

# POOP from Group



791st



790th



789th



788th

Newsletter of the 467th Bomb Group Association

February 2021

## **"SLICK CHICK" and the Ewart Crew**



**DURING JANUARY 1944, the original 467th aircrews were coming toward the close of phase training when brand new B24 "H" models commenced arriving at Wendover Army Air Base for crews to begin familiarisation before transfer overseas for combat. The 788th Squadron, Roderick E. Ewart Crew were one of those who took receipt of B24H 41-29388, a model originating from the Consolidated assembly at Fort Worth, Texas. This issue highlights memories of the crew aboard "their" ship and through the early weeks of combat before the crew and ship were separated by transfer of the 788th Squadron in May 44 to the "carpetbagger" unit.**

***RETURN OF THE 467th PX STORE  
Rackheath SITE#6 Latest  
Wendover Fundraising Project News  
Yvonne Caputo's Joe Haenn Story***

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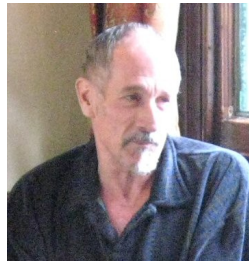
Col Albert J. Shower

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Jay Shower



The 467th  
Bombardment Group  
The Rackheath Aggies



# President's Message

By Brian Mahoney

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788th Bomb Squadron Staff Bombardier Edwin ('Ed' or 'Alex') Alexander was a lifelong friend of my father's who I only first met 22 years ago, at the unforgettable Tucson reunion of our association. It was like meeting a favorite uncle I had never known! His humor was a goodly part of his urbane, easy-going, and yet straight-to-the-point way. I remember that at a later reunion, seated next to him at one of the banquet tables, he made a point when the wife of a squadron mate made three mistakes with a single sentence: she presumed she knew her audience; she pronounced that being a member of her political party was a requirement for being patriotic; and violated the wise old dictum: *don't discuss religion or politics in polite company*. Ed, who had gone in harm's way in Liberators over 30 times in two bomb groups by the time he went down over Berlin with Lt. Chapman's crew on March 18, 1945, beamed as he said, "I bet that right up til now, you were sure that no reunion-going, country-loving WW II veteran could possibly be a Democrat," as he fished out his voter registration card. His delivery disarmed the tension with laughter that even the embarrassed lady joined.

As a society, we have come to a point that this story seems very quaint. In 2021, sadly, we can envision the lady 'doubling down,' refusing to accept as *fact* something she had just heard with her own ears and seen with her own eyes. But 'back then,' she graciously acknowledged an inconvenient fact. And if it had turned into a political discussion (the subject was immediately and enthusiastically changed by all table mates), all parties still valued light over the inevitable heat, proven truth over uninformed positions.

On January 6th, more than one child of a deceased 467th veteran expressed a wistful gratitude that their father had not lived to see the national shame that began with public incitement and ended with the violent desecration of the Capitol. My father's generation taught their kids how to argue fair and square, how to disagree without being too disagreeable. They imbued us—all across the political spectrum, in the era of Vietnam protests, Watergate, and urban riots—with a pride in the way the average citizen did not just shout simplistic slogans, but occasionally engaged their opponent in debate, while mutually valuing and participating in our revolutionary form of government.

It is time to bring everyone back to that civic engagement, without which there cannot be a free, pluralistic, civilized society. Let's honor the generation that defended this great American Experiment against dark forces of irrational fears manipulated into hatred. Our honoring should take the form of reviving and embracing the high standards of good citizenship, regardless of political persuasion. Let us restore the (once common) common sense of our elders that patriotism was not about personal loyalties to an individual, wrapping oneself in a flag, or shouting slogans, all of which were hallmarks of our three Axis enemies.



## News From Station 145

*From David Hastings MBE*

Sadly the awful Pandemic is still advancing with over 105,000 deaths in the UK since it started and last week our Norfolk & Norwich Hospital suffered 28 deaths in one day, but the evenings are getting lighter.

The Marker has wintered well thanks to the Salhouse Scouts and the daily check by Roger with the new flags (thanks to Martie) and halliards looking great. Our next major job in the Spring will be to sand down and re-paint the two flagpoles. We hope that we

may get an offer of help but if not the Parish Council will have to get a local contractor. We will also have to re-furbish the headstone to Earl Roy. Many people perhaps do not know that Earl insisted that his ashes must return to his airfield at Rackheath - what a great guy he was.

It does not seem possible that it is over 30 years since Colonel Shower unveiled the Marker and what a great day that was with Jay Shower providing a low fly-past in his Bonanza. At that Norwich Convention Colonel Shower at the 467th Dinner in the Maids Head Hotel remembered that he threw me off the Base in 1944 and then made a moving plea to "Save my Tower". Fortunately Tilia Properties rose to the occasion and thanks to them we have a splendidly restored Control Tower which Charlotte Shower opened supported by Air Marshal Sir John Kemball, the USAF from Mildenhall and many local residents.

In 1992 the airfield enjoyed the sound of a B-24 once more when "Diamond Lil" made a circle of the base before landing at Norwich after her flights over all the old 2nd Air Division USAAF bases.

Then how can we forget in 1995 Colonel Shower returning to the Saluting at the Norwich City Hall with the Lord Mayor and the Station Commander from RAF Coltishall, just as he did in the 1945 Victory Parade. Thanks to the 2nd Air Division USAAF the 50th Anniversary Parade in Norwich was one of the finest in the UK and what an evening we had at the Theatre Royal with Bob Bristers moving "We'll Meet Again" Forties show.

Also how can we forget the Private Miney plaque to remind us of that awful night in 1944 when the airfield was attacked. Finally that meeting in the Parish Church when Jim Coffey asked Brian Tagg the Chairman of the Parish Council if there was anything his crew could give to express their thanks for all the wartime friendship. Brian thought a fence and gate would be useful and we now enjoy the beautiful Coffey Crew Gates and fence which hopefully will remind future generations of the debt we owe to those young Americans. "THEY CAME AS FRIENDS, THEY STAYED AS FRIENDS, THEY HAVE REMAINED FRIENDS, AND WE WILL ALWAYS God Bless you and God Bless America David, Jean and Roger Hastings

Base Contacts.



*Charlotte Shower along with Air Marshal Sir John Kemball dedication of the restored Control Tower in 2007.*

# Notes from the Editor



This issue of your “POOP” newsletter marks the first time it appears in a digital only format (pdf file) having said goodbye to the previous 40 or so years as printed and bulk-mailed option. We thank readers having migrated to the digital platform which has been available the last 10 years, saving the 467th BG(H) Assoc. mounting costs, also appreciation if you continue to share or print your digital copy for those either unable or prefer the previous printed format.

Another new feature is the return of the 467th BG(H) Assoc. **PX Store** offering merchandise to purchase in support of the Group and hopefully an item or two of interest relating to the 467th. Our former Director, **Steve Watson**, has kindly agreed to handle all enquiries/orders of the limited stock and will advise shipping costs. See items available and prices in our PX Store in this “POOP”.

It was back in July 2019 I was contacted by **Fiona Gowen**, who introduced herself as freelance designer and illustrator currently working on a project for Broadland district council to design and illustrate six A2 interpretation panels to be installed in Rackheath, Newman Road woods (Site# 6). Her remit was to highlight the history of the area, the air base and the 467th Bomb Group. Research commenced at the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library (now “The American Library”) which led to our 467th BG web sites. Fiona was keen to research further a number of our images and gain permission for their use on the display panels. The following months led to many email exchanges and efforts to find quality high resolution images that would enhance the display panels. With the design and illustration completed, five of the six display panels told the

story of the 467th with the other panel concentrating on the nature and wildlife found in the woods. The global pandemic and lockdowns delayed their final installation which was finally competed toward the end of 2020. The 467th BG(H) Association were delighted to have been involved with the Project and subsequently credited on each display panel. Several examples are featured on this page and Project Leader for Site#6, **Ivan Barnard**, has provided latest updates on the site elsewhere in this “POOP”.

**THE ARRIVAL OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AIR FORCE (USAAF)**

**WHO WERE THE 467TH BOMB GROUP (HEAVY)?**  
The Group was activated on 1st August 1943 and came to be known as the ‘Rackheath Aggies’. They flew 221 missions during World War Two under the leadership of Colonel Albert J. Shower and were celebrated for their bombing accuracy. The Group was composed of four squadrons: the 788th, 789th, 790th and 791st. Members of the squadrons ranged in rank from enlisted men (Airman Basic to Senior Airman); to sergeants (Staff Sergeant to Chief Master Sergeant); to commissioned and field officers (Second Lieutenant to Colonel). The four squadrons spent six months in training prior to being stationed in Rackheath, latterly in Wendover, Utah, where they increased their expertise in their given fields and united as a single unit with a common purpose.

**ARRIVING AT THE BASE**  
Ground crews left Wendover for New York Harbor and arrived in England by ship on 11th March 1944. Unusually, the Group’s air crews started to arrive in Rackheath in their B-24s on the same day. After settling in, the Group returned to the rigorous routine that had been established during initial training.

**ADJUSTING TO LIFE IN ENGLAND**  
‘A Short Guide to Great Britain’, a leaflet produced by the US War Ministry, was issued to personnel to help them navigate the culture and customs. It included advice on behaviour in pubs, driving on the left side of the road and acclimatising to the British weather.

**ACHIEVEMENTS**  
The Group marked significant milestones by hosting parties and inviting people from the village. A two-day celebration was held for the Group’s 200th mission on 21st and 22nd April 1945, with dances, a buffet and fireworks. A ‘short snorter’ (a banknote signed by fellow air travellers for good luck) was also produced.

**THE B-24 LIBERATOR**  
The B-24 Liberator was designed and largely manufactured by the Consolidated Aircraft Company, though the Ford Motor Company also contributed to its production. The B-24 had four engines and was favoured by allied forces throughout the war due to its ability to carry heavy bomb loads and to cruise at high speed. It also had an impressive bombing range and was very reliable.

**NOSE ART**  
Applying nose art was a way to both distinguish and personalise very similar-looking aircraft. Some accounts suggest that crews painted pieces based on what they thought would distract enemy wingmen and pilots, while others say they believed their nose art brought them luck.

**WITCHCRAFT**  
‘Witchcraft’ was built by the Ford Motor Company and maintained and flown by the 790th squadron. It became the most famous bomber in the Eighth Air Force. Of its 137 missions, it achieved 130 without aborting or failing to attack its target, and flew both the first and last of the 467th’s 221 missions.

**‘This is the Plan’**  
This is the ‘Plan’ (topographic map) used by the 467th Bomb Group during the war.



story of the 467th with the other panel concentrating on the nature and wildlife found in the woods. The global pandemic and lockdowns delayed their final installation which was finally competed toward the end of 2020. The 467th BG(H) Association were delighted to have been involved with the Project and subsequently credited on each display panel. Several examples are featured on this page and Project Leader for Site#6, **Ivan Barnard**, has provided latest updates on the site elsewhere in this “POOP”.

**ALBERT JOSEPH SHOWER** and **JAMES JEREMIAH MAHONEY** were the two senior officers in the 467th. Two local roads are named in their honour: ‘Albert Shower Road’ on Rackheath Industrial Estate, and ‘Mahoney Green’, off Green Lane West.

**COL. ALBERT J. SHOWER**

Albert Joseph Shower was born on 16th June 1910 in Madison, Wisconsin. He was a cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York from 1931 to 1935.



**Military career**

Shower transferred to the Air Corps after graduating as a senior pilot and was stationed in Hawaii, Illinois and Michigan, as well as overseas. In May 1943, he became the commanding officer of a bomb group in El Paso, Texas, aged 32. In October 1943, Lieutenant Colonel Shower became group commander of the 467th. Shortly after arriving in Rackheath, he was promoted to colonel. Shower was known for demanding high standards of his men, which was reflected in their achievements. As well as being in command, Shower flew many missions to Europe. He was the only commanding officer in the Eighth Air Force who remained with his group from training right through to their return to the States at the end of the war. Shower retired from the USAF in 1961, having garnered many accolades. He briefly worked for General Motors, inspecting parts used on the Apollo spacecraft. He died on 15th October 2001, aged 91 and was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia.

**LT. COL. JAMES J. MAHONEY**

James Jeremiah Mahoney was born on 4th February 1917. He graduated from Boston College in 1943.



**Military career**

Mahoney started out in 1940 as a cadet, moving quickly through the ranks, and at age 27, became one of the youngest Lieutenant colonels in the USAAF during World War Two. The 467th Bomb Group Mahoney’s Group, the 492nd, was originally assigned to North Pickenham, then reposted to the 467th where it was renamed the 788th Squadron. In October 1944, Lieutenant Colonel Mahoney was appointed Deputy Commanding Officer of the 467th. James Mahoney died on 15th September 1998, aged 81, and is interred at Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia.

**COMMANDING OFFICER’S QUARTERS**

Known as ‘The White House’, this brick hut could accommodate two people, each with their own office, bedroom and shower/toilet room, and a small shared kitchen area. Colonel Shower had sole use of the hut until Lieutenant Colonel Mahoney’s promotion to deputy commanding officer six months after arrival in Rackheath.



**OTHER BUILDINGS ACROSS THE SITE**

**BCF huts**  
Created by the British Concrete Foundation, these huts were made from prefabricated reinforced concrete panels and posts, and could be extended as required.

**Nissen shelters**  
The Nissen hut was invented by Major Peter Nissen of the British Army in 1916 for military use. The units were portable, economical and easy to assemble.

**Blast shelters**  
These shelters were brick maze-like constructions without roofs. Several can still be found on the site today.

**Aircraft hangars**  
There were two T2 hangars on the site, one of which remains on Rackheath Industrial Estate. They were designed by architect A.E. Corton and made from steel and galvanised corrugated iron.

**JOHN “JACK” WEYLER:** It was with great sadness to the learn of the passing of our dear friend and loyal 467th supporter, “Jack” Weyler, on Christmas Day. Many of you would have known Jack as ever present at our annual reunions and a hugely popular figure always willing to share his memories and time with all who cared to listen. Who could ever forget some of those late night sessions that Jack (armed with a good Scotch) would hold court and hold us spellbound with accounts of life as a B24 combat pilot during the final months of WWII.

On a personal note, it was a real privilege to accompany Jack and Karin, along with his English host, Tony Oakden, on a visit to Rackheath during August 2016, the first return visit by Jack since departing back in 1945. News of the impending visit led to a memorable interview on top of the Rackheath Control Tower with a journalist of the local EDP newspaper who featured Jack on its front page the following day. Certainly Jack’s visit made a big impact on a number of the younger folk who worked here, to actually meet someone as special as a former B24 pilot who flew from here 70 years ago really bought home the significance of their unique workplace location.

Recall fondly a note Jack sent accompanying a 75 page section of his autobiography covering his Air Corps period. Typically understated in Jack’s inimitable style, “Nothing special, but it is my story!” John “Jack” Weyler, 789th Squadron, Crew Commander and Pilot. 1924 - 2020.



*Jack surveys the former airfield from the Control Tower, 2016*

News also reached us of the recent passing of Rackheath resident, **John Robinson**, who along with his late brother Tom lived for many years at the rear of Rackheath Hall in the Garden Cottage. Their property included an impressive enclosed walled-garden (formerly of the Rackheath Hall estate) which they earned a living running a market-garden. The property also possessed one of the few remaining BCF huts that was used as squadron accommodation for crew personnel and a source of much interest for local historians. The two brothers were genuine Rackheath “characters” and always welcoming to visitors who would drop by. During WWII their father was the local “Bobby” in the village and affectionately known as “Robbo”.

One of the brothers proudest achievements was a full restoration of the iconic bridge spanning the ornamental lake adjacent to Rackheath Hall which was a familiar sight to 467th personnel back in 1944/45. Restoration was completed in 2000 and undertaken both independently and solely by the Robinson brothers. A discreetly placed plaque commemorating the restoration can be found on the bridge.



*The iconic bridge adjacent to Rackheath Hall in winter 1944/45*

## Notes from the Editor *Cont.*

Please send news/articles for "POOP"  
To : Editor - Andy Wilkinson  
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*John Robinson, Perry Watts, and Tony North pictured on the restored bridge in June 2003*



**TREASURY NOTES:** The 467th BG(H) Association operates three distinct accounts. Our **GENERAL FUND** for basic ancillary expenses stands at **\$2729.38** and previously the source of funding for the bulk printing/ mailing of "POOP". We also operate a **REUNION SUPPORT FUND** for the purpose of providing initial deposits and the provision of support to enable our veterans to attend in person. The original sum was provided by a generous anonymous donor and currently stands at **\$4,656.85**. Our third account is the **WENDOVER FUNDRAISER PROJECT** with the aim to reach our principle target of \$52,000.00. The current fund raising has reached in excess of **\$45,000** with some way to go. Further news on our Wendover fund raising and progress with the stunning B24 model replica is found elsewhere in this issue.

**EMAIL AND ADDRESS CHANGES:** Remember to report changes to our President, Brian Mahoney, who handles all membership details including notifications of "Folded Wings" and obituaries.

### Folded Wings

**Harvey H. BAKER Sr** - Flight engineer 790th Aug 2019

**Edward J. McCRYSTAL** - NCO Intelligence 790th Aug 2019

**Aurel E. STUART** - Bombardier 789th Dec 2018

**Lawrence D. SWART** - Copilot 790th Dec 2020

**John "Jack" R. WEYLER** - Pilot 789th Dec 2020

Please send news of "Folded Wings" also Obituaries to 467th BG veterans or prominent Associates  
to - Brian Mahoney [researcher@brianhmahoney.com](mailto:researcher@brianhmahoney.com)

## **"SLICK CHICK" and the Rod Ewart Crew**



**Pictured at Wendover shortly before transition overseas: L-R standing, Roderick E. Ewart (pilot), Walter A. Saline (copilot), George M. Haber (navigator), Robert N. Promen (bombardier). L - R front, Richard Paik (engineer), Kenneth E. Larsen (radio-oper.), George Kalavitinos (gunner), Sidney D. Kagan (gunner), Harry M. Juhn (gunner), William R. McNeil (gunner).**

Early January 1944 saw the arrival at Wendover of brand new B24 "H" models for the fledgling original aircrews of the 467th tasked to fly the pristine aircraft overseas and eventually, combat. Among the 788th Squadron was the Roderick E. Ewart crew who were close to finishing phase training and took delivery of B24H 41-29388 assembled at the Consolidated Fort Worth plant.

In an email from June 2000, pilot Rod Ewart describes his memories and early association with the new B24.

*Perhaps you have heard how we named the plane assigned to us in Wendover, Utah, but I shall tell you anyway my memory of it. I am not certain how long we were at Wendover, when one morning factory new airplanes were assigned to each crew--these would be the planes we would fly overseas to combat. As aircraft commander, I declared that all crew members would participate in naming our ship and that the naming would occur in a week. So, all ten of us made suggestions, made arguments and nothing really hit us. In the beginning, that airplane provided more frustration than anyone could imagine. It was grounded constantly with this and that wrong--I once considered calling it the "Ruptured Duck" because it wouldn't fly! But when we got to combat it was always ready, battle damage notwithstanding. Then, someone, I haven't an idea who, suggested "Slick Chick"--it might have been our engineer, Dick Paik, I don't know. All of us liked it. Dick painted the name and a female figure on it--my memory of that first Slick Chick had the figure recumbent, not erect.*

The Rod Ewart crew arrived Rackheath on 15 March 44 after following the standard southern Atlantic ferry route taking

them via Brazil and West Africa before heading north steering well clear of potential hostile enemy contact. Radio-operator Kenneth Larsen of the Ewart Crew records in a personal diary the overseas journey was relatively trouble-free and the crew were pleased to be located on a brand new base where several buildings were still under construction. Kenneth records early pre-combat days where there was an occurrence of regular air-raid warnings and for men to go to the nearest air-raid shelters. Despite regular “warnings” it seems many preferred to remain in their warm beds where Kenneth records how cold it was at this time of the year.

On 3 April 44, Kenneth records the Ewart crew were supposed to fly on a training mission when tragedy almost struck. While in the process of take-off, the nose-wheel of the ship “SCREWBALL” collapsed causing the navigator to bang his head but fortunately none of the crew were hurt, although badly shaken.

*“We were all very lucky because we were supposed to go on a training bombing mission and we had four one thousand pound demolition bombs in the bomb-bay. If those bombs went off I wouldn’t be writing this diary!”*

Kenneth also records his opinion that “SCREWBALL” was likely a total loss and probably not able to be flown again with further damage to the fuselage. It seems this report was premature as several days later Kenneth reports participating on a further training mission adding that “SCREWBALL” is being repaired and likely to fly combat.

Lt. George Boes replaced the original crew bombardier from Wendover and the Ewart crew were to get their first experience of combat on the Groups’ second combat mission, 11 April 44, to target the Focke-Wulf Factory at Oschersleben, Germany. The crew aboard “Slick Chick” were among 27 Group ships attacking the target and Kenneth Larsen’s diary describes flak at the target but damage was slight, he also reported seeing a B24 from another group “go down in flames” with no one observed bailing out. Two further missions both aboard “Slick Chick” during April 44 led to disappointment when the 21 April mission to Zwickau was recalled with Group crews failing to assemble due to severe icing and weather conditions. 788th Squadron crews also reported dense contrails being built by the aircraft as they attempted to climb above the overcast.



*Aviation cadet Roderick Ewart of class 43G.*



*Kenneth E. Larsen, Radio-operator, Ewart Crew.*

The month of May saw the Ewart crew commence on the 1st with two combat missions on the same day. The first was another recalled mission to Ruisseauville, France, a “no-ball” target where a solid undercast obscured the target causing the ships to return with their bomb-load. The second mission of the day aboard “Slick Chick” was more productive when they were among the crews tasked to attack marshalling yards at Liege, Belgium. Fourteen Group ships attacked but Kenneth reports in the diary of a “very rough ride”. Flak was intense on the way in and out of the target with both the navigator and bombardier having narrow escapes after flak penetrated “Slick Chick”. The wearing of flak-suits saving them both from serious injury. “We landed a very tired crew”, records Kenneth.

Three more missions were flown by the crew on the 4th, 5th, and 7th May with mixed results including a recall. The Ewart Crews’ ninth combat mission on the 8 May to Brunswick, Germany, was to be their last aboard “Slick Chick” and their last day-light mission with the 467th Bomb Group. And a very eventful day it proved to be.



Target was an airfield and components factory near the city of Brunswick, Germany, and the Ewart crew aboard “Slick Chick” departed Rackheath a little after 6am among an element of 9 ships from the 788th Squadron. The Group provided 33 ships for the mission but three ships returned early with various mechanical difficulties. The remainder assembled along with the 466th and 458th and continued the mission following the briefed course. Approach to the target was made at an altitude of 20,500ft attacking in a north to south direction with each ship carrying 52 x 100lb incendiary bombs. The intended target was obscured by overcast as the first crews arrived and aiming was conducted by a signal from the lead PFF ships with the wing crews following. Time of “release” was recorded at 1017am but no sooner had crews discharged it coincided with the arrival of enemy aircraft.

Kenneth Larsen, writes: *“We just dropped our bombs when we were jumped by a large number of ME-109. Our engineer, T/Sgt “Dick” Paik, who was in the upper-turret was struck in the head by a 20mm shot by an attacking ME-109. He was hurt very bad with a fractured skull and concussion. Our tail-gunner, Sgt William McNeil, got the ME-109 that damaged us and injured Paik but the attack shot-out one engine and we landed back on just three”.*

The 788th Squadron were particularly hit badly in the ensuing attack that was reported to consist of 45 plus enemy aircraft. Another 788th crew, the Harrison crew ship was seen to turn over on its back and go down immediately after the target. Back at Rackheath “Slick Chick” was found to have been hit numerous times with 12 holes and the loss of No.#4 engine. It was later learned, six of the Harrison crew perished in the attack including the pilot, with four other crew taken POW. Sgt. “Dick” Paik upon return was immediately transferred to the 312 Station Hospital. Tail-gunner William McNeil was credited with a “probably destroyed” for his actions.

Pilot, Rod Ewart reflected on the incident in an email in June 2000: *“Dick Paik's wound really was serious. His physician, I would never recollect his name, told me that if Paik lived, he would be picking shrapnel off his pillow for years to come. No one, back then, would have been the least bit surprised if he had died in the hospital. That he returned to duty in July, shows the resiliency of youth plus the desire to do something for himself and the Country. We all wanted to have him return to our crew but in the interim had gotten Steve Korpash as his replacement and could not make the change.”*

Four days later on the 12 May 1944, personnel of the 788th Squadron boarded the train at Salhouse Station bound for RAF Cheddington to take up a new role of clandestine night-time operations over occupied Europe in stripped down specially painted black B24s. The new role required a smaller 8 man crew so gunners Sgt. George Kalavitinos and Harry Juhn remained at Rackheath and were reassigned to the 789th and 791st Squadrons. On May 27, 44, the rest of the Ewart Crew and 788th personnel left RAF Cheddington and flew to Harrington, Northamptonshire, their new permanent base.

“Slick Chick” was reassigned to the 791st Squadron where she remained flying regular combat until the last recorded mission 9 September 44. Achieving just short of 60 combat missions and receiving theater modifications led to some alteration to the original applied artwork and it is thought she was declared “war weary” at this time. Warmly remembered by members of her original crew, “Slick Chick” has pride of place among those original brand new B24s accepted eagerly by those young fledgling crews at Wendover.



Left, Walter A. Saline Right, Roderick E. Ewart

# ***The Joe Haenn Story***

## **By Yvonne Caputo**

I am consistently mesmerized by the miracles that have happened because of writing the book *Flying with Dad*. Even more incredible is that one of the miracles came through a post on Facebook. Dad's missions were in April and I posted stories about them on the 467<sup>th</sup>'s page. On April 20<sup>th</sup>, I received a message from Christine Herb White for a copy of the book for her grandfather, Joe Haenn. He was an assistant crew chief at Rackheath during the time Dad was stationed there.

Through our back and forth messages to Christine through Facebook, I learned that her grandfather was 103 and he lived in a personal care home. When I asked which one, I discovered he was only 7.2 miles away from me, and that I was extremely familiar with the wonderful facility that housed him, the Lutheran Community of Telford.

Christine gave me the phone number of her mother, Judie Herb, and I learned that I could deliver packages to Joe, but the home was on lock down because of COVID 19. I also learned that Joe had difficulty reading small print, so as nice as it might be to have a signed copy of the hardcover, it would make reading a chore. Well, dah, I had a copy of the author's proof large print on myself. Yes, there were small errors in the book, but nothing that would take away from the story.

I also learned that Joe loved cookies, so books and cookies were taken to the home and delivered to Joe's room. Judie called me the next morning to say that Joe had read 120 pages in one evening. The delight in her voice was all I needed. The reading material and cookie delivery would now be a part of my weekly life. The joy of this exchange was a balm to my own stay at home existence.

What came next were the phone calls, and our decision to keep a land line along with our cell phones was a good one. Conversations with Joe were so much easier using the land line. His hearing as well as his eye sight were simply compromised by his age.

On April 27<sup>th</sup> 1945, my father was on the "Wabbit" when it crashed on a training mission. The crash was the result of co-pilot error and engine malfunction. The pilot called for all six crew members to abort. Dad climbed up out of the escape hatch at the top of the plane, slid down to the wing, and jumped to the ground. He cried out in pain as he realized that he had done something to his leg. It was broken. Official reports of the crash say that he was the only crew member injured.

On our second phone call, I asked him if he had seen the "Wabbit" after the crash? His response took my breath away and suffused me with chills. He was clear, "The nose of the plane was so badly damaged, I couldn't see anybody getting out in one piece." My father's normal position as a navigator during bomb runs was in the nose of the plane. Because it was a training mission, he was up on the flight deck.

The second little miracle happened when I learned that visits were allowed. They had to be scheduled, and I was unsure if my not being a family member would count against me. It didn't, and I set up an appointment to go and meet Joe.



I entered an outer lobby of the home and was shown how to use a special phone. I carried it with me to outside a large picture window with a wonderful bench in front of it. There on the other side was Joe. The smile on his face equaled the smile on mine. This time the package I left on the trolley in that outer lobby was delivered directly to him. I had copied the Facebook post for him and of course there was a container of cookies.

The visits have happened weekly. Each time I try and find something to take to him. It might be an article from Facebook, or books that might interest him. Joe has met David Hastings, the former chair of the Second Air Division Memorial Library, now named the American Library dedicated to the Second Air Division. David has written several books and has had a book written about him. The former tells of David's flying the Diamond Lil" a B-24 H from Texas to Britain in 1992 to celebrate the first arrival of a 24 on British soil. The latter was written about David as a 10-year old boy living through the war, and his ongoing friendship with a particular B-24 crew during the war.

The third little miracle wasn't little at all. I asked Joe during one visit if he ever got close to any of the crews when he was in England. He responded, "No, I didn't want to. I didn't want to know when they didn't come back." He paused for a moment, then he said, "But there was one crew. Their pilot was named Stoudt, and he didn't come back. I never knew what happened to him or his team."

I asked permission to do some digging, and I sent information to J Peter Horne, Vice President of the 467<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Association. Peter replied he couldn't find anyone by that name. Crews were named for the pilots. On a subsequent visit, Joe remembered Murray and Knott as names on the crew. That did it.

Peter responded that it was the Damian J. Murray crew. Murray was the pilot, and his co-pilot was Benedict A Staudt. The engineer was Leslie J. Knott.

On 06 Aug 44, The Group attacked Hamburg Ger. Just prior to the target, 41-29373, "The Monster/Flak Magnet" was hit by flak. All the crew except Navigator Seymour M. Giltz were taken POW. Sadly, Giltz was KIA. I've attached the Missing Air Crew Report (MACR.)

The MACR lists that Giltz was interred on 8 Aug 1944 in the Hamburg-Schnelsen Cemetery

Peter was also able to supply information to let Joe know that all of the other crew returned to the United States at the end of the war. He also provided me with the gravesites of those crew members he was able to find.

On my very next visit, I shared all the news with Joe. I watched his face, his eyes misted just a little and his shoulders dropped. He stated simply, "It's good to know after all these years."

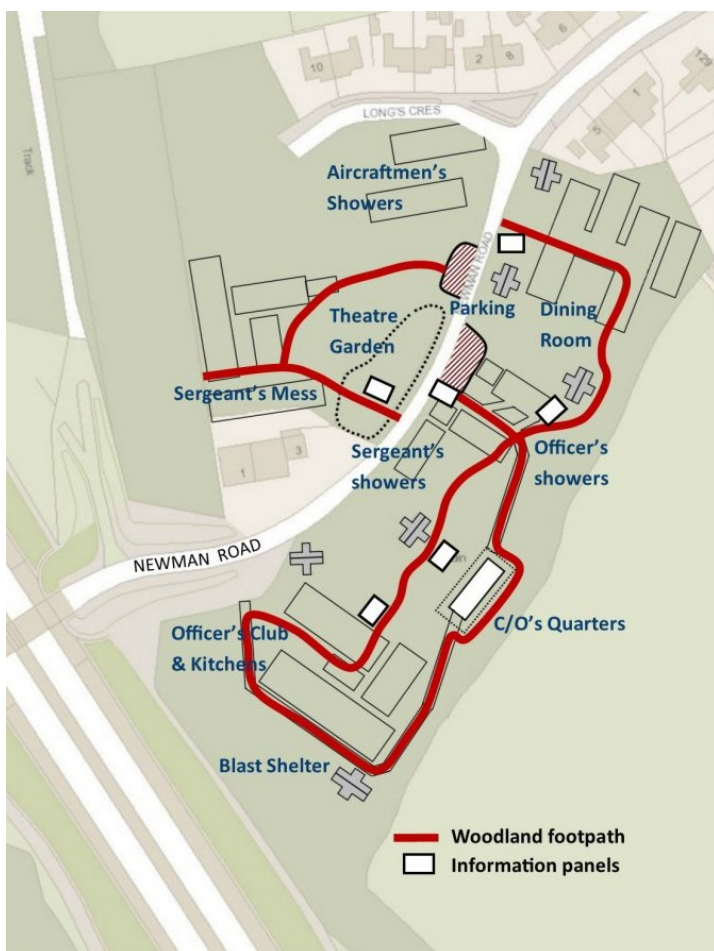
*Thanks to Yvonne for sharing her interesting story that was featured in a local newspaper, "Montgomery News" a few months back. Subsequent to publication an unexpected phone-call resulted in a surprise connection which will be followed up by a further article from Yvonne in the next "POOP from Group". EDITOR*



*Joe Haenn (left) with fellow 789th mechanic Frank Kohut*



## Rackheath Site 6. Community Wood Project. "Pathfinders."



In my last article I outlined possibilities, hopes and visions for the ongoing Project at Rackheath. A couple of those things have now been completed, notably the Information Panels and the Way-marker Posts and Car Park signs. This time it is perhaps appropriate to look back with pride on what has so far been achieved since we first commenced work on site late February 2020. I could now provide you with a very long list of items, however I consider that a picture tells the story far better. What better way to demonstrate this is to refer you to the 467th FaceBook Page where at your leisure you can explore week by week the photographic record of our achievements. There are three Albums of photographs that faithfully record our endeavours for 2020. I am deeply indebted to **Alec Blyth** for compiling and maintaining these Albums and also to **Paul Thorogood** for his additional photographs that complement these Albums.

Over the years I have been involved in a number of Heritage Projects, so I am well aware of the value of volunteers who tirelessly come together and who by their enthusiasm and commitment make such an invaluable contribution to the success of these Projects. Those individuals who have joined with me on this occasion as "Pathfinders,"

are to a person of the highest order of Volunteer that one would wish to lead. It is beyond doubt that without their endeavours we could not have achieved so much in such a short period of time. We are at the present time once again due to the Pandemic under lock-down, nevertheless much is being planned for our return when the restrictions are lifted.



*Scenes around Site#6 during the winter months. Wood-chipped path rear of the White House the former accommodation of Col. Albert J. Shower at Rackheath.*

During December we spent most of the time tidying up the site, sweeping and clearing the leaf-fall from the concrete pathways and building bases. It is very rewarding now to constantly see families and groups of people exploring the woods and learning in



*One of the six new Display Signs located in the Theatre Garden*



*Fireplace of the former Officer's Club. Waiting to be restored during 2021*

some detail what took place here during 1944/5. Bearing all that in mind we wait and look forward to implementing the next phase of the works as soon as we can.

With all Good Wishes for 2021.

Ivan A. Barnard

# The 467th Post Exchange



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



# The 467th Post Exchange

## Items Available to Order in support of the 467th BG Association

1. **RED 467th LIBERAMUS INSIGNIA BALL CAP:**  
Universal fit.....\$10.00 ea plus package and mail.
2. **SQUADRON PATCHES FEATURING SQUADRON LOGO, 788th, 789th, 790th, 791st:**  
Embroidered Patches 4" Dia.....\$3.00 ea plus package and mail.
3. **467th LIBERAMUS SHIELD GROUP PATCH:**  
Red Embroidered Patch 3"x3".....\$3.00 ea plus package and mail.
4. **SQUADRON PINS FEATURING SQUADRON LOGO, 788th, 789th, 791st:**  
Pins 1" Dia. (790th Squadron currently unavailable).....\$3.00 ea plus package and mail.
5. **CAR/REFRIDGERATOR MAGNET:**  
467th Shield/2AD/8th Air Force Round. 4" Dia.....\$2.00 ea plus package and mail.
6. **WHITE POLO SHIRT WITH GROUP PATCH:**  
Liberamus 467th BG/2 AD - 8 AF. ONLY avail sizes, XL & XXL.....\$15.00 plus package and mail
7. **CHALLENGE COIN in plastic envelope:**  
467th Liberamus/Happy Warrior Squadron, Tucson 2018 Reunion.....\$15.00 ea plus package and mail.

**ORDERS AND ENQUIRIES TO STEVE WATSON** [fswat49@icloud.com](mailto:fswat49@icloud.com)

Steve will advise shipping costs and availability

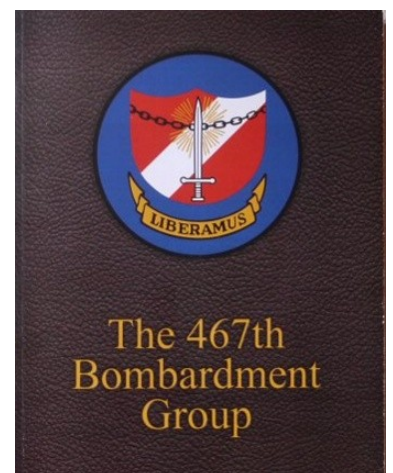
**PAYMENT:** Credit card/Paypal [HERE](#): or via check to "The 467th BG Association"  
to TREASURER, Valerie Corvino, 242 Molly Dr., McMurray, PA. 15317

### ALSO AVAILABLE:           The 467th Bombardment Group History by Allan Healy

The 467th BG Association is delighted to offer a softback limited edition of the original 1947 Allan Healy "467th BG History". This fifth and final edition has text reformatting and photographic restoration by Colin LaRussa, also a fully revised and comprehensive Addendum.

**Price \$50 + \$5 shipping** - payment via check or PayPal

**Available from David LaRussa, 8570 N. Mulberry Dr., TUCSON, AZ 85704**  
TEL - (520) 322-9827 [alarussa7@msn.com](mailto:alarussa7@msn.com)



# Obituaries



## Lawrence D. SWART, Copilot, 790th

Lawrence Donovan Swart, age 97, went home to be with the Lord and his wife Dorothea, on 12-09-20 while resting in his home in Randall, WI. Lawrence was an exceptional husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

Lawrence was a shining example of what all those titles should be. Lawrence and Dorothea were married for 74 years before Dorothea passed earlier this year. Lawrence was the pinnacle of what a man should be: honest, loyal, temperate, patient and loving. He was quiet yet strong, fair yet firm. He was a jack of all trades and a master of most of them. There was not much that he did not know something about. These words seem inadequate and paltry to describe Lawrence.

Lawrence was born March 13th, 1923 in Juanita, North Dakota, the son of the late Andrew and Martha Swart. He was united in marriage to Dorothea Elizabeth Kraus on November 24th 1945. Lawrence worked for the Railroad, joined the Army Air Corps (aka Airforce) and became a pilot. Lawrence was a Pilot of a B-24 bomber for the 467th Bomb Group in WWII and flew 26 combat missions over Germany. Lawrence also worked for the Kenosha County Sheriffs Dept. and retired from the Kenosha County Parks District. Lawrence was a member and Deacon at the Community Baptist Church, Silver Lake, WI.

Lawrence is survived by his son Dale A. (Josephine) Swart and Daughter Karen Davidson, his three grandchildren Dale D. (Carrieann) Swart, Amanda (Allan) Carter and SJ Azalea Swart, as well as his two great-grandchildren, Dale D. Jr and Jennifer S. Swart.



*Lawrence Swart, sitting left, and the Joseph C. Wilson crew before transfer overseas*



# WENDOVER FUND RAISER PROJECT

As we turned the year, which was to be the end of our Wendover Memorial campaign, the three campaign leaders and the Directors of the 467th BG Association have noted a shortfall, but given the extreme conditions that 2020 presented for all of us, we are pleased to see that we are within \$7,000 of our \$52,000 goal.

We have committed to a final push in the first quarter of this year, in order to make up the shortfall. Some of our original contributors have dug deeper and made additional contributions. One had to reduce their pledge—but still contributed a significant sum—and several have virtually doubled their initial giving. We are grateful for *all* all these gifts during this time of global belt tightening.

As construction of the model (as well as our payments) near completion, we are considering enriching the overall display in Wendover by documenting the extremely accurate and detailed interior portions of the 1:20 scale B-24, liveried as "Witchcraft" on the pilot's side, and as "Scrapper" on the co-pilot side. These storied planes are among the very few that left from Wendover in early 1944 and made it home after Victory in Europe.

Our intention was always to call out those who *paid the ultimate price in training or in transit* to Rackheath, as well as to commemorate all who served in the 467th. As we have discussed this two-part memorial intention, we have looked hard, but not found *any memorial*, specifically honoring those 15,500 Army Air Force personnel lost in training, making this all the more important.

Our initiative in finally honoring this huge category of overlooked heroes has resonated strongly with our friends in the four other B-24 groups of the 'Mighty Eighth Air Force' that also passed through Wendover, and also experienced losses there. Board members of the Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF), which honors and remembers the 14 B-24 bomb groups flying over occupied Europe from England, have been similarly moved by this long-overdue gesture.

We are now appealing to everyone affiliated with the 445th, 448th, 458th and 489th heavy bombardment groups. The plaque could and should *individually name* all training and transit losses of these Second Air Division bomb groups, and be broadly dedicated to the *thousands*, from all US Army Air Force units who fought in all combat theatres, but were lost to accident before they got to engage the enemy.

Please help us to fully fund plaques, gift books, and display photography, which will provide historical and human context for the stunning heavy bomber model. Spread the word now among all who will be honored to join us in this singular recognition of an entire category of unsung heroes.

The Wendover Memorial Campaign committee members are keen to share our research and fundraising experience to meet the goal, and especially to *connect with surviving family* of those forgotten lost airmen.

—J. Peter Horne, Co-Chair

—Andy Wilkinson, Co-Chair

—Brian Mahoney, *ex officio* member

<http://www.467bg.com/wendoverMem.php>

## PROGRESS REPORT

**TARGET: \$52,000**



# WENDOVER FUND RAISER PROJECT CONT.



*Terrific progress continues with the scale replica B24 model with (left) the radio-operator position and (below) attention to the waist area. Guillermo is currently working on the internal nose-area and focussing on the bombardier position.*



Our fund-raising is short of our target figure but within reach with one final effort. If you have not done so, please dig deep and honor *your* veteran by supporting this unique memorial and encourage family to join with you. Together we can achieve our realization born out of the toils and trials of where it all began 76 years ago. WENDOVER the operational birthplace of the legendary 467th Bombardment Group.

## How to Contribute:

Checks to the 467th BG(H) Assoc. Treasurer

**Valerie Corvino**  
242 Molly Drive  
McMurray, PA. 15317

Credit card payment via the Association  
PayPal account

**PayPal**



Full details on the Wendover Memorial Project and to contribute in support of this exciting effort, visit the website at:

<http://www.467bg.com/wendoverMem.php>

## Contributors to Wendover Memorial since last POOP:

*Tom Johnson In Memory Dean H. Johnson*

*Ann Pooch In Memory Jay Shower*

*Valerie Corvino In Memory Vincent J. Corvino*

*David Hastings In Memory of Mike Caputo*

*Tony Oakden In Memory of "Jack" Weyler*

*Willis E. Cobb III In Memory Willis E. Cobb Jr.*

*Wilson Noden*

*Vernon O. Mason*

*Historic Wendover Airfield Museum*

*David LaRussa In Memory Vincent D. LaRussa*

*Charles Moore In Memory Charles B. Moore*

*John R. Edwards In Memory Robert L. Edwards*