

POOP from GROUP 467

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STATION 145 RACKHEATH APO 558

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FOUR HUNDRED SIXTY-SEVENTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HEAVY) ASSOCIATION, LTD.
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FROM THE PREZ

All roads lead to Las Vegas in October. Make your reservations now using the form found in this POOP. Group activities will be limited to our dinner on Sunday, October 4 and our Business Meeting to be held on Tuesday, October 6, immediately following that of the Second Air Division. At the Business Meeting we will need to elect two new Board Members as the terms of Ralph Elliott and myself will end with that meeting. Make your recommendations for nominations to me or Ralph Elliott, addresses on the masthead. Please know that your nominee is willing to serve. Nominations will be open from the floor, of course, but again be certain the nominee is willing to serve the three-year term from 2nd Air Division Association Reunions 1992 to 1995. Floyd J. "Puff" Pugh and Theodore M. Wheeler are Directors to 1993 and Mel Culross and Jack D. Stratton, Jr. to 1994.

You will see from the reservation information on the Reunion application that there will be much free time in Vegas to do your own thing. This will be an unhurried, relaxing time to get to know each other and visit with your friends, and comrades, of the Second Air Division or make up your own entertainment schedules. We had such a good meeting in Tucson last year, well attended, nearly 300, and more than 50 first-timers. Come and enjoy in Las Vegas what we did in Tucson.

Plans go forward for the 467th Bombardment Group (Heavy) Association, Ltd. Convention 1993. The dates are May 13 to May 17, and it will be at the Hilton Gateway Hotel in Kissimmee, Florida. This is the Orlando area, Epcote Center, Disney World. A field trip to the Kennedy Space Center is being planned. Carl E. Epting, Jr. of 20 Park Terrace, Ormond Beach, Florida 32174, would appreciate hearing from you Floridians of the vicinity to help plan and coordinate the activities. We originally wanted this convention later in the year but moved to May to stay out of conflict with the 2ADA reunion in November, 1993 at Hilton Head, South Carolina.

I want to add a bit of personal experience to encourage each of you to locate all members of your crew or your buddies of any unit that you were assigned to.

In 1983 I attended the 467th Reunion in

Dayton, where a tree was planted and a Memorial Plaque was installed with a very nice ceremony by our own Phil Day. Following the Dayton Reunion, I made up my mind to try hard to find all of the members of our crew. I did find most of them through telephone information, but it took as many as 20 calls to find one of the persons I was looking for.

I still was four names short, so I wrote the Postmaster of the old hometown and told him of what I was doing and why I was doing it. In three weeks time I had letters of response by three postmasters who supplied the name of a brother of the man I was looking for. Then I discovered on the last contact that I had been looking in the wrong part of Texas. I did find them all at that time in 1984, and before long I had been to visit each and everyone, either at Reunion or at their home.

This was one of the most satisfying periods of my life. The expense and the time spent became minor when I had renewed Friendship after 40 years. I strongly urge all of you not to give up because the reward of Reunion reestablishes the bond that exists between men who have been in combat together. It is a very moving experience. My advice is don't give up until every avenue of contact is exhausted.

BITS AND PIECES - PHILLIP G. DAY

I guess the first thing I need to tell you is that on the last day of Ms. Cille and my vacation in England, May 15, I had a small stroke which affected my left side, left leg principally, that kept us in England from May 15 through May 25, as British Airways would not fly us home until I had been ten days away from this stroke. The trip home, on the 25th, was rather arduous. We got home about 3:00 a.m. body time and after a poor night's sleep, I tried to make arrangements to see our Shreveport doctor. There did not seem to be any particular hurry on his part, so it was not until Thursday that I was able to see him. The upshot of that was that he put me on a new blood thinner, Coumadin, which is a warfarin thinner that has made me feel very lethargic, with loss of appetite and abdominal pain. All in all, I have really not felt too good the last ten days. So this POOP, which I was

hoping to get out the first of June, has slipped somewhat and I have to set a date for it, and I have set in my mind the 15th of June, but it may slip further than that, to the first of July. It just depends on how I feel about it, but I do not think that is going to bother too much the continuity of what we have been trying to do.

Elsewhere, you will read my recollection of our Friends of the 467th return to England, Norwich and Rackheath, and I would say that the 25 veterans, the families and friends that accompanied us, all had a very good time. In retrospect, we might have done some things differently, possibly a day less in London and a day longer in Norwich and Rackheath, but we ran up against a bank holiday, and we did the best that we could. Mrs. Mary Ann Logaridis of Hyatt's Travel Service accompanied us and she was a blessing, both during that first week and also for Cille and I. Although she had gone back to the States, we were able to correspond with her by telephone when I was hospitalized and her support was outstanding. I just cannot thank her enough for all that she did for Cille and me while we were in the town of Redhill and I was hospitalized, Cille on her own and me unable to help her too much. It was a trying time, but Mary Ann and our many friends in Shreveport, via the telephone, offered us much support. It was a blessing to have them there.

I would tell you a bit about the National Health Service Hospital that I was at. I was taken to it at 5:00 a.m. in an emergency ambulance after having the stroke at a Bed and Breakfast, in the Village of Horley, near Gatwick, where we had intended to leave that morning about 10:30. We checked into the hospital immediately and I was put in a ward. I was taken care of very well. The doctors looked at me Friday morning. They were thinking this might be a transitory-type thing and last 24 hours or less. As a consequence, we re-scheduled leaving on Monday, May 18, and changed our reservations with British Airways to that effect. I did not see the doctors again until Monday morning. They came in and told us that this was not a transitory-type stroke, but was a very mild stroke and that I would have to stay there a few more days. We told British Airways of this and they, at the time, told us that we would not be able to fly back on their airplane until ten days after the incident. So we were then able, through Mary Ann, to re-arrange our departure on May 25, on the same flight going from London-Gatwick to Dallas-Fort Worth, then to Shreveport. National Health Service is not free to everyone, certain overseas visitors are exempt from paying any costs, but I was not. I was told that my total charges for the hospitalization would be 190 Pds. per day, about \$350, but this included all nursing and medical staff, (excluding consultants) drugs, dressing, hotel services, general services including administration and all that. They told me not to really worry about it, that it really was not going to be that much of a big deal. Of course, we had the traveler's insurance and we also have AARP foreign travel on our Medicare Supplement, so it probably is all going to come out all right. The nursing in England was fantastic. There were a number of graduate nurses on each ward; there were several first, second and third year nursing students on each ward; then there was a Nursing Sister who had charge of that ward. Even the first-year students knew the names of each patient, they knew their medical problem, they knew their medicines that they were having to take, they knew what the medicines were for and what the side effects were, and they

administered the medicines to you. It was just amazing to me that these were nurses, they nursed you, they were interested in your health, they were not tied up in making bookkeeping records and putting stuff on charts, they were nursing you the whole time. It was just fantastic.

The food was not good. In fact, it was pretty bad. I lost several pounds while in there. It did not hurt me any, but I have since gained most of it back. I do not remember a real good meal of any kind other than a noon meal one day when I had oxtail soup, which had a lot of flavor to it. I had never eaten it before and I would have eaten more of it if I could have gotten it. Breakfast was hot porridge or cold cereals, a slice of bread, not toast, and juice. Finally, I found out that I could ask for milk and get it, so I drank considerable milk. The tea cart ran eight times a day. He woke you up in the morning, about 7:00, then just before your breakfast was served, then about 10:00, just before the noon meal was served, about 2:00 p.m., about 4:00 p.m., just before the evening meal was served, and then again before you went to bed that night. If you did not like tea and/or coffee, you were pretty well limited to a pitcher of water on the side. When I went in, one of the other patients in the room was being discharged and he left me with a bottle of orange juice concentrate and told me that I would find that my water would taste much better if I put a third of that in every glass of water I drank, and he was right. The water was tasteless; it had little or no minerals in it, it was just hard to drink without any help for it. On Monday, they sent in the physical therapist, Ms. Lisa Brian, and she did an appraisal of me at my bedside and then took me a short distance down the hall to a small gymnasium, she called it, and had me do some walking and that sort of thing for her. She gave me a couple of exercises and admonished me to not try to get out of bed myself. I did not pay that much attention to her, because I tried to get up that afternoon by myself to get to a chair and collapsed on the floor in a big heap. It took a couple of nurses to pick me up and get me in the chair, so I learned from that, I was not as well off as I thought I was. But she worked with me on Tuesday morning and Tuesday afternoon, and Wednesday morning and Wednesday afternoon. She gave me a cane on Wednesday and told me she was going to take it away from me on Thursday, but she took me away from the ward and down to the large physiotherapy department and showed me how to walk on cement and gravel, and cobblestones and how to get around. I used the cane and was quite apprehensive that she would take it away from me the next day, but on Thursday morning she came in and we finished up with her therapy. She told me she was going to let me keep the cane, just to use it to make my way when I got on the airplane. I brought it home with me of course and have it here, but I haven't used it but very little since I have been home. I have regained most of my balance. I had lost some of my ability to balance myself, and the cane was a nice thing to have. I have progressed quite a bit now. I can go up and down stairs without having to think about which foot goes down first, the business that she told me was to say that the bad foot goes to hell, so if you were going downstairs, you would put the bad one down first and if you were coming upstairs the good foot goes to heaven, so you put the good foot up first, and that was the way I had to go up and down stairs for a while. I can now go up and down them without any difficulty. So, in effect, the doctors were

waiting on Ms. Brian to tell them I could travel and they released me on a Thursday afternoon, but that was the Thursday before the Monday that I could go home, so Cille and I went back to the Bed and Breakfast, where I was when I was taken ill, and spent the next three days there. We taxied to the airport on the Monday and were met by the British Airways people at the terminal entrance and by wheelchair were taken through all of the requirements to get aboard the aircraft later in the morning. They upgraded my seat from coach to business class and we came home on that long flight. We were ten hours from London-Gatwick to Dallas-Fort Worth. We were three hours in Dallas-Fort Worth waiting on a plane to Shreveport, another hour in the plane waiting on weather to get to Shreveport, a thirty-minute flight. We got home about 2:00 a.m. body time. We were able to get to bed about 3:00 a.m. body time, after being met by family and friends at the airport. All in all a rather arduous day. Since then, as I have said, I have seen the doctor, have been on this medicine, and am doing fairly well. That is the reason this POOP did not come out on time.

In last POOP, Vol. 11, NO. 1, I published a letter from a Sandra Jarnon, Peter Bond's daughter. Since then, I have found that her name is Varnon. I met Sandra, her sister Christine, and brother Kevin, and Sandra's husband, Hamish, and Christine's husband, Ian, at our lunch at the Green Man in Rackheath on Tuesday of our visit there. I apologize for getting her name wrong and I want you all to know that it is Varnon in the event you would like to write to her.

We presented to the Second Air Division Memorial Library a check in the amount of \$380, which was the monies available for the Peter Edward Bond Memorial Fund. From this, they will purchase books and circulate them with the acknowledgment of this memorial to Peter Bond.

Jim Mahoney asked that I, in this POOP, tell you that he has additional requests for his Video tape of the color film of the 467th at Rackheath, of which over fifty copies have been sold. If you wish one of these tapes, please write Jim: James J. Mahoney, Spring Street, Rural Route 2, Box 77C, Hamilton, New York 13346, and send him \$38.50 for each tape you wish. They will be sent to you postpaid. This is a marvelous tape. I have one and look at it occasionally, and each time enjoy it as much as the last.

Vince LaRussa, P.O. Box 43906, Tucson, AZ 85733-3906, has 5 (five) only of "The History of the 467th" left to sell. After these there ain't no more! \$35 each, postpaid. Write him if you want one of these last 5 (five) books. Call him at (602) 887-2253 and make sure you get one.

I have several letters that I will pass on to you. Here is one from M/Sgt. Fred Schnettler, 817 Stratford Drive, East Meadow, New York 11554. He would like to correspond with anyone of the 467th, possibly the 791st Bomb Squadron, who knew Sgt. Albert B. (Red) ^{Sevin}, a B-24 Crew Member, who was killed in action August 3, 1944, over France. Sgt. Schnettler began this inquiry through the Air Force magazine in April-May of 1992 and received a response from Lyle Prichard that we, of the 467th, may be able to help him. He has since written me the inquiry and I pass it on to you. If you have any information that would be of benefit to Sgt. Schnettler, please correspond with him.

Ian McLachlan, an Aviation Historian, of One Joy Avenue, Newton Flotman, Norwich, Norfolk NR15 1RD, England, is prepared to begin a book on 8th Air Force Mission 311, the Hamm Mission of April 22, 1944. He has in hand material

from the Air Force and from the German Air Force Archives and is looking at this time for information, particularly pictures of aircraft 42 52 445 of the 791st Squadron, Lt. Stalie C. Reid was the Pilot, which was shot down on that date and also aircraft 42 52 536 of the 788th Squadron, which was flown by Lt. James A. Roden on that day. He would like pictures of the aircraft. He would like pictures of the crew. He would also like a picture of Pvt. Daniel E. Miney, who was killed in action on the intruder attack on Rackheath. Any of you that can assist Ian, please do so. He apparently is a recognized author. He enclosed with his letter a brochure on his most recent book, which was called Eighth Air Force Bomber Stories. If you would like more information on that, please get in touch with me.

The Group, while at Rackheath, had a dance band, named the Airliners, which played for on-base dances. I believe it was under the direction of a Capt. Lou Rhodes, from Fort Wayne, Indiana. The Second Air Division Memorial Library Librarian has recently had an inquiry from a lady named Jeanne Lacey, who would like to correspond with any members of the Airliners. She says that on occasion she would sing with the band on base and would like to renew some of those old friendships. If you can help Jeanne, or if you know the whereabouts of Capt. Lou Rhodes, please correspond this information to me and I, in turn, will pass it on to Jeanne through the Library.

I have a letter from Dan Carroll, 210 Pineapple Street, Satellite Beach, Florida, 32937. He has written and published a book titled Crew Umbriago, which is about a B-17 bomber crew which he served with from July 1944 to May 1945 in the 15th Air Force. He has made a study through his friend, Fred Dundas, and has found that there were a number of aircraft named Umbriago, one of which was in the 467th Bomb Group, believed to be Serial No. 440068. This was an aircraft that came with the 788th Bomb Squadron from the 492nd in August, 1944. Any of you who crewed on Umbriago in the 467th should contact Dan Carroll, who promises to send you a copy of his book for any information you might be able to give him concerning the 467th Umbriago.

FRIENDS OF THE 467TH RETURN TO ENGLAND 1992- by Phillip G. Day

Tony and Constance Bell
James and Anna Branton
John and Joyce Brinson and John III
Henry and Dorothy Close
Phillip and Lucille Day
Hugh and Eileen Donlon
Thomas and Elizabeth Elsen
Charles Eppolito
Henry and Catherine Fagan
Charles and Luella Harter
Allen and Edna Herzberg
James and Betty Horak
Frank and Rita Johnson
B. L. "Bozy" Johnston and daughter, Carol
St. Clair
Clarence and Futina Kurtz
David LaRussa
Vincent and Gloria LaRussa
Jim and Polly Mahoney
Edward and Janet Novak
Bruce and Mary Palmer
Ray and Merlina Perkins
Joe Ramirez
Bill and Eileen Sheldrick
Albert Shower
John and Elsie Taylor
Frank and Etoile Watson
Bill and Kay Claussen joined us at Rackheath, as did George Hallowell, Jr.

Friends of the 467th returned to England 1992. The majority of the 25 veterans and 25 accompanying family and friends, mostly arrived at the London-Gatwick and Heathrow airports by 10:30 a.m., May 1. The exceptions were David LaRussa, Joe Ramirez, and Col. Al Shower, who were flying in from the West Coast and whose departure was delayed quite awhile in Los Angeles due to the Rodney King riots, which occurred that day. Vince LaRussa and Charles Eppolito and Mary Ann Logaridis, of Hyatt Travel Service, had come over on Thursday. Vince and a representative from Insight Travel Service met us at Gatwick Airport, while Mary Ann and a representative of Insight Travel Service met those arriving at Heathrow. We were all taken by motor coach into London to our London Hotel, the Grafton, which is on Tottenham Court Road in Central London. This is an old hotel, has a small lobby, a fair size lounge and dining room that would appear to hold 90 to 100 people. Checking in was rather slow. The best time would probably have been 2:00 p.m. We were early and had some problems getting all of us in rooms as soon as we would have liked. We did assemble in the lounge on our own and got our first experience with London pricing. Cille and I had a bowl of soup each, we shared a sandwich, and a glass of wine, and the cost was 9.4 Pds., which is about \$18 U.S. We did use our room to freshen up, to take a short nap, and then went out on the streets for a while to just walk about within a three-block area of the hotel. Our first group function was the welcome dinner at 7:30 that evening, which was quite good, made better by the imported wines that were served with it, the white was from California, the red from France. The West Coast contingent, David LaRussa, Joe Ramirez, and Col. Shower arrived just as we were sitting down to eat. We visited a bit after the meal around the table, some went back to the lounge and that ended "Day One."

Saturday, May 2, after a continental breakfast at the hotel, we boarded an Insight tour bus for a three and a half-hour tour of the metropolitan area of London. The tour was made very enjoyable by the Insight lady guide who had many years of experience and a great knowledge of the total of what we were seeing. We stopped at Westminster Cathedral for an hour and following that had a very good pub lunch at an old pub called Alberts. Following that, our coach carried those who wished back into the shopping area of London and took the remainder of us back to the hotel where we were on our own for the rest of the afternoon and the evening. A group of us, Vince LaRussa, his son David, Charles Eppolito, Cille and myself, went out that evening to find a place to eat and ended up in a Greek restaurant. The food was quite good. I had Octopi. I should not have had Octopi, but again we were made aware of the pricing of that town. Our meals averaged \$27 U.S. each.

Sunday morning was at leisure. A number of us opted for church services. Twelve of us went to St. Paul's Cathedral for morning prayer. Cille and I stayed for the Eucharist, others went to churches in the vicinity. After noon, we boarded the Insight travel coach and went to Windsor Castle, the largest inhabited castle in the world, the second home of the Kings and Queens of England. There we toured St. George's Chapel, which was, and especially that part used by the Knights of the Order of the Garter, much historical, much of beauty, oil paintings of all the British aristocracy, armor and weapons, a lot of walking, climbing hills and stairs, somewhat tiring, but again made very enjoyable by our Insight travel

guide. We returned to the Grafton Hotel, and the next group function was dinner that evening, which was not satisfactory in that we ate in the dining room and there was another travel group eating in the dining room and the atmosphere just wasn't one that would allow us to enjoy our comradery as much as we would have liked. Monday, May 4, after our continental breakfast, we boarded a motor coach to begin our trip to Norwich. We went by way of Cambridge, arriving there in about an hour and stopping for about an hour to walk through the college area where we were able to visit Kings College Chapel, a magnificent building, dating from the 1600's. From Cambridge, we went to Mattingly, just a few miles to the American Cemetery in England. Over 3,300 Americans who were killed or died in England in the Second World War are buried there. Over 700 were disinterred and returned to the United States. Also, there is a wall, 475 feet long with over 5,500 names of those who were missing in action from England, including their rank and unit of service. Our Group has 27 buried in the Cemetery and 28 names on the wall. A very beautiful chapel completes the whole of it. We had a brief ceremony in remembrance of our 229 fallen comrades from the Group, and Col. Shower laid a wreath at the foot of the flagpole and I gave a short prayer. Then we spent about an hour looking over the grave sites and at the names on the wall. We had lunch at the nearby "The Plough" public house, and it was a good and plentiful meal, ham, pork, chicken sandwiches, cheese dishes, and some things not nameable but also good. The building the pub was in was over 300 years old. We were on our way to Norwich at about 3:00 p.m., arriving at the Maidshead Hotel a little after 5:00. Traffic was pretty heavy on the road as this was the end of the bank holiday. Waiting at the hotel when we arrived were a number of our English friends, and it was so good to see them and so nice of them to wait that indeterminable time to be there to greet us. We checked in, visited our rooms, and then had our dinner and orientation meeting at the Maidshead at 7:00 that evening.

Tuesday morning, May 5, after a full English breakfast, we left the Maidshead by motor coach for Rackheath. Traveling with us as our guide to Rackheath was Martin Hall, who now lives with and is a companion to Tony North, who you know is losing his eyesight. Martin is an employee of the British Postal Services and took time off for our visit in order that he could be with us and help us in the many ways that he did while we were there. We went to Rackheath and picked up our good friend, Tommy Dungar, who then became our guide for the bus portion of our trip. The first place we went to were the Golden Gates. They are in somewhat of disrepair, not painted, rusty, but it was very nostalgic to pull through them and stop while the majority of us left the coach to either take pictures or have our pictures taken by them. We then went into Rackheath Park to the old mansion, which is now unoccupied and in quite bad repair. We were met there by John and Annabell Howe, who are, with Mrs. Paul Gowing, owners of Rackheath Park but not of the mansion at this time. They told us how they could only try to keep vandals from doing any further damage to the building until such time as something better could be done with it. It is a possibility that it could become an apartment building of some type. We left the park then and went to New Rackheath to All Saints Episcopal Church and Community Center where we were met by many of our English friends from Rackheath, Salhouse, and vicinity. The ladies of the villages had set up for us

coffee, tea, sandwiches, cookies, cakes and pies. We visited there for an hour, presenting to the Chairman of the Rackheath Council, Mr. John Fuller, a hardcover copy of our newest edition roster of people who served with the 467th at Rackheath. Mr. Fuller graciously accepted the book and said that he would make certain that a suitable display for it would be arranged. This is another of our Group's efforts toward remembrances of our stay in Rackheath and joins a memorial marker at the village sign, a set of benches at the same place, gates to the Church and Center, and our framed pieces, Roll of Honor of our war dead, aircraft pictures, others placed in the Narthex of the church.

While at the Community Center, Tommy Dungar honored three, Bruce Palmer, Joe Ramirez and myself, by presentation of individual plaques, handmade, hand painted, beautiful workmanship. Mine featured "Lil Peach", Joe's "Witchcraft", and Bruce's the 789th Bomb Squadron "Flying Boxcar" insignia. Each had the 8th Air Force patch, with 467th Bombardment Group and Rackheath on them. We will let you see them at future reunions. Each of us thank Tommy for this honor.

We left the Community Center and went to the historical marker erected and dedicated by our Group in July of 1990, a very handsome stone made more impressive by the flagpoles on which British and American flags are flown on each day. Brick and plantings have been done by the owners of the adjacent businesses. It is a very impressive marker. Then off to the Green Man Public House for a cold buffet lunch, at which we had 33 guests. It was my pleasure to introduce the guests to the whole of the crowd and I did a damn good job of it, received many, many compliments. After lunch, we continued our coach and walking tour, which went to many sites still identifiable on the old base area. Forty people tramping about through the brambles and briars, and it took to 5:00 p.m. to do it all, and we did it thoroughly, being directed and led to various of them by our good English friend, Tommy Dungar and aided particularly in the Red Cross communal area by our English friend Phyllis Smales, who was with the Red Cross during the entire time of the Group's stay in Rackheath. Ms. Cille and I left the Group at this time with Phyllis and Wilford Smales and went with them to their home, Swan Cottage, for a visit. It was a very good experience. Their house is nearly 170 years old, four rooms, two up and two down, whose dimensions cannot be over 20 feet by 20 feet; living room, kitchen, and bathroom downstairs, two bedrooms upstairs; four windows, one per room, quite small; a reed thatched roof. It is a National Trust Registry House and cannot be modified internally or externally without government permission. Their yard is not large, but is filled with a profusion of flowers, trees, berries, and vegetables. They both know the names of each and everyone of the dozens of varieties. They are so happy there. Well, it was tea time, and Phyllis brought out two large plates of sandwiches, cheese and onion quiche, sausage rolls, tea-cakes, cookies, and fresh-brewed tea. We just had to eat. I had carried with me pictures of our house in Shreveport which I showed to them and they were duly impressed. They ran us back into Norwich, about fifteen miles, and after a quick wash-up, we went down to the Group dinner (we were continuously eating). It was a fair meal, white wine to accompany it. We then had visits among the tables and talks by individuals concerning what they had seen, how they were doing, how the trip was going for them. It was quite an

enjoyable time.

Wednesday morning, after our full English breakfast, we boarded the coach for a tour of Norwich. Our guide was Geoffrey Goreham, a good friend of the 467th and a Norwich newspaperman. He directed the bus to many historical sites in the city and his expertise and knowledge of the town made the whole of it extremely enjoyable. We ended the tour at the Second Air Division Memorial Library Room, where we were met by Phyllis Dubois and her staff and we had a visit there of maybe an hour, to allow the veterans and their families to see the entire library complex and to visit with the staff. While there, we presented two checks to Tom Eaton, Director of the Second Air Division Memorial Library Trust. The first was in the amount of \$380 and was designated "The Peter Edward Bond Memorial Book Fund." From it, books of the library's choice will be purchased and will be circulated in the library system, with a dedication plaque to the memory of Peter Edward Bond, Friend of the 467th. We presented a second check to Mr. Eaton in the amount of \$1,000 to augment our present \$4,000 endowment in the name of the 467th Bombardment Group, the interest of which has purchased many books for the library system, which are circulated with the plate "Donated by the 467th Bombardment Group in Memory of the 229 Veterans of the Group who were lost in combat operations in the Second World War."

We were then on our own for the afternoon and Ms. Cille and I, after a meal of fish and chips not nearly as good as those remembered from the years 1944-45, went back to Rackheath to visit with Tommy and Doris Dungar. We went first to Horning Ferry, where we wanted to visit the pub but found it closed for no reason, then to Wroxham where we left Doris and Ms. Cille to shop while Tommy and I went back to the Rackheath area to look. We stopped by the impact area of the V-2 rocket which Tommy has written about in our POOP from Group; the large hole is still in the ground. Then we went to the base site where we received permission of the owner's wife to go into his farm, and we found the hardstand, the parking place of Lil' Peach, the aircraft I most identified with while at Rackheath. Quite a nostalgic moment, then back to Wroxham to pick up the ladies and back for a short visit with Tommy and Doris at their home. We didn't arrive back in Norwich in time to do any shopping, unfortunately. We wished to have visited the Coleman Mustard Shop and the Scissor Shop in town, but found them both closed when we got there. A bad deal. Back to the hotel, a drink, clean up, dress up, to Vince LaRussa's room for white wine, then down to our guests for the farewell banquet. A large group, fifty from America, nearly forty from England. A very informal affair, the only speaker, Ms. Phyllis DuBois of the Second Air Division Memorial Library, to thank us for our donation of the books and the monies. A lot of visiting afterwards, goodbye to our English friends and then farewell to Norwich for awhile.

Thursday, May 7, after our full English breakfast at the Maidshead, we left Norwich by coach to make our way back to London, the Grafton Hotel, where we had the afternoon at leisure. Ms. Cille and I walked quite a bit in the City, looking for a toy store where we could buy some things for our grandchildren, but were not successful. We returned to the Grafton then and we had our farewell dinner that evening. A good round of speaking after the meal. We talked of many things. I was talking mostly about support of the 467th Association and trying to find some area or place in which we could put our memorabilia.

Friday morning, May 8, it was farewell to our Group, as we each went our separate ways. Those who left late were there to wish those who left early bon voyage and good travels, a rather nostalgic moment, but the whole of the trip was very good. It was a well-received, well-planned tour, and we all enjoyed it very much.

I especially want to thank Mary Ann and Vincent for all the work they did to make this such an enjoyable time. They spent many hours of many days putting this altogether. Hyatt Travel Service did us a beautiful job. Insight Travel furnished us good guides, and good motor coaches. They were very accommodating in anything we wanted to do. Especially, though, we need to thank Mary Ann and Vince for working so hard to make this such a beautiful trip.

AFTER THE HAMM RAID FROM THE GROUND ANSWER TO HAMM RAID SURPRISE ATTACK

By Allan J. Welters

It was great to read Major Kenneth L. Driscoll's article about the "surprise" attack on our base on the day of the Hamm Mission. It was like a long awaited answer to a bad dream I had long ago. In answer to the article written in Vol. 11, No. 1 "POOP from Group," I will write what I remember. It was like being on the ground watching what was going on as compared to what Driscoll saw going on during flight.

I very well remember the late takeoff for the Hamm Mission and thought about the aircraft having to return in darkness. But then I thought that all had been decided on and things would probably turn out fairly well. I was working on one of our 789th aircraft that had problems that would take some time to complete so worked on through evening chow time to finish and went to eat late.

I had arranged to meet Al Gerads and Daniel Miney at the south end of the field that evening. Al and Daniel were both members of the Group's 1229th Quartermaster Service Company. We had been at Rackheath for some time before I knew that Gerads was with our Group. It was great to meet Al as he was from my hometown and a "shirttail" relative. Daniel Miney was a friend of Gerads and thus became a friend of mine. After chow I returned back to the 789th Engineering Hut to check if anything was to be done before I went to meet Gerads and Miney at the other end of the field.

When I got back to the Engineering Hut no one was around, the weapons racks were unlocked and weapons gone. There was a note on my weapon telling me to take my weapon and go join the others in the woods behind the "bomb dump" to help hunt down some "Saboteurs" that were thought to have been seen. I remembered promising Gerads and Miney to meet them but "Orders" are orders and off I went with my weapon, headed along the east side of the "bomb dump" in the gathering darkness.

Then the drone of a strange sounding aircraft was heard, it was coming in from the same direction our aircraft used to make their approach from the northeast. It was just above the treetops coming at an angle somewhat to my right and toward me. I got a creepish feeling up my spine and back of the head. It felt like a bad situation was about to take place. I raised my weapon and sighted on the plane, ready to fire, but waited for it to come along my right so I could see the insignia on the side of the fuselage. It was too dark to see the insignia and I thought it must be an RAF aircraft because by that time the "gun pits" should have opened up if it were an enemy plane. As I turned to continue on my way, I heard the blast of the first bomb go off. I

turned to look back in time to see the blast of the second bomb that was dropped. As the plane disappeared into the darkness, the tracers from the "gun pit" on the far end of the field began following it. Then my thoughts went to Gerads and Miney, wondering if they were all right. Then all of a sudden I saw airplanes in low flights criss-crossing and circling, they were somewhat to the south of our field. Then I saw tracers streaking back and forth between the planes. It was a wild sight to see and I thought what it must be like for the crews in those aircraft up there milling around in the dark trying to find where to land and not knowing who is firing at them. Some had their navigation lights on. Then I saw one burst into flames and go down behind the trees, then another was on fire and went down. I thought, "My God, what's happening, help those guys get down." It looked like the "JERRIES" were shooting our airplanes down.

After the bombs were dropped, I could see there was something going on on the south end of the field. Then the first of our planes landed and it seemed like something happened, it did not keep going to and around the end of the runway. Then a second plane came in on the southeast-northwest runway and something happened to it, run off runway or what, and it seems one other had problems and the rest landed all right. Then I finally took a normal breath and began wondering why no one else was around and if Gerads and Miney were O.K.

In the morning I asked a number of people if they knew who and how many were hit, no one knew. Then about the third night following, I worked into the night on an aircraft and when finished went back to our (789th) area wash room to clean up. There was one other G.I. in there and to my surprise, it was Al Gerads. I asked if he was at the south end of the field that evening. He said, "No, I had some other duty to do, but Daniel Miney was there and the bomb blast tore him apart." It must have been the Lord's good will to have duties elsewhere for us instead of being with Daniel Miney. That was 22 April 1944--and my birthday. What more of a birthday gift could one ask for.

After the war, I moved to St. Paul from my hometown and lost contact with Gerads. Later I began trying to find him but was told he passed away. Then just a few years ago at a family gathering, I was told by one of the guests that Al Gerads was his neighbor. I said "You've got to be kidding." It turned out Al is still living and so close that he can be called without a long distance call. We have since enjoyed calling and visits. He did not know about our Group Association, so I signed him up. I believe he is the only member we have from the 1229th Quartermaster Service Company. On 4 March this year, I received a call from Gerads, he was at Ft. Snelling VA Hospital because of a heart attack. On 6 March, he had triple bypass surgery. On 7 March, I received "POOP FROM GROUP". On 8 March, Al's wife called me and asked if I would go to visit Al as his spirits were low and he did not care to live on. I went to see him and got to talking with him so as to cheer him up. I had our newsletter with me and read Driscoll's article to him. The change of expression on his face told me reading the letter had good results. Before I finished he said, "I want to keep that letter." I said, "Al, the good Lord didn't spare your life back at Rackheath so you could give up now. Remember you're a 467th trooper, don't give up the fight." He thanked me often for spending time with him. I said "Al, I'm happy to do this as it makes up for some of the time we could not spend together when we were at Rackheath and when things were serious and

duties came first." Al is doing well and back at home going through the recovery paces.

During my visits with Gerads at the hospital, he told some things that took place at Rackheath that I did not know about. One was that of him seeing a crew bail out of a damaged B-24 with two men using one chute, one hanging on the other's legs. There was one other member of the 1229th Quartermaster Company that could speak German well besides Al. The Company Commander called both of them in and asked who wanted to go over to Germany for interpreter's duty. Both wanted to, so the Captain suggested they pull cards and high draw would go. Al got the low card. Two weeks later they received a message saying the volunteer who went was killed. I remember Charles Engelmann, our Personnel Sergeant, asking me if I wanted to go. I said yes, but nothing every came of it.

Gerads also told about U.S. Airborne troops being quartered with their QM unit for a short time, and also German POW's for a short time. He also remembered being at a chapel service, seated alongside our Group Commander, Col. Shower.

I'm sure there are others who would have an experience to write about as Major Driscoll did. I sure would enjoy reading them, and it would be great for you to share with us your part in the 467th history. Lastly, I would like to hear from a crew member or English friend about the crewless landing of our B-24 #42 52 623 Wabbit, without damage when it landed in a meadow. It was flown back to our base and went on to fly missions until the war's end.

Thank you, Major Driscoll, for taking time to write that article, besides it being a meaningful experience, it also stirred me greatly.

LETTER FROM ALBERT L. TOUCHETTE

Dear Phillip,

When Major Driscoll wrote his article in the Vol. 11 No. 1 "POOP FROM GROUP 467TH" about the raid on Hamm, Germany, 22 April 1944, it stirred emotions even though many years have passed.

This is especially true when his recount of that raid touched on the events at Rackheath upon returning from the Mission. His reference to an enlisted man as a visitor who was killed was disturbing. PFC Daniel Miney was one of my Command; it was he who was killed. Sgt. Mahoney, also of my Command, was injured. They were in the 1229th Quartermaster Service Company. Their duties were not glamorous, but they were fine young, patriotic, dedicated service men. I hope that these two men are included in the over 5,000 names for the Association's Master Roster for the Second Air Division Memorial Library Room. (They are, Ed). Not many know, or knew these loyal men whose daily duty was dirty, cold, hard work delivering coal and emptying latrine G.I. cans, not combat duty, but still losing one's life in the call of duty. They were more than visitors!

Capt. Albert L. Touchette

LETTER FROM TONY BELL

Hello Phil, Connie and I will be seeing you at our "Friends of the 467th" get together in England in May!

I am prompted to write because of Lt. Driscoll's letter in March 1992 edition of POOP FROM GROUP. Usually when one reads of a mission he flew, and the story being read was written by someone else, in another squadron, and as seen from another plane, one is often amazed as to how wrong the other guy is! Well,

if Driscoll's narration of the Hamm mission is inaccurate, then so is my diary entry made the day after the mission was flown. It is almost as though he was in our plane; 303 Topper, of the 791st.

We too straggled back, experienced pyrotechnical being fired at us by the Germans, landed on a blacked out field, had to use our landing lights, had some ground officer stop our plane and tell us to shut our lights as the field had been under attack!

According to my diary, the Hamm mission was not planned as a surprise raid on Germany by the 8th Air Force. The only surprise about that mission was that surprise we got when we got back! Our landfall on the English coast was not only dark, it was one full hour after our very pistol color code authentication tables ran out! I wonder if Driscoll remembers the heavy flak the British sent us as we flew around with our navigation lights on, firing one hour old authentication flares? I'll never forget the colors; Yellow/Yellow/Red!! The more we fired the more the Brits would respond!

This mission appears in the diary I gave you at Tucson (POOP From One of the Group), read it, you will be surprised at the similarities between Driscoll's and my recollections.

Regards, Tony Bell

LETTER FROM THERESA B. REDMOND

Dear Mr. Day:

Your name was given to me by a member of the 8th Air Force Historical Society as Unit Contact in the hope of gaining information of a friend of mine.

His name, Sgt. Dan Schmaltz of Chicago, Illinois. He served with the 467th Bomb Group, 788th Bomb Squadron, 96th Combat Wing (2nd Air Division) about May 1944 until he was killed in action August 1944.

It was suggested that a newsletter that you print, called "POOP FROM GROUP," might bring some information of men who knew him, served with him, possibly even have some snapshots of him.

I am writing my autobiography and am attempting to fill in the gaps of missing information. I knew Dan when I was in high school, corresponded with him regularly when he was in service. It stopped when a piece of correspondence was returned to me, marked "Deceased."

I would appreciate anything you can do to help in obtaining my previously mentioned information.

His name again: Sgt. Dan Schmaltz.

Thank you for your consideration of my request. If any expense is involved, please advise.

Sincerely yours, Theresa B. Redmond,
400 Old Toll Circle, Black Mountain, N.C.
28711.

LETTER FROM LYLE AND IRENE PRICHARD

Dear Phil and Miss Cille,

Just received and devoured a welcome and well-done "POOP FROM GROUP." Irene and I always jump to see who gets it first. Finally I won. Always scan it for something that relates to someone I knew. The article, "Detective Work," hit a familiar chord. David A. Waite and I graduated from Cadets at George Field, Lawrenceville, Illinois, in the class of 43-G. His serial number is 0-809069, mine is 0-809040. At Wendover Field, 16 November 1943, he was listed as co-pilot for George Tormoen. At Rackheath, he was in the 788th Squadron and I always thought he went to the 492nd/801st with the Carpetbaggers. I remember another of my buddies in 43-G was Will's co-pilot in the 788th, John Schweighauser, Serial No. 0-809051.

Bill Dillon said that he knew Wills in the 492nd. The last (previous) POOP listed George Tormoen with address, so six weeks or more ago, I wrote to him to see if he could put him in touch with Dave but so far he has not found the time to answer. Still is a mystery isn't it.

I enjoyed Ken Driscoll's article on the Hamm raid. At the end he says that Jack Skinner was shot down that day, 11 May 1944. My diary and Healy's book lists Skinner's crew going down on 11 April 1944. That was my first mission to Oschersleben. Skinner and Stuckman, Skinner's co-pilot, 43-G, 0-80906, were flying our right wing coming back to Rackheath in good weather. They slid back and disappeared from my sight. When we landed and were in debriefing word came in that they had crashed into a stone farmhouse and everyone aboard was killed. As I remember, it was the 467th's first operational loss.

In the past few weeks I've heard from Tony North and Martin Hall from Norwich. Always nice to hear from our English friends. Probably won't go to the reunion again this year. Might be able to get to Midwest 2nd Air Division one in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Wrote to Puff Pugh a while back. Now he owes me a letter. Give Miss Cille a big kiss from us. Vice President Co-Pilots Association. Lyle and Irene Prichard.

FINAL REPORT ON THE NEINBURG BRIDGE MISSION OF 3 MARCH 1945 - from Ralph Elliott

Mission documents I received from Edward W. King in April effectively prove his claim to have bombed the Neinburg Bridge target individually, even though he was pilot of the deputy lead plane of the second squadron and the second squadron did not drop on that target. Ed's original letter was published in the 12/01/90 issue of POOP. Of particular import is the fact that he was able to get extensive reports of that mission from the National Archives in Switland, MD. Division Field Order 617 verifies that two individual ships did bomb the bridge; and Interrogation Notes of King and Belingheri identify them as the two crews. Belingheri, who was flying wing in the high right element of the second squadron, dropped on King's drop. From his position in the formation, he probably assumed he was dropping on the lead, not on the deputy. While King's Interrogation Notes state, "This ship dropped on first squadron on primary (target). Were individually synchronized", the first statement is obviously in error since King's drop was probably on the third pass over the target. None of the 467th planes dropped on the first pass, and only the first squadron, which Col. Shower and I were leading, dropped on the second pass. Since this was a Division lead, both the 458th and 466th groups were involved, but only one other squadron dropped on the bridge--the rest went to Bielefeld.

I think the evidence verifies King's version of the events affecting his crew on the Neinburg Bridge mission, and should lay the subject to rest. What is perhaps more important is the fact that Ed was able to get copies of the old mission reports to prove his point. It might prove helpful for future investigators if POOP printed a list of sources for historic material. How about sending any addresses you have to Phil for future publication. And one final note: it never pays to argue with a lawyer!

The following was submitted by C. P. "Larry" Kurtz. He wrote that he believed the Author, C. N. Ball, worked in the Orderly Room of the 788th Bomb Squadron for First Sgt. Owen K. Ball. And Further, "I know all the aircraft mechanics will appreciate it. Thanks!"

ODE TO THE AIRCRAFT MECHANICS

(with apologies to Clementine)
In Barracks Twenty the beds are many
and they number ninety-nine,
but we never get to sleep there
for we're all out on the line.

In the morning, in the dawning
as our shoes we feebly shine
comes the old familiar whistle
"Get Your Ass Out On The Line"

Are there passes for the masses
when there comes the evening time?
Are you nuts, boy; are you loco?
"Keep Your Ass Out On The Line"

Are you croonin' for some spoonin'
out beneath the pale moonshine?
Hang back up that fancy clothin'
"Get Your Ass Out On The Line"

When this war has passed forever
and the world's once more sublime,
I fear they'll leave us dumbly standing
"With our Ass out on the line."

Author: C. N. Ball from the 476th BG 788th SQ., 1944

LAST POST

John B. Corbett
Peter DeRose
Robert L. Held, Jr.
Linville Holley
Lonnie B. White

"May they go from Strength to Strength in the Life of Perfect Service in GOD'S Heavenly Kingdom."

ROSTER ADDITIONS

David T. Alp - A	Great Yarmouth, England
Thomas C. Beeson	Kissimmee, FL
Ralph F. Brueggemann	Long Beach, CA
Mike Caputto	Meadville, PA
Greg Diming -A	Phoenix, AZ
Alvin Eischen	Comfrey, MN
Charles T. Eppolito	Buffalo, NY
Robert Fixler	New Rochelle, NY
Jerrold E. Jacobson	Cedar Falls, IA
Mike Keller -A	Phoenix, AZ
Seymour Klein -A	Boynton Beach, FL
Earl F. Lair	Phoenixville, PA
Donald J. Prescott	Seal Beach, CA
Ronald A. Renaud	Tucson, AZ
Fredrick W. Roberts	Columbus, OH
Harold C. Rubendall	Sublette, KS
Betty M. Sanders -A	San Antonio, TX
Edward Sanicki	Milwaukee, WI
Herby Slaughter -A	Norwich, England
Max Sheppard -A	Hartsville, IN
Mrs. H. Varnon -A	Norwich, England
Raymond M. McTye	Stone Mountain, GA

Anyone wanting an address, drop me a card. If they live near you, give them a ring, drop by to see them. Don't let any one of them not be welcomed. And please, each of you reading this, send me the names and addresses of any 467th or 2nd Air Division veterans so we can get them on the Group Roster or in contact with their Group representative. The time is now to do this.

LOST SOULS

POOP was returned from the following. Tell us what you know of them, try to locate them if they live in your area.

Robert L. Trantor
Henry A. Brown

Scotia, NY
Springfield, IL

MAIL-MEMORIAL FUND
CONTRIBUTORS - POST 03-01-92

Raymond D. Beaulieu	John E. Mahoney
Earl D. Belisle	Virgil W. Marcum
John B. Brinson, Jr.	Wayne "Beef" Mountford
George W. Condry	Thomas Nelson
John Doling	Charles "Chuck" Pollock
Howard W. Dye	David G. Patterson -A
Henry W. "Tex" Ellison	Joe Severance
G. "Jeff" Gregory	Ross Voyles
Lowden Hiller	Walt Weaver
Glenn C. Kenagy	Allen J. Welters

A total of \$690 in donations were received, of which \$310 was designated for the Peter Bond Memorial Book Fund. A check for \$380 was presented to the Second Air Division Memorial Library on May 5, 1992.

TREASURER'S REPORT

There was a transposition in prior report reducing closing balance by \$90.00.

Operating Fund:	
Opening Balance 03-01-92	\$ 12,003.74
Contributions	380.00
Interest (5 months)	118.43
Sub Total	12,502.17

Expenses:	
Secretary and Roster , Poop 11-1	261.60
Reproduction Poop 11-1	319.11
USPS, POOP and General Postage	348.00
USPS, Non U.S. Mail	20.86
Phillip G. Day Telephone and Misc.	55.00
2nd Air Division Memorial Library (1)	1,000.00
Sub Total	2,004.57
Operating Fund 06-15-92	10,497.60

Special Funds:	
Peter Edward Bond Memorial Book Fund (2)	-0-
Fund Amount 03-01-92	70.00
Donations Received Since 310.00	
2nd Air Division	
Memorial Library	380.00
Friends of 467th (3)	780.00
Rackheath Memorial	47.50
Albert Joseph Shower Endowment	746.50
Sub Total	1,574.00

Total All Accounts 07-01-92	\$ 12,071.60
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- (1) Increase 467th Book Endowment Fund to \$5,000. Authorized by 467th Bombardment Group (Heavy) Association, Ltd. Board of Directors.
- (2) Donated May 5, 1992 at Norwich.
- (3) Monies Accumulated for Friends of 467th Expenses.

LETTER FROM RAY BEAULIEU

Hi Phil,

Just a short note to let you know I had a nice conversation with Paul Hannafey of North Carolina. He was an original member of the 467th Group in Wendover as a navigator. On a training mission that he had been excused from, his crew crashed in the mountain, none surviving.

Paul eventually went to England by boat and at Rackheath he was assigned to Norman Rigsbee's Crew (83). Some of the members of that crew were Thomas Murphy, co-Pilot; Orther Witt, Bombardier; Friedy, Engineer; and Dale Hamilton, Gunner. They flew their last mission on July 31, 1944. I believe you had previously mentioned that in your letter to me.

During his tour, Tom Murphy was given his own

crew and I have written him to see if he has any information in regards to the "Lonely Heart." I tried to call him but there was no telephone number listed.

I also wrote Howard W. Stubbs, of Iowa, who I believe was our replacement navigator after ours was injured. He was also an original 467th member. He also had no telephone number listed.

I also called Lyle Waite of Moweaqua, Illinois, and had a long conversation with him. He was a gunner who arrived at Rackheath in November 1944. By that time I was long gone from Rackheath, but he remembered the "Lonely Heart"/Sharksmouth plane.

I have tried to reach Ted Wheeler of New Hampshire, Telephone 1-603-642-3080, on numerous occasions, but no answer. Probably down south for the winter.

On the Murphy and Stubbs letters, I have noted return postage guaranteed. That will be one way of finding out if the address is correct.

So for now, Ray Beaulieu, 44 Whittenton Street, Taunton, MA 02780.

P.S. Keep up the good work!

"THE BATTLES OF SPLASHER 5"

April 1944 - August 1944, by 1st Lt. Howard W. Johnson, 790th Sq. 467 Bomb Group, 2nd Air Division, 8th Air Force (later, Colonel USAFR, Retired)

World War II pilots who flew "the Hump" have emphasized the hazards of flying between India and China where the clouds have "rocks" in them.

The 467th Bomb Group, 2nd Air Division, and all 8th Air Force pilots flying combat missions from England in 1944 could emphasize similar weather hazards. The clouds over England did not have rocks in them. They had airplanes, lots of airplanes, under, in, and over the clouds. I submit that English weather and air traffic were grater hazards than the flak and the occasional German fighters that we encountered.

Adding to the constant hazard of collisions was the fact that we usually used only one major electronic "lighthouse"-Splasher 5--located several miles north of Rackheath on the North Sea Coast, towards which or away from which all of our pilots flew ADF courses to reach assembly altitudes or to let down to after missions.

You will recall our formation assembly procedures, if possible, were to form at an assigned altitude over Splasher 5. If there were clouds at this altitude, we formed at whatever altitude, necessary to get above the clouds. There were almost always clouds. During my entire tour at Rackheath I rarely glimpsed the sun from the ground.

When assembly of the Group aircraft had to be effected above the clouds (most of the time), our planes took off at 30-second intervals. When gear and flaps were up and a rate of climb of 300 feet per minute at 155 miles per hour was established, we made a single needle width turn, if necessary, to 33 degrees magnetic heading (this was the actual heading of Runway 3), continuing to maintain the rate of climb and airspeed. At 5000 feet, we made a single needle width turn to the left, still climbing and rolled out on a heading of 210 degrees magnetic. On up we climbed, at 7000 feet a turn to 30 degrees magnetic, at 9000 feet a turn back to 210 degrees, 11,000 feet a turn, 13,000 feet-turn, and so on until you reach the top of the overcast. Then continue climbing to assembly altitude in a like manner and finally home in on Splasher 5 and look for the Group formation, for "Pete the POM Inspector"

(Continued on Pg 10)

assembly ship flying the Group assembly colors, flying a racetrack course over the beacon.

I recall one early morning before dawn briefing at which our meteorologist, "Cloudy Joe", proudly pointed to the weather diagram with a few fluffy clouds drawn thereon and announced that all we could encounter on our entire mission would be a few "cumulus of fair weather." We made our pre-dawn takeoff. At 300 feet I noticed rain on the windshield. At 500 feet we entered an overcast. I flew out and back, out and back, out and back, but at 23,000 feet we were still in the overcast. Some cumulus of fair weather!!!

The return to base almost always involved Splasher 5. After leaving enemy-held territory, the Group would "home" in on the Splasher, letting down to 500 feet above the

cloud tops. We go back to the racetrack around it again and the ships in order, first up, first down, leave the formation, at one minute intervals, home to the Splasher, then out to sea on a 53 degrees magnetic heading, letting down at 500 feet per minute at 160 miles per hour. At 5,000 feet we turned left and flew toward the Splasher on an ADF (Aural Direction Finder Radio Aid) heading, still at 500 FPM and 160 miles per hour, to break out under the clouds (hopefully) before reaching the coast line. Then inland to pick up the Cromer-North Walsham-Worstead-Wroxham railroad line that would lead us to the base perimeter lighting and around the circuit to the left to the active landing runway.

(Continued Pg 14)

Second Air Division Association 45th Annual Convention • October 4-7, 1992 Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada • (702) 794-9561

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3

Registration
Early Bird Party
(Cash Bar, Complimentary Hors D'Oeuvres)

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4

Registration
Cocktail Party
Group Dinners

MONDAY, OCTOBER 5

Buffet Breakfast
Golf Tournament
Cocktail Party
Buffet Dinner
Awards Ceremony

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

Buffet Breakfast
Business Meeting
Cocktail Party
Gala Banquet & Dance

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

Buffet Breakfast

The costs listed below are for the entire package, as shown above, including hotel room for three nights, Sunday 10/4 to Wednesday 10/7. For special arrangements, let me know your requirements and I will advise cost.

COSTS PER PERSON

Single Occupancy	\$390.00
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Triple Occupancy	\$260.00 per person
Quad Occupancy	\$245.00 per person

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In all future conventions, an advance deposit of \$50.00 per person attending will be required, which will be non-refundable if written cancellation request is not received before 90 days of the convention starting date or by due date of the entire payment. Confirmations will be mailed upon receipt of deposit. At that time, we will also mail you an insurance application you can use to collect payment for late cancellation. Please read this carefully. Insurance must be purchased and paid for at time of final payment. Note mailing address on form.

ALL EXTRA NIGHTS AND INCIDENTAL CHARGES MUST BE PAID UPON CHECK OUT, DIRECTLY TO THE HOTEL.

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Sgl. _____ Dbl. _____ Trip. _____ Quad _____ Will Share _____ Arr. _____ Dep. _____

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Other parties in your room if triple or quad _____

Do not call hotel for reservations, changes, cancellations, etc. All these should be sent to me:

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Miracles thicker than fog on flight of No. 10607

Murphy, not God, was co-pilot, but angels followed his B-24

By James J. Murphy

It was the day after Christmas. As I was wheeled backward through the glaring hospital corridor, rows of overhead lights looming up behind me like little suns and then fading away to the front, I remember thinking that this day was just 45 years since the day of the five miracles. The miracles that had come just after Christmas so long ago.

The anesthetist had warned me that the operating room would feel cold. He came to introduce himself to me in the little cubicle where I lay on the gurney. My wife, Kathleen, holding my hand and trying to look calm. But even the corridor already felt cold in my hospital gown.

Everything was in slow motion. The distance to the operating room was probably only 100 feet, but the trip seemed to take half an hour. I had plenty of time to think.

I remembered the lucky accident that brought me to this rolling gurney so early on a Tuesday morning — the magnetic resonator imaging test that looked for a cause of hearing loss in my left ear, but found instead, a tumor nestled against the left side of my brain. I looked it up in our family medical book, reading about paralysis, blindness, seizures, or worse.

I remembered the clear, calm voice of Dr. John Wright explaining how he was going to cut a hole in my skull and take it out; I remembered too his calm recital of possible after-effects.

I recalled Kathleen's marvellous calm as Christmas approached, as I frantically graded papers for 150 students at the university and tried to think of everything that needed doing before the operation. I knew though that she was seething with worry. She did not even blanch when I arranged to have her signature added to the checking account for a small publishing business I ran outside of university time. Just in case.

I remembered Christmas day, with daughter Sheila and son Brian and his wife, Debbie, trying to act as if it were a normal day.

I FELT the gurney shoulder its way through the swinging doors behind me. The glare of the operating room surprised me. So did the noise: chatter, clatter, rattle. I saw Dr. Wright over to the right looking at four bright pictures suspended on the wall. I had seen them before: my own skull, with the bright pear-shaped tumor standing out against the darker background of brain and bone. **A clock on the wall said 10 minutes to 8 o'clock.**

A hand grabbed my chin. "This is just oxygen," a voice said, as a hard rubber mask came down on my face. I remember being surprised at how hard and narrow it was, not at all like the wide, pliable oxygen masks we wore in the cockpits of B-24s in World War II. I couldn't see how this rigid mask could work without leaking.

"You'll feel sleepy in a minute," the voice said. But I didn't feel sleepy.

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It was Dec. 29, 1944. Cold, dreary, foggy England. Rackheath Air Base was on the edge of Norwich, in East Anglia, the round bulge on the map facing Europe a hundred miles north of London.

Even we young pilots knew something was wrong. We didn't get very much direct news about the battles across the channel in Europe, but there was a different sense of urgency these days in flight orders coming down daily to the 467th Bomb Group from division headquarters.



JAMES J. MURPHY: The author with his B-24, and today at the University of California, Davis, where he is professor of rhetoric and English.

The Germans had suddenly counter-attacked. The Battle of the Bulge was under way, with Gen. Rommel's armored forces threatening not only to smash through to the Belgian coast and cut the allied forces in half, but to cut off their supply ports as well.

What it meant for us air crews was that suddenly we were flying missions under weather conditions which would normally have kept us on the ground. The effort to bomb the German supply lines became more important than the usual safety rules.

GETTING A loaded B-24 into the air was a nerve-racking experience any day, but a nightmare in bad weather. A red manufacturer's placard in the cockpit warned that the plane should never be flown at a weight greater than 44,000 pounds, or 22 tons. With 2,700 gallons of high octane fuel and 6,000 pounds of bombs, we flew every day with 33 tons.

I always felt that getting this "flying boxcar" off the ground was 95 percent of the mission. (We were to learn later that, in our group, six crews died from the weather or other kinds of accidents for every one that fell to enemy action.)

An extremely dense fog seeped into everything on Dec. 29. Buildings 50 feet apart were invisible. Yet the combat routine went on — the posting of crew names the night before, the 4 a.m. wake up, the 5 a.m. breakfast before going to the briefing room. Our crew of 10 was on the list.

All of us officers went to command briefing session, resentful of being up so early for nothing. It had happened before. It was obvious we could not fly a B-24 in this fog when we could hardly see each other as we walked to the briefing hut. Yet the drill went on.

There was the repetitively melodramatic pulling away of a huge drape to show a map of Europe with our bombing route laid out in red tape. Our target was a railroad marshaling yard behind the lines. We took navigation details, synchronized our watches, and went back out into the white darkness.

We could hardly believe that we were still going ahead, when we got off the truck at our plane and realized that we couldn't even see the end of the wing tip from the cockpit. We knew the total wingspread was 110 feet, so one side of the wing was 55 feet. I was co-pilot. Russell

"Scotty" Scott the pilot. We looked at each other. We both knew what that meant. We had to reach 120 miles an hour to take off. Every flight school instructor had drilled us to remember that 60 miles an hour equals 88 feet per second. So we'd have to be going 176 feet per second to get this 30-odd tons of bombs and gasoline into the air. If anything went wrong on takeoff when we could only see 40 feet ahead in the milky soup, we'd have less than a quarter of a second to react.

But we went ahead with the preflight checks, plugging in our electrically-heating flying suits, checking the oxygen masks, running up each of the four engines in turn to make sure we could rely on it.

WE WERE due to be the third ship to taxi out, one of three "lead" planes on which all the others would gather to make the giant box formations supposed to keep German fighters at bay. Our jobs were to go off first, then circle high in the sky while the others moved into formation behind us. The first and second lead planes moved slowly past, and we very carefully pulled as close as we could behind the second plane.

It should not have happened at that airspeed, but Number 10607 flew into the air. It was a miracle.

We could barely see the ground from the cockpit window, and we realized that if we lost sight of those two round stabilizers in the tail of that B-24 ahead of us, we could easily stray off the concrete taxiway and get our wheels mired in the frozen mud alongside us. The B-24 has a tricycle landing gear, with a nose wheel far up to the front. When the brakes are applied in taxiing, the front end dips down like the head of an elephant nodding in a parade. So the plane ahead seemed to us to be going up and down as we cautiously braked as close as we could get.

We still expected to hear a voice on the radio: "Abort, abort." This was impossible flying weather. But no voice came.

The deadly-still fog meant there was no wind at all, no air movement to increase our airspeed at takeoff.

The ship ahead stopped. Half a minute later it turned, trembling, and all we could see was a wing as the pilot gunned the engines to full power. Then it was gone. The only way we could line up on the runway was by looking down from the cockpit windows at the rows of white stripes we knew marked each end of the runway. We could see nothing else. Scotty and I looked at each other.

Scotty ran up full power, brakes full on, until it felt that the ship would vibrate apart. Then he released the brakes. We seemed to lumber down the runway. Hours seemed to go by. The airspeed indicator inched upward, when it should have been sweeping up like the second

hand on a watch. I kept staring down at the runway from my cockpit window, then I glanced at the airspeed indicator — a slow 92 miles an hour — but when I looked back out the window I saw white stripes flashing by. The other end of the runway! We were not going fast enough to take off, but we were at the end of the runway!

I TOOK the wheel in my hands and pulled back. A co-pilot was not supposed to do that, with the pilot concentrating on the instruments in front of him to keep the plane on course and steady. But there was not time to talk to Scotty, only a split-second to grab the wheel. I knew the field off the end of the runway was deep-plowed, rutted enough to tear off our landing gear and smash all 10 of us to pieces. It should not have happened at that airspeed, but Number 10607 flew into the air. It was a miracle.

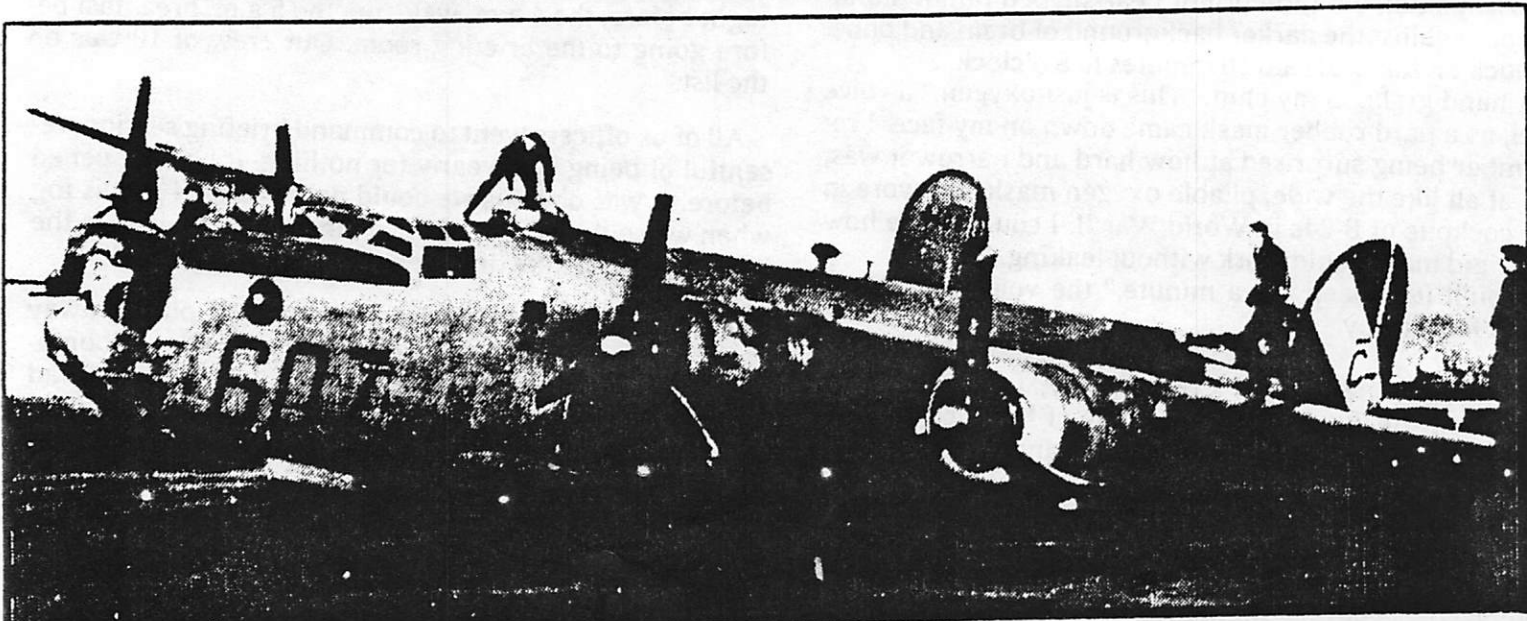
But now there was nothing. Only whiteness. We staggered. Then a smashing downward jolt. We'd hit the ground! Suddenly things were going too fast. A shuddering vibration swept the plane, like a rolling earthquake you feel but don't believe. Then freedom, a feeling of flight. (Later we learned that we had indeed hit the ground off the end of the runway, falling hard enough to shake loose three 500-pound bombs which crashed through the bomb bay doors and skidded along the ground underneath us without exploding. It was the second miracle.)

AGAIN WHITENESS. Scotty struggled to keep us climbing straight and level, only the instruments in front of him to help him. Truly it was flying blind. Suddenly a black wall loomed up in front of us — trees! The trees got blacker, higher, closer, like some great dark hand reaching out to enclose us. We smashed right into the blackness. A scrape, a lurch, and amazingly we were out on the other side. Again vibration, but we were still flying. A third miracle.

I hardly dared even look at Scotty, afraid to break his tense concentration on the dashboard instruments that were helping to keep us alive in this whiteness.

The worst was yet to come. The human senses are easily fooled. It takes steely nerves to trust an inanimate instrument with your life when your body tells you that your plane is doing something that the instrument denies. You can be "sure" that you are going left when your instruments say that you are going straight ahead. We had just taken off at an impossibly low speed, had hit the ground again, and had plowed through trees into the opaque whiteness. In all that turmoil, could Scotty continue to fly blind?

Suddenly the fog lightened. Then it began to break up into patches alternating with sunshine. But the light ~~showed us something even more heart-stopping~~ than the trees we had crashed through. We saw that we were now flying on our side, one wing pointing straight up to the sky and the other toward the ground beneath the fog. We were slowly rolling over on our back at 120 miles an



CREWMEN RETURN to No. 10607 after the crash on the day of five miracles.

hour! In another 20 seconds we would dive into the earth, upside down.

Perhaps only a pilot could appreciate the panic of breaking out of solid cloud, where the eye sees no apparent movement, into racing cloud tufts where the world is turning upside down. Everything is reversed: To pull the wheel back is to go down, to push it forward it to go up, Left is right, right is left. Scotty grappled with the controls for age-long seconds while we gradually righted ourselves. Had the fog been only 100 feet deeper, two seconds deeper, we could never have recovered. A fourth miracle.

All of this had happened in less than a minute — enough terror for an ordinary month of flying. Scotty and I just looked at each other; there was little to say. Now we could think of our mission, so we continued the long climb up to our rendezvous-point at 24,000 feet.

One of the gunners called on the intercom, asking us to look back. We saw a pair of thousand-foot plumes of black smoke, coming out of the fog close together, back where we had just been. (Later we were to learn that the smoke was from the two lead planes we had followed on to the runway just a minute before; both had crashed off the end of the runway in that fog.)

WE CLIMBED through the sparkling winter sunshine toward the little specks we knew would be the command ships for the mission. We were determined to go on. The plane seemed to be all right despite what had happened. But as soon as we approached the leader the radio came alive: "Do you know your bomb bay doors are blown off? Return to base."

Astonished, we sent our chief engineer, Charles Cox, to look at the doors. They were indeed gone, with a piece of torn aluminum flapping loose on one side. Three bombs had bounced off their shackles and disappeared, taking the bomb bay doors with them. Reluctantly, then, we turned back. We knew that our own base at Rackheath was too foggy for a landing, so we headed for another airfield near Norwich at Horsham St. Faith after dropping the rest of the bombs into the shallow waters of a North Sea inlet called The Wash. It had been an exciting morning, but now it was over.

We were wrong. We made a normal landing approach to the Horsham airfield, which was empty of aircraft. Even though it was only a few miles from Rackheath, it had not suffered the dense fog that we had, and its planes had made it off safely. We touched down normally on the two main wheels under the wings, nose high, with the nose wheel 10 feet off the ground as we slowed down. As the speed dropped, the nose wheel gradually came down until it too was rolling on concrete. By this time we were slowing down from about 75 miles an hour.

THEN CATASTROPHE struck. As soon as the nose wheel came down the fuselage was traveling parallel to the ground, the whole left landing gear broke off, the 10-foot strut supporting the huge wheels rolling upright backward to smash into the horizontal stabilizer in the tail section of the plane. The left wing dropped screeching onto the concrete, and the plane lurched into an uncontrollable leftward swing off the runway.

Again, it all seemed to be in slow motion. I can still see the faces of a group of British laborers working with burning tar as our 30-ton juggernaut suddenly came crunching down on them. One froze, then threw his shovel over his left shoulder and ran. We bore down on the burning tar, little flames licking all over it. There was nothing we could do. I remember feeling disappointed, thinking that it was ridiculous that we should explode in a field of ordinary tar after everything else we had survived that morning. I think I closed my eyes.

But the screeching stopped. We had not exploded, apparently because our crunching juggernaut snuffed out the flames. We came to rest with one wing on the ground and the other in the air. We scrambled to get out, not knowing whether the gas tanks had ruptured and were about to blow.

THE B-24 has a small circular escape hatch over the cockpit area, and Scotty, Chuck Cox and I got through that little hole in seconds and ran down the sloping left wing to get away from the plane in case it did burn or explode. The navigator, bombardier, and gunners all got safely out through other exits. Number 10607 did not burn.

(Adrenalin makes a difference. We had fled through that escape hatch encumbered with all sorts of flight gear like oxygen hoses, electric wires, and even ear-phones in my case. When it was clear later to go back in to get our personal effects, I could not get out the hatch by myself even though I had stripped off all the unnecessary gear.)

The 10 of us gathered to look at Number 10607. The two propellers on the ground were bent like pretzels. There was a huge gash in the left stabilizer where the landing gear strut had crashed through it. And then we saw for the first time the bits of tree branches imbedded in the fronts of both wings.

We were a silent group; again, there was not much to say. We had taken off below take-off speed, we had survived a crashing bounce back to earth, we had smashed through trees, we had nearly rolled over on our back, and then we had survived a crash landing through fire. We could have died five times. It was truly a day of five miracles. I remember thinking that after all that I would never be afraid again.

Abruptly I was thrown on my right side. A loud clanging of pipes filled my right ear. I dropped lengthwise on something hard. A babble of voices. Bright lights. I tried to open my eyes, but only the right one would work at all.

I could see a hospital room wall, nurses passing back and forth. I could only see straight ahead, so the nurses were just moving torsos, no feet or heads within my range of vision.

My head felt as big as a balloon. Dimly I sensed that there was a bulbous presence on the left side of my head, something light but bulky. My left eye was covered. But my right eye saw clearly and sharply.

One of the torsos moved to the side, and I could see what looked like a 6-foot diameter clock: 10 minutes to 12. I was out, the operation was over! Four blank hours had passed since that hard black mask was pressed over my face in the operating room.

I REMEMBER being surprised that I could see so clearly out of that one right eye. Everything looked sharper, brighter than usual. I could see the metal side-bars on my bed — the pipes I had heard clanging. Then another form came up to me. It was the neurosurgeon, Dr. Wright. He leaned over to look at me. "We got it all and it seems to be benign," he said. Then he asked, "Would you like to see your wife?" I can't remember whether I spoke or made a sign, but in moments Kathleen was there.

She was happily surprised that I could talk. We both had taken it for granted that I'd be "out of it" for a day or two after such an operation. She told me more of what Dr. Wright had said, about how successful it had been. We held hands again. In rapid succession Sheila, Brian and Debbie came through for brief visits. Then they were all gone.

I was by myself, and I remembered that day of miracles 45 years ago. Truly, this was the day of the sixth miracle.

It was on one of these returns that I recall suddenly seeing another B-24 on a collision course off my left wing. I promptly put our plane into a near vertical bank to the right and the other pilot did the same to the left and there was no disaster, but it was close.

For the benefit of any readers who might remember any of us, our crew, in addition to myself as pilot, included Bob Moulton as co-pilot, Don Kaynor as navigator (early transferred to a lead crew) Jack Merritt as bombardier-navigator (Don Kaynor was replaced by additional training for Jack plus a G box), Dave Baumhover as flight engineer, Roger Rafford as radio operator, Glenn Permann originally as ball turret gunner, later waist gunner, Guenter Staedicke and Harold Peek as waist gunners and Woodrow Spacek as tail gunner.

Our plane, acquired at Wendover, was flown to England via South America and Africa and brought us home safely from 13 combat missions with me as airplane commander. We named the plane "Ruth Marie" for my wife who shared the problems and the challenges of our lives at Mountain Home, Wendover, and Herington, Kansas.

On D-Day our crew fought the Battle of Splasher 5 and Buncher 15 twice. (The Group flew three missions). Many will recall our pre-midnight briefing on 5 June, D-Day evening. We knew something was up, not only because of the timing of the briefing but because when we entered the briefing room we noticed the presence of a one star General, General Peck. We rarely had a General in attendance at a 467th Bomb Group briefing. I am sure that this was one mission all of us wanted to fly, to be part of history on the long-awaited D-Day.

But back to the Battle of Splasher 5. There were planned to be some 10,000 airplanes in the skies over England and France prior to and during the Normandy landings.

You may recall we had one-way traffic on D-Day eve and D-Day. Our planes took off and formed up over Splasher 5. We then headed

north to Scotland, then turned south on course to Normandy, then West past the Jersey Isles, and then north, back to England. This was the special airways traffic control procedure set up for the D-Day missions.

On D-Day morning we took off long before dawn and made our race track pattern to Splasher 5. To find our place in the formation we had to recognize flashlight signals from the tail of the aircraft on which we were to fly formation. Somehow we did and we were over the beaches at the time of the landings.

I will always remember that on the way back, our radio operator, Roger Rafford, handed me earphones to listen to General Dwight Eisenhower announcing the Normandy landings to an excited world.

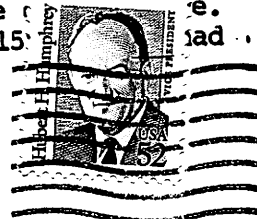
But our day was not over. On return and some rest, we took off for a second mission, the Group's third of the day. Our return again involved a one-way traffic pattern as we had for the earlier mission. We let down to stay beneath a lowering ceiling and on arrival over England involved our flying through the traffic patterns of many bases south of Rackheath on the aircraft carrier that was the island England.

The final challenge for this day was that on arrival near Rackheath the usually silent radio announced "bandits in the area." This meant that all lights on aircraft and on the ground were extinguished.

Once more I headed for Splasher 5 and then out over the North Sea for a while. Returning to Splasher 5 and thence toward Rackheath, I was delighted to see perimeter lights for various airfields again visible.

Bob Moulton, always reliable, announced that he thought he saw the perimeter lights of Rackheath. He was right and we landed about 24 hours after General Peck's original briefing.

Author's note: This article was written with D-Day's first mission as a frame. We usually formed on Buncher "15" and had similar problems.



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