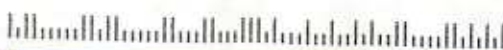


306th Echoes

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It's Savannah December 4 - 7

My wife and I spent a night in Myrtle Beach in late fall, seeing the Christmas Show at the Alabama Theatre.

The following morning we breakfasted with friends and then headed south along the swampbordered highways with Savannah as our objective. We checked in with the Tourist Bureau and visited several hotels, staying that night in a new Radisson Hotel there (we were in a Radisson in Covington last year.)

But after traveling around the city and in consideration of all things, we again opted for the Marriott Riverfront. Many of you were with us in 1998 at our previous Savannah visitation, and once again we'll find its spaciousness, its decor (all new room furniture) and its food to your liking.

Savannah can be a pretty sticky area in the fall, and we finally have selected December 4 to 7 as our dates there. A Marriott registration form can be found on page 8.

Marty Lenaghan, the son of a 306er now deceased, will serve as our on-site chairman. Some of us are getting a bit long in the tooth for that assignment, and when one of our active children volunteered it seemed wise to accept the offer. Highlighting our schedule once again will be a day at The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum on the far end of the Savannah Airport and at Exit 102 on I-95. The area around "our" museum has

grown quite a bit since our previous visit and there are small hotels right there' But they lack many of the things we like in hotels so were passed over at this time. If you drop in for your own visit at the museum some time you will find ample places in which to stay. But this time we will take buses from our hotel to the museum and back. We hope to be able to develop a round trip feature that will permit some of the wives perhaps to make their ritual visit and then find time for other activities in downtown Savannah.

Many arrangements are yet to be made, and you will learn more about our activities in the April, July and October issues of Echoes. Now it can be time for you to make your hotel reservation, and then to encourage your 306th friends, other fans of the 306th and the 8th, and your children, grandchildren etc to make plans for Savannah in the nice weather of the late fall season on the southeastern coast of the U. S.

See you in Savannah in '03!

Remember Our Color Source

Dr. Herman Kaye, 423rd, through his generosity has made possible the use of color in future issues of Echoes. He likes it. The editor likes it. And, we are sure that our faithful readership finds it acceptable. But, we want to assure you that Dr.

Kaye also has his fellow man in mind. To this end we call attention to page 7, where we include a letter addressed to Dr. Kaye by another recipient of his thoughtfulness and concern for the health of others.

Fox elected to Lead SSMA

Edward K. Fox, 369th engineer and now a resident of Seminole, FL, is the current president of the Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association, succeeding Bud Klint, in that post. Fox follows J.P. Noack, his 369th pilot by two years. In fact, Fox was flying that 14 Oct 43 mission with Noack in one of our five returning planes.

Fox was badly wounded that day, went to the 2nd General Hospital on return and was later transferred to the U. S. for continuing treatment.

Presentation of the Distinguished Service Cross was made in May 1944 at the Deshon General Hospital, Butler, PA, but as he was long gone from the 306th, information about the award was never connected to the 306th until a story appeared in Echoes in July of 1988, some 44 years after he had received the medal. Fox is one of six to have received the medal during WWII.

Also continuing to serve the SSMA is George G. Roberts, 367th radio operator, has had several terms as treasurer.

Mississippians in the Mighty Eighth

This is an anthology, and has come to the 306th Library through the good offices of George G. Roberts 367th radioman. He wrote to pieces in the book; "A Home Away from Home" and "Royalty Christens

a Fortress." Roy Trask, 423rd, authored "A Task for Trask." Three natives are listed among the KIA's: Buford Branum 423rd, Herbert C. Edelstein 367th and Harold Richard 423rd. One of ours was on the POW list: William V. Harris 423rd.



So, you thought the Thurleigh Airfield you once knew had disappeared? Some of the elements still remain, even in the middle of things. This is a picture of the principal driving course now operating there, but just to the left of center is a portion of our 24 runway, and dropping straight down from that is a portion of one of the short cross runways. The strip below shows some the garage area which is now on the Thurleigh scene.



Obituaries

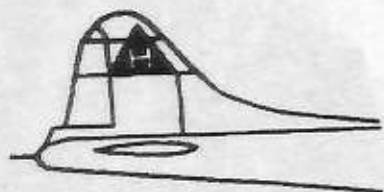
Charles W. Armuth, 369th waist gunner (Ethan Allen crew) died in Aug 2002. He came to the Group 15 May 44 and completed his combat tour, departing 5 Sep 44.

Rex C. Barber, first sergeant of the 369th Squadron, died 20 Dec 2002 in Syracuse, UT. He came to the 306th 1 Apr 42, and left in Jan 44, graduating from OCS in Apr 44. From then on he was assigned to the Air Service Group in China. He was also on active duty in Korea. Barber worked in a Job Corps Center for 30 years, and owned a public accounting business in Syracuse. He also served as mayor of Syracuse for eight years. In 1992 he took a 306th group to Scotland following the Group reunion in England. He leaves his wife, Delsa, 2c, 5gc, 5ggc.

Andrew L. Graham, 423rd bombardier and POW (Loyal Felts' crew), died 5 Mar 02 in Pulaski, VA, where he had worked and also served as mayor. He was on Felts' original crew, and went down on a mission to St. Nazaire. After release he went to Virginia Tech, graduating in 1948. Until 1986 he was with Appalachian Power Co., retiring as marketing and customer service manager. Andrew was also a town councilman for 24 years and mayor from 1994 to 1997. He leaves his wife, Elrica, 2c, 4gc.

Richard D. Holt, an original ground officer with the 367th Squadron, died 26 Sep '98 in Durham, NC. On orders to Richmond, VA, and then overseas, his name disappeared from our records. He earned his BS at NCStU in 1948, and retired as physical plant director at the state's John Umstead Hospital.

Renato P. Iafrate, 369th ball turret gunner (Harvey Ryder crew), died in mid-Dec 98 in Smithfield, RI. He arrived with the group 13 Dec 44 and flew through the end of the war. He became a skilled sharpener of hockey skates and was much in demand by



Leland Kessler, president; Anthony J. Conroy, vice president; Russell A. Strong, secretary; Robert N. Houser, treasurer; Royce Hopkins, William F. Houlihan, Hugh E. Phelan, Frederick P. Sherman, directors; Lowell W. Burgess, past president.

Ralph Franklin, British representative, National School Cottage, Keysoe, Beds., MK44 2HP, England; Telephone from U.S. 011-44-1234-708715.

306th Echoes is published four times annually: January, April, July and October, and is mailed free of charge to all known addresses of 306th personnel, 1942-45. Contributions in support of this effort may be remitted to the treasurer.

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The 306th Bomb Group Historical Association is a Federally tax-exempt organization and as a veteran's group is classified as 501 (c) (19).

college and professional teams. He leaves his wife, Mary, 2c, 3gc, 2ggc.

James A. Laine, 367th bombardier (Joseph Downing crew) and POW (w. John Ryan), died 1 Nov 02 in Snellville, GA. He joined the Group 12 Dec 42 on one of the very early replacement crews, and was MIA 6 Mar 43 on a St. Nazaire raid. After the war he spent 30 years with Gulf Oil, retiring in 1982 as real estate director. Laine then lived in Bradenton and leaves 1s.

Harold F. Lightbown, 369th radio operator (John Howard crew), and later a gunnery officer in the 384th BG, died 10 Dec 02 in Wakefield, MA, where he had lived since his retirement from his own printing business. He was the 49th EM to complete a combat tour 10 Jul 43. In his later years he was an ardent supporter of youth soccer. Harold was a regular reunion attendee and leaves his wife, Arlene, 3c, 7gc.

Edward J. Lindsay, 423rd pilot, died of cancer in May 83 in Buffalo, NY. He completed his 35 missions in Feb 45, having arrived 12 Sep 44. Lindsay later worked for Carton Craft in Buffalo, and leaves his wife, Eileen, 2c, 2gc.

Raymond W. Litka, 368th gunner (Lester Evans crew), died 24 Sep 02 in Sioux Falls, SD. His home was in Jasper, MN, where he had been a mechanic for John Deere. He arrived with the 306th 27 Dec 44, and flew during the rest of the war. He had a leg amputated a year before his death, and never fully recovered. He leaves his second wife, Beulah, 4c, 5gc, 2ggc.

Jack R. Martin, 423rd electrician, died 1 Nov 02 in Portland, OR. He leaves his wife, Eva, 3d, 6gc, 6ggc.

H. Kenneth McCaleb, 367th navigator (James Parks' crew) and POW (w. William Bisson), died 8 Oct 02 in Huntsville, AL, where he had lived for many years. He had been a mechanical engineer for NASA. In 1939 he founded the student newspaper at Missouri Southern State College, and in 1998 he and his wife, Margaret, made a gift to the college and founded The McCaleb Initiative for Peace there. Besides his wife, he leaves 1s, 3gc.

Maj. Mack McKay, an original pilot with the 423rd Squadron, died 24 Oct 02 in Los Alamitos, CA, after suffering for an extended period with emphysema. He earned his wings with Class 41-E at Brook Fld., TX. On 20 Jan 43, he took command of the 368th Squadron and headed it until 8 Apr 43, returning then to the States to lecture as an expert on B-17 combat operations. In the States he became director of training at a major crew training base, once again working for Col. J. W. Wilson, first 423rd CO. Mack drove himself in that job until he suffered a breakdown, and was given a medical discharge 16 Apr 44. He later flew with the Flying Tigers organization and was an investment broker. He and his first wife had five daughters, all still living, and he is also survived by his third wife, Eldona, 10gc, 12ggc.

Keith E. Miller, 449th Subdepot, died 9 Nov 02 in Farmland, IN. He



O.K., Here's the Scoop! They are all 423rd and they all lived in the infamous DINGLEBERRY HALL! They can't hide any longer in anonymity. A small picture in the editor's file had everyone named except for one person, the only non-flyer in this group. Back row: Robert L. Nabors Nav, Charles E. Jordon N, Fred A. Brockway N. Middle row: John J. O'Brien P, Jacob J. Quintis CP, Alfred Ashton B, Ken Herbster ground officer, Harold Fossum P, William Finkelstein N. Front row: William L. Ryan B., James G. Seymour CP, James C. Chambers B, Wilbur C. Weiland P, John Horkulic B and Except for Ken, they were members of the O'Brien, Fossum and Weiland crews, except that gives us two more bombardiers than we needed!

served successively on the stoker detail, on the gas tank replacement crew, and as an assistant crew chief. Keith came to the 306th May 43 and departed in Jan 46. He was a mortician. Keith leaves his wife, Readae, 2c, 4gc, 3ggc.

Thomas A. Nagy, 423rd crew chief, died 30 Dec 02 in Perryopolis, PA. He leaves his wife, Phyllis.

Oliver J. (Snapper) Nasby, 423rd tail gunner (John Baldwin crew), was killed 3 Aug 2002 when the motorcycle he was driving hit a deer near Liberty, IL. After going back to college, he reversed course, reentered the Air Force and became a bomber pilot. He flew missions in the Korean affray. He leaves his wife, Darlene, 3c, 3gc.

Henry B. Osterhoudt, 369th gunner (Clifford McBride crew), died 1 Mar 02 in Orlando, FL. He came to combat 25 Feb 44 and completed his tour in late June.

Orlie Parker, Jr, DDS, died 5 Jan 03 in North Little Rock, AR. He was in the original Group, arriving at Wendover, UT, 3 Apr 42, and holding a variety of clerical jobs in the 368th Squadron. After service he attended AR Tech, Rhodes Univ, and the UTenn Dental College. He had recently been honored by the Arkansas Dental Society for having spent 50 years as a licensed dentist. He served on the Arkansas Constitutional

Convention in 1979, and also served as sergeant at arms of the Arkansas House of Representatives and the Arkansas Senate after retirement from his dental practice. He leaves his wife, Christine, 4c, 10gc.

J. Calvin Scoles, 369th radio operator (George Schneider crew), died 12 Nov 02 in Billings, MT. He joined the Group 29 Jun 44 and finished his tour in Dec. He leaves his wife, Betty.

306th Family

Dorothy Franklin Cavaness, widow of William Cavaness, 368th, died in Nov 02 in California where she had been hospitalized for some months. Bill died 27 Dec 95 in San Antonio. They were married in Bedford, England, and had two children. She is survived by a daughter, Jane Wirtz, who often accompanied her mother to reunions, and 5gc. The Cavaness' only son died some years ago. Bill was a master sergeant in charge of the general repair group, and he was a USAF retiree as a chief master sergeant. He was the 306th Association president in 1993-94.

Kitty Hulings, widow of Tom Hulings, the last 368th CO, died 2 Oct 02, and was interred in Provincetown, MA. Tom died 8 Jul 98 in Atlanta, GA, where they had long been resident. She leaves 2c, 2gc.

306th PUBLICATIONS

Published materials now available from the Group will help you follow the 306th through the combat period 1942-45:

Combat Diaries of the 306th Squadrons

Day by day diaries kept by intelligence officers, of the Squadrons' combat activities. More than 150 pages, also including plane and personnel rosters. Plastic bound

Men of the 306th, on microfilm

A roll of 16mm film duplicates the 306th card file of nearly 9,000 men, including data extracted from various 306th records, and personal data on some of the men. 1995 edition.

Mission Reports

Copies of official reports on each mission you flew, including intelligence summaries, track charts, formations and crew interrogation reports. Data for some missions may be missing from the files. Three missions for \$5.

ORDER FORM

306th ECHOES' Book	\$55.00
Sept. 02 Directory	\$10.00
367th Combat Diary	\$20.00
368th Combat Diary	\$20.00
369th Combat Diary	\$20.00
423rd Combat Diary	\$20.00
Casey Jones Project	\$10.00
Men of the 306th (16mm film)	\$20.00

Make check payable to: 306th Bomb Group Association (prices quoted include postage and packaging charge)

Name:

Mailing Address:

Send to: Secretary, 306th BGA, 5323 Cheval Pl., Charlotte, NC 28205

An Idea + Pilots' Names + Crew Pictures + Photo Albums = A Book for Reunioners to Pour Over

This all began when the editor mulled over his large collection of combat crews, and is now moving into book form after some thinking through about a way to entertain a lot of people at reunions, and perhaps bringing together more and better information about combat crews.

Most of two new photo albums he bought a year ago will eventually be used to hold the battery of pictures. Collecting crew pictures became a project when Echoes began running identified crew pictures several years ago. Sometimes there was one and sometimes there were 20 or more. He now has accumulated in the neighborhood of 275 pictures, and is still looking for more. There were more crews than that. Most came to Thurleigh, learned about combat flying and flew their tour, which might have been only 1, or the more standard totals of 25, which went to 30, finally for the last 10 months was 35.

But as we all know these crews fluctuated in their membership. Whole crews "quit" on a pilot, pilots were KIA and someone else got a crew. New crews were formed out of the remains of several crews. Because of all the changes in personnel, some men flew on a variety of crews, and evidently some crews flew most of their missions intact.

There was no provision at Thurleigh for regularly capturing crews on photo film. Francis Waugh explained that in the early days there were not enough photo snappers, not enough time, not enough supplies, and everyone was dedicated to getting the planes into the air and flying the missions.

But a number of crew pictures were shot at Thurleigh, but spasmodically. Others came with pictures taken at crew training in the States. The editor can pretty well spot the ones shot at Alexandria, LA. There is a sameness about them. Some enterprising first pilots got all of their men to a local photographer and had a studio portrait made. Others were taken by someone with a small camera. Many of them have ground crews or other passersby take the pictures.

At this writing more than 200 crew pictures, whatever their origins may be are reposing in the editor's office and these will go to Savannah in December for your viewing, if you are there. It is a 'trip' to look through a hundred crew pix and find out all of the things that could happen when from four to ten men, even 15 men, got together for some snapshots.

The original pictures, which came in all shapes and sizes, have been copied on a Kodak Picture Maker, and then standardized to a 5x7 format. More get blown up than reduced. The copies turn out beautifully and emphasis is on the people not the airplanes men are much easier to identify. Most are horizontal, but some are vertical. A few have the crews in a long line and they are copied 4x10 and then arranged sideways on the pages. There are two photos on each page, regardless of size or orientation.

Perhaps best of all, each of the men pictured is placed in a large index, so that you can find yourself and your crew. The pages are organized by the last names of the first pilots at the time you came to Thurleigh. But we have a number of crews who came into being as pickups from a variety of crews. Some men do appear in more than one picture and there is probably at least one person who will be found in three photos.

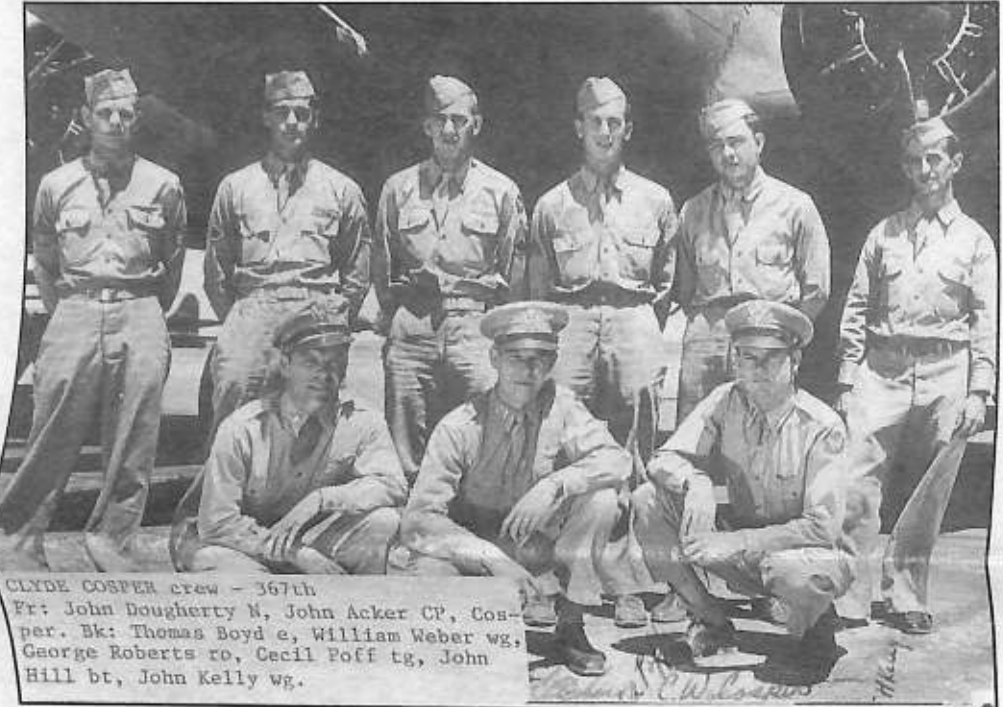
Unpictured crews may also be listed in the book but if you renew a search for a long missing crew picture, and are successful, we will be able to work it into the book. A number of the pictures are not just limited to flying crews. There is at least one wife pictured and one small son. Some crew chiefs are included along with mechanics and armorers, and a few passersby who were invited in, or just jumped in front of the camera. At this writing we have no idea how many different men are included.

By the way, as we are trying to include all the names, we must report that Max Bowles, a 423rd crew chief is pictured along with three other men on the ground crew. We need to know the names of "Jim, Sad Sack and Mac." Pleaseeeeeee!

Examples of pages in Crew Book



JAMES D. CORCORAN crew - 369th
Fr: Bernard Hagen cc, Frank Bisignano tg, Chas Nagel e, Robt Fowler wg, HW Haskins bt, Earl McKenna mech. Bk: Nathan Gordon B, John MacPherson N, James Corcoran P, Barney Silverman CP



CLYDE COSPER crew - 367th
Fr: John Dougherty N, John Acker CP, Coper. Bk: Thomas Boyd e, William Weber wg, George Roberts ro, Cecil Poff tg, John Hill bt, John Kelly wg.



COL. FRANK A. ARMSTRONG, 27 Jan 1945, first rank to Germany
Bk: Armstrong P, Robert Salimik N, Frank Yuss B, Joseph Collette e, Charles Hill wg, Raymond Erickson St, Donald Tustall tg, Robert Savage ro, Claude Putman CP, Fr: Thomas Karberovich, Roy Ploeger, John R. Stone, Jackson Van Diver, William Pangle, William Gilchrist, Joseph Broussard, Jesse Ellis, and Wm Feczer cc.



JOHN BARNETT crew - 423rd
Fr: Norman Nelson B, Herbert Doer N, Barnett, unk. Bk: Walter Morgan wg, Bernard Papiela wg, Walter Crawford tg, David Goldberg ro, Frederick Mannello e.

Dues? No! Gifts? Yes!

It does take money to keep the 306th Association flying. Those who are able are asked to make an annual contribution to keep everything running smoothly. No one is dropped from the mailing list for non-payment! Your gift is tax deductible.

Please accept my gift to the 306th BG Association: \$ _____

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306th Bomb Group Association
P.O. Box 13362
Des Moines, IA 50310

DATE _____

Baltimore Church has Puzzling Plaque



Bill Carlisle, a control tower officer at Thurleigh, has lived in Baltimore for some years since retirement. There has been brought to his attention by the pastor of a Roman Catholic Church there a rather unique plaque with a tenuous connection to the 306th.

Bill is shown in the picture above perched rather high off the floor in the sanctuary so that he can read the plaque there. The bottom line of the inscription reads "306th Heavy Bombardment Group".

The lower picture shows a closeup of the wings which are attached.

"The pastor and I would like to know what the connection is between this church and the 306th. Who placed the plaque there? Why the 306th? Did fliers contribute the wings?"

Nothing has been found thus far, and guesses wander all over. But there seems to be little or no awareness of the plaque

among the present day congregation. Make a guess. Send the editor your best guess.



More Reunion Views



Caroline Tait (sister of Al McMahan 369th), Janet and Grover Goode 368th.



George and Elizabeth Stephens, 369th



Arleda and Dr. Wymond Wilson 369th



Karen and Ed Sandini, 369 with Jane and Vince Fredrick 369th



Ralph and Nell Bordner-368th entertained at Covington, their grandson, Capt. Ralph Bordner III, his wife Sariela and great-granddaughter Isabella. Capt. Bordner is an astronautical engineer stationed at Wright-Patterson AFB. Em Christianson 368W is in the center.



The Dancers: Gypsy & Nick Hoolko



The Tourist: Janice Ross sees Covington



Brice Robison 423rd and new wife



Jo and Ed Ronczy 367th

306th Needs Help Handling Sales

We need help from someone willing to take over sales of 306th merchandise as Jack Frost is no longer able to handle it all. If you are interested please contact Bob Houser, our longtime treasurer.

The task includes ordering necessary items, seeing up-to-date information is available for Echoes, customers are mailed items they request, and their checks are forwarded to Houser.

If interested in accepting this responsibility, contact Houser at 2412 48th Street, Des Moines, IA 50310 or at 515-279-4498.



Margaret and Anthony Santoro 369th



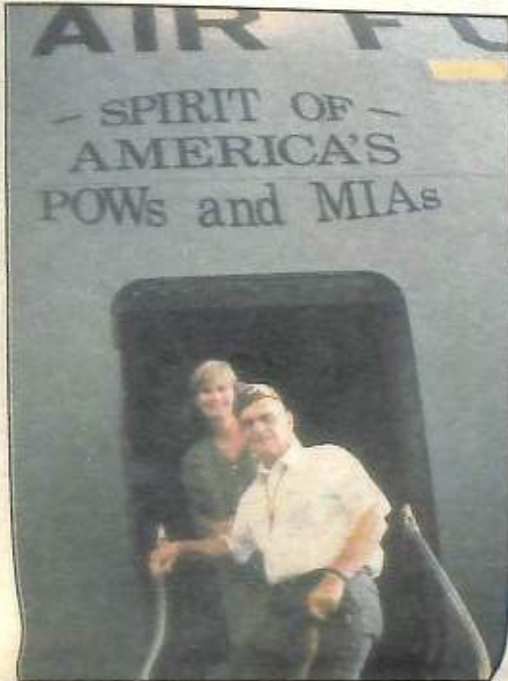
Alfred and Joannette Norman 369th



Wilma and Jack Frost 369th



Wallace and Betty Boring 368th



Robert Wadrop 367th and his daughter, Mary Ann, were at Charleston AFB 20 September to participate in the National POW/MIA Recognition program. Bob qualified by being a member of Franklin Ware's crew 4 Feb 44 when they were shot down over Germany. Bob and Mary Ann also inspected a new C-17 being dedicated on the Recognition day.



The nose of the Sally B intrudes on this array of new cars now being stored on pavement at Thurleigh



Royce and Molly Hopkins, at reunion banquet with Robbie Lanyon 423rd-W and Russ Houghton 368th.



The Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes fly side by side on the side of our 306th Museum at Thurleigh. This was a part of the crowd at the dedication last June.

Bailing Out, 3:41 p.m

By Myron Sorden

I overslept on my second morning at Thurligh. One of my crew members woke me up and told me "they" wanted me. I was to substitute for a navigator who had grounded himself, and I would be the first mission up on the rest of my regular crew.

I had no time for breakfast, but the jeep driver taking me out to the plane gave me a piece of coffee cake. I climbed aboard the B-17 as one engine was being started, and met the toggler, Sgt. Eugene Levy, also on his first mission. A few minutes later we were joined in the nose by Capt. Paul George, the Group assistant engineering officer. He was an old guy of 43. He brought some flak vests with him.

I remember seeing some P-47s over the Channel. Also I had taken a couple of sun fixes and was plotting the course of our flight. At ten thousand feet pilot Thomas Ledgerwood said to put on the oxygen masks. While we were over the Channel and approaching the coast of Holland, Capt. George said to put on the flak suits. Shortly after this I commented to Ledgerwood over the intercom that I had never seen so many small black clouds. He asked how many missions I had been on.

I replied, "None."

I heard over the intercom, "That's flak!"

Shortly afterwards, German ME-109s were coming through our Group. With three men in the nose, each firing a .50 caliber machine guns, it was very noisy and, with the spent shells on the floor, it was hard to stand up. After we had left the Initial Point on the way to the target, an ME-109 came directly at our nose.

Sgt. Levy screamed, "I got him!"

The fighter blew up not too far from our plane. Whether Levy got it, I cannot say, but someone did.

Anyway at this time, Levy hit the toggle switch, intentionally or accidentally, in his excitement. Russ Strong's history of the 306th Group, *First Over Germany*, says that all planes dropped their bombs after the deputy lead plane dropped theirs for some unexplained reason.

Through the Eye of the Needle

#9 of 10

Myron Sorden has authored one of the better chapters we have brought to you from the 306th men who appeared in *Through the Eye of the Needle*. His one day of aerial combat had more excitement than most wanted. As you will note from the heading above, there will be just one more story to appear. Sorden was the navigator on James Opdyke's crew, but never flew a mission with them. He had a degree from Penn College before the war, earned a Master's from the University of Iowa in 1947, became an accountant and retired from the Simpson College faculty in 1976 because of a disability. He died 8 Jan 1996.

There will be one more tale from this book, that of James V. Vaughter, who went to prison camp 14 October 1943 and for many years has been one of the most active members of the Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association.

We thank the Stalag Luft III organization for its permission to quote from their book, through the good offices of Gen. Albert F. Clark.



Recently Found Crews

Top is the crew pictures for William Winslow's 367th Crew: Winslow, Melvin Brecher B, Leonard Lanzito N, Shirly Ross CP. Em's Bk: Robt Templeton wg, Alvin Miller tg, Smedley Riles bt; Fr: Roscoe Bradley ro and Edgar Rommeiss e.

423rd: Fr: Ed Craig wg, Russ Schuetpelz bt, Louis Bagwell tg. Bk: Harold Boker e, Phil German B, Edward Lindsay P, Maurice Mullens CP, Jack Cullen ro.



We were the deputy lead. Our crew had limited combat experience. There was pilot Ledgerwood on his seventh or eighth mission, but his first after several months of convalescence recovering from a broken arm. John Acker, copilot, was on his first mission. Eugene Levy and I were on our first. Capt. George or his second or third mission and probably without authorization for any of them. Four gunners were from one crew, the rest of the six on their crew were sick. I don't have information on the other two gunners. My question is: why were we flying deputy lead for the Group?

Over the target area a plane from our group was there, and suddenly debris was hitting our aircraft and that plane was gone. Five gunners did get out alive from a crew on their 24th mission. Our plane was hit by rockets from an ME-110, damaging one or two engines, and the Tokyo tank on the right wing tip was streaming fire.

After leaving the formation we became target practice for several fighters. Ledgerwood said he was going to dive and see if he could put the fire out and maybe shake the fighters. I can't remember the airspeed but do remember that I knew he couldn't pull the plane out at that speed. Everyone in the nose was quiet and there was no chatter on the phone. Everyone was just waiting to die. I had heard that your life flashes before you at times like that. I remember only thinking of my wife and my high school sweetheart. Gradually the nose started to come up and we heard the order to bail out. The B-17 was a great plane. The fire was still with us, but the enemy fighters were gone.

I made an entry in the log book, "Bailing out, 3:41 p.m."

I took off my flak suit, which had been torn apart when I had been hit earlier by a shell. From the position I was standing and the hole in the plane, it would probably have hit my heart. Thank you, Capt. George, for bringing the suits. I reached for a parachute, making sure it didn't have

Benson Tale Tells Much of Earl's Life

Out of the Turret and Into Hell, by V. Elaine Benson. 2001. Order from the author: 1317 N Matlock St., Mesa, AZ 85203, \$25.00.

This is the story of Earl Benson, a memoir of his youth, and then primarily is devoted to his prison camp experience following the destruction of his aircraft 5 Apr 43. Kelly Ross' crew was shot from the skies near their target, the Erla Works, just outside Brussels, Belgium.

They were not alone, as three other crews from the Group were also shot from the afternoon skies by Luftwaffe fighters. It was not as disastrous as it might have been as 70% of crew members survived. Also "cashing" in that day were the crews of Robert Seelos, Clarence Fischer and William Parker. Again, it was the Clay Pitrons of the 367th who bore the brunt of onslaught as three of its crews were down, along with Seelos' 368th crew.

But, back to this book. The early part is concerned with Benson boyhood life with a house full of boys. Things were noisy and rough around the Benson household, and in itself this was quite a story. All saw service in WWII, but only Earl found the pleasure of a two-year stint in a German prison camp. The emphasis in this book is

any shell holes.

When I went to the escape hatch, I noticed it was gone and oxygen tubes were broken and on fire. Apparently one of the rockets had exploded just under the escape hatch. I hesitated going through the fire but decided it was better than blowing up in the plane. The tail gunner didn't get out.

Before jumping, I made sure my hand was on the rip cord. After free falling for some time, I couldn't believe the quiet-

on the early and later periods of Benson's life as a prisoner.

The author, who is Earl's second wife, also supplies a brief sketch of each of the brothers, something often overlooked in such biographies. A house full of boys can be a rough environment and it develops a toughness that Earl used to advantage in the POW phase of his life.

Earl later spent another 20 years of his life on active duty with the Air Force, and survives to this date.

Two factors led to this story being told: Elaine Benson read a brief account of the Erla mission in *Echoes*, and then found *First Over Germany*, which filled in a lot more. Soon she had a tape recorder spinning and she recorded many of Earl's conversations with others about prison camp and his early life. She interviewed others to fill in gaps, and she also used the Postal Service to contact others in Earl's past life to fill out his history.

Earl and his brothers all came fully equipped with rough edges, some of which they wore off in the "combat" of family life, and some of which also succumbed to their service experiences.

It is an interesting addition to the lore of the 306th. Thanks, Elaine.

ness... I didn't even hear the engines on our plane. I wondered for a second if the plane had exploded and I was in heaven. But blue sky and white clouds were above me and green landscape was far below. I had no sensation of falling after I was away from the plane, so my thoughts were on escape. I decided to delay opening the chute and get to the ground quicker. Soon I could see the horizon changing more so I decided now was the time to pull the

Dolores Kaye's Memory Honored In \$1,000,000 Gift to City of Hope

Dolores Kaye, wife of Dr. Herman H. Kaye, has been honored with a gift of \$1,000,000 to the City of Hope National Medical Center and Beckman Research Institute in Los Angeles, CA.

Dr. Kaye, a member of the 423rd Squadron in combat late in the war, pursued educational goals when he returned to civilian life, earning first a degree in law and then entering medical school and emerging as a Doctor of Medicine. It was in the medical field that he pursued his life work, retiring as the head of a large organization.

Mrs. Kaye became known to many of the 306th organization as they attended many reunions together, including the 1992 50th anniversary event in England, to which they also appended a week's trip through France. About 75 persons were together in two

buses for this event.

Her name will appear on a front wall of the Helford Clinical Research Hospital in the meditation garden. Dolores & Herman were married 4 Jul 1948 and this continued until her death 1 Jul 1998. They have three children

Between 1946 and 1968 Dr Kaye earned juris doctor, master of science, doctor of philosophy and doctor of medicine degrees. From 1968 until 1982 he served as chief executive officer of Pacific Coast Medical Enterprises, Inc., and from 1980 to 1984 he was a securities commissioner for the State of California.

Herman arrived with the Group 1 Sep 44, completed 30 missions as a lead crew member on 2 Mar 45, and was transferred from the 306th 21 Mar 45.

I got in a ditch and it passed. With headlights blacked out except for a small hole, they didn't have much vision except straight ahead. I continued along the road until coming to a T-road, so then I started across country again.

Clouds were moving in and I was getting very sleepy at three thirty a.m. I lay down on the ground, and sleep came very quickly. I awakened shaking from the cold. It was beginning to get light so I got up. Two or three feet ahead of me was a drainage ditch, four or five feet wide. A three-foot stick didn't touch bottom. If I had fallen in before deciding to sleep I might have drowned. I couldn't swim and I panicked in water at that time. I still do.

I entered the next road I came to. Shortly thereafter I came to a farmhouse that had three five or six gallon cans of milk waiting to be picked up. I was tempted to empty them but was afraid of being caught and also knew all the hard work of milking the cows, having grown up on a farm. With daylight approaching, it was time to leave the highway.

I soon came to the Dortmund-Ems Canal. Barges and boats were going every few minutes in both directions. Luck was with me because I spotted a boat shed. However, it had a padlock. No problem, the escape kit had a file. It wouldn't even make a scratch! Some of the boards were rotten enough to break. I peeked through the cracks and it looked like a nice boat in there. Too bad I couldn't get it.

Starting north, I came to a bridge a mile or so away. I had observed that there was very little traffic over the bridge. I didn't think anyone on the river would wonder about me being there, so I watched until the road was clear and made a dash over the bridge. I could not see traffic coming from the west because the road turned north.

It was about noon after I crossed the bridge. I hid in some bushes below the west end of the bridge until I knew that I had a clear path to the field west of the north-south road. This was home for some hogs. Now my hopes of reaching Holland were getting higher. This was farming territory and I went past some trees and saw a woman digging potatoes. She ignored me.

About two-thirty I noticed a man in a black uniform heading the opposite way, about two hundred yards to my right. I tried not to look at him, but out of the corner of my eye I could see that he kept glancing at me. After about 10 minutes, I came to a pine forest. When I last looked back, he was still looking at me. I then ran as far as I could. Again I came back to farm land and passed by a village of six or seven houses.

About a mile farther on I came to a river. It was quite wide, perhaps a hundred feet, but I could see where horses and wagons had driven through it. I walked across. It came to the top of my pinks [officer's trousers]. The water was cold but very clear, so I filled my bag and put in purifying tablets.

By now the sun was getting lower and the air was cold on my wet clothes. After about a mile I came to a field with grazing

cattle. Walking across the field, I headed for a three-sided foundation of a bygone shed. Suddenly I noticed a farm wagon going down the road. Next a farmer was coming to get the cows. I was sure I was in Holland but still was hesitant to be found. I walked to the foundation and got inside. The farmer got his cows and headed west. He hadn't seen me.

The man on the wagon was now coming toward me when I sneaked a look over the foundation. I started to run but my football knee quit on me. The farmer took off his wooden shoe-now I knew I was in Holland-and was using it as protection in case I tried to tangle with him.

"Holland-Nederlands?" I asked.

"Ja!"

He had left his 10-12 year old boy in the wagon. I went with him trying to say I wanted clothing and food. I was using the dictionary in the escape kit.

Every answer was "Ja."

When we got to the wagon I said "Germany?" and pointed down.

The boy pointed east. I must be in Holland. There had been no conversation between the father and boy. I gave the boy the chocolate bar from the escape kit. He gave me a green apple. I ate it. I had been saving the bar for hard times.

We went back across the river exactly where I had waded out and then to the village that I had passed by earlier in the afternoon. When we arrived at the village, he motioned me to go with his boy. It was almost dark by now. We went in the house. The woman had me take off my flying coveralls and pinks, and shoes and put them by the oven door to dry. She then fried some boiled potatoes for me.

The boy just sat and watched. Finally some French workers came in, saluted me and left. By this time my clothes, shoes and socks were about dry. Next, another Frenchman came in who saluted me and thanked me in English. His mother was a Canadian. He said they were all prisoners of war doing farm labor. He had escaped twice but had been recaptured. Then he told me to wait in the house and that the army was coming to get me. He told me we were in Germany about two miles from the Dutch border. I asked him to help me escape, that the United States would pay him.

He told me not to worry, the U. S. fliers were in a good camp, no work and there was a radio. Also, the war would be over by Christmas, not saying the year. He saluted and left.

The table was set for three, but the father didn't come in. About seven o'clock, a non-German captain came to take me. He had a German Shepherd dog. We walked for over two hours, but at least he had to push the bicycle. At a small Army post, he turned me over to a corporal who put me in the side car of a motorcycle. We traveled for about 25 miles to a larger army post. It was quite a thrill on narrow, winding and hilly roads with a blackout head light!

A few days later I was at Dulag Luft, where I met pilot Ledgerwood face to face for the first time.

September 27, 2002

Dr. Herman Kaye
1905 Carla Ridge
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Dear Dr. Kaye,

Thank you for your magnificent gift to City of Hope National Medical Center and Beckman Research Institute in the amount of ONE MILLION DOLLARS. Please be assured that as agreed, your wife's name will be placed on the front of Helford Clinical Research Hospital on the meditation garden wall.

I called you but your housekeeper told us that you were at an Airforce Reunion in Kentucky.

We remember your clowning and antics with your friend, Jimmy Doolittle and ~~reconsider taking your seat on the Board of Governors, as we need you.~~

Would you please extend our most sincere best wishes to all the heroic and wonderful men in your group from us here at the City of Hope. We love and respect them deeply.

Warmly,

Jerry Malkin

Jerry Malkin
Associate Vice President of Development
JM/rc

Bailing Out

Continued from page 6

ripcord.

Then I felt a jolt that made me think my back was broken, I was really unhappy and wished that I had stayed in the plane. I assumed that when I hit the ground it would finish the back and I would be paralyzed.

Two fighter planes headed toward me. That took my thoughts away from my back. I tried to take evasive action by tugging on the parachute ropes but I'm sure that didn't help. Instead of shooting at me they went on either side of me and one waved as he went past. They knew I wasn't going anywhere except on to the soil of the Fatherland.

Our plane was flying in a circle around me and finally took a long glide into a field below me. When I came down in a plowed field, I could feel the heat from the burning B-17. By this time my back was relaxed and the landing was not bad.

After rolling over when I hit the ground and struggling to get the parachute under control, I gathered the chute in my arms and went into some woods. About this time there were screams from children, and looking toward them it was evident that they were watching the parachutes come down. I counted six before going

deeper into the woods. I got out the escape kit and put some sulfa powder on cuts on thumb and knee. I tore a strip of my handkerchief to wrap around the thumb and put a band aid on my leg.

I knew that we were southwest of Bremen and I should be near the Holland border. I was very thirsty, and as it was beginning to get dark, I started walking west. About fifteen minutes later I came upon a stream. I took the pouch from the escape kit and filled it and took a drink. I couldn't wait for the pills to work. I did use them when I refilled the bag to carry. I figured the water was safe because cows were drinking downstream. Just before dark I saw some carrots in a garden, so one became my dinner. Most of the dirt came off.

Now I was getting more confidence and I walked on to the next road. So far I had not seen a human. It was moonlit and I saw a person coming on a bicycle. I couldn't get out of sight so I kept going, with a passing thought of trying to get the bicycle from her. All went well until I was approaching a village.

Two soldiers met me, and said something I didn't understand.

I answered, "Ya."

They went on.

With blackout the village was as dark as the countryside. Shortly after passing through the village, I saw a truck coming.

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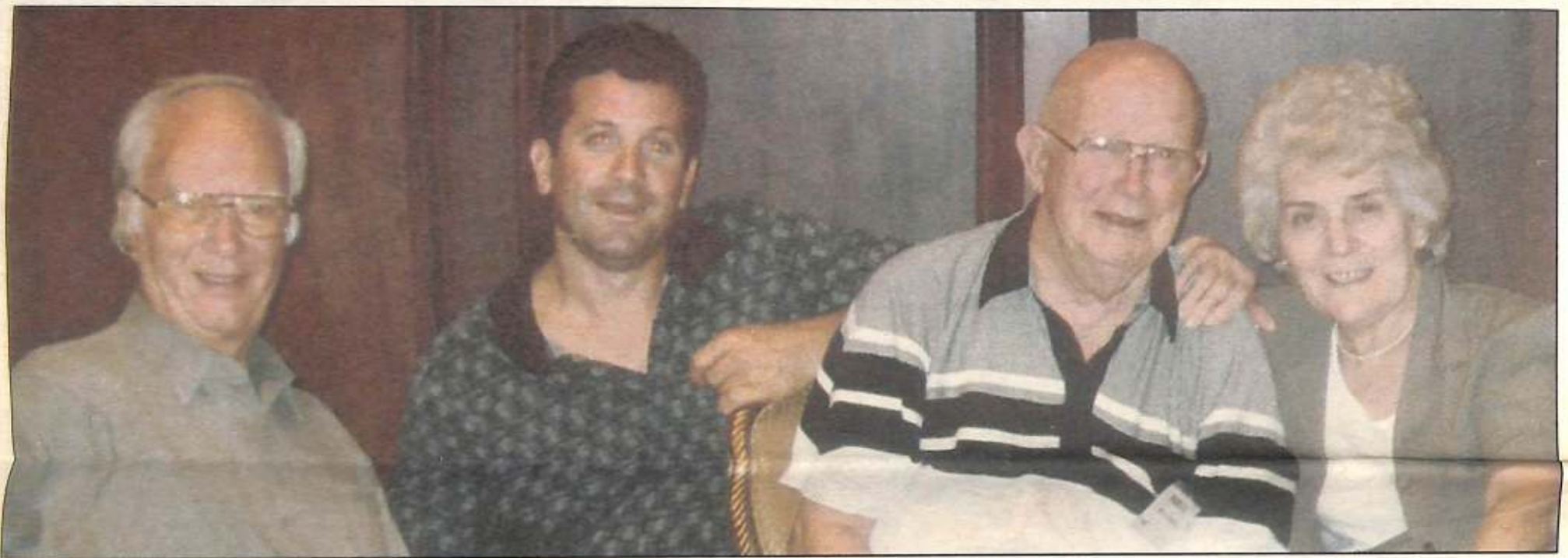
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Caught by the Camera At Covington Reunion

Ben Pelzel, Dr. Thurman Shuller and Bill Houlihan became friends in mid-1942, and observed a 60th anniversary of that event. It was a long, hard journey from Wendover, Utah to Covington, Kentucky, and they were thankful that they could spend a lot of time reminiscing over their hospital, and their fellow doctors and staff who ran the small hospital at Thurleigh and took care of their 8000 potential patients from 1942 to 1945. The picture below features Ralph Franklin, who got cropped out of a big picture last time. Ralph is on the left, and then comes Marty Lenaghan who is our 2003 reunion chairman, Ralph Bordner 368th, and Daphne Franklin, the other half of our British duo.



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