



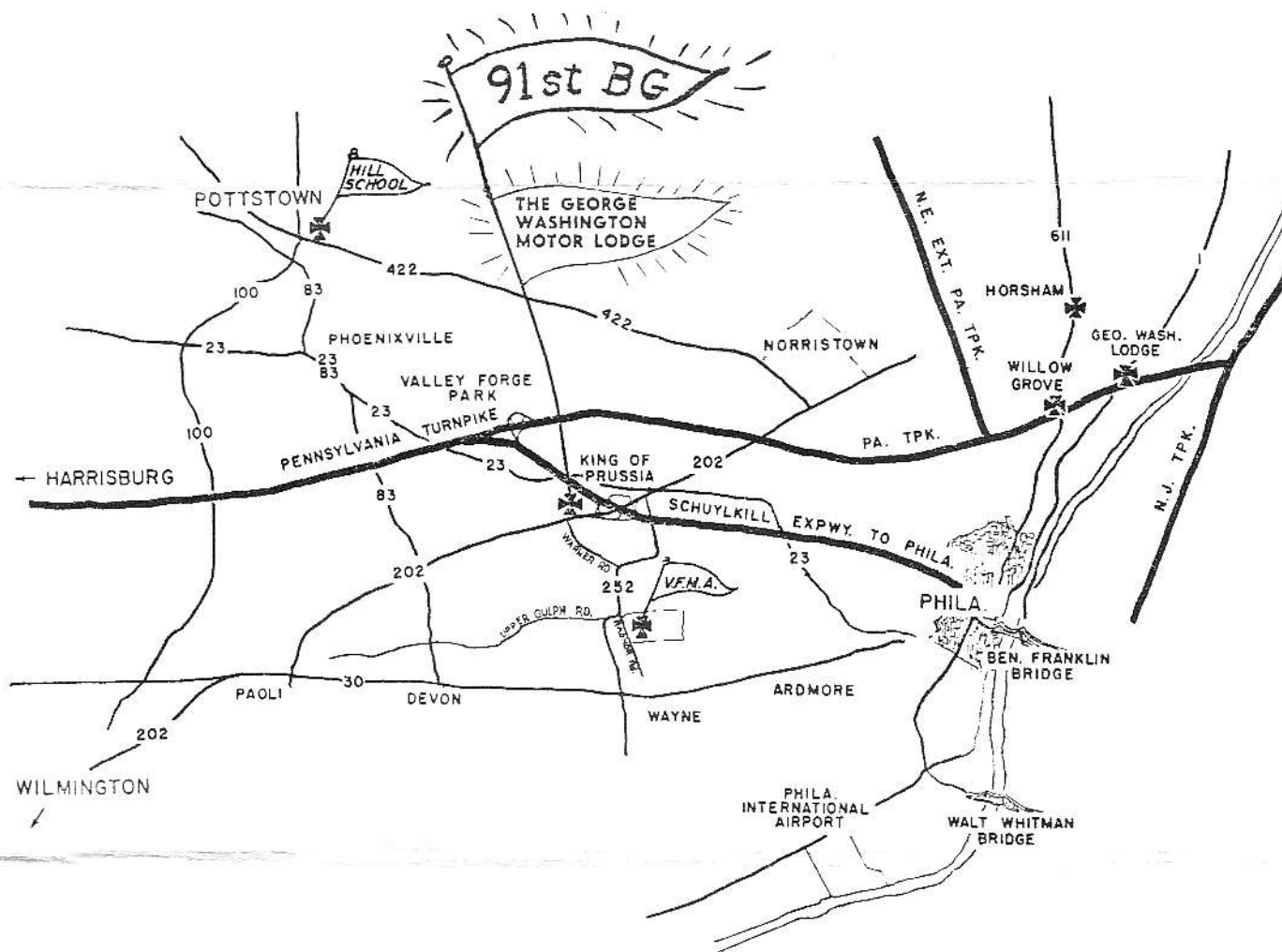
The Ragged Irregular

91st Bombardment Group (H) Newsletter

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Target Valley Forge—National Reunion June 22-27



Prime target for ex-91st-ers from all parts of the nation June 22-27 will be the George Washington Motor Lodge at King of Prussia, Pa., for the bi-annual National Reunion of the 91st Bombardment Group Memorial Association.

The headquarters are adjacent to Valley Forge Park and 20 minutes from central Philadelphia.

Saturday and Sunday, June 22-23, will see early bird informal arrivals, and return of persons participating in "Operation One

More Time."

Official registration, visits to Valley Forge, golf, pub time and movies have been set for Monday, June 24

On Tuesday the group will make a bus tour (with lunch) in the Amish country around Lancaster.

Optional tours to see the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, Betsy Ross House, etc., have been scheduled for Wednesday, June 26. A Group Cocktail Hour and dinner

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Operation 'One More Time' Filled With Goodies

A heavy load of goodies awaits 91st-ers making the overseas trip "Operation One More Time" June 9-21.

The group will fly to Brussels and visit Bastogne, site of the Battle of the Bulge; Luxembourg; Munich, with a Hofbrauhaus Group party; a "Sound of Music" tour of Salzburg; Bertchesgaden; Mainz, with dinner in Kronberg Castle; a Dusseldorf to Cologne trip on the Rhine, and a visit to Amsterdam and 91st gravesites in Opijnen.

A full two and a half day program is planned in the Basingbourn area.

They will be greeted by the East Anglian Aviation Society at Duxford Imperial Air Museum, with flyable B-17s, B-24s, and other

WW II aircraft on the line.

They will be welcomed to Basingbourn Depot by the Station Commander and be guests at an official luncheon at the Officer's Club.

There will be an escorted base tour and a dedication of the original 91st BG control tower as a museum area.

British royalty are expected to attend tea time for the group.

A concert is scheduled by the Victor Valley (Cal.) High School Band, 150 American youths on a concert tour of Europe.

A BBC-TV and news radio show in "C" hangar, with dancing, etc., is also scheduled. Several "secret" surprises are on tap for the group.



A group of 322nd sqdn. members relaxing before the officers club are shown in this May, 1943 shot. From left, at the head of the table, are: Bruce D. Barton, Robert B. Campbell, Steven H. Lindley, Ed Brodnax, Bert Humphries, Priebe, John T. Hardin, Robert H. Bowcock, Art Reynolds. Nearest camera, 1 to r, John G. Hawkins, Henry L. Adkins, John W. Beauchamp.

Here's How To Get Promoted—The Hardest Way

Editor's Note: This story is from the history of the 324th squadron. It is reprinted just as presented in the account.

During the month of September (1944) two staff sergeants of the 324th Bomb Squadron were promoted to Tech. Sergeant, even though the rating was not authorized by the Table of Organization for their respective assignments. They were Regis R. Carney, tail gunner on a ship piloted by Lt. Cater, and Clement D. Dowler, ball turret on the same ship. An account of their unusual experience follows and it was for the way these two lads conducted themselves that they received the promotion.

On 28 April, 1944, the group took off to attack an airfield at Avord, France. It was Carney's 19th mission and Dowler's 13th. Just after bombs away the ship was shot out of the sky by flak, but all crew members succeeded in bailing out.

French peasants hid Carney from the Germans for several days, moving him from house to house and eventually bringing him together with Sgt. Dowler, Sgt. Campbell, another member of the same crew, and Lt. Cater, the pilot.

On one of the moves at night, Carney and Dowler were hidden in the back of a car driven by a French patriot when they were stopped by a German sentry.

The French driver denied that there were passengers in the car, but the boys were smoking in the back end and the smoke gave them away. The German opened the compartment, found they had no identity cards, searched them and narrowly avoided finding the American escape aids, handled a chocolate bar which was part of the escape kit, and much to their surprise let them go.

The four crew members mentioned above stumbled into a Maquis company of 250 men and decided to join it. They were given a uniform, a

gun, and food. Lt. Cater went on a job with two Maquis to steal tobacco. They had a gun battle with gendarmes. Both Maquis were wounded and they had to abandon the stolen tobacco in the car, which had tires shot out and the gas tank punctured.

Evidently the Maquis as an organization wasn't too particular how it satisfied its needs as a resistance force. They preferred to steal from the Nazis but weren't above stealing from their own countrymen.

Carney and Dowler separated from Lt. Cater and Sgt. Campbell and started for southern France on foot. (Lt. Cater eventually reached England but it was reported that Campbell was killed fighting with the Maquis.)

Carney and Dowler finally joined a Maquis force of some 6,000 as they organized in a woods in the south of France. The army had all sorts of equipment including M/7 guns, food, gasoline, etc. Here they encountered 17 airmen, 9 of them American, and an American 1st Lt. who had been dropped for sabotage purposes. The 17 airmen formed a small unit under the command of the lieutenant, and built and occupied a cabin in the woods. They bought food and installed a radio. The Germans then attacked what was supposed to be an unimpregnable defensive position. The Maquis put up very little resistance and were routed. Luckily Carney and Dowler managed to get away. (This was two days after the invasion.)

They started south again and joined another Maquis company about 3,000 strong. This force, too, was attacked by Germans both on the ground and from the air and driven from their defended positions.

Carney and Dowler, anticipating a Mediterranean landing, walked south for two weeks with four French lads. They met a Canadian major who had been dropped by a parachute as a sabotage expert. He invited Carney and Dowler to

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join the big Maquis outfit he was working with. They decided to take his invitation and spent several weeks driving for a French captain and blowing up bridges and performing other acts of sabotage at night. Here they met 15 American paratroopers with a captain in charge. These men were rough and ready, tough veterans highly trained in guerrilla warfare. Carney and Dowler joined them and helped them assemble three 37mm guns which were dropped by parachute.

When the invasion occurred in the south, these Americans from a mountain peak position held up the retreat of the German 19th Army for 24 hours. The 37mm guns took a heavy toll of German transport and completely stopped all traffic on the road.

When the Germans in desperation sent a force to eliminate the guns, the Maquis defending the American position fled, leaving the Americans unprotected. The Americans were forced to withdraw down the far side of the mountain, abandoning the guns. Many Maquis were killed

but there were no American casualties. (Two days later when the Americans went back up the mountain the guns were intact. Curiously enough the Germans had not destroyed them.)

A few miles beyond the road block thrown up by the 15 American paratroopers, 4000 officers and men of the German 19th Army surrendered to Carney, Dowler, and the 15 paratroopers.

The prisoners were turned over to an advancing French army, which was plainly disgusted because the Germans wouldn't fight.

Capt. Roy Rickison, leader of the paratroopers, wrote a letter each for Sgt. Carney and Sgt. Dowler praising them for their courage, fighting spirit, and willingness to follow orders.

The two flew back to England by way of Corsica, Italy, and Gibraltar.

Now they are back in the states with a promotion, a letter of praise, and proud memories of an excitement-packed experience.



Capt. Frank Kolts' crew, shot down on their 18th mission to Oschersleben, February 22, '44. Front row, 1 to r: T/Sgt. Matthew Kryjak, engineer; T/Sgt. Abe S. Homar, engineer; T/Sgt. John Guros, radio operator; S/Sgt. John Hill,

tail gunner; S/Sgt. Omar Sharpe, ball turret; S/Sgt. Roy Grandquist, waist gunner.

Back row: Lt. Ehud Merkle, co-pilot; Lt. Harold White, bombardier; Capt. Frank Kolts, pilot; Lt. Reed Alexander, navigator.

Long Beach Area Rally Round Big Success

Another highly successful Southern California Rally Round was hosted by area Flt. Leader Doug Gibson at the Jolly Roger Inn in Anaheim February 23. More than 60 members and guests attended the event.

Eastern Division chairman Paul Chryst made the long journey from Pottstown, Pa., to attend, and Virgil Mott flew in from Oklahoma.

Attending were: Mr. and Mrs. Doug Gibson, Long Beach, 401st; Mr. and Mrs. Rocco J. Maiorca, Los Angeles, 401st; Virgil Mott, Tulsa, Ok., 401st; Mr. and Mrs. Aubun R. Pene, Brea, 401st; Mrs. Goldie J. Cahill, Glendale, HQ.; Paul Chryst, Pottstown, Pa., 401st; Mr. and Mrs. Faber Cripps, Arcadia, 401st & 441st Sub. Depot; Mr. and Mrs. Jack Gaffney, Riverside, 401st; Mr. and Mrs. Ralph J. Tomek, South Gate, 401st.

Mr. and Mrs. William D. Allen, South Gate, 384th B.G.; Mr. and Mrs. Francis J. Steinhoff, Garden Grove, 97th B.G.; Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Thomsen, Alhambra, 401st; Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wright, Long

Beach, 322nd; Mr. and Mrs. William Guldner, Van Nuys, 401st; Mr. and Mrs. Chris Christiansen and family, Upland, 322nd; Mr. and Mrs. Walter W. Kuehl, Anaheim, 324th.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Puls, Playa del Rey, 323rd; SMS and Mrs. Louis Holland (Ret.), Lancaster, 401st; Mr. and Mrs. Robert H. Clapp, Fullerton, 322nd; Mr. and Mrs. W.S. Baranowski, Orange, 97th B.G.; Mr. and Mrs. A.A. Fallin, Los Alamets, 384th B.G.; Mr. and Mrs. James B. Robertson, Norwalk; Mr. and Mrs. Walter M. Ward, Bellflower, 401st; Mr. and Mrs. Hugh C. Ham, Resedo, 322nd; John L. Hurd, South Gate, 491st B.G.; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Paspate, Playa del Rey.

Mr. and Mrs. Leon Scheman, Lakewood; Ray W. Schroeder, Claremont, 322nd.; Mr. and Mrs. Edward Harney, Lakewood; Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Heintert, Temple City; Mr. and Mrs. Damma, Whittier; LTC and Mrs. Bruce F. Bauer, Santa Ana; Ms. Caralyn Cartor; Mr. and Mrs. Frank Keneley, Whittier, 401st; Wallace Duffy, Hawthorne, 401st.



Here's a shot of Capt. Dikran "Herk" Hazirjian, squadron navigator for the 324th sqdn., taken in January, 1944.



T/Sgt. R.C. Hill, 324th sqdn. radio operator, gets "30-mission washdown" in 1944.

Western Division Sets September Rally Round

A Western Division Rally Round has been set for September 6-7-8 in Fresno, Cal.

The get together is especially aimed at area members who will not be able to make the National Reunion in Valley Forge in June.

A unique attraction for the

Rally Round is that it will coincide with the third "Annual Gathering of War Birds" at Chandler-Fresno field held the same week end. P-51s, P-47s, P-38s, T-6s, and B-25s will be on hand for the big event.

Headquarters will be at the Tradewinds Motor Hotel, 2141 North Parkway Drive, Fresno.



Louis LaHood's crew with their plane "Lassie Come Home." Front row, l to r: Gail Garner, ball turret; Ernest Ellington, waist; John Anding, engineer; Bob Megchelsen, tail gunner; Bob Hettinger, waist;

Norman Mansfield, radio operator.

Back row: Homer Glass, navigator; Louis LaHood, pilot; Joe Stolber, co-pilot; Manuel Canter, bombardier.



Here is Dave Bramble's crew on "The Village Flirt," #42-29739, taken in October, 1943.

Front row: S/Sgt. W.W. Reich, tail gunner; T/Sgt. P.L. Zimmerman, radio operator; S/Sgt. R.C. Ridings, ball turret; S/Sgt. J.I. Bernas-

coni, assistant engineer; S/Sgt. R. Poppa, assistant radio operator.

Back row: Lt. Q.H. Ellis, navigator; Lt. R.C. Singer, bombardier; Lt. D.A. Bramble, pilot; Lt. P.G. Mack, co-pilot; T/Sgt. J.M. Williams, engineer.



Oscar O'Neil's crew of "Invasion II": Front row: Friehofer, Carmichael, O'Neil, Bush, Youell.

Back row: Melchiondo, Goldstein, King, Barostowski, Lapp.

From The Editor's Desk...

Paul C. Burnett

Box 909, Auburn, Al. 36830

A nice note from Col. Vernon W. Bryant, Director, Storage and Transportation, Defense Supply Agency, Defense Depot, Memphis, Tenn. "I wish to express my deepest appreciation to you for your fine efforts in publishing The Ragged Irregular. I enjoy the R/I very much, and look forward to each new issue with anticipation.

"I served with the 364th Service Squadron and the 441st Sub Depot during the entire stay of the 91st at Bassingbourn. I truly believe that no one in the 8th Air Force sewed and patched as many flak and bullet holes as I did. The association with the 91st has been one of the highlights of my military career...The ole Memphis Belle is parked next door to a National Guard Armory up the street from here. Brings fond memories when I pass by and see her..."

The Western Division has a new Life Member on its rolls - Ammon H. Powell, 4747 Griffith Ave., Fremont, Cal. 94538. He will receive his Gold Card at the National Reunion in Valley Forge. Ammon, ex-322nd sqdn., was an engineer-gunner. His crew included Edward L. Mooney, pilot; Fredrik S. Waiss, co-pilot; John Kurylo, navigator; Robert Permenter, bombardier; Carl W. Fuller, radio; Walter Hanych, ball turret; John F. Cayne, tail gunner; Peter J.R. Smith, gunner, and Robert B. Baker, assistant engineer-gunner. He flew missions in Red Alert, Superstitious Aloysius, Wee Willie, Bachelor's Bride, and Lassie Come Home.

Ex-pilot Phil Mack of the 323rd sqdn. has passed along the word that Robert C. Singer, former 323rd sqdn. bombardier, died in Camillus, N.Y., Oct. 16, 1972.

John T. "Tyse" Hardin, 322nd sqdn. pilot of "Mizpah," and Harry Knowles, group electrical systems specialist, flew down from Atlanta recently in Knowles Cherokee 180 recently for a brief visit with the editor. Hardin is a captain with Eastern Airlines; Knowles has an office equipment business in Atlanta.

Steve Lindley, bombardier on the 322nd ship "Chief Sly" that led the Hamm raid reported in the January R/I writes: "This one brought back a lot of memories and added information I did not know. The loading list itself reminded me of people I had forgotten but at that time was very close to. Missions like the Hamm raid took total cooperation and togetherness. I am prejudiced, but to me this list of names and planes was the 91st." Steve sent along the picture of the 322nd members included in this issue. He is now with the Petroleum Corporation of Texas, P.O. Box 911, Breckenridge, Texas.

Western Division Secretary-Treasurer George Parks is trying to locate the crew chief of a 323rd sqdn. B-17 G, Ser.#42-37938, call letters OR-E. George and pilot Tom Gunn used the ship on a mission to Kassel 19 April 1944, when the ship was badly shot up but the crew managed to fly it back to Bassingbourn alone. He wants to thank the crew chief for his excellent maintenance.

1974 National Reunion...

and dance with live music has been set for the evening.

The 91st Memorial Association business meeting and final closing will take place on Thursday.

The George Washington Motor Lodge offers indoor and outdoor swimming pools, a putting green and other recreational facilities. It is adjacent to an 18-hole public golf course.