

POOP from GROUP 467

VOL. 4 NO. 3

Station 145 APO 558

July 1, 1985

OFFICIAL

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FROM YOUR VEEP

May 30, 1985, was a great day in the history of the 467th Bombardment Group (Heavy). Our airfield - once the place from which our aircrews took off to pass the gauntlet of German flak and fighters - has become an industrial park. The place where our ground crews worked long, hard hours to somehow make our shot-up B-24's flyable for yet another mission now has Wendover Drive. (Except for British law, it would have been named for Al Shower.) This conversion of a place required by war to the uses and opportunities of peace is, of course, altogether fitting; it continues a trend begun shortly after war's end and will benefit the people of Rackheath and the Norwich area.

Here is an eyewitness report from David Hastings, our Honorary Member:

"At last I've time to write to you and the 467th with the news about the Great Day on May 30th, when 'WENDOVER ROAD' was opened at Rackheath. The Sun shone from a cloudless blue sky, the new Road looked great, F.27 aircraft from Air UK were flying overhead, and the memories came flooding back for many of us. Jordan made a superb speech on your behalf and read the wonderful letter from Al Shower. Then he and Fred Thomas formally unveiled the Road. Name. We then toured the site and retired for lunch at the 'GREEN MAN'. A truly wonderful event and I have enclosed a copy of the programme and the EDP press cutting. Having pressed the Council strongly to name the main Road after the 467th I'm delighted that it has now happened and we have yet another permanent memory of you all, to hand down to future generations. As promised I have collected three bags on the Runway concrete and Jordan has taken the first consignment home with him. News on the Tower is still vague, but we are still trying.

Also enclosed is a report on the films. The response has been overwhelming this year, and our deep thanks go out to James Mahony for making it all possible. The VE DAY showings at the Library were tremendous, with hundreds turned away, but we have had two more showings since and still they ask for more. Tomorrow I take 'A VILLAGE REMEMBERS' down to the Ipswich Town Hall for the AIRSCENE evening, when we are 'half' the programme, the other part being a talk by the USAF Crew of the Blackbird. I gather the evening has been a complete sell-out so you can add another 500 people to the list. Anyway I'm looking forward to driving down there and showing the 467th to Suffolk.....

Finally, you be pleased to know that Jean and I will definitely be coming to the Convention despite the Pound/Dollar problems, so we will look forward as Honorary Members to renewing old friendships once more.

Regards to all the 467th, we'll always remember you.

Yours Sincerely, David"

Here, just received from David, is a picture of Jordan Uttal, our American Representative, Board of Governors, right, and J. Fred Thomas, President of the Second Air Division Association, left, at the opening of Wendover Road. David Hastings is Chairman of the Council's Economic Development Committee.

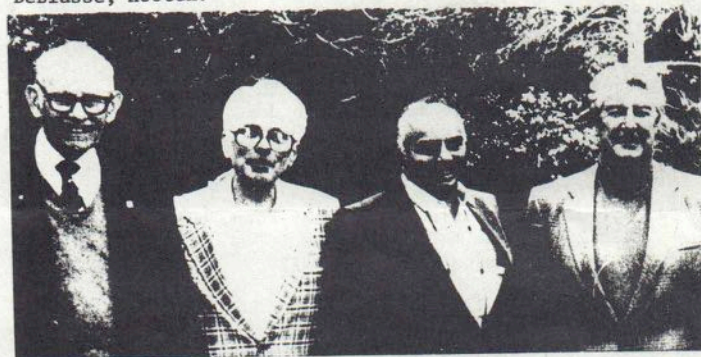


Please be sure to read the summation of Jordan Uttal's address and Al Shower's letter reproduced elsewhere at this issue.

Our control tower - where we gathered to wait for our returning crews and to count with hope and trepidation - remains in private ownership. David Hastings is trying to arrange for the tower to be acquired for renovation and the creation of a museum in part of the building. I hope he succeeds!

MINI-REUNION IN CHAPPAQUA, NY

Al Shower attended a reunion of his Class of '35 at nearby West Point in May. My wife Joan and I were pleased that Al could visit us. We spent a delightful Sunday afternoon, May 19th with Ruth and Ed Hooten and Jo and Andy De Biasse joining us. One of our picture-shy wives captured the four of us 467th veterans. Left to right: Al, Coffey, DeBiasse, Hooten.



MEMORIES AND MEMORABILIA

We all have our memories of our days at Rackheath and the lasting friendships we formed with our comrades. We also remember the local people we met in town (Norwich), in the Village and in the pubs, people and good times we remember to this day.

As your VEEP, I have received letters from English friends of the 467th that reveal, "from the heart," how they remember us. Here is one from Alan Last.

Dear Sir,

I don't really know how to start this letter to a stranger, but here goes. No doubt you know Mr. Jordan Uttal of Dallas, Texas, a co-founder of the 2nd Air Div. Association and now your rep on the Board of Governors on the Trust here in Norwich. Now and again we drop each other a line and he gave me your address hoping you may be able to help me. You sir, I believe, are the Vice-President of 467th B-G which during those dark days was stationed at Rackheath. I live in north Norwich only about 1½ miles from the 'old' base, my wife has friends in the village who she goes horse riding with, over and around the base and until last year, when I hurt my legs, I used to do the same. We would like to know if a history of the 467th B-G has ever been written. and if so where to get hold of it. I belong to the American Memorial Room Library and have read many wonderful books from there, have just finished that of the 44th B-G history who were at Shipdham. I was just leaving school and belonged to the Air Training Troops, 14-17 year olds, and most Sundays we used to visit U.S or R-A-F bomber bases. Who, after seeing the vast fleets of bombers proudly flying round and getting into formation ready to bomb the Huns, can ever forget the sight, or to see them coming home, battered, engines stopped, etc. firing red and green flares. I together with thousands of people from this area have great admiration and respect for the 8th Air Force, and them for us, because I have met many ex-airmen who come back on holiday to Norwich. They all say one thing in common, "gee, its great to be back".

I hope Mr. Coffey, you may be able to help me in my request. The best of luck to you and thanks a million.

Yours Sincerely, Alan Last

About Allan Healy's book: the best I can do for Alan Last is to send him a bound photo copy to read, copy if he wants, and return. APPARENTLY THE MEMORIAL LIBRARY DOES NOT PRESENTLY HAVE A COPY. IF YOU HAVE A COPY YOU CAN SPARE, YOUR DONATING IT TO THE LIBRARY WOULD BE A GREAT GIFT!

In a recent letter, David Hastings made the audacious suggestion that Jordan Uttal, a founder of the 2nd ADA, perhaps could carry back to the U.S. some pieces of the old runway. Well, Jordan is a good sport and did indeed bring back some. J. Fred Thomas, 2nd ADA President, is also a good sport and brought back some more. We of the 467th do indeed have high class courier service! (I wondered how they would explain to Customs, if challenged, why they were carrying chunks of concrete from England to the USA.) At any event, I will try to produce some pieces mounted, which I will price at cost plus a modest donation to our 467th fund, Phillip Day, Treasurer. If you'd like to have one, please let me know ASAP!

And from our Memorial Library's Mr. Sleath:
Deat Mr. Coffey,

467th Bomb Group Memorabilia

A local resident has just shown me a copy of "Rackheath Memories" which was printed by the Rigby Printing Company, Norwich, in 1945. He worked there as a young man and surreptitiously kept a faulty copy for interest.

The book consists mainly of cartoons of off duty scenes in the Officers Club and was put together by Sgt. Jack M. Preston and S/Sgt. Harris L. Conway. I wonder if any of your members still has a copy, enhanced with autographs of friends, which he might be willing either to donate or at least photocopy, for the Group's Memorabilia binder in the Memorial Room?

The 467th is one of the groups we have more memorabilia items of, but I would still be grateful for items relating to Rackheath, even in photocopy form if the originals are still precious to the owners.

Yours sincerely, Colvin Sleath
Deputy Divisional Librarian

If any of you have a copy of "Rackheath Memories" let either Phillip or me know so we can put you in touch with Mr. Sleath.

I hope that you have made your plans to attend the reunion in McAfee in September, it should be a great one! I look forward to seeing you up there!

Jim

LAST POST

I have received notification of the death of the following:

Raymond W. Allpress	Jack Rothchild
Charles Mintzlaiff	Howard W. Stubbs
Paul Prazuch	Edward E. Wilson, Jr.

May they go from Strength to Strength in the Life of Perfect Service in God's Heavenly Kingdom.

FOUND SOULS

John E. Schmidbauer
Arnold Thompson

Two out of four Lost Souls of last Poop, but still need
Gerald Stevens - Columbia, OH.
B. J. Williamson - Malakoff, TX.

LOST SOULS

Last POOP returned by USPS. See if you can find them and send me their new address so I will not have to delete them from the mailing list.

Andrew Curney - Ambridge PA.
Norval V. Cunningham - Kenoska, WI.
William R. Geyer - Detroit, MI.
Robert Hower - Choquin Falls, OH.
Capt Chris Johnston (Assoc.) - Wichita Falls, TX.
Julian Martin * - Chadwick, IL.

* POOP returned marked "Refused".

ROSTER

We stood virtually even this quarter, eleven off the roster and sixteen new and returned members. In addition to the two Found Souls, the following were added to the roster:

Edwin J. Alexander	Glenview, IL
Raymond Blick	Daly City, CA
James L. Bowman	Pittsburg, PA
William S. Carrico	Elkton, MD
Paul Ehrlich	Los Angeles, CA
Charles E. Kagy	Los Angeles, CA
John H. Kelly	Glendale, CA
C. R. Pratt	Coatesville, PA
Phillip Shady	Lavelllette, NJ
William L. Sheldrick	Bellevue, NB
Jack O. Stanton	Vermillion, KS
John J. Taylor	Waukesha, WI
William H. Willis	Dover, DE
Romaine Werdung	Shalimar, FL
Jay Young	Pen Argyl, PA
Joseph N. Zbikowske	Bel Air, MD

I wrote another member of the name and address of one of the names above, thinking I was reuniting them after 40 years. In answer, I was thanked, of course, but told he already had the address. IF YOU CORRESPOND WITH ANYONE IN THE 467th, PLEASE SEND ME THEIR NAME. We can double the roster with your cooperation. A 14c postcard and a few minutes of your time, PLEASE!

MEMBERSHIP

Seventeen of our roster have not paid their dues to the Second Air Division Association. We are at a standstill in 2 ADA membership. Join or rejoin the 2 ADA, receive the quarterly Journal, which alone is worth the "price of admission", twenty to twenty-four pages of articles, memorabilia, letters, PX bargains, Reunion with us and support the Memorial Library through donations to the Trust. Send \$10 membership dues to Evelyn Cohen, address in 2 ADA Reunion piece.

467th Bombardment Group Treasurer's Report - 7/01/85	
Cash on Hand - 11/15/84	\$ 603.97
Donations/Dues Received	1,350.00
Adam Soccio Memorial	70.00
Total	\$ 2,023.97
Disbursements	
Postage Stamps and Envelopes	\$ 377.81
Computer Service	125.62
Reproduction - Printing	203.10
Binding of Roster	21.35
467th BG Return Address Stamp	19.21
Vice President's Expenses	200.00
Total	\$ 947.09
Cash on Hand - 7/01/85	\$ 1,076.88

Over 1650 POOP sent out in last two mailings. The last printing, 850, and mailing cost was approximately \$380 or \$446 each including \$.22 stamp, \$.09 computer service and \$.126 reproduction. This issue should cost about the same, \$375+.

MEMORIALS

We still have not found a suitable memorial for Adam Soccio. A fund, \$70, is awaiting your suggestions.

Wendover Road, Rackheath Industrial Estate, was officially opened on May 30, 1985 by Jordan Uttal, American Representative to the Board of Governors, Second Air Division Memorial Trust. Also attending was J. Fred Thomas, President of the 2nd Air Division Association. Jordan's remarks emphasised the continuing Anglo-American friendship that began with the Eight Air Force arrival in East Anglia the history and accomplishments of the 467th while at Rackheath and contained a message from Colonel Shower to those in attendance as follows:

"I am pleased to extend congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of this important development in the Rackheath area. The episode of my life during service at Rackheath provides one of the highlights in my memory, wherein area residents and Army Air Force guests, during the War, lived and worked in harmony toward a mutual goal. It is extremely gratifying to learn of the continuing bonds of respect and love between the residents of the Rackheath area and the veterans and their families of the 467th Bomb Group and Associated Units.

The determination and singularity of purpose shown by the members of the 467th Group were developed and enhanced during our weeks of training at Wendover Air Force Base in Western Utah. They coped there with the challenge of the desert environment, wintry weather, and badly worn equipment, after which the issuance of new aircraft and the assignment to a Garden spot such as Rackheath seemed like the entry into Paradise. Plans are afoot for a 467th Group reunion at Wendover in appreciation of lessons learned there which proved so valuable in future operations.

My wish is for continuing prosperity and beneficial development in this area which so many of the 467th veterans hold in fond and grateful memory."

Jordan Uttal concluded with the following:

"And so Ladies and Gentlemen, from Al Shower, from all of the surviving Rackheath Aggies, from the 2nd Air Division Association, and from our good friends here in the Norwich area connected with the Memorial Trust, and the Memorial Room, we thank you for cementing further this warm connection between Wendover Field, Rackheath Air Base, Rackheath Industrial Estate, the 467th Bomb Group, and the 2nd Air Division.

Fred Thomas- will you join me here to unveil this sign... We name you, proudly, WENDOVER ROAD and declare the road open. THANK YOU!!!!"

ROLL OF HONOR

A Roll of Honor, listing those Killed in Action or Killed in Line of Duty while serving with the 467th from 11 March 1944 to 8 May 1945, is being prepared for the Memorial Library Room in Norwich. Based on a 1952 compilation and subsequent additions, the Roll contains 208 names. I have reviewed the Roll and find 24 additional names that I believe should be included, however in all cases I do not have a Serial Number for them and this is a must criteria for inclusion. Check your orders, see if you find any of the following names and if a serial number send it to me as soon as possible.

Name	Rank	Date	
Allen, Raymond V.	T/Sgt	9 Nov 44	KILOD (UK)
Bishop, Carl S.	S/Sgt	7 Aug 44	KIA
Chilver, Harold R.	1/Lt	7 Aug 44	KIA
Dadig, Albert S., Jr.	Sgt	22 Aug 44	KILOD (UK)
Dahlin, Axel R.	2/Lt	11 Apr 45	KIA
Fearon, Joseph H.	Sgt	29 Dec 44	KIA
Gore, Joseph A.	Sgt	3 Feb 45	KIA
Meredith, Oliver E., Jr.	S/Sgt	16 Aug 44	KILOD (UK)
Morehouse, Ronold L.	Sgt	25 Dec 44	KIA
Ostander, Lyle M.	T/Sgt	9 Nov 44	KILOD (UK)
Pendergast, James R.	F/O	22 Jan 45	KILOD (UK)
Ryers, Lewis E.	Sgt	29 Dec 44	KIA
Wunrich, Arnold A.	F/O	9 Nov 44	KILOD (UK)

The following were Killed in Line of Duty at Dakar, Three others who died on or about 17 March 44 at Dakar are already included in the Roll.

Bertch, David	Sgt
Detwiler, John K.	S/Sgt
Gorczewski, Anthony J.	S/Sgt
Green, Gene S.	Sgt
Houghton, Earl L.	2/Lt
Kelly, Howard J.	Cpl
Massey, Luther E.	T/Sgt
Mosser, Edward J.	2/Lt
Rugin, Albin M.	F/O
Wallingham, Earl	Sgt
Waterman, Robert P.	S/Sgt

I need a serial number and date of death for these eleven also.

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION REUNION

The 2 ADA will reunite at McAfee, NJ, September 5-9, 1985, at the Americana Great Gorge Resort. You must be a member of the 2 ADA to attend. Join the 2 ADA by sending \$10 to Evelyn Cohen, 06-410 Delaire Landing Road, Philadelphia, PA. 19114 and include a deposit of \$100 or more toward your reservation. The cost will be - Single Occupancy \$410, Double Occupancy \$310 each, Triple Occupancy \$280 each. This is for your room for three nights, three cocktail parties, the mini-reunion dinner, the West Point trip, including lunch, the Friday evening Bar-B-Que, two buffet breakfasts and the grand Banquet on Saturday night.

Written cancellations by August 1 will receive full refunds. If full payment not received by July 15, reservations will be cancelled and no refund of deposit will be made.

Make your reservations immediately. At this writing 80 (total) from the 467th will be there, a little more than one-half Group veterans with whom you can renew or begin a new acquaintance. Lets have the greatest number of Group veterans in attendance.

OTHER REUNION ACTIVITY

I participated in some of the 448th BG Reunion activities held June 13-16, 1985, here in Shreveport - Bossier City/Barksdale Air Force Base. Over 120 were in attendance from all over the US and each I spoke to had an enjoyable time, praised the accommodations, food and beverage service and the amenities of Barksdale Air Force Base and it's key personnel involved in the reunion activities.

Although it was unusually hot here for mid-June, the accommodations and places of functions, save the out door Memorial Service were held in air condition comfort and even the most northerners did not have complaint. LeRoy Engdahl, VP of 448th, did an excellent job of arrangement and activities. I had two enjoyable evenings with them. Gerry and Sammie Merket were there also, from the 446th.

MISCELLANEA

Martin Bowman's newest book "Castles In The Air", about 4 engine glider units and personnel (1st and 3rd Division B-17s) is in my library and was found most interesting and enjoyable reading. I recommend it to you. Roger Freeman's "Mighty Eight War Diary", also in my library, was found somewhat tedious but is redeemed by "Incidents", vignettes of interest, principally as to individuals, in chronological relationship to the missions and the several profiles of individuals randomly interspersed through the book. And for those of us on missions, who know when and where we flew them, we can find out what our individual effort was to the whole 8th AF effort of the day.

Martin W. Bowman, 3 Armes Crescent, Norwich, NR 2 4EW England asks that you who were POWs, escapees or evadees send him your written, or taped, experiences for his forthcoming book "Home By Christmas".

Peter Bond, 1 Markham Tower, Bowers Avenue, Norwich NR3 2PX England, writes that he was able to show William S. Carrico around Rackheath but could not accommodate another Group vet because he, Peter, didn't have prior notice of the visit. If you are going to Rackheath, for a more memorial trip with the most knowledgeable persons of Rackheath, contact Peter before going to Norwich so he or Tony North or Tommy Dungar can arrange to be with you.

Peter sent me some additional slides of Rackheath to incorporate into the carousel of Norwich and the base. I'll bring it to McAfee, we may have a chance to see it.

Thirty-seven letters received and twenty-seven requiring answers were answered. Excerpts of three are included in this POOP. Got some good comments on Doyle Covington's masthead and you see that we have gone to it. A couple of positive comments on a Group reunion. I will ask that it be put on the Group business meeting agenda at McAfee. I will suggest Shreveport-Bossier City-Barksdale Air Force Base. If you support a Group reunion as above and/or have other suggestions let me know before the end of August. The 467th veteran at Dallas-Ft Worth reunion I missed (POOP - Vol 4 No. 2) was Alford L. Robinson who with wife, Margie, joined us for a wonderful evening.

Mrs. Jackie Stuart, 52 Silverwood Close, Cambridge CB1 3HA, England, a social historian, believes "that whilst much excellent work has been done on the aviation and combat side of the war, the social side of this period has been neglected". She is particularly interested in the American's off base activities but requires on base activities as well, as a background to our experiences of war in England. She would like to send you a blank tape and a list of topics she would like discussed, if you will participate. Alternatively, send her written information. Of course, she will not publish anything that could cause embarrassment to anyone, or to identify anyone without their permission. I know that a number of you can help Mrs. Stuart, and I urge you to do so.

PX

Jack Stevens, 3526 Larga Circle, San Diego, CA, 92110 is US agent for Tony North's "Liberator Album-Volume 3" featuring the 96th Combat Wing, the 458th, 466th and 467th Groups. Send Jack \$10 for this volume, a worthwhile addition to an 8th AF oriented military book collector. I still have 467th cap/jacket patches for \$5 and Group plaques for \$10. Tell me if you wish either or both when you send in your mail-memorial mail fund donations.

MAIL CALL

A letter from Colonel Shower

Dear Phillip,

Received the copy of April "POOP" upon my return from Europe on 12 May, but haven't been able to get around to writing until today (2 June 1985). Less than 24 hours after arriving home, I was off again to my 50th (class) reunion at West Point. After that, spent two pleasant days with Jim and Joan Coffey in their beautiful suburban New York home. On Sunday they had invited Andy and Joanne DeBiasse and Ed and Ruth Hooten for Brunch, so we had a real mini-reunion.

Upon arriving home 20 May I started to massage the mountain of paper which had accumulated since my departure on 12 April. First stop on my trip was in Cairo for 4 days, then Vienna and Nurnberg for two days each, and by rail and boat to Moscow for three days. The last week was spent in and out of Paris as I used up my Eurail pass.

One trip was to St. Quentin, where I engaged a taxi to take me out to the airfield at Clastres where we established a detachment to forward gasoline to Patton's army. After bombing the field on 25 August, we arrived there on 15 September to see the French busily filling in the last holes in the runway. The field is still a closed military area, with the surrounding area looking pretty much like it did 40 years ago, minus the activity of B-24s and P-38s.

Just a day or two ago I ran across a photo taken at Clastres, with Ned Ogden, Walter Smith, Bob Doenges, Allen Herzberg and me. As of now, only two of the subjects are still around.

The day I was at St. Quentin happened to be V-E Day, and downtown there was a parade with speeches and music. I was interested to hear that two pieces the band played were "Way Down Upon the Swanee River" and "Glory, Glory, Hallelujah". I also visited the "Basilique", which had been sickeningly ravaged by the war.

To make a long story short (too late), the reason I am writing is to send in the dues of which you reminded us in the POOP. Check for same is enclosed. The publication is extremely well done and very interesting. Congratulations and appreciation on a fine job. Upon reading Welter's letter, it occurred to me that Robinson was at the Dallas-Fort Worth Mini-Reunion. Perhaps the 14th one. Also, I have fond memories of the "Wabbit" as I flew my first mission in her, don't remember who was the pilot but there is a photo extant of some of the crew on that mission.

I note your request to check my records for new names, will do that and let you know shortly. I am looking forward to seeing you at the 2AD reunion.

With best personal regards to Miss Cille and to you,
Sincerely, Albert J. Shower
Col., USAF (Ret)

And a letter from Jim Hogarth:

Dear Phil

Re: Paragraph in "Poop from Group" 3/31/83, Mission 147, December 25, 1944, Aircraft #42-94963:

Here is my account of what happened to Aircraft 42-94963 (from the 788th?) on Christmas Day, 1944, Sefka and Hanks, two pilots.

I was called at the last minute to fly with Sefka's crew to replace his right waist gunner who was ill. My own crew (Art Holter, pilot) wasn't flying that day. In addition, I was one mission behind them, so I was chosen (by mistake I was told later). The call came so late that I barely had time to get everything together before take-off time. In my notes written after returning to Rackheath I said, "I saw the sun rise at 10,000 feet on this Christmas Day, but almost didn't see it set". My mission #17 on Christmas Day is one that I will never forget.

Everything went fine during assembly and we were soon on our way to the target, Mechnick, just over the German border. Just about the time we crossed our lines we started getting occasional flak. However, we did get a couple of bursts close enough to put a few holes in the plane. The target area was clear and we dropped our incendiary bombs over the town starting fires everywhere.

About five minutes after bombs away at 12:10 p.m. we were attacked by 8 ME-109s from about 5 o'clock. The enemy planes kept their nose pointed at us until they got in close. Everyone thought they were our P-51 fighter escort. On the first pass the tail gunner thought he got one of them before his turret was knocked out and set on fire. His left gun was smashed and he lost his oxygen, but the fire went out a few minutes later.

After the first attack, my notes say we were next hit by FW-190's from about 10 o'clock. (I am not too sure of this though, it could have been the same 8 ME 109s coming back.) In any event, we really caught it this time - all engines were damaged except number 4. They also knocked the dome off the top turret and put it out of commission. Gas was coming out the left side so bad that it looked like a torrential rainstorm on the left waist window. It was at this time that I noticed a fire in the radio equipment over the bombay area. I was able to smother this fire with a blanket. I think the radio fire started from shrapnel from a 20mm shell. This same shrapnel also damaged the index fingers of my heated gloves and lacerated both of my fingers as I was reaching for the left waist gun during the first attack.

When we lost our engines we dropped from 23,000 feet to 18,000 feet and then on down to 10,000 feet in a short period of time. Number one engine was windmilling, number two was running at half power and number three was feathered. The pilot told us to prepare to bail out when it looked like we were going to be under attack again by a lone plane. Our nose and right waist were the only useable guns. It turned out that the lone plane was a P-51 responding to our distress flare.

At this point we were able to get some more power of #2 engine, and then lightened the plane by throwing everything out that wasn't tied down. We then headed for an emergency fighter air strip in Belgium. (All these years I thought it was Luxemburg, but my notes and your article say it was Belgium.)

Our next problem was that since number 3 was out, we had no hydraulic system to aid in landing the plane. At the last minute as we approached the air field, the main gear was cranked down and shortly before touchdown, the engineer was able to kick the nose down.

We still had no flaps or brakes and coming in hot on a short runway was a major problem. The two pilots and the engineer stayed up front while everyone else went to the back and held on to whatever we could find; I used the left gun mount. The landing was a good one, but it had to be fast with no flaps. The pilot dragged the tail down the runway to try and slow us down. (Also, I don't think he knew that the nose wheel was down.) My notes say we ran out of runway and eventually hit another B-24. I know we went across some rough ground for quite a period of time before we crashed. I know it doesn't sound right for planes to be parked off the end of a runway, so maybe we did swerve to one side or the other. In any event, I judged that we hit at 50 to 60 mph and bodies went flying and hit the bombay bulkhead and ended up in the ball turret hole. I ended up on top of the pile. I don't think any of us were knocked out, if we were, it was only momentarily. The plane broke in half at the bombay and started to burn. Needless to say we all got out in a hurry through the left waist window. We all thought it would blow up any second. (I don't think anyone in the back of the plane was injured except for minor bumps and bruises. The navigator did get cut on his head and later had it bandaged.)

The pilot and co-pilot somehow got hung in their seat harness and couldn't get out of their seats. The plane's flight engineer and a ground crew member from the emergency field where we landed tried to cut them free. The heat forced the flight engineer to leave the plane. The ground crew member (possibly a medic) had to be forced to leave the plane by other ground personnel before he could free the pilots. He was hysterical when he got in the ambulance with the rest of us. He said the pilots were pleading with him to get them out.

We spent Christmas night at the fighter base and went to Brussels the next day. We spent that night in Brussels, and I think we left the next day for England.

You would think this would be a routine flight back, but the way things had been going lately, nothing was routine. In Brussels the left waist gunner and myself were assigned to a B-24 to fly back to England with a crew from another group. The plane was one that had a problem, but had been repaired enough to be flown back to England for additional maintenance. We were given just enough gas to get us back to the repair depot for B-24's in England.

The take-off and flight back was uneventful, but as we were about to pass over the pilot's home field, we ran out of gas in one of the engines. The pilot said, "I am going to land the plane at this field since I am familiar with it and know nothing about the other field." It was almost dusk at this time, so around he came to make his landing but he lined up on the wrong runway which was not plowed and was covered with snow. The tower shot off red flares and said go around, so we went back up with our three engines screaming and tried again. The results were the same and the tower was shooting its red flares and saying go around again, and the pilot said, "the hell with it, I am already out of gas in one engine and I don't know when the others might quit, so I am landing now". I guess the tower thought we were going to hit them because as we went by the tower, people were coming out of it like rats leaving a sinking ship. When the plane touched down and the brakes were applied, we just kept sliding down the snowy runway, and off the end. It was the same bumping sensation that I had gone through a few days earlier. I thought to myself, not again - we're going to crash. This time the plane stopped before we hit anything.

I called the 788th and had them send a truck over to pick the two of us up and return us to Rackheath. So three days later and a few nerve racking episodes we were back.

Sincerely, Jim Hogarth

William H. "Bill" Willis wrote of his 467th and POW experience. Bill was Armour-Gunner on J. D. Mullican's crew (Mullican's Meatballs 790th BS) and flew Nose Turret/

Toggler. Other crew were Co-Pilot Jay Young, Navigator Bill Castleman (Caselman), Engineer Walter Sies, Radio Marvin Levin, Waist Gunners Mat Breletich and Carl Pratt and Tail Gunner Leonard Tomaski. The crew had arrived at Rackheath in late December 1944 and were on their third mission, flying in Super Wolf (42-95080, 790th BS), to Osnabruk on February 16, 1945.

Bill wrote "Our first two missions targeted Magdenberg. On February 16th, we were assigned what was noted as a "Milk Run" to Osnabruk. We encountered heavy flak over the target that set #3 engine on fire and knocked out #2 which we could not feather. My oxygen supply was zero so I crawled back to the waist. Walt Sies was in the bomb bay trying to splice one of the control cables and I remember seeing blood streaming down his face. That was the last I saw of Walt. The Germans told me during questioning near Emmen, Holland that his chute did not open.

Our ship, Super Wolf, carried radio jamming equipment so that day we carried extra crew members. I think his name was John Conners, from Mass. (Not listed as MIA that date with rest of crew - Editor) Jay Young was injured from the jump and was hospitalized, therefore we never saw him after our capture.

I hit a ceramic tile barn roof, the resulting hole upsetting a Dutch farmer but it absorbed the shock of impact for me. Lucky I didn't straddle a rafter or I would have been a high pitched tenor for life.

We were held near Emmen, Holland, for 3 or 4 days and then then were sent to Frankfort interrogation center for a week or so of solitary.

We went by box car from Frankfort to Wetzler, observed a B-26 raid at Wetzler, continued on to Muenburg and observed the night blitz on that city and received some of the shot down Crews in our compound. The march to Moosburg involved strafing and bombing from P-47s and finally liberation by Gen'l Patton in person. I'll never forget his speech from atop a tank that was delivered in typical Patton form. And the raising of the American flag sent chills up one's back and brought a multitude of tears.

A Staff Sergeant who lived through a free fall in the tail section of a B-17 was in our barracks at Stalag VII-A. We called him "Ghost".

I would like to mention one incident as a POW that seems humorous now but sure wasn't at the time. We arrived in Wetzler after the box car ride, tired, dirty and hungry as hell. We were directed to a small compound mess center to eat. Much to my surprise the menu consisted of cold, canned chicken dumped in a big bowl. We were told to eat as much as we wanted. One of the empty cans was on the table and the label was very familiar to me, "Canned Chicken - Richardson & Robbins, Dover, Del.". Needless to say I told everyone that this was a product from my hometown, population about 5,500 at the time (about 28,000 now).

At approximately 2:30 AM the following morning, I was awakened by terrific stomach pains and nausea. I managed to get out of my small bunk, opened the hall door and found a line the length of the building waiting to use one available toilet facility. You can imagine what that facility was like by the time my turn came and all without lights. You could ice skate the entire length of the hall because some just couldn't wait. (Food Poisoning)

Police dogs were turned loose in the Compound at night so outside was a no-no.

It took over a week to get over the sickness and most were so weak they couldn't walk. From then on I was known as "that damn guy from Dover where the rotten chicken is canned".

I plan to join the Second Air Division Association and attend the McAfee, NJ reunion.

Tomaski, Pratt, Young and myself plan to arrange a crew reunion. I don't think I will have any trouble locating Levin either in Philadelphia or Allentown. Could you help me locate William Castleman and "Moon" Mullican. I only know Moon by that first name and remember his home state as Tennessee. Bill Castleman called me at home in 1945 from D.C. Would appreciate any suggestions or help you can give.

Thanks again for your note and bulletin (POOP). I enjoyed reading about Rackheath and like most, plan to visit there after retirement.

Sincerely, Bill Willis

P.S. Have a 22' I.O. Boat that I have named Super Wolf II in gratitude that she didn't blow up before we all bailed out."

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467th
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