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### 306th Bombardment Group Association

## 306th History Ready; Final \$17.50 Offer

First Over Germany will soon be coming along to those who have purchased it at the pre-publication offer. It is expected that by the time you receive this issue of **Echoes** the book will be off the press and will soon be in the mails.

Author Russell A. Strong states that this is the last offering of the book for 306th veterans at this price. Use the coupon in this issue to place your order now.

As this issue of **Echoes** went to press the book was in type, and there only needed to be a final check of "brown prints" before printing and binding would begin.

The book will be about 335 pages and includes about 75 pictures. It is indexed as to names appearing, and more than 2,500 men of the 306th have been included in the text. Appendix A includes a full list of missions flown by the group and Appendix B lists all the command and staff officers who served between 1942 and the end of the war.

**The editor sincerely regrets the lateness of this January issue, but due to circumstances beyond his control he was unable to complete the work at an earlier date.**



The exterior of the new 306th Bomb Group Restaurant at the Sarasota-Bradenton Airport. The entrance is located on US-41 just at the north edge of the airport.

## 306th Eatery Opens in Sarasota

As one approaches the Sarasota-Bradenton Airport from the north, there stands on the east side of the road a large sign with an Eighth Air Force insignia on it and over that reads "306th Bomb Group". Stretched across the lower portion of the sign are the four colorful patches of the combat squadrons, and below that the legend, "A Restaurant".

This is the new restaurant dedicated to recalling the glorious, tragic halcyon days of 1942-45 when the 306th Bombardment Group led air battles across Western Europe as a part of the great campaign to relieve millions from the enslavement of Nazi Germany.

Inside the restaurant are more than 300 pictures, posters and other memorabilia of those days. These are not just random pictures, but they are of the men that worked and lived at Thurleigh and of the planes that flew the 341 combat missions launched from that base in rural Bedfordshire.

On Thursday night December 4,

more than 200 people gathered in the restaurant to participate in its grand opening. David C. Talichett, president of Specialty Restaurants Corporation of Long Beach, California, was there to welcome his guests, along with Jeff Krenek, General Florida divisional manager, and Terry Large, manager of this latest addition to the chain of eateries that has had the 94th Aero Squadron as its rallying point in many parts of the country.

Col. Charles B. Overacker, Jr., of Denver, Colorado, and the man who organized the 306th Bomb Group in 1942 at Wendover, Utah, and Mrs. Overacker were on hand for the opening.

Also there were Col. and Mrs. George L. Robinson of Jacksonville, Florida. Col. Robinson was the fourth and longest tenured of the combat commanders of the group.

Other guests on this opening evening were M/Gen. James S. Cheney, onetime 306th group navigator and judge advocate general of the USAF at retirement; Maynard H. (Snuffy) Smith, the 306th's only Medal of Honor recipient and a resident of St. Petersburg; Lt. Col. and Mrs. William M. Collins, Jr., Poland, Ohio, and Mr. and Mrs. Russell A. Strong, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

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## 306th Again Leads in Attendance

Again the 306th led the parade of bomb groups, fighter groups, depots and other organizations, as the seventh annual reunion of the 8th Air Force Historical Association convened in St. Paul, Minn.

Final figures have not yet been released at this writing, but the 306th turned out en masse for this

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# Ryan Looks for Humor In Tales Of Early Days of the Group

Col. John L. Ryan, 367th commander and an evadee, was the speaker on the occasion of the 306th banquet Friday night at the St. Paul reunion. His remarks are below.

I'm probably the only person in this room who has read every word of Russ Strong's forthcoming book. I should like to assure Russ that I have no intention of revealing any of his secrets; I should also like to assure all of you that I shall be brief. As a matter of fact, I intend to confine my remarks to a small number of incidents, mostly of a personal nature, not to be found in the records covering the activities of 1942 and 1943.

First, however, I wish to read a message to you from Colonel "Chip" Overacker whom I visited a week ago last Sunday at his Denver home. — "Chip," as you know from an article in the Echoes, is now 80 years old. He wanted to make this reunion, as he told Walt Coons and me when we stopped by to see him last June, but there are things young fellows like us do that older warriors in their consummate wisdom know better than to try.

Perhaps there is no one in the 306th who know "Chip" better than I do. My association with him covered all of his tenure as commander of the 306th. In addition to that, I worked for him for almost two years as a test pilot at the Proving Ground at Eglin Field during 1944 and 1945. Needless to say, I have a great respect and a very deep affection for our old boss. But let him speak for himself . . .

Well now, let me relate a few short anecdotes which describe in some small way the wondrous accomplishment of "Chip" Overacker in creating, like the Man upstairs, something out of nothing. They all tend to demonstrate that the best adjectives which described most of us in those early days were "inexperienced" and "unqualified." Most of these little stories come from my memory banks which seem to become less efficient with each passing year. Still, there may be those among you whose recollections may be rekindled by their telling.

I recalled for the old timers two years ago at Colorado Springs the historic flight of the Group from Wendover to Westover. Let me add one humorous touch to that outstanding navigational feat supplied by Walt Coons who just happens to be a native son of Denver, Colorado. A couple of hours out of Wendover heading for New England Walt's navigator called him to have a look out of the plexiglass nose asking "How'd you like to have a look at Denver?" Walt took one look at the terrain and said, "Hell, that's Cheyenne!"

Based on such precise navigation, we eventually found ourselves at Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts. Brand new B-17F's were delivered to us and had to be shaken down before the trip across the pond. Translated into the know-how which was then available about fuel consumption this simply meant to fly the hell out the airplanes and find out how much gas they burned. Altitudes flown and power settings didn't matter much in this determination. With luck there'd be enough petrol to get us to "Blighty."

Well, given an opportunity like this to burn up gas we all roared off in our new birds and flew as much as we could. Various methods were devised to establish cruise control procedures and determine fuel consumption. One intrepid crew became fascinated with all the sailboat activity which dotted the New England lakes in that warm summer of 1942. There were hundreds of graceful small sailboats gliding peacefully across green waters with beautiful young damsels stretched out on the foredeck taking the sun, as we say in New England. This ingenious crew discovered that a very low pass over a sailboat with a very quick pull-up would deflect enough down-wash to topple the sailboat spilling damsels and 4-F's into the drink. This crew couldn't keep the secret to itself and soon no lake in New England was safe from the intrepid airmen from Westover. The local bars, however, became places to be avoided.

There were other ways to check fuel consumption. My navigator, Bob Hermann, remembers vividly looking up from his maps one day and staring straight into Niagara Falls which soon faded from view in the spray as we pulled up over the top. Then there was the classic pass one bright morning under the George Washington Bridge in New York City. That episode has been magnified out of all proportion. We weren't leading a whole squadron of B-17's; we were all alone. But let me hold the sequel to flying under the bridge until the end. It has a rather pleasant ending.

Then there was the chance of a lifetime for our crew to look good and put on a show for the United States Navy. Harry Holt, our squadron commander, was an Annapolis man, class of 39. His father was at that time a Navy Captain commanding a cruiser division in the Atlantic Fleet. A couple of weeks before we shoved off for England, this very senior naval officer, with wide gold stripes on the sleeves of his gleaming white uniform, came up to Westover to see son Harry. My crew was chosen to take the Navy for a flight and show off our magnificent flying machine. We did just that; went out past Boston over the Atlantic, buzzed some merchant ships - but not naval vessels - for identification purposes, let the good Captain fire the waist guns and the top turret and opened up the ball turret so he could have a look down into it. Trouble is we forgot to retract the ball turret to the horizontal position and landed with the gun barrels pointed straight down. At the end of our landing roll which was accompanied by a terrible screeching and grinding sound those two 50 calibre barrels were ground down so short they looked like pistol barrels. The Captain was most gracious and said not a word as he walked away from the aircraft, but I didn't need the shake of his head to know that we'd blown it badly.

Somehow or another we finally got ready to go to England. Most of our maintenance personnel were in New York waiting for a boat bound for England. We got our airplanes ready for the trip by applying the best Model-A mechanical know-how we possessed. We put on new tires and installed new spark plugs!

I remember bits and pieces of the Intelligence briefing we got for the crossing. The item which impressed most of us was about the long range German reconnaissance aircraft which operated over the North Atlantic keeping track of allied convoys for the U-Boats. We could encounter them, we were told, some four hundred miles west of Ireland. That made a bloody impression! The crossing might just turn into a combat mission. To be prepared for any eventuality we carried a box of ammunition for each gun and our flight plan called for us to load and test all guns in mid-Atlantic. We did just that and then waited for the enemy to show up. As the rising sun began to turn the sky ahead of us a very faint pink, there was suddenly an awful racket from the nose of the aircraft as that powerful .30 calibre in the plexiglass nose let loose with a couple of murderous long bursts. I got on the interphone with "What the hell are you shooting at?" After an embarrassed pause a meek voice came back with "It's OK, pilot. The navigator says it's not the running lights of a German aircraft. It's the morning star."

So we fought our way through and made it to Scotland. We also managed to make our way south to England and come to roost at Thurleigh. However, having found Thurleigh once was no guarantee that we'd ever find it again. I remember one local training mission which embarrassed us almost as badly as our show-off performance with Harry Holt's father. When we'd finished our training and headed back to base we found ourselves in a typical Limey low visibility condition. You could see straight down through the haze, but forward visibility was zero. We did square searches, circular searches and everything else we could think of over the area where we thought Thurleigh had to be but to no avail. We simply couldn't find it. We finally spotted an airfield, did a tight pattern to keep it in sight and landed. We taxied up to the tower and stopped surrounded by a few Halifaxes and several war-weary Wellingtons. I decided to swallow my pride and make no bones about being lost. So, I marched into Operations and said to a kind, old, non-rated flight lieutenant wearing a row of campaign ribbons from World War I, "We're lost. Can you tell me how to get to Thurleigh?" "Captain," he said, "if you'll taxi back out to the runway you just landed on, take off, hold your heading, climb to 500 feet and then put your undercarriage and flaps back down, you'll be on final approach to runway 24 at Thurleigh."

After such great feats of airmanship, it's small wonder that the Germans were able to put an end to our aerial antics in March of 1943. Two incidents from my "April in Paris" interlude are worth telling because they exemplify the courage and guts which we all came to admire in our British hosts and especially in our sister service, the Royal Air Force.

My companion, guide or tour director, you may call him what you like during my last three weeks in France before getting out was an Englishman.

## Overacker Sends Message to Reunion

Col. Charles B. Overacker, first commander of the 306th, was unable to attend the St. Paul reunion, but sent along greetings to those assembled.

*Greetings! To all former members of the 306th Bomb Group, gathered here in reunion and in the spirit of good fellowship, to reminisce, to renew old friendships and to engage in some lying and bragging, eat drink and be merry!*

*I had hoped to be able to join you for this momentous occasion but it was not to be. So, Colonel Jack Ryan, one of the 306th early birds of Wendover days, has volunteered to deliver my regrets and best wishes to you all.*

*I well remember that historic morning in March 1942, sitting in a wooden barracks building at Salt Lake City airport, as a procession of fresh, young, eager pilots filed in to be alternately assigned to the fledgling 306th and 305th Bomb Groups, the latter at that time commanded by "Curly" Lawson, later by Curt LeMay. Thus, the 306th was born.*

*Then the move to Wendover, Utah, the "tent city," the all-too-short training period, the move to Westover, Massachusetts, in preparation for the Atlantic crossing in new aircraft but minus all qualified co-pilots who were "ploughed back" to 2nd Air Force for further training and subsequent assignment to future groups as aircraft commanders with the balance of the Group, less aircrews, making the crossing by sea.*

*The United Kingdom! Settling in at Thurleigh, familiarization with England, RAF radio procedures, local flights, English money, discovery of the "Key Club" and finally Operational!*

*That first combat mission, the locomotive works and marshalling yards at Lille, on 9 October 1942 if memory serves me, as part of the first "100 plane mission" flown by the 8th Air Force. Our introduction to Goering's yellow-nosed FW 190's doing lazy 8's over us at 25,000 feet and to German Flak and, regretfully, our first combat loss.*

*And so on, to glory and pride of accomplishment, of missions recorded in candle smoke on the ceiling of the Club as well as in the annals of 8th Air Force History as one of the most outstanding bombardment groups to participate in the defeat of Hitler's Germany.*

*For those who died, we bow our heads in silent prayer; for those who survived, God bless! Carry on, smartly!*



# Another View of Arizona Harris

By Allan Richardson

In the early days of the 306th Bombardment Group's organization at Wendover, Utah, our little contingent of officers from the Harrisburg Intelligence School arrived on the first of July, 1942. Among them were Captains John Wright and John Bairnsfather, who became the 367th and 368th squadrons' first S-2's (Combat Intelligence). Lt. Col. Charles "Chip" Overacker commanded the Group, with Lt. Col. Curtis E. Lemay, his executive officer for a brief stay before Lemay was shipped to the 305th BG; Capt. Douglas Coleman was his adjutant and Capt. Watts Humphrey, the Group Intelligence Officer.

I was assigned to the 369th Squadron. One of the squadron's pilots, Lt. Charles W.B. Cranmer, had an engineer in his crew named Arizona Todd Harris. I was billeted with Cranmer and stayed with his crew more or less from Wendover to Thurleigh, until 3 January 1943, when Cranmer's plane was shot down over the English Channel while returning from a bombing mission to the German submarine pens at St. Nazaire off the French coast. T/Sgt. Arizona Harris distinguished himself for posterity that morning by continuing to fire his top-turret guns at the attacking enemy FW 190's as his plane sank beneath the waves. None of the crew survived.

Historian Arthur Bove wrote in his account of the 306th Bombardment Group, *FIRST OVER GERMANY*, "The Group's first Distinguished Service Cross was awarded to this boy from Arizona whose name was never forgotten at the base." Although 38 years of more wars, peace and victories have intervened, I'll share what memories I can leading up to that fateful day.

Our little S-2 group had pulled into the base on a typical hot, dry afternoon. Day bombers were returning from practice missions and new crews stood by to take over the planes for evening and night runs. Two months of intensive training and maintenance had kept the too few 17s flying night and day. Crews were tired and tense. Living quarters and space were at a premium. However, we were assigned to reasonably comfortable barracks. After a shower and supper, we looked over the desolate but fascinating salt flats which extended to the horizon where the Humboldt Range on the west rimmed this dessicated lake which had been cut off from the sea in a distant age. Darkness soon covered the scene, and the take-off roar of the "night-owls" subsided. I turned in. One crew was retiring. They explained that the boys at my end of the barracks were on the night run and probably would not get back before 2 A.M. My cot was next to the entrance where the opened flap

revealed a beacon, a few stars and summer lightning over the distant peaks. I thought about my wife and the dolce vita I left back home. Sleep came quickly.

When shots rang out just a few feet away, I literally jumped out of bed. Standing in the entrance, a youth in somewhat disheveled gear held a spent revolver. "Sorry," he grinned, "... just blowing off steam." I muttered something best forgotten and stumbled back into bed.

In the morning, introductions were in order. "I'm Charlie Cranmer, pilot," stated the one who had fired the shots. "Sorry about the racket last night. We've had a rough week." Pointing to the others he continued, "My co-pilot here is Al Brunsting, Paul Byer next to him is navigator, Johnny Reed over there is our bombardier. I'll let the rest of the boys introduce themselves." So I shook hands with a lot of nice kids.

In a few days Cranmer took me on a night instrument run to the Pacific Coast. The flight gave me the opportunity to meet the rest of the crew and observe their functions. Sgts. Charles Wall, Harry Meyers and Cpl. Charles Taylor managed the waist and tail guns; Sgt. Kermit Constantine operated the radio and Sgts. Joseph Haire and Glen Wyly took care of the aircraft mechanics. Cranmer's engineer and top-turret gunner was Arizona Harris, a big, red-headed, good natured boy from Tempe, Arizona. In the fall of 1938 at the age of 20, he had joined the Air Force and was sent to March Field, California, for training.

According to his brother Charles, the last time he saw Todd, as his family called him, was October 1941 when he was about to leave Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico. From there, his brother believes, he helped ferry some planes to Hawaii. He was on an aircraft half way to Hickam Field when Pearl Harbor was bombed. His plane was ordered to turn back, and Arizona was sent to Wendover. The family relates that he was very proud of his uniform and his mission in the 8th Air Force.

When the crew manned their stations on take-off, I made the rounds of the ship to talk with each one, eventually settling in the cockpit to watch the little towns and villages drift by, their Main Streets lighted, as so many have observed, like a string of pearls.

Concentrated training during July allowed us time to work into our assignments. New planes and crews arrived and more construction relieved the congestion. Wendover had few distractions to divert us from our appointed tasks except, perhaps, the Stateline Hotel at the edge of the base. This unique building straddled the Utah/Nevada state line right down the middle. On entering, the Nevada room on the right invited gambling and liquor, while Utah's Blue Law parlor on the



## Al Richardson

Winchester, VA, June 1980

Friends of the Library will show a "Father and Son" exhibit of the paintings and illustrations of Frederick Richardson along with the photographs of his son Allan Richardson, a resident of Winchester.

Frederick Richardson (1862-1937), was born in Chicago. He studied art at the St. Louis School of Fine Arts and Academie Julien in Paris. "Who's Who in America" lists Frederick Richardson as a painter and magazine illustrator.

A number of his works hang in the home of Allan Richardson. One of the more elaborate of his publications is an edition of "Mother Goose" published in 1915 and still in print. It contains more than 100 full color plates.

Allan Barbour Richardson was born in Park Ridge, a Chicago suburb. The family moved east when he and his brother went to Princeton University. After college, he worked with Fox Film commercial movies, radio with Zenith and Atwater Kent, a stint back in Chicago with J. Walter Thompson as copywriter and eventually a decision to become a photographer.

He studied photography under Rabinovitch, a noted camera portraitist in New York City. He then joined commercial studios to learn the Madison Avenue use of camera art. Then as a free-lancer during the thirties, he did photographic illustrations for National magazines including Vogue, Harpers Bazaar, Mademoiselle, Cosmopolitan and LIFE. After a three year stint during World War II as an Air Force Combat Intelligence Officer, he settled down in New York as a professional photographer again, and a portrait specialist.

left entertained the innocents. Weekend passes meant the chance to visit Salt Lake City to admire the Mormon culture and the city's beauty, both architectural and feminine.

On the first of August we were declared mission ready. Ground crews entrained for Richmond Virginia, and the air echelons flew with only one stop in Illinois to Westover Field in Massachusetts. I was assigned to Cranmer's plane. While breezing over the Rockies at an intimate peak-to-plane altitude, we watched the wild life scatter among the pines. Sometime Charlie Cranmer could not resist playing tag with regulations. His crew were ever loyal to their personable, easy-going pilot who privately had a reputation for loving a pretty face where'er he roamed. But Lt. Cranmer could fly!

Crossing the continent we passed the time reminiscing about family, friends, hopes and dreams. Each boy told his story. They were typical American youths prompted by old-fashioned patriotism, a desire for adventure and, perhaps unconsciously, a desire to know and prove themselves. A few were married, some with expectant wives.

Although I knew little of Arizona's background, the recent letters from his brothers Charles and William as well as Robert Birchett, a close family friend, enable me to describe his early life in some detail.

Arizona Todd was born on 21 September 1918, one of seven children, to Charles E. and Ethel Ruth Harris. His family called him Todd. The Harris family are mostly dairy farmers and ranchers. Todd went to grade school and high school in Tempe, and helped on the farm until he graduated in 1937. Following school he worked as a cowpuncher, did odd jobs on ranches, then went bumming until he joined the Air Corps in 1938. A younger brother, Donald Russell, who had also joined the Air Corps was killed on maneuvers at March Field in July 1940.

Todd was a would-be poet and short story writer, but had not had anything published. All of his stories are about farm and ranch life with a kind of Bret Harte flavor imbued with the love of great open spaces. Never a ladies's man, he shied away from any close attachments to girls, preferring to put them on a poetic pedestal. Todd was somewhat of a dreamer, according to his brother Willima who contributed the following anecdote.

"Once when we were moving a herd, my brother Charles and I were riding point, daddy was lead man. We had driven most of the day. Toward evening along a stretch of road, I looked back and saw Todd, who was supposed to be at the road herding strays, near the center of the herd, just riding along deep in

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## Ryan Recalls

That's about all I knew about him. Didn't even know his name. I just called him Monsieur. This gentleman spoke a half-dozen languages, had lived in Paris for years and was, I later found out, a squadron leader in the RAF reserve. When the war started he was mobilized in place in Paris and told to stay there. He became a master spy, did all sorts of nasty things to the Krauts and was one of the few Englishmen who had the confidence of General DeGualle. He took it upon himself to get me out of France and in the process provided me some experiences I'll never forget.

First experience: One day he had taken me for a guided tour of Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris. On our way back to my "residence", as we were walking along the Champs-Élysées, he spotted two German officers about a hundred yards away coming in our direction on the same side of the street. I must say I was more than somewhat concerned. But not my friend. Paris in those days was full of refugees. Paris contained a totally polyglot society. You could hear any language of Europe spoken on any Paris street corner. The Germans had not as yet imposed full martial law on the north of France; they were, consequently, still forced to tolerate certain "inconveniences." As I watched the two German officers approach, my companion suddenly stopped speaking French in which we had been conversing and said, rather commandingly, "Speak English!" As the two officers passed by us, both of us were talking in rather loud English. When they were out of hearing range, I turned to my friend and asked "Why were we talking in English?" His answer was typically British and typically brief: "It infuriates the bastards."

The second incident was much like the first. My friend always wore a grey topcoat and a grey Homburg hat, the preferred garb of German businessmen in Paris. During the occupation there was a daily German language paper published in Paris for the occupation Forces called the *Pariser Zeitung* or the *Paris Times*. The masthead of this paper was printed in heavy black German Gothic. My friend used to buy a copy of this paper every morning, fold it neatly so the heading *Pariser Zeitung* was clearly visible and carry it stuck under his left arm.

We were walking one day toward the former American Embassy which had been taken over by the Germans and was now the headquarters of the German Atlantic Fleet. The main entrance at street level was guarded by two marines with rifles standing at parade rest. As we passed by, both marines snapped to attention at the sight of this "German" businessman with his *Pariser Zeitung* and came to present arms. My friend with complete self-assurance raised his right arm in the Nazi salute, barked out a resounding "Heil Hitler" and on we went.

My friend incidentally was Frederick Forest Yeo-Thomas, the "White Rabbit" of British Intelligence, whose exploits are chronicled in a book of the same name by Bruce Marshall.

After I got back to England and back to work, there's a story I like to tell called "Easy come, easy go." About four months after my return I was called one day to the finance office at 1st Division and presented one hundred pounds in cash. "What's this for?" I asked the finance officer. "Beat's me," he said; "Bomber Command said you had it coming." Well, I never did figure that out. It was either per diem for touring Paris or for resting a couple of months at 2nd General Hospital at Oxford. But it did amount to some four hundred bucks and that was a lot of moolah. While I was trying to figure out how to spend all that loot, I kept it locked in the top drawer of my dresser in a house I lived in with General Williams and Colonel Putnam at Brampton. I never really had to make a decision on how to spend it. Fate took care of that problem for me. One night Colonel Putnam and I drove down to Thurleigh to some kind of party or drinking contest and while we were there the damn house with all my loot in it burned to the ground.

My last little gem goes back to the George Washington Bridge. I'm sure you've all heard of the "long arm of the Inquisition." Well, the Army Air Corps was quite as effective in keeping tabs on people. It seems that flying under that bridge had attracted a bit of attention as things usually do in the Big Apple. As a result the Civil Aeronautics Administration set out on a campaign to persecute the heretic who had violated all those regulations about low flying over metropolitan areas, endangering lives and being a damn nuisance. One morning in October of 1943 I was summoned to the office of the Chief of Staff, 1st Division, and handed a document about an inch and a half thick by Colonel Bartlett Beaman with the question "Did you really do this?" Lo and behold it was a violation filed against me in August of the preceding year by the CAA which had finally caught up to me with scads of indorsements of which the last one, from Bomber Command, left little room for doubt about what was expected. It simply said: "Forwarded for appropriate disciplinary action. Records of this headquarters indicate that subject officer is a member of your command."

Now Bartlett Beaman was a tough old codger who had a passion for correct English. He kept a tray of red pencils on his desk with which he redlined every grammatical mistake on outgoing correspondence and fired it back to the writer for correction. In short order he acquired the nickname "Poison Pen Beaman." Yet in spite of this one phobia, Bart Beaman was a kind, fatherly figure with a wonderful New England sense of humor.

"After I'd admitted to him that I was the guilty SOB, he said he'd have to think about such a serious matter for a day or two before deciding what action would be appropriate. The following morning I was sitting at my desk contemplating my fate when a corporal came in and gave me a copy of a 32nd indorsement from 1st Division to Bomber Command with a red

Col. Warren Borges, a 423rd pilot in the second half of 1944, is the new president of the 8th Air Force Historical Society, elected at the annual meeting in St. Paul.

## Reunion

(From page 1)

event, even though some "boycotted" the gathering because they don't go that far north at the mid-October point of the year. Despite the threat of inclement weather, no snow bothered the reunioners.

The whole affair got underway a day early this year with a symposium planned by the 8th AF Memorial Museum Foundation. Included in this program was Lt. Gen. Adolf Galland, onetime commander of Luftwaffe fighter forces; Col. Cass S. Hough, chief of 8th AF technical operations; Col. Francis S. Gabreski, 56th FG ace; Maj. Gen. Philip Ardery, 389th BG squadron c.o.; Maj. Gen. John W. Huston, 379th BG navigator and USAF historian, and Maj. Richard A. Peterson, 357th FG ace.

Roger Freeman, English author of some of the best material on the 8th AF, was the moderator.

On Friday the 306th arrived in numbers, but because of the growing throng attending the 8th AF activities, it has become impossible to house all of the participants in one hostelry, a far cry from the first reunion at Miami Beach when the entire group took up little more space than the bar.

At the Friday night dinner Col. John L. Ryan, onetime 367th Squadron CO was the speaker, regaling his audience with stories about some of the early people in

the group. Some business was conducted, but no progress was made on the establishment of a formal organization.

Reports were also rendered on the 306th memorial at Thurleigh and the 8th AF memorial at Wright-Patterson AFB.

Plans are already underway for the 306th reunion in 1982, hoping to bring together the largest group yet of men from Thurleigh.

Russell A. Strong, editor of 306th Echoes, was unable to attend the St. Paul reunion. A brother was killed in an automobile accident a few hours before Strong and his wife were planning to leave for St. Paul.

## Keysoe Pub Loses Out in Recession

"The Fox," a popular Keysoe pub, has closed, a victim of the recession.

"Owners of the pub, Charles Wells Ltd., said it has closed because of its isolated position."

Earlier tenants of the pub told newspaper reporters that business in the last nine months had been "absolutely dreadful."

Elsewhere in England pubs in rural locations are said to be hit hard by the current recession. The tenant of the Golden Lion in Bedford says clients are coming out later at night for a drink, cutting heavily into revenues.

A reunion picture in last April's issue of Echoes had an erroneous identification. In a group picture on page 3 the man kneeling in front was George Klucick, 367th gunner, and not Gus Krajcik.

## Reunion Registrants

367th - Richard Argo, Joseph Broussard, Walter Coons, Clifford "Arkie" Evans, Joe Hammer, Robert Hermann, Norman Johnson, Jerome Kostal, Gus Lamb, Ed Leahy, James Lenaghan, Frank Levis, William McKearn, Georga Pederson, Walter Pilat, Fred Rector, Jack Ryan, Jack Schmidt, Robert Shultz, Leslie Turner, Charles Vondracheck, Charles Wood and Bartlett Smith.

368th - Ralph Bidner, George J. Allen, Joe Gabrish, Calvin Garrison, Joe Hardesty, Russell Houghton, Merrill Immerman, Irving Karpman, Lee Kessler, Edward Lanich, Karl Madsen, Eduardo Montoya, Waverly Ormond, Gilbert Roeder, Donald Ross, Andy Vangalis and Warren Wilson.

369th - Bill Collins, Harley Cuvelier, Robert Flood, Jack Hartung, John Howard, Fremont Jewell, Paul Jorgensen, Casey

Jones, Maynard Nelson, Earl Schwab, Dennis Sharkey and James Wirth.

423rd - Norman Armbrust, Hollis Baker, Warren Brges, Harry Doles, Bill Guilfoyle, Russell Hawkins, Ted Hood, Kenneth Jacobson, William Lynch, Paul Reiox, Robert Robertson, Douglas Schrack, Charles Schwoch, Frank Serafin, Leo VanDeurzen, Robert C. Williams.

Other units (or units unknown) - Edward Bergeron, Delmar Corderman, Howard Hodges, Wendell Hull, William H. Jones, Don Sheridan, Robert Tramontin, Don Upchurch, Fred Puhl, Kenneth Herbster, Dael Dysinger and Wayne Stellish.

Friends - Catherine Brennan, George Gransie, Judith Hermley, Nena Leary, Jane Odle

pencilled note on top "For Major Ryan." The indorsement read simply "This officer was reported missing in action over Europe on 6 March 1943."

I thought you might welcome a little diversion from blood, guts, flak and fighters and that's why I've concentrated on some of the humorous aspects of our big shooting war. And now before you train your heavy flak on me for talking too long, I'll report myself missing in action from this podium.



# St. Paul Review







### Reunion Photos Available

If you want Squadron photos, banquet photos, or any others shown here on the reunion pages, please contact Casey Jones, 40 Arthur Matthew Dr. East, Hanover, MA 02339.

Color prices are: 3 1/2x5 - \$2; 5x7 - \$5; 8x10 - \$8.  
Prices for black and white prints are one-half those of the color prints.

### Gen. Spivey at 306th Restaurant

There was a special guest at the opening of the 306th Bomb Group Restaurant, a man who commanded lots of onetime 306th personnel during World War II. In fact, he had under his command about 8,500 men, as many men as made up a wing of the First Air Division.

He was Maj. Gen. Delmar T. Spivey, who commanded Stalag Luft III from shortly after he was shot down in July 1943 until late April of 1945. As a colonel at that time, Spivey was flying with the 92nd Bomb Group as an observer for 8th AF.

Upon retirement in 1956, Gen. Spivey became commandant of Culver Military Academy, staying there for 11 years, and then spending 11 years with The Balfour Company before retiring completely. Even now, though, Gen. Spivey is heading up a big POW reunion planned for 1982 in Chicago.

One of Gen. Spivey's principal reasons for attending was an opportunity to renew a long acquaintanceship with Col. Overacker. They had last served together shortly before both men retired.

At least eight men in the restaurant on Friday night had been prisoners of war.

Gen. Spivey died Jan. 18, 1982, at Largo, FL, where he had made his home in recent years.





# Leedy Recalls Ditching of Hanson's Ship

"1st Lt. Henry Hanson's aircraft lost an engine off the coast of Denmark, after being hit hard over Stettin by flak. From then on it was all downhill and after losing two more engines the crew ditched 60 miles off the coast of England. Hanson's picture is at the left, and above are the trophies of 1st Lt. Vincent J. Kiely, Hanson's navigator. The Sea Squatters Club card is explanatory, and the patch at the right was the work of the British Goldfish Club. Despite the large swells, the complete absence of gasoline in the tanks made the plane somewhat bouyant and it floated, changing places in the record 22 minutes. Kiely's comment was "Who had the presence of mind to keep track of that fact?" Although the crew got out easily, there was only one good life raft for nine men, so six rode and three floataed, changing places in the cold North Sea until they were picked up by a British ship after two hours in the water." (306th Echoes, Vol. 6, No. 3, July, 1981).

By Taylor Leedy

It was with great interest that I read the above article on Lt. Henry Hanson's ditching and the comments by Lt. Kiely, the navigator.

This is only part of the story and perhaps this can answer the questions of the record of the ditched aircraft remaining afloat for 22 minutes. Why the crew was rescued in two hours at 60 miles offshore, or maybe why they were rescued at all.

The mission on the 13 May 1944 is listed as a raid on Stettin, Germany. It started out as a raid on Poznan, Poland, and Stettin was a secondary target.

We took the northern route, the North Sea to Denmark then east over the Baltic, then south somewhere around the Polish-German border. I do not recall whether we went all the way into Poznan prior to going to Stettin or not. I do remember there was solid overcast over the entire area, and we were not allowed to bomb occupied territory by radar.

We ended up dropping on our secondary target Stettin, headed north to the Baltic Sea and then retraced our incoming route back to England and our home base.

This was a long mission and over the North Sea more than one plane was observed going down presumably for ditching either due to a lack of gas or mechanical troubles or a combination of both. I believe Hanson's aircraft was the only one from our group to have this experience.

This was my 26th mission and I had just been assigned a shiny new aircraft with no camouflage paint, modified supercharger controls and extra heavy laminated

front windows in the pilot's compartment. This aircraft according to Sgt. James Poston, radio operator, was 42-127212. The only reason I got this aircraft was my "seniority" and my dissatisfaction with our original ship which we had brand new in January 1944 and which incidentally went on to be named the "Dingleberry Kids" and completed more than 100 missions. This was aircraft #42-97505, call letters Snodgrass V-Victor. I had been Lt. Robert Welter's copilot when we got this plane and I took over the plane and crew when he left in April 1944.

When Lt. Hanson's plane started to go down I had plenty of gas, which I attribute to the new aircraft and a favorable location in the formation. I called to the group commander for permission to follow Hanson down but there was so much chatter I didn't hear an acknowledgement, but I went anyway. Lt. Hanson made a good ditching considering there was considerable swell and somewhat limited visibility up to 1000 feet or so above the water. I would estimate two to three miles of visibility at the time at water level.

I had been in intermittent contact with British Air Sea Rescue on the way down, but communication was difficult. We watched the crew exit the aircraft safely and saw their plight but could do nothing except to hope for a speedy recovery by Air-Sea Rescue. We kicked out some one-man rafts but they landed too far away to be of assistance.

The British rescue unit was in the area within an hour but due to reduced visibility and poor radio communication, we were unable to make visual contact. In the meantime, my supply of gasoline was getting lower and lower. After exhausting almost all of our Very pistol flares in trying to give the rescue boat a visual contact, they spotted us on our last flare. We made one final "Buzz" over the ditched crew and headed back to Thurleigh.

When we landed we had logged 11 hours and 35 minutes of flight time, were overdue and listed as missing in action (no one had seen us leave the formation) and were temporarily in the "Dog house."

Our crew had a reunion this year and I verified all of the above information with those who were with me that day. I believe that Sgt. J. V. Poston our radio operator was the one who logged the 22 minutes for the aircraft to sink after the ditching. Sgt. Carl Metz our tail gunner remembers it as 32 minutes.

Promoters of the "Sally B", a flying B-17 in Briton, publish a newspaper. A subscription is \$20 per year for three issues and should be sent by international money order to B17 Preservation, 277 Chiswick High Road, London W4 PU.

## Deceased

- Curry, Leon A., 368th radio operator (Altshuler's crew, 1945) 30 Dec 76.
- Earney, Howard A., 369th radio operator (1942) 15 Sep 76.
- Easterly, Harvey E., 368th gunner (Ehrler's crew, 1943-44) 1 Apr 73.
- Eddy, John E., 369th gunner (Christenson's crew, 1945) 27 Jun 62.
- Fitzsimmons, James J., 369th navigator (Walters' crew, 1944) in '74.
- Hagen, John P., 368th, 20 Jun 76.
- Haglund, Robert, 982nd MP Co., 11 Jun 72.
- Hall, Earl A., 368th engineer (McStay's crew, 1944) 17 Feb 73.
- Hall, Harry A., 368th engineer and POW (Ranck's crew, 9 Oct 43) 8 Jun 65.
- Herold, Edward C., 423rd gunner (Stewart's crew, 1944) date unknown.
- Matzke, Robert G., 368th pilot and squadron operations officer (1944-45), shot and killed 1 Aug 80 in Bradenton, FL.
- O'Connor, Bernie, 4 Nov 81 at Morristown, TN
- Potter, Carl L., 369th gunner and POW (Ramsey's crew, 24 Apr 44) 20 Feb 81 in Cranston, RI.
- Walton, Alfaroz P., 369th copilot (Christenson's crew, 1945) 14 Aug 81 in West Palm Beach, FL.
- Westmoreland, Maurice B., 423rd gunner (Stewart's crew, 1944) date unknown.
- Wilcox, James A., group ops clerk, 4 Sep 72.
- Wilhelm, Richard J., 423rd gunner (Love's crew, 1943-44) 28 Oct 54.
- Willoughby, Martin L., 367th gunner and Swiss internee (Schwedok's crew, 2 Apr 44) 21 Apr 75.

## Flood Plans England Tour In August

Bob Flood, 369th bombardier and POW, is putting together a memorial tour to mark the 40th anniversary of the arrival of United States Air Forces in England with a departure date of August 22.

The tour includes the following:

- ... Sailing to England on the Queen Elizabeth 2
- ... Three days of festivities, memorial services and day visits to selected locations
- ... Hotel accommodations
- ... Open return via Britain Airways

Arrangements can be made for those wishing to extend their stay in England or to include a visit to the Continent at additional cost. Arrangements can also be made for car rentals for those wishing to tour on their own after the memorial festivities are concluded. For those who do not wish to sail aboard the QE2, air travel can be arranged to coincide with the festivities in England.

The sea-air price, which includes hotels, transport to hotels and visiting sites, special events (dinner dance, receptions, luncheons, admissions), will range from \$2000 (minimum tourist class and standard hotel) to about \$3000 (first class and luxury hotel). For information and reservation forms, write to: Robert J. Flood, 920 Pelhamdale Avenue, Pelham Manor, NY 10803.

The October 1981 newsletter of B-17 COMBAT CREWMEN AND WINGMEN, published in South Gate, CA, featured the 306th. Special mention in it of Walter Correll, 368th, and Paul Milak, 423rd.

## Newly-Found

- Baltzer, Donald, 2126 Rancho Verdi Dr., Escondido, CA 92025 368
- Boyd, Thomas E., 24 Altadena Dr., Mt. Lebanon, PA 15228 367
- Calahan, Paul D., 87 S. Saxon Ave., Bay Shore, Long Island, NY 11706 369
- Carakostas, Kenneth, 1257 N. Rollin Hwy., Hudson, MI 49247 369
- Curtis, Roger H., 2565 Riverside R., Rt. 1, Alger, MI 48610 368
- Des Roches, Albert P., Rt. 2, Box 319, Saco, ME 04072 367
- Disko, Sam, 7244 W. 61st Pl., Summit, IL 60501 367
- Dysinger, Dr. Dale W., 16513 N. Lund Rd., Eden Prairie, MN 55344 423
- Efird, Irvin R., 14720 S. Cedar, Fresno, CA 93725 368
- Garza, Manuel, Rt. 61, Box 188, Lander, WY 82520 449
- Hatch, George L. Jr., 6131 Fir Valley, San Antonio, TX 78242 367
- Holland, Richard R., 1312 E. Dry Creek Pl, Littleton, CO 80122 367
- Hopper, Col. Ray V., 1325 Montclair Way, Los Altos, CA 94022 GP
- Howe, David O., 111 Monterey St., Terre Haute, IN 47801 423
- Immerman, Merrill, Rt. 2, Box 170, Rockford, MN 55373 368
- Johnson, Stanley T., 3909 Heritage Hills Dr., #36, Bloomington, MN 55437 423
- LeKashman, Raymone, 1 Little Fox Ln., Westport, CT 06880 368
- Manthey, Stuart W., Rt. 2, Box 629, Clinton, WI 53525 423
- Martin, Paul H., 3320 Topaz Ln., Fullerton, CA 92631 367
- Neely, Jack 5676 E. Carey Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89110 423
- Patton, Edward R., 3516 Tamarack Dr., Sharpville, PA 16150 368
- Piedmont, Daniel J., 125 Courtly Cir., Rochester, NY 14615 369
- Somerville, Paul, Rt. 2, Box 286, Washington, WV 26181
- Stewart, Richard M., 1007 Hamton Ridge Rd., Akron, OH 44313 367
- Trostle, Richard A., 4208 Manorwood Dr., Glen Arm, MD 21057 369
- Vaughn, Robert L., 4209 Huerfano Ave., San Diego, CA 92117 449
- Weishar, Richard W., 1914 17th, Rock Island, IL 61201 367
- Wolffhope, Clifford R., Box 134, Salix, PA 15952 423



# Restaurant Brings 306th to Sarasota



Clarence J. Crowl, 423rd, and Trygve Olsen, 369th, were both copilots who "enjoyed" lengthy stays in a German prison camp, and renewed experiences at the 306th Restaurant.



Bill Collins stands in front of the new sign along US-41 at Sarasota that will give any 306th veteran a thrill.

## 423rd Admits Coal Moving Expeditions

*Bert Theriault writes: "I chuckled while reading the feature on the mysterious disappearance of large quantities of coal from storage areas. I am sure that certain enlisted flying personnel in certain huts of the 423rd were guilty of making moonlight requisitions on aforementioned stockpiles.*

*"Very seldom did our hut suffer from lack of heat. In fact, the two-wheeled trailer kept behind Col. Lambert's quarters was the favorite means of conveyance. After each successful "mission", and they were all successful, thus maintaining an 8th AF tradition, we gave a silent thank you to the colonel."*



Col. and Mrs. Charles B. Overacker came from Denver, Colo., for the opening of the 306th Restaurant, and are here shown just before dinner was served on Friday night.



Col. George L. Robinson was among the 306th guests for the Thursday evening opening of the restaurant. He now makes his retirement home in Jacksonville.



Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Columbus, 423rd, came over from St. Petersburg for the evening. Joe took a long time returning from Schweinfurt.



Snuffy Smith, left, engages in conversation during the cocktail hour before the dinner. Seated beyond are Mr. and Mrs. Harold Schrecongost, 367th.



# News Releases of 1943 and 1944 Tell of 306th

This is the first of a series of news releases, written at Thurleigh during the war, which we will be publishing in issues of ECHOES. These were prepared by the base public information office under the direction of Capt. William C. VanNorman. They are interesting in that they were written not later than the day after the combat action, but they are also interesting in telling about a whole host of jobs which had to be done on the base to keep the planes in the air. At the conclusion of each item we will attempt to give you an update on the individual concerned.

## Pollock First To End Tour

The first officer of this wing to complete his operational tour was 1st Lt. Eugene J. Pollock, navigator, New Orleans, LA.

After graduating from Harrison Stone Jackson Junior College in Mississippi where he was majoring in chemical engineering, he went into the Air Corps and received wings as a navigator April 1, 1942. His first assignment took him to the Pacific Theatre where he performed patrol duty.

He was returned to the States for training in heavy bombardment and sent to the ETO, where he arrived in September 1942. Navigating over targets in Belgium, Holland, France and Germany, he completed his tour by going over the Focke Wulf factories in Bremen, Germany.

"It was the toughest of them all," he said. "There was just more of everything."

Lt. Pollock holds the Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross with one cluster. He is credited with the destruction of one enemy fighter, over Rouen, France, Dec. 12, 1942.

## The Crew Chief's Role Explained

As crew chief of the Flying Fortress, "Satan's Lady," a veteran of 34 missions over enemy territory, M/Sgt. Harry Tzipowitz, Philadelphia, PA, is responsible for the mechanical condition of his ship going into combat. In this way, he is playing an important part in the Eighth Air Force's daylight bombing of vital military and industrial targets in Hitler's Europe.

While every major section of the plane has specialists who work on that part alone, Sgt. Tzipowitz must be familiar with every part of the ship so that he can diagnose troubles, judge their relative importance and call in the specialists if the repair work takes more time than he and his small crew can spend on it. Sgt. Tzipowitz and his crew must be prepared to work

around the clock, often in miserable weather and by the light of a flashlight or parked jeep, to make his plane ready to take off at dawn for another bombing attack on Hitler's war machine.

Enlisting in the AAF in December, 1941, Sgt. Tzipowitz came overseas in September, 1942. He was trained for his present job in the Air Mechanics School at Chanute Field, Illinois, and the Boeing B-17 School at Seattle, Washington.

## Money Up For Future Echoes

As of 30 November, the 306th ECHOES account showed a balance of \$2169, according to William M. Collins, Jr.

Donations since early July had totalled more than \$1,500, and when added to the profit made on the caps sold at St. Paul and the kickback from 8th AF on registrations, far outstripped the expenses of the organization during the period.

The last issue of ECHOES cost \$297.50 for printing, and postage came to \$110.

As additional funds become available they will be used to continue the publication of ECHOES and to help in providing advance funding for the 1982 reunion.

## New Size Ready of B-17 Etching

The outstanding copper etching of a B-17 bearing the tail markings of a 306th plane with a Triangle H is now available in two sizes.

Offered now is a 12 inch by 9 1/2 inch rendition in a solid English oak frame for \$25, plus \$1.50 for postage and packing.

The larger size is 15 by 13 inches and is priced at \$37, plus \$2 for postage and packing.

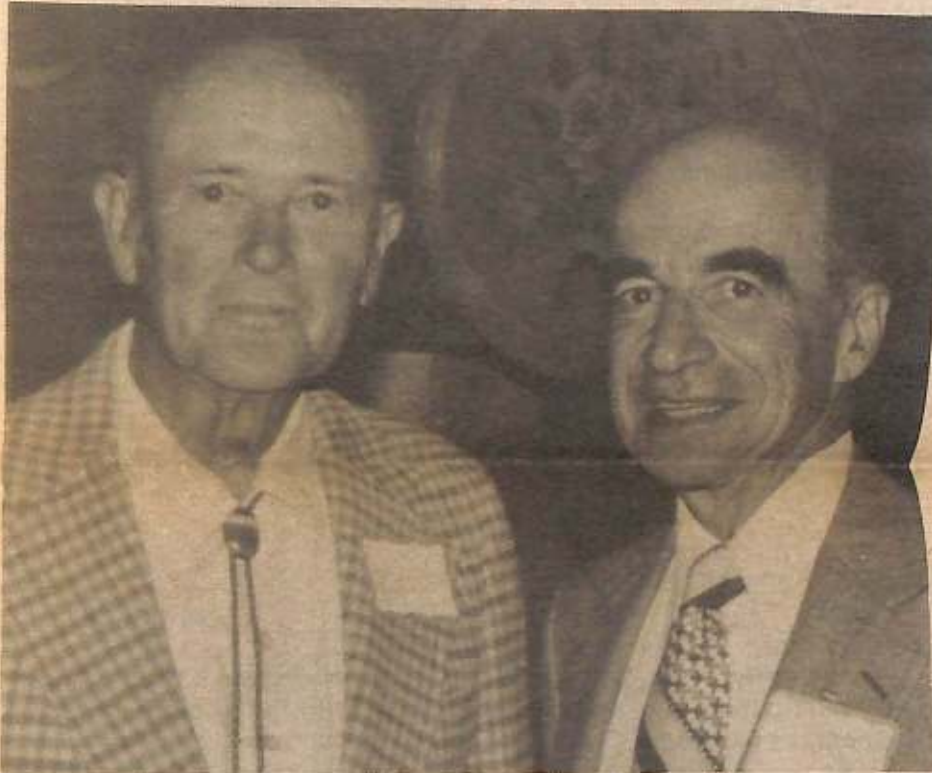
Order from Contrive, Inc., 913 Shell Ct., Bedford, TX 76021.

## 306th Moves

Economos, George, 6204 Bradley Blvd., Bethesda, MD 20812  
 Edwards, Milton B., 8256 Annwood Rd., Largo, FL 33543  
 Futchik, William E., Ft. Washington, MD 20744  
 Norton, Irving, 1699 Dorian Ave., Spring Hill, FL 33526  
 Prescott, Harold, 3725 Cattle Dr., Kingman, AZ 86401  
 Wilson, Warren, Rt. 1, 26 Drew Ln., Port Ludlow, WA 98365



Harry Doles, 423rd, shows a souvenir to Bert Perlmutter, 369th.



Maj. Gen. Delmar Spivey, longtime commander of Stalag Luft III, came to the dinner especially to see Col. Charles (Chip) Overacker. He also met Joe Consolmagno, right, 367th, another veteran member of the Stalag Luft III contingent.



Russell Strong, editor of Echoes, stands outside the uncompleted entrance of the 306th Bomb Group Restaurant. Note the scaffolding in the entry way.



# Preface Explains Author's Reasons For Writing Book

The 306th Bombardment Group (H) was one of the original bombardment units of the U.S. Eighth Air Force in World War II. Because its work has been largely overlooked in written and pictorial recountings of the air war, this book has been prepared to accurately and in detail recount the combat history of the unit from its formation in March 1942 until V-E Day in May 1945.

In the planes the greatest risks were taken, therefore this book focuses on the flyers. Because of a lack of space and time too little mention is made of the ground crews, mechanics, clerks, riggers, cooks, drivers and hundreds of others who faithfully and diligently served in the support roles so that the bombers might fly.

Research for this study began in 1974 at the USAF Museum, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, and continued in various libraries and repositories, and with individuals throughout the United States. The author is particularly indebted to the personnel of the National Archives' General Records Division at Suitland, Maryland, where numerous visits were made to search mission records and other data, and to the staff of the Simpson Research Center, Air University, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

While these repositories were gold mines of information, it was ultimately the veterans of the 306th who furnished much of the human interest material. Many of them recounted incidents about which they had not talked since leaving England or the prisoner of war camps in Germany.

Sometimes this recall was a very painful experience. They also delved into personal files to find records, diaries and pictures, all of which were willingly loaned and became invaluable in trying to reconstruct those days.

While one might assume that the records would be intact and would contain all the necessary information, I quickly learned that many vital papers were missing and that some were never saved. Often I later located needed copies one by one, in the possession of individuals.

The interest and cooperation of the 306th veterans was phenomenal. There was also a group of these men who generously provided funds so that the research could be pushed beyond what my own resources could provide. To them I owe a special debt of gratitude. There have been others who have generously given of their time and expertise to this project. One friend loaned a WATS line for a year so that I could talk with men in far flung places. There were those who had no connection with the 306th but who became fascinated with my quest and gave me great assistance.

A special mention must be made of Col. John L. Ryan, who one night in Colorado Springs graciously offered to serve as the critic for my manuscript. Once he began reading he spent many hours in helping resolve all kinds of technical, historical and grammatical problems, to the end that the book you read is better for his efforts.

Like any historian, I have been confronted with the necessity to pick and choose from among the available data and stories. Initially I selected seventy-five missions about which to write, later expanding the list to perhaps a hundred. In the course of collecting information I was forced sometimes to discard good stories that could not be verified; some I chose to use, although with trepidation. I also had to face the problem of which eye witness account to use concerning a particular incident. Those who find their version missing have my apologies.

Unfortunately, I cannot mention all of those who have contributed in so many ways to the completion of this history. I appreciate the patience of those who have been close to the work, especially members of my family, for it has been a seven-year task. Living with the 306th in 1944 was exciting, sometimes terrifying. Returning to the 306th from 1975 until 1982 has been a most rewarding and enjoyable experience.

## More Issues of 'Echoes'

Here's my help for future issues of **Echoes**!

I enclose \$\_\_\_\_\_ to support the production and mailing of the 306th **Echoes**. I also want to support continuing reunion activities for those who once served.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Wm. M. Collins, Jr.  
2973 Heatherbrae Drive  
Poland, OH 44514



A 306th ceramic mug with YOUR squadron insignia and your name is now available, created under the direction of Casey Jones, onetime Group navigator. They sell for \$10 each. Send your name as you want it to appear on the mug, and your squadron, to LTC C. F. Jones, 40 Arthur Matthew East, Hanover, MA 02339.

## OUR BRITISH 'CONNECTION'

Cyril and Mary Norman  
16 Rye Crescent  
Cople  
Bedford, England

John and Diane Mills  
16 Ibbett Close  
Kempston  
Bedford, England

Keith and June Paul  
2 The Lodge  
Clapham  
Bedford, England

## Response

To the Editor:

Thanks very much for the copies of your newspaper, "Echoes." I enjoyed reading them, and particularly the story of the lad who escaped from the German prison camp, which I thought was fantastic.

I was one of the ones from the 94th who spent about two weeks at Thurleigh, and I still have some memories of the place. Particularly on the day we arrived having just flown the Atlantic—they were short of quarters and put us in one of the British huts which had no stove, no mattresses on the beds, and most of the windows were out. We just lay down in our full flying clothes and woke up next morning to find an inch of snow in the ground. Some welcome to England!

We were impressed with you lads who were all wearing ribbons—or so it seemed—and figured you must be heroes. It was only later that we found that everybody still around after five missions automatically got an Air Medal.

The more I read of accounts of the first year in the ETO, the more I realize that the good Lord was certainly looking after me to bring me through 25 missions without a scratch. You're doing a good job keeping the boys together, and reminding our citizens that we defended the great freedoms of America, (although in some pretty strange places), which so many now take for granted. Keep up the good work!

Col. F. H. "Pappy" Colby

Ed Note: Colby is believed to have been the oldest combat officer in the Eighth to have flown a full tour.

## Continuing 306th Research

Although the new history of the 306th is completed, there will be continuing research conducted on the group in attempting to bring together an even more complete picture. This involves the ongoing search for men who served. If you wish to assist in this effort, send your contributions to

Russell A. Strong  
2041 Hillside  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

## Britons Ask Help to Preserve Last Flying Fortress

Edited by Shirley Clark

THE LAST British-based operational Flying Fortress, which the British call "20 tons of nostalgia," is going to be grounded unless its sponsors raise enough money for four (comparatively) new engines. At last count, there were about 50 hours time remaining on the engines, which are being operated at reduced power to save wear and tear.

The *Sally B* is painted to represent an aircraft of the 749 Squadron, 457 Bomb Group of the Eighth Air Force, which was stationed at Glatton in Huntingdon during WW-II.

In raising funds to keep *Sally B* flying, Euroworld is offering B-17 mementos for sale — pensets, neckties, photoprints, metal USAF pilot wings, 8th Air Force stickers, badges, Flying Fortress first day covers, coasters, and a signed limited edition of a *Sally B* painting by artist Anthony Harold.

John Walsh may be contacted at Dept. PP, 44 Dietz Road, Hyde Park, MA 02136; more information on the mementos also may be obtained from B-17 Sales, Dept. PP, c/o Euroworld, 277-279 Chiswick High Road, London W4, England, Europe.

Gordon, Connir & Lloyd Richards  
14 Pavenham Road  
Oakley  
Bedford, England

John Hadfield  
9, Brook Lane  
Harrod  
Bedford England



thought. I looked over at Charles and motioned him to be quiet. As we traveled on, Todd rode right through the herd and out front past all the herd, past Charles and me, and didn't ever notice we were there. He rode until daddy stopped him out in the lead and sent him back. I suppose he was living some character in one of his stories."

Another anecdote tells of Todd working at a dude ranch. "He was always showing off. This time he was riding a young horse. As he came to a low railing - he was showing off for a young lady and her young brother, he decided to make this untrained horse jump the railing. He rode out galloping toward the rail; the horse stopped, but Todd didn't. He hit the ground hard. Back in the saddle, out again, gallop, stop, hit the ground four times until the horse stumbled over the rail and Todd called it a jump. he never did give up even though it cost some hide and skinned places. Todd was that way, "do what you set out to do." He was determined to finish what he started, a characteristic which later served him well.

Except for the personal stories and shop talk, the trans-continental trip was uneventful. We landed at Westover for a stay of two weeks before proceeding overseas. Family that could, joined us for farewells. On August 14 ground personnel moved to Fort Dix for staging.

On the 30th, skeleton crews took off for Gander, Newfoundland, and Greenwood, Scotland. The rest of us boarded the Queen Elizabeth along with about 16,000 military personnel plus the ship's crew. Life on board meant two meals a day and was very crowded. We landed at Greenock, Scotland, without event, although the Germans broadcast that the 306th had gone down to its grave at the bottom of the Atlantic. From Greenock we proceeded by train to Bedford and Thurleigh. Crews and personnel were eventually reunited.

Preparations for the first bombing mission to the Fives-Lille Locomotive works in France got underway with the valued help of RAF liaison. Good enemy intelligence, as evidenced by the swarm of FW 190's waiting for us, made this a costly mission. Our popular CO, Col. Overacker, led the group with Capt. James Johnston of the 369th squadron as co-pilot. Following this mission bad weather set in, so Operations spent the time studying available data for answers. Crews were briefed on the German submarine pens off the French coast which were given priority at this stage. The enemy also considered the pens a priority to protect, which resulted in more costly raids by our 17s. The 306th Bomb Group's first Distinguished Flying Crosses were awarded to Capt. Robert C. Williams and Lt. Emmett Ford for their courage on these missions.

In mid winter tension was relieved briefly when Carole Landis, Martha Ray, Kay Francis and Mitzi Mayfair, a pretty quartet from the USO,

visited Thurleigh. Rather heavy casualties had put the morale at a low ebb but the girls helped the 306th celebrate a victory the night before they left us. Carol later wrote a book, *FOUR JILLS IN A JEEP*, relating her experiences on the tour. It was made into a movie starring her and Martha Raye.

The subpens retained priority for almost half of the targets until the summer of 1943. Twice I got permission to go on missions, but was ordered off just before the planes taxied. Both of these planes were lost. One 3 January 1943 a mission was scheduled for the St. Nazaire subpens. The day before, I asked Cranmer if I could go with him. He and the crew tried to discourage me but reluctantly agreed. Arizona Harris had received the Air Medal for a similar raid in November and knew only too well what to expect.

From time to time the rosters of the crews changed. Meyers, Haire, Wyly, Danna and Hanson were taken from Cranmer's crew and distributed among new crews to give them the benefit of their experience. Among the replacements for the "Fitin' Bitin'" crew, as Charlie Cranmer's plane was dubbed, were Willima Musck, Robert Ransom and Edgar Whitaker.

The night before the mission, Charlie and I were talking it over in the bar. "Why do you want to stick your neck out, Rich?", he asked me. "You've stretched you luck twice - that's enough. Don't tempt fate again."

"You go," I reminded him.

"Well, maybe we are all crazy, maybe. But this is war, we volunteered, so we go - to make the world safe for democracy," he added with ironic humor, raising his glass in mock tribute.

Early next morning, I suited up and climbed aboard his plane. Arizona and the old timers were giving the newcomers last minute advice as they took their stations. The quiet and somber atmosphere gave me a queasy feeling. Why DID I stick my neck out? And then engines were revved, chucks removed, the plane started to move. Just then, over the intercom, Operations ordered me off. Each time the reason had been that Intelligence officers were needed to debrief the crews on their return.

I jumped off and watched the Fortresses disappear in the dawn. Ten boys, the cream of American youth were headed for Destiny. Among them, a good-natured, red-headed farm boy named Arizona Todd Harris, who had the soul of a poet with the unflinching courage to finish whatever he started.

Thurleigh is a modest little village in the heart of the John Bunyan country in Bedfordshire. On bicycles we could explore the country lanes, the green fields and gardens of the little cottages where hospitality often offered us tea and biscuits. Thurleigh is eight miles from the town of Bedford which was



## Klette Given Silver Star

PLATTSBURGH AFB, N.Y. - A former deputy commander of the 380th Bombardment Wing here has been awarded the Silver Star for a mission he led nearly 37 years ago.

Retired Col. Immanuel J. Klette earned the medal for actions against the Leuna synthetic oil plant in Merseberg, Germany, near Leipzig during World War II. Paperwork initiating the award was lost during the war. It was finally presented to Klette on July 11, 1981, as part of the 380th's silver anniversary celebration.

As a major, Klette led the entire 8th Air Force of 1000 bombers and 900 fighters on the Nov. 21, 1944 raid. He was cited for gallantry because of the military operations he conducted against an armed enemy of the United States.

Klette, who also served as commander of Plattsburgh during

the base's construction, established several records during his tour of duty in Europe.

Most heavy bombardment missions by a pilot in ETO-91.

Most combat hours in heavy bombardment by a pilot in the ETO-689 hours, 25 minutes.

Pilot and aircraft commander who had the most element/squadron/group/wing/division/task force/air force leads in heavy bombardment in ETO-73.

First pilot to fly more than 25 missions.

First pilot to land a B-17 returning home from a combat mission on one engine with three engines feathered.

First pilot to crash land a B-17 returning from a combat mission on instruments and at night with the entire crew surviving.

the center of agricultural exchange and noted for its fine schools. Among the town's historical attractions is the John Bunyan Museum. But of immediate interest to the officers and GIs were the in-town British and American Red Cross services, clubs and canteens, the pleasant parks and, in summer, boating on the River Ouse. The British Isles are on a latitude approximately between Newfoundland and Greenland, consequently the winter days are very short and the summer days last into the night - much to the chagrin of the 306th. When the boys took their dates in the summer evenings to the park, or sat with them on the banks of the Ouse, any show of affection was so obvious. Modesty reigned for a brief time and then it was, Who cares?

During the autumn days of September, Arizona met an English girl and fell in love with her. In the grim reality of war his heart seemed freed of hidden restraints. He wrote

his family of his new-found happiness, but fate intervened before he could fulfill that love.

Sunday morning following the fateful 3rd of January raid, I visited the John Bunyan Museum. I wished to ponder the Bard's philosophy in his *PILGRIM'S PROGRESS*, wherein he speaks of birth, life, death, Divine Justice and the wages of sin. But I found no answer to the ubiquitous question asked by the boys: Who ties the tickets on the bombs and bullets? Perhaps no one can truly answer.

In World War I, a young American poet named Alan Seeger, who had joined the French Foreign Legion was killed in Flanders Fields. In the trenches before he died, he penned a verse which concludes, "I have a rendezvous with Death, and I shall not fail that rendezvous." Arizona Todd Harris and his crew would merit such an epitaph. So would all the boys of the 306th, and legions of others who shared in Winged Victory.



# Restaurant

(From page 1)

From Strong's collection of 306th pictures had come most of the views shown throughout the restaurant. Because there were so many local dignitaries present on Thursday evening, Mr. Talichett extended an invitation to 306th men and their wives to attend a special dinner on Friday night. Some 200 letters of invitation were sent to men living in the southeast.

Again there on Friday were Col. Overacker, Smith, Collins, Strong, and Bert Perlmutter, Earl Shapland, William Cassedy, Milton Edwards, Daniel Schlessel, Jack Webb, Mace Fatigati, Jack Hubbard, C.J. Crowl, Henderson Knight, Ewald Jensen, Trygve Olsen, Joseph Consolmagno, William Rizzo, Frank Cargill, Harry Doles, Alton Blair, Walter Morey, Harold Schrecongost, Robert Folk, Russell Sheldon, Waldemar Madsen, Joseph Columbus, Henry percis, John Wanning and Art Paul, a "friend" of the 306th, was also on hand.

Like the 94th Aero Squadron, the 306th building has the appearance outwardly more of a farm house than of the quonset and other metal and concrete structures of Thurleigh. A large American flag flies in the front yard, and jeeps and ambulances are parked around.

Inside one is quickly face by pictures, including a prominent one of Snuffy Smith receiving the Medal of Honor from Secretary of War Henry Stimson. Walls throughout the restaurant have an abundance of pictures. Large windows overlook the adjacent airport, and for this opening an attempt was made to have a B-17 on hand, but none could be found and placed there for a reasonable cost.

The guests on both night were provided an excellent meal featuring prime rib for the entree. All expressed their great satisfaction with the meal and the service accorded everyone.

Now when you travel down Florida's west coast, plan for a meal at the 306th Bomb Group Restaurant. Identify yourself and have a good look at the pictures. They will stir up all kinds of memories for you.

## Strong Attends 306th Birthday

On January 30 the 306th Strategic Wing, stationed at Mildenhall AFB, 23 miles northeast of Cambridge, England, celebrated the 40th anniversary of the founding of the 306th Bombardment Group.

Russell A. Strong, 306th historian and editor of *Echoes*, was the speaker for the occasion, attending at the invitation of Col. Rochard Giordano, present 306th commander.

A full report of the activities carried on there will appear in the April issue of *Echoes*.

## 8th Editor at Open House

LTC John Woolnough, editor of the 8th AF NEWS and a leading figure in the establishment and development of the 8th AF Association, was among those special guests who attended the opening of the 306th Bomb Group Restaurant in Sarasota.

Woolnough had considerable influence in the selection of the 306th for the naming of this restaurant.

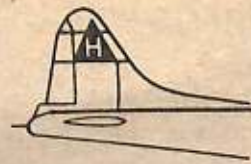
The editor of ECHOES was also interested in Woolnough's comment that "306th ECHOES is the best

newspaper now published by any of the bomb groups.

We'd like to think that is true, but we refuse to rest on our laurels and hope to produce better papers for you in the future.

Look for the 306th in future issues of the 8th AF NEWS, including coverage about the restaurant and also a repeat of the Snuffy Smith story that appeared last summer.

It costs \$8 to join the 8th AF Historical Society and to receive quarterly issues of the newspaper. Write to 8th AFHS, 495 NE 157 Terrace, Miami, FL 33162.



306TH ECHOES is published four times annually by the 306th Bombardment Group Historical Association, in January, April, July and October.

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Each issue is prepared and printed at Kalamazoo, MI, and editorial contributions are welcomed and should be sent to the editor. Mailing is from Poland, OH, and new addresses, changes and deletions should be sent to the contact man.



# PAN AM

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306th BOMB GROUP



307th, 368th, 389th, 423rd Squadrons, and service organizations  
Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England - September 1942 April 1945

## THE 306th RETURNS TO THURLEIGH, OCTOBER 3, 1982, TO CELEBRATE THE 40th ANNIVERSARY OF OUR ARRIVAL

### WHY GO BACK AFTER 40 YEARS?

### TO DEDICATE A MONUMENT & PLAQUE TO ALL OF US

### "WHO SERVED AND FOUGHT FOR FREEDOM"

### THE PROGRAM INCLUDES RENEWING OLD AND CHERISHED FRIENDSHIPS, "PUBBING" ON LEND LEASE BIKES, REVISITING THE PLACES THAT WERE THE GI HANGOUTS, PLUS MANY OTHER FUN ACTIVITIES.

PACKAGE A — 7 DAYS/6 NIGHTS THURLEIGH (Bedford)

INCLUDES:

- 6 Nights Deluxe Accommodations at the Bedford Moat Hotel (Sorry, the Swan couldn't handle us)
- 4 Nights dinner including banquet and Glenn Miller style dancing the evening of dedication
- Full English Breakfast daily
- All transfers by private Frames motorcoach (the Gray Line of England)
- Excursions to Shuttleworth Antique Aircraft Museum, Duxford Imperial War Museum, the American Cemetery at Cambridge and Tour of Base.
- All Tips and V.A.T., Private Tour Escorts, Plus Many Extra Surprises

PACKAGE B — 5 DAYS/4 NIGHTS THURLEIGH (Bedford)  
3 DAYS/2 NIGHTS LONDON

INCLUDES:

- 4 Nights Deluxe Accommodations at the Bedford Moat Hotel (Sorry, the Swan couldn't handle us)
- 4 Nights dinner including banquet and Glenn Miller style dancing the evening of dedication
- Full English Breakfast daily
- All transfers by private Frames motorcoach (the Gray Line of England)
- Excursions to Shuttleworth Antique Aircraft Museum, Duxford Imperial War Museum, the American Cemetery at Cambridge and Tour of Base.
- 2 Nights Deluxe Accommodations at the Kensington Palace Hotel, London
- All Tips and V.A.T., Private Tour Escorts, Plus Many Extra Surprises

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A Minimum Deposit of \$100.00 per person for both the land and air package is required with this reservation form.  
Enclosed is my deposit in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Check  Money Order. Payable to 306 Bomb Group Memorial Assoc. Trust Fund.

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Houston — \$650

Miami — \$540  
L.A. — \$763

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San Francisco — \$763

If you wish to stay longer than October 10, 1982, the airfare paid is guaranteed as outlined above in the sample airfares, however; a date of return must be specified at time of ticketing. (Land Package price is for the original 7days/6 nights only.) Reservations may be cancelled 60 days prior to departure with no penalty.