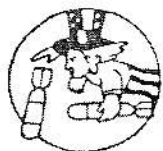


THE RAGGED IRREGULAR



322nd Bomb Sq.



323rd Bomb Sq.



Supporting Units



324th Bomb Sq.



401st Bomb Sq.

Vol. 38 No. 4

91st Bombardment Group (H)

October 2005

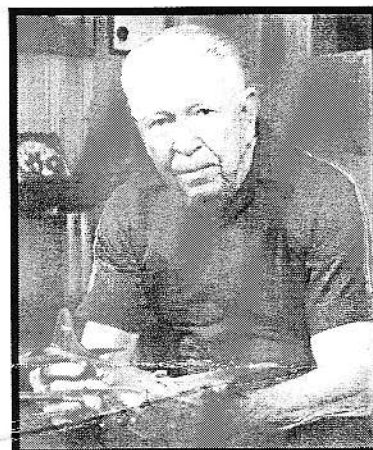
IN TRIBUTE TO PAUL C. BURNETT, FOUNDING EDITOR OF "THE RAGGED IRREGULAR", WE ARE REPRINTING HIS FIRST ISSUE TO BE FOUND IN THE CENTERFOLD OF THIS ISSUE.

Paul C. Burnett, a decorated World War II Veteran, in the 8th Air Force. Professor Emeritus of Journalism at Auburn University and a resident of Auburn since 1948, died February 18 at East Alabama Medical Center in Opelika. He was 86.

Burnett attended Texas A&M University and the American University in Stockholm, Sweden and graduated from Louisiana Tech and Louisiana State University, working during those years for six community newspapers while editing the college newspaper at Louisiana Tech. The Impending war and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor changed his plans to buy a weekly newspaper in Louisiana. He joined the Army Air Corps in 1942 and was assigned to the 91st BG as a B-17 navigator. Based in England, he filmed combat footage for the 1942 documentary, "The Memphis Belle." That same year, over France, Burnett's plane "Chief Sly" took repeated hits from German aircraft. Though seriously wounded, he guided the crippled bomber, without charts or radio, over the English Channel and to a safe landing in the English countryside. He was awarded four medals, including the Purple Heart, and was featured in Esquire magazine. His actions over France and the English Channel were cited as one of the 12 greatest navigation feats of WWII. He was interviewed on the BBC by legendary entertainer and radio personality, Kate Smith and made two broadcasts with George Hicks, the only radio reporter to cover the D-Day landing. He also made one broadcast with actor, Clark Gable. Upon his return stateside, he remained an aviation instructor until the end of the war. He was the founding editor of the "Ragged Irregular". He alone wrote all of the articles in the Newsletter.

He joined the Auburn faculty in 1948 and was given the primary responsibility of teaching journalism in the Department of English. In his 31 years at Auburn, he built the journalism program from one instructor and a single classroom to a separate department in the School of Arts and Science. During his tenure, he trained countless state and nation journalists, politicians and business leaders. Upon his retirement in 1979, a milestone recognized by the Alabama Legislature, his class roll books contained more than 7,200 names, including at least six past and present instructors in the university's journalism program.

Burnett is survived by his college sweetheart and wife of 61 years, Lorraine, his sister Dana Dandl, daughter Sherry Birney, son, Jay Burnett, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



The Presidents Corner: Ed Gates

Happy Halloween, everybody. (That seems appropriate since I find I don't need masks any longer to scare the celebrants.) Life does go on, in spite of the dire events along the Gulf Coast. Our prayers and help from many of you went out to those who suffered losses. We can be really proud of the contributions of our Air Force and the other services to the solution of problems that have, literally, engulfed our fellow citizens. Jake Howland writes that the D-Day Museum was vandalized and notes that it is a pertinent reminder of the need to find a formal repository for valued documents of the 91st.

As noted elsewhere in this issue, we are in contact with M/Gen. Metcalf, the director of the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB, regarding display of *The Memphis Belle*. Earl Pate is our point of contact for on-going "participation" in development of the display - if we can have an input.

We have also resumed the dialogue with the 91st Space Wing at Minot AFB, North Dakota, regarding possibility of developing a Unit history display. I recently suggested to Col. Adams, 91st SW Commanding Officer, that we might like to have a Rally Round in August 2006 in conjunction with their Northern Neighbors Day air show. I have also invited him to be our guest at our Reunion 2006 in Colorado Springs. Jim Bard, Secretary of the 91st Strategic Recon Wing Memorial Group, has been energetic in continuing to encourage this idea; many of you met Jim and his wife at Reunion 2004 in Alexandria, Va. We have established contact with the new 91st Space Wing Base Historian whose first day on the job was 6 Sep 05, thanks to a recent visit Jim made to Minot. The B-52 Memorial Association will be meeting at Minot in 2006, too. We have asked that the 91st Space Wing develop a plan and tell us what they would like in the way of contributions from our members; maybe we could deliver "the payload" if we have a Rally Round there.

Your Board had a quarterly Conference Call on 13 Aug 05. We reviewed the proposed changes to the By-Laws which will be disseminated soon for your vote. Joe Harlick, our Chairman of the Nominations Committee, has received nominations for all offices, but would be happy to hear from any of you who would like to step up. Joe will be announcing the candidates in the April *Ragged Irregular*. Our finances continue strong under the loving care of Secretary/Treasurer Ace Johnson. We added another \$160 contribution to the Memorial

Maintenance Fund for one of the signed lithographs, "The Ruhr Valley Raiders," plus a donation by the purchaser who saw my cap with the B-17 on it, made the mistake of talking to me, checked our website and we all gained something. Our Historian, Jake Howland, reported on contacts with the folks in Europe who so generously represent us at Memorial services. We also discussed word from Mr. Jakob Mayer of a new memorial which has been erected near Innsbruck to the crew of a 323rd aircraft, "Priority Gal," where the crew avoided the town in a crash landing; more on that later but unfortunately the communication arrived just a week after the passing of the last crew member, co-pilot John Karlac.

We concluded with some discussion of Reunion 2004 in Colorado Springs. I will be meeting with Sam Newton in Colorado Springs later this month on a tour of facilities. Ace has done a lot of "leg work" - should we say "finger work" on the phone and e-mail with the Chamber and Hotels interested in hosting us. Your Board decided to plan for the last half of September 2006 to avoid Labor Day weekend and get better rates. For those of you worried about the temperature, so far in September this year the highs have been 15 degrees warmer in Colorado Springs and the lows 5-10 degrees above those in Tacoma. So get your knit hats out, buy your oxygen bottle (8000' in the Springs and 14,000 on Pike's Peak) and get ready for another great Reunion. We will have details for you in the January R.I. Keep 'em flying, Ed Gates

Tentative - 2006 Reunion Date

? Sometime in last half of September

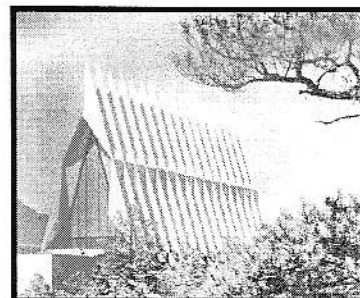
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Home of the Air Force Academy

ACADEMY HOTEL

\$89 PER NIGHT PLUS TAX

Complimentary hot/cold buffet breakfast



Chapel at Air Force Academy

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND MORE:**CHRISTMAS IS COMING!**

Don't forget the PX has many items – books shirts etc. for sale
 Contact Marv Goldberg 321-953-3694 mmarvgold@aol.com
 Also, the books, reviewed below, could also make a nice gift.

BOOK REVIEW "The Killing Sky" By Jaap van der Kuylen**Reviews by Paul Limm**

Some of the best books about the Eighth Air Force have been written by foreign writers. Roger A. Freeman immediately comes to mind. Last year, Jaap van der Kuylen, a Netherlands author, published a magnificent account of the 8th Air Force Mission No. 182, the January 11, 1944 attack on the aircraft manufacturing complex in Oschersleben and Brunswick, Germany. The epic air battle over Oschersleben on this day ranks with the Schweinfurt missions. Sixty bombers and five fighters were lost over the continent and van der Kuylen provides more than statistics and a brief narrative to describe the mission. He uses written interviews with crew members, diaries, quotations from "debriefings" or "interrogations", newspaper and after action reports, and other official publications, to describe in detail the actions of each of sixteen bomb groups and fifteen fighter units from take-off to final landing. In addition, he has integrated the German fighter activity into a minute by minute chronology of 8th Air Force Mission No. 182 from 0950Z assembly of the 1st, 3rd, and 2nd Bomb Divisions over East Anglia, to 1347Z, when German fighters reported "...no hostile aircraft over Holland." Even then, the battle was not over because, due to rain, fog and sleet, many airfields of the 1st Bomb Division were closed and damaged B-17s had to "limp" into unfamiliar air bases, causing landing accidents.

"The Killing Sky" is recommended reading for all who are interested in the Oschersleben mission of January 11, 1944. It is a hardbound, lavishly illustrated book and may be ordered from the publisher by internet at rjipsma@euronet.nl. \$51.45 includes postage. Inquire about special prices for combined orders.

Andy Anderson, 323rd, will be publishing a book, tentatively called "One Pilot's Story-The Fabled 91st and other 8th Air Force Memoirs". He hopes to have it published in approximately six weeks. Andy says it includes quite a bit of real history that he doesn't think the 91st people have ever seen. The price will be in the \$20 range. If you are interested in obtaining a copy, contact Andy at 9735 Paso Robles, Northridge CA 81325. awanderson@socal.rr.com
 A review of this book, and more information, will probably be in the Jan. issue.

**Joe Harlick has answered our question as to "Who is Trudy"**

Her whole name is Trudy Ervin and she entertained with the Kay Kyser Band as a singer. Kay Kyser was a friend of Lt. Col. Weitzenfeld and a B-17 was named "Evening Folks-How Y'All" from Kay Kyser's opening expression.

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(with photo if possible)
 Material for publication
 should be sent to
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www.bombsqd323rd.com

From Phil Mack, former Editor of the RI –

I was asked to attend a symposium of sorts to recognize the arrival in Seattle of the Collings Foundation B-17 "909". The Museum of Flight asked Gregory Pierce, President of the local Chapter of the 8th Air Force Society, to get a few veterans together and Phil was asked to join along with several other local ex-B-17 types and to make the conclave more interesting he also invited some ex-B-24 aficionados to join the symposium which certainly livened the conversation. It seems I was the only person in Seattle who flew the original "909". The symposium was lively as former crewmen defended their type of aircraft – B-17 or B-24. It was my personal opinion that the B-17 won the argument.

SEND US YOUR STORIES TODAY TOMORROW MAY BE TO LATE

Letter from Jack Gibson, 322nd

The letter in the April 2005 issue brings back memories of our Christmas Eve mission, I've enclosed a copy of my mission diary entry for that day. We were able to fly back the next morning to home base – I especially remember the winter "decorations" that nature placed on our B-17 that early morning.

I was ball-turret gunner on Robert Miller's crew – 322nd squadron. That was our fifth mission. We had already had our "baptism" – our second mission on December 5th was to Berlin and our bomber had been shot up quite a bit. The following is my Diary entry for Mission Five, Sunday, 24 December 1944. Today we delivered "Xmas present" to a German fighter base at Merzhausen, 15 miles northeast of Frankfurt. The whole Eighth Air Force was up today helping to check the recent Nazi push. We got flak on the lines but due to good evasive action we avoided a lot of it. Bandits were reported in the area and although other groups were hit hard, we sighted no enemy fighters. The target was visual and for the first time I got to see the bombs hit = and they really hit. Our field was closed in on return so we had to land at the 94th Bomb Group base. We spent Christmas Eve in their briefing room but it was good to be down and safe. Alt. 23,000 Ft. Temp. 36 degrees C. Mission length: 6 ½ hours.

Letter from Lou "Hap" Holland, 401st

I have been a member of the 91st BG since 1967 and thought it was time I wrote you a letter. My wife and I attended the first reunion in Memphis. We had attended several reunions over the past 45 years. The last time was at Oklahoma City, where I finally met my Operations Officer, Major McParlin (He retired a Brig. General). I had not seen him in 50 years. Here is what I remember:

Our first mission was to Bremen Germany on 20 December, 1943. Our crew was Pilot H. Web, Copilot, J. Flinn, Nav. Moser, Bomb. H. Weiss, Eng. Kaltenpeck, BG R. Ruth, LW Letalton, RW R. Marshal, RO, L. Holland, TG, J. Paget. Our mission was at 24,000 ft. about 9 hours. Lots of enemy fighters shooting at us – and flak over target. Lost No. 2 engine before hitting target. Lost No. 4 engine leaving target. Lots of holes in A/C. We made it back to England on 2 engines and bellied in a grassy field about 50 miles from Cambridge. No one seriously hurt.

The RWG, Roy Marshal and myself completed 30 missions - the last one to Berlin on 8 May, 1944. I returned to the US as an instructor at McGowan Field, Boise Idaho and was discharged on 4 Sept. 1945.



I reenlisted on 29 June 1946 and met my wife that night. We were married on 9 March, 1947 and were married 55 years. She passed away on 24 Nov. 2002.

After serving 26 years in the Air Force, overseas seven times in twelve years. Japan 1947, Alaska 1949-51, TDY England and N. Africa 120 days, Korea 1954-55, Guam 120 days 1956, Alaska 120 days 1958, 30 days Guam 10 years, 5 years at Beale AFB and 4 years 8 months at Edward on the "Blackbird" program. I retired 1 Nov. 1969 as a SMSgt.

I worked as a Real Estate Salesman until 1977 when I had a near fatal heart attack and retired again. At this time I am 92 years old and I'm living at the retirement manor hear in Lancaster CA and I'm in good health but I do not drive anymore.

My best regards to everyone. I have been a life member for about 35 years.

For the full story of the Merzhausen Raid on Christmas Eve 1944 turn to page 5.

Now – here's the rest of the story:**(From Newspaper Clipping sent in by Jack Gibson)****RECORD BOMB BLOW 8TH AF'S YULE GIFT TO NAZIS****Over 2000 Heavies – Biggest Single Mission – Unload on Christmas Eve.**

While the weather closed in again yesterday to curtail air activity against the enemy, the Eighth Air Force was still counting up the results of its Christmas present to the Nazis: delivered Sunday by more than 2,000 heavy bombers and 900 fighters, the largest force of heavies ever flown on a single mission.

Sunday's big air attack was part of a weekend patter, which continued yesterday, designed to pound the hell out of the communication lines supplying and enforcing the German armies in their current counter-offensive. It was in direct support of the U.S. First Army forces which have been rolled back into Belgium by the weight of the German drive. Taking advantage of clear weather, the Dec. 24 mission started for Germany in the morning and the first bombers were nearing Germany as the tail of the tremendous column was leaving England.

AIRDROMES HIT: The Eighth started its Christmas blow on Saturday, when a force of heavies, protected by some 700 fighters, struck at airdromes in the area from which the Germans had operating tactical aircraft in support of their offensive. At least eight of the airdromes attacked were rendered unserviceable. Marshalling yards at Coblenz and rails near Trier, close to the Luxembourg border, Kaiserlautern and Homburg were also hit. The Luftwaffe came up to meet the attackers and lost 77 planes in the resulting dogfights.

Col. David C. Schilling of Traverse City, Michigan, 26 year-old Commander of the 56th Fighter Group, top-scoring group in the Eighth Air Force, came out of Saturday's fights with a kill of five to become the Eighth's highest scoring pilot now on active duty. His kill of five Saturday was the biggest individual score of the day and brought his total to 341. "My major trouble," Schilling said after the attack, "was to get my fighters back into formation to come home when we were running low on gas. They just wouldn't quit fighting."

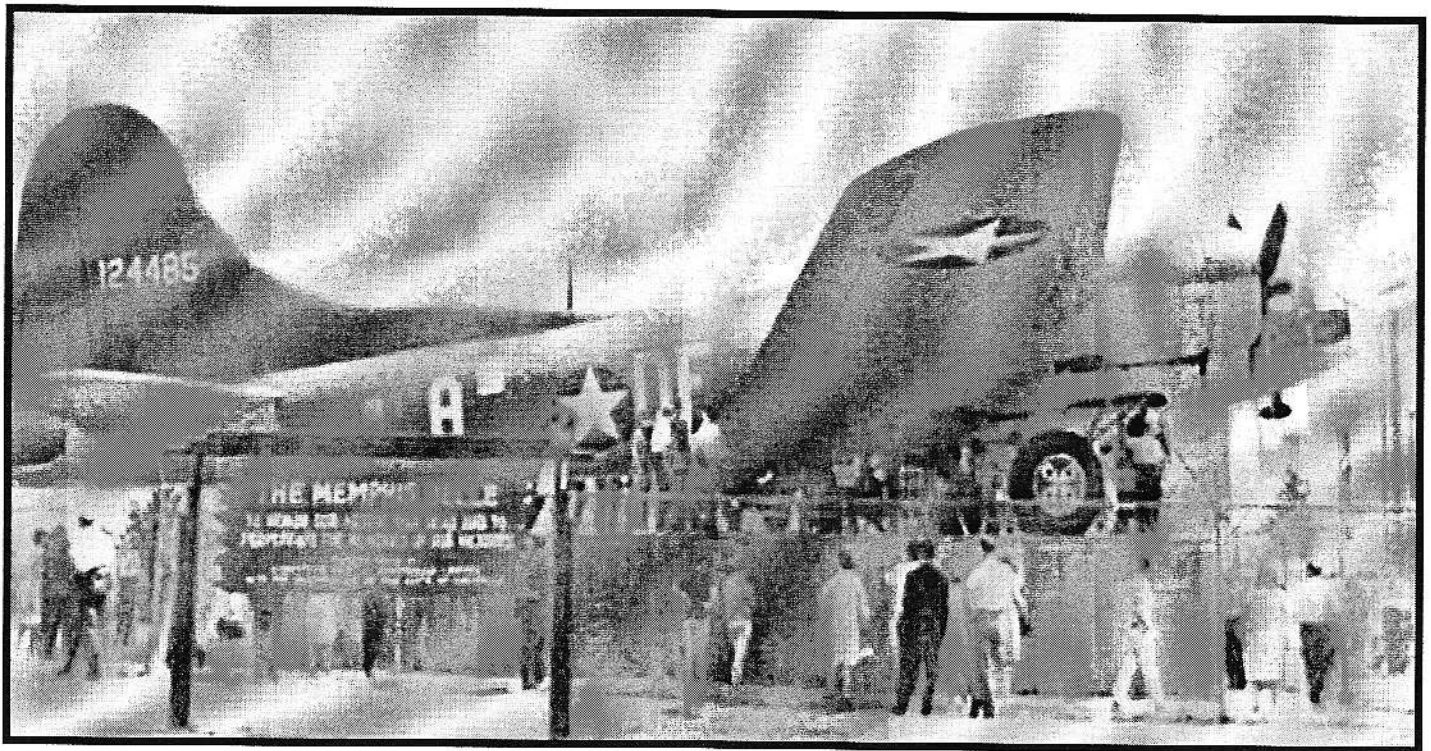
Sunday's big attack continued the pounding of the airdromes at Frankfurt. These lie across the Rhine, just opposite the bulge the Germans have driven into the 1st Army line.

The heavies dropped 100, 250 and 500 pound bombs on hangars and fields. Most of the targets the heavies went for were tiny road junctions, railroad crossings & bridges. Clear weather enabled crews to see the targets and to bomb visually. Reports were that the bombing was "all good". The fighters had a good day Sunday too, taking on the Luftwaffe in a series of dogfights from which 76 of the Nazi fighters failed to return.

LUFTWAFFE WEAKENS: On Monday, the Eighth sent 400 heavies and 400 fighters into the attack. The Luftwaffe failed to put up quite as big a show of resistance and came out of the fighting with 46 of its planes shot down. In addition to the Luftwaffe, however, the attacking force ran through some moderate ack-ack.

The Ninth Air Force took part in the Christmas show too. Its fighters flying 1,172 sorties Sunday in support of the 1st Army. Its activities resulted in the destroying or damaging of 116 Nazi tanks and armored vehicles, 778 motor vehicles, 56 railroad cars and 28 horse-drawn vehicles. In addition, a fuel dump was blown up, rail lines were cut at 20 places and two bridges were destroyed and two damaged.

The RAF too, was out over the weekend, hitting at V2 launching sites in Holland on Sunday, in addition to bombing airfields at Essen, Dusseldorf and Bonn and the Cologne marshalling yards. The Eighth Air Force's three-day total of enemy planes knocked out was 218. Its losses for that time were 38 bombers and 40 fighters, some of which are believed to have landed safely in friendly territory.



THE "MEMPHIS BELLE" AS IT WAS ORIGINALLY DISPLAYED IN MEMPHIS

"MEMPHIS BELLE"

MOVES TO NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE U.S. AIR FORCE

at Wright-Patterson – Dayton, Ohio

by Vice President, Earl Pate

A national aviation treasure and widely recognized symbol of American bravery and heroism during World War II is being relocated to the world's largest and oldest military aviation museum. The aircraft, which has been located in the Memphis, Tenn. area since 1946, was on loan from the Air Force to volunteers and aviation enthusiasts until the 1980's when the association became its leaseholder. The move to the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force will allow the Air Force to share the Memphis Belle's story of the determination and perseverance of America and her allies in defeating the Axis threat with millions of visitors from around the world. According to National Museum of the U.S. Air Force Director, Major General (Ret.) Charles D. Metcalf, the Memphis Belle Memorial Association deserves to be commended for providing nearly 60 years of care for the aircraft, and looks forward to displaying the aircraft as the centerpiece of the museum's World War 2 collection "It will be a tremendous honor to display an aircraft such as the Memphis Belle, which is a source of such great national pride and historical significance," said Metcalf. "We will give it a level of care and public visibility befitting its legacy to ensure that future generations will learn about the heroism and bravery of its crew." The museum's restoration team, which maintains more than 300 aircraft and aerospace vehicles, will continue the restoration of the Memphis Belle at the museum. The effort will begin upon the aircraft's arrival and is expected to take several years to complete.

The National Museum of the United States Air Force is located on Springfield Pike, six miles northeast of downtown Dayton. Admission and parking are free. It is open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day).



The Ragged Irregular

91st Bombardment Group (H) Newsletter

Vol. 1 No. 1

October, 1967

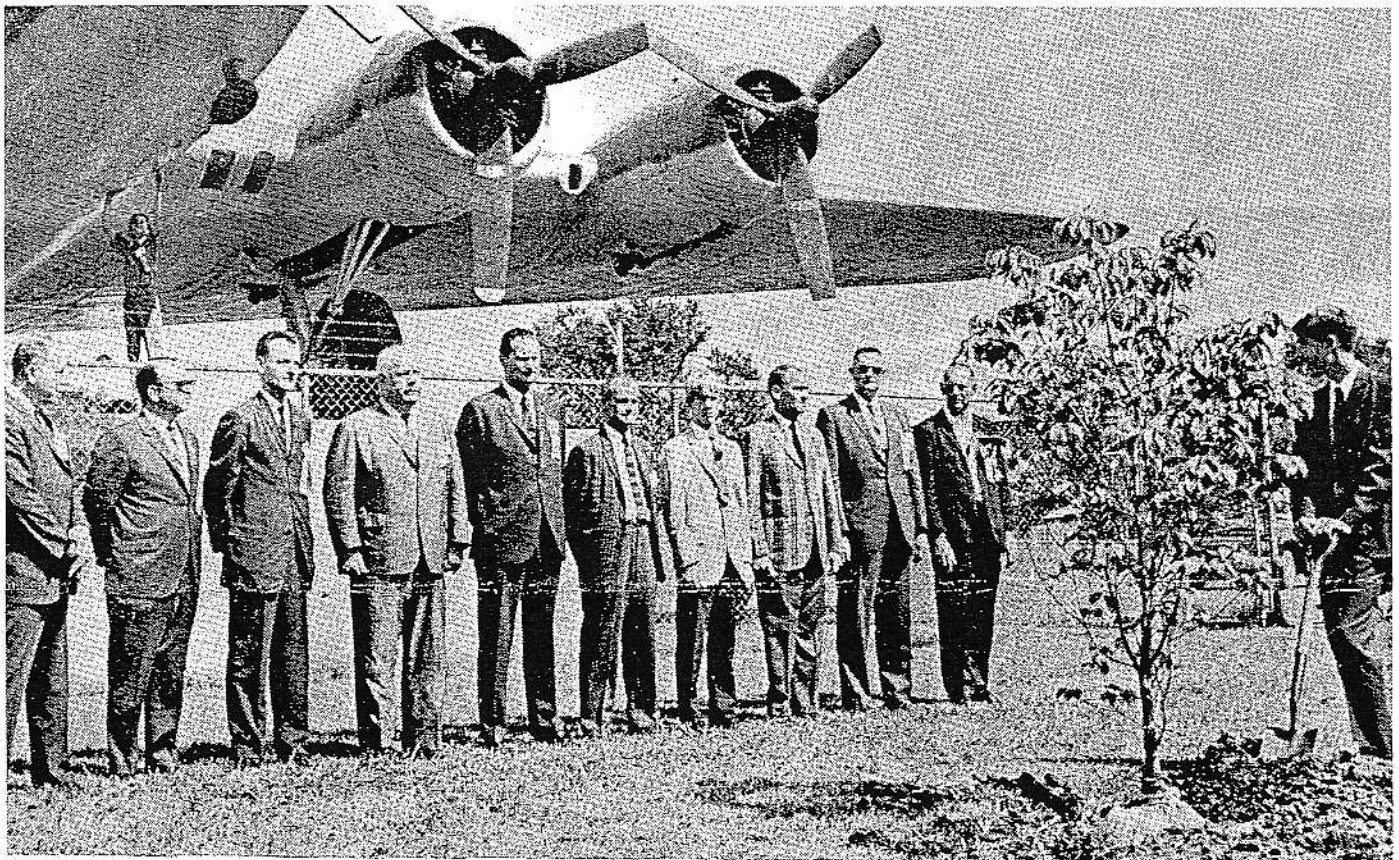
All Bombs 'On Target' At 25th Anniversary Meet

"BIG 25" had almost as much impact July 25-26-27 as the Big One did in 1943, but to the ex-91st-ers gathered in Memphis for Triangle A's 25th anniversary reunion it marked a big beginning rather than a thankful finish. "Something money couldn't buy," one summed it up. "A real fountain of youth, with buddies I haven't seen in 25 years." A wife declared she'd "never seen a group of men enjoy themselves so much!" And all of the 400 or so members, wives, and children at the silver anniversary meeting were in full agreement.

Those who couldn't make it this year had better begin planning right now for next year's shindig, scheduled for Denver sometime during the last two weeks in July.

Members began rolling into Memphis in force on Monday, July 24, and "lobbying" at the Sheraton-Peabody was in full swing by nightfall. Tuesday was turned over to registration, visiting, and examination of the "trophy room," where the walls and tables were covered with pictures, scrapbooks, and other mementoes of the "good old days."

(continued on page 2)



A re-dedication ceremony highlighted the reunion visit to the site of the "Memphis Belle," the famous 91st Fortress now permanently enshrined at the National Guard Armory in Memphis.

Shown planting a pink dogwood tree as a "living memorial" to Memphis to commemorate the Group's first reunion is 15-year-old Dean Giambrone, son of Joseph M. Giambrone, the Belle's old crew chief.

Observing the tree planting are, l. to r., Joseph Giambrone, Eastern division treasurer; Joseph Camelleri,

Eastern division co-chairman; Paul Chryst, Eastern division co-chairman; Maj. Gen. Stanley T. Wray (ret.), Reunion Committee president; Col. Robert K. Morgan (ret.), wartime pilot of the Belle; Clarence "Bill" Winchell, Belle's waist gunner; David Pitts, 14-year-old Pleasant Grove, Ala., youth who sparked the recent refurbishing of the Belle; Robert Gerstemeier, Eastern division secretary; M/Sgt. George Parks, Western division co-chairman, and Philip Taylor, Western division secretary.

All Bombs 'On Target'...

Coffee and sweets helped keep the yak-yak thick enough to walk on. That night a showing of "The Memphis Belle" and other Bassingbourne movies drew a crowd that overflowed the view area, making a second run necessary the next day.

Press and television coverage of the Group activities was great. The **Commercial Appeal** and the **Press-Scimitar** had stories and pictures in every edition, and every television newscast had 91st-ers in starring roles.

Wednesday was the big day activities-wise. First on the schedule was a group breakfast (the Peabody is famous for its Southern country-style breakfasts), and even at 8 o'clock the dining area couldn't have squeezed in another eager beaver.

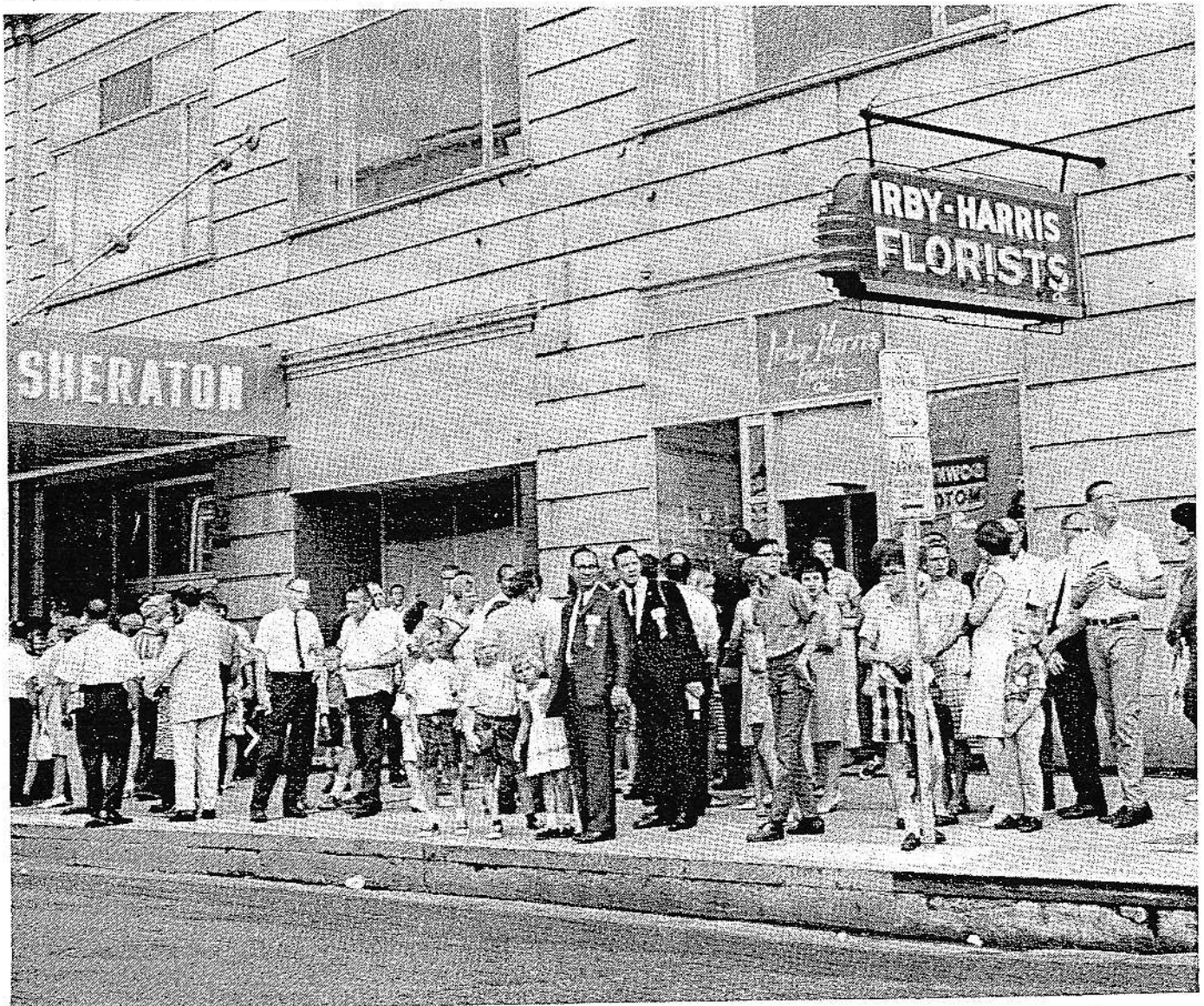
At the Group luncheon at noon the 91st was welcomed to Memphis by Mayor William B. Ingram, WWII fighter pilot, who presented Maj. Gen. Wray with a key to the city. Honor guests at the luncheon were Col. Robert K.

Morgan, pilot of the "Memphis Belle," C. E. "Bill" Winchell, Belle waist gunner, and David Pitts, the 14-year-old Pleasant Grove, Ala., youth who was responsible for the refurbishing of the "Memphis Belle" memorial in Memphis.

In the afternoon a mass visit by bus to the Belle memorial was made, and Joseph D. Giambrone, Jr., 15-year-old son of East Coast Division treasurer Joe Giambrone, headed a "rededication" ceremony by planting a memorial dogwood tree before the historic plane.

Wednesday night a dinner-dance for members and wives in the Sky Room atop the Peabody wound up the day (and started the next) in great shape. Teenagers had their own dinner and record hop.

Thursday morning, members wound up the reunion with the only business session of the week, laying plans for continued growth of the reborn 91st. Members departed with only one complaint—"We needed one more day to get caught up on 25 years of talk!"



Even after 25 years 91st-ers haven't forgotten how to wait patiently in line. Here a group waits for one of the

four chartered buses to take them from the Sheraton to the re-dedication ceremonies.

The Ragged Irregular

These news letters are published quarterly in October, January, April, and July, in an effort to keep alive the spirit of the 91st Bombardment Group (H) and to maintain the fellowship of those who fought together in World War II from AF Station 121, Bassingbourne, England, 1942-1945.

Material for publication should be sent to the editor, Paul C. Burnett, Box 909, Auburn, Alabama 36830, not later than two weeks before the first day of the month of publication.

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(from the Atlantic to the Mississippi River)

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West Coast Division

(from the Pacific to the Mississippi River)

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Secretary

Phillip R. Taylor
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Treasurer

Robert H. Racicot
209 Lamont Court, Vallejo, Calif. 94590

Dues are \$3 per year, payable to the Division Treasurer. Get Your Buddies Back With Us. Send current addresses of former 91st-ers to the proper Division Secretary.

Reunion Business Session

In the only formal business session of the reunion several decisions vital to the continued growth of the 91st association were made.

1. A second annual reunion of 91st-ers was scheduled to be held during the last two weeks of July, 1968, in Denver. Exact days will be announced later, but for vacation planning save those last two weeks in July.

2. All present officers of the group were continued in office for 1968. Officers are listed on the masthead of the Irregular.

3. A permanent historical records section was established, to gather and preserve information about the 91st. Publications covering the group activities from 1942-45 will also be a function of the office. Paul C. Burnett, Box 909, Auburn, Ala., 36830, was named historian and editor. All persons with pertinent information, records, photographs, etc. are asked to contact him.

4. Plans for a group-sponsored flight for a Bassingbourne reunion were discussed, with favorable response from members. Though no definite decisions were made, a possible 1969 trip at an estimated round trip flight cost of \$180 per person was set forth. Trip time would last approximately three weeks.

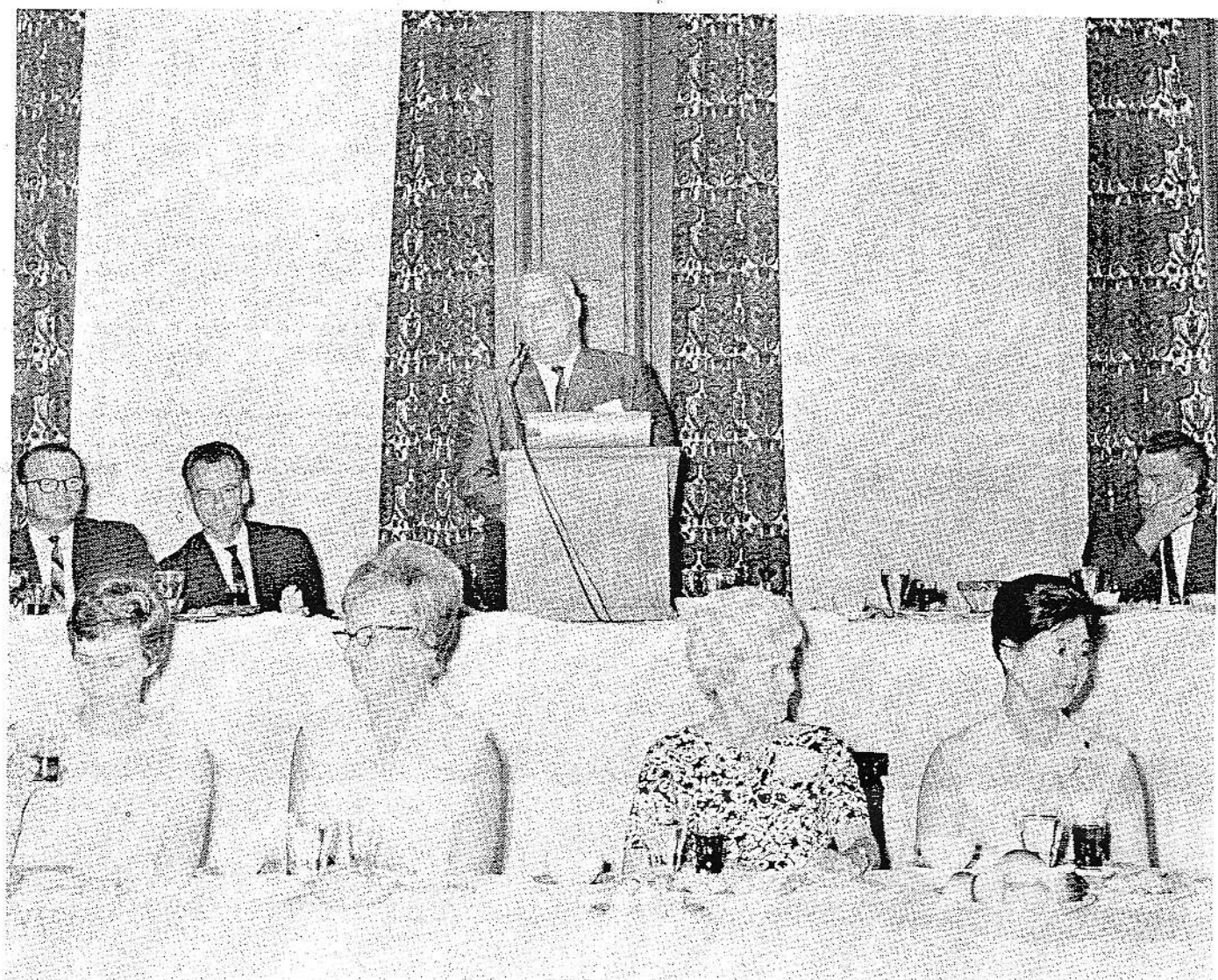
5. Gen. Wray reported that the 91st Bomb Group (H) Reunion committee was incorporated as a non-profit organization in Ohio on 17 July, 1967. This means that gifts to the 91st organization are income tax deductible, as was the case with the 91st Bomb Group Memorial Association of a few years ago.

6. The group decided that membership dues would be continued at \$3 annually. Members failing to pay dues will be dropped from mailing lists.

What Can I Do To Help?

Over and over this question pops up—in hundreds of letters from newly-contacted ex-91st-ers, from the growing number of flights, and especially from those meeting at Memphis. Realizing that a small handful have worked night and day to "get the show on the road," most want to contribute toward a flourishing group. But—what can I do to help?

Several things every member can do are: (1) Pay the \$3 annual dues promptly and regularly. Correspondence, newsletters, convention planning, contacting "lost" members cost money, and if membership dues haven't stretched far enough, headquarters members have paid the deficits from their own pockets. (Additional donations exceedingly welcome!). (2) Make sure all your former 91st buddies know of our organization and join! Send all addresses you have to headquarters. (3) Organize regional flights and take part in local Rally Rounds. (4) Let us know what 91st historical information you have. (5) **Begin planning now for next year's reunion!**



Maj. Gen. Stanley T. Wray welcomes members at the Wednesday reunion luncheon. Mayor William B. Ingram, a WWII fighter pilot, also welcomed 91st-ers to Memphis and presented Gen. Wray with the keys to the city. In a later action Mayor Ingram sent certificates of Memphis citizenship to reunion registrants.

Shown above are, first row, l. to r., Mrs. Paul (Nancy) Chryst. Mrs. Robert (Trudy) Gerstemeier, Mrs. Stanley T. (Esther Wray), and Mrs. John (Chung Oak) Parsons. Second row: Joseph Camelleri, Paul Chryst, Gen. Wray, George Parks.

Our thanks to... Maj. Paul W. Flournoy and Joseph F. Gagliano, our Memphis men on the spot, who made arrangements, looked after details, and otherwise ran themselves ragged to make smooth our Memphis visit.

And to the Ladies ... the wives of Reunion Committee members who worked long and hard before and during the reunion at the endless jobs that accompany any such event.

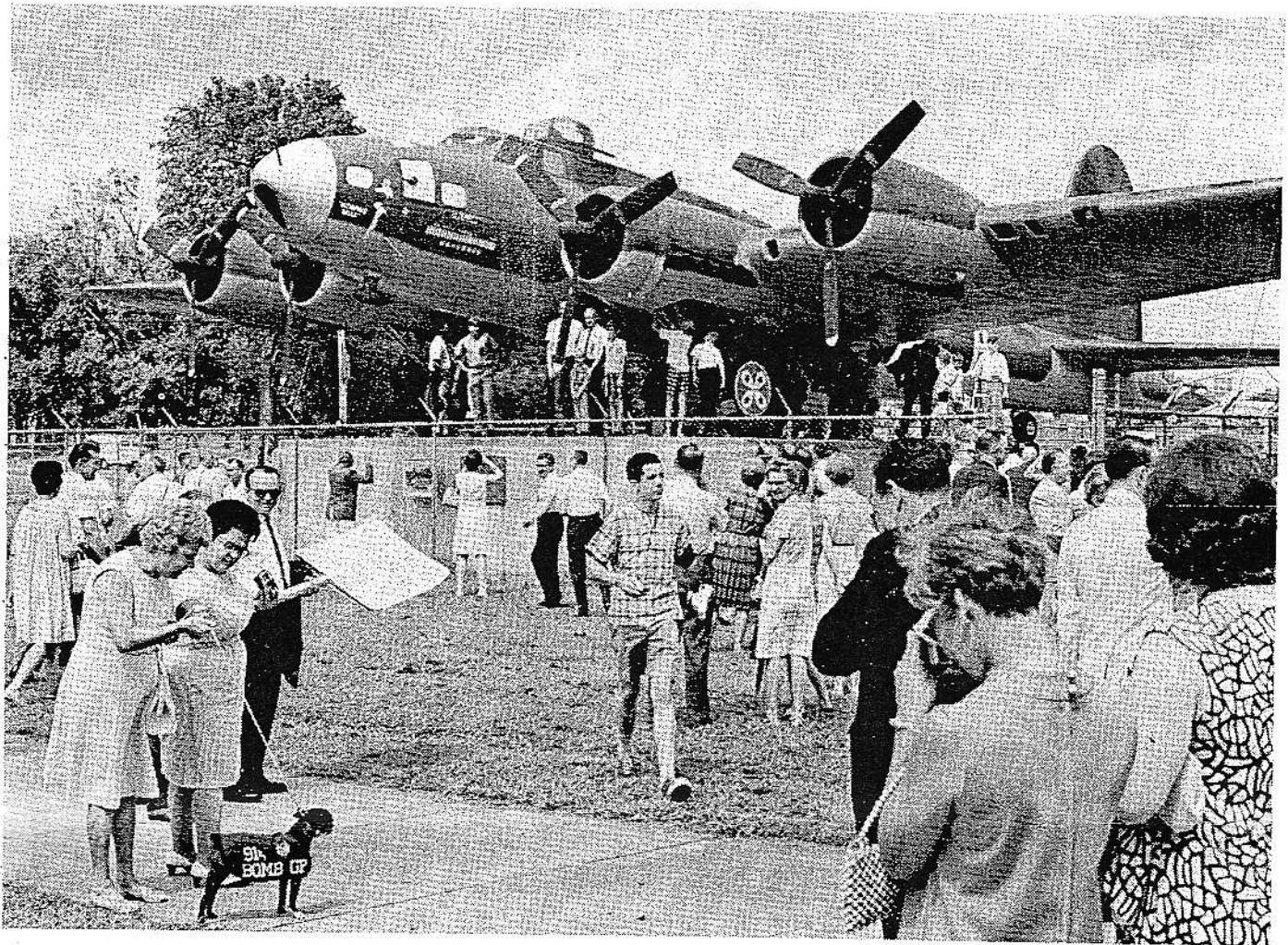
Membership Roster Under Way

A complete roster of all 91st members currently of file, both East and West Coast Divisions, is under way, and copies will be made available as soon as compilation and printing can be completed.

Who has them? ... We're trying to get copies of the squadron insignia for our historic files and for publication use. Who has copies we can borrow and copy? If you have one in top condition drop a card to the editor ... Also, if you have a copy of your squadron orders listing plane numbers and crew members for the migration flight from Newfoundland to the ETO, pass on a copy. The 322 sqdn. orders are on hand, thanks to Steve Lindley.

Squadron photographs made at the reunion will be printed in the January issue of The Irregular. Lack of time at the re-dedication ceremonies did not permit identification of all members in each group, but we expect to have completed the task by the next issue.

Now is the time to plan for next year's reunion.



Here members are getting a first hand look at one of the last surviving Fortresses of WWII. Parents and child-

ren alike had a ball climbing over, around, and through the plane "like Daddy used to fly."

Flight Leaders Named

Local flight leaders to help locate former 91st members and to conduct area Rally Rounds have been named in many sections of the country, but more are needed. If you are willing to serve your area, contact your divisional chairman.

The current flight leaders are:

Douglas Gibson, 2740 Knoxville, Long Beach, Calif. 90815 (Los Angeles area).

Jerry L. Newquist, 3624 56th S.W., Seattle, Wash. 98116.

David Calvert, 10900 W. 23rd Ave., Denver, Colo. 80215.

CMS Ken Jones, 115 Langley Dr., Waco, Texas 76705.

John Irak, 3578 Lincoln St., Gary, Indiana 46408.

J.C. Bill, P.O. Box 950, Jasper, Alabama 35501.

George Zucco, 2457 Allender Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15216.

Col. John R. Parsons, 1800 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Wilfred P. Conlon, 1570 Main Street, Springfield, Mass. 01103.

Robert P. Hare III, Daytona, Florida.

Royal Order of the Rigid Digit...

The data form filled out by those attending the Memphis reunion asked about membership in the Rigid Digit fellowship. For a great many, this was the first they had heard about a former 91st institution that was both unique and noteworthy. Founded in the very dark days of 1942 by (then) Col. Stanley T. Wray to add a little humor to a decidedly unfunny existence, the Royal Order of the Rigid Digit gave recognition with pomp and circumstance to those persons (chiefly pilots) who pulled some really royal goof in the performance of their duties. A magnificent mahogany-mounted silver plaque, from John Bull Silversmiths, showing a clenched fist with middle finger erect and carrying the motto "You've had it, Chum!" was ceremoniously presented before assembled fellow officers. A small replica on a blue ribbon was worn around the neck until the recipient had worked off his "sin."

First to be so honored was a pilot who greased an A-20 onto the runway in a perfect landing, only to pull up the landing gear instead of the flaps.

Paid your dues yet? Don't make your buddies carry you.

1967 Memphis Reunion Roster

From every corner of the country ex-91st-ers rolled in for the 25th anniversary reunion, and everybody from A (Abb) to Z (Zucco) had a great time.

If we missed your family or squadron number it was because you missed our membership data form. In the next issue of the Irregular we plan to include data forms to be filled out by those who didn't complete them at the reunion.

Bob Abb (323)
Mr. & Mrs. Charles E. Allen (401)
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick J. Amber & family (401)
Col. Thomas E. Ashinurst (401)
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Bankowsky
Mr. & Mrs. Edwin L. Baxley (322)
Donald Beal
Ralph J. Bell (401)
Col. George Birdsong (323)
Mr. & Mrs. John C. Bishop & family (323)
Mr. & Mrs. James E. Black & family (322)
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth L. Blackburn (323)
John Blackowiak
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald A. Blaisure
Mr. & Mrs. David Bramble
Mr. & Mrs. Alton L. Brown & family (401)
Mr. & Mrs. Arnold W. Broun & family (322)
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth E. Breckenridge (982 MP)

J. C. Bull (322)
William F. Burke (322)
Mr. & Mrs. Kermit Burman (401)
Mr. & Mrs. Paul C. Burnett & family (322)
John L. Butzler (982 MP)
Mr. & Mrs. David E. Calvert (323)
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph A. Camelleri & family (322)
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Campbell & family (322)
Mr. & Mrs. James F. Carden
Mr. & Mrs. W. S. Carpenter & family (324)
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Chryst & family (401)
Shan Clayton
R. E. Clement, Jr. (401)
Mr. & Mrs. Charles E. Cliburn (324)
Mr. & Mrs. Ford C. Cowherd & family (323)
Mr. & Mrs. James F. Daley
Lt. Col. & Mrs. Clyde E. DeBaun (324)
Peter Delo
C.A. Dickson
Vernon L. Dion (401)
Mr. & Mrs. Everett Dodd
Robert Dorey
Mr. & Mrs. Phil R. Dorn (401)
Mr. & Mrs. Wilbur C. Duemler (322)
Mr. & Mrs. Howard M. Dunham (323)
Ferrell Evans

(continued on page 7)



One of the most popular spots at the reunion was the trophy room, filled with photographs, scrapbooks, and mementoes of Bassingbourne days. Here a group looks

over a bit of the collection while enjoying coffee and sweets.

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(continued from page 6)

1967 Reunion Roster

John A. Evans (323)
 John A. Fearheller (322)
 Clayton Ferree
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul W. Flournoy, Jr. & family (322)
 Robert E. Foster
 Mr. & Mrs. Joe Franke (323)
 Mr. & Mrs. Jack P. Gaffney & family (401)
 Joseph S. Gagliano (322)
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Gerstemeier & family
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph M. Giambrone & family
 Mr. & Mrs. Douglas G. Gibson (401)
 Anyan A. Gordon (1st ST. COMP.)
 Walter E. Grabinski (401)
 Col. Thomas H. Gunn (324-401)
 Mr. & Mrs. Lloyd Guzek & family (324)
 Oliver J. Hackwith (322)
 Mr. & Mrs. John T. Hardin & family (322)
 Mr. & Mrs. Edward Haller
 Joe Harlick (324)
 James A. Harrison (322)
 Mr. & Mrs. John A. Hassler (401)
 Marshall B. Haugen (322)
 Gaylord Henryson (322)
 William A. Hester (323)
 Mr. & Mrs. Thomas F. Higgins
 Whitmel W. Hill, Jr. (323)
 Mr. & Mrs. Jack Hobson
 Col. Robert Hoffman (323)
 SMS Louis R. Holland, wife & family (401)
 James H. Hopkins
 Harry E. Hovermill (401)
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Iiams
 Mr. & Mrs. John Irak (401)
 Mr. & Mrs. Rex Jacobs & family (401)
 Mr. & Mrs. Earl H. Johnson (401)
 Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth L. Jones & family (401)
 Mr. & Mrs. Raymond E. Jones & family (401)
 Col. & Mrs. Frank S. Kamykowski (322 & 441 SD)
 Mr. & Mrs. James R. Knaub
 Horace Knight & daughter (401)
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Lackey & family (322)
 James V. LaGrossa (322)
 Rudy Lehman
 Mr. & Mrs. Steve Lindley, Jr. (322)
 Mike London (982 MP)
 Mr. & Mrs. Howell B. Loper (323)
 Arthur MacLemore
 Mr. & Mrs. Lloyd J. Mahan (323)
 Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Manzano (324)
 Mr. & Mrs. Albert Marcus (401)
 Mr. & Mrs. Donald P. Marks & family (401)
 Gerald R. Massie (323)
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. McClesky (982 MP)

Mr. & Mrs. Richard W. McCoy
 William G. J. McCrea (322)
 Paul G. McDuffee (401)
 Robert K. Morgan (324)
 Mr. & Mrs. Rudy Moretti (324)
 W. R. Middleton (Hdqs.)
 Mr. & Mrs. Edwin L. Miller (401)
 Mr. & Mrs. Harold Mitchamore (323)
 Mr. & Mrs. John H. Mitchell & family (322)
 Mr. & Mrs. Herman Moser
 Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Nail
 W. Reese Mullins (323)
 Mr. & Mrs. George H. Odenwaller (323)
 Mr. & Mrs. Oscar O'Neil
 William Page
 M/Sgt. George W. Parks
 Lt. Col. & Mrs. John R. Parsons, Jr. (322-401)
 Ed Peacock (322)
 Alfred H. Peters (401)
 Randall Peterson (323)
 Matt G. Pettera (401)
 C.O. Pierce
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Pullen
 Curtis Pyrah (324)
 Mr. & Mrs. William D. Raatz
 Mr. & Mrs. Edward B. Reppel Jr. (323)
 Mr. & Mrs. William A. Reynolds (323)
 R. C. Richardson (324)
 Mr. & Mrs. Arthur E. Roper
 Mr. & Mrs. Nathan Roberts (Hdqs.)
 Joe Rose
 Mr. & Mrs. Joe Samson
 Mr. & Mrs. Willis C. Schilly (323)
 Mr. & Mrs. Morris J. Shapiro (324)
 Evelyn Ritscher
 Thomas Sharp
 Mr. & Mrs. Seymour Simpson & family (323)
 Howard E. Sisk (322)
 Sam M. Slaton (323)
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert C. Sponsel (322)
 George Stuts
 Phillip R. Taylor (323)
 Mrs. Donald Tegler
 Albert K. Tucker (401)
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Weinstock (324)
 Mr. & Mrs. L. B. Wheeler & family (Hdqs.)
 Mr. & Mrs. Cecil E. Williams & family (323)
 Mr. & Mrs. C. E. "Bill" Winchell, Jr. & family (324)
 Maj. Gen. Erbon W. Wise (Hdqs.)
 Mr. & Mrs. Norman Wittman
 Maj. Gen. & Mrs. Stanley T. Wray (Hdqs.)
 Mr. & Mrs. C. H. Yanson (324-Hdqs.)
 Mr. & Mrs. Albert Yocuis (322)
 Thomas Young
 John Ventura
 George Zucco (322)

New Jersey Rally Round

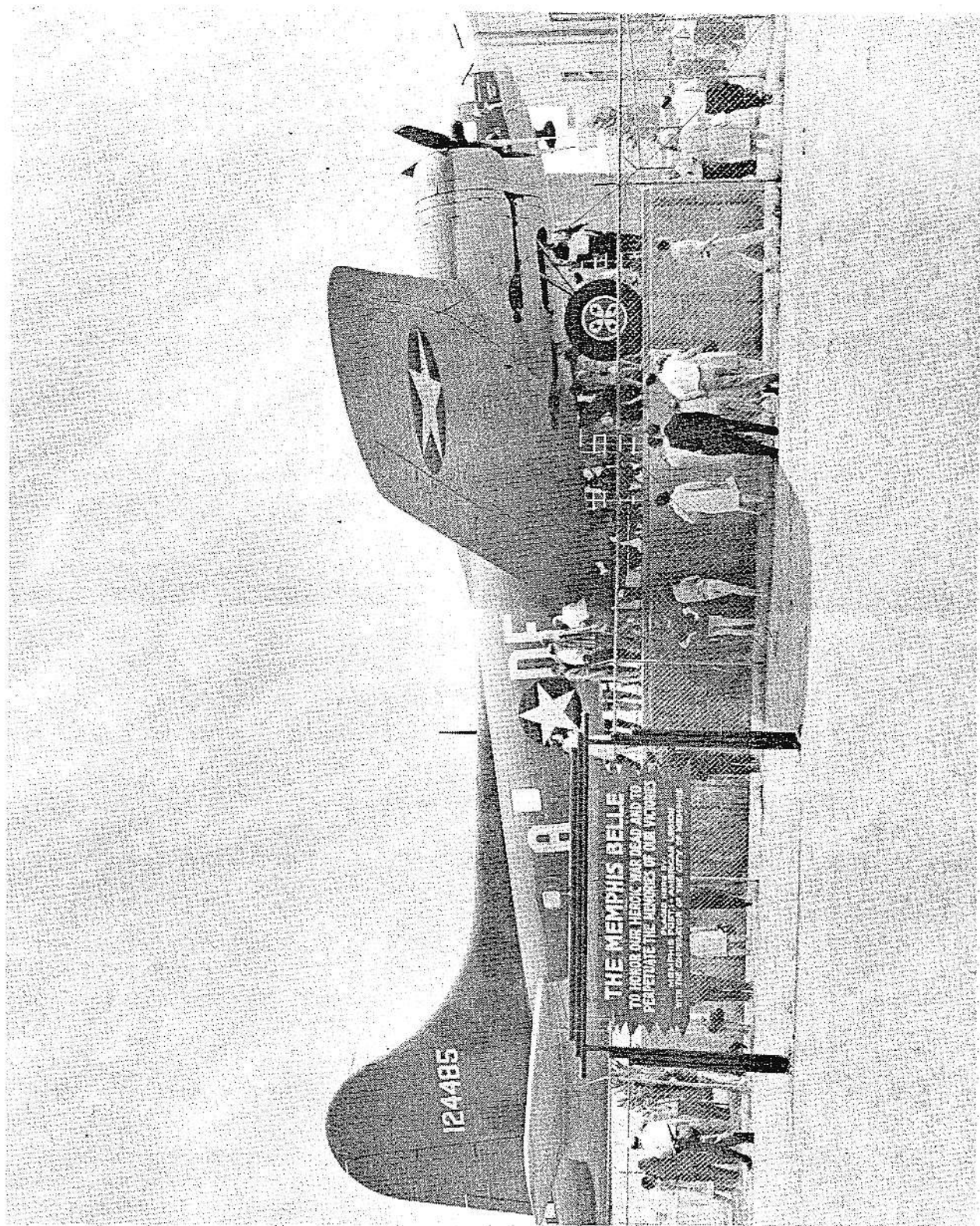
A New Jersey Rally Round is scheduled for Ocean City, N.J., Saturday, Oct. 28. Info flyers have been mailed to regional members, but if you were overlooked contact Robert E. Gerstemeier, Kerr Road, RD #1, Lansdale, Pa. 19446.

Let us know...what historical data, stories, pictures, articles, etc. you have concerning the 91st. We need material for our files and publications.

Oakland Rally Round

A Rally Round for 91st-ers in the Oakland, Calif. area has been set for Saturday, Nov. 4. Those needing details contact Phillip R. Taylor, 3030 Alta Vista, Calif., 94501.

Photographs on page 2, 5, 7, were taken by Gerald Massie, former 91st photographer, now assistant director of the Missouri Division of Commerce and Industrial Development. Photos on page 4 and 6 were taken by Joe Harlick, now with Boeing Aircraft.



Not only has Memphis refurbished this 91st veteran and improved its site, but bigger things are being discussed. Plans for enclosing the memorial and gathering

additional WWII relics to make a permanent museum are being studied.

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From Across the Pond

by Vince Hemmings

LATEST NEWS ON THE SALLY B

The UK's last B-17 Flying Fortress Sally B grounded because of a new EU liability insurance regulations, has been reprieved with the help of insurers, supporters and Sir Richard Branson.

Sally B will now join the London fly-past on July 10th marking the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II after Lloyds of London offered it just three months insurance instead of the usual annual premium. This has substantially reduced the cost.

The new EU regulation on third party insurance introduced on the 1st May, classed Sally B in the same category as an airliner. The annual premium increased by £1,000 extra per flying hour. In an unprecedented move, on the 17th June Lloyd's of London underwriter's came up with an affordable solution to comply with new EU regulation EC 785/2004. Help has come from Lloyd's brokers Marsh, Sally B's broker Arthur I. Gallagher (U.K.) and other London insurance companies and Lloyds Underwriters. Sally B's hull insurance underwriters also wished to help and generously stepped forward with a special deal to extend the aircraft's cover to the end of the 2005 season.

The operators B17 Preservation said that help has also come from other sources. Our members have helped, as have the public. One Leicester businessman has made a substantial personal donation, and Sir Richard Branson has generously offered to pay for the three month season's third party liability premium. Commenting on Virgin Atlantic's involvement, Sir Richard Branson said: "When we were told about the plight of Sally B everyone at Virgin Atlantic felt we ought to do something to help keep this amazing aircraft flying. I am honoured that Virgin Atlantic has helped ensure that the Sally B will take pride of place in the 60th Anniversary Fly-past over Buckingham Palace this summer". Elly Sallingboe, the head of B-17 Preservation, said: "We are intensely grateful to everyone who has offered us so much support in this serious crises for Sally B. But this is only the beginning, the problem has not gone away, we must now plan ahead. As a long term solution must be found if Sally B is to continue flying for the education and enjoyment of future generations. I am counting on the powers of our government to grant us an exemption from this illogical situation and for Brussels to amend this law to consider

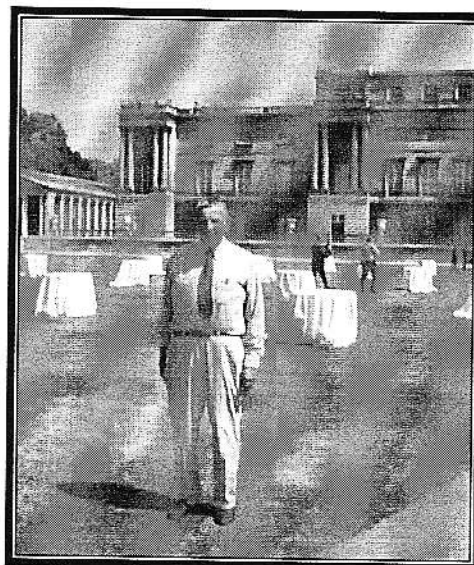
the limitations within which Sally B flies, rather than the current criteria based simply on aircraft weight. And, it is vital that the aircraft receives further financial support to meet the ever-increasing costs." A petition seeking an exemption to the new EU regulation has already been signed by 7000 people. The aircraft will return to the skies for three months for the remainder of the 2005 season on 2nd July when it will display at Kimbolton Castle and RAF Waddington.

Thousands of B-17s, nicknamed Flying Fortress, flew daylight raids over German cities during the war. The aircraft is permanently based at the Imperial War Museum Duxford. It is backed by a registered charity and relies solely on charitable donations for its survival. This year it celebrates 30 year flying in the UK and its 60 birthday.

Note from Vince Hemmings:

Linda Mason, the Special Events Manager at the Imperial War Museum at Duxford retired a short time ago. One of Linda's many tasks was to show visiting airmen around aircraft they flew. It may be that some returning 91sters were allowed into the B-17 Mary Alice by Linda.

Sam Halpert – Is back from England where he was a guest at the Air Show at Duxford (60,000 spectators) and was invited to lunch at Buckingham Palace with the Queen. She invited 1,000 veterans and he was the only "Yank". He was also a speaker at the Air Crew Forum at Bletchley Park (where they broke the Enigma code). The forum consisted of 4 RAF guys, a Luftwaffe pilot and Sam. Sam says it was a great trip, but its even greater to be back in the "GOOD OLD USA"



SAM HALPERT at BUCKINGHAM PALACE

STORY'S from the Ring - Mike Banta Ringmaster**Become a member of the ring by e-mailing****Mike at B-17banta@aol.com**

Don Freer, one of our Ring participants wrote that he had been shot down on that mission and offered to send the author his story. As a result, Don wrote a magnificent detailed account of that mission. His beautifully written account is copied below.

As a result of his story passing over the Ring, the grandson of recently deceased Hal Lasch wrote the following "Thank you" E-mail to Don. Hal's widow, Dot, who is a Ring Participant forwarded it to me and I forwarded it to the Ring. Everyone has, won because that author asked that question. Now this incredible event has been memorialized for all of us.

From: Chris Hulting To: Don Freer Cc: Grandma Lasch
Thank you for writing your story of the day you will never forget, December 5, 1944. I am Harold Lasch's grandson. I have heard many stories of the missions and the time of being a POW. This is the first time that I have been able to relive the moments of that last mission. I can not thank you enough for your courage and bravery 60 plus years ago. I know you and Harold were young and only two men on that crew. You were only one crew of many. Many who fought for what they believed. I would not have the life, the liberty or the happiness without what You, my grandfather and the other brave men and women did for us.

DON FREER'S STORY: DECEMBER 5, 1944

I was the pilot of LG-E (Easy-Does-It) of the 322nd Squadron of the 91st BG attacking a Flak gun factory in Berlin. The weather over the continent was OK except for a solid undercast of several cloud layers all the way into the target. Our 36 plane formation climbed to 27,000 ft and leveled off. There was little if any flak and no fighters were reported. It was routine all the way with Joe Gallagher, copilot and I taking turns flying the plane and keeping in tight formation.

As we neared Berlin, we could see some flak coming up through the clouds below us. Ahead and slightly off to the side there was a small hole in the clouds. A cluster of very large flak bursts were coming up through that hole about every 30 seconds. The group lead turned, headed for the clearing and it looked to me that his heading was going to put the Squadron and, particularly, Easy-Does-It, directly in line with the flak bursts. We passed the IP and were on the bomb run with the bomb-bay doors open so we couldn't take any evasive action. The closer we got the more certain I was that only luck would keep us from getting hit. We ran out of luck this time and suddenly all Hell broke loose! There was a loud explosion and bright flash in the cockpit and the sound of breaking glass. I

remember the smell of cordite or burnt powder through my oxygen mask. Looking through the right window it was obvious that we had taken a direct hit because the right inboard engine had been blown completely away. It felt for a moment like the airplane had stopped in mid-air and I realized that only the left outboard engine was functioning. The left inboard engine was wind milling and the right outboard engine was running away. I told Joe Gallagher to feather the non-operating engines but only the controls for the outboard left engine worked. All other engine controls were kaput! While this was going on, I called on the intercom for all crew positions to check in and to give a status report. The navigator, Hal Lasch, reported that he was wounded and the togglier, Joe Sanchez, was unconscious. All the other crewmembers said they were OK so I took a quick look in the nose. I told Joe Gallagher to help Lasch and Sanchez and told the ball turret gunner, Tony Tacinelli, to report on the condition of the bottom of the A/C. He said the wings were full of holes with fuel spraying out and there was smoke and some small fires where the No. 3 engine had been blown off. Next, the flight engineer, Oscar Stillman, reported that the bombs were hung up and could not be released, not even salvoed. He crawled up on the bombs to pry them loose with a screwdriver or some kind of lever but he couldn't do it. I was really impressed with him.

I was able to keep up flying speed and control by putting the airplane in a shallow dive and run the on good engine at emergency level, but it required extreme left rudder pressure (both feet) with all the trim cranked in. I observed a steady stream of oil shooting straight up from the runaway right engine and then cutting back in the slipstream about 10-15 ft above the nacelle. The nose of the A/C was riddled with upward puncture holes. It reminded me of the cabbage grater my Mom used at home. The windshield was cracked but still intact. Other than the guys in the nose, no one reported any injuries and I wasn't aware of any serious damage to the rear part of the A/C. I had called on the VHF radio for fighter support and suddenly a red nose P-51 appeared off our right wing and stayed with us all the way. We were losing altitude at a pretty fast rate and were down to about 20,000 ft. The 91st BG formation had moved far out in front of us so I turned the A/C to the north to get under the bomber stream heading home from the target. Trying to land the damaged plane with the full bomb load and only one engine working against the tremendous drag of the other engines plus the unknown terrain under the lower cloud layers could be suicide. As much as I hated to admit it, we were obviously "out of business". The A/C was barely controllable and could be on fire or explode at any time. I called the crew on the intercom and told them to prepare for bailing out and Tacinelli was told to get up out of the ball turret. Joe Gallagher and Hal were instructed to put a chute on Joe Sanchez and get ready to drop him out of the escape hatch using a static line to open his chute. The rest of the crew reported on the intercom that they were all OK and were ready. At that point, Hal reported that Joe Sanchez was conscious, that his oxygen mask had been blown off, but he was recovering after they put another mask on him.

(Continued from Page 8)

I ordered the crew to bail out and said they had exactly one minute before I left the controls and jumped. I carefully timed that one minute with my GI wrist watch and saw them all leave. As an afterthought, I decided to make one more check, so I called on the intercom and asked if anyone was still there. Borge Kellstrom, our waist gunner answered. I told him to get out of the A/C because I was leaving but would give him exactly one more minute before I jumped, again, I called on the intercom and this time I got no answer.

I let go of the controls and got out of the seatbelt and shoulder harness, flak suit, etc. I was wearing the special back pack parachute and RAF boots for just such an occasion. As the plane started to roll to the right, I took a running dive for the escape hatch opening and hit it on the first try. However, I only got part way out. My head, arms and shoulders made it, but the rest of me didn't, I was stuck in the hatch. I hooked my boot around a piece of electrical equipment and pulled myself back inside. I realized that the corners of the parachute pack had caught on the hatch, so I tried again but used both hands over my shoulders to reach back and depress the corners and when I jumped, it worked, and I was out!

We knew it was mandatory that you delay opening your chute for as long as possible. At very high altitude, you could pass out or die from lack of oxygen, there was a possibility of being hit by flak or flying debris, and

You might be run over by planes in a following formation. Get down as far and as fast as you can. If you extended one or more of your limbs, you could control your altitude and stop any fast spinning. It also helped pass the time while you were waiting to open your chute. I had a long way to drop, so I gave it a try and it really worked. The air felt cold and wet as I dropped through several cloud layers and the sound of the formations above became very faint. Finally, I decided to open the chute since I still couldn't see the ground, and didn't know how much room was left. There was a strong jolt when it opened, but I was still between two cloud layers. Out of the cloud above me, I saw LG-E coming at me with the P-51 still on its right wing. I could count the rivets as it passed just below me and I waved at the P-51 pilot as he went by.

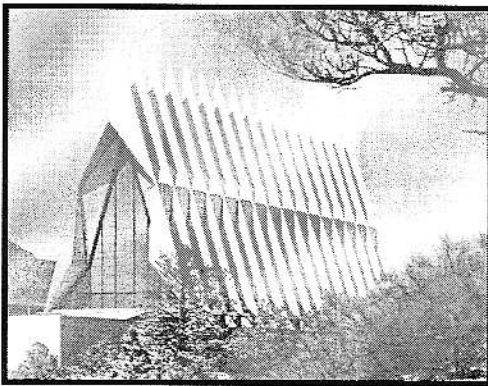
Immediately after that, there was a large explosion and a bright red flash in the clouds below. I went into and through the same clouds a moment later. I don't remember seeing any evidence of the crashed plane or the P-51 but a couple of FW-190's went scooting by in the distance. I saw no other chutes at any time after I jumped. I was coming down into a very dense forest or woods as far as I could see in all directions except for a small clearing a little ways from me. By pulling hard on the chute risers, I was able to steer towards the clearing, but it increased my descent speed. I remember looking down through my feet at the trees coming up too fast. The next thing I remember was regaining consciousness, lying at the base of a huge fir tree in the densely packed woods. My chute was hanging in the tree above me. I knew I had to move out of there, but discovered two partially dislocated knees and badly sprained ankles would make it slow going. After popping my knees back in place and getting upright, I got out of the chute and took off my 45 colt pistol and shoulder holster and threw it into a nearby clump of bushes. It might get me shot wearing it 400 miles inside Germany.

A narrow path was nearby and I started moving along it. It was very quiet. There was a little snow on the ground and the large fir trees were covered with strips of aluminum chaff dropped to block the German radar. It reminded me of Christmas, which was coming soon. A tiny deer came running by, stopped for a minute and then went on. After some distance, there was another path coming in from the left and I started down it. Soon, a small group of civilians approached from the other direction. They surrounded me but were not threatening and they marched me back down the path to a small village where I was put against the wall of a building. The local civilians, men women and kids started gathering around, obviously very curious. They examined my outfit and wondered how a handkerchief and some other stuff was used. Later, an old man dressed all in black with muddy boots rode up in a wagon pulled by a shaggy old horse. He began shouting at the crowd, pointing at me, and put a rope noose over his head and made hanging motions. I couldn't speak the language, but I knew what he wanted to do. The crowd started to mill around and wasn't friendly anymore.

At that moment, the local constable came out of a house with a pistol in his hand. The crowd backed off and he took me into his home where his wife was waiting. They set me down at their dinner table and fed me a welcome bowl of soup and tried to talk, but we couldn't understand each other. In about an hour, a Volkswagen military auto showed up with several plainclothes officials carrying side arms. I was put in the back seat under guard and driven to the local jail in Templin, a town about 40 miles north of the center of Berlin. They searched me, took any documents and equipment they found and removed things like my watch and boots but left me with the GI shoes. I was put in a bare jail cell and sat on the floor. Gradually, the other members of the crew were brought in until there were seven of us by nightfall, but Joe Sanchez and Borge Kellstrom never appeared. One of the local policemen told me they had found no other survivors. The plane had been blown to bits.

The Crew of "Easy Does It" on Dec. 5, 1944: Pilot-1/Lt. Donald Freer - Co-pilot-1/Lt. Joseph Gallagher, Navigator-1/Lt. Harold Lasch, Toggelier - S/Sgt. Joseph Sanchez, Flight Engineer - S/Sgt. Oscar Stillman, Ball Turret Gunner - S/Sgt. Anthony Tacinelli, Radio Operator - S/Sgt. Roy Tanner, Waist Gunner - S/Sgt. Borge Kellstrom, Tail Gunner - S/Sgt. Lawrence Schenk.

PS: Joe Sanchez and Borge Kellstrom were declared MIA. Many years later, the Graves Registration Bureau finally ran a search for me. Their bodies had been recovered by US teams in East Germany and returned, first to France, and then to California in the late 1940's.



CHAPEL AT AIR FORCE ACADEMY

THE 2006 91ST BG REUNION IN COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

HOPE EVERYONE IS MAKING PLANS TO ATTEND THIS ONE!

Everyone is working hard to make this the best reunion ever.

Here are some of the trips that are being considered:

Trips to the Academy; Norad in Cheyenne Mt.; Garden of the Gods; a Ghost Town & Pottery Factory; Royal Gorge with lunch train ride; Buckskin Joe's recreated western town & tourist trap; Cripple Creek Gold Mine; Manitou Springs shopping & Native American Cliff Dwellings, Melodrama Dinner Theatre, Pikes Peak by cog RR (or by bus if enough people want to stay through Sunday) and a few Museums like Numismatic, Mineral & Industry, Professional Rodeo, Pioneer and Rocky Mt. Dinosaur. Activities will be on Wednesday through Saturday with the Business Meeting on Friday morn and the Banquet on Saturday night. Plans are to return (after 22 years) to the Flying W Ranch for dinner on Friday night.

Arrangements are being made to enable you to extend your stay on either side of the Reunion.

DO TRY TO MAKE IT TO THIS REUNION!

DUES will be DUE - JANUARY 2006

Even at this late stage, we are still having individuals sign on as Life Members. Becoming a Life Member (Cost \$100) relieves you of having to renew your Membership (\$10) each January, gives the Association some working Capital and allows your spouse the opportunity of continuing to receive the "Ragged Irregular".

Folded Wings cont'd:

★ Harold Bauman 324th



Sarver PA, July 2005

As reported by Joe Bessolo
Harold was my Radio Gunner and he was an excellent one. He had 30 missions all on our plane "Little Miss Mischief". He is survived by his wife Rose and was a loving father & grandfather and will be missed by all.



Sam J. Cipolla, 323rd, Age 81 Pleasant Prairie WI, Sept. 14, 2005



As reported by Cliff Schultz

Sam was the past senior vice president of the 91st Bomb Group and ran one of our best remembered Reunions — Chicago IL, 1988. He was a member of the crew of "Nine O Nine" as a ball turret gunner and was a recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Metal with three Oak Leaf

Clusters. He participated in the Normandy Invasion and Southern France, Germany and the Ardennes Campaigns. He was chairman of the 91st Memorial Plaque Presentation at the Air Force museum in Dayton OH.

Sam was the founder and president of Wolfram Metal Products for the past 20 years.

He was the beloved husband of the late Mamie Cipolla and is survived by his sons Joseph and Charles and Daughters Kathleen and Anita, 8 grandchildren, and 3 great grandchildren.



Gordon Beach, 401st, Age 93 Sutter Creek CA, May 31, 2003



As reported by J. Howland

Gordon Beach was the original ball turret gunner on Sam Newton's crew, "Cool Papa".

On his final mission, Bert watched Langfords crew get knocked out of formation. He is survived by his wife Blanche.

Gordon and Bert Stiles were close friends. In his book "Serenade to a Big Bird", Bert describes his relationship with Gordon. "In some ways, Beach and I were closer than any of them. We just had to think about Denver and we were there together."

Folded Wings cont'd:

★ **Edward J. Gallagher, Jr., 401st, Age 82**
Philadelphia PA, June 6, 2005 (D-Day)

As reported by his wife Jeanne

He was a tail gunner on "Shoo Shoo Baby" and "The Peacemaker".

He died peacefully at home. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Jeanne, three children, 9 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

He was buried in his service uniform that he was still able to wear after all these years.

★ **Charles "Bob" Hackstock, 322nd, Age 83**
Auburn WA, July 5, 2005

As reported by his wife Augusta

He was born February 25, 1922 in Bedgrade NE and moved to Ft. Morgan CO in 1938 where they operated a dairy for many years. He was a farmer and carpenter at Plains Airways in Ft. Morgan prior to enlisting in the USAAC in 1942. Lt. Hackstock was a pilot and copilot on a B-17 and a member of the 91st BG. November 2, 1944, he was reported MIA and spent 6 months as a POW in Germany. Arriving home on June 28, 1945. He married Augusta in 1945 and in 1954 they moved to Seattle WA where he was employed by Boeing Aircraft and was also a member of the Air Force Reserves stations first at Pain Field and later at McChord AFB. He was called to active duty on several occasions including the Bay of Pigs and in the last years in the reserves flew many transport missions into Vietnam under fire. He retired as Lt. Colonel in the reserves in 1982 after serving his country for a total of 38 years.

His interest in farming continued after moving to Washington State and he and his wife raised registered quarter horses for a number of years. He never lost interest in growing things and planted a vegetable garden every year through 2004. He used his carpentry skills to build a three car garage and a huge barn on their acreage.

His activities with the 91st Bob Group including being past president and gardening became his hobbies. He attended the USAFA dedication in Colorado Springs in 1985 and he and Augusta traveled to England in 1992 for a 91st Bomb Group reunion.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Augusta, a son Richard and daughters Sonja Babcock and Cathy Rosa and three grandchildren, Shane, Michael and Christina.

★ **William J. Duffey, 323rd, Age 82**
Manchester NJ, July 29, 2005

As reported by his wife



He was born on July 2, 1922 in Orange NJ and attended Parochial schools both there as well as in high school in Montclair NJ. He served 2 ¾ years in the Army Air Corps, graduating from Radio Operator and Mechanic School in Sioux Falls SD. He attended flight school as an

Aviation Cadet in Santa Ana CA Tulare CA, Merced Ca and graduated as a pilot and 2/Lt. in Douglas AZ. Assigned to the 8th Air Force in England and completed 35 missions over Europe as a copilot of a B-17 bomber "Wicked Witch". One of his crewmembers was "Tex" Frye, father of Suzi Frye Shepherd.

He graduated from Instrument Flying Instructor School in Bryan TX and was assigned to fly B-25's in Moody Field, Valdosta GA and Turner Field, Albany GA before being released from active duty in June 1945.

He attended Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken NJ and received an Engineering degree in 1949. He was employed as a Technical Writer and Editor for Army Ordinance, Metuchen NJ for two years and for 30 years at Automatic Switch Co. Florham Park NJ where he retired in 1982 after 20 years as Valve Service Manager.

He was married 25 years to the late Claire Duffy and then to Emily Ann Cohn Sandler Duffy in 1975 for 30 years and lived lastly in Manchester NJ. He was deceased in Toms River NJ, July 2, 2005 at age 82. His 83rd birthday was on the day of his interment.

He is survived by his wife Emily, daughters Barbara Duffy Gearhart, Garden Grove CA and Eileen Duffy Cook, Huntington Beach CA, Jane Sandler, Ocean Township NJ, Sons, Dr. Stephen Sandler and daughter-in-law Karen Sandler of Verona NJ and Scott Sandler and daughter-in-law Sonja Sandler of Pinebrook NJ and six grandchildren.

He was a member of the Eighth Air Force society and the 91st Bombardment Group (H)

**WILL THE CIRCLE REMAIN UNBORKEN
 BYE AND BYE LORD, BYE AND BYE
 WILL OUR CREW BE ALL TOGETHER
 IN THE SKY LORD, IN THE SKY**

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The Ragged Irregular

October 20

Folded Wings:

★ **Lillian Keil, RN, 801st Age 88**
Covina CA June 30, 2005



As reported by Paul Limm

Lillian Mary Kinkela was born November 17, 1916 in Arcata in Northern California. Her father left the family when she was a young girl and she and her mother lived in a convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Eureka, which her mother cleaned. Her two brothers lived elsewhere.

Following high school, she joined the nursing program at St. Mary's Hospital in San Francisco. She went to work as a flight attendant for United Airlines, which then required stewardesses to be registered nurses. When a passenger asked her why she was working for a commercial airline when she could help in the war effort, she decided to enlist.

Capt. Lillian Keil was one of the most decorated women – and by all accounts, one of the most dedicated nurses – in U.S. military history. She was a flight nurse, stationed at Bassingbourn with the U.S. Army Air Corps and flew on 425 combat evacuation missions in WW II and the Korean War. She helped load wounded soldiers onto airplanes and took part in 11 major campaigns including the Battle of the Bulge in Normandy. She tended to approximately 10,000 soldiers while they were being flown to military hospitals.

Her daughter Adrienne said that "To a wounded soldier she represented home and despite hazardous conditions (sometimes she had to sleep on a keg of gunpowder or among medical supplies that the planes were delivering to battlefields) she would try to keep up with her hair and make-up so the men would be

reminded of their sister or sweetheart. She represented hope for them and always tried to have a look on her face that everything was going to be OK"

She was awarded 19 medals and ribbons including four Air Medals, two Presidential Unit Citations, a WWII Victory Medal, four battle stars in WWII and a Korean Service Medal with seven battle stars.

While doing publicity for the Air Force in 1954, she met Walter Keil, a former Naval intelligence officer, who was working in advertising and public relations. They were married six weeks later and her father (with whom Keil had by then reunited) walked her down the aisle.

Keil was honorably discharged from the military in 1955, after becoming pregnant with the first of two daughters. The family moved to Covina in 1958 and she continued serving as a nurse in emergency rooms and hospitals.

In 1954, the Hollywood movie "Flight Nurse" was based in part on Keil's experiences.

Keil also appeared on the Ralph Edwards' show "This is Your Life" in 1961 and generated a record amount of mail from veterans who remembered her caring for them.

Last year, she was the honorary grand marshal of the National World War II Memorial Dedication parade in Washington, D.C.

She is survived by her daughters Adrienne Whitmore of Chino Hills and Lillianne Wittman of Big Bear, four grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Editors note: Nancy and I had the privilege of meeting Lillian Keil at the World War 2, Memorial Dedication on the 29th of May 2004 and wrote an article about her in the July 2004 issue of the Ragged Irregular she was a longtime member of the 91st BGMA and was the only member from the 91st. that we came in contact with that day.