

The Ragged Irregular



322nd SQDN



323rd SQDN



SUPPORTING UNITS



324th SQDN



401st SQDN

Vol. 21, No. 1

91st Bombardment Group (H) Newsletter

January 1988

KLETTE: DC TRIBUTE FITTING AND EMOTIONAL



The Oct 1987 Washington, DC Rally-Round drew the heaviest attendance on Sunday, Oct 11th, when a 91st BGMA Memorial Wreath was placed upon the Tomb of the Unknowns and a 91st BGMA plaque was accepted by the Arlington National Cemetery for display in the Tomb's Trophy Room. The above pictures record the wreath ceremony. The left photo depicts (L-R) Pres

Paul Chryst, Sec Whit W Hill, Col Immanuel J Klette and Maj John C Ufford, the USAF Honor Guard who officially participated in the ceremony. The center photo depicts a portion of the 91sters and family members who attended the solemn occasion. In the right photo Col Klette places the wreath to honor all the Nation's Unknown Heroes.

IF EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS INDICATES success, THE 9-12 OCT 1987 Association Rally-Round was successful. Many members seized the opportunity to honor the unknown dead of the of the Armed Forces of the United States, and to meet with one another once again at this Capitol City.

The four day Columbus Day weekend, on which the Rally was held, was marked by limited Association activities. A Saturday visit to the Smithsonian Paul E Garber Aircraft Restoration Facility, and the installation of the 91st Bomb Group Memorial plaque in the Trophy Room of the Tomb of the Unknowns, Arlington National Cemetery, VA were planned to permit participants to visit and view other historical and cultural attractions in the Nation's Capitol.

The real success of the affair, sparked by Sec Whitmal W Hill, (323rd & 441st) was apparent when the greatest number of 91st BGMAers appeared on Sunday, 11 Oct to participate in the occasion's primary, solemn purpose.

That purpose was when the members met at the Tomb of the Unknowns in the Arlington National Cemetery to witness the placement of a 91st BGMA wreath at the Tomb and the installation of the 91st BGMA plaque for display in the Tomb's Trophy Room. Col Immanuel J Klette (324th) was selected to make the presentations.

At the close of the ceremonies honoring the deceased of WWII, Col Klette said, "This has been a very emotional affair. I noted tears in the eyes of many 91sters. I

91ST BGMA PRELIMINARY PROGRAM FOR '88 CONVENTION POSTED

FOLLOWING IS A PRELIMINARY PROGRAM FOR the Wed Aug 31 to Mon Sep 5, 1988 National Reunion activities of the 91st BGMA.

Aug 31 - Early Bird Arrivals; Hotel check-in (Group rates apply); Independent sight seeing; Shopping etc.

Sep 1 - Registration; Hospitality Suite opens; Independent activities.

Sep 2 - Final Registration; Optional tours; Sight-seeing; Independent dining; Hospitality Suite.

Sep 3 - Members Business Meeting; Group Lunch, Sieben Brewery; Evening Cocktails; Banquet Dinner and dancing.

Sep 4 - Continental Breakfast; Memorial Service; Independent Hotel check-out or extend another night at Group rate.

Group sponsored activities being arranged include: Golf at Naval Air Station; Water Tower Place - Observation Deck; Sears 103 Story Tower (World's Highest); Soldier's Field - Chicago Bears; Museum of Science &



Chicago Marriott Hotel.
540 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60611

Continued on Page 2

Continued on Page 7

To the right is a facsimile of the 91st Bomb Group (H) plaque which was presented to the Trophy Room of the Tomb of the Unknowns, Arlington National Cemetery, VA. In the far right photo Col Klette displays the plaque prior to its acceptance by Kerri Childress of the Arlington National Cemetery staff. To the Col's right are Pres Chryst and Sec Hill.



DC TRIBUTE

Continued from Page 1

had them too. This ceremony has been long overdue and it is a fitting tribute to our departed Comrades. We are all forever grateful to 91st BGMA Sec Whit Hill for arranging this memorable day in the history of the 91st BGMA."

Later, Sec Hill effectively captured the thoughts and emotions of those 91sters witnessing the ceremony when replying to a query regarding the event from Col Robert A Hobbs, USAF (Ret), Yellville, AR.

Hill wrote, "The ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns, to me a former ground crew member, was a sobering one. Especially when I reflect back on those 'kids' with whom we joked in the early morning hours before a mission and then never saw again."

With the outstanding support of Major John C Ufford, Commander, USAF Honor Guard and his men, Col Klette, Pres Paul Chryst, and Sec Hill officially presented the 91stBGMA wreath upon the Tomb. After the wreath laying ceremony the Association members present were ushered into the Trophy Room, located at the top of the steps leading down to the Tomb, where under the guidance of Major Ufford, and Mrs Kerri Childress, Directorate of Ceremonies and Special Events, Dept of the Army, Arlington National Cemetery, Col Klette placed the 91st BGMA plaque dedicated "IN MEMORY OF THE UNKNOWN AMERICAN HEROES" in the Trophy Room display case.

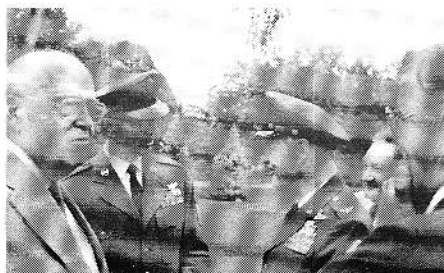
The Sunday, 11 Oct 1987 events started out with an excellent Brunch at the Ft Myer Officer's Club. There, Col Klette was pleasantly surprised to witness the presentation of a Life Membership, a program he had proposed and nurtured many years ago.

Roger W Armstrong, POW (401st), who survived the fall of Lt John Askins' flaming 44-6093 during the 2 November 1944 Merseberg raid, was presented his Life Membership credentials by Pres Chryst. As Armstrong had come from Costa Mesa, CA to attend the Rally-Round, and was the 234th 91ster to become a Life Member, it was obvious that Col Klette's Life Membership program is alive, well, and progressing.

Col Klette was visibly pleased to note Roger Armstrong was the 234th Life Member of the 91st BGMA, and said the Association has come a long way since he initiated the Life Memberships program many years ago. As the First Life Member, he hopes more full members will take advantage of this system for eliminating Annual dues payments which insures continuing contact with Association activities.

Illness prevented Capt Wilfred A Bouchard, USAF (Ret), 322nd, of nearby Temple Hills, MD from attending the Sunday function. He nevertheless contributed

Continued on Page 3



The Washington, DC Rally-Round provided opportunities for friendly chats between old friends (left Photo); the award of the 234th 91st BGMA Life Membership credentials to Roger W Armstrong who is flanked on his left by a pleased Col Klette while Pres Chryst makes the presentation from the right in the center photo and the photographing of BGMA Member

Bill Bouchard's daughter, Renee, who generously donated professional photographer skills to the occasion. Pictured with Renee (unless we're wrong) is Member Alfred J Ciaramboli of NY who scheduled a Florida trip so he could attend Sunday ceremonies.

DUTCH RESISTANCE SURVIVOR SEEKS AIRMEN SHE SAVED

"MIEP" OF THE WWII DUTCH Resistance Movement is alive and well and seeking to contact as many as possible of the 160-plus American Airmen she helped evade capture, according to Orol G Natvio, Past National Commander of the American Ex-Prisoners of War, Arlington, Tx.



MIEP

Natvio writes the lady, known only as "Miep" by her wartime benefactors, married a US pilot (now retired), and now resides in the US. Her name and address is: Johanna M Krueger, 89 Oak Creek Trail, Madison, WI 53717; Telephone - (608) 833-9080.

"Miep's" underground activities continued until Jan 1944 when she was picked up and held prisoner by the Germans for 14 months and then held prisoner by the Russians for another four months. During that time she endured a great deal of hardship and torture.

"In the years that have gone by I often think of you (the Airmen she saved) and would like to hear from you.... This is the only way I might be able to get in touch with you. I would be very grateful if you would take the time to write to me," she says.

Certainly any 91ster who remembers a young Dutch girl named "Miep", who got to him "before the Germans did," will write this real Heroine - Johanna M Krueger.

NINE-O-NINE NAMESAKE REPAIRS PROGRESSING

MAJ PHILIP G MACK, JR, USAF (Ret), 323rd, is the source of this issue's good news concerning the namesake of the 323rd's famous NINE-O-NINE.

Writing from Bellevue, WA, he says an article on the plane's crash in the local JOURNAL-AMERICAN caught his attention.

Since he had flown the original aircraft on one of his concluding missions (Berlin, 9 March 44) as Co-Pilot with Capt David Bramble, he sought additional information regarding the damaged replica. He wrote Dan Donatella, Project Coordinator of the SAVE THE B-17 TRUST FUND based in Freedom, PA. Donatella, in replying to Mack's query, said repairs are progressing very well.

Donatella also wrote, "we have lots of enthusiasm here locally for this aircraft (NINE-O-NINE's damaged replica) and its restoration. We are receiving a lot of publicity, as well as national attention. We have been making a video documentary of the entire restoration project."

MEMPHIS BELLE INSPIRATION FACING SERIOUS SURGERY

Margaret Polk, the lady who inspired the name for the 324th's MEMPHIS BELLE, has had or must undergo open heart surgery. To help offset the high cost of surgery a Margaret Polk Medical Fund has been established in Memphis, TN. Donations can be sent to: Commerce Union Bank, Attn: Ruth Archer, PO Box 1503, Memphis, TN 38101-9982. More detailed information may be obtained by calling Dorothy Rongey, (901) 360-8270. Frank Donofrio, Pres of the MEMPHIS BELLE MEMORIAL ASSN, is an official of this worthy fund raising effort.

DC TRIBUTE

Continued From Page 2

immensely to the pictorial content of this R/I.

Capt Bouchard sent his pretty blond daughter Renee, a professional photographer, to cover the event for him. Many of this issue's better pictures were taken by her. For her assistance the R/I can only say, "Thanks Renee, and thanks Capt & Mrs Bouchard for having such a talented, helpful daughter."

(She heads the Photo Dept of the Close-Up Foundation in Arlington, VA and does Free-Lance Photography for business and professional organizations.)

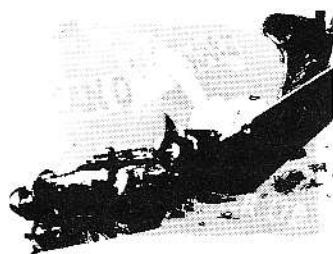
Genial Harry Hovermill (401st) ran the Rally's Sheraton National Hotel Hospitality room where good spirits and camaraderie abounded. Of particular interest were the members of the 90th Bomb Group who flew B-24s in the Pacific, and were holding an annual reunion at the Sheraton at the same time as the 91st Rally-Round. They frequently dropped by the room to say hello, swap stories, and friendly heckling.

A number of 91st BGMA members living in the area attended the wreath laying ceremony without registering. Those who did register were: Roger & Mrs Armstrong, Wilfred & Mrs Bouchard (322) & daughter Renee, Pres Paul & Mrs Chryst (401), Sam & Mrs Cipolla (323), Owen Cooper (401), William & Ruth Dietrich (323), Howard & Mrs Donahue (323), Bill & Mrs Eblen (323), Stuart & Mrs Fitzgerald (323), Vincent & Mrs Garofalo (323), Lloyd & Mrs Guzek (324), Ray Harding (401), Sec Whit & Mrs Hill (323/441), Conrad & Mrs Hohing (324), Hough Howard (324) and Family, Immanuel Klette (324) & friends, John & Mrs Kurylo (322), Editor Rudy Malkin (401) Russell A Mattson (324), Walter & Mrs Packard, Long John & Mrs Parsons (Hq/401), Elmer & Mrs Perry (401), Laurence Smelser, son of former 91ster & MIA Capt Smesler, & friends, and Joe & Mrs Sterling (Hq 91).

PRESERVE OUR PROUD PAST

BUNCH, HACKSTOCK AND ONDROVIC ADD MERSEBURG RAID MEMORIES

TIME DID NOT PERMIT inclusion in the Oct R/I of other personal accounts of 91st BG losses on the 2 Nov 1944 MERSEBURG/LENNA, Germany raid. It would be remiss not to publish additional information received concerning the fall of the 322nd's MAN-O-WAR and MISS SLIPSTREAM, and the unique experience of a 401st crew. They follow:



Hare's stricken, struggling plane broke in half.

MAN-O-WAR

A Missing Air Crew Report completed after the raid recorded the the weather and visibility when 1st Lt Leroy B Hare's MAN-O-WAR was struck as being "9/10 undercast at IP, 10/10 undercast at target, cloud tops at approximately 13,000 ft" and location as "5110N-1214E."

TSgt Maurice D Sherk and SSgt Russell L Waggoner, 322 BS Crewmen, witnessed MAN-O-WAR's damaging from another plane and gave similar accounts of it. Waggoner's account follows:

"We were flying at approximately 27,500 ft altitude, when we were attacked about five minutes after "bombs away" by about 40 to 50 enemy fighters. Aircraft 42-38083 was hit in the trailing edge of the right wing and empennage. Fragments came off the wing and tail and the aircraft turned over on its side. It then fell back behind the formation. About ten enemy fighters kept making attacks on subject aircraft. The ship then peeled off to the left, and remained behind the formation for about 5 minutes during which time some of the crew could have bailed out, however, I saw no one bail out or chutes open."

Eventually, Hare's stricken, struggling plane broke in half. The resulting casualties were buried in a cemetery at Gnetsch, Germany on 3 Nov 44, according to recalled subsequent conversations with 91st BGMA sources.

MISS SLIPSTREAM

John Bunch and Trea Charles Hackstock, 91st BGMA members, provided personal accounts of the fall of MISS SLIPSTREAM. Hackstock was the Co-Pilot, and Bunch the Bombardier on 1Lt Dale Brant's crew. Bunch closed his account with the statement, "Of course after 43 years these



"Suddenly our two port engines were on fire."

details may be a bit inaccurate, but it's the best I can do at age 65."

Bunch says MISS SLIPSTREAM was hit by fighters attacking from the rear. He never saw any of them.

"Suddenly our two port engines were on fire," he writes. "I hung my headphones on the gun control handles after getting the 'Bail Out' order from Dale, our pilot. My headphones suddenly just went up in the air and were suspended for a second or two before crashing to the cabin side.

"Gus, (Warren Gustafson, the Navigator) tried to get out thru the escape hatch while still wearing his flak suit. I pulled him back in and tore off his flak suit. Then out he went and out I went.

"I delayed my jump as we had been instructed. When I finally pulled my ripcord I was probably only 2,000 feet up.

I heard rifle fire but didn't know if it was directed at us or others trying to escape. On the ground I was reunited with our Engineer, John H Ludwig, who had a bad ankle sprain. Later Charles Hackstock, our Co-Pilot, ended up in the same POW camp I was in."

Charles Hackstock preceded his comments on her fall with, "It is so difficult to write anything as fact.

"We were flying No 8 position when hit by flack", he recalls. "Then the fighters took over and did their job. I believe we were the first plane to go down that day. In the film that was taken by the lead A/C the first flash (appearing in the film), I believe, was MISS SLIPSTREAM being hit by flack. I only saw that film once at the 1976 Colorado Springs 91st BGMA Reunion."

A copy of a "Mission Summary Report" submitted by Hackstock says, "There was none of the usual zig zag course to the target, none of the usual attempts to confuse the Luftwaffe fighter defense. Two groups of B-17s (91st & 457 BGs) had gone off course and were trailing the main bomber stream without escort, and as usual, this did not pass unnoticed by the Luftwaffe; in fact the largest force of e/a, some 200, concentrated on the 91st and 457th before the friendly escort could interfere..."

Only three of MISS SLIPSTREAM's crew escaped death or injury that day. They were Brunch, Hackstock and, Hackstock believes, James Willey, one of the gunners.

A "Sgt Smith," substituting for their regular Tail Gunner, George Grashoff, was flying on his 78th mission, Hackstock recalls. He adds with pride that all his six remaining crew members (some have died since the war) are members of the 91st BGMA - three joined this year.

An "Individual Casualty Questionnaire" filed by Hackstock after the war probably

Continued on Page 5

MERSEBURG MEMORIES

Continued from Page 4

explains the death of MISS SLIPSTREAM's Pilot, 1Lt Dale Brant. Hackstock jumped just before Brant, after everyone else had left the ship which was hit five minutes after leaving the target. While making his free fall jump he noticed a parachute open above him and assumed, since he and Brant were the last to leave, it was Brant. When Hackstock landed he heard considerable rifle fire.

Later, taken to the police at Weimar, he noticed flying boots with yellow, painted "K-8's" on them and a bloodied B-10 Flying Jacket. Brant had "K-8" painted on his boots.

When Brant never appeared at any of the POW camps Hackstock surmised he had been shot by civilians despite a "hearsay" report that Brant had been seen later by a member of another crew in another POW camp.

Of the 18 men comprising the crews of MAN-O-WAR and MISS SLIPSTREAM the following seven lost their lives on the 2 Nov 1944 Merseburg raid: Dale Brant, Pilot; Warren Gustafson, Navigator; Thomas F Harris, Top Turret; Floyd E Callen, Waist Gunner; and George F Hanson, Tail Gunner.

LL-A

Certainly the mettle of every 91ster who participated was tested during the 2 Nov 44 raid. Life Member John J Ondrovic (401st) and his crew had their courage tested before and throughout the mission, flying LL-A, a "Lemon" Fort.



Dark smoke flowed from the engines.

Ondrovic writes LL-A, 44-6293, "was sluggish and had trouble maintaining position in formation. It was suspected there was some flaw in the plane."

Consequently the ball turret was removed to improve its flying characteristics and, subsequently, Ondrovic was approached and asked to fly the modified LL-A on 2 Nov 1944. After a discussion with his crew they all agreed to fly her.

Ondrovic's "Statement" on the "Flying Characteristics of LL-A, minus the Lower Ball Turret," written on 3 Nov 44 follows:

"Mission to Merseburg, Germany, 2 Nov 1944, flying the #2 position in the second element of the lead squadron.

"The ship had four (4) new reconditioned engines.

"Assembly at 9,000', we climbed at 2200 rpm, 33"hg., 400'/min, cylinder head temperature at 180c. We started our climb over the Channel with settings at 2300 rpm, 35"hg. Reaching 15,000', we pulled 2300

rpm, 38"hg. This setting sufficed to 23,000', when we started to lag in formation. The #1 cylinder head temperature went up to 222 deg. with cowl flaps opened about 3/4; the rest at 200deg. All four engines were detonating, causing dark smoke to flow from the engines. Mixture was auto-rich. We did not lean it out because of high cylinder head temperature. To stay with the formation we throttled back on #1 to 2300 rpm, 35"hg. (to keep cylinder head temperature at 220 deg) and boosted the rest to 2400 rpm, 41"hg. Cylinder head temperature stayed at 220 deg on #2, 3, & 4 engines. Reaching 27,000, I tried cutting to 23-38 but it wasn't sufficient when the air speed dropped to 140 mph. To regain 150 mph again, it was necessary to pull 2400 RPM on #2, 3, and 4 engines. When the formation flew straight and level at 27,000', 23-38 kept us in formation. Any slight deviation in air speed or level flight necessitated boosting rpm to 2400.

"Bombs went away alright, 23-38 was sufficient with a bomb load for evasive action. Shortly after the target, we were attacked by enemy fighters, coming in from 6 o'clock in six (6) ship waves for the initial attack. Then with the sun at 10 O'Clock, we were attacked from 3 O'Clock to 6 O'Clock by pairs of FW 190s. Simultaneously, we were being attacked from 7 O'Clock. After firing at our tail, the 190s would split "S" underneath our plane with their bellies up.

"FINAL CONCLUSION: In my opinion, removal of the Ball Turret for improvement of flying characteristics does not offset its value when attacked by enemy fighters."

Ondrovic's crew claimed five enemy fighters downed during the Merseburg raid. Only Sgt Ben Whittle received credit for his claim. Ondrovic proudly adds that all seven of his original crew members who survived 35 missions are now 91st BGMA Life Members - and all seven attended the 1986 Tampa Reunion.

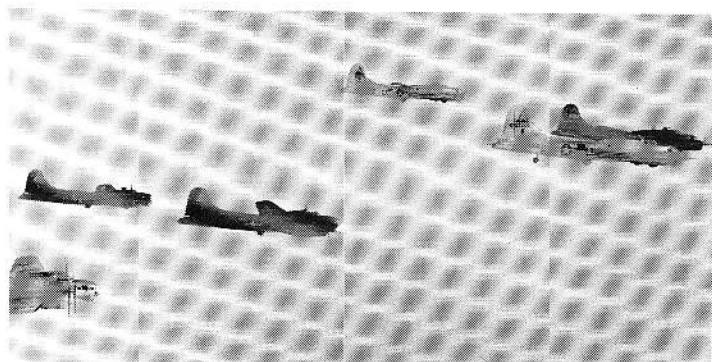
He concluded that he believes LL-A was subsequently used as a weather ship.

An eye-straining study of historical microfilm files by 91st BGMA Historian Bud Evers has produced a list of crews and aircraft lost by the 91st on this mission.

The list contains the Sq number, pilot's name, and aircraft number. All the pilots held the rank of 1st Lt unless indicated otherwise. The list follows:

401st (2) - Askins (44-6093) and Chouinard (42-31883); 323rd (5) - Faris (43-37625), Harris (42-97234), Liekus (42-97563), Snow (42-97956), and Rustand (42-97984); 322nd (6) - Capt Hammer (42-98010), Burne (43-38202), Browne (43-38212), Hare, (42-38083), Hamilton (44-6298), and Brant (44-8208).

NEAR DOWNING BY CHAFF RECALLED BY 401STERS



91st BGMA member Allan N Morey of Syracuse, NY, recently found the above excellent photo he took while flying as Co-Pilot with John D Davis' 401st crew. Morey concluded his tour as a 1st Pilot; Davis concluded his tour as Major, Commander, 401st BS.

By HENRY KING

THE CRIPPLED B-17 FLYING FORTRESS shudders with a wind-milling prop, it continues to lose altitude and seems doomed to crash into the chalk cliffs of Dover.

At the last moment the prop "freezes," the vibration stops, the nose lifts and the pilot puts her down safely on the grass. There's not enough fuel left to taxi to the parking area.

That, and other harrowing tales of World War II in the Flying Fortresses of the 91st Bomb Group came to life again recently when four members of the "General Ike" crew saw one another on the Grand Strand at Myrtle Beach, SC, and for some of them, it was the first time to see each other since the war.

Frank Varva, a summer resident on Deer Run Court, Deerfield Plantation, Myrtle Beach, SC, had not seen George Parrish of Burlington, NC, since the pair finished their required missions and separated. Varva was the Navigator and Parrish the Engineer.

Rudy Malkin of Baltimore, MD, and Allan Morey of Syracuse, NY, had kept in better touch, particularly since Malkin continued maintaining the addresses of former crew members and 91st Bomb Group veterans.

Morey was the Co-Pilot and Malkin the Tail Gunner. The four came from among the young men of draft age in the 40s who chose to volunteer their service in the Army Air Corps over an uncertain assignment in the Army. Morey was the only one married and the eldest of the group at 26.

They became the nucleus of a crew that trained in the States of Washington and Oregon and flew on to England in the fall of 1943 to a base at Bassingbourn.

It was Parrish who recalled that dangerous Augsburg mission when the former fliers were desperate to return to their base.

"We were flying in a group down to Augsburg, possibly 50 to 60 planes in formation. We were just going into our bomb run at about 30,000 Ft with the bomb bay doors open.

"We and the other planes were dispensing what they called chaff. It was thin strips of aluminum foil designed to confuse the German radar.

"Someone in a plane ahead and above us failed to break open the package the size of a cigarette carton. It came down and hit our No. 2 engine, ruptured the oil line and caused a fire. The pilot took evasive action. One of the lower bombs in the rack didn't release and others fell on it."

The pilot, John D Davis, and crew debated seeking haven in Switzerland, but seeing Germans shoot down another disabled plane that was headed there, they took the chance of flying six hours in a faltering plane back to England.

On the way there, two friendly Spitfires took up escort, only to be mistaken by US P-47s who riddled one of them badly before realizing their mistake.

Meanwhile, they had ditched all material they could - even armor plate and their reserve parachutes. Over the Channel there was thought of ditching the plane itself when then they discovered there were only nine chutes for the crew of ten. That idea was thus abandoned. (Later the 10th chute was found stuffed in the radio operator's spot).

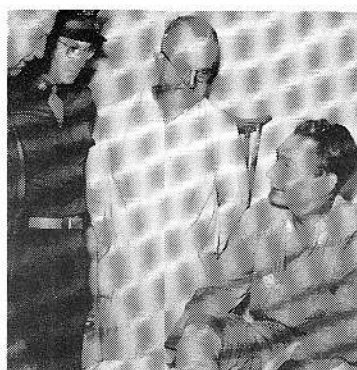
Parrish continued the story: "As we went over the water with the coast about 20 to 25 miles away, we continued to lose

Continued on Page 7



This probably late-1943 401st Sq photo depicts then-Lt John D Davis and his crew. Front row, L - R are: Lt Frank I Varva, Navigator; SSgt George A Parrish, then-Waist Gunner; SSgt Joel Zeigler, Tail Gunner; and TSgt Dduard K Nowlin, Radio Operator. Standing L - R are: SSgt Joseph Brennan, Ball Turret Gunner; TSgt Robert A Wood, Engineer; Lt Allan N Morey, Co-Pilot; Lt John D Davis, Pilot; SSgt Robert O Duncan, Waist Gunner; and Lt Walter G Guarve, Bombardier. The crew seeks information regarding Duncan and Zeigler with whom they lost contact. Duncan's last known address was Gary, IN; Zeigler's was NY, NY.

Recuperating in the Schick General Hospital near Cedar Rapids, IO, after his 4 Mar 1944 wounding, TSgt Robert A Wood of Davis' crew received the attention of VIPs. L-R Iowa Senator Guy M Gillette, LtCol Carpington, Chief Surgeon, Schick General Hospital, and a doctor who is unidentified.



401STERS RECALL

Continued from Page 6

altitude. The No 2 engine's propeller could not be feathered, and because of that it was wind-milling and beginning to fall apart.

"Frank (Varva) was giving the pilot instructions, saying the airfield was straight ahead. As we approached we were actually lower than the height of the cliff. With a lot of prayer that propeller froze, eliminating the drag and allowed us lift high enough to go over the cliff."

Varva recalled that they came in slightly to the right of the runway, with no time for circling. The ground radio operator warned, "You're turning into your dead engine," a hazardous maneuver. At about the same time the other inboard engine ran out of fuel.

Flares which were shot up from the ground in the late afternoon showed the way to the grassy runway and the plane landed without the usual circling.

Varva said he would always remember what the Englishman on the radio said: "Good show, jolly good show!"

After their debriefing they encountered the Polish pilot of the British Spitfire. The American fire had shattered his canopy, there were bullet holes in the propeller and the irate pilot had lost part of one ear. Through an interpreter he had some harsh comments for the lack of proper identification of friendly aircraft by the US P-47 pilot.

Another incident the group recalled was the time Varva saved Malkin's life in flight. It was their first mission, and Malkin failed to respond to one of the frequent oxygen checks.

Parrish went to investigate but with only limited oxygen in a walk-around bottle. Then Varva went back with a larger bottle and found Malkin's oxygen hose had somehow become disengaged.

"I think he's dead," Parrish told Varva before he had to leave. "I don't care if I break your neck", Varva told the unconscious Malkin, "I'm going to get you out of there." He then managed to pull Malkin out of the cramped tail gunner

quarters, over his armored seat back and into a position to give him his own oxygen supply.

Malkin recovered shortly, was reattached to his own oxygen supply and Varva recovered his walk-around bottle.

Remembering the advantage of the larger oxygen bottle, Varva remarked with wry humor, "I never buy a quart of gin; I always buy a gallon."

The original crew first flew "Buckeye Boomerang" and "Buckeye Boomerang II." Both aircraft were shot down with other crews. At that point the Army Air Corps stopped painting the ships in camouflage, giving them the name "Silver" planes.

Varva and his buddies got the first one, named "General IKE" for Eisenhower, who christened it, with a bottle of Mississippi River water an airman had vowed to drink when he finished his missions. But, he too was shot down.

Considering the steady attrition of planes and crewmen, it was Providence that spared the original crew from death and serious injury. Only TSgt Robert A Wood, Flight Engineer, sustained a flak injury.

Varva recalled he gave Wood first aid while Parrish read the instructions from a manual.

Editor's note: The editor did not fly the Munich mission described by Parrish in this article. Another oxygen failure resulted in Malkin's temporary grounding and subsequent reassignment to Lt Lester F Rentmeester's crew.

Unintentionally omitted during the writing or editing of Henry King's fine article published 7 April 86 in the South Strand Section of the of THE SUN NEWS of Myrtle Beach, SC was the fate of two other members of Davis' crew.

SSgt Joseph Brennan, Ball Turret Gunner, while flying with another crew, was KIA when that crew went down. Lt Walter G Quarve, Bombardier, was interned in Switzerland when battle damage precluded a return while flying with another crew.

Addenda: Mrs Frank (Mary) Varva covertly arranged the newspaper coverage.

'88 CONVENTION

Continued from Page 1

Industry; Ethnic Restaurants; Michigan Ave Shops; Boutiques, Department Stores; Dinner Theater and all forms of entertainment.

Hotel room rates, registration fees and special reunion air fares will be announced in the April issue of the R/I. Plan now to come early and stay later to be able to meet and enjoy the excitement of Chicago with your 91st BGMA buddies!

1988

DUES DUE! DUES DUE!

Folded Wings

• CARLSON, HERBERT "SWEDE," 324, 370 Brooklyn Ave, Massapequa Pk, NY 11762, June 1987. Carlson, a Bombardier, was with Col USAF (Ret) Vincent A Fonke's crew when they were shot down on 16 August 1944 some 60 miles of the Leipzig, Ger. target. Only a few of the crew survived subsequent rigors of forced marches to several POW camps. The 91st BG lost eight B-17's on the raid.

• CLIFFORD, HARRY WILLIAM, 401st, 260 E Main St, Newark DE 19711; 6 Dec 87. Reported by his sister Enid Hart of Salt Lake City, UT.

NEWEST LIFE MEMBERS

PAUL M ANDREWS, Vienna, VA. (Assn. Life)

ROGER W ARMSTRONG, Garden Grove, CA.

RUDY MALKIN, Editor, Baltimore, MD.

LAUREN MUMMERT, Topeka, KS.

JOHN M ROGAN, Jessop, PA.

MIKE F SCHEXNAYDER, New Iberia, LA.

BERNARD A STELLHORN, Indianapolis, IN.

Congratulations & Thanks!

**Subscription & Membership Renewal**

JANUARY is the month for payment of your DUES!
Remain an Active Member by paying your annual dues, promptly.

Help support your Association which entitles YOU to receive four issues of The Ragged Irregular, attend local Rally Rounds, the National Reunion and a host of other, fun-filled activities with your 'buddies from Basingbourn'.

ANNUAL DUES...\$5.00 \$ _____
MEMORIAL MAINTENANCE FUND _____
GENERAL CONTRIBUTION _____
LIFE MEMBERSHIP...\$100.00 _____

I have a Winter address (effective _____)
which is listed as: _____ date _____

NAME _____
Please Print
ADDRESS _____
CITY, STATE _____
ZIP CODE _____

1988

DO IT TODAY! DON'T WAIT!
Mail checks or money orders, payable to:
91st BOMB GROUP (H) MEMORIAL ASSN.
TO: LTC Charles R. Hackstock, Treas.
14224 S.E. 288th Street
KENT, WA 98042

NOTE: If you don't want to cut your R/I
send a photocopy of this form.

THE RAGGED IRREGULAR

These newsletters are published quarterly. October, January, April and July are the scheduled publication months. The R/I's purpose is to keep alive the spirit of the 91st Bombardment Group (H) and to maintain the fellowship of all those who fought together in World War II from AF Station 121 in Basingbourn, England from 1942 to 1945.

Material for publication should be sent to the Editor, Rudy Malkin, 1643 Thetford Rd., Balto., Md. 21204. "Time-Value" items must be received three weeks before the first day of the month of publication to permit necessary priority consideration for inclusion in that issue. Every effort will be made to utilize other submitted material in the scheduled or later R/I issues.

91st BG Memorial Assn.
1643 Thetford Road
Balto. MD 21204

FORWARDING AND ADDRESS
CORRECTION REQUESTED.

NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BALTIMORE, MD
PERMIT NO. 1324