Russ -

Received the allied casualties page - presume you sent me to Faylor. He called me and talked for about 1/2 hour. Surprisingly well informed on WWII history for a guy who flew ONE mission before the war ended! Over the years he came to the same conclusion I did that journalists and historians underreported WWII - they still do!

He made a surprisingly accurate comment on Walter Cronkite - a liberal at heart, but rarely shows it in his reporting. The current crop of TV Network anchors raise my blood pressure every time I see them - and groan at the tube. They seem clueless to me. An exception on CNN is Tom Dolbe, write his peer, Wolf Blatherkite, or whatever, is damn infuriating and mostly wrong. The Hawaiians say "AKOLE PUKA" - butt hole. The networks are full of A.K.'s!

I noticed, of course, that US losses in WWII were 2.2%, UK's were about 5%+ and wonder of wonders (and I wonder) was France with 6%. (Vestal Charles de Gaulle was not among them.) Russia's number was 3.8%. Canada was 4.7 (Many seemed unable to count! Probably had journalistic country.)

Despite my bias against journalists I find

myself regularly appearing Tom Mitchell,
Editor of the W. Kansas Journal, a long time friend of
mine from High School, College and Law — he practiced
for over 50 years and was a Marine Capt in the
Pacific — told me he wished the Chicago Tribune
would hire Tom Mitchell!! T.M. spent about 4
years at the helm of the New Orleans Times Picayune
which gave him great insight into municipal
and state politics. He admitted that was so
when I mentioned it when we sat at the
same table at a local wedding! So I told
him about the infamous Paddy Bowler, 1st Ward Ald.
in Chicago, who was voted in by an investigative
reporter. So, Paddy declared: "I state it
fair and square!" God's Truth.

Cheers,
Ed

* I want to send my friend's respects
by Mitchell.

5/31/01

Dear Russ -

The "Treatise" sums up my views of our WWII experience. It was inspired by the pilot I got when I came across the Lubbock photo from 1942 and observed the ravages of time in my mirror.

I was always annoyed by the way the Army seemed to be trying to demean the Air Corps' accomplishments. Goering gave us the most support, during his court trial after the surrender.

I was always appreciative of the dedication of our ³⁰⁶ground personnel, but not of episodes of their continuous safe haven at Thurligh. We - air crew - enjoyed it as a welcome respite from the aerial warfare we tried to endure 75 times, in my time. It was clearly evident to us that this was not a realistic goal in the early months - which was hard on the nerves.

I have never been sure that this was generally understood by the ground echelon - which, in fact, was only at risk during their voyage to England. Hard to imagine a more peaceful place than Thurligh, except for the live ammunition and bombs incinerated and handled regularly. Of course, "fraternization wounds" were pretty common.

Amazing how history repeated itself in the Pacific War! An old friend retired as a col. and joined the NATO staff for 8 years. Rubbed shoulders with a number of former Luftwaffe brass and asked them how they would characterize the B-17 operation: "No matter what we did, they kept coming. They were relentless".

Our ground commanders have been pretty reluctant in preserving their image as the winners of wars.

Even McKeigh caught the fever! He testified that he came to grips with his mortality during the Gulf War!! If memory serves me, over 500,000 troops on air side lost 3 in the chase - 165 aviators, I believe, were lost in precipitating the chase! And, 1.5 million medals were awarded!!! (It's like a scenario for a Gilbert & Sullivan comic opera!)

I saw a "Legends of the Air" segment on Gen Horner, who planned and executed the Gulf air war. He was amazingly restrained about the dominant part played by the Air Force.

Reminds me of when Gen Hittner got a 5th star in WWII there must have been great kerashing of teeth in the ground staffs! I never figured out who chose the man honored but it was a great choice - and a brave one!

Next thing I was not an historian - think of the excitement and outrage I would have stirred up! Among the traditionalists, to be sure.

Take care,

Ed

1/8/05

Dear Russ -

I became a cardiac patient on 12/17 - what seemed to be a flare up of asthma was in fact an enlarged heart that was not delivering needed oxygen. Really pooped out and breathless. The confirmation included the good news that it was treatable.

The pills worked fast and within a couple of days I was breathing normally and my blood pressure has been averaging 120/42 - P 73 ever since! As in my 20's. This morning my scale registered 179 lbs - I can't remember when that happened. Before - during WWII I began at 188 to get in the Cadet Corps and board around 210 mostly. Topped out at 235 last Jan. and decided to shrink, in the moderation mode.

Now, I have to arrest the shrinkage. & feel somewhat good, in general.

Bill Heelihan sent me an E-Mail rendition of St Mary's, Keyport, Church which reminded me of the enclosure which I assembled about 1980, as I recall.

The recent Rumsfeld publicity reminded me that in every case you make do with what you have, just as he stated so clearly. The press reaction is typical of their unrealistic viewpoints. It's apparent they will never acknowledge that the Iraq survival rate is over 99% despite their hurrying about the KIA rate which is inflated.

by the inclusion of accidental deaths they insist on labelling as combat deaths. Blatant dishonesty. Anyway, the Keyway Church was a treasure for the early 30's. During my time we had no fuel weather landing system at Thurleigh so we were like Alaska Bush pilots - without the mountains, of course.

Then I wound up as an instructor pilot in B-17's and B-29's at Dulport AAB (MS), which had no system either. Kessler, to the East, about 10 miles at Bilopi, HAS a radio range, Army & Tech Training Base - we had 80+ hangars built at Dulport and nothing we could call our own! My people were diverted to alternates regularly upon bad weather from the Gulf closed in.

One day I flew back from End AF HQ at Tampa in a Twin C-45 (push) with clear air predicted... wrong - the coast was cloud covered to 8000 feet and I had about 15 min of gas left when Kessler told me to hold for 10 minutes until 3 B-24's climbed out. "No way - I estimate 15 min total fuel supply". So Kessler ordered the B-24's to clear out now toward the Gulf. Incidentally, I did not have a CP but I did have 6 air corp passengers in the C-45. The procedure was to work a let down from 8000' over the cone, proceed out the NW leg and when you break out at about 500 ft

Look left for the Gulfport runways. You can
 hear the gump on the left side were all eyes
 and cheered when they saw our field. We
 had left Tampa 3 hours earlier - it was now
 about 9 AM and the red lights were blinding
 the low-fuel news. (The crew chief who had come
 along had thoughtfully included a "31" can in
 which 3 passengers barfed! - Good planning by
 the guy who wet-nursed this airplane)

The point is that no wars are perfect and
 we don't need a press corps intent on exposing
 every problem that arises in war time regardless
 of the dangers they add to the operation by
 alarming the troops and their families by negative
 reporting that helps nobody except our foes, and
 so many of them appear to be our foes! It was
 ever thus!

The C-45 was a weekly administrative flight
 on Friday afternoon to deliver training reports to 3rd AF
 HQ. When my parents rented a house on the St Petersburg
 Beach for 2 weeks I volunteered for the C-45 - Friday
 go, Mon. early return - about 500 miles each way plus air
 traffic delays - a stretch for the C-45.

That Gulf location bred weather systems
 quickly that were rarely predicted. Very frustrating for
 Met officers who had no offshore reports for
 guidance. Formation air craft were a blessing, indeed.

Ed.

Russ - My opinion
of journalists worsen
every day.

9/2/04

Dear Garton's "Thorny
nut" - Ed Hennessy

Ed

with
certain
experiences.

and concise piece
? especially when your
educations and unique

Both were Yale graduates and both were duly
elected members of "Skull and Bones", THE most elite,
exclusive and secretive collegiate organization in the
world with a long history. The 300-plus living
members are said to be the most powerful people in
our society. It's all very secret. They have their own
elegant on-campus building that resembles a private
bank depository. Members only are admitted.

So, we now have two presidential candidates
slugging it out for the job, and apparently ignoring
the basic precept of S.I.B. - support of each other.

I have frequent memory flashes about a wise
Irishman who had this to say about a hotly contested
election: "Tis better the devil you know than the
devil you don't."

Gives me pause, doesn't it? Obviously, the
campaign managers see no advantage in covering this
ground. It is equally clear that our journalists are
in step with the campaign managers since they cannot
be unaware of their common collegiate and
philosophic backgrounds. Otherwise they could not

call themselves journalists.

Thus we have even more news management by the media which reports the news that fits their personal agendas. Just as they are doing in Iraq war reports that NEVER mention our troops amazing survival rates. The loss rates are always presented and demeaned. The meagrest loss rates ever in a war of this scale.

It's as if they were taking their cues from producers/directors Michael Moore, who reminds me of Mr DeLittie, Eliza's father, in Shaw's "Pygmalion", whose later life career was a Morality Lecture Tour of the United States! (aside to Mr Moore; note well that I am likening you to DeLittie - NOT to Shaw.)

Another surprise, perhaps; Dean Barton of the Yale School of Management, does not mention the shared collegiate backgrounds of the candidates, either.

Could this be evidence of the power and influence of the "5.9 B." alums and/or the careful restraint of the university reports? Undoubtedly BOTH. Not to mention the pudence of the author as he walks a fine line as a Yale Dean!

"Fooly" - EPILOGUE

6/13/69

Iraq is such a quagmire of ignorance and dependency that it seems to be a hopeless case. The German people, at the end of WWII, simply denied the evils of Nazi leadership and aims; many still do; but they were smart enough to get in step with the allies. No such prospects with Iraqis, who are so rooted in ignorance and fundamentalist religion that they are invulnerable objects. There is a presumed superiority that have ambitions rooted in tribal customs and beliefs which make them seem like workshoes in human form and extremely dangerous and recalcitrant. In fact, that characteristic permeates Iraqi society, and others that are tribal based. This explains the ruthless ways of dictators and tyrants who had no time for attitude adjustment and became exterminators of dissidents.

Isn't it odd that so many survivors now profess to prefer, for example, life under Saddam to the prospect of democracy, which is beyond their comprehension.

Consider the French dilemma - they have such a huge Islamic ethnic population that they are afraid of expatriating them and stirring up the rest of the Islamic World by so doing.

In the "King and I", the King cried: "It's a puzzlement!" - ref. English ways. For Iraq the Western World is their perplexing matter even, too, obviously. We're infidels marked for death!

Today --

6/13/04

ABC News stated that 828 US troops have been
died in Iraq - they did not say "Killed in Action";
but let's assume the worst and call it KIA.

250,000 is the figure given for the total US
troops that have been at risk in this war - because
of rotation the strength on any given day might be
135,000. No matter.

828 dead divided by 250,000 at risk
reveals that .003312% are dead. If that
seems strange, multiply 250,000 by .003312%
and you get 828. Of course - simple arithmetic.

Now, 250,000 minus 828 = 249,172 survivors

249,172 ÷ 250,000 = 99.6688% are survivors!

To prove it, multiply 250,000 by 99.6688%
and you will get 249,172!

To get 250,000! Voila!

A unique war, without a doubt, but you would
never know it from what the media reports!
If they are not liars they are stupid. Or, truly
masters of obfuscation! (accomplished liars)

Ed Hennessy

3/29/06

Dear Russ:

My favorite aviation magazine is "Air & Space", the Smithsonian publication. Easily the most generally interesting of its genre.

The mag, I see, once has a great story about Edward R. Murrow and his WWII day reporting for CBS Radio from the Rediff during the London Blitz and his ride in an RAF "Lancaster" on a Berlin night attack. The title was "Orchestrated Hell." His live coverage of the Blitz was likely the most influential (by a US citizen) during the Second World War.

The timing of this article with the Murrow movie is pretty remarkable, too! You should read this - if you have not done already.

However, my beady eye caught a fairly typical misconception - page 66, col. 2. says ref in problem getting RAF permission to fly with them: "apparently the US Army was more tractable. Newspaper reporters including Walter Winchell and Andy Rooney, went along on the first B-17 mission into Germany in January 1943."

Wrong! That never happened. Here is what did happen. On 27 Jan 43 my aircraft, "Little Audrey" was indisposed for a mechanical repair not finished on time. Coincidentally, "Banabee" was clear to go but Bill Casey was not on that day. Thus, Tiger Terry asked me to fly "Banabee" with my crew - and so we did just us. Our late assignment entailed taking the #7 position in the

is the lead squadron of the 306th. That "hole" spot was nobody's favorite, being most ^{VULNERABLE} vulnerable to fighters.

No matter, as we headed across the water the #2 pilot had to abort, so I did the prescribed maneuver - climbed up to fill the #2 vacancy on Col. Frank Armstrong's Nightwing.

The weather was not cooperative so we went for Wilhelmshaven in lieu of Bremen. We crossed the German coast on such a flat angle that my front and crew perceived us as the first to "break the plane" into German space and let out pigeon shots on the intercom. Since pilots have no decent view downward from the cockpit this seemed like a stretch to me. I got on the intercom and suggested that the 423rd on our right would probably have been ahead of us due to the angle of approach. (By a few feet, if at all) I got ears up front. When we landed the crew hitched a ride to the debriefing while I was talking to the crew chief about a few minor adjustments. When I arrived about 10 minutes later than the crew, the "cat was out of the bag" already - and rapidly amplified by the many reporters.

This a myth was born, but it was still a myth, and these life cats have 9-lives! You will recall that Andy Rooney flew 5 times with the 306th and lived on the Base for several weeks,

I believe. A unique accomplishment for a journalist! I believe Walter Cronkite rode alone once during the invasion.

Some years after the War, Andy wrote in his regular, syndicated column about being flown over the First Germany invasion with Bill Casey on "Panshee"! I was surprised by this since I was pilot on the "First over" on "Panshee" on 27 Jan 43. It's easy to see how the misconception arose: Casey flew "Panshee" on the second Wilhelmshaven mission on 26 Feb 43! I'm sure that this only indicated a slip of the pen, in Andy's memory years after the event. This certainly did not change the course of history, but does show how myths take on a life of their own.

Here's one of my own clear memories of that period in my life. I was present when a reporter later asked Col Armstrong: "Who was really first over Germany, Col? You or Henning?" His answer was: "I don't know. Everywhere I looked to my right, he was there, tucked in close."

Precisely - I made "tucked in" a way of life in those days, - that's how you stay alive and reasonably well. I never missed an assigned mission never aborted and never had to feather an engine in combat in those hairy early days in the wild blue yonder. Which really was unique in its time, come to think of it.

My final mission was St. Nazaire, Sub Pens - it was my fourth visit to that area which was defended by over 3000 flap batteries - three times more than Normandy had during the invasion! Heaviest concentration in WW II.

I shrank & gulped when the briefing officer opened the curtains to show the target map and route lines. By this time it was hard to tell myself that flak was a barrage rather than attacks taking dead aim at one. In fact you were more likely to be missed than hit. Small consolation when those black burst blossoms all around you. Especially in that area!

Anti-climax: in the landing traffic pattern upon returning to Thurlough, my #3 engine ran out of gas! So I feathered it and landed, rather than ride around while transferring fuel. Baiter - the fact remained that I never feathered an engine in combat, where it could be fatal when the Luftwaffe saw ^{an} idle propeller, which was an imitation to pounce on & disabled bird.

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Recs

E/25/46

Dear Hazel - (Kerry)

Here's a story from our Sunday paper that caught my eye!

My first view of Mont Saint Michel was on Nov 17, 1942, from a B-17 flying on 3 engines at zero altitude, when I looked up to my right, there it was, above us. Spall notes that its top is about 500 feet. We must have been in a surprising sight to any monks or nuns who happened to look down!

Mont had deland a look to St Nazaire and took a hit by flak in the #3 engine. It had to be feathered and the fire extinguisher had to be activated. I was a co-pilot. Then, fresh out of flying school on July 3 and not delighted with my Texas pilot, over the cowboy - even to lots, cowboy boots, in the cockpit! I was keeping my eyes open for a chance to get away from this nut, as a matter of fact.

In his amazing wisdom he chose not to stay with the formation for the trip home over the Atlantic west of the Great Peninsula. So, he peeled off and we hit the deck to buzz across the Peninsula at zero altitude.

Luckily he was not discovered by the plentiful German fighters based around there.

It was a pretty trip across beautiful cow pastures - utterly peaceful. We popped across the coast, in the sky, below the chateau - I looked up to my right to behold it!

I have often wondered what any resident names or monks
thought if they looked down at our D-19
putzing along below!

Obviously, we made it to the steep, to find
that the right landing gear was imperable, forcing us to
make a 1-wheel landing. We both tried to hold it
on the runway as long as possible, but it, of course, did
a proud loop to the right and turned almost
in a full circle in the grassy infield. Fortunately, no
fire or injuries to crew.

I never got back to St Michel in my travels
but have never forgotten my first viewing from
sea level!

Am glad the French are going to do a kind of Dutch
job in raising this icon. Interesting concept: trap water in
a reservoir at high tide and then flush it out like
a great water closet at low tide to get rid of the
"offal" and preserve the masterpiece! Vive le duck!

Ed Hannon

6/26/66

NOV 17, 1942 TARGET ST. NAZARE SUB-PENS

Over target area our #3 engine took a hit from flak that required feathering the propeller and actuating the fire extinguisher. At 2000 feet it was a strain to stay in formation, so it seemed wise to drop out and take a short cut back to base by flying across the Brent Peninsula at zero altitude and lower speed to preserve the three engines.

We were lucky to fly undetected by any of the numerous German fighter bases in the area. After passing over lovely pastoral scenes of dairy cattle grazing we crossed the coast line at the village of Mont Michel at sea level. I looked up to behold the ancient abbey on its little island - the abbey top was about 500 feet.

I have often wondered how startled any resident nuns and monks would have been if they happened to glance down to see a 3-engine B-17 putting in along at water level!

Unfortunately we were not allowed to carry cameras! We arrived back at Thurleigh and found that our right landing wheel was inoperative, forcing us to make a 1-wheel, controlled crash landing. Even with both of us in the controls, the right wing dragged at about 70 mph and we ground looped into the grassy infield where cutting all power off to prevent fire. Nobody injured. Aircraft ultimately salvaged for future duty.

6/26/04

Dear Russ -

Here is a copy of the Mont Saint Michel story from the Sunday R.S. It triggered some fond memories, which you can tell from the copies of other letters, etc.

Come to think of it, I recall seeing you at a story about this Saint Michel sighting long ago!

Our HDA has been after me to do an article for their otherwise dull monthly News Letter - this could be an interesting subject for an op-ed. It's history for a peaceful reason!

Reminds me - too many modern Americans would have been seen as seditionists in earlier times. But Supreme Court rulings ⁱⁿ Freedom of Speech ~~had~~ ^{have} made that terminology meaningless. Which was to encourage our fanatical Islamic enemies who do wear the old fashioned way, in muslims, to give the appearance of civilisim but unacceptable solution would be to shut anyone out of uniform!

E. H. H. H. H.

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12/2/06

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She knew instantly who was calling - The four of us were close as couples. She was a very recent bride on the fateful day. Hank grabbed some clothes and jumped in the car to race to the parked B-17-B's. They had a home on a waterway so she wore a kimono robe, went out to stand on the broadcast tower to better see the fighters buzzing along at about 50 feet with canopies open. It was such a surprise that she and other wives thought it was a U.S. exercise! So, she automatically waved at a passing plane - and the pilot waved back!

She began recalling that scene, which still amazes her. Hank and a friend tried to get a B-17 away from Hickham but never, never got it airborne. They were lucky to survive.

Pandemonium for weeks followed. Women and families were given temporary housing as arrangements were made to get them back to the mainland. As a new bride she picked up all her wedding presents

and personal stuff — and never saw it again! My guess has always been that opportunists pilfered such stuff in the chaos following the attack.

Hank did a full tour in the Pacific, caught malaria, recovered and we wound up at Dalhart AAB Training B-17 aircrew. Our wives became good friends and they managed to find living quarters in Clayton, N.M., about 50 miles NW of Dalhart! 3 or 4 of us were carpooled for the commute! ^{one} driver, 3 sleepers! They were scheduling.

In a few months we were all transferred to the 3rd AF Base at Sulphur, N.M., where we trained 3 crews of 40 crews each using 80 B-17 F's & G's for the air work. We all endured the terribly humid heat at Sulphur where a salt pill dispenser was next to the water station. And heavy airplanes had a hard time lifting off in that hot air. We would put on Clean Khaki's in the morning — or whatever the 10-12 hour "shift" began — they'd be wet with sweat by the time you got out to the car!

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I was also one of several who were offered contracts to fly for Eastern - with an "early out" in about August of 1945. Thus I opted to become a non-flying civilian, even though I was very fond of military flying with all that great equipment.

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Then his whole family of 6 was flown in a cargo plane to Goose Bay, Labrador, where he was C.O. of this key Strategic Base - a kind of high tech operation carved out of the ^{TUNDRA} tundra and forests. (Great fishing in that wild area.)

When he retired he went to work for NATO for about 8 years and worked alongside of many Luftwaffe ranking officers, which he enjoyed immensely. He told me he hated, as an early Pacific veteran, how the Luftwaffe ran the 8th Bomber Command - "No matter what we did, they kept coming. They were relentless." And, as the Nuremberg Trials, Reichsmarshal Goering was

was asked: "What made Germany surrender?"
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 Greatest Generation". I have to confess that I was not
 too fond of Brokaw until I read his book and realized
 he had hit upon the wonder of how ordinary people
 handled extremely difficult times.

Ed H.

Merry Christmas seems inadequate and
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In a few months we all transferred to the 3rd Air Force at Gulfport, MS, where we trained three classes of 40 crews each, using 80 B-17Fs and Gs for the air work. We all endured the terribly humid heat at Gulfport where a salt pill dispenser was next to the water stations. And heavy airplanes had a hard time lifting off in that hot air. We would start in clean khakis in the morning—or whenever the 10-12 hour shift began—they'd be wet with sweat by the time you got out to the car!

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She began recalling the scene, which still amazes her. Hank and a friend tried to get a B-17 away from Hickam but never got it airborne. They were lucky to survive.

Blind emotion for weeks followed. Women and families were given temporary housing as arrangements were made to get them back to the mainland. As a new bride she packed up all her wedding presents and personal stuff—and never saw it again. My guess has always been that opportunists pilfered the stuff in the chaos following the attack.

Hank did a full tour in the Pacific, caught malaria, recovered and we wound up at Dalhart AAB training B-17 crews. Our wives became good friends and they managed to find living quarters in Clayton, NM! 3 or 4 of us males carpooled for the commute: one driver, 3 sleepers! Seven days a week schedule.

In a few months we all transferred to the 3rd Air Force at Gulfport, MS, where we trained three classes of 40 crews each, using 80 B-17Fs and Gs for the air work. We all endured the terribly humid heat at Gulfport where a salt pill dispenser was next to the water stations. And heavy airplanes had a hard time lifting off in that hot air. We would start in clean khakis in the morning—or whenever the 10-12 hour shift began—they'd be wet with sweat by the time you got out to the car!

Hank and I worked as a team. Starting out, he was a section commander and I was the class supervisor of flying training—40 air crews, next assignment combat. It was surprising that air flight instructors managed to start families in these unlikely conditions.

Hank was promoted to supervisor of flying training for the whole base and took me along as his assistant. When I asked him “Why me?” he quickly replied that I was the only officer besides himself who could write a decent letter or directive! I think he was right.

He arranged for both of us to qualify for Regular Army commissions—but I was not enchanted with the reality of the service politics and the disadvantage of not having an Academy background, so I declined.

I was also one of several who were offered contracts to fly for Eastern Airlines—with an “early out” in about August of 1945. Thus I opted to become a non-flying civilian, even though I was very fond of military flying with all that great equipment.

So—Hank and Gloria stayed in and had a remarkable ride until retirement. In fact, he supervised the building of a SAC base in Indiana and remained as the SAC C.O. on this base which was responsible for the defense of Chicago.

Then his whole family of 6 was flown in a cargo plane to Goose Bay, Labrador, where he was C.O. of this key strategic base—a kind of high tech operation carved out of the tundra and forests. (Great fishing in that wild area.)

When he retired he went to work for NATO for about eight years and worked alongside of many ranking Luftwaffe officers, which he enjoyed immensely. He told me he asked, as an early Pacific veteran, how the Luftwaffe saw the 8th Bomber Command. “No matter what we did, they kept coming. They were