

# 306<sup>th</sup> Echoes

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## 306th Veterans Omaha Reunion

### Dayton Set For Reunion During '07

Dayton and the USAF Museum will be the locale for the 2007 reunion, it was decided at the Omaha reunion, recently past.

This was put forth by President Rocky Rockwell during a discussion at the annual business meeting, and this site was followed in the informal balloting by Little Rock and moving to fasten on the coattails of the 8<sup>th</sup> AF Association.

Rocky arrived with considerable information he had accumulated on the Dayton site. Dayton has figured in several other, and this year we will be there from the 12th through the 15th of September. Registration details, etc., will appear in the April issue of *Echoes*.

### Looking at the 8th AF Reunion Situation

As our 306<sup>th</sup> veteran attendance continues to shrink (note picture above), we have a choice of joining with the 8<sup>th</sup> or of turning our reunion over to another generation.

The 8<sup>th</sup> AF this year is going to Kalamazoo, MI where there is a fabulous air museum with lots of money behind it. Their exhibits are excellent and it is also the choice the 306<sup>th</sup> has made for housing the extensive collection which the secretary has brought together over the last 30 years. We are required by law to indicate in our Bylaws what will happen to this collection and our tax exempt status takes care of the money in our treasury and it will follow to The Kalamazoo Air Zoo also.

Housing for this will be in a Radisson Hotel in downtown Kalamazoo, about five miles from the museum, with shopping, entertainment, museums and libraries close by.

Also, Western Michigan University began teaching aviation before WWII and now boasts a large College of Aviation which trains would-be pilots for air-lines around the world as well as maintaining a large curriculum of academic studies covering all aspects of the aviation scene.

The 8<sup>th</sup> is going to smaller cities because of the high prices, traffic confusion and other factors not conducive to handling an aging population. By interstate or highway, Kalamazoo is about midway between Detroit and Chicago, and there are good highway connections north and south.

### Memorial Gifts

Now total more than \$12,000

Milton Adam by Lynn Kirby

Joseph Borzym and members of the "Banshee" crew by Donald Borzym

O. B. Bourn by J. P. Farrell

Daniel (Bud) Gates by William Camicom

Harry Gile by Shirley Gile Street

Arthur E. Hatton by William Camicom

Rudy Horst by Douglas E. Horst

Max Judas by Robert A. Judas

John Kappmeyer by L. Lamarr Kappmeyer

Waverly C. Ormond by Kathy Ormond

James W. Reeves by J. Brent Reeves

Al Rehn by Don Ross

Frank Serafin by Robert Maus, James & Wendy Maus, Thomas & Phyllis Maus, Donna Millet & Thomas VanWilder

Harold Thornam by Jeannette Thornam

Robert C. Williams by Betty Williams

### The Lancaster Versus the Flying Fortress

Although the Royal Air Force battle-tested B-17s in July 1941 (with poor results), the U.S. bomber didn't really get into the fight in Europe until 1943, when Eighth Air Force crews flew it and B-24 Liberators against Germany on daylight missions.

The B-17 is an earlier design than the Lancaster, but each occupies the same heroic status in its country's military lore. Lancasters could carry more bombs to the target, but B-17s had Norden bombsights, which could get the bombs on the target.

Lancaster	B-17G
Wing Span	
102 feet	103 feet 9 inches
Maximum Speed	
287 mph	302 mph
Typical Payload	
14,000 pounds	8,000 pounds
Range	
1,660 miles	2,000 miles
150mph	8AF Cruise



## OBITUARIES

**Delbert E. Bishop**, 369th tail gunner (John Roberts crew), died 30 Sep 2006 in New Albany, IN. He came to the Group 27 Apr 44, and was MIA 11 May 44 in a mission to Saarbrücken, Germany and became a POW. Returned to the U.S., he joined Public Service Co. of Indiana and was foreman of its meter shop when he retired with 44 years of service. He leaves 4c, 5gc, 2ggs.

**Dellon E. Bumgardner**, 368th copilot (Charles Niblack crew) and pilot, died 24 Nov 2006 in Vista, CA. He flew 38 missions, finishing his tour 9 Oct 44. For some years he flew the B-17 for the Commemorative AF out of Midland, TX. His wife had preceded him in death.

**Joe Carpenter**, a bomb sight maintenance man, had come to the 306th 15 Feb 1943. He died 23 Sep 2006 in Baton Rouge, LA. He became a representative for McNeil Pharmaceuticals, working for them for 38 years. He leaves his wife, Betty, 2c, 4gc.

**Robert L. Fallow**, 369th copilot (Robert Hoyt crew) and pilot, died 2 Nov 2006 in La Grande, OR. He had joined the 306th 15 Jul 1943 and became the 94th officer to complete a tour. For 40 years he owned and operated La Grande Amusement, a vending and music machine company. He leaves his wife Catherine, 3c, 7gc, 2ggc.

**Clayton H. Gilliam**, 369th waist gunner (Edward Sandini crew), died 1 Apr 2006 in Jefferson, IA.

**Joseph W. Haire**, 369th crew chief, died 18 Oct 1995 in Bountiful, UT. After a long

USAAF career he was then a technical writer for Bell Helicopters. He leaves his wife, Ione, 2s, 3gc. Their first son, Robert, was born in Bedford.

**Allan H. Lingwall**, 369th pilot, died 12 Sep 2006 in Dallas, TX. He came to the 306th 15 June 44 and ended his combat tour 14 Oct 44. Lingwall retired as a USPS carrier in 1980. He leaves his wife, LaVonne, 1s.

**Irving R. Norton**, 368th bombardier (Frank Krzyston crew) died 18 Apr 2003 in Orange Park, FL. He came to Thurleigh 21 Apr 44 and completed his tour 14 Aug 44. He also served as the 368th Squadron Bombardier. He leaves 1d.

**Howard Pahdapony**, 369th copilot (Donovan Halve crew), has died at Lawton, OK.

**J. R. Parker**, 423rd aviation mechanic, has died in Taylors, SC. He joined the Group in Apr 43 until Nov 45 on an airplane repair crew. He leaves his wife, Nellie.

**Wallace Peckham**, 369th copilot (Edgar Smith crew), died 8 Nov 2006 in League City, TX. He flew 27 missions between 10 Feb 45 and the end of the war. He then flew with the Casey Jones mapping project. He left the group 7 Oct 1945, and was an insurance agent for some years. He leaves his wife Georgia, 1s, 2d.

**Richard Rubano**, 423rd toggler (Wilmer Schultz crew), died 28 Apr 2006 in Niles, OH. He came to the group 13 Jan 45 and flew 21 missions. He retired from the Sharon Transformer Div, Westinghouse Corp., after 42 years of service. He leaves 5c, 10gc.

**Robert G. Schultz**, 367th radio operator (Tom Ledgerwood's crew), died 23 Dec 2006 in Haines City, FL. He was wounded and grounded 28 Jul 43 on a mission to Kassel, Germany, completing 12 missions.

Schultz graduated from U-Miami and worked for some years for the Haines City (FL) Citrus Growers Assoc. as an accountant and office manager.

**Albert M. Smart**, 423rd engineer (Fred Engstrom crew), died 29 Sep 2005 in Nashville, GA. He joined the Group 10 Feb 45 and flew at least a dozen missions.

**John O. Thach**, 369th radio operator (Ray Schieb crew), died 9 Nov 2005 in Germantown, TN. He joined the Group 13 Feb 45 and departed 7 Oct 45. Thach was a meteorologist for the U.S. Weather Bureau for some years, until retirement. He leaves 2d, 4gc, 1ggd.

**Harry Vitale**, 367th ball turret gunner (John Heraty crew), died 3 Nov 2000 in Salt Lake City, UT. He came to the Group 5 Jul

44 and completed his tour 21 Jul 45. He left his wife, Dona.

**William H. Wear**, 367th pilot during 1945, died 28 Dec 1956 in Fallen, NV. He retired from the USAF in 1967 and men worked for the Postal Service as a letter carrier in San Jose, CA. He retired from his two Federal jobs after 36 years. He leaves his second wife, June, 1d.

**James B. Weatherread**, 876th Chemical Company, died 10 Jun 2006 in Crowley, TX. He was the first chemical worker to join the Group in 1942 and remained until his leaving for home in late 1945. He leaves his wife Sylvia, 2c, 4gc, 3ggc.

**Kenneth Yass**, 423rd copilot (with Ragnar Carlson) and pilot, died in Sep 2006 in a West Palm Beach, FL hospital after a lengthy illness. He arrived 27 Nov 43 and completed his 30 missions 12 Jun 44. Ken earned BS and MA degrees from Columbia University. He spent 38 years as a physicist for the NASA Research Center in Cleveland, OH, retiring 3 May 1988. He leaves a brother.

**Michael J. Zinkovich**, 369th bombardier, who joined the Group 30 Dec 42, died in May 2002 in Winter Park, FL. He was the 29th officer to complete combat 24 Jul 1943. Returning from combat, he became the staff bombardier for the 371st Combat Crew Training School at Westover, MA in 1944-45. He retired USAF 1 Aug 1969. He had studied at Georgetown Univ and his late work was as a property appraiser for Orlando and Tallahassee, FL, and as an auditor general for Orange County, FL. He leaves his wife, Mary, 4c, 2gc.



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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).



## 306th PUBLICATIONS

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

#### ORDER FORM

First Over Germany by Russell A. Strong A 325 page narrative history of the 306 <sup>th</sup> . 100 pictures & 1700 names. Fourth edition is paperback.	\$35.00	_____
306th Echoes Book 800 pages, including 25 years of our quarterly newspaper, BxW & color.	\$40.00	_____
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The Reich Wreckers 80 pages of charts & other data covering 341 combat missions. Prepared by Charles J. Westgate III	\$6.00	_____
Squadron Combat Diaries More than 100 pages each, compiled daily after missions by Squadron Intelligence officers. Also included are rosters of Specialty personnel.		
Spiral bound.	367th	\$20.00 _____
	368th	\$20.00 _____
	369th	\$20.00 _____
	423rd	\$20.00 _____
306th Group Directory	23 Oct. '06	\$10.00 _____

Mission Reports Detailed information on  
specific missions flown between 9 Oct. 42  
and 19 Apr 45. May range from 1 to 50 pages.  
Include the name of individual you are  
interested in to derive most benefits. List  
dates, etc. on separate sheet.

3 for \$5.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
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Make check to 306th BG Assn. and mail to Secretary: 306 Bomb Group Assn.  
5323 Cheval Place  
Charlotte, NC 28205

#### 306th Family

**Joyce Ayton Frazier**, war bride of Arthur Frazier, 369th medical technician, died 24 Oct 2006 in Humphrey, Ark. Services for her were conducted by their son, the Rev. Randy Frazier. While they met in Bedford, she came after the war and they were married in the U.S. She leaves Arthur, 2c, 5gc, 3ggc.

### 8AF Becomes Cyberspace Cmd.

In Washington, DC media conference last November, it was announced that the 8<sup>th</sup> AF has become the Air Force Cyberspace Command and will be under the command of Lt. Gen. Robert J. Elder, Jr.

Secretary of the Air Force, Michael W. Wynne, said the 67<sup>th</sup> Network Warfare Wing will be among the elements that will form the core of Cyberspace Command. Air Force personnel specialists are working to develop educational plans and career paths for those airmen who will work within the new command.

The secretary also said Air Combat Command, Air Force Space Command and Air Force Materiel Command are working to develop the new Cyberspace Command. "The aim is to develop a major command that stands alongside its Air Force Space Command and Air Combat Command as the provider of forces that the president, combatant commanders and the American people can rely on for preserving the freedom of access, commerce, in air, space, and now cyberspace.



## Chaplain Simester Looks at Early Morning Duty

The telephone bell is ringing out in the hall! I reach for my flashlight ("torch" in England), and pull out of bed. Before I get to the phone it has rung again. I hate to have it keep on ringing, because I am the only one in this barracks who gets up for briefing. Capt. Ralph E. Simester was a Protestant Chaplain and a Methodist minister from Ohio. He died 26 Mar 1973.

"This is Sgt Mallory. It is now 3:35, and briefing is at 4:30."

"Thank you" I reply and get up.

Fifty-five minutes. I sometimes wish they

would wait to call me so that only 15 minutes would intervene before briefing time. Then I could dress in a hurry and get there on time. As it is, I am dressed and ready long before time. I dare not go back to sleep because I would never waken on time.

This morning I stirred the fire in the lounge room, set a pot of water on the stove, and dressed while it boiled. Then I made some tea. I had a bit of a headache and I thought tea might set me up.

Then out into the slow, warm rain. The planes were having engines warmed up. The ground crews were already out on the line.

Ordnance and Chemical Warfare were no doubt helping load the planes with bombs. Armament men were just finishing breakfast. They would be out to set the fuses and to check up on the armament. The gas trucks would be ready to make last minute refilling so that each plane would have a full tank of gas for takeoff.

The night is pitch black. No moon. Low clouds make it darker than usual. Yet, all over the field is activity. Hundreds of men are already busy. The KPs in the mess halls, the CQs in every site waking men. The operations clerks, the intelligence staff radio and radar men, MPs and guards, the trans-

portation men— Drivers of many trucks, the weather staff, the men in equipment and clothing drying rooms, the duty officer and men in the dispensary, and the communications staff. Of course, the combat officers and men form the bulk of the early morning group. Say 350 combat men, with at least one man working on the ground for every one flying.

As I walk through the dark I can see planes are being readied. Here and there is a sudden glow of light as the head lamps are tested. A roar goes up from all over the field.

*cont. on page 7*

## Few Messages, But Lots of Chaff from the Radio Room

by Arthur McGuire, 423rd  
3 Feb 45 to 19 May 45

Although many believe the term military intelligence is an oxymoron, these worthies did perform useful services, among which were the so-called debriefing of combat crews. Following operational missions these crews wild eyed, disheveled, and exhausted were questioned immediately after landing so that, hopefully, the preceding events would be recalled as accurately as possible.

All of these interviewees naturally assumed that the interviewees were constantly alert and observant of every enemy activity encountered during the operation. I wasn't. Having determined early on that the views on a bombing mission ran the gamut, from merely alarming to terrifying, I concluded that the less I saw the better. And further what I didn't see wouldn't hurt me— maybe!

Time seemed to be of great import to the interrogators. What time did you observe enemy action, flak, fighters, rockets, ground activity and the like. When it appeared WE were entering the maw of oblivion, the time of day was the last thing on my mind. Also I never did get the hang of the 24 hour military time. If questioned,

which was seldom, I usually picked a number about half way like 11 or 12 and mumbled 11:15 or 12:10 and tried to look wise. Estimates both quantitative and qualitative were stressed. How was the flak heavy, light, accurate, inaccurate? Were the enemy fighters ME 109s or FW 190s, how many, where when, etc. etc. At the first glimpse of flak, however inaccurate, I was personally convinced that the entire anti-aircraft arm of the Wehrmacht was zeroed in on our squadron and annihilation was only minutes away. To one who had trouble identifying a B-17 from a P-51 to be able to pick out a small plane zooming by at 400 mph was highly optimistic. Many nervous gunners had the same trouble, blazing away at anything nearby, occasion-ally a B-17. The few fighters I did see only looked like big trouble to my glazed eye. So you can see my reports on enemy action were not objective much less accurate.

During the British RAFs interminable air battle with Germany their bombers began to drop a Christmas tree-like decoration of metallic strips intending to deflect the German radar. The efficacy of this has been debated pro and con and remains doubtful. Nevertheless our commanders seized the

idea and adopted it for our bombers. So, to a plane already bursting with tons of bombs, 2700 gallons of high-octane gas, thousands of 50 cal. rounds, pistols, bayonets, knives, rocks, bricks, brass knuckles, enough in total, to conquer a small nation, was added a dozen or so boxes of light tinsel, called chaff.

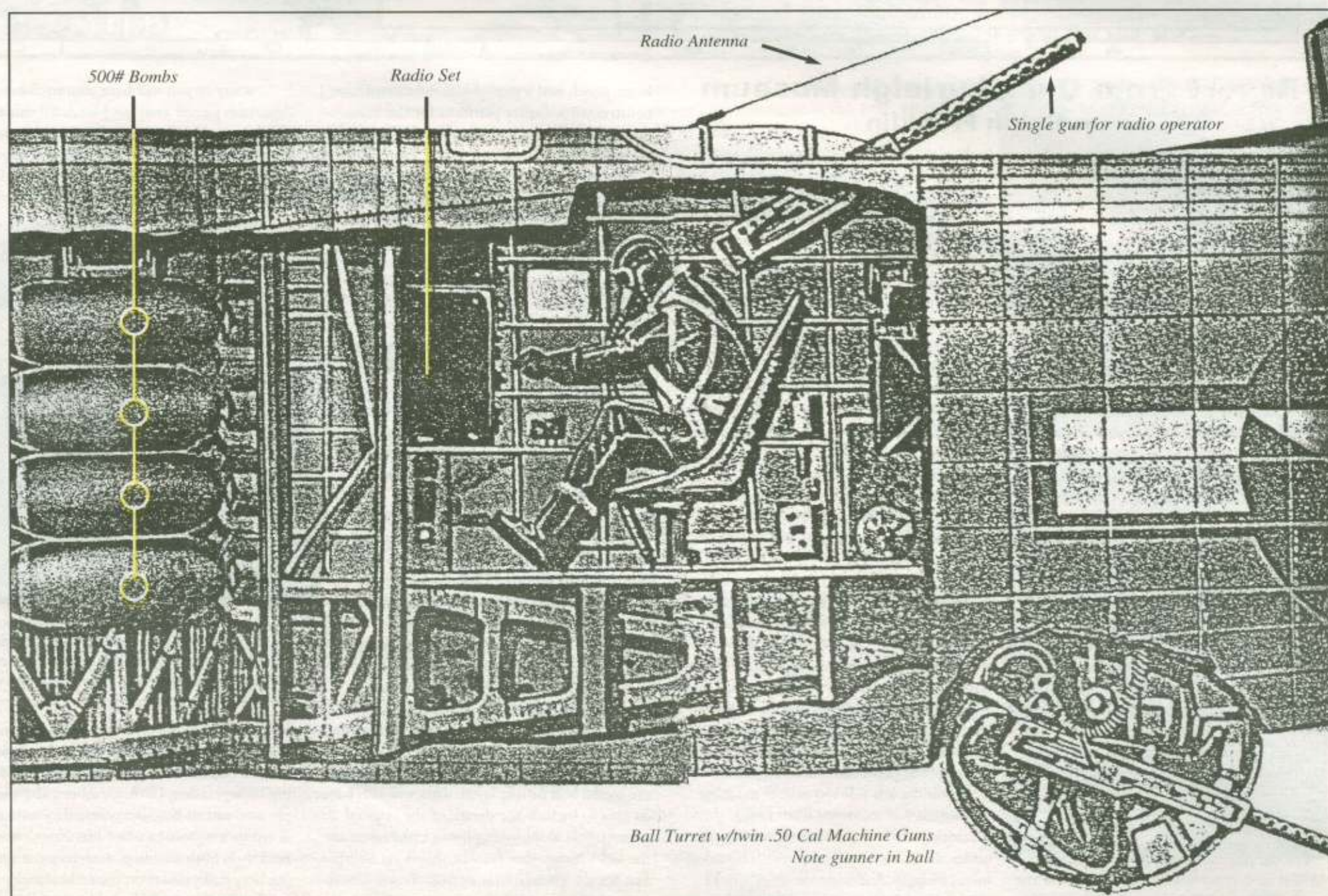
As the Radio Room was approximately mid-ships and the Radio Operator usually a lad of limited imagination, he was designated as the purveyor. So at a signal from the cockpit I began furiously tearing open boxes and flinging chaff through a newly constructed chute in the fuselage. Soon at 40 below zero I was sweating like a dollar slot player in a crooked casino, and sometimes had a vision of an old dutchman below looking up at the descending shower of silver and muttering "Now what are those crazies up to?" The effect, I believe, was mainly psychological. It was at least some defensive action for a group who appeared to themselves as moving targets with a bulls eye painted on the seat of their pants, hoping for the best.

Again, since being located adjacent to the bomb bay, the radio operator was designated to quickly open the connecting door, on hearing the bombs away call, and determine

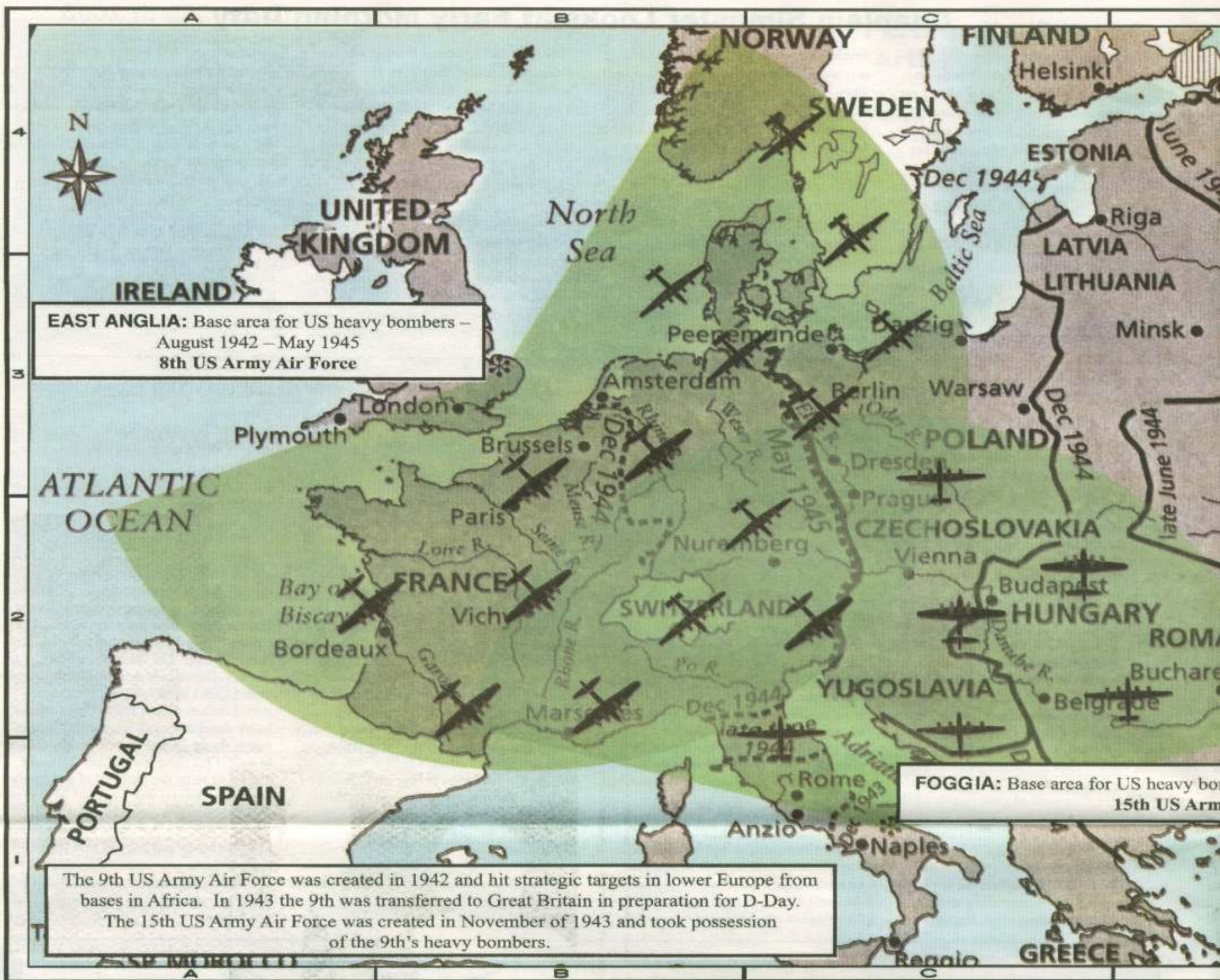
if all bombs were successfully released, and the doors could be closed. In the absence of any bomb or bombs being hung up and not released, another mind numbing occurrence, a quick look into the empty bay 5 miles straight, down with flak bursting all around, isn't exactly a day at the beach.

The accuracy of the bombing, of course, was paramount since that was the name of the game. These results were best obtained from photos which were developed later and often revealed some uncertain results. Many reports of bomb damage and fighters destroyed were, like accounts of Mark Twain's alleged early demise, greatly exaggerated. Often I monitored the communications between aircraft and occasionally, with heavy cloud cover present, the city below was in doubt, indeed sometimes the country as well! One thing was certain. Someone was going to be the recipient of our missiles since there was no way we could lug several tons back across a continent while under enemy attack. So from time to time it was look out below and another tiny village received some premature urban renewal!

Certainly a great deal of valuable intelligence was gleaned from these sessions, but not from me.







### Report From Our Thurleigh Museum from Ralph Franklin

Good morning to you all. I find it difficult to believe, but this is the 16th consecutive year that Daphne and I have had the pleasure of being in this gathering of a great group of people, people we can call our friends, the word friends becomes more meaningful with the passing years

It is with friendship, total respect and admiration for what you people achieved in WWII as a bomb group that has concentrated our thoughts and minds to dedicate this past summer to what has now become a first class 306th Bomb Group Museum. Since 1 March we have spent every weekend, and many days during the week there, delivering your story to hundreds of interested and admiring visitors. This Bomb Group will live forever now that our museum has become so well known and extremely popular.

Talking of visitors, I have an amusing story for you. A few weeks ago an American lady and her daughter arrived by taxi, she seemed very interested as did her daughter, and asked lots of questions. Suddenly the mother yelled out "oh look up there, there are pictures of naked ladies painted on the aircraft". I quickly said, that was just a morale booster for the air crews. The lady then looked at me in disgust saying "Surely the American government would not allow that". Her daughter just laughed, saying 'oh mother'.

For the past two years we have had special WWII 60th Anniversaries to celebrate at the museum, 2004 D-Day & 2005 VE Day,

both of these events went very well, with good crowds at each event. This year we had something different, we had a classic car rally, 96 of these wonderful machines arrived by 10:00, filling all the parking spaces and more. All the cars had at least one passenger on board. The age of the vehicles ranged from the 1920's to the early 1950's. On arrival the visitors had breakfast in the form of a local delicacy "A Bedfordshire Clanger", they were then given written instructions for a drive around the county. On their return the vehicles were on display for all to view. More food, this time a 'Hog Roast' - wonderful! We had a small group playing and singing 40's music. It turned out to be a first class event, and the Classic Car people have requested we hold the event again next year. It's all good publicity.

We are regularly congratulated on the way we have assembled the displays, with a frequent comment that the building creates an atmosphere which is both personal and evocative, it brings back memories of those now distant times. I do not know what they are, but there are many occasions when handkerchiefs appear to wipe a tear away. Visitors are continually asking questions on our exhibits, particular interest is shown in what was the left side .50 caliber machine gun which was recovered from Louis Matchka's 367th B-17 after almost 60 years under the Baltic Sea, by a Swedish friend of mine, Magnus Anderson. With others he also recovered a part of the pilot's instru-

ment panel, and a pair of binoculars and case. I constructed a display platform for the items, they are lying on a bed of sand which resembles the sea bottom.

Another item of great interest and the envy of many, is the Norden Bomb Sight, so generously donated by George Kerr, a 369th bombardier with the Roy Trask crew. George had previously sent over his A2 jacket, and with other items of military attire we already had, we have dressed one of our handsome mannequins as George appears in a 1944 crew photograph. This is all part of a display dedicated to Bombardiers. Other items in this presentation have been sent to us by Hugh Phelan 367th and John Hickey 369th. We intend to develop these more personal displays as and when we receive other items from you good people.

Now I would like to thank Royce Hopkins for his valiant effort in acquiring a duplicate Medal of Honor originally awarded to Sgt. "Snuffy" Smith, and presented to him at Thurleigh on 15 July 1943. I am sure you are all familiar with the story of Snuffy, and you do not want to hear it again. It is with great pride to both Daphne and I to be able to display this treasured possession as an indication to the dedication of around 8000 young Americans who served with the 306th at Thurleigh in those dark days of WWII. Our son, Graham, is in the process of producing a special cabinet in which the medal will be displayed. This will also have an area to include the details of the original presentation along with photographs taken at the time. You realize friends, this is yet another first for the already famous 306th Bomb Group in England.

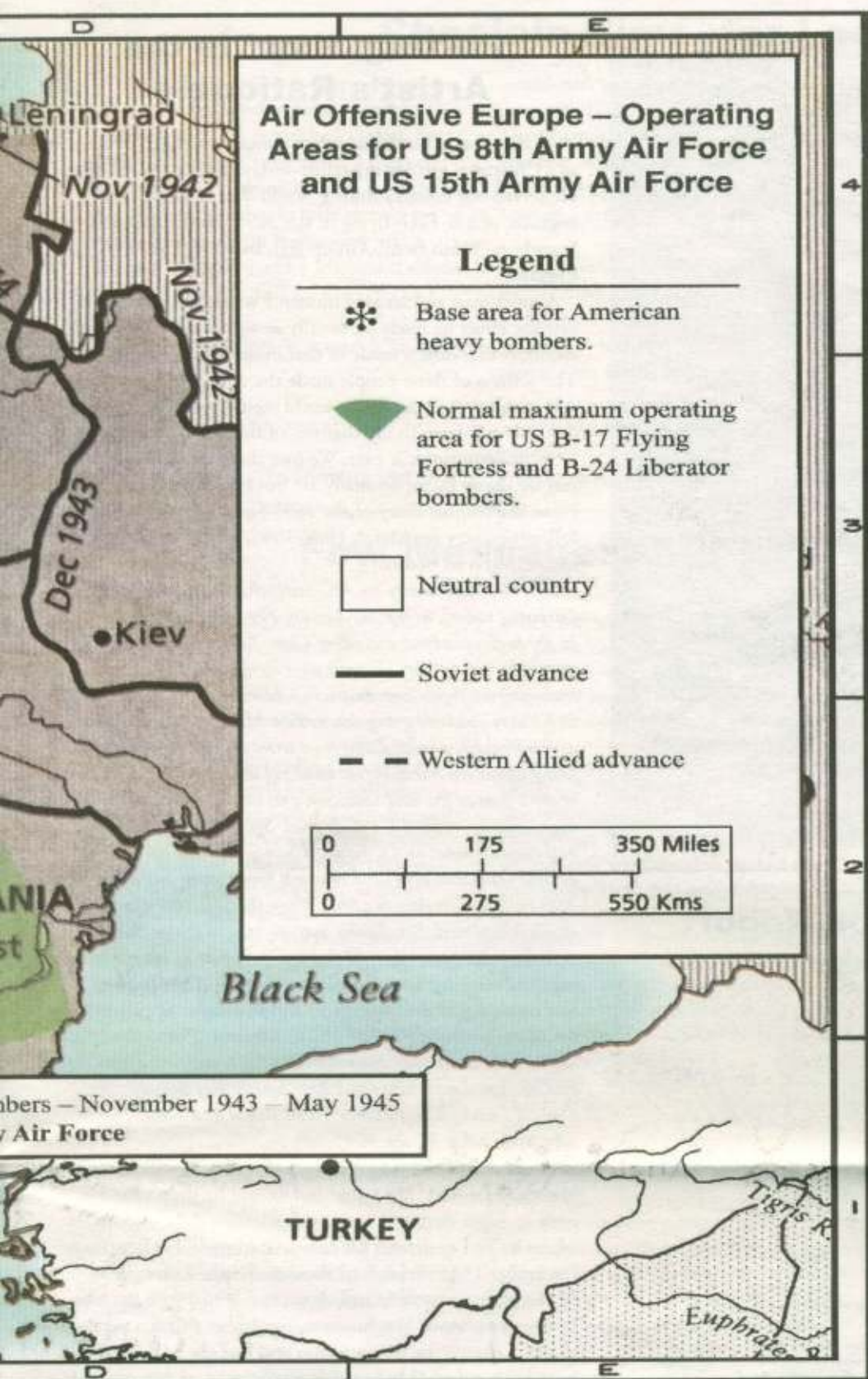
As many of you will have seen in *Echoes*, Joe Albertson passed away on March 17 this year. He volunteered for the Army Air Corps on 8 December 41, the day after Pearl Harbor, and did his training at the famous Wendover Field, finally arriving at Thurleigh 6 September 1942.



Ralph Franklin, our British Rep is the bright face on the left. Robert Rockwell, the new president of the 306th Association is Albert McMahan, ex-president and reunion chairman. Royce Hopkins, treasurer, and Hoot Houghton, director.

He left the end of July 1945, this was about 2 weeks after his marriage to Peg. Joe remained in the Air Force for the next 22 years, finally retiring in September 1967. October 1967 the couple returned to England where they settled down to a normal married life. Last year we held their 60th wedding anniversary at one of the hospitality suites on your old airfield. Sadly, I didn't realize that about 9 months later I





**Those Who Came To Omaha in 2006**

- Ralph & Flora Bordner
- Ralph, Jr. & Sharon Bordner
- Richard & Virginia Bordner
- Merle & Edward Brown
- William & Ruth Carnicom
- Em Christianson
- Melvin & Delka Cooper
- Ted Cumberledge
- Vernon DeLair, & Roland, Kasey, Donna, Teresa, Dennis, Jeffrey & Susan
- John & Alice Deterding
- Fred & Tress Engstrom
- John Gaydosh
- James Geriach & Marian
- Richard & Patricia Gonzalez
- Forest & Hazel Goodwill
- William & Jean Haase
- John & Elizabeth Hickey
- Nick & Dorothea Hoolko
- Royce & Mollie Hopkins
- Russell Houghton
- Bill Houlihan & Joel Labo
- Graford and Margaret Jennings
- William Kelly
- Allen & Cynthia Lawson
- Nena Leary, James & Tom Roland &
- Bari Lissner
- Dillon McDermott
- Albert McMahan & Carolyn Tate
- Clyde Mills (Charles & Donna Hammond)
- Clayton & Jean Nattier
- Susan O'Konski
- Hugh & Evelyn Phelan
- Dick & Anna Phelan
- Robert & Fay Raftery
- Robert & Ruth Rockwell
- Don & Janice Ross & Steve Wilson
- Tony & Margaret Santoro
- Mark & Betty Schartz
- Fred & Ruth Sherman
- Thurman Shuller & Henry Eugene & Jean Smith
- Donald Snook
- Ed & Helen Sobieszczyk
- Robert & Louise Starzynski
- Wayne & Margaret Stellish & Carol Petrucka
- George & Elizabeth Stephens
- Russell & June Strong
- Roy Stroud
- Vernon Williams



*The Vernon DeLair Group, becoming reunion regulars.*



*Ruth and Robert Rockwell. He is the new president of the 306th Association.*

would be making arrangements to have his cremated remains scattered in Galsey Wood opposite our museum. The previous week I had arranged with the local clergy to hold a full military funeral in Thurleigh church, this was done with the full co-operation of the staff at



*Right, and just behind him is... Jumping back to the left Russell Strong, secretary;*

moments to say farewell to his dad. Last year it gave me great pleasure to thank Herman Kaye for funding the copying of the 341 mission reports for use in England. I am not sure if thank you was really appropriate in hindsight as they have created a lot of additional work. It's amazing how news spreads as I am receiving queries on specific missions from many parts of the world, including not only the

UK, but America, Holland, France and Germany. To be serious for a moment, once again Herman, a big thank you, I say this because every time I find answers for those enquiring, I learn more about the 306<sup>th</sup>'s exploits.

It is now over four years since we opened our displays to the public, my dream of creating a living memorial to you people, and indeed to all who lived through those traumatic times of WWII is some way to being achieved. I realize this from the response of our many hundreds of visitors we have throughout the year. The comments in the visitors book also reflect this. Our visitors are coming from far and wide, in fact from many parts of the world. We welcomed people from several states in America, they included- Florida, Texas, Kentucky, Virginia, Maryland, California, Alabama, New York, Ohio, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Illinois, Washington, and Oregon. Others I have made notes of visited us from- Canada, Italy, Sweden, Australia, Netherlands, Germany, Spain, and Switzerland and of course many more from all over the British Isles. I also made a note of a few special groups we had the pleasure of meeting. No. 5 BFTS who trained in Clewiston, Florida. Guys from the British RASC, one of them 90 years old, he fought in Egypt 1942-43. Members of the Worcester Regiment, and one group who flew you may remember, as they were coming home as you went out. They were the *British Pathfinders*, they were holding their reunion at the Swan Hotel.

One thing that is pleasing us a lot at this time, is that we are already taking bookings for next year's mid-week visits. They include History Societys, and a group from over here

which apparently includes one ex-306<sup>th</sup> man, I do not know his name at this time. Hopefully this all means we are in for a busy 2007.

Daphne and I are delighted and encouraged to know that what we started just over four years ago has attracted so much attention from around the world. I am aware that it is small compared to many and does not have the splendor of the national establishments. What it does have however is the character, being a real WWII building to portray our large collection of genuine period artifacts in the best possible way. With our loving care and attention the old building is doing a grand job. From my personal point of view I feel quite humbled to think that something that began to fascinate me as a school boy way back in 1942 has become such a major part of my life and culminating in a display which is giving so much interest and enjoyment to so many people, and I am certain will be a permanent memorial and reminder of what you people, the men of the 306<sup>th</sup> achieved in helping to defeat the enemy and bring about peace.

Before closing can I say if you plan a trip to England at any time please do not hesitate to contact me if you feel I can be of help. You can contact me by mail, by telephone or indeed by e-mail if I can get Russ to print our correct e-mail address in *Echoes*. I do have some business cards if you would like one.

My friends, that's about all from me for this year, once more can I say what a pleasure it is being with you all again, and to let you know that Daphne and I will continue to keep the name of the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group alive in England.

It's a labor of love you know, so until the next time, good luck and God bless you all.

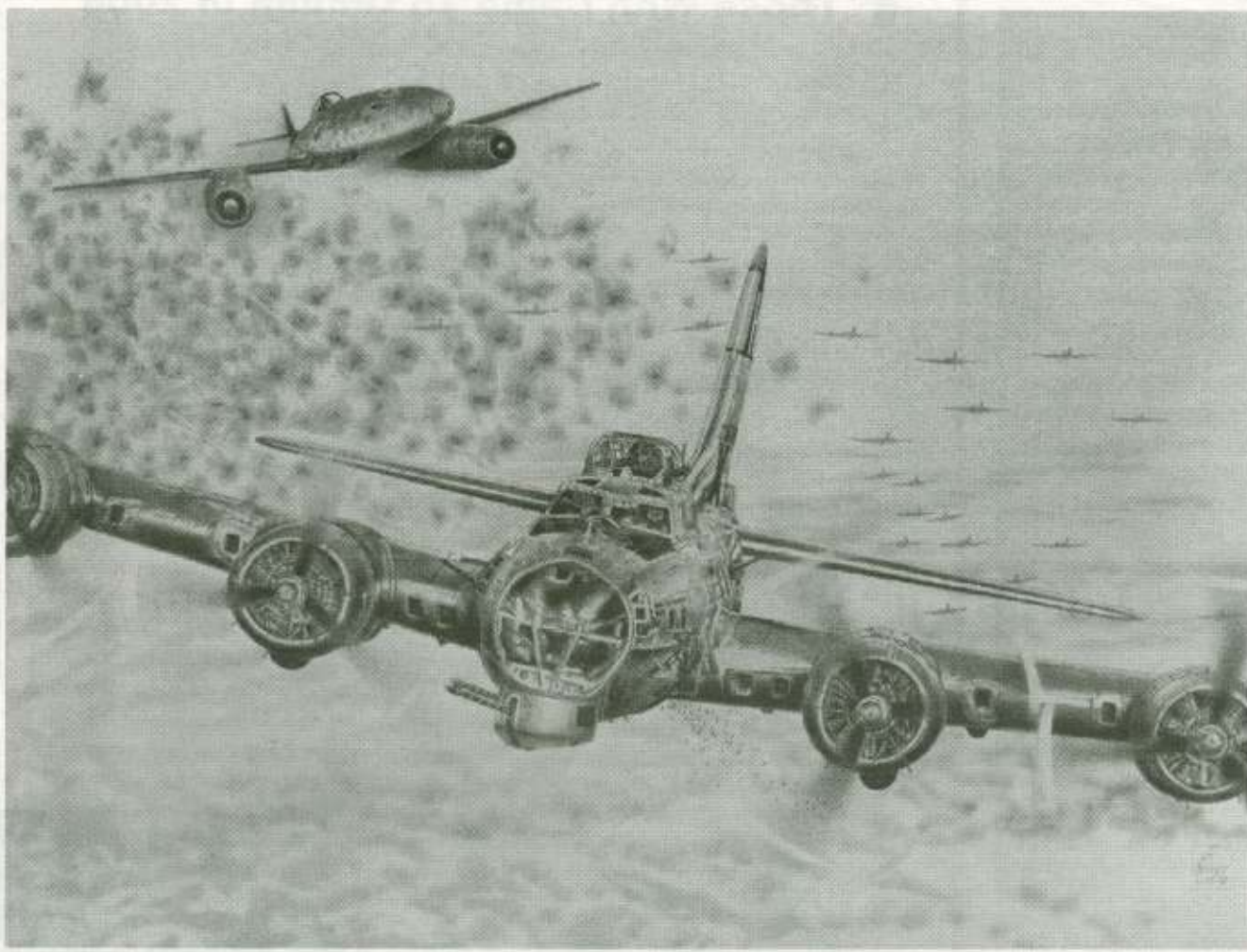


*Don Ross, left, in conversation.*



*Bill Houlihan, who worked in the Station Hospital and Dr. Thurman Shuller, the first flight surgeon with the 306<sup>th</sup>.*





### “Parting Shot” is the Artist’s Rationale

*Parting Shot*, a black and white pencil drawing, was done as a Christmas gift for my father-in-law, Richard A. Trostle. He served our country during World War II as the flight engineer of a B-17G, flying in the 369<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, 306th Bomb Group (H), based in Thurleigh, England.

A quiet man and an avid hunter, I wanted to commemorate the effort he made personally as well as the efforts and sacrifices that others made in that intense time of need. The actions of those people made the world we have today and without their deeds the world would be far darker and certainly not free. To say that we, of this time, owe them a lot is understating the case. We owe them everything. How can we thank them? So many are not here anymore. From the combat diary of the 369<sup>th</sup> Squadron there is the following entry for March 18th, 1945, when the group was on a mission to Berlin:

*The 306<sup>th</sup> flew thirty-six A/C (aircraft), including four PFF (airborne radar), as 40<sup>th</sup> 'C' Group. The 369<sup>th</sup> had nine A/C in the high squadron, including Capt. Albert Bowley. Fifteen to twenty E/A (enemy aircraft) were seen in the target area, including dogfights over Berlin in which two fighters and one B-17 were observed going down. Two ME-262s made a pass at the formation behind and then went under our formation, firing about ten bursts before breaking away. One ME-109 made a pass at the lead squadron and turned to attack the high, coming in from 3 o'clock level. Sgt. George L. Sarver, ball turret gunner on Lt. Edward Sandini's crew, opened fire at 300 yards and kept up a constant fire, scoring hits as the ME-109 passed below his A/C. When the ME-109 started to climb it exploded. Sgt. Sarver was credited with one E/A destroyed. AA (anti-aircraft) fire was moderate to intense barrage and tracking, lasting about ten minutes. The squadron had six damaged A/C, one severe and five slight. The high squadron bombed PFF with visual assistance. Photos show high bombs away over Tempelhof A/D (airdrome) on a heading of 150°. Lts. Lester Kearney, Edgar Smith, Ray Schieb, Donald Snook, Alfred Lomar, Allen Babin and Victor Moore were other pilots for the 369<sup>th</sup>.*

The action above is as it happened and is an official and historical account. My father-in-law said he didn't fire his guns in anger during the war, the situation didn't occur where he had to defend his crew and himself. He flew from December 1944 through to the end and the Luftwaffe fighter defenses were beaten down earlier in 1944. Because I wanted to honor him however, remember this is a personal gift, I altered the true scenario and had the ME-262 buzz his bomber. (My heartfelt apologies to all historians. I know your work is important and vital. This drawing was just not meant to represent your work, but my father-in-law's and those who served like him. Call it a diversion from History for Love's sake.)

In those moments when an enemy fighter was seen to turn in and take a heading for your bomber the gunners were more than willing to shoot as soon as possible and with as many bullets as possible. I can imagine some force was applied to those triggers as well. Surviving German pilots described the experience as flying into a hailstorm, so many bullets were flying through the air and striking their planes, fired from dozens of guns.

Because Richard Trostle is a hunter, and a patient man, I illustrated him in his top turret aligning himself with the flight path of the ME-262 to get in the parting shot, where with a hunter's eye, he can have more time for a longer burst of fire. The jet's approach, greeted by the ball turret and starboard waist gunners, is the more immediate and customary place to fire at the enemy, but I wanted to portray Richard in the hunter's role, not in the 18 or 19-year-old neophyte role that so many of those young men found themselves in. I wanted to show a bit more confidence and presence of mind, qualities he possesses in abundance. If I had the opportunity to know him as he was then I would have portrayed him in that light.

To prevent any possible misunderstanding: the title *Parting Shot* could be seen by some as a tip of the hat to the German fighter pilots, since the ME-262 was the last effective (though of small scale) effort they made in the defense of their homeland, but the title's true meaning is forever tied to:

Richard A. Trostle, Flight Engineer  
369th Squadron, 306th Bomb Group  
Thurleigh, England  
Mission: Berlin, March 18th, 1945

*Jef Dauber*

Jef Dauber  
February 3rd, 1993

### Remember Now?

By now you have probably read Lee Kessler's piece in the last issue of *Echoes*. You may also found Brice Robison's humorous bit as well. We are looking for such gems. We still have a pretty good backlog of items for future issues, but we need your explication of some of the humorous rib splitters or serious items you may have never revealed.

Whether it is ten lines or a hundred lines, give us a try and we will try to use and even try to illustrate it. Like our editor, you may have a short term memory that does not include old friends and new. What we need is a prompter.

My wife remarks that sometimes her Rolladex needs to speed up to where her brain is, so that she can utter sensibilities. And at that, she is way ahead of her husband. Maybe its because we have been married more than 60 years.

We will accept any or all of your excuses for your lack of loquacity, and will promise not to question your veracity.

I've about given up on the new style crossword puzzles in the daily and especially the Sunday newspapers. I have a daughter-in-law whom I used to drive almost crazy. I would call her by five Sunday afternoon and without much urging would reveal the fact that I had completed my bout with the pencil and the little boxes.

Do your best, and the address remains 5323 Cheval Place, Charlotte, NC 28205.

### Detail From Mission Report 18 March, 1945

*At approx 1110 hours two ME 262's made a pass at a group behind attacking from 6 o'clock high varying underneath that formation & underneath our high squadron heading toward our lead squadron. To within about 1000 yds and then broke away after being fired upon from B-17's & P-51's were then seen to chase them away.*

*Just after B.A. an ME 262 was observed from our high squadron to have stepped up unobserved in contacts on a formation to the right about 5000 yds away. The jet broke out position for about 10-15 seconds & fired about 10 bursts. Bursts were visible & seemed to come from large cal gun, jet then rolled on axis and went lower from A/C. Further fired. The jet then broke away.*



image from www.stargazr.us



## Chaplain Simester Looks at Early Morning Duty

cont. from page 3



Chaplain Simester reads during a Chapel service at Thurleigh.

On the road are bicycles with their flickering lamps.

The other morning I was at the briefing room way too early. So I went to one of the Squadron combat rooms. The only one there was Major James McKinney, the 369<sup>th</sup> Squadron C.O. He had been up all night. Now he was making a fire in one of those crazy little English stoves. He is a big boy, and is a West Point graduate.

But this morning I went directly into the briefing room. Most of the men were already present. The officer from the Control Tower is passing out the directions for taxiing to their proper positions for take-off. This is an important detail in getting all planes off without confusion. When he finishes the briefing proper will follow.

The Group Operations Officer, Maj. Billy Casseday, makes a preliminary statement. Our group is the first in the (40<sup>th</sup>) Combat Wing, and the Wing is third in the First Air Division. There are three divisions bombing in this area this morning.

Then Intelligence takes over. Month after month Maj. John Baimsfather has stood before the Group. He rarely misses. He rolls up the screen from the map. The men all rise to their feet because the target is low down on the map. A long haul! The murmur is pretty loud this morning because the course seems unusually long. Many take their seats again. A crowded room, not much smoke because cigarettes are not supposed to be lighted before the briefing is

over—after a short description of the general course on the big map. The screen goes down again and pictures are thrown against the screen to show details.

First the pictures of yesterday's successful mission. Many German planes had been destroyed on the ground. It was a good show. That helps the men. Many hate to discover that their effort was a miss.

Then aerial pictures of the target for today. Roads, identification marks such as rivers, roads, lakes, quarries, woods and towns. There are many places in Germany I know pretty well from maps and pictures.

"Here is your 'I.P.' (the spot where the planes begin their bombing run). The wind is so strong and the distance is not far. It will take you 14 minutes."

While the screen is still lowered the weather officer reports. The general weather situation: cloud conditions at takeoff. Weather along the route. Clear over the target. Visibility on return will be one to three miles, light icing at 9000 feet. Temperature at 22000 feet is -34 degrees.

Then comes the battle order: You can expect many flak batteries at thee target.

Watch out as you go over the German lines. You can expect some enemy fighter opposition, but you will have so many friendly fighters in support. Remember, fly good formation. They pick out ragged groups to attack. Here are your radio instructions.

"Any questions?"

"Good luck- light 'em up."

There is a general movement. Everyone except the pilots leave for their individual preparations: The gunners to get equipment, to get the gun barrels into the planes, cameras loaded, parachutes, oxygen masks, electric suits, etc. Navigators go to a special briefing for exact information on the route. The pilots stay for last instructions and advice. The pilot is in command. He has keep check on every man in his crew.

Ralph E. Simester, the second Protestant chaplain to serve the men at Thurleigh, went back to Ohio to continue his duties there in the West Ohio Conference of the United Methodist church. Retiring from those duties in 1965, he moved to Nashville, TN. He died of injuries received when he was struck by a car while crossing US-90 26 Mar 1973 near Panama City, FL. He left his wife, 2d, 7gc.

## Crew Members of Miss America



Standing: (1 to r) Andrew Gallagher, navigator; Ray Schieb, pilot; Joe D. Lyies, copilot and Richard Trostle, engineer. Kneeling: Tony Birkemeier, bombardier; Calvin Sammons, tail gunner; Paul Wright, ball turret gunner and John Thach, radio operator.

Trostle is believed to be the only crewman still living, now in Littlestown PA. His wife died 15 years ago, and he is basically blind from macular degeneration. He no longer drives and has difficulty in reading much of anything. His only daughter lives in California.

## Eisenhower Talks to Invasion Forces D-Day 6 June, 1944



## 306th Leaders See Maps







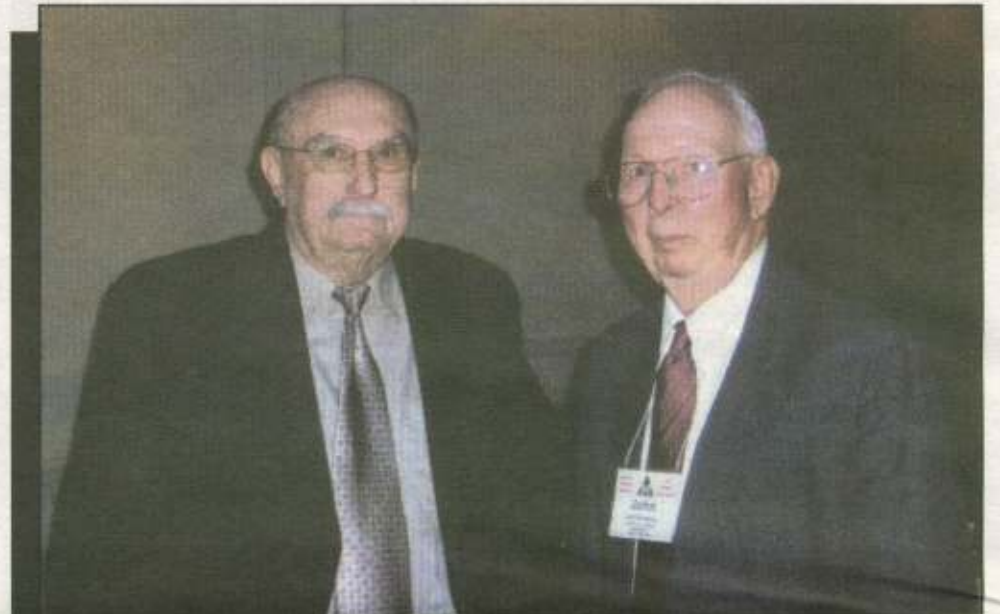
*Carolyn Tate, a helper at registration, and her brother, Albert McMahan, chairman at Omaha.*



*Ready for dinner: Susan O'Konski, Clayton & Jean Nattier, Al McMahan and his sister, Carolyn Tate, June and Russell Strong*



*Royce Hopkins, Janice Ross and her grandson, Scot Wilson, a high school history teacher in Omaha.*



*Graford Jennings and John Deterding*



*Fred & Ruth Sherman, a second marriage for each.*



*Robbie Lanyon and Russell Houghton. She's a 306th widow and he lives in Orrs Island, Maine and Tucson, AZ.*



*Ralph & Daphne Franklin. They're British, you know!*



*Mollie & Royce Hopkins. She helps sell things and he counts money and pays bills.*