

May 11, 1981

Mr. Russell A. Strong  
2041 Hillsdale  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Dear Russ:

I have your letter of April 1st, and I'm sorry for the delay in answering it. I have given plenty of thought to the events of May 13, 1944, and I am enclosing all of my recollections of the mission we flew on that day.

I do hope that what I have written is of some information to you. As I'm sure you know so well, time ~~does~~<sup>DOES</sup> change things for all of us.

I have kept in touch with some of my old crew who are members of the 306th Bombardment Group Association - Bob Cox (The co-pilot) and Al Clarke (the bombardier) - neither of whom was with me on this particular mission. Al had gone to Italy for some PFF training and Lt. George Clements subbed for him; Lt. Locke, who was a first pilot on a new crew and was being oriented on this mission, substituted for Bob Cox on this mission. We do get a Christmas card from Robert Maxwell, the Flight Engineer, each year. His last address was Rt. 2 - PO Box 170-B, Leesburg, VA. 22075. We did hear from Dominic Bloise for a few years but, last year, when my wife and I were in San Francisco (his old home town), we checked the local phone directories with no success.

Again, I ask that you return the enclosed material to me when you have finished with it.

Thank you for the list of the crews of that mission. Ben Peters and I were roommates at Bolton on the way home, and, during our first night there, some soandso emptied our wallets by leaning through the window into our pants that were draped over the back of a chair. I forget the exact number of men that this happened to that night- about 12 to 15- and all were returnees spending their first night there on the way home. Ah, memories, memories!

I shall be writing to Bill Collins. I'm really glad to be receiving the "Echoes", and I do hope to get to St. Paul in October. I do have to be in Chicago about that time, and I do hope that the two dates do not conflict.

All the best-

*Since*

Vincent J. Kiely

*P. S. My wife and I went to Theowleigh in 1977. We could not get on the base but we did get a good shot of one of the old huts. I have this on a slide; if you want a print, please let me know. Since*

As I recall the events of that mission, we had been hit by flak over the secondary target- Stettin- which left one of our engines on fire. As the formation moved out over the Baltic Sea, the pilot made his standard procedure moves to extinguish the fire. In general, we stayed with the formation, but we gradually lost speed and dropped down and away from the group. As I recall, I tuned Malmo, Sweden radio and informed Lt. Hanson that he could "home" on that station. He asked that I determine a heading back to England, which was given. We flew on westward, over Denmark, and on over the North Sea. As we let down and as our position became nearer to England, we were jettisoning any equipment that could be disposed of.

As I understood it, the three remaining engines consumed more fuel than four would have. As fuel became scarcer, we had only two engines and, finally, we were on one - but still flyable.

The ditching itself was standard in that we all assumed our prescribed positions. We hit into a large swell, but Lt. Hanson had "dragged the tail" according to procedure and, when we hit the water and into this swell, we must have gone on through it and then stopped. In the sitting positions where we were, we immediately had water - and it was green and it was cold - up to our necks. As I was nearest the bomb bay door (in the radio room area), I took the reverse inertia-force of my own body and my three crew members in front of me and landed half-way into the bomb bay with the door underneath me. This was over the step from the bomb bay into the radio room. Later, I found out that I had sustained some lumbar contusions and had to go to an Army General Hospital for an examination and treatment.

We had been in touch with some of the other planes in the formation as we were preparing for the ditching. There was no panic or tension shown; we had all practiced the ditching procedure but I'm sure that we never thought we'd ever have to use it. One other B-17 circled us after the ditching. Later, there were a pair of RAF-51's and, again, later still, two British Wellingtons that dropped life rafts near us. However, we had a problem. One of our rafts had been apparently hit and could not be inflated. I'm not sure now which raft this was, but all nine of us had to get into the other five-man raft. This meant for very crowded conditions so we took turns getting into the water. Off in the distance we could see a buoy-shed but we could not move towards it because of the number of people on the one raft- and also due to the terribly cold water, our soaked-through flying suits, and that fact that those in the water were being grasped by those in the raft.

I can only guess that we were in the water about two hours. We were picked up by an RAF Air Sea Rescue Unit and taken into some place in England where we spent the night. Our wet clothes had been removed and dry clothing given us on this rescue unit.

Probably due to the fact that we were out of fuel when we ditched, our plane floated for a long period of time. Someone said it was up for twenty-two minutes (who was keeping time on this with all that we were going through I don't know), and it was supposed to have created some sort of record in the ETO :

The British had a club for people who had ditched and I'm enclosing a copy of the patch that I wore on my uniform jacket. There was also a card that I was a member of the "Goldfish Club". I hope that you can use these items for some purpose in your material, but I would ask that you return them to me when you have finished with them. ☺ - *and the SEA SQUATTERS CLUB.*

↓  
P.S. WE DITCHED ABOUT 25 MILES OFF THE ENGLISH COAST.

May 11, 1981

Mr. William M. Collins Jr.  
2973 Heatherbrae Drive  
Poland, Ohio 44514

Dear Bill -

Enclosed is my check for \$10.00 to support  
the production and mailing of ECHOES and  
the reunion activities of the 306<sup>th</sup> Association,  
and thank you for continuing to send the  
ECHOES to me.

You might like to contact  
Mr. ROBERT L. MAXWELL  
RT. 2 - P.O. Box 170-B  
LEESBURG, VA. 22075

NEW →

170?

who was our flight engineer. Al Clarke  
(bombadier) and Bob Cox (co-pilot) are already  
listed in your roster.

All the best -  
Dwain

VINCENT J. KIELY  
71 SOUTH DRIVE  
ROCHELLE PARK, N.J. 07662

1 April 1981

Mr Vincent J. Kiely  
71 South Drive  
Rochelle Park, NJ 07662

Dear Mince:

I hope you have good recall on mission of 13 May 44.

You are the only crew member whom we have located, and Henry Hanson is deceased. That is the day you ditched.

What was wrong with the plane? what caused problems?

How did the ditching go?

Do you recall chronology of events?

How long were you in the rafts? What was the conversation?  
Anyone panic?

Who picked you and where did they take you?

Any aftermath to report?

I would appreciate any detail you can give me as I have very little information. I am enclosing copies of intelligence report and crew list, which you may keep.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

December 30, 1981

Mr. William M. Collins, Jr.

2973 Heatherbrae Drive

Poland, Ohio 44514

Dear Bill -

I enclose a check for \$25.00 to support  
the production and mailing of the 306<sup>th</sup>  
Echoes.

You are surely doing a great job with  
this publication and I must commend  
you and Russ Strong for your work.

All the best!

Sincerely -

Vincent J. Kiely

VINCENT J. KIELY  
71 SOUTH DRIVE

ROCHELLE PARK NJ 07662

June 8, 1983

Mr. William M. Collins Jr.

2973 Heatherbrae Drive

Poland, Ohio 44514

Dear Bill -

Enclosed is a check for \$25.00 to support the production and mailing of the 306<sup>th</sup> FCHOES. I also want to support the continuing reunion activities for those who were served.

I have been in contact with my old ex-pilot and bombardier about going to the Omaha reunion. My wife and I are due back from Italy the Sunday before

the meeting and, if we can get the  
other two "characters" to bring their wives,  
we'll be there too! (jet-lag or not!).

Bob Cox (the copilot) is writing to Russ Strong  
about accommodations - that we can be near  
one another.

Sincerely hope to see you there.

All the best - Duce

Duane J. Duce

71 South Drive

Rochelle Park, NJ 07662

December 28, 1986

Dear Russ -

I took a few pictures at the  
Reunion in Jayton and I thought  
that this came out pretty good -  
so I had this 5x7 printed for  
you. Should you want to have  
the negative please let me know.

I do hope that you and yours are  
enjoying the holidays and that  
your 1987 will be everything  
that you want it to be.



All the best -

Sincerely  
Lily

February 1, 1987

Dear Russ -

Enclosed is a check for \$25.00 for my  
" dues " for 1987.

I have been curious of whether there <sup>are</sup> any  
bumper - stickers or window decals of the  
306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group available. I've seen  
them on a few cars at our reunions but  
never did see any for sale. If you know  
where they can be obtained, I would appreci-  
ate getting that information.

Thankyou - and looking forward to  
the September Reunion!

Jimmie Liles

August 23, 1987

Dear Russ -

I'm sorry to say but I have had to cancel our trip to Alexandria for the Reunion this year.

In late June I had to undergo a quadruple bypass operation. I came through it OK and I feel fine altho I've lost about 25 pounds in the process. I walk over a mile per day without any problem and walking was one thing I hated to do - but I really enjoy it now.

As per the enclosed copies - Radio Station WTRT covers the tri-state areas of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. So far I haven't heard any mention of the Group but an announcement has to be in their hands two to three weeks in advance; and, of course, it could be given over the air when I wasn't using the radio.

THE RECORD is our local paper and I would estimate its exposure must be to about 500,000 readers. Bergen County, where I live, is

heavily populated. Two neighboring counties, where the paper is also distributed, are also heavily populated.

So far I have not seen anything in this paper but I will let you know if it does appear.

You mentioned to me one time that you thought that the Group would have window decals and/or bumper stickers at this year's meeting. I would really appreciate receiving whatever "goodies" will be distributed.

I sincerely hope that this Reunion

will be a great one. We will  
look forward to Las Vegas in '88!

All the best -

Steve

August 6, 1987

Station WPAT  
Broad Street  
Clifton, N.J. 07013

Attn: Miss Debbie Sheehan

Dear Miss Sheehan:

I am enclosing an item about my old Bomb Group and wonder if it could be given air time in your "Public Affairs Announcements".

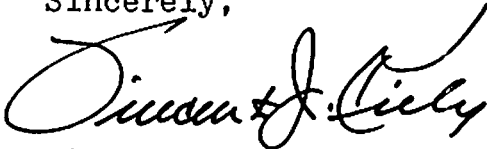
While I know that the entire item is rather lengthy for an announcement over the air, you could certainly edit the piece as you see fit.

This is the first time I have ever sent material of this nature to the media, and I do not know if this is the correct way to do it. Should you have any questions, please feel free to call.

Incidentally, Mr. William H. Webster, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, has accepted the Group's invitation to be the speaker at our reunion banquet.

Thank you for your courtesy in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vincent J. Kiely". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Vincent J. Kiely

71 South Drive  
Rochelle Park, NJ 07662

PHONE: 201/ 843-1853

August 6, 1987

THE RECORD  
150 River Street  
Hackensack, N.J. 07601

Attn: Special Events Editor

Gentle People:

I am enclosing an item about my old Bomb Group and wonder if it could be published in your "Special Events" Section.

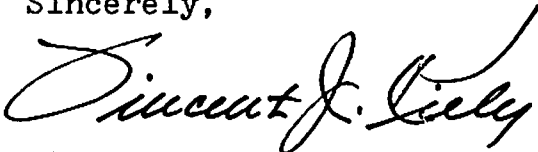
While I know that the entire item is rather lengthy for an announcement to be put in a column, you could certainly edit the item as you see fit.

Incidentally, Mr. William H. Webster, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, has accepted the Group's invitation to be the speaker at our Reunion banquet.

This is the first time I have ever sent material to the press, and I do not know if this the correct way to do it. Should you have any questions, please feel free to call me.

Thank you for your courtesy in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vincent J. Kiely". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Vincent J. Kiely

71 South Drive  
Rochelle Park, N.J. 07662

PHONE: 201/ 843-i853



The 306th Bombardment Group, an original unit of the nation's largest air force in World War II, the Eighth Air Force which served in England from mid-1942 until the end of hostilities, will have its annual reunion September 16-20, 1987, in Arlington, Virginia.

More than 700 veterans and their wives are expected to gather in this Washington, DC suburb for four days of renewing acquaintances, telling war stories, and seeing many of the historic sites in the area.

Retired Brigadier General William S. Rader, onetime deputy commander of this unit in 1943-44, is the chairman for the reunion, and promises an excellent program for this event.

Donald R. Ross, Federal circuit judge in Omaha, Nebraska, is currently the president of the Association. During 1944 and 1945 Judge Ross served as the group bombadiering officer.

Locally, more information about the reunion may be obtained by calling Area Code 201- 843-1853. We would like to hear from any 306th veterans, whether they are able to attend the reunion or not. More than 2,000 men from this 10,000-man unit are currently on its Association mailing list, but it is felt that many more have not yet been located.

While the Association has an annual reunion, produces a quarterly newspaper and a biennial directory of its membership, it is unique in not having a dues structure. The Association operates solely on the voluntary contributions of its members.

Submitted by:

Vincent J. Kiely  
71 South Drive  
Rochelle Park, NJ 07662

PHONE: 201/ 843-1853

"SITES" — SHOULD BE "SIGHTS" !

June 14, 1989

FLAG DAY

Dear Russ:

Enclosed is my application for the 8th Air Force Association and my check for \$10.00 for same.

I also am enclosing an item which I'm sure you will enjoy.

We have sent in our reservation forms for Little Rock and are looking forward to this Reunion.

Do hope all is well with you.

Kind Regards-

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Vincent".

Vincent J. Kiely

71 South Drive  
Rochelle Park, NJ 07662

September 4, 1987

Dear Russ -

As a follow-up of my letter  
to you with regard to sending  
information regarding the Reunion,  
I enclose a page (with the  
announcement marked) from THE  
RECORD of August 19, a Wednesday.

I must admit that I missed this  
item but a friend of mine here in  
town spotted it and gave it to  
me. I went to the paper plant  
and got the whole daily edition.

→

THE RECORD has a daily circulation of 199,000 and 235,000 on Sunday.

I did not receive any calls nor have I heard anything on the radio, from my other letter.

I'm enclosing a copy of MODERN MATURITY, the publication of the AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED PERSONS (originally affiliated with the RETIRED TEACHERS group). AARP has 19 million members and it certainly covers our age group. What do you think of running an ad for two or three issues to try and locate some people?

Accidentally, by Brickfield, the Executive Director of AARP, is an old B-17 pilot. I met him after coming back from overseas at Harvard University where we were roommates while we took a course in Statistical Control. I wrote to him a while back and he responded and extended an invite to contact him when we were in Washington. Now, of course, I won't be able to do that this year, but my wife and I plan for it early next year.

At any rate, if I do hear  
from anyone, I shall get the  
info to you.

I do hope the Reunion will  
be a tremendous success.

All the best -

Trice

February 10, 1990

Mr. Russel A. Strong  
5323 Cheval Place  
Charlotte, NC 28205

Dear Russ:

If my memory serves me correctly, some time ago in the Echoes there was an item that you had access to the up-to-date location of people from our Group.

In mid-1989, I wrote to a Mr. Virgil F. Thompson in Lima, Ohio whose name was listed in the "Search" section of the 8th AF Historical Association. I was trying to locate the last three of my crew, but he did not have the information.

Their names and addresses from 1944, plus their ASN's are as follows:

Sgt. Clarence D. O'Malley ASN 35527738  
c/o Mrs. Maude Mc Climans  
Sharp Road  
Olmstead Falls, Ohio

Sgt. John T. Hamilton ASN 13020580  
c/o Mrs. Norma R. Hamilton  
214 33rd Street  
Newport News, Virginia

Sgt. Dominic M. Bloise ASN 39037974  
c/o Mr. & Mrs. Gildo (or Guido) Bloise  
120 Augusta Street  
San Francisco, California

Mr. Thompson's reply had a John Hamilton in Chesapeake, Virginia. I called there but this Hamilton had been in the U.S. Navy; On Dominic Bloise, he suggested a Gus Bloise in Daly City, but the phone company has no listing for a Bloise in Daly City. He had no information on O'Malley.

Some four or five years ago, my wife and I checked

out Sharp Road in Olmstead Falls. The area is quite rural, and I stopped at a number of houses along this road, but no one knew or heard of the name of O'Malley or Mc Climans.

We also went to Newport News and stopped at the address shown here. It was a lovely big old house, but the neighborhood was badly deteriorated and, again, we had no luck there.

On a trip out to San Francisco, I checked thru the local phone books, but no Dominic Bloise.

I would be most appreciative if you have any information for me on how I can do some further checking on the whereabouts of these three men; after more than forty years it's a real challenge, but it would be thrilling to see if they could be located.

Thank you, Russ, very much!

*Vince*

VINCENT J. KIELY  
71 South Drive  
Rochelle Park, NJ 07662

*Am 2/14/90*



19 August 1990

Dear Russ:

Early this year I wrote to you with regard to locating some more of my old crew and I had asked about any contact you might have had with the VA, and your reply mentioned that your "source" had retired, and suggested my writing to the VA in Washington, which I did, sending letters to the three names I had. I received a phone call from there as well as a follow up letter suggesting I write to the VA R cords Processing Center, P.O. Box 5020, St. Louis, MO 63115 and I had to enclose a check for two Dollars for each name (Under Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, 1.526(i) (1) (iv) ).

In response, I was told that Clarence O'Malley, who had been our radio operator, had passed away May 23, 1974. No other details were supplied about him.

In late July, I received a phone call from our old tail gunner, and he had received my letter which had been delivered to his sister who still lives at their old address in San Francisco. He is:

Dominic M. Bloise CASA BUENA)  
1495 Casa Buena ← - Apartment 104  
Corte Madera, CA 94925

PHONE: 415/ 924-8230

I have not heard from the third chap - John T. Hamilton

At any rate, you have one more name for your roster.

(Over)

With every good wish-

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vincent". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "V".

Vincent J. Kiely

71 South Drive  
Rochelle Park, NJ 07662-3605

VINCENT J. KIELY

71 South Drive — Rochelle Park, N.J. 07662 — (201) 843-1853

January 1, 1993

Dear Russ;

I am enclosing a picture of my crew that was taken just before we went over to England. *NAMES ON BACK OF PICTURE.*

The only member that I have not been able to reach is John Hamilton. Hanson is dead, as are Eskew and O'Malley.

Sorry we could not make England, but we were expecting another grand child at the same time, and things were rather tense; but we do plan on the Seattle trip.

Please be good enough to return this picture to me as it is the only one I have of the crew.

Happy New Year!



Front Row: Henry Hanson (pilot),  
LEFT ) Robert F. Cox (co-pilot)  
TO ) Vincent J. Kiely (navigator)  
RIGHT ) Alexander J. Clarke (bombadier)

Rear Row: Dominic Bloise (tail gunner)  
Donald Urban (ball turret)  
John Hamilton (waist gunner)  
John Eskew (waist gunner)  
Clarence O'Malley (radio operator)  
Robert Maxwell ( Top turret and  
flight engineer)

367th Squadron

RECEIVED

SEP 18 12 24 PM '53

Alexander Aaron  
BERGEN COUNTY CLERK

681



# Army of the United States

## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

*This is to certify that*

VINCENT J KIELY O 694 679 First Lieutenant  
816th AAF Base Unit

*honorably served in active Federal Service  
in the Army of the United States from*

7 October 1943 to 28 October 1945

*Given at* SEPARATION CENTER SFAAF Sioux Falls South Dakota

*on the* 28 *day of* October 1945

*Charles L Summers*

CHARLES L SUMMERS  
Major Air Corps

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

|   |  |  |  |  |   |   |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| 1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL<br><b>Kiely Vincent J</b>  |  |  | 2. ARMY SERIAL NUMBER<br><b>0 694 679</b>              | 3. AUS. GRADE<br><b>1st Lt</b>   | 4. ARM OR SERVICE<br><b>AC</b>  | 5. COMPONENT<br><b>AUS</b>                                  |
| 6. ORGANIZATION<br><b>Sq A 816th Base Unit Alliance AAB, Nebraska<br/>Troop Carrier Command</b>                             |  |  | 7. DATE OF RELIEF FROM ACTIVE DUTY<br><b>28 Oct 45</b> | 8. PLACE OF SEPARATION<br><b>SFAAFld Sioux Falls South Dak</b>   |   |   |
| 9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES<br><b>556 West 140th Street New York City New York</b>                            |  |  |  | 10. DATE OF BIRTH<br><b>20 Dec 1918</b>  | 11. PLACE OF BIRTH<br><b>New York City</b>  |   |
| 12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT<br><b>See 9</b>  |  |  |  | 13. COLOR EYES<br><b>Blue</b>  | 14. COLOR HAIR<br><b>Brown</b>  | 15. HEIGHT<br><b>5'9"</b>                                   |
| 16. RACE<br><b>X</b> WHITE <input type="checkbox"/> NEGRO <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (specify) <input type="checkbox"/> |  |  |  | 19. MARITAL STATUS<br><b>X</b> SINGLE <input type="checkbox"/> MARRIED <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (specify) <input type="checkbox"/> | 20. U.S. CITIZEN<br><b>X</b> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> | 21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO.<br><b>Cost Clerk 01.050</b> |


MILITARY HISTORY

|  |   |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| SELECTIVE SERVICE DATA<br><input type="checkbox"/>   | 22. REGISTERED<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO | 23. LOCAL S. S. BOARD NUMBER<br><b>none</b>                          | 24. COUNTY AND STATE<br><b>none</b>              | 25. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY<br><b>See 9</b> |
| 26. DATE OF ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY<br><b>7 Oct 1943</b>  |   | 27. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO.<br><b>Navigator 1034</b> |  |  |
| 28. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS<br><b>Aerial Combat (Europe) Normandy</b><br><b>American Defense Service Medal and World War II Victory Medal issued at 39 Whitehall St., New York 4, N.Y. on 9 Dec 1948</b>                         |   |  |  |  |
| 29. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS<br><b>European-African-Mediterranean Theatre Medals issued</b><br><b>1st Lt BD GO 169 1944 3rd OLC Hq 1st BD 131 2944 Air Medal Hq 8 AF GO 232 1944</b><br><b>Initials of Issuing Agent: CUL</b> |   |  |  |  |
| 30. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION<br><b>Contusion rt lumbar region moderately severe - dusto plane ditching in North Sea LOD yes 13 May 1945 Air Off Europe 13 May 1945</b>  |   |  |  |  |
| 31. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED<br><b>Strike out those not applicable.<br/>Soldiers Fld Mass Harvard Bus Sch Statiscal</b>  |   |  | 32. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U. S. AND RETURN |  |
| 33. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION<br><b>(D) Par 3 SO 142 SFAAF Sioux Falls S Dak 20 Oct 45</b>   |   |  | DATE OF DEPARTURE<br><b>7 Feb 1944</b>           | DESTINATION<br><b>England</b>                                    |
|  |   |  | DATE OF ARRIVAL<br><b>8 Feb 1944</b>             |  |
| 34. CURRENT TOUR OF ACTIVE DUTY  |   |  | 35. EDUCATION (years)                            |  |
| CONTINENTAL SERVICE  |   |  | FOREIGN SERVICE                                  |  |
| YEARS  | MONTHS  | DAYS   | YEARS  | MONTHS   |
| <b>2</b>   | <b>0</b>  | <b>21</b>  | <b>0</b>   | <b>6</b>   |
|  |   |  | DAYS   |  |
|  |   |  | <b>15</b>  |  |
|  |   |  | GRAMMAR SCHOOL                                   | HIGH SCHOOL  |
|  |   |  | <b>8</b>   | <b>4</b>   |
|  |   |  | COLLEGE  |  |
|  |   |  | <b>2 (Evening)</b>                               |  |

INSURANCE NOTICE

IMPORTANT IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY-ONE DAYS THEREAFTER, INSURANCE WILL LAPSE. MAKE CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF THE U. S. AND FORWARD TO COLLECTIONS SUBDIVISION, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

|                       |            |      |              |                |  |   |                            |                             |               |             |
|-----------------------|------------|------|--------------|----------------|--|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| 36. KIND OF INSURANCE |            |      | 37. HOW PAID |                | 38. Effective Date of Allotment Discontinuance | 39. Date of Next Premium Due (one month after 38) | 40. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH | 41. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO |               |             |
| Nat. Serv.            | U.S. Govt. | None | Allotment    | Direct to V.A. | <b>31 Oct 45</b>                               | <b>30 Nov 45</b>                                  | <b>6.70</b>                | Continue                    | Continue only | Discontinue |
| <b>X</b>              |            |      | <b>X</b>     |                |  |   |                            | <b>X</b>                    |               |             |

|  |                   |   |  |
|--|-------------------|---|--|
| 42. FINGERPRINT<br> | RIGHT THUMB PRINT | 43. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in VA Application for Readjustment Allowance Made on <b>JAN 28 1946</b> )   |  |
|  |                   | <p><b>Lapel Button Issued</b></p> <p><b>U A L o. N W K - N S.</b></p> <p>FOR CONVENIENCE, A CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY NO. <b>32-90-438</b> HAS BEEN ISSUED BY THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION TO BE USED FOR THE FUTURE REQUEST OF ANY STRAIGHT OR INSURANCE BENEFIT UNDER THIS ACT.</p> <p>AS AMENDED, THE <b>Class of Holding</b> PERSON TO WHOM THIS SEPARATION PAPER WAS ISSUED IS <b>ALAN V GODDING Captain Air Corps</b></p> |  |
| 44. SIGNATURE OF OFFICER BEING SEPARATED<br><i>Vincent J. Kiely</i>                                    |                   | 45. SIGNATURE OF OFFICER RECEIVING THIS PAPER<br><i>Alan V Godding</i>  |  |

October 14, 1993

306th Bomb Group Association  
P.O. Box 70603  
Ballard Station  
Seattle, WA 98107-0603

Attn: Reunion Committee

In early August I wrote you a letter stating that I would have to cancel our planned trip to Seattle for the Reunion set for September 9-11th.

In that letter I also wrote that I had sent you a check dated February 21 1993 (#3768) in the amount of \$287.70 for the following activities connected with that Reunion:

|    |                       |             |              |
|----|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1- | Registration Fee      | (2 persons) | \$50.00      |
| 2- | Boeing Plant Tour     | (2 persons) | 36.00        |
| 3- | Museum of Flight      | (2 persons) | 38.00        |
| 4- | Tillicum Village Bake | (2 persons) | 90.00        |
| 5- | Seattle City Tour     | (1 person)  | 18.00        |
| 6- | Reunion Banquet       | (2 persons) | <u>55.70</u> |
|    |                       |             | \$287.70     |

and I asked for a refund of this amount.

To date I have not received an acknowledgement of that letter from you nor have I received a check for the amount shown.

Kindly see that a check for the \$287.70 is in the mail without delay.

Thank you.

*Vincent J. Kiely*

Vincent J. Kiely

71 South Drive  
Rochelle Park, NJ 07662-3605

cc: Mr. Russell Strong  
Secretary

*Russ - I'm sorry to have  
send you this letter.*

*I cannot understand  
the reason I have not  
heard from these people.  
- Shaula -  
Juice*

VINCENT J. KIELY

71 South Drive - Rochelle Park, N.J. 07662 - (201) 843-1853

Russ-

I was sorry to read about Bob Williams' passing in the April Echoes. A funny story about him: We were selected to fly "Weather Ship" and he was aboard as pilot. When we were out over the North Sea, he said that he wanted to try out a new microphone. After awhile, this strange voice that sounded like a poor imitation of Donald Duck came over the intercom. After speaking for a few minutes, I called the crew and for the clown to knock off the Donald Duck talking and reminded them that we had big brass on board. There was no more "Donald Duck". When we landed and I had dropped down out of the hatch, Bob Willaims jumped up on my back and shoulders, pounding me on the head, shouting "You big Irish bastard, I'll give you Donald Duck!." It was he who had been talking! I reminded him of this incident when I saw him at Fort Worth and he remembered it. He was a nice gent.

*Steve*



July 8, 1995

Dear Russ-

Appos of our friend Bob Maxwell, I don't know whether he kept a diary or not, but, on more than one occassion at our meetings and on phone conversations, he was emphatic that the 306th had gone to Berlin on March 4th, and that he was going to write to you about it. In this regard, I met a woman this past Spring after I had noticed a bumper sticker of the 94th Bomb Group on her car. We had quite a conversation- her husband had been with that Group and he had kept a diary and it was in great detail and, in fact, it had been published in the local paper. He was a gunner and I don't know how he kept track of all that was going on during a mission. You and I, as navigators, were certainly kept busy, and we did not have to do the shooting as our main job on the plane. At any rate, she gave me a copy of the published journal and I am sending it on to you, but I would ask that you return it to me after you've read it.

To give you some insight into his recalling incidents, I saw Bob at the Reunion in Omaha in 1985 and he surprided me by telling me that I had saved his life when we ditched in May 1944. I do remember him being in the water on my left and, after some time, he told me that he felt he could not hold on any longer. I grabbed him by the back of his collar and attempted to scissor my legs around him to hold him up. I don't know if I got both his legs but I must have gotten one. At this present point in time I have no idea of how long we stayed in this position. Meanwhile my back began to bother me from the crash but we held on until the Air-Seax Rescue picked us up. I had him by the collar all this time and he was ahead of me when we were pulled in. I had honestly forgotten all about this particular happening and I'm not sure if anyone else was aware of what was going on but, as I say, he brought it up, and I suppose, one would well remember an incident of this type if it were happening to oneself.

Speaking about remembering and NOT remembering, you surprised me when you told me I had noy gone on the March 6th raid to Berlin and all these years I was positive sure I had! But, as my wife and I talked last evening after you had called, what difference does it make after OVER fifty years - we've lived to see our children well settled and to see our children's children,

we're in pretty good shape physically and are comfortably fixed so what more could we want?

Our very best to you, and, please, do return this newspaper section to me.

Kind regards-

*Vince*

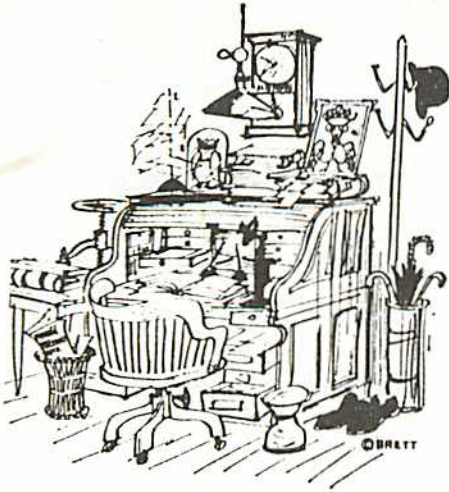
Vince

*Please excuse the mis-spellings.*

23 August 1997

Dear Vince:

FROM THE DESK OF



In response to your recent inquiry concerning Dominic Bloise, I had some correspondence with his sister, although as I recall the first notice of his death that I had came in the form of the returned ECHOES. His sister in Carmelita Bloise, 120 Augusta St, San Francisco, CA 94124.

All the best,

**Vincent J. Kiely**

August 18, 1997

Dear Russ -

I was sorry to read the Echoes and to see that my old tail gunner, Dominic Bloise, had passed away. We had seen him a year ago in May and he looked OK to us, but who can tell.

My wife and I had flown to Phoenix and then rented a car and drove up to San Francisco where we had reunion with Dominic. I had kept in touch with him for a few years after the war and then lost him somewhere. I guess it was after one of our Reunions that I thought about contacting him and I wrote twice to his old address in S.F. Finally, I got a phone call from him. His sister had received my letters and gave them to him and it was she who

persuaded him to either answer my letters or to call me. We had kept in touch down the years by mail or by phone.

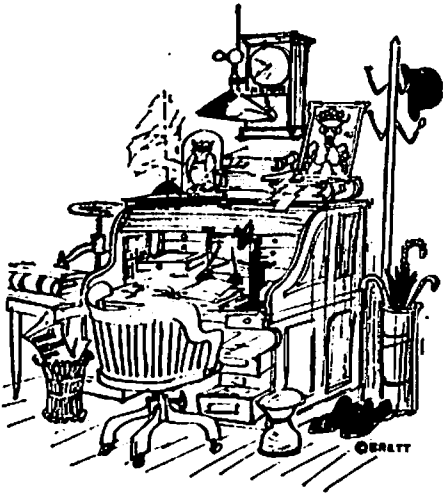
When we had dinner in Corte Madera, he told us he had over 10,000 shares of CHEVRON stock. He had worked for CHEVRON for many years and, along with his pension and IRAs, he was doing OK but his accountant was after him to set up an estate plan and I sure hope he did.

This leads me to ask you; who wrote to you about his death? If it was his sister, do you still have her name and address so that I could write to her to extend my condolences. I would appreciate any information you may have and I thank you for it.

Sincerely -  
Diane Cielie

VINCENT J. KIEZY  
71 SOUTH DRIVE  
ROCHELLE PARK NJ 07662-3605

FROM THE DESK OF



## Vincent J. Kiely

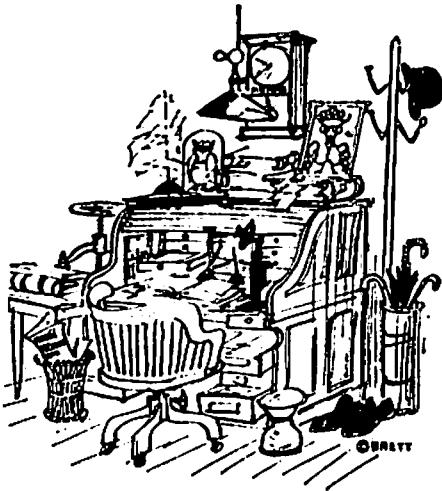
February 17, 1998

Dear Russ:

The story of the three-engine takoffs in the January issue reminded me that I landed on a three-propeller B-17. We had taken off on a mission, assembled OK and headed out over the North Sea. Shortly after departing the English coast, I picked up the conversation between Henry Hanson (the pilot) and Robert Maxwell (the flight engineer) about the left inboard propeller was "windmilling" and could not be controlled. The propeller would continuously ride out on the shaft and back again and we were almost in sight of the Dutch coast when Hanson decided to abort and we headed back to England. He told Al Clarke (the bombardier) and myself to get out of the nose, fearing that if this prop flew off, it could slice into the plane and we could be injured. Shortly after, it did finally come off. It hit somewhere on the tail and, fortunately, with very little damage. Hanson said we would land at the very first air base we saw when we got back to England which we did with no further problems. It happened to be an RAF base and he and I went to their Operations office and, after some conversation with the British personnel (where we based, etc.), they called Thurleigh and, as I can remember the phone conversation, it went something like this: "I say, we've had a rawther strange-looking three-engine Flying Fortress land at our base here." Hanson and I had a good laugh out of their nonchalance about our incident. I can't recall what happened to the plane, but we were trucked back to Thurleigh.

Again, on page 6, you referred to the vagaries of crew assignments. In my

FROM THE DESK OF



## Vincent J. Kiely

own case, after our ditching on May 13th, I never did see Henry Hanson again. It was his 23rd mission and my 15th. He did two more and then rotated back to the States. In the meantime I flew with different crews and did some missions with Ben Peters and Brad Butterfield and I'm sure there were others. Which leads me to the question of whether you have the records of all the missions each person was on? I recall our conversation with regard to the fact that you knew I had gone on a mission to Berlin on March 8th, 1944 when I had been under the impression that it was on March 6th. We had a flood here in 1977 and wound up with 4½ feet of water in our finished basement and where I kept my books, and records and other memorabilia. Needless to say, we lost it all. Would it be possible to get a record of my missions from you? If there is any charge, please let me know.

We are looking forward to Savannah in December. I have been in touch with Al Clarke and Bob Maxwell and they will be there as well.

With all good wishes-

*Vincent*

VINCENT J. KIELY

71 South Drive  
Rochelle Park, NJ 07662-3605

*Please reuse the typewriter!*

August 17, 1993

Dear Russ-

I have received the 367th Squadron Combat Diary and thought it was excellent - the amount of work involved in producing this Diary - and the other Squadrons- certainly merits a WELL DONE!

There are a few things I would like to point out to you: on Page 144, a FREDERICK J. MC GOVERN is listed as a co-pilot- ARRIVAL-44-05-23 and DEPART 44-08-00 TOUR". In the BOMBADIERS LIST on Page 151, a FREDERICK J. MC GOVERN is listed as ARRIVAL 44-05-23 with no DEPART and the word TOUR. I know Fred Mc Govern and he came as a BOMBADIER with Neal Ringvall (Page 144) as NAVIGATOR in May of 1944. Fred was on the committee for the Reunion held in Dayton, where I last saw him, and we still exchange Christmas greetings. Secondly - my TOUR was for 34 missions. At the time of the second increase of tours , I was pro-rated for thirty-four missions instead of thirty-five.

The account of our ditching on May 13, 1944 (Page 59) is almost correct - there was only ONE dinghy(the other had been punctured by flak and was not flatable) and the NINE of us had to hang on to the sides and no one got INTO the dinghy.

Which leads me into an important question to you and I do hope you can give me an enlighttning answer: What constitutes the requirements for a Purple Heart award? Does there have to be blood loss and how much or do bruises or contusions have any bearing on the worthiness of receiving this medal? I can recall a bombardier in our Group who got a scratch over one eye (that could have been covered with a Band-Aid as big as your pinky finger nail) when the plexiglass nose was shattered by flak, and he got this medal! I don't recall his name but I haven't forgotten the incident.

The reason I bring this up is that the enclosed copies of WD AGO Form 53-98 show in Block 30 the injury I received in the ditching. I had also received a Medical Report when I left the Group to return home, but, unfortunately, this paper was lost in a flood we had here in 1977. The date shown for the ditching is, of course, incorrect. To this day I still have problems with my back - nothing severe but I've learned how to do things -lifting, bending, etc. without getting a "jab" to remind me of what happened.

In reading the article in "ECHOES" for January 1993 on Major Earl Rudolph,

who knows how he got the lacerations - was it the shrapnel or did he hit his ankle against something when he was releasing the bombs? Please believe me when I say I take nothing away from what he did, but I go back to my question to you - the requirements needed for the award.

I had intended to ask you about this when I saw you in Seattle, but we have had to cancel out due to the illness of my wife's sister, the prognosis for whom is not very good at all.

Thank you for taking the time with this letter and I do appreciate what you can find out for me.

Kind regards-

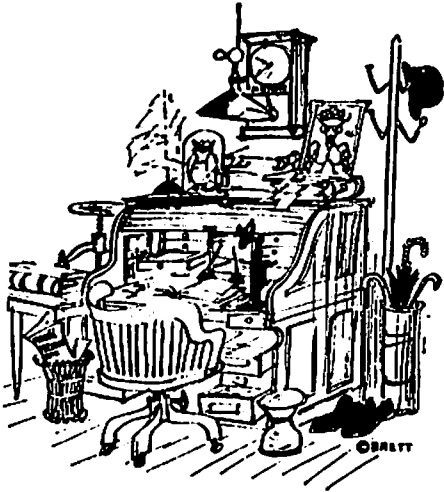


VINCENT J. KIELY  
71 South Drive  
Rochelle Park, NJ 07662-3605

P.S. - Re the July 1993 "ECHOES" - a name comes to mind of an EDWARD A. CAREY, who was one of my instructors at San Marcos, TX. Ed flew with the 423rd Squadron and came from the Buffalo, NY area.

*I stand corrected - the word should be spelled "BOMBARDIER"*





## Vincent J. Kiely

13 July 2004

Dear Russ -

The item in the latest "Echoes" reminded me that I had seen a B-17 a few years ago on a trip up in to New York State. That particular day, I went into a hanger and there it was! It was flyable, but that day, they were doing some work on it but was allowed to walk around - and into the plane - after I had told the people of my position in the B-17, and of the missions I had flown..

A short time later, my son who is an accountant, was on a business trip out to California and in one of the companies he had to visit, he noticed all the pictures of B-17's, and of the story behind "Twelve O'Clock High".

I've asked for some reports of what was there and, while some of the copies are not so very good, I thought you might like to see them.

To go back to the airfield in New York, the article is well written and I checked the route of the 306<sup>th</sup> and Reginald Thayer's name is on it.

I do hope you enjoy looking at these articles but, as a favor to me, if you wish to make copies, please be kind enough to return these to me.

I still keep in touch with the three others of my crew. Al Clarke (the bombardier) was in the New York City area recently <sup>from Florida</sup> so we had him and his lady friend over for dinner. Robert Maxwell calls me every 15<sup>th</sup> of May - it was on that date that we ditched in 1944; and Robert Cox calls from California every so often.

Travelling is a great problem for us - my wife is badly affected with arthritis, so we do very little of it anymore.

With best wishes -  
Dince

Maxwell  
7/19/04