



The Ragged Irregular

91st Bombardment Group (H) Newsletter

Vol. 16

No. 3

October, 1983

Dutch Memorial Honors 91sters

For four decades the inhabitants of the tiny Dutch farming community of Opijnen (pop. 700) have honored the memory and maintained the graves of eight former 91sters who lie buried in the Dutch Reformed churchyard there. From time to time The Ragged Irregular has written up their story, especially on those occasions when Memorial Association members have taken part in their annual activities.

But this year - the fortieth anniversary - a truly special and unique memorial service was held, sponsored by the American Women's Club of Amsterdam and the Betty McDonald Foundation, assisted by the 91st Bomb Group Memorial Association.

The story of the Opijnen memorial began around lunchtime on July 30, 1943, when Dutch farm workers near Opijnen noticed a lone, limping B-17 (124399) struggling along, under attack by two German fighter planes. As Hendrick de Kock, then an 18-year-old farm worker recalls: "The plane began to spin to the earth and eight parachutes blossomed forth." (Two of the 10-man crew were already dead aboard the aircraft.)

"Immediately the German fighters began to shoot the descending crew members. One, whose parachute was riddled, plunged like a stone and fell through the thatched roof of an old farmhouse, striking the beams before landing finally in a pile of hay." de Kock reached him just before he died, in time to give him a drink of water and receive a few cigarettes in gratitude. That crewmember was the navigator, 1st Lt. Robert U. Duggan.

Five of the parachutists were killed in the air.

Only two members of the crew survived -- Keene C. McCammon, the pilot, and John P. Bruce, co-pilot. The last to bail out, they came down some distance away from the others. McCammon came down in the river Waal, was captured and spent two years in German prison camps. Bruce landed at the village of Varik, near Opijnen, with an injured knee. He was immediately captured and after a stay in a German hospital spent the remainder of the war in P.O.W. camps. Both men are now members of the Memorial Association.

The citizens of Opijnen, after considerable difficulty, persuaded the Germans to let them bury the dead fliers in the local church cemetery. The eight buried there



McCammon, de Kock and Bruce examine pictures of the crash site.



91ster Les Walshaw places the wreath from the Memorial Association.

were: S/Sgt. George Richard Krueger, waist gunner; S/Sgt. Mike Anthony Perrotta, ball turret gunner; 2nd Lt. Daniel Victor Ohman, bombardier; S/Sgt. Hermon Daines Poling, tail gunner; S/Sgt. Harold Royce Sparks, waist gunner; 1st Lt. Robert Urquhart Duggan, navigator; T/Sgt. Douglas Victor Blackwood, radio operator, and T/Sgt. Americo Cianfichi, engineer, of the 323rd sqdn., 91st B.G.

After the war, when the U.S. had established a memorial cemetery at Margraten, near Maastricht, where 8301 U.S. personnel lie buried (40 of them former 91sters), the citizens of Opijnen got special permission from the U. S. Government and the families of the airmen to keep them in Opijnen. Only one other U.S. soldier is buried in Holland outside the cemetery at Margraten-- S/Sgt. John E. McCormick of the 392nd B.G. (B-24s), in Zoetermeer, near The Hague. McCormick was shot down over Holland Feb. 25, 1945. He worked with the Dutch underground for two months and was killed by the Germans April 29, just five days before the surrender of German forces in Holland. A street in Zoetermeer has been named for him.

In 1950 the American writer Betty MacDonald, author of "The Egg and I," turned over the Dutch royalties from her best-selling book to a foundation for the upkeep of the graves of American soldiers in Holland, to be administered by the American Women's Club of Amsterdam. Since the military cemetery at Margraten was excellently supported by the U.S. Government, the Club has used the returns from the fund toward the upkeep of the graves at Opijnen.

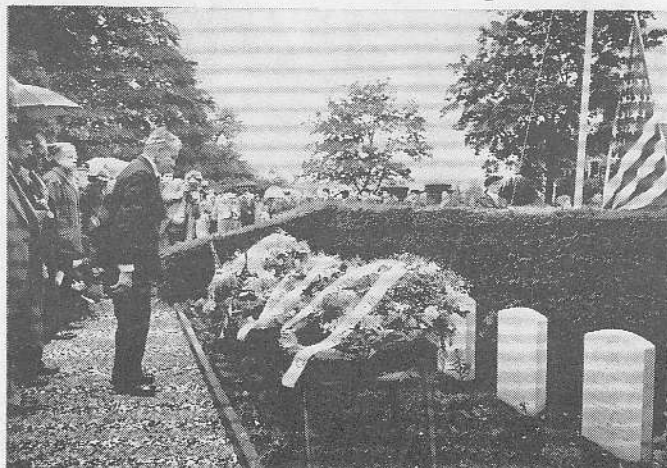
This year - the fortieth anniversary - the AWCA decided on a really special memorial ceremony, with the erection of a granite monument of thanks at the Opijnen cemetery and the attendance of U. S. and Dutch dignitaries, and representatives of the 91st Bomb Group.

After months of planning and hard work the services were held May 28, 1983. Officially representing the 91st was Life Member Les R. Walshaw, who is working for the U.S. government in Germany. Guests of honor were 91sters Keene McCammon and John P. Bruce, only surviving members of the crew, who flew in from Minnesota and Florida for the memorial.

Walshaw describes the event like this: "On Saturday, 28 May, Lts. McCammon and John P. Bruce, the only two survivors of the 10-man crew, returned to the site of the tragedy to honor the memory of their comrades.

"Over the years, the memory has been kept alive by the tireless efforts of Mr. Hendrick de Kock caring for the eight graves, and Mr. Douwe de Vries who has relentlessly organized and arranged the annual memorial. Hendrick, who at the age of 18 witnessed the lamentable event 40 years ago and assisted in recovering the scattered bodies from the fields, is the only known living witness.

"The Memorial, a tribute to those eight who paid the ultimate price for freedom, was held at the Dutch Reformed Church of Opijnen cemetery after the indoor church services. The eulogies delivered during the church services were given by Mr. S. J.



Hendrick de Kock places the wreath from Opijnen. Photo Stars and Stripes.



School children of Opijnen place flowers on the graves.

Wijnperle, Mayor of Neerijnen; Mr. H. Mills, US Consul General Netherlands; Col. C. C. Clark, 32TFS Commander (USAFE), Camp New Amsterdam (CNA), Soesterburg NL; Dr. P. D. de Bruijn, Chaplain of Opijnen; and Maj. G. Golden, CNA Chaplain.

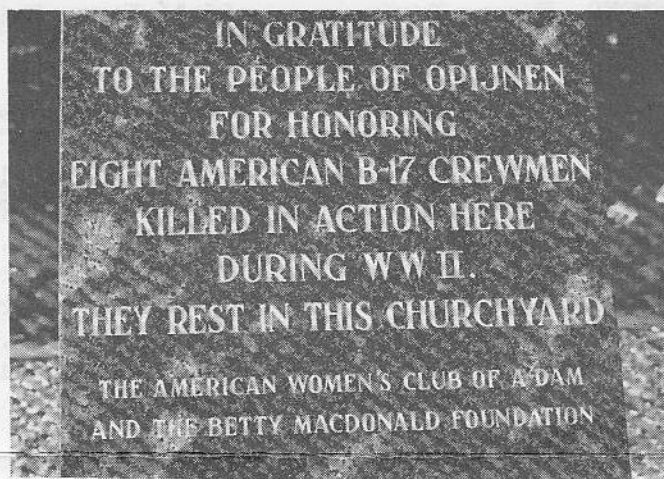
"Mrs. Diana P. Mills, Chairperson Opijnen Memorial Committee, and Mrs. Andre de la Porte, President American Women's Club of Amsterdam NL, unveiled the new granite monument, on behalf of the Betty McDonald Foundation, in gratitude to the residents of Opijnen for their support honoring the eight 91st crewmembers over the years. The gold leaf inscription bore the following statement: IN GRATITUDE TO THE PEOPLE OF OPIJNEN FOR HONORING EIGHT AMERICAN B-17 CREWMEN KILLED IN ACTION HERE DURING WW II. THEY REST IN THIS CHURCHYARD.

"Four F-15s from the 32TFW, CNA N1, performed the very impressive missing-man formation fly-by. The laying of wreaths from the town of Opijnen, the Women's Club, and the 91st Memorial Association was followed by children from the local elementary school, who filed past the eight white marble headstones, adorning them with flowers they had picked especially for the occasion. The flag ceremony and 21-man gun salute was impeccably performed by the USAFE Elite Guard. Following one minute of silence to reflect, a small choir group of Opijnen women began to sing God Bless America in English. Before the first three lines had been sung the people present began to join in. This observer found it extremely difficult to sing during these highly emotional moments. Despite the inclement weather the event was one of the most impressive memorials I have witnessed. Dutch-American ties have never been stronger in the village of Opijnen.

Special thanks go to the following persons for their contributions to making the event so impressive: Lt. Scott Woodham, 32TFS, Protocol; Carol Bousquet-Redmond, AFEBS (AFN); Stephany James, Stars and Stripes; Theresa Wynne, AFEBS (AFN); Mr. H. de Kock, Opijnen, Mr. Douwe de Vries, Opijnen. And finally, Ms Evelyn Richie of Amsterdam, whose hours of arranging and coordinating were the catalyst for the occasion.



Mrs. Diana P. Mills and Mrs. Andre de la Porte place AWCA wreath at memorial.



The four-foot high granite monument erected at the Opijnen churchyard.

Plan Now For Colorado Springs '84

Colorado Springs is nationally known as an outstanding vacation spot and the committee is hard at work lining up some extraordinarily attractive activities for the more than 400 91sters expected to be on hand September 5-8, 1984. But what will be the real secret for making this one THE BEST ONE YET depends on what YOU do!

Reunions are great because they bring old friends and buddies back together to

share old memories and stories. The great scenery and exciting events are the icing on the cake, and not the main dish.

Each member who plans to attend should make sure there will be old friends to visit. Write or call buddies and urge them to meet you there. Put a note on your Christmas cards. Round up your crew members, squadron workmates, etc., and get them lined up for the big event!

New Members - Address Changes

ABDO, Edmund.	300 Donny Dr, R.D. # 4,	Moscow.	PA.	18444 (C)
ALLEN, John W.	7390 Chico Way, NW.	Bremerton.	WA.	98310 (C)
ANDERSON, Marvin D.	1224-108th SE.	Bellevue.	WA.	98004 (C)
ANTONACCHIO, Felix A.	80 La Salle Ave.	Hasbrouck Hgts.	NJ.	07604 (C)
BANKOVSKY, Nicholas. (L)	294 Colfax Rd.	Wayne.	NJ.	07470 (C)
BRAUGHMAN, Dick .	Chief P.A. USAF Museum.	Wright-Patterson.	OH.	45433 (N)
		Air Force Base.		
BERNARD, Wesolowski.	46 Route Nationale.	Mercy LE BAS.	54960.	France. (N-A)
BONNER, Charles H. Maj.(Ret)	303 Old Salem Way.	Martinez.	GA.	30907 (C)
CASSESE, Louis R.	30 Livingston Pl.	Middletown.	RI.	02840 (C)
CHANEY, C.G. LTC.(Ret)	127 Arlington St.	Johnston.	PA.	15905 (N)
CIGANEK, Victor.	81-40 264th St.	Floral Park.	NY.	11004 (C)
CORNWELL, Thelma.Mrs.	215 Oak Knoll Dr.	Dayton.	OH.	45419 (N-A)
CRIPPS, Faber H.	Rt. 2. Diamond Lake.	Atwater.	MN.	56209 (C)
CRUISE, Robin E.	1735 Vizaheea Dr.	Dubuque.	IA.	52001 (C)
DARLING, Dale J.	3382 Amberway Crt.	Cincinnati.	OH.	45239 (N)
DASZEWSKI, Edmund D.Maj.	Box 92960.	Los Angeles.	CA.	90009 (C)
DETERLINE, Robert	6549 Illinois St.	Mammond.	IN.	46323 (C)
DONAHUE, Walter R.	End Of Willett Rd.	Saundertown.	RI.	02874 (C)
DONLEY, Earl.	518 W. Frederick St.	Lancaster.	PA.	17603 (N)
DRYJA, Norbert P.	Rt. 1, Box 148.	Krakow.	WI.	54137 (C)
DYER, Charles W.	5400 W. Orchard Dr.	Bloomington.	IN.	47401 (N)
EAKER, Ira C. LT.GEN.(Ret)	2202 Decatur Pl, NW.	Washington.	DC.	20008 (C)
EMOND, Eugene P.	35-16 Ferry Heights.	Fair Lawn.	NJ.	07410 (C)
FISHER, Jack C.Jr.LTC(Ret)	P.O. Box 711.	Victorville.	CA.	92392 (C)
FOLVEN, Linez.	22 South Main.	Minot.	ND.	58701 (C)
FRYE, Wayne B."TEX"	6915 Texhoma Ave.	Van Nuys.	CA.	91406 (C)
GILBRIDE, James D.	11811 Memorial Dr.	Houston.	TX.	77024 (N)
GUINN, Charles A.	735 W. Roosevelt.	Coolidge.	AZ.	85228 (N)
HADLER, Kenneth H.SSGT(Ret)	117 N. Oxalis Dr.	Orlando.	FL.	32307 (C)
HALLER, Edward.	Box 189 Rt.# 2.	Highland.	IL.	62249 (C)
HASLER, Arthur S.	8111 Roxboro Dr.	Bayonet Point.	FL.	33567 (C)
HAWKINS, John G.	6046 Golden Forrest.	Houston.	TX.	77092 (C)
HAZIRJIAN, Dikran "Herk"	36 Laurel Lane.	Bristol.	VA.	24201 (C)
HILGERT, Merle O.	11124 Bryant Rd.	Mokena.	IL.	60448 (N)
HOFFMAN, Marion C.	5950 Cindy Dr.	Dayton.	OH.	45449 (N)
JACKSON, Ronald W.	Box 2010.	Sparks.	NV.	89431 (N-A)
JANSE-ELAERTS, John.	Schoolstraat 2 bus 4.	3220 AARSCHOT.	BELGIUM.	(N-A)
JOHNSON, Raymond A.LTC(Ret)	20035 Cronese Lane.	Apple Valley.	CA.	92307 (C)
JONES, Raymond E. LTC(Ret)	R.R. 2, Box 288-D.	Hemphill.	TX.	75948 (C)
KIRKLAND, Russell A.	P.O. Box 337.	Alford.	FL.	32420 (C)
KLOUS, Harold.	P.O. Box "L".	Albuquerque.	NM.	87103 (N)
KUDASIK, Joseph W. Jr.	252 Lambert St.	Central City.	PA.	15926 (N)
LACASCA, Joseph.	2584 Alder Ave.	East Meadow.	NY.	11554 (C)
LAMEN, Clemith B.	35 West 30th.	Eugene.	OR.	97405 (N)
LIEBE, John W.	102-2nd St, SE # 1005.	Rochester.	MN.	55904 (C)
LOYLESS, Roy E. (L)	P.O. Box 249.	Simonton.	TX.	77476 (N)
MAKI, Rudolph J.	15260 W. 44th Ave.	Golden.	CO.	80403 (N-A)
MARKLE, Herbert A.	20 Evergreen Pl.	Howell.	NJ.	07731 (C)
MATHERS, Dudley B. Jr.	3924 Wentwood Dr.	Dallas.	TX.	75225 (N)
MATHIAS, Glen E.	Box 121.	Genesee Depot.	WI.	53127 (CH)
MEEKER, Allen.	West 285 Summer Pl.	Girard.	PA.	16417 (N)
MOREL, Lawrence C.	8 Pleasant St, Box 152.	Gorham.	NH.	03581 (C)
MULLEN, Norval A.	223 W. Jackson St.	Parker City.	IN.	47368 (C)
MC CONNELL, George.	824 Gardenside Crt.	Lehigh Acres.	FL.	33936 (C)

MC GARA, Clemens B. CMSGT. (Ret)	1310 E. Section Apt.3.	Mt. Vernon.	WA. 98273 (C)
MC GEE, Fewer Edmund.	1202 Abby Rd.	Round Rock.	TX. 78664 (N)
MC LACHLAN, Ian.	1 Joy Avenue. Norwich, Norfolk.	Newton Flotman, NR15 1RD.	England. (N-A)
MC PARTLAND, James H. Brig/Gen. (Ret)	P.O. Box 20.	Richardson.	TX. 75083 (C)
NAPIER, Alexander J.	110 Country Lane.	Haughton.	LA. 71037 (N)
PAPPAS, Xenophon Jack K.	4 Cromwell Hill Rd.	Monroe.	NY. 10950 (C)
PERIS, Joseph M. Jr.	462 E. Waneta Lake Rd. Box 180.	Dundee.	NY. 14837 (C)
POPE, Jerome D.	5240 Greencroft.	Dayton.	OH. 45426 (C)
RASMUSSEN, William E.	8729 Center Rd.	Traverse City.	MI. 49684 (N)
RUBEN, Hymen.	1010 Burton Dr.NE.	Atlanta.	GA. 30329 (C)
RUDA, John.	26000 Nagel.	Roseville.	MI. 48066 (C)
RUDY, William J.	One Oakhill Rd.	Ardsley.	NY. 10502 (N)
RUSSUM, Milton H.	295 Barben Ave.	Watertown.	NY. 13601 (N)
SHIPPIKA, John.	1519 Warrinsville Center, Road.	Cleveland.	OH. 44121 (C)
SNYDER, Charles H.	64 Fries Rd.	Tonawanda.	NY. 14150 (C)
SOMMERS, Sam L.MSGT(Ret)	3859 Saturn Ave.	Lompac.	CA. 93436 (C)
SOWERS, Leonard E.	6 Doctors Lane.	Macomb.	IL. 61455 (C)
SPREINE, William E.	8626 Valhalla Dr.	Everett.	WA. 98204 (N)
WATERS, Edward.	715 Rue Fontaine Lane.	Houston.	TX. 77015 (N)
WILLIAMS, David M. (L) Col. (Ret).	5312 Alta Bahia Crt.	San Diego.	CA. 92108 (C)
WILMONT, James C.	7937 Vadosta Ave.	San Diego.	CA. 92126 (C)
WOOD, Ray E. MSGT.USAF.	Rt. 1, Box 54A.	Des Lacs.	ND. 58733 (N-A)
YOUNG, Thomas A.	Box 306.	Verona.	MS. 38879 (C)

Carter Crew Reunion In Houston

Houston, Texas was the site of a joyous 38-year-reunion of eight former 401st squadron crew members who flew 35 missions together over Germany in 1944-45 in "Little Patches," "Shoo Shoo Baby" and "General Ike."

Attending, all members of pilot Will T. Carter's crew, were: Walter Boenig, Natalie, Texas; Will T. Carter, Beaumont, Texas; Lewis B. Ellis, Baltimore, MD.; William Grimmett, Livingston, Texas; Arthur J. Jabara, Miami, FL.; Joseph J. Kremer, Jefferson City, MO.; John P. Rumph, Kirkland, WA.; James D. Woolsey, McCleod, MT., and their wives.

This crew flew in the first daylight bombing raid on Berlin and once led the entire Eighth Air Force on a maximum effort mission against the submarine manufacturing and repair yards at Hamburg.

A cocktail party was hosted in honor of the group and their wives by Continental Airlines on the evening of their arrival at the Guest Quarters Hotel on Thursday,

May 26, where luxurious suites were made available for all by the hotel.

Letters of recognition and congratulations to the crew members were received from Congressman Bill Archer, Texas State Senator Don Henderson and County Judge Jon Lindsay of Houston.

On Saturday a tour was made to NASA Johnson Space Center and a party and barbecue was hosted by Mr. & Mrs. L. H. Ballinger where two of our astronauts, Commander Thomas K. Mattingly and Lt. Col. James F. Buchli attended and expressed their gratitude and appreciation to the crew members for their bravery and help in leading the way for them.

Also managed a night out of kicker dancing in Texas proving the "old folks" not so old.

Old friendships and comradeship were renewed, along with reminiscing, re-flying missions, sharing war stories, pictures, and life experiences.

It was an occasion that was looked for-

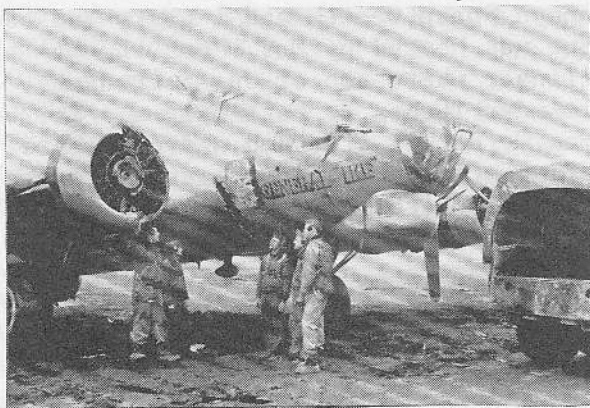
ward to for months, and will be remembered for years by all.



Attending the Houston reunion were: Front row, 1 to r, John P. Rumph, Walter Boenig, Arthur Jabara. Back row, Joseph J. Kremer, William Grimmett, Will T. Carter, Lewis B. Ellis, James D. Woosley.



L to r, Barbara Jabara, Dorothy Ellis, Margie Boenig, Beryl Woosley, Joseph Kremer's daughter, Pat Kremer, Gene Rumph, Jimmie Grimmett, Gloria Carter.



Under the propless No. 3 engine, pilot Will Carter and co-pilot Lewis Ellis view gashes in Gen. Ike from fly-away prop.

From The Editor's Desk...

Paul C. Burnett Box 909 Auburn, Al. 36830

Shoo Shoo Baby Update

Mike Leister, curator for the 512th Antique Aircraft Restoration Group re-building Shoo Shoo Baby, passes along the latest up-date on the progress of their work and a new picture of 076 in Sweden.

Most of the work this year on "Baby" has been concentrated on rebuilding the two outboard wings. Severe internal corrosion has kept Ray McCloskey, Dan Vasey and Tom Corbiel busy. The left outboard is finished, wiring and all, ready to install.

The right outboard needs painted inside and the ribs re-installed. Both inboard wings are installed, although the trailing edge of the right wing still needs to be installed. Both main landing gears are completely installed and the Baby is ready to sit on her own gear except for two flanges that hold the outer brakes on.

We have recently found records showing that 076 was battle damaged 11 times, not counting her final mission, all damages from flak. Anyone wanting a list of parts we still need or wishing to contribute to the restoration effort should contact: 512MA/AARG, Dover AFB, DE. 19902.

A new Shoo Shoo Baby booklet with many recently discovered pictures, patch and decal is available for a \$5 donation.



Does anyone recognize the man on the bicycle? We thought he might be a "Baby" crew member since the plane is being used as a backdrop. Contact Mike Leister.

Roy E. Loyless, ex-401st sqdn. and ex-P.O.W., of Lawless Farm, P.O. Box 249, Simonton, Texas 77478, found out about the

Memorial Association in August, 1983, and joined immediately. Thinking better of his decision, on September 1 he sent along his check for \$100 to become our most recent Life Member! How's that for action?

Mrs. Donald E. Caldwell (Amy) sent her check for a Life Membership for Don to mark his birthday August 16 and his retirement August 19 after 37 years with Sears-Roebuck in Uniontown, PA. Donald was a sergeant with the 324th sqdn. Photo Lab.

Ladies, Christmas is coming up. Why not follow Amy's example and give hubby a Gold Card for his gift?

This example of the "Order of the Rigid Digit" has been presented to the East Anglia Aviation Society for display in the Tower Museum at Bassingbourn. The front plate reads: "My God Am I Right?" Order Of The Rigid Digit 91st Bomb Group (H) Memorial Association, Inc.

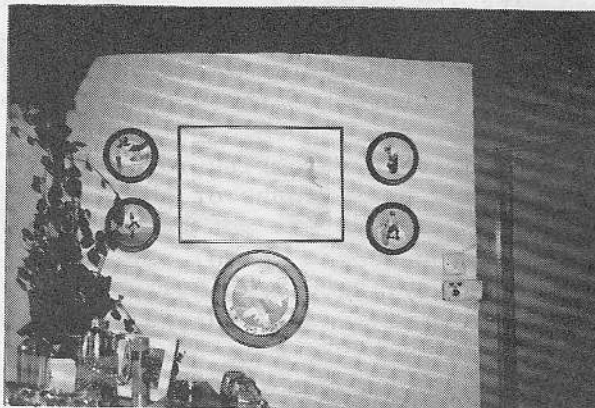
The side plates read: Presented To The E.A.A.S. By The Members of The 91st Bomb Group (H) Memorial Association, Inc.; and Control Tower Museum Station 121 Bassingbourn, England July 1, 1983.

The rear plate reads: Thank You For Remembering Us" 91st Bomb Group (H) Members.

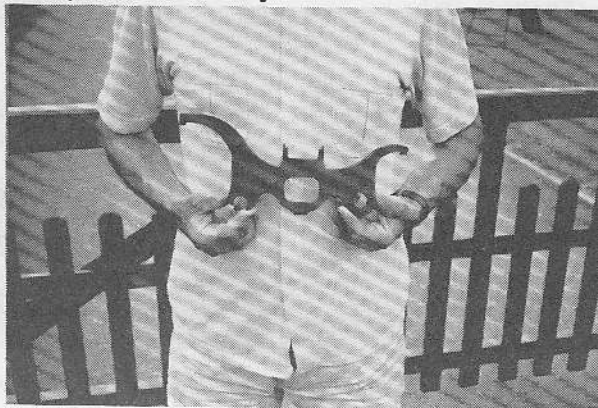


Bob DeGeorge and wife Georgette visited the old base and the Cambridge area in July and Bob sent along a couple of pictures. He points out the the 91st

occupies a most prestigious spot in the Officers' Club -- the wall at the end of the bar!



Also he has a shot of an artifact dug up recently during some farming activity in the dispersal area that he would like identified. From the markings it is something to do with a 50 calibre machine gun. Can anyone identify it?



One of our most recent applicants for associate membership in the 91st B.G. Memorial Association is T/Sgt. Ray E. Wood, Headquarters 91st Security Police Group (SAC), Minot AFB ND. Ray is not only currently a member of the active 91st Wing at Minot, but his father, M/Sgt Rurel R. Wood (Ret) was with the 322nd sqdn. at Bassingbourn.

British writer Peter Harris is doing a piece on Bert Stiles, ex-401st sqdn. co-pilot on Sam Newton's crew and the author of the best-selling book "Serenade to the Big Bird," and is trying to pinpoint the "Lt. Mac" to whom the book is dedicated and who is written up in chapter 7 of the book. "Lt. Mac" was shot down in "Cool Papa."

Can any of Bert's friends enlighten us? The only "Mac" closely associated with Bert that the Irregular editor is familiar

with was Arthur B.B. MacLemore, but he does not fit the details. If you can help, write: Peter Harris, 45, All Saints Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, England.

An English associate member is trying to locate pictures of the ground crew of Outhouse Mouse, OR-N 231636. Barrie J. Railton has been gathering information, history, and photographs of the plane for several years, but has not been able to locate a ground crew photo. If you can help, contact : Barrie J. Railton, 6, Holroyd Road, Claygate, Surrey KT10 OLG, England.

Ted Winslow visited Bassingbourn during the summer and sent back these photographs.



An interior view of the Tower Museum



Winslow and Vince Hemmings in the Officers' Bar at Bassingbourn

Representing the 91st at the Madingly Cemetery Memorial Day services was M/Sgt. (Ret) Otto Meikus and his wife Gladys, who live in Cambridge.



William J. Cornwell, ex-Hq. sqdn, and host for the '82 Reunion in Dayton, died of a heart attack August 30. Bill, a holder of the Bronze Star, was one of the members who represented the 91st in Memorial Day ceremonies at the Air Force Museum last May.

We have received information that William J. Dinneen, ex-401st sqdn., died of a heart attack August 12.

If members of the Memorial Association would drop us a note when they learn of deaths of ex-91sters we would be grateful.

Pikes Peak Or Bust In '84!

Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, & A Great New Year!